

City of Port Phillip Draft Nature Strip Guidelines 2021

Submission of Response

Emma Cutting

Submitted: Friday, 11th February 2022



Acknowledgement of Country

The Heart Gardening Project respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands that we garden upon, the Bunurong Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land, aim to treat nature like close family and continue to learn about First Nations culture.

This submission is to be presented to:

- Mayor Marcus Pearl
- Deputy Mayor Tim Baxter
- Councillor Heather Cunsolo
- Councillor Peter Martin
- Councillor Andrew Bond
- Councillor Rhonda Clark
- Councillor Louise Crawford
- Councillor Katherine Copsey
- Councillor Christine Sirakoff
- CEO of City of Port Phillip Peter Smith

On behalf of:

- Myself, Emma Cutting
- My family, especially my daughter Elisabeth June
- The Heart Gardening Project Board - Matt Kurowski, Barbara Hogarth, Julie Hutchinson, Peter Cash and Nic Brinkley
- 20 Subject Matter Experts (see Supporting Document 1)
- The 5890+ people who signed the petition 'Keep street gardening growing in City of Port Phillip' (see Supporting Document 5)

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Submission Statement

The City of Port Phillip's (CoPP) vision states that, in 10 years from now:

“The beauty and biodiversity of our coastal, bay, park, waterway and inland environments are protected and enhanced for future generations to enjoy. We have played our part in promoting and addressing environmental sustainability, from tackling climate change, emissions and sea level rise to minimising flooding risks.” (1)

The strategic directions for Council include being *“Liveable”, “Vibrant”* and *“Sustainable”* with a focus on creating a great place to live that provides a sustainable future which is *“greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient”*. (2)

The draft Nature Strip Guidelines (NSGs) put forward by CoPP contradict this vision and the strategic objectives. The Purpose and Outcomes of the draft NSGs seek to make the gardens safer while supporting this growing community interest. While the draft NSGs create questionable safety enhancements, they dramatically reduce the opportunity for street gardening and, in doing so, create several unintended, adverse consequences.

This submission puts forward why The Heart Gardening Project recommends that City of Port Phillip Councillors:

1. Reject the draft NSGs; and,
2. Develop new NSGs in consultation with the community and Subject Matter Experts.

Through evidence and the views of 20 Subject Matter Experts (see Supporting Document 1) we will demonstrate that CoPP can meet its stated objectives for revised NSGs without adversely impacting street gardening. As well as the stated directions, other objectives have been discussed in meetings between The Heart Gardening Project, CoPP officers and Councillors. These various objectives have been summarised as follows:

- Enhance neighbourhood amenity and placemaking
- Make positive impacts on the environment and limit CoPP impact on climate change
- Ensure safety and accessibility for all residents and visitors in CoPP
- Improve Council decision-making and enforcement relating to street gardens.

Enhance neighbourhood amenity and placemaking:

CoPP can improve the liveability, vibrancy and sustainability of Port Phillip in accordance with the Strategic Directions by encouraging more street gardening on the almost 360 acres of CoPP nature strips.(3)

Part of being **Liveable** is access to high quality spaces. The interpretation that this should be confined to defined spaces, such as parks and reserves, ignores the greatest opportunity CoPP has to make the city *“a great place to live”*.(4)

Placemaking is about connecting people to public places. Providing opportunities for residents to engage with and improve the public spaces in which they live is incredibly powerful for community participation and community building.(5)

The core elements of the CoPP **Sustainable** objective talk directly to a city that is *“greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient”*. There are clear benefits associated with street gardening in delivering all these desired outcomes.(6)

Being **Vibrant** is about a strong economy, a thriving, inclusive community and being a creative hub. Street gardens are highly effective catalysts for community interaction. The thousands of active participants in Port Phillip are evidence of this. In a city where block sizes limit garden sizes, the street gardens take on even greater importance. It is a creative outlet for so many.(7) There is also a clear economic justification. Street gardens improve property value and, subsequently, improve council revenue through rates. (8)

Make positive impacts on the environment and limit CoPP impact on climate change:

Street gardens create several positive environmental outcomes:

1. Improving biodiversity (aligned to CoPP's 10 year vision) by creating habitat
2. Holding stormwater and reducing flooding risk (aligned with CoPP's water sensitive urban design programs)
3. Attracting and supporting pollinating insects helping to preserve Australia's food security and ecosystem health
4. Capturing particulate pollution, improving air quality
5. Reducing emissions and sequestering carbon.

Evidence supporting these beneficial outcomes has been provided in the supporting documents.
(9)

In summary:

1. The Little Things that Run the City report found that in Melbourne, up to 60% of insect biodiversity lived in mid-storey (between ground cover and tree canopy) while 19% lived in lawn.
2. Josh Byrne and Associates has provided expert advice that a benefit of a waterwise verge is improved water efficiency and increased stormwater infiltration.
3. According to When Bee Foundation, 1 out of every 3 mouthfuls of food depends on bees and that honeybees, native bees and other pollinating insects are essential to our food security and ecosystem health.
4. The Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub Cities for People and Nature report states that "Creating green space in urban areas by planting trees, shrubs and ground cover can have the co-benefit of mitigating air pollution in locations such as busy roadsides."
5. Science Advances 2020 featured a report that said emission from road asphalt rose 300% with moderate solar exposure, therefore multi-layers of vegetation not only curb emissions through shade but also, according to Dr Gregory Moore, sequester more carbon.

Ensure safety and accessibility for all residents and visitors in CoPP:

Though CoPP's strong focus on community safety and accessibility is to be commended, it needn't come at the cost of amenity. The current draft NSGs take a heavy-handed approach to safety and an inflexible approach to accessibility and, in doing so, significantly reduce opportunity for street gardening and put at risk existing gardens that create extensive beneficial outcomes for the environment and community. In particular:

- **Pedestrian safety and accessibility** can be maintained through significantly less restrictive guidelines. (10)
- **The safety of edible foods** can be managed through applying a simple disclaimer process and recommending soil tests. (see Supporting Document 2-3)
- **Tree safety** can be maintained and even improved with certain planting guidelines that not only help the tree, but save council money in looking after/replacing trees and support the community and environment. (See Supporting Document 4)
- Also, safety is only one part of human health, and mental health and well-being (including depression, loneliness and obesity) improve through street gardening. (4)(11)

Improve Council decision-making and enforcement relating to Street Gardens:

CoPP can provide clarity relating to what is and isn't permitted while providing the opportunity and encouraging the community to engage in street gardening. The current draft NSGs are overly restrictive and most of the existing street gardens fall foul of the guidelines.

Over 5890 people have signed a petition in support of street gardening in Port Phillip. There are hundreds of active street gardeners who will continue to find opportunities to improve their environment. Seeing as it can be difficult for councils to get residents to voluntarily engage in formal environmental programs, this is an opportunity for CoPP. If local laws become too restrictive, this will only create additional conflict between community and CoPP.

The draft NSGs will result in significant non-conformance, with residents not likely to understand the draft NSGs and perhaps even to wilfully ignore them. Ongoing disputes between the community and CoPP may place additional burden on CoPP officers, which would be the opposite of what the NSGs seek to achieve.

By aligning the NSGs with community desires, CoPP can significantly reduce the cost of enforcement while providing the residents with the opportunity to engage in an activity that is overwhelmingly supported by the community.

Conclusion

There are clear social, environmental and economic benefits to CoPP and the Port Phillip community by creating more opportunity for street gardening. The draft NSGs risk negatively impacting all these things by taking an unnecessarily conservative approach to safety, accessibility and tree maintenance.

Included along with this Submission Statement are the following supporting documents:

1. Subject Matter Experts - Statements of Support
2. Recommendations and Best Practice
3. Tree Safety
4. Other Research
5. Surveys and petition

The Heart Gardening Project team look forward to ongoing discussion and working with CoPP to achieve its strategic objectives and 10 year vision through the creation of street gardens that the whole community can enjoy safely.

Many thanks,

Emma Cutting

South Melbourne local for 20 years, mum, wife, Founder of The Heart Gardening Project, amateur naturalist, amateur plantswoman, street gardener, author, music teacher, performance coach, pianist

Overview of CoPP draft Nature Strip Guidelines

Things to be commended

- An update to the Nature Strip Guidelines is being attempted
- CoPP is addressing sight lines, utility access, pedestrian/driver safety and accessibility and the safety and survival of our precious trees

Research/consultation issues

- Bunurong Boonwurrung People have not been invited for consultation (1)
- Though accessible, no spatial analysis has been done (1)
- No socio-economic research has been done (1)
- Other stakeholders (including owners, renters, businesses, tourists, elderly, children, The Planet, external Subject Matter Experts) have not been sought out and listened to
- Community have not been consulted (note: it is believed that the author is the only one who was consulted on Tuesday 1st June 2021 yet it was admitted in the meeting with council officers on 30th November 2021 that the information given wasn't taken on board) (1)

Main Issues

- Clearance areas - these preclude the vast majority of street gardening from happening therefore the following list of 'Additional Issues' aren't even issues until gardens are able to be created
- Tone is negative, disabling and disempowering, starting with the document's purpose
- It doesn't align with most CoPP documents

Additional issues

- Renters (around 50% of the population) have to jump through more hoops than before
- Business owners have more paperwork than before
- People in heritage houses (about 50% of houses) have to jump through more hoops than before. (2)
- No edibles are allowed to be planted
- No planting around and under trees
- No planting in tree squares
- Raised planter box placement is too restricted
- Only one type of nature strip (Document 2-8, Type 4) is visualised
- The one type of nature strip that is visualised represents a small % of nature strips in CoPP
- The visualisations are complicated and out of scale leading to thinking much more is possible than in reality
- The document is far too technical for most residents to understand
- Language is unclear and inconsistent e.g use of the word verge in amongst nature strip
- Blanket bans on laneways, median strips and play equipment are far too restrictive

(1) This information was shared in a meeting on Tuesday 30th November 2021 by Council Officers Jennifer Witherage and Claire Ulcoq in the presence of Nic Brinkley and Lyn Allison of Westgate Biodiversity: Bili Nursery and Landcare.

(2) According to Heritage Overlay Map

https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/rfkhggwi/ba65bdcf-d602-eb11-a813-000d3acb4083_d89de741-40ad-494b-bfdd-fdfebe2c0832_port-phillip-c161portpt2-incorporated-document-city-of-port-phillip-heritage-policy-map-december-2021-approval-gazetted.pdf

Recommended changes to the CoPP draft NSGs

A “Promoting Safe Gardening” instead of “Preventing Unsafe Gardening” approach

The purpose of this document is to help all residents create safe and beautiful gardens that align with the environmental and social issues of our time. It is also to provide regulations and guidelines that are generative, supportive and aligned to all City of Port Phillip’s documents and visions.

Basic recommendations to give to residents regarding street gardens:

On nature strips*:

Indigenous plants are recommended to increase biodiversity and connect to indigenous culture. If the nature strip is under 1m wide simply keep plants under 500mm high.

If nature strip is 1+ metres wide...

- 300mm set back** from footpath and 500mm set back from kerb (same as existing NSGs)
- 1m set back from driveways
- All set backs can be planted with ground covers up to 300mm high
- Everywhere else maximum plant height is 800mm
- Corners and intersections- set backs are the same as above and you can only plant up to 500mm in height in the 9m from the corner/intersection.

Planting around Tree Guidelines...(Tree squares and nature strips):

You can plant under and around trees but keep these things in mind to help your street tree:

- Tree planting guidelines apply 1m radius around small trees and 2m radius around large trees
- Only use small hand tools eg trowels, small garden forks
- Be very careful around tree roots 50mm or more in thickness
- Plant small plants eg tube stock
- Use set backs and plant heights as above - indigenous species are again recommended
- Do some extra watering through stressful periods (hot, dry or both etc) to help all plants
- Try to leave soil level at ground level
- Mulch up to 100mm high around trees but keep soil and mulch 100mm away from base of tree

Tree squares:

You can build a frame around your tree square garden but keep these things in mind...

- Keep timber frame 200mm high and use wood at least 50mm thick
- Keep the structure strong and sturdy at all times
- Think about car doors opening and use a set back where needed
- (CoPP to provide pictures that give ideas as to designs?)
- (CoPP to provide/recommend safety reflectors?)

Additional recommendations to CoPP:

- Tarmac removal available to residents through Green is the New Black (see City of Sydney)
- Planter boxes with closed bases are unsustainable, expensive, difficult to maintain and do not help our environmental issues. If these are to be put on tarmac these should be a last resort after as much tarmac has been taken up as is possible.
- No need to ban edibles, just put disclaimer in. Hobsons Bay has a great sentence, informing residents of possible soil contamination and recommending a soil test before planting edibles (see Moreland for info on soil testing).
- Recommend an indigenous nursery as they will help with appropriate plant choice (see Hobsons Bay and Bayside)
- Bring in an approval system for swings, signs, other play equipment (see Cockburn)
- Median strips should be able to be planted on if over a certain width and in quieter streets.
- Laneways should definitely be able to be planted in - simple regulations needed though depending on the general use.
- No need for clearance area around utilities - a disclaimer is usable and normal (see Moreland)
- Wording added to provide protection to existing gardens
- Glossary needed

*using the commonly accepted use which is the strip of open land between the footpath and road

** set backs are the commonly used term rather than clearance area

References to Submission Statement

(1)

City of Port Phillip, Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-2032- Vision

(2)

City of Port Phillip, Council Plan 2021-2022 - Strategic Directions

(3)

Marshall, A. J., Grose, M. J. & Williams, N. S. G. 2019. From little things: more than a third of public green space is road verge. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening*, Abstract.

“Road easement green space constituted 7.0% of land cover and a surprisingly high 36.7% of public green space.”

(4)

Marshall, A. J., Grose, M. J. & Williams, N. S. G. 2019. Footpaths, tree cut-outs and social contagion drive citizen greening in the road verge. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening*, 2.

“By increasing the extent and diversity of street greenery, verge gardening makes cities more liveable (Säumel et al., 2015) by regulating temperature (Leuzinger et al., 2010; Gillner et al., 2015; Sanusi et al., 2015), mitigating stormwater runoff (Breen et al., 2004; Armson et al., 2013), mitigating air pollution (Vailshery et al., 2013), improving human health through reduction in stress and improvements in social cohesion (De Vries et al., 2013), reducing early childhood asthma (Lovasi et al., 2008) and reducing depression (Taylor et al., 2015).”

Living Melbourne Strategy, Action 1- Protect and Restore Species Habitat and Improve Connectivity, Protect and restore habitats, and increase ecological connectivity of all types between streetscapes, conservation reserves, riparian and coastal areas, open spaces and other green infrastructure across metropolitan Melbourne, page 46.

“Urban areas can play a significant role in conserving biodiversity, but without conscious efforts to protect and enhance habitat and linking corridors, our natural environment, which is ‘fundamental to the health and wellbeing of every Victorian’, will continue to decline.”

(5)

Pauli, N., Mouat, C., Prendergast, K., Chalmer, L., Ramalho, C.E., and Ligtermoet, E. (2020) The social and ecological values of native gardens along streets: A socio-ecological study in the suburbs of Perth. Report for the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub (CAUL), Melbourne, Australia.

“While they may be small in size compared with other sites of urban greening and restoration, verge gardens are highly visible in neighbourhoods dominated by vehicle and foot traffic. This means that verge gardens have the potential to act as sites of education, socialisation, and contemplation for local residents.”

Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize website. Tng, Serene. Peter Smith on creating memorable places, 2021.

“When you think about placemaking in places around cities, it goes beyond just shaping their physical qualities, it is also about creating social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability as well.” And “...if places aren’t inclusive, then I think we fail as a society.”
<https://www.leekuaneyeworldcityprize.gov.sg/resources/interviews/peter-smith/>

(6)

Norton, B. A., Coutts, A. M., Livesley, S. J., Harris, R. J., Hunter, A. M. & Williams, N. S. G. 2015. Planning for cooler cities: a framework to prioritise green infrastructure to mitigate high temperatures in urban landscapes. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, Introduction.

“.....to substantially reduce the UHI (urban heat island), widespread implementation of green infrastructure is required. For example, measurements during an EHE (extreme heat event) in Melbourne, Australia, suggested a 10% increase in vegetation cover could reduce daytime urban surface temperatures by approximately 1°C (Coutts & Harris, 2013).”

“Case study—City of Port Phillip, Melbourne, Australia- The City of Port Phillip comprises 20.62 km² of predominantly pre-1900 suburbs on the north shore of Port Phillip Bay in inner city Melbourne, Australia (City of Port Phillip, 2014) and is home to over 91,000 people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011b). The City of Port Phillip was a key partner in this research and keenly aware of the impacts of heat on communities especially from the 2009 extreme heat event in Melbourne which contributed to 374 excess deaths (Department of Human Services. ”

Hunter Block, A., Livesley, S.J., Williams N.S.G. 2012. Responding to the Urban Heat Island: A Review of the Potential of Green Infrastructure. Victorian Centre Climate Change Adaptation Research, 1.

“Vegetation cools microclimates by shading heat-absorbing materials, increasing the albedo¹ (or reflectivity) of surfaces, providing evapotranspirative cooling and altering wind patterns (Oke 1989; McPherson 1994; Taha 1997).”

Living Melbourne: our Metropolitan Urban Forest (Technical Report)

“...vegetative cover shades impervious surfaces and prevents the sun’s rays from hitting them, thus inhibiting heat storage and subsequent release, which would contribute to the urban heat island effect.”

Broekhuizen, K., De Vries, S. I., Pierik, F.H., Healthy ageing in a green living environment: a systematic review of the literature, Summary.

“It can be concluded that there is a significant positive association between a green living environment and physical activity, and between a green living environment and (perceived) health, including morbidity, mortality and survival in people aged 60 years and over.”

City of Port Phillip Annual Report, 2020-2021.

“Increased urbanisation and loss of trees and vegetation is also contributing to pollutants, nutrients, litter and sediment flowing into Port Phillip Bay and impacting biodiversity in our City.”

(7)

ABC Radio Perth. Wynne, Emma. 2021. Perth verge gardens grow community as well as plants

"There's a real opportunity for community cohesion and for people to get to know their neighbours through doing this, which is wonderful." - Natasha Pauli

Stuart Smith, Sue. The Well Gardened Mind

"This is the first time in the history of our species that large parts of our world's population are living in a state of disconnection, not only from nature but from one another. Community gardening addresses both kinds of disconnection."

Hassell Studio website. Hazelwood, Jon. Planting for all the right reasons.

"We should create urban landscapes that are encouraged to grow, are resilient to change and dare I say, gardened." And "Research suggests that it's not only quantity but the quality and variety of vegetation that improves both biodiversity and human wellbeing. Our public spaces must therefore be more than just 'green spaces'. Clipped and mown monocultures must be replaced with varied, natural and complex planting. And the 'in-between' places - streets, gardens and even industrial areas - should all play a role in urban biodiversity. Let's create connections to planting that will make people happier and healthier."

(8)

O'Sullivan, O.S., Holt, A. R., Warren P. H., Evans, K. E., 2016. Optimising UK urban road verge contributions to biodiversity and ecosystem services with cost-effective management, Abstract.

"Maximising the contribution of verges to urban biodiversity and ecosystem services is economical and becoming an increasingly urgent priority as the road network expands and other urban greenspace is lost, requiring enhancement of existing greenspace to facilitate sustainable urban development."

Marshall, A. J., Grose, M. J. & Williams, N. S. G., 2019. Footpaths, tree cut-outs and social contagion drive citizen greening in the road verge. Urban Forestry and Urban Greening, 2.

"Being citizen-led means such change could occur at little financial cost to local government, and local government can facilitate verge gardening through education, providing advice, and by reorienting existing guidelines to encourage residents to verge garden."

For proof of improved real estate prices, please refer to Statement of Subject Matter Expert Oliver Bruce, Director of Marshall White Real Estate in Supporting Document 1.

(9)

1- The Little Things that Run the City – Insect ecology, biodiversity and conservation in the City of Melbourne (2016) Mata L, Ives CD, Morán-Ordóñez A, Garrard GE, Gordon A, Cranney K, Smith TR, Backstrom A, Bickel DJ, Hahs AK, Malipatil M, Moir ML, Plein M, Porch N, Semeraro L, Walker K, Vesk PA, Parris KM, Bekessy SA. Report prepared for the City of Melbourne.

2- How to Create a Waterwise Verge: Guidance for Household AND Waterwise verge best practice guidelines: Guidance for Local Government. Prepared for Water Corporation by Josh Byrnes and Associates.

3- When Bee Foundation website, <https://www.whenbeefoundation.org.au/about-bees-pollination/>

4- Parris, K.M., Barrett, B.S., Stanley, H.M., & Hurley, J. (eds.) (2020). Cities for People and Nature. Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub, Melbourne. Cities for People and Nature, 30.

5- Research Article, Science Advances 2020. Asphalt-related emissions are a major missing nontraditional source of secondary organic aerosol precursors.

“Multi-layers of vegetation have been found to sequester carbon more successfully than just trees.”
- written with permission of Dr Greg Moore, who is a senior researcher at Melbourne University’s Burnley Campus, and Chair of the National Trust of Victoria’s Register of Significant Trees committee.

(10)

The document ‘**Movement and Place: Urban Road and Street Design Guide**’, written by **The Victoria State Government and Department of Transport**, has the vision of “Safe, connected, vibrant urban roads and streets for us to live, work, move, play and stay.” The whole design of this document helps us to change how streets have been looked at for the last 50-60 years. The idea that the whole area between home boundaries is part of the streetscape indicates that street gardening fits in perfectly.

Traffic Safety - Greening and beautifying a neighbourhood is a well-known, well-used, successful traffic calming device.

Example: City of Vancouver have Green Streets Program which encourages hundreds of locals to street garden for the council to promote traffic calming.

City of Vancouver sees street gardening as an official traffic calming and beautifying tool

<https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/beautifying-your-boulevard-and-street.aspx>

Perceived/Psychological safety is increased with gardens and cared-for vegetation present.

According to City of Port Phillip, “the positive ‘look and feel’ of our streets and spaces can contribute to reducing crime and increase feelings of safety.” Expert William Sullivan says that “Seeing and interacting with people in your neighbourhood on a recurring basis is ‘a powerful force’ in helping people feel safe in their communities.”

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/w1efndih/draft-community-safety-plan-attachment.pdf>

<https://www.science.org/content/article/city-fights-crime-gardening>

Crime rate lowered/Actual safety is improved.

A report explained that “Residents living in ‘greener’ surroundings report lower levels of fear, fewer incivilities, and less aggressive and violent behaviour...Furthermore, this pattern held for both property crimes and violent crimes.” Another report said that “...activated green spaces convey the idea that these are no longer anonymous areas...Philadelphia’s city-wide drug-related crimes increased by 65 percent, but the rates around the greened areas fell 18 to 27 percent.”

<https://nfs.unl.edu/documents/communityforestry/KuoSullivanenvironmentandcrime.pdf>

<https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/case-studies/a-water-department-reduces-crime/>

Elderly pedestrians are safer

According to a report, 1 in 4 Australians are expected to be 60 and over by 2050. With older people being much more vulnerable to heat stress, climate change expecting to create more extremes of temperature, and seeing as trees and vegetation can reduce temperatures of streets up to 20 degrees Celsius, it seems obvious to create as much urban greening as possible.

<https://theconversation.com/how-do-we-save-ageing-australians-from-the-heat-greening-our-cities-is-a-good-start-112613>

[Movement and Place: Urban Road and Street Design Guide, Victorian Government and Dept of Transport Page 15](#)

Increasing pedestrian awareness

Gardens at ground/eye height can be used as a pedestrian calming tool. Street gardening slows people down and makes them more aware of their surroundings (e.g. getting them looking up from their phones). A report found that pedestrians slowed down when walking through gardens and that provided time for them to immerse themselves in their surroundings and interact.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286406247_Landscape_Experience_and_the_Speed_of_Walking

Maintaining gardens is safer than maintaining lawn.

Maintaining a waterwise garden is slow, quiet and calming and, once established, a waterwise garden needs very little maintenance. Mowing the lawn, on the other hand, is noisy, awkward on small nature strips and the resident has ear muffs on so can't hear what is going on. Lawn also requires more constant maintenance. David Glenn of Lambley Gardens and Nursery says "Lawn requires 4-5 times as much time as gardens and uses a lot more water."

(11)

Urban green spaces and health. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016, 18.

"There is accumulating evidence showing that urban green space may be 'equigenic' (Mitchell et al., 2015), i.e. that the health benefits linked with access to green space may be strongest among the lowest socioeconomic groups, including minority ethnic groups."

New Scientist (online article). Douglas, K., Douglas, J., 2021. Green spaces aren't just for nature – they boost our mental health too.

"Understand how to green the world's urban spaces the right way and it can boost human well-being, help redress social inequality and be a boon for the biodiversity we all depend on."

Subject Matter Experts Statements of Support

Supporting Document 1



Supporting Document 1- Subject Matter Experts - Statements of Support



Dr Max Whitten, AM FAA

Katherine Berthon, Urban Pollinator Ecologist

Professor Sarah Bekessy, Urban Conservation Biologist

Dr Holly Kirk, Urban Spatial Ecologist

ICON Science, Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group RMIT Centre for Urban Research

Dr Nicholas Williams

Professor of Urban Ecology and Urban Horticulture

School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, The University of Melbourne

Jon Hazelwood

Principal and Landscape Architect

Public Realm Design Director for the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation
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Susie Quinton

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Rachael Ashton

Transport and Place Planner, Road Safety and Movement and Place Expert

Contributor to the National Road Safety Strategy and the Infrastructure Australia Strategy

Project Manager of the Movement and Place Guide for Urban Roads and Streets

Department of Transport 2021

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Lecturer, Landscape Architecture programs

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Jen Lynch

Lecturer, Landscape Architecture

School of Architecture and Urban Design

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RLA, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

Locals

Dr Emma Jackson

Lecturer, Architecture and Urban Design
RMIT University

Oliver Bruce

Director, Marshall White Real Estate

Jeremy Hines

The Relief Unit cafes

Anna Fairbank

Co-director, Fairbank and Lau P/L Architecture and Urban Design
PhD candidate Architecture and Urban Design
RMIT University

Organisations

John McCaskill - Chair

Rotarians for Bees

Ricardo Simao - Board Member

Gardens for Wildlife Victoria

Niall Fahy - Strategy and Key Projects Manager

Flow

In regards to Supporting Document 3 - Tree Safety

Consultation was carried out with **Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria**

The document is supported by **Dr Greg Moore, OAM**

The document is supported by **Nic Brinkley** - local native plant specialist, horticulturalist

Dr Max Whitten AM FAA

Supporting Statement for *The Heart Gardening Project* and its vision to create an 8km biodiversity corridor connecting Westgate Park and the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

The concept of inner-city footpath plantings is neither new nor unique. For example, it is enthusiastically supported by the City of Sydney Council. Their reasons are well captured in the introductory comments to their inviting and informative Self-Assessment Checklist “*Gardening on your street with garden beds*”. It states:

“We’re thrilled that you are interested in greening and improving your street with planter boxes. Footpath gardening is a great way to meet your neighbours, get out in the fresh air and take a local patch of your city and make it beautiful.”

Once the self-assessment checklist is completed and submitted, the enthusiastic gardener is up and running. The companion City of Sydney Council Policy Document on street gardening is a helpful guide in completing the checklist. It is not overly prescriptive, nor intimidating; it is inviting and constructive. It promotes a partnership between the local government and the community. The benefits are manifold and tangible.

A particularly telling story about the social and environmental value of Sydney’s street planting, enthusiastically supported by the City of Sydney Council, was published in The Sydney Morning Herald, 28 January 2022: “*Lane with ugly past transforms into an inner-city oasis*”.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/first-came-the-wedding-then-the-drag-queens-lane-with-ugly-past-transforms-into-an-inner-city-oasis-20220121-p59q3a.html>

The article recounts a “*year-long project to turn the gritty lane into something beautiful; a reclamation of public space for the community, and an antidote to the banality of long lockdowns*”.

The point in noting experiences with inner-city street gardening elsewhere is simply to remind ourselves about what works well, or not so well, and to learn from other examples. Also, to let others learn from the successes enjoyed by the City of Port Phillip with its street gardens.

Coming to the City of Port Phillip and the inspirational and pioneering endeavours of **Emma Cutting**, instigator of *The Heart Gardening Project* (THGP), we are witnessing something quite unique and exceptional; something which goes beyond what we see in Sydney and other metropolises. As elsewhere, the individual gardens, beautifully illustrated in the *Melbourne Pollinator Corridor Handbook*, reward their creators in terms of wellbeing, and in terms of achieving a personal goal and linking with nature; but, equally and additionally, passive neighbours and visitors can share in this created public good. Clearly, the benefits listed above in the City of Sydney street gardening checklist are similarly realised by the existing street gardens in the City of Port Phillip.

However, THGP does more; much more. By promoting the concept of an 8km corridor, from the Royal Botanic Gardens to Westgate Park, the project transcends the aesthetic and wellbeing benefits of individual gardens. It can now more credibly talk about biodiversity enhancement, ecosystem services including pollination services, and climate change mitigation. Even promoting community awareness and some ownership of these important concepts is a valuable contribution.

Thus, THGP beautifully demonstrates that 'greening the nature strip' can much more than an aggregation of separate efforts by residents to establish a street garden within their individual bailiwick. The notion of a green corridor transcends these cameo efforts by single households. The interconnected collective effort, creating a biological corridor, gives meaning to 'increasing biodiversity and habitat'; it gives relevance to the concept of ecosystem services in a built-up urban context, addressing issues of biodiversity enhancement and climate change amelioration. Further, as magnificently demonstrated by THGP in action, the tangible aesthetics, the broader community engagement, both by active participation and by passive enjoyment through other community members and visitors, must play a therapeutic role in mental health and wellbeing at a community level.

[This 'projected' community impact is reminiscent of the claims back in the 1970s by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, regarding Transcendental Meditation, that scientific research found a "*statistically significant reduction in crime rates in 12 American cities when the threshold of 1% of each city's population practicing the TM technique was reached*".]

Regardless, these individual and community benefits of *The Heart Gardening Project* must be self-evident to any person with a soul, and an open mind, who walks these streets and absorbs the natural beauty on display.

The question, then, needs to be posed "***Is there a disconnect between the City of Port Phillip's Nature Strip Guidelines with their prescriptive limitations, on the one hand, AND, the existing street gardens created by The Heart Gardening Project on the other?***"

Emma Cutting believes that to be the case; and, certainly, she does seem to have a point, particularly in relation to plantings under street trees and in laneways. It would be a crying shame if any gardens would need to be removed.

Local governments all over Australia, to deliver the services that their communities require and expect, depend heavily on volunteers working with council staff; and who are driven by two motives – a belief in making a difference for the better, and enjoying their efforts in the process. Both depend on the other to get good outcomes.

I would therefore urge council and its staff to work closely, constructively and with open minds, with Emma and her co-volunteers. What you already have in South Melbourne is far more significant than a disjointed collection of street gardens. You have the makings of an ecologically functioning inner-urban nature corridor which contributes to the suite of benefits mentioned above.

There is every possibility that a successful 'Heart Gardening Project' in the City of Port Phillip could serve as an inspiring model for local governments across Australia. The social, environmental and economic benefits nationally, all flowing from the successful emulation of 'The Heart Gardening Project' would be truly immense. And then we can all '*dips me lid*' to a movement, initiated by Emma Cutting, and championed by the City of Port Phillip.

Background for Max Whitten pertinent to providing the above comments:

- BSc (1st class Honours in Botany) Sydney University 1962
- Professor of Genetics, Univ Melbourne (1976-1981)
- Chief, CSIRO Division Entomology (1981-1995)
- Chief Technical Officer, FAO of the UN in SE Asia for IPM policy and Farmer Empowerment (1996-2000)
- Fellow, Academy of Science (genetics, entomology, biodiversity and sustainable Agriculture)
- Member, Order of Australia (biodiversity and sustainable Agriculture)
- Inaugural Chairman, Wheen Bee Foundation (2009 – present)
- Queensland Government's Sport Volunteer of the Year, 2015
- President, Maleny Golf Club Inc (2001-2019) working closely with Sunshine Coast Council to build a community golf course.

Katherine Berthon, Prof Sarah Bekessy, Dr Holly Kirk



Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group

RMIT University

GPO Box 2476

Melbourne 3001

Victoria, Australia

To City of Port Phillip Councillors,

Roadside gardens, like those created by the Heart Gardening Project (THGP), can make significant contributions towards nature conservation in urban areas. These areas make up a huge proportion of public open space (1) and can support threatened flora and fauna in Australian cities (2), especially when managed to provide appropriate resources for nature (3).

THGP has been creating biodiversity sensitive street gardens, which have the potential to enhance access to everyday nature for people in the City of Port Phillip in three crucial ways:

- 1. Street gardens increase the diversity of native flora and fauna in the City of Port Phillip.*
Landscapes that maximise the species diversity and understory diversity of the landscape provide excellent food and shelter resources for urban wildlife, improving the persistence of small native birds, bats and insects (4). Whilst these gardens may seem small, their contribution to urban nature conservation is often equal to that of larger green spaces (5).
- 2. Street gardens create connectivity between people and nature in the City of Port Phillip.*
Roadside gardens create linear corridors and 'stepping stones' of habitat, providing vital pathways across the landscape for urban wildlife and connectivity between larger green spaces. This connectivity makes it easier for animals to find food and mates and maintain large healthy population sizes (2). The mixed vegetation demonstrated in the THGP street gardens helps to maximise this effect (6).
- 3. Street gardens provide multiple amenities in the City of Port Phillip.*
Diverse understory vegetation along streets provides a range of ecosystem service benefits, reducing urban heat and traffic pollution, improving stormwater drainage (7) while also increasing the mental health and wellbeing of residents and creating a greater sense of place and community (8). These benefits were particularly pertinent during COVID lockdowns when these were the spaces most accessible to urban residents (9).

As part of her urban ecology research, Katherine Berthon has witnessed a wide diversity of fauna already benefiting from the work of THGP – over 30 species including native bees, beetles, wasps and other insects. The current proposed guidelines would mean these gardens are at risk of being removed. This would result in the tragic loss of thriving native wildlife from the City of Port Phillip.

Roadside gardens offer an excellent opportunity to make significant gains for both human and non-human residents. However, without street gardening guidelines that support existing projects like THGP and encourage future projects, we risk seeing a city without the bees, birds and bats that bring so much joy. Roadsides provide the perfect opportunity to increase understory and herbaceous vegetation, ensuring we have a city that protects and conserves our native fauna.

Katherine Berthon, Urban Pollinator Ecologist
Professor Sarah Bekessy, Urban Conservation Biologist
Dr Holly Kirk, Urban Spatial Ecologist

Interdisciplinary Conservation Science Research Group
RMIT Centre for Urban Research

ICON Science statement continued:

For more information on the importance of road verges for conservation, please read:

- (1) Marshall, A. J., Grose, M. J., & Williams, N. S. (2019). From little things: More than a third of public green space is road verge. *Urban forestry & urban greening*, 44, 1264-1273.
- (2) New, T. R., Sands, D. P., & Taylor, G. S. (2021). Roles of roadside vegetation in insect conservation in Australia. *Austral Entomology*, 60(1), 128-137.
- (3) Phillips, B. B., Wallace, C., Roberts, B. R., Whitehouse, A. T., Gaston, K. J., Bullock, J. M., ... & Osborne, J. L. (2020). Enhancing road verges to aid pollinator conservation: A review. *Biological Conservation*, 250, 108687.
- (4) Threlfall, C. G., Mata, L., Mackie, J. A., Hahs, A. K., Stork, N. E., Williams, N. S., & Livesley, S. J. (2017). Increasing biodiversity in urban green spaces through simple vegetation interventions. *Journal of applied ecology*, 54(6), 1874-1883.
- (5) Vega, K.A. & Kuffer, C. (2021) Promoting wildflower biodiversity in dense and green cities: The important role of small vegetation patches. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 62, 127-165.
- (6) Ersoy, E., Jorgensen A., Warren, P.H. (2019) Identifying multispecies connectivity corridors and the spatial pattern of the landscape. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 40 308-322.
- (7) Säumel, I., Weber, F., & Kowarik, I. (2016). Toward livable and healthy urban streets: Roadside vegetation provides ecosystem services where people live and move. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 62, 24-33.
- (8) Pauli, N., Mouat, C., Prendergast, K., Chalmer, L., Ramalho, C.E., and Ligtermoet, E. (2020) The social and ecological values of native gardens along streets: A socio-ecological study in the suburbs of Perth. Report for the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub (CAUL), Melbourne, Australia.
- (9) Fischer, L. K., & Gopal, D. (2021). Streetscapes as Surrogate Greenspaces During COVID-19?. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 71.

Dr Nicholas Williams

7th February 2022

Re. City of Port Phillip Nature Strip Guidelines

Dear Councillors,

I write in support of The Heart Gardening Project's request for Council to reconsider the draft Nature Strip Guidelines. Emma Cutting has put a great deal of work and passion into improving the guidelines using an evidenced-based approach. My research group has conducted a number of projects investigating how nature strips can better provide for people and biodiversity and I have discussed how this research can be applied to nature strips in Port Phillip with Emma.

My former PhD student Dr Adrian Marshall investigated the prevalence, social and landscape drivers and effect of verge gardening in Melbourne. In his public summary he concludes:

- *Verge gardening is quite common and it contributes to the presence of native species, adds biomass and creates structural complexity, meaning it helps provide habitat and resources for a range of species.*
- *Gardening in the nature strip encourages more gardening in the nature strip. It's contagious! (this was demonstrated statistically)*
- *The main factor stopping people from gardening more in the nature strip is negative attitudes from councils.*
- *Residents generally understand that gardening in the nature strip contributes to urban sustainability, biodiversity and human health and wellbeing.*
- *Councils have a great opportunity to bring themselves more into line with community attitudes and to embrace gardening in the nature strip.*
- *We need to start reimagining the entire road from property line to property line to create streets that work better both socially and ecologically*

We have also worked with the City of Melbourne on their streetscape biodiversity project developing a plant palette of native species suitable for nature strips and then monitored the biodiversity response to them. The streetscape biodiversity plantings have been very successful and bee and butterfly diversity and abundance increased quickly relative to the control sites.

Given Councils biodiversity and climate change goals and the loss of private green space in our cities, greater uptake of nature strip plantings should be encouraged by council. When this occurs hopefully the term nature strip will no longer be seen as an oxymoron.

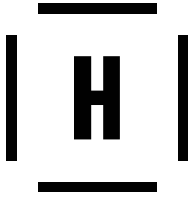
If needed would be happy to discuss the issue with you as required.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr Nicholas Williams
Professor of Urban Ecology and Urban Horticulture

School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences
The University of Melbourne, Burnley Campus
500 Yarra Boulevard, Richmond Victoria 3121 Australia
T: +61 3 9035 6850
Email: nsw@unimelb.edu.au



8/02/2022

"Efforts at mitigating global biodiversity loss have often focused on preserving large, intact natural habitats. However, preserving biodiversity should also be an important goal in the urban environment, especially in highly urbanized areas where little natural habitat remains. Increasingly, research at the city/ county scale as well as at the landscape scale reveals that urban areas can contain relatively high levels of biodiversity."

Promoting and preserving biodiversity in the urban forest
December 2006, Alexis A. Alvey

To whom it may concern,

THE HEART GARDENING PROJECT

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ARCHITECT DIRECTORS VIC:
MARK LOUGHNAN 15032
PETER LEE 13798

I am a Principal and Landscape Architect at Hassell and have over 25 years' experience in the design and delivery of public domain and landscape architecture across Australia and in USA, UK, China and Middle East.

Over the past few years, through my role and Public Realm Design Director for the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation and other similar projects, I have become increasingly interested in, and advocated for the role of planting in our cities streets and places. In particularly the biodiverse benefits this planting brings when compared to lawn or asphalt.

This has led me to work with experts in their field such as –

- Professors John Raynor and Claire Farrell at University of Melbourne,
- Professors James Hitchmough and Nigel Dunnett at University of Sheffield, UK
- Thomas Raynor and Claudia West – USA

It has also led me Emma Cutting and The Heart Gardening Project.

Through our work as Landscape Architects, we work within, and have been responsible for numerous Landscape Strategies and Policies. These projects such as Sydney's Green Grid are aspirational and important pieces of work, however this often a disconnect between these far reaching pieces of work and the implementation of urban greening. Through the rigours of cost cutting, traffic engineering, CPTED, plant availability, construction etc, the quantum of biodiverse planting is severely compromised.

Our urban landscapes are often dominated by mono-cultures of single species, lawns and hedges, many being maintained by maintenance practices that have not evolved in decades. These mono-cultures have little resilience to climate and other changes, they are not regenerative and are limited in biodiversity.

Projects such as The High Line, or Sheffield's Grey to Green involve years of testing, and a coordinated approach that stitches together academia, the nursery industry, the gardening industry, local authorities and landscape architects, and we would see the aspiration of The Heart Gardening Project to be as important as these projects.

We fully support the proposals that Emma has so comprehensively addressed in relation to the proposed draft Nature Strip Guidelines, and hope that the issues can be



resolved amicably in order for this important work for Melbourne, and an important case study for the global issues of urban biodiversity, to continue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Hazelwood'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'H'.

Jon Hazelwood
Principal

Mobile 0428 738612
Email jhazelwood@hassellstudio.com

Susie Quinton



8/02/2022

*"We have the eyes of an artist.
We have the brains of scientists.
We have the heart of a poet.
We have the wisdom of philosophers.*

"We are landscape architects"

Mr Fumiaki Takano, 1943-2021.

To whom it may concern,

THE HEART GARDENING PROJECT & THE CONTRIBUTION TO STREET GARDENING WITHIN THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP.

My name is Susie Quinton and as an Associate Landscape Architect and avid garden and plant lover at Hassell, I write to you today to provide a letter of support for the excruciatingly detailed response and review of the Draft NSGs Emma Cutting has developed.

Through my decade of experience working in practice, I have worked across many fields and stages of design within and across Australia – and no other brings me more joy and heartfelt impact than those that directly engage with and benefit the community that reside within them. Streetscapes, public parks and reserves, gardens to name a few provide me the passion and engagement to carry on each day. More so, this experience and project diversity leads me to meet exceptional people in the world such as Emma Cutting, the founder of the Heart Gardening Project and leader of the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor Project.

I have witnessed firsthand the beautiful connections being developed as a result of the street gardening network within the CoPP. No longer are people averting their gaze, looking elsewhere whilst walking along the street but are in fact connecting and communicating with their neighbours, community members and fellow garden lovers. Stopping to chat, engaging in conversation, sharing stories and proudly discussing their achievements and next goals has been wondrous to experience. Seeking a connection to the earth is paramount and providing a guided avenue to do so can foster both these extremely positive community connections, but also between the community and council.

As a designer, I completely appreciate the need and desire to ensure risk is mitigated and safety is upheld for both the existing and proposed trees & understorey planting, staff providing maintenance efforts and the community members themselves, as well as ensuring a continuity of character is provided across the CoPP. To this end - Education, guidelines and measures are important – CoPP can provide this guidance through a revised set of guidelines to ensure all measures are worked within, whilst still providing a degree of creativity to those community members so desperate to seek it.

The opportunity to capitalise on the benefits of community street gardens & verge plantings in providing community and social benefit, reduce continued maintenance costs for council as well as the boundless benefits to sustainability, biodiversity and pollinator protection is an opportunity not to be lost.

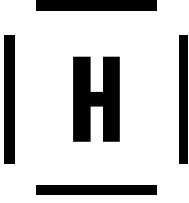
As an experienced landscape architect, I, with the support of Hassell, provide support for The Heart Gardening Project's response to the 2021 City of Port Phillip draft Nature

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Strip Guidelines and encourage a review that incorporates community member, Traditional Owner and subject matter expert engagement to develop a revised set of guidelines. We hope this opportunity can be explored for a better outcome for the CoPP, its community and its context.

Should we be of assistance to the further development of these guidelines, in a development or review capacity – please do not hesitate to be in touch. We would welcome the opportunity to continue this work in support of CoPP & The Heart Gardening Project.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susie Quinton'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S' and a long, sweeping tail.

Susie Quinton
Associate

Email squinton@hassellstudio.com

Dr Laura Mumaw

Dear Councillors,

Emma is to be congratulated on the work she has done promoting and supporting urban greening, on both private and public patches of land.

My research on wildlife gardening has demonstrated the importance and value of improving habitat for biodiversity on residential land - from nature strips to front and back gardens. When residents get involved in nature stewardship, there are benefits for their wellbeing and sense of purpose, as well as connections to fellow residents and the land and its flora and fauna.

I commend the principles Emma has set out in her submission, particularly to improve the liveability, vibrancy, sustainability, and biodiversity of local urban neighbourhoods. The handling of nature strips is a contested and challenging issue. I believe Emma's suggestion of developing workable approaches in consultation with the community and subject matter experts is an excellent one that can reap rewards for council and community, including the development of positive long-term relationships working together towards a greener city.

Regards,

Dr. Laura Mumaw
Research Associate, School of Global, Urban and Social Studies
RMIT University

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6164-8482>

[Centre for Urban Research RMIT profile](#)
[Gardens for Wildlife Victoria](#)
[Linkedin Profile](#)
[Google Scholar profile](#)

Recent papers:

[A framework for catalysing the rapid scaling of urban biodiversity stewardship programs](#) *Journal of Environmental Management*
[Towards good governance of urban greening: insights from four initiatives in Melbourne, Australia](#) *Australian Geographer*
[Assessing and strengthening community capacity building in urban biodiversity conservation programs](#) *Cities and the Environment*
[From green spaces to vital places: connection and expression in urban greening](#) *Australian Geographer*
[Transforming urban gardeners into land stewards](#) *Journal of Environmental Psychology*
[Why politics and context matter in conservation policy.](#) *Global Policy*

Jock Gilbert



Re: Letter of support, Heart Gardening Project submission

Jock Gilbert
Program Manager, Bachelor of Landscape Architectural Design
Lecturer, Landscape Architecture programs
School of Architecture and Urban Design
RMIT University

Registered Landscape Architect, AILA
Co-chair, School of Architecture + Urban Design Reconciliation Action Committee
Email: jock.gilbert@rmit.edu.au

Landscape architectural design at RMIT is animated by the need for landscape architecture to address the critical issues currently facing contemporary Australian society – both urban and regional – through teaching, research and community engagement. These issues include biodiversity loss, climate change, reconciliation, water quality and public open space availability and access. Each of these issues impinges on questions of liveability, access to and quality of the public realm, both now and into the future.

As such, I fully support and endorse The Heart Gardening Project's response to the 2021 City of Port Phillip draft Nature Strip Guidelines and support the objectives described in the submission and the proposition that new NSGs should be developed in consultation with the community and subject matter experts with attention to the following key objectives:

- Enhance neighbourhood amenity and placemaking
- Make positive impacts on the environment and limit CoPP impact on climate change
- Ensure safety for all residents and visitors in CoPP
- Improve Council decision making and enforcement relating to Street Gardens

I believe that attention to the above objectives should facilitate a range of positive outcomes across scales which provide social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits whilst clearly addressing the larger issues outlined above in relation to public space and amenity.

Further to this, I fully support the broader Heart Gardening Project and its place-enhancing aims and look forward to working with Emma in advancing this important work in mutually beneficial ways.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jock Gilbert".

Jock Gilbert, 07/02/2022

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Jen Lynch

RMIT Classification: Trusted

8, February 2022

To the City of Port Phillip Councillors,

As a landscape architecture researcher, I believe that Emma has achieved something remarkable through the Heart Gardening Project—a public space designed and actively maintained by members of Port Phillip community and which, through the sum of their efforts and Emma’s leadership, creates a vast and unique public garden, connecting and providing benefits to the Council’s human and non-human residents alike. An outcome with this level of vibrancy, community investment and connectivity is a rare achievement and it would be a tragic outcome should the gardens and the value generated through them be removed.

Landscape architects understand that successful public spaces create a balance across a range of community interests and technical requirements. The guidelines, as Emma has demonstrated in her research, require a further degree of input, thinking and nuance to achieve a more effective balance. We also know that successful public spaces require the input and perspective of many. This includes specialists as well as a full cross-section of the local community, including the First Nations community. This is a large part of why the Heart Gardening Project is so successful—Emma’s vast amount of research, thinking and coordination has drawn a wide range of perspectives and expertise into the project.

A collaboration between Council and the Heart Gardening Project could both advance the guidelines and build on the incredible work that’s taken form in the streets of Port Philip Council.

Kind regards,

Jen Lynch

Lecturer (Landscape Architecture)

School of Architecture and Urban Design

RMIT University

RLA, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

Rachael Ashton

Dear Councillors,

Our city has been growing quickly due to its liveability but there are opportunities to improve our most valuable public assets – our streets.

Our streets need to respond to population and climate change. Around the world, city investment is moving away from highways and sprawl to creating places and great streets – Street gardening is a critical element of great streets. The role of design is shifting from building bigger roads to making streets that support quality places and the way people want to live in healthy and thriving environments.

Most people in Victoria live in urban environments - but our most precious public spaces in cities are currently designed without consideration for the environment and the future needs of all users. Streets must be designed to better balance the needs of more people as we work towards both our road safety goals and our climate change goals and targets.

Our streets need to include bio-diversity to ensure tolerance for today's climate and resilience for future change.

Cities face a decision every time they invest in infrastructure: to cater to cars, or to grow sustainably, promoting healthy neighbourhoods with options for cool and easy access. These are public decisions that affect our entire city, and— through their impact on climate — the entire world.

Our precious public spaces – our streets should include green elements beyond tree canopy, such as swales, rain gardens and kerb extensions to promote infrastructure that is durable and adaptable for our changing climate. Street gardening is an incredible opportunity to improve not only people's health and well being but also the economic vibrancy of our city.

Kind regards,

Rachael Ashton

**Transport and Place Planner, Road Safety and Movement and Place Expert
Contributor to the National Road Safety Strategy and the Infrastructure Australia
Strategy Project Manager of the Movement and Place Guide for Urban Roads and
Streets, Department of Transport 2021**

Dr Emma Jackson

To City of Port Phillip Councillors and Peter Smith,

The wide streets and footpaths in the Port Phillip area are unique. It took until 1890 Melbourne to have a civic sewerage system and we were nicknamed 'Smellbourne'. Prior to this the streets in the Port Melbourne, Albert Park, and South Melbourne areas were deliberately planned and built to be extra wide to facilitate the movement of stench from the tanneries and dirty industry that dominated the water's edge. It was also a health driven initiative as it was thought that most disease was airborne. The particularities of this legacy leave us in a very fortuitous urban situation in 2022 where we have a uniquely high ratio of roadside/public space per square metre of private property. To date we have not capitalised on the urban advantage this could offer our area. We are still in the throes of European urban planning. If we could capture this opportunity and create indigenous gardens by our street side, we could be national leaders in what it looks like to have a more connected relationship with the ground we build and live on. It would be a completely innovative and new model; living in a direct relationship with native parkland.

We know there is community interest and engagement, this has been evidenced by the hard work of Emma Cutting and The Heart Gardening Project. With Council support, this could be an incredible opportunity.

Dr Emma Jackson

Lecturer RMIT Architecture and Urban Design

Director, Ground Under Repair

Winner 2021 Tapestry Design Prize for Architects, Australian Tapestry Workshop.

Oliver Bruce



To whom it may concern,

I am a local resident and a local real estate agent / auctioneer. I was born in The City of Port Phillip, have resided here for all but 3 years of 45 years. I have been selling real estate in CoPP for 20 years.

As a local real estate agent, I have had a number of sales in South Melbourne and in particular, the streets around Napier, Cobden, Clarendon Place where street gardens are prominent.

I must say that I have found the street gardens a great innovation which have improved the streetscape and liveability of the area.

Furthermore, I want to point out that the buying public have also commented on the streetscape where street gardens are prominent.

It is my strong opinion that these gardens soften the concrete jungle of inner city living and in turn have created a 'wow' factor from the buying public. As such, I believe that these gardens increase the street appeal and hence the value of property.

I have heard only a few negative comments about these gardens and from what I could ascertain, any negative comments around them are for unfounded reasons. The positives far out way the negatives.

The other obvious plus of these gardens are the environment improvement of the flora and the fauna. This is obvious so I don't need to share my views here.

I hope that the council and its members don't waste valuable time, money and resources trying to change the ability for its residents to create green space and street gardens. To eliminate these gardens would be a step backwards on many fronts. Even the mere suggestion is laughable.

I am happy to be contacted further to discuss on this matter.

Oliver

Oliver Bruce

Director

P 03 8564 2717 **M** 0409 856 599 **W** bruce-oliver.com **f** **@** **in**
Port Phillip Level 1, 101 Dundas Place, Albert Park

[Market Update Report](#)

Jeremy Hines



Dear Councillors and Peter Smith,

The street garden out the front on The Relief Unit 1 cafe has changed the whole space outside our cafe. It was tarmac and dirt and as soon as the garden went in, it gave a nice boundary to the space. It has also helped the health of the tree, gives my staff something green and settled to look at through the day and customers always comment on it and enjoy sitting around it. Dogs go to the toilet on it but that is understandable as it is the only green unsealed space for hundreds of metres around. We re-use the excess water from customers' drinks on the garden- so we aren't wasting water, which helps the garden, which helps the tree, which helps the people in the area. Business-wise, **I definitely believe it has increased revenue for the cafe** which, in these times, we welcome with open arms.

Jeremy Hines, The Relief Unit cafes
South Melbourne and Port Melbourne
246 Park St
144 Ferrars St
208 Ingles St

Anna Fairbank

Co-director, Fairbank and Lau P/L Architecture and Urban Design.

PhD candidate Architecture and Urban Design, RMIT.

Resident, business and property owner, South Melbourne.

info@annafairbank.com + 61 0488618100

The Heart Gardening Project letter of support 08.02.2022

We see this project as a key opportunity to improve the living quality in the South Melbourne precinct. I have lived in the area for 15 years, with other colleagues and neighbours who have committed to the area for over 30 years as both business owners and residents. We actively support community initiatives and voluntary efforts for the vital contribution to experience of place.

As we understand, Victorian Government *Wellness for all Victorians* and *21st Century Cities* represent binding concepts adopted in contemporary cities liveability policies. These are headlines intending the integration of neighbourhood quality and importantly, reducing health impacts and cost. People are facing new challenges, no less COVID, and can no longer rely on static policies that do not cater to rapid shifts and need for restorative places. People generate vibrancy, and do the work with greening, improving biodiversity, actions which support fundamental principle civic value and amenity, realty property and overall precinct value.

From Albert Park Lake to the M1, development, population growth and activity are controlled by a variety of overlays, and this gives the precincts unique formal characteristics and ambience. But while we live and work live in an area considered unique for the density, regeneration of industrial fabric, low scale fine grain pedestrian streets and lanes, South Melbourne streets are also largely bitumen tarmac, get hot, and in parts lack the intimate proximity of local vegetation texture altogether. The compact heritage forms and narrow streets and laneways are spatially limited in compared to design guide standards: no matter how narrow, these are ever vital for relief and social interaction, even to the extent of working with planters, and open roller door gathering.

The Heart Gardening Project has raised a need for support and co-ordination with Council. Where concerns for kerbs, view lines, car access mooted, we imagine these are manageable by design to suit the context at hand. By example, where car access is cited as being impeded by planting, car spacing still works either side of pre-existing tree patches in the, and as per other plantings precinct wide, workable without detriment to cars pedestrians or trees; and managed by residents as an ongoing concern. Where plantings bring other visitor risk, the history of streetscape resident furnishing and plantings from St Kilda to Port Melbourne shows otherwise. Policy guidelines are most effective when workshopped and tooled to support visionary programs like this. Concerns of those against that can be integrated in this type of project.

As coincident programs are concerned, the Shrine to Bay example program is as we understand is regarded a grander community-initiated and funded project convened by DELWP. *The Heart Garden Gardening Project* is no lesser a gesture except in a relatively understated and, in parts neglected and underutilised unique local setting. It seems unacceptable to assume plantings would be removed across the entire Port Phillip precincts with the excellent mix of casual and formal plantings in existence; retrogressive to say the least at a time when cities locally and globally are going the other way.

This initiative follows volunteer improvement and importantly, corresponds with globally recognised health and environment “urban acupuncture” based in domestic agency. The concept helps solve environmental and biodiversity degradation, absorb heat, and preserve good quality spaces at the micro level. Combined with reducing vehicular speeds, this ensures high quality living space and reflects best practice. Other cities, particularly in NSW, and overseas in UK, EU and USA actively encourage local interventions which offer significant positive effect on our surroundings.

Moving on to a wider precinct comment, Capital City presents a new problematic where South Melbourne is caught between MCC, PPC and state development interests. Where City of Melbourne has a clear tree and pollinator program, state planning documents outline 2018 maximised build zones and small green "confetti" pockets – a concept which is fragmentary and sublimated as development contribution.

Southbank has 1% of open space by recent account, and firstly, dominates with development at the M1 and set to advance west into Montague with increased overshadowing, and secondly, this has split north-south integrations. A key development claiming contribution, a dog park and basketball pocket barely moving the margin but making the declarative point. Wellbeing is not a brand.

Key spaces from Albert Park to Botanical Gardens are spaces also under pressure - high impact activity affects these zones - increasing high incidents of low fly aviation, and major events – at least then we need to distinguish domestic intimate living contexts and management profile. Albert Park, as urban park, may cater for anticipated Capital City and surrounds, broad scale street vegetation networks ought not be overlooked. The project can draw on South Melbourne’s historic legacy, main roads and quiet zones behind. This builds on the willingly planted and self-managed effort to the extent that community temperament, biodiversity including pollinator activity, and low fly bird populations, along with the associated aural and visual quality, have improved life on the ground.

The question is what of the Council vision and support framework? What innovative and subtle programs can balance the booming streamlined development approvals as *The Heart Gardening Project*?

One assumes local sustainable policy is aligned with health and environment liveability principles and indices and that authorities continue to back proactive domestic initiatives under 21st Century expectations. *The Heart Gardening Project* represents such opportunity, carrying numerous soft urban advantages that can be accommodated and ought to be promoted, and drive Council awards. South Melbourne needs unique solutions and seeing a work stretch across the precinct is exciting.

We support this initiative.

Anna Fairbank on behalf of Ann Lau, Donald Williams Lisa Dooley South Melbourne Resident Representatives.

BACKGROUND

Anna Fairbank (who has worked in senior roles at Denton Corker Marshall and Hassell prior venturing on with independent practice) and Ann Lau (also a director of Hayball Architects), are experienced with local and international, small, and large design engagements which provides the insight as to why urban initiatives matter.



8th of February 2022

Re: The Heart Gardening Project's response to the 2021 City of Port Phillip draft Nature Strip Guidelines

To whom it may concern:

Gardens for Wildlife Victoria supports efforts to green our cities and provide habitat for our native fauna.

We believe best outcomes are achieved when the community and government authorities co-design and co-deliver projects from inception.

Both public and private spaces have a role in maintaining biodiversity and even small spaces play a part.

Ricardo Simao

Board Member
Gardens for Wildlife Victoria
e: Ricardo@gardensforwildlifevictoria.com
m: 0438 012 745

(on behalf of the Gardens for Wildlife Victoria Board)



Rotarians for BEES



An Initiative of the Rotary Club of Canterbury

Rotarians for Bees would like to respectfully support this submission by Emma Cutting to the City of Port Phillip.

Rotarians for Bees is an organisation of Rotarians and others who work with Governments at all levels, industry partners, and the beekeeping industry to support programs and initiatives aimed at the present and future wellbeing of bees and other pollinators. Now in our fourth year, we have worked very successfully with our industry partners to educate children and families about the importance of bees and pollination to our food chain and eco system which is under threat for various reasons. The greatest of these is the reduction and sometimes complete absence of habitat, particularly in urban settings.

Rotarians for Bees worldwide has recently added Environment and Sustainability as its seventh Area of Focus globally and this has been embraced by all Rotary clubs and Districts through the international arm called ESRAG (Environment and Sustainability Rotary Action Group).

Rotarians for Bees have been closely involved with Emma Cutting for two years now through The Heart of the City Project and the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor within City of Port Phillip and City of Melbourne municipalities. The work being undertaken by Emma and the volunteers (including Rotarians) is, in our opinion, a perfect example of what positive outcomes can be achieved by local communities who are proud of where they live and want to improve it for present and future families and generations. The significance for bees and pollinators is of paramount importance to us and all involved.

Rotarians for Bees would like to add our support to this submission for your consideration. We acknowledge the need for regulation guidelines particularly related to safety and logistical activities. However, it would be our hope that collaboration and conciliation of the relevant parties, including residents, could reconsider the initial document and find a middle ground supported by all concerned. If welcomed by Council, we would be pleased to have a Rotarian representative in those collaborative discussions.

Thank you for considering these comments,

John Caskill, Chair of Rotarians for Bees.

77444

mresources.com.au

rotariansforbees.org



Beeinventive Pty Ltd
PO Box 303
Bangalow, NSW 2479

8th February 2022

Dear Mayor Marcus Pearl and the Council of the City of Port Phillip,

This letter is to indicate Beeinventive's wholehearted support for The Heart Gardening Project's submission with regard to the City of Port Phillip draft Nature Strip Guidelines.

Beeinventive Pty Ltd (ACN 161 952 941) is the exclusive worldwide licensee of the Flow® brand, and Flow® technology including Flow Hives and Flow Frames, having supplied over 100,000 customers worldwide since our launch in 2015.

We have established partnerships with numerous organisations and initiatives around the globe that are focused on promoting pollinator health. Among them is The Heart Gardening Project, and we are very proud to support their important work.

Street gardens provide forage for pollinators, preserve biodiversity, sequester carbon, mitigate stormwater flooding risk, and are a source of vibrancy and beauty for local communities. Our planet is currently at the start of the sixth mass extinction event in its history; and with crucial insect populations in drastic decline worldwide, the need to protect their food sources and habitat has never been more imperative.

If you require any further input, please feel free to get in touch with me by phone or email using the contact details below.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Niall Fahy", written over a horizontal line.

Niall Fahy
Strategy and Key Projects Manager

+61 (0)403 611 296
niall@honeyfow.com

Recommendations and Examples of Best Practice

Supporting Document 2



Supporting Document 2- Recommendations and Examples of Best Practice



2-1- NSGs in Melbourne/Australia that can be used as inspiration

2-2- Further examples of amazing urban green spaces that have been/are being created

2-3- Further examples of cities and councils getting on board with street gardening

2-4- Five ideas for CoPP to implement

2-5- Self-assessment checklist for gardening on your nature strip!
(based on City of Sydney's NSGs)

2-6- Five types of nature strips in the City of Port Phillip
(comparing CoPP draft NSGs to revised NSGs)

2-1 Some recommended NSGs in Melbourne/ Australia

Hobsons Bay, VIC

<https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Services/Trees-Nature-Strips/Nature-strip-landscaping-guidelines>

- These are a great example of an easy, clear one-pager
- Particularly notable is the one sentence on soil contamination, simply informing and recommending a soil test before planting edibles
- A nursery is recommended
- Clear, simple planting requirements (300mm height around driveways, 500mm height everywhere else and some things to keep in mind)

Cockburn, WA

<https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Environment-and-Waste/Street-Trees-and-Verges/Verge-Improvement-Guideline#:~:text=The%20City%20recommends%20non%20Irrigated,their%20website%20for%20full%20details.&text=Prior%20permission%20from%20the%20City,than%2025%25%20of%20your%20verge>

[Guideline#:~:text=The%20City%20recommends%20non%20Irrigated,their%20website%20for%20full%20details.&text=Prior%20permission%20from%20the%20City,than%2025%25%20of%20your%20verge](https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/Environment-and-Waste/Street-Trees-and-Verges/Verge-Improvement-Guideline#:~:text=The%20City%20recommends%20non%20Irrigated,their%20website%20for%20full%20details.&text=Prior%20permission%20from%20the%20City,than%2025%25%20of%20your%20verge)

- This is one of the best set of nature strip guidelines I have read
- Clear, informative, enabling, encouraging, all aspects have been covered
- There are suggested designs that cover all types of 'verges'
- The community is empowered but council approval is required to put in swings etc
- There are grants available
- Understandable and accessible tips have been included

Vincent, WA

<https://www.vincent.wa.gov.au/residents/environment/environmental-sustainability/news-events/adopt-a-verge/waterwise-verge-guide.aspx>

- These guidelines are very free and extremely encouraging
- They are focussed on cooling, saving water and lowering maintenance, all of which native gardens do better than grass
- The council see that it is vital to plant out their nature strips
- There is no height restriction of plants
- They have an Adopt A Verge Program where Council helps residents prepare the verge for a garden and helps with a plant subsidy

Bayside, VIC

<https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/services/planning-and-building/how-plant-your-nature-strip>

- Apart from the permit needed, these guidelines are great- simple, usable, clear and realistic
- A nursery is recommended
- The planting requirements are usable (500mm from kerb, ground covers, 9m from driveway and plant height is 600mm)

Moreland, VIC

<https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/globalassets/website-moreland/areas/living-moreland/parking-roads/nature-strips/moreland-nature-strip-guidelines.pdf>

- This one is clear and simple
- There are 2 diagrams - one with the options that don't require a permit, one with the options that require a free permit
- Soil testing information is in the document
- This one offers information on site preparation and where to get free mulch
- Residents can go on a no spray register
- Disclaimer around utilities and access

City of Sydney, NSW

<https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-activities-initiatives/footpath-gardening>

- Great tone
- Clear community facing documents- separate ones for planters and street gardens
- Clear policy
- Plenty of freedom for residents
- Option for tarmac removal

2-2 Further examples of amazing urban green spaces that have been/are being created

Grey to Green- Sheffield, UK
<https://www.greytogreen.org.uk>

The High Line- New York
<https://www.thehighline.org>

ReNature- Paris
<https://renature-project.eu/compendium/86Paris>

Bee-City- Utrecht, Netherlands
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/27/bee-population-steady-dutch-cities-thanks-to-pollinator-strategy>

Woonerf- Netherlands

Dutch urban planning concept which has been around since the 1960s. Woonerf means “living street” and they put emphasis on the overall quality of life, rather than the speed of it - the spaces prioritise the pedestrian over the traffic in residential areas. One characteristic feature of Woonerf is landscaping. Through community gardens, plant boxes and thriving city trees throughout the area, people can experience optimal health and community benefits when travelling through their local city streets.

2-3 Further examples of cities and councils getting on board with street gardening

Urban farming- Los Angeles

In 2013, a law was changed to allow residents to grow food on their nature strip.
<https://blog.ted.com/no-more-citations-for-curb-side-veggies-in-los-angeles/>
<https://ronfinley.com>

Garden Street Program- City of Vancouver

Hundreds of gardeners caring for planted traffic circles and street corners across Vancouver.
<https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/green-streets-program.aspx>

Brunswick Communities for Nature- Moreland council

Creating gardens on nature strips for biodiversity.

Brian Coffey, Judy Bush, Laura Mumaw, Lisa de Kleyn, Casey Furlong & Raven Cretney (2020)
Towards good governance of urban greening: insights from four initiatives in Melbourne, Australia,
Australian Geographer, 51:2, 189-204, DOI: 10.1080/00049182.2019.1708552
<https://brunswickc4n.wordpress.com>

Life on the Verge- Devon Country Council

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/environment/wildlife/managing-verges-for-wildlife>

Wildflower verges- Rotherham, UK

Councils planting wildflowers and only mowing occasionally has saved council tens of thousands of pounds.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-48772448>

2-4 Five ideas for CoPP to implement

Plant Subsidy Scheme (inspired by Vincent Council, WA)

- This is a plant sale once a year for a week in prime planting season
- Council buy 3000 plants at wholesale prices (\$2)
- Council sell selected indigenous plants for \$1
- Up to 20 per person
- For use on your nature strip
- For plants that is a program worth \$6000
- Helping 150 locals with their street gardens
- To be run with/by Bili Indigenous Nursery (they are happy to find the space)

Nature Strip Rebate (inspired by Cockburn Council, WA)

- Application Form to be filled out (council will need to see receipts)
- Depending on the size of your nature strip garden you may get a rebate between \$100-\$500 or up to 50% of the materials
- Your nature strip garden will need to be within nature strip guidelines

Adopt A Verge (inspired by Vincent Council, WA)

- Application Form
- Council will prepare your nature strip for planting
- Council will do a certain number per year
- You will receive a token for Plant Subsidy Scheme of 20 plants
- Planting needs to have started within 6 weeks of preparation finishing

Extra Equipment Application Form (inspired by Cockburn Council, WA)

- If you would like to put play equipment or signs into your nature strip please fill out this application form here and council will try to help where ever we can
- Includes bee hotels, nest boxes and microbat boxes

Green is the New Black! (Innovation! City of Sydney do offer this service but there is no official title or program)

If you would like your nature strip widened, your tarmac removed to create a nature strip or your tree square widened council are taking applications.

Taking up tarmac will create:

- More greening opportunities for community and biodiversity to enjoy
- A cooler city
- The opportunity to conserve water run off
- A more beautiful and liveable city

Fill out the application form here (insert CoPP details)

2-5 Self-assessment checklist Gardening on your nature strip! (based on City of Sydney's NSGs)

We're thrilled that you are interested in greening and improving your nature strip and your community. Street gardening has so many benefits including:

- **Meeting your neighbours**
- **Addressing climate change**
- **Increasing biodiversity and habitat**
- **Connecting with your community**
- **Making a part of your city beautiful**

Before you get started, we ask that you fill in this simple checklist ensuring you answer all questions relevant to your project. We want to make sure you keep your footpath accessible to all users and your project will be well-maintained and meet City guidelines.

If you can't answer 'yes' or 'NA' to all the questions in the checklist, talk to one of our officers about your project and they can offer advice on how to make it work.

Contact them here (insert CoPP details)

Tips before you start

- It is recommended to use native/indigenous or water-wise plants. Please see list of recommended indigenous plants [here](#).
- Please use organic products and avoid using any 'icides.
- Consider watering by hand with collected rainwater or recycled water (irrigation systems are not permitted)
- Try mulch to retain soil moisture
- Under and around trees please be very gentle and read the tips on [How to Plant Under Trees to Help Them here](#)
- As footpath nature strip gardens are on public footways, the City cannot take responsibility for any damage to gardens or their contents.
- You are responsible for maintaining your garden and keeping it safe, clean, healthy and attractive; City officers may issue clean-up notices to residents or businesses who fail to maintain verge gardens in a safe and satisfactory condition.
- Stay sunsafe while you garden.
- Contact Dial Before You Dig to help locate any underground services on 1100.com.au or call 1100. Please see a [guide for how to use DBYD here](#).
- You can get more information from City of Port Phillip [here](#) (insert link here)

Completing the checklist

Make sure you answer 'yes' to all relevant points in the checklist – you can contact us if you have questions or queries.

Once completed send your checklist via:

Email:

Post:

In person:

Phone: To speak to someone about your project call...

Checklist for my garden

01/ Location of proposed footpath garden/planter box

01.01 / I have read the policy document that goes along with this list and found the guidelines that are applicable to the type of nature strip I have.

01.02 / The footpath nature strip on which I will garden is not a raingarden. A raingarden is a water saving garden designed specifically to capture and filter storm water. Please contact the City of Port Phillip on 9265 9333 if you are uncertain.

01.03 / The nature strip on which I will garden is located on the public footpath outside my property.

Note – If you have a tree square out the front or would like more tarmac removed to do more gardening please submit a request here as a part of the Green is the New Black Initiative

02/ Gardening on the footpath nature strip

02.01 / My footpath nature strip garden will not include raised edges such as bricks and fences.

02.02 / My footpath nature strip garden will not have stakes, guide wires or protrusions which may cause a hazard to users of the footpath and road. It will not have spiky or tall vegetation which may block sight lines or impede people using the footpath, especially for pedestrians who are blind or have low vision.

02.03 / All planting will be carried out by hand with no excavation deeper than 30cm. Mechanised tools and equipment will not be used and care will be taken around drain pipes.

02.04 / I have contacted Dial Before You Dig and have identified any underground services.

02.05 / My garden will not result in the planting, pruning or removal of trees.

02.06 / As I realise that trees are very important to our city, I will make sure I plant under and around trees using the guidelines provided. I will not cut, damage or remove tree roots to facilitate planting.

02.07 / My garden will have access for bins to go out and access around utilities will be left.

02.08 / My planter box has been built, positioned and planted out following the policy.

03/ Maintenance

03.01 / My footpath nature strip garden will be maintained to ensure it is safe, healthy, tidy, and attractive. It will avoid the use of spiky or tall vegetation which may block sight lines or impede people using the footpath, especially for pedestrians who are blind or have low vision.

03.02 / I will ensure my gardening activities will not disturb users of the footpath ie tools, materials and equipment will not encroach onto the public footpath.

03.03 / My garden will not allow run-off of materials such as water, soil, mulch or debris onto the footpath, road or into drains.

03/04/ I understand that I need to carry out all maintenance on my planter box and make sure it is visible in line with the policy.

04/ Speak with your neighbours

04.01 / Owners/Occupants of neighbouring properties have agreed to this footpath garden.

04.02 / The body corporate have agreed to the footpath garden.

05/ Declaration

I have completed the above checklist accurately and honestly, and confirm that the nature strip garden/planter box meets the requirements of this Policy.

Name:

Address of property:

Signature:

Date:

Insurance note

The City of Port Phillip will extend coverage under its liability insurance program to claims for injury or property damage arising out of footpath gardens, provided that they fully comply with the Footpath Gardening Policy and associated checklists. In addition to cover for the physical structures, the City will also extend its insurance cover to residents and community groups for any community gardening activities undertaken by them in compliant gardens.

Privacy Note

The purpose for which this information is being collected is for the City keep on record the completed checklists from residents or business owners who want to set up a footpath garden.

2-6- Five types of nature strips in the City of Port Phillip (comparing CoPP draft NSGs to revised NSGs)

Type 1- The whole space from house boundary to kerb is tarmac/concrete

CoPP Draft Document

Street garden

- Nothing allowed

Planter box

- Raised planter box can be created on spaces *at least* 3.1m wide minimum, being 1m from kerb, 1.5m from footpath and not more than 600mmW x 1mH (including plants) x 1.8mL

Proposed NSGs

Street garden

- Residents can apply to take up tarmac to create a nature strip with the Green is the New Black innovation
- Applicable tree square/nature strip guidelines then apply
- No spraying can be done on request

Planter Box

- Raised planter box (500mm-1mH) can be created on these spaces leaving 1.5m width for foot traffic on wide spaces and 1m width for foot traffic on narrow spaces



Type 2- Tree squares - wide and narrow streets

CoPP Draft Document

Street garden

- Gardens in pictures below not compliant- to be 'refurbished' ie removed

Planter box

- Raised planter box can be created on footpaths *at least* 3.1m wide, being 1m from kerb, leaving 1.5m for footpath and not bigger than 600mm W x 1mH (including plants) x 1.8m L

Proposed NSGs

Street garden

- Residents can apply to take up tarmac with the Green is the New Black innovation
- Planting under trees can happen if Planting Around Tree Guidelines are followed
- Frame can be built if certain guidelines are followed (or council build it)
- Removable frame around tree trunk recommended to help prevent build up of soil around tree
- No spraying can be done on request

Planter box

- Raised planter box (500mm-1m high) can be created on footpaths in line with the tree squares



Type 3- Nature strips 1 metre wide or less

CoPP Draft Document

Street garden

- Nothing allowed

Planter Box

- Nothing Allowed

Proposed NSGs

Street garden

- Residents can apply to take up tarmac with the More Green Less Black initiative
- When planting under trees use the Planting Around Tree Guidelines
- Plantings can be up to 500mm high
- Keep a 500mm set back from driveways
- Set backs are to be planted with ground covers
- Indigenous plants preferred
- Leave space for bins, general access and utilities
- Keep soil at same level as footpath (unless you have a planter box)
- No spraying can be done on request

Planter box

- Planter box (500mm-1m high) can be created on nature strip- sit it back from the footpath as much as possible



Type 4- Nature strips 1-4 metres wide

CoPP draft document

Street garden

- The vast majority of this land could not be planted on due to clearance areas (1.5m radius around utilities, 1m from kerb, 1m from driveway, 1.5 radius around small trees, 2.5m radius around large trees)

Planter box

- Planter box can be created on footpaths *at least* 3.1m wide, being 1m from kerb, leaving 1.5m for footpath and not bigger than 600mmW x 1mH (including plants) x 1.8mL



Proposed NSGs

Street garden

- Residents can apply to take up tarmac with the Green is the New Black innovation
- When planting under trees use Planting Around Tree Guidelines
- 300mm setback from foot path (already in current NSGs)
- 500mm set back from kerb (already in current NSGs)
- 500mm set back from driveways
- All set backs can be planted with ground covers
- Can plant up to 800mm high except near intersections
- Intersections require normal set backs as above + 9 metres of plantings no more than 500mm high
- Indigenous plants preferred
- Leave space for bins, general access and utilities
- No spraying can be done on request



Planter box

- Planter box (500mm-1m H) can be created on nature strip 300mm from footpath

Type 5- Nature strips 4+ metres wide

CoPP draft document

Street garden

- The vast majority of this land could not be planted on due to clearance areas (1.5m radius around utilities, 1m from kerb, 1m from driveway, 1.5 radius around small trees, 2.5m radius around large trees)

Planter box

- Planter box can be created on footpaths at least 3.1m wide, being 1m from kerb, leaving 1.5m for footpath and not bigger than 600mmW x 1mH (including plants) x 1.8mL

Proposed NSGs

Street garden

- Residents can apply to take up tarmac with the Green is the New Black innovation
- When planting under trees use Planting Around Tree Guidelines
- 300mm setback from foot path (already in current NSGs)
- 500mm set back from kerb (already in current NSGs)
- 500mm set back from driveways
- All set backs can be planted with ground covers
- Can plant up to 800mm high except near intersections
- Intersections require normal set backs as above + 9 metres of plantings no more than 500mm high
- Indigenous plants preferred
- Leave space for bins, general access and utilities
- No spraying can be done on request

Planter box

- Planter box (500mm-1m H) can be created on nature strip 300mm from footpath



Tree Safety

Supporting Document 3



Supporting Document 3- Tree Safety



3-1- Why and how trees can have plants underneath them

3-2- Recommended 'Planting Around Trees Guidelines'

3-1- Why and how trees can have plants underneath them

Trees are vital to our urban forest and the health of our cities. But Melbourne is still losing canopy (1) and our world is heating up.(2)

Therefore it is imperative that we:

- look after existing trees
- give young trees the best chance of survival
- help our trees to grow as fast as possible
- help residents and developers to learn about the importance of canopy cover and to apply that knowledge on private land.

It therefore makes sense that City of Port Phillip (CoPP) want to protect their trees as much as possible. They are valuable assets and are only going to increase in value.

In the 2021 CoPP draft Nature Strip Guidelines (NSGs), CoPP proposes that this protection should come in the form of 'clearance areas' of non-planting zones around trees that add up to about 8 square metres for a smaller tree and about 24 square metres for a larger tree.

The size of these clearance areas would result in the exclusion of street gardens in every single tree square in CoPP and the majority of most nature strips in CoPP.

The argument put forward by council regarding the inclusion of these 'clearance areas' is that vegetation, in particular the act of planting under a tree, affects the health of the tree in particular:

- collar rot may happen with too much soil and moisture building up around the trunk of a tree
- feeding roots on the surface of the soil can get suffocated with large amounts of soil placed on top
- important roots can be damaged.

Because there are hundreds of healthy trees in the area of South Melbourne and the City of Port Phillip (indeed, the world) with vegetation underneath them, these 'clearance areas' seem at odds with real life and, after researching and talking to specialists, have concluded that **it is possible to look after our trees (even improve the health of the trees) while encouraging and enabling safe, informed community street gardens underneath them.**

To back up the argument the author has:

1. Spoken to numerous Subject Matter Experts about the argument put forward by council
2. Drawn on The Heart Gardening Project's experience helping to create over 70 local street gardens
3. Looked up various nature strip guidelines

1. Subject Matter Experts' view:

The following SMEs were spoken to:

- tree specialist and researcher
- arborist
- horticulturalist/street gardener
- local native plant specialist/street gardener
- local horticulturalist/street gardener

Here are some of the points that were brought up in these conversations:

- Collar rot can be a problem in street trees in general but it requires a lot of consistent moisture and street trees in CoPP are highly unlikely to get that kind of moisture build-up considering the rainfall and the fact that the climate is getting dryer.
- Limiting large build ups of soil under the canopy around trees will prevent feeder roots from getting suffocated.
- Clear informed guidelines to help residents plant under trees gently (including leaving the larger roots in situ) can not only have no affect on the tree but can actually improve the health of the tree
- Trees can't be observed out of context - it isn't realistic to keep the trees in a 'bubble' without context of what else is going on in streetscapes. There are many factors including the heat island effect, water retention issues, wind tunnels, community health, carbon sequestration, community engagement, the survival of indigenous plant species, the protection of our urban biodiversity and the need for private property to keep/plant trees.
- Frangible plantings underneath and around trees can protect the base of the tree from workmen, cars, dogs, whipper snippers, lawn mowers and people.
- Seeing as street gardening is so popular and many residents are going to plant under trees anyway, giving clear guidelines and ideas around how to look after the trees will be most beneficial to everyone - council, trees and residents.
- Multi-layers of vegetation (eg understory, mid-story and canopy) sequester carbon most successfully, help with the heat island effect and the cooling of our city and also support biodiversity as well, with insect biodiversity being most prevalent in indigenous plants understory and mid story.(3)
- Trees have evolved to live with plants underneath them.

- Allowing residents to plant street gardens under trees with care can be positive to the health and longevity of the tree as the resident will add extra water in stressful times (e.g. dry, hot).

2. The Heart Gardening Project's experience helping to create over 70 local street gardens:

As a street gardener in City of Port Phillip, the author has found:

- No problems at all with collar rot or pathogens- nor has the author ever heard of a CoPP street tree in a street garden succumbing to collar rot or pathogens.
- Residents want to know how to do things properly with their street garden and would appreciate clear guidelines that help the greening of their area.
- There are very few roots (particularly large ones), in the top 100mm around trees with path topper.
- All the trees in the area of South Melbourne/Port Melbourne that have street gardens underneath (that's hundreds of gardens) are in good health, getting extra water from street gardeners in dry times.
- Raised/edged gardens not only give the soil in the current urban streetscape the opportunity to improve but also seem to keep in soil and moisture.
- Every tree that has been seen over 20 years in the area seems to have thrived within a street garden- in fact, trees are known to have died in path topper only to be replaced and then thrive within a street garden in the same site.
- Trees and understorey work together in streets like Cobden St (that have vegetation under every single tree for hundreds of trees), providing a cooler, greener, more relaxing environment for all pedestrians- they choose to walk down this street.

3. Very few nature strip guidelines require a no planting zone around trees.

For instance, of the six NSGs that are listed in Recommended Existing NSGs (in supporting document 2), three didn't mention planting underneath trees at all, one said the gardens would enhance the trees, one said to avoid under trees if possible and another had a tree clearance zone that was smaller than CoPP.

Conclusion

Considering:

- What the specialists have said
- What has been observed regarding the health of local trees with street gardens
- The direct street gardening experience The Heart Gardening Project has had creating over 70 street gardens in CoPP
- What other NSGs say

... the conclusion is that the 2021 CoPP draft Nature Strip Guidelines 'clearance areas' around trees are heavy-handed and unnecessary. **There are more positives to planting under trees than negatives and if street gardening is carried out in a safe, considered way, street gardens can improve the health of a tree.** Therefore, it is recommended that planting is allowed under trees and that residents adhere to some simple, clear Tree Planting Guidelines (see recommendations on following page).

3-2- Recommended 'Planting Around Tree Guidelines'

- Only use small hand tools eg trowels, small garden forks (use good, solid tools).
- Be very careful around tree roots 50mm or more in thickness (if you find a tree root around this size leave it in place - don't remove or hurt it).
- When cultivating or planting around a tree trunk, take care to not damage the bark or outer layers of the tree. It is important to not do anything that allow pests or pathogens to enter the trunk or to risk 'ring barking'.
- Plant small plants to keep soil disturbance to a minimum e.g. tubestock (provide a link to an appropriate, varied and accessible list of indigenous plants that are available in tubestock).
- Only plant species that can be considered a part of the understory - ground cover - 1m high).
- Keep plants away from the trunk of the tree.
- Plant species that won't need too much water.
- Don't raise the level of soil, mulch up to 100mm but keep fill and mulch 100mm from the base of the tree. (4)
- Do some extra watering through stressful periods for the garden to help plants and trees.
- Frames around the edge of tree squares are allowed to hold in mulch, hold in moisture and gradually improve the quality of the soil around the tree (can inset the frames a few cm to allow for rainwater to run into the garden creating passive irrigation).

References

(1) "Melbourne is still losing 1-1.5% of its canopy each year" - Dr Gregory Moore
<https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/as-melbourne-heats-up-the-city-s-trees-are-changing-20220127-p59rlh.html>

(2) City of Port Phillip declared in the latest Annual Report that "by 2050, maximum daily summer temperatures are projected to increase by 2.1 degrees" and "Port Phillip is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Since 1950, temperatures have increased 1.2 to 1.4 degrees".

(3) The Little Things that Run the City – Insect ecology, biodiversity and conservation in the City of Melbourne (2016) Mata L, Ives CD, Morán-Ordóñez A, Garrard GE, Gordon A, Cranney K, Smith TR, Backstrom A, Bickel DJ, Hahs AK, Malipatil M, Moir ML, Plein M, Porch N, Semeraro L, Walker K, Vesk PA, Parris KM, Bekessy SA. Report prepared for the City of Melbourne.

(4) In alignment with AS4970 – Protection of trees on development sites

Other Research

Supporting Document 4



Supporting Document 4- Other Research



4-1- Comparing draft CoPP NSGs to Revised NSGs

4-2- Some CoPP docs that don't align with draft CoPP NSGs

4-3- Excerpts from Port Phillip Planning Scheme and various Acts

4-4- Documents referred to in CoPP draft NSGs - how aligned are they?

4-5- Triple Bottom Line Comparison between CoPP draft NSGs and proposed NSGs- Visualisation

4-6- About The Heart Gardening Project

4-1- Comparing draft CoPP NSGs to Revised NSGs

Current 2021 draft CoPP NSGs	The Issue (7% of CoPP = 1,450,000 square metres of land)	Proposed NSGs- for the People Planet Profit
	CLIMATE CHANGE	
The draft guidelines barely add to our green space-only in tiny patches.	Amount of green space	With urban green space decreasing, we can add 360 acres of green space to the City of Port Phillip urban forest.
Very little community access to this land for greening will actually exacerbate the heat island effect.	Temperature change	Multilayers of vegetation will help address the heat island effect, preventing sun getting to impermeable surfaces which not only lowers temperature but also emissions.
Water run off will continue to be a major urban problem around roads and footpaths. Grass uses more water than water wise gardens.	Water retention and health/soil compaction	Caring for and improving and softening the soil will increase water retention. Filters the water going into aquifers and our rivers.
Existing trees can filter air pollution very well but tree canopy is decreasing.	Air pollution/Noise pollution	More lower street greenery filters pollution from traffic, fires and noise.
Without allowing community to have the opportunity to build soil health and mulch we will lose soil into our waterways	Soil erosion	Retaining soil in situ will happen through planting vegetation, building soil health and mulching.
Carbon will be stored in trees. Grass will take up carbon but as soon as you mow it it releases it again.	Carbon sequestering	Multilayers of vegetation is better for carbon sequestering than just canopy (trees). Using biochar helps too.
With no vegetation under trees a lot of wind cannot be stopped therefore streets become wind tunnels and awful to walk through.	Wind tunnels	Vegetation of different heights has the ability to diversify or redirect wind from wind tunnels making areas more liveable and peaceful.
Apart from trees and lawn/compacted soil, biodiversity won't have a place in/on our barren urban monoculture spaces.	Biodiversity	Flora and fauna biodiversity will increase and become richer and more connected which will help ensure human food security, improve human quality and wellbeing of life.
	SAFETY	
Though asset safety is tangible, clear and easy to enforce, these guidelines continue a now outdated tradition in public space. Also, due to a lack of information, assets have the potential to be harmed by uninformed residents trying to create gardens.	Asset safety	These proposed NSGs provide clear setbacks from assets and offer empowerment through information to residents regarding restrictions while providing freedom. Assets and residents can work together on this land.
Child movements can be harder to predict around roads with no/very little garden. There is not much to interest and engage them and nothing to keep them on paths.	Child safety	Gardens provide a clear and very successful barrier that prevent kids from running onto roads and keep them engaged at their eye level so they will move more slowly. Carers with prams also appreciate the extra scenery when out walking.
With grass/dirt sight lines will be pretty clear.	Elderly Safety	Heat stress is a major problem and cooling our streets and creating places for them to rest will help our elderly residents. Also, street gardening helps them when they are out walking around their block and gardeners saying hello to them invites conversation to help intergenerational connection in the community. With community looking out for each other help is never far away and gardens that follow these guidelines won't impact sight lines.
Though it is great that tree safety is so important to CoPP, not allowing planting under trees and not informing residents about how to look after trees, will mean more damage is done to trees.	Tree safety	Guidelines for planting under trees will provide care for tree roots and help the tree grow faster and be healthier.
Sight lines shouldn't be affected unless grass gets too high.	Road safety	Sight lines shouldn't be affected with positive and informed communication. Gardens can provide frangible protection to trees from people, cyclists, dogs and traffic. Urban greening helps to slow down traffic and this, when combined with speed reductions to 30km, helps our urban communities move away from car use and increase road safety.
These draft NSGs are not necessarily beneficial to people with disabilities.	Disability safety	Anecdotal evidence has shown that vision-impaired and people in wheelchairs choose to move down greener streets. Footpaths would need to be kept clear.
Lawn requires more maintenance by residents so, if it is indeed maintained, residents will be out next to the road more often than with gardens with ear muffs on. Mowers/leaf blowers are so loud that pedestrian safety can potentially be impaired.	Pedestrian safety and health	People will move slower and more intentionally with more street gardens due to these proposed NSGs. People will look up from their phones and connect with what is going on around them. Families can bond over the gardens and critters and this brings people together in awareness. Also, safe gardens that are non-spikey and non-toxic can provide a safer 'cushion' rather than falling on the road or tarmac.
Very little in this draft will help ensure food security for all residents.	Food Security	Increasing biodiversity and giving the option to create edible gardens will enhance food security which is a vital option to our present and future communities.
When residents aren't given autonomy then they won't care.	Waste management	With more care given to our nature strips by residents there is less littering and more care given in return.

Current 2021 draft CoPP NSGs	The Issue (7% of CoPP = 1,450,000 square metres of land)	Proposed NSGs- for the People Planet Profit
Walking through streets of trees and lawn doesn't create this sense of safety. Though urban greening is known to reduce crime, passive surveillance on top of urban greening (street gardening) does a better job.	Psychological safety and crime	Cared for community areas create a strong sense of safety. When residents care more about their urban space, care radiates out from the homes. Greening and care of a space is a known deterrent of crime and graffiti.
CONNECTION		
The only solid connections here are workmen with the assets and humans with the trees- but they aren't at eye-level so interest is often limited. Nature strips remain places to move through to get to a destination.	Connection to land	Through planting understorey, residents can connect to their land and, with indigenous plantings, connect to the local Boon Wurrung people and their culture. Nature strips become a set of destinations.
Even though urban greening is known to build community, if council are the only ones doing it this connection would be very limited.	Human connection to human	The proposed NSGs build deep community cohesion from the individual, to families, to micro-communities to communities to suburbs to the whole of City of Port Phillip. People of all economic and cultural backgrounds get to know each other around a positive activity that connects humans at the same level.
Weeds/dirt provide very little habitat to our indigenous biodiversity.	Nature connection to nature	The scope for successful wildlife corridors for our insects, birds, reptiles is incredible and powerful using these guidelines. These corridors will also build genetic strength within our indigenous flora and fauna.
Weeds/dirt-monocultures are known to provide very little stimulation and inspiration to humans.	Human connection to nature	Connection to nature is known to create joy, inspiration and engagement and increase quality of life. Having wildlife outside your front door is something that all people can learn about in their own time and way.
WITHIN HUMANS		
Barren under-nourished, under-maintained land lacking in community/government care does very little to improve the mindset.	Mental issues	These proposed NSGs address loneliness, depression and anxiety. These NSGs will make residents stronger, healthier and more engaged with the outdoors and easy other. Street gardens (and what they mean to the community) will provide inspiration and a sense of well-being to all people- even people who don't have gardens.
Footpaths will be accessible but not engaging and inspiring.	Physical issues	Street gardens combat obesity by inspiring more residents to go outside their homes to look at all the diverse gardens. Also, people are more tempted to get out and walk in cool, green and friendly streets. Other health issues like Vitamin D deficiency is addressed.
FINANCIAL		
Heat, tarmac and dirt are not what attracts people to a place.	Local economy	Local foot traffic is higher in greener, cooler urban areas. Locals and tourists alike will travel to see street gardens and wildlife corridors and enjoy being a part of something bigger and greener. Developers are also seeing the value as well.
Lack of green and a sense of care decreases property value.	Realestate prices	Real estate prices are higher in areas with street gardens. They enhance liveability and are an obvious way of seeing care and pride in the community to an outsider.
Street gardening is so popular that it will still take place even if it's not allowed and a combination of a lack of information and blanket policies has the likelihood of creating more damage to council property and the creation of more unsafe gardens and street trees being planted.	Council \$	Encouraging residents to green up their nature strip using clear accessible guidelines could save council money due to decentralising maintenance (eg watering of trees and keeping them healthier) and decreasing chances of unsafe street gardening. Street gardens could even create revenue through tourism.
These draft guidelines do not consider the value of a healthy resilient urban forest and the value that an informed community can bring to realising this.	Value of green	Street gardening is already an important part of our urban forest especially with understorey plantings being so lacking in CoPP;'s urban green spaces. The flow on financial benefits from encouraging safe street gardening will be enormous. The value of vegetation, healthy canopy cover, permeable surfaces and biodiversity will increase exponentially over the coming years and the proposed NSGs will make the difference between humans enjoying life in CoPP or suffering through it.

4-2- Some CoPP docs that don't align with draft CoPP NSGs

CoPP draft NSGs don't align with following docs-local, state, global	Applicable Excerpts	Links	How the Proposed NSGs will help align with CoPP's docs...
Council Plan 2021/2022	Community Vision and Strategic Directions: Inclusive, Liveable, Sustainable, Vibrant, Well-Governed	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/council-plan-and-budget	These proposed guidelines would help bring community and council together over a positive inclusive document. They will make sure everyone can have access to street gardening which, in turn, will make our city more liveable, sustainable and vibrant. With tourism dropping off street gardening provides an excellent way to generate visitors around activities that are possible during COVID (street gardening and walking) and to proudly show just how much of a leader CoPP really is.
Greening Port Phillip: An Urban Forest Approach 2010	Vision: "The City of Port Phillip will have a healthy and diverse urban forest that uses innovative greening solutions to enhance the community's daily experience, ensuring environmental, economic, cultural and social sustainability for future generations."	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/y3bnyloa/an_urban_forest_approach.pdf	The proposed guidelines has the opportunity to be an innovative greening solution that aligns with this Vision.
CoPP Eco Footprint Report	Two key aspects were explored: The City's current and future environmental footprint – the natural resources required to support urban lifestyles and the greenhouse gas emissions and waste generated and opportunities to reduce this footprint and increase the sustainability of the city.	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/c12b5uyh/copp-report-smallest-file-size_pages.pdf	Here is an opportunity for change that is already happening and wanted by the community- street gardening- that will sequester carbon emissions, use food waste to improve soil, address the heat island effect, reduce electricity use and capture more water. The proposed NSGs provide opportunity to change on behalf of others which is truly community-centric as well.
CoPP's 2 Greening objectives	Enhancing liveability. Creating a sense of place, shaping the future of Port Phillip and caring for our natural environment (Council Plan Goal 4, Strategies 4.1 - 4.4). Adapting and sustaining. Preparing the Port Phillip's community and council assets for a different climatic future (Council Plan Goal 2, Strategy 2.1).	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/council-services/trees-and-vegetation/greening-port-phillip	Street gardening enhances the liveability of a community through joyful, diverse plantings, increased biodiversity, care for our public areas which is shared with all others, psychological safety and will help CoPP adapt to the heat issues already arising from the Climate Crisis.
City of Port Phillip Asset Management Policy	Outcomes b, c and d... b) Community benefit: Council will innovatively use its asset base to support the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the community. c) Environmental sustainability: assets are planned and developed to incorporate climate resiliency and mitigate our environmental impact. d) Financial sustainability: asset management decisions and practices ensure the council has the funds to look after, improve and grow its assets for current and future generations.	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/vxvlosh2/asset-management-policy-2021-v2-1.pdf	We can still take care of council assets, arguably better, with an informed approach on how to street garden. Assets such as trees can be looked after in ways that benefit both community and council. The greening of our city has to happen now in order to protect our kids and this can happen (and educate them at the sametime) through these proposed NSGs.
Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-2032 Vision	"The vision for the Strategy is to create 'a well-connected network of public spaces for all people that nurture and support the health, wellbeing, social connection, creative expressions, economy and environment of ourcommunity'."	https://hdp-au-prod-app-pp-haveyoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/5716/3947/6300/Council_Report_Places_for_People_-_Public_Space_Strategy_2022-32_8_December_2021.pdf	Street gardening with the proposed guidelines has the unique opportunity to connect all larger green spaces in CoPP and address all that is listed in this vision holistically and thoroughly.

CoPP's Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028	This document... "outlines the City of Port Phillip's commitment to environmental sustainability for the organisation and the wider community. It establishes a pathway that will assist to transition the City to a greener, cooler, more liveable city where we are all reducing our impact on the environment and are more resilient to the impacts of climate change."	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/gvvpcauy/copp_act-and-adapt-sustainable-environment-strategy-2018-28_final.pdf	We can all share in this vision together, building communities around our green public spaces and giving responsibility and autonomy to residents so they have even more of a chance to live in a greener, cooler city.
Towards Zero Sustainable Environment Strategy 2007-2020	Vision: "To develop a healthy and liveable city and region with the smallest possible ecological footprint that is vibrant, viable and nourishes the living aspects we love and depend on."	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/k3fpbbpv/e43840-18-toward-zero-strategy.pdf	These proposed NSGs provide a base from which the ecological footprint can become smaller including food waste, water retention, heat island effect and emissions.
Community Engagement Policy	Purpose "...outlines how Council will facilitate genuine and transparent opportunities for the community to provide feedback and inform the decisions made by Council..." and 8 Outcomes.	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/oe2frau2/14-2-att-1-community-eng.pdf	It is not evident how the community engagement process used in the draft NSGs has helped community and other stakeholders.
Council Plan 2021-2031- Volume 1 Health and Well Being	Page 19- Individual and lifestyle factors including Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviours, Exercise Page 20- Understanding our Health and Well-Being Rates of crime much higher than the Victorian average Crimes on streets, lanes and footpaths increasing	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/gkkb5ox5/copp_council-plan-2021-31-v1-accessible.pdf	The proposed NSGs address so much to do with health and well-being. Street gardening radiates care out onto the street and has been proven to lower crime, improve people's mental health and change resident's attitudes and behaviours.
Art and Soul: Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018-22	"The City's cultural ecosystem makes a powerful contribution to our identity, our happiness and wellbeing, our lifestyles and our economy. This strategy sees Council and our diverse community working together to co-create the future, while honouring the Boon Wurrung people of this place."	https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/1j3b2sbs/copp-art-and-soul-creative-prosperous-city-strategy.pdf	Our cultural ecosystem is entangled with our gardens and greening- especially indigenous gardens. We can honour the Boon Wurrung people by planting indigenous plants, a part of their culture.
Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest Strategy (of which CoPP is a signatory)	In fact, the CoPP draft document is more aligned to the Stresses and Shocks outlined in the Strategy.	https://resilientmelbourne.com.au/living-melbourne/	This document clearly states the positives from greening, all of which are evident in street gardening- social connection and cohesion, socio-economic benefits, improving physical and mental health, ecosystem services, connection to country and ecosystem health.
Victoria's Climate Change Strategy	Everyone has a part to play – the community, businesses and governments.	https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/victorias-climate-change-strategy	Many residents in CoPP want to do something to help fight climate change, to help make our city more beautiful and bring people together in this stressful time. These proposed guidelines will do this.
Greater Melbourne Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy	Page 25- Strategic framework and principle... greening our streets and creating cool outdoor spaces are two of the main things we can do to combat the extreme heat that is affecting our whole system, including council assets. Action areas 4 (p25) and 6 (p32) and 10 (p43)	https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0043/549799/Greater-Melbourne-Regional-Climate-Adaptation-Strategy.pdf	Street gardening using these proposed NSGs tick every single point on page 32. Areas 4 and 6 and problems suggested on Page 43 can be addressed by these intentional informed NSGs.
United Nations 2021 IPCC report	"Today's IPCC Working Group 1 report is a code red for humanity. The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable: greenhouse-gas emissions from fossil-fuel burning and deforestation are choking our planet and putting billions of people at immediate risk. Global heating is affecting every region on Earth, with many of the changes becoming irreversible."	https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sqsm20847.doc.htm https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm/	We must green our city now and these proposed NSGs provide a way to do this. We have the opportunity to do this and we must not rely on our neighbouring councils to take on what is our responsibility. CoPP can do this and will be continuing to uphold their share of the climate crisis. The community want to get involved.
Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy		https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org	It would be interesting to see how CoPP could justify this document to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM), of which CoPP states they have achieved compliance (and needs to continue to demonstrate it).

4-3- Excerpts from Port Phillip Planning Scheme and Acts

Further to the strategies and policies referenced above, we note the following key policies in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme and Council's key duties and responsibilities under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

It is clear that the policies and objectives outlined below not only strongly encourage initiatives such as nature strip planting, but encourage the conservation and retention of established vegetation. It is THGP's view that these policies and objectives could be further achieved by the City of Port Phillip through adopting the recommendations made in this submission, in particular, in providing further opportunities for planting and not unreasonably restricting (or removing) planting activity.

A. Planning Scheme Context

Port Phillip Planning Scheme	Applicable Excerpts
Planning Policy Framework	
Clause 11 – Settlement	<i>Planning is to facilitate sustainable development that takes full advantage of existing settlement patterns and investment in transport, utility, social, community and commercial infrastructure and services.</i>
Clause 11.01 – Victoria	<i>Deliver networks of high-quality integrated settlements that have a strong identity and sense of place, are prosperous and are sustainable by:</i> ... <i>Preserving and protecting features of rural land and natural resources and features to enhance their contribution to settlements and landscapes.</i>
Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values	<i>Planning should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support (including ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic diversity) and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.</i> <i>Planning must implement environmental principles for ecologically sustainable development that have been established by international and national agreements. Foremost amongst the national agreements is the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment, which sets out key principles for environmental policy in Australia. Other agreements include the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development, National Greenhouse Strategy, the National Water Quality Management Strategy, the National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity, the National Forest Policy Statement and National Environment Protection Measures.</i> <i>Planning should protect, restore and enhance sites and features of nature conservation, biodiversity, geological or landscape value.</i>
Clause 12.01 – Biodiversity	<i>Assist in the establishment, protection and re-establishment of links between important areas of biodiversity, including through a network of green spaces and large-scale native vegetation corridor projects.</i>

Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenity	<p><i>Planning should identify, prevent and minimise the risk of harm to the environment, human health, and amenity through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Land use and development compatibility.</i> • <i>Effective controls to prevent or mitigate significant impacts.</i>
Local Planning Policy Framework	
Clause 21.01 – Vision and approach	<p><i>Port Phillip’s vision is to create:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A city that produces low greenhouse gas emissions and is responsive to climate change issues;</i> • <i>A city of distinct neighbourhoods where an understanding of local character and heritage is an important element of a sustainable future;</i> • <i>A diverse and creative city that is reaching out to the future with innovative design and development, high environmental awareness and a vibrant culture;</i>
Clause 22.13 – Environmentally Sustainable Development	<p><i>The following objectives should be satisfied where applicable:</i></p> <p><i>Urban Ecology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To protect and enhance biodiversity within the municipality.</i> • <i>To provide environmentally sustainable landscapes and natural habitats, and minimise the urban heat island effect.</i> • <i>To encourage the retention of significant trees.</i> • <i>To encourage the planting of indigenous vegetation.</i> • <i>To encourage the provision of space for productive gardens, particularly in larger residential developments.</i>

B. Legislative Context

Section	Applicable Excerpts
<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>	
Section 4 – Objectives	<p><i>(1) The objectives of planning in Victoria are—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land;</i> b) <i>(b) to provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity;</i>
<i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i>	
Section 1 – Purposes	<p><i>The main purposes of this Act are—</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(e) to set out principles of environment protection; and</i> <i>(g) to provide for a general environmental duty to minimise risks of harm to human health and the environment from pollution or waste; and</i> <p>...</p>

Section 13 – Principle of integration of environmental, social and economic considerations	<i>Environmental, social and economic considerations should be effectively integrated.</i>
Section 15 – Principle of primacy of prevention	<i>Prevention of harm to human health and the environment is preferred to remedial or mitigation measures.</i>
Section 23 – Principle of conservation	<i>Biological diversity and ecological integrity should be protected for purposes that include the protection of human health.</i>
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	
Section 9 – Overarching governance principles and supporting principles	<p><i>(1) A Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.</i></p> <p><i>(2) The following are the overarching governance principles —</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;</i> <i>(c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;</i> <i>(d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;</i> <i>(e) innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;</i>

4-4- Documents referred to in CoPP draft NSGs

Road Safety Act 1986 (Victoria)

Can't find specifically what is aligning with the draft NSGs apart from the fact that this is a document about road safety and street gardens are near a road.

https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-10/86-127aa210%20authorised_2.pdf

Road Management Act 2004 (Victoria)

Aligns around Schedule 3- "power to remove certain trees or vegetation" on page 203 but seemingly nothing else is mentioned regarding vegetation on streets.

<https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/04-12aa062%20authorised.pdf>

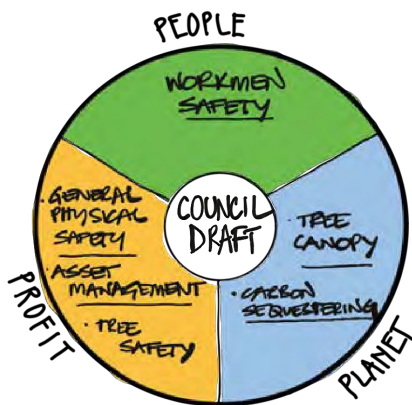
Local Law No 1 (Community Amenity) 2013(City Of Port Phillip)

Part 2/10 Footpath Activities and Part 3/38 Safety and Protection of Assets are aligned to a point but there seems to be much scope for change in the draft nature strip guidelines.

<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/uxyj0vjw/copp-local-law-number-1-community-amenity.pdf>

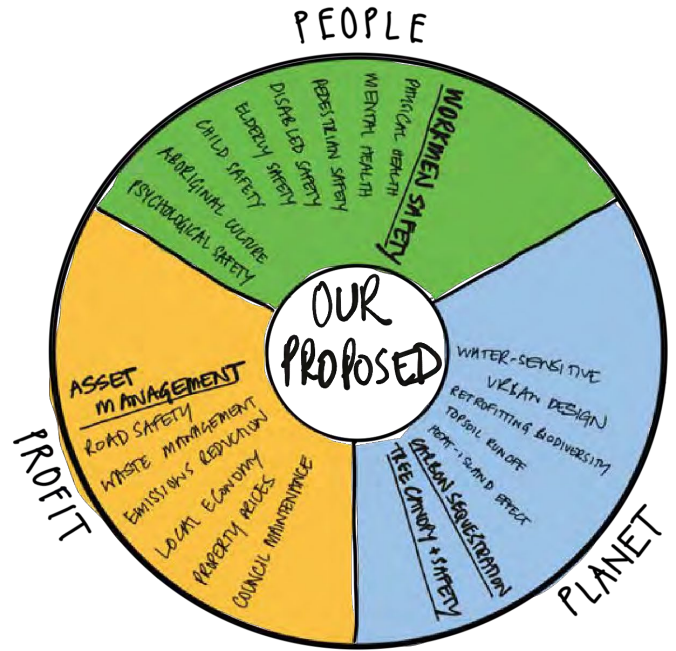
4-5- Triple Bottom Line Comparison

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE COMPARISON



COUNCIL'S DRAFT

ASPECTS of
 HUMAN → HUMAN
 HUMAN → NATURE



OUR PROPOSAL

HUMAN → HUMAN
 HUMAN → NATURE
 NATURE → NATURE
 CONNECTION TO COUNTRY

4-6- About The Heart Gardening Project

Our purpose? To heal humankind by creating biodiversity in our cities. We are doing this by bringing nature and humans together through street gardening. We started officially at the beginning of 2020. Since then we have done a lot including the following:

Basic stats:

- Created over 70 street gardens to help increase biodiversity
- Planted around 5000 plants
- Given away over 500 plants to local street gardens
- Covered 454 square metres with indigenous-focussed gardens as a part of the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor
- Engaged positively with over 100 houses around The BEE Gardens alone (one site on the corner of Moray and Cobden Sts)
- Built up over 1600 Instagram followers
- Built a local Facebook group with around 600 members
- Had over 30 volunteers help and over 70 offer- we simply can't keep up with the demand
- Engaged directly with at least 600 local households over the past 2 years
- Talked to thousands of people locally and around Australia
- Consulted with over 30 specialists and scientists.

Media and writings:

- Gardening Australia ([watch here](#))
- Written a book, the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor Handbook (can send on request)
- Created a film, 100% made by this community ([see here](#))
- Various radio, The Age, Herald Sun (read/listen [here](#))

Support from organisations:

- Partners are Westgate Biodiversity: Bili Nursery and Landcare, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Open Gardens Victoria, Hassell Architecture, Mezzanine Films and Sustainable Gardens Australia
- Received a grant from Open Gardens Victoria in 2020
- Received sponsorship from Flow Hive, Salus Body and When Bee Foundation
- Industry partner with RMIT: Architecture in 2021 and we continue with RMIT: Landscape Architecture into 2022
- With the support of the Department of Fairness and Family Housing and Star Health we have created a 100 square metre garden in Park Towers Reserve, South Melbourne
- By word of mouth alone (so far), we have multiple schools interested and taking part in the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor
- We will be a part of Melbourne Knowledge Week in May 2022, City of Melbourne's annual festival of ideas for a smart and innovative city.
- Expert advice and research input from researchers with the Clean Air and Urban Landscape Hub
- Emma will be a guest speaker at 2022 Design Week Own It!

Some other things of note regarding The Heart Gardening Project

The Melbourne Pollinator Corridor (MPC)

Currently the main focus of The Heart Gardening Project, the MPC will be an 8km community-led and -maintained pollinator corridor connecting green patches Westgate Park and Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, focussing on native bees and other pollinating insects on mainly undernourished, barren public spaces. The aim is 200 indigenous-focussed gardens no less than 50m apart with 18,000 indigenous plants in the ground by the end of 2024. It has been designed based on local science, includes at least 10 schools in the route and citizen science will play a huge role in the MPC's success .

Butterfly report

Spurred on by a City of Melbourne report where 10 species of butterflies were found over a 2 month period in numerous sites, I wrote a report around just one site (The BEE Gardens) where, over 7 months, I noticed and documented 7 species of butterfly...*that were not there before The Gardens were built.* (report available on request)

THGP practices sustainability in our local area

We pull on many methods in the way we work- including permaculture, organic principles, regeneration, revegetation and the Miyawaki method. We are increasing the carbon held in our nature strips through using biochar. Local is a huge focus (e.g. most materials are now sourced locally) and we have 3 worm farms and a compost bin just for Heart Gardening Project use. We also use other locally made compost and bury Bokashi compost wherever possible.

THGP is creating closed loop systems

For example, from the sponsorship of a local business, we have purchased 2 x 100L portablewater tanks to pick up water from Jock's Ice Cream in Victoria Ave that would otherwise be wasted which then goes straight onto the local street gardens.

THGP boosts local economy and contributes to increased real estate prices

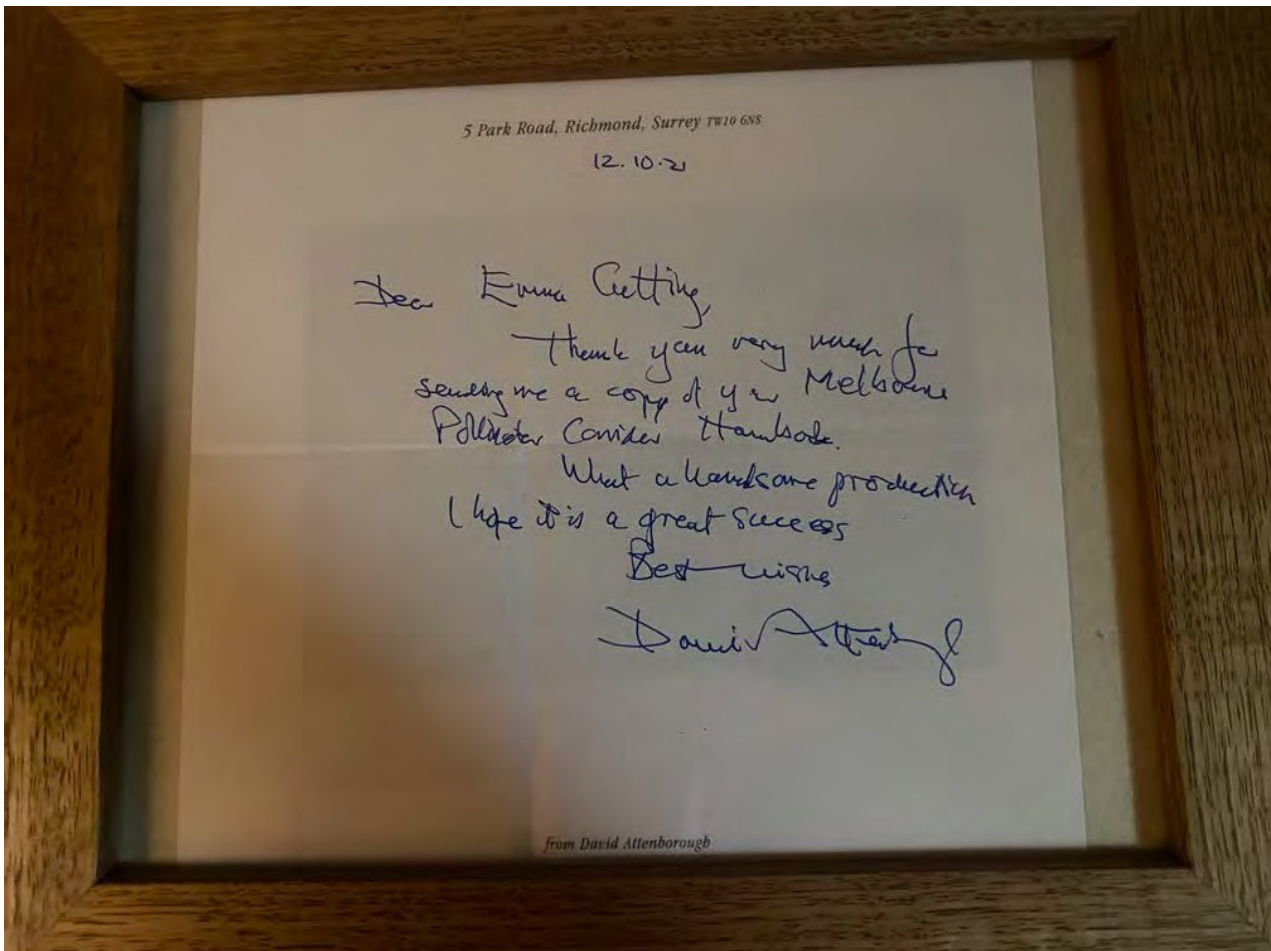
Our local street gardens, the Street Garden and Street Art Walk and organised tours have boosted sales in local cafes such as Park Lane Cafe and The Relief Unit. Retail sales at Bili Nursery (a part of Westgate Biodiversity) have increased because of The Heart Gardening Project and Garden of Eden Nursery also has had an increase in sales because of the increase in street gardening. Real estate prices are also believed to have increased because of the street gardens (see statement from Oliver Bruce, Director of Marshall White in Supporting Document No1). The creation of the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor (which will be an easy walk being alongside footpaths) will see many more tourists coming to the area and has already created interest and support from local developers.

Letter from Sir David Attenborough

One of the highlights for The Heart Gardening Project so far is a letter from one of the world's most favourite and most inspiring people, Sir David Attenborough. This letter has not been publicised- it means too much to me. However, I am sharing it here to demonstrate the support that street gardening has.

"We live our lives in the shadow of a disaster of our own making. That disaster is being brought about by the very things that allow us to live our comfortable lives."

- Sir David Attenborough, A Life on Our Planet.



Surveys and Petition

Supporting Document 5



Supporting Document 5- Surveys and Petition



5-1- Connection and Safety Survey Findings for
The Heart Gardening Project

5-2- Biodiversity Report for The Heart Gardening Project

5-3- Overview of Petition “Keep street gardening growing in City of
Port Phillip”

5-1-Connection and Safety Survey Findings for The Heart Gardening Project

We designed a survey of 10 questions regarding local street gardens. As expected, the respondents of this survey were strongly supportive of street gardening.

Here are the top 3 takeaways from the survey, which comprised 83 locals:

1. Regarding accessibility, the majority of respondents felt that street gardens positively impacted people with disabilities, the second strongest response group being feeling there was “no change” in accessibility.
2. Risks associated with street gardens as hazards (tripping, parent/child safety, driver safety) were not perceived as significant
3. Increasing constraints around street gardening directly correlates with a feared erosion of community cohesion, a negative impact on environmental factors and negative emotional state.

Here are each of the questions asked with some of the findings:

1- How do street gardens mainly make you feel?

97.6% stated that they felt positively towards street gardens, with 74.7% choosing ‘amazing’ over ‘I like them’.

2- Do street gardens help you connect to your community?

96.4% said that street gardens made them feel more connected to their community.

3- How do you feel street gardens impact your mental health?

80 of the 83 people who answered the question said that they felt street gardens impacted their mental health positively, with 62 choosing ‘really positively’ and 18 ‘positively’.

4- How do you feel street gardens impact your local natural environment?

98.8% felt that street gardens impacted their local natural environment positively, with 86.75% choosing ‘really positively’ over ‘positively’.

5- Generally speaking, how do you feel street gardens impact on pedestrian and child safety?

Only 2.4% thought that pedestrian and child safety would be negatively affected.

6- Generally speaking, how do you feel street gardens impact on driver safety?

53.7% said that driver safety was positively impacted and 45% said 'about the same'.

7- Generally speaking, how do you feel street gardens impact the safety of people with disabilities?

58% said that people with disabilities were positively affected by street gardens, with 35.8% saying they were affected about the same.

8- Generally speaking, how do you feel street gardens impact council assets (eg phone pits, light posts, signs, telegraph poles)?

100% of respondents (even the one who hated street gardens) thought that council assets/utilities (eg phone pits, light posts, signs, telegraph poles) were not adversely effected by street gardens.

9- When thinking about trip hazards, how significant a risk are street gardens?

96.25% of respondents thought that street gardens were an acceptable risk (with the choices being acceptable/unacceptable).

10- How would you feel if the street gardens were gone?

97.5% said they would feel worse (90.2% feeling much worse and 7.3% feeling worse).

5-2- Biodiversity Report for The Heart Gardening Project

Carried out by: Katherine Berthon, urban pollinator ecologist

Date: February 8th, 2022

Time frame: 1 morning, approximately 1 hour at each site

The 3 sites were:

1

100 square metres of the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor
250 Bank St, South Melbourne
Planted in December 2021

2

The BEE Gardens
corner Cobden and Moray Sts, South Melbourne
80 square metres
Planted between November 2019 and December 2020

3

Laneway
Next to 101 Cobden St, South Melbourne
10 square metres
Planting starting March 2020

All three sites would be non-compliant and would need to be removed to be compliant under the new draft CoPP NSGs.

Overall Findings:

- 1 x Ant spp. (species)
- 3 x native bee spp. (including some not seen much outside large greenspaces)
- 1 x introduced Honeybee spp.
- 1 x beetle species
- 3 x Hemiptera (true bugs)
- 4 x butterfly/moth species (two as caterpillars)
- 1x bee fly (potentially Bombylidae but not fluffy enough)
- 1 x hoverfly (Syrphidae)
- 7 x other fly species (Diptera)
- 3 x spider species (Araneae)
- 1 x Noisy Miner
- 4 x Wasp sp. (including nesting)
- 1 x Damselfly sp. (Odonata)

Total species seen using the sites:

31+ species!

Breakdown over each site:

Bank St Garden (30 min search time + photos)

- Beetle sp. (in leaf litter, no photo, it buried itself)
- *Nysius* sp. (True bug, Heteroptera, Lygaeidae - on paper flower)
- *Lasius niger* (Black Garden Ants)
- *Homalictus urbanus* (native bee, relatively certain ID from 'chill' photos)
- *Apis mellifera* (Honeybee, drinking from the paper flowers)
- *Trichiocercus sparshalli* caterpillar (Long-tailed bombyx moth larvae)
- Lepidoptera sp. (green caterpillar in the flower, possibly a skipper larvae)
- Aranae sp. (Tiny spider making a web in the *Brachyschome*)
- Syrphidae sp. (Black/Yellow Hoverfly)
- Noisy miner (eating insects in the tree in the middle - not a Euc)
- Cabbage White butterfly
- 6 x types of flies

BEE Gardens (30 min search time + photos)

- Hemiptera sp. Green Psyllid
- *Apis mellifera* (Honeybee, drinking from *Salvia*, Mint, *Plectranthus*) x 13+ individuals
- Leafcutter bee (Megachilidae sp., foraging on yellow daisies, *Plectranthus*, *Wahlenbergia* and *Brachyschome* variously)
- Syrphidae sp. (Black/Yellow Hoverfly)
- *Lasius niger* (Black Garden Ants)
- Black/Yellow Wasp sp. (Vespidae)
- Cabbage White
- Little Blue Grass Butterfly (family *Lycanidae*)
- *Ocybadistes* sp. (Grass Dart, likely *Ocybadistes wakeri*)
- Tiny Black Fly sp.
- Bee fly sp.
- Blue damselfly (and likely both dimorphic sexes - *Odonata*)

Laneway (20 minutes search time + photos - some extra time while chatting)

- Orange true bug (*Heteroptera* sp.)
- *Homalictus* sp. (foraging on parsley flowers, possibly different sp. than at Bank St)
- *Megachilidae* sp. (caught on basil flower *occimum gratissimum*)
- Honeybees (foraging on catnip)
- Bee fly (foraging on parsley flowers)
- Wasp sp. (spider wasp)
- Potter wasp nest
- Bright blue wasp sp.
- Cabbage White (on basil flowers)
- Green iridescent fly
- Big brown spider
- Tiny Black/gold spider

5-3- Overview of Petition “Keep street gardening growing in City of Port Phillip”

To demonstrate the breadth of support for this submission, a petition was started in November 2021 called “Keep street gardening growing in City of Port Phillip”.

The action being requested in the petition is the same as this submission. The petition reads:

“We are asking Mayor Marcus Pearl and the Councillors of City of Port Phillip Council to arrange a rewrite of the new draft nature strip guidelines so that they are inclusive, empowering, researched properly, thought through and not only celebrate current street gardeners (who are out making our city more beautiful) but also encourage others to make a safe, informed and positive difference to their community and their planet.”

This petition has been created through change.org and closes on Sunday, February 13th, 2022 after which it will be lodged formally and informally with the City of Port Phillip. After the closing date, the petition will be lodged formally through the CoPP website and informally through sending a pdf of the petition to Mayor Marcus Pearl, the other 8 Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer of City of Port Phillip Peter Smith.

At the time of writing, there are 5890+ signatures on the petition with most signatories being local to CoPP and the Melbourne area.

As the petition would take up almost 170 pages, it has not been included in this submission.



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