

Solway Ward update

Councillor Kevin Chow | December 2011

Christmas spirit sweeps across Boroondara



Cr Chow at the fabulous new Markham Victory Reserve Regional Playground in Ashburton.

Dear neighbours,

If you've noticed an even more festive Christmas spirit this year, I'm hoping that Council's "Christmas in Boroondara" program is a contributor.

Ashburton and Hartwell shopping centres join many others across the City now aglow with decorations of the season.

These results were brought about through the active involvement of trader groups, associations and individual shopkeepers who have gone that extra step this year to decorate their stores and put on activities to encourage this season of sharing.

As a resident as well as your representative, I am pleased to note important capital works that have been

completed or advanced during the course of this year.

Of great regional significance is bringing the Markham Victory Reserve Master Plan to life, through the completion of the shared path and playground.

This unique and innovative new playground for children of all ages is divided into age zones: Toddler Play, Junior Play, Senior Play and a Junior Active Zone.

It is unlike any other playground in Boroondara, offering children the opportunity to play on slides, nets, sandpits, swings, totems, a basketball half-court and beginner skate park.

Picnic facilities also provide a fun space for families.

I particularly like the Kookaburra Classroom with its woodblock seating alcove and red gum sculptures.

There will be an official opening in the New Year that will be publicised and I hope that you, family and friends will come along.

Until then, my very best wishes for the holiday season,

Best wishes,



Cr Kevin Chow



Solway Ward
Cr Kevin Chow

Including parts of
Ashburton and Glen Iris



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Planning our future neighbourhoods

People love living in Solway Ward for many reasons. We have leafy streets, plentiful parks and gardens, unique heritage areas, convenient and lively shopping strips and valuable community facilities.

Our Ward has a distinct look and feel and we all want it to remain that way so that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy a similarly pleasant environment.

However, development pressure has increased over the past few years and we have noticed a spike in applications for large-scale proposals involving units and apartments.

Council is in constant contact with the community and we all want a definitive plan and direction that is tailored to this rapidly evolving planning landscape.

While the majority of residents understand that suburbs change over time, we are keen to see that new development is respectful and complements the existing local environment.

In order to gauge what you value in your area, Council is undertaking a Neighbourhood Character Study.

In September and October, more than 700 local residents had their say and the results of this project will be released

next year in the form of Neighbourhood Character Precinct Profiles and Design Guidelines.

These profiles and design guidelines will then form the basis of a planning scheme amendment, which will give some certainty to our neighbourhoods about the design of buildings.

Such guidelines and policies will give developers a clear direction on what is and isn't appropriate in our City, and also provide stakeholders with clarity if developments are called in to the Victorian Civic and Administrative Tribunal.

Once completed, this work, along with the Activity Centres Strategy and Open Spaces Strategy, will provide clear guidelines for acceptable development in Solway Ward, helping to protect its quintessential character.

For more information on how Council is planning for our future, phone 9278 4534 or visit www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/strategic-planning.

Have your say on the Open Space Strategy

The City of Boroondara is working on an Open Space Strategy to plot the future of our parks, gardens and sporting fields, and I would like you to have your say.

Solway Ward features a network of popular open spaces – including Ferndale Park to the north-west and Markham Victory Reserve in the south – which residents regularly use to keep fit, socialise, play and watch sport, observe native flora and fauna, and take part in many other recreational activities.

The draft Boroondara Open Space Strategy (BOSS) recommends the following:

- introducing an open space contribution rate as part of the planning scheme
- identifying opportunities to provide additional open space
- preparing plans to guide future upgrades of selected open space
- improving park features such as shelters, seating areas, BBQs, play areas and paths
- protecting and enhancing biodiversity values
- continuing sustainable water use and measures that assist in mitigating climate change
- protecting heritage values in open space.

Freeway noise update

A World Health Organization (WHO) report published in late 2010 found that the health impacts of environmental noise are a growing health concern.

In a separate 2009 report, the WHO concluded "there is sufficient evidence from large-scale epidemiological studies linking the population's exposure to environmental noise with adverse health effects. Therefore, environmental noise should be considered not only as a cause of nuisance but also a concern for public health and environmental health."

In August, a Freeway Noise Community Working Group was formed comprising representatives from Council and three community groups, and it has resolved to commission research to look into the links between traffic noise and the health of residents living in close proximity to freeways.

It was further agreed that the Freeway Noise Community Working Group would:

- identify 'hot spots' to prioritise and communicate as a list for action to VicRoads and the Victorian Government
- estimate the cost of noise attenuation works and options
- prepare a noise testing plan including pre-and post-proposed VicRoads noise mitigation treatments on the Monash Freeway
- research the viability of a class action suit around a claim of nuisance to surrounding residents.

This is an important issue to many residents in Solway Ward and I will keep you up-to-date with developments.

At the end of November, Council sent all households an information leaflet/feedback form regarding the draft BOSS and I encourage you all to respond. An electronic version can be downloaded from www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/your-say.

For more information on this survey, as well as February information sessions, visit the website or phone 9278 4534.