

3 Presentation of officer reports

3.1 Boroondara Housing Strategy - Community consultation outcomes and consideration of final strategy

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform the Urban Planning Delegated Committee (UPDC) of the outcomes of community consultation on the Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy (Draft Strategy) and to seek a resolution to adopt the final version of the Boroondara Housing Strategy.

Background

The current Boroondara Housing Strategy was adopted in December 2015, and is due for review and revision to bring it in line with current population and household projections, and local housing needs and aspirations. The review of the Boroondara Housing Strategy coincided with the release of the most recent Census 2021 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

On 15 May 2023, an updated Draft Strategy was presented to the UPDC for endorsement for community consultation. The UPDC resolved to carry out community consultation for four weeks from 17 May to 16 June 2023.

This report presents the community consultation outcomes and changes arising from community feedback. The final version of the Boroondara Housing Strategy is provided at **Attachment 1** for adoption.

Key Issues

The community was invited to share feedback on the Draft Strategy via a survey on Engage Boroondara, and drop-in sessions with officers. The communications campaign included a project website, email notification, social media postings, and a Boroondara Bulletin article.

The survey questions included on the Engage Boroondara website were specifically tailored to seek feedback about three strategic directions, articulating Boroondara's approach to responding to housing needs. Sixty-two (62) feedback responses were received via this platform during the consultation period.

Four further responses were received via post or email, including a submission from Servants Community Housing.

In total, 69 feedback responses were received on the Draft Strategy, and are discussed in this report. Overall, there was generally strong support for the strategic directions proposed. The Consultation Summary Report is provided at **Attachment 2**.

Feedback provided by the community has helped identify where further consideration, refinement, or actions were needed, and has informed the proposed changes provided at **Attachment 3**.

A Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan (**Attachment 4**) lists each action from the Strategy; alignment to strategic directions; timeframe for delivery; and relevant departments responsible for delivery, budget and resourcing.

Next Steps

Officers recommend the UPDC resolve to adopt the final version of the Boroondara Housing Strategy. Should the UPDC resolve to adopt the final version of the Boroondara Housing Strategy, officers will begin implementation of the actions identified in the Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan.

Officers' recommendation

That the Urban Planning Delegated Committee resolve to:

1. Adopt the Boroondara Housing Strategy, September 2023 provided at **Attachment 1**.
2. Receive and note:
 - a. The Boroondara Housing Strategy Consultation Summary Report at **Attachment 2**;
 - b. The proposed changes arising from community feedback at **Attachment 3**; and
 - c. The Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan provided at **Attachment 4**.

Responsible director: **Scott Walker, Director Urban Living**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform the Urban Planning Delegated Committee (UPDC) of the outcomes of community consultation on the Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy (Draft Strategy) and to seek a resolution to adopt the final version of the Boroondara Housing Strategy (**Attachment 1**).

The reports also seeks a resolution to receive and note:

- The Boroondara Housing Strategy Consultation Summary Report at **Attachment 2**;
- The proposed changes arising from community feedback at **Attachment 3**; and
- The Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan provided at **Attachment 4**.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

Plan Melbourne

Key directions in Plan Melbourne relating to housing include:

- deliver more housing closer to jobs and public transport.
- manage the supply of new housing in the right locations to meet population growth and create a sustainable city.
- increase the supply of social and affordable housing.
- provide greater choice and diversity of housing.
- facilitate decision-making processes for housing in the right locations.

To manage the supply of housing in Melbourne, it is expected established areas (including Boroondara) will accommodate a greater share of housing demand. Plan Melbourne has an aspiration to achieve 70% of new housing being provided within Melbourne's established areas between 2015 and 2051. Plan Melbourne also aims for housing choice to be provided in activity centres and other locations that offer good access to jobs, services and public transport.

State Planning Policy

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) is part of all Victorian planning schemes and sets the context for land use and development at the State, regional and local levels. The PPF includes objectives, policies and strategies relating to population and housing change.

Clause 11.02-1S of the PPF requires planning authorities to:

Plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15-year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur.

Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031

The Boroondara Community Plan sets the strategic direction for the municipality based on seven themes and a series of strategic objectives. Local planning policies (relating to issues such as heritage, urban design and architecture) and controls (such zones and overlays) play a critical part in delivering on Council's commitments set out in the Community Plan.

The key themes strategic directives that the Housing Strategy can play a role in delivering include:

- Theme 3 - The Environment by identifying potential actions to link with Council's Climate Action Plan and response to the climate emergency.
- Theme 4 - Neighbourhood character and heritage by identifying potential actions to guide development outcomes and ensure good urban design.

Other Council Plans

The Housing Strategy will consider and stand alongside:

- Boroondara's Climate Action Plan and Implementation Plan 2021-23;
- Homelessness Protocol 2020;
- Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33; and
- Disability Action Plan 2018-2022.

Boroondara Planning Scheme

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme provides a statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for Boroondara. The vision for housing is to protect heritage and respect the character of the City to maintain amenity and liveability whilst recognising the need for appropriate, well-designed development for future generations.

Planning Practice Notes 90 - Planning for Housing and 91 – Using the Residential Zones

Planning Practice Notes provide information and guidance to local councils on planning for housing development and protecting neighbourhood character. This is to ensure a balanced approach to managing residential development in planning schemes through the preparation of a housing strategy and application of residential zones.

3. Background

The current Boroondara Housing Strategy was adopted in December 2015. It is due for review and revision to bring it in line with current population and household projections, and local housing needs and aspirations. The review of the Boroondara Housing Strategy coincided with the release of the most recent Census 2021 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

On 15 May 2023, an updated Draft Strategy was presented to the UPDC for endorsement for community consultation. The UPDC resolved to carry out community consultation for four weeks from 17 May to 16 June 2023.

This report presents the community consultation outcomes and changes arising from community feedback. The final version of the Boroondara Housing Strategy is provided at **Attachment 1** for adoption.

4. Outline of key issues/options

The need for a Housing Strategy

The PPF is part of all planning schemes in Victoria and sets the overarching strategic direction for managing population and housing change. Specifically, Clause 11.02-1S of the PPF requires planning authorities to: *Plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15-year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur.*

Over the next 15 years, Boroondara's population is forecast to grow by around 28,700 additional residents and 9,400 dwellings.

While Council cannot directly control population increase, it has an important role as the Planning Authority to inform and direct how this is managed for the benefit of the existing and future community.

Boroondara requires a Housing Strategy to manage the provision of housing throughout the municipality including its location and typologies.

A Housing Strategy is also required as the strategic foundation for any potential implementation of housing focussed policies and controls in future (including changes to zone schedules, local planning policies and other planning provisions) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Structure of the Boroondara Housing Strategy

The purpose of the Housing Strategy is:

- To understand and define current and emerging population trends and associated housing needs for Boroondara; and
- To identify strategic policy directions and actions to meet those needs.

Accommodating additional population is only one facet in the provision of housing which needs to be considered and balanced with other housing related needs and challenges, such as:

- Protecting heritage and character
- Sustainability
- Design excellence
- Housing diversity and choice
- Housing capacity
- An ageing population
- Housing affordability
- Social and affordable housing
- Homelessness
- Infrastructure capacity

In response, the Housing Strategy:

- Sets out key population and household characteristics, housing change patterns/locations and housing capacity analysis findings.
- Identifies three key strategic directions to articulate Boroondara's approach to responding to its unique context. These are:
 - Housing diversity in appropriate locations;
 - Housing that is suitable and achieves design excellence; and
 - Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future.
- Sets out actions to support meeting these strategic directions.

The strategic directions in the new Housing Strategy are generally consistent with those in the Housing Strategy of 2015. It does not make significant departures from the directions around the location and type of housing required throughout Boroondara.

The Strategy identifies future strategic work including subsequent policy and planning scheme changes which would be subject to separate planning scheme amendments and consultation processes.

The Action Plan sets out indicative timeframes for delivery of tasks including short term (1-3 years), medium term (4-6 years) and long term (6+ years) actions.

Community consultation overview and findings

The community were invited to share feedback on the Draft Strategy via a survey on Engage Boroondara and two drop-in sessions with officers. The communications campaign included a project website, email notification, social media postings, and an article in the Boroondara Bulletin.

Survey questions on Engage Boroondara were specifically tailored to the three proposed strategic directions articulating Boroondara's approach to responding to the municipality's housing context. Sixty-two (62) feedback responses were received through this platform during the consultation period.

In total, 69 feedback responses were received on the Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy. Officers consider this to be a suitable quantum of feedback to understand general community sentiment. The Consultation Summary Report (**Attachment 2**) provides a detailed overview of the consultation results.

Engage Boroondara survey

Strategic Direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations

There was strong support for 'Strategic Direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations', with 75.8% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with this direction.

More housing close to services and transport

A large number of respondents expressed support for more housing, particularly medium density housing close to services and transport.

Officers note this strategic direction seeks to guide future housing development towards areas well located in relation to existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport. These areas include Major Activity Centres, commercial corridors and along some main roads (as shown in the Framework Plan in the Housing Strategy).

Greater diversity of housing including social and affordable housing

There was strong sentiment expressed for providing diverse housing to cater for downsizers, older residents, young people, and for people with diverse backgrounds or economic circumstances. There was also feedback supporting an increase in social and affordable housing provision in the municipality.

The final Boroondara Housing Strategy identifies an action to continue to support the delivery of diverse housing stock through planning policies and controls in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. Further actions have been identified within the Housing Strategy to investigate ageing-in-place housing needs and options for community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses. The Housing Strategy also seeks to investigate social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses and investigate whether alternative housing models can deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options.

Heritage and character

A number of respondents raised concerns about the loss of heritage and valued neighbourhood character. Emphasis was placed on the importance of balancing neighbourhood character and new housing needs. Concerns were expressed in relation to impacts of heritage controls on development opportunities.

Officers note Council has undertaken the Municipal Wide Heritage Gap Study, which was completed over a six-year period and included an additional 5,000 properties in the Heritage Overlay. An action is included in the Housing Strategy to review the Neighbourhood Character Policy (including Precinct Statements) to ensure policy directions are delivering housing which respects and enhances the preferred character. The inclusion of a property in the Heritage Overlay does not necessarily prohibit property development but rather triggers the need for a planning permit to require an assessment against Council's heritage policies in the planning scheme.

Some respondents sought clarity on housing in 'appropriate locations'.

Officers' recommendations

Officers recommend additional clarification be included in the final Housing Strategy around what 'appropriate locations' means.

Strategic Direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence

There was very strong support for 'Strategic Direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence' with 91.9% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the direction.

Energy-efficient housing design

A large number of respondents noted well-designed, energy-efficient housing is necessary to minimise impacts on the environment and expressed support for more Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) principles being utilised, including 7-star energy ratings, with reference to Council's Climate Action Plan. Some respondents commented Council should progress a planning scheme amendment to introduce stronger ESD provisions into the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Council is required to follow a detailed process to amend the planning scheme including final approval from the Minister for Planning to introduce ESD requirements. To date, it has been Council's position for these issues to be managed through state-wide ESD provisions. Nonetheless, Boroondara Council joined 23 other Councils to seek changes to Victorian Planning Schemes to introduce stronger ESD policy directions and is awaiting support from the Minister for Planning to progress a Planning Scheme Amendment. Officers will continue to work closely with the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) to advocate for improved planning controls.

Higher density housing

Some respondents commented higher density housing is more sustainable as it is more energy- and resource-efficient. Other respondents commented that more housing, including higher density, should be allowed in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ). Officers note the Housing Strategy continues to support higher density housing in our activity centres, and along some commercial and transport corridors close to existing services, public transport, amenity and infrastructure. The NRZ generally covers established residential streets with limited capacity to accommodate significant future housing change given a focus on retaining existing character.

Design excellence

There was commentary made about the importance of good design and its positive impact on Boroondara's character. Comments were made about utilising basic design principles such as awnings, cross-ventilation, orientation to minimise the need on heating/cooling requirements. Reuse of existing buildings was also put forth as an alternative to demolition as it is resource inefficient. There was also feedback about the need to incorporate universal design principles to ensure houses are resilient and can adapt to the needs of residents over time. Officers note Council has finalised *Design Excellence in the City of Boroondara* to communicate Boroondara's design expectations, and this document will be released shortly. This is the first in a series of design guidelines to be produced by Council.

Tree canopy and garden space

Feedback was received supporting an increase in tree canopy and garden space associated with new housing developments. Officers note Council is currently drafting a Tree Canopy Strategy to ensure there is clearer guidance around this matter.

Officers' recommendations

Officers noted areas of support, interest or concern raised by respondents. Actions currently underway by Council or listed in the Housing Strategy are responding to many comments made in the feedback. Therefore, no further changes to the final Housing Strategy are recommended.

Strategic Direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future

There was very strong support for '*Strategic Direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future*', with 82.2% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with this direction.

Increase in social and affordable housing

Many respondents expressed their support for more social and affordable housing, particularly for cohorts such as young people, families, women, people experiencing homelessness, essential workers, people on low incomes and older people. There were also comments on the use of airspace above Council-owned land for this type of housing.

It has been a long-held position of Council the provision of social and affordable housing is a Victorian and Federal Government responsibility, and Council-owned land should not be divested for such use. The position of Council has been to support an increase in social and affordable housing on land owned by the Federal or Victorian Governments and to advocate to and work with other levels of government, community housing providers and the private sector to provide social and affordable housing.

An action within the Housing Strategy identifies further investigation into social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses. A further action is to investigate whether alternative housing models can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara.

Diversity in housing for diverse community and needs

There was strong sentiment for the need for a diversity of housing types to cater for the community, including greater numbers of bedrooms in higher density apartments and better options for older people. Actions within the Housing Strategy include:

- Investigate strengthening local policy provisions for the delivery of a range of dwelling sizes and bedrooms in 10+ dwelling developments.
- Investigate ageing-in-place housing needs and options for community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses.

Adaptable housing

Some respondents commented houses need to be adaptable to change with the needs of occupants. An action is included in the Housing Strategy to investigate strengthening local planning policy provisions to ensure new housing is adaptable and accessible.

Commercial buildings for residential use

Some feedback from respondents suggested underutilised commercial/office space should be considered for conversion to residential uses. Officers' position is it is important to maintain land zoned for commercial uses to support a strong economy in Boroondara. An action in the Housing Strategy is to review the Neighbourhood and Local Shopping Centres network to understand the economic role and function of centres including future housing provision. As part of Strategic Planning's work program, initial work on this has already commenced.

Planning tools for social and affordable housing delivery

Commentary from some respondents included better utilisation of planning tools/mechanisms and policy to increase the provision of social and affordable housing such as negotiating section 173 agreements with property developers, advocating for inclusionary zoning and as-of-right development for secondary dwellings. Officers have the ability to negotiate section 173 agreements for affordable housing where appropriate. To date, it has been Council's position social and affordable housing provision is a Victorian Government responsibility.

Planning policies through the Boroondara Planning Scheme must be consistent with and cannot contradict state-wide policy directions. Council is required to follow a detailed process to amend the planning scheme including final approval from the Minister for Planning to introduce any new planning policy.

Vacant properties

Some feedback was provided advocating for levies on vacant properties. Occupancy rates were lower than usual at the 2021 Census, however although some unoccupied dwellings are available stock, many would have been only temporarily unoccupied due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. A return to higher occupancy rates is forecast. An action within the Housing Strategy is to monitor population and dwelling forecasts, particularly having regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on population and housing needs and to prepare an interim report within 2 years.

Officers' recommendations

Officers note areas of support, interest or concern raised by respondents. Actions currently underway by Council or listed in the final Housing Strategy are responding to many comments made in the feedback. Therefore, no changes to the Housing Strategy are recommended on these issues.

Community consultation drop-in sessions

A small number of people attended drop-in sessions on 23 May 2023 and 30 May 2023. Areas of interest included:

- Seeking an overview of the Draft Strategy.
- Council's social and affordable housing position.
- Vacant properties in Boroondara and its impact on housing supply.
- Homelessness and Council's response process.
- Protection of heritage.

Officers' recommendations

Officers noted areas of interest or concern raised by attendees. No recommended changes are proposed to the Housing Strategy.

Feedback via post or email

Community Housing

Servants Community Housing (Servants) presented a comprehensive submission to the Draft Strategy. The submission put forward two recommendations:

- Council adopt specific targets to increase social and affordable housing within Boroondara.
- Council endorse the use of Council-owned land to increase supply of social and affordable housing.

To date, it has been Council's position the provision of social and affordable housing is a Victorian and Federal Government responsibility, and Council-owned land should not be divested for such use. Council supports an increase in social and affordable housing on land owned by the Federal or Victorian Governments, and supports advocacy to other levels of government, community housing providers and the private sector to provide social and affordable housing.

Officers' recommendations

Officers note that with a rise in community interest in social and affordable housing provision in Boroondara, there may be opportunities to revisit this area in future, however no recommended changes are proposed to the Housing Strategy.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Two submissions were received regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience of racialised trauma, cultural homelessness, displacement, dispossession and loss of identity and culture, and the impact secure housing has on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' safe belonging in the community. One of the submissions was anonymous feedback received from a person outlining their lived experience as a subsidised housing tenant.

Officers acknowledge the often complex and devastating experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The *Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-2026* recognises there is a significant gap between the health status of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the non-Aboriginal population, and access to secure housing can impact this.

Officers' recommendations

Officers recommend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples be captured in the final Housing Strategy as an additional key group in critical need of housing.

General

A detailed response raised a number of concerns including around data. These are discussed in greater detail in the Consultation Summary Report.

Officers' recommendations

An additional action be added to the final Housing Strategy to enhance internal processes for development data collection.

Proposed changes to the Boroondara Housing Strategy as a result of community feedback

Feedback provided by the community has helped identify where further refinement can be made and has informed proposed changes to the Housing Strategy at **Attachment 3**.

It is proposed the following changes are made to the Housing Strategy:

- Addition of text capturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as an additional key group in critical need of housing.
- Additional clarification added to the Housing Strategy around what 'appropriate locations' means.
- An additional action be added to the Housing Strategy to enhance internal processes for development data collection.

Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan

A Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan at **Attachment 4** lists each action from the Strategy; alignment to strategic directions; timeframe for delivery; and relevant departments responsible for delivery, budget and resourcing.

5. Consultation/communication

An internal Housing Strategy Steering Committee has met at key stages of the project to oversee the development of the Housing Strategy. The Committee consisted of senior officers from Strategic Planning, Placemaking, Statutory Planning, Community Planning, Customer and Communications and Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces.

A Communications Plan and an Engagement Plan was prepared prior to community consultation. The consultation process was undertaken in accordance with Council's standard process and any statutory obligations and was for a period of 4 weeks from 17 May until 16 June 2023.

Submitters that provided their contact details have been invited in writing to this UPDC meeting. Should the UPDC resolve to adopt the final Boroondara Housing Strategy, officers will release the document on Council's website following completion of final checks for document accessibility.

6. Financial and resource implications

Preparation of the Boroondara Housing Strategy and associated costs have been funded by the Planning and Placemaking operating budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years.

Implementation of actions identified in the final Boroondara Housing Strategy will require future funding from the Planning and Placemaking operating budget or through Priority Project funding, where required.

7. Governance issues

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a general or material conflict of interest requiring disclosure under chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Boroondara City Council.

The recommendation contained in this report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 as it does not raise any human rights issues.

8. Social and environmental issues

The Boroondara Housing Strategy identifies potential policy needs and actions to ensure social and environmental challenges can be addressed.

9. Evaluation and review

Given the significant fluctuations in population growth in recent years, the Housing Strategy includes an action to continue to monitor data, particularly COVID 19 pandemic recovery, on population and housing needs and undertake an interim review 2 years after adoption.

Manager: David Cowan, Manager Planning and Placemaking

Report officer: Jessica Donaldson, Principal Strategic Planner



Boroondara Housing Strategy

September 2023





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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Boroondara acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Introduction

Housing Strategy overview

The Boroondara Housing Strategy identifies how best to accommodate our community's housing needs over the next 15 years.

Council heard through the Boroondara Community Plan consultation that our community wants us to protect our existing heritage and valued neighbourhood character. It is also important to understand and respond to issues around housing diversity, affordability, equity and sustainability.

The Housing Strategy sets out key housing related needs and challenges in Boroondara. It identifies strategic directions and responses to support our community and to work with social housing providers, developers and the State Government to meet the different housing needs of Boroondara – now and into the future.

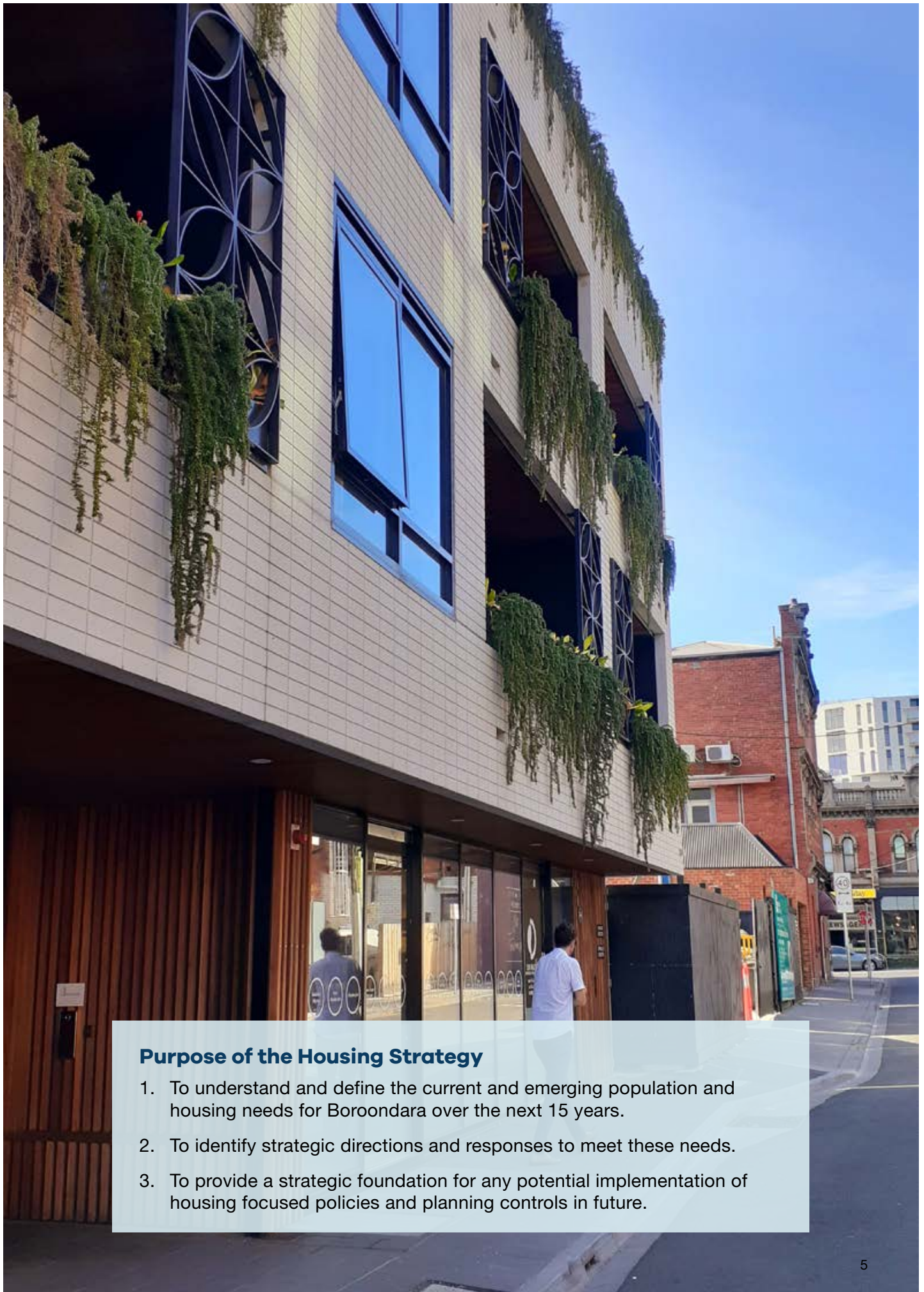
The Victorian State Government's *Planning Practice Note 90 – Planning for Housing* requires a housing strategy to:

- Ensure a range of housing opportunities are available across the municipality to meet the needs of the projected population.
- Outline the strategies and implementation mechanisms to accommodate the projected population and household needs.
- Identify where and how the housing needs of the future population will be met across the municipality.
- Identify suitable locations for housing growth including areas close to services, jobs, public transport (such as activity centres and commercial corridors).

The Housing Strategy is not a tool to control population growth or prevent different types of housing from being developed. It presents an opportunity to guide the provision of housing to appropriate locations, providing appropriate choices for current and future residents, in a sustainable manner.

The release of the Housing Strategy will not result in the immediate rezoning of land or a change in planning policy and controls. It will identify specific areas where Council, within our local government role and sphere of influence, will need to focus more detailed work in a short to medium timeframe.

The Housing Strategy is an adopted Council document that sits alongside other State and local plans and strategies, such as the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31*. It is one of Council's key strategic documents and needs to be considered in local policy development and decision making (refer to the appendix for Policy Context).



Purpose of the Housing Strategy

1. To understand and define the current and emerging population and housing needs for Boroondara over the next 15 years.
2. To identify strategic directions and responses to meet these needs.
3. To provide a strategic foundation for any potential implementation of housing focused policies and planning controls in future.

Why is housing important?

Housing is a complex issue with implications for social wellbeing, equality, transport, the economy and the environment. In its simplest form, it is a basic necessity and human right*¹ for all people to live a healthy life.

Housing provides a secure foundation for individuals to live the lives they want.

People want and need different things from housing throughout their lives. It is therefore important to have the right kinds of housing in the right locations allowing people to meet their employment, transport, services and social connection needs.

Housing needs to be suitable for different types of households including those with children, singles, older age, people of all abilities and different incomes. Housing is essential to support vulnerable people to live independently and with dignity.

Housing can also provide financial security. Housing at various price points needs to be available to ensure affordability for a wide range of people. Housing should not be a source of undue financial stress.





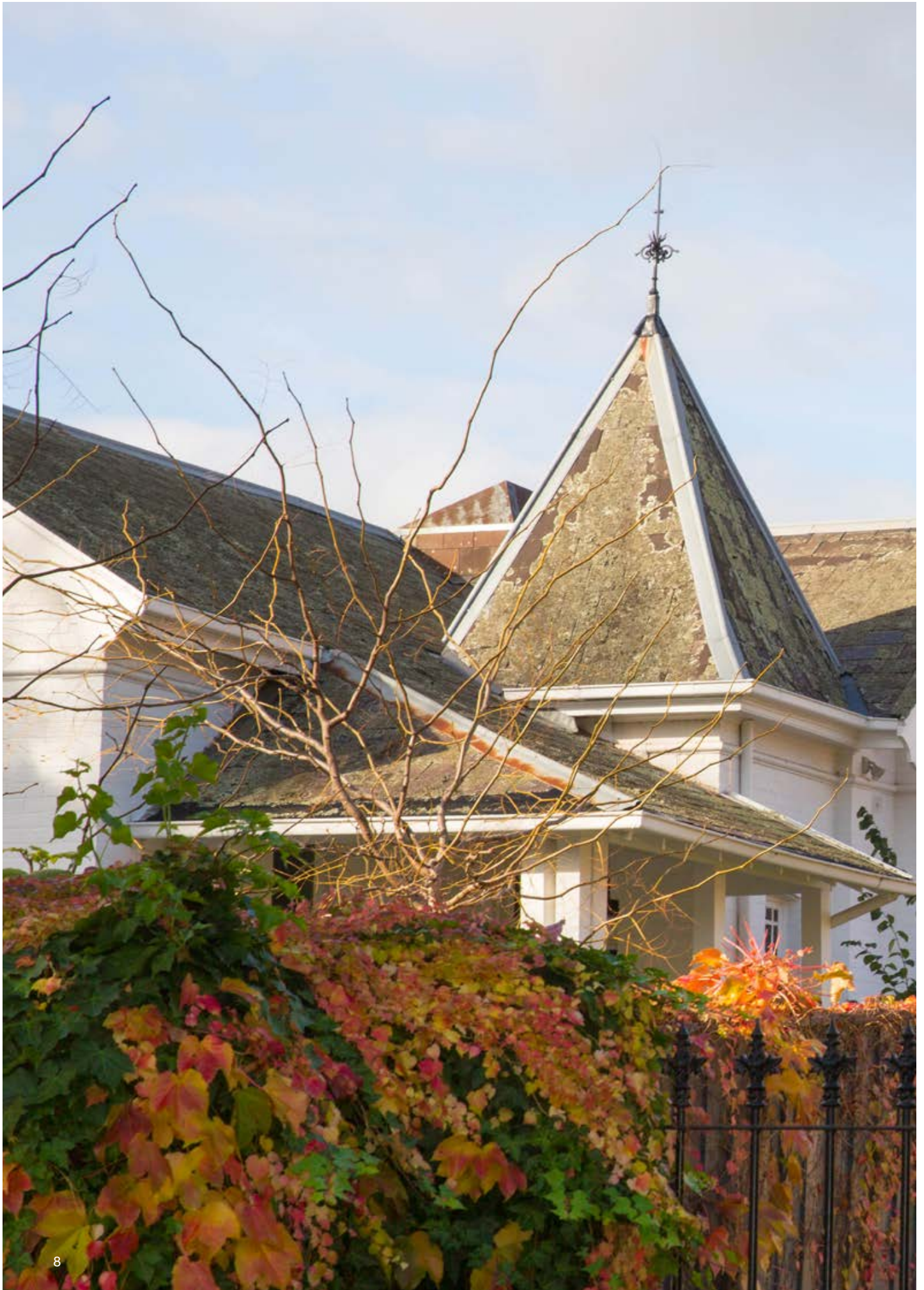
What our community values

Boroondara has undertaken extensive engagement activities with the community over the last few years. Most recently, Council updated the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31*, which sets out the vision for our municipality based on community values, aspirations and priorities. The Boroondara Community Plan builds on what makes Boroondara a great place to live, work, study and play.

Our community expressed how important it is for all its members, especially those in need, to be considered by Council in our planning, delivery, partnership and advocacy.

Focusing on the demands of today, while exploring the possibilities of tomorrow, is an important balancing act. The way we live, socialise, work, commute and connect will continue to evolve in coming years. We recognise too, the real threat to our environment, to our health and wellbeing, and to the quality of life of current and future generations resulting from climate change. How we approach and respond to these changes will be critically important.

Housing plays a key role in Boroondara's collective identity – it contributes to the look and feel of our streets and neighbourhoods. Council knows that protecting and respecting the character of Boroondara, while facilitating appropriate, well-designed development (that includes diversity in housing size and affordability) matters to our community. We will therefore continue to embrace diversity, foster inclusion, respect heritage, protect the environment and support people to live their best lives.



The community vision as outlined in the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* is for a 'sustainable and inclusive community'.

Through consultation on the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031*, our community said:

We value our local heritage. We value Council's advocacy to protect the distinct character of our neighbourhood streets and carefully regulate new development.

Diversity in housing size and affordability is also important to us.

We value these things because they contribute to Boroondara's uniqueness and make it an attractive place to live, work and play.

Setting the scene

Boroondara forms part of the inner eastern region around the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD), bordered by the cities of Banyule, Manningham, Whitehorse, Monash, Stonnington and Yarra.

The City enjoys a high degree of accessibility to the surrounding region, particularly in an east/west direction. The municipality is well serviced by public transport and main arterial roads and freeways that pass either through the City or along its borders.

Boroondara has an extensive network of commercial centres comprising three major activity centres (Camberwell Junction, Kew Junction and Glenferrie), 31 neighbourhood centres and four commercial corridors. There are also 15 local centres throughout the municipality.

Boroondara is a custodian of a portion of the Yarra River and its environs, one of the most important riverine environments in Victoria. The Yarra River environs contain most of Boroondara's regional open space and provide a significant landscape feature within the municipality.

Our City is an attractive and highly sought after residential area with a mix of housing types. Set in a green, treed environment, it is known for extremely high levels of amenity.

Residential development is the dominant land use within the City with some of the finest residential streets in Melbourne.

The character of Boroondara is one of the key features that makes Boroondara special. It is derived from both the natural setting and the way our City has developed over time. The inter-war and post-war subdivision patterns are very distinctive. The City is a prime example of the 'Garden Suburb' form of development, highlighting the important contribution of nature strips, trees and private gardens.





Who are we?

Understanding the population and household characteristics of Boroondara provides a good insight into Boroondara's housing role and function, and how it is likely to change in the future.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates that Boroondara was home to 169,901 residents in 2021². Most live in Boroondara's 72,812 private dwellings³. Boroondara residents also occupy other forms of accommodation including aged care facilities, residential colleges, and rooming houses.

Boroondara's community profile varies across its geography. For example, in Hawthorn, home to Swinburne University and much of Boroondara's higher density housing, around one in four residents are aged in their 20s⁴. In Balwyn North, which is close to several well-regarded schools and where most homes have at least four bedrooms⁵, almost half of households are couples with children⁶, and only one in nine residents is in their 20s⁷.

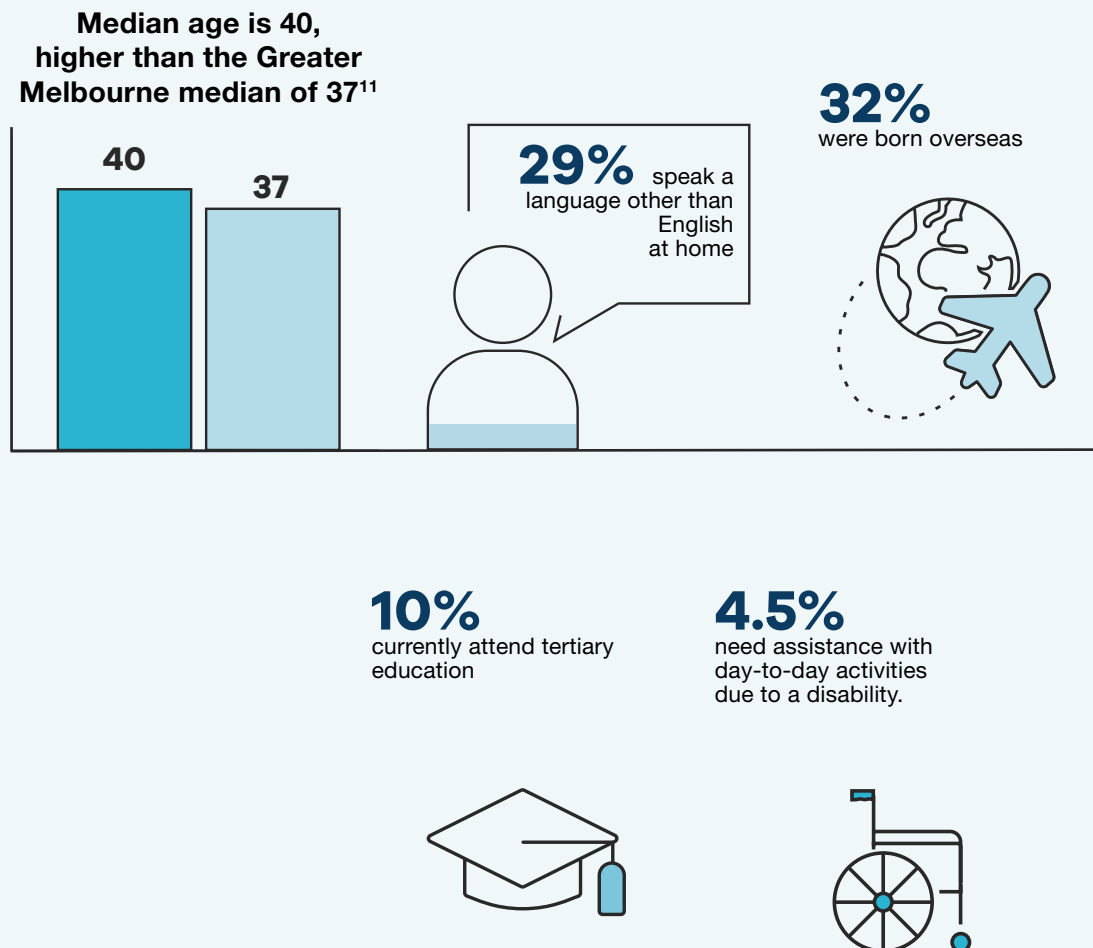
The community is made up of 52% females and 48% males⁸.

In 2021, most of those who work within the City of Boroondara (70%)⁹ lived outside the municipality.



Our residents¹⁰

A snapshot:



Our households^{12, 13}

A snapshot:

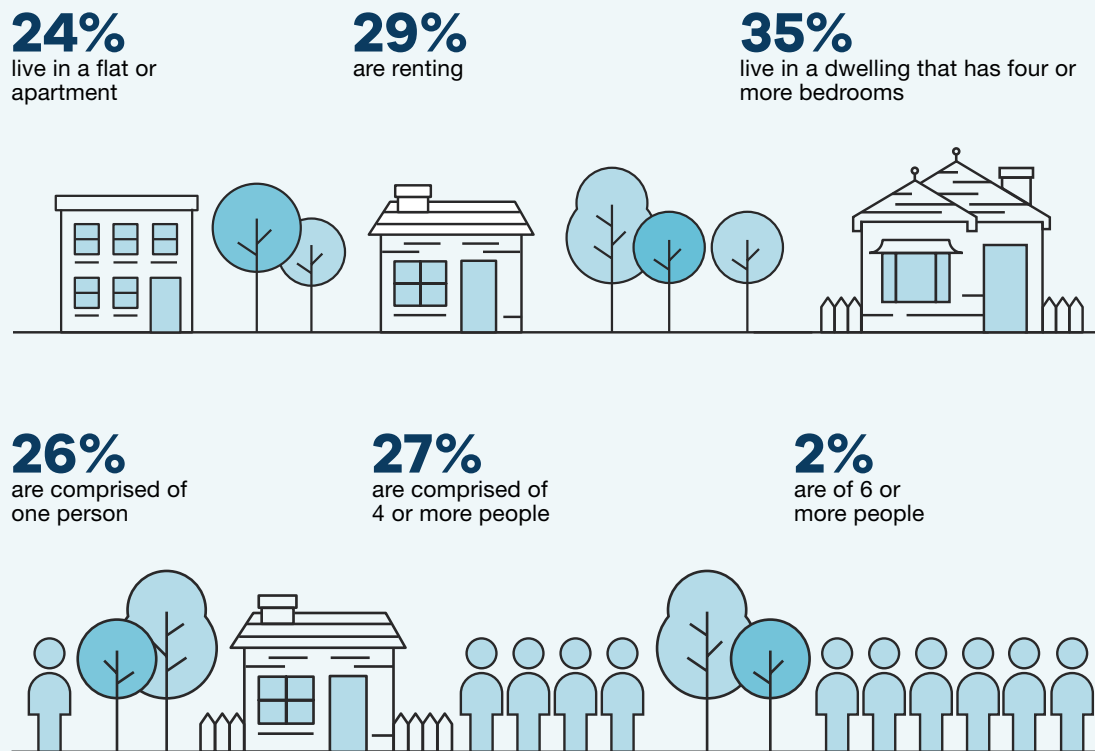
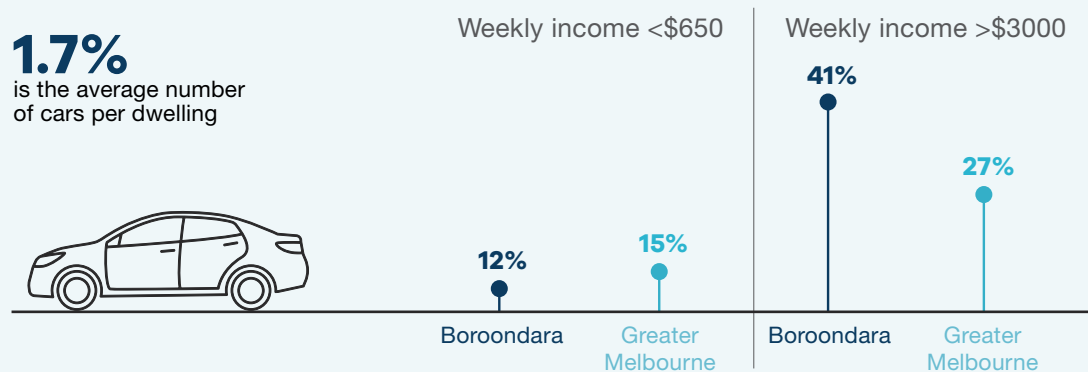


Chart 1: Boroondara households are more likely than households across Greater Melbourne to have a weekly income in excess of \$3000.



How do we live?

With 169,901 residents in 2021, Boroondara is the 11th most populous and the 8th most densely populated of Melbourne's 31 LGAs¹⁴. In 2011, Boroondara was the 5th most populous and 6th most densely populated Melbourne LGA¹⁵.

The number of private¹⁶ dwellings in Boroondara grew 780 per annum on average between 2011 and 2021¹⁷. This is equivalent to a 12% growth over 10 years compared to 26% across Greater Melbourne. Boroondara has an annual growth rate of 1.2% in comparison to Yarra 3.6%, Melbourne 9.4%, Banyule 1%, Manningham 1.7%, Whitehorse 1.6%, Monash 1.6% and Stonnington 2.7%.

At the 2021 Census, 11% of our 72,812 private dwellings were unoccupied. This is a continuation of a gradual upward trend. In 2011, 8% were unoccupied. This is similar to Greater Melbourne, where the proportion of unoccupied dwellings increased from 9% in 2011 to 10% in 2021¹⁸. It is important to note that although some of these unoccupied dwellings are available stock, many would have been only temporarily unoccupied. For example, the COVID 19 pandemic restrictions prevented the arrival/return of residents (including international students) from overseas, residents were temporarily living in second homes elsewhere, while other dwellings may have been waiting for a new owner or tenant to move in, being renovated or awaiting demolition.

Boroondara households had an average size of 2.5 people¹⁹. This continuation of the gradual downward trend in household size has coincided with growth in couple-only and lone person households outpacing growth in family households with children (see Chart 2)²⁰.



Boroondara is the 11th most populous LGA in Melbourne. This is down from 5th in 2011.

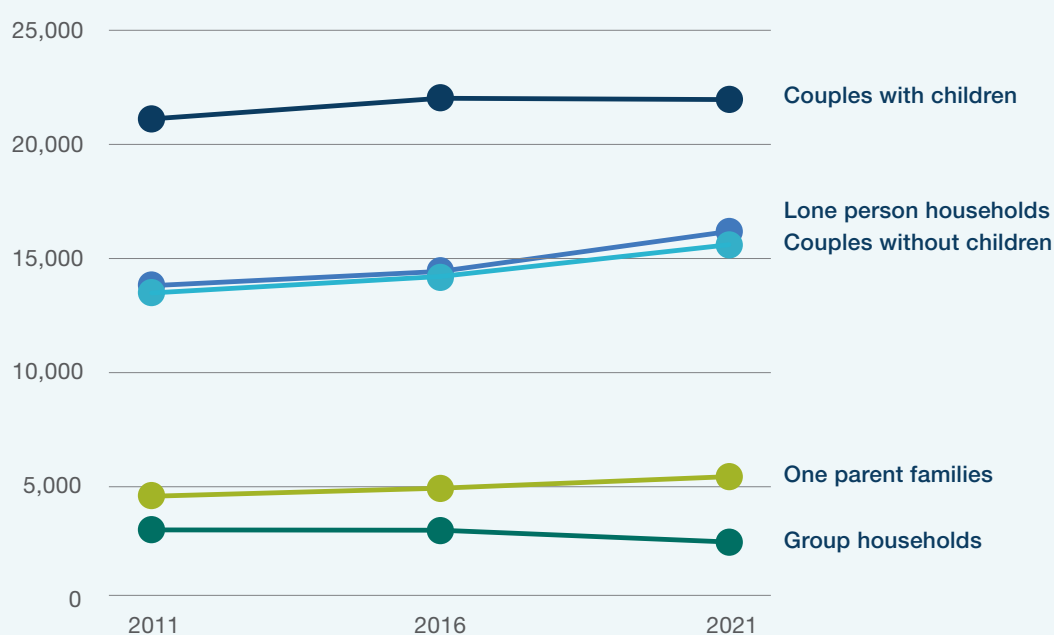


Private dwellings grew in Boroondara at an average of 780 per annum between 2011 and 2021.



The average household size is 2.5 people.

Chart 2: Growth in couple only and lone person household has outpaced growth in couples with children.



Household structure

The makeup of households shapes our understanding of how we live now and identifies patterns to plan for.

The dominant household type in Boroondara is couples with children, making up 34% of all households. However, couples with children may not account for such high proportions of Boroondara households in future. In fact, the number of couples with children in Boroondara was similar at the 2016 and 2021 Censuses, while the overall household count grew²¹.

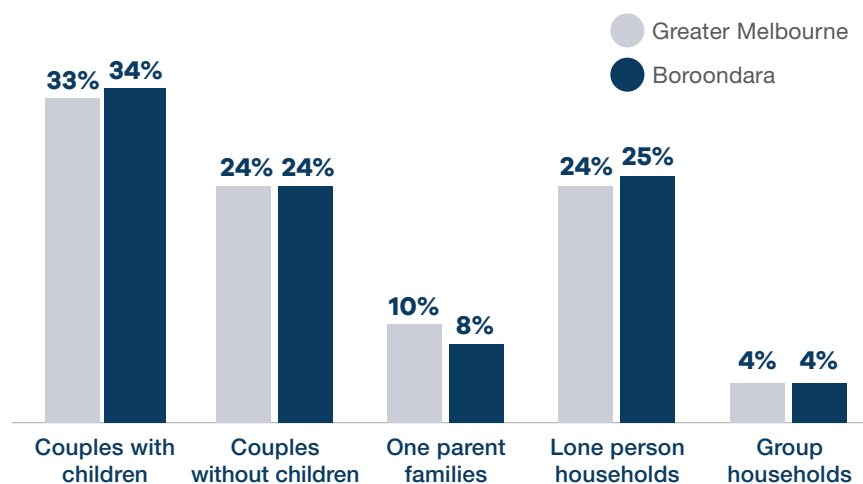
Couples without children and lone person households each increased from 23% of Boroondara households to 24% and 25% of households, respectively, between the 2016 and 2021 Censuses. These household types now account for almost half of all Boroondara households²² (see chart below).

This modest but noteworthy shift toward smaller households suggests potentially changing housing preferences.

Residents aged 65+ are 3.5 times as likely than younger residents to live in couple-only or single households²³. With our ageing trend, this shift will likely continue.

Boroondara's household composition is generally similar to that of Greater Melbourne²⁴ (see chart below).

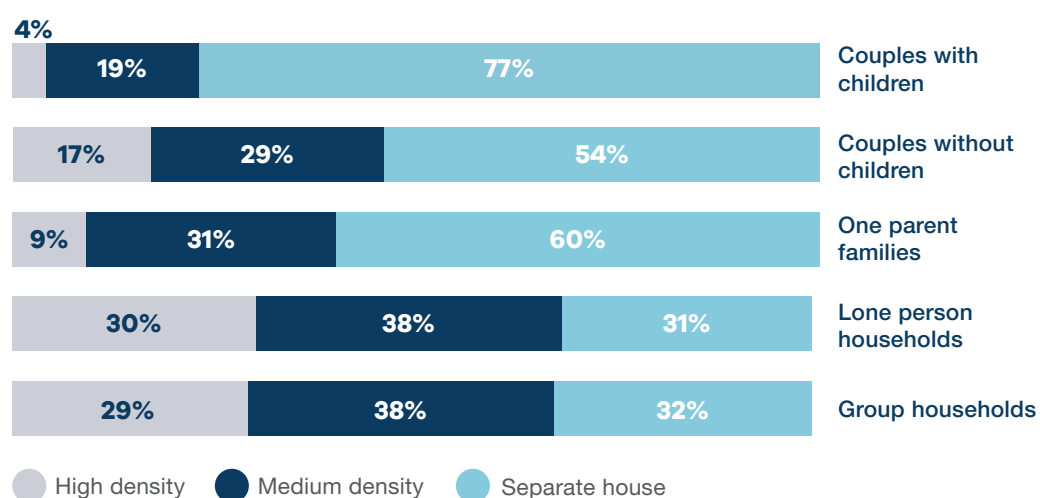
Chart 3: Boroondara has a similar household profile to Greater Melbourne.



A snapshot²⁵ (see chart below):

- Most family households (including couples without children) live in separate/stand-alone houses.
- Lone person and group households have similar occupancy patterns. About one in three live in separate/stand-alone houses and a little less than this live in high density²⁶ settings. The greatest proportion live in medium density²⁷ dwellings.
- A small number (218) of Boroondara households live in houses or flats attached to shops or offices (not shown in the chart). Most of these households are either lone person or group households.

Chart 4: Most households with children live in separate or stand-alone houses.



Types of housing

The dominant dwelling type in Boroondara is separate/standalone house (53% in 2021). The remainder of housing is made up of medium (29%) and high density (18%) housing²⁸ (see chart below).

Net growth in Boroondara since 2011 has been mainly in high-density dwellings²⁹, which tend to have two or fewer bedrooms. Medium density dwellings tend to have two or three bedrooms, and most separate/stand-alone houses have at least four bedrooms³⁰ (see charts below).

Chart 5: Just over half of the dwellings in Boroondara are separate/stand-alone houses.

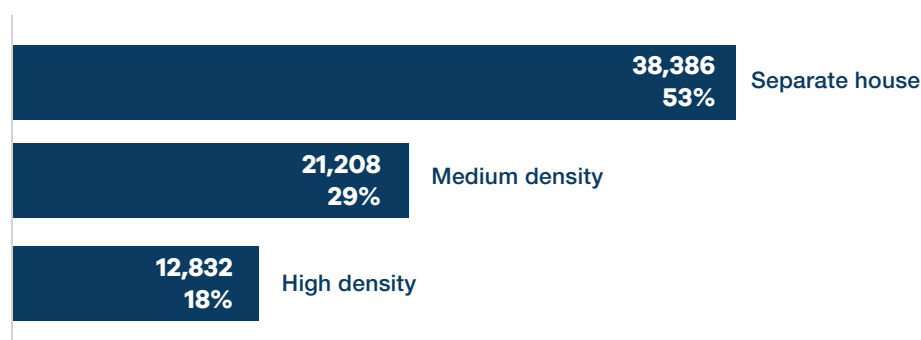
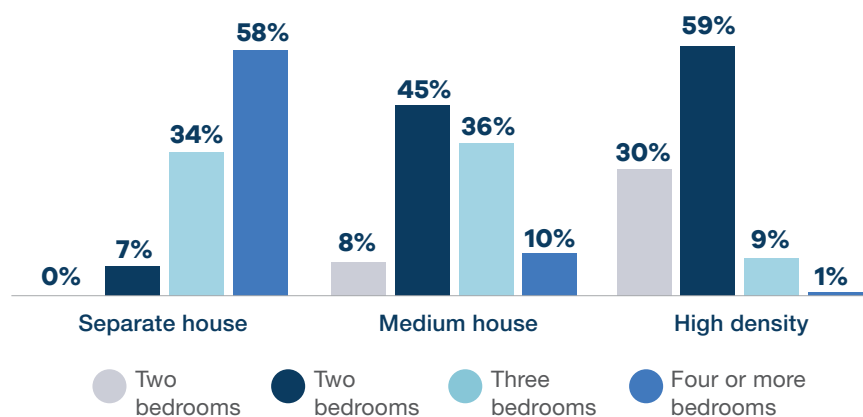


Chart 6: Most separate/stand-alone houses in Boroondara have at least four bedrooms and most high-density dwellings have two bedrooms. Based on private dwellings counted in the 2021 Census, excluding visitor only and non-classifiable.



The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in significant and wide-ranging impacts on the economy which are likely to disrupt normal patterns of building approvals³¹. For example, the number of new Boroondara dwellings approved in building permits in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were the 2nd and 3rd lowest counts of the past 10 years³². The number of net new Boroondara dwellings approved in planning permits in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were the lowest in at least the past seven years³³. This suggests that actual dwelling growth may slow in the next few years.

Chart 7: The proportion of Boroondara households living in dwellings of four or more bedrooms increased between 2011 and 2021.

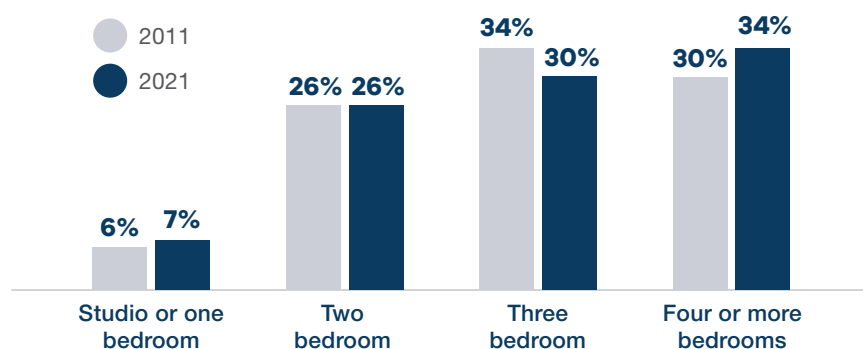
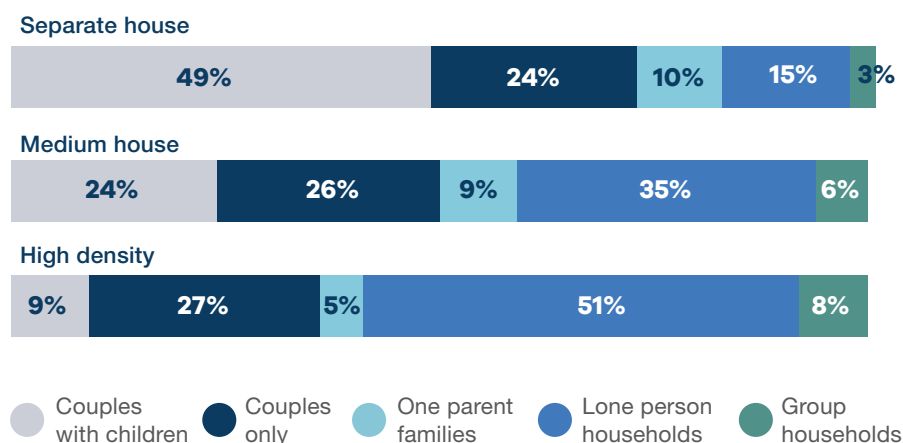


Chart 8: In 2021 most occupied separate houses were occupied by households with children. Most occupied high-density dwellings are occupied by one person.



Patterns of housing development

It is important to understand where and what types of housing development have been occurring within the municipality over a period of time. This helps to interpret what is being sought and delivered by housing policy and the market.

Small scale development

Between 2005 to mid-2022, housing development has been predominantly small-scale and spread fairly evenly across the City.

Small scale development has increased housing diversity in our residential neighbourhoods and provided more housing choice for residents.

Of these developments, approximately 77% delivered 2-3 dwellings (e.g. dual occupancy and townhouse developments). The remaining projects delivered between 4-9 dwellings (e.g. townhouses and low-rise apartments).

Large scale development

Larger scale development has mostly occurred in major Activity Centres, within or close to neighbourhood activity centres, and along main roads that are close to train and tram stops.

These larger developments have played an important role in providing more housing diversity and choice for residents near amenity and services with access to jobs and public transport. Those developments with commercial uses at ground level have contributed to activating streets.

This pattern of development is consistent with the policy position at both state and local level.

It is noted that some developments have occurred more along public transport corridors and main roads where larger sites tend to be easier to develop and provide a greater level of design flexibility.

Typically, residential developments in these areas are in the form of mid-rise apartment buildings.

Image 1: Map showing the distribution of small scale developments with 2-3 dwellings spread fairly evenly across the City.

Source: City of Boroondara, 2022

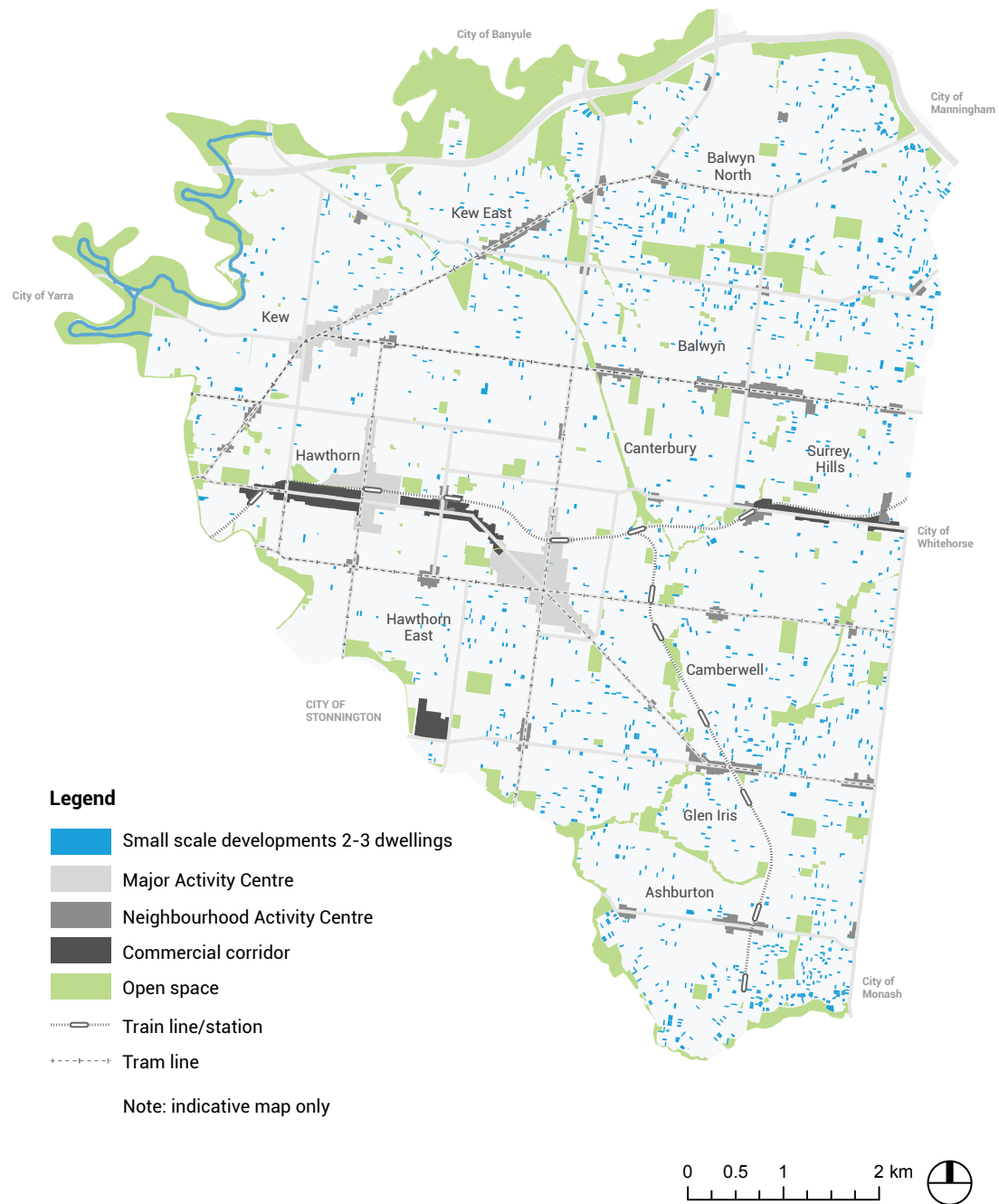


Image 2: Map showing the distribution of small scale developments with 4-9 dwellings spread fairly evenly across the City with less frequency.

Source: City of Boroondara, 2022

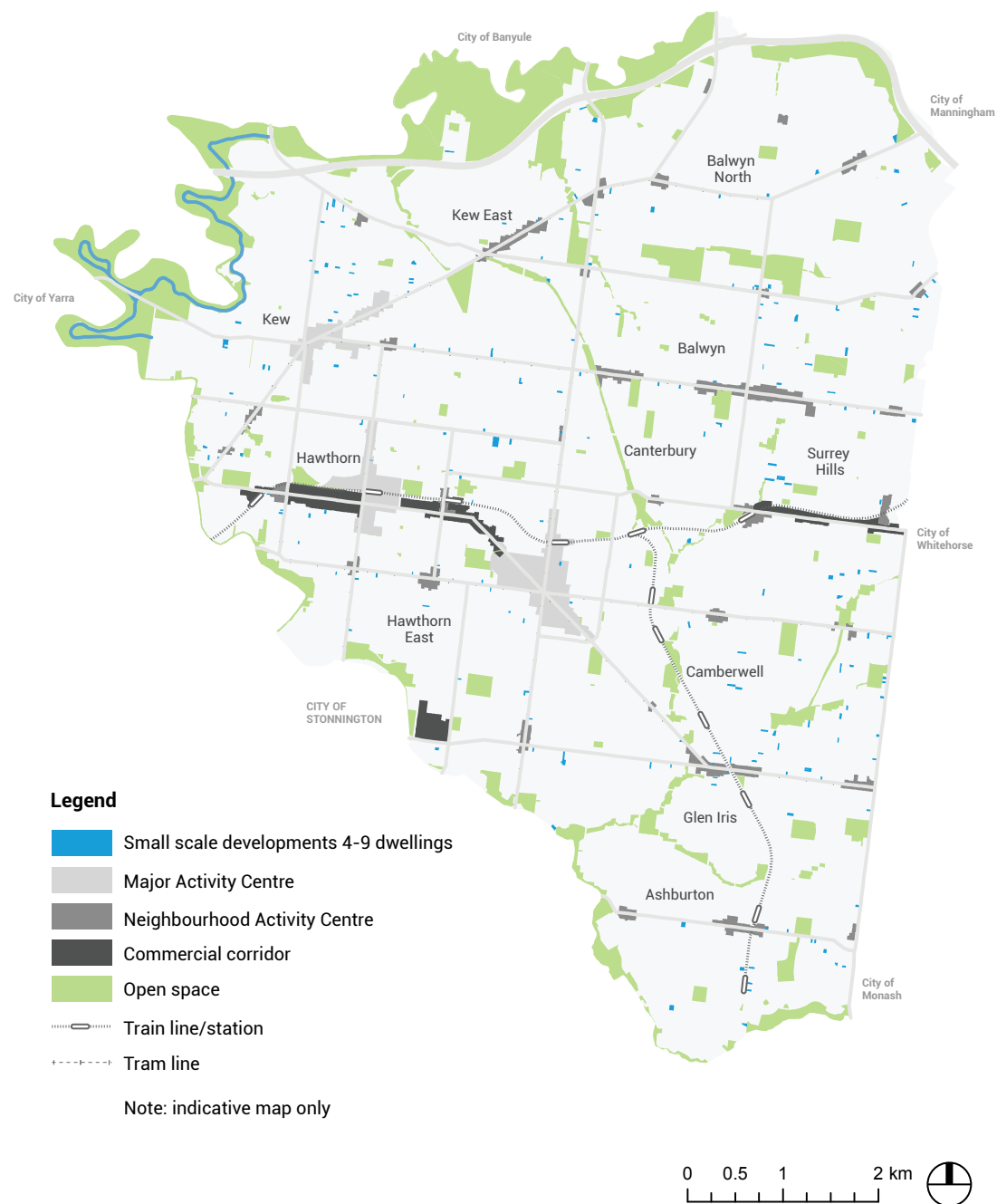
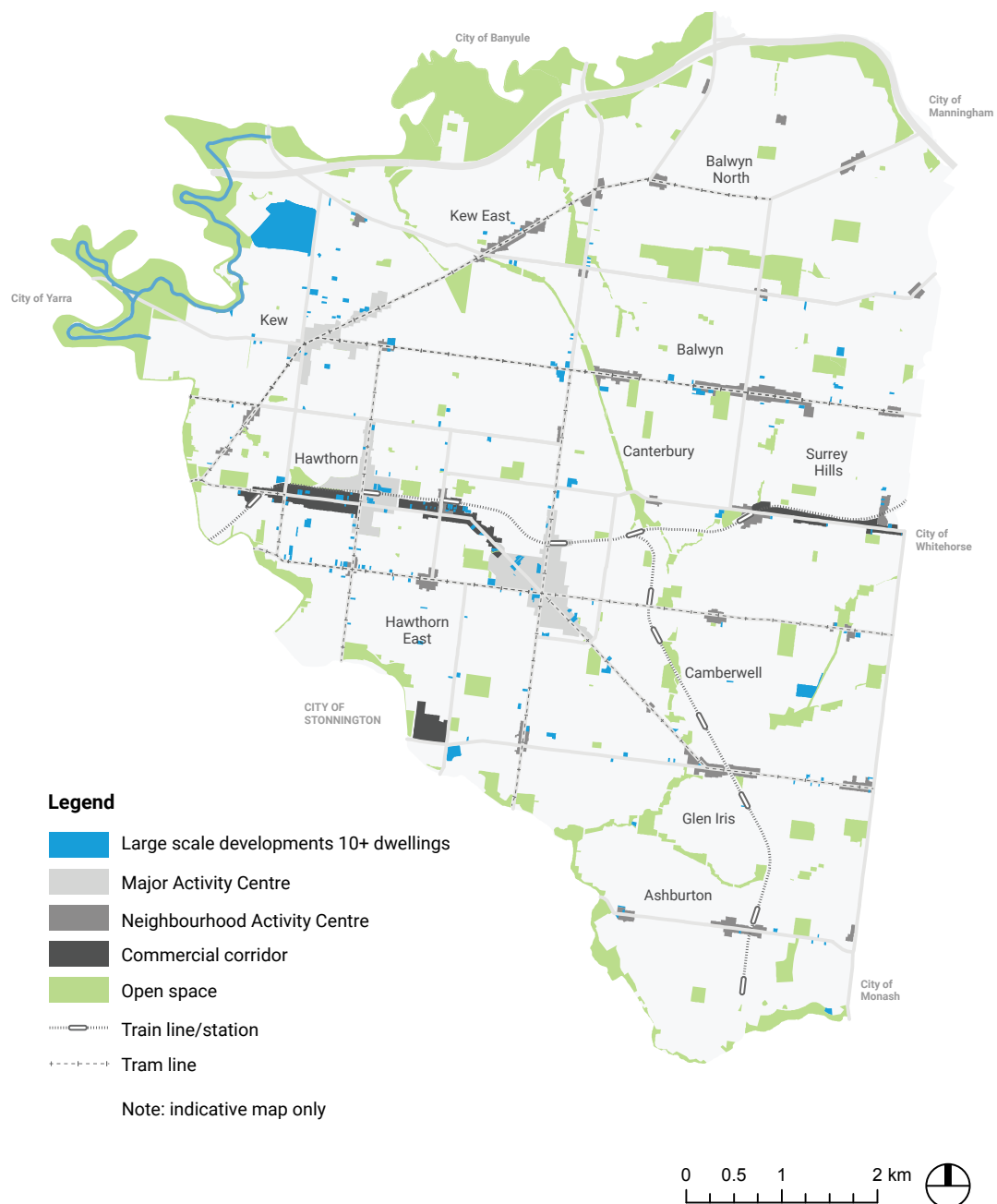


Image 3: Map showing the distribution of larger scale developments with 10+ dwellings mostly occurring in and around major and neighbourhood activity centres and commercial corridors, and public transport lines.

Source: City of Boroondara, 2022



Cost of housing

Of the occupied dwellings in Boroondara in 2021, the majority were either owned outright (38% versus 29% across Greater Melbourne) or had a mortgage (29%), followed by private rentals (27%)³⁴.

In the December quarter of 2021, the median house price in Boroondara ranged from \$2.21M in Hawthorn East to \$3.39M in Canterbury and units were between \$610K in Hawthorn and \$1.3M in Ashburton^{35,36} (see Table 1²⁷). Across Metropolitan Melbourne the median house price was \$950K³⁸.

At the 2021 Census, the median mortgage repayment per month in Boroondara was \$3,000, high relative to \$2,000 across Greater Melbourne, but more consistent with Inner South-East Metropolitan Partnership councils (at between \$2,400 for Glen Eira and \$3,000 for Bayside)³⁹.

Median weekly rents⁴⁰ in Boroondara during the December Quarter of 2021 were higher than the Metropolitan Melbourne median (\$430 weekly compared to \$400) and increases as dwellings increase in size. The median weekly rent for a four-bedroom house in Boroondara costs more than double that of metropolitan Melbourne overall (\$923 compared to \$450)⁴¹.

At the time of writing, increases in rental and mortgage costs have added to housing affordability issues.

At the 2021 Census, Boroondara was ranked 27 out of 31 Greater Melbourne LGAs for the proportion of households in social housing (with rank 1 having the highest proportion of households in social housing). In June 2021 there were 796 social housing dwellings in Boroondara⁴² which represents approximately 1.1% of all Boroondara dwellings. This includes housing managed by not-for-profit housing associations such as Servants Community Housing.

The median house price in Boroondara ranged from \$2.21M in Hawthorn East to \$3.39M in Canterbury.

\$3000 is the median mortgage repayment amount per month in Boroondara.

Only 1.1% of all Boroondara dwellings are social housing.

27% of dwellings are privately rented.

38% of dwellings are owned outright.

Table 1: Showing the median house and unity prices in Boroondara.

Suburb	Houses (December Quarter 2021 Median)	Units (December Quarter 2021 Median)
Ashburton	\$2,250,000	\$1,325,000
Balwyn	\$2,750,000	\$860,000
Balwyn North	\$2,407,000	\$1,111,500
Camberwell	\$2,650,000	\$884,000
Canterbury	\$3,390,000	\$900,000
Deepdene	\$2,731,500	Not enough sales
Glen Iris	\$2,537,500	\$708,500
Hawthorn	\$2,971,000	\$610,000
Hawthorn East	\$2,210,000	\$665,000
Kew	\$2,580,000	\$940,000
Kew East	Not enough sales	\$1,237,400
Surrey Hills	\$2,525,000	\$901,000

Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (December 2021) 'Property sales statistics' (data set), HOUSE 4th Quarter 2021, accessed 13 July 2022;

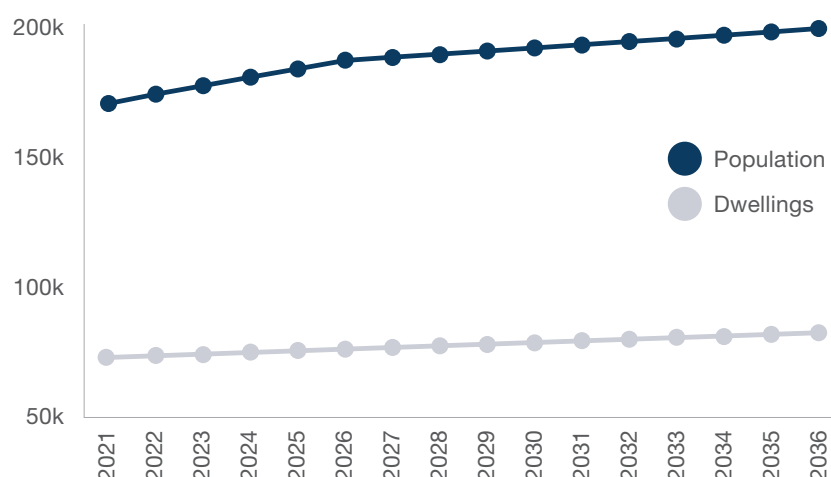
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (December 2021) 'Property sales statistics' (data set), UNITS 4th Quarter 2021, accessed 13 July 2022; Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (December 2021) 'Property sales statistics' (data set), Yearly Summary DecQTB 2021, accessed 13 July 2022.

Population and household projections

Boroondara has experienced steady population growth for most of the past decade. The ABS estimates that Boroondara saw annual increases of between 1300 and 2500 residents every year between 2011 and 2017⁴³. This is an annual growth rate of 1.2%.

Over the next 15 years, Boroondara is forecast to grow by around 28,700 additional residents and 9,400 additional dwellings⁴⁴ to reach a total of approximately 200,000 residents and 80,000 dwellings (see chart below).

Chart 9: Over the next 15 years, Boroondara is forecast to grow to more than 80,000 dwellings and around 200,000 residents in total.



The projected increase in population and dwellings is based on an average household size of 2.4 persons per household (slightly lower than the metropolitan average) with a total of 11,981 additional households. The projected dwelling increase of 9,400 accounts for some of the population growth being accommodated by existing vacant dwellings rather than provision of new dwellings. Boroondara's occupancy rate was lower than usual at the 2021 Census due to restrictions associated with the COVID 19 pandemic. However, this vacancy rate is expected to reduce to normal pre-pandemic levels.

The COVID 19 pandemic slowed population growth across all geographic areas, largely due to less overseas migration. Capital cities are projected to bear the heaviest impacts, with total population across capital cities estimated to be around 5% lower by June 2031 than would have been the case in the absence of COVID 19 pandemic⁴⁵.

This presented the “first overall population decline for the capitals ever recorded by the ABS”, coupled with increased movements to the regions⁴⁶.

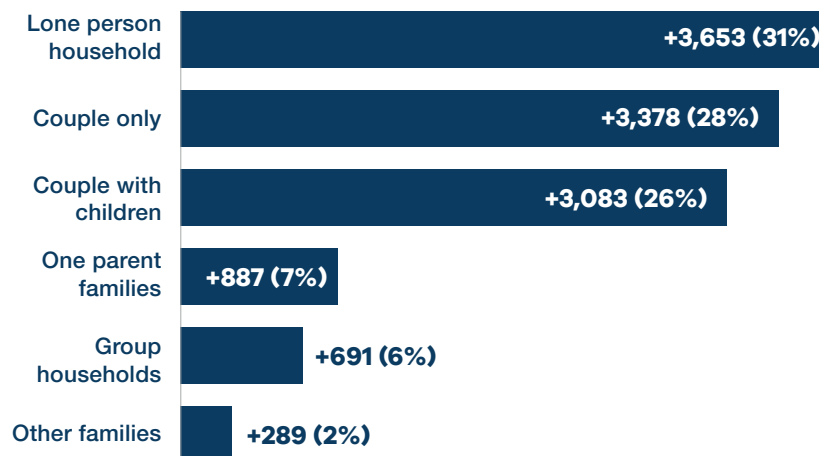
In Boroondara, the pandemic resulted in a population reduction of 5.4% or 9,646 from 2019 to 2021⁴⁷.

This reduction is largely due to the lack of overseas migration which was the key driver for population growth in Boroondara pre-pandemic. Net domestic migration (usually negative) and births/deaths play only minor roles⁴⁸.

Despite the uncertainty the COVID 19 pandemic has introduced, the Federal and State Governments have assumed that migration will return over two-to-three years⁴⁹.

The chart below shows the nature of these forecast changes in terms of forecast additional households⁵⁰.

Chart 10: Forecasts indicate that growth in households of one or two adults (only) between 2021 and 2036 will be greater than growth in households with children and group households.



Boroondara's population in 2021 was 169,901.

Over the next 15 years, Boroondara is forecast to grow by around 28,700 residents and 9,400 dwellings.

Understanding our housing needs and challenges

Melbourne is growing and changing

The State Government's *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* sets the framework for integrating long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning. It directs how to manage the supply of new housing across the city to meet population growth.

Local housing strategies and policies must be consistent with the state-wide policy directions set by the State Government through *Plan Melbourne*.

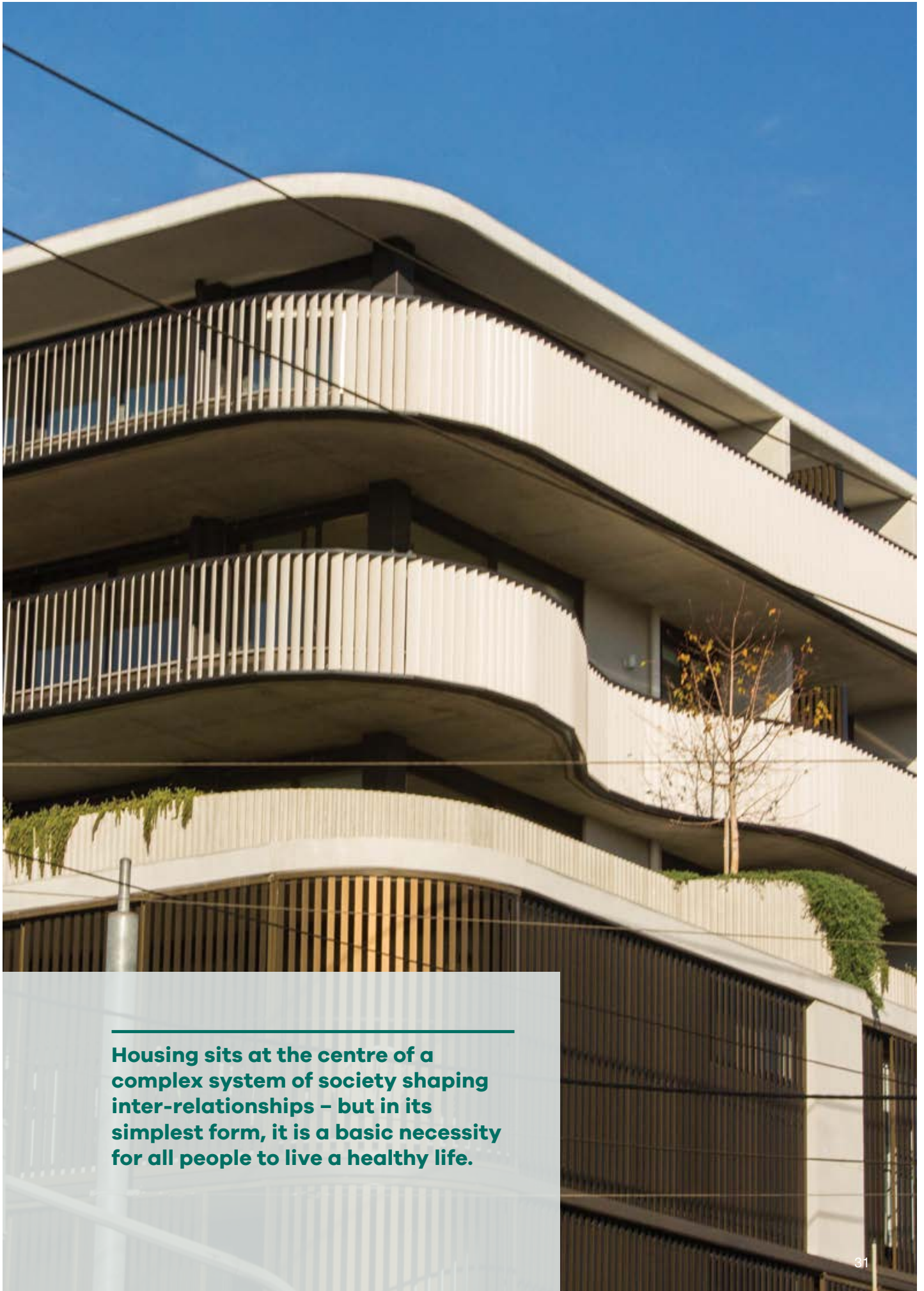
Boroondara will need to accommodate an appropriate level of housing growth to meet future demand.

Council must plan for this population growth while balancing other policy objectives set out in the Boroondara Community Plan (such as protection of neighbourhood character and amenity) as well as other plans such as the Climate Action Plan. A strategic and proactive approach will allow Council to better balance these (sometimes) competing objectives and achieve more consistent outcomes.

While Council cannot directly control population growth, it has an important role as the planning authority to plan for its current and future communities' housing needs. If planned well, growth can deliver a range of benefits, such as greater choice of dwellings to accommodate the different stages of life of our residents, economic development and more inclusive and vibrant neighbourhoods. It is also important to consider and respond to how an increase in population can place pressure on infrastructure, such as parks, drainage, schools and childcare, and aged services. Council understands that this requires a balance between the benefits and costs of providing increased amenity and services to people. It is also acknowledged that the City needs a population that is spread across different age and life stages to help keep various services viable and functional.

The Housing Strategy utilises the most up-to-date data to plan for our current and future needs within this context. This data has helped inform the following key housing needs and challenges in Boroondara, which are discussed further in this section.

- Protecting our heritage and character
- Sustainability
- Design excellence
- Housing diversity and choice
- Housing capacity
- Infrastructure capacity
- An ageing population
- Housing affordability
- Social and affordable housing
- Homelessness



Housing sits at the centre of a complex system of society shaping inter-relationships – but in its simplest form, it is a basic necessity for all people to live a healthy life.

Protecting our heritage and character

Home to some of Melbourne's finest suburbs, Boroondara boasts many exceptional heritage streetscapes and residential, commercial, and grand civic buildings. The tree lined streets, gardens and green open spaces are a vital component to the character of our City.

Boroondara protects its heritage by applying the Heritage Overlay to properties of identified heritage significance. The Heritage Overlay is a tool that requires a planning permit to subdivide land, demolish, build or alter a property that has a level of heritage significance.

Over 15,000 properties in Boroondara are covered by a Heritage Overlay. This places Boroondara in the top 3 councils in Victoria in heritage protection.

Residential areas in Boroondara are also divided into 80 Neighbourhood Character Precincts according to their style and common characteristics. This helps new development respond to and respect the character and history of local areas. Each precinct has a Precinct Statement (a background document in the Boroondara Planning Scheme) that sets out the preferred future character. Neighbourhood character is a critical element of Council's consideration of development proposals.

To safeguard the character of Boroondara, the overwhelming majority of our residential areas are within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (87%). These areas will likely see only limited change in response.

To balance this, the majority of future higher density housing development will continue to be directed to areas that are near public transport, jobs, services and infrastructure such as major activity centres, commercial corridors and along some main roads.

Future change in these areas will be carefully guided by planning policies and by applying suitable zones and overlays. In major activity centres this might include Structure Plans and Design and Development Overlays.

Further work is required to ensure that the Neighbourhood Character Precinct Statements remain effective and up-to-date.



Sustainability

Council knows how important it is to our community to address the increasing threat to our environment and health and wellbeing of current and future generations as a result of our changing climate. Council has developed Boroondara's Climate Action Plan and declared a climate emergency as a response.

Greenhouse gas emissions generated from the construction and operation of buildings is one of the largest contributors to the emergency. Council is leading by example having reduced greenhouse gas emissions from Council-run buildings and services by 80% since 2007-08.

As Boroondara consists of large areas of residential neighbourhoods, housing plays a very important role in creating a more sustainable environment. Improving the energy and water efficiency of new buildings and retrofitting existing ones contributes to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and stormwater pollution. Incorporating sustainable design features and materials into housing will ensure there is greater ability for resilience and adaptation to the changing climate.

With any new housing development, retrofit or addition, there is an expectation that it will contribute to Boroondara's biodiversity and canopy cover. Large trees and landscapes on public and private land help mitigate changing climate and heat island impacts.

Locating new housing close to public transport and cycling infrastructure encourages a more sustainable approach to the movement of people.

To ensure greater accountability for Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) in the development of buildings, Council joined 24 other Councils to seek changes to Victorian Planning Schemes to introduce stronger ESD policy directions.

The State Government has voiced support for a state-wide policy, however, at the time of writing, there is still no dedicated planning policy in the Boroondara Planning Scheme that requires an ESD assessment to be provided as part of a planning application.

Climate change is not only a local issue. It requires a coordinated, consistent and strong policy response across all levels of government. Therefore, it remains Council's position that a state-wide ESD policy is needed. Further work is required in partnership with Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) to advocate for this.



Design excellence

The design quality of our housing is central to how we live. Good design is a key element in creating housing that is secure, desirable, healthy and safe, enabling people of all ages and abilities to flourish⁵¹.

Council also knows the important role that housing plays in the look and feel of our City. Design excellence is about striving to make a positive contribution to Boroondara and enables people to feel a sense of connection and pride for their neighbourhood.

In 2017 the State Government introduced the Better Apartment Design Standards to all Victorian Planning Schemes to improve the liveability and internal amenity of apartments. In 2021, an update to the Standards focused on the external amenity impacts of apartment buildings. With a significant number of new housing in Boroondara in the form of high and medium density apartments, these Standards are vital in ensuring that apartments make a positive contribution to our neighbourhoods and are safe and healthy places to call home.

A considerable amount of housing in Boroondara is medium density (29%). This includes townhouses or side-by-side housing, and can be found throughout the municipality. Further educational opportunities exist to highlight the benefits of high-quality design.

Universal design supports flexibility, adaptability and the longevity of housing. Developments that incorporate design strategies at the outset – such as level floors, wider doorways and corridors, and accessible kitchen and bathrooms – future proofs our housing. It allows residents of all ages, abilities and in all life stages to use and adapt their housing according to their changing needs⁵². This is an important consideration for Boroondara's ageing population and changing households.

Design excellence is also about high quality construction and efficient use of resources. Housing consumes a lot of energy and water and contributes significantly to our City's climate impacts. This is why it's important for housing to function as efficiently as possible to minimise resource consumption and reduce maintenance and operating costs.

In Boroondara, we highly value our green spaces and large trees. Protecting and adding more large trees should be at the forefront of the design process. Integrating significant tree coverage and vegetation into the design of buildings will aid in off-setting emissions, reducing urban heat, improve air quality and improve visual amenity. Investing in quality landscaping adds value to properties as people place such high importance on it⁵³.

Further educational work is required to reinforce our City's expectations for design excellence so that the highest quality places we want now and those we need for the future are delivered.



Housing diversity and choice

A key *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* objective is to facilitate the provision of a greater diversity and choice of housing to help meet the specific needs of the population.

The community vision in the Boroondara Community Plan is for a sustainable and inclusive City. A diverse range of housing is essential to fulfilling this commitment and enables our people to make choices that cater to different stages of their lives. It allows people to stay in their local community if they so wish – from children to young adults, to families and into old age. This is important to maintain social connections, mental health and wellbeing, and community vitality.

Data shows our household types are changing. An increase in smaller lone person and couple only households combined with an ageing population means smaller and different types of housing will be required.

Council will continue to support the delivery of a diverse range of housing stock through existing housing policies in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Further work will be required to investigate whether alternative housing models can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara. It should be noted that there are limited legislative tools at present to actively support this type of housing. These models include but are not limited to:

- Rent-to-own – for people who can afford private rented housing and who would like to own their own home, but do not earn enough to save for a deposit.
- Build-to-rent – supported by institutional investors, such as superannuation schemes, wanting to invest in high quality developments that offer a return over the long term.
- Co-housing – semi-communal housing consisting of a group of private homes and shared community space.

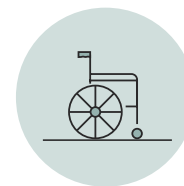
Image 4: Showing a diverse range of people that require housing in Boroondara. The community vision in the Boroondara Community Plan is for a sustainable and inclusive City. A diverse range of housing is essential to fulfilling this commitment and enables our people to make choices to cater to different stages of their lives.



Students and
young people



Single parent
families



People living with
low level of mobility
or disability



Older people



Single person
households



People with families
on low household
incomes



First home
buyers



Empty nesters



Migrants

Housing capacity

Boroondara will need to ensure there is sufficient capacity to accommodate around 9,400 new dwellings over the next 15 years⁵⁴.

Land use zones provide directions on how land can be used, particularly what uses are permissible. Each zone has a purpose, and its application provides planning certainty of what can occur. This directly influences the availability of land for housing in Boroondara.

There is a significant amount of land (4,734.47 ha) allowing for residential use in Boroondara.

The majority of Boroondara's residential land is in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) [87%], which incorporates largely low-scale residential neighbourhoods with special and intact neighbourhood character and areas of heritage significance. These areas are considered the least suitable for accommodating additional housing and change, however there are opportunities for new low scale infill development depending on site context.

Boroondara has land in other zones that allow for residential development (General Residential Zone, Residential Growth Zone, Commercial 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone) [see Table 3]. These zones define land use in and around the City's activity centres, commercial areas and along some public transport corridors and main roads. These zones generally allow for medium to high density development and encourage a mix of land uses.

Detailed capacity modelling and analysis has been undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning to understand whether our housing needs are likely to be met under the current policy settings (while also considering the likely rates of uptake by the market) over the next 15 years.

'Capacity' in this context means, theoretically whether enough dwellings and the right mix of dwelling types can be developed under the current zoning and planning controls to meet our projected housing needs.

With capacity for a net increase in dwellings of approximately 65,050 in Boroondara, there is more than adequate capacity under the current policy settings to provide for the 9,400 dwellings likely to be needed.

It can be concluded that Boroondara's current zones can accommodate the anticipated housing need. Focus can then be on ensuring policies and controls guide future housing delivery in appropriate locations, with housing choice, and in a sustainable manner.

Table 2: Breakdown of land in Boroondara that allows for residential uses by zone (excluding land that is not suitable for residential e.g. open space, schools, train lines etc.)

Zone	Area (hectares)	Area (%)	Anticipated outcome
Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)	4122.05 ha	87.06%	Supports minimal change. Considers identified neighbourhood character.
General Residential Zone (GRZ)	392.62 ha	8.29%	Supports moderate change.
Residential Growth Zone (RGZ)	37.64 ha	0.8%	Encourages increased housing density and diversity.
Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)	167.04 ha	3.35%	Encourages increased housing density and diversity above commercial uses.
Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)	1.94 ha	0.04%	Encourages high density residential within commercial context.
Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ)	2.53 ha	0.05%	May allow for residential uses but plays only a marginal role in provision of housing in the municipality.
Priority Development Zone (PDZ)	10.65 ha	0.22%	May allow for residential uses but plays only a marginal role in provision of housing in the municipality.

Infrastructure capacity

The delivery of housing in Boroondara must also be considered in conjunction with the capacity and functionality of community and physical infrastructure.

Planning for community infrastructure – the buildings and spaces that provide services, activities and amenity such as libraries, community health centres and pre-schools – and physical infrastructure such as drainage, is integral to ensure high-quality outcomes that meet the needs of existing and future communities.

The *Boroondara Community Plan 2021–31* sets out key strategies to ensure the delivery of community services and facilities that are adaptable to meet the changing needs and expectations of our community.

The *Boroondara Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33* identifies key issues and responses for physical infrastructure provision and maintenance.

Council will need to continue to plan for and manage local infrastructure and request the State Government to provide new and upgraded key infrastructure in the municipality, such as schools, public transport facilities, arterial roads and Melbourne Water managed drainage and sewage systems.

An ageing population

Boroondara's population continues its ageing trend with an increase in people over the age of 65 (15% of the population in 2011, and 18% in 2021)⁵⁵.

Many older people live in homes that may no longer be suitable as their life circumstances have changed, such as death of a partner, health issues, desire for a lifestyle change or financial factors. Often older people can be asset rich (owning a home) but income poor (living on savings, superannuation and age pension).

At the 2021 Census, 81% of Boroondara residents aged 65 and over were living in a dwelling classified by the ABS as having at least one 'spare' bedroom⁵⁶.

The Federal Government actively encourages older people to downsize. People aged 60 and over can make a large contribution to their superannuation fund from the proceeds of selling their family home. The purpose of this measure is to encourage people to downsize into housing that is more suitable to their needs. This in turn frees up larger homes to accommodate families.

This policy response is based on the assumption that where the number of bedrooms exceeds the number of permanent residents, dwellings are not being fully utilised.

However, downsizing is about more than just reducing the underutilisation of houses. Research shows that residents looking to downsize want more manageable internal and external space while maintaining sufficient size⁵⁷.

The primary reasons for older people to downsize were: lifestyle (27%) and financial (27%) reasons, the garden or property requiring too much maintenance (18%) or being 'forced' to move (15%)⁵⁸. Often due to a lack of choice in appropriate housing, people must move away from their local community, increasing social isolation and distance from established networks.

There is also an increasing older age cohort. These 'young olds' do not need immediate medical care or access to retirement services. Instead, they reframe the idea of elderly people as conservative, immobile or needing concentrated care, and embrace living active lives for 20-plus years after retirement⁵⁹.

Due to housing affordability issues, more households will be forced to rent into retirement. Accordingly, there will be an increasing need for secure, stable, affordable and appropriate housing options in the social and private rental sectors to accommodate this cohort in years to come.

As Boroondara's population continues its ageing trend, there will be many housing challenges that require a policy response. Some of those will be outside Council's role. Where Council can play a role, it needs to ensure that our residents have the opportunity to age in place. Provision of a diverse range of housing at various price points is critical in achieving this outcome and ensure our residents remain connected to the local community they have lived in for many years.



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Housing affordability

Boroondara is a very desirable place to live. The strong demand to reside here has resulted in continued house price growth and high land values.

As purchasing housing in Boroondara is significantly higher compared to the Melbourne Metro. While renting is more viable than purchasing a home, it is cost prohibitive for many households, particularly those consisting of young people and students.

Some households are paying housing costs which exceed the affordability benchmark of 30% of household income, with serious impacts on residents and the City's health, diversity, and vibrancy.

Housing prices in Boroondara have far outpaced local incomes leaving many households behind. Between 2006 and 2021, the median price of a house in Boroondara has increased by 215%. Median household incomes have only increased by 57% over the same period⁶⁰.

To maintain Boroondara's social and economic resilience, greater housing affordability is important. Council acknowledges this need and will continue to support the delivery of housing diversity within the municipality through planning policy. However, responding to housing affordability extends beyond Boroondara and urgent policy intervention is required at the State and Federal Government levels to influence the market.

At the 2016 Census, Boroondara was ranked 4th of Melbourne LGAs for having a low proportion of key workers relative to the labour force. This is indicative of low housing affordability.

Between 2006 and 2021, the median price of a house in Boroondara has increased by 215%. Median household incomes have only increased by 57% over the same period.



Social and affordable housing

Another key objective of *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* is to increase the supply of social and affordable housing.

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 defines affordable housing as 'housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the needs of very low, low and moderate income households' (refer to table below for the annual income range).

Table 3: Annual household income ranges – eligibility for affordable housing (excluding social housing)

Household type	Very low income range (annual)	Low income range (annual)	Moderate income range (annual)
Single adult	Up to \$26,680	\$26,681 to \$42,680	\$42,681 to \$64,020
Couple, no dependant	Up to \$40,010	\$40,010 to \$64,030	\$64,031 to \$96,030
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	Up to \$56,010	\$56,011 to \$89,630	\$89,631 to \$134,450

As discussed earlier in the Strategy, housing in Boroondara is significantly higher compared to the Metropolitan Melbourne. Median weekly rents in Boroondara for all dwelling types are higher and increase as dwellings increase in size.

Housing options delivered as 'affordable housing' in Boroondara (typically at a 20 per cent discount to market rent) are therefore not affordable to very low to moderate income earners in our City.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing defines low-income households as those receiving Centrelink incomes. In Boroondara, only 37 (1.5%) dwellings made available for rent in the private rental market in the March quarter of 2022 were affordable for households receiving a Centrelink payment⁶¹.

There are four types of households in critical need of housing: key workers, single older women, people escaping domestic and family violence and people with disability

Key workers

Around 10%⁶² of employed persons living in Boroondara are employed in key worker⁶³ occupations.

Key workers are people who work in essential industries such as teachers, healthcare and emergency workers and are considered important to the proper functioning of the City. Many receive low to moderate incomes – indicated in Table 2 – and so rely on low and moderate income housing. The growing housing affordability crisis means they are increasingly unable to afford housing close to their work. Equally they are generally ineligible for public housing⁶⁴.

Proximity to work is particularly important in healthcare, emergency services and some community and welfare support roles to allow workers to cover shifts, quickly respond to increases in service demand and attend emergency situations⁶⁵.

Key workers make a significant contribution to our local economy and community. Without intervention to increase housing supply for key workers, Boroondara will face challenges attracting and retaining key workers. This is particularly pertinent given Boroondara's ageing population and future need for more healthcare workers.



Single older women

The Parliament of Victoria's *Inquiry into homelessness in Victoria (March 2021)*, found single older women are a fast-growing cohort experiencing homelessness. There is generally an underreporting of this and therefore numbers are likely to be higher.

Research undertaken by Council and Monash University (2010-2012) identified a range of factors contributing to this in Boroondara such as low or no income, lack of superannuation, and the high cost of private rental and homeownership. These women are also disadvantaged by a retirement system predicated on home ownership⁶⁶. Single older women, especially low income women or women dependant on pensions, are often forced to move out of their local community due to unaffordable housing, isolating them from their family, social, health and geographical networks.

People escaping domestic and family violence

The Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) heard consistent evidence about the central role access to secure housing plays for people trying to escape domestic and family violence⁶⁷. The evidence showed that housing pathways are 'blocked up' and not flowing as intended. Significantly, a lack of viable long-term housing options prevents people from escaping the system and establishing new lives. In 2019–20, 35% (40,021 clients) of all clients seeking specialist homelessness services in Victoria cited 'family and domestic violence' as their main reason for seeking assistance⁶⁸. Police recorded 966 family violence incidents in Boroondara during the year ending March 2022. Family violence often goes unreported⁶⁹, so the actual number of family violence events may be higher.

People with disability

Some people with disability receive the Disability Support Pension as their main source of income, which may put some housing options out of reach⁷⁰. In Boroondara, almost 2,000 residents received a Disability Support Pension in June 2021⁷¹. Data suggests that some people with disability struggle to find affordable housing and are vulnerable to housing or rental stress. The availability of affordable, sustainable and appropriate housing helps people with disability to participate in the social, economic and community aspects of everyday life⁷².

It should be noted there are other types of households also in critical need of housing such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples. As noted in the *Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-2026*, Council recognises there is a significant gap between the health status of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the non-Aboriginal population. Although there have been some improvements, many areas such as housing, require urgent action to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians.

Within the current planning legislative framework, local government can provide for more housing for very low, low and moderate income households by:

- entering into a voluntary agreement with a planning permit applicant, under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, for the provision of affordable housing as part of a proposed development;
- advocating for policy and legislative changes to the State Government; and,
- facilitating partnerships between developers and affordable housing associations/providers.

Further work is required to understand if these planning tools are adequate policy responses to address the need for affordable housing in Boroondara for the vulnerable groups discussed. It is acknowledged that increasing the provision of affordable (and social) housing is the responsibility of State and Federal Governments and Council has and will continue to advocate to both levels of government on this matter.

What is the difference between affordable, social, public and community housing?

There is often confusion around what each of these mean – here are some definitions for clarity.

Affordable housing is a broad term describing housing suitable for the needs of a range of very low, low and moderate income households (whether bought or rented) so these households can meet their other essential living costs.

Social housing is an umbrella term that includes both public housing and community housing. It generally indicates housing that involves some degree of subsidy.

Public housing is housing owned and managed by Homes Victoria. The State Government provides public housing to eligible Victorians including people who are unemployed, on low incomes, live with disability or a mental illness, who are at risk of homelessness.

Community housing is housing owned or managed by community housing providers. The community housing sector and government work in partnership to deliver more housing to more Victorians who need support. Community housing providers are highly regulated, not-for-profit organisations that specialise in housing the diverse range of tenants that require both public and affordable homes. Because of their not-for-profit structure they can deliver services cost effectively and to a high standard.

The State Government's **Big Build** project will provide around 213 social and 170 affordable housing dwellings at its Markham and Bills Street redevelopment sites.

At the time of writing, there remains approximately 2,500 people waiting for social housing on the Victorian Housing Register and transfer list for the Box Hill Regional Office (covering Boroondara, Whitehorse and Manningham).

Homelessness

Homelessness comes in many forms from couch surfing to sleeping rough (e.g. on streets, in cars or improvised shelters).

People can become homeless through no fault of their own, due to a variety of complex and often interrelated risk factors. The COVID 19 pandemic has only exacerbated the situation. Risk factors include loss of employment, family violence, lack of affordable housing, alcohol and other drug dependency, being recently released from prison, mental illness, financial difficulty and family breakdown.

The various risks are compounded by rising rents in the private market and an inadequate supply of social housing stock. The nature of risk factors also means it is often difficult for a person to break the cycle of homelessness once they become homeless.

Council plays several roles in relation to social housing and homelessness including:

- advocacy on the provision of social housing
- advocacy for funding for homelessness services to provide assertive outreach
- providing staff with a framework for responding to reports of homelessness as outlined in Council's Homelessness Protocol
- providing grants to organisations supporting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Increasing the provision of social housing is important to addressing homelessness. Council does not offer financial subsidies or assets for the development of social housing. That is the responsibility of State and Federal Governments. Council has and will continue to advocate to both levels of government to increase and improve social housing stock in Boroondara (on State Government or private land owned and/or managed by not-for-profit housing associations).

Homelessness is a growing national problem and the increase in homelessness is being seen in Boroondara. The number of people in Boroondara who were homeless on Census night increased from 383 in 2011 to 426 in 2016.

Source: ABS (2018)

Housing strategic directions

The community vision as outlined in the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* is for a 'sustainable and inclusive community'.

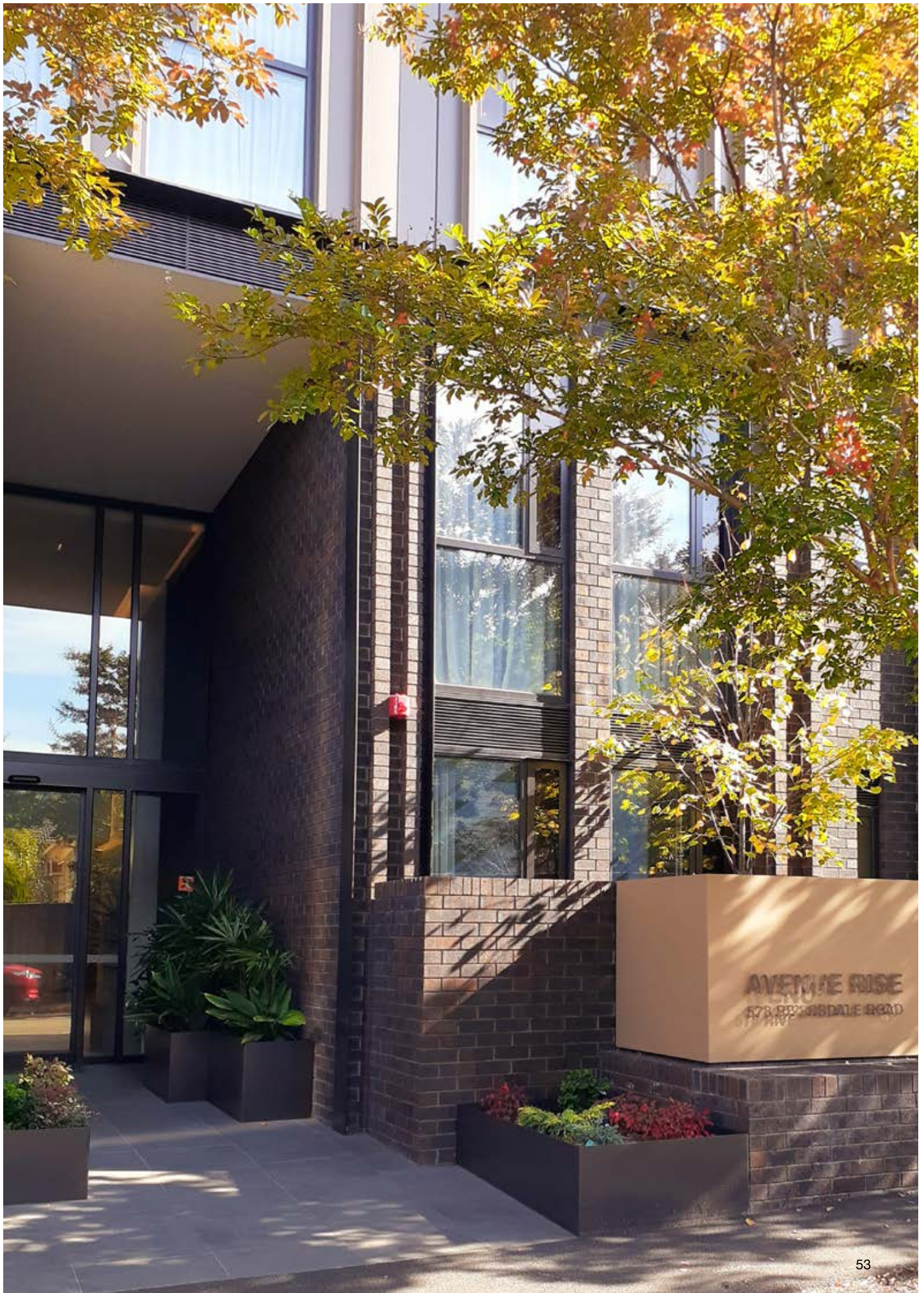
With this in mind, three strategic directions articulate Boroondara's approach to planning for future housing provision in response to the unique context of Boroondara.

These strategic directions have been informed by data analysis and research, *State Government Planning Practice Note 90: Planning for Housing and community aspirations*.

Each strategic direction includes desired outcomes, responses and actions that outline how Council will aim to achieve the identified strategic directions. This is supported by a Housing Framework Plan (Image 5).

The strategic directions are:

- 1. Housing diversity in appropriate locations**
- 2. Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence**
- 3. Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future.**



Strategic direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations

Providing a diverse range of housing (in terms of typologies, size and cost) allows a variety of people to live in Boroondara and contributes to a vital community.

Council knows that protecting and respecting the character of Boroondara, while facilitating appropriate, well-designed development (that includes diversity in housing size and affordability) matters to our community.

Housing capacity analysis shows there is adequate capacity to accommodate projected future housing in Boroondara. However, it needs to be guided to appropriate locations. This means most of our future housing development will continue to be directed towards areas that are well located in relation to existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport such as major activity centres, commercial corridors and along some main roads (as shown on the Framework Plan as high and moderate change areas). These areas have also been identified as being able to absorb some change in character.

In response to our City's unique heritage and character including the importance of green spaces and trees, many areas of Boroondara will likely see only minimal change.

Structure Plans will play a key role in determining the most appropriate way in accommodating opportunities for future housing and employment growth in our Activity Centres.

Desired outcomes:

- The majority of new housing, particularly higher density housing, is located in activity centres, commercial and public transport corridors and along some main roads.
- A diverse range of housing types are delivered.
- New housing is respectful of the City's unique character.
- New housing located within activity centres and commercial areas does not displace commercial uses.
- New developments align with preferred character outcomes and design guidelines in the Neighbourhood Character Precinct Statements.
- Appropriate infrastructure assets are planned for and are in place to accommodate future housing development, including new housing developments contributing to required upgrades of infrastructure to meet additional demands.



To achieve this, Council will:

1. Investigate the most appropriate housing outcomes in General Residential Zone 5 (GRZ5).
2. Review the Neighbourhood Character Policy (including Precinct Statements) to ensure policy directions are delivering housing that respects and enhances the preferred character.
3. Complete the Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan and include it as part of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
4. Review our Neighbourhood and Local Shopping Centres network to understand their economic role and what role they may play in future housing provision.
5. Monitor population and dwelling forecasts, particularly having regard to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on population and housing needs and prepare an interim report within 2 years.
6. Investigate enhancing internal processes for development data collection.
7. Ensure Council-controlled assets and infrastructure are in place to meet future population and housing needs such as local roads and drainage, libraries and open space.
8. Request the State Government to provide new and upgraded key infrastructure in the municipality such as schools, public transport, roads, bike paths, regional open space such as Yarra River corridor and Gardiners Creek and Melbourne Water managed drainage and sewage systems, particularly in and around future high change housing areas.
9. Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to:
 - include the Boroondara Housing Strategy as a background document in the Planning Scheme
 - update local policy in accordance with the Housing Framework Plan, the strategic directions and desired outcomes of the Housing Strategy.

Housing Framework Plan

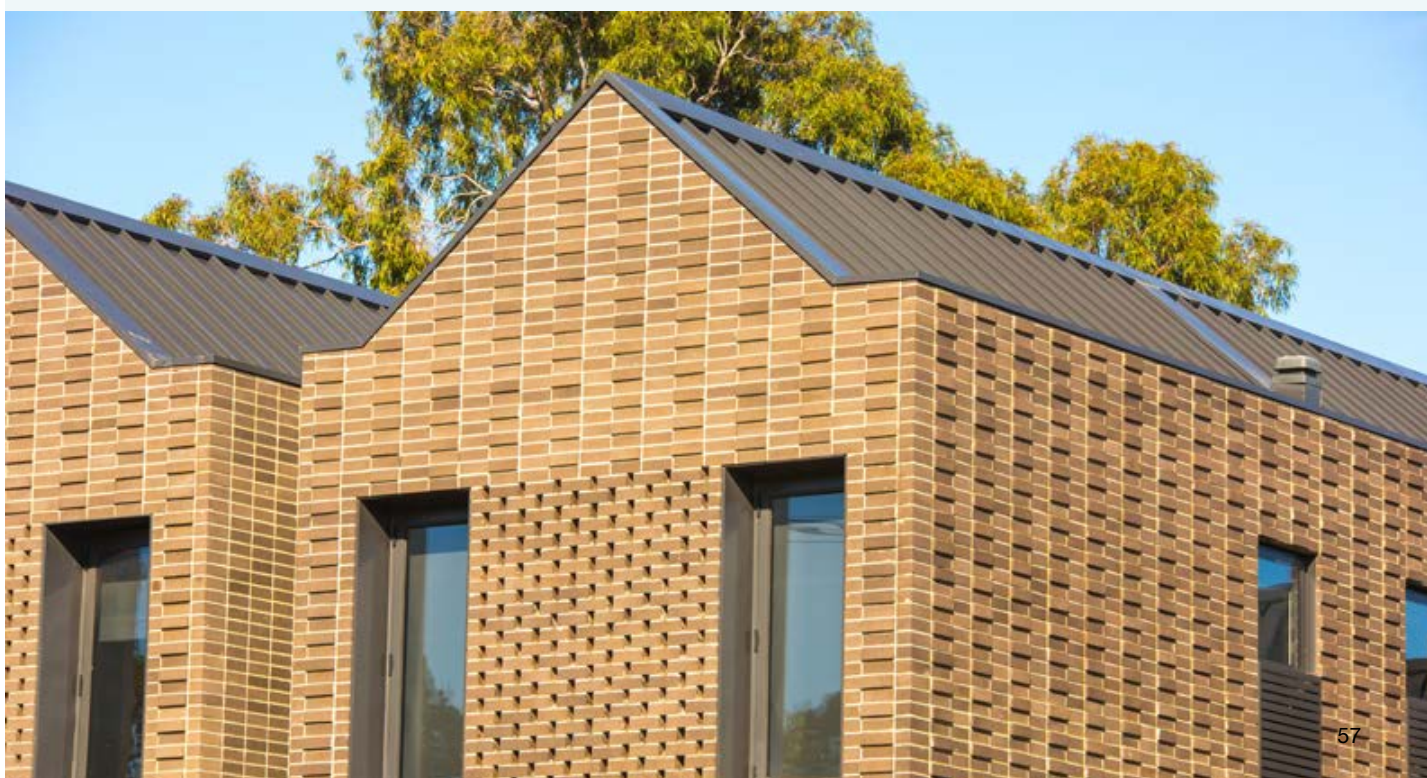
The Housing Framework Plan provides the overarching strategic direction on residential development throughout Boroondara. It is based on three change areas – low, moderate and high – which are discussed in more detail on the following pages.

Irrespective of a site's location in any of the three change areas, a contextual assessment of any housing development will be required. This assessment will need to consider any site-specific constraints or attributes.

The change areas are indicative only and do not provide the strategic basis for planning zones.

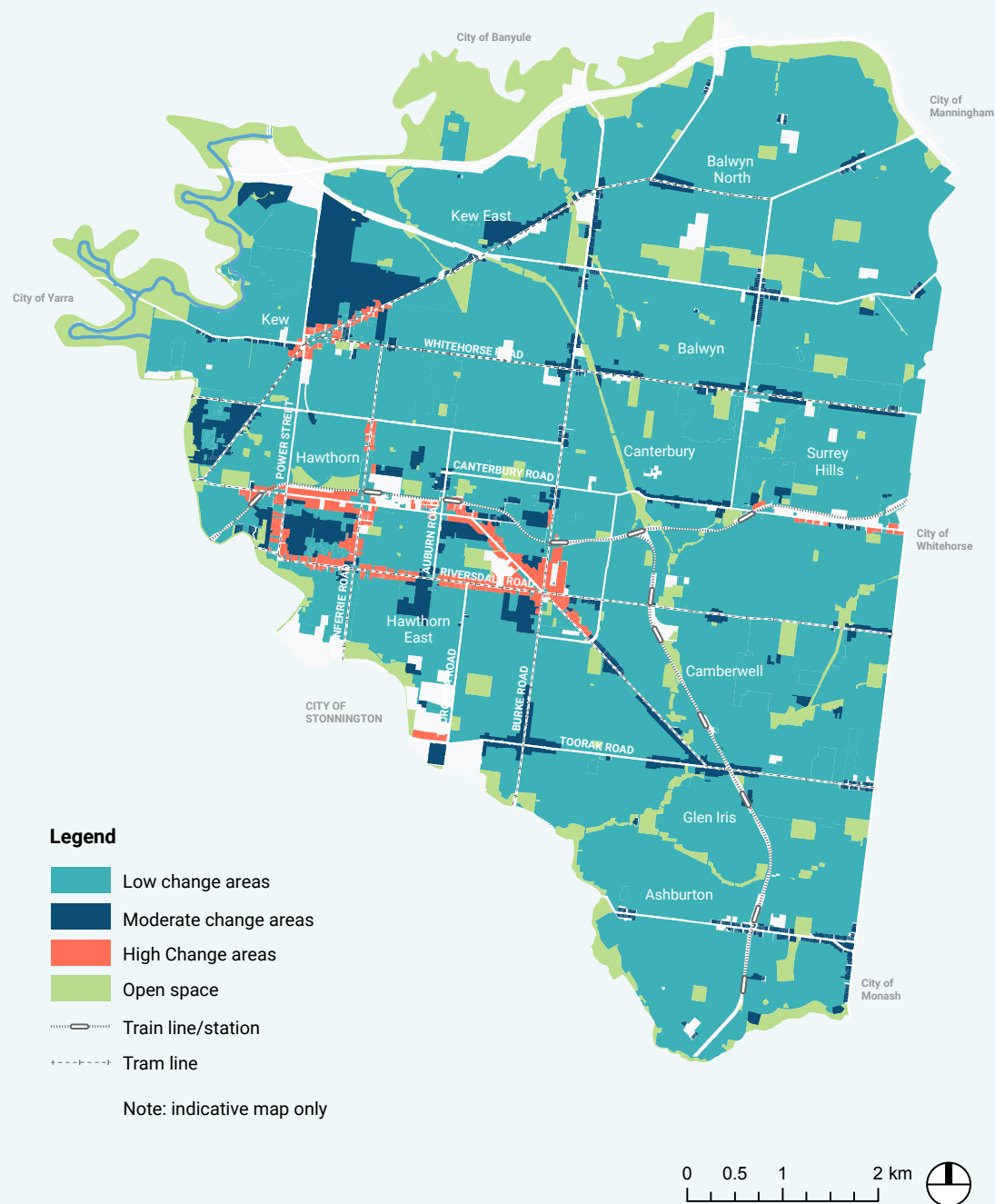
The zones (including relevant schedules) determine the level of change in an area and are further refined by planning overlays to reflect the local conditions. Commercial zones will play an important role in the provision of future housing.

Detailed capacity modelling and analysis undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning indicates there is more than adequate capacity under the current policy settings to provide for the 9,400 dwellings likely to be needed over the next 15 years. Therefore, Boroondara's current zones can accommodate the anticipated housing need.



Boroondara Housing Strategy September 2023

Image 5: Housing Framework Plan. Shows distribution of low, moderate and high changes areas across Boroondara. Note: Indicative map only. Development outcomes will depend on any site specific controls, constraints and attributes and contextual assessment.



Low change areas

Low change areas are generally within established residential locations that have limited capacity to accommodate significant future housing change over time. These areas often have a strong and consistent character, have significant established and important tree coverage and many areas are protected through Heritage Overlays. New housing in these low change areas will need to respect the type, scale, and prevailing character of the area. It is expected that infill development of one or two dwellings on typically small individual lots (including alterations and additions to existing dwellings) that is respectful of existing character will continue. Areas of low change apply to around 72% of the municipality⁷³. It is acknowledged that often infill development of one dwelling on a lot does not require planning approval and this can have issues around respecting prevailing character.

Moderate change areas

Moderate change areas have the capacity to accommodate a more modest level of housing and are generally within or close to activity, neighbourhood and commercial centres, education and public transportation. These areas often already have a mixed character that allows them to absorb additional housing development. It is expected that enhancement will gradually evolve over time as development of one, two or more dwellings on individual lots (including smaller scale apartment developments and additions to existing dwellings). Areas of moderate change apply to around 7% of the municipality⁷⁴.

High change areas

High change areas support additional housing provision and diversity at increased densities. These areas have strong mixed use and commercial character that can absorb housing change as well as access to existing services, public transport, amenity and infrastructure. Locations include Glenferrie/Hawthorn, Kew and Camberwell major activity centres, commercial corridors such as Camberwell Road and along sections of major transport corridors such as Riversdale Road, Glenferrie Road, and Power Street. It is expected that housing diversity will occur through mixed use, infill and apartment development. Areas of high change apply to around 2% of the municipality⁷⁵.

Strategic direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence

Council understands that environmental sustainability is an important issue for our community and changes need to be made by all. Improving our housing stock to be more energy efficient through Environmentally Sustainable Design, adaptive reuse of existing buildings and energy retrofits to existing housing is a vital component in response to the increasing threat of the changing climate.

Providing and retaining significant tree coverage and vegetation is a key priority in creating a cool, green City and must be considered in conjunction with housing delivery.

Investment in good design generates social and economic value in the form of improved health and wellbeing, greater sense of community and safety, enhanced property values, improved environmental performance and reduced energy costs⁷⁶.

There is an opportunity for Council to investigate new policy to improve medium density design outcomes in our residential areas and strengthen existing design policies in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. This includes reinforcing our City's expectations for design excellence so that the highest quality places are delivered consistently.

Key to delivering design excellence is incorporating universal design principles early in the design process. This means housing is designed and built to be safe, easy to live in and adaptable to the changing needs of occupants across their lifetime, particularly people with disability or temporary injuries, the elderly and families with young children⁷⁷.

Desired outcomes:

- Housing that incorporates or retrofits ESD measures to assist in reducing the environmental footprint of development.
- Design and construction of dwellings and residential buildings retains and enhances canopy tree coverage, vegetation and landscaping.
- Innovative, high-quality urban architectural and landscape design that enhances the appearance and strengthens identity of the City.
- Housing that incorporates universal design principles to allow for flexibility and adaptability to meet the diverse range of needs of people today and in the future.



To achieve this, Council will:

1. Continue to progress a joint-Council planning scheme amendment to introduce new Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) provision into respective planning schemes.
2. Continue to advocate to the State Government for the introduction of a state-wide ESD policy into the Victoria Planning Provisions.
3. Continue to play an active role in the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).
4. Investigate implementing an educational program to encourage and enable energy retrofits to improve energy efficiency of Boroondara's older homes and buildings.
5. Review and update existing local planning scheme policies to enable ESD upgrades while respecting the heritage or character-defining elements.
6. Continue to apply Council's existing tree protection controls and investigate opportunities to strengthen local policy through a Tree Canopy Strategy and new or existing controls within the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
7. Continue to advocate to the State Government for metropolitan wide tree controls and changes to building regulations to improve tree protection and canopy cover on private property.
8. Investigate strengthening local policy to improve medium density design outcomes.
9. Prepare a series of best practice urban design guidelines for new development within Boroondara.
10. Promote high standards of design and environmental sustainability in Boroondara through bi-annual Urban Design Awards.
11. Investigate strengthening local planning policy provisions to ensure new housing is adaptable and accessible.
12. Monitor the impact of the State Government's Better Apartments Design Standards in Boroondara context and seek to introduce local policy improvements where necessary.



Strategic direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future

Having a range of housing for all residents – including young families, students, key workers, older people and those on different incomes – will add vitality to our community and supports social inclusion.

The dominant household type in Boroondara is couples with children. However, this is continuing to change and with an increase in single person and couple only households as well as an ageing population, the types of dwellings required to accommodate these smaller households need to be considered.

A person's ability to age in place is determined by the availability of appropriate accommodation. To meet future demand from an ageing population in Boroondara, Council will need to monitor the need for aged care facilities, retirement villages and other alternative housing models such as co-housing.

There is a growing 'young-old' cohort of people who live active lives for 20-plus years after retirement. Council will also need to better understand their housing needs and wants, with potentially more 'active living' apartment developments within our activity centres.

Boroondara is a desirable place to live and housing prices are high, meaning it is a challenge for many people to live here. Although Council has limited influence on the housing market, Council as the Planning Authority can respond by setting policy that results in greater diversity of housing in appropriate locations. This will help the market deliver housing at various price points.

The importance of strategic partnerships in the delivery of social and affordable housing is also recognised. Council will continue to advocate to the State Government for additional social housing in Boroondara, particularly on State-owned sites or delivered by Community Housing Associations. It is well-known that increasing the provision of social housing is an essential aspect to addressing homelessness.

Desired outcomes:

Greater diversity of housing choices and opportunities suitable for all residents including:

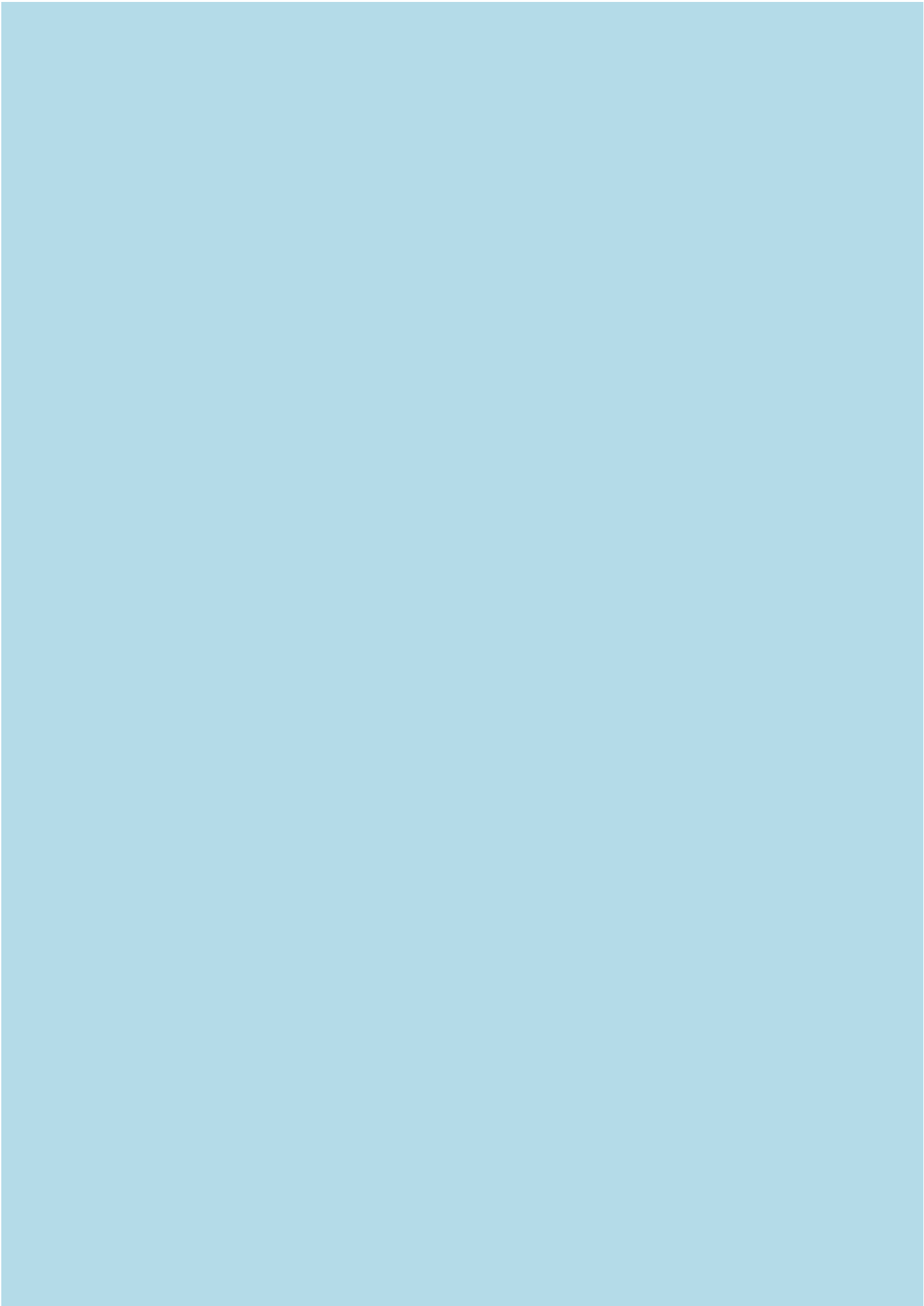
- housing that consists of a mix of sizes, layouts and various price points to accommodate people of different stages of life, family structures, mobility and socio-economic groups.
- housing that meets the needs of our older residents and people living with disability located close to transport, services and amenities.
- increased supply of social and affordable housing (delivered by Federal, State Government and Community Housing Associations).
- appropriate alternative housing models, such as co-housing, that can contribute to affordable and social housing opportunities and lower ongoing living costs in Boroondara.



To achieve this, Council will:

1. Continue to support the delivery of a diversity of housing stock through planning policies and tools in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
2. Investigate strengthening local policy provisions for the delivery of a range of dwelling sizes and bedrooms in 10+ dwelling developments.
3. Investigate the ageing-in-place housing needs and options for our diverse community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses.
4. Investigate housing affordability and social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses.
5. Continue to advocate to and work with Federal and State Government, community housing providers and private sector to provide social and affordable housing for Boroondara residents.
6. Support not-for-profit community housing providers to continue to provide social housing in Boroondara.
7. Investigate whether alternative housing models, including rent-to-own, build-to-rent and co-housing, can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara, and potential policy responses.





Appendices

Policy context

National

In August 2022, the Australian Federal Government announced a new National Housing Supply and Affordability Council, which will provide advice in developing a National Housing and Homelessness Plan.

The Federal Government also announced several new housing initiatives, including:

Housing Australia Future Fund

The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund will build 30,000 social and affordable housing properties in its first five years.

Of these 30,000, 20,000 will be social housing properties – 4,000 of which will be allocated for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.

The additional 10,000 properties will be affordable homes allocated to frontline workers like police, nurses and cleaners.

Further, a portion of the investment returns will be made available to fund acute housing needs on an ongoing basis. In the first five years, the investment returns will fund:

- \$200 million for the repair, maintenance and improvements of housing in remote Indigenous communities.
- \$100 million for crisis and transitional housing options for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.
- \$30 million to build more housing and fund specialist services for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Help to Buy Shared Equity Scheme

This scheme will allow 10,000 eligible home buyers a year to buy a new or existing home with an equity contribution from the Federal Government. It involves an equity contribution of up to a maximum of 40 per cent of the purchase price of a new home and up to a maximum of 30 per cent of the purchase price for an existing home.

State

Planning and Environment Act 1987

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 provides the legal framework for the operation of Victoria's planning system.

It specifies the objectives of planning in Victoria, including:

- to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land
- to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria
- to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value
- to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria
- to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.

It also provides the definition and income ranges for "affordable housing", which is housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Plan Melbourne aims to create a city where every day needs are within a 20-minute walk, cycle or local public transport trip.

Key directions in Plan Melbourne relating to housing include:

- deliver more housing closer to jobs and public transport
- manage the supply of new housing in the right locations to meet population growth and create a sustainable city
- increase the supply of social and affordable housing
- provide greater choice and diversity of housing
- facilitate decision-making processes for housing in the right locations.

To manage the supply of housing in Melbourne, it is expected that established areas (including Boroondara) will accommodate a greater share of housing growth.

Plan Melbourne aspires to 70% of new housing being provided within Melbourne's established areas between 2015-2051.

It also directs that housing choice will be provided in activity centres and other locations that offer good access to jobs, services and public transport.

Plan Melbourne identifies three major activity centres in Boroondara:

- Camberwell Junction
- Glenferrie/Hawthorn
- Kew Junction.

Boroondara also has a number of neighbourhood activity centres including:

- Ashburton
- Auburn Village
- Balwyn
- Balwyn East
- Balwyn North
- Bellevue
- Belmore Heights
- Boroondara
- Burwood Village
- Canterbury Village
- Church Street
- Cotham Village
- Deepdene
- Dickens Corner
- East Camberwell
- Glenferrie Hill
- Golf Links Village
- Greythorn
- Harp Village
- Hartwell
- Maling Road
- Middle Camberwell
- Mont Albert Terminus
- Mount Street
- Riversdale Village
- South Camberwell
- Stradbroke Village
- Surrey Hills
- Through Road
- Upper Glen Iris
- Willsmere Village.

Planning Practice Note 90: Planning for Housing

This Planning Practice note provides direction to plan for housing growth and protect neighbourhood character to ensure a balanced approach to managing residential development in planning schemes through preparation of a housing strategy and application of residential zones.

Residential Zones

Victoria's Residential Zones have undergone significant reform in the past decade, with significant changes made in 2013, and updates in 2017 (Amendment VC110).

The reformed residential zones provide more certainty and consistency about housing growth and built form outcomes by creating consistent and strengthened maximum building height controls and the introduction of a minimum garden area requirement in the General Residential Zone and the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

In 2021, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) released a discussion paper, 'Improving the operation of ResCode', that proposes to apply a new model to residential development planning permit applications. It proposes to replace the ResCode assessment requirements with a new Performance Assessment Module (PAM), based on objectives, standards and decision guidelines. At the time of writing, DELWP (now the Department of Transport and Planning) are considering feedback received during public consultation, which will inform decisions about implementation.

Regional

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 includes Boroondara, along with the Cities of Bayside, Glen Eira and Stonnington in the Inner South East Metro Region.

In 2020 the Inner South East Metro Region had a population of 567,390 people or approximately 11 per cent of Melbourne's total population. The region's population was projected to increase by over 216,000 people between 2020 and 2051 to a total of 784,040 people. From 2016 to 2051 an additional 119,170 dwellings would be needed to accommodate this growth [note: this does not take into account the impact of COVID 19 pandemic].

The Inner South East Region Metropolitan Partnership produced the Inner South East Regional Framework (2020) with a key action to advocate for and explore opportunities for key worker affordable housing.

In August 2021, DELWP released the draft Inner South East Metro Land Use Framework Plan to set regional-level planning policy (based on Plan Melbourne 2017-2050) to be implemented into planning schemes.

Under the housing choice theme, Boroondara is projected to account for the largest population across the region (213,840) to 2036 and would be expected to accommodate a total of 88,100 dwellings [note: again this does not take into account the impact of COVID 19 pandemic]. At the time of writing, the Inner South East Metro Land Use Framework Plan has not been finalised.

Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) is the policy content of the planning scheme. The PPF structure provides for three tiers of integrated planning policy, grouping state, regional and local planning policy by theme.

Statewide policies

Statewide policies provide direction on planning and managing residential growth in Victoria.

Key housing directions are:

- plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15-year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur.
- residential land supply will be considered on a municipal basis.
- planning for urban growth should consider:
 - opportunities for the consolidation, redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas
 - neighbourhood and landscape character
 - the limits of land capability and natural hazards and environmental quality
 - service limitations and the costs of providing infrastructure
- ensure development contributes to existing or preferred neighbourhood character.
- increase the supply of housing in existing urban areas by facilitating increased housing yield in appropriate locations, including under-utilised urban land.
- ensure that an appropriate quantity, quality and type of housing is provided.
- increase the proportion of new housing in designated locations within established urban areas.
- encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to services, jobs and public transport.
- ensure an adequate supply of redevelopment opportunities within established urban areas to reduce the pressure for fringe development.

- identify opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.
- ensure housing stock matches changing demand by widening housing choice.
- facilitate diverse housing that offers choice and meets changing household needs.

Regional policies

Regional policies provide planning guidance to councils within the Melbourne metropolitan context.

Key housing directions are:

- Manage the supply of new housing to meet population growth and create a sustainable city by developing housing and mixed-use development opportunities in locations that are:
 - in and around the Central City.
 - urban-renewal precincts and sites.
 - areas for residential growth.
 - areas for greyfield renewal, particularly through opportunities for land consolidation.
 - areas designated as National Employment and Innovation Clusters.
 - Metropolitan Activity centres and Major Activity Centres.
 - Neighbourhood Activity Centres – especially those with good public transport connections.
 - areas near existing and proposed railway stations that can support transit-oriented development.
- Identify areas that offer opportunities for more medium and high density housing near employment and transport in Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Facilitate increased housing in established areas to create a city of 20 minute neighbourhoods close to existing services, jobs and public transport.
- Provide certainty about the scale of growth by prescribing appropriate height and site coverage provisions for different areas.
- Allow for a range of minimal, incremental and high change residential areas that balance the need to protect valued areas with the need to ensure choice and growth in housing.
- Create mixed-use neighbourhoods at varying densities that offer more choice in housing.

Local policies

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme provides a statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for Boroondara.

The vision for housing is to protect the heritage and respect the character of the City to maintain amenity and liveability whilst recognising the need for appropriate, well-designed development for future generations.

The MPS contains the following strategic directions related to housing:

- Maintain and strengthen the network of activity centres, neighbourhood centres, local centres and commercial corridors.
- Ensure major activity centres, neighbourhood centres, local centres and commercial corridors retain a commercial focus with regard to land use and built form outcomes.
- Ensure residential development complements the commercial focus of activity centres, neighbourhood centres, local centres and commercial corridors, particularly at the upper levels of development.
- Minimise the impacts of development on sensitive residential interfaces by way of visual bulk, noise, traffic and vehicle access.
- Facilitate residential development in accordance with the Housing Framework shown on the Housing Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.
- Provide a diverse range of housing types that protect preferred neighbourhood character and adjoining residential amenity.
- Provide housing that is sufficiently flexible to account for age, temporary or permanent injury or impairment, and disability.
- Protect residential areas surrounding discretionary uses from potential amenity impacts.

City of Boroondara Plans and Strategies

Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031

Boroondara's Community Plan (BCP), incorporating the Community Vision, Council Plan 2021-25 and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25, is a strategic document that sets out the 10-year vision for the City of Boroondara based on the aspirations of the community and the priorities they told us were important.

The BCP balances the needs of our community today, reflects the community's experience during the COVID 19 pandemic, while recognising the challenges, opportunities and changes to come over the next decade.

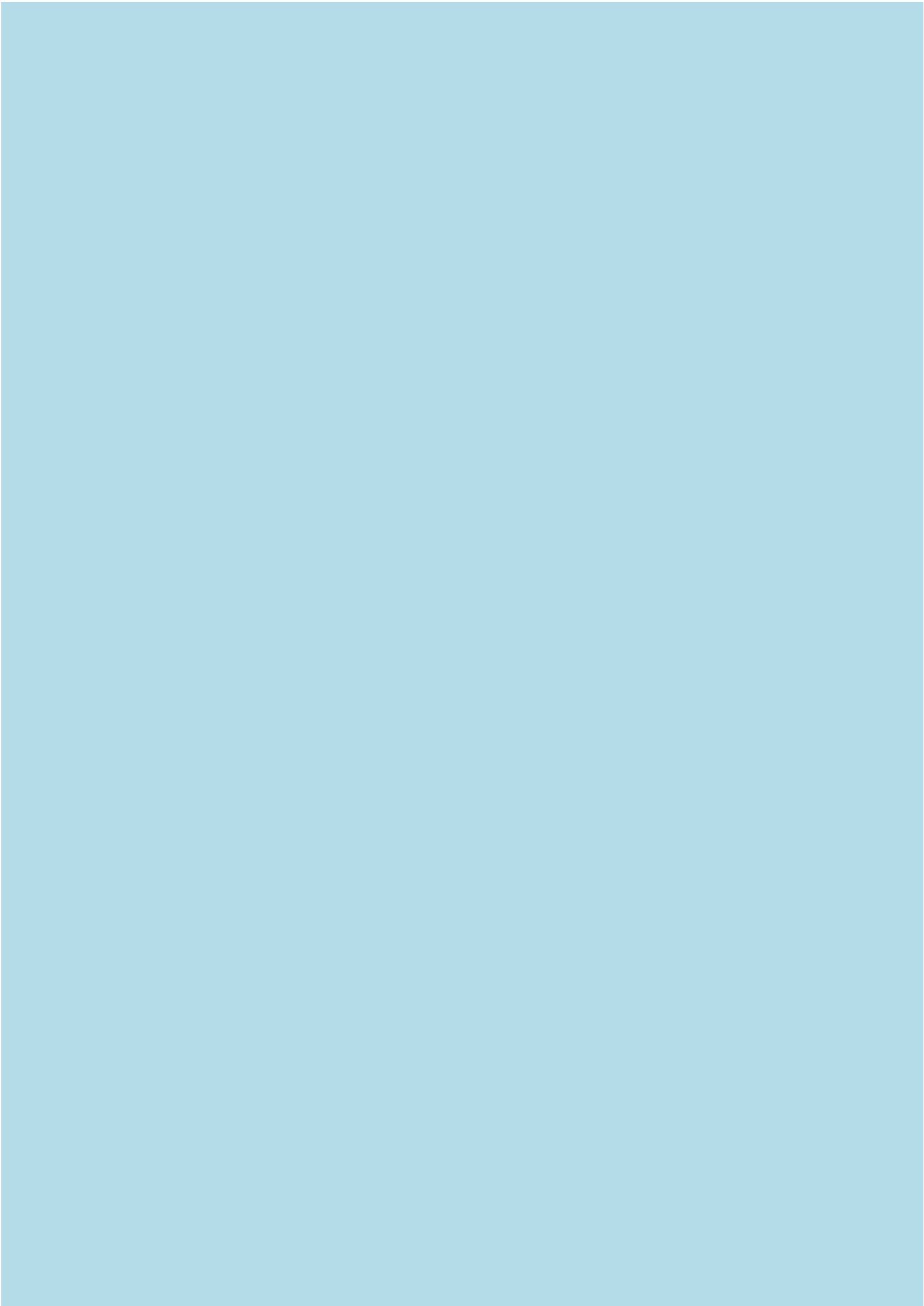
The BCP is structured around seven themes, as expressed by the community in 2017. Checking with the community in 2020-21, it was confirmed these themes still represent what the community want Council to focus on over the next 10 years:

1. Community, Services and Facilities
2. Parks and Green Spaces
3. The Environment
4. Neighbourhood Character and Heritage
5. Moving Around
6. Local Economy
7. Leadership and Governance

These seven themes work together with six health priorities to provide a robust foundation for achieving the community's vision, to create 'a sustainable and inclusive community.'

The Housing Strategy also considers and stands alongside Boroondara's:

- Climate Action Plan and Implementation Plan 2021-23
- Homelessness Protocol 2020
- Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33
- Disability Action Plan 2018-2022
- Open Space Strategy 2013
- Bicycle Strategy 2022



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Contact

Website: www.boroondara.vic.gov.au

Email: boroondara@boroondara.vic.gov.au

Telephone: **9278 4444**

After hours emergencies: **9278 4444**

Postal address:

Private Bag 1 Camberwell VIC 3124

Customer Service centre:

Camberwell office

8 Inglesby Road, Camberwell

For speech or hearing impaired:

National Relay Service: **TTY 13 36 77**

Speak and Listen: **1300 555 727**

Free interpreting service: **9278 4002**





Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy

Consultation Summary
September 2023



Draft Housing Strategy - Consultation Summary September 2023

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Boroondara acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Draft Housing Strategy - Consultation Summary September 2023

Housing Strategy overview

The Boroondara Housing Strategy identifies how best to accommodate our community's housing needs over the next 15 years.

The current Boroondara Housing Strategy was adopted in December 2015 and has provided the overarching framework for the provision of housing in Boroondara. The current Housing Strategy is due for review and revision to bring it in line with current data projections (coinciding with the release of new Australian Bureau of Statistics data from Census 2021) and housing needs and aspirations.

The Housing Strategy is an adopted Council document that sits alongside other State and local plans and strategies, such as the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31*. It is one of Council's key strategic documents and needs to be considered in local policy development and decision making.

Boroondara has undertaken extensive engagement activities with the community over the last few years. Most recently, Council updated the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31*, which sets out the vision for our municipality based on community values, aspirations and priorities. The community vision as outlined in the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* is for a 'sustainable and inclusive community'.

Through consultation on the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031*, our community said:

We value our local heritage. We value Council's advocacy to protect the distinct character of our neighbourhood streets and carefully regulate new development.

Diversity in housing size and affordability is also important to us.

We value these things because they contribute to Boroondara's uniqueness and make it an attractive place to live, work and play.

The Housing Strategy was drafted with this community sentiment in mind.

Purpose of the Housing Strategy

1. To understand and define the current and emerging population and housing needs for Boroondara over the next 15 years.
2. To identify strategic directions and responses to meet these needs.
3. To provide a strategic foundation for any potential implementation of housing focused policies and planning controls in future.

Draft Housing Strategy - Consultation Summary September 2023

Community consultation overview

A Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy was taken to an Urban Planning Delegated Committee meeting on 15 May 2023. Councillors resolved to release the draft for public consultation for a period of four weeks from 17 May until 16 June 2023.

The community were invited (through a communications campaign that included website, email, social media, Boroondara Bulletin article) to share their feedback on the Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy via a survey on Engage Boroondara. Survey questions were specifically around how the community felt about the three proposed strategic directions that articulate Boroondara's approach to responding to the municipality's unique context. 62 people contributed their feedback via this platform during the consultation period.

Two community consultation drop-in sessions were held at the Camberwell Civic Foyer on the 23 May 2023 3-6pm and 30 May midday-2pm. A small number of people attended these sessions.

Four other pieces of feedback were received via post or email, including a submission from Servants Community Housing.

Feedback from the community is presented in this report along with an Officers' response and recommendations for changes to be made to the Housing Strategy where necessary.

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Community consultation findings

Engage Boroondara survey

The Draft Housing Strategy outlines the key housing needs and challenges facing Boroondara. Three strategic directions were developed to address some of these needs and challenges and maximise the role Boroondara Council can play to achieve a sustainable and inclusive community. These are:

Strategic Direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations

Strategic Direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence

Strategic Direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future

Community members were invited to review the Draft Housing Strategy and indicate their level of agreement with each Strategic Direction and offer any other feedback or comments on the Draft Strategy.

The purpose of the survey was to:

- invite the community to share their feedback on the Draft Housing Strategy for Council's consideration.
- understand the level of community support for the Draft Housing Strategy.
- identify elements of the Draft Housing Strategy that may need review or refinement.

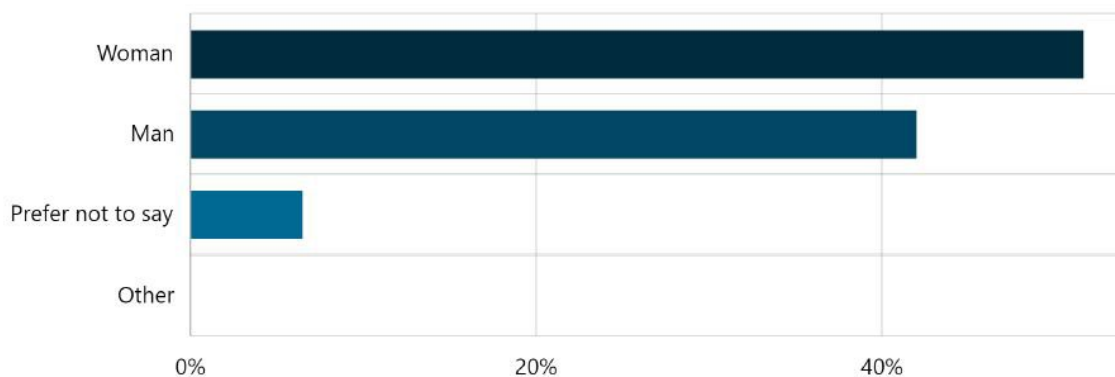
There were a total number of 62 respondents via the Engage Boroondara survey. Respondents did not necessarily answer each question.

The following section provides an overview of respondents' demographic information followed by respondents' direct feedback/commentary in response to three questions. Officers' responses and any recommended changes to the Housing Strategy as a result of feedback is provided.

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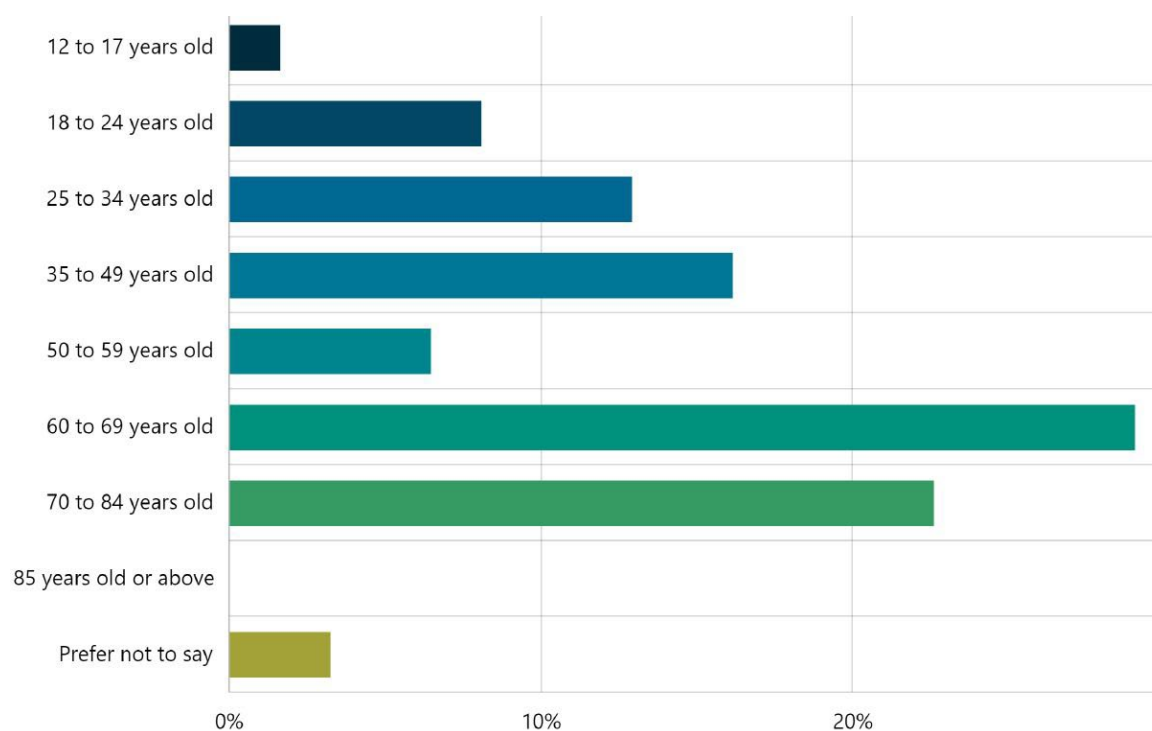
Who participated in the survey?

Gender of respondents



- Woman: 32 (51.61%)
- Man: 26 (41.94%)
- Prefer not to say: 4 (6.45%)

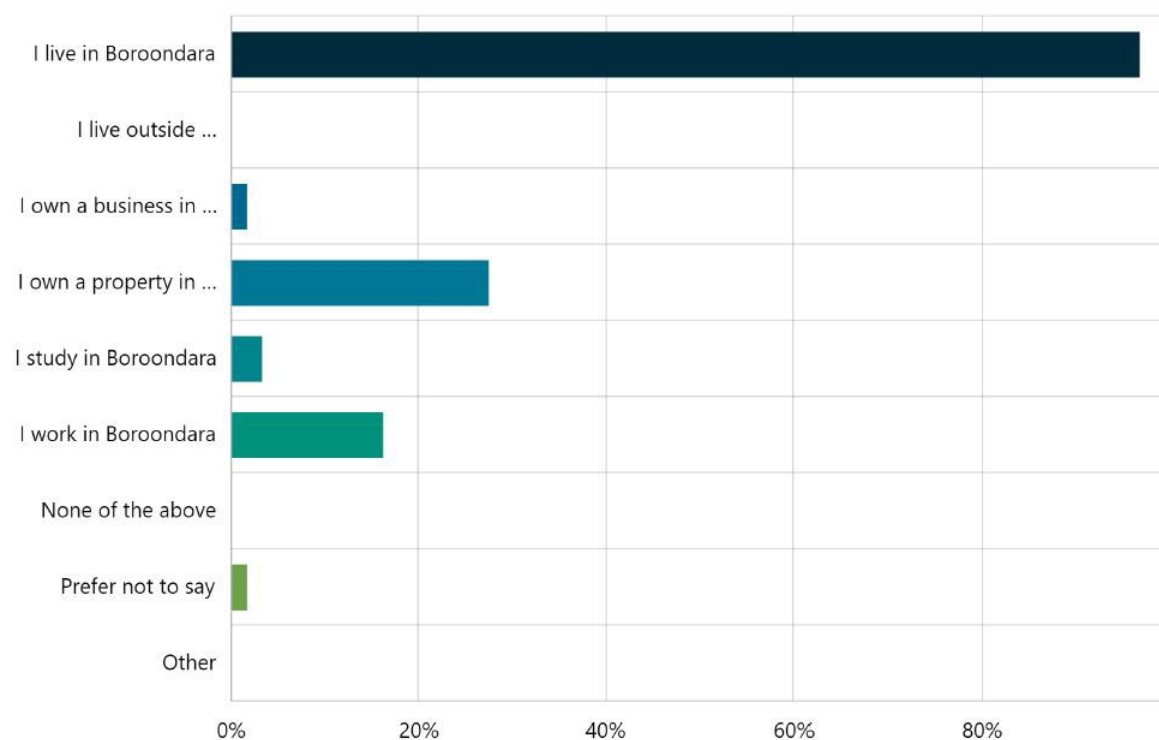
Age of respondents



- 12 to 17 years old: 1 (1.61%)
- 18 to 24 years old: 5 (8.06%)
- 25 to 34 years old: 8 (12.90%)
- 35 to 49 years old: 10 (16.13%)

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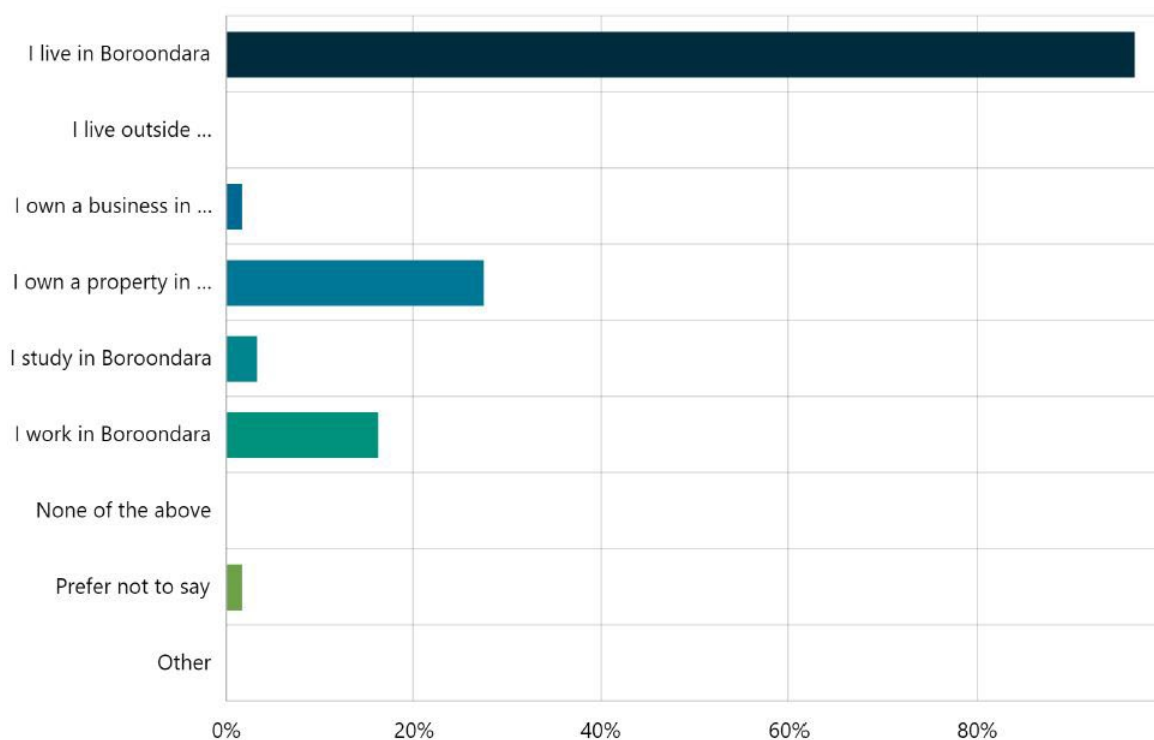
- 50 to 59 years old: 4 (6.45%)
- 60 to 69 years old: 18 (29.03%)
- 70 to 84 years old: 14 (22.58%)
- 85 years old or above: 0 (0%)
- Prefer not to say: 2 (3.23%)

Respondents' connection to Boroondara

Note: respondents could answer more than one.

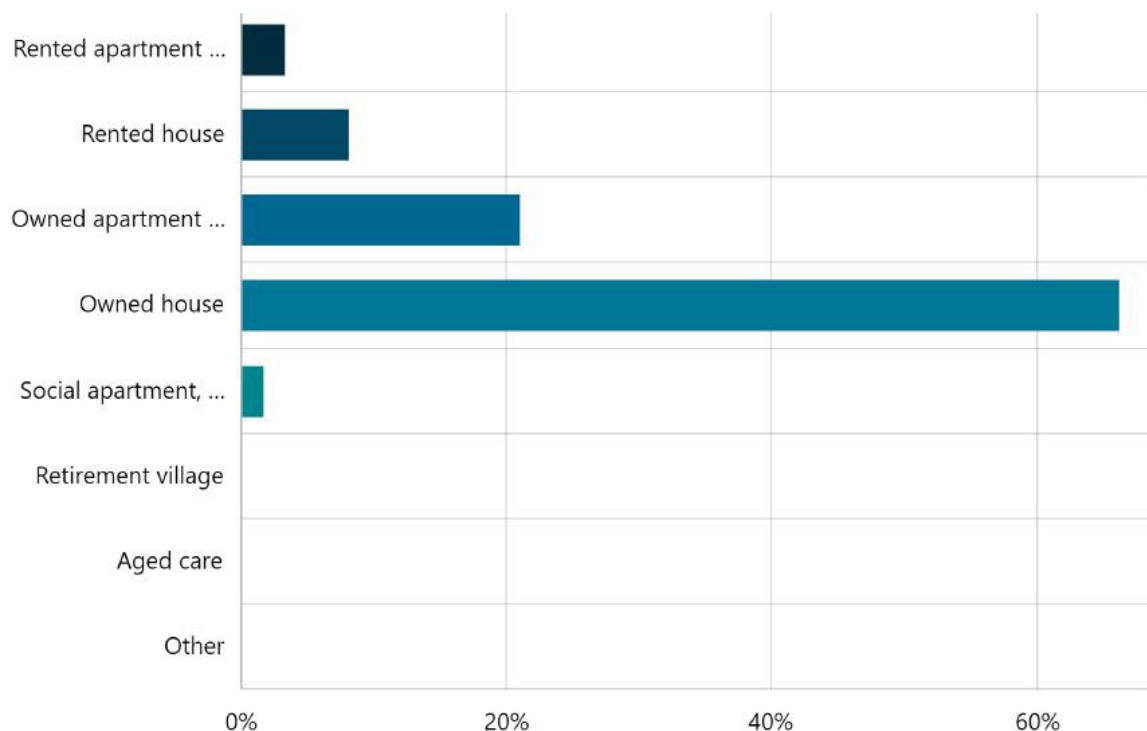
- I live in Boroondara: 60 (96.77%)
- I live outside Boroondara: 0 (0%)
- I own a business in Boroondara: 1 (1.61%)
- I own a property in Boroondara: 17 (27.42%)
- I study in Boroondara: 2 (3.23%)
- I work in Boroondara: 10 (16.13%)
- None of the above: 0 (0%)
- Prefer not to say: 1 (1.61%)
- Other: 0 (0%)

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Suburb of respondents

- Ashburton: 2 (3.33%)
- Balwyn: 3 (5.00%)
- Balwyn North: 3 (5.00%)
- Camberwell: 8 (13.33%)
- Canterbury: 5 (8.33%)
- Deepdene: 0 (0%)
- Glen Iris: 3 (5.00%)
- Hawthorn: 17 (28.33%)
- Hawthorn East: 7 (11.67%)
- Kew: 6 (10.00%)
- Kew East: 0 (0%)
- Mont Albert: 0 (0%)
- Surrey Hills: 6 (10.00%)
- Prefer not to say: 0 (0%)
- Other: 0 (0%)

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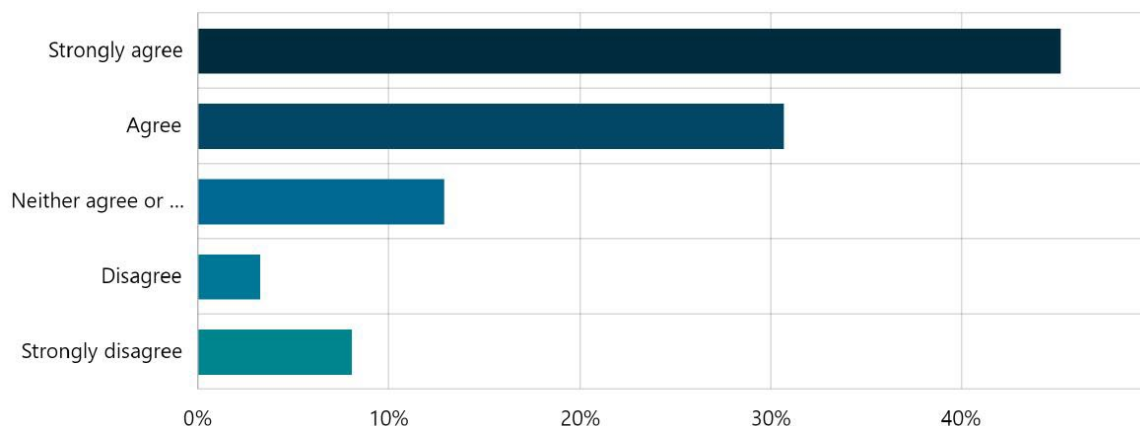
Housing type of respondents

- Rented apartment or townhouse: 2 (3.23%)
- Rented house: 5 (8.06%)
- Owned apartment or townhouse: 13 (20.97%)
- Owned house: 41 (66.13%)
- Social apartment, townhouse or house: 1 (1.61%)
- Retirement village: 0 (0%)
- Aged care: 0 (0%)
- Other: 0 (0%)

Survey questions and feedback

Strategic Direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations. Our draft strategy proposes that we will continue to support housing diversity in appropriate locations. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this focus?

Draft Housing Strategy - Consultation Summary September 2023

Results

- Strongly agree: 28 (45.16%)
- Agree: 19 (30.65%)
- Neither agree or disagree: 8 (12.90%)
- Disagree: 2 (3.23%)
- Strongly disagree: 5 (8.06%)

Direct feedback/commentary

- “I agree, but what is considered ‘appropriate’ needs to be expanded. Making NRZ, 87% of the city, off-limits to most development makes meaningful change impossible. Development must be allowed over the ENTIRE city”.
- “Allow development in the neighbourhood residential zone”.
- “Caters for all the population”.
- “We need more housing so that there are more housing options for homeless people”.
- “Australia has a housing crisis. We must all work together to assist in finding solutions”.
- “The Boroondara Community Plan noted the community places importance on diversity in housing size and affordability (p 38).
 - A mix of dwelling sizes ensures that households have access to housing that is appropriate for their living arrangements. Household sizes in Boroondara are decreasing, increasing demand for medium density housing.
 - A range of housing price points enables people on different incomes to live in and contribute to our community. This addresses existing social inequities while improving the diversity and inclusivity of Boroondara.
 - Residents can remain in their community as they move through life stages with different housing needs.
 - Housing diversity supports the development of mixed-use and 20-minute neighbourhoods. This improves residents access to transport, services, amenities, job and volunteering opportunities.
 - Greater housing diversity and density in appropriate locations prevent urban sprawl and loss of public spaces”.
- “Unsure what exactly IS housing diversity?”

Draft Housing Strategy - Consultation Summary September 2023

- “To achieve housing diversity and given the changes and current mix of the housing stock, the Housing Strategy and Council should focus on encouraging more diversified housing stock in the medium density dwellings. This is currently skewed toward 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. Emphasis should also be given to appropriate medium density housing which is located close to transportation nodes and shopping/community centers. Council should apply Design and Development Overlays rather than the Heritage overlays which are too prohibitive when it comes to appropriate redevelopment. This approach would support the continuation of the growth of medium density developments occurring mostly in and around Major and Neighbourhood Activity Centres and commercial corridors and public transport lines”.
- “If we let the market decide the streetscape, we will end up with McMansions in affluent areas and ghettos elsewhere. Council has a significant role in forming community, both by the types of developments it permits, and the communities it facilitates. Land needs to be made available for social housing in every shire, and particularly those with good health and public transport networks”.
- “Greater housing diversity will allow more people to find suitable homes in Boroondara. In particular, I support moves to increase the amount of public housing and affordable housing”.
- “The emphasis should be on medium density housing, particularly in the areas around transport and shopping hubs. Note that medium density housing has great environmental sustainability advantages”.
- “I strongly believe that many of the heritage overlay restrictions and single dwelling covenants are now inappropriate and are counterproductive to Boroondara achieving a suitable mix of dwellings”.
- “What is the definition of appropriate locations? What say do we have in deciding these locations?”
- “The outline of appropriate locations does not align with the measured distribution of occupant household type by dwelling type (chart 8 in the Strategy). Chart 10 shows clearly that the expected demand for new residence will be roughly evenly distributed between lone occupants, couples, and couples with families (85% of new residence). Chart 8 clearly indicates that medium density dwellings have an extremely strong alignment to this demand. This alignment however, is completely divorced from the strategy. The vast majority of the suitable land for new medium density developments is locked away in NEZ zones slated for low change (Image 5), with areas suited only to high density dwellings are slated for the highest level of change and areas with the highest current proportion of medium density dwellings are slated as areas of medium change. This will clearly lead to the development of new dwellings that does not meet the forecast needs of new occupants, and must be altered immediately”.
- “The area's appeal lies in its leafy streets and classic houses”.
- “The Housing Strategy should focus on encouraging more diversified housing stock in the medium density dwellings. This is currently skewed toward 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings. Emphasis should also be given to appropriate medium density housing which is located close to transportation nodes and shopping/community centers”.
- “Over 15,000 properties in Boroondara are covered by a Heritage Overlay. This places Boroondara in the top 3 councils in Victoria in heritage protection. Council should apply Design and Development Overlays rather than the Heritage overlays which are too

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prohibitive when it comes to appropriate redevelopment. This approach would support the continuation of the growth of medium density developments occurring mostly in and around Major and Neighbourhood Activity Centres and commercial corridors and public transport lines”.

- “The building of additional high density living in our suburb will change the character and reduce the liveability for all. I do not support the ongoing population growth of Melbourne”.
- “Agree additional housing needs to be close to services”.
- “Increasing diversity based on location has been a policy which has led to the destruction of many period homes, tree canopies & gardens, and permanently ruined the amenity of many precincts. Latest example demolition of 110 Glyndon Rd Camberwell of a beautiful art deco home in a street of them”.
- “This has been a planning objective been pursued for last 20 years and done nothing to increase housing affordability, if anything, has made things worse and driven prices up”.
- “Map p39 lacks detail on streets impacted - should be re issued & more time for comment”.
- “All commercial buildings impacted should not involve demolition of pre-war buildings. Middle Camberwell shops are mainly pre-war & should be protected by heritage overlays”.
- “Development should not be left to developers as they build for the maximum price & profit. Council should work with state & fed government to build suitable social housing”.
- “Melbourne needs much more housing, closer to jobs, better infrastructure, and public transport”.
- “We need more housing in Boroondara, I support medium density infill”.
- “We also need more housing suitable to downsizers like my parents - the family home was not suitable, they do not need residential aged care, they sold and bought a townhouse but it was difficult to find one that would allow them to age in place (with eg, a lift and no shower over bath, that was secure)”.
- “Diversity helps promote and support a vibrant community. It teaches current and future generations to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion”.
- “We need more affordable housing in Boroondara. This doesn't mean demolishing all of our heritage, but there are many places where density can be easily accommodated - especially near railway stations (e.g. Camberwell Station carpark)”.
- “We need to continue to have diversity in housing to support affordability and sustainability, especially for younger families looking to live in the area”.
- “Equal human rights despite your background and economic status”.
- “Suburbs should mirror the reality of the population diversity of the state. Helps for creating a vibrant and interesting community”.
- “The leafy character of much of Boroondara has been adversely affected by insensitive residential development over the last 15 years or so. Restricting future intensive development to a relatively small area will help limit these effects”.

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- “I do not support high rise but I support medium rise and multiple houses on one site like townhouses and units. As well as stand-alone houses. This provides a range of housing options to meet diverse household needs that change over time”.
- “Boroondara is blessed with access to great public transport. We are a low-density suburb with lots of opportunity to create higher density around transport, hubs, our educational institutions and businesses will benefit from higher density housing that is more affordable. Higher density housing also needs to include a minimum of 10% public and social housing”.
- “Some locations could be more suitable or less dense than others for a more intense and viable use, the new proposal should be tune with the area, similar forms and style”.
- “The question was too general”.
- “Appropriate locations indicate clustering of high density residential along main roads, allowing developers to build without concern for the future residents. Better to have medium, human scale density across a wider number of places that allow options for different people within neighbourhood communities and accessing parks and quiet space. Not all young, single or poor people want to live in high density it’s just they can’t afford anything else”.
- “I am keen for Boroondara to provide more high density living so people can live near where they work (and most work in the city), to make Melbourne a more liveable city”.
- “Equity”.
- “Too many people are living in cars/tents who cannot afford Boroondara rents”.
- “This area is well serviced and pleasant to live in. In fairness it ought to provide a place to live for people of all demographics”.
- “Appropriate locations for housing diversity is vital to ensure the suburbs retain their unique character”.
- “1. Preservation of Character; 2. Density Concerns; 3. Parking and infrastructure concerns; 4. Property values”.
- “Unclear what appropriate locations have been defined. Where is this made clear?”
- “A mix of housing types and will make Boroondara a city to include young and old to continue and further establish an economic and social community mix”.
- “Sounds right”.
- “Diversity of housing and therefore diversity of people makes it an interesting and lively place to live. For example, having Swinburne and all the uni students that come with it living near Glenferrie Road makes the area much more cosmopolitan and is the reason there are so many restaurants, bars, shops, etc there. However too much increase in development could easily ruin what is great about the areas in Boroondara”.
- “Not sure what ‘in appropriate locations’ means”.
- “Sounds like some elitists are around saying ‘not in my backyard/on my street’?”
- “It’s important”.
- “I think more public housing is urgently needed so wherever houses/apartments can be is fine”.

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- “It mirrors the demographics of Boroondara”.
- “As someone with housing/planning expertise I well appreciate the need for diverse options for a diverse community that includes those who cannot afford the Australian dream”.
- “I believe that this strategy causes:
 - too much high density living which is changing the character of the area
 - causes terrible traffic problems and lack of parking
 - apartment living design all seems to be the same which is ugly
 - decreases these residents from having appropriate outdoor space and sunlight”
- “As I understand it, this would include supporting more smaller homes such as apartments and townhouses. I think this is good because it would help make it more affordable to live in the area. I would like to be able to continue living in the area as I get older, even though I don't want to own a detached house. I would also like the area to be accessible to my friends who are not rich”.
- “I do not care much about preserving the area's character”.
- “Point 1 ‘Investigate the most appropriate housing outcomes’ is really vague and I don't know what that means”.
- “We need more housing so I support development if it appropriate”.
- “The statement is admirable, however I have difficulty in accepting that the strategy genuinely delivers on this in a meaningful manner”.
- “Different people have different needs”.
- “Having housing in areas where there are other supports like transport and shops makes sense”.
- “We need to support the growing population and make the most of the existing infrastructure”.
- “It's important to maintain heritage in Boroondara while encouraging denser housing development in areas close to services. This should include social housing and low cost rentals. Attention to environmental considerations such as greenery, trees and minimal concreting around properties is also essential”.
- “I am concerned by the number of people unable to afford to buy a home and the number of people locked out of the private rental market. It is also concerning that the public housing waiting lists are so long. I believe we need a range of housing types, including more affordable housing, in appropriate settings”.
- “VCAT and developers just over rule Council regardless of what the community says”.
- “I feel very strongly about the need to ensure that as many people as possible can access housing appropriate for their needs and budgets within locations like ours with access to great amenities. We need diverse housing types to suit various life stages and financial circumstances”.

Officers’ response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

There was strong support for ‘*Housing diversity in appropriate locations*’ with 75.81% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with Strategic Direction 1.

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A large number of respondents expressed their support for more housing, particularly medium density housing, close to services and transport. Officers note that the Housing Strategy strategic direction continues to guide future housing development towards areas that are well located in relation to existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport such as Major Activity Centres, commercial corridors and along some main roads (as shown in the Framework Plan in the Housing Strategy).

There was a strong sentiment for the need for a diversity of housing to cater for all of the community whether it be downsizers/older people, young people, and access to housing despite people's backgrounds or economic status. There was also a number supporting an increase in social and affordable housing in the municipality.

The Housing Strategy identifies an action to continue to support the delivery of a diversity of housing stock through planning policies and tools in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. Further actions have been identified within the Housing Strategy that include investigate the ageing-in-place housing needs and options for our diverse community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses; investigate social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses and investigate whether alternative housing models, including rent-to-own, build-to-rent and co-housing, can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara, and potential policy responses.

A number of respondents raised concerns about the loss of heritage and character. Further emphasis was made about the importance of balancing character and new housing. There was also commentary that heritage overlays are development prohibitive.

Officers note that Council has undertaken a number of significant pieces of heritage work including the Municipal Wide Heritage Gap Study, completed over a seven-year period and with over 5,000 additional properties protected through inclusion in the Heritage Overlay. An action is included in the Housing Strategy to review the Neighbourhood Character Policy (including Precinct Statements) to ensure policy directions are delivering housing that respects and enhances the preferred character. It is noted that owning a property in a Heritage Overlay does not always prohibit developing the property. However, it does mean that planning permission is sought before implementing certain designs.

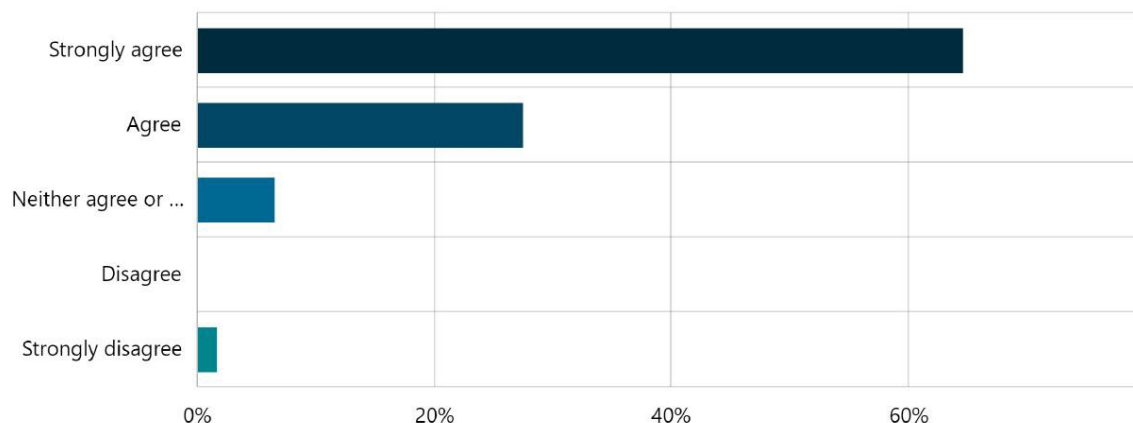
A few respondents commented that housing in 'appropriate locations' is not clear.

It is recommended that additional clarification is added to the Housing Strategy around what 'appropriate locations' means.

Strategic Direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence. Our draft strategy proposes that we will continue to support sustainable, well-designed housing. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this focus?

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Results



- Strongly agree: 40 (64.52%)
- Agree: 17 (27.42%)
- Neither agree or disagree: 4 (6.45%)
- Disagree: 0 (0%)
- Strongly disagree: 1 (1.61%)

Direct feedback/commentary

- “The most important factor in sustainable development is MORE development of dense housing. Detached homes are the least efficient form of housing - they lead to urban sprawl and automobile dependence. Boroondara’s *Climate Action Plan* aims to put in place practices that address climate change, and this is perhaps the most important change that is required”.
- “Building high density housing is the best way to ensure sustainable development”.
- “Necessary for climate and saving energy”.
- “We need to promote the building of more housing”.
- “Well-designed housing is good for the environment”.
- “We must all do more to save our planet. There are many critical issues facing our world, this is one that we can all play a part to make a positive change”.
- “Sustainable design reduces the environmental impact of housing. Energy-efficient developments have reduced electricity consumption, lowering emissions and electricity bills. Sustainable design can lower water consumption, promoting drought resilience. Promoting recycled or locally sourced materials will reduce construction waste and transport emissions. Overall, the uptake of ESD principles will strongly support Council’s *Climate Action Plan* community targets”.
- “Incorporating universal design principles into developments ensures that housing is suitable for people of all ages and abilities. Residents can live in their homes longer and avoid expensive retrofits”.

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- “Council should progress its planning scheme amendment to introduce new, strong ESD provisions into the Boroondara Planning Scheme for housing. Advocacy for incorporating ESD policy in the VPP should continue”.
- “An Urban Greening Strategy will promote housing's heat resilience, amenity, and biodiversity”.
- “Housing LIVEABILITY should be a key focus strategy. So many of the apartments and subdivisions recently have been built for investors and not designed for people, couples and families to live in (eg. lack of light, outside/green space, basic storage, tiny room sizes etc). Apartments can be a great housing option - but only if they are designed well”.
- “It is welcomed that Boroondara has joined 24 other Councils to seek changes to Victorian Planning Schemes to ensure greater accountability for Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) in the development of buildings. However, at the time of submitting, there is still no dedicated planning policy in the Boroondara Planning Scheme that requires an ESD assessment to be provided as part of a planning application. This requirement should be added to planning schemes and increased resources given to the planning department to ensure that development applications align with strict environmental and sustainability standards, including energy efficiency requirements and green building practices. In addition, Council should establish grants for low and middle income households to assist them achieve the highest ESD standards with their homes. These grants could be funded from a vacancy and short-term rental levies”.
- “So much development is aspirational - the biggest house I can get on the block. Sustainability is a public good; it needs Government intervention to be effectively lived out”.
- “It is 2023 and the planet is facing a climate and ecological crisis”.
- “The Boroondara Planning Scheme should be updated to require an ESD for every proposed development”.
- “I think NEW houses should be sustainable, however, I do not agree with the option of Gas being removed”.
- “The commitment to high ESD standards is commendable, in particular the emphasis on the local character of tree coverage within suburban areas. It is clear, however, that this has been used as a tool to lock out the necessary land to meet the incoming strategic needs instead of the guiding hand to ensure the highest standard of new developments. Limiting the medium zones of change only to those areas that reflect these intents the least is not a sustainable strategy to ensure that all developments are consistent with the espoused ESD principles, and in actuality provides less scope for opportunity to innovate in the most needed area: Medium Density Residential properties that maintain the character of the current neighbourhoods. This strategy must enable this, and this strategy direction currently is ambivalent to it”.
- “Not sure how anyone could disagree. Surely no-one sets out to support badly designed houses, it is what qualifies as good design or design that fits in with its surroundings that is arguable”.
- “There are many examples in our suburb of poorly designed houses; lack of sun control ie awning, and lack of cross flow ventilation”.

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- “Often houses are built, squashed onto blocks, all designed to increase profit for the developer and the community is left with the consequences”.
- “Agree all housing must be sustainable”.
- “Yes - we should be retrofitting, rather than demolishing perfectly good buildings all the time”.
- “We also need to keep and INCREASE the tree canopy”.
- “This will happen more if Council goes into partnerships with state & federal governments, rather than leaving things to developers who only build for profit, rather than quality”.
- “Goes without saying. More apartments will be needed to meet current and future demands. Ensuring good design, appropriate size, sound proofing, insulation etc is essential”.
- “There are so many new homes in Boroondara that are going to be costly for the occupants to run (heating/cooling) and a drag on climate action. New housing often has no eaves, no consideration of orientation, removes tree canopy, and is large. They further rely on gas heating and air conditioning rather than passive operation. Boroondara should amend its own planning to prevent new gas appliances being installed, and it should also allow solar without restrictions (including on heritage homes). Our 110-year-old weatherboard is modestly sized, well oriented and has had retrofitted insulation”.
- “Living more sustainably ensures we live comfortably and healthily, whilst having smaller(st) possible ecological footprint”.
- “Not all housing is good housing”.
- “Suitability is important for future generations”.
- “Makes sense on many fronts that houses should be built to a high standard”.
- “It is important buildings are built for the future, minimising retro fitting in the future”.
- “There is a long way to go with design excellence and sustainable development in Boroondara. So this is a high priority. Design principles advocated by Robin Boyd and others over 50 years ago are still being ignored in some recent developments”.
- “Attractive well-designed housing is pleasing to the eye and adds to the character of our locality. It also offers a positive environment for those living in the housing”.
- “Don’t want houses built boundary to boundary without garden space”.
- “Design excellence should not be an excuse to slow down planning approvals. Sustainability is a must design. Excellence is difficult to measure and should be scrapped”.
- “Garden space should be encouraged and kept to a maximum proportion, boxes for buildings could be better design and discouraged”.
- “This is important for the environment and the future”.
- “Sustainable has to look at factors beyond the building materials. Needs a minimum add of green space and reduce concreting and paving every available outdoor space messing with the water table and urban island. Multi-unit must provide fogo, solar etc. where renters have no control. Buildings must suit future populations so more construction (one of the biggest negative impacts in the environment) is limited”.

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- “We want housing to be well designed, but not if that is at the expense of affordability. It is more important to me that Boroondara is affordable so my son can live near me as a young adult, than that the buildings 'look nice’”.
- “Question too vague”.
- “I don’t know enough to comment really, but the situation for those doing it rough it dire”.
- “Climate change necessitates a change from former building practices”.
- “Appropriate design is important to retain the character in our neighbourhood”.
- “As a community we must continue to support sustainability efforts across all aspects of our lives”.
- “Housing needs to be built for the longer term and to meet the needs for comfort which are evolving given climate change”.
- “Ill defined. What is 'sustainable' and 'design excellence'? There are many examples that don't fit either. Why don't you use a minimum star rating for sustainability or energy efficiency?”
- “Development needs to enhance or at the very least not detract from what makes Boroondara a good place to live. For example, maintaining and enhancing vegetation, water sensitive urban design, quality housing which enhances people's lives (e.g. natural light and open space), not overshadowing or visually impacting surrounding areas, maintaining heritage, etc. Unrestrained and un-directed development only creates urban slums”.
- “Climate change and cutting down on planned obsolescence is important for the environment”.
- “Strong advocate for strict control on building housing that is sustainable, eco-friendly and 7 star”.
- “'Sustainable' should be defined - I guess in this context it means houses that can be sustained, i.e. won't fall down in the next few years”.
- “Climate change, sustainable living, efficient housing”.
- “Blah blah blah. Who actually objects to sustainable well-designed housing. Silly survey”.
- “I don’t believe that the housing that has been approved is appropriate. So continuing it is, in my opinion, continuing a flawed strategy”.
- “I am very much in favour of making Boroondara more sustainable and environmentally friendly, and I'm glad it's a focus”.
- “The document says “the overwhelming majority of our residential areas are within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (87%). These areas will likely see only limited change in response.” To me, this conflicts with the focus on sustainability - I think that modern, denser housing is generally more environmentally friendly. While the strategy does allow for some minimal development in these areas, I think there should be more”.
- “It is really a no brainer. But it is hard to reconcile this aim with the extraordinary number of ridiculously enormous houses being built in the suburb with full wall windows devoid of covering and heating/cooling on all the time!”

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- “Housing always should reflect the character of the surrounding area and be built in a sustainable way”.
- “There is too much housing in Boroondara that is poorly designed for Australian conditions - no eaves, many bedrooms and bathrooms, built fence-to-fence with no space on the property - there needs to be a way to stop this!”
- “To cut down on energy consumption and provide pleasant practical accommodation”.
- “I think that sustainability is very necessary in facing environmental challenges in Boroondara (and everywhere). Buildings which adhere to the new ecological parameters have less of an impact on climate change and can be cheaper to live in for the residents in terms of power etc. Good design is very important to the people of Boroondara, who have pride in their area and enjoy structures which blend well in their streetscapes and are attractive. This can and I believe, should apply to more affordable housing too”.
- “On the basis that this is commercial, sustainability regardless of cost is pointless”.
- “My family is committed to making our homes as sustainable as possible through electrification, water conservation, etc. I am surprised that Boroondara is approving new builds that ignore these important features”.
- “Boroondara should amend its own by laws where it can influence the quality and sustainability of housing developments eg Environmentally Sustainable Development ESD requirements. Why is Boroondara lagging behind other Victorian LGAs?”
- “I support solar panels on street facing rooves in heritage overlay areas. I do not see them as any more or less attractive than roof tiles for example plus we have a climate emergency!! The more solar panels the better”.

Officers’ response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

There was very strong support for ‘*Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence*’ with 91.94% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with Strategic Direction 2.

A large number of respondents noted that well-designed, energy-efficient housing is necessary to minimise impacts on the environment and expressed their support for more Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) principles being utilised, including 7 star ratings, with reference made to Council’s *Climate Action Plan*. Some respondents commented that Council should progress planning scheme amendment to introduce strong ESD provisions into the Boroondara Planning Scheme. It is important to note that Council requires the Minister for Planning’s approval for any changes to the Boroondara Planning Scheme including the introduction of new planning policies. Council therefore cannot simply change the planning scheme to introduce ESD requirements. As climate change is not only a local issue, a coordinated, strong and consistent policy response is needed across all levels of government. It has been Council’s long-held position that a state-wide ESD policy is needed. Officers will continue to work closely with the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) to advocate for this.

A few respondents commented that higher density housing is more sustainable as more energy- and resource-efficient. Commentary was made that more housing should be allowed in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone. Officers note that Housing Strategy continues to support higher density housing in our Activity Centres, along some

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commercial and transport corridors that are close to existing services, public transport, amenity and infrastructure. Areas of Neighbourhood Residential Zone are generally established residential locations that have limited capacity to accommodate significant future housing change as it supports the retention of existing character.

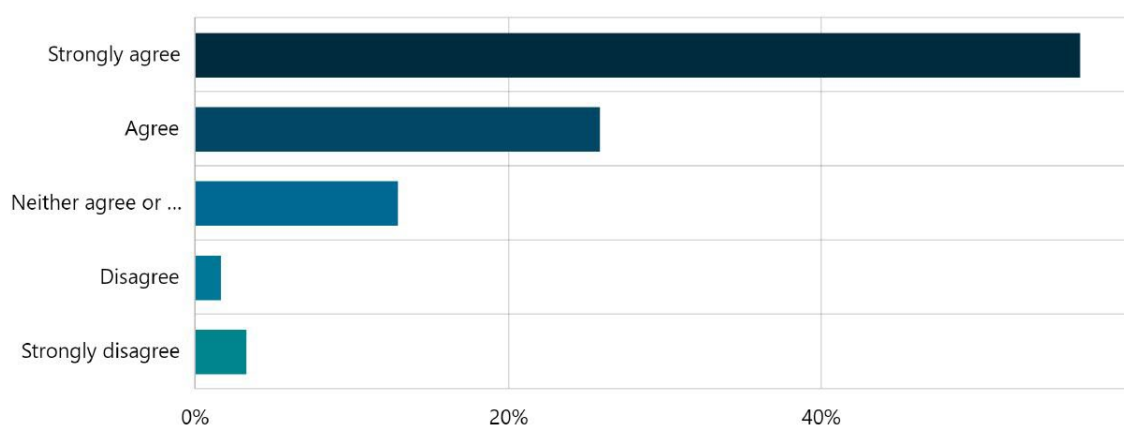
There was commentary made about the importance of good design and its positive impact on Boroondara's character. Comments were made about utilising basic design principles such as awnings, cross-ventilation, orientation to minimise the need on heating/cooling requirements. Reuse of existing buildings was also put forth as alternative to demolition as it is resource inefficient. There was also feedback about the need to incorporate universal design principles to ensure houses are resilient and can adapt to the needs of residents over time. Officers note that Council will shortly be releasing *Design Excellence in the City of Boroondara* that will communicate Boroondara's design expectations in a clear and visual document. This is the first in a series of design guidelines to be produced by Council.

There was also a number supporting an increase in tree canopy and garden space associated with new housing developments. Officers note that Council is currently drafting a *Tree Canopy Strategy* to ensure there is clearer guidance around this matter.

Areas of support, interest or concern raised by respondents have been noted. Actions currently underway by Council and/or listed in the Housing Strategy are responding to many comments made in feedback therefore no changes to the Housing Strategy are recommended as a result.

Strategic Direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future. Our draft strategy proposes that we will continue to support the housing needs of all residents. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this focus?

Results



- Strongly agree: 35 (56.45%)

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- Agree: 16 (25.81%)
- Neither agree or disagree: 8 (12.90%)
- Disagree: 1 (1.61%)
- Strongly disagree: 2 (3.23%)

Direct feedback/commentary

- “According to the strategy, most families in Boroondara live in detached homes, while most apartments are occupied by people without children. This means we need more medium and high-density development with three- and four-bedroom flats, that are suitable for families. This will provide much greater freedom of choice for Boroondara residents”.
- “More three and four bedroom flats are needed to ensure that families are able to live in apartments rather than stand-alone homes being the only option for families”.
- “Social housing is needed, especially as it is close to support services”.
- “Could be erected in air space above Council owned property, eg carpark, just as residences are built above retail and commercial”.
- “It is important to plan for future home buyers and not just focus on those who are in the market right now, it’s about the growth”.
- “We must care for the most vulnerable people in our community”.
- “Council must be bold and take big steps. Our local students, children, essential workers and the very poor should not be shut out of Boroondara. We should be embracing social housing, not encouraging ghettos in other suburbs. Sharing the beautiful suburb creates a more equitable society with less division. The use of Council land or air space such as a car park in Glenferrie Rd makes good use of the land without too much impact on the streets with heritage concerns. Other Councils have recognised they have a responsibility, and we should do the same”.
- “Prioritise opportunities to negotiate section 173 agreements under *the Planning and Environment Act 1987* to enable the provision of social and affordable housing. This can improve affordability and diversity of housing while also addressing homelessness”.
- “Advocate for inclusionary zoning mechanisms for social and affordable housing and incorporating them into the Boroondara Planning Scheme. Unlike section 173 agreements, inclusionary zoning can be mandatory”.
- “Facilitate co-location of community services in mixed-use developments”.
- “Consider and advocate for capturing value uplift when land is rezoned for higher value uses”.
- “Consider policies to increase available housing and rental stock by addressing the high number of unoccupied dwellings. This includes researching why dwellings are unoccupied (short-stay accommodation, temporarily unoccupied, or permanently empty) and investigating opportunities to increase availability to long-term renters and homebuyers”.
- “Commitment to end homeless in Boroondara. The number of people in Boroondara who were homeless on Census night increased from 383 in 2011, to 426 in 2016. This was the second largest increase (11.2%) in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR).

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The increase aligns with the increase in reports to Council relating to instances of homelessness, with 76 reports made in 2017 compared to seven in 2009. In this context it is incumbent upon the City of Boroondara to increase funding and support for people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness as part of the housing strategy and include initiatives that plan, deliver, partner and advocate to ending homelessness in Boroondara”.

- “Comparing Australia with northern Europe - houses are built to last 20 years not 100 years. The resultant energy costs and rebuild costs in terms of resources (not financial) are taking from the next generations”.
- “Boroondara can make a contribution to reducing homelessness. Council should explore options to develop Community Land Trusts and Social/Public Housing Partnerships”.
- “Council should introduce significant vacant property and short-term-rental levies”.
- “Do you mean all current residents or any future residents. How are you going to determine these needs of residents?”
- “While the intent is good, it is clear that without mandated strategic level KPI indicators for these focus areas, Council will continue to be a laggard in areas such as social housing and housing affordability. Only with these enshrined in the highest-level plans and strategies does the necessary leverage, will, and accountability exist as an essential foundation to improve. With the strategy as currently expressed, the Council will not improve its standing despite the best of intentions”.
- “The draft strategy of supporting residents needs surely could apply to all that the Council does and is the reason the Council is there at all”.
- “This survey seems to be couched in such general terms that people would be hard pushed to disagree. Most reasonable people want good design, and want the needs of resident to be met. Without defining what the needs of the residents are and how the council proposes to meet those needs, there is little to actually comment on”.
- “Noting that according to the housing strategy Council acknowledges ‘increasing the provision of social housing is important to addressing homelessness’”.
- “Council should commit to ending homelessness in Boroondara has part of its housing strategy. The Council should actively explore partnering arrangements with the not-for-profit housing providers that will deliver more public, social and affordable housing. This approach would allow Council to play a key role in development of public, social and affordable housing from planning perspective, provide a reliable long-term investment and reduce homelessness in Boroondara”.
- “Council should also consider: Setting an inclusionary zoning level of no less than 15% and a vacant Property/Short-Term Rental Levy. 11% of private dwelling were unoccupied. The funds raised could be hypothecated towards supporting those experiencing homelessness and supporting the provision of public, social and affordable housing”.
- “I do not support the over development of our suburb”.
- “Often the provision of housing for older residents or low income, involved putting up multi-level developments, that are poorly designed and do not meet the needs of our community”.

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- “We should really consider what population we want Melbourne and our suburb to have”.
- “Bigger is not better and we need to look at the environmental aspects and lack of green spaces”.
- “I suggest we need to put a stop to development and aim to protect our suburb”.
- “Agree all housing must suit a diversity of residents, with emphasis on the groups that will be increasing in the future, including the aged and renters”.
- “Recommend provision for as of right dual occupancy subject to compliance with conditions for buildings and works, including:
 - single storey, single bedroom granny flats (not just for granny, but for anyone - another family member, a carer, an essential worker etc),
 - a second self-contained dwelling in an existing house, which preserves the existing character (and heritage, if applicable) of the house as it presents to the street, which could allow granny (or anyone) to continue to live in the older front dwelling and a family, or cared etc in the rear, and/ or make provision for a home office”.
- “Recommend conversion of existing unused / underused office space and commercial buildings for residential use, including group / communal housing, in particular older and heritage buildings which are more adaptable to housing”.
- “To date, all levels of government including Council, have done nothing to improve housing in Boroondara, except benefit developers, property & construction industries”.
- “Many feel the planning system is rigged to benefit developers”.
- “Heritage and trees are demolished every day and there is no one tracking or forecasting the number of period homes & buildings that are lost each year”.
- “Despite 20 years of rabid development in Boroondara, housing unaffordability is at an all-time high. Homelessness is at all time high and people sleeping in parks. No social housing is ever built in Boroondara - just luxury apartments”.
- “Leaving development to the private sector HAS NOT WORKED”.
- “We need essential workers, we want our kids & grand kids to live here, but they can't afford it & more luxury apartments is not the solution”.
- “Council needs to (1) review and protect more heritage properties, (2) go into partnership with government and not for profit agencies to build sustainable, low cost housing”.
- “May be a bit of a big ask. Some people are going to feel aggrieved whatever you do”.
- “We need to also consider the personality and character of our neighbourhoods, security and safety for all walks of life and ages, and extensive engagement with the community”.
- “Future residents of Boroondara don't currently have a say in how housing is developed or managed. This needs to be strong in the Strategy and in Council's actions”.
- “As young families look to move to the area (or move back) it is important that we allow housing to be designed and redesigned to accommodate these growing families. Especially housing that was built in a different time that doesn't suit the needs of modern families”.

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- “Not sure how you could legislate for houses to meet present and future needs. Needs change over time because of changes in technology and building materials and peoples' attitudes change too. Trying to predict too far into the future is difficult”.
- “Those on low incomes certainly warrant more support. But why should Council support those who choose to build large residences, e.g. with 4 or more bedrooms?”
- “Current housing has a lack of diversity that will not meet the needs of future residents. We are at risk of turning our back on younger generations. We also must embrace social and affordable housing. Many of those accessing affordable and social housing, are fleeing domestic violence. We are risk of excluding Boroondara residents from living in their suburbs because they are fleeing domestic violence”.
- “Current building materials used do not give you the "lasting feeling" even solid brick construction of the past takes very little to demolish and ignore by present and future dwellers”.
- “The survey questions were too vague”.
- “What actions of Council would actually go here? How far into the future? What kinds of considerations for future populations are you making?”
- “We need to think about current residents but also people who want to live in Boroondara. The Victorian Government has an objective that most of Melbourne's population growth will be accommodated in existing suburbs - so Boroondara needs to support higher density living”.
- “Vague question...what is residents? You need to be more specific....it sort of sounds like it is designed to get the answers you want”.
- “Many wealthy people live here. It's the poor and disadvantaged who need the support”.
- “As the owner of an apartment in Boroondara where the cladding of the less than 10-year-old building had to be replaced at huge expense, I do not understand why the Council is so neglectful in oversight of building regulations. Not only the cladding but well over \$100,000 of other building faults have been found. The 18 residents many of whom are retirees must now struggle to pay for all these replacements/repairs. It seems to a common problem in this area so I wonder if fine-sounding strategies are not really worthless”.
- “Can't argue against that”.
- “Everyone needs a home”.
- “It's important that everyone has a place to live so a variety of housing options to suit people with disabilities, and/or living alone, or in families, or with pets, (particularly if the pet is the sole companion), is important”.
- “More social housing”.
- “Gender lens on housing to ensure older women and women escaping violence can access accommodation, which is affordable, safe and close to amenities”.
- “Use empty houses and retrofit empty offices”.
- “Blah blah blah”.
- “The type of housing that is being introduced is going to restrict young families and older people living in the area. This is not inclusive”.

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- “I like the parts about building more social housing in Boroondara, I think that would be good”.
- “Diversity in housing in an important strategy. The failure to reflect this strategy with appropriate controls is telling”.
- “While I strongly agree, I have no idea how you can hope to meet this objective”.
- “Mixed housing encourages more diversity, particularly in age, that will reflect the broader community's diversity”.
- “I believe it is the right approach in that it is more inclusive than perhaps in the past. The Council, in line with the community, seems to be addressing the needs of those who perhaps were often ‘air-brushed’ out of housing strategies in the past. These include young people starting out and struggling to buy a home or rent in the private market, recently arrived migrants who cannot find affordable housing and the homeless and those at risk of being homeless. This last group now includes old people too, and the Council's inclusiveness in its draft strategies is a step in the right direction”.
- “The issue is what is the community of the future, predictions of societal change to date is not great”.
- “We need to diversify the housing mix to suit different life stages and needs. Increasingly new houses seem to be enormous, boundary-to-boundary edifices. Smaller, homes for families, young people and older people are needed”.

Officers’ response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

There was very strong support for ‘*Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future*’ with 82.26% of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with Strategic Direction 3.

A large number of respondents expressed their support for more social and affordable housing, particularly for key groups such young people, families, women, people experiencing homelessness, essential workers, people on low incomes and older people.

There was also a number of respondents commenting on the use of airspace above Council-owned land for such housing.

It has been a long-held position of Council that the provision of social and affordable housing is a State and Federal Government responsibility, and Council-owned land should not be divested for such use.

The position of Council has been to support an increase in social and affordable housing on land that is owned by the Federal or State Government and to advocate to and work with other levels of government, community housing providers and private sector to provide social and affordable housing for Boroondara residents.

An action within the Draft Housing Strategy identifies further investigation into social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses. A further action is to investigate whether alternative housing models, including rent-to-own, build-to-rent and co-housing, can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara, and potential policy responses.

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There was a strong sentiment for the need for a diversity of housing to cater for all of the community, including greater number of bedrooms in higher density apartments and better options for older people. Actions within the Housing Strategy include investigate strengthening local policy provisions for the delivery of a range of dwelling sizes and bedrooms in 10+ dwelling developments and investigate the ageing-in-place housing needs and options for our diverse community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses.

Some respondents commented that houses need to be adaptable to change with the changing needs of occupants. An action is included in the Housing Strategy to investigate strengthening local planning policy provisions to ensure new housing is adaptable and accessible.

Some feedback from respondents suggested that underutilised commercial/office space should be considered for conversion to residential. Officers position is that it is important to maintain land zoned for commercial uses to support a strong economy in Boroondara. It is noted that there is an action in the Housing Strategy to review our Neighbourhood and Local Shopping Centres network to understand their economic role and what role they may play in future housing provision.

Commentary from some respondents included better utilisation of planning tools/mechanisms and policy to increase the provision of social and affordable housing, for example, negotiating section 173 agreements with developers, advocating for inclusionary zoning and as-of-right development for secondary dwellings. It is noted that Officers do negotiate section 173 agreements with developers for affordable housing where appropriate. It has been a long-held Council position that social and affordable housing provision is a State Government responsibility. It is also important to note that planning policies at the municipal level (through the Boroondara Planning Scheme) must be consistent with and cannot contradict state-wide policy directions. Council requires the Minister for Planning's approval for any changes to the Boroondara Planning Scheme including the introduction of new planning policies. Council therefore cannot simply change the planning scheme to introduce inclusionary zoning or as-of-right requirements. It should be noted there is currently no tool in the Victorian Planning Scheme (VPP) to achieve inclusionary zoning outcomes. For Council to be able to introduce such a policy, the State Government would first need to change the VPP to make such a tool available to local government or introduce it as a state-wide policy.

Some feedback was around placing levies on vacant properties. Occupancy rates were lower than usual at the 2021 Census, however it is important to note that although some of these unoccupied dwellings are available stock, many would have been only temporarily unoccupied due to COVID 19 pandemic restrictions. A return to higher occupancy rates is forecast. An action within the Housing Strategy is to monitor population and dwelling forecasts, particularly having regard to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on population and housing needs and prepare an interim report within 2 years.

A number of respondents raised concerns about the loss of heritage and character and over-development in Boroondara. Officers note that Council has undertaken a number of significant pieces of heritage work including the Municipal Wide Heritage Gap Study, completed over a seven-year period and with over 5,000 additional properties protected

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through inclusion in the Heritage Overlay. An action is included in the Housing Strategy to review the Neighbourhood Character Policy (including Precinct Statements) to ensure policy directions are delivering housing that respects and enhances the preferred character.

Areas of support, interest or concern raised by respondents have been noted. Actions currently underway by Council and/or listed in the Housing Strategy are responding to many comments made in feedback therefore no changes to the Housing Strategy are recommended as a result.

Community drop-in sessions

A small number of people attended drop-in sessions on 23 May 2023 and 30 May 2023. Areas of interest included:

- Wanting an overview of the Housing Strategy
- Council's social and affordable housing position
- Vacant properties in Boroondara and its impact on housing supply
- Homelessness and Council's response process
- Protection of heritage

Officers' response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

Areas of interest or concern raised by attendees were noted. No changes to the Housing Strategy recommended as a result.

Feedback received by email or post

Community Housing

Servants Community Housing (Servants) presented a comprehensive submission to the draft Housing Strategy.

Servants is a registered community housing provider, supporting 95 tenants across four properties in Hawthorn and Kew, equating to 11.9% of Boroondara's total social housing tenants. Servants works in partnership with local agencies including ACCESS Health, St Vincent's Community Mental Health Clinic, and Boroondara Community Outreach to ensure people on low incomes have safe and sustainable alternatives to homelessness.

The Servants submission highlighted that Council's review of the Boroondara Housing Strategy provides a fresh and important opportunity to reconsider Council's responsibility to actively work towards, as the Boroondara Community Plan states, a city that can 'embrace diversity [and] foster inclusion'.

The submission put forward two recommendations:

1. Council adopt specific targets to increase social and affordable housing within Boroondara. Their argument for this included:

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- Minimum targets do not create a legally binding agreement for provision of social housing, and provide little risk to Council. They are important in guiding an ethos and understanding in Council and within the community that social housing is a necessary priority for fulfilment of the Boroondara Community Plan.
2. Council endorse the use of Council-owned land to increase supply of social and affordable housing. Their argument for this included:
- Council's 2015 Housing Strategy explicitly precludes council land being used for social and affordable housing and reinforces the responsibility of State and Federal government in supplying land for such use. The 2023 Draft Strategy is no clearer in making a commitment to exploring the potential for council land to increase social housing supply. This hand-off approach is at odds with Boroondara's potential capacity, and in stark contrast with the perspectives of other local councils.
 - Successful social housing has already been well-established on Boroondara land. Council receives market rent on Hamer Court (535 High St, Kew), which houses 28 people on low incomes in a former aged-care facility. The success of this model, which includes live-in house managers and shared meals, has been celebrated nationally as an innovative and sustainable solution to supporting people at risk of homelessness, including those with acute psychiatric conditions.
 - There is opportunity to build social and affordable housing using "airspace" above Council buildings or carparks, including Kew Library. In this way, Council can take advantage of opportunities to better meet the needs of a diverse community even without compromising the need to use Council land for public facilities.

Officers' response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

It is acknowledged that Servants Community Housing does great work in the Boroondara community.

It has been a long-held position of Council that the provision of social and affordable housing is a State and Federal Government responsibility, and Council-owned land should not be divested for such use.

The position of Council has been to support an increase in social and affordable housing on land that is owned by the Federal or State Government and to advocate to and work with other levels of government, community housing providers and private sector to provide social and affordable housing for Boroondara residents.

Officers note that the draft Housing Strategy has identified that there are approximately 2,500 people waiting for social housing on the Victorian Housing Register and transfer list for the Box Hill Regional Office (covering Boroondara, Whitehorse and Manningham).

An action within the draft Housing Strategy identifies further investigation into social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses. Officers note that with a rise in community interest in social and affordable housing provision in Boroondara, there may be opportunity to revisit this area in future.

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It is recommended that there be no change to the Housing Strategy at this time.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Two submissions were received around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience of racialised trauma, cultural homelessness, displacement, dispossession and loss of identity and culture and the impact secure housing has on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' safe belonging in the community. One of the submissions was anonymous feedback received from a person outlining their lived experience as a subsidised housing tenant.

Officers' response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

Officers acknowledge the complex and devastating experiences of the anonymous respondent.

As noted in the Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-2026, Council recognises there is a significant gap between the health status of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the non-Aboriginal population. Although there have been some improvements, many areas such as housing, require urgent action to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians.

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap is identified as a key strategic document in the Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-26. This Agreement prioritises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples securing appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and needs as a key outcome for 2031. Council recognises health and wellbeing inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as requiring specific focus. Council also recognises the importance of maintaining up to date social, physical and environmental data relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, in order for Council to appropriately advocate, where required.

Through the Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy, Council is committed to taking a collaborative approach to addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing as articulated under the following actions:

- Action 31: Attend existing local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led networks to facilitate relationship building, understanding of sector needs and identify collaboration opportunities to explore.
- Action 41 on page 51: In collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sector, advocate where required on health and wellbeing issues which are important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Council is also committed to developing relationships with Aboriginal-led services and networks in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) specifically supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and/or providing strategic policy and service advice and planning in the EMR.

Through these commitments, Council will continue to stay up to date with the housing needs of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and, where required, advocate to the appropriate levels of government, in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sector.

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It is recommended that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples be captured in the Housing Strategy as a key group in critical need of housing.

General

A Boroondara resident submitted a detailed response via email. A summary of raised issues included:

- The Housing Strategy needs to fit within an overarching vision for the City in a way that ensures amenity, infrastructure and liveability are not unduly compromised.
- There are no timelines or strong commitment to deliver actions in the Housing Strategy.
- Absence of commitment to planning for densification through planning tools, engagement of community and communication with architects and developers to influence design outcomes.
- Council is impotent and relies on State Government, particularly implementing Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) requirements.
- The absence of the number and types of accommodation built since 2016 is glaring.
- Accommodation choice for downsizers needs expanding beyond retirement complexes and luxury apartments.
- Further Heritage Gap Studies should be undertaken.
- Foreign Investment Review Board policies drive investment in new homes that then remain empty.
- Needs greater clarity and transparency around planning for higher density.
- There should be acknowledgement that forecast population and dwellings may be exceeded.
- Lack of meaningful impact on design and amenity outcomes of development or taking cumulative impacts into account.
- Concerns around lack of planning for or understanding of the limits of infrastructure.
- Concerns around demolition of existing affordable housing and lack of pursuit of new affordable housing.

Officers' response and recommended changes to the Housing Strategy:

Responses are provided in the order of the raised issues above.

The *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31* sets out the vision for our municipality based on community values, aspirations and priorities. The community vision as outlined in the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* is for a 'sustainable and inclusive community'. It sets out key strategies to ensure the delivery of community services and facilities that are adaptable to meet the changing needs and expectations of our community. The *Boroondara Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33* identifies key issues and responses for physical infrastructure provision and maintenance. These Plans have been foundational in the drafting of the Housing Strategy.

An action plan will form part of a wider report to be tabled at a meeting of Council's Urban Planning Delegated Committee seeking final adoption of the Housing Strategy. The Housing Strategy will set an overarching framework and is guided by the *Boroondara Community Plan (2021-31)*. Some recommended actions in the draft strategy, like

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potential policy changes, will need more work before we can put them in place. This includes further strategic work, as well as consultation with the community.

Actions within the Housing Strategy around communicating design outcomes include investigating strengthening local policy to improve medium density design outcomes; preparing a series of best practice urban design guidelines for new development within Boroondara; and promoting high standards of design and environmental sustainability in Boroondara through bi-annual Urban Design Awards.

It is important to note that Council requires the Minister for Planning's approval for any changes to the Boroondara Planning Scheme including zoning changes and the introduction of new planning policies. Council therefore cannot simply change the planning scheme to introduce policy. The Housing Strategy will also help us advocate to the Victorian and Australian governments about housing issues that are outside of our control.

The Housing Strategy has been drafted utilising development data since 2005 and is further supported by a housing capacity analysis report produced by SGS Economics and Planning. Officers believe that internal development data collection processes can be further enhanced, and an action can be added to the Housing Strategy reflecting this.

An action within the Housing Strategy includes investigating the ageing-in-place housing needs and options for our diverse community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses.

Council has undertaken a number of significant pieces of heritage work. The Municipal Wide Heritage Gap Study was carried out through eight separate suburb assessments and associated planning scheme amendments to include additional properties in the Heritage Overlay. The project has been completed over a seven year period and with expenditure in excess of \$1.5 million devoted to the project. Over 5,000 additional properties were protected through inclusion in the Heritage Overlay, nearly a 50% increase since before the gap study commenced. This places Boroondara in the top 3 councils in Victoria in heritage protection. A mix of individual heritage places and precincts have been included in the Heritage Overlay plus extensions to existing heritage precincts.

Foreign Investment Review Board policies are outside of local government sphere of influence and is a Federal Government matter.

The Housing Strategy is a high-level framework document that has been informed by up-to-date data. Areas of higher density will continue to be directed to our Major Activity Centres (Glenferrie-Hawthorn, Kew and Camberwell Junction), along some commercial corridors and main roads. These are shown on the Housing Framework Plan in the Housing Strategy as high and moderate change areas. These areas are well located in relation to existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport.

The forecast population increase of approximately 27,800 people and 9,400 dwellings has been reached through examination of population trends and building approvals. Officers acknowledge that these figures may be exceeded or may be less. They are forecasts to be utilised as tools in future planning. An action in the Housing Strategy is to monitor

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population and dwelling forecasts, particularly having regard to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on population and housing needs and prepare an interim report within 2 years.

Planning policies at the municipal level (through the Boroondara Planning Scheme) must be consistent with and cannot contradict the state-wide policy directions set by the Victorian Government through Plan Melbourne. The Planning Scheme does not explicitly require the consideration of cumulative impact of development to the extent that Council can refuse a development application on the basis of what other applications might be lodged on adjoining or nearby properties in the future. Council can only decide each application on its individual merits. It is important to note that Council requires the Minister for Planning's approval for any changes to the Boroondara Planning Scheme including the introduction of new planning policies. Council therefore cannot simply change the planning scheme to introduce design and amenity requirements.

Council will shortly be releasing *Design Excellence in the City of Boroondara* that will communicate Council's design expectations in a clear and visual document. This is the first in a series of design guidelines to be produced by Council.

Some of the infrastructure concerns listed such as nbn connections, power black outs, provision of schools, Melbourne Water managed drainage and sewer systems, traffic on arterial roads are outside of Council's sphere of influence. Council has prepared the *Boroondara Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33* to oversee Council's delivery of physical infrastructure provision and maintenance. The *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* sets out strategies to ensure the delivery of community services and facilities that are adaptable to meet the changing needs and expectations of the community. The Housing Strategy has taken these Plans into account during drafting.

The Housing Strategy has identified actions to investigate affordable housing issues in Boroondara, and potential policy responses as well as continuing to support the delivery of a diversity of housing stock through planning policies and tools in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. Council's long-held position is supportive of an increase in social and affordable housing on land that is owned by the Federal or State Government.

It is recommended an additional action be added to the Housing Strategy to enhance internal processes for development data collection.



Draft Boroondara Housing Strategy

May 2023



Draft Housing Strategy

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Draft Housing Strategy

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Boroondara acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Draft Housing Strategy

Introduction

Housing Strategy overview

The Boroondara Housing Strategy identifies how best to accommodate our community's housing needs over the next 15 years.

Council heard through the Boroondara Community Plan consultation that our community wants us to protect our existing heritage and valued neighbourhood character. It is also important to understand and respond to issues around housing diversity, affordability, equity and sustainability.

The Housing Strategy sets out key housing related needs and challenges in Boroondara. It identifies strategic directions and responses to support our community and to work with social housing providers, developers and the State Government to meet the different housing needs of Boroondara – now and into the future.

The Victorian State Government's *Planning Practice Note 90 – Planning for Housing* requires a housing strategy to:

- Ensure a range of housing opportunities are available across the municipality to meet the needs of the projected population.
- Outline the strategies and implementation mechanisms to accommodate the projected population and household needs.
- Identify where and how the housing needs of the future population will be met across the municipality.
- Identify suitable locations for housing growth including areas close to services, jobs, public transport (such as activity centres and commercial corridors).

The Housing Strategy is not a tool to control population growth or prevent different types of housing from being developed. It presents an opportunity to guide the provision of housing to appropriate locations, providing appropriate choices for current and future residents, in a sustainable manner.

The release of the Housing Strategy will not result in the immediate rezoning of land or a change in planning policy and controls. It will identify specific areas where Council, within our local government role and sphere of influence, will need to focus more detailed work in a short to medium timeframe.

The Housing Strategy is an adopted Council document that sits alongside other State and local plans and strategies, such as the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31*. It is one of Council's key strategic documents and needs to be considered in local policy development and decision making (refer to the appendix for Policy Context).

Draft Housing Strategy

Purpose of the Housing Strategy

1. To understand and define the current and emerging population and housing needs for Boroondara over the next 15 years.
2. To identify strategic directions and responses to meet these needs.
3. To provide a strategic foundation for any potential implementation of housing focused policies and planning controls in future.

Why is housing important?

Housing is a complex issue with implications for social wellbeing, equality, transport, the economy and the environment. In its simplest form, it is a basic necessity and human right*¹ for all people to live a healthy life.

Housing provides a secure foundation for individuals to live the lives they want.

People want and need different things from housing throughout their lives. It is therefore important to have the right kinds of housing in the right locations allowing people to meet their employment, transport, services and social connection needs.

Housing needs to be suitable for different types of households including those with children, singles, older age, people of all abilities and different incomes. Housing is essential to support vulnerable people to live independently and with dignity.

Housing can also provide financial security. Housing at various price points needs to be available to ensure affordability for a wide range of people. Housing should not be a source of undue financial stress.

What our community values

Boroondara has undertaken extensive engagement activities with the community over the last few years. Most recently, Council updated the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31*, which sets out the vision for our municipality based on community values, aspirations and priorities. The Boroondara Community Plan builds on what makes Boroondara a great place to live, work, study and play.

Our community expressed how important it is for all its members, especially those in need, to be considered by Council in our planning, delivery, partnership and advocacy.

Focusing on the demands of today, while exploring the possibilities of tomorrow, is an important balancing act. The way we live, socialise, work, commute and connect will continue to evolve in coming years. We recognise too, the real threat to our environment, to our health and wellbeing, and to the quality of life of current and future generations resulting from climate change. How we approach and respond to these changes will be critically important.

Housing plays a key role in Boroondara's collective identity – it contributes to the look and feel of our streets and neighbourhoods. Council knows that protecting and respecting the

Draft Housing Strategy

character of Boroondara, while facilitating appropriate, well-designed development (that includes diversity in housing size and affordability) matters to our community. We will therefore continue to embrace diversity, foster inclusion, respect heritage, protect the environment and support people to live their best lives.

The community vision as outlined in the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* is for a 'sustainable and inclusive community'.

Through consultation on the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031*, our community said:

We value our local heritage. We value Council's advocacy to protect the distinct character of our neighbourhood streets and carefully regulate new development.

Diversity in housing size and affordability is also important to us.

We value these things because they contribute to Boroondara's uniqueness and make it an attractive place to live, work and play.

Draft Housing Strategy

Setting the scene

Boroondara forms part of the inner eastern region around the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD), bordered by the cities of Banyule, Manningham, Whitehorse, Monash, Stonnington and Yarra.

The City enjoys a high degree of accessibility to the surrounding region, particularly in an east/west direction. The municipality is well serviced by public transport and main arterial roads and freeways that pass either through the City or along its borders.

Boroondara has an extensive network of commercial centres comprising three major activity centres (Camberwell Junction, Kew Junction and Glenferrie), 31 neighbourhood centres and four commercial corridors. There are also 15 local centres throughout the municipality.

Boroondara is a custodian of a portion of the Yarra River and its environs, one of the most important riverine environments in Victoria. The Yarra River environs contain most of Boroondara's regional open space and provide a significant landscape feature within the municipality.

Our City is an attractive and highly sought after residential area with a mix of housing types. Set in a green, treed environment, it is known for extremely high levels of amenity.

Residential development is the dominant land use within the City with some of the finest residential streets in Melbourne.

The character of Boroondara is one of the key features that makes Boroondara special. It is derived from both the natural setting and the way our City has developed over time. The inter-war and post-war subdivision patterns are very distinctive. The City is a prime example of the 'Garden Suburb' form of development, highlighting the important contribution of nature strips, trees and private gardens.

Who are we?

Understanding the population and household characteristics of Boroondara provides a good insight into Boroondara's housing role and function, and how it is likely to change in the future.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates that Boroondara was home to 169,901 residents in 2021². Most live in Boroondara's 72,812 private dwellings³. Boroondara residents also occupy other forms of accommodation including aged care facilities, residential colleges, and rooming houses.

Boroondara's community profile varies across its geography. For example, in Hawthorn, home to Swinburne University and much of Boroondara's higher density housing, around one in four residents are aged in their 20s⁴. In Balwyn North, which is close to several well-regarded schools and where most homes have at least four bedrooms⁵, almost half of households are couples with children⁶, and only one in nine residents is in their 20s⁷.

Draft Housing Strategy

The community is made up of 52% females and 48% males⁸.

In 2021, most of those who work within the City of Boroondara (70%)⁹ lived outside the municipality.

Our residents¹⁰

A snapshot:

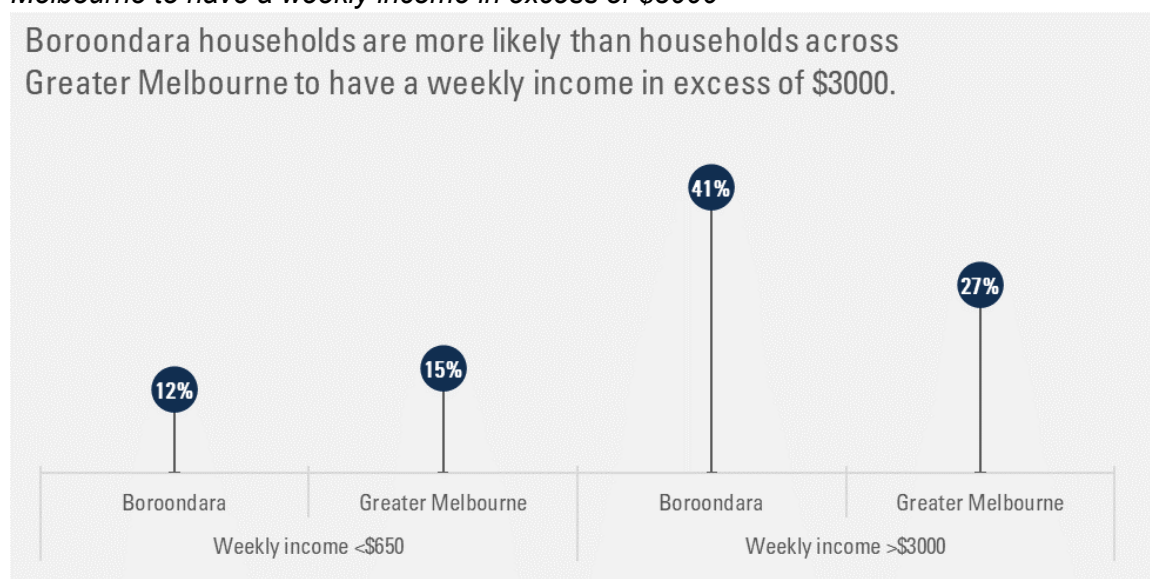
- Median age is 40, higher than the Greater Melbourne median of 37¹¹
- 29% speak a language other than English at home
- 32% were born overseas
- 10% currently attend tertiary education
- 4.5% need assistance with day-to-day activities due to disability.

Our households^{12, 13}

A snapshot:

- 24% live in a flat or apartment
- 29% are renting
- 1.7 average number of cars per dwelling
- 26% are comprised of one person
- 27% are comprised of 4 or more people
- 2% are comprised of six or more people
- 35% live in a dwelling that has four or more bedrooms
- Boroondara households are more likely than households across Greater Melbourne to have a weekly income in excess of \$3000.

Chart 1: Boroondara households are more likely than households across Greater Melbourne to have a weekly income in excess of \$3000



Draft Housing Strategy

How do we live?

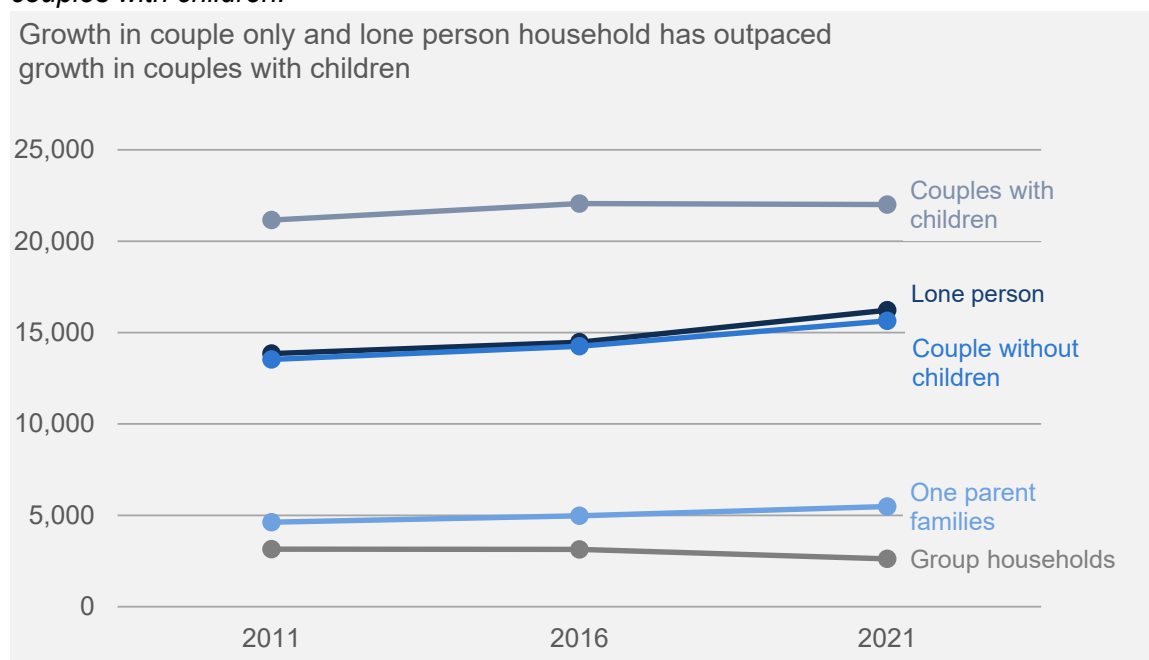
With 169,901 residents in 2021, Boroondara is the 11th most populous and the 8th most densely populated of Melbourne's 31 LGAs¹⁴. In 2011, Boroondara was the 5th most populous and 6th most densely populated Melbourne LGA¹⁵.

The number of private¹⁶ dwellings in Boroondara grew 780 per annum on average between 2011 and 2021¹⁷. This is equivalent to a 12% growth over 10 years compared to 26% across Greater Melbourne. Boroondara has an annual growth rate of 1.2% in comparison to Yarra 3.6%, Melbourne 9.4%, Banyule 1%, Manningham 1.7%, Whitehorse 1.6%, Monash 1.6% and Stonnington 2.7%.

At the 2021 Census, 11% of our 72,812 private dwellings were unoccupied. This is a continuation of a gradual upward trend. In 2011, 8% were unoccupied. This is similar to Greater Melbourne, where the proportion of unoccupied dwellings increased from 9% in 2011 to 10% in 2021¹⁸. It is important to note that although some of these unoccupied dwellings are available stock, many would have been only temporarily unoccupied. For example, the COVID 19 pandemic restrictions prevented the arrival/return of residents (including international students) from overseas, residents were temporarily living in second homes elsewhere, while other dwellings may have been waiting for a new owner or tenant to move in, being renovated or awaiting demolition.

Boroondara households had an average size of 2.5 people¹⁹. This continuation of the gradual downward trend in household size has coincided with growth in couple-only and lone person households outpacing growth in family households with children (see chart below)²⁰.

Chart 2: Growth in couple only and lone person household has outpaced growth in couples with children.



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Private dwellings grew in Boroondara at an average of **780 per annum** between 2011 and 2021.

Boroondara is the **11th most populous LGA** in Melbourne. This is down from 5th in 2011.

The average household size is **2.5 people**.

Household structure

The makeup of households shapes our understanding of how we live now and identifies patterns to plan for.

The dominant household type in Boroondara is couples with children, making up 34% of all households. However, couples with children may not account for such high proportions of Boroondara households in future. In fact, the number of couples with children in Boroondara was similar at the 2016 and 2021 Censuses, while the overall household count grew²¹.

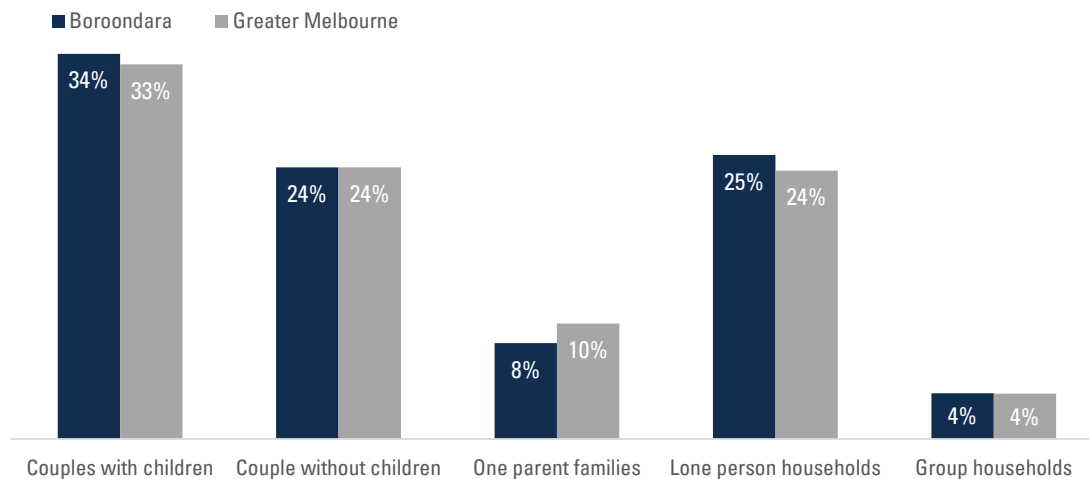
Couples without children and lone person households each increased from 23% of Boroondara households to 24% and 25% of households, respectively, between the 2016 and 2021 Censuses. These household types now account for almost half of all Boroondara households²² (see chart below).

This modest but noteworthy shift toward smaller households suggests potentially changing housing preferences.

Residents aged 65+ are 3.5 times as likely than younger residents to live in couple-only or single households²³. With our ageing trend, this shift will likely continue.

Boroondara's household composition is generally similar to that of Greater Melbourne²⁴ (see chart below).

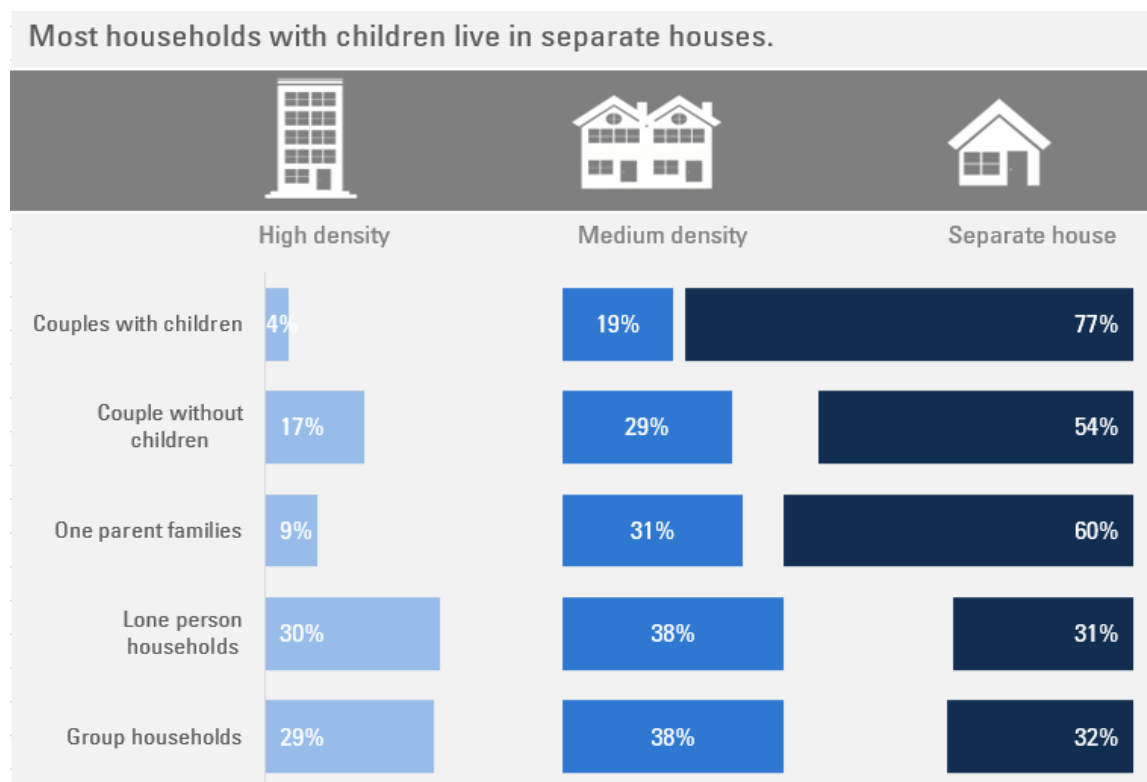
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Chart 3: Boroondara has a similar household profile to Greater Melbourne.

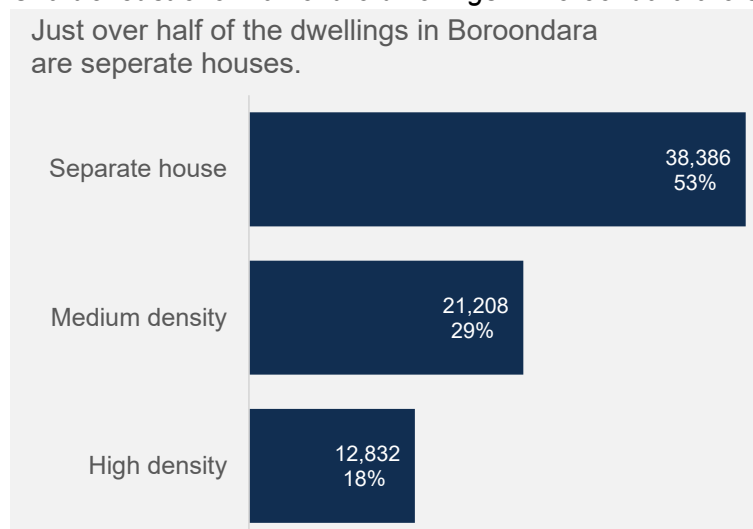
A snapshot²⁵ (see chart below):

- Most family households (including couples without children) live in separate/stand-alone houses.
- Lone person and group households have similar occupancy patterns. About one in three live in separate/stand-alone houses and a little less than this live in high density²⁶ settings. The greatest proportion live in medium density²⁷ dwellings.
- A small number (218) of Boroondara households live in houses or flats attached to shops or offices (not shown in the chart). Most of these households are either lone person or group households.

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Chart 4: Most households with children live in separate or stand-alone houses.**Types of housing**

The dominant dwelling type in Boroondara is separate/standalone house (53% in 2021). The remainder of housing is made up of medium (29%) and high density (18%) housing²⁸ (see chart below).

Chart 5: Just over half of the dwellings in Boroondara are separate/stand-alone houses.

Net growth in Boroondara since 2011 has been mainly in high-density dwellings²⁹, which tend to have two or fewer bedrooms. Medium density dwellings tend to have two or three

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bedrooms, and most separate/stand-alone houses have at least four bedrooms³⁰ (see charts below).

Chart 6: Most separate/stand-alone houses in Boroondara have at least four bedrooms and most high density dwellings have two bedrooms.

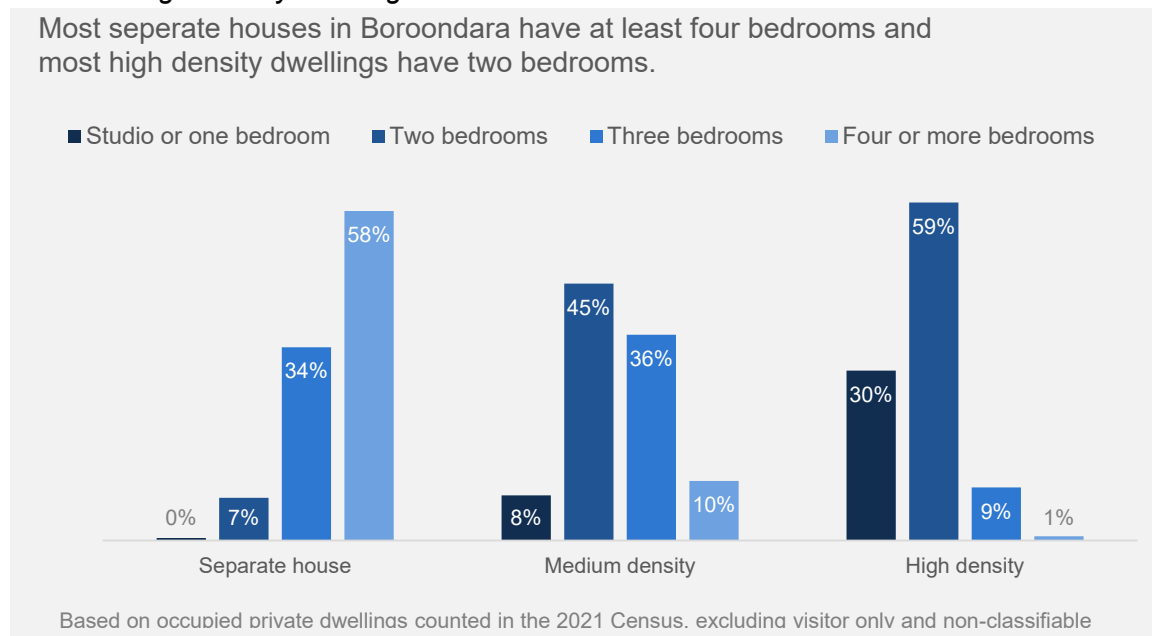
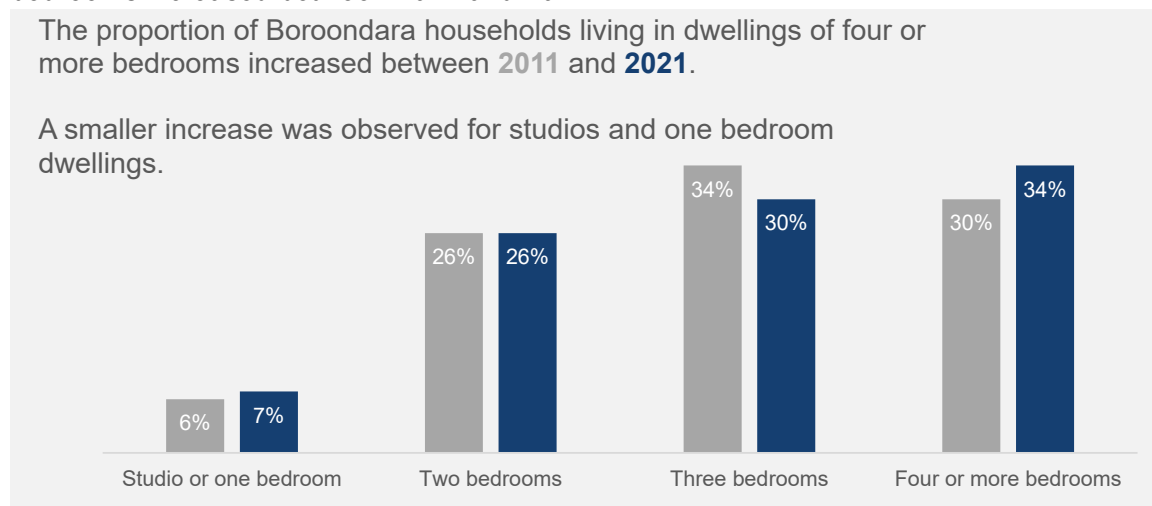
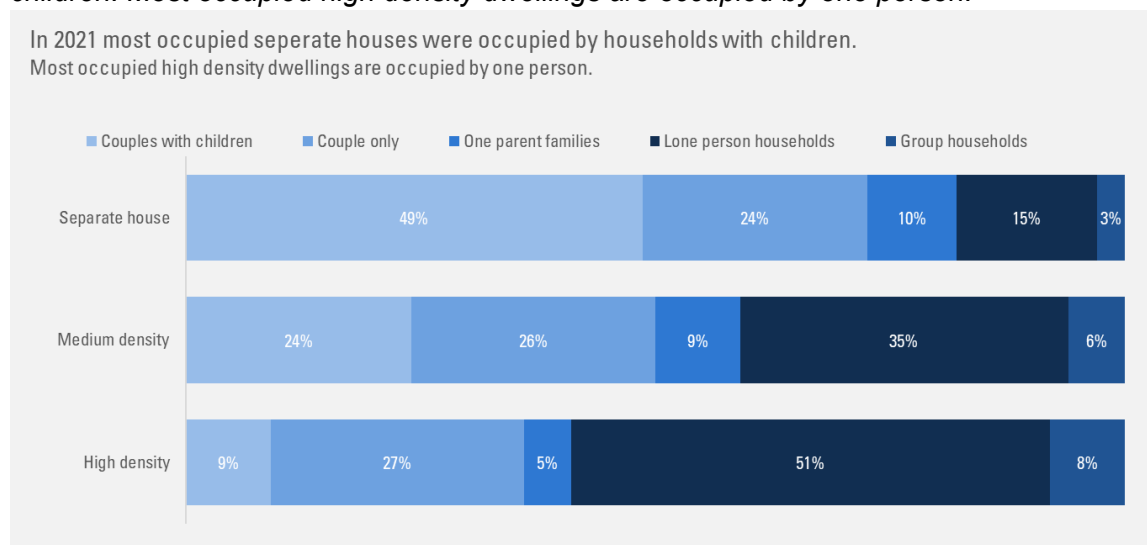


Chart 7: The proportion of Boroondara households living in dwellings of four or more bedrooms increased between 2011 and 2021.



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Chart 8: In 2021 most occupied separate houses were occupied by households with children. Most occupied high density dwellings are occupied by one person.



The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in significant and wide-ranging impacts on the economy which are likely to disrupt normal patterns of building approvals³¹. For example, the number of new Boroondara dwellings approved in building permits in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were the 2nd and 3rd lowest counts of the past 10 years³². The number of net new Boroondara dwellings approved in planning permits in 2020-21 and 2021-22 were the lowest in at least the past seven years³³. This suggests that actual dwelling growth may slow in the next few years.

Patterns of housing development

It is important to understand where and what types of housing development have been occurring within the municipality over a period of time. This helps to interpret what housing policy and the market are delivering.

Small scale development

Housing development was predominantly small-scale and was spread fairly evenly across the City.

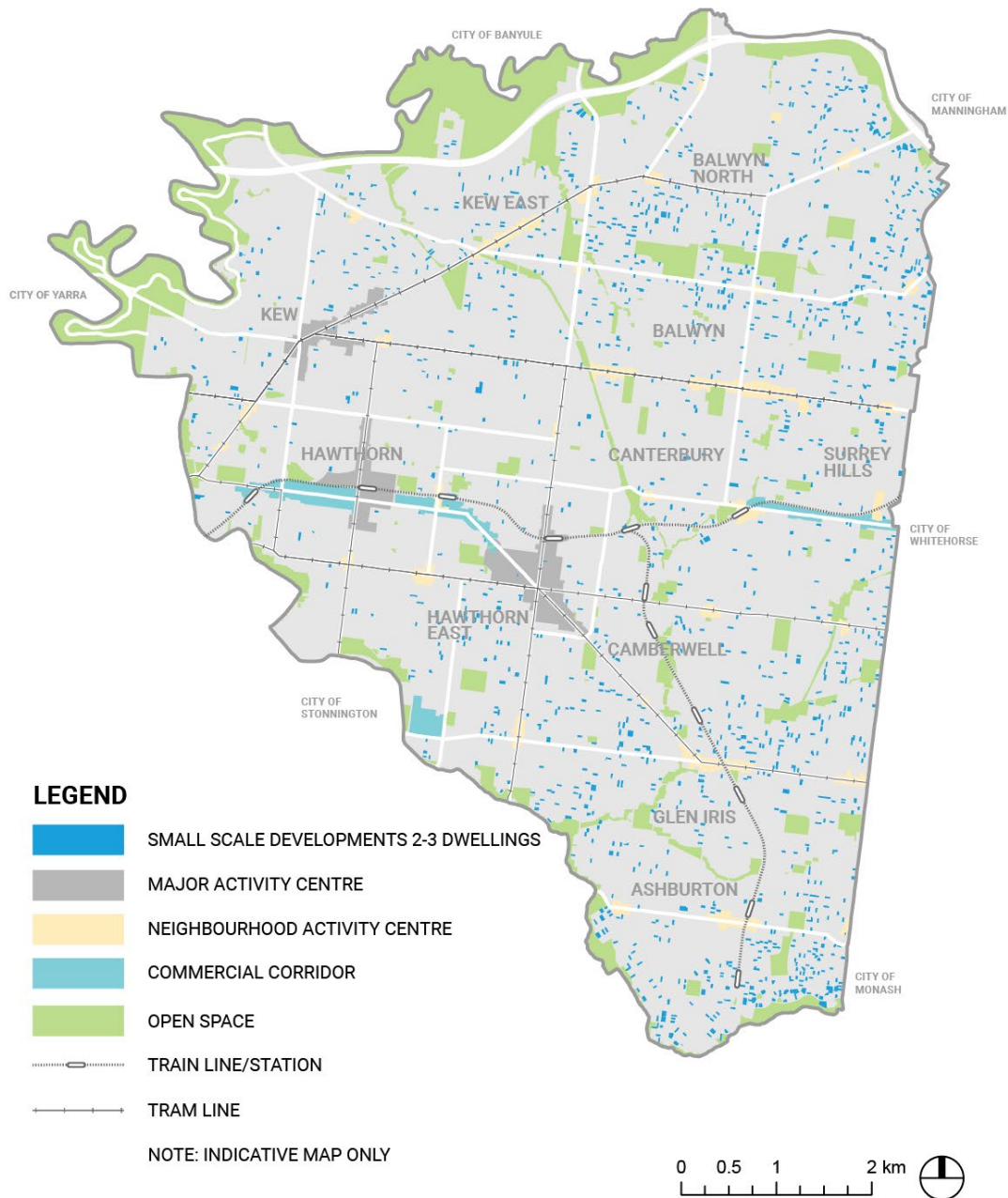
Small scale development has increased housing diversity in our residential neighbourhoods and provided more housing choice for residents.

Of the small scale developments, approximately 77% delivered 2-3 dwellings (e.g. dual occupancy and townhouse developments). The remaining projects delivered between 4-9 dwellings (e.g. townhouses and low-rise apartments).

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2-3 dwellings, 2005-mid-2022

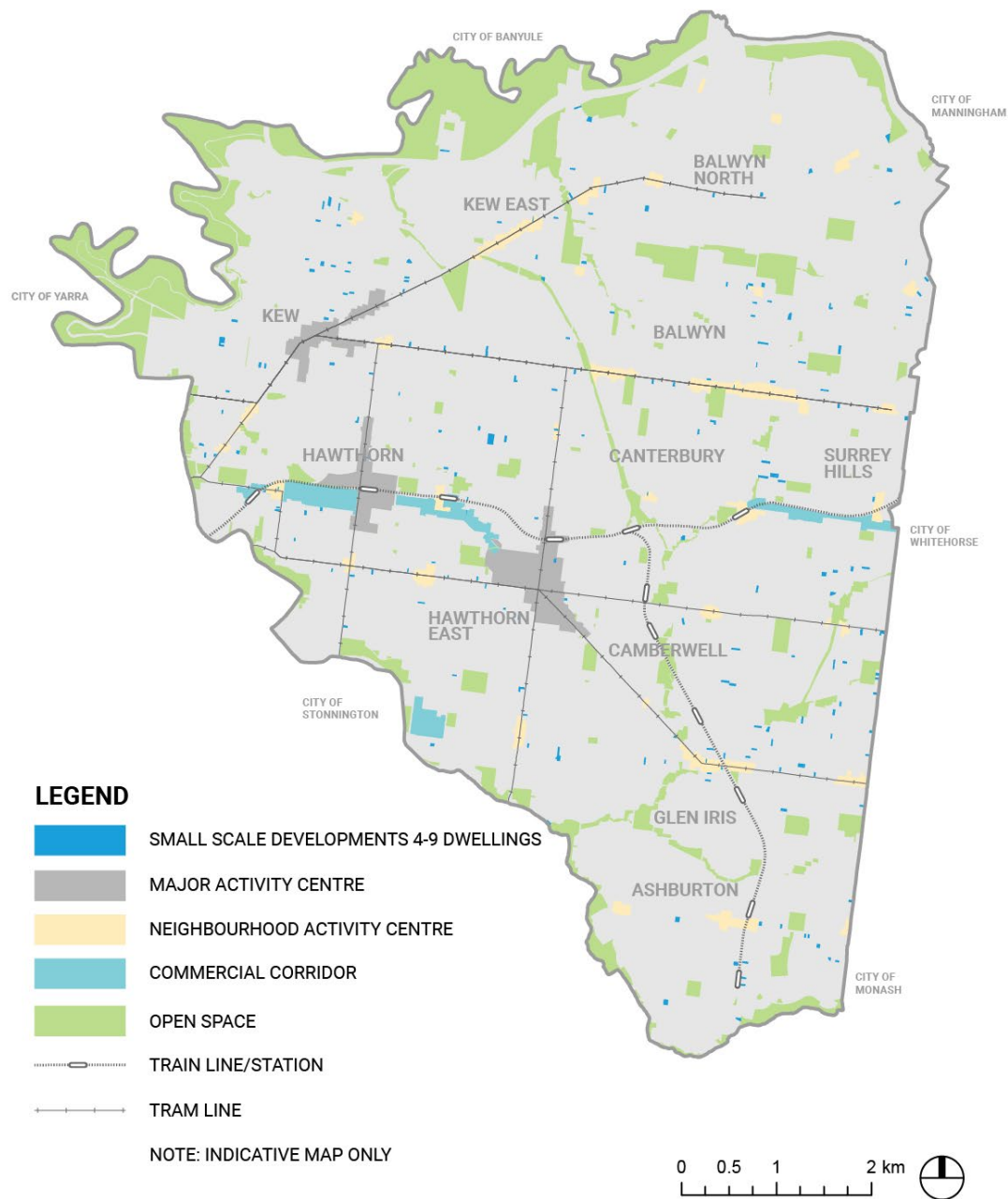
*Image 1: Map showing 2-3 dwelling distribution spread fairly evenly across the City.
Source: City of Boroondara, 2022*



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4-9 dwellings, 2005-mid-2022

Image 2: Map showing 4-9 dwelling distribution spread fairly evenly across the City with less frequency. Source: City of Boroondara, 2022

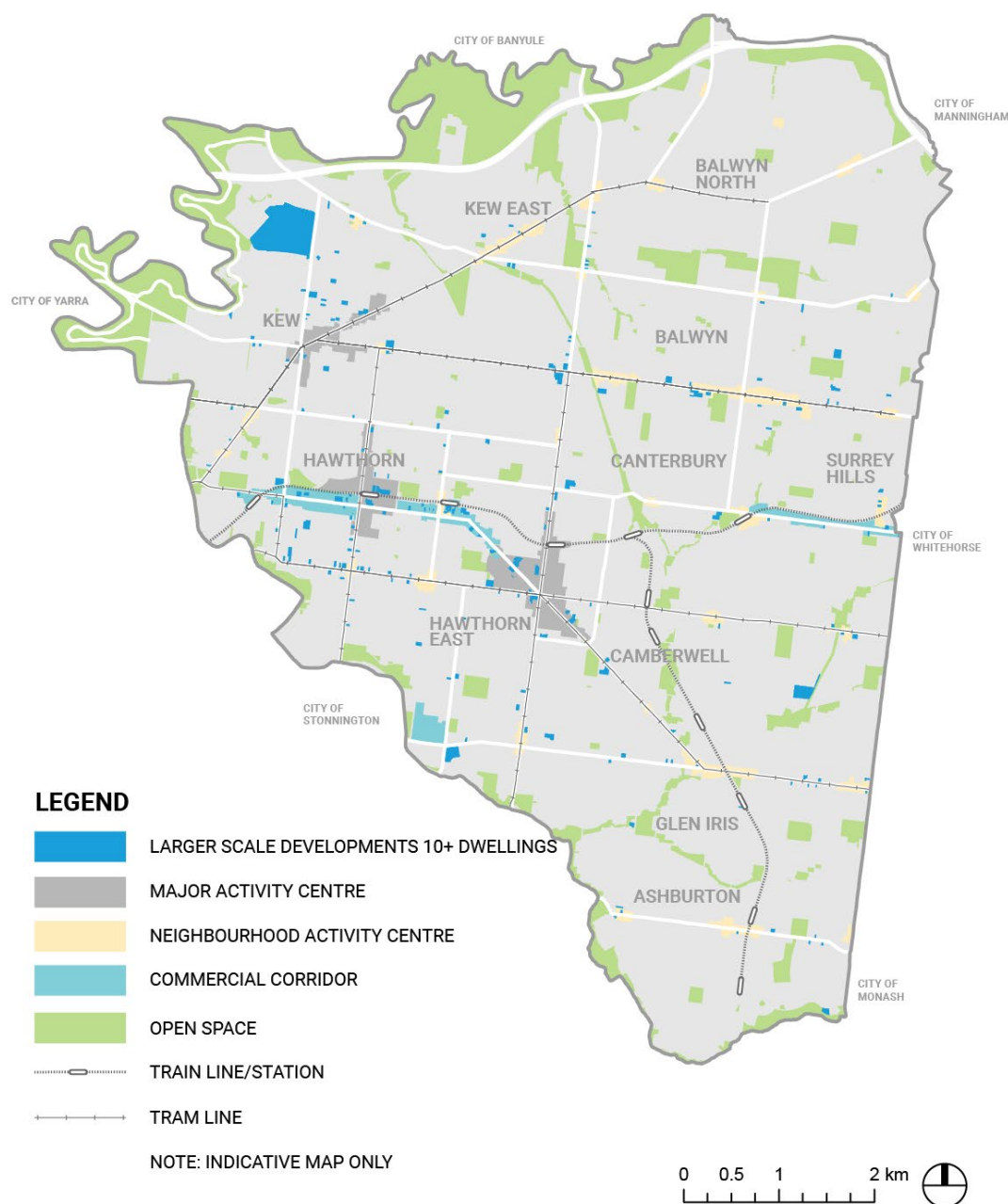


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Larger developments (10+ dwellings, 2005-mid-2022)

Image 3: Map showing 10+ dwelling distribution occurring mostly in and around Major and Neighbourhood Activity Centres and commercial corridors and public transport lines.

Source: City of Boroondara, 2022



Larger scale development has mostly occurred in major activity centres, within or close to neighbourhood activity centres, and along main roads that are close to train and tram stops.

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These larger developments have played an important role in providing more housing diversity and choice for residents near amenity and services with access to jobs and public transport. Those developments with commercial at ground level have contributed to activating streets.

This pattern of development is consistent with the policy position at both state and local level.

It is noted that some developments have occurred more along public transport corridors and main roads where larger sites tend to be easier to develop and provide a greater level of design flexibility.

Typically, residential developments in these areas are in the form of mid-rise apartment buildings.

Cost of housing

Of the occupied dwellings in Boroondara in 2021, the majority were either owned outright (38% versus 29% across Greater Melbourne) or had a mortgage (29%), followed by private rentals (27%)³⁴.

In the December quarter of 2021, the median house price in Boroondara ranged from \$2.21M in Hawthorn East to \$3.39M in Canterbury and units were between \$610K in Hawthorn and \$1.3M in Ashburton^{35, 36} (see table below³⁷). Across Metropolitan Melbourne the median house price was \$950K³⁸.

At the 2021 Census, the median mortgage repayment per month in Boroondara was \$3,000, high relative to \$2,000 across Greater Melbourne, but more consistent with Inner South-East Metropolitan Partnership councils (at between \$2,400 for Glen Eira and \$3,000 for Bayside)³⁹.

Median weekly rents⁴⁰ in Boroondara during the December Quarter of 2021 were higher than the Metropolitan Melbourne median (\$430 weekly compared to \$400) and increases as dwellings increase in size. The median weekly rent for a four-bedroom house in Boroondara costs more than double that of metropolitan Melbourne overall (\$923 compared to \$450)⁴¹.

At the time of writing, increases in rental and mortgage costs have added to housing affordability issues.

At the 2021 Census, Boroondara was ranked 27 out of 31 Greater Melbourne LGAs for the proportion of households in social housing (with rank 1 having the highest proportion of households in social housing). In June 2021 there were 796 social housing dwellings in Boroondara⁴² which represents approximately 1.1% of all Boroondara dwellings. This includes housing managed by not-for-profit housing associations such as Servants Community Housing.

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Table 1: Showing the median house and unity prices in Boroondara.

Suburb	Houses (December Quarter 2021 Median)	Units (December Quarter 2021 Median)
Ashburton	\$2,250,000	\$1,325,000
Balwyn	\$2,750,000	\$860,000
Balwyn North	\$2,407,000	\$1,111,500
Camberwell	\$2,650,000	\$884,000
Canterbury	\$3,390,000	\$900,000
Deepdene	\$2,731,500	Not enough sales
Glen Iris	\$2,537,500	\$708,500
Hawthorn	\$2,971,000	\$610,000
Hawthorn East	\$2,210,000	\$665,000
Kew	\$2,580,000	\$940,000
Kew East	Not enough sales	\$1,237,400
Surrey Hills	\$2,525,000	\$901,000

Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (December 2021) 'Property sales statistics' (data set), HOUSE 4th Quarter 2021, accessed 13 July 2022;

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (December 2021) 'Property sales statistics' (data set), UNITS 4th Quarter 2021, accessed 13 July 2022; Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (December 2021) 'Property sales statistics' (data set), Yearly Summary DecQTB 2021, accessed 13 July 2022.

Median house price in Boroondara ranged from **\$2.21M** in Hawthorn East to **\$3.39M** in Canterbury.

\$3000 is the median **mortgage** repayment amount per month in Boroondara.

27% of dwellings are privately **rented**.

Only **1.1%** of all Boroondara dwellings are **social** housing.

38% of dwellings are **owned** outright.

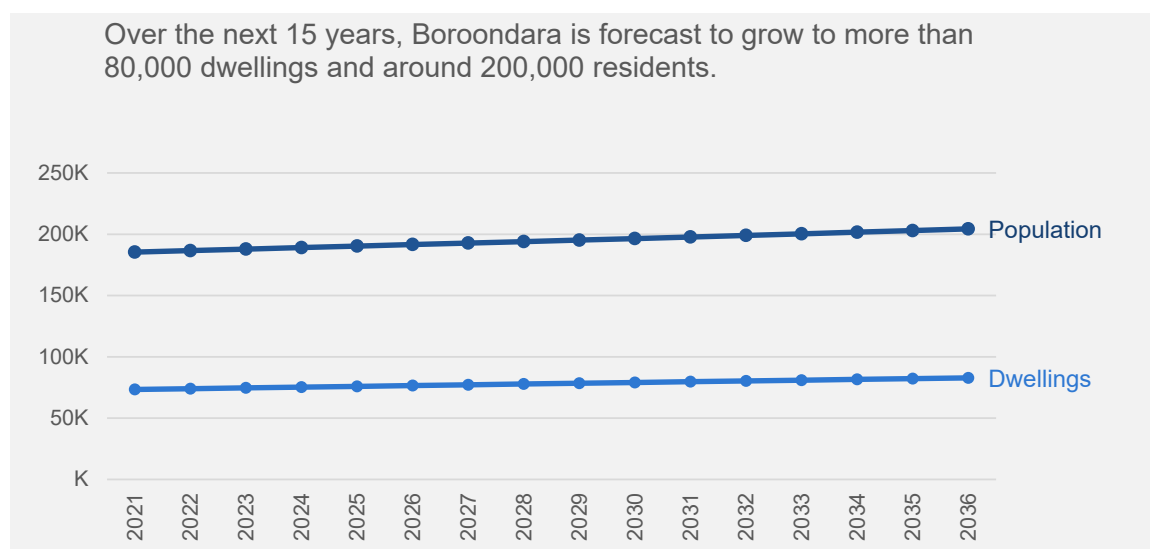
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Population and household projections

Boroondara has experienced steady population growth for most of the past decade. The ABS estimates that Boroondara saw annual increases of between 1300 and 2500 residents every year between 2011 and 2017⁴³. This is an annual growth rate of 1.2%.

Over the next 15 years, Boroondara is forecast to grow by around 28,700 additional residents and 9,400 additional dwellings⁴⁴ to reach a total of approximately 200,000 residents and 80,000 dwellings (see chart below).

Chart 9: Over the next 15 years, Boroondara is forecast to grow to more than 80,000 dwellings and around 200,000 residents in total.



The projected increase in population and dwellings is based on an average household size of 2.4 persons per household (slightly lower than the metropolitan average) with a total of 11,981 additional households. The projected dwelling increase of 9,400 accounts for some of the population growth being accommodated by existing vacant dwellings rather than provision of new dwellings. Boroondara's occupancy rate was lower than usual at the 2021 Census due to restrictions associated with the COVID 19 pandemic. However, this vacancy rate is expected to reduce to normal pre-pandemic levels.

The COVID 19 pandemic slowed population growth across all geographic areas, largely due to less overseas migration. Capital cities are projected to bear the heaviest impacts, with total population across capital cities estimated to be around 5% lower by June 2031 than would have been the case in the absence of COVID 19 pandemic⁴⁵.

This presented the "first overall population decline for the capitals ever recorded by the ABS", coupled with increased movements to the regions⁴⁶.

In Boroondara, the pandemic resulted in a population reduction of 5.4% or 9,646 from 2019 to 2021⁴⁷.

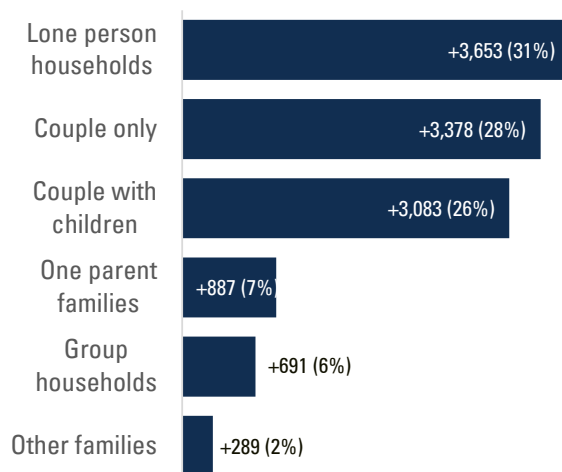
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This reduction is largely due to the lack of overseas migration which was the key driver for population growth in Boroondara pre-pandemic. Net domestic migration (usually negative) and births/deaths play only minor roles⁴⁸.

Despite the uncertainty the COVID 19 pandemic has introduced, the Federal and State Governments have assumed that migration will return over two-to-three years⁴⁹.

The chart below shows the nature of these forecast changes in terms of forecast additional households⁵⁰.

Chart 10: Forecasts indicate that growth in households of one or two adults (only) between 2021 and 2036 will be greater than growth in households with children and group households.



Over the next **15 years**, Boroondara is forecast to grow by around **28,700 residents** and **9,400 dwellings**.

Boroondara's population in **2021** was **169,901**.

Draft Housing Strategy

Understanding our housing needs and challenges

Melbourne is growing and changing

The State Government's *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* sets the framework for integrating long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning. It directs how to manage the supply of new housing across the city to meet population growth.

Local housing strategies and policies must be consistent with the state-wide policy directions set by the State Government through *Plan Melbourne*.

Boroondara will need to accommodate an appropriate level of housing growth to meet future demand.

Council must plan for this population growth while balancing other policy objectives set out in the Boroondara Community Plan (such as protection of neighbourhood character and amenity) as well as other plans such as the Climate Action Plan. A strategic and proactive approach will allow Council to better balance these (sometimes) competing objectives and achieve more consistent outcomes.

While Council cannot directly control population growth, it has an important role as the planning authority to plan for its current and future communities' housing needs. If planned well, growth can deliver a range of benefits, such as greater choice of dwellings to accommodate the different stages of life of our residents, economic development and more inclusive and vibrant neighbourhoods. It is also important to consider and respond to how an increase in population can place pressure on infrastructure, such as parks, drainage, schools and childcare, and aged services. Council understands that this requires a balance between the benefits and costs of providing increased amenity and services to people. It is also acknowledged that the City needs a population that is spread across different age and life stages to help keep various services viable and functional.

The Housing Strategy utilises the most up-to-date data to plan for our current and future needs within this context. This data has helped inform the following key housing needs and challenges in Boroondara, which are discussed further in this section.

- Protecting our heritage and character
- Sustainability
- Design excellence
- Housing diversity and choice
- Housing capacity
- Infrastructure capacity
- An ageing population
- Housing affordability

Draft Housing Strategy

- Social and affordable housing
- Homelessness

Housing sits at the centre of a complex system of society shaping inter-relationships – but in its simplest form, it is a **basic necessity** for all people to live a healthy life.

Protecting our heritage and character

Home to some of Melbourne's finest suburbs, Boroondara boasts many exceptional heritage streetscapes and residential, commercial, and grand civic buildings. The tree lined streets, gardens and green open spaces are a vital component to the character of our City.

Boroondara protects its heritage by applying the Heritage Overlay to properties of identified heritage significance. The Heritage Overlay is a tool that requires a planning permit to subdivide land, demolish, build or alter a property that has a level of heritage significance.

Over 15,000 properties in Boroondara are covered by a Heritage Overlay. This places Boroondara in the top 3 councils in Victoria in heritage protection.

Residential areas in Boroondara are also divided into 80 Neighbourhood Character Precincts according to their style and common characteristics. This helps new development respond to and keep the character and respect the history of local areas. Each precinct has a Precinct Statement (a background document in the Boroondara Planning Scheme) that sets out the preferred future character. Neighbourhood character is a critical element of Council's consideration of development proposals.

To safeguard the character of Boroondara, the overwhelming majority of our residential areas are within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (87%). These areas will likely see only limited change in response.

To balance this, the majority of future higher density housing development will continue to be directed to areas that are near public transport, jobs, services and infrastructure such as major activity centres, commercial corridors and along some main roads.

Future change in these areas will be carefully guided by planning policies and by applying suitable zones and overlays. In major activity centres this might include Structure Plans and Design and Development Overlays.

Further work is required to ensure that the Neighbourhood Character Precinct Statements remain effective and up-to-date.

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Sustainability

Council knows how important it is to our community to address the increasing threat to our environment and health and wellbeing of current and future generations as a result of our changing climate. Council has developed Boroondara's *Climate Action Plan* and declared a climate emergency as a response.

Greenhouse gas emissions generated from the construction and operation of buildings is one of the largest contributors to the emergency. Council is leading by example having reduced greenhouse gas emissions from Council-run buildings and services by 80% since 2007-08.

As Boroondara consists of large areas of residential neighbourhoods, housing plays a very important role in creating a more sustainable environment. Improving the energy and water efficiency of new buildings and retrofitting existing ones contributes to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and stormwater pollution. Incorporating sustainable design features and materials into housing will ensure there is greater ability for resilience and adaptation to the changing climate.

With any new housing development, retrofit or addition, there is expectation that it will contribute to Boroondara's biodiversity and canopy cover. Large trees and landscapes on public and private land help mitigate changing climate and heat island impacts.

Locating new housing close to public transport and cycling infrastructure encourages a more sustainable approach to the movement of people.

To ensure greater accountability for Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) in the development of buildings, Council joined 24 other Councils to seek changes to Victorian Planning Schemes to introduce stronger ESD policy directions.

The State Government has voiced support for a state-wide policy, however, at the time of writing, there is still no dedicated planning policy in the Boroondara Planning Scheme that requires an ESD assessment to be provided as part of a planning application.

Climate change is not only a local issue. It requires a coordinated, consistent and strong policy response across all levels of government. Therefore, it remains Council's position that a state-wide ESD policy is needed. Further work is required in partnership with Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) to advocate for this.

Design excellence

The design quality of our housing is central to how we live. Good design is a key element in creating housing that is secure, desirable, healthy, safe and better places for people of all ages and abilities to flourish⁵¹.

Council also knows the important role that housing plays in the look and feel of our City. Design excellence is about striving to make a positive contribution to Boroondara and enables people to feel a sense of connection and pride for their neighbourhood.

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In 2017 the State Government introduced the Better Apartment Design Standards to all Victorian Planning Schemes to improve the liveability and internal amenity of apartments. In 2021, an update to the Standards focused on the external amenity impacts of apartment buildings. With a significant number of new housing in Boroondara in the form of high and medium density apartments, these Standards are vital in ensuring that apartments make a positive contribution to our neighbourhoods and are safe and healthy places to call home.

A considerable amount of housing in Boroondara is medium density (29%), such as townhouses or side-by-side housing and is found throughout the municipality. Further educational opportunities exist to highlight the benefits of high-quality design.

Universal design supports flexibility, adaptability and the longevity of housing. Developments that incorporate design strategies at the outset – such as level floors, wider doorways and corridors, and accessible kitchen and bathrooms – future proofs our housing. It allows residents of all ages, abilities and in all life stages to use and adapt their housing according to their changing needs⁵². This is an important consideration for Boroondara's ageing population and changing households.

Design excellence is also about quality construction and efficient use of resources. Housing consumes a lot of energy and water and contributes significantly to our City's climate impacts. This is why it's important for housing to function as efficiently as possible to minimise resource consumption and reduce maintenance and operating costs.

In Boroondara, we highly value our green spaces and large trees. Protecting and adding more large trees should be at the forefront of the design process. Integrating authentic landscaping into the design of buildings will aid in off-setting emissions, reducing urban heat, improve air quality and improve visual amenity. Investing in quality landscaping adds value to properties as people place such high importance on it⁵³.

Further educational work is required to reinforce our City's expectations for design excellence so that the highest quality places we want now and those we need for the future are delivered.

Housing diversity and choice

A key *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* objective is to facilitate the provision of a greater diversity and choice of housing to enable people to meet their specific needs.

The community vision in the Boroondara Community Plan is for a sustainable and inclusive City. A diverse range of housing is essential to fulfilling this commitment and enables our people to make choices to cater to different stages of their lives. It allows people to stay in their local community if they so wish – from children to young adults, to families and into old age. This is important to maintain social connections, mental health and wellbeing, and community vitality.

Data shows our household types are changing. An increase in smaller lone person and couple only households combined with an ageing population means smaller and different types of housing will be required.

Draft Housing Strategy

Council will continue to support the delivery of diverse range of housing stock through existing housing policies in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Further work will be required to investigate whether alternative housing models can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara. It should be noted that there are limited legislative tools at present to actively support this type of housing. These models include but are not limited to:

- Rent-to-own – for people who can afford private rented housing and who would like to own their own home, but do not earn enough to save for a deposit.
- Build-to-rent – supported by institutional investors, such as superannuation schemes, wanting to invest in high quality developments that offer a return over the long term.
- Co-housing – semi-communal housing consisting of a group of private homes and shared community space.

Image 4: Showing a diverse range of people that require housing in Boroondara. The community vision in the Boroondara Community Plan is for a sustainable and inclusive City. A diverse range of housing is essential to fulfilling this commitment and enables our people to make choices to cater to different stages of their lives.

The community vision in the Boroondara Community Plan is for a sustainable and inclusive City. A diverse range of housing is essential to fulfilling this commitment and enables our people to make choices to cater to different stages of their lives.



Students and young people



Single parent families



People living with low level of mobility or disability



Older people



Single person households



People and families on low household income



First home buyers



Empty nesters



Migrants

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Housing capacity

Boroondara will need to ensure there is sufficient capacity to accommodate around 9,400 new dwellings over the next 15 years⁵⁴.

Land use zones provide directions on how land can be used, particularly what uses are permissible. Each zone has a purpose, and its application provides planning certainty of what can occur. This directly influences the availability of land for housing in Boroondara.

There is a significant amount of land (4,734.47 ha) allowing for residential use in Boroondara.

The majority of Boroondara's residential land is in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) [87%], which incorporates largely low-scale residential neighbourhoods with special and intact neighbourhood character and areas of heritage significance. These areas are considered the least suitable for accommodating additional housing and change, however there are opportunities for new low scale infill development depending on site context.

Boroondara has land in other zones that allow for residential development (General Residential Zone, Residential Growth Zone, Commercial 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone) [see table below]. These zones define land use in and around the City's activity centres, commercial areas and along some public transport corridors and main roads. These zones generally allow for medium to high density development and encourage a mix of land uses.

Detailed capacity modelling and analysis has been undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning to understand whether our housing needs are likely to be met under the current policy settings (while also considering the likely rates of uptake by the market) over the next 15 years.

'Capacity' in this context means, theoretically whether enough dwellings and the right mix of dwelling types can be developed under the current zoning and planning controls to meet our projected housing needs.

With capacity for a net increase in dwellings of approximately 65,050 in Boroondara, there is more than adequate capacity under the current policy settings to provide for the 9,400 dwellings likely to be needed.

It can be concluded that Boroondara's current zones can accommodate the anticipated housing need. Focus can then be on ensuring policies and controls guide future housing delivery in appropriate locations, with housing choice, and in a sustainable manner.

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Table 3: Breakdown of land in Boroondara that allows for residential uses by zone (excluding land that is not suitable for residential e.g. open space, schools, train lines etc.)

Zone	Area (hectares)	Area (%)	Anticipated outcome
Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)	4122.05 ha	87.06%	Supports minimal change. Considers identified neighbourhood character.
General Residential Zone (GRZ)	392.62 ha	8.29%	Supports moderate change.
Residential Growth Zone (RGZ)	37.64 ha	0.8%	Encourages increased housing density and diversity.
Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)	167.04 ha	3.35%	Encourages increased housing density and diversity above commercial uses.
Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)	1.94 ha	0.04%	Encourages high density residential within commercial context.
Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ)	2.53 ha	0.05%	May allow for residential uses but plays only a marginal role in provision of housing in the municipality.
Priority Development Zone (PDZ)	10.65 ha	0.22%	May allow for residential uses but plays only a marginal role in provision of housing in the municipality.

Infrastructure capacity

The delivery of housing in Boroondara must also be considered in conjunction with the capacity and functionality of community and physical infrastructure.

Planning for community infrastructure – the buildings and spaces that provide services, activities and amenity such as libraries, community health centres and pre-schools – and physical infrastructure such as drainage, is integral to ensure high-quality outcomes that meet the needs of existing and future communities.

The *Boroondara Community Plan 2021–31* sets out key strategies to ensure the delivery of community services and facilities that are adaptable to meet the changing needs and expectations of our community.

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The *Boroondara Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33* identifies key issues and responses for physical infrastructure provision and maintenance.

Council will need to continue to plan for and manage local infrastructure and request the State Government to provide new and upgraded key infrastructure in the municipality, such as schools, public transport facilities, arterial roads and Melbourne Water managed drainage and sewage systems.

An ageing population

Boroondara's population continues its ageing trend with an increase in people over the age of 65 (15% of the population in 2011, and 18% in 2021)⁵⁵.

Many older people live in homes that may no longer be suitable as their life circumstances have changed, such as death of a partner, health issues, desire for a lifestyle change or financial factors. Often older people can be asset rich (owning a home) but income poor (living on savings, superannuation and age pension).

At the 2021 Census, 81% of Boroondara residents aged 65 and over were living in a dwelling classified by the ABS as having at least one 'spare' bedroom⁵⁶.

The Federal Government actively encourages older people to downsize. People aged 60 and over can make a large contribution to their superannuation fund from the proceeds of selling their family home. The purpose of this measure is to encourage people to downsize into housing that is more suitable to their needs. This in turn frees up larger homes to accommodate families.

This policy response is based on the assumption that where the number of bedrooms exceeds the number of permanent residents, dwellings are not being fully utilised.

However, downsizing is about more than just reducing the underutilisation of houses. Research shows that residents looking to downsize want more manageable internal and external space while maintaining sufficient size⁵⁷.

The primary reasons for older people to downsize were: lifestyle (27%) and financial (27%) reasons, the garden or property requiring too much maintenance (18%) or being 'forced' to move (15%)⁵⁸. Often due to a lack of choice in appropriate housing, people must move away from their local community, increasing social isolation and distance from established networks.

There is also an increasing older age cohort. These 'young olds' do not need immediate medical care or access to retirement services. Instead, they reframe the idea of elderly people as conservative, immobile or needing concentrated care, and embrace living active lives for 20-plus years after retirement⁵⁹.

Due to housing affordability issues, more households will be forced to rent into retirement. Accordingly, there will be an increasing need for secure, stable, affordable and appropriate housing options in the social and private rental sectors to accommodate this cohort in years to come.

Draft Housing Strategy

As Boroondara's population continues its ageing trend, there will be many housing challenges that require a policy response. Some of those will be outside Council's role. Where Council can play a role, it needs to ensure that our residents have the opportunity to age in place. Provision of a diverse range of housing at various price points is critical in achieving this outcome and ensure our residents remain connected to the local community they have lived in for many years.

Housing affordability

Boroondara is a very desirable place to live. The strong demand to reside here has resulted in continued house price growth and high land values.

As shown in Section 2.2, 'Cost of Housing', purchasing housing in Boroondara is significantly higher compared to the Melbourne Metro. While renting is more viable than purchasing a home, it is cost prohibitive for many households, particularly those consisting of young people and students.

Some households are paying housing costs which exceed the affordability benchmark of 30% of household income, with serious impacts on residents and the City's health, diversity, and vibrancy.

Housing prices in Boroondara have far outpaced local incomes leaving many households behind. Between 2006 and 2021, the median price of a house in Boroondara has increased by 215%. Median household incomes have only increased by 57% over the same period⁶⁰.

To maintain Boroondara's social and economic resilience, greater housing affordability is important. Council acknowledges this need and will continue to support the delivery of housing diversity within the municipality through planning policy. However, responding to housing affordability extends beyond Boroondara and urgent policy intervention is required at the State and Federal Government levels to influence the market.

At the 2016 Census, Boroondara was **ranked 4th** of Melbourne LGAs for having a low proportion of key workers relative to the labour force. This is indicative of **low housing affordability**.

Source: AHURI (2021)

Between 2006 and 2021, the **median** price of a house in Boroondara has **increased by 215%**. Median household incomes have only increased by 57% over the same period ^{lxix}.

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Social and affordable housing

Another key objective of *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* is to increase the supply of social and affordable housing.

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* defines affordable housing as 'housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the needs of very low, low and moderate income households' (refer to table below for the annual income range).

Table 2: Annual household income ranges – eligibility for affordable housing (excluding social housing)

	Very low income range (annual)	Low income range (annual)	Moderate income range (annual)
Single adult	Up to \$26,680	\$26,681 to \$42,680	\$42,681 to \$64,020
Couple, no dependant	Up to \$40,010	\$40,010 to \$64,030	\$64,031 to \$96,030
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	Up to \$56,010	\$56,011 to \$89,630	\$89,631 to \$134,450

Source: *Victorian Government Gazette*, 22 June 2022.

As shown in Section 2.2, 'Cost of Housing', housing in Boroondara is significantly higher compared to the Metropolitan Melbourne. Median weekly rents in Boroondara for all dwelling types are higher and increase as dwellings increase in size.

Housing options delivered as 'affordable housing' in Boroondara (typically at a 20 per cent discount to market rent) are therefore not affordable to very low to moderate income earners in our City.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing defines low-income households as those receiving Centrelink incomes. In Boroondara, only 37 (1.5%) dwellings made available for rent in the private rental market in the March quarter of 2022 were affordable for households receiving a Centrelink payment⁶¹.

There are four types of households in critical need of housing:

Key workers

Around 10%⁶² of employed persons living in Boroondara are employed in key worker⁶³ occupations.

Key workers are people who work in essential industries such as teachers, healthcare and emergency workers and are considered important to the proper functioning of the City. Many receive low to moderate incomes – indicated in Table 2 – and so rely on low and moderate income housing. The growing housing affordability crisis means they are

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increasingly unable to afford housing close to their work. Equally they are generally ineligible for public housing⁶⁴.

Proximity to work is particularly important in healthcare, emergency services and some community and welfare support roles to allow workers to cover shifts, quickly respond to increases in service demand and attend emergency situations⁶⁵.

Key workers make a significant contribution to our local economy and community. Without intervention to increase housing supply for key workers, Boroondara will face challenges attracting and retaining key workers. This is particularly pertinent given Boroondara's ageing population and future need for more healthcare workers.

Single older women

The Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness (2021), found single older women are a fast-growing cohort experiencing homelessness. There is generally an underreporting of this and therefore numbers are likely to be higher.

Research undertaken by Council and Monash University (2010-2012) identified a range of factors contributing to this in Boroondara such as low or no income, lack of superannuation, and the high cost of private rental and homeownership. These women are also disadvantaged by a retirement system predicated on home ownership⁶⁶. Single older women, especially low income women or women dependant on pensions, are often forced to move out of their local community due to unaffordable housing, isolating them from their family, social, health and geographical networks.

People escaping domestic and family violence

The Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) heard consistent evidence about the central role access to secure housing plays for people trying to escape domestic and family violence⁶⁷. The evidence showed that housing pathways are 'blocked up' and not flowing as intended. Significantly, a lack of viable long-term housing options prevents people from escaping the system and establishing new lives. In 2019–20, 35% (40,021 clients) of all clients seeking specialist homelessness services in Victoria cited 'family and domestic violence' as their main reason for seeking assistance⁶⁸. There were 966 family violence incidents reported to Police in Boroondara during the year ending March 2022⁶⁹.

966 family violence incidents were reported to Police in Boroondara during the year ending March 2022.

Source: Crime Statistics Agency (March 2022) 'Latest crime data by area' accessed 28 August 2022.

People with disability

Some people with disability receive the Disability Support Pension as their main source of income, which may put some housing options out of reach⁷⁰. In Boroondara, almost 2,000 residents received a Disability Support Pension in June 2021⁷¹. Data suggests that some people with disability struggle to find affordable housing and are vulnerable to housing or

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rental stress. The availability of affordable, sustainable and appropriate housing helps people with disability to participate in the social, economic and community aspects of everyday life⁷².

It should be noted there are other types of households also in critical need of housing such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples. As noted in the *Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-2026*, Council recognises there is a significant gap between the health status of Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and the non-Aboriginal population. Although there have been some improvements, many areas such as housing, require urgent action to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians.

Within the current planning legislative framework, local government can provide for more housing for very low, low and moderate income households by:

- entering into a voluntary agreement with a planning permit applicant, under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, for the provision of affordable housing as part of a proposed development;
- advocating for policy and legislative changes to the State Government; and,
- facilitating partnerships between developers and affordable housing associations/providers.

Further work is required to understand if these planning tools are adequate policy responses to address the need for affordable housing in Boroondara for the vulnerable groups discussed. It is acknowledged that increasing the provision of affordable (and social) housing is the responsibility of State and Federal Governments and Council has and will continue to advocate to both levels of government on this matter.

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What is the difference between affordable, social, public and community housing?

There is often confusion around what each of these mean – here are some definitions for clarity.

Affordable housing is a broad term describing housing suitable for the needs of a range of very low, low and moderate income households (whether bought or rented) so these households can meet their other essential living costs.

Social housing is an umbrella term that includes both public housing and community housing. It generally indicates housing that involves some degree of subsidy.

Public housing is housing owned and managed by Homes Victoria. The State Government provides public housing to eligible Victorians including people who are unemployed, on low incomes, live with disability or a mental illness, who are at risk of homelessness.

Community housing is housing owned or managed by community housing providers. The community housing sector and government work in partnership to deliver more housing to more Victorians who need support. Community housing providers are highly regulated, not-for-profit organisations that specialise in housing the diverse range of tenants that require both public and affordable homes. Because of their not-for-profit structure they can deliver services cost effectively and to a high standard.

Source: State Government of Victoria, 'A Housing Explainer – social housing in Victoria', August 2021, VicGov, Viewed 14 April 2022, <<https://www.vic.gov.au/homes-victoria-housing-explainer>>

The State Government's **Big Build** project will provide around 213 social and 170 affordable housing dwellings at its Markham and Bills Street redevelopment sites.

At the time of writing, there remains approximately 2,500 people waiting for social housing on the Victorian Housing Register and transfer list for the Box Hill Regional Office (covering Boroondara, Whitehorse and Manningham).

Homelessness

Homelessness comes in many forms from couch surfing to sleeping rough (e.g. on streets, in cars or improvised shelters).

People can become homeless through no fault of their own, due to a variety of complex and often interrelated risk factors. The COVID 19 pandemic has only exacerbated the situation. Risk factors include loss of employment, family violence, lack of affordable housing, alcohol and other drug dependency, being recently released from prison, mental illness, financial difficulty and family breakdown.

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The various risks are compounded by rising rents in the private market and an inadequate supply of social housing stock. The nature of risk factors also means it is often difficult for a person to break the cycle of homelessness once they become homeless.

Council plays several roles in relation to social housing and homelessness including:

- advocacy on the provision of social housing
- advocacy for funding for homelessness services to provide assertive outreach
- providing staff with a framework for responding to reports of homelessness as outlined in Council's Homelessness Protocol
- providing grants to organisations supporting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Increasing the provision of social housing is important to addressing homelessness. Council does not offer financial subsidies or assets for the development of social housing. That is the responsibility of State and Federal Governments. Council has and will continue to advocate to both levels of government to increase and improve social housing stock in Boroondara (on State Government or private land owned and/or managed by not-for-profit housing associations).

Homelessness is a **growing national problem** and the increase in homelessness is being seen in Boroondara. The number of people in Boroondara who were homeless on Census night increased from 383 in 2011 to **426** in 2016.

Source: ABS (2018)

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Housing strategic directions

The community vision as outlined in the *Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031* is for a 'sustainable and inclusive community'.

With this in mind, three strategic directions articulate Boroondara's approach to planning for future housing provision in response to the unique context of Boroondara.

These strategic directions have been informed by data analysis and research, State Government *Planning Practice Note 90: Planning for Housing* and community aspirations.

Each strategic direction includes desired outcomes, responses and actions that outline how Council will aim to achieve the identified strategic directions. This is supported by a Housing Framework Plan (Figure 1).

The strategic directions are:

1. Housing diversity in appropriate locations
2. Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence
3. Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future.



Strategic direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations

Providing a diverse range of housing (in terms of typologies, size and cost) allows a variety of people to live in Boroondara and contributes to a vital community.

Council knows that protecting and respecting the character of Boroondara, while facilitating appropriate, well-designed development (that includes diversity in housing size and affordability) matters to our community.

Housing capacity analysis shows there is adequate capacity to accommodate projected future housing in Boroondara. However, it needs to be guided to appropriate locations.

~~Most~~ This means most of our future housing development will continue to be directed towards areas that are well located in relation to existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport such as major activity centres, commercial corridors and along some main roads (as shown on the Framework Plan as high and moderate change areas). These areas have also been identified as being able to absorb some change in character.

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In response to our City's unique heritage and character including the importance of green spaces and trees, many areas of Boroondara will likely see only minimal change.

Structure Plans will play a key role in determining the most appropriate way in accommodating opportunities for future housing and employment growth in our Activity Centres.

Desired outcomes:

- The majority of new housing, particularly higher density housing, is located in activity centres, commercial and public transport corridors and along some main roads.
- A diverse range of housing types are delivered.
- New housing is respectful of the City's unique character.
- New housing located within activity centres and commercial areas does not displace commercial uses.
- New developments align with preferred character outcomes and design guidelines in the Neighbourhood Character Precinct Statements.
- Appropriate infrastructure assets are planned for and are in place to accommodate future housing development, including new housing developments contributing to required upgrades of infrastructure to meet additional demands.

To achieve this, Council will:

1. Investigate the most appropriate housing outcomes in General Residential Zone 5 (GRZ5).
2. Review the Neighbourhood Character Policy (including Precinct Statements) to ensure policy directions are delivering housing that respects and enhances the preferred character.
3. Complete the Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan and include it as part of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
4. Review our Neighbourhood and Local Shopping Centres network to understand their economic role and what role they may play in future housing provision.
5. Monitor population and dwelling forecasts, particularly having regard to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on population and housing needs and prepare an interim report within 2 years.
- 5-6. Investigate enhancing internal processes for development data collection.
- 6-7. Ensure Council-controlled assets and infrastructure are in place to meet future population and housing needs such as local roads and drainage, libraries and open space.
- 7-8. Request the State Government to provide new and upgraded key infrastructure in the municipality such as schools, public transport, roads, bike paths, regional open space such as Yarra River corridor and Gardiners Creek and Melbourne Water managed drainage and sewage systems, particularly in and around future high change housing areas.

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8.9. Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to:

- include the Boroondara Housing Strategy as a background document in the Planning Scheme
- update local policy in accordance with the Housing Framework Plan, the strategic directions and desired outcomes of the Housing Strategy.

Housing Framework Plan

The Housing Framework Plan provides the overarching strategic direction on residential development throughout Boroondara. It is based on three change areas – low, moderate and high – which are discussed in more detail on the following pages.

Irrespective of a site's location in any of the three change areas, a contextual assessment of any housing development will be required. This assessment will need to consider any site-specific constraints or attributes.

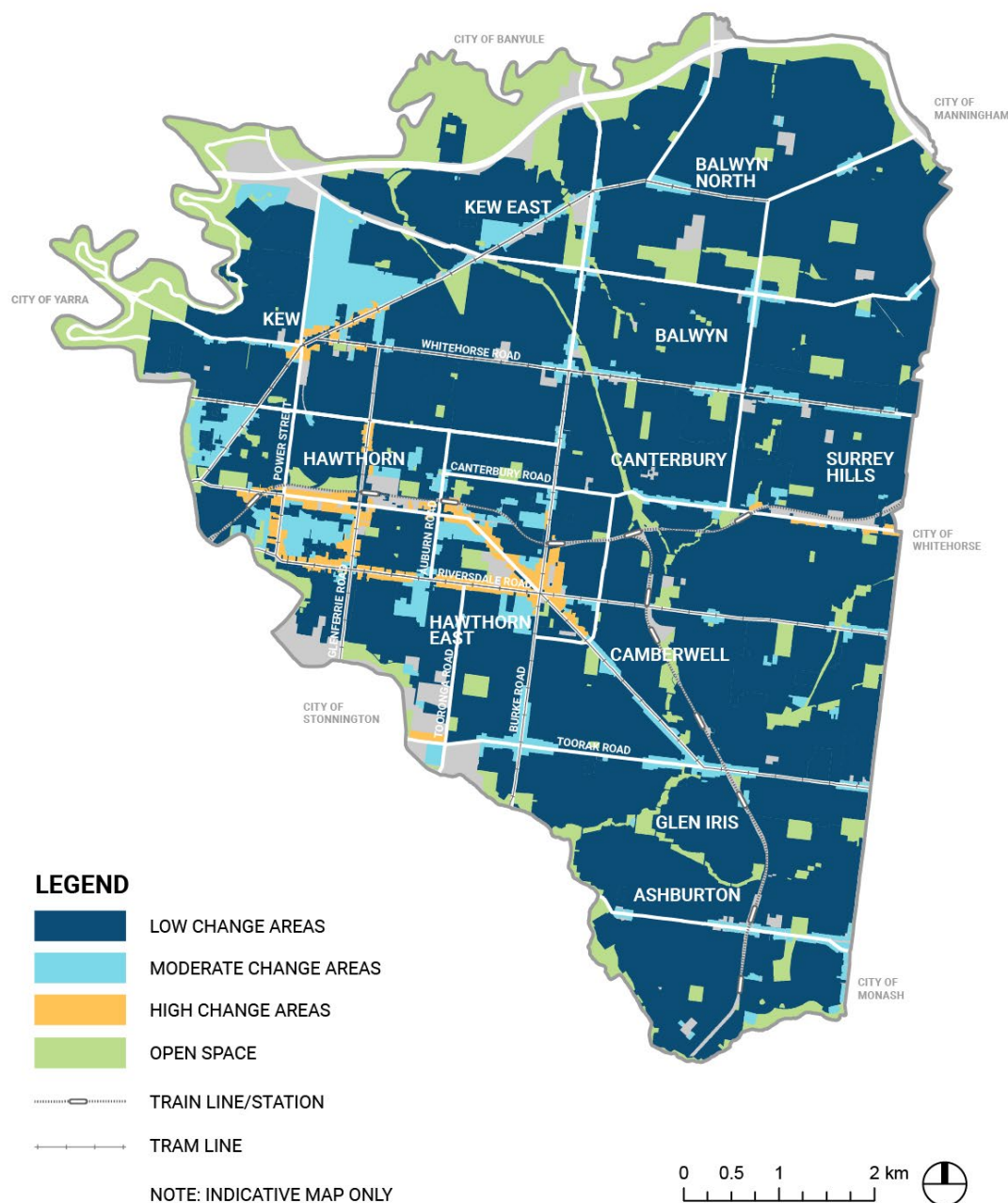
The change areas are indicative only and do not provide the strategic basis for planning zones.

The zones (including relevant schedules) determine the level of change in an area and are further refined by planning overlays to reflect the local conditions. Commercial zones will play an important role in the provision of future housing.

Detailed capacity modelling and analysis undertaken by SGS Economics and Planning indicates there is more than adequate capacity under the current policy settings to provide for the 9,400 dwellings likely to be needed over the next 15 years. Therefore, Boroondara's current zones can accommodate the anticipated housing need.

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Image 5: Housing Framework Plan. Shows distribution of low, moderate and high changes areas across Boroondara. Note: Indicative map only. Development outcomes will depend on any site specific controls, constraints and attributes and contextual assessment.



Low change areas

Low change areas are generally within established residential locations that have limited capacity to accommodate significant future housing change over time. These areas often have a strong and consistent character, have significant established and important tree coverage and many areas are protected through Heritage Overlays. New housing in these low change areas will need to respect the type, scale, and prevailing character of the area. It is expected that infill development of one or two dwellings on typically small individual

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lots (including alterations and additions to existing dwellings) that is respectful of existing character will continue. Areas of low change apply to around 72% of the municipality⁷³. It is acknowledged that often infill development of one dwelling on a lot does not require planning approval and this can have issues around respecting prevailing character.

Moderate change areas

Moderate change areas have the capacity to accommodate a more modest level of housing and are generally within or close to activity, neighbourhood and commercial centres, education and public transportation. These areas often already have a mixed character that allows them to absorb additional housing development. It is expected that enhancement will gradually evolve over time as development of one, two or more dwellings on individual lots (including smaller scale apartment developments and additions to existing dwellings). Areas of moderate change apply to around 7% of the municipality⁷⁴.

High change areas

High change areas support additional housing provision and diversity at increased densities. These areas have strong mixed use and commercial character that can absorb housing change as well as access to existing services, public transport, amenity and infrastructure. Locations include Glenferrie/Hawthorn, Kew and Camberwell major activity centres, commercial corridors such as Camberwell Road and along sections of major transport corridors such as Riversdale Road, Glenferrie Road, and Power Street. It is expected that housing diversity will occur through mixed use, infill and apartment development. Areas of high change apply to around 2% of the municipality⁷⁵.

Strategic direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence

Council understands that environmental sustainability is an important issue for our community and changes need to be made by all. Improving our housing stock to be more energy efficient through Environmentally Sustainable Design, adaptive reuse of existing buildings and energy retrofits to existing housing is a vital component in response to the increasing threat of the changing climate.

Providing and retaining significant tree coverage and vegetation is a key priority in creating a cool, green City and must be considered in conjunction with housing delivery.

Investment in good design generates social and economic value in the form of improved health and wellbeing, greater sense of community and safety, enhanced property values, improved environmental performance and reduced energy costs⁷⁶.

There is opportunity for Council to investigate new policy to improve medium density design outcomes in our residential areas and strengthen existing design policies in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. This includes reinforcing our City's expectations for design excellence so that the highest quality places are delivered consistently.

Key to delivering design excellence is incorporating universal design principles early in the design process. This means housing is designed and built to be safe, easy to live in and

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adaptable to the changing needs of occupants across their lifetime, particularly people with disability or temporary injuries, the elderly and families with young children⁷⁷.

Desired outcomes:

- Housing that incorporates or retrofits ESD measures to assist in reducing the environmental footprint of development.
- Design and construction of dwellings and residential buildings retains and enhances canopy tree coverage, vegetation and landscaping.
- Innovative, high-quality urban architectural and landscape design that enhances the appearance and strengthens identity of the City.
- Housing that incorporates universal design principles to allow for flexibility and adaptability to meet the diverse range of needs of people today and in the future.

To achieve this, Council will:

1. Continue to progress a joint-Council planning scheme amendment to introduce new Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) provision into respective planning schemes.
2. Continue to advocate to the State Government for the introduction of a state-wide ESD policy into the Victoria Planning Provisions.
3. Continue to play an active role in the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).
4. Investigate implementing an educational program to encourage and enable energy retrofits to improve energy efficiency of Boroondara's older homes and buildings.
5. Review and update existing local planning scheme policies to enable ESD upgrades while respecting the heritage or character-defining elements.
6. Continue to apply Council's existing tree protection controls and investigate opportunities to strengthen local policy through a Tree Canopy Strategy and new or existing controls within the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
7. Continue to advocate to the State Government for metropolitan wide tree controls and changes to building regulations to improve tree protection and canopy cover on private property.
8. Investigate strengthening local policy to improve medium density design outcomes.
9. Prepare a series of best practice urban design guidelines for new development within Boroondara.
10. Promote high standards of design and environmental sustainability in Boroondara through bi-annual Urban Design Awards.
11. Investigate strengthening local planning policy provisions to ensure new housing is adaptable and accessible.
12. Monitor the impact of the State Government's Better Apartments Design Standards in Boroondara context and seek to introduce local policy improvements where necessary.

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Strategic direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future

Having a range of housing for all residents – including young families, students, key workers, older people and those on different incomes – will add vitality to our community and supports social inclusion.

The dominant household type in Boroondara is couples with children. However, this is continuing to change and with an increase in single person and couple only households as well as an ageing population, the types of dwellings required to accommodate these smaller households need to be considered.

A person's ability to age in place is determined by the availability of appropriate accommodation. To meet future demand from an ageing population in Boroondara, Council will need to monitor the need for aged care facilities, retirement villages and other alternative housing models such as co-housing.

There is a growing 'young-old' cohort of people who live active lives for 20-plus years after retirement. Council will also need to better understand their housing needs and wants, with potentially more 'active living' apartment developments within our activity centres.

Boroondara is a desirable place to live and housing prices are high, meaning it is a challenge for many people to live here. Although Council has limited influence on the housing market, Council as the Planning Authority can respond by setting policy that results in greater diversity of housing in appropriate locations. This will help the market deliver housing at various price points.

The importance of strategic partnerships in the delivery of social and affordable housing is also recognised. Council will continue to advocate to the State Government for additional social housing in Boroondara, particularly on State-owned sites or delivered by Community Housing Associations. It is well-known that increasing the provision of social housing is an essential aspect to addressing homelessness.

Desired outcomes:

Greater diversity of housing choices and opportunities suitable for all residents including:

- housing that consists of a mix of sizes, layouts and various price points to accommodate people of different stages of life, family structures, mobility and socio-economic groups.
- housing that meets the needs of our older residents and people living with disability located close to transport, services and amenities.
- increased supply of social and affordable housing (delivered by Federal, State Government and Community Housing Associations).
- appropriate alternative housing models, such as co-housing, that can contribute to affordable and social housing opportunities and lower ongoing living costs in Boroondara.

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To achieve this, Council will:

1. Continue to support the delivery of a diversity of housing stock through planning policies and tools in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
2. Investigate strengthening local policy provisions for the delivery of a range of dwelling sizes and bedrooms in 10+ dwelling developments.
3. Investigate the ageing-in-place housing needs and options for our diverse community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses.
4. Investigate housing affordability and social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses.
5. Continue to advocate to and work with Federal and State Government, community housing providers and private sector to provide social and affordable housing for Boroondara residents.
6. Support not-for-profit community housing providers to continue to provide social housing in Boroondara.
7. Investigate whether alternative housing models, including rent-to-own, build-to-rent and co-housing, can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara, and potential policy responses.

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Appendices

Policy context

National

In August 2022, the Australian Federal Government announced a new National Housing Supply and Affordability Council, which will provide advice in developing a National Housing and Homelessness Plan.

The Federal Government also announced several new housing initiatives, including:

Housing Australia Future Fund

The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund will build 30,000 social and affordable housing properties in its first five years.

Of these 30,000, 20,000 will be social housing properties – 4,000 of which will be allocated for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.

The additional 10,000 properties will be affordable homes allocated to frontline workers like police, nurses and cleaners.

Further, a portion of the investment returns will be made available to fund acute housing needs on an ongoing basis. In the first five years, the investment returns will fund:

- \$200 million for the repair, maintenance and improvements of housing in remote Indigenous communities.
- \$100 million for crisis and transitional housing options for women and children fleeing domestic and family violence and older women on low incomes who are at risk of homelessness.
- \$30 million to build more housing and fund specialist services for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Help to Buy Shared Equity Scheme

This scheme will allow 10,000 eligible home buyers a year to buy a new or existing home with an equity contribution from the Federal Government. It involves an equity contribution of up to a maximum of 40 per cent of the purchase price of a new home and up to a maximum of 30 per cent of the purchase price for an existing home.

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State***Planning and Environment Act 1987***

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 provides the legal framework for the operation of Victoria's planning system.

It specifies the objectives of planning in Victoria, including:

- to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land
- to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria
- to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value
- to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria
- to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.

It also provides the definition and income ranges for "affordable housing", which is housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Plan Melbourne aims to create a city where every day needs are within a 20-minute walk, cycle or local public transport trip.

Key directions in *Plan Melbourne* relating to housing include:

- deliver more housing closer to jobs and public transport
- manage the supply of new housing in the right locations to meet population. growth and create a sustainable city
- increase the supply of social and affordable housing
- provide greater choice and diversity of housing
- facilitate decision-making processes for housing in the right locations.

To manage the supply of housing in Melbourne, it is expected that established areas (including Boroondara) will accommodate a greater share of housing growth.

Plan Melbourne aspires to 70% of new housing being provided within Melbourne's established areas between 2015-2051.

It also directs that housing choice will be provided in activity centres and other locations that offer good access to jobs, services and public transport.

Plan Melbourne identifies three major activity centres in Boroondara:

- Camberwell Junction
- Glenferrie/Hawthorn
- Kew Junction.

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Boroondara also has a number of neighbourhood activity centres including:

- Ashburton
- Auburn Village
- Balwyn
- Balwyn East
- Balwyn North
- Bellevue
- Belmore Heights
- Boroondara
- Burwood Village
- Canterbury Village
- Church Street
- Cotham Village
- Deepdene
- Dickens Corner
- East Camberwell
- Glenferrie Hill
- Golf Links Village
- Greythorn
- Harp Village
- Hartwell
- Maling Road
- Middle Camberwell
- Mont Albert Terminus
- Mount Street
- Riversdale Village
- South Camberwell
- Stradbroke Village
- Surrey Hills
- Through Road
- Upper Glen Iris
- Willsmere Village.

Planning Practice Note 90: Planning for Housing

This Planning Practice note provides direction to plan for housing growth and protect neighbourhood character to ensure a balanced approach to managing residential development in planning schemes through preparation of a housing strategy and application of residential zones.

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Residential Zones

Victoria's Residential Zones have undergone significant reform in the past decade, with significant changes made in 2013, and updates in 2017 (Amendment VC110).

The reformed residential zones provide more certainty and consistency about housing growth and built form outcomes by creating consistent and strengthened maximum building height controls and the introduction of a minimum garden area requirement in the General Residential Zone and the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

In 2021, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) released a discussion paper, 'Improving the operation of ResCode', that proposes to apply a new model to residential development planning permit applications. It proposes to replace the ResCode assessment requirements with a new Performance Assessment Module (PAM), based on objectives, standards and decision guidelines. At the time of writing, DELWP (now the Department of Transport and Planning) are considering feedback received during public consultation, which will inform decisions about implementation.

Regional

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 includes Boroondara, along with the Cities of Bayside, Glen Eira and Stonnington in the Inner South East Metro Region.

In 2020 the Inner South East Metro Region had a population of 567,390 people or approximately 11 per cent of Melbourne's total population. The region's population was projected to increase by over 216,000 people between 2020 and 2051 to a total of 784,040 people. From 2016 to 2051 an additional 119,170 dwellings would be needed to accommodate this growth [note: this does not take into account the impact of COVID 19 pandemic].

The Inner South East Region Metropolitan Partnership produced the *Inner South East Regional Framework* (2020) with a key action to advocate for and explore opportunities for key worker affordable housing.

In August 2021, DELWP released the draft Inner South East Metro Land Use Framework Plan to set regional-level planning policy (based on Plan Melbourne 2017-2050) to be implemented into planning schemes.

Under the housing choice theme, Boroondara is projected to account for the largest population across the region (213,840) to 2036 and would be expected to accommodate a total of 88,100 dwellings [note: again this does not take into account the impact of COVID 19 pandemic]. At the time of writing, the Inner South East Metro Land Use Framework Plan has not been finalised.

Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) is the policy content of the planning scheme. The PPF structure provides for three tiers of integrated planning policy, grouping state, regional and local planning policy by theme.

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Statewide policies

Statewide policies provide direction on planning and managing residential growth in Victoria.

Key housing directions are:

- plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15-year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur.
- residential land supply will be considered on a municipal basis.
- planning for urban growth should consider:
 - opportunities for the consolidation, redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas
 - neighbourhood and landscape character
 - the limits of land capability and natural hazards and environmental quality
 - service limitations and the costs of providing infrastructure
- ensure development contributes to existing or preferred neighbourhood character.
- increase the supply of housing in existing urban areas by facilitating increased housing yield in appropriate locations, including under-utilised urban land.
- ensure that an appropriate quantity, quality and type of housing is provided.
- increase the proportion of new housing in designated locations within established urban areas.
- encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to services, jobs and public transport.
- ensure an adequate supply of redevelopment opportunities within established urban areas to reduce the pressure for fringe development.
- identify opportunities for increased residential densities to help consolidate urban areas.
- ensure housing stock matches changing demand by widening housing choice.
- facilitate diverse housing that offers choice and meets changing household needs.

Regional policies

Regional policies provide planning guidance to councils within the Melbourne metropolitan context.

Key housing directions are:

- Manage the supply of new housing to meet population growth and create a sustainable city by developing housing and mixed-use development opportunities in locations that are:
 - in and around the Central City.
 - urban-renewal precincts and sites.
 - areas for residential growth.
 - areas for greyfield renewal, particularly through opportunities for land consolidation.
 - areas designated as National Employment and Innovation Clusters.

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- Metropolitan Activity centres and Major Activity Centres.
- Neighbourhood Activity Centres – especially those with good public transport connections.
- areas near existing and proposed railway stations that can support transit-oriented development.
- Identify areas that offer opportunities for more medium and high density housing near employment and transport in Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Facilitate increased housing in established areas to create a city of 20 minute neighbourhoods close to existing services, jobs and public transport.
- Provide certainty about the scale of growth by prescribing appropriate height and site coverage provisions for different areas.
- Allow for a range of minimal, incremental and high change residential areas that balance the need to protect valued areas with the need to ensure choice and growth in housing.
- Create mixed-use neighbourhoods at varying densities that offer more choice in housing.

Local policies

The Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) in the Boroondara Planning Scheme provides a statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for Boroondara.

The vision for housing is to protect the heritage and respect the character of the City to maintain amenity and liveability whilst recognising the need for appropriate, well-designed development for future generations.

The MPS contains the following strategic directions related to housing:

- Maintain and strengthen the network of activity centres, neighbourhood centres, local centres and commercial corridors.
- Ensure major activity centres, neighbourhood centres, local centres and commercial corridors retain a commercial focus with regard to land use and built form outcomes.
- Ensure residential development complements the commercial focus of activity centres, neighbourhood centres, local centres and commercial corridors, particularly at the upper levels of development.
- Minimise the impacts of development on sensitive residential interfaces by way of visual bulk, noise, traffic and vehicle access.
- Facilitate residential development in accordance with the Housing Framework shown on the Housing Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.
- Provide a diverse range of housing types that protect preferred neighbourhood character and adjoining residential amenity.
- Provide housing that is sufficiently flexible to account for age, temporary or permanent injury or impairment, and disability.
- Protect residential areas surrounding discretionary uses from potential amenity impacts.

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City of Boroondara Plans and Strategies

Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031

Boroondara's Community Plan (BCP), incorporating the Community Vision, Council Plan 2021-25 and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25, is a strategic document that sets out the 10-year vision for the City of Boroondara based on the aspirations of the community and the priorities they told us were important.

The BCP balances the needs of our community today, reflects the community's experience during the COVID 19 pandemic, while recognising the challenges, opportunities and changes to come over the next decade.

The BCP is structured around seven themes, as expressed by the community in 2017. Checking with the community in 2020–21, it was confirmed these themes still represent what the community want Council to focus on over the next 10 years:

1. Community, Services and Facilities
2. Parks and Green Spaces
3. The Environment
4. Neighbourhood Character and Heritage
5. Moving Around
6. Local Economy
7. Leadership and Governance

These seven themes work together with six health priorities to provide a robust foundation for achieving the community's vision, to create '**a sustainable and inclusive community.**'

The Housing Strategy also considers and stands alongside Boroondara's:

- Climate Action Plan and Implementation Plan 2021-23
- Homelessness Protocol 2020
- Asset Plan 2022-23 to 2032-33
- Disability Action Plan 2018-2022
- Open Space Strategy 2013
- Bicycle Strategy 2022

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References

¹ Every person has the right to an adequate standard of living, which includes the right to adequate housing (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 11).

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⁵ id 2022, [Balwyn North, Number of Bedrooms per Dwelling](#), City of Boroondara community profile website, accessed 11 July 2022.

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¹¹ Note: Two demographic data sets are referenced. For clarification, Greater Melbourne is a geographical area defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to represent the functional extent of Melbourne as a capital city. Metropolitan Melbourne is an area defined by Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning. It extends beyond the northern boundary of Greater Melbourne as defined by the ABS.

¹² Excludes 'Visitor only' and 'Other non-classifiable' households.

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²⁶ Flats and apartments in three storey and larger blocks.

²⁷ Semi-detached, row, terrace, townhouses and villa units, plus flats and apartments in blocks of 1 or 2 storeys, and flats attached to houses.

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Boroondara Housing Strategy Action Plan**September 2023**

Short term (1 to 3 years), medium term (4 to 6 years) and long term (6+ years).

#	Action	Timeframe	Relevant Teams or Directorates	Resourcing/Budget
Strategic Direction 1: Housing diversity in appropriate locations				
1.1	Investigate the most appropriate housing outcomes in General Residential Zone 5 (GRZ5).	Medium	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
1.2	Review the Neighbourhood Character Policy (including Precinct Statements) to ensure policy directions are delivering housing that respects and enhances the preferred character.	Short	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
1.3	Complete the Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan and include it as part of the Boroondara Planning Scheme.	Short	Strategic Planning and Placemaking teams	Strategic Planning work program and budget
1.4	Review our Neighbourhood and Local Shopping Centres network to understand their economic role and what role they may play in future housing provision.	Short	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
1.5	Monitor population and dwelling forecasts, particularly having regard to the impact of the	Short	Strategic Planning and Social Research teams	Strategic Planning work program and budget

#	Action	Timeframe	Relevant Teams or Directorates	Resourcing/Budget
	COVID 19 pandemic on population and housing needs and prepare an interim report within 2 years.			
1.6	Investigate enhancing internal processes for development data collection.	Short	Urban Planning, Building Services and Strategic Planning teams	Urban Planning and Building Services work program and budget
1.7	Ensure Council-controlled assets and infrastructure are in place to meet future population and housing needs such as local roads and drainage, libraries and open space.	Ongoing	Asset Management team	Asset Management work programs and other Council budgets as required
1.8	Request the State Government to provide new and upgraded key infrastructure in the municipality such as schools, public transport, roads, bike paths, regional open space such as Yarra River corridor and Gardiners Creek and Melbourne Water managed drainage sewage systems, particularly in and around future high change housing areas.	Ongoing	Community Support and Urban Living Directorates	Various work programs and budgets
1.9	Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include the Boroondara Housing Strategy as a reference document in the Planning Scheme update local policy in accordance with the Housing Framework Plan, the strategic directions and desired outcomes of the Housing Strategy. 	Short	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
Strategic Direction 2: Housing that is sustainable and achieves design excellence				

#	Action	Timeframe	Relevant Teams or Directorates	Resourcing/Budget
2.1	Continue to progress a joint-Council planning scheme amendment to introduce new Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) provision into respective planning schemes*. *dependent on the Minister for Planning allowing amendment progression	Short	Strategic Planning and Urban Planning teams in partnership with Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE)	Strategic Planning and Urban Planning work programs and budgets
2.2	Continue to advocate to the State Government for the introduction of a state-wide ESD policy into the Victoria Planning Provisions.	Ongoing	Strategic Planning and Urban Planning teams in partnership with Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE)	Strategic Planning and Urban work programs and budgets
2.3	Continue to play an active role in the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).	Short	Strategic Planning and Urban Planning teams	Strategic Planning and Urban Planning work programs and budgets
2.4	Investigate implementing an educational program to encourage and enable energy retrofits to improve energy efficiency of Boroondara's older homes and buildings.	Medium	Environmental Sustainability, Urban Planning and Strategic Planning teams	Environmental Sustainability, Urban Planning and Strategic Planning work programs and budgets

#	Action	Timeframe	Relevant Teams or Directorates	Resourcing/Budget
2.5	Review and update existing local planning scheme policies to enable ESD upgrades while respecting the heritage or character-defining elements.	Medium	Strategic Planning and Urban Planning teams	Strategic Planning and Urban work programs and budgets
2.6	Continue to apply Council's existing tree protection controls and investigate opportunities to strengthen local policy through a Tree Canopy Strategy and new or existing controls within the Boroondara Planning Scheme.	Short	Urban Planning Forestry and Strategic Planning teams	Urban Planning Forestry and Strategic Planning work programs and budgets
2.7	Continue to advocate to the State Government for metropolitan wide tree controls and changes to building regulations to improve tree protection and canopy cover on private property.	Short	Urban Planning Forestry and Strategic Planning teams	Urban Planning Forestry and Strategic Planning work programs and budgets
2.8	Investigate strengthening local policy to improve medium density design outcomes.	Medium	Strategic Planning and Placemaking teams	Strategic Planning work program and budget
2.9	Prepare a series of best practice urban design guidelines for new development within Boroondara.	Short	Strategic Planning and Placemaking teams	Strategic Planning work program and budget
2.10	Promote high standards of design and environmental sustainability in Boroondara through bi-annual Urban Design Awards.	Ongoing	Urban Planning team	Urban Planning work program and budget

#	Action	Timeframe	Relevant Teams or Directorates	Resourcing/Budget
2.11	Investigate strengthening local planning policy provisions to ensure new housing is adaptable and accessible.	Medium	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
2.12	Monitor the impact of the State Government's Better Apartments Design Standards in Boroondara context and seek to introduce local policy improvements where necessary.	Medium	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
Strategic Direction 3: Housing that meets the needs of all residents now and in the future				
3.1	Continue to support the delivery of a diversity of housing stock through planning policies and tools in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.	Ongoing	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
3.2	Investigate strengthening local policy provisions for the delivery of a range of dwelling sizes and bedrooms in 10+ dwelling developments.	Long	Strategic Planning team	Strategic Planning work program and budget
3.3	Investigate the ageing-in-place housing needs and options for our diverse community members, including but not limited to single older women, 'young-old' cohort, LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members, and potential policy responses.	Medium	Strategic Planning and Community Planning and Development teams	Strategic Planning and Community Planning and Development work programs and budgets

#	Action	Timeframe	Relevant Teams or Directorates	Resourcing/Budget
3.4	Investigate housing affordability and social and affordable housing issues within Boroondara, and potential policy responses.	Medium	Strategic Planning and Community Planning and Development teams	Strategic Planning and Community Planning and Development work programs and budgets
3.5	Continue to advocate to and work with Federal and State Government, community housing providers and private sector to provide social and affordable housing for Boroondara residents.	Ongoing	Strategic Planning, Urban Planning and Community Planning and Development teams	Strategic Planning, Urban Planning and Community Planning and Development work programs and budgets
3.6	Support not-for-profit community housing providers to continue to provide social housing in Boroondara.	Ongoing	Community Planning and Development team	Community Planning and Development work program and budget
3.7	Investigate whether alternative housing models, including rent-to-own, build-to-rent and co-housing, can help deliver housing diversity and affordable housing options in Boroondara, and potential policy responses.	Short	Strategic Planning and Community Planning	Strategic Planning work program and budget

Short term (1 to 3 years), medium term (4 to 6 years) and long term (6+ years).