

Markham Avenue Community Engagement

Places Victoria feedback report

December 2016

Introduction

In October and November 2016, Places Victoria undertook engagement with key stakeholders and the Ashburton community regarding Places Victoria's proposed redevelopment of the Markham Avenue estate on behalf of Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Engagement activities were managed by RPS Manidis Roberts Pty Ltd (RPS) on behalf of Places Victoria, and RPS issued their report on the outcomes of the engagement to Places Victoria on 20 December 2016. That report describes the engagement program and the key issues raised, sorted into classifications by theme and sub-theme.

This document offers Places Victoria's response to the issues raised in that report.

The community engagement program comprised publication of information about the project, including the development application and technical reports, a series of fact sheets, an online feedback form, social media updates, a dedicated project email address, stakeholder meetings with council and community groups, pop-up information sessions and community information events.

The engagement program yielded 241 responses.

Feedback was classified into nine key themes as follows:

THEME	% OF TOTAL FEEDBACK
Consultation processes	6.99%
Design	15.34%
Environment	7.41%
Height and density	16.39%
Overshadowing	5.74%
Development and planning	20.88%
Public housing	9.92%
Traffic	11.8%
Other	5.43%

Places Victoria, in consultation with DHHS, has reviewed and considered the feedback and provided a response to the issues raised in this document.

Feedback and responses

Theme 1: Consultation

Feedback on consultation comprised 8.27% of all feedback received. Some respondents expressed frustration about the nature of the engagement program and stated that the community should have had a role in shaping the development, particularly in regard to its size. Other comments referred to the program being too brief, information being too complex and that the tools and approaches were not appropriate to the engagement.

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Consultation	74.63%	There was a significant amount of feedback about the level of input the local community could have into the project. Several pieces of feedback described the process as a “sham” and stated it wasn’t a proper consultation process.	Places Victoria offered a program of community engagement that was appropriate for the proposal and collected a diverse range of feedback to inform the decision making process. The feedback provided has been summarised in RPS’ engagement report, which will be provided to the Responsible Authority (in this case the Minister for Planning) to help inform his decision about the project.
		Feedback included frustration that the scope or size of the project were not open to community input, including development of a vision for the future of the estate.	Places Victoria collected a wide range of feedback that included the scope and size of the project and has reflected these concerns in the engagement report that will be provided to the Minister for Planning.
		There were also views expressed that the community had been promised full consultation and that the consultation undertaken was short and informal – consisting of information provision only and that there was no community meeting offered.	Places Victoria was formally appointed to deliver this project in September 2016 and began the engagement as soon as practical after that appointment, noting that the community had been requesting information about the project prior to that time. The engagement program comprised a series of stakeholder meetings in October and broader community engagement in November. Places Victoria believes that it is inappropriate to conduct engagement activities during the school holidays or while local councils are in caretaker mode. The development program required an application for a Planning Scheme Amendment and planning approval to be lodged prior to Christmas 2016.

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
			<p>Places Victoria offered open house information sessions as this is an appropriate and effective way of sharing complex information with diverse stakeholders.</p> <p>Places Victoria believes the process and timing of engagement was appropriate, complied with accepted international standards and resulted in a very significant level of engagement with interested groups and the broader community.</p>
		<p>A view was expressed that engagement should have taken place earlier in the planning process, before final plans were developed.</p>	<p>Places Victoria was formally appointed to deliver this project in September 2016 and began the engagement as soon as practical after that. Draft plans were prepared in a short timeframe to meet DHHS's design and financial requirements and deliver much-needed public housing as a priority.</p> <p>These plans were offered for community feedback at the earliest opportunity.</p>
		<p>Some stated that there was a failure to respond meaningfully to community inquiries and action groups in regard to the scale and design of the development.</p>	<p>Full copies of the development application, including all technical reports and architectural drawings that showed the design and scale of the project were published online and shared at information sessions at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Meetings were also held with several interested groups and organisations.</p> <p>Feedback on all elements of the proposal is included in the engagement report.</p>
		<p>There was also a suggestion the planning process should stop to allow time for more consultation.</p>	<p>The community engagement program was appropriate for the proposal and collected a diverse range of feedback to inform the decision making process.</p> <p>The engagement program supports a planning process such that the views of the community can be considered by the responsible planning authority.</p>
		<p>There was a comment regarding planning and delivery of public housing being promised to be developed in partnership with current tenants and the community – and that the residents of Ashburton have not been consulted.</p>	<p>The engagement program comprised stakeholder meetings in October and community engagement in November.</p> <p>DHHS was and remains responsible for engaging with public housing tenants and their advocates in regards to the redevelopment of the estate.</p>
<p>Information provided</p>	<p>10.45%</p>	<p>Regarding information provided to the community, there was a claim documents contained deliberate errors to obscure damage done to the area and hide impacts on the local community. There was also a comment that documentation and plans were incomplete, inconsistent and contradictory in regards to height, tree removal and traffic impact.</p>	<p>A full copy of the development application and supporting technical reports was made available in draft form. No material developed or supplied by Places Victoria contained any deliberate error or omission. Consistent with best practice design development, the design evolved, and the draft documents were refined and coordinated to incorporate improvements and a small number of additional design requirements as they surfaced.</p>

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
		<p>There was also feedback that a summary of impacts was not provided allowing residents to understand how assessments were undertaken, that there was a lack of detail and some information provided was based on value judgements.</p>	<p>Places Victoria provided a series of factsheets, FAQs and draft copies of the technical reports that summarised the likely impacts online and at two community information sessions.</p> <p>Those documents included assessments of all relevant design elements including proposed building heights, overshadowing, access, landscaping, overlooking, traffic and parking.</p>
		<p>Feedback was provided that specific details of the project were kept under wraps until plans were finalised.</p>	<p>Plans and all technical reports were published in draft form and the latest versions were used in the consultation process, leading up to the final versions being included in Places Victoria's submission to the Minister for Planning on 20 December 2016.</p>
Tools	13.43%	<p>There was criticism of the engagement process, stating there was too little time for residents to absorb detail and ask questions. It was described as a "sham" and designed to minimise review or input.</p>	<p>Places Victoria engaged with a range of interested stakeholders and the broader community over an intensive two-month period. Comprehensive information was available online and at community information sessions. Community members were able to ask questions of the project team and technical experts at the community information sessions or via a project email address. The local residents' action group (ARAG) was also engaged via specific meetings on two separate occasions.</p>
		<p>It was also claimed the letterbox drop was flawed and didn't reach the target audience or many people.</p>	<p>Places Victoria is confident that the 1500 letters it distributed reached the majority of recipients. Places Victoria responded to complaints of letters not reaching the target audience by repeating the letterbox drop for neighbouring streets, doorknocking adjacent properties and offering other means of information sharing including a press advertisement, online information and social media advertising.</p>
		<p>One community member expressed dissatisfaction the information sessions were not offered as town hall-style meetings in order to water down pressure from the public on the development team. It was also stated the sessions didn't explore or provide a response to actual problems or concerns</p>	<p>Places Victoria sought feedback about the proposed engagement approach from stakeholders including Council and ARAG during meetings in September and October.</p> <p>Up to 15 Places Victoria and DHHS senior staff attended information sessions and provided detailed answers to enquiries.</p>
		<p>There was also a comment the pop-ups were informal and done at inappropriate places and times.</p>	<p>Pop-ups are in informal means of promoting engagement opportunities and were offered at a variety of times and in well-trafficked local areas, such as Alamein Station. The pop-ups were one of a number of engagement channels utilised as part of the overall engagement program.</p>

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Petition	1.49%	References were made to a petition circulated by Graham Watt MP calling for the project to be subject to local planning controls.	Places Victoria is aware of the local member's views.

Theme 2: Design

Feedback on design comprised 18.15% of all feedback received. Comments included in this these included those on access to the site, impacts on the community garden, design of the buildings, facilities, services and parking. There is also some reference to environmental issues such as the use of trees for aesthetic and screening purposes that are included here and not in 'Environment' for that reason.

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Access to site	0.68%	Markham Avenue is so narrow that Ambon Street will probably need to be setup as the main access to Markham Estate.	Site access will be via Markham Ave to include two entry points. One entry will access the basement carpark and the other entry will service visitor parking and public housing tenant parking. Both entry points are in similar locations to those existing on the site.
Accessibility	2.04%	More accessible housing needed for disabled individuals. Question about accessibility of private housing.	The development will include accessible housing to meet DHHS requirements. Six fully accessible public units are being provided with the remaining being adaptable units. This approach is above the industry standard for apartments.
Apartment standards	10.88%	Apartment size was raised by a number of stakeholders who stated the apartments would have low internal amenity. Others stated apartments needed to be reasonable in size – “no dog boxes”. A small number flagged the site has historically had an issue with dampness.	Apartment sizes are generally larger than industry standard across Melbourne with layouts consistent with the Better Apartments Draft Design Standards. A mix of 1, 2 and 3-bed units are provided.
Community garden	2.04%	Retaining the community garden in the neighbouring public open space was flagged as important by a small number of stakeholders, with one stating the presence of the former Markham Estate was a key factor in the creation of the community garden	The community garden will be retained in its current position. Future estate residents will be provided with the contact details for the garden. Water harvested from the roof of building E will be provided to the community garden free of charge.
Design	8.16%	A number of stakeholders raised the design of the buildings, with one stating the cluster of buildings does not appear to respect the neighbourhood, another flagging there was unacceptable separation of the buildings. There was also a call for an increase in spending on the articulation, design and materiality of the Markham Avenue frontage. Another piece of feedback stated that private housing was of better quality with access to gardens and the community garden, while the public housing would have poor build quality and no access to garden or community areas.	The development proposes the creation of a master-planned residential community, that focuses on a ‘tenure blind’ offering of both public and private housing. This represents a unique opportunity to conceptualise a high quality residential precinct within a highly-desirable neighbourhood and parkland setting. The master plan for the site aspires to be an exemplar development, with a premium quality amenity offer for all future residents. Both the public and private dwellings will be constructed under one single construction contract, using the same building contractor and pool of

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
		<p>One stakeholder felt there was too little open space in the proposed development, while another stated urban design could be used to reduce crime. There was also the suggestion for a garden space and winter solar access needed for all apartments.</p> <p>One piece of feedback noted concerns for lack of storage for public housing residents.</p>	<p>subcontractors. The contract will require a very high standard of workmanship and documentation for both.</p> <p>The public and private housing will be visually indistinguishable from each other and will feature the same external materials.</p> <p>Open space within the site is fully integrated for use by both private and public residents, and access across and through the site is promoted through the design treatment of those open spaces.</p>
Facilities	4.76%	<p>There was feedback about the need for facilities such as childcare, a community room to support service provision, funding for community development workers and support services within the site. It was also suggested BBQ facilities, gym, café and convenience store that could be a great addition to the local community.</p>	<p>A community needs analysis has been completed for the project which indicates that existing community infrastructure has sufficient capacity for any increase in population.</p> <p>Private BBQ, kitchen and library facilities will be provided which will complement the surrounding parkland and playgrounds.</p>
Fencing	12.24%	<p>A number of stakeholders raised the issue of fencing. Statements included no fences were shown in plans, which could be a safety issue for children in regards to the creek at the rear and dogs.</p> <p>It was also suggested a lack of fencing could lead to encroachment on public parkland and Ashburton Forest and that it was not acceptable to borrow public land as residents' private space.</p>	<p>Residents fronting the surrounding parkland to the east and south will have either an enclosed balcony or courtyard.</p> <p>Boundaries will be defined with landscaping rather than fencing, creating a soft interface to the site.</p>
Landscaping	1.36%	<p>One piece of feedback flagged landscaping as an issue, stating a landscaping standard was not achieved.</p>	<p>A more detailed and resolved landscape plan has been provided as part of the final planning submission.</p> <p>The emphasis of the updated landscape design is to prioritise complementing the established surrounding parkland rather than simply borrowing from it, by maximising space for deep soil zones, retention of existing mature trees where possible and the removal of fencing in locations to support the 'bleeding' of the parkland and landscaping into the site.</p>
Light spill	2.04%	<p>Light spill was raised by a small number of people, specifically extra light from the car park on the site's western boundary and light encroaching on neighbouring properties.</p>	<p>Carpark lighting on the west side of the site will be designed to reduce impact on adjoining properties and constructed in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard.</p>
Park interface	1.36%	<p>There was feedback that the basement would protrude above ground level along the southern boundary causing a wall on the park interface for 53 metres and an unacceptable visual impact. It was suggested plantings could soften this.</p>	<p>The design has been refined with the basement lowered and set further back from the eastern boundary, so that it responds to the fall of the land and is much less visible than was indicated in the draft plans.</p>

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
			Extensive landscaping is also to be provided on all boundaries in the final design submission.
Parking	27.21%	<p>Provision of parking on the site for residents and visitors was raised by a large number of stakeholders, with many noting the amount provided would lead to overflow parking on nearby streets and outside neighbouring properties. It was also suggested overflow parking would exacerbate traffic issues and impact on users of Markham Reserve.</p> <p>Feedback included the allocation of parking to public housing (one park per two units or 31 out of 62 having no parking), at least one car park per unit was required and what was being provided was less than was historically available. One user suggested the 230 parks being provided was at least 55 parks short.</p> <p>Distance to services was also flagged as a reason for inclusion of more parking, with one person stating at least 300 parks were needed given the nearest supermarket is two kilometres and a 40-minute walk away. It was also stated that residents could not be forced to walk or cycle so lack of parking was concerning.</p>	<p>Given the range of public transport options, as well as local support services, schools, community centres, recreation options and shopping located within 1.5 km of the site, the Ashburton site is expected to attract households that are not as car-reliant.</p> <p>The profile of proposed one and two-bedroom public housing dwellings also supports a lower parking ratio for that component. The proposed rate of 0.5 car spaces per apartment exceeds the 0.35 ratio of DHHS's current evidence.</p> <p>On-site visitor parking for the private dwellings has been increased to 29 private visitor spaces, along with 3 DHHS visitor car spaces.</p>
Segregation	1.36%	The shared path running through the site was flagged as segregating the public and private components of the development.	<p>The look and feel of the buildings and landscape will be consistent for both public and private units.</p> <p>DHHS's ownership, maintenance and management requirements for this redevelopment call for the public dwellings to be located in separate buildings from the private.</p> <p>The central landscaped spine provides an open access through the site for all residents (public and private) and for the broader community, as it connects Markham Avenue and Gardiners Creek.</p>
Services	1.36%	There was a comment noting sewerage easements and assets appeared to be on council-owned land.	The proposed subdivision plan has been amended to ensure the sewerage easement is included within the site.
Setbacks	6.12%	<p>Setbacks of the proposed buildings were raised by a number of stakeholders, with some raising concerns of infringements on public open space. These included the setback at the rear of the site where a building is within two metres of a biodiversity corridor and public recreation area.</p> <p>Setbacks from Markham Reserve and the community garden were also raised.</p>	<p>The setbacks have been refined with the eastern boundary ranging from 2.235m to 11.1m and southern boundary ranging from 1.81m to 7.725m. These changes respond to the desire to create more 'breathing space' between the site and adjoining parkland.</p> <p>Further investigation is under way into the design of the south-east corner of building F, which currently includes five apartments over five levels. This investigation will respond to issues such as a desire for increased setbacks,</p>

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
			concern over excessive bulk and scale and overshadowing of the adjoining parkland and community garden.
Shadowing	1.36%	Internal shadowing within the site was raised in regards to the extent and duration of shadowing of communal space being unacceptable and not complying with design standards. A suggestion was also made buildings should be aligned east/west across the site to allow morning and afternoon sun to pass through so as to not shadow the east or west.	The master plan has adopted an approach of maximising an east-west orientation of main buildings to maximise solar access for dwellings. Refinements have also been made to the communal spaces to limit overshadowing of these important spaces with the central space moved further south to avoid shadowing from the central building.
Social integration	1.36%	There was a suggestion a street party or community garden festival be run on a seasonal basis, organised by council but funded by DHHS.	Noted
Sustainability	13.61%	<p>There were multiple suggestions in regards to the importance of Markham Estate being a sustainable development – being zero emissions to the absolute extent possible.</p> <p>Suggestions included water harvesting (stormwater etc) for use in garden irrigation, toilets and laundry facilities. A comment was also made the water efficiency proposal does not comply with Place Victoria’s own standards. There was also a suggestion for the estate to have its own community garden.</p> <p>In terms of energy efficiency, it was suggested windows should be double-glazed and easily shaded from the sun and that there should be no air-conditioning unless it was run off solar power. It was also suggested an east/west orientation of the buildings would allow north-facing solar panels to produce power, while another stakeholder suggested the buildings should be orientated north/south. It was also suggested the buildings should be no taller than four stories and all should be walk-up.</p> <p>There was also a suggestion that there should be no car parking at all on the site to reduce car dependence, with a Section 173 agreement to restrict car parking on and off-site.</p>	<p>Places Victoria proposes that the development will adopt a best practice approach to sustainability. Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 5-star Green Star for all private housing. - A 7 Star NatHERS rating for all public housing - WSUD response to stormwater collection and treatment. - Landscaped areas within the site and the adjoining community garden to be irrigated from rain water from roof runoff. - Permeable paving will be used on deep soil zones to minimise hard surface run-off.
Transport	1.36%	There were suggestions that the project should include improvements to pedestrian and bike facilities, including an access track on the north side of Gardiners Creek crossing to Solway Bridge.	The development does not include works external to the site, however the opportunity to walk through the site from Markham Ave to Gardiners Creek is provided for in the landscape plan.
Trees	0.68%	It was suggested planting a substantial number of mature trees along boundary parallel to Ashburn Grove could soften the scale of the development.	The landscape plan proposed with the development will protect existing vegetation within adjoining properties while retaining a number of mature trees within the site. Additional landscaping will be provided along the western

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
			edge of the site to provide for greening of the space and assist in screening to adjacent properties.

Theme 3: Development and planning process

Feedback on the development and planning process comprised 24.69% of all feedback received. Comments included the planning scheme amendment process, calls for the project to be referred to Boroondara Council for consideration and approval, the inappropriateness of the Minister assuming the position of responsible authority, and extensive comments about the funding model. The need to fund the public housing development through the sale of private units was seen as artificially increasing the scale of the development.

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Apartment standards	9.5%	Opinions were expressed the project does not comply with the Better Apartments Draft Design Guidelines. Specific mention was made to internal setbacks, internal amenity accessibility standards, long unit corridors, loss of privacy and shadowing of open space in winter.	The development proposal provides for an assessment against the draft Better Apartment Standards, which demonstrates the proposed dwellings are generally in accordance with the standards as drafted. It is noted that changes to the standards are anticipated as part of their finalisation in early 2017.
Election promise	0.50%	A number of references were made to election commitments from political parties about no high-rise development.	The election commitment in October 2014 was to demolish the existing Markham estate "and start again".
Funding	25%	<p>There were a considerable number of comments regarding the funding model adopted for the project.</p> <p>There were a number of issues raised in regarding to funding including the cost-neutral approach, profits resulting from the project and the sale of public land.</p> <p>In regards to information provided about the private units funding the public housing, comments were made that this argument was flawed or misleading, and that large profits would be made by the project. There were also comments made that taxes should fund public housing and that there was no explanation as to why new public housing must be built at zero cost to the state.</p> <p>The project was compared to one in Preston that was being funded and subject to the local government planning process. There were also statements that Ashburton was being discriminated against.</p> <p>There were multiple references to the project making a huge profit and cynicism 190 private units were required to pay for 62 public housing units. A comment was also made public housing tenants were being sold out to make a massive windfall.</p>	<p>The Victorian Government is using a range of methods to fund public housing renewal projects, with a common approach now being to introduce housing for private ownership on a section of the state-owned land being redeveloped. The proceeds from the sale of these private houses are intended to fully fund construction of the public or social housing being replaced on the site. This model applies to the Markham Avenue estate, as well as the recently-announced Flemington estate renewal (22 low-rise buildings) and other sites under a \$185 million investment program announced on 1 December 2016 covering nine aged estates across inner-Melbourne.</p> <p>The provision of new one and two-bedroom dwellings will assist in balancing the stock profile in the eastern region that covers Ashburton and will better match the current local demand for smaller homes e.g. for older couples and singles.</p>

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
		<p>A number of comments were made around the importance of reducing the public housing waiting list, but the selling off of private land does not achieve this.</p> <p>Others stated the sale of public land would make a trivial contribution to the waiting list and that there was a conflicting argument about the need to support the waiting list when most of the development was for private housing. The need to attach private homes to the project was also questioned.</p>	
Local government policy	25%	<p>Multiple submissions stated the project did not comply with a range of local government policies and that it should be subject to local planning regulations.</p> <p>These included:</p> <p>General comments about the project not complying with City of Boroondara Planning Guidelines, local planning scheme and there be being no right of appeal over the project to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Character Policy was mentioned, with specific references to impervious surfaces, scale and siting</p> <p>Planning scheme car parking requirements for off-street parking for visitors and residents</p> <p>Traffic rules and building height limits were mentioned as well as a reference to a proposed waiver of requirement to make monetary contribution to public open space.</p>	<p>The development has responded to all existing planning provisions which apply to the site including neighbourhood character, parking requirements and housing initiatives to allow for additional growth.</p> <p>Given the range of public transport options, as well as local support services, schools, community centres, recreation options and shopping located within 1.5 km of the site, the Ashburton site is expected to attract households that are not as car-reliant. The profile of proposed one and two-bedroom social housing dwellings also supports a lower parking ratio. The proposed rate of 0.5 car spaces per apartment exceeds the 0.35 ratio of the Department's current evidence.</p> <p>Private dwelling visitor parking on the site has been increased to 29 spaces along with 3 DHHS visitor car spaces.</p>
Precedent	5.5%	<p>Reference was made to the project setting a precedent for developers to build high-rise buildings.</p>	<p>The development is not considered to represent a precedent for developers to build high-rise buildings. Each application a responsible authority receives is to be considered on its merit.</p>
Planning Scheme Amendment process	24%	<p>A significant number of comments related to the use of a Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA) as the approval tool of the project and opposition to that approach.</p> <p>Reference was made to bypassing normal planning controls, and that a PSA was being used to avoid restrictions being placed on the project. It was also stated there was no opportunity for review or objection.</p>	<p>The proposed planning scheme amendment does not seek to change or modify the planning provisions which apply to the site.</p> <p>The planning scheme amendment responds to the project's important status as being state-significant for the renewal of public housing which warrants the consideration of a planning application by the Minister for Planning.</p> <p>Through this process, the views of the community and Council have been sought.</p>

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
		<p>Questions were asked as to why that planning approach was chosen, why local planning processes were being bypassed and why the project was not being assessed by local government as the public/private development at Preston is.</p> <p>Comments were made about the project was being forced through with disregard for residents, council and council guidelines and many were unhappy with the lack of council involvement. Specific mention was made of council and community members having more of a say in how an area is developed, as the current population will have to live with the consequences and that all community projects should be approved by council.</p> <p>There were also references to residents having no recourse to VCAT, a conflict of interest in the government assessing its own development and that there was a lack of transparency and accountability in how plans are proposed to move forward.</p> <p>Claims were made that Places Victoria began master planning the site over 12 months ago and the project was a test case for densifying the eastern suburbs.</p>	
Public Housing	1.00%	Two comments indicated support for public housing on the site, provided council planning processes were followed.	Noted.
Reconsider proposal	9.5%	<p>There were a number of comments that the proposal should go back to the drawing board or be reconsidered.</p> <p>Specific mention was made of including more public housing, fewer apartments, lower building heights and more parking and modifying the proposal so it was more acceptable to council and residents. It was also suggested the project should go through the local planning process.</p> <p>There were also calls for further consultation, the development of a plan more fitting to the area.</p>	The development remains an important commitment made by Government to renew the Markham estate.

Theme 4: Environment

Feedback on environmental issues comprised 8.77% of all feedback received. The potential impact on trees both on and off site was the most frequently raised issue. The impact on Gardiners Creek and the water table were also areas of concern.

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Gardiners Creek	7.04%	<p>Concern was expressed about the impact of the project on Gardiners Creek and the creek catchment area. Specific mention was made of the potential impact of excavation and lack of sun.</p> <p>A statement was also made that while six trees would die on the property, more than 70 would die in surrounding wildlife corridor. Another claim was made the bushland remnant of Ashburton Forest would be destroyed.</p>	<p>The development will not overshadow any part of Gardiners Creek.</p> <p>No existing trees beyond the site boundary will be removed.</p>
Cultural Heritage	1.41%	<p>A statement was made Aboriginal Cultural Heritage requirements had been watered down.</p>	<p>This site is mapped as being in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity and due to the proposed development being considered to be a 'high impact activity', cultural investigations were required. These initial investigations revealed the potential for cultural heritage material on the site, culminating in the requirement for a full Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP).</p> <p>In accordance with section 46 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, Biosis has prepared a CHMP for the activity area. No aboriginal cultural material was found during the site investigations, which were conducted for the purposes of preparing a full CHMP. Therefore, the CHMP only prescribes one management requirement, which is that a copy of the CHMP is kept on site during works and that all employees/contractors are aware of the CHMP requirements. Further, if an unexpected find is encountered, the protocols of section 8 of the CHMP must be adhered to.</p>
Flooding	2.82%	<p>Concern was expressed about the project's proximity to a flood plain.</p>	<p>The land is not subject to flooding and will not impact flooding of nearby land.</p>
Flora and Fauna	4.23%	<p>Impact on local flora and fauna was raised, as well as impact on local biodiversity and that due consideration wasn't given to environmental impacts.</p>	<p>A biodiversity report has been completed that responds to the concerns noted and formed part of the material available for viewing.</p>
Runoff	2.82%	<p>A few comments were made around runoff, noting impervious surfaces associated with the project would have a negative impact on the environment.</p>	<p>Permeable paving will be provided where possible to reduce the hard surface runoff. Deep soil zones are also provided and reduce water runoff.</p>
Trees	64.79%	<p>Trees were the most commonly raised environmental issue with feedback generally falling into five categories.</p>	<p>Tree Logic has completed an arborist report that responds to the impact of tree removal and the impact on those trees being retained.</p>

SUBTHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
		<p>The majority of comments indicated concern about the number of trees, including mature tree or natives, to be removed. A comment was also made that project documents only referred to the number of native trees to be removed.</p> <p>Concern was also expressed trees to be retained on the site would be in jeopardy due to the construction work and proximity to underground car park. Similarly, a statement was made the underground car park and impervious surfaces would impact on future tree growth.</p> <p>A statement was made that insufficient information was provided to determine if project will have a detrimental impact on trees on adjacent properties or trees in general.</p> <p>Future plantings were also addressed – with a view there would not be enough room on the site to plant new canopy trees.</p> <p>A comment also noted removing trees would impact on character of the area</p>	<p>No trees outside of the project boundary will be removed and impact to root zones is minimised.</p> <p>A landscape plan has been provided in the final submission which is more resolved and considered.</p>
Water table	17.39%	<p>Comments were made around the basement car park's interaction with the water table in the area. Some comments stated there would be an impact, while others stated examination of impact was required.</p> <p>There was a comment expressing concern for impact on surrounding properties resulting from changes in the water table.</p>	<p>The lowest basement level is above the ground water level therefore the proposed development, and in particular the basement excavation, will not impact the ground water level.</p>

Theme 5: Height and density

Feedback on height and density comprised 19.38% of all feedback received. This included references to the height of the project, the number of apartments proposed and how the project fits with the neighbourhood context of Ashburton.

SUB-THEME	%:	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Size	55.41%	<p>Multiple pieces of feedback discussed the increase in number of apartments on the site – from 56 to 252 – and stated that this was too many and that it would place a strain on local infrastructure. There were questions about the need for 190 private dwellings. There was also a statement around reducing number of dwellings to an appropriate level – making a profit was acceptable, but not at expense of the Ashburton area.</p> <p>Another piece of feedback stated 70 public houses only should be built on the site while another noted existing multi-house blocks in the area were causing problems with traffic.</p> <p>In addition to the number of units, the height of six stories was noted as an item of concern, as well as height of Building B. There were varying suggestions as to what height the buildings should be – including two or three stories on the perimeter and three or four in the centre to fit within the adjacent tree canopy. One piece of feedback noted eight buildings of between two and six storeys on the site would be an eyesore.</p> <p>One person stated it was possible to reduce the height and density of the project to a more acceptable level, and the proposed development was too big for the site.</p> <p>Multiple pieces of feedback stated the buildings within the site were too large and too close to the park, neighbouring properties and Ashburton Forest.</p>	<p>The development proposal has carefully considered the impact to the existing character and local services offered in Ashburton and surrounds.</p> <p>The community needs assessment report and associated technical reports demonstrate the local infrastructure can cater for the additional growth.</p> <p>The design concept allows for lower two-storey townhouse forms against Markham Ave to provide a more familiar interface to the street, with the apartment buildings being located further back into the site</p>
Neighbourhood context	44.59%	<p>There was significant feedback around how the proposed project would fit into the Ashburton area. It was noted that the height, bulk and scale of the project were out of character with the surrounding area or landscape and would impact on resident's personal amenity and way of life.</p>	<p>The character of the local Ashburton area is a mix of single and double-storey detached dwellings with the emergence of newer townhouse and some apartment buildings.</p> <p>The design concept allows for lower two-storey townhouse forms against Markham Ave to provide a more familiar interface to the street, with the apartment buildings being located further back into the site.</p>

	<p>Overdevelopment was a frequently used term in comments, linked to the project not being suitable for the land, or a neighbourhood that contains predominantly single-dwellings.</p> <p>Density was also a frequently raised issue. Some stated high density was not suitable for the area and that it was in the wrong location, while another person stated developments of this kind have been built on main roads, not back streets. There was also feedback a medium-density development would be more reasonable. Some feedback stated redevelopment was not opposed, as long as it was minimal and respectful of the neighbourhood. One person noted small apartments lacking character would create unliveable slums.</p> <p>There was also feedback that the development would detract from the character, amenity and liveability of a quiet, peaceful and family-orientated suburb.</p> <p>Impact on property values was raised by a number of people, with one stating no other building in Ashburton was more than two stories high and it should remain this way to preserve local character and our investments. Another noted proceeds from the project should be used to reimburse neighbouring properties for a loss in value.</p>	
--	--	--

Theme 6: Overshadowing

Feedback on overshadowing comprised 6.79% of all feedback received. References included overshadowing of neighbouring properties and the community garden as well as the impact on privacy.

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Adjacent properties	25.45%	In addition to a few general comments about overshadowing and amenity impacts, there was specific reference to shadowing of adjacent properties, including gardens. Specific mention was made of the open space of 2A Markham Avenue and 93A Ashburton Grove as well as shading cast from Building A.	Refer shadow diagrams provided in the final planning submission. The development provides for increased setbacks and lower building heights where adjacent to the existing dwellings to ensure that overlooking and overshadowing requirements can be met
Community garden/parkland	27.27%	A number of comments were made about shadowing impacts on the community garden, Markham Reserve and the remnant Ashburton Forest. In addition to general mentions, there was a specific reference to the garden's productivity. There was also a comment regarding shadowing leading to insufficient light to the sports oval.	The site provides an appropriate response to the objective for side and rear setbacks. Only late afternoon overshadowing will impact the community garden in the middle of winter. Light to the sports oval will not be impacted.
Privacy	36.36%	Loss of privacy as a result of the project was raised, particularly for those living near it in regards to backyards, open space and homes. Reference was made to having windows and balconies overlooking neighbouring properties resulting in a loss of privacy. Building B was mentioned as overlooking private open space. Homes in Ashburton Grove were also mentioned.	The development provides for increased setbacks and lower building heights where adjacent to the existing dwellings to ensure that overlooking and overshadowing requirements can be met.
Overshadowing (general)	10.91%	There were a number of general statements about overshadowing caused by the buildings within the site restricting access to sunlight.	Shadow diagrams demonstrate that the neighbouring secluded private open space will not be impacted by overshadowing.

Theme 7: Public Housing

Feedback on public housing comprised 11.73% of all feedback received. Comments included the reduction in bedrooms as a result of building smaller units represented a net loss of housing in spite of the increase in units. Additional three bedroom units were called for to accommodate families and concerns were raised about the visible separation of public and private housing.

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Decrease in number	21.05%	<p>A number of comments noted smaller units meant there would be fewer beds available than in the previous development. Specifically, while there was an increase in the number of units, there were 56 two-bedroom units in the old Markham Estate and there would be 47 in the new. One person claimed they had been lied to about the project providing an increase in public housing.</p> <p>Some stated the whole site should be used for public housing, and that the amount of private housing provided was excessive.</p>	<p>The previous 56 public housing units had long been under-utilised. This new plan allows for an increase of six (10 per cent) in the total number of public housing units on the estate, to 62. The mix of two and one-bedroom units will assist in balancing the stock profile in the eastern region that covers Ashburton and will better match the current local demand for smaller homes e.g. for older couples and singles.</p>
Family accommodation	13.68%	<p>Three-bedroom public housing units suitable for families were raised by a number of people – stating more accommodation for families was needed.</p> <p>Comment was also made this was important as there were vacant one and two bedroom public homes in Ashburton, including Power Avenue, so why build more when families were on the waiting list.</p> <p>Comment was also made that there should be more public and less private units.</p> <p>A comment was made at the ARAG meeting that the local council wants more three-bedroom housing and the Office of the Victorian Government Architect has been “scathing about how the project has been developed”.</p>	<p>See above response.</p>
Future management	1.05%	<p>One comment stated it was important to know how the public housing would be maintained in the future given residents have paid a lot for their properties.</p>	<p>DHHS will retain ownership of the public housing units. There will however be common landscape maintenance and rubbish removal across the public and private land components.</p>
Insufficient provision	10.53%	<p>Comments were made about the project failing to meet public housing needs or alleviate the waiting list and that the number of public housing units being planned was inadequate.</p>	<p>The redevelopment of the Markham estate will contribute to a more widespread renewal of public housing.</p>

SUB-THEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Need increase	20%	<p>Several comments acknowledged the need for public housing in the local Ashburton area, including two that strongly supported the project going ahead.</p> <p>Comment was made that the site should deliver a meaningful increase in public housing and be retained under state control. It was also suggested 75 public housing units rather than 62 be provided – a net gain of six is not enough and that the current number of proposed public houses was inadequate.</p> <p>Several of these comments were made in the context of reducing the overall size of development.</p>	<p>This new plan allows for an increase of six (10 per cent) in the total number of public housing units on the estate, to 62. The provision of new one and two-bedroom dwellings will assist in balancing the stock profile in the eastern region that covers Ashburton and will better match the current local demand for smaller homes e.g. for older couples and singles.</p> <p>Other DHHS projects are actively looking at increasing the supply of public housing, with better use of assets including vacant land owned by the Director of Housing.</p>
Segregation	26.32%	<p>Segregation of the public and private units was raised in a number of comments – with suggestions that integrating the two forms of housing would be preferable for better social outcomes. One person stated public housing should be indistinguishable from private and that the current design did not do enough to break down barriers.</p> <p>Suggestions were made of a “salt and pepper” approach, integrating public housing throughout the site. It was also noted different provision of parking for public/private units was a differentiator and that both types of unit should have comparable space and quality.</p> <p>In terms of initiatives to promote integration, a suggestion was made around private buyers being encouraged to befriend a disadvantaged neighbour - especially the elderly or young families.</p>	<p>Various approaches are taken by DHHS in determining the placement of social housing, either in clusters or ‘salt-and-pepper’. In this instance, the most appropriate approach decided upon (due to a range of considerations) is that social housing should be established on its own title adjacent to and blending harmoniously with the proposed new private housing.</p> <p>Externally, the public and private buildings will be indistinguishable in their design and materials.</p> <p>Elements such as landscaping treatments and maintenance will be common to the private and social housing residents.</p> <p>All residents will be able to freely move through the whole site including to access the adjacent parkland and reserve.</p>
Social issues	2.11%	<p>A small number of comments referred to social issues associated with public housing. One stated adding to the number of social housing residents in the area was seen as an issue, while another noted concerns about mixing public and private housing leading to an increase in anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>The project aims to deliver high-quality public housing and improve community integration and diversity by co-locating public and private housing.</p>
Speed up construction	1.05%	<p>One stakeholder commented the project is not proceeding fast enough and they would like to see more urgency in relation to construction.</p>	<p>Noted</p>

SUB-THHEME	%	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Tenant selection	2.11%	Feedback was provided that care needs to be taken in selecting tenants for the public housing component of the project. This person stated they would support housing being assigned exclusively to single adult women and single female parents.	Tenancy allocation from the Victorian Housing Register takes account of the setting into which a household will be placed to ensure it is a good match for all parties.
Amount of public housing	2.11%	Two comments were received stating there was too much public housing in the development. One noted immigration was the root cause of all planning problems – that existing suburbs were being destroyed for high-rise apartments without adequate supporting infrastructure. The other comment stated the density of the social housing element of the project should be reconsidered – in regards to potential social problems.	The changed profile of the site tenancy mix should create a more sustainable and supportive environment for residents.

Theme 8: Traffic

Feedback on traffic comprised 13.95% of all feedback received. Comments included concern that population growth would result in increased congestion, parking problems and safety risks. Questions were raised about the accuracy of the traffic impact assessment.

SUB-THEME	%:	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Congestion	45.13%	<p>Existing congestion on local streets was raised as an issue in many comments, along with concerns an increase in residents would cause more traffic and increased issues that local roads could not support.</p> <p>It was suggested providing parking for 282 cars would cause an increase in traffic, congestion, noise and safety. One person felt effects would also be experienced in Glen Iris, Malvern and Ashwood.</p> <p>Markham Avenue was noted by a number of people as being too narrow to support a development of this size. Several comments raised the issue of parked cars on Markham Avenue and Ashburn Grove and also congestion on weekends when sporting events were held at the reserve.</p> <p>Specific mention was made to increased traffic build up and queuing on the streets leading to Warrigal Road and High Street and around Alamein station. There was also a suggestion there would be traffic problems where Victory Boulevard meets Warrigal Road. Feedback was also received from a resident near the intersection of Winton Road and Solway Street stating traffic has been increasing as the area is used as a thoroughfare between Warrigal and Malvern roads.</p>	<p>A peak of up to 125 vehicles movements per hour are expected to be generated by the development, equivalent to just over two vehicles every minute during the peak hour;</p> <p>Traffic generation of the site is distributed over a wide and permeable network, with multiple connections to the arterial road network. As a result, turning volumes of no more than 25 vehicle movements per hour are expected for any one movement, with turning volumes generally less than 10 vehicle movements per hour;</p> <p>The expected future traffic volumes on Victory Boulevard are expected to fit well within the range of the daily traffic volumes identified for a collector road;</p> <p>The expected future traffic volumes on Ashburn Grove are expected to fit well within the range of the daily traffic volumes identified for a collector road;</p> <p>The occurrence of kerbside parking activity in the area assists in the reduction of vehicles speeds, therefore, the removal of kerbside parking would only result in higher vehicle speeds;</p> <p>It is anticipated that the parking demands generated by the proposed development will be generally contained on-site, and additional on-street parking is unlikely;</p> <p>Should demands for on-street parking eventuate, parking restrictions may be implemented to manage the on-street parking, under the control of Council; and</p> <p>The traffic volumes generated by the proposed development are therefore expected to be accommodated by the surrounding arterial road network.</p>

SUB-THEME	%:	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Cycling	4.42%	A comment was made about promoting existing bike and footpaths and access to public transport. Another comment was made around ensuring traffic does not hinder use of the existing bike path.	<p>The proposed buildings are set back sufficiently to ensure that appropriate sight distances can be provided to the shared path along the site frontage;</p> <p>It is recommended that obstructions within the front setback are limited to objects less than 900mm high (measured to the height of the adjacent driveways), or are sufficiently transparent to not restrict sight distances; and</p> <p>It is recommended that shared path warning signage is installed at both crossovers, with give-way signage installed requiring vehicles to give way to the shared path.</p>
Parking	20.35%	In addition to comments about parking noted under Design, there were a number of statements around parking in local streets already being congested. One stated there was not enough parking for soccer grounds at the moment, while another noted residents of Markham Estate would drive and park to Alamein station, which was already very busy.	<p>It is anticipated that the parking demands generated by the proposed development will be generally contained on-site, and additional on-street parking is unlikely.</p> <p>Markham Estate is within walking distance to Alamein Station.</p> <p>Private resident parking is being provided as per the planning scheme requirements.</p> <p>Given the range of public transport options, as well as local support services, schools, community centres, recreation options and shopping located within 1.5 km of the site, the Ashburton site is expected to attract households that are not as car-reliant. The profile of proposed one and two-bedroom social housing dwellings also supports a lower parking ratio. The proposed rate of 0.5 car spaces per apartment exceeds the 0.35 ratio of the Department's current evidence.</p> <p>Visitor parking on the site has been increased to 29 private visitor spaces are provided along with 3 DHHS visitor car spaces.</p> <p>Visitor car parking is being provided at 0.15 spaces per unit for both the public and private housing.</p>
Safety	15.04%	<p>There were a number of concerns raised about safety on local streets, particularly the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and families. This includes users of the bike path and people using the playground of Victory Boulevard.</p> <p>Several people expressed a view a higher volume of traffic would create more hazards and more risk of injury or death.</p>	<p>The project will create increased passive surveillance across the adjoining parkland.</p> <p>Residents will arrive and depart by two crossovers into the site.</p> <p>Appropriate signage and warnings for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles will be provided.</p>

SUB-THEME	%:	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Traffic	2.65%	A number of references were made to traffic in general as a potential issue associated with the project.	These issues are responded to elsewhere in this theme.
The traffic assessment	7.96%	<p>The traffic impact assessment completed for the project was raised, with questions asked about its scope and the need for a peer review. This included whether an assessment had been done of the entire length of Markham Avenue (other than Ashburn Grove/Markham Avenue and Markham Avenue/High Street) and whether studies take into account increased urban density and car ownership in Ashburton.</p> <p>There was a comment the traffic assessment of Markham Avenue and Ashburn Grove was not accurate, another stating the studies have not revealed the extent of the traffic problem and another questioning why crashes in the area were not shown.</p>	<p>Traffic generation of the site is distributed over a wide and permeable network, with multiple connections to the arterial road network. As a result, turning volumes of no more than 25 vehicle movements per hour are expected for any one movement, with turning volumes generally less than 10 vehicle movements per hour;</p> <p>The expected future traffic volumes on Victory Boulevard are expected to fit well within the range of the daily traffic volumes identified for a Collector Road;</p> <p>The expected future traffic volumes on Ashburn Grove are expected to fit well within the range of the daily traffic volumes identified for a Collector Road;</p> <p>The occurrence of kerbside parking activity in the area assists in the reduction of vehicles speeds, therefore, the removal of kerbside parking would only result in higher vehicle speeds;</p> <p>It is anticipated that the parking demands generated by the proposed development will be generally contained on-site, and additional on-street parking is unlikely;</p> <p>Should demands for on-street parking eventuate, parking restrictions may be implemented to manage the on-street parking, under the control of Council; and</p> <p>The traffic volumes generated by the proposed development are therefore expected to be accommodated by the surrounding arterial road network.</p>
Traffic improvements	4.42%	One comment stated local road infrastructure and intersections should be upgraded to facilitate safer traffic flows, while another was concerned strategies to improve traffic flow would attract more traffic.	As above.

Theme 9: Other issues

Feedback on other issues comprised 6.42% of all feedback received. Comments included construction impacts (noise and dust), how population growth would impact local social infrastructure including schools and healthcare, as well as noise, light and security.

SUB-THEME	NO:	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Construction	3.85%	Feedback related to construction of the project included concerns about safety during construction including asbestos, privacy and increased danger of traffic. Damage to neighbouring properties was also raised.	The appointed contractor will follow approved construction management and traffic management plans. Places Victoria will continue to engage with the community during any construction phase to ensure that impacts are minimised.
Infrastructure	25%	<p>A number of people raised impact on local infrastructure as an issue – associated with an increase in population. One comment suggested the area did not have the infrastructure to cope with the development.</p> <p>Impacts on local sewerage, water and electricity infrastructure were raised as well as waste removal.</p> <p>Public transport was also raised – with increased services on the Alamein line as well as its extension to East Malvern to accommodate growing population density. Strain on bus services was also mentioned.</p> <p>One comment noted based on availability of open space, access to train, bus and bike network, access to community facilities and social support, the development was appropriate for the site.</p> <p>Feedback was also provided land was becoming scarce and it was important sufficient land was put aside for schools, child and aged care centres and that the site should have been used for a primary school.</p>	<p>The proposal allows for sufficient spaces for servicing of all dwellings including waste management facilities, mailboxes and storage facilities.</p> <p>The site has access to adequate road and drainage infrastructure. An application to the appropriate suppliers for water, sewerage, electricity, gas and phone services will be made. Given the residential nature of the surrounds, it is not expected that this development will unreasonably overload the capacity of the above services.</p> <p>Based on a dwelling yield of 250 dwellings, and assuming an average household size of 2.6 persons, the proposed development of the subject site will generate a residential population of around 655.</p> <p>An additional 250 dwellings will increase the number of dwellings in Ashburton small area by around 8%* (based on 2016 Boroondara population forecasts showing this area has approximately 3,054 dwellings).</p> <p>An extra 655 people within the Ashburton small area will result in the same percentage (8%*) increase (based on 2016 on Boroondara population forecasts showing the area has approximately 8,300 people).</p> <p>The demand estimates do not support the need for additional education or child care services as a result of the development.</p>
Noise	7.69%	Noise from the site was raised, including noise from parties.	Noted. An increase in the number of residents will increase noise however an Owners Corporation will create a set of rules to control noise by private residents, while DHHS will be responsible for public tenants

SUB-THEME	NO:	FEEDBACK SUMMARY	RESPONSE
Safety/security	11.54%	<p>There were a few comments regarding safety and security, including a specific concern about security concerns regarding the car park on the western boundary.</p> <p>One comment noted if the population increases more security would be needed while two comments stated safety and security of existing homeowners will be potentially put at risk due to the project.</p> <p>Another stated there were concerns among local residents about law and order and incidence of crime and this concern was driven by more public housing.</p>	Having more residents on the estate and introducing private property owners will increase the level of activity and passive surveillance across the site. This should contribute to reduced levels of anti-social behaviour.
Services	46.15%	<p>A number of comments were focussed on services in the local area and the impact of population growth.</p> <p>Specifically, there were comments regarding Solway Primary School being at capacity and struggling to meet needs of existing students. Further it was stated the school did not have capacity to deal with 252 units and potentially 200 families moving in. Another comment noted the previous Markham Estate included a diverse range of people and local schools could cope.</p> <p>There were two comments regarding references to education in project materials – with one noting reference to two schools in the area was made, while the other asked on what basis the conclusion was formed there was no need for additional education facilities.</p> <p>Similarly, a question was asked regarding the conclusion there was no need for additional police or emergency services given Ashburton Police Station is only open two days per week.</p> <p>Pressure on shops, the library and GP services were also mentioned as well as management of routine waste and hard rubbish collection.</p>	See Infrastructure response above.
Social issues	3.85%	There were two references to social issues – including more litter and graffiti as a result of the project.	Noted
Waste collection	1.92%	Waste collection was raised in a small number of submissions – with reference to large waste vehicles needing to attend the site.	Waste collection contractors will be required to provide appropriate sized vehicles to access the site.

