

Activity Centre Program

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
PHASE 2

Engagement Report Ringwood

MARCH 2025

Acknowledgement

We proudly acknowledge Victoria's First Peoples and their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living and continuous culture. The activity centres we are planning for are located on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation and we acknowledge them as Traditional Owners. We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present, and we acknowledge that they have never ceded their sovereign rights to lands and waters. We recognise their unbroken connection to Country, we celebrate their culture and history, and we honour their rights as custodians.

Introduction

This report details findings from Phase 2 engagement with the community on the Ringwood Activity Centre as part of the Victorian Government's Activity Centre Program. This follows on from Phase 1 engagement which took place earlier in 2024, where we asked the community about places in their local area that were important to them.

Overview of engagement approach

Feedback is presented in this report and other activity centre-specific reports, one for each centre. This report outlines who we heard from; what we heard; and the changes that have been made or other responses to key feedback received. This report is intended to be read in conjunction with the [Activity Centres Program Phase 1 Engagement Summary Report](#) which details the policy context and background as well as all the engagement activities to obtain community feedback.

The Engagement Summary Report details the processes followed and the methods that were used to consult the community. It also outlines what we heard from community and stakeholders regarding the Activity Centre Program overall, and the changes that have been made or other responses to key feedback received. This includes feedback gathered from all Engage Victoria pages and VPA engagement sources, including where feedback was provided on the program as a whole.

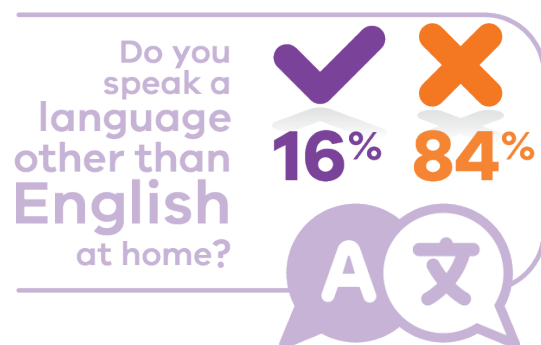
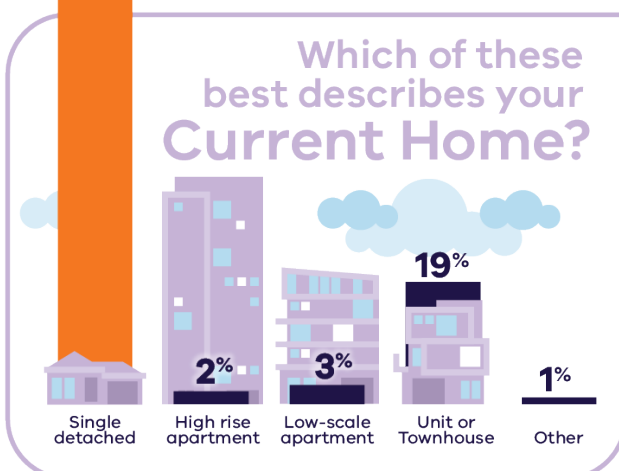
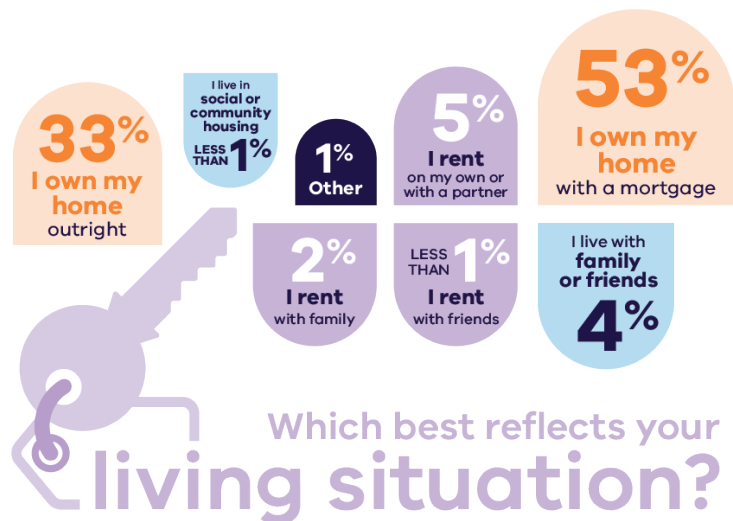
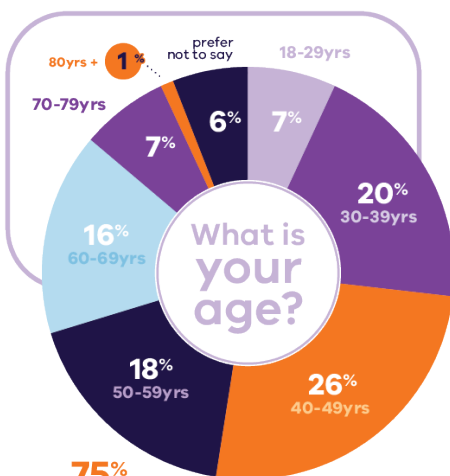
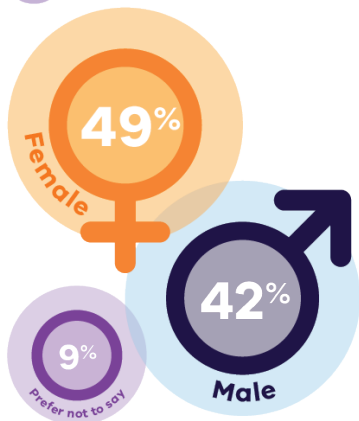
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Who we heard from

We asked respondents to provide us with demographic information to understand who in the community has engaged with our consultation. Below is an overview of who we heard from.

What is your gender?

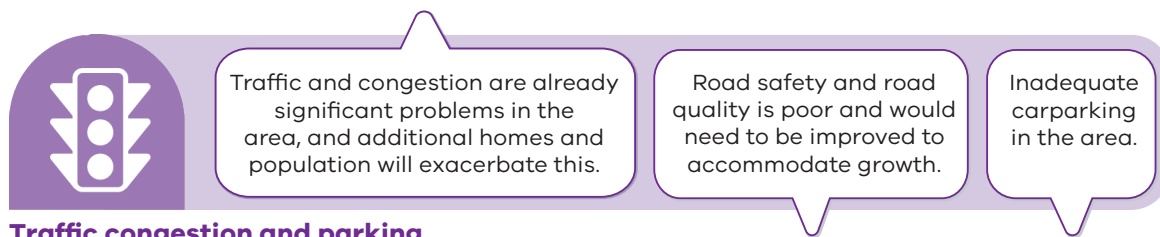


What we heard

The Ringwood community showed moderate support for the proposed Ringwood Activity Centre plan. There was support for the need for more new homes close to jobs, services and transport across Melbourne. There was some support for a more walkable suburb and infrastructure improvements. However, those who engaged with the project were less supportive of a streamlined planning process.

Key themes

The below are the themes we heard in the free text fields of the surveys as well as what community told us in their submissions.



Traffic congestion and parking

- Traffic and congestion are already significant problems in the area, and additional homes and population will exacerbate this.
- Road safety and road quality is poor and would need to be improved to accommodate growth.
- Inadequate carparking in the area.



Environment, local amenity and streetscapes

- The area has a high environmental value, and its green leafy nature is central to its local amenity and streetscapes. Its tree canopy, green spaces and wildlife diversity should be protected.
- More homes would compromise the area's environment, local amenity and streetscapes.
- Residents like that it's far from the city and offers more space.
- Areas of high heritage value need to be protected.
- Concern around immigration.
- Concern around overshadowing, urban heat island and noise impacts.





Local infrastructure and services are already at or above capacity, in particular local schools and hospitals.

Local infrastructure and services would need to be expanded and upgraded to accommodate more people.

Local infrastructure and services



Public transport is currently infrequent and unreliable and would need to be improved to accommodate more people.

Public transport



Distrust in the legitimacy of the consultation process.

Trust in the consultation process



The streamlined planning process will speed up the development of new housing, making new housing more affordable.

The streamlined planning process will reduce community input and lead to a lack of transparency and poor-quality developments.

Streamlined planning process



General support for locating more homes within walking distance of the activity centre.

Six stories is inappropriate for much of the catchment area.

Support for densification in the activity centre core area, but not the catchment.

Desire for the activity centre core and catchment boundaries to change.

Catchments



Key stakeholders

We received 18 submissions from key stakeholders about the Ringwood Activity Centre. The below is what we heard from the key stakeholder submissions for Ringwood.

Whitehorse City Council

- Has concerns about the lack of public consultation undertaken.
- Has concerns about how infrastructure will be provided and paid for.
- Stated that there has not been enough time to submit complete feedback.
- Has concerns regarding the fact that consultation has been undertaken during council elections.
- Stated that the state government's housing target can already be met with existing planning arrangements.
- Has concerns that the plan has not considered existing local planning rules and the local context enough.
- Has concerns about lack of consideration of local flora and fauna and the impact of the activity centre on biodiversity.
- Stated the need to ensure that affordable housing is provided and there is more information made available about this element of the plan.
- Has concerns that technical studies have not been provided in public consultation.
- Has concerns that heritage buildings have not been appropriately considered.

Major landowners

- Support the overall principle of the activity centre for more homes.
- Support taller building heights.
- Seek further consideration for the existing local area and planning rules that are in place to better align with them.
- Oppose setback requirements.
- Support walkable catchments.
- Support the deemed to comply approach.
- Has concern regarding a lack of consultation throughout the development of the plans.
- Has concern regarding a lack of technical assessments and work supporting the Activity Centre Program.

State agencies are being engaged separately from the public engagement process.

Community Reference Group

8 attendees

We reconvened Community Reference Groups as part of phase 2 engagement. A workshop was held to obtain community feedback and the below is what we heard:

Activity centre controls

Sustainability: Attendees stressed incorporating stormwater drainage, solar power, energy storage, and electric vehicle charging in high-density areas. Suggestions included boosting tree canopy, protecting natural areas, and ensuring floodplain-sensitive development.

Local amenity, streetscapes and vibrancy: Emphasis on guidelines to match the local landscape, avoid overdevelopment, preserve local amenity and streetscapes. Concerns included overshadowing, wind tunnels, and view lines, particularly towards the Dandenong Ranges. Support for enhancing street-level vibrancy with mixed-use buildings, plazas, and elevated shopping spaces.

Catchment controls

Catchment walkability: Attendees suggested enhancing connectivity and focusing on walk quality, safety, and accessibility. They highlighted the need for better lighting, surveillance, sound barriers and landscaping. Improvements included pedestrian paths through the activity centre, raised paths at Mullum Mullum Creek, and shared paths.

Building types and design: Emphasis was placed on a diverse housing mix—options for elderly, single-level units, multigenerational homes, worker and affordable housing, as well as social housing with on-site services. Design recommendations provided and the need to avoid impacts on Mullum Mullum Creek and historic areas like Deep Creek Road raised.

Community infrastructure

Community spaces: Emphasise inclusive hubs, rooftop gardens, educational centres, places of worship and Indigenous gathering spots to enhance social connection and wellbeing, especially for youth, elderly, and vulnerable groups.

Transport infrastructure: Address congestion and improve pedestrian flow by promoting public transport, including community and electric buses, frequent train services, expanded bike paths, and road widening.

Developer contributions: Implement a standardised system for developer contributions to better manage growth and infrastructure needs.

Next steps

Once the Ringwood Activity Centre Plan is in place, landowners in the Ringwood Activity Centre will have clear new rules to follow if they want to build new homes on their land. Each landowner can decide if and when they want to apply for a planning permit (where required) to build new homes. If they don't want to change anything on a property, they don't have to. Landowners will have more opportunities to build more different types of homes on their property.

Over time there may be more homes being built in these neighbourhoods which also means more customers and opportunities for local businesses. It also means more Victorians will have the chance to find a home that's right for them.

The Activity Centres Program is now expanding to new activity centres near train stations or trams across Melbourne. This will support new homes to be built in areas with good existing transport capacity and leverage new capacity created through Victoria's Big Build investment in the Level Crossing Removal Program and Metro Tunnel project. Community feedback on the initial 10 draft activity centre plans has emphasised the importance of prioritising locations with good public transport. The new centres are well serviced by public transport, community facilities and shops and will support the supply of more homes across Victoria.

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