

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



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## BRIMBANK

### BRIMBANK TRADERS UNDER PRESSURE

*Brimbank Leader*– 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/brimbank-traders-under-pressure/>

A formal complaint has been lodged with the State Ombudsman over Brimbank Council's new policy for business associations.

The Business Association Support Policy, adopted in March, aims to support local leadership by forming "appropriately constituted, representative and viable business associations" and ensure consistent "financial and in-kind support" for businesses associations.

But Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association said the council was being "undemocratic" in insisting that businesses support its vision for each respective town centre in order to receive funding.

President Darlene Reilly said the policy should have been clarified before it was approved.

"Members are bound to agree with the council and its views," she said. "It's shutting down debate."

But Sunshine Business Association president Bruce White said his association, with more than 100 members, supported the council's policy.

"We don't expect the council to fund something that is not in line with the policy," he said.

Ms Reilly said SunRRA feared it would set a precedent for other organisations.

Council city development general manager Stephen Sully said the policy held up a "reasonable expectation" for business associations.

"The policy will not ... prevent business associations representing the views of business and property owners and being able to advocate about particular issues or prevent council from addressing these concerns," he said.

Mr Sully said the council had written to business associations clarifying how the policy would be applied after concerns were raised by SunRRA.

He said the council had not received any inquiries from the Ombudsman's office.

The policy will next be reviewed in February 2014.

### YOUR MOVE FOR ST ALBANS FUTURE

*Brimbank Leader*– 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/your-move-for-st-albans-future-fbready/>

Brimbank residents are invited to comment on two plans that aim to improve movement around St Albans.

The draft St Albans District Connections Strategy aims to improve transport and accessibility for the area and improve movement for people of all abilities around the St Albans District, including into and out of the activity centre.

And the draft St Albans Activity Centre structure plan will help to inform the council's decision making about development proposals, strategic planning policies, public realm improvements and development facilitation in the centre.

Administrator Meredith Sussex said consultation ensured a better product.

"Both of these documents are key planning frameworks for St Albans District as they will guide council's decision making about improvements to accessibility,

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safety and connectivity in the St Albans District, and the future development of the St Albans Activity Centre,” Ms Sussex said.

“I encourage community members to read the documents and provide comment back to council.

“All community feedback will be carefully considered, and the documents would be amended as needed before coming back to council later this year for consideration for final adoption.”

Copies of both documents can be viewed between 9am and 5pm from today until July 22 at locations around the municipality.

### **SUNSHINE'S SUNVALE PARK BID**

*Brimbank Leader— 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/coalition-discusses-sunvale-park-bid-fbready/>

Advocates for parkland at the former Sunvale Primary School site have hailed a meeting with State Government representatives a success.

Respect the West's Sean Spencer and John Heddich met Planning Minister Matthew Guy and Western Metropolitan MP Bernie Finn there last Friday.

Sunshine residents have been campaigning for the site to become public parkland since its closure almost two years ago.

Mr Spencer said Mr Guy had agreed Brimbank needed more open space and had “listened to what we had to say”.

Mr Spencer said many in the community wanted to see the site retained as parkland and open space without housing.

“We think it should be retained in its entirety for a community outdoor recreation, arts and music space,” he said,

Brimbank Council chief executive Nick Foa said the council had reiterated its interest to the Government for a park with some affordable housing.

He said there was a shortage of public open space around the school and the council wanted the Government to develop a park there with a playground, seating, possible shelter, paths and significant tree planting.

### **HELPERS IN SPADES**

*Brimbank Weekly— 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/helpers-in-spades/2208334.aspx>

Brimbank residents can help make their municipality cleaner and greener by taking part in a series of planting activities next month.

About nine planting sessions have been planned by the council and local environment groups.

The Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley group will plant more than 800 native trees and shrubs at Keilor's Caroline Chisholm Reserve on July 31, and are asking residents to join them. The group's grants co-ordinator, Judy Ingram, says people need to bring closed shoes, gloves and a bottle of water.

“There are so many activities going on during the month and we are excited because many parks and reserves are damaged because of flooding in recent years. We will provide tools and other equipment which residents can use for the planting.”

Other sessions will include planting wildflowers at Buckingham Reserve on Saturday and weeding, planting and mulching at the Taylors Lakes wildflower garden on July 6.

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### TRAVEL PAIN LOOMS FOR RAIL USERS

*Brimbank Weekly*– 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/travel-pain-looms-for-rail-users/2208330.aspx>

A two-week closure of the Sydenham railway line is expected to throw travel into disarray from Friday.

Line upgrades to support the Regional Rail Link and electrification of the Sunbury line will force commuters onto buses during the unprecedented rail shutdown.

From July 1-18, buses will replace Sydenham line Metro trains between Albion and Footscray.

During the closure, Sydenham line tracks will be realigned between Tottenham and Sunshine railway stations.

A Regional Rail Link Authority spokeswoman said the school holidays were the best time for the closure.

"Closing the line for two weeks during the school holidays minimises the need for ongoing weekend closures and provides an opportunity for other works and essential maintenance."

She said the temporary closure had been discussed with community and advocacy groups.

"The temporary closure was announced with as much notice as possible so passengers, road users and communities could prepare for it."

But the Weekly found many commuters at Sunshine station on Friday were unaware of the changes.

John of Ardeer said it was the first he had heard about the trains being replaced.

Although the shutdown would put people out, Sunshine West resident Helen hoped it would be of benefit in the longer term.

Delahey Action Group secretary David Anderson, who represents Brimbank on the Regional Rail Link community reference group, recently told the Weekly that options other than a full closure should have been considered. "We are not satisfied that Metro and the minister have exhausted all the options in regard to this work."

As the Regional Rail Link is built, further rail closures will be required.

### GRAFFITI TAGS A BLIGHT ON BUILDINGS, AND SUNSHINE'S IMAGE

*Brimbank Weekly*– 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/graffiti-tags-a-blight-on-buildings-and-sunshines-image/2208326.aspx>

Brimbank residents are being urged to report graffiti, with the area experiencing an increase in attacks.

Sunshine Business Association president Bruce White said a number of businesses in Sunshine had been tagged in recent weeks.

"I got tagged myself and had to clean it up on Monday."

Mr White said it was vital businesses acted quickly to remove the graffiti as tags appeared to attract more graffiti. "Mess breeds mess, the sooner traders clean it up, the less likelihood there is that they will get attacked again."

Victims of graffiti attacks are encouraged to contact Brimbank Council for a graffiti removal kit and report the incident to police. "We must send a message that this will not be tolerated, we want it stamped out."

Caroline Springs residents also fear a recent increase in graffiti could damage the suburb's reputation.

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Long-time resident Joy Cox is fed up of seeing graffiti on street signs and on a wall surrounding Lake Caroline.

"I think it's disgusting and graffiti just serves to cheapen Caroline Springs ... it's no wonder suburbs in the west have a bad reputation."

Last week, Melton Council announced a 24-hour graffiti hotline (1800779484) in an effort to win the war on tagging across the shire. The hotline will be open on Friday.

Mayor Justin Mammarella is urging residents to report all incidents of graffiti.

"By taking a proactive approach as a community, we can ensure we have a clean and tidy shire and send the message that vandalism is not acceptable," he said.

Mrs Cox believed the rise in graffiti incidents could be put down to young people not having much to do in the area. "There still aren't enough recreational facilities in the area so kids often resort to doing things they shouldn't be doing."

### **SUNSHINE WEST TREES DAMAGED, STOLEN**

*Brimbank Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/sunshine-west-trees-damaged-stolen-fbready/>

Tree vandals have targeted three Sunshine West streets.

Brimbank Council recently planted 78 white cedar trees in Allison and Hall streets, of which 35 have been either stolen, vandalised or snapped in half.

In nearby Joan St, nine of the 15 olive trees planted have been stolen.

Infrastructure and environment general manager Paul Younis said replacing the trees would cost about \$7500.

An Allison St resident, who did not wish to be named, described the vandalism as disgusting and a "waste of ratepayers' money".

The cost to buy one tree, plant it and provide two years of maintenance costs about \$420.

"The council try to beautify the area and this is what happens," the resident said.

Mr Younis said vandalised trees were "not a common problem". "We do have about 70 trees a year vandalised which cost council about \$12,000," he said.

Mr Younis said the sites of the most recently vandalised trees were all in the same Street Tree Infill Program work area, chosen because of its low street tree density.

### **BRIMBANK POLICY PROMPTS SUNRRA PROBE CALL**

*Brimbank Weekly – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/brimbank-policy-prompts-sunrra-probe-call/2208323.aspx?storypage=0>

The historical enmity between Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association and Brimbank Council has flared for the first time since administrators were installed.

A complaint has been lodged with the state Ombudsman accusing the council of undue influence.

SunRRA has requested the Ombudsman investigate the council over its business associations support policy. The group claims the policy blackmails associations against criticising council decisions.

But the council argues associations are free to advocate and represent the views of business.

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SunRRA president Darlene Reilly (pictured) said the wording of the policy implied the council would only help fund associations as long as they towed the council line.

"They should be advocating and lobbying for their members, but council can use this policy as a form of blackmail," she said.

The policy contains a clause that ties resource allocation to associations that will "support council's vision for the respective town centre and reflect it in reports, plans and other documentation prepared for the centre by the association".

SunRRA wrote to council chief executive Nick Foa, arguing this pressured the association into following council plans and policy whether its members agreed with them or not.

Mr Foa wrote back explaining it expected the initiatives the council supported would "be consistent with council's overall vision and planning for the relevant town centre".

Ms Reilly said this was the first time the group had lodged a complaint with the Ombudsman since the council was placed under the watch of administrators.

"I was shocked when I read the policy. This is exactly the kind of thing the Ombudsman pointed out was wrong in Brimbank in 2009.

"It is saying 'you must support us' if you want to be funded. Who will be next?"

Council's general manager of city development, Stephen Sully, said the policy offered a transparent approach to supporting business associations. "The objective of the policy is to enable council to work collaboratively with Brimbank's business associations, as we consider partnership with the business community to be vital in realising the potential of our town centres," he said.

Mr Sully said the council had a good working relationship with business associations, particularly in Sunshine and St Albans.

Associations are encouraged to work within an agreed framework, something that was considered to be "a reasonable expectation". The policy does not prevent business associations representing members' views and advocating about particular issues, according to Mr Sully.

"Council has written to business associations clarifying the application of the policy after concerns were being raised by a resident group." The council would not say how it worded this clarification.

Sunshine Business Association president Bruce White described the stoush as a storm in a teacup. "We don't view it as an issue. We had plenty of opportunity for input when this vision was being built, as did everybody."

The council is yet to hear from the Ombudsman's office about the matter.

### **RESIDENTS TO BLOCK SELL-OFF**

*Brimbank Weekly – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/residents-to-block-selloff/2208328.aspx>

'We were told it would always remain a nature reserve.'

Angry north-west residents are banding together to try and stop Brimbank Council from selling off parks and open spaces.

About 80 residents gathered at Overnewton Gate House last week to vent their frustrations at plans to sell off land in Sydenham, Taylors Lakes, Keilor and Keilor Downs.

The council argues money raised from the sale of the blocks will be channelled directly into its expanded parks upgrade program.

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But residents fear the sales could create safety issues for hundreds of children who walk through the spaces to get to and from school, avoiding busy roads.

Keilor Lodge resident Graeme Elkington said children in the area would have nowhere to play if the blocks were sold.

"When we purchased our blocks of land we did so because we knew there was a place there for our kids to play and we were told it would always remain a nature reserve," he said.

"We paid a premium to have the land border our property and moving to the court was a lifestyle choice."

Mr Elkington said his children often used the land to play football and other sports.

"My son plays football for Keilor Football Club and the team often uses the block to train when the club's grounds are flooded," he said.

"You don't need playgrounds to make the space usable because they often attract people who cause trouble. The playground up the road is full of syringes and broken glass."

Many elderly residents attended last week's meeting. Long-time Taylors Lakes resident Ross Heathcote said he was disgusted the council was even considering the sales.

"I walk for an hour each day at Cohuna Court reserve and a lot of adults and elderly people use these spaces to get exercise. It's not just about play equipment and I worry for future generations as they will have nowhere to go just to enjoy some nature and some peace and quiet."

Speaking at the meeting, which was organised by Keilor MP Natalie Hutchins, council's general manger for infrastructure and environment, Paul Younis, told

emotional residents the council would not sell any land until it had listened to them.

"There has not been a decision to sell and I encourage all of you to put your submissions in. We must go through the proper legal process and each resident will get an opportunity to stand before the council and let their opinions be known."

Submissions must be lodged by August 8.

Residents who attended the meeting unanimously voted to reject the council's plans and more than 100 have signed a petition. They also formed groups to encourage other residents to sign individual letters of protest.

### **RATES RISE KEPT LOW IN BRIMBANK**

*Brimbank Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/rates-rise-kept-low-in-brimbank-fbready/>

Rates will rise 4 per cent across Brimbank after the council adopted its 2011-12 Budget.

Administrator Meredith Sussex told a special meeting last week the rise was "one of the state's lowest".

"We know that lots of people in Brimbank do it tough so we've tried to keep the rate rises at last year's level," she said. "It's as low as we can go without affecting services and new initiatives."

Amendments to the draft budget included donating microfilm and a microfiche scanner worth \$14,000 for Sunshine and District Historical Society, and \$20,000 for Sunshine United Cricket Club.

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But there was nothing new for Keilor Basketball Centre, which members and supporters say sorely needs extending.

Rates on an average \$308,000 residential property go up by \$1.37 a week. Rates for commercial and industrial properties rise by 6 per cent and for vacant land, 8 per cent. Income from council rates is expected be \$105.8 million out of a total projected \$157.2 million.

A total of \$48.5 million will be spent on capital works, including improvements to roads and open spaces, as well as community and sporting facilities.

About \$2.2 million has been allocated to the long-anticipated widening of Taylors Rd between Kurung Drive East and Kings Rd in Sydenham.

"We've listened to community concerns about open space and boosted capital spending on parks, playgrounds and gardens to \$4.7 million," Ms Sussex said.

Community centres such as the Sunshine Youth and Community Hub will receive \$10.2 million, with \$4.5 million allocated to sports facilities, including the new pavilion at the Derrimut Community Hub.

Another \$1.6 million will continue the construction of Hampshire Road Town Square.

### **TRACKING PROGRESS IN ST ALBANS**

*Brimbank Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/tracking-progress-in-st-albans-fbready/>

The Baillieu Government has committed to starting work on the notorious St Albans level crossing - but residents may not see a spade in the ground until 2014.

Western Metropolitan MP Bernie Finn and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport Edward O'Donohue met the St Albans Traders Association at the Main Road crossing last week to assure them planning was progressing.

Mr O'Donohue said: "The project will get funding, we wouldn't be here if it wasn't moving along.

"During this term, at a minimum, planning and any associated land issues will be completed and construction will commence, as was our election commitment," he said.

Last month the Leader reported the crossing received a share of \$16.5m in the State Budget, but only for planning work.

It has been ranked at number four in a list of crossing priorities for the government, alongside nine other crossings.

St Albans Traders Association secretary Asip Demiri was among residents appalled at earlier news that an out-of-use rail crossing in Brighton was to be upgraded ahead of the St Albans crossing.

Mr Demiri said the association would continue to fight for an outcome.

"We won't go away, we want to get this done," he said.

"Being number four is not good enough, we used to be number one."

Vic Roads Western Projects director John Moylan said the upgrade was critical with more trains planned for the tracks.

Traders Association president Sebastian Agricola said the community would be "eternally grateful" when it was complete.

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Local Labor MPs claim three studies have already been completed to get rid of the notorious traffic bottleneck and say extra planning studies are a waste of time.

## MARIBRYNONG

### 'MINI-SUBURB' TOUTED FOR OLD KINNEARS SITE

*Maribyrnong Weekly – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/minisuburb-touted-for-old-kinnears-site/2211057.aspx?storypage=0>

THE long-abandoned Kinnears rope factory site on Ballarat Road could be turned into a mini-suburb including high-rise apartments, increasing the number of homes in Footscray by more than a quarter.

Development plans for the historic site have been on and off since it closed in 2002 after a century of operation.

Last week, Maribyrnong Council requested Planning Minister Matthew Guy to authorise a planning scheme amendment that would pave the way for redevelopment of the 3.3-hectare site.

Concept plans show a maximum of 1350 homes for more than 2500 people, as well as retail space, a residential hotel, offices and a medical centre.

Building heights range from 4-18 storeys, double that of the council's preferred maximum of 6-9 storeys and creating shadowing problems for houses on Ballarat Road.

The council's report on the concept plans hint at potential traffic problems from the site, particularly during peak hours.

The site is owned by property developers AXF Group and its website states it will be "the western suburbs' premier residential and commercial hub in the heart of Footscray".

AXF did not return the Weekly's calls for comment.

Transformation of the site has a number of bureaucratic hurdles to cross before work, expected to be completed in stages over a 10-year period, can begin. The council must first seek Mr Guy's permission to amend the Maribyrnong planning scheme. The amendment will then be put out for public comment and submissions before it can be adopted by the council and approved by the minister.

A final detailed development plan for the site can then be considered for the council's approval.

Maribyrnong Residents Association's Alan Ross said careful consideration needed to be given to traffic, particularly when development begins on the 3000-home Maribyrnong Defence site to the north.

"The width of Ballarat Road is already too narrow and a mini-township on the Kinnears site will need adequate provision for road transport or it'll become a traffic logjam," Mr Ross said.

Footscray People for Responsible Development spokeswoman Sylvie Leber said Footscray should not be the guinea pig for experiments in urban planning.

She said there needed to be requirements on building heights, affordable housing, open space and design that was sensitive to the site's history.

"We're totally in favour of development that's appropriate and responsible," she said.

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"What we don't want is concrete dog boxes, we want proper consultation with residents who live around the development site."

Kinnears, the largest and longest continually operating of three major Victorian rope works, is listed as a significant site on Heritage Victoria's heritage register.

Mr Guy said the state government had a policy of supporting urban renewal at sites such as Kinnears and looked forward to progressing development "through consensus with the council, the proponent and the community".

### **RIVERSIDE PLAN PROMPTS WAVE OF UNREST**

*Maribyrnong Weekly – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/riverside-plan-prompts-wave-of-unrest/2211064.aspx>

MARIBYRNONG Council has approved plans for a riverside restaurant despite protests from neighbouring residents and acknowledgment by councillors of possible parking problems.

The proposal for a \$1million 140-seat cafe and restaurant on crown land beside the Maribyrnong River will require demolishing an old boat shed used by Peter Somerville's Blackbird Cruises and the construction of public and private moorings.

The decision on the application - which has evolved from a teahouse to a cafe to a restaurant since it was put forward in mid-2009 - was deferred twice this year to hear from residents and have further talks with other authorities.

Residents near the site said about 140 patrons visiting the dead-end street would create traffic chaos, made worse by the proposal to reduce the required parking spaces from 84 to 35.

There would also be noise from guests dining late into the night.

Resident Rod Gaskell said it was an overdevelopment of the site.

"I have found it difficult on a number of occasions, particularly on Saturdays, to park in Saltriver Place. In addition to the failure of the proposal to allocate car parks according to the planning regulations, the plan does not allocate any space for Blackbird customers.

"The mayor was railing against overdevelopment in Moreland Street with the 25-storey tower, but when it's happening in Saltriver Place the council takes no notice."

Deputy mayor Martin Zakharov said there was no easy answer on parking.

"Simply saying 'no' is not the way out of this, and we have to find a balance. People have to accept that we are becoming a more densely populated part of the city."

He said the plan was approved because it was the best outcome for the site, as it opened up the river for public use. Opening hours had been reduced on Sundays and delivery times curtailed.

Mr Somerville, 2010 Citizen of the Year, said the approval was to be expected, but it was not good for the future of the river.

"There are planning guidelines for the Maribyrnong River Valley, and I don't think they were considered in any of the development plans."

Mr Somerville said he expected the council to help relocate his office and find a safe temporary mooring during construction.

Cr Michael Clarke said Mr Somerville's operations would be safeguarded.

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### **FOOTSCRAY WATERSIDE RESTAURANT AHOY**

*Maribyrnong Leader – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/footscray-waterside-restaurant-ahoy/>

MARIBYRNONG Council has approved a 140-seat riverfront restaurant in Footscray, despite agreeing with residents' concerns that the parking, design, and operating hours will cause problems.

The council had twice deferred a decision on the controversial development to seek more information about its obligations under the City of Footscray tender, requiring a "teahouse" to be built.

An attempt by Cr Catherine Cumming to limit the restaurant's operating hours to 7am-5pm did not get off the ground.

Residents used the twice-extended question time to quiz officers about the depth of traffic studies done on the area, and to query the safety of floating pontoons. One resident voiced support for the development, calling on the council to make it easier for those supporting a proposal to have their say.

Cr J. Cumming, in moving the motion, agreed he was concerned about the location of the pontoons but said they had been approved by Parks Victoria.

"Issues around car parking are correct . . . I don't know how we'll get around that," he said.

"(The size is) on the generous side but it's what's been negotiated and to change now would be not acting in good faith."

Cr J. Cumming said the council would "police" the development so that it would be acceptable to residents.

Resident Rod Gaskell was "astounded" the councillors could acknowledge the problems but still approve the development.

He said the size of the restaurant had grown "exponentially" since it was first proposed, and would block the view - a featured selling point of local apartments.

Councillors stated they would do all possible to protect the business of former Maribyrnong Citizen of the Year Peter Somerville while his Maribyrnong River Cruises building was demolished and incorporated into the restaurant.

But Western Metropolitan Group of Historical Societies member Elaine Brogan told Leader Heritage Victoria's condition that an archaeological dig be done of the site for maritime artefacts was not stipulated in the council's planning permit conditions.

The building was a former swimming club and boat building yard, possibly dating back to the 1920s.

### **PUSH BACK ON PLANNING POWER IN BRIMBANK**

*Maribyrnong Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/push-back-on-planning-power-in-brimbank/>

MARIBYRNONG Council will spend thousands of dollars in a potential legal first to get the State Government to build an office block in Footscray bigger than planned.

And councillors will vote next month to regain the powers they earlier delegated to the Planning Minister.

Under those powers the Ballieu Government controversially approved plans for a 25-storey office tower in Moreland St.

The two sites in dispute are a kilometre apart.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



Cr Michael Clarke last week foreshadowed his plan to rescind the planning powers in a furious speech aimed squarely at the Liberal Government and Planning Minister Matthew Guy. He described the tower as a “violence perpetrated on this community”.

“Minister Guy spits in the face of this council,” Cr Clarke said. “We will no longer participate with the Department of Planning and Community Development until they understand ‘partnership’.”

Cr Clarke was angered by Mr Guy’s approval of a two-storey development at the intersection of Hopkins and Moore streets, calling it “a remarkable underdevelopment of a premier site”.

“From a 25-storey development to, in the next breath, two storeys it’s completely mad, where’s the logic? Where’s the reason? Where’s the consistency?”

Cr Clarke said the site, near other planned and completed high-rise blocks, could easily accommodate 10-15 storeys.

A date for the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal hearing between the council and the minister over the Hopkins St site has yet to be set.

Planning and governance experts have suggested an order to build something bigger than the applicant intended would be a legal first, and described the whole situation as “curious”.

“I’d very surprised if VCAT upheld it ... I’d encourage them to try to reach an understanding,” Monash University Prof Ken Coghill said.

“It’s a most unusual way for a council to act,” RMIT Prof Michael Buxton said, adding the situation should act as a warning to councils which hand over their powers to the state.

Mr Guy did not want to weigh in to the proposed rescission or VCAT hearing.

He called it a “petty political fight”.

If the rescission motion is successful, it will bring the planning approval process back before the council for projects including the Joseph Rd precinct, the Forges site and Footscray market.

### **SKY HIGH MEETING SNUB**

*Maribyrnong Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/sky-high-meeting-snub/>

A long-awaited meeting between the Education Minister and the SKY High working group has been cancelled.

Education Minister Martin Dixon was to meet the campaigners for a high school in Seddon, Kingsville and Yarraville last Thursday but his staffers postponed the meeting.

SKY spokeswoman Janine Lloyd said the cancellation was “difficult” to take after months of preparation. It would have been the first meeting between the new government and SKY.

“Our community expected we would currently be discussing short-listed options for meeting the recognised gap in secondary schools,” Ms Lloyd said.

She said a report outlining options for a secondary school was due for completion in January after stakeholders met last year to identify potential outcomes. The group is still unsure whether it will receive a copy of the report.

A spokesman for Mr Dixon said the meeting would be rescheduled as soon as possible. The spokesman did not respond to questions about the report.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



There is a SKY High planning meeting, 8pm, Monday, August 8, at Yarraville Club, Stephen St, Yarraville.

### **MARIBYRNONG TRIES TO GET TRUCKS OFF ITS STREET**

*Australian Transport News – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.fullyloaded.com.au/industry-news/articleid/74423.aspx>

A council in Melbourne's western suburbs is trying to encourage truck drivers to avoid using its roads in a bid to reduce heavy vehicle numbers.

Maribyrnong City Council says it is working with the Victorian Department of Transport to convince drivers to use Citylink and the West Gate Freeway instead of roads running through Footscray and Yarraville.

Maribyrnong, which is closely located to Melbourne's central business district and the Port of Melbourne, attracts up to 20,000 trucks a day. They vary from light rigid trucks to B-doubles and put pressure on the roads and pollute the environment, the council says.

"The activities and predicted future traffic growth to and from the Port of Melbourne will potentially have a major impact on the City of Maribyrnong," it says.

"Council supports the reduction in truck traffic through its residential streets as this will improve the health and well-being of residents and the environment. Local community action groups like Maribyrnong Truck Action Group are also actively seeking reductions of truck traffic on residential streets."

The council will continue to work on the development of a freight movement network using the primary arterial and freeway road network, it adds.

It says a trial of 'No trucks' signs on four of its residential streets for one week in April 2007 led to a 77 percent drop in the number of semi-trailers.

"The results show that the 'No trucks' signage has been very effective in reducing large trucks from the CBD area. VicRoads has been requested to undertake follow-up monitoring and enforcement of the restrictions," it says.

## MELTON

### **MELTON COUNCIL ON PET PATROL**

*Melton Leader – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-council-on-pet-patrol/>

The next time you hear a knock at the door it could be Melton Council officer checking that your pet cat or dog is fully paid-up.

The council is continuing to door knock homes in a bid to ensure all cats and dogs in the shire are registered.

The program began in December last year.

Since then, local laws officers have checked more than 1900 properties and issued 211 warning notices.

The owner of an unregistered cat or dog can receive a \$239 fine per animal. Under state legislation, every cat or dog over three months of age must be registered.

Registered animals must be re-registered by April 10 each year.

All animals that are registered for the first time or have moved from another municipality must also be micro-chipped.

Melton Council mayor Justin Mammarella encouraged responsible pet ownership.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"It's important that everyone who owns a dog or cat aged over three months old has it registered with council," he said.

"There are a number of vets across the shire where you can take your animal for micro-chipping.

"When an impounded animal has been micro-chipped, it takes just a few seconds to find out who the animal is registered to and the owners can be contacted quickly."

Animal registration forms are available from the Civic Centres in Melton and Caroline Springs or can be downloaded from the council's website.

Dog registration fees vary from \$17-\$120, with cat registration fees from \$9-\$44.

Information: 9747 7200.

### **EVERYONE'S EVERGREEN WHEN MELTON MATES HOOK-UP AT A CLUB**

*Melton Leader – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/everyones-evergreen-when-melton-mates-hook-up-at-a-club/>

Friendship is the key to a healthy lifestyle, according to Melton's Fred Riley.

Developing and maintaining healthy relationships was one of the key messages of this year's Men's Health Week campaign, which includes hanging out with your mates.

A resident at Lifestyle Brookfield, Mr Riley knows all too well the benefits of good mates and having a laugh.

He is now part of a group in the village who meet every Wednesday afternoon to play bowls - for enjoyment, camaraderie and physical activity.

"We have a lot of fun and having a game or competition regularly provides a great opportunity for us all to meet up and chat about what's going on," he said.

The team behind Men's Health Week say social clubs, community groups and sports teams are some of the best ways for men to get together and share their concerns or just provide support for each other.

The annual Men's Health Week ran from June 13-19 with the aim of increasing men's awareness of their health and wellbeing.

### **RAGE AGAINST THE PAGE IN MELTON SHIRE**

*Melton Leader – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/rage-against-the-page-in-melton-shire/>

Demeaning rumours about Melton shire teenagers are being posted online, sparking fears they could lead to potentially deadly consequences.

A Facebook profile called Melton Goss has almost 170 members, with wall posts naming and shaming several students, mainly alleging they have been involved in underage sexual acts.

The profile, claiming to be moderated by a Melton-based secondary student, first posted on June 2.

They have since posted almost 30 slanderous comments.

There are eight other profiles named Melton Goss, but their posts are private.

Cyber bullying expert Susan McLean said students "named and shamed" on these pages could find it "hurtful, frightening, scary and threatening" and it had potentially deadly consequences.

In July 2009 a Geelong schoolgirl took her own life after being cyber bullied. She was the fourth student from the school to commit suicide in six months.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"We know that cyber bullying can lead to mental illness and depression which can lead to suicide," Ms McLean said.

"I'm sick of hearing 'it's just a bit of fun' - you can't predict how these pages will hurt someone."

Ms McLean said students, parents and teachers all had a role to play in stamping out cyber bullying.

"Where are the parents? They have a major role to play," she said.

"Schools also have a role to play, they need to dish out the consequences.

"It doesn't matter if you started the page or not, the mere fact that you joined the page means you're giving it the OK."

Melton police Inspector Mario Fiorentino said other cases of cyber bullying have led to charges being laid and intervention orders being obtained.

He said it was a criminal offence to harass or stalk someone on social networking sites.

"Police are able to identify persons operating such sites if required via the communications carrier," he said.

"We have already investigated a number of similar situations in which victims have been harassed, stalked or bullied resulting in intervention orders being obtained and charges laid and we will continue to do so as complaints come in."

### **ANTHONY'S CUTTING REALIGNMENT OPEN TO TRAFFIC**

*Melton Leader – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/anthony-s-cutting-realignment-set-to-open-tomorrow/>

The Western Highway realignment at Anthony's Cutting is open to traffic, nine months ahead of schedule.

Politicians and community members met on the site yesterday for a community open day to celebrate the completion of the \$200 million project.

There have been 21 casualty crashes on the notorious steep climb at Anthony's Cutting over the past five years.

More than 29,000 vehicles, including more than 4000 freight vehicles, use this busy section of highway every day.

State Roads Minister Terry Mulder joined Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport and Ballarat federal Labor MP Catherine King in officially opening the new connection yesterday.

The realignment has involved constructing a new 5km highway connection south of the existing route, running from Melton West to east of Bacchus Marsh.

The traffic switch operation started at 10am today (Monday) and was completed by lunch time.

To ensure safety the new freeway will temporarily operate at reduced speeds for the initial 4-7 days before it becomes a 110 km/h zone.

Some construction works will need to be completed on the old Western Highway to connect Bacchus Marsh Rd in Bacchus Marsh and High St in Melton.

As a result, sections of the old Western Highway will be closed.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



Road users are asked to visit [whrp.com.au](http://whrp.com.au) for up to date details

The new alignment, jointly funded by the Federal and State Governments as part of the Nation Building Program and the Victorian Transport Plan, avoids the steep hills and tight curves through Anthony's Cutting, improving safety and reducing travel times and transport costs.

### **GROWING THEIR OWN IN MELTON**

*Melton Leader – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/growing-their-own-in-melton/>

Green thumbs at Melton's Abbeyfield in Melton South are putting flavour back into their food by building their own vegetable garden.

The residents of the independent living estate are working with Melton's Bunnings Warehouse team and Melton Lions Club members to get the garden established.

Not afraid to get their hands dirty, residents were out in force last week to lend a helping hand building planter boxes which will house a range of vegetables.

The end result will mean residents being able to contribute to making a difference to their health and well being, as well as their diet.

### **BIG MACS TO BIG MACKS FOR MELTON WOMAN**

*Melton Leader – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/big-macs-to-big-macks-for-melton-woman/>

Serving your country in Afghanistan is a far cry from flipping burgers.

Former McDonald's restaurant manager Christina Walsh has traded in her apron for camouflage gear as she prepares for deployment to Afghanistan with the Australian Army.

The Melton resident will have her Australian Active Service Medal in time for the next Anzac Day. "My mum and dad are a bit worried, so I'm trying not to scare them," Private Walsh said.

"But I've always wanted to do something different, to get away and have adventures.

"Now I'm a specialist transport driver for Macks to Unimogs to utes, you name it."

Soon Private Walsh will be one of 1550 Australian soldiers stationed in Uruzgan province to help train Afghan soldiers and to restore peace. "The training has been great, learning what it's really going to be like," she said.

"Over there my job will be driving replenishment missions to the forward bases. There might be roadside bombs, but I'll be in a Bushmaster, which is very heavily armoured."

Private Walsh will return home in September just in time for her partner Nathan's 30th birthday.

"We're planning to buy a house, but first we'll be heading to the (Golden) Fleece (Hotel) for a beer or two," she said.

### **MELTON TEACHER STILL HELPING IN QUAKE-HIT HAITI**

*Melton Leader – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-teacher-still-helping-in-quake-hit-haiti/>

Melton Christian College teacher Kellyanne Borg will soon leave the comforts of home to live and teach in the impoverished nation of Haiti for the next two years.

Ms Borg first visited Haiti in July last year - six months after the January 12 earthquake - where she trained local primary school teachers and met her sponsor child of four years, Belinda Rose.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"Words cannot express the images I saw of poverty, destruction and hopelessness, but in the midst of this I discovered a resilient and warm group of people who taught me what it means to live in a community," she said.

She returned to Haiti in December for three weeks, which reaffirmed her desire to make a difference in the country through its education system. This August, she will join the ranks of TeachHaiti, a school in Port-au-prince for the poor.

### **ANTHONY'S CUTTING TO OPEN EARLY**

*The Courier –24<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.thecourier.com.au/news/local/news/general/anthony-s-cutting-to-open-early/2206554.aspx>

The Anthony's Cutting realignment between Bacchus Marsh and Melton is expected to open early next week.

The newly-built five kilometre stretch of the Western Highway will allow drivers to bypass the steeper Anthony's Cutting route.

Ballarat MP Catherine King said a community open day will be held tomorrow at the project site office on Hopetoun Park Road between 11am and 2pm.

"This is great news for people who travel the Western Highway between Melton, Bacchus Marsh, Ballarat and beyond – the project is something the community should celebrate," Ms King said.

"Local weather conditions and effective scheduling work by the alliance team is delivering this project well ahead of schedule.

"Once the new stretch is open it will be a fully functioning and busy freeway that people won't be able to see this way again."

Ms King said it was still unsure when the road would be open but it was tipped to be early in the week.

More than 29,000 vehicles per day, including more than 4000 freight vehicles, travel the highway section daily.

State Transport Minister Terry Mulder said the new freeway connection would eliminate the tight curves and low-speed section through Anthony's Cutting, which has seen 21 casualty crashes over the past five years.

The \$200 million Western Highway – Anthony's Cutting realignment project is jointly funded by the federal and state governments as part of the National Building Program and the Victorian Transport Plan.

## MOONEE VALLEY

### **DEBATE SWIRLING ON COST FLOW-ON**

*Moonee Valley Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/debate-swirling-on-cost-flow-on/>

Our growing water bills will be used to cover the cost of recycling, desalination and stormwater drains.

City West Water last week announced its annual increase in water charges, which showed the typical Moonee Valley household water bill would be \$860, or about \$105 extra a year.

In July last year, locals were slugged with a \$114-a-year increase from the 2009 price.

The water retailer's managing director, Anne Barker, said alternative water sources came at a cost. "Traditional catchments will continue to provide the bulk of our water supplies in years when there is good rainfall," she said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



“Alternative supplies of water come with increased costs which need be paid for by all users.

“While we’ve had a great year of rainfall and our dams are recovering, it comes after more than 13 years of drought and our water storages levels are just over half full. These new sources of water will secure Melbourne’s long-term water needs.”

Government concessions will be increased to help low-income earners and CWW will provide flexible payment plans.

Water Minister Peter Walsh said \$62.9 million in government concessions would help more than 700,000 Victorian households, with 32,000 extra to receive financial help for the first time.

Mr Walsh said the former Labor Government had failed to supplement Melbourne’s water supplies in a sensible way to keep up with population growth.

But Opposition spokesman on water John Lenders said the north-south pipeline should be turned on before there was another drought, instead of paying for other upgrades.

“The Government is stopping Melburnians receiving the water they’ve already paid for, and replacing it with expensive, new, recycled and stormwater projects that will push prices up even further,” he said.

“(Premier) Mr Baillieu sees nothing wrong with Melburnians having paid \$300 million for the water, and a further \$180 million in water dividends to the State Government this year, because he is ideologically opposed to a major infrastructure project that helped drought-proof our state for more than four million Victorians.”

The price rises come into effect on July 1.

### **SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS TOWN PLANNING IRE**

*Moonee Valley Leader– 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/survey-highlights-town-planning-ire/>

Angst over town-planning issues have been reflected in a community satisfaction survey about Moonee Valley Council.

The annual survey involved interviewing 350 local residents via telephone about council’s overall performance.

The council scored 69 out of 100, which is a rating of “acceptable”.

But residents underlined the city’s planning issues by rating it lower than any other service area, 54 out of 100, which means “it needs some improvement”.

Local Government Victoria commissioned the annual survey across 77 municipalities, asking respondents to rate their council as excellent (100), good (80) or acceptable (60) on advocacy, community engagement, customer service and service areas.

Minister for Local Government Jeanette Powell urged councils to carefully analyse the community’s rating to see where any improvements were needed.

But council’s CEO Neville Smith said council was pleased with the results and it was its highest score since the 2003-04 survey.

“The survey helps us to track what we are doing well and areas that need improvement. It also highlights the services that are more important to residents,” Mr Smith said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"The areas where council needs to improve are town planning, local roads, footpaths and appearance of public buildings and traffic management and parking."

Mr Smith said the survey results were consistent with feedback council had received from residents throughout the year.

"Council is committed to working hard to ensure we have robust policies and strategies in place to direct growth in appropriate areas and to deal with complex issues that results from being part of an expanding city," he said.

"Councillors have also asked that we write to the Minister for Planning (Matthew Guy) to ascertain what planning tools his department is proposing to help us better protect our residential areas from inappropriate development."

Results of the community satisfaction survey are in the Have Your Say section on [mvcc.vic.gov.au](http://mvcc.vic.gov.au)

### **TAKING CHARGE OF SAFETY**

*Moonee Valley Weekly– 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/taking-charge-of-safety/2207566.aspx>

Metropolitan Fire Brigade wants residents to become fire wardens in their homes and businesses this winter. Ascot Vale station officer Dean Gould says residents need to take responsibility and consider what can be done to reduce the risk of fire at their home or work.

Last year the MFB attended 65 residential property fires in the Moonee Valley area.

Mr Gould said there were key things householders should check - electric blankets, heaters, smoke alarms, clothes dryers and power points.

He launched the winter safety campaign at The Gather coffee shop last week.

Cafe owner John Roumpos donned an 'I'm a safety warden' apron and will promote the campaign with a pamphlet display in the shop.

### **WORKING STUDENTS GET SHORT SHIFTS**

*Moonee Valley Weekly– 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/working-students-get-short-shifts/2207567.aspx>

The jury is out on Fair Work Australia's decision to allow flexible working hours for casual student employees.

While some Moonee Valley businesses say the move is a good idea, others believe shorter hours would be disruptive.

The state government last week gave small businesses the option to employ teenagers for 90-minute shifts on school nights.

It overrules a blanket three-hour minimum period of employment in the retail sector which was introduced by the federal government last year.

Essendon North Supa IGA owner Greg Priestley says the new laws are a good idea.

"It provides flexibility for teenagers and they have more time for homework or studying," he said.

Chin Shen, who owns a newsagency in Moonee Ponds, said she wasn't aware of the Fair Work laws but would not employ teenagers to work 90-minute shifts because she wanted staff to be available as much as possible.

"It's not up to the government [how long someone works] but the employer.

"A shorter shift would disrupt teenager's homework and study time.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"It's not beneficial to anyone."

The changes mean teenagers can work 90-minute shifts from 3-6.30pm on school days but can work longer shifts any time after 6.30pm.

Teens must get their parents' permission to work the shorter shifts.

Mr Priestley said the need to get permission would not influence who he hired.

"It's really up to the parents. If parents didn't allow their child to work the shorter shift, I would be fine with it."

The National Retail Association welcomed the changes, saying it had been increasingly difficult for teens to find work because of restrictive work arrangements.

### **MOONEE PONDS CREEK WORK COULD BE A PROBLEM**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-ponds-creek-work-could-be-a-problem/2207564.aspx>

Restoring a 4.9km section of Moonee Ponds Creek between Strathmore and Flemington Road to a more natural state could result in erosion and flooding problems, according to Melbourne Water expert Gavan O'Neill.

He was responding to calls from Moonee Valley Council and the Flemington Association to have the "concrete creek" returned to its former glory.

Last week, it was named as one of Melbourne's worst planning decisions by Steve Dunn, president of the Victorian division of the Planning Institute of Australia.

An Ascot Vale resident who regularly rides along the creek, Mr Dunn suggested it was not too late to bring new life to the waterway.

The Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works concreted the Strathmore to Flemington section of the creek in the 1950s and '60s to prevent flooding.

At the time it was considered necessary to allow the creek to cope with an expected massive increase in water run-off created by booming urban development.

Mr O'Neill said better planning controls in recent decades meant such measures were now rarely required, but the issues which forced the concreting of the creek remain.

"The channel was lined in the 1950s to protect against flooding and erosion problems that were regularly threatening property and people - the same pressures remain today because hard urban surfaces like roads and rooves increase run-off.

"An engineered solution would be required to cope with the extreme flows.

"Opportunities to recreate a more natural channel that will carry the immense flows from this urban catchment and withstand the massive stream power are very limited and would be extremely expensive.

"That stretch of the creek is a case of function over form, but that function is critical to protecting people and property from flooding."

### **IN MOONEE VALLEY, BILLS A RISING TIDE OF DESPAIR**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/in-moonee-valley-bills-a-rising-tide-of-despair/2207560.aspx>

Rising water bills are expected to put further strain on already struggling Moonee Valley families.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



The Essential Services Commission has given state-owned water companies approval to increase their prices by between 5-15 per cent in the new financial year to cover inflation and the cost of new infrastructure.

City West Water customers face a 14 per cent hike.

Water usage charges will rise by 15.7 per cent and sewage disposal charges will rise by 9.5 per cent.

Service charges for water will increase by 10.5 per cent and service charges for sewerage will increase by 16.8 per cent.

City West Water estimates that an average yearly household water bill will increase to about \$860 - a \$104 hike from last year and a weekly increase of \$2.

Essendon Citizens Advice Bureau's Jan Murphy said the water bill rise was more bad news for many of the bureau's clients.

"It's going to make it a lot harder on everybody - it's actually frightening.

"People on wages find it difficult enough to pay bills. For people that are just getting by anyway, what are they going to do?"

Helping Hands Mission spokeswoman Melanie Kent said the charity was experiencing an increasing demand for help in Moonee Valley.

"We are selling an enormous amount of blankets because people are using them and leaving the heaters off to try and save money."

She feared the rise in water bills was another expense many families couldn't afford to meet.

City West Water managing director Anne Barker said the price increases were necessary to allow the government and Melbourne's water companies to plan for the city's long-term water needs.

"With the increasing variability of rainfall over Melbourne's catchments, we need to look to alternative supplies of water for Melbourne, including water recycling, desalinated water and stormwater harvesting.

"While we've had a great year of rainfall and our dams are recovering, it comes after more than 13 years of drought and our water storages levels are just over half full."

Despite the increase, City West Water's typical household water bills were among the cheapest of any major Australian city, she said.

"While price increases will place pressure on household budgets, the increases are necessary.

"A typical water bill would still be hundreds of dollars less each year than the other capital cities."

### **PARKING CONCERNS FLOW AS MARIBYRONG RIVER PLAN GETS THE NOD**

*Moonee Valley Leader* – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/parking-concerns-flow-as-river-plan-gets-the-nod/>

Moonee Valley Council has endorsed its multi-million dollar plan for improvements along the Maribyrnong River.

The plans include new pathways, boardwalks, wharves, boat launching facilities and a floating cafe.

But the new blueprint has been overshadowed by a lack of parking spaces.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



Moonee Valley Mayor John Sipek and councillors Paul Giuliano and Narelle Sharpe voted against the report, saying it provided “little-to-no” parking spaces.

Cr Giuliano said it was a great plan with a lot of potential but needed to be clearer about parking.

“Parking is already an issue around that area and people will not walk 10km to access this park or the river to go for a run,” he said.

“People drive to parks to enjoy it and with diminished parking, I cannot approve this master plan,” he said.

Cr Shirley Cornish, who endorsed the plan, said it was a long-term concept for the area and no decisions had been made about parking.

View the Maribyrnong Rover Master Plan at [mvcc.vic.gov.au/mrmp](http://mvcc.vic.gov.au/mrmp)

### **WATCHDOGS IN LONG WAIT**

*Moonee Valley Leader— 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/watchdogs-in-long-wait/>

Every man - and his dog - is calling on Victoria Police to release promised street-by-street crime statistics to Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Crime Prevention Minister Andrew McIntosh promised to release local statistics as part of a \$550,000 boost to Neighbourhood Watch programs in the May State Budget.

But the statistics are now being withheld by Victoria Police.

“The statistics cannot be released without consent of Victoria Police because it is their data,” Mr McIntosh said.

Moonee Valley Neighbourhood Watch convener Ron Kennelly (pictured with dog Kerry), who oversees 31 community-based watchdog groups in the city, said residents had a right to be informed.

“We are the eyes and ears of police, we report it and we feed police with information,” Mr Kennelly said. “We deserve to know the street-by-street crime statistics and we’re committed to getting them.

“We understand that it’s a police management issue and we hope the resignation of (former) Chief Commissioner Simon Overland will give way to a new commissioner who will support Neighbourhood Watch.”

Victoria Police spokeswoman Anita Brens said there were several issues with releasing the statistics, which include privacy issues in identifying victims of crime through location.

But Mr Kennelly said the data didn’t act as a scare tactic and it actually “helped fight against crime”. “It makes people more alert,” he said. “If their street’s crime statistics are low they’ll feel safe and if there has been a lot of reported crime in their street they’ll know to be more alert and careful.”

Essendon MP Justin Madden said local families shouldn’t have to wait any longer for the statistics.

Police said they were working closely with Acting Chief Commissioner Ken Lay, Neighbourhood Watch groups and the Department of Justice to resolve the issue.

### **GATEWAY TO SHOWBIZ**

*Moonee Valley Leader— 26<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/lifestyle/story/gateway-to-showbiz/>

If you are an up-and-coming musician, event manager or just looking to network in the entertainment industry, Shane Wickens can help.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



The former musician from Ascot Vale spent years showing his talent at Battle of the Bands in Moonee Ponds and at similar gigs, before moving off stage in 2008.

Wickens became the artistic director at The Push, an organisation that presents workshops and mentoring programs for those passionate about entering the entertainment industry.

“The Push FReeZA Summits are an opportunity for young people hoping to organise music, arts or cultural events in their communities, to not only get inspired, but also get the knowledge and make the connections to realise their dreams and potential,” he said.

“It’s a chance for young people to participate in hands-on workshops, network with their local FReeZA committees and hear first-hand from music industry experts.”

Open to 12-25-year-olds, the workshops will run from July 4-8, during the school holidays, in Brunswick, Bendigo and Leongatha.

Workshops include professionals sharing advice and information on getting a career in the music industry, social networking and online marketing tools.

Future Entertainment director Jason Ayoubi, a guest speaker at the event in Brunswick, said he would provide insight into his experiences in bringing some of the largest global artists to Future Music Festival, The Hot BBQ and Summadayze.

Wickens said the program would let participants have their say about what goes on in youth arts.

The Push FReeZA Summit will run at Brunswick Town Hall, 233 Sydney Rd, Brunswick, on Friday July 8 from 9.30-3.30pm

Entry is free and lunch is provided. Details: 9380 1277 or visit [thepush.com.au](http://thepush.com.au)

## WYNDHAM

### WYNDHAM RESIDENTS TO FORK OUT MORE AT THE TIP

*Wyndham Leader – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/wyndham-r-residents-to-fork-out-more-at-the-tip/>

Rubbish tip fees in Wyndham are set to rise from this Friday mainly because of the State Government’s decision to increase landfill levies, Wyndham Council says.

The rise will mean rates at the Werribee refuse disposal facility will increase by \$2 to \$19 for a car or station wagon and by \$5 to \$35 for a level, single-axle trailer.

Wyndham Deputy Mayor Bob Fairclough said more than 50 per cent of the increases was due to the rise in landfill levies.

In May this year, the Environment Protection Authority announced landfill levies for municipal waste would rise from \$30 to \$40 a tonne, forcing the council to increase gate fees for all tip users, he said.

“It is estimated that Wyndham city deposits 38,690 tonnes, including city-wide waste collection at the refuse disposal facility each year, which would result in an additional cost of \$1.7 million once the increased EPA levy is applied, which is beyond what the city is able to absorb,” he said.

“Wyndham ratepayers still have access to two tip vouchers and two pre-booked hard waste collections each year.”

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



### **WERRIBEE ZOO'S ANIMAL SICK BAY BENEFITS**

*Wyndham Weekly – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/werribee-zoos-animal-sick-bay-benefits/2210985.aspx>

Werribee Open Range Zoo senior veterinarian Natalie Rourke shows some of the outdated medical equipment donated by Mercy Health to its new \$2.1million vet hospital. Along with ultrasound tools, the bounty also included three humidicribs, endoscopic towers, intravenous fluid pumps and an anaesthetic monitor.

Ms Rourke said the gifts would greatly assist with the diagnosis, treatment and continuing care of the zoo's animals. "The items we've received are extraordinarily valuable. If we had bought them ourselves, they would have cost more than \$100,000."

### **CASH VITAL FOR WYNDHAM MENTAL HEALTH**

*Wyndham Leader – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/cash-vital-for-wyndham-mental-health->

Funds are needed now to meet demand for clinical mental health services at Wyndham's public hospital, Tarneit state Labor MP Tim Pallas has told parliament.

He said demand for the services at Werribee Mercy was at "breaking point".

Despite this, Mr Pallas said the number of full-time mental health case managers at the hospital was recently reduced by three.

The hospital said it was experiencing unprecedented growth in demand for the services.

"We know there is a need to further expand our services in order to improve access to mental health services in Wyndham and we are working with the

Department of Health to meet this need," Mercy Health South Western Health Services executive director Richard Ainley said.

A State Government spokeswoman said it would spend \$26.9 million over four years in Victoria to meet the growing demand for mental health services, particularly in outer metropolitan growth areas.

Wyndham is the fastest growing municipality in Australia. Money should be allocated in the next month, the spokeswoman said.

Mr Pallas told parliament Wyndham needed to get its fair share.

He said a recent State Government report found the West accounted for 11 per cent of Melbourne's population but had just 4 per cent of its mental health services.

### **SECOND INDOOR AQUATIC CENTRE FLOATED FOR WYNDHAM**

*Wyndham Weekly – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/second-indoor-aquatic-centre-floated-for-wyndham/2210973.aspx>

A second major indoor aquatic centre for the city would be built in Tarneit within a decade, with a major upgrade of the Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre by 2013-14, as part of a proposed council strategy.

The draft 2011 Wyndham Aquatic Facility Strategy, approved by councillors on Monday night, outlines a 20-year plan for their provision and use.

Based on population projections to 2031, it recommends a new aquatic centre be located in Tarneit, rather than Point Cook.

It states that the Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre is running at capacity during peak times, however, the average annual attendance has levelled off between 540,000 and 560,000.

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One of the main problems identified at the centre is overcrowding in the children's and adult aquatic areas, directly contributing to downward pressures on annual visitor numbers.

At the Werribee Olympic Outdoor Pool, annual seasonal attendances have risen 25 per cent since its redevelopment in 2009.

The strategy outlines a planned expansion of the Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre by 2014, subject to funding.

This would include extensions to the gym and fitness areas, additional change rooms, and larger spaces for swimming programs.

It aims to lift annual visits to the centre to 910,000 by 2021, the same year the new aquatic centre would open.

The council plans to review the strategy in five years.

The document is now open for public comment and is scheduled to be adopted by the council in August.

Details: [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au)

### **WYNDHAM STILL PLAYING 'CATCH-UP' ON TRAINS, BUSES, PARKING**

*Wyndham Weekly*– 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/wyndham-still-playing-catchup-on-trains-buses-parking/2210970.aspx>

There seems to be little relief in sight for commuters frustrated by the lack of car parking at Werribee and Hoppers Crossing stations.

In April, Wyndham councillors unanimously supported a move by Iramoo ward's Heather Marcus to request an urgent meeting with the Director of Public Transport and VicTrack to push for more spaces on vacant land surrounding the stations.

Cr Marcus also called for a progress update on stage two of the recommendations from last year's Wyndham bus services review.

A report presented to councillors on Monday night showed that a meeting was held between the council and VicTrack on May 9, but the concerns about parking were referred to the Director of Public Transport.

Councillors also resolved to write to Public Transport Minister Terry Mulder with a list of requests, including a review of the city's bus network every two years, with funding for any additional routes or extensions it identifies.

In relation to Hoppers Crossing station, the council has asked Mr Mulder to formalise a temporary car park around the substation that was first used by commuters during building works for the new 271-space car park.

Truganina ward councillor Glenn Goodfellow told the meeting that Wyndham's current provision of public transport services was not sustainable.

"It makes you wonder what more we have to do," he said.

The first stage of the former state government's changes to the city's bus network left many areas still without a bus route within 400 metres - including Leakes Road between Tarneit and Derrimut roads and parts of Point Cook.

Despite the council pushing for 20-minute frequencies and route extensions into growth areas, the government has yet to make any announcements on future bus services for the city.

Cr Kim McAliney called on the government to take immediate action to improve access to public transport for the city's 160,000 residents.

"In two years, we will have another 25,000 residents - how long do we have to wait?" she said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"We're already playing catch-up - it's not good enough."

### **WERRIBEE MERCY HOSPITAL 'CRITICAL' AS STAFF CUTS BITE**

*Wyndham Weekly– 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/werribee-mercy-hospital-critical-as-staff-cuts-bite/2210967.aspx?storypage=0>

Urgent funds are needed to boost clinical mental health services at Werribee Mercy Hospital, which are at "breaking point" according to Tarneit MP Tim Pallas.

The Labor member said the situation was rapidly reaching a "critical state" with demand stretching services to the limit.

Despite this, he said, the number of full-time mental health case managers at the hospital had been reduced by three and he called on the government to address what he labelled an "impending crisis".

Mercy Mental Health includes

psychiatric and mother baby units based at the hospital, along with a range of other services within the community, including homeless outreach and a crisis assessment and treatment team.

A government report has found the western suburbs accounted for 11per cent of Melbourne's population but had only 4per cent of its mental health services.

Mr Pallas told the Weekly that after meeting with the Australian Nursing Federation, which has expressed similar concerns, he believed the staff cutbacks were a result of budgetary pressures.

"The government has to deliver more money towards mental health," he said.

"With the level of population growth occurring in this community and an increasing number of mental health presentations, we can't stand by and allow the erosion of these vital services."

Federation assistant secretary Pip Carew said it was believed a new enterprise bargaining agreement struck with the hospital doctors had put extra strain on its funding for mental health.

She said more than half of new mental health referrals were now being put on a waiting list.

"We're concerned that if patients are not being treated in a timely manner, there's a significant risk they'll become acutely ill and be forced to seek emergency help and possible hospitalisation."

Ms Carew said a case manager could see up to 25 patients, "so this will have a major impact on the community".

Mercy Health south western health services executive director Richard Ainley said there was unprecedented demand for its mental health and hospital services.

While not directly answering why case managers had been cut, he said Mercy was making changes to the organisation of its staff from next month in an effort to deliver the best care possible.

"We know there is a need to further expand our services in order to improve access to mental health services in Wyndham and are working with the Department of Health to meet this need," he said.

A government spokeswoman said almost \$27million would be spent in the next four years to meet the increasing demand for mental health services across Victoria, particularly in outer metropolitan growth areas.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



Mr Pallas said Wyndham had to get its fair share.

### **WERRIBEE SOUTH PLAN OFFERS LAND USE CERTAINTY**

*Wyndham Weekly* – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/werribee-south-plan-offers-land-use-certainty/2210974.aspx>

A plan designed to give the Werribee South community and developers more certainty on planning matters has been approved by the state government.

The Werribee South Green Wedge Management Plan covers 11,350 hectares bordered by the Princes Freeway, coastline and the urban growth boundary.

It divides the area into eight zones: intensive agriculture; tourism; Werribee South township; parks, coast, waterways and wetlands; marina; rural residential; Western Treatment Plant; and RAAF and dry-land farming.

Green wedge zones were introduced as part of the former Labor government's Melbourne 2030 strategy to recognise, protect and conserve land adjacent to urban areas for agricultural, environmental, historical and recreation purposes.

Wyndham mayor John Menegazzo said the plan offered economic, environmental and social benefits for the region.

"It will provide a guide on how we can sustainably manage land use and activity.

"It has been developed with input from the Werribee South steering committee, which comprises representatives of Wyndham city, residents, farmers, businesses, and water authorities, as well as state government departments.

"The diversity in Wyndham - from agriculture to the coast, from grassland to shopping centre - is part of what attracts people to live in the municipality.

"This plan will allow us to preserve some of it for future generations."

The plan will be available next month at [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au)

### **TARNEIT SAFETY WORK GOES ON**

*Wyndham Leader* – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/have-your-say-tarneit-safety-work-goes-on/>

Work to improve safety on a busy Tarneit road where a woman was killed last week continues.

The road fatality was the second on Sayers Rd in recent years.

Police said the woman, aged in her early 60s, was hit by a car as she tried to cross the road to a bus stop last Wednesday about 6.15am.

It happened near Penrose Promenade.

Wyndham Council is duplicating Sayers Rd between Tarneit and Derrimut roads and, as part of these works, installing traffic lights with signalised pedestrian crossings at Penrose Promenade and Crossway Ave.

The project started this year and should be completed by the end of the year.

Residents told the Wyndham Leader last week ongoing works had made the road more dangerous than ever and needed to be completed quickly.

The road was particularly dangerous for drivers not familiar with its changing conditions, they said.

The last fatality on Sayers Rd was in 2008, at the corner of Tarneit Rd.

The council, which is responsible for the road, switched on traffic lights at the corner late last year.

Last week's fatality took Wyndham's road toll to six this year, more than the whole of last year.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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It came weeks after a young Werribee man died in hospital following a single-car collision at Hoppers Crossing on Heaths Rd.

In March, four people were killed in two collisions at Werribee.

The driver of the car that hit the woman last week was helping police.

No charges had been laid.

Ambulance Victoria said paramedics tried for half an hour to resuscitate the woman but she died at the scene.

Before paramedics arrived, passers-by and police tried to help.

Police said the collision happened in front of people waiting at the bus stop.

### **SHINY DISCO BALLS IN HOPPERS CROSSING**

*Wyndham Leader – 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/shiny-disco-balls-in-hoppers-crossing/>

Up to 1000 young people will welcome in the school holidays at a dance party in Hoppers Crossing this Friday night.

The event for locals aged 14-17 has become so popular it has been moved to the Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre.

The dance party, called Friday Night Underage, is being put on by Wyndham Council's youth services staff.

The council said it had held dance parties for the past 12 years, mainly at Hoppers Crossing's Youth Resource Centre.

Council chief executive Kerry Thompson said the new and bigger venue was needed to cater for growing attendances.

"Attendance at the dance parties has significantly increased over the past two years from around 200 young people several years ago to a record of 870 for our first event at the Wyndham events centre in September 2010," she said.

About 550 young people were at the last dance party in April.

Council staff and security will supervise the no pass-out event.

There will be prizes and giveaways.

The council said these could include vouchers and movie tickets.

The dance party runs from 7-11pm at the Derrimut Rd centre.

The cost is \$8.

There will be another dance party at the centre on Friday, September 23 and a smaller dance party is on at the new Wyndham Vale Community Learning Centre on Friday, September 2.

One at Point Cook Community Learning Centre for children in grades 6-8 is planned, but a date had not been confirmed yet.

An all-ages gig will be held at the Youth Resource Centre on Saturday, July 11, featuring Closure in Moscow, Dream on Dreamer and Awaken I Am.

For more on the dance parties, visit [youth.wyndham.vic.gov.au](http://youth.wyndham.vic.gov.au)

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# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



## ACROSS THE REGION

### GET READY FOR RAIL SNARL OUT WEST

*The Age – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://theage.drive.com.au/state-urged-to-think-smaller-on-roadwork-20110629-1gqx0.html>

Victoria should build fewer mega-road projects such as the proposed freeway under the Maribyrnong, and invest instead in more small road projects to clear choke points in the network, a report to a state government inquiry has recommended.

In findings that implicitly criticise the former Labor government's approach to decision-making, economic consultant ACIL Tasman reports that the headline-grabbing big road projects in Victoria have barely paid their way, returning benefits no bigger than the costs.

By contrast, it says, evaluations published by the industry's research arm, Austroads, show that smaller road projects in Victoria typically deliver benefits worth two to four times the cost of the project.

The report says the decision to build Australia's biggest desalination plant in one hit, rather than adopt a staged approach, has been "quite costly" for the state. It also finds that too much emphasis was put on water restrictions, when raising the price of water would have done the job more simply.

Tackling a wide range of topics, the report also suggests that the Baillieu government should:

- Consider a historic tradeoff to cut stamp duties, such as those on property sales, and raise more revenue from land tax, by overhauling the exemptions that mean most land goes untaxed.
- Introduce congestion pricing on Melbourne's roads, and earmark the money to pay for improving roads and public transport.
- Allow private operators to run Manila-style jeepneys, minibuses or group taxis on routes poorly served by public transport, or at times when trams, trains or buses are rare.
- Offer 2500 to 3000 lucrative postgraduate scholarships to the world's best and brightest, to attract them to Melbourne, where they could become generators of future opportunity.

ACIL Tasman prepared the report for the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission, the state's equivalent to the Productivity Commission, which has been asked by Treasurer Kim Wells to prepare a state-based reform agenda.

The report, Victoria's Productivity, Competitiveness and Participation, finds that in general Victoria's infrastructure is in good shape, relative to that in other states, and well-run. But it warns population growth is putting it under more pressure, intensifying the need to get value for money.

It says the avoidable costs of congestion of Melbourne roads are on track to double by 2020 and urges the government to build the case publicly for congestion taxes, with proceeds earmarked for road and rail projects, to dissuade people from driving at peak hours.

On taxes, it points out that Victoria has the lowest land tax revenue of any state but the highest reliance on stamp duty on property sales, taxes on insurance and gambling taxes.

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It says Victoria could achieve real productivity gains by shifting its tax balance to get more from land tax - which "has a broad and immobile base, thus minimising the effect on economic decision-making" - and less from taxing business transactions.

The report says Melbourne's public transport compares well with that in other capital cities, but it urges the government to relax restrictions to allow informal minibuses to operate where there are unmet needs.

It also warns the Baillieu government that to put a rail link into the proposed container port at Hastings "would be challenging" and it might have to settle for a port serviced only by trucks.

### **GET READY FOR RAIL SNARL OUT WEST**

*The Herald Sun –29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/get-ready-for-rail-snarl-out-west/story-e6frf7jo-1226083771089>

Transport chaos looms in Melbourne next week, with road lane closures on top of a railway shutdown that will make the west a mess.

Motorists will be fined \$366 if they drive in a special temporary bus lane and their cars will be towed away if they park in it.

The Regional Rail Link Authority has warned of heavy delays along Ballarat Rd, and advised motorists to avoid the area.

The hardline approach will be a double whammy for train users from the west hoping to avoid the rail disruptions by using their cars.

Temporary bus lanes will be set up along a section of Ballarat Rd for special train-replacement services that will ferry 18,000 Metro commuters a day.

Trains will not run between Footscray and Sunshine from Friday night until July 18 due to works on the Regional Rail Link.

Instead, express buses will run from Albion and Sunshine stations to Flemington Racecourse, where special trains will take them into the city.

V/Line services from Bendigo and Ballarat are also being replaced by coaches.

Rail link chief Corey Hannett was forced to defend the authority yesterday amid mounting criticism the public was being kept in the dark about noise levels.

"We have undertaken community consultation," Mr Hannett said on radio station MTR.

The criticism follows the bungled announcement last year of compulsory property acquisitions in Footscray.

The temporary bus lanes are in force from 4am next Monday and will end at 10.30pm on July 15.

Link spokeswoman Ilsa Colson said VicRoads and police were responsible for enforcing the bus lanes.

"Parking in a bus lane is a towable offence," she said.

Under road safety rules, driving in a bus lane attracts a fine of three penalty units, which will be worth \$366 from this Friday.

"Traffic signalling will be adjusted to allow for improved traffic flow in the morning and afternoon peak periods," Ms Colson said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



### **REFORM IS A MIXED BLESSING, SAY WESTERN SUBURBAN DOCTORS**

*Hobsons Bay Leader –29<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/reform-is-a-mixed-blessing-say-western-suburban-doctors/>

Doctors are divided over the Federal Government's decision to split Melbourne's west between two new "Medicare Locals".

Medicare Locals, part of the government's health care plan, are a network of primary health care organisations aimed at improving services and after-hours care.

Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon announced the areas for Victoria's Medicare Locals earlier this month. They include a South Western Melbourne Medicare Local for Hobsons Bay and Wyndham as well as a North Western Melbourne branch.

As previously reported in the Leader, the Westgate GP Network and other western service providers had campaigned against the government's initial plan for one Medicare Local for the whole western region.

Westgate GP Network chairman Dr Joe Garra of The Clinic Werribee said he was pleased federal and state governments had recognised the growth and specific needs of the western suburbs.

"We're very pleased that they've split the western suburbs," Dr Garra said.

"Hobsons Bay and Wyndham will be one Medicare Local which is good because (the area) has one hospital and one GP network. What we don't know is who will run it."

The first four Victorian Medicare Locals, which do not include the two western groups, will start operating on Friday.

The Westgate GP Network, along with other western groups including Werribee Mercy Hospital, ISIS Primary Care, the Gathering Place Health Services, Hobsons Bay Council and Wyndham Council, must now re-submit its bid to run the south-western Medicare Local.

Australian Medical Association Victoria president Dr Harry Hemley said the government was "pushing ahead" with what he termed an "expensive health reform experiment".

### **UPDATES FROM SUMITOMO, UNITRAC, ACONEX AND RAILSERVE**

*Progressive Railroading –27<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

[http://www.progressiverailroading.com/supplier\\_spotlight/news/Updates-from-Sumitomo-Unitrac-Aconex-and-Railservice--27085](http://www.progressiverailroading.com/supplier_spotlight/news/Updates-from-Sumitomo-Unitrac-Aconex-and-Railservice--27085)

- Aconex has obtained a contract to manage communication and documentation for the Regional Rail Link project in Victoria, Australia. During the design and construction phase, Aconex will enable the project's contractors to "access, distribute, track and archive information in real time, using one central system," Aconex officials said in a prepared statement.

### **RESIDENTS 'IN THE DARK' OVER RAIL LINE**

*The Age –27<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/residents-in-the-dark-over-rail-line-20110626-1gltn.html>

Footscray residents affected by the expansion of a railway line through Melbourne's west have been left in doubt about the project's impact on their homes - just weeks before properties are to be bulldozed.

The Regional Rail Link is a new set of railway tracks from Southern Cross Station to Werribee. It was meant to cost \$4.3 billion, but is now being budgeted by the Baillieu government at \$5.3 billion.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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The most expensive railway project in Victorian history, it will separate Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat trains from the suburban system, to increase reliability and allow more services to run.

To build new tracks through a section of the existing Sydenham line in Footscray, the government has compulsorily acquired 63 homes and businesses. These will be either demolished or partially knocked down to make way for the new rail line. Demolition works are to begin in September.

But many residents along the rail line whose houses have not been bought, or which have been only partially acquired, say they remain in the dark about the project's impact on them.

A leaked Environment Protection Authority report, produced last year, shows an expected 53 trains an hour will use the rail corridor by 2016 - double the current number.

This would cause air pollution and "chronic noise-induced sleep disturbance, with significant proportions 'highly disturbed'", the report found.

Two Footscray resident groups fighting to get more information from the Baillieu government about the project's potential impacts say it has been just as secretive as its predecessors about the new line.

Among those affected by the expanded rail line will be Jack Manallack, who lives in Victoria Street. The 88-year-old's house will be neighbour to the regional rail line once a factory next door, built by his father in 1947, is demolished.

The Regional Rail Link Authority previously offered to buy out Mr Manallack, who has lived in his house for 50 years, but he wants to stay.

"There are that many memories I've got here. My father passed away here, my wife passed away here, and I want to pass away here too."

Born in nearby Buckley Street, Mr Manallack has been given no assurances that a brick wall that would protect him from noise and diesel fumes from trains will be left standing during demolition works.

In nearby Railway Place, on the other side of Footscray, residents have also been left shaken by scant details of an elevated rail line to be built behind their homes as part of the project. No noise protection barriers will be built as part of those works.

A further study on the project's impacts, commissioned in light of the EPA report, remains - at this stage - confidential.

### **NUMBERS WILL NOT ADD UP FOR SCHOOLS**

*The Herald Sun –26<sup>th</sup> June 2011*

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/numbers-will-not-add-up-for-schools/story-fn7x8me2-1226081960073>

A classroom crunch is looming at Victoria's secondary schools as a baby boom pushes thousands of extra students through the primary ranks.

Families and experts have likened the education system to a time bomb, with the state's bulging high schools unable to cope with the expected influx.

This year there are almost 8000 more students in prep than year 7 in state schools.

And the situation will escalate, with 12,000 more babies born in Victoria last year than a decade ago.

RMIT planning expert Michael Buxton said the closure of hundreds of inner-suburban schools had combined with a decade of rapid population growth to produce a perfect storm.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



"This has been a sleeper issue for a number of years and I suspect that we're now in for a very rude awakening," Prof Buxton said.

Nowhere is the secondary school shortage more critical than Melbourne's inner suburbs, where families are commonly forced to send their children to schools several suburbs away once they finish primary schooling.

For many, the commute is too hard, forcing them to spend anywhere between \$3000 and \$30,000 on private-school fees.

Principals have complained about disappearing playgrounds as portable classrooms are trucked in to deal with soaring numbers.

About 37 per cent of the new arrivals will be absorbed by independent schools, leaving the Department of Education to accommodate the rest.

While the department said it had undertaken "sophisticated demographic modelling" on future education needs, it confirmed it had plans for only four schools.

Only one - Torquay Secondary College - will be a stand-alone school for years 7 to 12. Two will be prep to year 9 and the other for special-needs students.

The department refused to reveal its enrolment growth forecasts or when the new schools would open.

"When schools reach capacity the department provides relocatable buildings (for) additional students," spokeswoman Megan McNaught said.

But relocatables are little comfort for parents in suburbs such as Richmond, where there has not been a co-educational state high school since Richmond Secondary College closed in 1992.

The school -- later replaced by Melbourne Girls' College - was among the first of more than 400 closed by the Kennett, Bracks and Brumby governments from 1992.

Richmond High School Choices -- a parents' group lobbying for a school in the area -- said 92 per cent of Richmond's girls who finished grade six in 2009 were still in the public system, while only 61 per cent of the suburb's boys were still receiving a state education.

"We have four primary schools all bursting at the seams and just one secondary school for girls only," group spokeswoman Virginia Dods said.

Yarra councillor Stephen Jolly said increased urban density and the desire of families to stay in the area had made the situation "a time bomb".

"It has been ticking away for 15 years but it has been easy for governments to just hope it would go away," Cr Jolly said.

It is a similar story in Coburg, after the Bracks Government closed Moreland City College in 2004, leaving the suburb without a year 7-12 school.

The battle has also been raging in the inner west, where parents from Seddon, Newport, Kingsville and Yarraville have been calling for a new high school.

Templestowe's Julie Pastore, who has a daughter in prep, said a lack of secondary schools was the topic on every parent's lips in the middle-ring suburbs.

"We are all concerned about the great unknown -- what is going to happen in six or seven years' time," Ms Pastore said.

Australian Education Union secretary Mary Bluett is among those who say ballooning class sizes, shrinking playgrounds and declining educational standards are inevitable unless significant resources are thrown at the problem immediately.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011



Opposition education spokesman Rob Hulls accused the new government of ignoring the looming crisis, saying Labor would have built seven new schools over the next three years if it was still in power.

But Education Minister Martin Dixon put the blame back on to Labor, saying the previous government had pushed for population growth but "planning wasn't keeping up".

Mr Dixon cited Melbourne's southeastern growth corridor, where Pakenham Secondary College was the sole state high school.

"Out there is a situation where there is 60 per cent of students in the independent school system - way above the state average of 37 per cent," he said.

The Coalition had committed four times as much money as the previous government buying land for schools, he said.

While Mr Dixon said he was confident in the Government's ability to meet demand for state schooling, he admitted he had seen no enrolment growth forecasts since coming to power.

"I don't know how much will be needed over the next 10 years ... I know that based on current projections, the sorts of things we announced in this year's budget ... would be a fairly typical year based on the figures we have now," he said.

PORTABLE classrooms are rapidly taking over the spaces where Victorian children used to play.

At Port Melbourne Primary School - where student enrolments have leapt from 122 in 2002 to 448 this year - principal Peter Martin has grown used to the steady arrival of relocatables.

"Based on the current growth rates and unless a new school is built in the area soon, my school oval will disappear under a sea of relocatable classrooms within three years," Mr Martin said.

With enrolments expected to reach 784 by 2015, Mr Martin is worried about what will happen to his youngest pupils once they finish grade 6.

By then his 130 grade 6 graduates will be competing with students at three other primary schools for the 150 year 7 places on offer at Albert Park College, which opened this year and is already at capacity.

Across the Yarra River at Kingsville, Steve and Jo Hansby have three children aged 5, 7 and 9 but no local secondary schools.

"Kids from the local primary schools are now going to 13 or 14 different high schools and that is fracturing the community and putting strain on families," Mr Hansby said.

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