

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

14th October 2011



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BRIMBANK

COUNCIL REJECTS BID TO RAZE DEER PARK INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Brimbank Leader – 14th October 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/council-rejects-bid-to-raze-industrial-heritage-fbready/>

A piece of Brimbank's industrial history in Deer Park will be retained.

An application to demolish nine heritage-protected industrial buildings on Ballarat Rd was denied by the Brimbank Council at a planning meeting last Tuesday. Investigations found the buildings on the 146ha site, once a former explosive manufacturing site, were heavily contaminated.

Developer Orica was applying to tear them down.

Five of the buildings, including Ballentines Sporting Ammunition Factory, were considered to be of primary heritage significance.

The brick building, built about 1935, was used as a rifle range in the testing of lead shot pellets.

Objectors included Friends of the Black Powder Mill group, Sunshine Historical Society and National Trust, who feared the proposed demolition, would have a detrimental effect because the buildings were among the last surviving examples of their kind in the state.

In its report, the council said that no proposal for development was received, and there was a lack of willingness to retain and restore these significant buildings.

EXTENSION APPROVED FOR SUNSHINE TOWERS

Brimbank Leader – 12th October 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/extension-approved-for-sunshine-towers/>

Brimbank Council has endorsed plans to increase the number of units in the controversial three-tower Metro West development.

The \$150 million mixed-use development next to the Sunshine Marketplace has recently been sold.

Last week the site's new owners, a Victorian-based private equity group who bought it for \$15 million, applied to Brimbank Council to extend the existing permit and approve changes to the design, which the council supported.

The changes include a reduction in the number of larger apartments in Tower A, which creates space for an additional 35 apartments, a permit extension of one year and the redesign of the facade.

A report prepared for the council meeting said the proposed changes would result in a higher quality development and acknowledged that as the new proposal was similar to the existing one, there was "very little chance of successfully defending a refusal of the current application".

Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association president Darlene Reilly said the new design looked "absolutely shocking".

"You go through the public display process but once the permit is issued they can increase the number of apartments without public consultation," Ms Reilly said.

She said Metro west should make a greater contribution towards local infrastructure.

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Metro West spokesman Glyn Bosisto said the amendments were minor and the development would give first-home buyers the opportunity to live in an established area close to the city.

Construction is scheduled to begin midway through next year.

DRINKS LAW 'COULD SAVE LIVES'

Brimbank Weekly – 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/drinks-law-could-save-lives/2318826.aspx>

The father of a teenager who died following a heavy drinking session at a friend's house has welcomed a new law that bans adults giving liquor to children, saying it could prevent more alcohol-related deaths.

From November 1, adults will be banned from supplying alcohol to minors (under 18) in a private residence unless their parents give consent.

People breaching the law could face fines of up to \$7000.

Melton's Leigh Clark, 15, died in 1999 after drinking alcohol given to him by a friend's mother at a party.

He collapsed in a nearby paddock and his body was not found for days.

His father Bruce has been fighting ever since for tougher laws on the secondary supply of alcohol.

"The most important thing about this law is that adults will need to get real permission before they give any alcohol to kids," he said.

"Parents of kids going out to someone's house at night now have rights."

He believed his son's death could have been prevented by the new law.

The state government has launched a \$1million education campaign and Mr Clark said he was "100 per cent" behind the push.

"It is important parents and kids are aware of the new laws and start to ask questions. If they are educated on the laws they'll think again before putting up booze for kids."

Vic Health acting CEO John Fitzgerald said an overwhelming majority of parents had backed the law.

"In our research we have found about 45 per cent of underage drinkers get alcohol from parents and 91 per cent of the parents we've surveyed have shown support for the new laws," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to give parents control over who gives alcohol to their kids."

However, Kororoit MP Marlene Kairouz said she feared the government campaign could lull parents into a false sense of security.

She said the state government's campaign should warn parents the laws won't stop children drinking at private homes.

"The reality is many teenagers bring alcohol with them to a party."

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VIOLENCE TAKES A RAP

Brimbank Weekly – 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/violence-takes-a-rap/2318807.aspx>

Deer Park students like Noah Beyene, Kyanne Dunlop and Yonas Tamiru (pictured) have hooked up with some of hip-hop's finest talent to spread the anti-violence message.

Leading artists Pex and Mantra and music teacher Dobe Newton worked with the Victoria University Secondary College students to create songs that share their experiences of violence and conflict in Brimbank.

The Words not Weapons program, run by the Justice Department and Mushroom, has produced a CD with tracks from schools that took part.

Teacher Michael Currie says it is normally challenging to get students to discuss these issues openly.

"What was most positive and encouraging was seeing so many of the students opening up and talking about the conflict they see in their everyday lives and ways they can overcome it."

Listen to the VU Secondary College track Violence Ain't Good at livenofear.com.au

DOGGY DNA A HOT REQUEST FOR VETS

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/317/story/142037.html>

Veterinary clinics are being inundated by pet owners eager to prove their dogs are not dangerous.

Following the tragic death of four-year-old Ayen Chol and the new dog ownership laws that followed, many dog owners in Brimbank fear their dogs might be mistaken by neighbours and the council as a pitbull.

The new legislation introduced last month will see unregistered pitbulls seized and destroyed.

Not knowing the breed of their dogs and fearing they will be put down many residents are choosing to get their dogs DNA tested to find out what breed they are.

Veterinary nurse Kerry Bozicevic from Brimbank Vet Clinic said while the testing had been available for the past six months, there had been an increase in the enquiries they were receiving from concerned pet owners since the new laws were introduced.

Ms Bozicevic said people seemed keen to ascertain the definite breed of their dog.

She said dogs that had been tested included Staffordshire terriers, heelers, golden retrievers and even a Spoodle.

"People seem a little more fearful and want to know exactly what their dog is. Especially with cross breeds," she said.

Altona Vet Clinic's Dr Rod Sharpin said they had performed more than a dozen DNA tests on dogs since the new law came into play.

"Most of our clients that are coming in, may have dogs that could be considered of mistakenly identified as a pitbull," he said.

Dr Sharpin said before the new law came in to effect they had barely performed any DNA tests on dogs.

"This test is aimed at trying to give the owners some piece of mind to confidently go to the council and know the breed of their dog.

"We can rule the dog out of being a pitbull but we can't actually identify a pitbull," he said.

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"A pitbull has a number of genetic markers made up of a number of different breeds – so we can rule out pitbull but we can't say that it is."

Dr Sharpin said the test can never be used in a legal situation but was meant to add a little weight to a pet owner's belief that their dog is not a restricted breed.

"A staffy (Staffordshire terrier) or American Staffy is often confused for a pitbull," he said.

Dr Sharpin said these breeds can be identified by the test so the owner can confidently say their dog is a Staffy or a Boxer etc..."

The Altona Vet said the situation was confusing but was not confident that the new laws would have the desired effect.

"I'm feeling sorry for everybody at the moment. My honest opinion is I don't think they will really achieve a lot ... and a lot of nice dogs may be put down because of it."

Dr Sharpin said pet owners should not have any problems as long as their dog is registered, de-sexed and micro-chipped.

SCHOOL'S OUT

Brimbank Star– 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/317/story/142032.html>

Pure luck avoided a tragedy last month when a car ploughed into an Albion primary school after an accident on King Edward Avenue.

The accident came just weeks after nearby residents submitted a petition to Brimbank Council calling for traffic safety measures to be installed on Adelaide St, which they fear has become a thoroughfare for irresponsible motorists, particularly during peak hours.

According to concerned onlookers the accident occurred when a vehicle travelling north along Adelaide St and turning right into King Edward Avenue was hit by a vehicle travelling south on Adelaide St.

It's believed the vehicle travelling south spun out of control, flattening a roundabout sign and smashing through the fence of St Theresa's Primary School, breaking a fence pole clean and ending up well into the school grounds.

The accident occurred during school holidays; normally students are enjoying their lunch in the yard at the time the incident occurred.

Frank Reinthaler, a member of Stop Adelaide St Speeding and Rat-Running group, said the debris went a few metres into the schoolyard.

"It's horrible to think that the car was pushed into the school ground at least three or four metres as observed by the tyre marks left on the running track," Mr Reinthaler said.

He said the street, which has two primary schools and a kindergarten located on it, has become a "speedway for irresponsible drivers".

The frustrated resident said while the council had committed to installing traffic counters during October and assign an officer to investigate, the group was concerned that nothing would be done to improve safety for school children and residents.

"Let's hope that the lesson of this latest incident is not lost on the council and that our concerns will be better addressed rather than a matter of simply ringing the Hoon Line."

He added Albion Primary School had become so concerned about traffic conditions that they had forbidden students from riding their bikes to school.

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Brimbank Council general manager of infrastructure and environment Paul Younis, said the council was not aware of the recent accident that occurred on King Edward Avenue.

Mr Younis said the council had responded to concerns received about speeding, hooning and “rat-running” in Adelaide Street in the past and several traffic management measures had been implemented.

He said the petition was currently being investigated and would take into account traffic volumes, speed and vehicle classifications and would also consider police-reported crashes in the area.

U-TURN BURN

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/317/story/142065.html>

Calder Park Raceway has come under fire from outraged Brimbank motorists who claim they have been duped in to donating to a charity that does not exist.

The Raceway has been charging drivers \$5 to enter their property to discourage illegal U-turns as previously reported by Star (Wrong way, 4 October).

A sign advertising the \$5 fee also displayed the text: ‘All precedes Sunbury Cancer Council.’ But Cancer Council Victoria spokesperson Deb Stringer told Star last week that this charity did not exist and that the Cancer Council had not received any funds from the Raceway.

Calder Park general manager Ian McArthur said it was an innocent mistake and that the funds have been donated to the Sunbury Cancer and Natural Therapy Foundation.

Mr McArthur said last week that up to 600 cars had been performing illegal U-turns on their property which had created a serious safety issue.

Brimbank Highway Patrol Senior Constable Trent Hewet said drivers were endangering themselves and others by not U-turning at designated points along the Calder Fwy.

But drivers have been outraged by the fee, labelling it as “unfair” and “unethical”, claiming signage wasn’t clear and that they were not provided with a receipt of their donation.

Mr McArthur said the fee was for entry to the Raceway and not a donation.

“The donation’s being made by us,” he told Star.

“We can donate it to any charity we like. The \$5 is a deterrent. We haven’t done this as a result of trying to make money.”

The Sunbury Cancer and Natural Therapy Foundation confirmed they had received a donation from the Raceway recently, but would not disclose the amount.

Mr McArthur said it was around \$160.

“The numbers (of drivers performing illegal U-turns) have drastically reduced now which is great,” he said.

But drivers are still unhappy.

One driver told Star she was outraged a receipt issued to her by the Raceway read “illegal U-turn” when she was told her \$5 was a donation to the Sunbury Cancer Council.

Shane, who withheld his surname, told Star the Raceway had behaved “morally and ethically... wrong”.

“I can understand from their point of view (why they’re charging drivers),” Shane said.

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“But I think he’s going the wrong way about it.”

Shane said he had contacted Consumer Affairs because the Raceway was falsely advertising the money was being given to the Sunbury Cancer Council.

He called on Mr McArthur to refund the money or donate it to Cancer Council Victoria and apologise to drivers.

Ms Stringer said the Cancer Council only endorsed fundraising activities which encourage voluntary donations and comply with the Fundraising Appeals Act and state laws.

She said locals wanting to get involved in fundraising can contact Regan Zaxos on 1300 65 65 85 to take part in the Sunbury Relay for Life in November or visit www.cancervic.org.au

BIODIVERSITY CALL

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/sunshne-ardeer-albion/317/story/142052.html>

Brimbank residents are being asked to have their say on the draft Biodiversity Strategy that provides a plan to protect and enhance the area’s natural landscape over the next decade.

The strategy has been developed as part of the council’s commitment to protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity within the municipality as identified within the Brimbank Community Plan 2009-2030.

These natural areas, which are scattered throughout Brimbank, provide us with a snapshot of the plants and animals that were once widespread across the land and across a large area of Western Victoria. Many of these significant plants and animals have been recognised and are protected by State and Federal government legislation.

Brimbank administrator and chair of council’s community advisory sustainability and environment committee, Ms Joanne Anderson said the strategy would assist the council to implement measures to ensure it continued to protect and improve the quality and quantity of these natural areas and look for opportunities to connect the sites through natural corridors ensuring the long term sustainability of the native species and vegetation communities.

“Most importantly, we will continue to foster greater community understanding and connection with our significant natural areas which will continue to create and build on the active participation and ownership already shown by the wider Brimbank community,” Ms Anderson said.

Residents can have input into the issue during the consultation period which runs until 2 November.

FEARING THE PAST

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/317/story/142038.html>

Residents have spoken out against the return of councillors to Brimbank City Council calling for “quality not quantity.”

Residents voiced their concerns at a Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) meeting last week where the VEC heard submissions to their review of council wards and councillor numbers.

The VEC has recommended that Brimbank have three councillors in Taylors, Grasslands and Harvester wards, with two councillors in Horseshoe Bend ward when council elections are held next year.

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One resident speaking at last week's meeting said they were "disturbed" the VEC had recommended the same structure as it had in 2009 when the councillors were sacked and replaced with administrators.

"What we experienced and endured last time... it didn't work," the resident said.

"The administrators have suggested the council can operate with less councillors. What we would like is for the administrators to continue."

A second resident backed up those sentiments, claiming that the administrators had "proved they're doing a good job".

"We've had a bad experience with 11 and good experience with three," the resident said.

"I would first stress for quality, then for quantity."

A representative for the Greens said the VEC's suggested structures wouldn't work.

"We may find the return of democracy to Brimbank short-lived or not what we hoped for," the representative said.

The Greens have proposed nine councillors equally divided across three wards.

"We think this option is like the Brownlow medal option, it's best and fairest," he said.

Other submitters, including former Keilor MP George Seitz, did not choose to speak on their submissions to the VEC.

In his submission Mr Seitz claimed the "Anglo Saxon Celtic" dominated council were discriminating against the "179 different nationalities" in Brimbank.

Other submitters wrote that it would be a "travesty of justice" to keep the same ward structure as was in 2009.

"Brimbank needs the same system as Melbourne City Council, nine elected councillors and the mayor to be elected by the residents," the submitter wrote.

Public submissions to the review are now closed, with the report available from Wednesday 26 October.

EYE ON DRUNKS

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/317/story/142056.html>

Kororoit MP Marlene Kairouz has warned parents in Brimbank and Melton not to be lulled into a false sense of security after the State Government announced its new alcohol laws last week.

Ms Kairouz called on parents to remain vigilant in the wake of new legislation which will see adults who supply alcohol to minors fined.

The new laws will make it an offence for adults to supply alcohol to a minor in a private home without parental consent.

An adult who supplies alcohol to a minor without a parent's consent could be subject to the same penalty faced by licensees who supply alcohol to minors in licensed venues – a maximum of over \$7000.

The problem with Mr Baillieu's new laws is not what they will do – but what they won't," she said.

"Our concern is that these laws in practice are unworkable and are distracting the Baillieu Government from investing in programs that will actually work – that is, better and more targeted education to parents and children about the harmful effects of underage drinking."

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She said the Government had a responsibility to caution parents that the new laws won't stop children drinking at private homes.

"The reality is many teenagers bring alcohol with them to a party.

"The Baillieu Government must make sure parents are aware of the limitations of these laws."

She also claimed there were serious practical issues in enforcing the new laws for police and for parents hosting parties.

"If there are 50 teenagers at a party and 25 have parental consent to be supplied with alcohol and 25 do not, this makes it very difficult for the host parents to know who is allowed to drink and who isn't," Ms Kairouz said.

She called on the government to maintain a focus on community education as the key to tackling binge drinking.

"Teenage binge drinking is a very serious social issue confronting parents today. It has very harmful long-term health effects and young people under the influence of alcohol are more vulnerable to dangerous and violent situations."

FERAL CAT FURORE

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/317/story/142036.html>

Brimbank has a feral cat problem with more than 2000 caught by council in the past financial year.

The council has come under fire for the out-of-control feral cat populations, which have been seen in and around restaurants.

A Deer Park resident told Star she had seen up to 20 feral cats hanging around restaurants on Ballarat Rd in Deer Park because restaurant owners were feeding them.

"I saw cats going into the kitchen," the resident told Star.

"I called the council and they said well did you get sick from the food?"

"He said if you're not sick...that's it for us."

Star also witnessed seven feral cats wandering around restaurants on Main Rd East in St Albans.

Western Suburbs Animal Rescue Service member Nathan Miles said Brimbank was being overrun by feral cats.

Mr Miles said he had removed almost 100 cats from a Deer Park restaurant over a three year period but couldn't get rid of them because they were regularly being fed.

"These people won't listen," Mr Miles said.

"We've reported it to the council, but the council, as usual, has done nothing.

"When it comes to animal management it's a debacle."

Mr Miles said the issue was one of animal welfare and public health and safety that highlighted the "incompetence" of the council's animal management.

"The Administrators need to review the animal management team from the ground up," he said.

"We're not going to relent, they will be found accountable."

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Brimbank City Council General Manager of City Development Stephen Sully said he was aware of the allegations surrounding the restaurants, but investigations had not been able to prove the cats were inside the restaurants.

He said the council had undertaken “several” cat trapping programs in Deer Park and St Albans but that there were increases in cat numbers during breeding seasons in the year.

Mr Sully said the council had picked up 2042 cats in the past financial year.

“Most of the cats collected were feral cats, not registered, not micro-chipped and without any form of identification,” Mr Sully said.

He said the council is continuing to promote responsible pet ownership and encourage residents to report sightings of cats gathering inside or outside places that serve food to the public.

HELP STEPS UP

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/317/story/142049.html>

The State Government is spending \$50 million over the next financial year on the fight against family violence.

A spokeswoman for Crime Prevention Minister Andrew McIntosh told Star the money will be spent on a range of initiatives to increase the safety of victims and perpetrators of the crime.

The spokeswoman said there had been a steady rise in the reporting of family violence incidents but evidence showed that the crime is still largely under-reported.

Victoria Police has recorded 7394 incidents of domestic violence in the year to June across the northwest, with Hume Police Service Area (PSA) topping the list with 2037 incidents.

Brimbank PSA had 1696 incidents, Whittlesea had 1377, Wyndham 1331, Hobsons Bay 550 and Maribyrnong had 403 incidents.

“There is a need to improve responses and increase reporting,” the spokeswoman said.

“Improvements in police response to family violence and increased confidence to report to police have contributed to increased reporting rates across Victoria.”

Welfare services across these areas have been calling for more funding to deal with domestic violence, while some Labor MPs have slammed Mr McIntosh for referring the issue to the Women’s Affairs Minister during a session of Parliament (Funding call, 20 September, Sunshine Star).

But Mr McIntosh’s spokeswoman defended his decision, telling Star that 40,000 reports of family violence were made to Victoria Police last year and evidence had shown the majority of victims were women and children.

“Family violence is a multifaceted and complex issue that needs to focus on education, prevention, response and recovery,” she said.

“It is an issue that also sits across a number of ministerial portfolios including women’s affairs, housing, health, police, attorney-general, education, crime prevention and local government.

“To respond effectively to family violence it is important to have programs that address both the victim and also hold the perpetrator to account and make them accountable for their behaviour.”

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She said the \$50 million would be invested in supporting Preventing Violence Against Women projects across Maribyrnong, Brimbank and Wyndham councils and the Strengthening Risk Management Project in Hume, which will test the delivery of multi-agency approaches to family violence, along with directly funding welfare services.

STAMPING OUT POLLUTION

Brimbank Star – 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/317/story/142040.html>

Brimbank City Council has signed a two-year agreement with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria, pledging to work together to stamp out pollution.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organisations acknowledges the joint responsibility they have to identify, investigate and enforce action against industry for breaches of the Environment Protection Act of Brimbank Planning Scheme.

Brimbank General Manager of City Development Stephen Sully said the council had initiated the MOU from their council plan to exchange information with the EPA.

“Council is committed to managing Brimbank land to its best and highest use, and this groundbreaking agreement that was initiated by council will facilitate our goal,” Mr Sully said.

“Council is committed to rehabilitating and redeveloping former industrial sites and addressing the environmental impacts of industry.”

Brimbank CEO Nick Foa said the MOU would allow the organisations to use their “collective knowledge and expertise” to address issues such as the allegations of

contamination at the Cairnlea Estate and the possibility of a landfill being built at the former quarry in Kealba.

EPA CEO John Merritt said the MOU meant officers would work “side-by-side” to cut red tape.

“Too often in the past we have seen local government and EPA trying to achieve similar outcomes – be it reductions in air, noise or water pollution – without enough consultation or co-operation with each other,” Mr Merritt said.

“We believe we have the checks and balances right in the agreement to ensure it delivers better environmental outcomes for local residents while properly preserving the independence of the EPA as regulator.”

Both bodies will continue to undertake independent investigations of issues in order to provide evidence for compliance action and satisfy community expectations..

THOUSANDS IN NEW HOMES MISS THE BUS

Brimbank Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/thousands-in-new-homes-miss-the-bus/2318828.aspx>

Thousands of Caroline Springs and Burnside Heights residents are living beyond the reach of public transport, according to the Bus Association of Victoria.

There are large public transport black spots in Melbourne's rapidly growing outer suburbs, new research shows.

BusVic estimates 34,000 housing lots developed between 2004 and 2009 are still without public transport within walking distance - defined as 400 metres from a bus or tram route or 800 metres from a railway station.

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Added to them are another 21,000 lots which were expected to be developed in the past two years.

Suburbs with significant areas beyond the reach of public transport include Deer Park, Caroline Springs and Burnside Heights.

BusVic executive director Chris Lowe said there was a lag between land developments being commissioned and the beginning of public transport services.

"If urban and transport planning were more integrated we may not have this lag," he said.

"A key objective of any new transport plan should be to ensure access to public transport services is available when residents are moving in and that the access is within 400 metres of their homes. If we don't plug this gap then we are just increasing Melbourne's dependency on private transport."

He called on the state government to make funds available to redress the growing backlog.

"There is also an element of inequity in terms of the scope of services on offer to those in the inner suburbs far exceeding the scope of services available to those living in the urban fringe," Mr Lowe said.

Long-time Caroline Springs resident Joy Cox said she was disappointed there weren't more bus services operating at local shopping centres.

"There are so many more people coming in and a lot of them wait around for long periods of time for buses to come," she said.

Transport Minister Terry Mulder's spokeswoman, Larissa Garvin, said BusVic's comments ignored a massive expansion of heavy rail to growth areas which would start from next year, including expansion of electrified train services to Sunbury.

"These rail extensions will provide a huge boost in public transport access for growth areas in the north and north-west," she said.

"The Regional Rail Link Project will provide a further expansion of heavy rail to our fastest growing areas in Melbourne's west, and the government has already started a study into a new rail line to Rowville in Melbourne's south-east."

BIODIVERSITY DRAFT AIMS AT NATURAL FIT

Brimbank Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/biodiversity-draft-aims-at-natural-fit/2318821.aspx>

Brimbank residents can have their say on a new strategy which aims to protect and enhance the municipality's natural areas.

The council's draft biodiversity strategy is aimed at improving the quality and quantity of Brimbank's natural areas in the next 10 years.

It replaces the council's 1997 natural heritage strategy.

Residents have until November 2 to comment on the plan.

Administrator Joanne Anderson said the strategy would help the council build on the active participation and ownership already shown by the community.

"The strategy will help council look for opportunities to connect natural area sites through natural corridors ensuring the long-term sustainability of the native species and vegetation communities," she said.

"Most importantly, we will continue to foster greater community understanding and connection with our significant natural areas."

Community workshops will be held at the Keilor municipal offices on October 19 and at Glengala Community Centre on October 27.

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More details: 92494905.

KEILOR VILLAGE PLAN DECRIED

Brimbank Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/keilor-village-plan-decried/2318829.aspx>

The president of the Keilor Residents and Ratepayers Association fears a new development plan for Keilor Village's centre is too focused on commercial needs.

The document has been developed by Brimbank Council in consultation with residents and is open to public comment until November 11.

The plan was born out of consultation about the village in 2008, during which residents expressed a desire to maintain the village character and create an attractive and sustainable community.

But the association's president, Susan Jennison, is concerned the draft plan identifies an area on Kennedy Street which could be considered for the expansion of the village centre.

According to the document, the land could be rezoned from residential zone 1 to business zone 1.

"If that specific area is changed to a business zone area it could have a huge impact on residents," Mrs Jennison said.

"The document doesn't focus on one shopping area and it is important the village concept is applied for the whole of Keilor Village."

She has urged residents to read the document and have their say.

The plan has recommended improving connectivity between both sides of the Old Calder Highway, improving the relationship between the library and art gallery to

strengthen a sense of community, investigating the introduction of bicycle lanes and exploring the connection of paths and lanes in the surrounding area.

Comments can be sent to the council's planning department at 704 B Old Calder Highway, Keilor. More details: brimbank.vic.gov.au

COUNCILS WANT ACTION ON HEALTH CRISIS

Brimbank Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/councils-want-action-on-health-crisis/2318827.aspx>

Western suburb councils are demanding improved hospital services to tackle the region's growing health crisis.

Brimbank Council's acting general manager of community well-being, Chris Kelly, said the municipality has fewer aged-care places than the state average and the rate of general practitioners available per resident is going backwards.

Department of Human Services figures show Brimbank has 30 low-care, aged-care places per 1000 eligible residents compared to the state average of 41.

There are 0.77 general practitioners per 1000 residents, down from 0.85 the previous year and more than 25per cent below the state average.

"There is also a shortage in alcohol and other drug treatment services in the city of Brimbank," Ms Kelly said.

Brimbank has identified a number of health and well-being challenges and responses in its 2010-14 plan.

"Heart disease, depression, type 2 diabetes and stroke are the four largest causes of years of life lost for the Brimbank population and all are above the state average," Ms Kelly said.

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Another 600 more hospital beds will be needed in the west in the next decade, according to the state government's Victorian Health Priorities Framework.

Hobsons Bay deputy mayor Tony Briffa said despite the higher prevalence of chronic diseases in the west, there was just one hospital with four campuses run by Western Health - the only other hospital being the Mercy at Werribee.

"One can see where the funding is going and the disparity of services despite the western suburbs containing the largest population growth area in Victoria and a higher prevalence of chronic disease compared to the rest of the state."

Western Health chief executive Kath Cook said hospitals in the west met only 50-60 per cent of the population needs.

Kathryn McFarlane, a spokeswoman for Health Minister David Davis, said Victoria's health system had not been properly planned in the past 11 years under Labor.

FORMER BRIMBANK COUNCILLORS WANT TO RETURN

Brimbank Weekly – 11th October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/former-brimbank-councillors-want-to-return/2318817.aspx>

Only one of 11 Brimbank councillors dismissed by the former state government has ruled out running for election next year.

The council was sacked by then local government minister Richard Wynne in 2009 following a scathing report by the Victorian Ombudsman.

With just 12 months left until the next scheduled council election, voters are waiting to hear from Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell as to whether democracy will be returned to Brimbank.

Greens councillor Geraldine Brooks was the only sacked councillor to unequivocally rule out re-election.

"We need more residents who have a record of being involved in the community to put their hand up and run for council."

Former mayor Troy Atanasovski said he would be seeking to run again as he considered the sacking a travesty of justice.

"I've never given up working for the community. In 2008 it was a fresh new council. There were eight new councillors and the Ombudsman's report was mostly about the former council. But the minister didn't see it that way."

Sam David said he was interested. "The administrators have done a good job but there are only three of them; they can't do the kind of job councillors do."

Marion Martin will consider running depending on who else contests the election. She remains bitterly disappointed at the sacking.

"There are still a lot of unanswered questions to be answered. We have all been tarred with the same brush."

Margaret Giudice said she was definitely thinking about it, but wouldn't confirm either way until closer to the time.

"It is up to the people to decide who they want representing them. They will make their decision based on the candidate's track record and commitment to the community."

Stuart Miller said he was leaning away from running, but the situation could change by next October.

"My personal feeling about the matter is there were no adverse findings that would preclude anyone running again."

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Former deputy mayor Tran Siu is ineligible to seek election at any level of government for seven years after he was found guilty last month of distributing two unregistered how-to-vote cards.

Robert Bozinovski, Maria Kiselis, Heidi Seitz and Robert Shamon could not be contacted.

A spokesman for Mrs Powell said there was nothing to stop the sacked councillors contesting the election.

"Provided the former councillors are not in breach of [the Local Government Act] they will be entitled to stand and face the verdict of the electorate."

JOINT BRIMBANK ENVIRONMENT PLAN

Brimbank Leader— 11TH October 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/joint-brimbank-environment-plan-fbready/>

Brimbank Council and the EPA have joined forces to tackle environmental issues across the municipality.

A two-year trial agreement was signed last week, in what could become a new model for state and local government co-operation in Victoria.

EPA and council officers will work together to share information, determining the best way to enforce industry breaches against the Environment Protection Act or Brimbank Planning Scheme.

They will collaborate on submissions and applications to VCAT, while the EPA will provide technical support to help guide the council in planning applications within buffer zones.

EPA chief executive John Merritt said the agreement would encourage consultation and co-operation.

"Too often in the past we have seen local government and EPA trying to achieve similar outcomes - be it reductions in air, noise or water pollution - without enough consultation or co-operation with each other," he said. "The end result is frustrated residents and often a less than perfect resolution."

Brimbank chief executive Nick Foa said working together would improve outcomes for both the community and industries.

"Through this agreement, both EPA and council can use their collective knowledge and expertise to ensure the issues associated with former landfills and potentially contaminated sites are managed effectively and with minimal impact on the broader community," he said.

The EPA and the council said they would continue to undertake independent investigations of issues as they arose in order to provide evidence for compliance action and to satisfy community expectations.

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HOBSONS BAY

IT'S LIGHTS ON TO A NET BENEFIT

Hobson Bay Star– 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/williamstown-altona-laverton/317/story/142112.html>

Altona City Soccer Club will receive \$73,679 to install and upgrade lights at their H.C. Kim Reserve as part of a State Government program.

Altona City Soccer Club president Ray Chetchuti said he was over the moon by the announcement.

"We're always fighting, rallying and lobbying to upgrade our facilities," he said.

"Especially with the amount of kids we've got coming through.

"We need those funds to upgrade and accommodate all the kids that want to play soccer."

Mr Chetchuti said the club had about 450 playing members.

"We're a fairly large club," he said.

"We obviously need to expand and that money will help to help accommodate all of these kids."

Western Metropolitan Region MP Bernie Finn said local clubs were attracting greater numbers to their ranks, especially with the recent announcement of the return of Harry Kewell to play for Victory in the A-League.

"This funding boost will ensure Altona City Soccer Club can not only cater for growing demand but accommodate even more people from the wider community wanting to join in the fun," Mr Finn said.

Mr Finn said the program, Strengthening the World Game Program, will not only benefit the soccer club but will develop and open up a range of possibilities for other sports as well as nearby schools.

Minister for Sport and Recreation Hugh Delahunty said the program had provided over \$4.5m in funding to 56 projects across Victoria to date.

For more information about the Strengthening the World Game Program visit www.sport.vic.gov.au.

BOOZE BANS EXTENDED

Hobson Bay Leader– 11th October 2011

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/booze-bans-extended/>

Drinking alcohol will be banned in public areas in parts of Altona, Williamstown and Laverton again this summer after Hobsons Bay Council voted to continue to trial the bans for another two years.

Williamstown Sen-Sgt Ian Hicks said most people behaved appropriately once they were aware of the alcohol-free zones, which were extended in the last two years.

Are the alcohol-free zones a good idea? Tell us below.

"(The zones) are an effective tool to stop people bringing down slabs of beer," Sen-Sgt Hicks said.

Thirteen infringement notices for alcohol offences were issued in the Altona zone last summer and four within Williamstown's zone.

But according to a report by council officers, more evidence needs to be gathered by Victoria Police over the next two summers before the council can make an "informed decision" on whether to make the bans permanent.

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Cr Angela Altair said she would like to see the incoming council, which will be elected in 2012, make the bans permanent.

“We’ve definitely benefited from these alcohol bans,” Cr Altair said.

“I’m very confident (that) since the introduction of, and extension of, the alcohol bans have been beneficial in reducing antisocial behaviour.”

The Altona alcohol free zone comprises the area bounded by the Esplanade, Civic Pde, Romawi St and Bayview St.

Williamstown’s zone extends from the beach back to Railway Pde and west from Thompson St to Bayview St.

Laverton’s zone extends north from Laverton station and is bounded by Woods, Thomas and Hickey streets and Maher Rd.

The zones are in effect from December 1 to April 30.

CALL FOR RAIL SAFETY GATES

Hobsons Bay Leader – 11th October 2011

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/theres-space-for-gates/>

A Hobsons Bay councillor has dismissed as “nonsense” the view that there is not enough space at North Williamstown railway station to upgrade the pedestrian crossing with automatic safety gates.

Cr Angela Altair told last week’s council meeting that the council had previously received “all sorts of silly excuses” the last time it requested the gates in 2008.

On September 28 this year, a 27-year-old Williamstown cyclist was hit by a train at the station crossing, reigniting calls for the safety gates to be installed.

In September 2008, acting Public Transport Minister Tim Pallas wrote a letter to Williamstown Labor MP Wade Noonan that said there was not enough space to upgrade the pedestrian crossing to an automatic system.

But Cr Altair said last week: “Our officers assure us that’s nonsense because at the gates at Altona there’s even less space and they’ve managed to put in the automatic gates. There’s no excuse ... it is now a matter of genuine life and death.”

Williamstown North ward councillor Peter Hemphill was not at the council meeting but told the Leader the crossing was a “disaster waiting to happen”.

“It’s always been quite clear to me there should be automatic gates to stop individuals being hit by trains,” Cr Hemphill said.

“It was recognised three years ago there was a serious problem there.

“Again I would call on the government and VicTrack to install automatic gates.”

VicTrack spokesman Jason Murray said VicTrack was not responsible for funding crossing upgrades and was only the “delivery agency” or “builder”.

“Decisions on what pedestrian crossing to upgrade, and where funding comes from, are made by other bodies,” Mr Murray said.

Public Transport Minister Terry Mulder did not respond to the Leader’s requests for comment.

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MANY A SLIP OR TRIP IN THE HOME

Hobsons Bay Leader— 8th October 2011

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/many-a-slip-or-trip-in-the-home/>

Cracking concrete and tripping hazards are posing a serious health risk for elderly and disabled residents in Hobsons Bay, a report reveals.

Archicentre data shows almost 40 per cent of homes inspected in Hobson Bay had a trip-and-slip hazard, compared with the Melbourne average of 31 per cent.

Archicentre's Victorian state manager David Hallett said a quarter of the homes visited by the building-inspection service were shown to have a serious safety problem.

"Things that haven't been hazardous before have become hazardous," Mr Hallett said.

"Residents become less mobile or their eyesight can deteriorate and that can cause more obstacles around the home."

Mr Hallett said trip-and-slip hazards included torn carpet, uneven pavement, loose rugs and poor lighting. There was also an increase in the incidence of cracking, with one in five Hobsons Bay homes showing signs of cracks.

Mr Hallett said the recent drought might have played a major part in problems.

According to an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report, more than 66,000 elderly people are taken to hospital every year after suffering a fall in their homes.

Mr Hallett urged residents to take advantage of the free home-safety inspection service.

He said families should monitor safety issues in elderly relatives' homes.

"If you see a hazard, remove it immediately. It could save a life or prevent serious injury," he said.

Low-income earners over the age of 60 and people with a disability are eligible for the free home-safety inspection. Details: 9815 1900.

MARIBRYNONG

ASH AIMS TO BREAK BARRIERS

Maribyrnong Leader— 14th October 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/ash-aims-to-break-barriers-fbready/>

A new community liaison officer at Footscray police station aims to break down barriers.

Sen-Constable Ash Dixit said his role was to promote awareness among diverse communities of the role of police and to encourage interaction with police.

Sen-Constable Dixit said many people, particularly those from migrant communities, often were hesitant to speak to police, even as victims because they were unaware of their rights. When Sen-Constable Dixit first migrated to Australia from India in 1999, he too was hesitant to approach police, he said.

He said his "job is to ensure that if they hesitate they (know) they can always approach me and talk to me about the issue" so he could guide them in the right direction.

Sen-Constable Dixit said he would work in partnership with various community groups to ensure they understood how police officers could help them and to

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reassure them they did not need to be afraid. He said one of the first initiatives he had formed was the Maribyrnong African Youth Advancement Committee.

It aimed to help establish young African people in the community and guide them to procure jobs, traineeships or voluntary work - any avenue that could lead to employment.

Sen-Constable Dixit can be contacted at Footscray Police Station in Irving St, Footscray, or on 9689 4630.

WALKING TO LEARN

Maribyrnong Star– 13th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/317/story/142329.html>

Maribyrnong Mayor Sarah Carter is calling on all kids to pull on their shoes for Victoria Walks to School Day next week.

Victoria Walks to School day aims to raise awareness of the need for children to make walking part of their daily routines to improve health and fitness, friendships and self confidence.

Last year 70,000 primary school children from 363 Victorian schools participated – double the number of school kids who had walked to school the previous day.

Schools that sign up go in the running to win sports carnivals and sporting vouchers, and have the chance to win the Golden Shoe award.

“Walking is a great way to stay fit, be kind to the environment and enjoy your surroundings and friends,” Cr Carter said.

“I encourage all school kids, parents and teachers in the City of Maribyrnong to take part.”

The Victoria Walks to School day is on 19 October.

CAMERAS IN ACTION

Maribyrnong Star– 13th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/317/story/142319.html>

Drivers beware: a new speed and red-light camera will soon be switched on in Maidstone.

The camera, which has been installed at the intersection of Ballarat Rd and Ashley St, will be switched on in coming weeks as part of a roll out of 32 new speed and red-light cameras across the state.

The cameras were installed by the former Labor Government more than a year ago, but the Coalition Government refused to switch them on until they completed their own audit on road safety cameras.

“This exhaustive report, recently tabled in Parliament, found Victoria’s road safety cameras were focused on road safety, not raising revenue, and that cameras save lives,” Police Minister Peter Ryan said.

The new addition will bring the City of Maribyrnong’s safety camera tally to seven.

According to the Fines Victoria website, a total \$4,377,230 in fines was given out by the municipality’s cameras over the 2010-11 financial year.

The most profitable camera at the corner of Ballarat Rd and Churchill Ave raked in more than \$1.3 million in fines.

All net revenue collected from speeding and red-light camera infringements is directed back into road safety infrastructure, according to Fines Victoria.

“The activation of these cameras are timely as October was the worst month on our roads last year with 36 people fatalities, representing an eighth of the 2010 road toll in just one month,” Mr Ryan said.

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"Speed is responsible for about a third of all deaths on our roads and if these cameras slow speeding motorists down, they will save lives.

"These cameras are located at intersections across the state to deter motorists from flouting the road rules and endangering their own lives and the lives of others."

Since cameras were introduced in the late 1980s, Victoria's road toll has more than halved and the 2010 road toll of 288 is the lowest annual road toll since monthly records began back in 1952..

FREIGHT WAR OF WORDS FOR MPS

Maribyrnong Star– 13th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/317/story/142327.html>

Tarneit MP Tim Pallas has accused Ports Minister Denis Napthine of protecting his own patch at the expense of the West.

Mr Pallas said Mr Napthine had failed to deliver important freight connections for Melbourne's inner West despite committing to fund a \$500,000 pedestrian overpass in his own electorate.

"While addressing the concerns of Portland residents is important, Mr Napthine has not explained why it is more important than reducing truck movements away from suburban streets in Melbourne's West," Mr Pallas said.

"The Baillieu Government has failed to commit to the Truck Action Plan and has stalled its \$40 million first stage of works, nonetheless it wants to introduce bigger and longer trucks on inner western suburbs roads 24 hours a day.

"These roads in the West cater for almost 50 times more truck movements than Portland."

Mr Pallas said if implemented, stage one of the Truck Action Plan would remove one million trucks a year from Yarraville and surrounding suburbs.

"It is gross hypocrisy that the Minister, now in Government, refuses to invest in on-road infrastructure but supports an expansion of the big truck roll-out for Melbourne's West."

SANLI SETS SIGHTS ON JOBS

Maribyrnong Star– 13th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/317/story/142323.html>

Maribyrnong councillor Sel Sanli wants containers out and manufacturing in around the Tottenham and Brooklyn precincts to try to boost employment in the region.

Cr Sanli, whose ward takes in parts of the two suburbs, said the council needed to work with the State and Federal Governments to utilise the land to its best effect.

"It's more about making the land more efficient, more employment – being an industrial zone, I don't think the community is being well-resourced with its employment in the area," he told Star.

"If I was to narrow it down to Braybrook, which has quite high unemployment rates, it's looking at other ways to change business from container parks to, ideally, manufacturing, where you can get more unskilled labourers working there."

Cr Sanli said getting rid of the container parks also had the advantage of reducing truck traffic in the West.

The council had been working with the previous State Government on overhauling the Braybrook and Tottenham precincts to tie in with the WestLink tunnel, which was meant to come out in that area.

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Cr Sanli said indications from Maribyrnong CEO Vince Haining were that the Baillieu State Government was still keen to go ahead with the project.

"I know that the previous government had ideas about the freight container hubs in the East, North and the West... that might be a solution for it.

I'm not saying it is the solution, but it is a solution.

"As we're getting more high-density living in our population, we understand how important land is and we understand how important jobs are for social well-being for a person, or family, or economic development of a nation. It's got very broad, positive impacts.

"Having a very high unemployment rate in the western suburbs is not good enough."

PROTECT VICTIMS

Maribyrnong Star – 13th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/317/story/142321.html>

The State Government is spending \$50 million over the next financial year on the fight against family violence.

A spokeswoman for Crime Prevention Minister Andrew McIntosh told Star the money will be spent on a range of initiatives to increase the safety of victims and perpetrators of the crime.

The spokeswoman said there had been a steady rise in the reporting of family violence incidents but evidence showed that the crime is still largely under-reported.

Victoria Police has recorded 7394 incidents of domestic violence in the year to June across the northwest, with Hume Police Service Area (PSA) topping the list with 2037 incidents.

Brimbank PSA had 1696 incidents, Whittlesea had 1377, Wyndham 1331, Hobsons Bay 550 and Maribyrnong had 403 incidents.

"There is a need to improve responses and increase reporting," the spokeswoman said.

"Improvements in police response to family violence and increased confidence to report to police have contributed to increased reporting rates across Victoria."

Welfare services across these areas have been calling for more funding to deal with domestic violence, while some Labor MPs have slammed Mr McIntosh for referring the issue to the Women's Affairs Minister during a session of Parliament (Funding call, 20 September, Sunshine Star).

But Mr McIntosh's spokeswoman defended his decision, telling Star that 40,000 reports of family violence were made to Victoria Police last year and evidence had shown the majority of victims were women and children.

"Family violence is a multifaceted and complex issue that needs to focus on education, prevention, response and recovery," she said.

"It is an issue that also sits across a number of ministerial portfolios including women's affairs, housing, health, police, attorney-general, education, crime prevention and local government.

"To respond effectively to family violence it is important to have programs that address both the victim and also hold the perpetrator to account and make them accountable for their behaviour."

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She said the \$50 million would be invested in supporting Preventing Violence Against Women projects across Maribyrnong, Brimbank and Wyndham councils and the Strengthening Risk Management Project in Hume, which will test the delivery of multi-agency approaches to family violence, along with directly funding welfare services.

MENU'S 5 MILLION MEALS

Maribyrnong Leader— 13th October 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/menus-5-million-meals-fbready/>

More than five million meals will be provided to those in need over the next two years through a program developed by Coles stores and the food rescue organisation SecondBite.

Coles stores in Braybrook, Footscray and Yarraville were part of a pilot program to donate surplus fresh food to local charities.

It has now expanded into a national program.

The Western Region Indigenous Gathering Place in Maribyrnong is one of the local groups to benefit from SecondBite donations, and planned activity group worker Colleen Gunn said the donations helped the indigenous community “tremendously”.

She said with the cost of living rising, a lot of people could not afford enough food.

Ms Gunn said the fresh fruit and vegetables people received from SecondBite allowed them to spend money on other items such as meat, or paying bills.

SecondBite national manager Zoe Whyatt said Australia threw out 7.5 million tonnes of “perfectly good, fresh food” every year and SecondBite picked up that resource and redistributed it to “people going hungry”.

SecondBite also receives donations locally from Organic Dairy Farmers in Footscray and ALDI stores in West Footscray and Maribyrnong.

MAIDSTONE REZONING UNFAIR ...'GAGA' TOO?

Maribyrnong Weekly— 12th October 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/maidstone-rezoning-unfair-gaga-too/2320510.aspx?storypage=0>

Elvis, Lady Gaga, Mr Bean and a host of living, dead or imagined celebrities were represented in a picket outside the Department of Planning office in the city in a bid to have a rezoning decision reversed.

The “celebrity” protest was organised by Maidstone residents who are calling on Planning Minister Matthew Guy to reverse a decision by the department to rezone two blocks of land at Ashley Street, Maidstone.

Residents, including the owner of one of the blocks, say they were not informed of the decision.

Resident Edith Pringle, dressed as Elvis, said they had more chance of being heard if they were dressed as celebrities after Mr Guy had appeared to overturn a planning decision at Phillip Island when Miley Cyrus had expressed disappointment via her Twitter account.

Maribyrnong Council had proposed the rezoning of 170 and 180 Ashley Street from public and residential to industrial, but councillors voted to abandon the plan in March this year following a panel hearing and more than 60 objections from nearby residents.

But the Department of Planning later intervened and allowed the rezoning, angering residents who say they were not informed and that it creates the possibility of the more industrial development close to homes.

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Residents at the protest said the state government had prior to the election promised a planning system based on consultation and honesty.

Ms Pringle said the process leading to the department's decision was flawed and Mr Guy needed to intervene.

She said the department had trampled on residents' rights and the minister was none the wiser.

"If it's Elvis you're asking: the minister has left the building. If they do this to one community there's a chance they'll do it to others."

Resident Barry Armstrong described as a "furphy" the department's reasoning that the land was incorrectly zoned and needed to be rectified.

"[Their statement that] 'one site was zoned residential 1, but has never been used for residential purposes' ignores that if you inspect the site you will see the concrete slabs, poured to commence previously approved homes before the builder went broke and was unable to complete them.

"The claim that the other site is being used for industrial purposes is also incorrect.

"It was previously a ... depot, and is currently used for the storage of scaffolding. It has never been used for industry. Even this low-level use was only permitted to operate after consultation with all of the residents with strict limits on times of operation and noise applied."

Western Region MLC Bernie Finn, who visited the site earlier this year, said he believed the decision was wrong and said he would pursue the matter with the minister.

"Once these decisions are made they're very hard to un-make. The government is locked into a legal position ... we have to work within that.

"If we can undo this, we should."

Mr Guy's office did not respond.

KINGSVILLE RESIDENTS LOSE FIGHT FOR HERITAGE

Maribyrnong Weekly— 12th October 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/kingsville-residents-lose-fight-for-heritage/2320515.aspx>

A multi-storey residential development has been allowed to proceed in a heritage area in Kingsville.

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal overturned a residents' appeal against Maribyrnong Council's approval of six two- and three-storey dwellings being built on four blocks at 118-124 Williamstown Road, Kingsville.

The existing single-storey building that was once shops and a supermarket will be demolished, except for the facade.

Residents appealed to VCAT over the size and scale of the development and its impact on the heritage value of the detached, single-storey timber Edwardian and post-World War I timber homes.

VCAT member Tracey Bilston-McGillen acknowledged the heritage value of the area, known as the Queensville Estate, but concluded the subject site on Williamstown Road was not of similar value.

"I accept ... that the heritage value and character of the subject site is different from the streets further to the west, the residential 'hinterland'/the remaining Queensville Estate.

"They are streets of detached, single-storey, timber Edwardian and post-First World War-era homes. They are similar in scale and present a relatively cohesive streetscape. This description, however, does not apply to the subject site."

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Ms Bilston-McGillen ordered changes to the application, including removing west-facing balconies to reduce the scale of the building.

The council recently released a draft housing strategy that says the municipality will need an extra 15,800 homes by 2031 - almost half will be apartments.

The strategy proposes dividing the municipality into zones for "limited, incremental and substantial" residential development.

The Williamstown Road development is in a "limited" change zone.

Council sustainable development manager Nigel Higgins said the council's planning scheme amendment provided adequate protection for developments within limited-change areas.

YARRAVILLE INDUSTRIAL SITE FOR SALE

Property observer– 12th October 2011

<http://www.propertyobserver.com.au/industrial/yarraville-industrial-site-for-sale/2011101151887>

A 7.4-hectare Yarraville site owned by chemical giant Orica next to the Port of Melbourne has been listed for sale.

It is being offered for sale through Walter Occhiuto and Andrew Dawkins from Dawkins Occhiuto.

The Industrial 1-zoned property is on the corner of Whitehall and Lyell streets.

Offers are due by November 9, with flexible settlement terms available.

With neighbours including chemical manufacturer Albright and Wilson, Whitehall Street was dubbed one of Victoria's most contaminated strips of land in 2005. Environmental watchdog the EPA included Orica's site in its report, noting it had range of contaminants on its Whitehall Street site, including mercury and other heavy metals. The EPA called for an audit on the property.

It was reported that at the start of last century, Tasmanian company Mount Lyell shipped hundreds of thousands of tonnes of iron pyrites – a copper mining by-product – to the banks of the Maribyrnong River in Yarraville. It set up a factory on what is now the Orica site. The factory, and its neighbour Cuming Smith, a fertiliser and acid manufacturer, roasted the pyrites in a kiln. The released sulphur dioxide, which was made into sulphuric acid, was used in the manufacture of superphosphate fertilisers. The leftover material was a purplish iron oxide called "spent oxides" or "cinders".

From 1901, iron oxide was used to fill the river flats on the banks of the lower Maribyrnong, noted the historian Professor Ian Rae, a chemist who has advised governments on hazardous substances.

Yarraville was named by its pioneer land speculators promoters to emphasise its proximity to the Yarra River when it was subdivided for housing in the 1850s by the partnership of Biers, Henningham and Co, which issued 900 invitations to its inaugural fete, picnic and land sale.

But its residential ambience changed in the 1870s when the waterfront was taken up by large, smelly factories given the onset of modern manufacturing to Melbourne.

Across the river is Coode Island.

As manufacturing employment has declined, the residential parts of Yarraville have been reinvented as a commuter suburb with weatherboard cottages. Its commercial precinct around Anderson Street is possibly Melbourne's narrowest main street, now with restaurants, cafés and organic produce shops.

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MARIBYRNONG CYCLIST INJURED ON NATIONAL RIDE TO WORK DAY

Maribyrnong Leader– 12th October 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/maribyrnong-cyclist-injured-on-national-ride-to-work-day/>

As a record number of cyclists hit the roads this morning one Maribyrnong rider was not so lucky.

Paramedics were called to the intersection of Cumberland Rd and Bracken St just before 8am when a cyclist collided with a car.

Paramedic Sophie Faulkner said the 24-year-old man was conscious but confused.

“He told us that he was riding his bike and thinks that after braking suddenly that he went over the top of his handlebars and crashed into the rear of a car in front of him,” Ms Faulkner said.

The man was wearing a helmet but paramedics believe his face hit the rear window and shattered the glass.

“It’s believed he lost consciousness for a brief period and could not remember falling to the ground,” Ms Faulkner said.

He was treated for grazing to his left arm and cuts to his face and was taken to the Footscray Hospital in a stable condition.

Today was national Ride to Work Day, an initiative encouraging commuters to bicycle rather than drive to their workplace.

Ride organisers estimated 40,000 Melbournians took up the challenge this year.

It is not known whether the injured man was a regular cyclist.

PITFALLS LOOMING FOR WEST'S CYCLISTS

Maribyrnong Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/pitfalls-looming-for-west-cyclists/2320511.aspx>

A vital cycling link from the city to the western suburbs could be severed as the state government wavers on commitments to bike paths.

The Weekly understands there are no commitments to fund missing links in the bike network from Deer Park to Footscray along the rail corridor and at Shepherd Bridge on Footscray Road.

The corridor from the city to Sunshine via Footscray is effectively severed and cyclists' safety is at risk as they share busy streets.

Initial project documents for the \$5billion Regional Rail Link project cite only bicycle parking as part of the project's "minimum functional requirements".

Money for widening the busy and dangerous Shepherd Bridge with extra room for bike lanes was allocated in July last year by the previous Labor government as part of the first stage of the \$380million truck action plan, which the current state government has put on hold.

Bluestone ward councillor Catherine Cumming said major works at West Footscray and Footscray railway stations needed development plans and planning approval from Planning Minister Matthew Guy before major work could begin.

"The previous state government made mistakes with Footscray station and we don't want this state government to make mistakes with West Footscray," she said.

Cr Cumming called on Mr Guy to consult the community once the station's designs were complete to ensure they met expectations, including provision for cyclists.

Mr Guy's office did not respond to requests for comment.

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The latest annual bike counts show close to 600 riders cross Shepherd Bridge in the morning peak and more than 100 use Cross Street, close to West Footscray station.

LeadWest CEO Anton Mayer said the cycling infrastructure, including a path along the rail corridor and lockable bike cages, had been proposed and was vital to transport in the west.

"That's what they [state government] told us and we'll hold them to that.

"It should be a no-brainer. You've got to have these facilities so people can cycle into town or to a rail head."

RRL spokeswoman Kate Eskdale said 'parkiteer' bike cages would be built at stations including Footscray, West Footscray, Sunshine, Tarneit and Wyndham Vale. "The Department of Transport, including the Regional Rail Link Authority, has been working closely with VicRoads, which oversees the Principal Bicycle Network and prioritises funding for bicycle paths," Ms Eskdale said.

"The authority will continue to work with VicRoads, relevant stakeholders and the community during the project's detailed design process to ensure a co-ordinated outcome for cycling."

VicRoads metropolitan north-west regional director Nial Finegan said once a review of projects promised by the previous government was complete it would be able to make a decision about cyclist improvements along Footscray Road.

He said VicRoads would consider the needs of cyclists as part of all major transport projects.

NOT HAPPY, MINISTER, ON RULINGS FOR MARIBYRNONG

Maribyrnong Leader— 11th October 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/not-happy-minister-on-rulings-for-maribyrnong-fbready/>

Maribyrnong Council will seek to reclaim planning powers if the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, continues to ignore it on important planning decisions.

Mayor Sarah Carter said the council wanted an interim body put in place while waiting for a Planning Referral Authority to be set up after the overturn of two council decisions in the past six months by the minister without consultation with the council.

In May, Mr Guy announced he had approved a 25-storey tower in the Joseph Rd precinct ahead of a planned meeting between him and council to discuss the plans.

Again, in July, it was announced the rezoning of 170 and 180 Ashley St in Maidstone to industrial had been approved by the Department of Planning and Community Development, over-riding Maribyrnong Council's earlier zoning preference for residential and public use zoning.

A department spokesman said the Public Use 7 zoning was inappropriate for the site, which was privately owned and being used for industrial purposes.

Cr Carter said the council would "seek our planning powers back" if Mr Guy denied council's request for the interim panel. She said it wanted assurance it would not be overlooked when the minister made "big planning decisions".

Cr Martin Zakharov said discussion with stakeholders was inadequate when the minister overturned council decisions. He said it was "not good governance" when the department was known to "throw down" a decision with next to no discussion with council.

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Victorian Local Governance Association president Cr Samantha Dunn said the minister or department had in recent months made a number of interventions, including decisions in Bass Coast and Surf Coast shires.

JAM VAN TO STAY AT FOOTSCRAY

Maribyrnong Leader – 9th October 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/jam-van-to-stay-at-footscray-fbready/>

For more than 30 years Nick Tsiligiris has dished out his doughy creations at Footscray station.

Mr Tsiligiris is determined to continue the tradition during work at the station to make way for the Regional Rail Link.

While some buildings in Irving St will be demolished this month as part of preparatory work for the rail line, Mr Tsiligiris is being looked after.

Mr Tsiligiris, who lives in Richmond, chose Footscray as the home for his Olympic Doughnuts van almost 34 years ago

While conceding that the station would look better once it was redeveloped, Mr Tsiligiris said his business would not change and he would continue to treat people to fresh, hot jam doughnuts.

Mr Tsiligiris makes more than 500 doughnuts every day. He said he always tasted the first of the day to make sure they were just right. "They're fresh (and we) make them on site."

Dolly, one of his employees, said Mr Tsiligiris was the reason his customers kept coming back.

"He's very good to everyone, and because of the doughnuts, they are very fresh and they can see how we make them," Dolly said.

A Regional Rail Link Authority spokeswoman said the organisation had consulted with Mr Tsiligiris on the timing of its work to minimise disruption.

"Mr Tsiligiris and his doughnut van have been part of the fabric of Footscray for 30 years and will continue to be a feature of Footscray station," she said.

"The final location of the Olympic Doughnut van will be determined when Regional Rail Link contractors are on board and the station design for Footscray is complete."

There will be associated demolition work in other areas, including Buckley St, later this year.

MELTON

MELTON RESIDENTS' GROUP COY ON DETAILS

Melton Leader – 14th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-residents-group-coy-on-details/>

Melton Shire ratepayers have been left in the dark about the intentions of a new residents' association, it is claimed.

Diggers Rest resident and regular council watchdog David O'Connor said he had been given little or no information about the recently registered Cambridge, Coburn and Watts Residents Association.

Mr O'Connor said, to his knowledge, the association had not released a statement of purpose, called for expressions of public interest or advertised for a committee of management.

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The group was registered on September 1. Melton resident Matthew Matalowski is listed as its public officer. But Mr O'Connor says it has been impossible to obtain more information about the organisation from Mr Matalowski, or his brother Michael, who was named as a contact.

"At the ordinary meeting of council, Michael Matalowski introduced himself to me and others, as the contact person with respect to the proposed association," Mr O'Connor said. "He was provided with my contact details and made an assurance that he would provide further information about the group, in particular a copy of the draft statement of purpose."

But Mr O'Connor said he had had no contact, despite making several attempts.

"Usually residents are given the opportunity to become actively involved during the development stage prior to the incorporation of a residents' association," he said.

"The incorporated name would suggest that residents in the Shire of Melton, especially those that reside within the Cambridge, Coburn and Watts wards, would be represented by this group.

"The name gives the impression that all residents within the Melton Shire are eligible to apply for membership."

Mr O'Connor said he had written to Consumer Affairs Minister Michael O'Brien to seek clarification. Matthew and Michael Matalowski both failed to return Leader's calls.

MELTON POLICE CHIEF KEEPS WORD

Melton Leader– 14th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-police-chief-keeps-word/>

Melton Police Inspector Mario Fiorentino says it is an "expectation" that police members swear on the Bible when signing affidavits.

It comes after court admissions from a senior Victorian police officer that he has never sworn on a Bible or affirmed his word in obtaining search warrants by affidavit.

Detective Senior Sergeant Stephen McIntyre, an officer of 25 years, confessed at a County Court pre-trial hearing that the only practice he had ever seen in Victoria Police was signing a name and having it witnessed.

Sen Sgt McIntyre told the judge he had always accepted that signing the document would suffice when accepting the truthfulness of the document.

But Insp Fiorentino said all of his staff were expected to comply with legislated requirements and to swear or affirm affidavits "at all times regardless of circumstances".

"It is an expectation, one of many that comes with the job, that members comply with," Insp Fiorentino said.

"If there is any evidence to the contrary that this is not happening in the Melton Police Service Area, I want to know about it.

"I certainly haven't seen or heard anything to indicate that our members aren't complying with this requirement."

Insp Fiorentino said the requirement to swear on the Bible had been reinforced across Victoria Police through global e-mails and station "read-outs".

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MELTON PISTOL CLUB TAKES HEART FROM GRANT

Melton Leader– 14th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-pistol-club-takes-heart-from-grant/>

A life-saving portable defibrillator is the first item on Melton Pistol Club's latest shopping list.

The club is one of 17 Melton Shire groups to receive a Federal Government volunteer grant.

The club has secured \$4790, which will buy the defibrillator and the training to go with it.

Secretary Russell Camp said getting the machine had been a priority.

"We have a few older members at the club. Some are in their 70s and 80s, and we do have a few members who are paramedics, but obviously they are not there all the time," Mr Camp said.

"Getting a portable defibrillator and training people who will be around the club most of the time to use it has been a priority."

Other grant recipients included Melton Rugby Union Club (\$4750), Melton District Tennis Association (\$4998), Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation (\$4759.40), Caroline Springs Volleyball Club (\$4736.72), Diggers Rest Junior Football Club (\$3760) and Melton SES (\$4962).

MELTON AND MOORABOOL STORAGES NO USE IN FLOODS

Melton Leader– 13th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-and-moorabool-storages-no-use-in-floods/>

Melton's and Moorabool's water storages cannot help reduce flooding, a water supplier says.

Southern Rural Water has moved to clear up misconceptions that storages, including Merrimu, Melton and Pykes Creek reservoirs, have floodgates that can be used to help lessen downstream impacts.

"That is not the case," manager water supply west Edward Smith said. "The only storages that Southern Rural Water operates in the state that have floodgates are Lake Narracan and Lake Glenmaggie in Gippsland."

Mr Smith said no storages were designed to manage floods. "They were designed to simply store water for various uses," he said.

"Once they are full, any excess water entering the reservoir will flow over the spillway and into the rivers or creeks downstream.

"Essentially, all we can do is monitor the structures and the river flows and pass information on to relevant agencies."

Mr Smith also warned curious locals to stay clear of any infrastructure, especially spillways, at times of high water flows.

"Playing on or near a spillway during a flood is a recipe for disaster," he said.

WATERWAY CHARGES FOR MELTON MAN

Melton Leader– 13th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/waterway-charges-for-melton-man/>

A Melton businessman has been ordered to donate money to Landcare and pay legal costs after he was caught using a personal watercraft illegally at Melton Reservoir.

Gary Fernihough, 50, was put under a diversion order at Sunshine Magistrates Court on September 23. Mr Fernihough was charged after Southern Rural Water

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officers caught him entering the area via Hopetoun Park Reserve last summer, and operating a personal watercraft upstream of the railway bridge.

He faced several charges, including trespassing, failing to obey an authorised officer's direction, and failing to give his name and address.

He was ordered to donate \$500 to a local Landcare group, not to use a watercraft on the reservoir unless authorised and to pay \$2182 to cover Southern Rural Water's costs.

Southern Rural Water's manager water supply west Edward Smith said the ruling should send a message to boat and watercraft owners.

"We understand that people are keen to use the reservoir," he said.

"The Melbourne Runabout and Speed Boat Club, which has been operating at Melton for over 50 years, welcomes new members and provides great launching facilities, but club members are limited to the water between their club house and the railway bridge."

Mr Smith said the banks where people illegally accessed the reservoir were dangerously steep.

He suggested Pykes Creek Reservoir, near Bacchus Marsh, as an alternative.

"Our compliance officers will be out again in force this summer," he said. "We urge everyone to do the right thing."

ENOUGH'S ENOUGH, FIX MELTON HIGHWAY

Melton Leader– 12th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/enoughs-enough-fix-melton-highway/>

The Melton Leader is today calling on the State Government to duplicate the Melton Highway as a matter of urgency.

Enough is enough.

It's time to act before another family suffers the heartbreak of losing a loved one on this notorious section of highway.

Thirteen people have died and 260 have been injured on the Melton Shire section of the highway since 1987.

Melton Council has long earmarked the duplication of the Melton Highway as its major road safety priority.

Melton Police, whose members have to deal with the aftermath of these accidents, also supports the duplication call.

Last week Melton Highway Patrol, the Operations Response Unit and local police ramped up the road safety message by handing out flyers that warned drivers about risky driving on the Melton Highway.

They also conducted random breath tests, registration checks and vehicle testing.

Superintendent Graham Kent said the road had been identified as "high risk".

"Our data analysis shows that there has been a 58 per cent increase in serious collisions in the Melton area compared to the same period last year," he said.

Melton police's Inspector Mario Fiorentino said the highway was the most significant risk in Melton Shire.

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SAFETY A PRIORITY FOR MELTON HIGHWAY

Melton Leader– 12th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/safety-a-priority-for-melton-highway/>

Duplication of the Melton Highway is not on VicRoads' agenda, but plans for safety improvements are in the pipeline.

VicRoads regional director metropolitan north-west Nial Finegan said a proposal for improved safety along the 19km highway, from Sunshine Ave to the Western Freeway, was being developed.

But the road authority has no plans to duplicate the highway. "These improvements will improve safety for all road users," Mr Finegan said.

Upgrades being investigated include minor road widening and asphalt resurfacing, installing safety barriers, hazard removal, new signs and improved delineation.

The investigation into the proposals is expected to be finalised by the end of the year, before being submitted for funding consideration.

Mr Finegan said there had also been several upgrades to the highway in recent years including a roundabout at Plumpton Rd (\$2.5 million in 2008), widening shoulders at the Mount Cottrell Rd intersection (\$331,000 in 2009) and installation of a raised traffic island and U-turn facility at Banchory Ave, Hillside (\$250,000 in 2010).

The Melton Highway has also been neglected in the State Government's \$2.7 million commitment to fix black spots in the western suburbs.

The only project funded in Melton Shire was a \$68,000 right-turning lane for the intersection of Moodie and Station streets, Melton South.

VicRoads' data shows there were 22 run-off-road casualty crashes on the highway in the five years to June 30, resulting in three fatalities and 11 serious injury crashes.

A community road safety forum will be held at Melton Community Hall on October 26 from 7-9pm. Guest speakers will include Melton Highway Patrol members, chief magistrate and former coroner Noreen Toohey and Christine Harrison from Road Trauma Support Services.

TABCORP PARK'S SLIPPERY TRACK TO BE CHECKED

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/sport/harness-racing/tabcorp-parks-slippery-track-to-be-checked/2319681.aspx>

Harness Racing Victoria is investigating the circumstances that led to Friday night's Melton Plate meeting at Tabcorp Park being abandoned because the track was a safety risk.

Friday's "moderate" amount of rain would normally not be enough to cause the track to deteriorate to a point where a race meeting would be lost, HRV said in a statement.

"The Melton area did receive a storm with some following rain during Friday afternoon which resulted in the track becoming slushy and unfit for racing.

"However based on previous experience, the amount of rain should not normally be responsible for a track to deteriorate to a point where a meeting is lost.

"There seems to have been other factors which, combined with the rain, contributed to the track being in such a condition that the meeting had to be abandoned.

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"It would appear that planned grading in the week leading up to the races was not undertaken - for reasons still being investigated.

"Added to this is a growing concern with the track material which was laid just prior to the Breeders Crown. HRV will now undertake an assessment of the adequacy of the material.

"With the moderate amount of rain received in Melton, the track became too sloppy and slippery, which then posed a significant safety risk to horses and drivers." The Melton Plate has been rescheduled for Friday with the same field, barrier positions and emergencies as last week.

HRV consultants will analyse the track surface and preparation this week in readiness for the rescheduled Melton Plate.

The Scot Notch Memorial has been rescheduled and will be held on Friday, November 4 as a random barrier draw event over 2240m, with a stake of \$20,000.

REMEDY URGED FOR MELTON HIGHWAY

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/remedy-urged-for-melton-highway/2319692.aspx>

A Sydenham doctor who says he's lucky to be alive after being involved in a smash on the Melton Highway is calling for it to be upgraded.

Dr Michael Saeed was involved in a head-on collision on a notoriously hazardous dip over Kororoit Creek in March last year.

He said he believed the other vehicle was travelling at 100-110km/h around a blind bend when they collided.

Dr Saeed had his sternum broken in two, ribs broken and believes a later heart attack was due to a blood clot caused by the crash.

"Something needs to be done ... a bridge or another way to divert traffic to Melton in a separate lane and an overhead lane to Melbourne," he said.

A Facebook group, Duplicate Melton Highway Now, where family and friends speak of people who have died on the highway, has more than 500 members.

Narelle Bowden, who lost a young relative in a collision on the highway last year, said she had gathered more than 2000 signatures on a petition calling for the highway to be duplicated.

"Too many people are dying," she said.

"Unfortunately, more people will die until the duplication is done. It is a terrible road."

Melton's Inspector Mario Fiorentino said the highway itself was not to blame for the number of fatalities.

He cited a combination of driver behaviour and other factors.

"Drivers are not appreciating the risk of the road. The volume of traffic unfortunately sees inattentive, impatient risk takers overtaking on double lines."

Inspector Fiorentino said duplication was an option to be considered, but in the interim drivers should drive to the conditions.

"One impatient driver puts themselves and other drivers at risk ... there'll be no tolerance for drivers flouting the law on that road; it is too high a risk."

Melton CFA station officer, Jayson Hirt, said the highway was one of several local roadways that presented the brigade with significant incidents.

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VICROADS LOOKS TO IMPROVE HIGHWAY SAFETY

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/vicroads-looks-to-improve-highway-safety/2319693.aspx>

Vicroads regional director Nial Finegan said it was developing a plan for safety improvements along 19 kilometres of the Melton Highway between Sunshine Avenue and the Western Freeway.

But it has no plans to rebuild the highway.

"These improvements will aim to address the 22 run-off-road casualty crashes that have occurred in the past five years to June 30 resulting in three fatalities and 11 serious injury crashes," he said.

Upgrades being considered are minor road widening and asphalt resurfacing works in selected areas, installation of safety barriers, hazard removal, new signs and improved delineation.

Mr Finegan said upgrades to the highway in recent years included a roundabout at the intersection of Plumpton Road, Plumpton; widening the eastbound and westbound shoulders at the intersection of Mount Cottrell Road; and installation of a raised traffic island and dedicated U-turn area at the intersection of Banchory Avenue, Hillside.

BID TO UNLOCK MUZZLES FAILS

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/bid-to-unlock-muzzles-fails/2319698.aspx>

A Ballan woman who fought Moorabool Council's decision to declare her two Staffordshire bull terriers dangerous dogs has had a bid to overturn it denied at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Jessica Bugter's dogs, Hurricane and Cayenne, were declared "dangerous" after they escaped from her Ballan home in February and killed four guinea fowls at a neighbouring property.

Although Ms Bugter did not oppose the council's order to register her dogs as dangerous in February, she said she was under stress at the time and it was only later that she could see the negative mental effect the requirement of wearing the muzzles had on her dogs.

She said her dogs had become noticeably upset by wearing them when they were taken out.

Under new state laws, registered dangerous dogs have to be de-sexed, micro-chipped, kept in secure and fenced areas, and be on a leash and wearing a muzzle when taken for walks.

Ms Bugter told VCAT she had spent up to \$20,000 improving gates at her property and on the pens where the dogs had been kept since February.

She said her two dogs were well-behaved around children, including her nieces and nephews who frequently played with them.

Of the 5724 dogs registered in Moorabool Shire, 11 - mostly guard dogs - have been declared dangerous.

Council spokesman Phil Weir said the 11 dangerous dogs, which also comprised an English mastiff, Siberian husky, wolfhounds, bull terrier, blue heeler, Staffordshire bull terriers, Doberman and German shepherd, were strictly monitored.

The dogs must wear an identifiable collar, signs must be visible on their enclosures, they must be contained at all times and their movements registered by the owners.

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The council said that in the past five years it had investigated 289 dog attacks. Most had happened in rural areas.

Mr Weir said most of the dogs involved in attacks had been destroyed.

CALL TO SAVE HERITAGE BUILDINGS

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/call-to-save-heritage-buildings/2319700.aspx>

Heritage buildings may disappear unless moves to bring western Moorabool under a protection overlay are introduced soon, according to a Bungaree historian.

Bungaree and District Historical Society president Dennis Spielvogel says further delays could endanger iconic structures.

"Speed up the process," Mr Spielvogel said.

"These things have to be protected before they are lost."

Last year, Moorabool Council undertook a study of west Moorabool as part of an overlay process that has been 15 years in the planning.

The study covered parts of the shire, like Gordon and Ballan that were not included in a 1995 Bacchus Marsh heritage study.

It highlighted 720 properties, of which 420 needed to be further assessed.

But Moorabool heritage advisory committee chairman Tom Sullivan said nothing more could be done until the Bacchus Marsh study process was finalised.

"Council has signed off on a planning scheme amendment for the Bacchus Marsh heritage overlay and it is in Melbourne waiting for ministerial approval," Cr Sullivan said.

"The west Moorabool study is not even on the councillors' radar.

"Lots of the funding comes out of Heritage Victoria, but we won't get any money until the Bacchus Marsh study is completed."

Former Moorabool citizen of the year and Barrys Reef resident Pat Liffman said towns like Blackwood were in danger of losing their character due to the delay in implementing heritage overlays.

"If a heritage building were to burn down you could put up a multi-storey structure," she said.

"And the whole character of the area would disappear. It has already happened in Blackwood; unsuitable buildings are being put up."

Cr Sullivan said he understood the community's frustration but due process had to be considered. "From childcare to roads, the council has a lot of priorities competing for resources."

MELTON NOT ALONE ON THE FRINGE, OUT IN THE COLD

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/melton-not-alone-on-the-fringe-out-in-the-cold/2319689.aspx>

Residents in growing fringe suburbs like Melton are suffering from a lack of jobs and services, according to a new report.

Closing Gaps on the Urban Fringe of Australian Capital Cities highlights poor performance in the range of residents' skills, local employment rates and opportunities and access to health and education in fringe areas compared to inner metropolitan suburbs.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

14th October 2011



It found growth-area residents are generally younger, employed in relatively "low-value" service industries like retail and construction, earn lower incomes and are highly dependent on private transport.

Report authors Andrew McDougall and Vigneshwar Maharaj concluded the benefits of creating jobs and improving infrastructure in fringe areas dramatically outweighed the costs, which they acknowledged would be considerable.

Mr McDougall said the inequities were similar across Australia's capital cities.

The report was commissioned by the National Growth Areas Alliance of Councils to help its campaign for increased funding for jobs and infrastructure.

The alliance represents 24 fast-growing municipalities across the country, including Melton.

Melton Residents Association (MRA) President Peter Rowan agreed that fringe areas were too often overlooked.

"We are recognised as one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Australia and we are no different to other growing areas ... we need more infrastructure," he said.

Mr Rowan said a lack of funding for the construction of the Abbey Road Bridge, to ease traffic congestion, was an example of an infrastructure need that had long been ignored.

"It's a direct route to Melton. The train station is another problem within the shire. The MRA shouldn't have to make so much noise about improving facilities."

Urging the council to do more to entice businesses to the area, Mr Rowan said the residents group was considering "simply bypassing council and contacting state ministers" because of a "lack of action".

"One of their priorities should be encouraging local business so [more] local people can be employed," he said.

Melton Council's general manager for planning and development, Luke Shannon, said it would push governments for a better deal.

"Council strongly advocates to the state and federal government for increased funding to ensure we can continue to provide the necessary services and infrastructure for our community ... better health services, including a 24-hour public hospital, and better public transport."

Mr Shannon said the shire's rapid growth must be matched by new jobs.

"The employment precinct in the Toolern growth area will bring many employment opportunities for our residents. A number of major businesses have recently established in the employment precincts at Ravenhall and Truganina providing for significant employment opportunities for local residents."

BREAKING THE INJURY CYCLE IN MELTON SHIRE

Melton Leader— 11th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/breaking-the-injury-cycle-in-melton-shire/>

A Cadel Evans-inspired bicycle boom is expected to keep Melton police rolling this month.

Bikes have out-sold cars in Australia for the 11th straight year, now fuelled by the Aussie cyclist's historic Tour de France win.

But with a surge in riders comes a spike in accidents.

Melton Shire cyclists have been put on notice this month as police crackdown during Safe Cycle month.

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Constable Jamie Jordan from Melton Highway Patrol said October was the worst month for cycling injuries.

"Police will be actively targeting bicycle offences, which will be dealt with accordingly," he said.

The campaign will also reward model riders, who will go into a draw for prizes.

BEREAVED DAD GREETS LIQUOR LAW

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/bereaved-dad-greets-liquor-law/2319688.aspx>

The father of a Melton teenager who died following a heavy drinking session at a friend's house has welcomed a new law that bans adults giving liquor to children, saying it could prevent more alcohol-related deaths.

From November 1, adults will be banned from supplying alcohol to minors (under 18) in a private residence unless their parents give consent.

People breaching the law could face fines of up to \$7000.

Leigh Clark, 15, died in 1999 after drinking alcohol given to him by a friend's mother at a party.

He collapsed in a nearby paddock and his body was not found for days.

His father Bruce has been fighting ever since for tougher laws on the secondary supply of alcohol.

"The most important thing about this law is that adults will need to get real permission before they give any alcohol to kids," he said.

"Parents of kids going out to someone's house at night now have rights."

He believed his son's death could have been prevented by the new law.

The state government has launched a \$1 million education campaign and Mr Clark said he was "100 per cent" behind the push.

"It is important parents and kids are aware of the new laws and start to ask questions. If they are educated on the laws they'll think again before putting up booze for kids."

Melton doctor Graeme Jacobs believed the law would reduce underage alcohol consumption to an extent.

"As a medical practitioner, no one thing is going to solve the problem of teenage drinking, but it's a step in the right direction," he said.

Dr Jacobs said the law alone did not have the power to change people's behaviour, but reducing the availability of alcohol and education would help get the message across to underage drinkers.

VicHealth acting CEO John Fitzgerald said an overwhelming majority of parents had backed the law.

"In our research we have found about 45 per cent of underage drinkers get alcohol from parents and 91 per cent of the parents we've surveyed have shown support for the new laws," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to give parents control over who gives alcohol to their kids."

But an attendant at a Melton Shire liquor outlet was not convinced the new law would be enough.

"I don't think the new law will change anything ... they'll get it from someone else."

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MASONS LANE RESERVE AWAITS UPGRADE

Melton Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/masons-lane-reserve-awaits-upgrade/2319697.aspx>

Bacchus Marsh junior sports clubs will get greatly improved facilities and playing surfaces if new Moorabool Council plans to upgrade Masons Lane Reserve go ahead.

The eight-hectare park, described by some as a barren paddock, is home to junior athletics, soccer, cricket and baseball clubs.

However, while it's one of the major sports precincts in Bacchus Marsh, it has had no major redevelopment in the past 10 years, despite a surge in numbers at junior sports clubs.

The council has prepared draft plans so it can seek grants to fund a multimillion-dollar redevelopment of the park.

Mayor Pat Griffin said he expected some grants the council had applied for would be approved as early as December.

Stages of the project could then be put to tender.

Masons Lane Reserve management committee chairman Darren Fowlie said clubs were dealing with sub-standard conditions and amenities that were falling short.

"All the facilities need upgrading, from the playing surfaces right through to the pavilions, to accommodate for growth," he said.

"As the town is growing we have to make sure facilities grow with it.

"It's just an eight-hectare paddock at the moment and there's not a lot of relief out there from the sun and the wind."

The plan covers four main areas: a new multi-purpose centre with change rooms, extra sports grounds, multi-purpose synthetic sports areas, and vehicle and pedestrian management.

Founded four years ago, Bacchus Marsh Soccer Club has 150 children aged 5-18 who train and compete at Masons Lane.

But club president Noel Stanley said the number could have doubled this year if facilities were better.

"There's simply not enough space to train under the lights at night," he said.

"We are growing reasonably rapidly and have had very meagre requirements up until now, but we're at the stage where we can't expand unless we get an extra fenced pitch and change rooms and showers for an opposition team."

With no dedicated soccer ground available, he said, the players were forced to train on a cricket ground at Masons Lane.

The club has no change rooms. It shares clubrooms with a dog-obedience club and uses a shipping container to store footballs.

Stanley said the Bacchus Marsh Scorpions would be the most under-resourced club in the Ballarat League.

"We don't want to complain, but we need council to approve this plan and move on with us this year," he said.

More than 250 athletes aged from 5 to 15 from across Moorabool are involved in the Bacchus Marsh Little Athletics Club, which uses Masons Lane Reserve on Saturdays.

The club is expected to grow to more than 400 members by 2015 and, according to club president Michael Belcher, a fully synthetic athletics track is long overdue.

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"It's a disadvantage when we're competing against Geelong, Altona, Corio, Williamstown, who all have better surfaces," he said.

STORMS STOP MELTON PLATE

Melton Leader– 11th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/storms-stop-melton-plate/>

Thousands of race-goers were left all dressed up with nowhere to go when the 2011 Melton Plate was cancelled at the last minute.

The \$50,000 group 2 race meeting at Tabcorp Park was called off about 5.30pm on Friday, just over an hour before the first race was scheduled to run. Storms and heavy rain forced the cancellation, with the condition of the track posing safety risks.

But Harness Racing Victoria has launched an investigation into why the track deteriorated so quickly.

Communications co-ordinator Jason Bonnington said there were "other factors" which led to the track becoming "slushy and unfit for racing".

"Based on previous experience, the amount of rain should not normally be responsible for a track to deteriorate to a point where a meeting is lost," he said.

"There seems to have been other factors which, combined with the rain, contributed to the track being in such a condition that the meeting had to be abandoned.

"It would appear that planned grading in the week leading up to the races was not undertaken for reasons still being investigated."

Mr Bonnington said there was a "growing concern" with track material which was laid prior to the Breeders Crown.

"HRV will now undertake an assessment of the adequacy of the material," he said. "HRV expert consultants, who have served HRV well over a number of years, will conduct a full analysis of the surface materials and the track preparation early this week to ensure that such a situation does not happen again."

The Melton Plate has been rescheduled for this Friday (October 14).

The field will remain as declared.

The Scotch Notch Memorial will now be held on Friday, November 4.

WEED OUT PEST PLANTS IN MELTON AND MOORABOOL

Melton Leader– 10th October 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/weed-out-pest-plants-in-melton-and-moorabool/>

The Department of Primary Industry is cracking down on serrated tussock in Melton and Moorabool Shires before it flowers in spring.

DPI Biosecurity area leader Chelsea Wardrope said landowners are liable for fines up to \$29,000 if they fail to control the weed.

"Officers from DPI will inspect Melton properties for serrated tussock and when the weed is found a directions notice will be issued to the landowner," Ms Wardrope said

"Landowners issued with a directions notice must control serrated tussock prior to flowering in spring.

"Landowners have a legal responsibility to manage pest plants and animals on their property to ensure they don't adversely affect agricultural production on neighbouring farms or impact on the natural environment."

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Ms Wardrope said where non-compliance for pest control occurs, penalties can apply. "Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 landowners are liable for fines of up to \$29,000," she said.

Melton Mayor Justin Mammarella said the council was working in partnership with landowners to enhance and protect the environment.

He said council provided financial assistance to landowners to control the weed on their land.

"For this program to be effective, all members of the local community need to do their bit to help control serrated tussock and be mindful that when this doesn't occur DPI will step in," Cr Mammarella said.

Meanwhile DPI has completed a serrated tussock compliance project in the Pykes Creek area near Ballan, where 19 properties were inspected.

Three properties required further serrated tussock control and the landowners were issued with direction notices. For more information, phone 136 186 or visit serratedtussock.com

MOONEE VALLEY

LIFE AFTER DIABETES

Moonee Valley Leader – 13th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/life-after-diabetes/>

Loretta Bastian is proof that those with diabetes can lead a normal life.

But the Moonee Ponds woman has stressed the importance of having regular eye and health checks to get on top of the disease early.

With about five new cases of Type 2 diabetes diagnosed each week in Moonee Valley, Mrs Bastian is one of a large group of people living with the disease.

It is a big issue, with the State Government recently committing \$22.2 million to promote awareness of diabetes and heart disease.

Mrs Bastian, 65, found she had diabetes about five years ago when she noticed black patches in her vision.

She has been diagnosed with diabetic retinopathy, a complication that can lead to severe vision loss or blindness.

Mrs Bastian said while it was hard to adjust to living with diabetes at first, exercising every day and a healthy diet had made a huge difference.

"I want people to know that you can control diabetes by eating and doing lots of exercise and by not worrying about anything," she said.

Diabetes Australia (Victoria) western suburbs branch secretary Ken Moore said it was worrying so many people from the north-western suburbs were affected by the disease.

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"You often don't know you've got it; the symptoms just creep up," Mr Moore said.

The Keilor East resident, who found he had diabetes after going for a general medical check-up, said it was important people knew they should worry about diabetes.

Mrs Bastian is participating in a Centre for Eye Research Australia study into the wellbeing of people who have diabetic retinopathy.

The centre is calling for more participants for its study.

Details: 9929 8363.

DON WINS VICTORIAN SENIORS AWARD

Moonee Valley Leader— 12th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/always-ready-to-help/>

Keilor East's Don Tucker gets a great deal of satisfaction from helping others.

And now his volunteer work has been formally recognised with a Council on the Ageing Victoria Senior Achiever Award.

The 72-year-old has been retired since 1997 but that hasn't stopped him giving back to the community.

Mr Tucker has been doing volunteer work with Holloway Aged Care Services for more than a decade.

As well as working in the gardens, the former bank manager also brought his administrative and financial knowledge when he joined Holloway's board.

Mr Tucker was able to organise \$2 million to contribute to the Holloway upgrade, changing it from the former Holloway Hostel to a high-care service.

"You certainly get a fantastic feeling with helping other people," Mr Tucker said.

He said he thought it was important to give back to the community to "leave things a little better than how you found them" and that receiving an award was good recognition for the older community.

Mr Tucker is, at the same time, a volunteer for Moonee Valley meals on wheels and the Keilor East RSL welfare fund. He has been a chartered member of the Keilor East Rotary Club since 1983.

MOONEE VALLEY'S CITIZEN OF THE YEAR NAMED

Moonee Valley Weekly— 11th October 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-valleys-citizen-of-the-year-named/2318669.aspx>

Moonee Valley Citizen of the Year Bruce Cameron credits the support given to him as a child for developing his own community-oriented approach to life.

When Mr Cameron was just three he was stricken with infantile paralysis, a condition now better known as polio.

"It took 11 years for me to become a normal person again and that's only because so many people helped me," he said.

"It has never been a matter of becoming someone who helps others.

"It was born into me through my family. It was a philosophy I was surrounded by from my earliest years."

Mr Cameron's breadth of community involvement has spanned many years and many causes.

Some of his more notable achievements have been to help build a school and community hall in an isolated community in the Northern Territory, 650km east of Katherine, and to invigorate Victoria's TAFE system so students in the automotive field had access to state-of-the-art equipment.

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For the past 25 years Mr Cameron has also been involved with the Moonee Valley Foundation, an organisation that raises funds to help young adults.

"Rather than fund-raising to plant a tree or put up another monument, the foundation fosters youth.

"We aim to help young adults achieve optimum success in whatever field they choose."

Mr Cameron described being named on Friday night Moonee Valley's finest citizen "a great privilege".

"I really accept this on behalf of all the people that have helped me.

"We never achieve anything by ourselves. We always have a team behind us."

MOONEE VALLEY OFFERS HELP TO BEAT EXAM STRESS

Moonee Valley Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-valley-offers-help-to-beat-exam-stress/2318680.aspx>

Moonee Valley Council's youth services team will hold a free workshop to help young people deal with stress.

It's been timed to coincide with the end of the school year when studying or preparing for exams can have a negative effect on students' mental health.

The workshop will be hosted by a qualified youth counsellor.

Moonee Valley mayor John Sipek encouraged young residents to attend and learn how to look after themselves during stressful times.

"Stress can be caused by a lot of different things, but common causes in young people are to do with school, work, family or relationships.

"This workshop will provide information, strategies and simple relaxation techniques to deal with stress and anxiety."

Council community services and partnerships councillor Miriam Gillis said: "We can help young people find and access support services that best meet their needs."

The workshop will be held at the Avondale Heights Library and Learning Centre from 5pm on October 20. Contact the centre on 83251940 or visit mvcc.vic.gov.au

IN MOONEE VALLEY, SELFLESSNESS RESULTS IN HONOURS FOR DOZENS

Moonee Valley Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/in-moonee-valley-selflessness-results-in-honours-for-dozens/2318670.aspx>

Everyday people who contribute an extraordinary amount to the community were thanked and honoured at the Spirit of Moonee Valley awards on Friday night.

The annual event is Moonee Valley Council's way of saying thanks to the selfless and hardworking residents who give up much of their lives to make the world around them a better place.

With a revised format, this year 24 residents were given a meritorious award.

Put simply, this award was to recognise their positive contribution to the community.

Another 15 residents were praised for outstanding community service.

From that group of 15, judges selected the Moonee Valley Citizen of the Year, East Keilor resident Bruce Cameron.

He received \$3000 for the charity of his choice and each outstanding award recipient was given \$250 to be passed on to a charity.

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Moonee Valley mayor John Sipek, who introduced the new format, said the Spirit Awards were his favourite night of the year.

"We are very fortunate to live in a municipality where so many people give so much to help others," he said.

After the formalities and entertainment at the Clock tower Theatre, all award recipients and their guests were invited to a cocktail party to celebrate their success.

MOONEE VALLEY'S FAIR COP

Moonee Valley Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/valleys-fair-cop/>

Moonee Valley police will get just one more officer as part of the latest boost to force numbers, but there are hopes more will be deployed to the municipality.

The State Government announced last month that an additional 125 police would be placed at stations around Victoria by the end of the year.

The biggest winner was Brimbank, which received another 13 officers.

Neighbouring municipalities Hume, Moreland and Melbourne will get six, four and three officers respectively.

Moonee Valley Acting Inspector David Byrt said that although there was only one additional officer deployed to the municipality, he was optimistic more would come.

"We've already received some significant numbers in Moonee Valley, so on this occasion we're receiving slightly less," he said.

Inspector Byrt said police in the north-western region would continue to share their resources where needed.

Moonee Valley received five more officers earlier in the year.

Acting Chief Commissioner Ken Lay said Victoria Police had had "a good look" at where the 125 operational officers should be placed, factoring in "population, suburban and regional growth, operational demand, crime levels, community perceptions and emerging trends".

The extra officers come as part of the State Government's pledge to deliver 1700 more officers over four years.

Police Minister Peter Ryan said additional numbers would help police target local crime.

"Putting more police on the beat will boost community safety and serve as a visual reminder that crime, violence and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated," Mr Ryan said.

KEILOR ROAD STRIKES BEDROCK

Moonee Valley Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/keilor-road-strikes-bedrock/2318675.aspx>

A significant vein of subterranean bedrock running from North Essendon to Strathmore could prove another obstacle in the growing push for car parking provision to accompany new developments on Keilor Road.

Bedrock is a consolidated rock that sits under initial layers of soil.

At its most recent meeting, Moonee Valley Council agreed to waive normal parking requirements for a four-storey, 74-dwelling apartment complex, in part due to the prevalence of bedrock at the 294-296 Keilor Road site.

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It was thought the removal of the bedrock to enable underground parking at Keilor Road would require significant blasting, an option not considered suitable in an already built-up area.

The development will still provide 84 car spaces but falls short of the 108 that would normally be required by the council.

Essendon resident and engineer Russell Brown, who has worked extensively in the area, said hard bedrock simply drove up costs for developers.

"It gets down to dollars; you can take out rock using expanding explosives, which are not really an explosive but a chemical that sets and cracks and fractures the rock."

However, Mr Brown said he welcomed decisions that waived parking requirements.

"We should be forcing people buying residential units so close to public transport to give up their cars."

Buckley ward's Cr Narelle Sharpe, who voted against waiving the parking provisions for 294-296 Keilor Road, said the bedrock was another problem the council had to contend with.

"To me if you can't find the room for car parking spots, too bad, the development shouldn't be approved."

ROYAL MELBOURNE SHOW RIDES OUT STORM

Moonee Valley Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/royal-melbourne-show-rides-out-storm/2318678.aspx>

There have been remarkably few complaints from the south of our city about noise and public behaviour in our streets during the Royal Melbourne Show.

Full credit to show organisers, who would be pleased with an attendance of 460,000 despite four days of incredibly bad weather.

The show may never eclipse the record attendance of 888,409 in 1971.

We have come to understand the different lifestyles of city and country people, which was the purpose of the show in the pioneering days.

One-hundred-and-fifty-six years later, the event is now almost about the carnival rides and the sideshows.

The Royal Agricultural Society board will again talk about changing the date of the show in a bid to stage the event in better weather.

It has been held previously on Melbourne Cup week and in late August, but the last week of September has been the traditional date for the event since 1913.

MOONEE PONDS VCAT HEARING: MINISTER SILENT

Moonee Valley Weekly– 11th October 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-ponds-vcat-hearing-minister-silent/2318671.aspx>

The future of a historic Moonee Ponds building earmarked for demolition still hangs in the balance with Planning Minister Matthew Guy yet to confirm heritage protection for the site.

An application to develop a four-storey, 24-unit apartment complex at the 255-257 Union Road site is due to be heard at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal on Monday.

Residents have lobbied against the development and believe the building could be a significant part of the original Moonee Ponds dairy which operated until the early-1900s.

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At its September 20 meeting, Moonee Valley Council voted to write to Mr Guy, seeking urgent interim heritage protection for the building so further research could be done.

He is yet to reply.

Mayor John Sipek said council officers had taken a range of actions to prevent demolition of the building.

"In addition to writing to the minister, officers have engaged an independent heritage consultant to undertake an initial assessment of the site.

"It recommends that there is justification for further investigation at this site. This assessment, along with a request to fast-track the council's application, has been sent to the minister."

Cr Sipek said the council had also written to Heritage Victoria asking it to use its powers to issue an interim protection order over the land.

This would prevent any demolition until further heritage assessments were made.

Resident Jan Shield said residents were preparing presentations for VCAT.

"We need something that fits the streetscape. We want our opportunity to put our case before VCAT."

Buckley ward's Cr Paul Giuliano said heritage was an important issue.

"It's essential that we protect buildings of local significance and that we do the work necessary to ensure we're protecting the right buildings."

GST FUNDING FEARS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

Moonee Valley Leader— 10th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/gst-funding-fears-for-local-councils/>

State Governments demanding a greater proportion of federal funding will leave local councils with less, a local councillor says.

Moonee Valley Cr Ange Kenos said local governments were often forgotten in funding and took aim at state governments demanding more GST funding.

"State governments are notorious for giving local councils little and any move to increase their tax take would come out our expense," he said.

"We are seeing the community every day. I don't want to see money being taken from us."

Spokeswoman for Victorian Treasurer Kim Wells, Kate Walshe said the Federal Government's \$2.5 billion cut to the state's GST funding was "unprecedented" and "unjustifiable".

"If Victoria receives a fair share of the GST distribution there will be more funds available to deliver important infrastructure and community services for Victorians including local services," she said.

SCANNING PLAN PRIVACY FEARS

Moonee Valley Leader— 10th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/scanning-plan-rings-the-alarm/>

Fears about privacy and use of collected information have been raised over the push for identity scanners in Moonee Valley's pubs and clubs.

As reported last week, Moonee Valley City Council has offered eligible venues a rebate if they install the machines, which require patrons to scan their IDs and be photographed.

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Liberty Victoria president Spencer Zifcak said it was a major concern that venues would collect personal information from patrons.

“Potentially this could lead to unauthorised distribution of this information,” he said.

But Moonee Valley Mayor John Sipek said the recommended supplier had privacy protocols built into the technology which complied with the Privacy Act.

“Council has spent almost a year working with local police and venue managers to identify the safest, most reliable and technologically advanced systems in the marketplace,” he said.

Cr Sipek said licensees must tell patrons their information was being collected and that, under the Privacy Act, the information must be deleted after 28 days.

Australian Privacy Commissioner Timothy Pilgrim said venues that were covered by the Privacy Act had an obligation to handle people’s personal information responsibly.

They must keep their databases secure and take steps to destroy or de-identify personal information no longer required, he said.

ESSENDON PAIR UPSET OVER FOUR-STOREY DEVELOPMENT

Moonee Valley Leader– 10th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/bye-bye-to-sky/>

Evanthia Mastorakos says she fears all she will see from her backyard are the walls of a high-rise apartment.

She is one of several Essendon North residents who have reluctantly accepted that a four-storey development, rather than the five-storeys initially proposed, will be built next door.

Moonee Valley Council agreed at last week’s council meeting to accept the new four-storey development plans for 294-6 Keilor Rd, which include four shops and 74 apartments.

The decision to accept the plans still needs to be approved by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Mrs Mastorakos, who lives in Birdwood St next to the site, said the four-storey development would be intrusive but it was better than the alternative.

A total of 44 objections were lodged against the original proposal for four shops, 89 apartments and fewer parking spaces.

“I’m upset that thing is going to go through anyway but there’s nothing I can do about it. We did all we could,” Mrs Mastorakos said.

She said it was already difficult to park outside her own home and the building would bring increased traffic into the side streets.

Cr Paul Giuliano said the reduction in the development, which also includes additional parking and balcony screens, should be considered a “significant win”.

But Cr Jan Chantry, who opposed the development, said she was disappointed the proposal was being accepted.

“This will become just another monolith in the ruinous nature of Keilor Rd,” Cr Chantry said.

Essendon North resident Vivien Sander said while she was unhappy with the proposal, she didn’t think the five-storey proposal would be rejected at VCAT.

“To those of us who live around where it’s going to be, all we’re going to see is this wall of building,” Ms Sander said.

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14th October 2011



Best Hooper Solicitors, who represent the developer, did not wish to comment.

The four-storey building meets the guidelines outlined in the draft Keilor Rd Structure Plan, which is open for community consultation until October 14.

MOONEE VALLEY IS A HOT ZONE FOR CAR THIEVES

Moonee Valley Leader— 8th October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/moonee-valley-is-a-hot-zone-for-car-thieves/>

The north-western suburbs continue to be a hot spot for car thieves, data has revealed.

The National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council is expected to release updated figures this week, but earlier statistics show that 230 cars were stolen from Moonee Valley in the 12 months to March this year.

Moonee Valley is ranked 18th for most cars stolen in the state and joins the bordering council areas of Brimbank, Hume, Moreland and Melbourne in the top 20.

Essendon, with 50 thefts, and Flemington, with 31, were the Moonee Valley suburbs with the highest number of thefts.

There were 28 cars stolen from both Keilor East and Moonee Ponds, 27 in Ascot Vale and 26 in Airport West.

Council executive director Ray Carroll said it was important for people with older models to install an immobiliser to avoid being an easy target.

Mr Carroll said cars without an immobiliser could be easily stolen by a "14-year-old with a screwdriver". "It's people who own those older cars that generally can least afford to lose it," he said.

Moonee Valley CIU Detective Sen-Sgt Mick Prowse said cars were stolen for a number of reasons.

The National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council data shows that 183 of the stolen cars were used for short term reasons such as joyriding, transport and committing other crimes and 47 cars were stolen for profit-motivated reasons such as being sold for parts.

WYNDHAM

GROUNDS GO TO WATER IN WYNDHAM

Wyndham Leader— 13th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/grounds-go-to-water-in-wyndham/>

Thirsty sports grounds in Point Cook are now drought-proof following connection to recycled water from Werribee's Western Treatment Plant.

Water Minister Peter Walsh and Western Metropolitan MP Andrew Elsbury turned on the tap for the new recycled water main last week at a new oval being built behind The Brook on Sneydes hotel on Sneydes Rd.

The recycled water main was a joint project between City West Water and Wyndham Council.

"Recycled water can be rolled out to schools, sports ovals and reserves in Point Cook," Mr Walsh said. "The \$2.5 million project will provide a secure source of water for the community's sporting grounds and open spaces, delivering 172 mega litres of recycled water a year from the Western Treatment Plant.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

14th October 2011



“It will also help reduce Point Cook’s demand on potable water supplies.”

Mr Elsbury said many local sports clubs had been frustrated by tough restrictions preventing them watering their ovals.

“Recycled water will ensure important public spaces and social infrastructure in our region can be well maintained, even through drought,” he said.

He said recycled water connections to six other Point Cook schools and six other Wyndham ovals would be switched on during the next two years.

The schools will be Point Cook P-9, Carranballac and Point Cook Secondary colleges and future schools planned at Featherbrook, Alamanda and Saltwater Coast estates in Point Cook.

Ovals to be connected will be at Featherbrook, Innisfail, Alamanda and Saltwater Coast estates in Point Cook, Point Cook Regional Reserve in Dunnings Rd and future sportsgrounds planned for the Werribee Employment Precinct, near Hoppers Lane.

PRIMATE PROPERTY IN WERRIBEE SOUTH

Wyndham Leader– 12th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/primate-property-in-werribee-south/>

Rock climbers will scale the walls of Werribee Open Range Zoo’s new gorilla exhibit to test for potential escape points before its opening next month.

Thick glass viewing screens and mesh fences will be checked prior to the arrival of three of Melbourne Zoo’s bachelor gorillas.

“This is one way to ensure that any obvious hand or footholds or possible escape routes are eliminated before we first release the animals into their new home,” Werribee zoo’s visitor and learning development manager Tim Grech said.

Leader was given a tour of the major exhibit, on Core Island close to the zoo’s entrance.

Visitors will be able to observe the primates from several viewing bays around the island, including an interactive play area and a stationary safari truck.

Mr Grech said the enclosure, which will feature the latest innovations in exhibit design and viewing, was one of the largest anywhere and featured a range of elements designed to help enrich the gorillas’ lives.

“We would expect the public to see all manner of behaviours, such as play, eating and resting, as well as the usual spats that males sometimes have,” he said.

A 4m dry moat surrounds the island where climbing structures, trees and a splash pond will make up part of the gorillas’ home.

The gorillas will also have 24-hour access to a sleeping den that has a water mister and can be heated and cooled.

Zookeeper Kylie Lihou said the gorillas would be encouraged to live as they would in the wild.

“The animals are provided with food that they must forage for within the exhibit, replicating their natural feeding behaviours,” Ms Lihou said.

“They will also be given hay to make their own beds at night.”

The children’s play area will feature oversized mobile phones with talking gorillas educating visitors on the dangers of extinction of gorillas in Africa.

The metallic ore coltan in mobile phones is mined in gorilla habitats.

Mr Grech said he was confident the animals and visitors would enjoy the new exhibit.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

14th October 2011



"Gorillas love to watch and observe and their island home provides one of the best vantage points in the zoo," he said.

"It will be the public that are on display."

OOPS, WRONG WAY, GO BACK

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/oops-wrong-way-go-back/2320458.aspx>

The office of state roads minister Terry Mulder has been forced to make an embarrassing apology after claiming credit for projects being funded by the federal government.

Last Wednesday, Mr Mulder's office issued a media release boasting about its allocation of more than \$3.3million to upgrade black spots across the northern and western suburbs.

This included \$1.7million for a roundabout at the intersection of Dohertys and Tarneit roads, the scene of a horror collision last May which resulted in three deaths and left a five-week-old baby fighting for life.

However, it was quickly revealed the upgrades were announced by federal Transport Minister Anthony Albanese in July this year. Mr Mulder made no reference to this in his release.

State opposition spokeswoman Jacinta Allan said Mr Mulder had been "caught red-handed".

"Mr Mulder has tried to deceive residents in Melbourne's northern and western suburbs by claiming this was new funding, when in fact the Baillieu government has nothing to do with the project funding at all," she said.

"Rather than spin, Mr Mulder should be explaining why the government isn't delivering vital road projects in Melbourne's western and northern suburbs."

In a statement last Friday, Mr Mulder's spokeswoman Larissa Garvin said he took full responsibility for the error.

"The office of the Minister for Roads was provided with a draft media release about 10 roads projects across Melbourne's northern and western suburbs. VicRoads has advised that the error was the result of a failure to thoroughly cross-check the media release," she said.

POINT COOK REZONING BID DRIVES WEDGE

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/point-cook-rezoning-bid-drives-wedge/2320469.aspx>

Point Cook residents will take to the steps of State Parliament today to protest against the redevelopment of a green wedge site bordering Point Cook Road.

The 443-hectare site was submitted by Wyndham Council to the Growth Areas Authority for rezoning and inclusion in the urban growth boundary.

Since then, the GAA has recommended the land be rezoned for housing development.

The final decision on the site's future lies with Logical Inclusions Advisory Committee, an independent panel set up to evaluate the GAA's recommendations. The committee is expected to make its decision in the coming weeks.

The Point Cook green wedge is one of nine around Victoria, including a 1110-hectare site in Werribee West, which have been recommended to the committee for development.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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About 60 people attended a community meeting in Point Cook last Thursday night to learn more about the proposed rezoning. Most agreed to start a green wedge support group and join other communities at today's rally.

Phil Cantone, who lives opposite the Point Cook green wedge, told the meeting that one of the reasons he built his house was because the green wedge provided him with a lovely view.

"The green wedge is home to endangered animals and flowers, as well as Aboriginal artefacts, such as carvings on trees, which need to be protected," he said.

Council has defended its decision to recommend the redevelopment of the Point Cook green wedge. Truganina ward's Cr Bob Fairclough and acting sustainable development director Bill Forrest faced a barrage of criticism at last week's meeting, with some accusing it of not doing enough to protect the green wedge, which includes a wetland.

But Mr Forrest said the land had degraded through weed and pest infestation.

Cr Fairclough said the council was aware of infrastructure issues in Point Cook and wanted new roads and schools put in place before any redevelopment of the green wedge took place.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/animal-magnetism/2320461.aspx>

Two additions have been made to Wyndham Council's legislative services team - mascots Hamish the dog and Sid the cat. Hamish and Sid will feature on the council's new animal services van which was launched this week.

The van will be used by legislative services staff to pick up stray animals, attend to complaints and support micro-chipping days.

The cartoons were designed by a staff member. Mayor John Menegazzo (pictured with Lutz and Pip) says he hopes the mascots will make the animal services team more approachable, particularly to schoolchildren and younger pet owners who may have questions about their animals.



WYNDHAM NURSES STEP UP THEIR WAGE FIGHT

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/wyndham-nurses-step-up-their-wage-fight/2320464.aspx>

Maternal and child health nurses at Wyndham Council will take their fight for better pay to the streets tomorrow.

Members of the Australian Nurses Federation will stage a community protest outside the Wyndham Civic Centre between noon and 2pm.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

14th October 2011



The nurses are already taking industrial action against the council after negotiations over a new enterprise bargaining agreement stalled.

They have called on management to provide a 4.4per cent annual wage rise over four years and an increase in annual leave from four to five weeks to align with the national standard for registered nurses.

ANF members are not alone in their campaign for better pay, with about 400 council workers who are members of the Australian Services Union also staging work bans. The ASU is also looking for a 4.4per cent pay rise for its members as well as recognition of long service in the new EBA.

ANF industrial officer Barry Megennis said members would vote tomorrow on whether they should escalate their work stoppages.

Nurses have placed a ban on visiting clients older than one year of age and are taking part in stop-work meetings.

Council's CEO, Kerry Thompson, said it had made changes to the EBAs to recognise service and industry trends. She said the recently expired EBAs provided increases of 4per cent a year which was above CPI figures for each year of its duration.

"The offer is consistent with what is being offered at other councils."

Ms Thompson said the council was committed to limiting the impact of the work bans on ratepayers.

FRINGE DWELLERS MISS THE BUS

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/fringe-dwellers-miss-the-bus/2320472.aspx>

Dozens of housing developments in Point Cook, Tarneit and Truganina are not serviced by public transport, with some areas waiting up to seven years to be placed on a bus route.

A study released by BusVic, the Victorian bus association, reveals almost half of the houses built in Melbourne's fringe suburbs between 2004 and 2009 remain without public transport.

This, according to BusVic, means about 34,000 households do not have access to a bus service. It predicts another 21,000 homes will be added to the list by the end of the year.

BusVic executive director Chris Lowe said the study highlighted a lag between commissioning housing developments and the start of public transport services.

He has called on the state government to develop a new transport plan which would ensure services for residents when they moved in. "If we don't plug this gap then we are just increasing Melburnians' dependency upon private transport, which is not good for congestion, not good for the environment and not good for social inclusion.

"There is also an element of inequity in terms of the scope of services on offer to those in the inner suburbs far exceeding the scope of services available to those residing on the urban fringe."

Wyndham Transport Advisory Group chairman Jim Giddings questioned why the government could not provide public transport when houses were built.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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"With all the information the government have to do date with Wyndham being a designated growth area, they know people are going to live here. Why can't they provide services and infrastructure as the growth is being experienced?"

FOOTSCRAY WHARF TRANSFORMED

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/footscray-wharf-transformed/2320514.aspx>

A \$5million redevelopment of the historic Footscray Wharf is taking shape, five years after a plan to turn the site over for public use was signed by Maribyrnong Council and the Port of Melbourne Corporation.

The wharf has been closed since July 2005 after it was declared unsafe by the PoMC, which had refused to fix it until the boats were gone from the site.

Under an agreement signed by the council and PoMC in 2006, the wharf was to be fixed and reopened in 2008.

The council in 2009 took a hardline stance and called for the removal of up to four boats still moored at the wharf - more than four years after PoMC issued their owners with eviction notices.

The last boats left the site last year. Following demolition, work began this year on a commercial marina with a public area for riverfront viewing and a heritage marker celebrating the wharf's rich maritime history.

Works are scheduled for completion this year.

They will include a public viewing area south of Shepherd Bridge, using a refurbished section of the old timber wharf and with a heritage interpretation marker referencing the wharf's maritime history; commercial mooring with two

floating pontoons; and landscaping of the old goods line rail track. Cycle and pedestrian access along the Maribyrnong River Trail will be maintained.

PoMC spokesman Peter Harry said redevelopment of the wharf was one of a number of projects the PoMC was working on in the Maribyrnong area to create a "port city vision" for the land.

The plan can be seen at portofmelbourne.bangthetable.com/



LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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POINT COOK GROUNDS GET POSITIVE FLOW-ON EFFECTS

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/point-cook-grounds-get-positive-flowon-effects/2320454.aspx>

Sporting grounds in Point Cook can finally be watered year-round after the suburb's new recycled water main was switched on.

The main will provide ovals and reserves in the Featherbrook, Alamanda, Saltwater Coast and Innisfail estates, as well as Point Cook's schools, with recycled water from the Western Treatment Plant.

Point Cook Football Club President Steve Ward said the introduction of recycled water meant the club's oval on Dunnings Road would be in good condition throughout the season.

He said the poor condition of the ground had impacted the quality of play during games.

Water Minister Peter Walsh said the \$2.5million project would provide schools and sporting clubs with a secure water source.

He said the recycled water main would give the suburb access to an extra 172 mega litres of water and reduce its demand on potable water supplies.

Western Metropolitan MP Andrew Elsbury said many clubs had expressed frustration about tough water restrictions in recent years which prevented them from watering their ovals.

"This project is important for Point Cook, a rapidly growing community which thrives on sport," he said.

CARAVANS NICKED IN DAYLIGHT DASH

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/caravans-nicked-in-daylight-dash/2320455.aspx>

Police have called on the public to help solve a spate of caravan thefts in Wyndham.

Wyndham's Detective Senior Constable Troy Morrow said five caravans had been stolen since August.

In a daring daylight raid on September 26, a 2008 white Jayco Sterling caravan with red stripes along the side and valued at more than \$65,000 was taken from the front yard of a house in Wynarka Drive, Hoppers Crossing.

The owners, retirees Alan (not his real name) and his wife were not home when the theft occurred about 11.15am.

Alan said a neighbour spotted the caravan being driven from their front yard, but didn't take down any details.

"We thought it [the caravan] was safe, it was fitted with a lock on the tow ball. We could never have imagined something like this would happen. It really makes you angry; we often go out on the road, so we leave everything inside," he said.

A beige-coloured Ute, possibly a Holden Rodeo, being driven by a short-haired man, was seen towing the caravan away.

Detective Senior Constable Morrow said opportunistic thieves had also stolen caravans from outside houses in Werribee, Hoppers Crossing and Tarneit, mostly during the day.

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"People leave caravans in their front yards, sometimes with two balls still attached, so thieves just back their vehicles into the driveway, hook up the caravan and take off."

He said caravan owners could take steps to prevent them being stolen such as removing its wheels or parking it in the backyard. Information to Werribee police on 97429444 or Crime Stoppers on 1800333000.

WEST SUBURBS ON BURGLARS' HIT LIST

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/west-suburbs-on-burglars-hit-list/2320462.aspx>

Hoppers Crossing and Wyndham Vale homes are among the most likely to be burgled in Victoria, an RACV report has revealed.

An analysis of the 2010-11 police crime figures shows one in 26 homes in Wyndham Vale and one in 28 homes in Hoppers Crossing were broken into in the last financial year.

The suburbs were ranked fourth and sixth on the list of most burgled suburbs, behind top-placed Ardeer (one in 15 homes), Footscray (one in 20) and Parkville (one in 25).

The figures were also based on Census data for occupied households.

According to police data, residential burglaries increased by 21 per cent in Wyndham in the year to July.

RACV general manager of home services, Peter Brindley, said the figures should act as a timely reminder for people to ensure their homes were secure.

"Installing a burglar alarm and connecting a professional home security monitoring service to an existing or new burglar alarm is one of the most effective ways to deter thieves," he said.

Ensuring doors and windows were secured by quality locks would also help to reduce the risk.

"You should always lock your doors and windows before you leave, even if it is just a quick trip, and ensure your mail is collected and papers are cancelled if you are on holidays."

Werribee's Inspector Bill Weatherly said the city's specialist burglary unit was making significant inroads.

"In time we can get on top of this problem," he said.

"The unit is now targeting our recidivist offenders and their strike rate is good."

JOBS IN WERRIBEE IN GUY'S HANDS

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/jobs-in-werribee-in-guys-hands/>

An announcement on the long-awaited Werribee Employment Precinct is expected in the next month.

Wyndham Mayor John Menegazzo said the State Government had committed to the project and was finalising details.

"We are still waiting for (Planning Minister Matthew Guy) to come back to us as to what the government's intentions are," Cr Menegazzo said.

"They have indicated we should have some sort of indication by the end of this month or early next month."

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The council has long advocated for the employment precinct on 925ha of government land including Werribee Mercy Hospital, the new Suzanne Cory High School and campuses of Melbourne and Victoria universities.

The precinct would eventually employ up to 60,000 people and cut the almost 70 per cent of Wyndham residents who travel outside the city for work, placing pressure on roads and transport.

It would include 145ha of housing in Point Cook.

Council chief executive Kerry Thompson said the council had been working closely with the State Government on a design for the employment precinct.

"Wyndham City is currently advocating for upgrades to Sneydes Rd to be incorporated into any plans for the area," she said.

The section of Sneydes Rd between the Princes Highway and Point Cook is single lane, with no edging, and has become one of the main thoroughfares for a rapidly increasing population of Point Cook.

Altona Labor MP Jill Hennessy called on the State Government to stop "dithering and support additional local jobs in the west by releasing plans for the Werribee Employment Precinct backed by funding".

The Government did not respond to queries last week but a list of recycled water projects in Wyndham includes Werribee Employment Precinct sportsgrounds and states that they are "currently undergoing planning".

WYNDHAM NURSES STEP UP THEIR WAGE FIGHT

Wyndham Weekly— 12th October 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/wyndham-nurses-step-up-their-wage-fight/2320464.aspx>

Maternal and child health nurses at Wyndham Council will take their fight for better pay to the streets tomorrow.

Members of the Australian Nurses Federation will stage a community protest outside the Wyndham Civic Centre between noon and 2pm.

The nurses are already taking industrial action against the council after negotiations over a new enterprise bargaining agreement stalled.

They have called on management to provide a 4.4per cent annual wage rise over four years and an increase in annual leave from four to five weeks to align with the national standard for registered nurses.

ANF members are not alone in their campaign for better pay, with about 400 council workers who are members of the Australian Services Union also staging work bans. The ASU is also looking for a 4.4per cent pay rise for its members as well as recognition of long service in the new EBA.

ANF industrial officer Barry Megennis said members would vote tomorrow on whether they should escalate their work stoppages.

Nurses have placed a ban on visiting clients older than one year of age and are taking part in stop-work meetings.

Council's CEO, Kerry Thompson, said it had made changes to the EBAs to recognise service and industry trends. She said the recently expired EBAs provided increases of 4per cent a year which was above CPI figures for each year of its duration.

"The offer is consistent with what is being offered at other councils."

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Ms Thompson said the council was committed to limiting the impact of the work bans on ratepayers.

RESPECT IS THE KEY

Wyndham Weekly– 12th October 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/respect-is-the-key/2320518.aspx>

An anti-violence message has been spreading through Maribyrnong in the past three years, with a focus on young people.

The VicHealth-funded council project, titled Respect and Equity: Preventing Violence Against Women, is aimed at changing attitudes to family violence.

According to police statistics, charges were laid in 114 family violence incidents in 2010-11 in Maribyrnong - up 14.9per cent on the previous year.

The message was sent out to schools, sports clubs with programs targeting topics such as sexual education and bullying, and via youth ambassadors such as this year's young citizen of the year Oti-Annan Willoughby and 2010 young citizen of the year nominee Preeti Kumar (pictured).

An evaluation of the project will be released next week.

LEARNER DRIVERS HEAD TO WYNDHAM VALE

Wyndham Leader– 11th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/learner-drivers-head-to-wyndham-vale/>

Vicroads has an information session to help learners become safer drivers.

The free, Keys, Please information session will be held at Iramoo Community Centre and aims to introduce the skills learner drivers need to become responsible licensed drivers.

Centre manager Linda Beyerle said the information session would be valuable to parents and young people seeking practical ideas and tips on driving safely.

“With the high number of young people involved in road incidents, we believe that anything we can do to help keep them safe is worthwhile and we urge parents to bring their young men and women to this session,” she said.

“If they are going to learn to drive, they should take advantage of any opportunity to increase their level of knowledge and understanding of what to expect when they get behind the wheel of a car.”

Attendees will receive free L plates and a handbook.

The session is at 1.30pm, Saturday, October 15, at the centre, 84 Honour Ave, Wyndham Vale. RSVP to toadmin@iramoooc.com.au or phone 8742 3688.

WERRIBEE PARKLIFE TO BE ENJOYED BY ALL SORTS

Wyndham Leader– 11th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/werribee-parklife-to-be-enjoyed-by-all-sorts/>

Werribee Park is gearing up for some big events that will cater for children, music, food and wine lovers and carollers.

The popular Children's Week Picnic is on this month, followed by a music festival and the Harvest Picnic in November and Wyndham Carols by Candlelight in December.

The children's picnic is on 10am-4pm, Sunday, October 23.

The free annual Wyndham Council-funded picnic attracted 7000 youngsters and their families in 2009, but was washed out last year.

Shuttle buses will run from Werribee and Hoppers Crossing train stations every 20 minutes. Visitors can bring a picnic or buy food and drinks at the park.

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A music festival, Harvest - The Gathering, featuring international acts Portishead, The National and The Flaming Lips, will be held on Saturday, November 12.

A separate event with a similar name, the Harvest Picnic, showcasing Victoria's best food and wine, is on Sunday, November 27.

It includes tastings, cooking demonstrations, live entertainment and competitions.

The carols, organised by the Christian churches of Wyndham, will be on Saturday, December 10.

TAPPING INTO GROWTH

Wyndham Star– 11th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/317/story/142089.html/>

Point Cook's ovals will be greener than ever with the State Government literally turning on the tap in Wyndham's fastest growing suburb.

Water Minister Peter Walsh was at the Point Cook Oval on Sneydes Rd last week to open the new recycled-water main, which will bring water from the Western Treatment Plant.

"From today, recycled water can be rolled out to schools, sports ovals and reserves in Point Cook," Mr Walsh said.

"The \$2.5 million project will provide a secure source of water for the community's sporting grounds and open spaces, delivering 172 mega litres of recycled water a year from the Western Treatment Plant."

Mr Walsh told Star that the project was an important step for conserving valuable water.

"It's great, not just in the West but wherever it's done," he said.

"You don't need to have drinking standard water to keep ovals green."

Western Metropolitan Region MP Andrew Elsbury said many of Point Cook's sporting clubs had been frustrated by the tough water restrictions which prevented them from watering their ovals.

"This project is important for Point Cook – a rapidly growing community which thrives on sport," Mr Elsbury said.

"Recycled water will ensure important public spaces and social infrastructure in our region can be well maintained and suburbs are kept green, even through drought."

Over the next two years the project will be rolled out to include other Wyndham suburbs.

CALL FOR URGENT FIX IN WYNDHAM VALE

Wyndham Leader– 11th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/call-for-urgent-fix-in-wyndham-vale/>

A campaign to improve Ballan Rd, Wyndham Vale, has been gathering speed with news of plans for two new quarries for the area.

Wyndham Council confirmed last week it had received applications for planning permits for a 220ha quarry off Cobbledicks Ford Rd, Wyndham Vale, and a 123ha quarry off Ballan Rd, near Quandong Park. Both sites would be quarrying basalt rock for use in construction and landscaping.

Manor Lakes resident Greg Byrne, who kicked off a "Fix Ballan Rd" campaign via Facebook two months ago, said the road could not handle its present traffic volumes, including B-double trucks, and that traffic would at least double, if not triple, if the quarries were approved.

LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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Mr Byrne said he and campaign supporters had so far collected more than 400 signatures on a petition calling for the road to be resurfaced.

He said he hoped to collect 2000 signatures and send the petition to the council, VicRoads, state and federal MPs and the developer of the Manor Lakes estate, Denis Family Homes.

Fellow campaigner Owen Anderson said truck noise was already a problem for Ballan Rd residents.

A former driving instructor, he said the road was dangerously uneven.

"It's not a case of if something will happen, it's a case of when," Mr Anderson said.

Sarah Burridge, who lives near the corner of Ballan and Bolton roads, said she already had too many trucks on her doorstep.

"At 70km/h with two toddlers, that's quite scary, but the condition of the road is appalling all the way down," Ms Burridge said.

Council chief executive Kerry Thompson said the community would be consulted.

Any decision would consider the quarries' impact on local infrastructure of noise, dust and heavy vehicle movements generated.

"It is important to note that if approved, not all of the site will be used at one time and extraction will happen over many years," Ms Thompson said.

WYNDHAM COUNCILLORS: WE SHOULD ELECT MAYOR

Wyndham Leader— 11th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/wyndham-councillors-we-should-elect-mayor/>

Councillors and not residents should continue to choose Wyndham's mayor, present mayor John Menegazzo says.

Greater Geelong will next year become Victoria's second municipality to directly elect a mayor, joining the City of Melbourne. In all other council areas, councillors choose a mayor.

Cr Menegazzo said that under the direct election of the mayor system, mayoral candidates would be limited to those able to fund election campaigns, which he said could cost more than \$150,000.

"At the moment I am happy with the system (we have), as long as politics stays out of it, which is the case in Wyndham," he said.

Councillors Marcel Mahfoud and Glenn Goodfellow did not support direct election of mayors for the same reasons.

The introduction of a directly elected mayor in Greater Geelong for the October 2012 council elections was a state Liberal pre-election promise.

It is now working on what kind of system of a directly elected mayor the city wants.

Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell said there would be a review of the two different models.

PROSPECTIVE WYNDHAM MAYORS UP HANDS

Wyndham Leader— 11th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/prospective-wyndham-mayors-up-hands/>

Deputy Mayor Bob Fairclough and Cr Kim McAliney are first out of the boxes in the 2011 mayoral race.

A new mayor, who will be decided by Wyndham's councillors next month, will lead the council into next year's local government election.

Cr Fairclough said: "I can say I'm interested".

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Cr McAliney, a former mayor, said: "Yes, I am interested".

Ruling themselves out were councillors Glenn Goodfellow, Marcel Mahfoud and Cynthia Manson. Cr Goodfellow, in his first term, said: "I would rather do a deputy mayor stint first".

Cr Mahfoud said he was also thinking of nominating for the deputy mayor position.

He said it was too early for him to run for mayor, not having served a full term.

Cr Mahfoud replaced Mark Rose, who resigned from the council due to family commitments in June last year.

Cr Manson said her time was better spent as a councillor, where she could openly debate issues in the chamber. She was also kept busy with a two-year-old son.

Mayor John Menegazzo was undecided, as were councillors Shane Bourke and Heather Marcus, both former mayors.

Cr Menegazzo said no agreement had been or would be struck between councillors.

"It's open slather," he said.

When asked if she wanted to be mayor, Cr Adele DeCrescenzo said she couldn't yet respond.

The mayoral election is on November 30 and the council election on October 27 next year.

REVIEW PICKS UP SPEED IN WYNDHAM

Wyndham Leader— 9th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/review-picks-up-speed-in-wyndham/>

SUBMISSIONS for a VicRoads review of speed limits close on Tuesday, October 11, and long-time Werribee resident Shirley Cameron has ensured her concerns are heard.

Mrs Cameron has called for the 60km/h speed limit on the Princes Highway to be extended beyond the intersection of Tyrone St, where she lives, to at least Werribee Police Station.

Tyrone St is directly opposite Sneydes Rd, which has become a major arterial road in and out of Point Cook.

"To come out of Tyrone St is quite hazardous, there is traffic from Point Cook going both east and west, crossing both lanes and coming into Tyrone St," her VicRoads submission reads.

"There is also much traffic coming from Werribee turning into Sneydes Rd.

"The situation is made even more hazardous as the 80km sign is about 100m west of the crossing, as motorists accelerate, it makes it hard to estimate their speed when entering the highway."

Submissions can be sent to speedreview@vicroads.gov.au or write to VicRoads, Speed Limit Review, 60 Denmark Street, Kew, 310.

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NEW WYNDHAM VALE STABLING TRACKS

Wyndham Leader – 8th October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/new-wyndham-vale-stabling-tracks/>

Plans are afoot for a train stabling yard near the end of Black Forest Rd, Wyndham Vale South.

The stabling yard would form part of the new Wyndham Vale train station, which is to be built as part of the Regional Rail Link.

A Regional Rail Link Authority spokeswoman said it had not been determined when the stabling yard would be built.

Provision had been made for three stabling tracks between the regional tracks.

This would allow for future 'short starter' train services to begin at the Wyndham Vale station.

A Wyndham Council submission on the rail link's noise management plan during construction expresses concern that the plan did not take into account the impact of noise from a future stabling yard.

The station and stabling yard would be about 500m from homes and a planned Wyndham Vale South Primary School.

The rail link spokeswoman said relevant state and federal policies and legislation would apply if the stabling yard was built.



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ACROSS THE REGION

PROTECT VICTIMS

Star News Group– 13th October 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/317/story/142321.html>

The State Government is spending \$50 million over the next financial year on the fight against family violence.

A spokeswoman for Crime Prevention Minister Andrew McIntosh told Star the money will be spent on a range of initiatives to increase the safety of victims and perpetrators of the crime.

The spokeswoman said there had been a steady rise in the reporting of family violence incidents but evidence showed that the crime is still largely under-reported.

Victoria Police has recorded 7394 incidents of domestic violence in the year to June across the northwest, with Hume Police Service Area (PSA) topping the list with 2037 incidents.

Brimbank PSA had 1696 incidents, Whittlesea had 1377, Wyndham 1331, Hobsons Bay 550 and Maribyrnong had 403 incidents.

“There is a need to improve responses and increase reporting,” the spokeswoman said.

“Improvements in police response to family violence and increased confidence to report to police have contributed to increased reporting rates across Victoria.”

Welfare services across these areas have been calling for more funding to deal with domestic violence, while some Labor MPs have slammed Mr McIntosh for referring the issue to the Women’s Affairs Minister during a session of Parliament (Funding call, 20 September, Sunshine Star).

But Mr McIntosh’s spokeswoman defended his decision, telling Star that 40,000 reports of family violence were made to Victoria Police last year and evidence had shown the majority of victims were women and children.

“Family violence is a multifaceted and complex issue that needs to focus on education, prevention, response and recovery,” she said.

“It is an issue that also sits across a number of ministerial portfolios including women’s affairs, housing, health, police, attorney-general, education, crime prevention and local government.

“To respond effectively to family violence it is important to have programs that address both the victim and also hold the perpetrator to account and make them accountable for their behaviour.”

She said the \$50 million would be invested in supporting Preventing Violence Against Women projects across Maribyrnong, Brimbank and Wyndham councils and the Strengthening Risk Management Project in Hume, which will test the delivery of multi-agency approaches to family violence, along with directly funding welfare services.

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SUNSHINE SITE FETCHES \$15 MILLION

The Sydney Morning Herald— 12th October 2011

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/sunshine-site-fetches-15-million-20111011-1livk.html>

A 14,670-square-metre Business Zone 1 development site has sold to a Victorian private equity group for \$15 million at Sunshine's activity centre in Melbourne's west. Next to Sunshine's Marketplace shopping centre, the site is vacant. It was sold with an existing town-planning permit issued in 2007 for a proposed \$175 million mixed-use project, Metro west. The permit allows development of one office tower of 12,000 sq m and two apartment towers over eight and nine levels above a retail podium and incorporating extensive on-site car parking. Carabott Holt Architects & Meinhardt (Town Planning) have been appointed to review the design to better align Metro west with the City of Brimbank's urban planning objectives for the Sunshine activity centre. Construction of Metro west is scheduled to start in mid-2012 if the minor planning amendments sought are supported by Brimbank.

THIEVES' HIGH STRIKE RATE IN THE WESTERN SUBURBS OF MELBOURNE

The Herald Sun— 10th October 2011

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/ardeer-weve-been-burgled/story-fn7x8me2-1226162503941>

Homes in Melbourne's western suburbs continue to be burgled at alarming rates with new statistics revealing Ardeer as the state's most plundered suburb.

Last year one-in-15 homes were burgled in Ardeer, which is near St Albans.

Footscray (one in 20), Parkville (one in 25), Wyndham Vale (one in 26) and Braybrook (one in 28) round out the state's top five.

The statistics, compiled by the RACV, show the number of burglaries in Ardeer skyrocketed from one in 42 just a year earlier.

RACV spokesman Peter Brindley said the western suburbs were well represented in the report.

"The top three suburbs recorded rates of between one in 15 and one in 25 homes.

"These are significantly higher than last year's top three most burgled suburbs, which recorded burglary rates of between one in 26 and one in 28," he said.

The rapidly developing northern suburbs of Mernda and Doreen are also listed in the top 10 for the third consecutive year.

But residents living in Melbourne's eastern and south-eastern suburbs can sleep a little easier, with burglary rates declining over the past decade to those more akin to rates in regional Victoria.

Mr Brindley said the results should act as a reminder for people to take precautions to ensure their homes were secure.

"Installing a burglar alarm and connecting a professional home security monitoring service to an existing or new burglar alarm is one of the most effective ways to deter thieves," he said.

"Another easy way is to ensure doors and windows are secured by quality locks."

A Victoria Police spokeswoman said police would not comment on statistics provided by an insurance company.

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