

Chirnside Park Structure Plan

Key Stakeholder Engagement Summary



Acknowledgement of Country



Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nation peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways. We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region. We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



Quality Assurance

Chirnside Park Structure Plan

Key Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Draft

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View across Belsay Reserve towards the Old Colonial Site Development

Key Stakeholder Engagement Summary

1 Overview

1.1 Overview of Engagement Approach

Community and stakeholder engagement is a critical component in shaping the revised Structure Plan (the 'Structure Plan') for the Chirnside Park Major Activity Centre (Activity Centre). Meaningful engagement ensures the Structure Plan reflects the aspirations, values, and lived experiences of the people who live, work, and invest in the area.

The engagement process has been designed to ensure broad and inclusive participation, providing multiple opportunities for the community, key stakeholders, and technical experts to contribute throughout key stages of the project. These stages aim to progressively build understanding, test ideas, and develop a shared vision for Chirnside Park's MAC.

1.2 Key Engagement Stages

Community and stakeholder input will be sought during the following key stages of the project:

- **Key Stakeholder Engagement**

This stage focuses on engaging with key stakeholders to understand current and planned projects, clarify negotiable and non-negotiable elements, and identify the opportunities, challenges, and constraints influencing future growth and development. It provides a foundation for aligning Council, agency, and landowner priorities and ensuring coordination across existing initiatives.

- **Issues and Opportunities Paper**

This stage involves sharing early findings, key issues and opportunities and emerging ideas with the broader community. It is designed to test the initial directions and ideas, validate what has been heard to date, and identify any gaps or new insights. Feedback gathered here will inform the development of draft concepts for the Structure Plan.

- **Draft Structure Plan**

The draft Structure Plan will be released for public review, providing the community and key stakeholders an opportunity to comment on the proposed vision, strategies, and actions. This stage is essential for ensuring transparency, building support, and refining the Structure Plan based on feedback before it is finalised.



Figure 1. Project Stages

1.3 Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is to summarise the key findings from Key Stakeholder Engagement undertaken during Stage 2 of the project (Background Research). This report outlines the engagement activities undertaken and captures the key themes, insights, and feedback shared by key stakeholders. These inputs will help inform the ongoing development of a revised Structure Plan.

2 Key Stakeholder Engagement

2.1 Purpose and Activities

Key Stakeholder Engagement was undertaken between May and June 2025. The purpose of this engagement was to:

- Create project awareness;
- Provide an overview of the project;
- Understand and confirm current and planned projects;
- Confirm negotiables and non-negotiables; and
- Identify existing local values, opportunities, challenges and constraints facing future growth and development within Chirnside Park.

Several opportunities were offered for key landowners, key agencies and Council Officers to provide input. These included:

2.1.1 Key Landowner Meetings

Key landowners were invited to participate in an online meeting with the consultant team and Council officers to discuss current or planned projects, development opportunities related to their sites, and broader issues and opportunities for the future of Chirnside Park. The key landowners engaged as part of this process included:

- McMullin Group – Owner of 325 Manchester Road, Chirnside Park. NB: This site is currently undeveloped.
- GPT Group – Owner and operator of Chirnside Park Shopping Centre.

Feedback from these discussions has been summarised and incorporated into Section 3 of this report.



Slides from Landowner meeting presentation

2.1.2 External Agency Meetings

Key Stakeholder Engagement also included meetings with key government agencies.

The purpose of these meetings was to understand the roles and responsibilities of key external agencies, understand current assets, requirements and any planned projects or needs, as well as to identify any issues and opportunities for the study area. Key external agencies engaged as part of this process included:

- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)
- Melbourne Water (MW)

Feedback received from the Department of Transport and Melbourne Water has been summarised and incorporated into Section 3 of this report.

2.1.3 External Agency Follow Up

Following on from the External Agency Meetings, briefing packs were prepared to allow each agency additional time to consider and coordinate their inputs. Each pack included an overview of the project and its scope, a request for specific information, and a set of follow-up questions.

2.1.4 Councillors

Discussion with the Councilor for Chirnside Ward in March 2025, providing an overview of the project and seeking early feedback.

2.1.5 Internal Council Workshop

A 2hr online workshop was held on the 12th May 2025 with Council Officers from various internal departments. The purpose this workshop was to gather input and insights from across Council to help inform the revised Structure Plan. Council Officers, representing the following departments, attended the workshop:

- Transport Planning
- Traffic Engineering
- Stormwater Engineering
- Social Infrastructure Planner
- Open Space Strategy & Planning
- Community Development (Urban)
- Place Planning & Activation
- Business Investment & Support
- Strategic Planning
- Statutory Planning
- Urban Design

The key objectives of this workshop were to:

- Initiate cross-departmental discussions.
- Reflect on the 2010 Urban Design Masterplan.
- Confirm current and planned projects.
- Confirm negotiables / non-negotiables.
- Identify opportunities, challenges & constraints.
- Capture future aspirations and big ideas.

During the workshop, the consultant team provided an overview of the project and the study area, as well as some initial findings. Participant were invited to respond to the following questions in small breakout groups (3 groups):

Reflecting on the 2010 UD Masterplan (10 minutes)

1. What have we learnt from the 2010 Urban Design Masterplan (UDMP) and how should this inform a new Structure Plan?
(i.e. what has worked, what hasn't worked and what should be carried forward into the new Structure Plan?)

Current / Planned Projects (10 minutes)

2. What recent/upcoming projects are being delivered in or near the Centre?

Are there any other upgrades, strategies, plans or initiatives we should be aware of?

4. Background & Context

Site Photos



4. Background & Context

Reflecting on the 2010 Urban Design Masterplan

Key actions:

- Rezoning of land to assist the centre's transition.
- Application of Planning Scheme controls to achieve the desired outcomes.
- The creation of an urban park.
- A green spine (pedestrian and cycle linkage along the Highway).
- Creation of a Development Contributions Plan Overlay.

Key Outcomes



Key Opportunities and Issues (10 minutes)

3. What are the key opportunities for development, growth, public space, infrastructure or innovation as part of the Structure Plan for Chirnside Park?
4. What are the major constraints to be considered by the Structure Plan —physical, regulatory, environmental or financial?

Big Ideas and Aspirations (10 minutes)

5. What big or bold ideas could transform the Centre?

To support discussions, an online mural board was prepared with an aerial map and questions. This was used to collect inputs from the smaller group discussions and to report the key points back to the broader group.

Feedback from these sessions has been summarised and integrated into Section 3 of this report.

2.1.6 Internal Officer Discussions

Feedback was also sought from Council Officers that were unable to attend the Internal Council Workshop. This included representatives from the following departments:

- Urban Forester Tree Establishment – responsible for street trees across Council; and
- Northern Parks Team Leader - responsible for maintenance of Parks, also looks after sections along arterial roads including Maroondah Highway.

Feedback received during these discussions has been summarised and incorporated into Section 3 of this report.

3 Feedback Summary

During the key stakeholder engagement process several opportunities, challenges, and future emerging principles emerged. A summary is provided on the following pages:

3.1 Lessons Learned from the 2010 Urban Design Masterplan

The following provides a summary of the key lessons learned from the 2010 Urban Design Masterplan:

1.1 What has worked?

Please use a coloured post it to provide your response here or on the 2010 UD Masterplan, opposite.

Document has helped work with developers as an advocacy piece - Clear directions for sites	Shared path popular, lighting and shared path makes it accessible - safe usable path	Eastridge Drive extension / signalised intersection at Manchester Road
Traffic signals contribution - Manchester and Eastridge	Urban park - largely successful - limited opportunity to improve (BDO pointing to shared path - green space from the site with early accessible and close to the street. Fully accessible path (BDO) through green space - shared path - shared path	Delivery of a regional park within an Activity Centre has worked successfully.
Urban Park - Big success	Urban Park - attracts people for and adds. Role in the future - potentially understood (attracting people outside of CP) 1 hr vs 15 min for daily	Potential to provide shared path to connect green space to urban park to Kimberly park to reduce reliance on private vehicles. Shopping centre expansion to put pressure on existing car

1.2 What hasn't worked?

Please use a coloured post it to provide your response here or on the 2010 UD Masterplan, opposite.

I think the Green Spine has not effectively activated Maroondah Highway. Much of the built form is still well setback from the Highway.	Stormwater - Silent in the masterplan - Precinct lacks an overarching approach	Shape of the structure plan was separated from the highway.	Provision of medium density housing	Lack of buy in from developers - Pedestrian Through Access, Urban interfaces
Lack of connectivity across the highway from a pedestrian perspective. Built form does not enclose the street.	Signalised intersection example. Signalised intersection there was push back from developers. A DCP would have been beneficial	Eastern precinct - linked influence on providing road connections. Leads to segregated developments. Does not link. Difficult to access maroondah highway	Transport link at front of the shopping centre - in the masterplan the focus is on the highway - but pedestrian crossing / movement of shopping centre might have implications and potential impacts on surrounding streets	CP and Lyndale most built up - need for green open space to support community / population increases.
resident opposition to improved through connectivity		Congestion esp peak hours to shopping - need to support movement around the centre.		

1.3 What ideas / aspirations should be carried forward into the new Structure Plan?

Please use a coloured post it to provide your response here or on the 2010 UD Masterplan, opposite.

Direction re community facilities	Precinct scale detention and treatment system rather than on-site measures	through access from Manchester Road to Maroondah Hwy, active interface with Manchester Road	signage directions (bit of a dog breakfast)	Reinforce the precinct as a major activity centre and support additional housing (including medium density) given proximity to services and facilities
New road connections - however needs another intersection on Maroondah Highway (close to Sunning)	Continuing on with Pedestrian and Cycling connections - Expand to Kimberley Reserve further north - also missing is Urban Park to Green Spine	Would be beneficial if there was more direction on the shopping centre site	Connection to other suburbs, trainlines etc. Stronger dual user trails in Chimsdale Park and between towns.	Paths and trails - quite isolated better connections in the future. To get to the train line. Trail network limitation investment and land ownership.
Built form activation of Maroondah Highway	270 Maroondah Hwy - need something here - some vision?	Chimsdale Park needs a heart - a town square/piazza		

Screenshot from Mural Board

3.1.1 Built Form and Land Use

What has worked well

- Medium-density housing has been provided near the shopping centre. This has provided some housing diversity within the Site and aligns with evolving housing needs.
- The 2010 UDMP provided a framework to advocate for diverse residential / housing outcomes.

What could be improved

- Built form along Maroondah Highway lacks activation, with large setbacks and minimal enclosure.
- Market demand has been insufficient to support higher-density and mixed-use development as intended. Medium density development has also been limited.
- The shopping centre provides limited integration with the broader precinct.

What to Carry Forward:

- Potential to improve built form outcomes along Maroondah Highway and other key street frontages.
- Prioritise built form that enhances the public realm, especially along key corridors.
- Provide clear direction for key development sites.
- Ensure residential development is aligned with infrastructure and public space improvements.

3.1.2 Public Realm, Open Space and Community Infrastructure

What has worked well

- The Urban Park (Belsay Reserve) has been highly successful. It is well-located, accessible, inclusive, and well-used.

What could be improved

- The Green Spine (along Maroondah Highway) lacks activation and connectivity.
- The Activity Centre would benefit from a civic heart or town square to serve as a focal point for community building and interaction.
- Additional green space will be needed to accommodate population growth in Chirnside Park and surrounding areas.
- Need for stronger focus on urban greening, canopy cover, and WSUD features across the precinct.

What to Carry Forward:

- Retain and enhance the Urban Park as a key community anchor.
- Opportunity to enhance the Green Spine through better links and activation.
- Opportunity to provide a civic space or town square to enhance the identity of Chirnside Park and to support social and community gatherings.
- Provide a connected open space network that is activated and meets current and future needs.

3.1.3 Movement, Access and Connectivity

What has worked well

- Wide, shared paths with lighting along Maroondah Highway have improved accessibility.
- Signalised intersections (Eastridge Dr and Kimberley Dr) and new road connections (e.g. from Manchester Rd) have improved local access.

What could be improved

- Poor pedestrian connectivity across Maroondah Highway and Manchester Road remains a major barrier.
- Walking and cycling networks remain fragmented and poorly connected. Community resistance has hindered delivery of key connections.
- Traffic congestion near the shopping centre remains problematic during peak hours.
- The current bus interchange at the shopping centre may be inadequate for future needs. Its location on private land may also limit the potential for changes / expansion.
- Limited internal connections on the southside of the Highway, have led to isolated and disjointed development.
- Aspirations to deliver a pedestrian spine along Kimberly Drive have not been realised.

What to Carry Forward:

- Safe and continuous pedestrian/cyclist links, especially across key roads should be prioritised.
- Strengthen and expand the shared path network, ensuring lighting is provided and connections are legibility.
- Improve signage and wayfinding throughout the Activity Centre.
- Potential to explore the opportunity for Kimberley Drive to provide a pedestrian focus.
- Investigate the potential for an integrated transport solution with capacity to meet anticipated long-term needs.

3.1.4 Infrastructure and Implementation

What has worked well

- The 2010 UDMF has provided a useful advocacy tool with developers, providing a clear direction for site-specific outcomes.

What could be improved

- Limited direction was provided for stormwater infrastructure and integrated water management.
- Implementation has been delayed due to fragmented land ownership, limited developer buy-in, and absence of delivery mechanisms.
- Challenges delivering key infrastructure (e.g. intersections) without cost-sharing tools.
- Fragmented ownership in the eastern precinct limits coordination and delivery.

What to Carry Forward:

- Reinforce the need for integrated drainage and transport infrastructure.
- Review planning tools to support infrastructure delivery.
- Support staging and coordination across landowners for more cohesive outcomes.

3.2 Opportunities and Issues

The following provides a summary of the key issues and opportunities identified:

Question 3

What are the key opportunities for development, growth, public space, infrastructure or innovation within the Centre?

Please use a coloured post it to provide your response here or on the Aerial Plan opposite.

with residential development to provide opportunity to build connection to the southern land	Connectivity between Kimberley precinct, shopping centre to green spine. Provide a range options to support different uses.	strategic long term to consider pedestrian type MAC, build connection to the east	Increase tree canopy cover in urban area.	Dedicated bike and cycle routes - looking at off road trails in study area (challenges associated with this). Offering more modes of transport.
Walking and cycling connections beyond the centre and into the Green Spine - people are eager to walk but don't have the safe space to do so	Precinct Scale Drainage Infrastructure	Improved ped connectivity across Maroonah Highway	Utilise passive irrigation - harvest and re-use of stormwater (if/when)	Kimberley Drive - enhanced pedestrian environment - safety
270 Maroonah Hwy - Industrial land - shortage of industrial land availability in YR		Road connections - Potential intersection near Eastridge into the Lacola site	green spine to be effective with active built form frontage to improve the ped experience	
Land front to real development along Kimberley Dr. opportunity to activate the interface to improve the ped experience	vacant land to be considered to impact the overall land use types	Upgrading intersection along highway.	Link between Fletcher and Penridge across Manchester - lake and pedestrian	
	Revisit mix of uses in DPO7 - Lacola site	and DPO8 McMullin site		

Screenshot from Mural Board

3.2.1 Housing and Residential Development

Issues

- Limited appetite for apartments or higher-density housing on key development sites due to distance from CBD and limited public transport accessibility.
- Topographical constraints, contamination, and irregular lot shapes present challenges for development.
- Interface with existing low-scale residential areas requires careful transition in scale and form.

Opportunities

- Promote a broader mix of housing types including townhouses, aged care, and affordable housing options.
- Support residential development near services, shops, and public open spaces.
- Redevelop underutilised and vacant land for mixed-use and higher-density housing outcomes.
- Coordinate development across key sites to unlock consolidated housing supply.

3.2.2 Business and Economic Development

Issues

- Fragmented land uses and vacant sites reduce cohesion and vibrancy.
- Private aspirations often conflict with Council's broader vision for mixed-use, walkable precinct.
- Lack of employment diversity—Chirnside is predominantly retail focused.

Opportunities

- Diversify commercial and employment offerings, including medical, professional services, and creative industries.
- Create environments attractive to smaller, local businesses alongside larger anchors.
- Encourage active ground-floor commercial in mixed-use areas to support a vibrant economy.
- Explore future potential for aged-care or health-focused employment clusters.



One of the undeveloped sites within the Activity Centre

3.2.3 Public Realm, Open Space and Community Infrastructure

Issues:

- Uneven distribution of community infrastructure and facilities; some areas poorly served.
- New developments often under deliver on social infrastructure and public space outcomes.
- Green Spine under performs due to lack of connections and active edges.
- Limited tree canopy and urban heat exposure in parts of the Activity Centre.

Opportunities:

- Provide inclusive, accessible, and diverse community infrastructure linked with new development.
- Increase canopy cover, landscaping, and streetscape improvements to improve comfort and identity.
- Integrate public art and placemaking in key areas (e.g., overpass, town square).
- Provide clear signage and visual cues between parks, shops, and community assets.
- Explore Kimberley Drive as a vibrant local street with improved pedestrian and shopfront amenity.



Opportunities for additional tree planting.

3.2.4 Stormwater and Infrastructure

Issues

- Stormwater management systems, including the Green Spine, underperform and need upgrades.
- Heat vulnerability and climate change risks require urgent attention.
- Tree canopy coverage is limited on large private development sites.
- Flooding and drainage issues, especially near key intersections and development sites.

Opportunities

- Increase tree planting in public and private spaces to improve urban cooling and amenity.
- Implement precinct-scale integrated water management (IWM) for stormwater reuse and irrigation.
- Use passive irrigation and sustainable development practices to reduce environmental impact.

3.2.5 Urban Design, Placemaking and Built Form

Issues

- Built form lacks cohesion and identity.
- Retail centres are vehicle-oriented and disconnected.
- Inactive frontages and poor pedestrian environments reduce safety and place quality.

Opportunities

- Promote a consistent urban design language across precincts, reinforcing a strong local identity.
- Activate streets and centres with retail frontages, public art, and quality landscaping.
- Create new civic spaces and pedestrian destinations with integrated public amenities.
- Emphasise human-scale development with good surveillance and walkability.

3.2.6 Movement, Access and Connectivity

Issues:

- Maroondah Highway and fragmented development sites restrict pedestrian and cyclist connectivity.
- Heavy car dependence with limited active transport and public transit options.
- Lack of continuous footpaths and off-road paths, especially north of the highway.
- Poor signage and wayfinding between key destinations (e.g., park to Green Spine).
- Streetscapes lack pedestrian comfort and landscape amenity.
- Poor pedestrian access across the Highway and at key intersections (e.g., Manchester Road).

Opportunities:

- Improve pedestrian and cycling networks, including continuous paths and safer crossings.
- Enhance public transport access and reliability, including flexible services (e.g. flexi-ride).
- Create internal connections within development parcels for better accessibility.
- Enhance Kimberley Drive and other streets as shared or mixed-use pedestrian-friendly environments.
- Explore major interventions such as pedestrian bridges over Maroondah Highway.



Potential to increase pedestrian crossings of Maroondah Highway.

3.2.7 Governance, Planning and Collaboration

Issues:

- Coordination challenges across multiple agencies and large landowners.
- Legacy Development Plan Overlay requirements may no longer align with current market or development feasibility.
- Council aspirations not always met by private investment decisions.
- Frustration around delayed infrastructure delivery vs community expectations.
- Lack of early engagement across government and stakeholders' delays project momentum.

Opportunities:

- Strengthen early engagement with DTP, Melbourne Water, and YVW for integrated planning.
- Package background materials and questions for agency review and internal feedback.
- Review and update Development Plan Overlays where appropriate to support viable, coordinated development.
- Explore the potential for a Developer Contributions to support priority infrastructure delivery.
- Consider staging development and flexible land use sequencing to align with market.

Feedback from engagement activities will be considered as part of the development of the Structure Plan for Chirnside Park.

Key Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Chirnside Park Structure Plan

