

# MUNICIPAL WIDE TREE STUDY

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

JUNE 2016



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Study Team recognises that the State of Victoria has an ancient and proud Aboriginal history and complex ownership and land stewardship systems stretching back many thousands of years. We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land, and offer our respect to the past and present Elders, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

### PROJECT CONTROL

NAME	NO.	PM APPROVED	PD APPROVED	DATE
Draft Consultation Summary	1	KW	LR	01/06/15
Final Consultation Summary	1	KW	LR	08/06/19

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

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### THE PROJECT

Whitehorse City Council is undertaking this Study to review, analyse and document the importance of vegetation, and especially tree canopy cover, to the municipality and the region. The study investigates ways in which this important aspect of the City can be protected and enhanced, as development and future growth inevitably occurs. The project is focussed on trees on private land, rather than on Council and other public land which is managed in a variety of other ways.

The Tree Study provides options and recommendations for policy and controls and other (non-statutory) mechanisms that will aim to ensure the future retention and regeneration of tree canopy. These include planning scheme changes to both protect existing trees and encourage the planting of future canopy trees. Options can also involve broader Council policy, advocacy and educational aspects to tackle the issue of tree retention on private land in a number of ways.

The Study will determine the types of trees that are most important as well as where in the City existing tree cover is lacking. While research and survey work is a significant part of the Study, the community's views are also very important in determining the final recommendations.

### APPROACH

The study will be undertaken in five stages:

- Stage 1: Project Inception
- Stage 2: Technical Analysis
- Stage 3: Draft Options Report
- Stage 4: Community Consultation
- Stage 5: Final Options Report

### GOALS OF CONSULTATION

1. To inform the stakeholders and the community of the purpose and commencement of the Vegetation Controls study.
2. To provide stakeholders and the community with the opportunity to identify issues and opportunities for the Options Report to address.
3. To gather feedback on the Draft Options Report and consider all submissions in its finalisation.



## CONSULTATION PHASES

### PHASE 1: TECHNICAL ANALYSIS & IDEAS

This first phase occurs during Stage 2 of the study after the technical analysis has been undertaken and a discussion report drafted. It provides the opportunity to present to stakeholders the preliminary findings and to workshop ideas and options.

### PHASE 2: OPTIONS REVIEW

Phase 2 will be undertaken during Stage 3 of the study to present to the working group, executive management team and Councillors the Draft Options report. The options will be discussed and the feedback received used to finalise the Draft Options before engaging with the wider community.

### PHASE 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This phase includes exhibiting the Draft Options report in Stage 4 of the project. It will include undertaking drop-in sessions to discuss the options with the wider community and undertaking workshops with relevant stakeholders to refine the recommendations.

## PROJECT OUTPUTS

The study outputs are listed below. Community and stakeholder consultation have been an important input into all project deliverables.

- Discussion Paper
- Community Engagement Report
- Options Report

## DISCUSSION PAPER

The Whitehorse Tree Study Part 1 (Discussion Paper) identifies the contribution of trees on private property in defining the character of the City of Whitehorse and of Melbourne's eastern region.

The canopy cover of Whitehorse was assessed using iTree software. Our analysis estimates that 26.6% of the City has tree canopy cover, with an additional 21.5% covered by other vegetation, such as grass, shrubs, small trees etc. The remainder of the ground cover is comprised of buildings (also at 26.6%) and hard surfaces (25.3%). The analysis of tree cover over the City indicates that the municipality has a high level of tree cover when compared with most metropolitan areas and other middle ring suburban municipalities, and slightly less or similar to adjoining municipalities (eg. Boroondara, Banyule). However the analysis confirmed anecdotal reports that tree cover is decreasing over the City, while building site coverage and other hard surfaces are increasing.

Across Whitehorse there is considerable variation in terms of tree cover depending on the neighbourhood character area. The area with the highest canopy cover is the Bush Environment character type, where tree cover is approximately 50%. Areas not covered by the neighbourhood character study, for example town centres and

industrial areas are the least treed. Together with Garden Suburban these areas have a canopy cover of just 23%. The remaining character type, Bush Suburban, has 29% tree cover. Areas with tree protection controls have a significantly higher proportion of ground covered by trees, as do areas identified as 'Bush Environment' and 'Bush Suburban' in the neighbourhood character study.

Key findings of all the analysis, background research and community engagement have guided the development of the draft options contained within this report.

Council officer and community feedback was obtained on the Discussion Paper through meetings and workshops and has formed the basis of the Issues discussion later in this Options Report.

## OPTIONS REPORT

The Options Report presents options for implementation of the findings of the Discussion Paper in terms of the additional or modified controls and other actions required to achieve the broad aim of retaining and enhancing canopy tree cover in Whitehorse. The report details statutory and non-statutory options that can be used, in some cases concurrently. Four options were presented as part of the report:

- Option A – Existing Model/Mix of Overlays
- Option B - Extend the SLO
- Option C – Extend the VPO
- Option D – Local Law

Option B – Extend the SLO was the preferred option which included the following features:

- Improving planning policy within the Whitehorse LPPF and strengthening the Council Plan;
- Extending the SLO controls to the remaining residential areas and including the VPO areas;
- Strengthening the landscape plan review process;
- Extending education programs and including welcome packs in a number of languages as appropriate;
- Enforcing S173 agreements on new subdivisions to require canopy tree planting on all sites;
- Continuing to advocate for an increase in fines for illegal tree removal, to the State Government; and
- Incentives such as discounted canopy trees or tree vouchers through Council and community nurseries.

# 2

## STAGE ONE CONSULTATION



## 2.1 STAGE 1 - DISCUSSION PAPER

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### ISSUES AND DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

Consultation to gather information, identify issues and discuss the project has been undertaken in the following format:

- A community bulletin
- A community and stakeholders workshop

#### COMMUNITY BULLETIN

The community bulletin was prepared to inform the broader community of the project purpose and to invite residents/stakeholders to the community workshop.

The bulletin included a survey of 3 questions to gauge the level of interest from respondents. Thirteen (13) responses were received. The responses included:

#### 1. WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE PROJECT?

Respondents highlighted that tree cover in Whitehorse is important to the character and visual amenity of the neighbourhoods. They acknowledged that moonscaping is an issue and the high rate of tree removal is having an impact on the City.

#### 2. ARE THERE PARTICULAR ISSUES YOU THINK THIS PROJECT SHOULD ADDRESS?

Respondents were clear on a need to prioritise the protection of canopy trees, indigenous trees and middle storey trees.

Respondents suggested introducing greater controls or developer incentives to assist in retaining trees. However, it was also noted that a blanket ban may not be the best approach and we should balance home owner rights with exemptions.

It was noted that a better process should be considered to monitor the planting of new developments, including the type and size of trees.

#### 3. ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A RELEVANT COMMUNITY OR INTEREST GROUP? (IF SO, PLEASE NAME)

Respondents included representatives from various advisory and resident groups.

#### COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

A community and stakeholder workshop was held on the 4th February 2016 (4.30-6pm) at the Council offices.

Twenty-five (25) attendees participated in the workshop, all of whom were residents of Whitehorse. Two (2) Councillors also participated in the workshop.

A presentation on the background findings (as provided in this Discussion Paper) was given to the group and then a discussion allowed participants to consider three questions in small groups, before coming together and having a whole group discussion.

**1. WHERE ARE MOST TREES BEING LOST ON PRIVATE LAND? ARE THERE PARTICULAR TYPES OF TREES OR AREAS WHERE THIS IS MORE EVIDENT?**

Workshop participants noted that there was an over-development of residential blocks in Box Hill, Surrey Hills and Mont Albert North, as well as a significant amount of tree loss in Blackburn North.

Participants agreed that new developments were not leaving a sufficient amount of space for replanting, with high site coverage and increased hard surfaces.

Commercial development was also seen to be growing quickly in activity centres like Box Hill and along Whitehorse Road, with no space provided for the planting of trees in private spaces.

Issues also included insufficient space being provided to allow new trees to grow, and old trees not being replaced.

Areas immediately surrounding the SLO were identified as experiencing greater tree loss.

**2. WHERE IS TREE RETENTION OR REPLANTING SUCCESSFUL? WHY IS THIS WORKING?**

In general participants felt that there were many areas where tree retention was working. They highlighted that retention is mostly seen on public land, e.g. street trees and bushland parks. However, streets where residents have established their own informal controls have more success, e.g. Jeffery Street and Linum Street.

Community enforced action and education of new residents has helped to retain trees in some areas.

**3. HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE DEVELOPERS AND OTHER PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY TO RETAIN AND INCREASE LARGE CANOPY TREES?**

Participants agreed that community education is key to tree retention by promoting the benefits of trees. They noted that this could be done through 'welcome packs', education in schools, through real estate agents and by educating developers.

Introducing incentives for developers to retain trees and for residents to plant new trees was also considered, such as using vouchers or free tree schemes.

Lastly, participants discussed the need for better compliance and enforcement of tree protection controls. This included possibly greater planning controls, better assessment and follow-up of landscape plans and the trees proposed to be planted in new development, and lobbying state government for increased fines for illegal tree removal.

## **STAGE 1 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONSES**

13 responses were received to the questions provided on the first community bulletin. This is a summary of responses broken down by question.

## WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THIS PROJECT?

Concern with the impacts of development on trees:

- Moonscaping of blocks when new houses or units are built.
- Developers do not seem to retain healthy mature trees and shrubs when building medium-density development, even though sometimes development could've been planned to retain trees.
- Long time residents note they have witnessed the 'thoughtless removal of vegetation to accommodate developments'.
- Lack of tree guards for street trees during development
- Amenity and neighbourhood character concerns relating to the loss of trees.
- The treed environment is what makes suburbs like Blackburn, Vermont etc uniquely liveable.
- Retaining and improving the tree canopy in the Mitcham area is important.
- Amenity of residential areas is important.
- Long time residents are disappointed to see so much of the tree canopy in the Mitcham area being destroyed – especially in the last 5 years.
- Overall reduction of tree cover in suburbs.
- A high rate of removal of beautiful trees and a lack of replacement trees.
- The current treed environment is under pressure from developers, development and climate change.
- Environmental/economic/social benefits of trees.
- The economic advantages of having a treed environment.
- Importance of parks as an ecological system.
- Contribution of individual trees that warrant special monitoring, protection and propagation.
- Importance of historic trees, street trees, large canopy trees & wildlife.
- The many benefits of trees, such as climate, environmental, health and wildlife habitat.

## ARE THERE PARTICULAR ISSUES YOU THINK THIS PROJECT SHOULD ADDRESS?

Prioritising the protection of different types of trees:

- Protecting indigenous trees should be the highest priority.
- Extend the current focus in the planning controls on canopy trees to middle storey trees.
- Protecting appropriate older canopy trees.
- Introduction of policies/programs to protect tree coverage.

- Need to balance the 'rights' of home owners with the overall need to retain tree cover, i.e.: not a blanket ban on tree removal – need a good compromise.
- Incentives scheme for developers of private land, e.g: deposit or rebate or reduced rates to retain healthy trees.
- Establishing a significant tree register within the SLOs and parks and apply VPOs where needed.
- Compensation for rate payers who host significant trees.
- Linking street trees, private trees and public parks.
- The development of an integrated park system with vegetation cover on residential allotments.
- Addressing issues relating to developers and new development.
- Moonscaping allotments prior to applying to council for permits to build.
- Need to introduce guidelines to minimise the impact of tree removal on the natural habitat.
- Total site clearing should not be permitted.
- 34 mature trees have been cut down in Edinburgh Road Blackburn South, 30 native over 25 years. Subsequently the amenity of the area has changed.
- Programs/policies to extend tree canopy and encourage new planting:
- Require the planting of new canopy trees, carefully considering what the requirements of new planting will be.
- New home builders should have to include large trees in their landscaping.
- Address issues such as the number of trees, type and size of trees in new developments, with the goal to plant trees of a reasonable size that provide habitat, food, shade in summer etc, that won't cause problems in the future.
- Recognition of all of the benefits of trees:
- Trees have an economic as well as environmental value and therefore should be treated as assets to our city like any other asset.

**ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A RELEVANT COMMUNITY OR INTEREST GROUP? (IF SO, PLEASE NAME)**

- Halliday Park Advisory Committee
- Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee
- Bolton Park Neighbourhood Residents Group
- Whitehorse Community Indigenous Plant Project
- Heatherdale Creek Parklands Advisory Committee

## EXTERNAL WORKSHOP RESPONSES

25 people attended an external workshop held on the 4th February 2016 at the Council offices. This is a summary of responses broken down by question.

### WHERE ARE MOST TREES BEING LOST ON PRIVATE LAND? ARE THERE PARTICULAR TYPES OF TREES OR AREAS WHERE THIS IS MORE EVIDENT?

#### LOSS OF TREES DUE TO DEVELOPMENT:

- New residents removing trees is an issue.
- Loss of trees due to construction or damage.
- Overdevelopment of sites, no check of planting or plans.
- Infill development, including dual-dwellings and multi-units.
- Residents developing single dwellings with no space for planting (McMansions).
- Over-development of blocks in Box Hill, Surrey Hills and Mont Albert North.
- Renovations, extensions, more use of paving.
- 'Every 2nd house' in Blackburn North.

#### COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Commercial development on Whitehorse Rd has not incorporated any planting, e.g. tax office.
- Box Hill activity centre.

#### PARTICULAR AREAS OR TYPES OF TREES:

- Areas immediately surrounding SLO boundaries – Bush Suburban areas.
- Trees in the middle of lots.
- Loss of protected trees (with minimal sanctions).
- Inappropriate planting and overcrowding of trees are leading to loss.
- More treed areas are experiencing a greater loss (more to lose), including in the Bush Environment character areas.
- Institutional sites (buildings with larger footprints).
- Trees that die and are not replaced.
- Trees that impact on neighbour's property.
- Age of trees and falling branches.

## **WHERE IS TREE RETENTION OR REPLANTING SUCCESSFUL? WHY IS THIS WORKING?**

### **WHERE IS IT WORKING:**

- Street trees.
- Bushland parks.
- Streets where resident have established controls eg Jeffery Street, Linum Street.
- Only where individuals want to.

### **WHY IS IT WORKING:**

- Community enforced action.
- Educating new residents.

### **OTHER COMMENTS:**

- Nowhere – even in SLO areas, developers remove trees but do not replant them.
- Rezoning/overlay controls has emphasised the value of the bush at the expense of garden area and exotic trees.
- Not working because there is no follow-up. Developer sells and no obligation on new owners.

## **HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE DEVELOPERS AND OTHER PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY TO RETAIN AND INCREASE LARGE CANOPY TREES?**

### **EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY ABOUT PLANNING CONTROLS AND BENEFITS OF TREES:**

- Translating planning requirements and informing new residents.
- Welcome Packs to new residents in several languages.
- Active education with the community and real estate agents – to communicate benefits.
- Tree Education Unit.
- Education in schools.
- Education of developers.
- Information provided in different languages.
- Benefits of cooling are not being recognised and also need to be communicated to the community.
- Research on ambient air temperature to be promoted.
- Floating foundations could be promoted to protect trees.

### **COUNCIL INTERVENTIONS:**

- Council to re-plant in baron areas to set an example.
- Better/more compliance/enforcement.



- Better and more consistent advice up front from Council.
- Independent arborists advice.
- Being proactive before removal.
- Better follow-up and monitoring of planting/landscape plans.
- Pro-active before the damage happens.
- Lobby state government re increased fines for illegal tree removal (amenity value as a measure).

**PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR RETAINING TREES:**

- Banyule have incentives, e.g. free plants for new residents.
- Introduce incentives for developers to retain/plant trees.
- Use incentives or vouchers.
- Free tree scheme for residents

**INTRODUCING PLANNING CONTROLS:**

- Setback and site coverage controls to require space for tree planting in new developments.
- Extend the SLO to all of Whitehorse.

**MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION:**

- Need for more monitoring and data of trees in non-protection areas.

**OTHER**

- More flexibility – individual case by case – more control in hands of land owners.
- Like for like replacement dead and removed trees.

# 3

## STAGE TWO CONSULTATION

## 3.1 STAGE 2 – OPTIONS REPORT

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### STAGE 2 - OVERVIEW

Consultation to gauge community feedback on the draft tree protection options was undertaken in April and May 2016 by:

- Website
- Community Bulletin and survey
- Online survey
- 3x Drop-in sessions

### WEBSITE

A project website that included project information and links to the Discussion Paper and Options report was made available to the public. The website enabled people to find out more about the project and gave directions on how to provide feedback on the project including:

- Information about drop in sessions;
- Link to online survey;
- Electronic Project Bulletin; and
- Electronic Feedback form.

A hard copy of the Draft Options Report was also made available at Council Customer Service Centres at the Nunawading Civic Centre, Box Hill Town Hall and Forrest Hill Shopping Centre, and at Libraries in Whitehorse at Blackburn, Box Hill, Nunawading and Vermont South.

### PROJECT BULLETIN

The Project Bulletin provided broad information about the project process and key issues relating to the project, with information about the drop in sessions at Vermont South, Box Hill and Blackburn. It also included five survey questions (responses have been summarised in Section 3.2).

A copy of the Project Bulletin is included at **Appendix A**.

### FEEDBACK FORM & SURVEY RESULTS

A Feedback Form was attached to the Project Bulletin and was made available to the community to provide the opportunity for all stakeholders to provide written feedback. The Form contained open-ended questions to elicit an understanding of the community's views on trees, preferred tree protection option and suggestions for the protection of trees in Whitehorse.

The Feedback Form was made available online and was distributed to attendees at the drop in sessions. The Forms were collected at the drop-in sessions or sent to Council which were then sent to the consultant for review and analysis. In addition to this an online survey asking the questions contained on the Feedback Form was also

available as another mechanism to record feedback. A summary of Feedback From and survey results can be found at **Section 3.2**.

A total of 56 formal written submissions were received. This included 31 completed feedback forms, a further 6 formal written submissions and 19 responses to the online survey.

### **DROP IN SESSIONS**

Three open drop-in sessions were held, including:

- 3:30-6:30pm on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at Sportslink, Vermont South;
- 11am-2pm on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May at the Box Hill Mall Community Kiosk, Box Hill; and
- 4-7pm on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May at the Blackburn Lakes Visitor Centre, Blackburn.

Stakeholder groups, residents, developers and all other interested parties were invited to attend.

Information including maps, summaries of the preferred option and copies of the Discussion Paper and Draft Options Report were made available for attendees. The drop in sessions offered the opportunity to speak directly with Whitehorse staff and the consultants, and to complete a feedback form to provide written comment.

The purpose of the drop-in sessions was to provide the opportunity for all interested parties to:

- Be informed about the study and the draft options,
- Ask questions about the draft options for tree controls,
- Discuss the values, issues and any suggestions regarding trees in Whitehorse, and
- Provide input to the draft options before the finalisation of the strategy.

The methods of publicity for the drop in sessions were:

- Project Bulletin made available on the council website and provided to interested residents and groups,
- Email to members of the community who signed up during stage one of the project;
- Public notice in the regular Whitehorse City Council column in the local newspaper.

A total of 51 people attended the three community drop in sessions. A total of 7 people and one Councillor attended the Vermont South community drop-in session, with 31 people and one councillor attending the Box Hill community drop in session and a further 13 people attending the Blackburn community drop in session.

## 3.2 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

A total of 56 formal written submissions were received during the exhibition period. The issues raised and a response to each have been summarised in the tables below.

### SURVEY RESPONSES

No	Issue/Theme	Response/ Recommendation
<b>Question 1: Do you think trees benefit your area? If so, in what ways?</b>		
1	Appreciates the cooling effects of trees. Values the wildlife habitat trees provide. Appreciates the aesthetic qualities of treed areas. Values indigenous and native trees.	Noted
2	Values the contribution of trees to habitat.	Noted
3	Values the aesthetic qualities of trees. Notes that trees improve biodiversity. Notes that trees provide a filter for carbon dioxide. Appreciates cooling effects of trees. Believes trees provide a suitable environment for the future.	Noted
4	Believe that trees are a beautifying element. Appreciates the air quality impacts of trees. Appreciates the provision of shade for people, plants and animals. Notes that trees protect soils and prevent erosion.	Noted
5	Values indigenous and native trees.	Noted
6	Believes that trees provide a nice environment to live in also provide natural habitat to animals.	Noted
7	Believe that trees are a beautifying element. Appreciates the air quality impacts of trees. Believes that trees create peace and instils good values in the young and instils peace in all.	Noted

8	<p>Appreciates the shading and cooling impacts of trees.</p> <p>Notes that trees provide habitat for wildlife like birds and, critically, bees, and allowing wildlife diversity. Additionally trees provide a link in the urban environment to nature.</p> <p>Values the way trees enhance amenity and create a more beautiful place to live.</p> <p>Trees provide privacy as housing density increases.</p> <p>Notes that trees absorb rainwater leading to reduced runoff.</p>	Noted
9	<p>Believes that trees are vital to the cooling of your home and surrounds.</p> <p>Believes that trees are vital to provide sanctuary for wildlife and to encourage wildlife to exist in an urban environment. Further to this trees encourage biodiversity in an urban environment.</p> <p>Trees also provide privacy in an ever increasing upward and outward growing community.</p>	Noted
10	<p>Believes that trees enhance streetscape</p> <p>Aids cooling during summer due to tree evaporation.</p> <p>Minimises road &amp; footpath maintenance costs.</p> <p>Adds to property values.</p> <p>Provides wind breaks.</p> <p>Aids wildlife such as birds and possums by providing food &amp; habitat.</p> <p>Help mitigate rain &amp; storm water runoff. And mitigate flash flooding &amp; flooding.</p> <p>Adds to amenity &amp; liveability of general surroundings.</p> <p>Aids soil moisture retention.</p>	Noted
11	<p>Believes that trees provide a cooling effect, shade in summer.</p> <p>Provides shelter for birds and wildlife.</p> <p>Values the amenity benefits of trees.</p> <p>Particularly support fruit trees.</p>	Noted
12	<p>Believes that trees add to the ambience of the area, provide shade and beauty to the landscape.</p> <p>Believes that trees provide homes to a range of birds and animals.</p>	Noted
13	<p>Values the contribution of trees to aesthetics, air quality and bird life and the general atmosphere of the "leafy eastern suburbs".</p>	Noted
14	<p>Values the aesthetic contribution of trees by providing natural forms, sounds in breeze.</p> <p>Values the provision of shade, habitat for birds and native animals, fresh air (pollution protection)</p> <p>Notes that trees provide screening from the street and neighbours.</p>	Noted



15	Values the shade that trees provide. Notes contribution to air quality. Notes the contribution of trees to habitat for birds and animals.	Noted
16	Values the shade and benefits to amenity that trees provide. Notes that trees provide habitat for flora and fauna. Appreciates the benefits to air quality.	Noted
17	Notes that property values are improved with trees.	Noted
18	Values the contribution that trees make to beauty, bird life, pollution, power bills, shade and ambiance.	Noted
19	Values the contribution that trees make beauty shade, air quality, liveability and link to nature.	Noted
20	Values the contribution that trees make to amenity, air, heat, biodiversity, habitat and mental health.	Noted
21	Values the contribution that trees make to habitat, shade, beauty, air quality, borrowed landscape	Noted
22	Values the contribution that trees make to birdlife.	Noted
23	Believes that trees are aesthetically pleasing.	Noted
24	Values the large canopy cover provided by trees.	Noted
25	Values the contribution that trees make to enhancing streetscape, wellbeing, serenity. Believes that trees keep places cool in summer, lessen emissions and soften the appearance of development.	Noted
26	Believes that trees soften the environments of roofs, homes, and commercial areas and give animal habitats.	Noted
27	Appreciates the aesthetics and habitat provided by trees.	Noted
28	Values the contribution that trees make to shade, habitat, visual appeal and softening the landscape.	Noted
29	Trees provide a green and leafy atmosphere, visually appealing; soften the hard lines of surfaces, calming, and habitat and bird life.	Noted
30	Values native flora and fauna.	Noted
31	Believes that trees provide shade and attract birdlife.	Noted
32	Believes that trees have various social and economic benefits. Strengthen sense of place and contributes to neighbourhood character.	Noted
33	Believes that trees have a calming effect and act as a carbon sinks	Noted
34	Values the contribution that trees make to beauty, birdlife, habitat for wildlife and cooler temperatures	Noted

35	Believes that trees improve the local environment, make a contribution to liveability, enhance the beauty of the area, improve air-quality, provide cooling and shade, and improve health and wellbeing.	Noted
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<b>Question 2: Do you have a preferred tree protection option from those proposed?</b>		
1	Supports the extension of SLOs that prohibit the removal of trees. Supports fines for illegal removal of trees that reflect the value of trees as well as their replacement with mature trees.	Noted
2	Better enforcement at VCAT Rationale for controls needs to be clear	Noted
3	Believes that all trees need to be protected. Contends that planning controls need meaningful penalties.	Noted
4	Believes that trees over 3-4 meters as well as shrubs of any size (particularly native shrubs) should be protected.	Further work to benchmark the definition of canopy tree.
5	Supports the SLO option protecting trees of 6m height.	Noted
6	Prefers improved education.	Noted – improving education will be a clear recommendation
7	Supports s173 option.	Noted – including the S173 Agreement option will be recommended in some cases
8	Supports the extended SLO option, but believes it should be city wide on all land including council and state owned land.	A blanket overlay approach is generally not applied across public land and a VPO is a more appropriate tool for protecting specific trees.
9	Supports the protection of healthy existing trees and requiring developers to plant new and appropriate trees when blocks are cleared for redevelopment.	Noted
10	Believes that overlay controls need to be changed to allow for maintenance of trees for personal safety and home protection. Trees need to be planted in appropriate locations to ensure that people take responsibility for trees on their properties and prevent conflicts or issues with neighbours.	Further work will be undertaken to determine exact content of overlay schedules. Tree protection to allow for maintenance and safety.
11	Believes the study has covered their preferred option.	Noted
12	Didn't support any of the proposed options. Believes that people should be able to control what is planted	Noted

	in their own backyard.	
13	Would like to see the introduction of a minimum private open space requirement for development. Including a requirement to provide space for native and non-native trees, small trees, shrubs and ground covers implemented in larger developments.	Further work will be undertaken to determine private open space requirements.
14	Believes that tree & vegetation protection should be municipality wide.	Noted
15	Supports improved education and restrictions on big subdivisions. Supports tree protection zones where a tree is identified in part of a development application and meets height requirement. Isn't supportive of other aspects of the options. Believes that some will just cop the fines and will get away with it because there are insufficient resources available for enforcement. Concerned about neighbours planting trees in inappropriate locations on property boundaries.	Concerns regarding fines, enforcement and trees on boundaries are noted.  Advocating for increased fines and greater enforcement is a part of the recommendations.
16	Supports the extension of the SLO	Noted
17	Supports planning rules for any new/replacement dwelling that requires the retention of peripheral plants/foliage, especially larger trees.	Noted
18	Supports a combination of Option 2-- extending appropriate SLOs over all of Whitehorse to protect large canopy tree especially on private land from development, together with Option 6 -further Local Laws pertaining to tree removal.	Noted  It is not considered necessary to have both an SLO and a Local Law on the same land, as a SLO can cover more than a local law.
19	Supports the protection of all trees that are not weeds that have a specified girth. Believes that trees should be able to be pruned for safety and that diseased trees should be able to be removed.	Noted
20	Supports a combination of extending the SLO and Local Laws.	Noted  It is not considered necessary to have both an SLO and a Local Law on the same land, as a SLO can cover more than a local law.
21	Supports applying the SLO to all of Whitehorse.	Noted
22	Supports extending the SLO to the whole of Whitehorse.	Noted
23	Supports providing financial assistance to people who own property with significant trees.	Investigate financial assistance options, such as providing vouchers for a discounted arborist assessment.
24	Supports a combination of keeping established significant native trees, planting new trees and	Noted

	educations.	
25	Supports greater fines for developers who remove significant trees, believes that Council must fully support whatever option is chosen.	Noted
26	Supports ensuring that staff have appropriate experience to review landscape plans, improved monitoring and the consideration of bond agreements associated with landscape plans.	Noted
27	Supports municipality wide controls.	Noted
28	Supports SLO extension and municipal wide VPOs. Believes that existing SLOs need to be strengthened and their boundaries be reset.	Noted –the effectiveness of existing SLOs to be considered when drafting new SLO schedules
29	Supports options that prevent developers from removing trees and enforce retention.	Noted
30	Does not have a preferred solution but believes that the current system isn't working.	Noted
31	Does not have a preferred option but is supportive of greater controls.	Noted
32	Supports the preferred option but believes that there should be a higher maximum number of trees.	Noted
33	Supports option 4, to make sure that each property has a large tree.	Implementing a mix of SLO and VPO schedules may not ensure that each property has a large tree.
34	Supports Option C.	Noted – supports blanket VPO controls
35	Supports option 2.	Noted
36	Supports regulation and encouragement for residents and developers to keep trees.	Noted
37	Supports a combination of option 2 and option 6.	Noted  It is not considered necessary to have both an SLO and a Local Law on the same land, as a SLO can cover more than a local law.
38	Supports protection of mature trees.	Noted
39	Supports rewriting the Whitehorse Local Planning Policy Framework to protect existing trees and stop moonscaping.	Noted

**Question 3: Do you have any other suggestions for achieving the study aims of tree protection and regeneration?**

1	Opposed to the total clearance of house blocks for new developments. Believes that new developments should be limited to a maximum 60% site coverage. Believes that most new development are out of	Noted
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	keeping with their surroundings.	
2	Advocate to State Government for definitive rules and increased fines.	Noted
3	Believes that Woody Weeds should not be treated the same as indigenous trees despite their habitat values, their spread can be an ongoing issue.	Noted – weeds and other exemptions will be considered further.
4	Believes that tree replacement should be calculated using a 1 tree removed = 2-3 trees replanted formula. Believes that checks after 3-4 years are required. Keep public information forums going reminding everyone why trees are valued.	Noted – ongoing education and enforcement will be a clear recommendation. Tree replacement is recommended to be 1 for 1, however more trees will be encouraged through education.
5	Providing information to all existing home owners and future house, home business owners which shows exactly our local laws and expectations.	Noted
6	Better enforcement of landscape plans. Arborist advice for existing trees and maintenance. Better education for tree purchase.	Noted
7	Concerned about the enforcement and monitoring of replacement trees. Believes that apartment type projects by developers will destroy many trees and the environment.	Noted
8	Believes that more emphasis needs to be put on the connection between humans and their environment.	Noted
9	Supportive of council playing a role regulating nature strips and front setbacks however is opposed to council being able to influence what happens on remaining areas of their land. Believes council should investigate moving power and communications underground. Believes that council should focus on street trees.	Noted Street trees are equally important to neighbourhood character, however is outside the scope of this project.
10	Believes healthy or significant trees should be retained on sites that are being redeveloped, particularly trees on the periphery of the property, where it cannot be argued they are obstructions. Supports greater fines for tree removal by developers e.g. \$10,000.	Noted
11	Ensure that new home owners are provided with appropriate knowledge of rules within their zone. Suggests that documentation in different languages be attached to sale contracts & outlined by agents before sale. Supports greater policing of zone overlay requirements to ensure less 'accidental/unintentional' destruction of the areas' trees as frequently occurs.	Noted
12	Believes that resources should be diverted into regeneration of public land.	Noted

13	Supports a 'Replacement' clause. Where a tree is removed through age, disease, damage, etc, a tree of similar size and environmental value is planted in its place.	Noted
14	Supports the consideration of mandatory tree & vegetation protection areas & tree protection zones.	Noted
15	Supports improved education. Including information at point of sale of trees on the height and spread of trees. Believes that rules for site permeability need to be better enforced. Encourage people to grow more small useful trees - they are just as valuable as big trees. Discourage large trees on the fence line between properties - they just cause arguments. Lobby for power line undergrounding as power lines in Whitehorse reduce the potential locations for larger trees.	Noted Include a recommendation for the undergrounding of powerlines in the future.
16	Believes that when a home is sold the new owners should receive a letter from the council welcoming them to the City of Whitehorse and outlining the vegetation protection for the area. Supports higher infringement penalties for those who don't comply and enforcement of the policy	Noted
17	Supports improved education for new residents and builders on the importance of retaining and replanting greenery and maintaining the garden in a neat manner.	Noted
18	Supports improved education. Suggests that real estate agents should be required to include some educational material and council guidelines regarding the significance of trees in the properties they are selling.	Noted
19	Believes it is very important that large trees can be protected on private property especially from development.	Noted
20	Supports a control that preserves some current trees and includes a minimum number of square metres of vegetation to prevent the complete moonscaping of blocks. Believes there are also many opportunities to improve tree canopies along arterial roads and the rail line. Where new parks can be acquired, such as the Healesville Freeway reservation, Council should do so.	Noted
21	Believes more support from council is needed to assist with the preservation and maintenance of established trees. Supports the coordination of pruning (and in some cases, removal and replacement) of trees with the	Noted – financial incentives to maintain large trees



	street tree pruning activities carried out by contractors on a regular basis. Particularly as the cost of switching off power to maintain trees is expensive.	
22	<p>Believes that there are the cost of maintaining trees is prohibitively expensive, when it needs to be a shared community responsibility.</p> <p>Supports a free service provided by council for residents with larger canopy trees, such as; arborist advice and tree inspections.</p> <p>Supports co-ordination between council with contracted tree loppers who trim branches back from power lines and private property owners. Allow residents to utilize these contractors for tree work in situations where the resident would otherwise be required to pay.</p> <p>Believes that indigenous trees shouldn't be the only option considered as non-native trees might be more appropriate for other areas.</p> <p>Supports immediate action on moonscaping of blocks by developers.</p> <p>Supports the provision of additional qualified arborists.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Financial incentives to maintain large trees</p>
23	<p>Believes that ornamental trees should be encouraged for gardens.</p> <p>Suggests that eucalyptus trees provide shade in summer and are good for backyards but drop leaves and branches and are unsuitable for small areas.</p>	Noted
24	<p>Believes that new laws need to be proactively supervised with enforcement officers to be effective.</p> <p>Believes that it is too easy for developers to accept the current fines for illegal moonscaping.</p>	Noted
25	Supports education, better planning, free native plants.	Noted
26	Increase fines	Noted
27	Supports improved education.	Noted
28	Limit the amount of land that can be developed for units that leave no room for trees.	Noted
29	Provide incentives through education.	Noted
30	Provide financial assistance for maintaining trees to offset the cost of maintenance.	Noted
31	Provide sufficient space for trees around unit development.	Further work will be undertaken to determine content of overlay schedules such as private open space and site coverage.
32	Encourage developers to build around trees, encourage architects to design incorporating existing trees.	Noted

33	Provide advice on suitable small trees that have root systems that are compatible with concrete driveways and brick buildings.	Noted
34	Provide additional support to people who own trees.	Noted
35	Support understory trees and plants. Protect existing trees on council land. Council should provide residents with significant canopy trees support via a substantial rates discount to recognise the cost and benefit of hosting trees. Greater Fines for illegal tree removal. SLO and neighbourhood character boundaries shouldn't end in the middle of the street, in order to preserve full streetscapes.	Noted Consider a range of measures to assist financially, such as: - Rates rebates - Vouchers - Other incentives
36	Provide educational publications in various community languages.	Noted
37	New buildings should be required to have trees planted in order to prevent new buildings taking up all the land.	Noted
38	Concerns about individual tree. Doesn't support the implementation of tree controls on their property.	Noted
39	Supports education.	Noted
40	Supports additional fines	Noted
41	Supports education to encourage people to plant more trees.	Noted
42	Supports tree protection controls.	Noted
43	Supports greater enforcement of planning controls, believes that trees are not being replaced appropriately after buildings works.	Noted
44	Supports incorporating appropriate and enforceable tree protection zone to protect trees during construction. Apply protections to other zones.	Noted
45	Believes that council needs to be leading by example, in the same way that flats and units should be encouraged.	Noted
46	Supports additional enforcement measures, including enforcement officers and additional fines.	Noted
47	Believes that the report doesn't mention the contribution of trees to mitigating climate change through acting as a carbon sink.	Noted
48	Supports increasing fines for illegal tree removal. Believes that only Council arborists should decide on tree removal.	Noted
49	Supports increasing fines for illegal tree removal.	Noted
50	Believes that the controls need to address the issue of development provide enough space for the planting of trees on private land.	Noted

<b>Question 4: Do you have any other comments?</b>		
1	Believes that road surfaces are being destroyed by all the heavy vehicles involved in construction and tree felling. Concerned about the amenity impacts of construction activities.	Noted
2	Opposed to intervention to council in backyards unless council is prepared to buy this land from property owners	Noted
3	Supportive of the project, glad something positive is being done to save our trees and environment.	Noted
4	Believes that if VCAT are involved in making a decision they should have a site inspection and listen to opinions from neighbours and concerned locals.	Noted
5	Believes that fines should be a large enough to be a serious deterrent to developers. Believes that developers should not be allowed to pay a fee to avoid open space requirements.	Noted
6	Believes that the rate of clearing in this area is such that if the council does not take action soon, the removal of trees will reduce its amenity, destroy its character and just as importantly introduce new problems (e.g. flooding from overpaved areas) that will cost just as much in the long term as taking action now.	Noted
7	Believes that controls to protect trees from boundary fence to boundary fence development & moonscaping, need to be urgently implemented.	Noted
8	Supportive of the strategy. Believes that the green canopy of Whitehorse is disappearing rapidly under the stress and pressure of developers and investors. Believes the Greenlink initiative is fantastic but needs to be better pushed out in to the community - perhaps with the green waste and recycling options there could be initiatives included in a reduced fee for these fees if residents participate in 'greening' the area. Believes that some developers, builders and some landowners are fully aware of laws but in some cases will, with no care, flaunt the law because their bottom line is to make a dollar with little regard for the surrounding residents and future residents.	Noted
9	Believes that the planting of trees on nature strips should be mandatory.	Noted
10	Believes that the canopy tree definition should exclude anything with more than 2 stems. Suggests that Boroondara's definition means that what most of would consider to be a bush counts as a tree Believes that if a tree wasn't planted because of a permit requirement and it was less than 10 years old	Noted

	you should be able to remove it and be encouraged to plant a replacement in the same place or somewhere else.	
11	Believes that tree protection zones must be better enforced and protected.	Noted
12	Supports efforts to reduce the amount of hard surfacing on developments.	Noted
13	Believes that action to prevent moon scaping needs to be taken and that space for trees on multi-unit development needs to be provided.	Noted
14	Suggests that the 'Diggers Club' promotion be considered.	Investigate community nurseries and plant vouchers.
15	Believes that in addition to fines that other punishments for noncompliance with tree protection be implemented such as revoking planning permits.	Noted, however it is not possible to revoke a planning permit
16	Believes that it is cheaper for developers to pay a fine than retain trees.	Noted
17	Believes that trees are synonymous with the Australian environment.	Noted
18	Believes that the planting of trees can improve the quality and appearance of development.	Noted
19	Believes that development needs to respect the character of the neighbourhood and that trees underpin the amenity of the area.	Noted
20	Believes that large canopy trees are what attract many people to Whitehorse but that many trees have been removed recently.	Noted
21	Believes that this is a critical issue and has seen both residents and developers destroy trees on private and public land.	Noted
22	Believes that an attitudinal change is required to address this issue, not just education.	Noted
23	Believes that by-laws need to be upheld to protect trees.	Noted
24	Believes that better education is required across the community.	Noted
25	Believes that crepe, myrtles, Chinese elms are as beautiful as street trees.	Noted
26	Has lived in the area for over 36 years and has seen an enormous reduction in tree cover over that time.	Noted
27	Believes that an emphasis needs to also be placed on public land. Council should have a list of suitably qualified arborists. Council's arborists should be more stringent with residents requesting tree removal.	Noted Recommend preparing a list of qualified arborists
28	Believes that additional resources are needed to	Noted

	address this issue.	
29	Laws to be introduced to prevent developers from removing all trees.	Noted
30	Expressed concern with the development on the corner of Junction Road and Surrey Road.	Noted
31	Believes that this is an urgent matter to be addressed.	Noted
32	Supportive of study	Noted

## WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

<p><b>President Blackburn Village Residents Group.</b></p>	<p>Supports option 3 - the extension of the SLO to all remaining residential areas of Whitehorse. Submission notes that the SLO is already in operation in places like Blackburn and can control buildings and works unlike the VPO.</p> <p>The submission does not agree that the SLO has been effective in protecting tree canopy in Blackburn. The BVRG believes that the SLO, particularly in Blackburn, has been effective at protecting some trees but not all trees.</p> <p>The BVRG believes that changes to the existing SLO need to be made. These changes include promoting further trees as a significant component of neighbourhood character, new trees to enhance the landscape of the municipality (e.g. ridgelines and backdrops). Supporting the retention of exotic and non-native trees, require that, where tree removal is permitted, appropriate replacement planting is provided and located appropriately on site to ensure that the tree canopy is retained.</p> <p>The BVRG believes that objectives of the SLO should be the maintenance of tree canopy rather than providing a criteria for trees that aren't worthy of retention.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Considers that the SLO is not always effective in Blackburn.</p> <p>Highlights the need to ensure new SLOs carefully consider maintenance requirements and promoting enhanced landscape character.</p> <p>Recommend that existing SLOs are reviewed in line with the development of new SLOs.</p>
<p><b>John Young</b></p>	<p>Believes that extending controls over the remaining residential areas of Whitehorse will require developers to justify tree removal.</p> <p>Believes that in order to assist with implementation that private arborists and tree surgeons working in Whitehorse should be informed that tree removal requires a permit. Further to this advertising and a phase-in period will be required to ensure the construction industry is aware of the new controls.</p> <p>The submission also believes that the definition of a 'tree' in terms of its size and circumference needs to be carefully considered and clarified. In addition to this the submission supports greater penalties for illegal tree removal. The submission also recommends additional resourcing from Council for enforcement and implementation.</p> <p>In respect to the addressing tree removal as part of new dwellings and units the submission contends that new dwellings should not have a larger footprint than existing buildings. Further to this the submission recommends that unit development should not be permitted on land that</p>	<p>Preferred option includes greater enforcement by Council and advocating to the State Government for greater penalties.</p> <p>An Amendment process will provide the appropriate time to advertise changes to the Planning Scheme to the development industry.</p> <p>Recommend further work to determine appropriate site coverage and setback requirements.</p> <p>Recommend further work to benchmark the definition of canopy tree.</p>



	<p>has established gardens or trees.</p> <p>The submission also believes that greater front and side setbacks should be provided in new developments and maximum site coverage controls to ensure there is space around new buildings for trees.</p>	
<b>Yarran Dheran Advisory Committee</b>	<p>Submission primarily addresses issues to Yarran Dheran Nature reserve rather than the Trees in Whitehorse Study.</p> <p>It is the view of the Advisory Committee that when native trees and shrubs are removed by Council there should be a parallel tree and shrub replacement policy.</p>	Noted
<b>Steven Frank – Tree Logic Pty Ltd</b>	<p>The submission believes that other incentives to protect trees amongst the community should be considered along with improved education rather than more regulations.</p> <p>The submission notes a number of issues to consider in relation to preserving trees including consideration of the health, structure and quality of trees; weed species; conflicts with infrastructure; and the longevity of trees.</p> <p>The submission suggests that a broader municipal-wide landscape analysis and landscape plan should be conducted to determine the most effective and appropriate ways to direct the retention and planting of canopy cover.</p> <p>The submission also notes that tree regulations also provide a disincentive to encouraging new planting.</p> <p>The submission suggests that direct enforcement of S173 agreements with developers as attempted in the City of Casey is not an effective way of preserving existing trees. The submission argues that public enlightenment and negotiation with developers are more effective tools for protecting trees.</p>	Noted
<b>Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society</b>	<p>Supports the option of extending the existing SLO to all residential areas of Whitehorse.</p> <p>Notes that there has been a significant loss of canopy cover in non-SLO and SLO precincts in Whitehorse over the past decade. The submission believes that the deficiencies in the Whitehorse Planning Scheme in relation to tree protection have been addressed within the 'Extend the SLO' option.</p> <p>The submission notes that additional resources for the enforcement and implementation of the SLO extension, ongoing funding for the Tree Education Program and providing suitably qualified staff to</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Careful consideration of exemptions, such as weed species, and avoiding the planting of such species, will be undertaken during the preparation of SLO schedules.</p>

	<p>assess the quality of landscape plans, is required.</p> <p>The submission recommends lobbying the State Government to increase fines for illegal tree removal. Additionally the submission recommends incentives for residents and developers to plant trees.</p> <p>Whilst the submission is supportive of the 'Extend the SLO' option the submission believes a greater emphasis needs to be placed on preventing the retention and replanting of weed species.</p>	
<p><b>West of Elgar Residents' Association Inc</b></p>	<p>The submission supports the extension of the SLO to remaining residential areas of the municipality. The submission also supports the strengthening of the tree conservation policy in the Municipal Strategic Statement, particularly the definition of an upper canopy tree.</p> <p>The submission suggests that a tree conservation strategy and program be provided including all options outlined in the report. Further to this the submission notes concern in relation to the setback and site coverage requirements of residential zones. The submission believes that further residential zone variations to ensure that sufficient root space at maturity is provided for new developments.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Recommend further work to determine appropriate site coverage and setback requirements.</p>

## 3.3 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

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### QUESTION 1: DO YOU THINK TREES BENEFIT YOUR AREA? IF SO, IN WHAT WAYS.

Almost all respondents indicated that trees were beneficial for their area, with respondents identifying a broad range of specific benefits of trees. These benefits included:

#### Environment

- Providing habitat for birds and animals
- Promoting biodiversity
- Protecting soils and preventing erosion
- Attracting birds
- Promoting Indigenous and native trees

#### Stormwater

- Absorbing rainwater leading to reduced runoff, helping to mitigate rain and stormwater runoff and mitigating flash flooding and flooding.

#### Air quality

- Acting as a filter for carbon dioxide, improving air quality
- Acting as carbon sinks

#### Amenity and Aesthetic Qualities

- Enhancing amenity and creates a more beautiful place to live
- Enhancing the ambiance of the area beauty to the landscape
- Contribution to the atmosphere of the 'leafy eastern suburbs'
- More desirable areas, property values
- Providing shade for people
- Providing a nice environment

#### Development

- Providing screening from the street and neighbours
- Providing borrowed landscape to surrounding dwellings
- Contribute to the neighbourhood character of areas
- Softens the appearance of development

#### Health and Wellbeing

- Providing a link in the urban environment to nature
- Reducing the urban heat island effect
- Fostering peace and serenity
- Creating a suitable environment for the future
- Acting as beautifying element

- Provide privacy as housing density increases
- Enhance streetscape
- Provides wind breaks
- Mental health

#### **Economic**

- Lowers energy consumption and power bills
- Adds to property values
- Minimises road and footpath costs,

### **QUESTION 2: DO YOU HAVE A PREFERRED TREE PROTECTION OPTION FROM THOSE PROPOSED?**

A variety of views were expressed in relation to the preferred tree options, with respondents being broadly in support of additional planning controls to protect trees. The extension of the existing SLO to all remaining residential land in Whitehorse was the most commonly supported option, with a number of respondents also supporting S173, Local Laws and a combination of other options.

In their discussion of the SLO option some respondents indicated that:

- Existing SLO controls which apply in places like Blackburn should apply to all residential land
- All trees in needed to be protected, not just canopy trees. Further to his some also argued that the SLO control should apply to not just private residential land but commercial and public land too.
- Ensuing that new trees are planted in appropriate locations preventing conflicts and damage.
- Consideration to maintenance of trees for personal safety and home protection
- Council staff should have appropriate experience to assess and review landscape plans, consideration of a bond associated with landscape plans.

There were a number of other measures which were supported by a number of respondents:

- Minimum open space requirement to provide space for trees.
- Additional fines for illegal tree removal, meaningful penalties. Perception that people are just as willing to cop fines as they are to retain trees.
- Financial assistance for people to maintain trees.
- Better enforcement at VCAT

Of those who didn't support the introduction of additional planning controls, they gave the following reasons:

- Believed that people should be able to control what is planted in their backyard.
- Other measures such as education could be effective in achieving tree protection aims.

### **QUESTION 3: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR ACHIEVING THE STUDY AIMS OF TREE PROTECTION AND REGENERATION?**

Respondents expressed a diverse range of other suggestions for tree protection and regeneration in Whitehorse.

#### **Site Coverage:**

- Introduce maximum site coverage controls for new developments in order to maintain space for trees and permeability

#### **Tree Recommendations:**

- Encourage small but useful trees, not just tall trees.
- Encouraging ornamental trees
- Provide advice on suitable small trees that are compatible for units.
- Woody weeds shouldn't be treated in the same way as indigenous trees despite their habitat values.

#### **Funding and support:**

- Provide additional support from council for owners of existing trees for their preservation and maintenance
- Introduction of coordinated pruning, removal and replacement of trees on private land to reduce the cost of maintenance.
- Financial assistance to maintain trees
- Provide arborist advice for existing trees and maintenance of trees

#### **Enforcement:**

- Better enforcement and follow up of landscape plans
- Improved enforcement and monitoring
- Proactively supervise new laws with enforcement officers
- Checks after 3-4 years are required.

#### **Education:**

- Providing information to all existing home owners, and future home owners, business owners which show local laws and expectations relating to trees.
- Provide documentation and information in a variety of languages
- Improved education for new residents and builders

#### **Fines:**

- Include a tree replacement clause.

- Advocate to State Government for increased fines.
- Replacement trees should be calculated using a 1 tree removed, 2-3 trees replanted formula.

**Design:**

- Maintain trees on sites that are being redeveloped, particularly those on the periphery of the site.
- Encourage developers to build around trees, design
- Lobby for power line undergrounding to provide nature strip locations for larger trees.
- Explore opportunities for planting along arterial roads and rail lines

**QUESTION 4: DO YOU AVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS**

The other views that were expressed at this question included:

- Concern about the amenity impacts of construction and tree removal activities.
- Support for the tree study project
- Fines should be large enough to be a serious deterrent to developers
- Greenlink is a good initiative but needs to be pushed further out into the community.
- Tree protection zones need to be enforced better
- Hard surfacing on new developments need to be reduced
- Fines in response to illegal tree removal should include the power to revoke planning approval
- Development needs to respect the character of the neighbourhood and trees that underpin that area
- Large canopy trees are what attract people to Whitehorse but many trees have been removed recently
- Trees on both public and private land need to be protected
- Attitudinal change is required to address the issue, not just education
- By-laws need to be upheld to protect trees
- Better education is needed
- Council should have a list of suitably qualified arborists
- Council's arborist should be more stringent with residents who want to remove trees
- Additional resources are needed to address this issue.

# 4

## CONCLUSION

## 4.1 CONCLUSION

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The Whitehorse Tree Study project has been developed through a broad and meaningful program of community consultation activities. Public comment on the Discussion Paper and Draft Options Paper has given direction to options for tree protection in the City of Whitehorse. An extensive range of feedback has been received as part of this process and the key issues and associated actions are summarised below. These issues will guide a number of revisions in the final Tree Study Options Report.

### PREFERRED OPTION FINDINGS

Overall, the majority of responses to the Whitehorse Tree Study have been supportive of controls to protect tree canopy. Of those who expressed an opinion on a preferred tree control option, their preference was for an extension of the SLO controls in Whitehorse. In addition to this, respondents have highlighted the benefits of trees to urban cooling, habitat, aesthetics as well as a wide range of other benefits.

### VARIATIONS OF THE PREFERRED CONTROL

Whilst the proposed extension of the SLO had strong support, a variety of other options and directions for controls were supported by the community, including:

- SLO controls over all land not just residential land;
- Additional replacement tree controls;
- A local law; and
- Support for the definition of a canopy tree as being 6+ metres, with some support for extending this definition to trees of 3-4 m in height.

### ENFORCEMENT

Many submitters expressed concerns about the rigour of current methods of enforcement and supported additional enforcement controls in Whitehorse. This included an increase to meaningful fines for residents and developers for illegally removing trees, and greater enforcement of landscape plans. There was a perception among many submitters that some developers and residents were choosing to absorb any fine/s into development costs and therefore circumventing the process with regards to illegal tree removal.

### EDUCATION

Education has consistently been identified as a key component which underpins the protection and expansion of trees. Submitters expressed support for additional education programs with a particular focus on providing information in languages other than English and providing information to real estate agents before property sales.



## OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS

There was a strong theme in submissions that site coverage, setbacks and site permeability need to be considered to allow for appropriate planting of trees in new developments.

## RESPONSE

In response to feedback from the community, it is recommended that the final Whitehorse Tree Study be revised to consider the following in response to the issues raised in the submissions above:

- Undertake further work to review appropriate site coverage and setbacks in Residential zone and overlay schedules;
- Review private open space requirements;
- Investigate and benchmark the definition of canopy tree in other Planning Schemes (i.e in height and girth);
- Investigate financial incentives and advice options to assist residents with tree protection and maintenance; and
- Compile a list of qualified arborists.

# A

## COMMUNITY BULLETINS