

# Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Quality, Affordable Housing & Clean Green Spaces



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Moreland Greens Policies  
Updated July, 2020

**We can make Moreland a thriving city with open space and neighbourhoods where we can connect to each other. The Greens on council will fight for development that benefits the community, affordable housing and high-quality, sustainable design, so we can all enjoy living in our city, now and in the future.**

The Greens acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung people of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners of the lands governed by the Moreland Council. We support Moreland Council engaging in a treaty process. The Greens will also work to ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage is factored into all relevant Council decisions.

Local government is the closest level of representative government to people's lives. From delivering essential services like maternal and child health, street cleaning and waste collection, to creating liveable neighbourhoods that are going to provide open space, safe walking and cycling paths and a clean environment, local government is essential to the quality of our daily lives and social connection with each other.

The Greens believe that our cities and neighbourhoods should be places that create communities where people can feel connected to each other, are able to move around safely, where there are diverse options for affordable housing, and where people can live in a clean, attractive and cared for environment.

# A Planning System That Puts People & Communities First

**The current planning system is deeply flawed. The Greens will advocate for planning reform by the State Government that gives local government greater autonomy and control to enable greater decision-making via consultation with communities.**

The Greens support the broad planning objectives of increased density in major activity centres to address the issue of population pressure and urban sprawl and to maximise the use of existing under-utilised physical and social infrastructure.

However, the Greens are critical of the lack of State planning laws promoting climate-friendly quality development and the failure of successive State Governments to provide sufficient public transport to move our growing population. These State Government deficiencies seriously impact upon the ability of Councils to deliver sustainable and equitable development.

Greens on Moreland Council will initiate improvements in the planning scheme to improve the liveability, accessibility and environmental performance of buildings.

**The Greens will apply these principles to planning decisions:**

- Give greater weight to environmental and social factors, to create sustainable, liveable communities that are easy to get around;
- Increase the proportion of buildings and apartments that are accessible and visitable for people living with disabilities;
- Ensure local communities have ongoing, substantive, and meaningful opportunities to participate and be consulted;
- Provide more open space and habitat for native plants and animals, with rigorous planning and regulation;
- Prioritise multi-dwelling planning applications that use “deliberative development” principles - apartments that are homes for people involved in designing and building them, not assets for investors;
- Demand higher environmental design standards on all new buildings.

The Greens will use strategic planning to integrate land use, transport and environmental sustainability. This will create vibrant, inclusive communities where natural and built heritage is valued and protected.

The Greens believe that developers should not be able to challenge the substantive elements of Council planning decisions at VCAT, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, only technical errors.



# Creating the Neighbourhoods of the Future

**The Greens on Council will make planning decisions that create affordable, sustainable and equitable housing options for the future. Moreland can be a place of neighbourhoods that maximise connections between people and provide for the wellbeing of the community.**

The Greens on Moreland Council led moves to trial a Design Excellence Scorecard which encourages better development. The trial period has been extended to allow further uptake and to evaluate the industry's level of interest. The Scorecard seeks outcomes which promote high Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD), improved accessibility, high quality materials and community benefit(s).

We believe the following measures will contribute to further creation of future neighbourhoods that are community focused and environmentally sustainable:

- new planning application streams that give priority to developments that deliver 8+ star environmental standard ratings, minimum affordable housing stock, deliberative development approaches and community benefit;
- seeking to amend the state planning Act to ensure greater protection for existing solar access from overshadowing impacts by new developments;

Moreland has experienced significant population growth over the last decade and the State Government has placed population targets that the city is required to house. The Greens have supported mandatory maximum height limits in the Brunswick, Glenroy and Coburg Structure Plans.

In 2015 the State Government introduced a new zoning scheme. Three residential zones are now in place – Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ), General Residential Zone (GRZ) and Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) – otherwise known as Neighbourhood Centres.

The Greens on Council will continue to support design excellence in our city, so urban development in Moreland is guided by principles of affordability and sustainability.

## **We will seek to:**

- Oppose poor quality development and encourage design with residents in mind.
- Oppose the over-development of neighbourhood areas by seeking a review of the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ).
- Prioritise and incentivise infrastructure that is accessible to people living with a disability.
- Demand the best community outcomes for all State Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) construction.
- Trial deliberative development models on council land, with a preference for multi-development planning proposals.



## **In our council ward areas, we will work to:**

### **North East – Coburg, Coburg North, Fawkner**

- Ensure that the future of Fawkner involves ethical, sustainable and community friendly renewal of the neighbourhood centres;
- Create material and social links between the north east and the greater Moreland area (eg. public transport and cycle pathways, including delivery of the proposed Fawkner bicycle shimmy);
- Initiate a review of the Coburg Activity Centre C123 Planning Scheme Amendment to include higher minimum environmental standards, minimum social/affordable housing, minimum quality standards, and more appropriate reduced building heights in residential and activity centre interfaces, and mandatory height controls;
- Push for the completion of Upfield shared path - the 'missing links' and completing lighting upgrades.

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### **North West – Glenroy, Oak Park, Hadfield, Gowanbrae, Pascoe Vale/South**

- Build the Wheatsheaf Community Hub, a new home for maternal child health, community health, neighbourhood learning and childcare services;
- Create the city's newest and largest library in Glenroy. Support the removal of the Glenroy level crossing and renewal of the precinct and Glenroy/Pascoe Vale Road intersection;
- Complete the Glenroy structure plan and ensure that any future development in this activity centre is ethical, sustainable, affordable and community friendly;
- Work with the community to renew the Pascoe Vale Road and Wheatsheaf Road shopping strips through accessible and inclusive design;
- Create material and social links between the north west and the greater Moreland area (eg. public transport and cycle pathways);
- Push for the completion of Craigieburn rail shared path;
- Advocate for safe, separated cycling lanes between Glenroy and Coburg;
- Advocate for the extension of the 58 tram connecting Hadfield to the CBD.

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### **South – Brunswick, Brunswick East, Brunswick West**

- Initiate a review of the C134 Brunswick Activity Centre planning scheme calling for the mandatory height controls, appeal rights and minimum affordable housing requirements (a review that the Labor State Government rejected in 2016);
- Oppose the over-development of neighbourhood areas by seeking a review of the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

the speculative development industry as well as Federal Government tax discounts for investment in property. Living in an affordable home is becoming unattainable for many, most significantly for young people and those experiencing social and other disadvantages.

The Greens on Council have driven the development of a comprehensive Affordable Housing Strategy. We have pushed for and achieved the establishment of Moreland Affordable Housing Ltd as the entity to do the feasibility studies, instigate the initial project and get further projects in the pipeline.

### **To improve the affordability of housing in Moreland, the Greens will:**

- Support the the Moreland Affordable Housing funding mechanism to get partners and funders onboard to deliver the initial project;
- Ensure that Council continues to provide funds of at least \$50,000 per year to this fund for deliberative development models to be used in all Activity Centres and multi-residential developments;
- Encourage and facilitate social and affordable housing organisations developing projects In Moreland;
- Advocate to the State Government for more public and community housing.


## **Affordable Housing in Moreland**

**Everyone needs a decent home to live in. The Greens believe that affordable housing is a human right. If everyone in Moreland can access secure, appropriate and affordable housing we all benefit from better health, wellbeing and community participation. Unfortunately, housing prices in our city continue to rise, fuelled by speculative development and investors looking to profit from Federal Government tax incentives to own property. This leaves many of us - especially young people and people experiencing disadvantage - unable to afford their own home.**

One of the greatest challenges our city is facing is housing affordability. Property prices are being fuelled by

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