

# DOCKLANDS NEWS

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▲ Premier Daniel Andrews helps cut the ribbon on the new Docklands Primary School last month.

## Docklands Primary School's in, at last!

*Docklands Primary School's first 200 students walked through the school gates on January 28 – the day the school officially opened with a visit from Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Education James Merlino.*

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*  
EDUCATION

It has been a long time coming for local families waiting for a school in their own suburb. Foundation principal Adam Bright said the school would work to become a part of the community.

"We were really excited to welcome students and families into the school and open the doors officially," he told *Docklands News*.

"A lot of planning went into the school and its opening so to finally have that opportunity was really exciting and the first day went really well."

"I'm really looking forward to having the opportunity

to link in with our community. Lots of our families have talked to us about Docklands not having a primary school, and now this means a lot to the community for families who can now live and go to school in Docklands."

Mr Bright also said the opportunity at Docklands Primary School was unique in that it was an opportunity to build a culture "from scratch".

The three-storey vertical school has a capacity for 525 students and includes a library, music and arts rooms, a competition-grade indoor court for basketball and netball, and outdoor learning terraces.

A co-located kindergarten has also been built on-site which will open this term with space for 66 kids, delivering both sessional and integrated kindergarten programs for three- and four-year-olds.

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## It's time to change the narrative on Central Pier

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
EDITORIAL

The past few months have brought further division on the issue of Docklands' sleeping giant Central Pier, in a situation where there are proving to be no winners.

In December, the pier's owner Development Victoria (DV) announced that it was preparing to remove the western tip of Central Pier from Victoria Harbour as it begins the process of "safely revitalising the historic Victorian dock".

As DV pointed out in a press release issued on December 15, the pier's western tip has been inaccessible for several years after being deemed structurally unsound. That section, as well the entire pier, requires a permit from Heritage Victoria before it can be touched.

This news was followed by DV releasing an expression of interest for "demolition works" of Central Pier on December 21, seen by *Docklands News*. While DV said the timing of the tender release was dependent on a heritage permit being submitted, it was approved back in March last year.

And while this document could easily be dismissed as a "tyre kicking exercise", a phrase some within DV have used to describe the process, it calls for expressions of interest into the possible "demolition, removal and disposal of buildings, structures and all remaining assets".

There is little doubt that should the heritage-listed pier be reinstated in the future, it will require extensive demolition across various sections before heritage elements can be retained and restored, and the pier rebuilt.

That is, at least, what the community expects. And after a story appeared in *The Age* in January unearthing Federal Court documents

from the case between DV and its anchor tenant Atlantic Group, which exposed DV's knowledge of the pier's critical condition long before its sudden closure in August 2019, it's what the community deserves.

But DV's press release titled "Western tip of Central Pier to be removed" and an ensuing document putting out the feelers for possible demolition of the pier in its entirety, is somewhat presumptuous without the all-clear from Heritage Victoria.

And while DV clearly states it is working with Heritage Victoria on this journey, to the awaiting public and local community in Docklands, these moves set a narrative that the cart has left before the horse.

The future of Central Pier is, according to DV, still undetermined and long-term planning for its resurrection will only be done so with "extensive engagement with the community and key stakeholders to create a vision for Victoria Harbour and Central Pier."

"DV is currently preparing to remove the western tip of Central Pier from Victoria Harbour in Docklands. The scope of works across the rest of Central Pier is yet to be determined," Geoff Ward, Group Head, Precincts, DV, said.

"We're working closely with Heritage Victoria on the long-term plans for Central Pier, and we will consult with the community and local business throughout the process."

But for a community that is eagerly awaiting clear information on its maritime asset, the prospects, whether real or not, of demolitions being earmarked without knowledge is the wrong narrative to be setting.

This coupled with the piece in *The Age* published on January 19, which exposed DV's alleged knowledge of the pier's risk of "catastrophic failure" around 10 months before the pier's

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## It's time to change the narrative on Central Pier

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sudden evacuation, doesn't help DV's cause either.

DV's response to that story, which argued that the facts laid bare in court documents did not represent an agreed chronology, were not complete or were in dispute, highlights just how significantly it's allowed everyone else but itself to control the narrative.

The story in *The Age* said that DV "had the option of terminating its anchor tenant Atlantic Group's lease without paying compensation provided it offered 24 months' notice, but it did not act".

"Instead, the agency claimed, just before shutting down the pier, that Atlantic Group had technically breached a number of minor provisions in its lease agreement. This meant it was not eligible for compensation after the closure," *The Age* reported.

*Docklands News* asked DV what those "minor provisions" were, and was told, "The tenants of Central Pier have commenced a Court Proceeding that DV is defending. It is not appropriate for DV to comment on matters that are presently before the Court," a spokesperson for DV said.

Ever since DV CEO Angela Skandarajah's uncomfortable interview with John Faine on ABC Radio in 2019 following the pier's closure, this has been the government agency's approach to everything concerning the pier. Say nothing, do even less.

And given the court documents confirming much of what most people already suspected about DV's conduct, one must wonder whether it's time it changed its approach. But, don't hold your breath.

Recent events have only likely confirmed a healthy compensation for DV's opponents, but there are no winners in this, and the narrative must start to change if we're to see the pier returned to Docklands anytime soon ●

## Boating hub tender precedes release of activation strategy

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
PLANNING

Development Victoria's (DV's) decision to put a tender out for a new ferry and boating hub on Harbour Esplanade South before the release of its long-awaited Docklands Activation Strategy should leave many scratching their heads.

In January, DV issued a media release announcing a new hub for ferry and boat operators to support charter fleet and ferry services in Victoria Harbour at Wharf 8, which is currently home to the Port Phillip Ferries glasshouse and *Cow Up A Tree* sculpture.

While plans to move the *Cow Up A Tree* to Harbour Esplanade North near NewQuay are already part of a longer-term approach for the precinct, the glasshouse space will be removed to make way for upgraded facilities.

In its media release, DV said that as part of Docklands continued development, both it and the City of Melbourne were encouraging interested parties to provide a creative solution for a new hub, which would "deliver much-needed operations, public amenities and shelter in one of Docklands' best-connected areas."

"It is a key pick up and drop off point for ferry and boat operators, has direct access to Marvel Stadium and has previously hosted Melbourne's New Year's Eve celebrations in Docklands," Geoff Ward, Group Head Precincts at Development Victoria, said.

"We are really interested to see what great ideas come forward. By improving facilities and creating an exciting offering, more people will be drawn to enjoy what the area has to offer."

But the decision to put a central area of Harbour Esplanade out to private tender, before the release of the draft Docklands Activation Strategy has left many wondering whether the strategy itself will be another piecemeal exercise.



The activation strategy, which is now months overdue for public consultation, has been held up by senior management at Development Victoria and the City of Melbourne and the longer it is delayed the greater local apathy is likely to be.

The events company charged with compiling the document, Alto Cibum, completed its final draft in December and according to its managing director Robert Clifford, who spoke with *Docklands News* last year, the strategy was due to be released in December.

While the strategy is understood to offer several recommendations for activations in Docklands, central to its findings is a push for the long overdue upgrade to Harbour Esplanade.

But with the Harbour Esplanade South and Wharf 8 now seemingly being placed into the hands of the private sector, it removes a significant component of any community-led vision for Harbour Esplanade.

The expression of interest campaign for the project ends on February 5 ●

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# A Gift for Docklands!

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*  
SPORT

Modelled on Victoria's iconic Stawell Gift foot race event, Docklands will soon host a Gift of its own at Ron Barrassi Snr Park.

Delivered in partnership with the Victorian Athletics League, Docklands Primary School and the Docklands Sports Club, the inaugural Docklands Gift will take place on Saturday, March 20 with a range of different running events and activities for the local community to enjoy.

With sponsorship from NewQuay developer MAB Corporation and support from the Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC), organiser Colin McEvoy said that the community event was all about helping restore some energy into Docklands.

"The whole idea of the Gift itself is to provide a community event," he said. "One of the things that's probably lacking in Docklands is a bit of soul. What we're trying to achieve is to have a community event which just happens to be an athletics event."

As reported in the November 2020 edition of *Docklands News*, the event was the culmination of a Committee for Melbourne focus group aimed at establishing a new community event for Docklands.

Kicking off at 9am with junior events for children from the primary school, Mr McEvoy said that the main event from 11am onwards would feature a professional running event – a handicap race open to everyone.

"The professional side of this sport is different to what we normally call the amateur athletics side of things, which have been going on for close to 100 years or more," he said.

"All the athletes run for money and they're all handicapped. So, it's open to all different



abilities and sexes and such, so males will run against females in many of the events."

"In saying that though, there are many events which are both male and female separate races. The main event will be either 100 or 120 metres. We're still yet to decide whether we can actually fit 120 metres onto the park."

More information about running events and other activities taking place on the day will be published in the March edition of *Docklands News* ●

**For more information:**  
[facebook.com/docklandsgift](https://facebook.com/docklandsgift)



▲ Runners big and small gathered at Ron Barassi Snr Park last month ahead of the upcoming Docklands Gift.

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▲ Principal Adam Bright and vice-principal Louise Spalliera.



▲ Premier Andrews with Member for Northern Metropolitan Sheena Watt (right) and Minister James Merlino (right).

# Docklands Primary School's in, at last!

*Continued from page 1.*

Thirteen other new schools opened in Victoria on January 28, in what Minister for Education James Merlino said was "the biggest school building boom the state has ever seen".

"Fourteen brand new schools are opening their doors for the very first time today. That is the most number of schools opening since at least post-war in our state's history," Mr Merlino said at the Docklands opening.

"This is indeed a day of celebration and a few tears as well for I know a few parents here at Docklands Primary School handing over their little preppies to the excellent staff here at Docklands Primary."

He also commended the design of the school, which he said reflected Docklands well.

Premier Daniel Andrews said the new school year was more important than ever after 2020.

"The first day of school is a big day every year – but particularly after the year we had in 2020. I thank every teacher, student and parent for their efforts last year and wish them well for



“

*This is indeed a day of celebration and a few tears as well for I know a few parents here at Docklands Primary School handing over their little preppies.*

”

the year ahead," the Premier said.  
"We're building new schools across the state, so every child has a great local school and a best start in life – wherever they live." ●

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# The Docklands “sleeper agent” is never too far away!

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
FEATURE

After 10 years helping shape Docklands, Development Victoria’s (DV) development director Ronan Mellan is moving on to help build the vision for neighbouring renewal in the Fishermans Bend and Arden precincts.

But the self-described “sleeper agent” of Docklands is never too far away from the action as far as this community is concerned! He said part of the impetus for his decision to switch roles was actually to benefit Docklands.

“I agonised over it [changing roles] because I have such an emotional connection to Docklands, but I partly felt 10 years in the same sandpit was probably enough. I’m so passionate about Docklands,” he said.

“We joked about me being a bit of a sleeper agent for Docklands and I think that it’s kind of useful for a whole bunch of reasons, like knowing what worked well and what we would have done differently with Docklands.”

“We can apply that knowledge and that experience to these emerging regeneration projects in Fishermans Bend and Arden. But equally, having an intimate knowledge of Docklands helps by then understanding the strategic context in this corridor which is like the western belt of Melbourne. So, as much as we can apply the lessons from other projects, we can create and curate other projects so that they benefit Docklands.”

The Scottish-born urban planner had long aspired to help shape Docklands before he’d even set foot in Australia for the first time 12 years ago.

As a student in the late ‘90s studying town planning and economic development, Mr Mellan said the Docklands project led by what was then VicUrban (now DV) was, and still remains, as an internationally-renowned model for urban renewal.

While that is a fact some Melburnians may find difficult to believe, Ronan said critics of Docklands were often heavily misinformed.

“Most cultures have the tall poppy syndrome but as an immigrant I recognise Australia really does have a chip on its shoulder at times. Any other regeneration that has had the success of Docklands would be crowing about it until the cows come home,” he said.

“We’re sitting here and that [Marvel] stadium was coming out of the ground in late 1999; it’s unbelievable.”

“Sometimes it [Docklands] can be a dirty word and I love nothing more than confronting that and saying let’s deconstruct that for a second – usually the person using Docklands as a punchline is only equipped with around 15 or 20 per cent of the information and you just start



▲ Development Victoria development director Ronan Mellan.

providing them that background and information and they recognise that it’s more than just about how windy it is.”

“So those are the superficial arguments but then you have conversations within the public sector, the huge financial benefits and how much money was directed into community outcomes like Ron Barassi Park, the library and so forth.”

But while he might be a staunch defender of Docklands, he’s certainly under no illusions as to how things could have been done better and he’s looking forward to taking some of those lessons and principles into Arden and Fishermans Bend.

Complementing Parkville, the Arden precinct, shaped largely around the new underground Metro Tunnel station in North Melbourne, will form a new community shaped around an employment cluster built on life sciences and medical innovation.

Fishermans Bend – Australia’s largest ever urban renewal project – is two-and-a-half times the size of Melbourne’s CBD and will incorporate four new residential precincts, as well as a new employment precinct, which is where much of Ronan’s efforts will be centred.

The former General Motors Holden (GMH) site, which is located within the City of Melbourne, was purchased by the state government in 2016 and will be focused on driving innovation largely around advanced manufacturing and logistics. The University of Melbourne has already bought into the government’s vision by purchasing land in the precinct for a new engineering and design campus and RMIT University is expected to follow suit.

With both precincts bearing many similarities to Docklands, Mr Mellan said the focus was now focusing on learning lessons of the past around what could have been done better – namely, “fine grain” details around heritage and activation.

He added that while Docklands had been largely driven by the private sector, the government was looking to take a more “curatorial role” in Arden and Fishermans Bend by retaining a greater controlling interest.

“The creation of the other precincts both metaphorically and physically repositions Docklands on the map. So, it becomes more of a connecting hub rather than a terminus,” he said.

“The benefits of that are greater visitation, greater economic activity and given its more

centralised location in that context it becomes a more desirable place to live and meet.”

“Something that we could have done better is celebrate Docklands’ maritime heritage. That’s one thing that we’re really taking with us to Arden is to celebrate the indigenous heritage of the area much more materially and much more genuinely.”

“If you look at some of the old pictures of Docklands through the late 1800s to the [19]60s it’s just such a lost opportunity to have retained a bit more of that fabric. That’s what we’re looking to bring in Fishermans Bend at GMH as well by looking at the automotive and industrial heritage down there.”

And while he was happy to see Docklands Primary School finally open last month, he said such catalyst projects had taken “way too long” and those mistakes were already being rectified in the new precincts.

But with COVID-19 presenting many unprecedented challenges to Melbourne, he said the far more “matured” Docklands was equipped to turn any such challenges into opportunities.

“You’ve now kind of got a more mature public space that is bedded in here. The challenge that we always knew we had and what was always apparent to me as an immigrant to Australia was that Melbourne expects authenticity in its space and it’s very hard to create authenticity from scratch,” he said. “So, there was an element of that but we just had to get Docklands out there and let it kind of weather and let it kind of rust and let it breathe.”

“It won’t be as simple as office workers returning after COVID. There was always a criticism of Docklands that we catered too heavily to the commercial activation and the office worker.”

“The services then grew up alongside that hive of activity and benefit from that. But assuming that criticism is valid, then we have an opportunity to readdress it rather than just reset and get office workers back and get back to the criticism of 2019.”

“I say that with acknowledgement that there are loads of small to medium enterprises in Docklands that depend on that business so we need to be cognisant and supportive of that, but at the same time, the residents have always felt we put workers first so here’s also finally an opportunity to recognise your ‘new local!’” ●



*Sean Car*  
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In September, the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government announced a landmark \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund to reactivate the central city as businesses progressed towards a COVID-safe reopening.

One of the grant recipients was South Wharf restaurant BangPop, which used the funding to put in place outdoor dining infrastructure and develop activations to entice customers back.

During lockdown, BangPop also moved its Thai cooking classes online and created an ecommerce hub to help promote a co-op of local businesses.

The restaurants include Meat Market South Wharf, Plus 5 cocktail bar, Henry and the Fox and The Common Man.

Area manager Sam Shaw said the alliance worked together to 'pivot to keep the dream alive'.

'Our teams joined forces to bring you something a little different from other COVID-19 hospitality pivots by providing online experiences including all equipment and ingredients delivered to your door,' said Sam.

'We saw that there was a need for people to connect to others throughout the lockdown and much of what was missed during this time was interaction, which is an important part of the hospitality experience.

'We sought to fill this need and found great success and a way to stay in touch with our customers (and find some new ones) through a tough time for everyone.'

Sam said the mental health of staff and the uncertainty around financial wellbeing presented great challenges for the hospitality industry during the pandemic.

'At the time of the first lockdown, hospitality staff had no information on financial aid so we were going blind into uncharted territory and it took its toll on all of us,' Sam said.

'Through resilience and working together, plus the added support of the government and the City of Melbourne, we were able to keep people engaged, which had a positive effect on their mental state.

'The learning from 2020 is that we are much stronger working together and through this we can get through anything.'

Looking to the future, Sam believes the hospitality industry will continue to innovate, with an increased focus on local products and produce.

'The obvious shortage of qualified staff for the hospitality industry, which relied so heavily on international workers, means the industry will need to further embrace technology,' Sam said.

'Through this, the usual roles of workers will change and we will see an uplift in local people seeing the industry as a viable career rather than just a means to an end.'

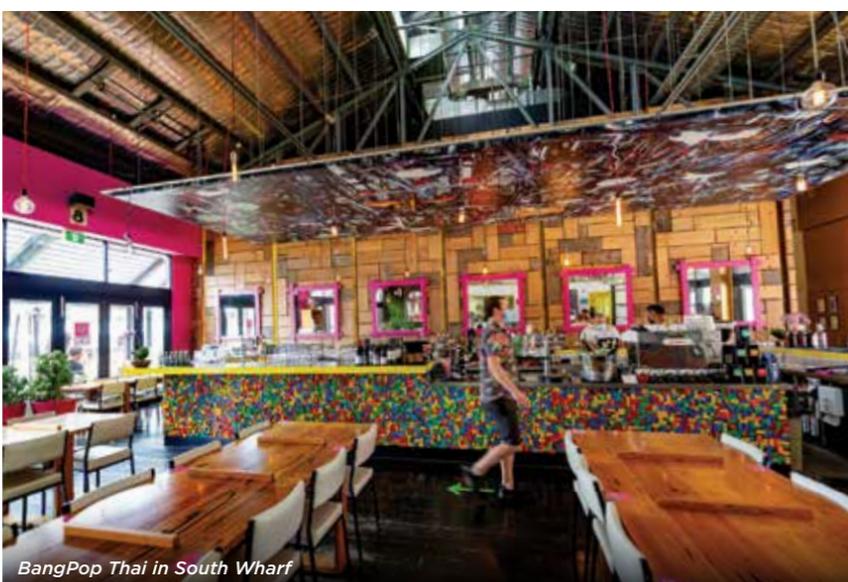
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BangPop Thai in South Wharf

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# Harbour side snubbed in Marvel Stadium upgrade

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
PLANNING

The \$225m upgrade of Marvel Stadium includes no funds to activate the ground's waterfront side as originally promised.

After plans released late last year showed upgrades to the stadium's southern and eastern sides, a government source has since confirmed to *Docklands News* that the government-funded project, in fact, included no money for the Harbour Esplanade-side of the concourse.

This is despite continued government insistence that the upgrade "offered the potential to reposition Docklands as Melbourne's key waterfront destination".

It had been hoped an upgraded harbour side of the stadium concourse would create a more lively Docklands area both on match days and during the week.

"I'm excited about opening up this precinct to the water in Melbourne," AFL CEO Gillon McLachlan said in March last year.

But upgrades to the stadium concourse — now more than 20 years old — were focused away from the harbour in November's announcement, and it now appeared the harbour had been snubbed completely.

Rather than an activated waterfront, plans instead focused on a "signature new town square plaza" that would welcome pedestrians arriving on the Bourke Street footbridge from Southern Cross Station, plus a "city edge" stadium expansion that would refurbish public and function areas that overlook on the Wurundjeri Way side of the ground.

Development Victoria (DV), the government's development arm which is partnering with the AFL on the project, maintained it would still be a win for the local area.

"The Victorian Government-funded upgrade of Marvel Stadium will transform the space into a seven-day-a-week, open and accessible entertainment hub and offers the potential to reposition Docklands as Melbourne's key wa-



▲ Plans feature a refurbished "city" side of the stadium concourse, with no funds allocated for the harbour side.

terfront destination," group head of precincts Geoff Ward said.

The government itself did not respond to questions from *Docklands News*.

The news is a blow to Docklands small businesses hoping to attract new clientele with the help of infrastructure upgrades.

The AFL purchased Marvel Stadium (then Etihad Stadium) in 2016 and in a 2018 deal, the Andrews Government committed \$225 million to the stadium upgrade.

In return, the AFL committed to hosting the Grand Final at the MCG until at least 2058,

quelling strong interest from rival AFL states.

A town planning permit application for the redevelopment has been lodged with the City of Melbourne and, if approved, construction could reportedly start in the middle of 2021.

It's understood that plans for Harbour Esplanade edge of the stadium are still wrapped up in negotiations with the public and private sectors, with a new functions space rivaling the Crown Palladium still central to the plans.

But plans regarding the future of AFL House are still up in the air, with the proposed move to the NewQuay West site near Ron Barassi Snr

Park understood to be "extremely unlikely" to happen ●



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# An honorary Docklander

WORDS BY *Sean Car*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*

COMMUNITY

Yarra's Edge resident Keith Sutherland received a medal (OAM) in the general division of the Order of Australia in this year's Australia Day honours, for service to his former hometown of Bendigo.

While he's only lived in Docklands for three years, Keith has wasted no time getting involved with his new community having led an ongoing campaign against a tram bridge through Yarra's Edge and is also a regular columnist for *Docklands News*.

But before he and his wife Karen's move to Docklands, Bendigo was where they called home and Keith's contributions to his former community are as inspiring as they are endless.

Having been heavily involved in Bendigo through business, local council, media and various community and sporting organisations, Keith helped fundraise more than \$15 million for his local community.

While there were many worthy projects he helped raise money for across more than 300 fundraising events, he said his biggest achievement was as chairman of the New Bendigo Hospital Appeal, which raised more than \$4 million for new hospital equipment.

In addition to chairman roles at a local primary school and of the "Citizens for New Bendigo" in the 1980s – the forerunner of the amalgamation of the City of Greater Bendigo, Keith forged a long career in real estate which he also leveraged for philanthropy.

As a former board member of First National Real Estate Group and chairman of its Victorian branch, he started its foundation and formed a successful association with the Red Cross.

With an interest in media, Keith also helped start the *Bendigo Weekly* newspaper and was a director of Bendigo IPTV where he had a program called *Pointy End* conducting more



than 500 interviews with many politicians, councillors and celebrities covering stories of local interest.

Speaking of his Australia Day honour, he said it was a great surprise but something he was extremely proud of.

"It's not something you expect and I'm grateful to those who nominated and supported me," he said.

"Coming from a working-class family in Bendigo I learned from an early age the importance of giving back. Encouraged by my parents about work ethics and having attended a tech school and being elected a prefect, I learned re-

sponsibilities which I followed throughout life."

"My journey has been long and one of great satisfaction and hopefully I have been able to help many along the way. Bendigo has been great to me and it really is a fantastic caring and sharing community and I have been lucky to get great support from many."

"My wife Karen and I moved to Docklands three years ago to have a quieter life but so far that hasn't eventuated as I'm passionately now fighting against a tram bridge. We absolutely love our new community and lifestyle and the people we have met." ●

“

*It's not something you expect and I'm grateful to those who nominated and supported me.*

”

## ADVERTISEMENT

### UPDATE ON THE WEST GATE TUNNEL PROJECT

The West Gate Tunnel Project is using the summer months to carry out significant works while traffic volumes are reduced.

In January, we demolished the eastern half of the Grieve Parade bridge originally built in the 1970s, in order to rebuild a stronger structure, which will span the width of the newly widened West Gate Freeway. As we finish rebuilding the bridge, there are reduced lanes on Grieve Parade over the freeway until 22 March.

Currently, we are working around-the-clock at several M80 interchange ramps to increase the bridge clearances, replace ageing barriers and bearings on the bridges, and repave the surrounding ramps.

During this work, ramps are closed for drivers including:

- Princes Freeway to Geelong Road ramps in both directions – until 22 February
- M80 Ring Road exit ramp to the West Gate Freeway inbound – until 22 February

Detours are in place during these works, and drivers are advised to plan for delays of up to 30 minutes on the West Gate Freeway, Princes Freeway, and M80 Ring Road.

These works are part of significant upgrades to the West Gate Freeway, including adding four additional lanes between Williamstown Road and the M80 Ring Road, that will bring new connections from the west to the port, CityLink and the city.

We acknowledge this work can be disruptive and we thank drivers and people who live on the detour routes in use, for their ongoing patience.

#### Noise Walls

The West Gate Tunnel Project is building some of the best quality noise walls ever seen in Victoria to achieve a new standard of noise reduction for residents along the freeway corridor.



New noise walls along the West Gate Freeway

Over 9km of new noise walls will be installed by the project, including sections recently installed at Spotswood and Yarraville.

The noise walls design uses textured concrete and acrylic panels of pale blues and greens, which allow light to pass through. Where space permits, planting will also be used to screen the noise walls.

These new noise walls will provide a significant reduction of noise for inner west communities.

For disruptions information visit: [bigbuild.vic.gov.au](http://bigbuild.vic.gov.au)  
and for regular updates, follow: [facebook.com/westgatetunnelproject](https://facebook.com/westgatetunnelproject)



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Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

# Frozen planning apps move through the pipeline

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*  
PLANNING

The first of 26 Fishermans Bend development applications that were “called-in” by the Minister for Planning in 2018 received the endorsement of the City of Melbourne in December.

The 26 applications were frozen while new planning controls for the precinct were drawn up. In announcing the freeze, Minister for Planning Richard Wynne said the government was “fixing up” the former Liberal Minister for Planning Matthew Guy’s “mess”.

“We’re fixing the mess Matthew Guy created when he rezoned swathes of land overnight to benefit a few fortunate landholders, in actions roundly condemned by an independent review panel,” he said.

“This Framework will make Fishermans Bend a community – rather than a concrete jungle – with schools, public transport and green, open spaces to meet friends and kick a footy.”

The government said the proposed developments were inappropriately dense. The frozen applications were referred to an independent advisory committee for analysis.

The first application was considered by the Future Melbourne Committee on December 8. It was for a 29-storey mixed-use tower at 111 Lorimer St, incorporating office, retail and apartments.

Although the Lorimer precinct of Fishermans Bend has a preferred maximum height of 18 storeys, councillors said the proposed height was acceptable.

The original 2017 development application proposed a 40-storey tower.

“Considering the fact that there are a number of other developments in the Lorimer Precinct of Fishermans Bend which do exceed that preferred height and I think more particularly that the context of this particular site – given that it has significant space around it and does not appear to cause any adverse overshadowing impacts – means that 29 storeys is acceptable,” City of Melbourne planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece said.

Cr Rohan Leppert also said that he thought the height was fine “on balance”.

Affordable housing mechanisms

But the proposal raised a new question for planning – how to achieve affordable housing in urban renewal precincts.

The motion of endorsement by the council – which advised the Minister for Planning that the City of Melbourne supported the proposal subject to certain conditions – was amended by Cr Rohan Leppert in an attempt to clarify



▲ A render of the proposal for 111 Lorimer St.

affordable housing mechanisms.

The developer proposed an internally managed, “build-to-rent” model for its 20 proposed affordable housing units.

“In accordance with the applicant’s preferred model (build-to-rent), local housing needs may not be adequately addressed and once on-sold, units may no longer be occupied by eligible tenants,” a report from management read.

City of Melbourne planners said a better model would be to transfer units to be managed by an external registered housing provider – but did not include it as a proposed condition.

Cr Leppert said the proposal, as it stood, had the potential to create an “enforcement nightmare” in urban renewal precincts.

“My concern with this is that ... wherever we may have voluntary affordable housing contributions in the future, if we start our very first application and set the precedent that the affordable housing mechanism is a bit of a choose-your-own-adventure, we are going to create an enforcement nightmare,” Cr Leppert said.

An amended motion was passed that advised the Minister for Planning to require the developer to enter into a binding agreement with a registered housing agency for the provision of affordable housing ●



▲ Two proposed apartment towers next to the Marvel Stadium concourse will stand around 100 metres high if approved.

## Dual tower plans next to Stadium

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
PLANNING

Developers want to build two 100-metre high towers next to the Marvel Stadium concourse on a site the AFL sold last year.

Plans from GFM Investment Management Limited have been submitted to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) for the 685 La Trobe St site, which would predominantly feature residential build-to-rent apartments.

A dual application for 28- and a 30-storey towers, currently before planning minister Richard Wynne, also details three lower levels comprising function space, cafes and retail outlets.

Prior to COVID-19, the AFL had a multi-million-dollar deposit on the site and if purchased, it was earmarked as green-space as part of a stadium redevelopment.

But the league backed out of the deal when the pandemic struck and offloaded the site to shore up its financial position after suffering a significant hit to operations.

It is believed the AFL could still become a tenant at the new development and could utilise the lower levels as function space.

“In delivering this project in partnership with the AFL, the multi-function space was a

“

*It is believed the AFL could still become a tenant at the new development.*

”

key deliverable for future function space desirable for the Docklands precinct with such close proximity to the Marvel Stadium,” GFM’s pitch to government read, in a document seen by the *Herald Sun*.

“The large, three-storey void function space will be a significant space for future functions of the AFL.”

GFM said the “multi-function space to be used by the AFL and other parties” would “improve Docklands as a destination”.

The AFL purchased Marvel Stadium (then Etihad Stadium) in 2016.

During the height of COVID-19 in Victoria last year, the asset proved a crucial safety net when securing a reported \$500-600 million assistance package from the banks to help it navigate through the downturn ●

## Glenn Harvey answers your legal questions

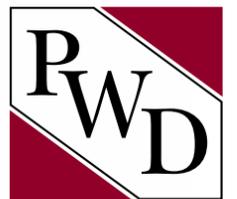
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## Potential overshadowing in Digital Harbour

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*  
PLANNING

The City of Melbourne is likely to ask the Minister for Planning to reduce the height of a development proposal in Digital Harbour to stop future public open space from being overshadowed.

The City of Melbourne's Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) will consider a proposal for a tower at 208-226 Harbour Esplanade on February 2. The site is part of the Docklands' incomplete Digital Harbour Precinct, which has recently been rebranded as City Harbour.

But the precinct's planned "key public asset" – future public open space named the "Central Green" –

would be unacceptably affected by the tower, according to a report from council management.

"At 11.00am on March 20 shadows would be cast over 90 per cent of Central Green. At the same time on September 22 shadows would extend over the entirety of this space. This extent of overshadowing is excessive and would undermine its enjoyment," the report read.

The report stated that the level of overshadowing would exceed that anticipated by the Digital Harbour Development Plan. As such, it recommended that the Minister for Planning require a reduction in height of part of the tower from 90 metres to 75 metres.

The Minister for Planning has authority over the application, but the

application was referred to council for comment.

The proposed 22-storey building is costed at \$195 million and would include office and retail space.

Although it is a single building, the proposal has three distinct tower elements at proposed heights of 96.5 metres and 90 metres.

The application is the first of a new-look City Harbour precinct development plan, with developer Poly Australia's 1000 Latrobe commercial project nearing completion along Latrobe St.

Future developments are also earmarked for 50 Digital Drive, 240 Harbour Esplanade and 220-230 Harbour Esplanade, which are all currently occupied by a car park ●

## Love in the air for the return of the Sunday Market

WORDS BY *Jess Carrascalao Heard*  
COMMUNITY

Love will be the theme at NewQuay Promenade this February, with Valentine's Day celebrations ringing in the first Docklands Community Sunday Craft/Farmers Market for 2021.

The market, which will take place on Sunday, February 14, will feature live entertainment by classical guitarist Alejandro Aguanca and singer Innoxia.

There will also be gift stalls, with wares ranging from jewellery and accessories to homewares and artwork.

Eileen Fiederling, co-ordinator of the Docklands Community Sunday Craft/Farmers' Market, will also provide another essential Valentine's Day touch.

"We have the roses now. I do the roses myself. We have single roses," she said.

The event will be COVID-safe, with hand sanitiser available, tap-and-go payment encouraged, social distancing measures, and a request for customers to ask stallholders for help rather than handling wares themselves.

The market on Valentine's Day will take place with the support of the Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC).

Mrs Fiederling said she approached the business group for Valentine's Day celebrations after their support for last year's Christmas market.

DCC president Johanna Maxwell said the Christmas market brought around 5000 people to the area.

As well as adding spark, she said it



▲ A promotion of the Valentine's Day market.

gave visitors the opportunity to see what else Docklands had to offer.

"It's important for us to support things that will bring visitation back to Docklands, which will then support business," Mrs Maxwell said.

Mrs Fiederling agreed, and hoped the Valentine's Day celebrations would do the same.

"We hope it encourages people to come down to Docklands too, maybe have some lunch and [do] some shopping," she said.

Takeaway food and coffee will be available at the market, and cafés and restaurants along NewQuay Promenade will also be open.

Mrs Fiederling said she was really looking forward to the return of the market to the area.

"I think it gives colour, and life, and movement. And I think it is a beautiful space for people," she said.

"It is such a special place."

The market will take place at on Sunday, February 14 at NewQuay Promenade. Admission is free ●

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# Welcome back to corporates

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*  
BUSINESS

Some businesses in Docklands have come out of lockdown praising their landlords, creating an upbeat mood as office workers began their slow return in January.

One is the Big Italiano, a breakfast, coffee and pizza place in the food court at Collins Square.

Proprietor Anthony Minasi was keen to go on the record about his experience during lockdown.

“The Walker Corporation has been an absolute life-saver for us,” he said. “In April, within two months of COVID, they promised us a [rent] waiver or a breeze.”

He wasn’t able to reveal details of the actual rent reduction because of a confidentiality clause but he compared it favourably to the situation at the Rialto where the business still hasn’t reached an agreement with the landlord for their café Rustica.

According to the Walker Corporation, which manages Collins Square, 18 retailers were trading after lockdown finished in November and there were no vacancies as a result of the pandemic.

There were also promising signs that morning coffee was making a comeback with queues at Mr Collins café, evidence that at least some of the 20,000 office workers in the five towers above were returning.

But it promises to be a slow road back to the kind of village-like conviviality pioneered in Docklands by corporates like NAB. The impromptu meeting over coffee is difficult when many workers are still at home.

Some corporate workers told *Docklands News* that even though they preferred meeting face-to-face, they were forced to schedule digital meetings to cater for their work-at-home colleagues.

One of the brave pioneers of the return-to-office movement is Michael Papageorgiou, a corporate financier for the Commonwealth Bank

of Australia.

Mr Papageorgiou has been back on level 20 in Tower One for the past three weeks.

“I volunteered,” he said. “I found it easier. My wife is also working from home. At least we don’t kill each other now!”

The hands-on corporate worker is also spending more time in the office than his colleagues.

“I’m working four days a week but most of my team is doing one week on, one week off,” he said.

Mr Papageorgiou chose the food court for his coffee and a meeting with workmates. The Big Italiano is reputed to have the cheapest and best brew in Collins Square at \$3.50 for a regular and the CBA financier was receptive.

Traders at the food court are expecting the number of office workers will increase in February, although seating in the court is still limited, forcing those wanting meetings to move chairs around.

“I’ve heard that [work] rosters have been drawn up for next week,” Mr Minasi said, hoping this will force a few more back into the office. “I’m still operating at 15 per cent of business.”

It’s a waiting game for all businesses catering to the corporates but he said the trading situation had been exacerbated by the fact that food courts were forced to close for 14 weeks during the lockdown whereas cafes could keep trading.

From February 8, the state government announced that 75 per cent of both public and private sector workforces would be permitted to return to office work, in what will come as a welcome boost to Docklands ●



*Rhonda Dredge*  
JOURNALIST  
RHONDA@CBDNEWS.COM.AU



▲ Anthony Minasi (left) and CBA financier Michael Papageorgiou catch up at the Big Italian.



▲ The face-to-face meeting returns to Docklands.

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# New cycling lanes along La Trobe St

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
TRANSPORT

Docklanders cycling into the CBD can now do so inside protected lanes along the entire stretch over the La Trobe Street Bridge.

Previously, cycling lanes on the street's southern end, between Harbour Esplanade and Spencer St, were merely marked lines with no protection from motorists.

But the City of Melbourne, as part of a program to fast-track protected lanes across the city, has ensured cyclists are now protected by curb-high barriers.

The move has cut the two-lane stretch of road in each direction down to one, as the council continued its bid to redeploy space to cyclists and pedestrians as part of a 10-year transport strategy.

"There has been a significant increase in the number of people riding bikes during the COVID-19 pandemic," a letter notifying nearby residents and businesses of the new lanes read.

"The new bike lanes will connect into Melbourne's existing bike lane network and provide a safe, efficient, sustainable transport alternative that will support physical distancing and get the city moving again when restrictions are eased."

"No right turn" signs will also be installed in both direction at the La Trobe and Spencer St intersection to ensure traffic flow is maintained.

The council acknowledged a "likely" reduction in vehicle flow along the section of to accommodate the new cyclist space.

Research conducted as part of the council's transport strategy released in 2019 suggested four in 10 people found cycling in Melbourne "unsafe and intimidating".

As such, the council has committed to fast-tracking 40km of new cycling lanes across the city.

"Kerbside protected bike lanes encourage people who are less confident or new to bike riding to feel safe when they are riding in the



▲ New protected bike lanes along the western end of La Trobe St.

city. The separator islands are manufactured off site and can be installed quickly. The adaptable design will allow for adjustments to be made if required," the council letter said.

"The new bike lanes will create a street that people can feel confident riding along, freeing up space on our roads, buses, trams and trains."



# "UooUoos" find homes in Docklands

WORDS BY *Jess Carrascalao Heard*  
ARTS & CULTURE

Docklands became home to several "UooUoo" sculptures in January, as part of an art trail celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Children's Hospital.

The opening of "Me and UooUoo: RCH150 Anniversary Art Trail" saw 100 of the colourful UooUoos (pronounced "you-you") dotted around Melbourne and Geelong for the community to enjoy.

One of the sculptures, *Baa-ni-ip* (Bunyip), located at Victoria Harbour Promenade and designed by proud Wadawurrung woman Deanne Gilson, was sponsored by Development Victoria (DV).

"Docklands is known for its clever and creative art installations and this art trail provides a perfect synergy with what is already on show in the precinct," Geoff Ward, Group Head Precincts at Development Victoria said.

The government body said it recognised the opportunity to entice the community to explore the area, while also supporting a good cause.

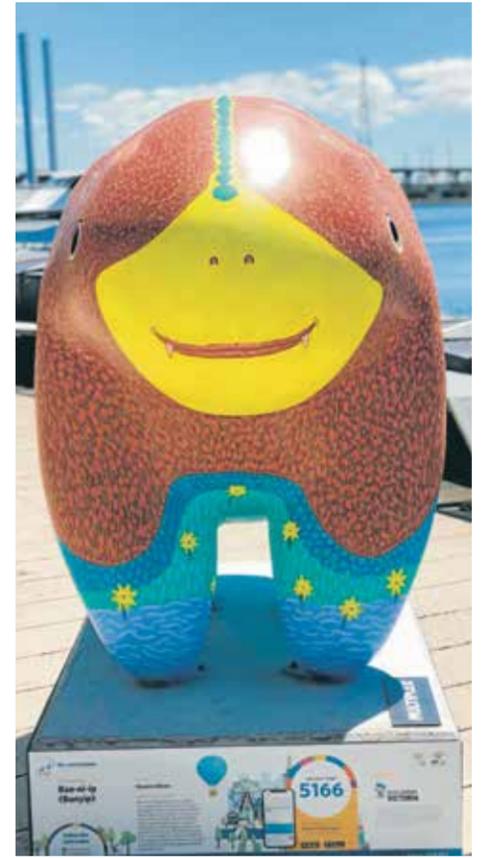
"We are proud to support the Royal Children's Hospital and the art trail, and we encourage people to explore the art in Docklands while experiencing the waterfront and the rest of the precinct," Mr Ward said.

The UooUoos were created by Melbourne artist Alexander Knox, who was also behind the *Creature* sculpture in the foyer of the Royal Children's Hospital.

Loosely based on both the wombat and the dugong, each individual UooUoo has been designed by an artist.

Each sculpture carries a unique four-digit code, which locals can enter into the "Me and UooUoo 2021" app to unlock rewards from sponsors.

The app has other interactive features, including games, a map to help UooUoo-seekers follow the trail and find the sculptures, and a gallery where the public can upload their own photos of the UooUoos.



▲ *Baa-ni-ip*, one of the UooUoos which has found a home in Docklands as a part of the art trail.

Mr Ward said, "I encourage everyone to head out to find the sculptures and participate in this great cause."

The RCH150 Anniversary Art Trail will run until March 21.

After the end of the trail, each UooUoo will be auctioned to help raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital ●

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▲ Sports returned to Ron Barassi Snr Park in December.

## Sports club rebounds after tough year

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
SPORT

Docklands Sports Club (DSC) has bounced back strongly after a difficult 2020 and is set to begin new junior soccer and cricket programs in February.

The club based out of Ron Barassi Snr Park re-started sports clinics and coaching in November after an eight-month hiatus due to COVID-19.

After a 2019 launch, the club had been concerned about the impact of the pandemic on the momentum it had gathered in its short period of existence.

But DSC has not only reported strong retention of families since the return, but an increase in female participation.

President Carina Parisella said that when the state government allowed community sport to return in November, the club moved quickly to re-start the programs that had been paused in March.

“We invited all of our families back and ran the rest of the term and put in place a COVID-safe plan,” Ms Parisella said.

“What was great was that we got some new families come and join us in that time ... retention has been great but one of the best things we’ve seen is an increase in female participation which has been my goal all along, to bring more young women into particularly soccer.”

The club has announced that its Aldi MiniRoos (junior soccer) program will begin a new term on Sunday, February 7, while the Woolworths Cricket Blast (junior cricket) will return the next week on February 14.

Ms Parisella said the club had also engaged the services of professional coaches for primary school aged children looking to develop their skills, as oppose to younger kids being introduced to the sports.

“Before we were really run completely by volunteers, either footy or cricket enthusiasts. What we’ve done as we built our network, we’ve started to get to know other local clubs and some other professionals in the coaching space. Definitely the benefit of all this is that the community and the volunteers still put the magic together.” ●



For more information:  
[facebook.com/DocklandsSportsClub](https://facebook.com/DocklandsSportsClub)

## Cladding ban announced

WORDS BY *Jack Alfonso*  
BUILDING

All future multi-storey developments are now prohibited from using high-risk cladding products for external wall cladding.

The Minister for Planning and Housing Richard Wynne made the announcement on February 1 basing the decision on expert advice which found that combustible cladding contributed to the spread of fire when used inappropriately on specific buildings.

The announcement comes more than six years after the blaze at the Lacrosse building at LaTrobe St in Docklands, which triggered a state inquiry into the issue.

The ban prohibits the use of flammable aluminium composite panels and rendered expanded polystyrene, applies to the use of these materials on apartments, hotels, and aged care facilities with two or more storeys, and to office buildings, shopping centres, and retail premises such as warehouses, factories, and car parks with three or more storeys. Minister Wynne said that the state government was “continuing to act” on the “most up to date expert advice” on combustible cladding, adding that “anyone caught flouting this ban will face significant penalties.”

The fines can total up to \$400,000 for significant breaches and will be enforced through the Victorian Building Authority (VBA). “This ban will ensure new developments are built to the highest standard to keep Victorians safe while we continue to rectify existing buildings through our world-first cladding rectification program,” Mr Wynne said.

The announcement has been met with cautious optimism from Master Builders Victoria (MBV), who said the change provided “certainty around what cladding products are deemed acceptable”, while also stressing it was “important to avoid any further changing of the goalposts” to avoid confusion for builders.

“Prior to this February 1 change, stringent processes had already been put in place to ensure the appropriate use of cladding products,” CEO of MBV Rebecca Casson said. “While this further change may simplify the process for future projects, it should be recognised that builders had abided by the previous changes that have been made to ensure the safety of cladding products.”

The Liberal opposition Minister for Planning Tim Smith, in comments reported in *The Age*, said that the VBA had “failed to keep Victorians

*“Instead of the Andrews government re-announcing a cladding ban on new buildings, why don’t they make existing buildings, that are clad in highly combustible material, safe?”*



safe” from high-risk cladding, adding there were still “literally hundreds of buildings” throughout Melbourne that could be deemed unsafe. “Instead of the Andrews government re-announcing a cladding ban on new buildings, why don’t they make existing buildings, that are clad in highly combustible material, safe?”

The state government’s own cost-benefit analysis indicated an annual \$1 million economic gain due to reduced insurance costs. The ban comes in lieu of the investigation conducted by the Victorian Cladding Taskforce, which was established in 2017 after combustible cladding exacerbated a blaze that caused 72 deaths in the Grenfell disaster in England, while high-risk cladding was also held responsible for the 2014 blaze at the Lacrosse building in Docklands.

“These products are a high risk when used inappropriately or installed incorrectly – that’s why we’ve acted to ban them for new multi-storey buildings,” Minister Wynne said.

In 2019, the government committed \$600 million to the Cladding Rectification Program to fix buildings with high-risk cladding. However, there is still a lot of grey area as to who fronts the costs of the program, as it is dependent on the risk associated with the individual building’s cladding ●



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Lord Mayor Sally Capp with artists Henry Wagons and Katie Pearson at the launch of Melbourne Music Week-Extended

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### 2 Explore little streets

Our iconic 'little streets' - like Little Collins and Little Bourke - are being transformed into safe and vibrant shared zones for all. Look out for bespoke stencils and colourful paint showing that pedestrians have right of way and speed limits are reduced.

### 3 Dine outdoors

Melbourne's beloved restaurants, cafes and bars have thrown open their doors, creating open-air dining experiences in laneways, parking spaces, footpaths and parks.

### 4 Wander through creative laneways

Forty of Melbourne's historic laneways are being transformed through lighting and creative installations, thanks to a team of production and graphic designers, music producers, lighting specialists, technicians and maintenance workers.

### 5 Attend innovative events

From Melbourne Music Week-Extended to Moomba, our artists and producers are working to deliver a calendar of events that will celebrate our city's resilience, curiosity and creativity. Find out more at [whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

### 6 Discover talented buskers

Our beloved Melbourne buskers are back and ready to entertain you from Bourke Street to Southbank and everywhere in between. Sing along and tip generously.

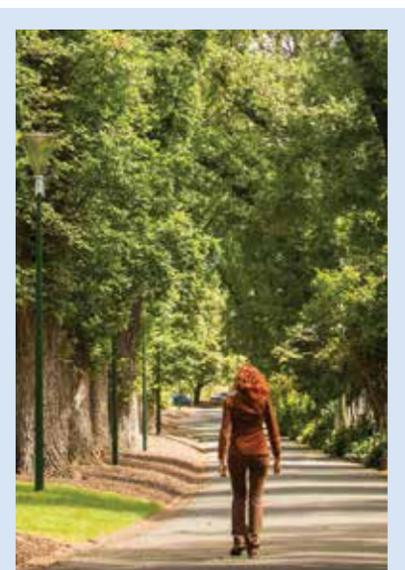
### 7 Watch your step

Our revamped laneways, bike lanes, shared zones and outdoor dining areas mean the landscape of the city has changed. We'll be updating our lane closure information and mobility maps, but please be mindful that traffic conditions on roads and footpaths may be different to the last time you visited the city.

To find out more, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneisopen](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneisopen)



A busker in Bourke Street



## KEEP COOL

Discover the coolest routes through the city on hot summer days by using our new Cool Routes tool.

As Melbourne experiences more frequent, extended and intense heatwaves due to climate change, this tool is designed to help you travel through the city more safely and comfortably, using a mix of city research and data from microclimate sensors.

To find out more, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/coolroutes](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/coolroutes)

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# 15 FAST FACTS ABOUT THE YEAR THAT WAS

In a year like no other, we were particularly busy at the City of Melbourne providing essential services and responding to all the challenges of 2020.

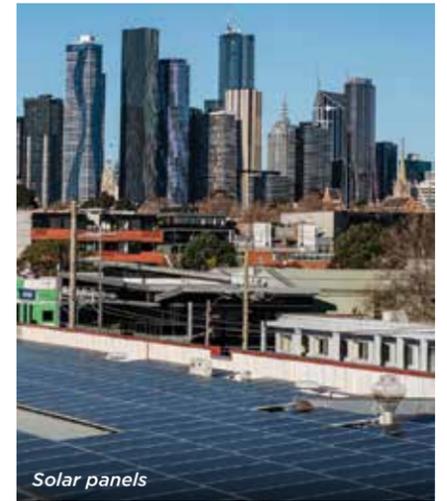
Here is a snapshot of our year in numbers:

- 1 planted 3174 trees
- 2 created more than 100 extended alfresco dining parklets
- 3 processed more than 1242 birth notices
- 4 recorded more than 6000 registered pets for the first time, including 2316 cats and 3747 dogs
- 5 supported a group of seven large energy users to purchase 110 gigawatt hours of renewable electricity through the second Melbourne Renewable Energy Project
- 6 provided more than \$17 million in funding to 2988 businesses
- 7 completed 4716 phone calls to check on the wellbeing of 726 isolated older people
- 8 supported 5650 artists with more than \$3.5 million in funding across 907 arts grants, including 385 artists with disability
- 9 loaned more than 220,000 physical items and more than 640,000 electronic items through our libraries
- 10 ran 200 early literacy programs, 249 English conversation clubs and 87 book clubs
- 11 provided 154 grants and sponsorships worth \$1.48 million to community organisations
- 12 delivered 551 ArtPlay creative sessions with 225 artists for 27,622 children and families
- 13 delivered 622 Signal creative art sessions with 488 artists, reaching 4056 young people
- 14 generated 862,000 kilowatt hours of clean energy from 2244 solar panels on council buildings
- 15 harvested 120,478,000 litres of stormwater

This is just a small sample of the varied work that is done by local councils.

To find out more about what we do and how to get involved in city life, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au)

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.



Solar panels



Pet registrations



Business funding



Arts grants

## COMMUNITY FOOD GUIDE

The proportion of Melbourne residents who reported experiencing food insecurity increased from 25.8 per cent in 2019 to 32.9 per cent in 2020, according to data from our latest Health and Wellbeing Profile. To find out how to access affordable, fresh and healthy food, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/communityfoodguide](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/communityfoodguide)



A new outdoor dining area at Bar Lourinha



### KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne* magazine online at [magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

You can also join conversations to influence plans for your neighbourhood through Participate Melbourne at [participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

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# Leadership roles assigned as council revamps meetings

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Key portfolios for the next four years have been assigned to recently-elected City of Melbourne councillors, who have endorsed a new way to conduct meetings.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp will take over transport chair duties, an important portfolio in the next four years as the council looks to implement its Transport Strategy 2030.

Since entering Town Hall in 2018, Cr Capp has been a strong proponent of redistributing CBD space to both pedestrians and cyclists, who make the vast majority of trips within the Hoddle Grid.

The Lord Mayor will also become the Aboriginal Melbourne chair.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece has retained the planning portfolio, a role he held in the previous council term (2016-2020).

Rohan Leppert will remain as his deputy, while also taking on the role of environment chair after fellow Greens councillor Cathy Oke stood down last year after 12 years in the chamber.

Cr Leppert holds his role as heritage chair but relinquishes the arts portfolio after eight years.

Town Hall's current longest-serving councillor, Kevin Louey, has been assigned the Business and Global Opportunities portfolio.

Once the chief of staff to former Lord Mayor John So, Cr Louey has entered his 13th year in the council chamber in 2021.

Second term councillor Philip Le Liu has been assigned as finance chair, taking over from former Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood, who in October ran unsuccessfully against Cr Capp in the 2020 City of Melbourne election.

Cr Leppert said given its scope of responsibilities, councillors decided a portfolio structure was again the most efficient way to conduct business.

He added that the process was a harmonious one.

"At this point in the electoral cycle some councils are tearing themselves apart deciding who gets which position. We don't do that," he said

Remaining portfolios were largely assigned to recently-elected councillors.

Dr Olivia Ball, the second Greens councillor alongside Cr Leppert, will chair the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging portfolio.

Roshena Campbell, who in her short time on council has been a strong advocate of a voucher program to kick-start the local economy in 2021, will lead City Activation.

Jason Chang will take the lead on Small Business, Elizabeth Doidge has been handed responsibility for Sustainable Building, Jamal Hakim will become Creative Melbourne chair, and Davydd Griffiths will lead the Education and Innovation portfolio.

At the December 15 council meeting, councillors also announced a shakeup to its decision-making framework for the next four years.

From now, Future Melbourne Committee meetings — which represent around two-thirds

*Lord Mayor Sally Capp will take over transport chair duties, an important portfolio in the next four years as the council looks to implement its Transport Strategy 2030.*



of all council meetings and where key decisions impacting the city are typically made — will no longer be structured in portfolio segments as featured during the previous term.

Instead, the Lord Mayor will take on the role of committee chair of all but one portfolio.

That remaining portfolio, Planning, will continue to be chaired by the Deputy Lord Mayor.

Cr Leppert said the new system eliminated an overly-centralised decision-making process. "I am actually quite glad that we've done away with what I thought was becoming a little bit of a problematic conflict, where the portfolio holder was also the chair of the committee, the proponent of the motion before the committee, the media spokesperson and becoming a bit of a policy lead," he said.

"We have to be conscious that all councillors have equal decision-making authority and responsibility. I think this model brings us back to that in two key ways; it doesn't make the portfolio lead the chair — the Lord Mayor will be the chair."

"Secondly, we're seeking to a brief a whole lot of portfolios together in a way that's going to make life as efficient as possible for the administration."

In what was the final meeting of 2020, councillors also endorsed its latest code of conduct.

"This code of conduct represents our commitment to respectful behaviour, to setting an appropriate tone and example for the rest of the organisation, and certainly reflecting our culture," Cr Capp said ●

## Docklands Probus team greets Antarctic

COMMUNITY

A party of eight from Docklands-based Bearbrass Probus club, which now has 60 local members, saw in the New Year in spectacular fashion.

The group downed champagne as their Boeing 787 Dreamliner circled the smoking Mt Erebus crater in the Antarctic, brilliantly lit by the midnight sun.

The party was organised and led by retired IT executive Mike "Spike" Sparkes. Three other members of the one-year-old Bearbrass club booked in, plus two spouses and two friends. Despite the formidable expense of the Melbourne round trip from 5.30pm to 7.30am, they all said it was worth it.

"We got four hours of low-level cruising along the iceberg-studded coast and into inland mountain ranges and white wilderness," Mr Sparkes said.

The *Dreamliner*, piloted by veteran Qantas pilot Lisa Norman, operated almost like a light plane, following paths of massive glaciers and travers-

ing valleys and mountain ranges in the vastness of the continent — twice the size of Australia.

Bearbrass secretary Sue Hoile said, "As we circled the Erebus volcano, I was overawed by its size and beauty. It was completely covered in ice yet pouring out steam and CO2.

"The naked valleys of bare rocks were a landform standing out black and brown amid the whiteness. Those valleys have no ice or snow yet are surrounded by ice. The sea ice also comes in an amazing range of formations, each with its specific name and beauty."

"We actually flew over a very small part of the immense mass. I have a greater understanding of the challenges faced by early explorers and the Australians now working at the research stations."

Mr Sparkes is himself a light-plane pilot and studied the *Dreamliner's* elaborate flight plan.

"I tried to join a summer expedition as a kid finishing uni but they only wanted experienced scientists or builders, drivers and tradies. No room for freshman



▲ Bearbrass secretary Sue Hoile.

engineers!" Mr Sparkes said. "Twenty years later, a friend joined a small group on a chartered sailing boat from Tierra del Fuego, but I was too late to get a bed. So, the New Year's flight for me fulfilled my lifetime goal."

**For more information:**  
[bearbrassprobus.org](http://bearbrassprobus.org)

## Sky's the limit for new vertical school at Fishermans Bend

WORDS BY *Jess Carrascalao Heard*  
EDUCATION

A new secondary school at Fishermans Bend reached structural completion last month, with the vertical school topping out at four storeys.

It is one of seven vertical government schools being rolled out in the inner city and designed to cater for up to 1100 students.

The interim name for the school is Fishermans Bend Secondary School and it will be open to students from Docklands when it opens in 2022.

Member for Albert Park Martin Foley said, "The community's vision for a Fishermans Bend secondary school is now becoming a reality and students will soon get to attend a modern, innovative and important local school."

Designed in consultation with the local community, the school features an environmentally-sustainable design.

Solar panels and solar batteries, food production gardens, and bicycle facilities for students and staff all feature, as well as a façade design allowing for natural light and thermal comfort.

STEAM will be the curriculum focus of the school, and students will have access to high-tech amenities, including a fabrication lab and robotics workshop, and arts, food technology sports and learning resource centre spaces that can be shared with the community.

Member for Southern Metropolitan Nina Taylor said, "Right across inner city Melbourne, we are delivering new schools and upgrading existing schools — so all Victorians can access a great local school."

The school was funded in the *Victorian Budget 2019/2020*, which invested more than \$6 million to build new schools across the state.

The school, located on Graham St in Port Melbourne, will open next year ●

**ELLEN SANDELL**

**STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE**

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Funded from Parliamentary Budget. Authorised by E. Sandell, 146 Peel St, North Melbourne.



# For the love of football, community, and Docklands

WORDS BY *David Schout*

A Brazilian who has called Docklands home since 2007, Rafael Jabuonski, has taken up a key role in the newly-formed Docklands Sports Club (DSC) which he believes could be a game-changer for the local community.

In 2019, a call went out for local families to attend a junior soccer clinic at Ron Barassi Snr Park.

After a successful day, the City of Melbourne were eager to gather parents as volunteers to form a new sports club for the local area.

One of those was Rafael Jabuonski (full name Rafael Eurides Jabuonski Junior), who was keen to get his young son involved.

In short time, a core group of volunteers assigned roles and later that year the Docklands Sports Club launched.

For Rafael, or "Raf" to most, it was an easy decision to join, and he soon became the club's vice president.

"I'm Brazilian, I love football, it's the best sport in the world," he said. "And I really like Docklands, basically, so for me when the opportunity came to do something for Docklands and marrying that together with my passion for the sport, it was a no-brainer."

He said that while 2020 was "a bit of write-off" due to COVID-19, the club had witnessed strong numbers upon resuming activities late last year.

Currently, DSC provides junior soccer and cricket clinics and has ambitious growth plans at their NewQuay base.

"We always had a mentality and a strategy that we wanted to have a strong core of kids that will come back, so we're doing everything we can to preserve that, because we think that will build community. And it's proven to be the case. With the enrolments for the term coming up, the numbers are looking good."

Rafael's journey to Docklands in 2007 was a direct one.

Back then, his employer in Brazil was looking for volunteers who wanted to move abroad as part of a large technology project.

He put his hand up, and upon arriving in Melbourne decided to rent a room in the (then) recently-finished Conder building.

"I grew up in the city. I've never been a country person, I don't have a dream of a house and a dog, so living here I see Docklands and think 'this is what I'm used to'. Apartment living was what I was used to. I find the location great, the view beautiful. So, everything looked perfect to me at that time."

Soon after, he bought his own apartment and remained in NewQuay where he lives with his young family.

"When I came here there were five buildings on this side, and not so many on the other side," he said.

Having spent more than 13 years in the

local area, he is well placed to ascertain both the area's strengths and where it could improve.

"In a way it's still hard to define Docklands for people that live in Melbourne. I think you either love it or hate it. And what I see is lots of attempts to improve it; some things work and some things don't ... I think it's trying to find its place," he said.

"I see Docklands is trying to find its identity, and trying to become something that's more permanent, rather than a place that's just specific or transactional. I've always observed that during the footy season, on game days then you have some people here. But they come for the game and then they leave, they don't stay. Having the mall here and other things to do and reasons to be here, it becomes a little more of a destination."

Rafael now works for Coles as a quality strategy manager, which he "loves".

He said the supermarket giant's role as an essential service through the worst of the pandemic was a fulfilling one professionally, knowing his work made a difference for people worried about stock levels and supply chains.

With a new term of sport (beginning on Sunday, February 7) on the horizon at DSC — and the new primary school offering opportunities for new members — he was looking forward to growing the club as a central part of the community.

"People felt there was no 'local' or place



to go and hang out with friends or neighbours and I think now having the sports club, there's nothing more community or local-oriented than that." ●

## PRECINCT PERSPECTIVE

# So much positivity in Victoria Harbour

The last time I wrote for this column we were in the midst of a lockdown, but we came through.

However, we do need to acknowledge that some families suffered the tragic loss of loved ones or the loss of employment and to them we all extend our sympathies. So much has happened to all of us, in Victoria harbour, in Victoria, in Australia and globally. Yet there is a taste of positivity and promise in the air as we look to the future.

Many of us were moved by the words of the talented young poet laureate, Amanda Gorman, at Joe Biden's recent inauguration as incoming President of the United States. For those that missed it, maybe Google, "Amanda Gorman inauguration poem" — it was a powerful and stirring address. There isn't room to quote all she said, but many of her words apply to us far from the United States:

"And so, we lift our gaze, not to what stands between us, but what stands before us. We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside. We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another. We seek harm to none and harmony for all."

“

*How inspiring it was to listen to and watch that young woman express herself with such poise and eloquence. Her message was one of hope and unity and we can take so much away from this.*

”

Closer to home, I am delighted to hear the children's laughter as they run around Buluk Park, excited to be able to be out again in the fresh air, catching up with friends and family. People are laughing again and exchanging smiling greetings. We have all endured months hidden behind masks and so smiling with our eyes, but smile we did, taking extra care in

kindnesses to others. We have come through this and we have the long hot summer ahead of us to warm our hearts, with the hope of new friendships to be made and older connections to be renewed.

We need to be grateful for all the positives we share in Docklands and in Victoria. Yes, many have complained about the government at state and federal level, I was occasionally guilty of this myself. But truly, here we are, one of the most fortunate nations in the world in terms of the effect of the pandemic. There was no procedure manual for enduring a pandemic and I believe we should be grateful that we have emerged comparatively well and that our governments have worked hard to keep us safe.

In Victoria Harbour things are slowly getting back to normal. Cafes are as full as they are permitted to be, and we are enjoying eating out again. People are out and about on their bikes, skateboards or pushing prams, walking and jogging. It's been an added delight to see the proliferation of bird life. I loved seeing the ducks waddle about in the park and the majestic black swan parents guarding their young near the Webb Bridge. Seagulls seem pleased to have people back again, eating lunch along the fore-

shore, leaving crumbs behind. There seem to be more people than ever walking dogs. I have seen more long-haired dachshunds in Victoria Harbour than anywhere else, maybe they are the new preferred pooch? No doubt pets have kept many people grounded. I know my two cats, Chloe and Gerald, have been a constant source of comfort and happiness.

The Portarlington and Geelong express ferries are operational again, trams again are seeing greater numbers travel into the city for work and shopping. The Dragon Boaters are back in training on Victoria Harbour, with their strident drumbeat often echoing into the early evening.

2021 is already in full swing and there is so much to look forward to in the coming months. It is time to celebrate the positivity of life in Victoria Harbour ●



*Stella M. Barber*

VICTORIA HARBOUR RESIDENT  
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MISSION TO SEAFARERS



# Mission to everyone

*How many hands have your single origin coffee beans passed through before arriving at your lips? Concrete, cars, coffee and Converse all arrive via the sea.*

As we keep breathing our collective sigh of relief at 8am every morning when the announcement is made “no local cases” - the freedom of movement that we have continues.

But not everyone has that freedom of movement; Seafarers that have kept us going are still denied shore leave when they arrive in the Port of Melbourne, even if they’ve been travelling for more than 14 days on the oceans to deliver our coffee beans. Until they are declared key workers and given priority for the vaccines, they will continue to suffer in isolation.

We are caring for them by continuing to deliver care packs and the essentials they ask for. You can help us to care for them by helping us with the cost of delivery fees for the goods that our charity partner Good360 Australia are able

to secure for us. For \$5000 worth of goods we need \$320 of donations for the delivery.

You can donate directly on our website or drop in and support our vital work by having a coffee, a drink or attending one of our great events coming up. Shantily Clad Sea Shanty night, the Melbourne Celtic Festival or our Sunday sessions. All details are on our website [missiontoseafarers.com.au/whats-on](http://missiontoseafarers.com.au/whats-on) See you at the Mission! ●



**Sue Dight**  
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HEALTH AND WELLBEING

# Our back to school health checklist

Every January millions of children, including some of our very own patients, go back to school.

While schools are great places for children to learn and develop both mentally and socially, it is important for kids to remember their health and wellbeing in the classroom all year round.

2021 is an especially important year as it marks the inaugural intake at our very own Docklands Primary School. All summer we have been fielding questions from both parents and students about getting ready for school. Therefore, we have created the Back to School checklist.

While most parents and children have a checklist of stationery and supplies for starting the school year, we are providing our patients with a “Back to School Health Checklist”. The checklist is a great way to remind kids of the importance of building healthy habits in school.

They are simple to incorporate and easily fit into a child’s everyday routine. For instance, packing a healthy lunch filled with lots of fruit and vegies, getting 60 minutes of daily physical activity and wearing the backpack correctly by carrying it with both straps.

Chiros and physios can also help training for strength, balance, coordination, flexibility and endurance, depending on the child’s needs. The health checklist also reminds kids to reduce their recreational screen time, sit correctly in the classroom and consider chiropractic care.

Kids don’t often think about the impact that common activities like sitting in a classroom, carrying a heavy bag and excessive screen time can have on their overall health and wellbeing.



Chiropractors and physiotherapists are well placed to assess and manage disorders of the musculoskeletal system and offer solutions and advice regarding your children’s existing spinal health issues or how to improve overall health and wellbeing.

Pick up your complimentary Back to School Health Checklist from us today, or if you are concerned about your child’s spine or any other back to school related activities, book an appointment with us online at [docklandshealth.com.au](http://docklandshealth.com.au) or call 9088 3228 ●



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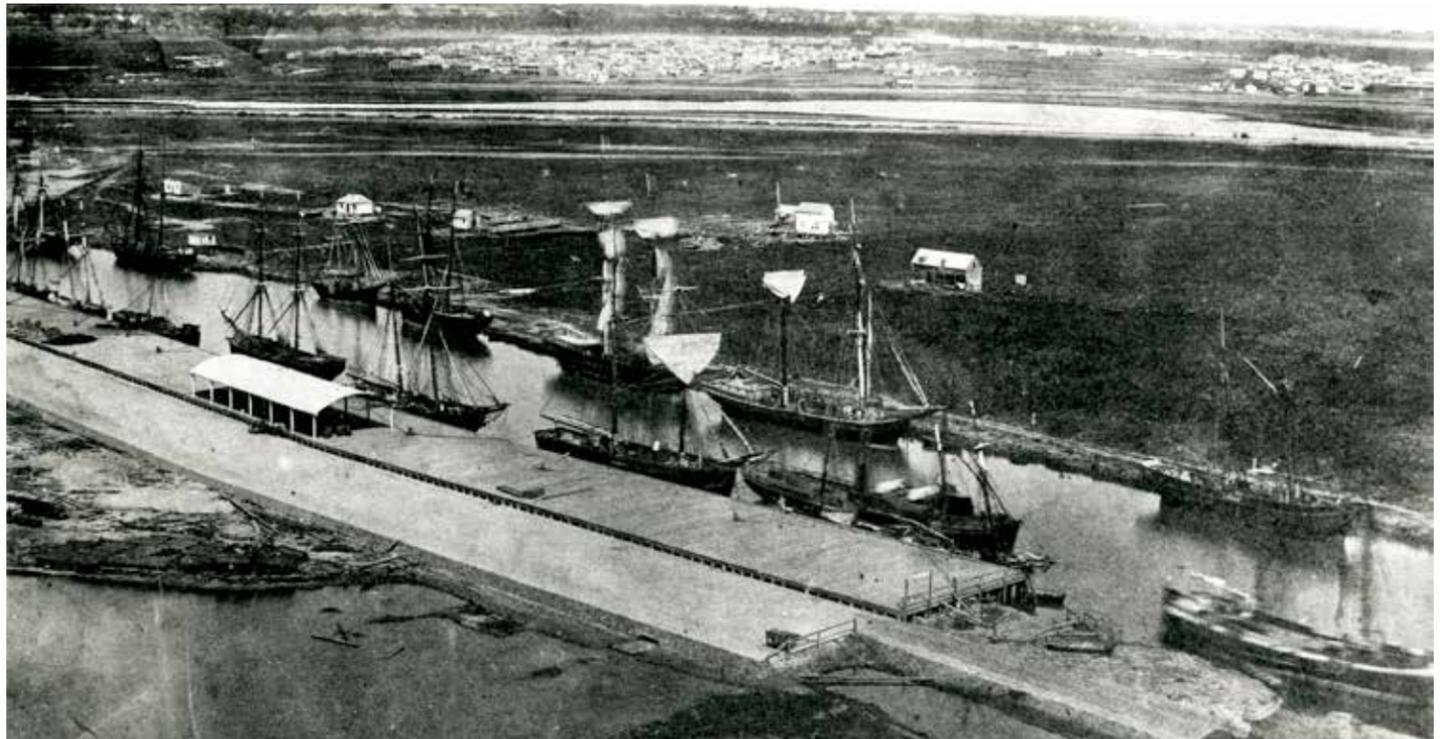
## VALENTINES WEEKEND SPECIAL

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# A narrow river

*This image from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria's (RHSV's) collection, taken in the 1850s, is a rare look at the Yarra river before it underwent many facelifts in the following decades.*



It was taken from the city side of the river, looking toward the region we now know as South Melbourne and Southbank.

Back then the river that flowed along the docks resembled a creek rather than the much wider canal we know today. While the width during this time varied along the river course, this particular portion appears to be around four ship-widths, which would have made any attempts to turn back towards the bay a nightmare. Generally smaller ships could access the wharves of Melbourne, with many being lighters that hauled cargo from larger ships around the winding narrow bend known as Fisherman's Bend. Depending on the ship size and the depth of the river, the 6km journey from Port Phillip Bay to Melbourne could take days to complete.

From the 1840s, wharfs were built to assist the unloading of cargo and the wide-eyed immigrants looking for a new life. By the time this image was taken, the south-west end of Melbourne was dominated by Queen's Wharf (west of King St), Coles and Raleigh Wharves (between King and Spencer streets), and Spencer Wharf at the end of Spencer St. The exact location of the photograph is thought to be (and has been cited elsewhere) as Australian Wharf, now at the site of the current World Trade Centre, west of Spencer Street Bridge.

Extending to 2032 feet, the wharf was built in 1855 in a time when news of the gold rush lured vast numbers of ships deep into the bay. The site held auctions for goods fresh off the boat, with July 11, 1856 edition of *The Argus* recording a sale of produce by Messrs Symons and Perry. Being close to the newly-opened gasworks, the wharf also included a small dock that allowed coal ships to unload their freight. The wharf would continue to be used until the 1970s when the Charles Grimes Bridge blocked off traffic.

Activity was also happening on the south side of the river. The scattering of homes and huts in the distance signal the formation of what was formerly known as Emerald Hill. In between the few shacks along the south bank (which risked constant flooding) and the settlement itself is a

sizeable swamp, a result of water collecting in the low lying delta plains. Emerald Hill allegedly got its name from journalist and would-be historian Edmund "Garryowen" Finn in 1845 to promote a picnic for the Father Matthew Society. This referred to the grassy hill that rose from the swamplands (not visible in this image, but likely would've been right). Inhabited by the Yalukit Willam (a clan of the Bunurong) before European settlement, Emerald Hill and its surrounding area was a traditional social and ceremonial meeting place for many indigenous tribes, with one notable meeting in 1840 witnessed by poet Richard Howitt reportedly attracting around 1000 participants. The meeting featured a ceremonial battle to settle a dispute (with one man being speared in the leg), with a reconciliation dance held the next night.

A small number of Europeans settled on the land, but it wasn't until 1852 that the area would experience a larger European expansion as the first allotments were sold. This was coupled with the formation of a tent settlement, known as Canvastown, along St Kilda Rd organised by Governor La Trobe. For five shillings a week, immigrants would live in a tent while they searched for work or gambled their livelihoods on the goldfields up north. For the almost 10,000 people that lived there, times were tough. One woman writing to *The Argus* in 1853 (January 26) lamented the hardships she and her family had gone through in five weeks, claiming "we can, in common with hundreds, see nothing before us but absolute starvation". As her husband was robbed while struggling to find work, her family had to deal with a tent that was too thin to keep out the rain and the foul language of neighbours. Another immigrant writing to *The Argus* (January 24, 1853) solemnly announced that "death has broken into several of our families". As Canvastown was also marred by crime, poor sanitation (due to the polluting of the Yarra), and a fever

epidemic, La Trobe would put a stop to the settlement after a couple of years.

West of Canvastown, more practical homes of weatherboard were being constructed, along with nearly 100 portable iron houses. The iron houses were the 19th century equivalent of Ikea furniture as they could be constructed in England, disassembled for transport to Australia, then reassembled. These included a parsonage for the Church of England, and Patterson House at Coventry St which still remains in its original spot more than 160 years later. As inns and shops were set up and the population reached more than 3000 people, there was dissatisfaction expressed towards the neglect by the Melbourne City Council, which was in charge of the town. It sparked a push for Emerald Hill to become its own municipality, with an 1855 petition claiming that "filth (sickness and disease supervening) is a sequence of the neglect of proper supervision." While legislation allowing settlements to become separate boroughs would pass in 1854, there were further disputes by the council on the legality of the separation. This led to several meetings at an Iron Store in Cecil St, including one that the *Argus* (May 9, 1855) reportedly claimed as "disorderly" as a vocal crowd interrupted proceedings. However, it would be worth the trouble, as Emerald Hill would be declared a municipal district on May 26, 1855.

The Yarra is now wider and, with all the reclamation works and urban expansion, most of the swamp is gone ●



*Ashley Smith*  
RESEARCHER  
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

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## Sundays at the Mission to Seafarers

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Catch-up with family and friends over a cold beer or glass of wine in the Spanish-style courtyard and lush beer garden, and savour a sizzling gourmet sausage hot off the BBQ.

## A belated Happy New Year to all!

*Fortunately, Victoria seems to have averted yet another debilitating COVID lockdown episode during January.*

With interstate and overseas travel curtailed, and “intra-state” tourism booming, more Victorians spending time around coastal Victoria may result in a heightened appreciation for Victoria’s rich and diverse maritime heritage in the wider public of piers, bridges and wharves above and below, many of which are very close indeed to folks living in Docklands.

Speaking of “below”, Central Pier comes to mind. Be alert and alarmed. Just prior to Christmas, two acutely alarming and disappointing actions by Development Victoria (DV) occurred in relation to the iconic heritage-protected pier. It is, once again, a failure by the responsible state authority. DV quietly issued a media release appearing only on the DV website and only a week before the Christmas break, on December 15. The media release signalled their intention to demolish even more of Central Pier. MMHN found this news appalling. It indicated a disturbing disregard for due public process by those charged with maintaining this heritage-protected infrastructure.

On a hopeful and somewhat puzzling note, Heritage Victoria advised that they have not yet actually received a permit to demolish application from DV. This permit process is a fundamental step for work on any heritage protected structure. It is to an extent reassuring to note that, even with an application for a permit to demolish, the process would require the applicant to substantiate the application by providing “proof” (i.e. expert reports) on the actual extent of public risk, proof of its state of decay, proof that remediation measures were not possible, and finally that even if demolition was deemed to be warranted, then DV would be required to provide “evidence” of their “intentions” for the structure post demolition. Why would DV begin a tender process without following due process or having a permit to demolish? This is precisely the way much of our built-form maritime heritage is lost – by the bureaucracy. Inexplicable and unacceptable on many levels. See [development.vic.gov.au/news/western-tip-of-central-pier-to-be-removed](https://development.vic.gov.au/news/western-tip-of-central-pier-to-be-removed)

Docklands residents will have noticed work happening beneath Collins Wharf (aka North Wharf) near the heritage ships. We can only hope DV have not seriously neglected maintenance of this Victoria Harbour wharf too.

On a more positive note there has been progress during January on the Mission to Seafarers Project and the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Precinct Project. Stakeholder consultations are underway and a report on feasibility, support and costs for a maritime precinct focussed on the Mission to Seafarers premises is due soon. Key stakeholders identified by the steering committee were invited to respond to a detailed set of questions by the end of January. Community input may also be added via the City of Melbourne Participate Melbourne website or directly by email to Biruu: [m.bowles@biruu](mailto:m.bowles@biruu).

Not very far from Docklands, adjacent to the

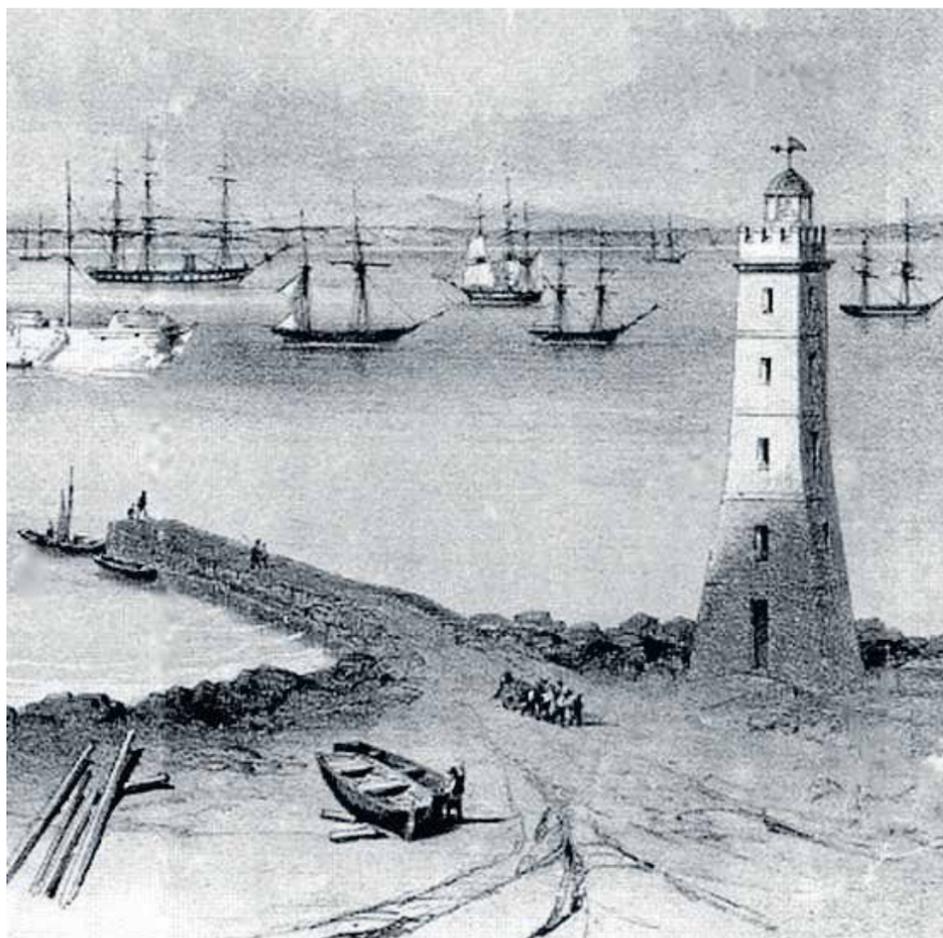
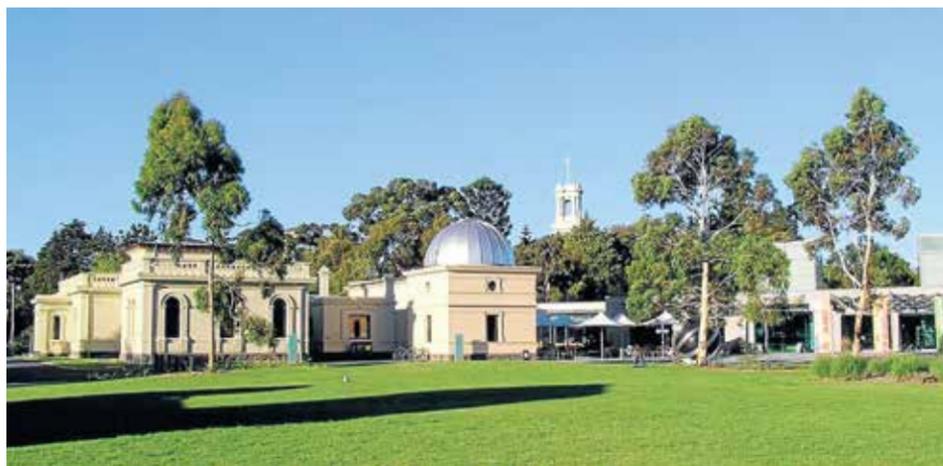
Royal Botanical Gardens, is a key example of Melbourne maritime heritage infrastructure – the Melbourne Observatory that played a critical role in 19th century shipping. Docklands residents may wish to have a look at this – the community is calling for it be World Heritage-listed. A primary function of Melbourne Observatory was to maintain “standard time”. Its precursor, the Williamstown Observatory (1853) was established specifically to provide accurate time at 1pm each day as a service to ships. It dropped one “time ball” each day from Flagstaff poles erected at Gellibrand’s Point, Williamstown, and another at Flagstaff Gardens.

Ships at anchor used hand telescopes to observe one of the two “time balls” and at the fall of the ball, they could adjust their chronometers and sextants. Precise time measurement enabled accurate navigation at sea. By providing an accurate measure of local time at a known longitude, ships could adjust for any errors that may have crept into their instruments and their calculations after long voyages.

Time at the Melbourne Observatory was determined by using a transit telescope to observe the movement of “clock stars” i.e. those stars with accurately known positions. Nightly observations ensured that the “master clock” in the observatory remained in alignment with of the “clock stars” across the field of view of the telescope. What began as a maritime service at Williamstown then at Melbourne was followed a “time ball” at the Telegraph Office in Melbourne, linked in 1870 by a telegraph wire between the observatory and the city. Melbourne’s watchmakers and citizens used this to check their timepieces; it later achieved wider application and was adopted throughout the colony. The observatory “time ball” came to control clocks at the railway stations at Spencer St and Flinders St, the Post Office clock, Parliament, Customs House and several banks.

In addition to time-setting, the observatory was the source of all weather forecasting, weight setting and measurement standard setting for Victoria and the southern hemisphere, compiling meteorological observations and tide data. It’s well worth a look: [collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/1632](https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/1632)

Given their familiarity with shipping, Docklands residents are probably more aware than many that the shipping industry pollutes the environment in various largely obscure ways. e.g. through paint and anti-fouling treatments, and of course, we are only too aware of catastrophic oil spills. Generally, though, shipping pollution seems somehow to be “under the popular radar”. Recent research on emissions free maritime propulsion indicates that that shipping pollution should factor more closely into environmental policy thinking. Maritime heritage enthusiasts are familiar with “transitions” in relation to ship propulsion. Oar to sail to steam to oil to electricity to nuclear. Are we now heading back towards wind propulsion?



Will stringent environmental controls and targets entail a radical shift in ship propulsion as well as cars? Will we see the emergence of “sail cargo” ships in Docklands?

MMHN member Christiaan De Beukelaer (University of Melbourne) recently sailed aboard the vessel *Avontur*, a two-masted schooner built in 1920, crossing the Atlantic to Germany with a crew of 15, completing a six-month cargo voyage trans-Atlantic round-trip via the Canaries, the Caribbean, Mexico, and the Azores relying almost entirely on wind propulsion to carry significant tonnage of cargo. So – will it be a case of back to the future – a new transition in shipping propulsion? See [unctad.org/news/sail-cargo-charting-new-path-emission-free-shipping](https://unctad.org/news/sail-cargo-charting-new-path-emission-free-shipping)

Early notice of MMHN seminar event at Docklands Library – given that uncertainty persists in relation to COVID, with considerable optimism, MMHN announces its 2021 seminar: “Port Phillip: Looking in, looking out. Aboriginal and colonial perspective” February 22 at Docklands Library at 5.30pm. Do come along – in fact - why not join MMHN now? Email [info@mmhn.org.au](mailto:info@mmhn.org.au) ●



Jackie Watts

CHAIR OF MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK

[JACKIEWATTS@NETSPACE.NET](mailto:JACKIEWATTS@NETSPACE.NET)

Advisory Accounting Legal Technology Digital

## NEW YEAR NEW START

We are excited to announce that we have launched our newly designed website. We are proud of our Digital team for delivering the website for a fresh start to 2021.

Our Digital team specialise in designing, building and maintaining websites and can help you create or transform your website to accelerate your digital footprint.

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## COUNCILLOR PROFILE

# A true community councillor

When *CBD News's* sister publication *Docklands News* ran Jamal Hakim's image on the front page of its September 2020 edition ahead of last year's City of Melbourne council elections, he really would have liked his chances!

And sure enough, the long-term Docklands resident, multicultural campaigner and managing director of a national health not-for-profit defied the odds and snuck into one of the nine coveted councillor positions ... not that we're suggesting our help had anything to do with his success!

Off the back of some clever preferences with other like-minded resident candidates and an "open and honest" dialogue with the rest of the field, Mr Hakim said he had always remained optimistic about his chances.

"I take things in my stride, I guess," he said. "I'm the kind of person that leaves myself open to all possibilities. So, part of me did feel optimistic. But at the same time, I was realistic that it's the first time I'm running and I'm an unknown character."

"I went into the preference discussions the same way I would any other negotiation, which is to align from a values perspective. Have those conversations, be really honest and look at the policies of the other candidates."

"My goal was to work with the other resident candidates to say, let's get an independent resident on council. It doesn't matter who it is."

Mr Hakim is one of six new faces on the council and his election to the City of Melbourne should come as welcome news to local residents throughout the municipality, given his pledge to carry his own lived experience into the role.

Not only has he lived in Docklands for more than 10 years, his professional experience working with Democracy in Colour, Marie Stopes and previously with Midsumma Festival means community will be central to his approach as a councillor.



▲ Newly-elected councillor and long-time Docklands resident Jamal Hakim.

Having been assigned the Creative Melbourne portfolio and deputy lead on the Health, Wellbeing and Belonging portfolio, he told *CBD News* that he was passionate about promoting multiculturalism, safety and deliberative government in our city.

"I think safety in the city is a really big issue because it underpins everything," he said.

"People feel less safe in the City of Melbourne year on year and that's probably because we're not understanding what safety encompasses – it's emotional, psychological, cultural, accessibility, environmental and all sorts of things."

"Deliberative government is also something that I'm really interested in. We really need to create a way of collaboration that takes into account our community in all of its forms."

"About 70 per cent of the recommendations from deliberative processes in Scotland are enacted. I think when you have that you have a more engaged community. You have to represent community realistically and be able to show representation within council."

While Jamal's life is about to get a whole lot busier as a councillor, he is no stranger to a full workload having only recently completed his

Juris Doctor (JD) at RMIT University so expect him to take the juggle in his stride!

He said that the combined fresh talent of fellow new councillors Jason Chang, Olivia Ball, Elizabeth Doidge, Davydd Griffiths and Roshena Campbell, with the experience of Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece and councillors Kevin Louey, Rohan Leppert and Phil Le Liu placed the group in good stead for a productive and pragmatic council term.

"What's really terrific about this council, and I can say this confidently, after meeting and sitting down with everyone individually is that we really got to know each other and we all set some ground rules around our behaviours and how we want to engage together," he said.

"What came from that was that we have a bunch of councillors who don't necessarily agree on everything, but they agree on the way we want to interact. Everyone wants to go into this in a way that is positive and be soft on people and hard on issues."

"All eyes will be on council post-pandemic and I think everyone is conscious of that fact in that whatever we do in this term will have implications for years and years to come – similar to what happened with Postcode 3000 and some of the other major changes in Melbourne."

"What we do with a city that is really changing in terms of how communities and businesses interact and how people's livelihoods are going to be impacted is going to be a challenge, but an opportunity to do things better." ●



Sean Car

EDITOR

SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

## CHAMBER UPDATE

## Valentine's Day Markets

Behind the scenes it's been a thoroughly interesting and at times frustrating journey dealing with state and local government regarding events.

Specifically, what classifies as an event and what is just normal business occurring and when you collate what a small business has to do it makes it very difficult to plan anything with certainty.

We do, however, have the Valentine's Day Markets coming up on Sunday, February 14. The markets will run from 10am to 3pm with a love filled theme and entertainers positioned along the promenade.

### \$50 memberships

One thing has become very clear to me coming out of restrictions and that is the world has changed forever. In line with this we're going to be focusing our efforts in the next two months on profiling every single one of our member businesses and just what they are doing post restrictions.

Last year our social media reached in excess of 10 million views. It's an asset we have invested in with time, money and staffing and we're going to put it to our members' advantage even more than normal.

We've also just redesigned our website to be more reflective of what is happening as of right now.

So, if you'd like to take advantage of our socials and our website to ramp up your business exposure – [docklandsc.com.au](http://docklandsc.com.au) – then the already minimal annual fee is being waived until February.

### Annual general meeting (AGM)

The Docklands Chamber of Commerce AGM was held last on November 12 via Zoom. Financials are posted on our website for 2019/20 detailing a loss for the financial year due to a heavy investment in profiling the case for permanent activation of Victoria Harbour and hosting the very first Docklands Business Awards. The executive committee now consists of:

- Johanna Maxwell - returned unanimously as president
- Daniel Hibberd - returned unanimously as vice president
- Mo Hamdouna - returned unanimously as secretary
- Glenda Archibald - returned unanimously as treasurer
- Ahmad Trad – returned

- Peter Kelly – returned
- Wei Xiong - new member (Sebel Docklands)
- Mark Scholem - new member (New Energy Physiotherapy)
- Vanessa Muggianu - new member (Berth Restaurant and Events)

I'd like to personally thank our outgoing executives - Stacy Andronikos, Nicole Hill, Mark Sutherland and Athol Hodgetts ●



Shane Wylie

MEDIA DIRECTOR

DOCKLANDSCC.COM.AU

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[melbourne.vic.gov.au/nmrc](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/nmrc)

**CITY OF MELBOURNE**



IVAN

It's very strange. It's our first day back since March and it's very weird. There are only three people on our floor and there was no one on the train in. But I don't feel any fears for COVID.



SHIVANI

We're back in the office and it feels excellent. I don't have any safety fears. There's lots of empty space, social distancing and hand sanitising.



MAY

We returned today and it's weird – that's my one word to describe it. And it is tiring.



ASHLEA

It's been good. Nice to not work in silence and get coffee with friends. It was hard to get up earlier in the morning. But it's not as busy as I expected, it still feels quite empty.

# Faces of Docklands

Question: How have you found returning to the office?

## BUSINESS



## Dream City re-opens

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Dream City at DFO South Wharf has re-opened its doors for the first time since early 2020 after further relaxation of public health restrictions by the state government.

The “edutainment theme park”, founded in late-2019, enables children aged from three to 16 with access to career-based educational activities ranging from operating flight simulators, fighting virtual fires, performing surgery and producing podcasts.

Dream City founder, Kajal Pala, admitted although the large parts of 2020 had been trying for herself and her team, there had been a number of silver linings to come from the forced closure.

“It was very challenging after having such a great response and feedback from schools and parents. We took this break as an opportunity for us to work with that feedback and refine what we do at Dream City to make it the best experience it can be,” Ms Pala said.

“We used the time to create a brand-new sports-science zone, which includes an indoor dream court and other educational sports activities. Due to restrictions, we had to build the new zone off-site, with only a few minor additions still needed. The response so far has been amazing.”

“We have also decided to include an option for parents of older children to drop off their kids and go shopping while their children are enjoying the activities.”

Spearheading the re-opening alongside Ms Pala is CEO Dean Sholl, creative director Scott Bull, head of education Michelle Hortle, head of technology Wade Dinnie and a range of expert educators.

While adding new educational experiences to the slate at Dream City, Ms Pala and her team

*“We took this break as an opportunity for us to work with that feedback and refine what we do at Dream City to make it the best experience it can be.”*



also spent the period of closure upgrading and refurbishing existing technology at Dream City to ensure the best possible experience for children and educators alike.

“We’ve had a great response so far from both parents and children, which have been reflected in some promising Net Promoter Scores (NPS),” Ms Pala said.

“In the coming months, we will also add extended session times to our usual two-hour sessions.” ●

**For more information:**  
[dreamcity.com.au](http://dreamcity.com.au)

# Investing in social housing, in the era of working from home

“

Welcome to the sixth of our 12-part series which will attempt to explore the role that housing can and should play within Australian society and why it is important to our economy that we house all Australians.

”

This series intends to draw on a range of perspectives centred around housing and homelessness. We will hear a range of views from business, the not-for-profit sector and hopefully government, as to why they believe housing is an important social and economic building block for Australia's future prosperity.

This month we have asked Peter Colacino, Chief of Policy & Research, at Infrastructure Australia to share his thoughts around why the objective around housing all Australians, and in particular investing in social housing in the era of working from home, should be considered an economic imperative for Australia ...

As Australians continue to feel the impacts of COVID-19 and the rolling series of lockdowns, adequate housing for many members of the community is a barrier to maintaining productivity and avoiding social isolation.

With one in three workers still based at home as a result of the pandemic, and 10 per cent of the total workforce intending to continue working remotely into the future, the measure of adequacy for housing has shifted. So too, the importance of suitable and affordable broadband has grown.

This shift has created, for many workers, a new hurdle for accessing work. The home internet connection becomes the link to economic and social opportunity, the living room the office as well as the place for family and the costs of utilities have shifted from employer to employee.

As we spend more time working from home, the pressure on those in an unstable or unsatisfactory housing situation has intensified. This risks further detaching those who are already

vulnerable from economic and social opportunities, and risks pronouncing isolation.

Infrastructure Australia's recent report *Infrastructure beyond COVID-19* anticipates the value of face-to-face contact and agglomeration in CBDs is such that two-thirds of those working remotely will return to the office and CBDs.

However, for those remaining at home, and those with reduced frequency in the office, optimising their productivity while working remotely is critical both to the economic performance of the nation and to avoid entrenching of financial disadvantage for individuals.

The pandemic, and the new needs of our workforce, should serve as a catalyst for the owners of housing for those on the fringe, including public, community and affordable housing, to rethink the economic value fit-for-purpose housing offers through enabling participation.

It is already widely understood that social housing is an economic enabler. As noted by KPMG in its evaluation of post-GFC investment in housing, social housing provides on average multiplier boost to the economy of \$1.30 for every \$1 spent.

However, just as the Commonwealth Treasury has noted, economic infrastructure provides an estimated four dollar return for every one dollar spent, although the impact of each project varies and the benefits of good projects can be many times higher.

Defining housing quality and pinpointing its incremental benefits remains a key challenge. To secure appropriate prioritisation of housing it will be necessary to turn the focus from considerations of the macro impacts of housing, to gaining a deeper understanding of the specific benefits of tangible housing projects and interventions. It is now paramount to consider the role that investment in fit-for-purpose housing plays in connecting its residents to the workforce.

While it's clear that many frontline roles cannot be undertaken remotely, research from the University of Sydney in September 2020 found the diversity of people working remotely is relatively high, both during and before the pandemic. While the transition to working from home has been most substantive in white collar roles, it extends beyond that. Clerical and administration roles shifted from 20 per cent to more than 56 per cent remote, while sales staff working remotely shifted from 22 per cent to 30 per cent of the workforce and more than 10 per cent of the labourer and machine operator/driver workforce is also remote.

Analysis from McKinsey across nine coun-

tries has shown that many activities such as information gathering and processing, communicating with others, teaching and counselling, and coding data can theoretically be done remotely.

With much of the workforce operating at least intermittently from home, the challenge of meeting people's housing needs has been complicated by the suitability of a person's housing to allow them to work from home. Housing now has a resounding impact on the kind of employment people can access as a result of its location, physical and digital connectivity and configuration.

The challenge of housing inequity, with social housing failing to meet the modern needs of the community, was highlighted in the 2019 Australian Infrastructure Audit. In particular, social housing faces the dual challenges of ageing, inappropriate assets and long waiting lists. This is exemplified by many multi-bedroom dwellings remaining under-occupied, while there is overcrowding elsewhere.

While this inequity in access is not new, the pandemic has thrust it into the spotlight. The acceleration of the move of the workplace online has also accelerated the move of social housing from social policy to a paramount economic issue that could directly impact our economic recovery. If we are to hasten the economic recovery, address workforce constraints and boost workforce productivity, it is critical that every individual has the opportunity to participate. With as many as one in 10 Australians now living in social housing, and two-thirds of that group employed, it is critical this substantial cohort is provided the opportunity to engage in the workforce.

Social housing tenants in the workforce are both more likely to exit social housing, and more likely to have access to higher incomes. The opportunity to achieve these two outcomes is now more closely tied to the nature of the property.

To encourage investment, we need more data and robust analysis of how public, community or affordable housing infrastructure interventions have improved outcomes for individuals. It is well known that investing in social housing has benefits for residents and our national economy, but we understand less about how these benefits are impacted by the type of housing we invest in. We need to better define fit-for-purpose housing and the economic case for enabling interventions.

The other side of the coin from Australia's property boom has been pronounced challenges in the delivery of affordable housing. While

existing community housing appreciates in financial value, locking up the balance sheets of owners, these assets age, deteriorate and their service value erodes as they no longer meet the needs of residents. The costs of minor maintenance, the costs to heat, cool and digitally connect, all grow.

While there is an established and growing need to refresh existing social housing assets, the opportunity to use the sale of existing houses to fund new, higher-quality dwellings strengthens.

Despite the opportunity, well-intentioned community attitudes to maintain the level of publicly-supported housing can compound the challenges associated with inadequate housing stock. Perceived friction associated with recycling or transitioning of housing stock to private ownership to create a stream of revenue for investment in new housing assets is a major hindrance. It is incumbent on the owners of existing public housing to educate the community on the shortcomings of existing assets.

If we are to address the challenges of economic and social isolation that impact those in publicly supported housing, it is critical that we can support an informed public discussion about the contribution of housing and digital connectivity to our communities. COVID-19 provides a catalyst for this discussion, and a burning platform to build the data and knowledge to support modern, right-sized assets to meet the needs of the post-pandemic home-based workforce.

*I hope you found the above perspective by Peter interesting and insightful. While what was said may not align with our view of the world, we all need to listen and digest what is said by others in order to find common ground. This is why we are focusing on the fact that the provision of shelter is a fundamental human need (not human right) and without that need being met, we have unintended social and economic consequences that will span generations.*

*Doing nothing is NOT AN OPTION! We need to act, and we need to act now. All of us need to be part of the solution so please feel free to write to me with your thoughts: info@housingallaustralians.com.au*



Rob Pradolín

FORMER GENERAL MANAGER AT FRASERS PROPERTY AUSTRALIA AND FOUNDER OF HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS (HAA)

INFO@HOUSINGALLAUSTRALIANS.COM.AU

## ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE

# Landfill tops Koorie Art Show

*"I've always used art in a political way," artist Clinton Naina told Docklands News. In December, Clinton was awarded the Koorie Art Show's top prize for his work Landfill.*

WORDS BY Meg Hill

The work is on exhibition at the Koorie Heritage Trust until February 21.

"It's a way of telling a story or exposing things that need to be thought about. Art can tell a political story as well as being political in and of itself," Clinton continued.

Clinton made *Landfill* out of domestic bleach and cotton. The artwork, a depiction of and commentary on societal waste, was made during Melbourne's lockdown. Surgical masks are depicted alongside a plastic bag.

"It's commenting on the waste that society uses that is filling our land. There's better ways of using or reusing these materials and we should be looking at ways to recycle and making sure we're not polluting the land because it's all we have," he said.

Reflecting on societal waste during the pandemic, Clinton said he saw the two phenomena as connected: there is sickness and illness all around the world, and we're chopping down the

forests that protect us from germs and disease.

"I think every time we chop down a tree or a forest or another creature dies, we're getting closer to destroying ourselves," he said.

He's has been exhibiting his art since he was a teenager, but he's been politically active even longer.

"My mother was Eleanor Harding, a political activist and community service worker. She was from the Torres Strait Islands, her lineage descends from Meriam Mer people of the Eastern Torres Strait and the Ku-Ku people of north-west Cape York," he said.

"I was taken as a newborn to my first Aboriginal land rights protest when I was one month old – to the first Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra on Australia Day 1972."

"That was the start of my political awareness of my people's ongoing struggle to survive."

He said art was a way of exposing things that needed to be thought about.

"I've particularly always looked at the politics of the environment, animal welfare, the Torres

Strait Islander people, land, mining – land is entwined with everything else in Torres Strait Island culture, it's not separate like in Western culture," he said.

In a way, Clinton said he felt responsibility to depict those things in his art: "We're not the only ones here anymore, so we have to teach the people living on the land how to look after it," he said.

"So, it was my responsibility in a way not just to be an artist but to do work that can shed light on those things and help the situations that we're in."

The 8<sup>th</sup> Koorie Art Show is open to the public Sunday, February 21 at the Koorie Heritage Trust, Yarra Building, Federation Square. Entry is free ●

**For more information:**  
[korieheritagetrust.com.au](http://korieheritagetrust.com.au)

# Pet's Corner

## The IT Crowd



*As a reclassified guide dog, Delsie is an exceptionally friendly and gentle pup which, according to owners Mike and Marilyn Sorel, "is why we adopted her".*



▼ Delsie, the year-and-a-half old Golden Lab, will do anything for a treat – including posing for a photo with parents Mike and Marilyn Sorel



WORDS BY Jack Alfonso

"She's great. She's a fantastic dog: she gets us out of the house when we take her for exercise," she said.

The Sorels, who run their own IT business, said their relationship had not changed due to the pandemic. "She hasn't worried about lockdown," Mike said. "She doesn't know any different ... we work from home anyway, so there was really no difference to our routine at all."

The couple raised Delsie since she was seven weeks old for the Guide Dogs Victoria program, but upon her reclassification, felt compelled to bring the "typical Labrador" into their family.

When asked about Delsie's favourite pastimes, with a laugh Mike told *Docklands News* "walk, eat, sleep; not necessarily in that order."

"She doesn't really have any idiosyncrasies," Marilyn said. "That's one of the main reasons we adopted her: because she's so easy."

Delsie isn't the first dog the Sorels have raised for Guide Dogs Victoria either. Remarkably, she is the 19th puppy they've trained – although, across 15 years in the program, Delsie is the first one to enjoy swimming.

When asked about their involvement with the program, the couple grinned at each other before saying, "it's the best thing we ever did." ●

### ABBY'S ANGLE

## And so, it has begun ...

The new year, the new start, the new way of living. It already feels more positive ... and I think we all had every right to be healthily sceptical that when that clock ticked on over past the end of the year that COVID and all its devastation would magically disappear. Of course, it wouldn't, and of course it hasn't.

But what that clock ticking over and ending the "unprecedented times" of 2020 actually did do, was give us all a chance to re-set. It provided us a point of time to say optimistically "well thank god that's done" and muster up some positivity that it would all be different. And, it actually does feel that it is different. Maybe it's simply that we are more comfortable seeing restrictions implemented in a more controlled way at the first sign of hotspots. Maybe it's because in re-connecting with friends and family, it all feels so much better. But it is certainly feeling more comfortable, and a lot better. In fact, it's feeling a lot more positive.

I'm seeing a new way forward, and it's better than simply feeling there's a return to "pre 2020". I'm seeing us take the learnings of what is important to us – which we learned when it was all taken away through restrictions – and prioritising them in our lives again. I'm seeing businesses learn that they can have their teams work in much more flexible ways. I'm seeing people realise how important time with family and friends is to their mind, heart and soul. I'm seeing connections and collaboration within community – buy local, support local – brings us together in ways we had easily forgotten before. I'm seeing, dare I say it, the return of values.

We are looking at our community, at our Australia, and we are carving out the path forward. There is a huge movement towards Australian made that is reminiscent of the war efforts. There is a protective focus on our healthcare, the protection of our people through last year but the emergence of our strength and resilience to build this year. We are taking pride in our homes (statistics show the restyling of

our home offices, and reviewing how we live as families is seeing enormous growth for our lifestyle retailers), we are seeking farmers markets and trying our hand at growing our own vegies, we are prioritising how we are living and what the future will look like.

I am looking forward to this year with a sense of calm excitement. This is the opportunity for us to really work to live, rather than live to work. And by that, I don't mean we don't work as hard or we dismiss our work commitments – but that we work in ways that both sustains our businesses and supports the lives we want to live. That we work harder in our "work period" but also give value to our time with family and protect that connection. That we work with our teams and our leaders to define how we want the future to work.

Australia has done an incredible job in keeping us all safe from the devastation many countries around the world are seeing. We are protected, and if we look at this to see the positives of what living in our community, in our country, can bring then we will thrive through the challenges that this year will still surely bring.

While #grateful was possibly the most over-used social tag of the last decade, at the start of 2021, I am truly feeling very grateful for the opportunities that lie ahead and the values that we collectively hold. Let's live well, let's work hard, let's look after each other. I'm damn grateful for being here with you all.

With much love,  
Abby x ●



Abby Crawford  
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### 10 YEARS ON

## Looking back at Docklands News - 10 Years On

FEBRUARY 2011 | ISSUE 61 |

DOCKLANDS NEWS

### Harbour Esplanade – the next stages

*Planning has started on the next stages of the Harbour Esplanade redevelopment.*

With stage 1 heading for completion, VicUrban and the City of Melbourne have started discussions about how the vast area between the roadway and the water is to be treated. The two bodies met to discuss the project on January 31.

Available finance will be crucial to the outcome, with VicUrban having limited funds set aside for the project.

VicUrban general manager for Docklands Simon Wilson won't say how much has been allocated to the project, but admits that other funding sources need to be found.

"That's not to say that we can't design to a budget," Mr Wilson said. "And, in any event, we will be speaking with the community before we do anything."

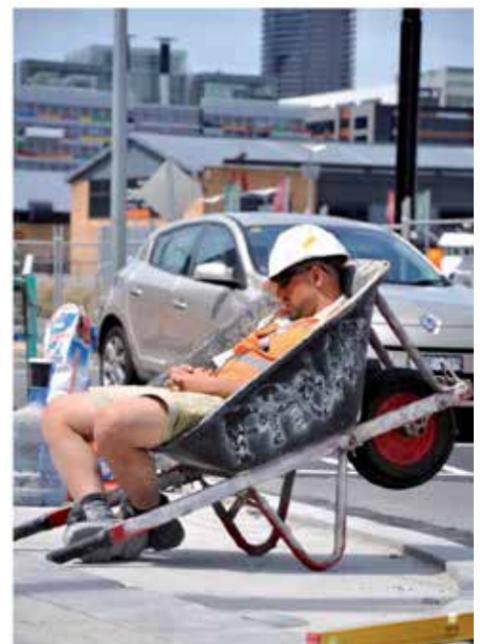
Next month, planting of up to 210 Norfolk Island Pines between Bourke St and Docklands Drive will start.

Mr Wilson said the trees had been ready since last year but it was decided to wait until the worst summer conditions had passed.

"And if we get another hot spell when we intend to plant, we will postpone again," he said.

The trees, which will be between five and seven metres tall when planted, are currently being cared for at a nursery in Newcastle and have been selected for their suitability to coastal conditions, hardiness and ability to provide year-round shade and shelter.

Mr Wilson pointed to similar plantings at Portsea, Warrnambool and at Gawler in South Australia as evidence of the species' suitability



▲ Smoko break during the Harbour Esplanade redevelopment. Roadworks will soon be finished as the authorities plan the next two stages.

for Docklands.

Pits for the trees and irrigation lines have been installed in anticipation of the plantings.

Mr Wilson said within the coming months, residents, workers and visitors would be able to enjoy new street furniture, including bench seats, drinking fountains and bike hoops, the first of which are now being installed between Bourke and LaTrobe streets.

"The Harbour Esplanade redevelopment will ultimately see this important public space transformed into a new harbour-side destination for Melbourne," Mr Wilson said ●

## Owners' Corporation Amendment Act set for debate in the Victorian Upper House

*In the first week of February 2021, the Victorian Legislative Council is set to debate and consider passing the amendments to the Owners' Corporation Act 2006.*

For those with a long memory, these were the legislative reforms first proposed in 2013, then repurposed and expanded upon and sent back out for public consultation in 2016, drafted and completed in late 2016 and then left to fester on the shelf for the past four years.

During that long and drawn out phase of eight years while successive Consumer Affairs Ministers have come and gone, Victoria's skyline has rapidly changed, and the profile of several metropolitan Victorian suburbs have increased in density significantly.

The winners have been the developers, and the burgeoning owners' corporation (OC) facilities management industry. The losers have overwhelmingly been the owners and residents in these towers.

Since the legislation was drafted and put on the shelf in 2016, we have had several fires in buildings with combustible cladding, prompting a huge government response in the form of the formation of a new entity – Cladding Safety Victoria – tasked with assisting in the removal of all combustible cladding on residential buildings.

We have also had the Supreme Court decision of Balcombe, which severely limited an OC's ability to enforce rules relating to short-stay operators and the use of residential lots as quasi-hotels.

We have also had the high profile corporate restructuring of high-profile developers, builders and architects, which has left multiple Melbourne buildings facing ruinous debts for building defects.

None of the above major catastrophes made it into the amendments proposed by the new OC legislation. It is simply breathtaking that a government would ignore the obvious lessons of those events, and simply act to dust off a piece of legislation that has been left on the shelf for four years and seek to enact this legislation.

Victorians deserve better. It is simply not good enough to put such a dynamic and fast-growing industry to one side.

Yes, there are some very worthwhile amendments that shall be passed with this legislation. Long overdue and sorely needed. The amendments will go a long way to ensuring that Victorian OCs are built and managed in a way that does not disadvantage owners unduly.

Of course, the only issue is that these reforms were on the table and ready to be passed years ago. What we needed was a well-resourced and informed Consumer Affairs ministry that was prepared to issue amendments and re-writes to keep pace with the industry, so that when parliament finally receives the legislation, it is at least current and up to date.

There is a possibility that The Greens and Independents might support amendments to be made to the OC legislation at the Upper House. What is sorely needed is further reform on short-stay operators. In addition, developers need to be restrained from engaging their mates and related companies to push management contracts. The threshold for an OC filing legal proceedings in all jurisdictions needs to be reduced to an ordinary resolution. ●



Tom Bacon

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## OCs have “responsibility” to inform short-stay guests on cladding

*Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV) is placing the onus jointly on owners' corporations (OCs) and owners to inform transient short-stay guests about flammable cladding.*

In our previous column we said that CSV had not provided any advice on how OCs can deal with transient guests who are more likely to be ignorant of fire safety.

The CSV let us know that its site does in fact have a section dedicated to “owner(s) of short-stay accommodation”, and it contains this:

“If the building has been found to contain combustible cladding, and it is within Cladding Safety Victoria's program, it is the responsibility of the owners' corporation and the owner to inform guests.”

This might come as a shock to OCs of buildings where short-stay businesses operate.

The requirement by CSV for the OC to “inform a guest” about combustible cladding cannot be met.

Without regulation, short-stay operators will not scruple to keep OCs in the dark about all aspects of their business operations including which apartments are being let and the occupancy. Building managers or OCs simply do not have contact details for the guests.

Really, the onus should be on the short-term operators not only to know and understand what the status of the building is but to obtain a signature from each guest to show that they also know and understand the situation.

We will put more questions to CSV and update you in our next column.

### Short-stay watch one: Police bashed

Before a month has passed in the new year, an all-night party at a short-stay has ended with a police officer hospitalised and four partygoers arrested.

Neighbours in the fiasco, which garnered prime-time news coverage, contacted We Live Here and said, “this out-of-control [short-stay] culminating in police assaults. Forty-plus people in attendance and a 15-hour ordeal where

we were at real risk with inadequate police response to de-escalate and owner refusing to remove renters until 2.30pm the following day.”

So much for the so-called “Airbnb Party” legislation. Let's hope the sympathies of a local councillor and a federal member can convert to pressure on the Victorian Government to step up and regulate this “out-of-control” industry.

### Short-stay watch two: Mail and parcels stolen

A Melbourne apartment building contacted us with a shocking report of mail theft:

“We had a short-stay guest rob our mailroom of all mail and parcels they could carry, then take them to their rented apartment. We had the whole thing on CCTV, but VicPol did not move immediately to apprehend the thief. None of the items have been recovered ...”

Compromised security is inherent to short-stay operation in apartment buildings. We will continue to lobby for regulations requiring short-stay businesses to record guest details with the building manager.

### Bills, Bills, Bills: Legislative confusion reigns

This month two OC Bills will return to state parliament and nobody seems to know what's going on.

The Bills are two parts of the same act!

- *Owners' Corporation and other Acts Amendment Bill 2019* – part heard.
- *Owners' Corporation Amendment (Short-Stay Accommodation Act) 2019* for review.

Given that we have had three Consumer Affairs ministers in the past four years, it's no surprise even the government doesn't understand the convolutions.

In 2015 the Victorian Government commenced a review of the *Owners' Corporations Act 2006* and received more than 150 submissions. The *Owners' Corporation and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2019* was introduced in December 2019 and had reached the Upper House for the third reading when COVID-19 closed parliament in February 2020.

The review included measures to regulate OC managers and developers and improve governance, e.g. restricting proxy farming; all long-overdue reforms.

One glaring omission a review of Section 8 “Rules of the owners' corporation” was explained like this:

“One issue that is beyond the scope of this paper is whether owners' corporations should be able to make rules prohibiting a certain use of a lot, where that use is permitted under the applicable planning instrument ... therefore, the question of whether a particular land use is appropriate is a matter to be addressed in the planning scheme and not through rules made by an owners' corporation.”

Separately Consumer Affairs introduced the *Owners' Corporation Amendment (Short-Stay Accommodation Bill) 2016*.

This is the Bill We Live Here lobbied against and had referred to a bipartisan Parliamentary Inquiry, which determined the Bill was unfair. The findings were dismissed by the government and the Bill was enacted in February 2019.

Has anyone made a successful complaint under this so-called Airbnb Party Act? We have had zero cases reported to us.

Now, in response to widespread derision, Minister for Consumer Affairs at the time, Marlene Kairouz, effectively said don't worry, we'll review the Act in two years. Well, time's up!

Rather than a confusing piecemeal approach, the government should review all aspects in concert: general improvements to the OC Act, specific provisions for short-stays and the hot potato – the role of planning regulations.

We hope the new minister for Consumer Affairs Melissa Horne understands that there are many, many major problems related to short-stays beyond violent parties.

We need a mature, open conversation between the government and stakeholders to address the short-stay issue in its entirety ●



Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton

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### SKYPAD LIVING

## Looking back to look forward

*While our high-rise precincts are new, Melbourne has a long history of apartment living.*

According to Charles Pickett, Melbourne saw its first purpose-built apartment building - a “walk-up” - around 1900. This was soon followed by our first high-rise. This was The Astor and it was constructed in 1920 and was 20 storeys high.

Of course, Melbourne's apartment history pales in insignificance against that of Europe's, with claims that vertical living originated in ancient Rome around 753 BC. Called insulae (island), these apartment buildings could be up to eight stories high and were constructed from wood, mud brick or rudimentary concrete.

In relative terms, however, Melbourne can still claim a respectable pedigree, with apartments having a longer Australian history than majority home ownership.

As regards the evolution of our apartment sector, Robert Stent, architect and Former Governor of Master Builders Association Victoria Foundation, contends that the sector has been “full of turn-offs, short sprints and long runs of both type and frequency.” And he sees four distinct periods that have been most influential:

- 1930s–1940s: the modernist movement which embraced the need for compact living and featured many studios and one-bed apartments;
- 1950s–1960s: relaxed planning controls permitted construction of three- and four-storey apartment buildings and also featured the “commission flats” under the Housing Commission of Victoria's Slum Reclamation Program (HCVSR);
- 1970s–1980s: an amended planning scheme stymied apartment construction in favour of detached dwellings in the city fringe;
- 1990s–2000s: inner-city Melbourne development in former industrial areas such as Southbank.

But why then is apartment living claimed as being so new for us?

Why are apartments not a prominent part of our “housing history”?

One theory for this absence has been posed by architect Peter Brew. He suggests that “flats” posed a problem for our more nationalistic historians as this style of living jarred with

our populist view of ourselves as having of a quarter-acre block with a Hills hoist. It is also the case that purpose-built apartments were not universally supported, with their desirability debated since they first appeared here over a century ago. While proponents pointed to cities like New York and their widespread adoption of this mode of living, many Australians argued that the future of the nation was in the balance, as apartments would surely become “the slums of the future”.

It is interesting to note that these same claims are still made today! However, design and construction are only part of our apartment story.

Next month's column will share the origins of the regulations that govern how we are able to live in our vertical villages ●



Dr Janette Corcoran

APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT

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# 终于开学了！

1月28日，Docklands港区小学正式开学，第一批200名学生走进了学校大门，这一天也迎来了州长Daniel Andrews和州教育部长James Merlino的到访。

这个学校对当地居民家庭来说已经盼望已久了。校长Adam Bright说，学校将努力成为社区的一部分。

他对本报说：“在正式开学之际，我们万分激动地迎接学生和家庭进入学校”。

“有关学校的开学我们作了很多计划，现在终于如愿以偿了，真是令人兴奋不已，而且第一天进行地很顺利。”



“我非常期待有机会连接我们的社区。许多家庭都与我们的讨论过有关Docklands港区没有小学的问题，而现在我们能安心在Docklands港区居住生活以及让孩子就地上学，对于这个社区的家庭而言意义重大。”

Bright先生还说，对于港区小学来说是个独一无二的机遇，因为这是一个“从零开始”建立文化的机会。

这座三层的垂直学校可容纳525名学生，包括图书馆、音乐和艺术教室、一个比赛级的室内篮球和无挡板篮球场以及室外学习平台。

学校内还建造了一个幼儿园，也将在这个学期开放，可容纳66个孩子，同时为3岁和4岁的孩子提供临时和综合幼儿入托服务。

1月28日，维多利亚州还有13所新学校开学，州教育部长James Merlino称之为“该州有史以来最大的学校建设热潮”。

Merlino先生在港区开学典礼上说：“14所崭新的学校今天首次开学，这是我们州有史以来至少自战后以来开设学校最多的一次。”

“这的确是值得庆祝的一天，也是值得激动流泪的一天，因为我知道港区的一些家长今天把他们的小宝贝交给了新港区小学的优秀员工。”

他还称赞了学校的设计，他说这很好地反映了Docklands港区。



## 体育场旁边的双塔规划

开发商希望在Marvel 体育场旁建造两座100米高的塔楼，该地块是澳洲足球联盟(AFL) 去年出售的。

David Schout

投资管理有限公司GFM已向州环境、土地、水和规划部提交了La Trobe街685号地块的规划，该地块将主要以出租公寓住宅建筑为特色。

目前提交给州规划部长Richard Wynne的28层和30层的两栋塔楼申请，也详述了底层三个楼面的多功能空间包括咖啡馆和零售店。

在COVID 疫情之前，AFL在此地块上有数百万澳元的保证金，如果购买的话，据说已经指定为绿色空间，作为体育场重建的一部分。

但当疫情爆发时，AFL退出了交易，并在其运营受到重大打击后，抛售了该地块以支撑其财务。

据信，AFL仍可成为新开发项目的租户，并可利用低层的楼层作为功能空间。

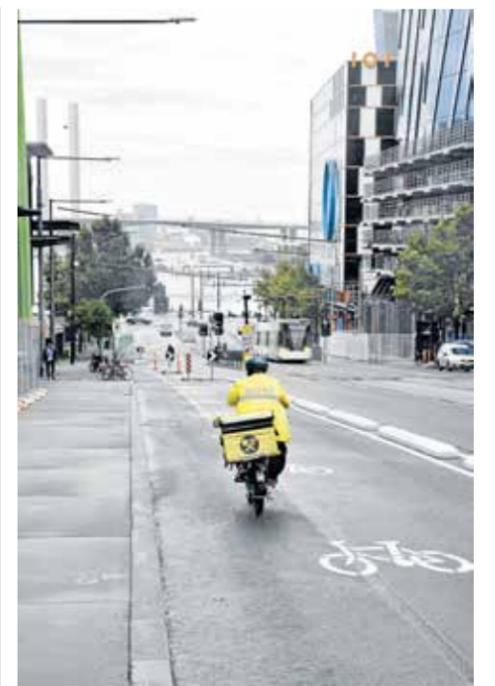
先驱太阳报披露的GFM向政府提交的文件显示，“在与AFL合作交付该项目时，多功能空间是未来关键的交付建筑空间，由于Docklands港区与Marvel体育场如此接近，该功能空间视为附近的理想空间”。

“宽敞的三层楼面功能空间将成为AFL未来重要的功能空间。”

GFM表示，“AFL和其他各方所使用的这些多功能空间将“以改善港区为目的”。

2016年，AFL收购了Marvel体育场(当时的Etihad体育场)。

去年新冠疫情在维多利亚爆发高峰期，该资产被证明是一个至关重要的资产保证，据报道，当时它从银行获得了5亿至6亿澳元的援助计划，以帮助其度过低迷时期。



## 新自行车道

David Schout

如今骑自行车进入CBD的Docklands港区居民可以在La Trobe街大桥上整个延伸的受保护车道内骑行。

以前，位于Harbour Esplanade和Spencer 街之间马路南端的自行车道仅是标记线，没有对骑车者的保护。

作为墨尔本市政一项快速跟踪城市保护车道计划的一部分，确保了骑车者现在受到路边高护栏的保护。

此举是通过将过去的双向双车道缩减至双向单车道，因为市政会继续努力将空间重新分配给骑车者和行人，作为10年交通战略的一部分。

在一封通知附近居民和企业新车道的信中写道，“在COVID疫情流行期间，骑自行车的人数显著增加”。

“新的自行车道将与墨尔本现有的自行车道网络相连，并提供一种安全、高效、可持续的交通替代方法，保持社交距离，并在限制放松后让城市再次流动。”

在La Trobe街和Spencer街的交叉路口也将双向安装“禁止右转”标志，以确保交通畅通。

市政承认该路段的机动车辆流量“可能”减少，以容纳新的骑车空间。

作为市政2019年发布交通战略的一项研究表明，十分之四的人认为在墨尔本骑自行车“不安全且令人畏”。

因此，市政已承诺在全市范围内快速跟踪更新40公里长的新自行车道。

## 周日市场充满爱的气氛

爱情将成为今年2月NewQuay Promenade的主题，2021年Docklands港区第一个社区周日手工艺品/农贸市场正是情人节的庆祝活动日。

Jess Carrascalao Heard

该市场将于2月14日星期日进行，届时将有古典吉他手Alejandro Aguanca和歌手Inoxia进行现场表演。

还将有礼品商家摊位，商品从珠宝和配件到家庭用品和艺术用品。

社区周日手工艺品/农贸市场的协调员Eileen Fiederling将为情人节提供一项特别的服务。

她说：“我们现在已经准备了玫瑰花，是我亲手做的，我们准备了一些单枝玫瑰。”

该活动将是COVID安全，提供洗手液，鼓励点击付费，社交距离措施，并要求顾客寻求摊主协助，而不是自己处理商品。

情人节的周日市场将在Docklands商会(DCC)的支持下举行。

Fiederling女士说，在去年的圣诞节市场得到了商会支持后，她又去联系了商业团体来庆祝这次情人节。

商会主席Johanna Maxwell说，上次的圣诞节市场吸引了大约5000人。

她说，今年的情人节/周日市场活动，还能让访客有机会看到Docklands港区其它还有什么。

Maxwell夫人说：“对我们来说，重要的是让游客返回Docklands港区，这样也就支持了我们的商业。”

Fiederling女士表示赞同，并希望情人节的庆祝活动也能做到这一点。

她说：“我们希望这样能鼓励人们来到Docklands港区，也许可以在这儿吃午餐并买买东西。”



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