

JUNE 2024 EDITION #208

PUZZLES & TRIVIA P18



Docklands' favourite winter festival is back from June 28 to 30, illuminating the suburb with live music, fire performers, flame jets, fire sculptures and a world-first underground light show at Marvel Stadium. Find out what else is taking place across Docklands this month on page 17. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

“Not good enough”: Councillors scathing of Marvel Stadium plans

“
Development Victoria and the AFL have been jointly slammed by City of Melbourne councillors over the first stage of plans to redevelop Marvel Stadium’s waterfront edge, with Cr Jamal Hakim going so far as to label it as “embarrassing”.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



With the Minister for Planning the final authority in approving the amendment, the City of Melbourne was invited to have its say on the site-specific planning controls proposed as well as a master plan, with detailed designs to be submitted at a later date.

The joint project by Development Victoria (DV) and the AFL and designed by Grimshaw Architects is seeking to construct three new towers at 140-160 Harbour Esplanade currently occupied by the Channel 7 building and AFL House. A range of uses across the three buildings is mooted, including offices, a function centre and retail, with options for homes and hotel subject to market conditions.

While current planning controls for both sites stipulate height limits of 75 and 60 metres, respectively, the amendment has sought to supersede these by constructing towers 129, 113 and 80 metres high.

Councillors were presented with an “incorporated document” on May 7, which outlined the proposed site-specific controls that DV and the AFL have requested the project be assessed against as opposed to the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

Marking the first major step in the stadium precinct’s transformation along Harbour Esplanade, an application for a planning scheme amendment went before councillors for comment at the May 7 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

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A green facelift for Southern Cross Station

HERITAGE, PAGE 07

Shipping Control Tower to be repaired



EVENTS, PAGE 12

From NewQuay to Yarra’s Edge: Docklands comes together to fight cancer

Yarra Point and Berth’s Biggest Morning Teas were two to remember on May 23, with packed turnouts at both events helping to raise considerable funds for people impacted by cancer.

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Hey, Development Victoria ... what's happening with Harbour Esplanade?

The AFL's long-awaited transformation of the waterfront edge of Marvel Stadium has further revealed the backwards approach to planning when it comes to Docklands, and what is at risk should it be allowed to continue.

OPINION BY
SEAN CAR



As you'll read in this edition, the City of Melbourne was relentless in its criticism of Development Victoria (DV) and the AFL's plans on May 7 for many reasons, but it was one nauseating theme that again stood out the most ...

The council's own planning officers have described the project as "state significant," yet the plans revealed so far have left a lot to be desired, devoid of key strategic detail and untested against the best of Victorian design excellency standards.

Where else but Docklands?

It's telling that no-one from either DV or the AFL registered to address councillors on May 7, nor did they make themselves available to answer any questions despite having representatives present on the night. Did they appreciate just how underdone the plans were and thought best to avoid the scrutiny?

If so, one has to wonder how DV let it come to this.

The redevelopment of the stadium's edge along Harbour Esplanade represents a rich opportunity to reimagine Docklands. It's an opportunity worth celebrating and



not to be taken lightly, nor without the buy-in of the community.

Unfortunately, it's not off to a good start, and unless the council's advice to "go back to the drawing board" is heeded, something much more precious is at stake than just another regrettable planning outcome.

And, that is, Harbour Esplanade itself.

As he tore the plan's urban context analysis to shreds on May 7, Cr Rohan Leppert rightly pointed out that the council couldn't consider the application in isolation, "unless we understand what's happening right next to it on Harbour Esplanade."

"What is Harbour Esplanade going to be? We need some level of thinking into what's going on there," Cr Leppert said.

Despite a master plan that's been sitting on the shelf since 2016, the answer is nobody has a clue what Harbour Esplanade is going to be because of the back-to-front approach to planning led by DV.

How can it be that the AFL is able to submit such a rushed effort to redevelop its stadium precinct, but the community is still left hanging for answers about its most critical piece of public space?

It's perhaps the most glaring omission. How there appears to be no commitment to contribute towards the upgrade of Harbour Esplanade – the public realm it is directly encroaching on – is staggering, particularly given DV is a co-proponent.

But looking forward, one should at least expect that as part of digesting the council's feedback, DV concedes on Harbour Esplanade and opens the entire redevelopment of the precinct, including Marvel Stadium and Central Pier, for community input.

No doubt very few will be holding their breath, but as Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said, it's crucial that the "mistakes of the past in Docklands" aren't repeated. It's never too late to do things the right way around. ●

Sean Car

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Photos: Laura Mamariti

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A green facelift for Southern Cross Station concourses

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has received matched funding from the City of Melbourne to create green infrastructure along the public concourses of Southern Cross Station.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The council has recently pledged \$500,000 towards the project as part of the fifth round of its Urban Forest Funds program, which provides support to new greening projects on private property, such as green spaces, tree plantings, vertical greening, or green roofs.

This funding will be matched by DTP, which is understood to be planning new trees, plants, and open spaces for its ground-level concourse to help cool the station, reduce pollution, support biodiversity, boost the economy and improve health and wellbeing.

"With millions of passengers passing through Southern Cross annually, we approached City of Melbourne through their Urban Forest Fund to improve the environment at Victoria's busiest public precinct and transport interchange," a DTP spokesperson told *Docklands News*.

While more detailed project plans are expected to be revealed soon, the DTP said it supported the inclusion of green infrastructure, where practicable, on the transport network, and that any design concepts for greening Southern Cross Station were at a preliminary stage of development.

The project was one of four to receive funding under round five of the council's Urban Forest program, which also included \$400,000 towards the expansion of Melbourne SkyFarm Stage 2 located on a carpark at Siddeley St in Docklands.

The council will also contribute \$500,000 towards the greening of Melbourne General Cemetery known as Project Cultivate, as well as \$423,098 for a new rooftop space at its Make Room housing project in the CBD in partnership with Unison Housing.

The council's environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said such greening projects were a positive contributor to climate and biodiversity, beautifying the city, creating spaces for people to come together.

"The Urban Forest Fund grant program has created jobs for

Melburnians and generated almost five times the economic return on investment – providing a boost for city businesses," Cr Leppert said.

"We know Melburnians want to see more green spaces in their neighbourhoods, and we look forward to working with our latest grant recipients to transform even more areas of the city from grey to green."

According to the council, around 75 per cent of land within the municipality is not owned or managed by the City of Melbourne, creating significant potential for other landholders to contribute more towards greening our city.

The Urban Forest Fund aims to accelerate greening across the city's private sector by providing matched funding grants, and the council prioritises greening projects which are publicly accessible and provide broad benefits to the public.

Since 2017, the Urban Forest Fund has provided more than \$1.7 million for greening projects valued at more than \$10 million. The Urban Forest Fund has supported projects such as Melbourne Skyfarm, Meyers Place Green Wall, Printmakers Lane and Victoria Point's garden along the Marvel Stadium concourse in Docklands.

The fund also aims to build partnerships between government and the private sector to deliver additional greening above and beyond the council's existing capital works investment.

Urban Forest Fund applications are assessed by urban greening experts and community representatives to ensure projects deliver the best value for money and public benefit.

The council said it was working with successful round five grant recipients to finalise partnership agreements and project plans. More project information will be available in the coming months. ●



Meet Peta Brehaut

"Since moving here I've got to know the people and the precinct and it's a great neighbourhood."

A resident of Yarra's Edge of three-and-a-half years, Peta Brehaut said she relocated from Southbank due to its overcrowded and disconnected atmosphere during lockdowns.

As well as working in the health sector, Peta is a "photographer on the side" and she said that the moment she moved to the photogenic suburb of Docklands, "I had to buy myself a new camera."

Peta said the most surprising thing about living in Yarra's Edge had to be how tight knit the community was.

"Honestly, sometimes I feel like I'm on the set of *Friends!*" she said. "The community here has been the most awesome surprise of all, I've made so many great friends." ●

Read Peta's full profile:
soulofdocklands.org.au



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FIRELIGHT FESTIVAL RETURNS

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A never-before-seen labyrinth of light and sound will dazzle Docklands this winter as an extension of the much-loved Firelight Festival.

Firelight Labyrinth will transform the underground space at Marvel Stadium into a spectacular maze designed by international creative lighting specialists, Mandylights.

"Firelight Labyrinth is the largest 3D video installation ever built in Australia," said Mandylights CEO Richard Neville. "The maze is essentially a giant three-dimensional video screen that people can walk inside."

"The term 'immersive experience' gets bandied around a lot these days, but by putting people in the middle of this video maze - well, you can't really get any more surrounded and immersed than that!"

Richard said many of the Mandylights design team began their careers in local high schools and amateur theatres. From these small-scale beginnings to vast global projects, their passion runs deep.

"Even though we're working with more lights and more pressure these days, my team and I feel lucky to be paid to play with lights. It's great fun."

The designers spent two months exploring unused spaces around the City of Melbourne before deciding on Marvel Stadium's underground car park.

"For concerts and theatrical productions, lighting is a supporting element," Richard said. "With Firelight Labyrinth, there is no artist or set to light - the lights are the whole show."

"We've had a blank canvas and an open creative brief. So, we can plunge everybody into darkness and present something amazing.

"In this day and age - when audiences have seen and done everything - it's rare to be able to offer a completely new, never-before-seen experience.

"It's always great to present work in Melbourne because people here don't need to wait until they see photographs on Instagram - they naturally want to go and explore unique experiences."

City of Melbourne's free Firelight Festival will once again illuminate New Quay Promenade, Victoria Promenade and Harbour Esplanade in Docklands, offering a diverse range of tasty eats and entertainment.

There'll be fire performers, African drumming, live music and storytelling, plus fire pits and drums, flame jets, fire sculptures and arches.

Warming food and drink will also be on offer, including dumplings, smoked meats, paella, churros and hot chocolate.

A team of fire drummers will be among the performers who'll create a buzzing atmosphere.



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The free Firelight Festival will take place on the first weekend of the school holidays, from Friday 28 June to Sunday 30 June.

The ticketed Firelight Labyrinth experience will continue until Sunday 14 July.

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CITY OF MELBOURNE



Council budget delivers surplus; funding to be “rephased” on major projects

The City of Melbourne has announced a draft budget of \$781 million, delivering a “modest surplus” of \$101,000 after “difficult decisions” were made to “rephase funding” on major projects.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The surplus is the first time the council has returned to the black in five years, with surpluses forecasted to continue to 2028.

In handing down her final budget, outgoing Lord Mayor Sally Capp said a surplus was made possible after \$42 million was made in spending cuts – most of which involved slashing operational costs, rephasing projects, investing in new technology, and improving efficiency across the organisation, along with reducing spending on consultants.

“To achieve surplus in the draft budget for next year, the difficult decisions have really been focused around cutting spending,” she said. “Deficit budgets are unsustainable. The great thing about returning to surplus budgets is that it gives future councils to continue to invest in what counts here in Melbourne.”

However, Cr Capp maintained that spending cuts would not impact major projects including Greenline and the Queen Victoria Market renewal, but funding would instead be “rephased”.

The \$316m Greenline trail will deliver four kilometres of promenades, parks and open spaces between Birrarung Marr and the Bolte Bridge.

“The rephasing of the budget for Greenline doesn’t impact in any way the timing or



▼ Cr Nick Reece, Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Cr Phil Le Liu announce the draft budget on May 14. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

finalising of Greenline and construction is under way,” she said. These works include building the Seafarers Park in Docklands, and Birrarung Marr precinct, all on the north bank of the Yarra River.

The budget has allocated \$10m to Greenline in the next financial year, with a further \$12.5m in grant funding. This would be followed by \$12m and \$2m in grants in 2026, \$8m in 2027, and \$10m in 2028.

Funding of \$20 million from the Australian Government has been allocated across the delivery of the Greenline Project Masterplan and the site one works at Birrarung Marr.

“We have every confidence that Greenline will be delivered. The business case presents a compelling case for why Greenline is important city-shaping project for

Melbourne,” Cr Capp said.

Speaking about rephasing projects, she added, “These are difficult decisions, and it does show prudent financial management to make those difficult decisions to rephase funding on major projects.”

The budget, announced on May 14, will see rates increase under the state government’s maximum 2.75 per cent rate cap in the next financial year after being paused during the pandemic. Rates for property owners will increase by an average of \$37.

Parking fees are also set to go up by 10 per cent to \$54 million with more paid parking to be delivered outside of the CBD, while parking fines are forecasted to increase by 2.4 per cent to \$40 million.

Waste charges for residents will be reduced by \$15 up to \$53 due to the municipi-

ality’s growing number of users.

For businesses, more than half of the council’s fees and charges will rise by less than five per cent. But \$1.6m will be invested to expand the council’s business concierge program, which is expected to create 640 new jobs and inject \$70m into the economy.

Business precinct associations will also get \$1.2m, alongside small business grants of \$500,000 and \$150,000 Aboriginal small business grants programs.

Construction of the Make Room Project will be completed in August, which is repurposing a council-owned building at 602 Little Bourke St to address people experiencing homelessness by providing 50 studio apartments.

Overall, the budget will see \$224.7 spent on infrastructure, \$64.1 on cleaning and safety, and \$49.8 million on open spaces and greening.

\$13 million will also be spent on upgrading roads and footpaths.

Revenue from general fines including drinking alcohol in banned public areas, and dumping rubbish, is projected to jump from \$2.3m to \$3.7m.

The council’s finance, governance and risk portfolio lead Cr Philip Le Liu said returning to surplus was an important step.

“We’ve cleared an underlying deficit of \$25.6 million by lowering operational costs, re-phasing projects, improving efficiency and doing more work in-house,” he said.

Public feedback on the draft budget will be open online until June 3 via Participate Melbourne. ●

Brendan Rees

JOURNALIST

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“Not good enough”: Councillors scathing of Marvel Stadium plans

Continued from page 1.

But while the council’s planning team supported the “broad design vision” of the proposal to create a landmark that “supports the city’s relationship with Harbour Esplanade”, it was critical of several “key outstanding matters”.

“A higher order strategic issue arising from the proposed amendment is the absence of current strategic plans for the surrounding precinct, including Central Pier, Harbour Esplanade and how the waterfront will better connect to the city,” the report by the council’s planners stated.

“The proposal also seeks a significant uplift in the context of existing planning controls without the provision of a commensurate public benefit such as affordable housing and/or investment into the upgrade of Harbour Esplanade.”

The report also raised concerns that the plans had not been tested against the Office of the Victorian Government Architect’s design review panel process in what they considered to be a “state significant project”.

Council planning officer Marjorie Kennedy said more strategic information regarding community benefit, movement and wayfinding, flood mitigation, tree removal, adaptive reuse, shadow analysis and wind mitigation was required before approval.

“This site is seeking a planning scheme amendment which would facilitate a development, but we need to understand what the precinct plan is so that we know what this project would be interacting with,” Ms Kennedy said.

Docklands resident Sandra Severin, one of many local residents to oppose the plans in their current form, described the project as the “the Development Victoria wall of Marvel” that threatened “splitting our suburb”.

“Considering Docklands’ various precincts are naturally separated from each other by water, how does restricting access even further by potentially cutting the suburb in half assist the community to grow?” Ms Severin asked.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece ultimately moved an amended motion to oppose the amendment, stating the council was “absolutely resolute that we will not repeat the mistakes of the past in Docklands.”

“In very simple terms, this proposal is seeking a site-specific approval without the approval of other key contextual documents,” Cr Reece said.

“Remember, this is being brought forward from Development Victoria, who have responsibility for the development of this precinct. So, the proposal seeks to introduce, for example, three new major pedestrian connections to the public realm before we actually know what the plans are for what they will lead to.”

“I do note the large number of submis-



sions we’ve received from Docklands residents and others ... one described the main building [that] runs the length of Marvel Stadium as the ‘Great Wall of Docklands.’”

“Now a project and a building of that size we would expect to go through an Office of the Victorian Government Architect design review process where we can really resolve some of those challenging aspects to the built form and come back with a project which really achieves the sort of architectural design excellence which we rightly expect here in Melbourne.”

Cr Rohan Leppert was damning of the plan’s lack of strategic justifications, and questioned why no-one from DV, the AFL, Urbis or Grimshaw had presented to answer questions.

In a scathing critique, Cr Leppert tore apart the plan’s urban context analysis as “reverse engineered gobbledygook” and the overall “key principles” diagram as “nonsense on stilts”.

“The longer I look at this image, the less I know about the urban context strategy that’s been chosen by the applicants,” Cr Leppert said.

“What was the purpose of this journey

that we’ve just gone on? How does this project connect the city to the waterfront? This is reverse engineered gobbledygook.”

“You can’t come up with a design and then reverse engineer a strategic justification for it and pretend that this cuts the mustard.”

“We need to understand the strategic basis for this proposal, how it connects Docklands with other parts of the city, what its relationship with Harbour Esplanade can be, and then we’ll have an idea about whether this is an idea worth pursuing.”

Cr Leppert also took aim at Development Victoria for failing to reveal what it was planning for Harbour Esplanade and the surrounding waterfront at Central Pier and said the strategic thinking for the precinct was being done “the other way around”.

“Development Victoria is a co-proponent of this application. We cannot consider this in isolation unless we understand what’s happening right next to it on Harbour Esplanade,” he said.

“There are overshadowing considerations for Harbour Esplanade, but what is Harbour Esplanade going to be? I mean, we need some level of thinking into what’s

going on there.”

“This is among the largest and most significant developments, and it is co-sponsored by government. Government needs to lead by example here.”

“It is just not good enough that the entire strategic framework is missing. I know I’m a little bit more agitated than I normally am, but we’re not going to be making this decision, the minister is, and so I think I need to really make the point.”

Docklands resident Cr Jamal Hakim finished off by stating: “this has to be one of the most embarrassing applications we’ve ever seen”, calling on DV and the AFL to consider the Docklands community in the plans.

“Someone’s clearly dropped the ball on this application. Either that or we’re all missing something really dodgy,” Cr Hakim said.

“I think it’s made worse that no-one’s here to speak on behalf of the applicant, and I think that’s something for somebody to consider.”

“Surely there’s a misstep here by the applicant and it’s time to go back to the drawing board.” ●

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Development Victoria to repair Shipping Control Tower

Development Victoria (DV) has announced plans to restore Docklands' historic Shipping Control Tower at North Wharf as part of a maintenance program to "ensure the structure can stand tall for years to come".

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



According to DV, works will include re-rendering of the external control tower, concrete repairs, and replacement of external windows as well as improvements to electrical safety and lighting.

Development Victoria Group Head Precincts Niall Cunningham said the essential repair works to this "historical gem" would ensure the tower continued to have its place in Docklands for many more years.

"As one of the largest urban renewal projects under construction in Australia it's great we can preserve and celebrate some of Docklands rich maritime heritage while we continue to transform the precinct for a prosperous

future," Mr Cunningham said.

The current tower was built in 1966 to coordinate shipping, towage pilots and emergency services in the busy port and was decommissioned in 1994 when the port facilities at Docklands were relocated further west to the Port of Melbourne.

Designed by architect C J Smith, the structure once housed a lift, stairs and two decks – one for observation duties containing radar and communication equipment, the other being for amenities for its 24 hours daily operation.

While its future use is yet to be determined, the tower has been the subject of many ideas for a new tourism attraction for Docklands, including a high-end restaurant and art gallery.

DV said the maintenance works were expected to be completed by September 2024. ●





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Central Pier demolition “progressing well”

Docklanders will have noticed considerable progress with the demolition of Central Pier in recent months, with much of Shed 9 now removed from Victoria Harbour.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The pier’s custodian Development Victoria (DV) has hired specialist marine contractor Fitzgerald Constructions Australia to carry out the demolition works, which are expected to take “several years” to complete. DV said as per its sustainability policy,



it was recycling materials such as the concrete slabs, metals including copper, steel, aluminium and brass, and timber so they can be kept out of landfill and used in other building projects.

DV’s group head precincts Niall Cunningham said works were “progressing well”. “The removal of Central Pier from Victoria Harbour is a key step in the Victorian Government’s plans to revitalise the area and adjacent waterfront in the heart of

Docklands,” Mr Cunningham said. “Works to remove the pier are progressing well, as we focus on the removal of Shed 9 as well as the concrete area around Shed 14 this year.”

“We’ll continue to engage with key stakeholders in the area as we consider opportunities for the revitalisation of Central Pier and adjacent waterfront areas, including respecting the rich cultural heritage of the Victoria Harbour.” ●

Funding plan for Greenline completed as construction gets under way

The City of Melbourne has finalised an all-important plan for funding its \$315 million “city-shaping” Greenline project as Lord Mayor Sally Capp helped mark the beginning of construction at Birrarung Marr on May 23.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Councillors approved the Greenline Partnership and Funding Strategy at their May 21 meeting, which sets out how the revitalisation of the north bank of the Yarra River between Birrarung Marr and the Bolte Bridge would be achieved.

While the council had originally sought a matched contribution of \$100 million from their Victorian and Commonwealth Government counterparts, it has so far only managed to secure \$20 million from the federal government.

However, with partnerships having always been an “essential component” of the project, the council has already collaborated with private developers and other levels of governments on several Greenline projects to date.

This includes the construction of Seafarers Rest Park within Greenline’s “Maritime Precinct” near the Mission to Seafarers building in Docklands, which is being

delivered in partnership with developer Riverlee as part of its Seafarers project.

The strategy identifies six potential funding sources, including direct budget funding across all levels of government, partnerships, grants, philanthropy, loans and value capture and commercialisation.

For the Greenline precincts which stretch into Docklands – Maritime and Salt Water Wharf – the plan aims to fund a majority of these projects through partnerships, with the bulk of the remaining funds to be provided by direct funding and grants.

The Salt Water Wharf precinct, which extends from Collins Wharf all the way to the Bolte Bridge, will be delivered and approved in conjunction with Development Victoria, Lendlease, Heritage Victoria and Melbourne Water and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal

Corporation.

In what was her last time speaking on a major strategy for Greenline at Town Hall, Lord Mayor Sally Capp paid tribute to everyone who had contributed to the “enormous effort” so far but admitted “there’s still plenty of work ahead”.

Despite a considerable 44 different planning overlays that cover the breadth of Greenline, Cr Capp, who will resign as Lord Mayor at the end of June, said the strategy set the project up “in the best way we can for success”.

“Difficult things are often the most worthwhile projects. I note that there are heritage overlays, environmental overlays, water overlays, and Indigenous cultural heritage overlays,” the Lord Mayor said.

“Navigating a path through these rules and requirements requires an unprece-

ded level of coordination, cooperation and collaboration and this is reflected in the partnership and funding strategy.”

“We’re also, of course, realistic that we can’t rely solely on government for delivering this project, and this is really similar to projects in other cities.”

Cr Rohan Leppert said the funding plan represented the final strategic step in allowing Greenline to realise its “maximum potential”, and he looked forward to “continuing to watch an extraordinary project evolve.”

“When we adopted the [Greenline] master plan at the end of last year, which was an exciting moment, my remarks at that time were that the master plan can be considered complete when the funding and partnership plan is endorsed alongside it,” he said.

“That’s what we’re doing tonight. And so, I do think that the master plan now with this funding and partnership plan paints that full picture and sets Greenline up for its maximum potential.”

On May 23, the Lord Mayor appeared alongside Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Catherine King to mark the beginning of construction at Birrarung Marr.

The Federal Government has contributed \$20 million under its Priority Community Infrastructure Program to deliver the works in Birrarung Marr as well as the now completed master plan, with the council jointly funding both projects. ●



ELLEN SANDELL

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THE
GREENS

Docklands' maintenance man calls time

Many Docklanders won't be aware that tucked away right at the end of North Wharf's last boat shed beside the Bolte Bridge, handyman Paul Vella has been plying his many trades in Docklands for more than 20 years.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Mr Vella has been a mainstay of Docklands since he was first contracted by what was then VicUrban (now Development Victoria) in 2002 to carry out some repairs on a small job, which ultimately "turned out to be a big job". He's been here ever since.

With so many different skills required to help restore, maintain, and preserve much of Docklands' heritage maritime infrastructure and public facilities, Paul's varied experience has proven to be the answer to DV's prayers.

With skills in engineering, blacksmithing, metallurgy, welding and fabricating, motor mechanics, carpentry, plumbing and electrical, it's fair to say Paul truly qualifies as a jack of all trades.

But after more than 20 years serving the many maintenance needs of the Docklands precinct and watching it evolve from a "ghost town" into what it is today, the 73-year-old has decided the time is right to retire.

While Paul said he would miss working in Docklands, the question of who replaces him is sure to prove a considerable challenge

given his diverse skillset and the fact that, as he pointed out, many of his trades had become "a lost art".

"We do welding, fabricating, woodwork, and general repairs on the wharves," Paul told *Docklands News*. "Some of it's plumbing and electrical. We get involved in all areas."

"I've just picked things up. From a young age I've always had a knack for just watching and understanding. From my apprenticeship through to my first job at Massey Ferguson, we made everything – we made the nuts and bolts, we made the steel, we made the timber – it was self-sufficient."

"There used to be fabricating shops on every corner in Melbourne just about. They're all gone. It's all moved overseas now, but you can't get fabrication overseas for small everyday jobs. Where do you go?"

After leaving his previous job at a subsidiary of ExxonMobil, Paul decided to start his own business to avoid "the rat pack", and it was shortly after this when VicUrban reached out for assistance with a job on some shade sails on Harbour Esplanade.

"Back in those days, they used to have to call a plumber, they



used to have to call a welder, a concreter, and they [VicUrban] were rapt ... one guy could do it all for them," Paul said.

Since then, Paul's business has leased the shed it currently operates in from DV, for which he conducts weekly precinct inspections and, when necessary, submits maintenance jobs for consideration.

Ranging from the smaller jobs right through to the bigger jobs, there is no task too challenging for Paul who attends to everything from graffiti removal and fencing maintenance, to wharf repairs and pier inspections.

Another important function his business provides Docklands that many people won't be aware of, is the storage and preservation

of heritage assets taken from Central Pier and old sheds which have been dismantled over the years.

In his shed one can find an abundance of old timbers and steel frames being looked after on behalf of DV and Heritage Victoria, who he said were preserving them in the hope of potentially reusing them again in Docklands.

"I've still got one of the old sheds from Central Pier being stored away for Heritage Victoria. Whether they'll ever put it up one day I don't know," Paul said.

"A lot of this stuff you can't use, but you can copy it if they've got samples. That's one of the main reasons they keep it so that they can build it back the way it was."

"At one stage there the plan was to put them [sheds] back on Harbour Esplanade. I don't know whether that's the current plan, but it certainly was one of the earlier plans."

And, as for Docklands, he said, "it should be celebrated."

"When I first came down here, there were a lot of old, derelict buildings; sheds falling down. I've watched the area develop with all the buildings going up," he said.

"People are very quick to criticise, but people who criticise have got no vision of the future anyway. Jeff Kennett was criticised for starting Docklands in the first place, but it was a wasteland, and now it's not a waste land. At least now it's got an opportunity, but it had to start somewhere." ●

DOCKLANDS HOME WORK CLUB

NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT TO KEEP GOING

Club currently runs on Thursdays at Library at The Dock during school terms and has 20 children between ages 7-11 from our local community. It is so popular that it has a waitlist! A day at the home work club includes -

Study support

Afternoon Tea

Club Time!

Literacy, numeracy support

Helps build confidence

Fosters social connections

Local Volunteer tutors

We need \$7,500 to run a group till the end of 2024 or \$2,500 for a term

LOOKING FOR DONATIONS AS SMALL AS \$20

To support Docklands Homework Club, please donate today!

DONATE HERE

North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre
(the parent body that ran Docklands Neighbourhood House until 2023)
Contact: Ariel Valent - arielv@centre.org.au - (03) 9328 1126
Contact Ariel to learn more about deductible gift recipient donations.
This campaign is run by Katy Send, a parent of a Docklands school student.
You can reach Katy at: DocklandsVoice.KSend@gmail.com

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OUR DRAFT BUDGET 2024-25

HERE'S WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

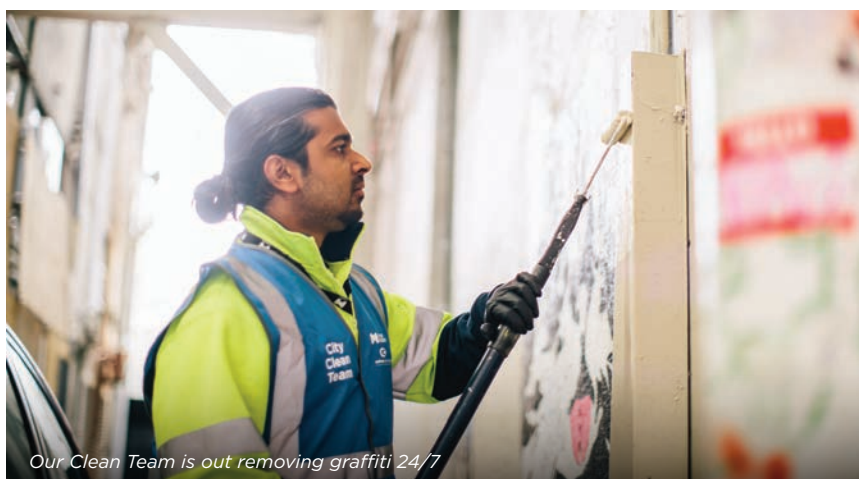
The City of Melbourne's \$781 million draft Budget 2024-25 is about doing what counts and delivering on our promises to the community, while strengthening our financial future.

Our draft Budget, together with our Annual Plan, sets out the priorities and investments we will deliver for Melburnians in the final year of our Council Plan 2021-25.

We are proud to announce a surplus Budget – a year ahead of schedule, with surpluses projected to continue to 2028.

We've made responsible choices so we can deliver what counts for our community now and continue to invest for our growing population in the years ahead.

The cost of living has been front of mind during the development of this Budget. We are continuing to deliver our core frontline services, along with free and affordable services our community relies on.



SEVEN HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR DRAFT BUDGET

1. Keeping our city clean

We're supercharging our cleaning efforts with \$41.6 million to ensure our streets are sparkling. Our Clean Team will be on the ground 24/7 – cleaning our streets, prioritising the removal of graffiti, monitoring hotspots and collecting and disposing of public litter.

2. More parks and open space

We're transforming our city from grey to green in neighbourhoods that need it most – with almost \$50 million to deliver more open spaces, and ensure our city is greener and more sustainable. This includes new green open space on Normanby Road in Southbank, expanding the Miles and Dodds Street Reserve, plus opening the Bedford Street Pocket Park, North Melbourne. We'll also plant 3,000 trees and maintain our parks and gardens.

3. Building better community facilities

More Melburnians will be able to play the game they love – close to home. We've earmarked \$224.7 million to build city-shaping projects and upgrade grassroots sporting facilities. We'll open the new Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre, complete the first stage of the Greenline Project in Birrarung Marr, build the state-of-the-art Trader Shed at Queen Victoria Market and a new Ryder Pavilion in Royal Park. We'll also invest almost \$13 million to maintain and upgrade our roads and footpaths to make it as easy as possible to get around.

4. More affordable homes and homelessness support

We're doing our part to address the housing crisis – with a proposal to transform two sites on Curzon Street, North Melbourne and Victoria Street, West Melbourne into new affordable housing. We'll also open the doors to Make Room, our landmark social housing initiative, providing accommodation and support for 50 people experiencing homelessness.

5. Country's biggest events calendar

We're doing everything we can to bring more people into the city – and delivering the best events calendar in the country does exactly that, with an investment of more than \$26 million. All our favourites are back – the Christmas Festival, Moomba, New Year's Eve, Now or Never and Firelight Festival, along with a world-first underground light show. With most of our major events free to attend, everyone can enjoy an affordable day or night out in the city.

6. Lower waste collection charge

Our hardworking team will continue to empty bins from homes and businesses on time, while reducing the waste charge for residents this year. Owners of properties valued above \$515,000 will receive a \$53 reduction, with owners of properties valued below \$515,000 receiving a \$15 reduction.



7. Making it easier to do business

We're expanding our Business Concierge service with \$1.6 million to provide more support for our small businesses and traders. A new-look, highly visible team will provide tools and advice for more new businesses beyond the CBD to start and succeed.







Have your say on the City of Melbourne draft Budget 2024-25 at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/our-plans-2024-25 by 5.30pm on Monday 3 June.

INVESTING IN DOCKLANDS IN 2024-25

The City of Melbourne is a dynamic municipality with 11 diverse neighbourhoods. While we're all Melburnians at heart, the support and services naturally differ for each area.

Our draft Annual Plan and Budget 2024-25 set out how we plan to invest in Docklands to deliver core services, maintain and improve parks, public spaces and recreational facilities, and fund events that will boost community connection as well as Melbourne as a world-class city.



			
Residential population 17,723	Number of businesses 1,026	Local jobs 74,161	Residents born overseas 62%



Building better infrastructure

The City of Melbourne will invest \$224.7 million in 2024-25 to deliver new parks and better community facilities to ensure Melbourne remains a liveable and attractive city for residents, businesses and traders.

New infrastructure investments and upgrades in Docklands include:

- \$784,000 for Yanongu Quay Wharf
- \$675,000 for parks and city greening
- \$1.4 million for road infrastructure

- \$518,000 for buildings and properties
 - \$233,000 for plant, equipment, fixtures and furniture
 - \$150,000 for the Waterways renewal program
 - \$11,000 for other assets
- Renewal and maintenance works to be carried out in Docklands include:
- \$180,000 for wharf and marina maintenance and renewal
 - \$768,000 for all other maintenance works

Grants support

Docklands businesses and community groups will be able to apply for their share of funding in 2024-25 with:

- Up to \$100,000 to support community-led activities and initiatives through the Connected Neighbourhoods Small Grants.
- \$1.2 million in business support, activations and marketing through our Business Precinct Program.
- \$100,000 in our Business Event Sponsorship Program for hosting business events.
- \$500,000 in Small Business Grants to support new businesses to get started and for existing businesses to expand and grow.
- \$200,000 in our Social Enterprise Grants to support local social enterprises.



Delivering vital local services

We're providing the highest level of services to our community.

Community services

Gowrie @ The Harbour is a City of Melbourne facility leased to Gowrie Victoria. This centre provides a 150-place education and childcare centre with integrated kindergarten.

The Family Services team includes maternal and child health, immunisation, family support and counselling

and parenting services, offered at Community Hub at The Dock.

At Library at The Dock, we provide about 50,000 items including a toy library, and run programs for children, teenagers and adults. We offer study space, access to computers and wi-fi, and online access to books, film, music and learning resources. The Community Hub at The Dock has a large bookable community space.

Parks and open spaces

We manage and maintain 16 public open spaces and six playgrounds in Docklands. These include Point Park, Buluk Park and Ron Barassi Senior Park

Sporting and recreation venues

We manage Melbourne City Marina, Melbourne's largest visitor berthing facility, Yarra's Edge Marina, and look after day-to-day operations of the waterways.

As well as that, we manage the community boating hub and provide licenses for organisations to use the hub as a base for dragon boating, sailing and outrigger canoes. The Hub @ Docklands is a multipurpose community and sports hub with bookable rooms, operated by YMCA Victoria in partnership with City of Melbourne.



YOUR SAY MATTERS

Earlier this year, we surveyed more than 4400 people across all neighbourhoods, checking in on priorities and making sure we're doing

what counts as we head into the final year of our four-year Council Plan.

The resounding feedback across the community is to continue to focus on improving safety, wellbeing, access, affordability and sustainability.




To find out more about what we're doing in Docklands over the next 12 months, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/our-plans-2024-25 to have your say by 5.30pm on Monday 3 June.

Visit the Neighbourhood Portals to learn more about each neighbourhood at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods

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 News* at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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From NewQuay to Yarra's Edge, Docklands comes together to fight cancer

Yarra Point and Berth's Biggest Morning Teas were two events to remember on May 23, with packed turnouts at both gatherings helping raise considerable funds for people impacted by cancer.

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea is a nationwide community event that raises vital funds for research, support services, and prevention programs in the fight against cancer – a disease that one in two Australians will be diagnosed with before the age of 85.

With \$25,000 raised last year, and the hope of reaching \$30,000 this year, the team from Berth and Cargo, which has been staging the event at NewQuay for many years, went even better by raising an impressive \$34,000.

The event saw a full house pack out Berth's upstairs function space overlooking Victoria Harbour, with inspiring speeches by cancer nurse Mary McGowan and Berth's events manager and cancer survivor Vanessa Muggianu.

Thanks to Lucas Real Estate's Baden Lucas and Mark Sutherland, who put in



another lively display as auctioneer helping to extract the most out of attendees on the day, some of whom went home with some magnificent prizes donated by local businesses.

The Yarra's Edge morning tea, which was organised by a team led by Docklander Petra Harmer-Shrowder, ended up "absolutely demolishing" their goal of \$3000, ultimately raising more than \$5500 thanks to "the generous support of local residents and businesses."

"We achieved a lot more this year because we thought out of the box," Ms Harmer-Shrowder told Docklands News. "Along with our usual raffle, with more than 26 prizes, we ran a Yarra's Edge quiz, a silent auction and a live auction run by Geoff White from Barry Plant to win a two-night stay in the Yarra Valley."

"It's our eighth year running, and the event has gone from strength to strength. We have a whole team at Yarra Point who helped organise prizes and get people through the doors to donate."

"We would like to thank our sponsors and all our wonderful friends from Yarra's Edge and beyond. For those that supported us by turning up with delicious food items for our sharing table." ●

"Cycling super-highway" under way amid further local safety concerns

The Victorian Government has begun construction of a new 2.5-kilometre "cycling super-highway" to Docklands as calls mount for safety upgrades to dangerous intersections around the West Gate Tunnel project.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



On May 26, Minister for Transport Infrastructure Danny Pearson announced that the first segment of the new veloway had been lifted into place, with the track to be completely separated from traffic and suspended between Footscray Rd and the new elevated road above – the first of its kind in Australia.

Running between Shepherd Bridge in Footscray and the city side of Moonee Ponds Creek in Docklands, the veloway will remove the need for cyclists to cross six intersections, including busy port entries



and exits – giving bike riders a safe, dedicated express off-road route to and from the CBD.

"The new elevated cycling super-highway above Footscray Rd will be a game changer for cyclists in the West – giving cyclists a safer off-road route between the inner west and the city," Minister Pearson said.



"Cyclist safety is at the forefront of the veloway's design – which will remove six intersections for bike riders between Footscray and Docklands."

More than 190 individual segments will be individually lifted to form the veloway's suspended section and will weigh a total of 1700 tonnes once complete, connecting to the new green bridge which can currently

be seen on Footscray Rd in Docklands.

While the new cycling route is constructed, cycling advocacy groups continue to lobby the state government for urgent safety upgrades to existing cycling routes around the West Gate Tunnel project.

Police continue to investigate after a cyclist was left with serious injuries in a hit-run incident by a truck while travelling along Dynon Rd at the intersection of City Link at around 8.55am on May 8.

Police allege the truck driver fled the scene. The male cyclist was taken to hospital with serious injuries.

A Department of Transport and Planning spokesperson said it was "working closely with Victoria Police to support their investigation and to better understand the circumstances of this crash".

The incident has shocked the community, with Greens State MP for Melbourne Ellen Sandell calling on the state government to improve safety at the intersection.

The incident follows the death of cyclist Angus Collins, 22, who was struck by a truck while cycling at the nearby Footscray Rd-Dock Link Rd intersection on February 2, 2023. ●

CHAMBER UPDATE

Lighting the way for businesses at the Firelight Festival

The Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC) is excited to welcome the return of the City of Melbourne's annual Firelight Festival, which set to ignite Docklands from June 28 to 30.

WORDS BY
DANIEL HIBBERD



At the heart of the Firelight Festival lies the much-anticipated Firelight Labyrinth experience to debut at Marvel Stadium.

This activation takes to the global stage by becoming the first place to showcase this groundbreaking technology. The DCC sees a great opportunity for businesses in the area to shine.

In tandem with the Labyrinth's appearance, the stadium precinct will come alive with a plethora of attractions, including the fan haven that is Marvel Stadium's Super-Store and the culinary delights of Friends of Fire, Amphora, and The Wine Room.

These offerings not only promise to enchant festivalgoers but also present a prime chance for local businesses to showcase their products and services to a captive audience.

Encouraging businesses to seize the moment, the DCC is urging all businesses to open their doors, cater to visitors, and provide enticing offers throughout the Firelight Festival weekend.

This call to action is not merely about driving foot traffic; it's about fostering community engagement and economic growth within the Docklands precinct. We also encourage visitors and locals to discover what our restaurants, retailers (especially within The District), and experienced-based businesses are presenting over the Firelight Festival.

We will be sharing not only the upcoming fun of the festival via our networks but also through our

business offerings as well.

Additionally, the DCC will also host the launch event, bringing together stakeholders and members to celebrate the opening of the 2024 Firelight Festival. This event will serve as an opportunity for businesses to network, share ideas, and enjoy the festival as it comes to life on opening night!

As the Firelight Festival draws near, the DCC stands ready to support and guide businesses in maximising their participation and impact. Together, let's illuminate Docklands with creativity, commerce, and community spirit, making this year's Firelight Festival an unforgettable showcase of all that Docklands has to offer.



If any business is yet to provide an offer or requires further promotion, we encourage all to reach out to us at admin@docklandsc.com.au ●

Pet's Corner

Beau is right at home in Docklands

“

Beau is a nine-year-old hairless Chinese crested dog, who according to his owner Julie, has lived in Docklands for four years and “really enjoys apartment living”.

”

WORDS BY
RUIXUE SU



Julie told *Docklands News* that Beau was quite social, and that if he bumped into other small dogs, he would happily communicate with them.

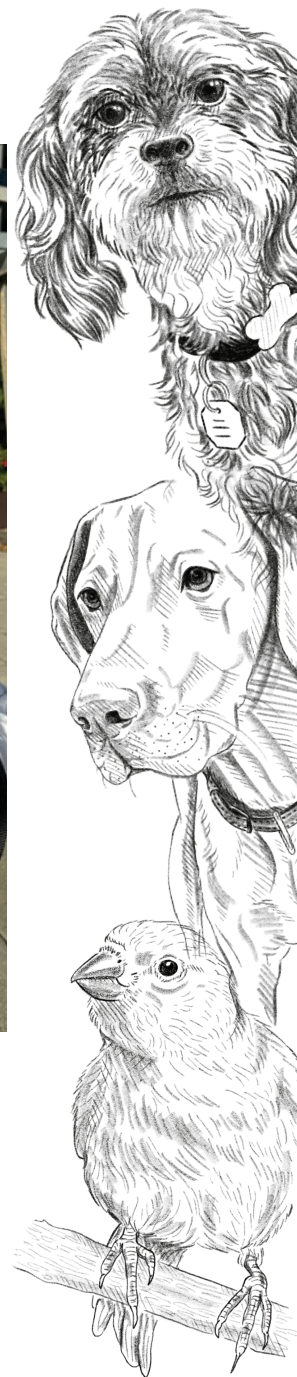
However, he's very nervous around dogs that are bigger than him and will often tremble when encountering one. Julie said Beau could be a bit cowardly at times and would often stand by her side and shiver even she stopped to talk to other dog owners.



“He goes on a lot of walks and sometimes we go to the nearby dog park, but he doesn't like playing fetch; he's actually a very quiet dog,” Julie said.

“He's got two toys that he likes playing with. If you throw one of them, he will retrieve it and bring it back to you, but he doesn't like playing with balls – if you throw a ball to him, he wouldn't chase it.”

Asked to describe Beau in three words, Julie said, “cute, witty, and lovable.” ●



Celebrating women and non-binary artists at Library at the Dock

Library at the Dock presents *They Shoot Film*; a showcase of film photography work by women and non-binary artists running from May 29 to July 7.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



They Shoot Film emphasise their commitment to craftsmanship and authenticity through their use of traditional practices.

One of the artists featured in the exhibition is Angela Cornish, who explores existentialism through her work.

Using expired, found, and sometimes deliberately degraded film, Angela hopes viewers will embrace the “tranquillity found amid turmoil” to gain a deeper understanding of the world.

Attendees can immerse themselves in a variety of work including darkroom prints, artist books, mixed media, and video installations, with some work also accompanied by artist journals that offer a glimpse into the dedication and labour involved in the artistic process.

They Shoot Film will officially open on May 30 at Library at the Dock and run until July 7. ●

The exhibition aims to spotlight alternative viewpoints, illustrating how each artist makes the medium their own in a space traditionally dominated by men.

Through an intimate exploration of their personal stories, *They Shoot Film* offers a platform to challenge the constraints of film photography, as well as archiving the artist's individual histories through their work.

While there are modern and convenient methods of printing and developing film on offer today, the artists featured largely use more intricate, time-consuming, and often costly, techniques in their work.

Despite the availability of simpler alternatives, the artists in

DOCKLANDS STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Updates on community projects and initiatives in Docklands

This month I am thrilled to update you on the exciting initiatives driven by the Docklands Stakeholder Group.

This dynamic group, formed after the Docklands Summit, has been instrumental in fostering engagement and spearheading projects that enhance our neighbourhood's vibrancy and liveability.

The group spent the early part of the year forming, norming and planning to deliver on the short-term objectives identified at the Docklands Summit. Five key projects were endorsed by the group and are progressing:

Community3008

Community3008 launched with great interest and participation from members of the Docklands community, forming a new neighbourhood association. This initiative marks a significant milestone, as Docklands was the only area without a residents' association until now.

Seeing more than 30 enthusiastic community members come together to establish this group was truly inspiring. Community3008 aims to strengthen local representation and create a unified voice for Docklands residents. The first official meeting to elect the association's executive positions took place on May 8.

Congratulations to inaugural president-elect Sandi, and all the elected officeholders. I encourage all members of

the Docklands community to register as members. Your active participation is crucial to making this association a success.

Docklands Farmers Market

The Docklands Farmers Market is another fantastic project that promises to enhance our community life. Set to bring fresh, local produce from farm to our doorstep, the market will provide a vibrant meeting place for residents. It's an excellent opportunity to foster community connections and support sustainable practices.

The stalls will be curated with the Docklands community in mind, ensuring that it complements existing offerings around the municipality. Keep an eye out for this great initiative!

Docklands Youth Zone

Recognising the need for dedicated spaces for our younger residents, SarasCare is establishing the Docklands Youth Zone.

This initiative was co-designed with young Docklanders and aims to create safe, engaging environments where young people can socialise, learn, and grow with robotics and theatre classes. By providing facilities and programs tailored to youth, we're investing in the future of Docklands and ensuring that our young residents feel valued and included.

The Cauldron

The Cauldron is an arts and crafts community project designed to infuse creativity throughout Docklands. This initiative will see gatherings from across Docklands on a regular basis to conduct arts and crafts workshops. Celebrating our community's

artistic spirit and encouraging participation from all ages, this is going to be a truly fun addition to the community calendar.

Placemaking activations

We're also rolling out some small placemaking activations aimed at piloting some urban environment transformation. This includes creating playful stencils and installations designed to engage younger residents and enhance public spaces. These activations are about making Docklands more inviting and interactive, reflecting the community's needs and desires.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers and members of the Docklands Stakeholder Group for their dedication and hard work. Your efforts are paving the way for a more connected and vibrant community. As we move forward, these projects will not only enrich our neighbourhood but also serve as a testament to what we can achieve through collective action.

An update on these initiatives will be provided to the council soon. This is a critical time for community feedback on the budget. I urge all residents to engage with the process and share your thoughts and priorities.

The Docklands Neighbourhood Portal has become a vital tool for community engagement, offering updates on local priorities, events, and projects. It's a testament to how digital platforms can enhance community connectivity and participation. I encourage you to use this resource to stay informed and involved.

As we continue to shape the future of Docklands, your input is invaluable. What other initiatives would you like to see? How can we further enhance our neighbourhood? Let's keep the conversation going and work together to make Docklands an even better place to live, work, and play.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we can achieve remarkable things for our community. For more information and to get involved, visit the Docklands Neighbourhood Portal. ●



Cr Jamal Hakim

CITY OF MELBOURNE

JAMAL.HAKIM@MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU



QUESTION:

What's the most relaxing way to enjoy Docklands?

Faces of Docklands



Aaron
Walking in the sun.



Bella
Just walking around.



James
Fishing on the pier and
enjoying the sun.



Joyce
Just having a walk and
enjoying the sunshine.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Council's funding of Docklands Farmers Market takes money from the communities in need

The City of Melbourne and Docklands Chamber of Commerce are planning to bring a monthly Farmers Market to Docklands by the end of this year. With the ongoing Senate inquiry into the major supermarkets' behaviour, the more choices consumers get the better the outcomes for everyone.

However, the Docklands Farmers Market project is receiving around \$40K out of the \$100K of the council's funds that were promised to the Docklands community after it decided not to fund the Docklands Neighbourhood House from July 2024.

The decision to grant such a significant amount of the council's money to a non-Docklands entity that operates farmers markets in Victoria from the funds allocated for the Docklands community raises many questions.

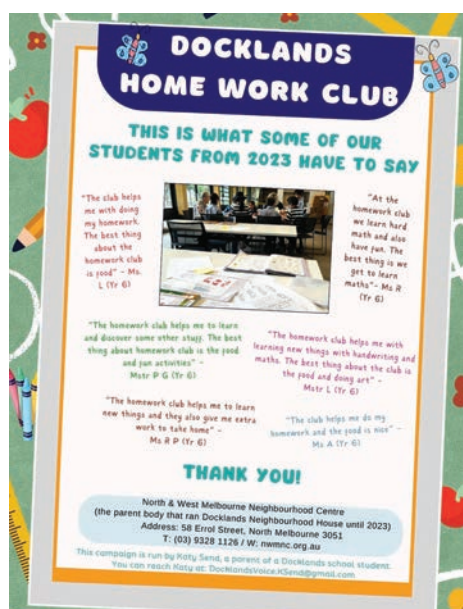
Being a member of the Docklands Stakeholder Group I voiced my concerns about the council's decision and whether the benefits that the market could bring to the Docklands community. Was this worth spending public funds while the suburb experiences a desperate lack of basic services?

Docklands is a 20-minute walk from Melbourne's two greatest markets: Queen Victoria Market (QVM) and South Melbourne Market. The QVM traders also have online delivery.

These are the local businesses that invest in local community. Monthly farmers markets bring traders from other municipalities. I am asking the council whether its budget is the appropriate avenue to enhance businesses from other regions.

The council invests in non-Docklands businesses and puts local Docklands businesses at a disadvantage by benefiting non-local traders. Docklands cafes and coffee shops will lose a portion of their weekend trade. A new local fruit shop opened recently in NewQuay and we hope that the shop will do well, but the farmers market is in direct competition.

Another issue is financially supporting a business that is known for its high-end grocery prices and whether it's reasonable to do so amid the current cost-of-living crisis. Residents spend less and look for



cheaper options. Every second Docklands family talks to me about how they struggle to make ends meet and are trying to save.

Fish Pier, The Butchers Club, and other smallgoods shops have all closed in NewQuay in the past two years. What are the signs that the expensive grocery traders will find enough customers in Docklands to bring good quality produce to the suburb in the current economic climate, and that the new market will be sustainable?

At the same time Docklands Homework Club (previously run by the Docklands Neighbourhood House) that operates from the Library at the Dock only received \$2K funding from the City of Melbourne in 2024 and is on the verge of closing as it needs \$10K a year to run. Parents now have to fundraise to keep it going.

From the local government strategic perspective, it is also not clear how the funding of a farmers market meets any of the three Docklands priorities, which are the current focus of the Docklands Stakeholder Group:

- Community connection
- Safer neighbourhood
- Docklands as a distinct water precinct.

This is not the first City of Melbourne decision that is so profoundly detached from the real Docklands community's needs and that further disadvantages vulnerable community members, including our children.

Among others are the decision not to fund the Docklands Neighbourhood House and closure of independent toy libraries. It is also disappointing to see that our elected representatives are silent when it comes to advocating for the issues vital for the community.

Katy Send

Local resident, local small business owner, parent of a Docklands Primary School student, Docklands Stakeholder Group member, leader of the Docklands Road Safety and Docklands Emergency Management projects.

No freight bridge

Fortunately, some years ago the then head of the Port of Melbourne Authority Stephen Bradford gave the residents of Docklands the absolute commitment that a low rail bridge would not be constructed adjacent the Bolte Bridge.

Premier Steve Bracks facilitated the meeting where this undertaking was given. We have no reason to believe there has been any change to this "meeting of minds."

Michael Lindell - Docklands resident



Rare phenomena in Docklands

Greetings from Docklands,

I am sending two pics; one is titled, *Lady Aurora spotted in Docklands*, of the Aurora Australis spotted on May 11, 2024, and the other titled, *Rare Fogbow visits the harbour waters in Docklands*.

Victorians were very eager to get a glimpse of the Aurora Australis phenomenon which was going to be a "once in a lifetime" type scenario for most Victorians and it came right to our doorstep in Docklands, even among the city lights!

A part of a Fogbow was captured as it was happening on May 12 at around 9.30am. Fogbows are usually a rare occurrence, especially for a city, as they usually are seen in a remote countryside locations.

This one was happening right under my nose and forming into an arch which was a delight to see.

Kind Regards,
Amruta Wazalwar ●

Renewing an owners' corporation's policy of insurance just got harder

It is compulsory under the *Owners' Corporation Act 2006* for a strata building with areas of common property to have a policy of insurance for reinstatement and replacement, and must hold a policy for public liability insurance as well, for a minimum of \$20 million.

However, the strata insurance market is becoming tighter and tighter. There are only a dozen local insurance companies that offer a policy for residential or commercial strata schemes in Australia.

And of these insurance providers, three of them only specialise in smaller schemes where the value of the building is less than \$20 million.

Of the remaining companies, at least five of those insurance providers have had their underwriters adjust their risk policies so that they are unable to insure any owners' corporation (OC) that has reported water ingress damage, combustible cladding or unresolved building defect issues within the building.

Just to make it harder still, several of the insurance providers have also adjusted their risk policies so that they will not extend any insurance coverage to any building where a risky business activity is being conducted. This may extend to a tobacconist shop, or tattoo parlour, massage parlour and even to some industrial uses where chemical treatments are being used or stored onsite.

So, it is no longer the case that insurance companies will increase their policy premiums by a percentage to cover the increased risk, or to decline to pay any claims related to certain subject matters. Instead, we have a situation where the local insurance market simply won't insure certain buildings at all.

This situation forces insurance brokers to consider the international insurance market, which is a very expensive option, and can leave some apartment buildings with policy premiums that are 200 to 300 per cent more expensive year-on-year.

The Victorian government enacted amendments to the *Owners' Corporation Act* in 2021 to permit the passing on of higher insurance premiums to certain lots if it were to be determined that the use of

the lot caused the insurance premium to increase. That is a good amendment but does not help a building if the insurance market just won't insure the building at all.

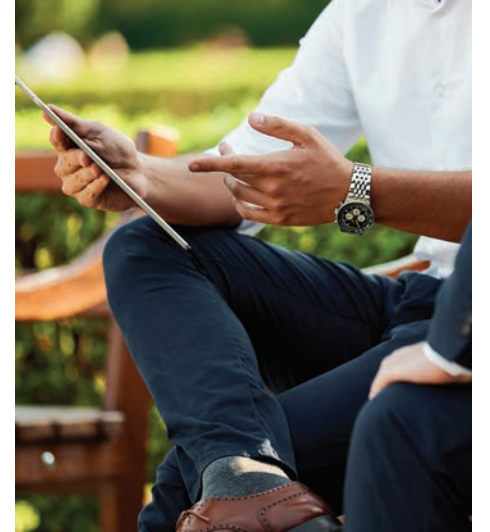
To avoid this situation from occurring, OCs are being pressured by their current insurers to take all steps to repair outstanding building defect issues, and to replace any combustible cladding within the current period of insurance.

In doing so, these insurers are enforcing OCs to act incredibly quickly (and sometimes too quickly) to carry out repairs, without allowing for sufficient time for legal proceedings to be concluded, or for proper scopes of work for holistic or staged repairs to be developed, or for competitive tenders to be undertaken.

The current situation is driving up levies, and trapping some apartment owners in debt recovery limbo if they cannot keep up with their costs.

The situation is fast approaching what some might describe as an "insurance crisis."

It may not be too long before the Victorian Government is requested to underwrite the strata insurance industry. Let's all hope it does not get that far. ●



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DOCKLANDS REPRESENTATIVE GROUP

Owners' Corporation Network: putting residential strata on a national footing

Several things are well known about residential strata. First and foremost is that it is now a mainstream way of living throughout Australia.

Another point is that it comes with complex challenges, ranging from conflict resolution to rectification works to arrears management. Notably, many challenges are common throughout Australia – we are all dealing with mitigating lithium-ion battery fires!

A third, regrettable point is that responses to managing residential strata are state-specific. While confronting the same issues, how we respond, and the importance and resources given to these issues vary between states. For instance, the governments of

NSW and Queensland each have dedicated Commissioners for Strata, while in Victoria, this space remains blank.

This has meant that in Victoria, support has fallen largely to strata residents themselves, with several groups, including the Docklands Representative Group (DRG) and Southbank3006, endeavouring to provide some degree of guidance.

There are also several Facebook pages where individuals share advice, though the reliability of this information is questionable.

Clearly, there is a need for a sustainable, coordinated approach to supporting residential strata, one which does not rely on individual volunteers' goodwill.

This was precisely the lesson learned by Owners' Corporation Network (OCN), a not-for-profit

organisation focusing on residential strata for more than 20 years. OCN originated in NSW in 2002 when several new apartment owners (who bought off-the-plan) came together to discuss common issues, such as developer defects and multi-decade supplier contracts.

Over the ensuing 20 years, OCN has evolved into an organisation that:

Advocates on behalf of residential strata, such as by authoring submissions for regulatory reforms (e.g., strata schemes development and management acts).

Produces strata-focused resources, such as residential strata emergency preparedness guides.

Hosts forums on strata topics, such as expert webinars on lithium-ion battery fires and water-proofing.

Given the commonality of strata issues nationwide, OCN's expertise is increasingly being sought, including in Victoria. Here, OCN has already been asked to comment on proposed programs and scheme designs. Due to this growing demand, OCN is exploring how its expertise can be best leveraged to serve strata owners, with efforts under way in the ACT, Queensland and Victoria.

OCN knows that activities in Victoria must develop in a way that both best leverages existing learnings and suits local conditions. This is why OCN is a participant in the HighLife Expo in Melbourne on Saturday, June 1.

For more information:
highlifeexpo.au



Here, OCN will co-host a "listening post" where locals can have their say about ways to improve residential strata. Additionally, OCN will offer FREE membership to Victorians who visit the HighLife Expo! ●

Janette Corcoran

MEMBER

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City of Melbourne council: the good and the not so good

Let's start with the good ...

Maritime heritage really matters in Docklands. Given it is of such significance to the maritime heritage of Melbourne, it comes as no surprise that Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN) is always alert to matters likely to have an adverse impact on the precinct, and therefore, on heritage values (beyond the damage that has already been done as port operations gradually shift downstream from Victoria Harbour).

This is why it is pleasing to discover that twice in April the City of Melbourne council took a pro-active stand in defending Docklands against inappropriate development.



Victoria Harbour and Yarra
Docklands News reported in May 2023 that "Council 'plays hard ball' over Port of Melbourne land rezoning".

This seemingly innocuous bureaucratic realignment of small portions of land in Docklands was in fact crucial to the future of the precinct, which is why it is pleasing that the council decided to "except"

this land from the proposed bureaucratic realignment.

Located along the Moonee Ponds Creek west of the Bolte Bridge, this small piece of land will be critical to the future of the Docklands. The Port of Melbourne Development Strategy 2050 identifies this small plot as "open space". But is it? Not really.

The sub-text of the council's decision has two important elements ...

The decision enabled the possibility of Moonee Ponds Creek trail to link with and activate NewQuay around Victoria Harbour; and, more significantly ...

This plot of land is essential to the highly controversial Port of Melbourne plan for a future Webb Dock freight link over the river.

The council voting for "exception" effectively compromised the Port of Melbourne plan for the construction of a rail freight link at water level across the Yarra River, which many consider would be disastrous in terms of the future of Victoria Harbour and the Birrarung/Yarra.

Harbour Esplanade

The council decided this month to take a stance against inappropriate development in Docklands by rejecting an amendment put up by the AFL and Development Victoria (DV) to redevelop part of the Marvel Stadium precinct. The proposal was described as "one of the most embarrassing applications the City of Melbourne has seen".

DV owns the Harbour Esplanade site on which three high-rise towers were proposed. The incident will be known forevermore as "DV's Great Wall of Docklands" proposal. The final decision will be made by Victorian Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny. Let us hope she can remain firm.



The less good

Lendlease on North Wharf – note the name – is historically important. The location is now incorrectly referred to by Lendlease as Collins Wharf. Why? Perhaps a Collins St address is deemed more appealing in the real estate marketplace of the future. Lendlease has plans dating back to 2017 to construct apartment high-rise towers on six sites along North Wharf. Lendlease states ...

"Each tower on the wharf that separates Docklands' Victoria Harbour from the Yarra River gradually decreases in height to the end of the wharf. The end of the wharf is earmarked for a [small] public green space. Collins Wharf is a premium waterfront residential precinct that extends Melbourne's famed Collins St further westwards to engage with the water, connecting its maritime past with the contemporary vibrancy of the city."

Park on North Wharf

Regrettably this [small] "public green space" has been labelled – again inappropriately by the City of Melbourne – "Eco Park". MMHN argues that it should be named in honour of engineers John Coode and Joseph Brady, who designed Victoria

Dock (aka Victoria Harbour).

Returning to Lendlease's work on North Wharf, MMHN also argues that given the open space deficit in Docklands, this small plot should be enlarged via DV acquiring one of the six Lendlease sites to be developed on North Wharf.

Furthermore, MMHN advocates that the community benefit contribution required of all developers should, in this instance, be directed towards the restoration and appropriate repurposing of the Shipping Control Tower in this North Wharf park. It would become a genuine destination for locals and, indeed, all Victorians.

Two recent Draft Council Plans both inexplicably omit reference to the unique Docklands precinct and its waterways. Given its unique status, it is in urgent need of "activation".

- Experiencing Melbourne 2028 – tourism plan
- Recreation Facilities Provision Framework – a plan

This is indeed a regrettable oversight which will hopefully be addressed before the final documents. MMHN made submissions to councillors on both matters.

Docklands clearly remains a "work-in-progress". MMHN encourages all in the Docklands community to get involved with what his planned in this unique precinct. Contact MMHN to share concerns. ●

Jackie Watts

CHAIR

INFO@MMHN.ORG.AU



HEALTH & WELLBEING



DOCKLANDS
HEALTH

WINTER WELLNESS
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

As the temperature drops and the days grow shorter, it's essential to prioritise our health and wellbeing during the winter months.

WORDS BY
DR EUNISE YEO

The cold weather, coupled with flu season, can pose challenges to our immune systems and overall wellness. However, with some proactive steps and healthy habits, you can navigate through winter with vitality and resilience.

Here are some tips to help you stay healthy during the chilly season ...

Maintain a balanced diet

During winter, it's tempting to indulge in comfort foods, but it's crucial to maintain a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

Stay hydrated

It's easy to forget to drink enough water when it's cold outside, but staying hydrated is just as important in winter as it is in summer. Drink plenty of water throughout the day to keep your body hydrated.

Get adequate sleep

Essential for overall health and immunity.

Stay active

Don't let the cold weather be an excuse to hibernate indoors all winter. Regular exercise is vital for maintaining a healthy immune system and managing stress.

Practice good hygiene

With flu season in full swing, practicing good hygiene habits can help prevent the spread of illness.

Stay warm and dry

Dress appropriately for the weather by layering clothing and wearing hats, gloves, and scarves to stay warm when venturing outdoors.

Prioritise mental health

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) affects many people during the winter months due to reduced sunlight exposure. Improve your overall wellbeing.

Stay connected

Maintain social connections with friends and family to combat feelings of loneliness and isolation that can occur during winter. ●

10 YEARS ON

JUNE 2015 | ISSUE 109 |

DOCKLANDS NEWS

Council approves esplanade plan

City of Melbourne councillors have voted to accept Places Victoria's Harbour Esplanade master plan, providing they get to see and approve all proposed buildings.

At the June 2 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, councillors voted unanimously to accept an alternative motion by Cr Rohan Leppert guaranteeing their future oversight of the project.

Cr Leppert said he feared the motion originally proposed by management could leave councillors sidelined, with approvals being handled by officers under delegation.

Cr Leppert said aspects of the master plan were so vague that "anything was possible" and, therefore, it was important to ensure the "opportunity of public oversight".

"We have to have a public debate about the specifics of this master plan," Cr Leppert said.

Cr Stephen Mayne agreed, saying the City of Melbourne prided itself on its public transparency. He said Harbour Esplanade was the most important and sensitive open space within the City of Melbourne. ●

He said the specific granularity of the development needed to be argued and debated in a public forum.

Cr Mayne foreshadowed that council funding for Harbour Esplanade would be "challenging", given its current focus on the Queen Victoria Market redevelopment. He said it was important that the City of Melbourne prioritise its future capital works and he looked forward to the council developing a 10-year capital works plan.

Cr Leppert's motion also requires Places Victoria to consult further with the community on the projects as outlined in a letter written to the council on May 29.

Places Victoria general manager Simon Wilson had earlier told the committee that the master plan was a high-level document, and it was always intended that the specifics would come back to council for approval.

The plan outlines a staged delivery of the esplanade over the next 10 to 15 years. It allows for up to 40 per cent-built form and divides Harbour Esplanade into seven zones for redevelopment including a recreation zone, heritage vessel zone, event and exhibition zone, urban plaza zone and water transport zone. ●

A preview of Docklands' new "tropical oasis" from Moon Dog

Doglands is the new mega-venue from Melbourne brew-masters, Moon Dog, promising a "tropical oasis in amongst the hustle and bustle of the Docklands."

WORDS BY JACK HAYES



With a "likely opening" in August, the team behind venues like Moon Dog OG in Abbotsford, Moon Dog World in Preston, and the recently opened Mood Dog Wild West in Footscray's Franco Cozzo building, has engineered Doglands to offer a 1500-person venue for game days and functions, and a 100-person capacity venue open seven days week.

Moon Dog co-founder Karl van Buuren told *Docklands News* that stepping inside Doglands would be an experience like no other.

"As you walk into the venue, while completely unassuming from the outside, you will be met by palm trees, rock formations and an expansive venue with plenty of different areas to explore," he said.

"The venue is designed to operate both as an amazing gameday experience for

pre- and post-events at Marvel Stadium, but also one of Melbourne's largest and most unique function spaces."

"While the large 1500-person will only be open for major events and functions, we will also have a smaller, more intimate 100-person venue that will be open seven days a week, which we hope will be a great addition for locals and a place for people to gather for after-work drinks."

According to Mr van Buuren, the all-week offering will dish up your "favourite" food,

beers, wines, and cocktails, along with a variety of weekly events such as trivia and a running club, and while the venue is still being built, they are now taking function bookings for Christmas for groups of 200 to 1500. ●

For more information: moondog.com.au



Jack Hayes

BUSINESS EDITOR

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A winter of activation in Docklands

While the cold creeps in, Docklands' events calendar is just starting to heat up this June with Firelight Festival, The Art of Banksy and Dreamskape.

WORDS BY JACK HAYES



Firelight Festival

Docklands' favourite winter festival is back from June 28 to 30, illuminating the suburb with live music, fire performers, flame jets, fire sculptures and a world-first underground light show at Marvel Stadium.

Firelight Labyrinth will transform Marvel Stadium's underground into a sea of glows and sounds, with over 144,000 lights designed by Mandylights, international creative lighting specialists. "Firelight Festival is a beacon of light for Docklands' traders – driving 100,000 visitors to the precinct

in 2023, creating 700 jobs and delivering a smouldering serving of arts and culture on Melbourne's stunning waterfront," Cr Roshena Campbell said.

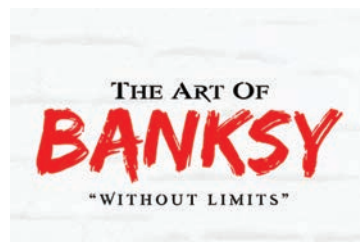
"The City of Melbourne's jam-packed calendar of events, festivals and activations strengthens our economy – bringing more than six million people to the city in 2023."

For those inviting friends and family to enjoy in the festivities, The Sebel Docklands is offering a special Firelight Family Stay for up to four people (\$279 per room per night), including a two-bedroom self-contained apartment, complimentary car parking, late check-out and two-for-one drink voucher at Urban Alley Brewery Docklands.

The Art of Banksy Without Limits

Opening in mid-June, The Art of Banksy Without Limits follows the life and work of the world's most famous and mysterious street artist.

It will exhibit more than 180 of the artist's works, including more than 100 originals, prints on different kinds of materials, photos,



sculptures, and more.

For premium ticket holders, you take home your own DIY Banksy T-Shirt.

Without Limits is located at The District Docklands, level 1/116 Studio Ln.

Dreamskape

Also opening in June at The District Docklands is Dreamskape, an Australian-first immersive sensory experience perfect for all ages and groups.

You will discover new worlds and experiences by utilising immersive light, sound, and movement inside an augmented reality environment with no visual aids.

Step inside the Dream Verse, jump aboard the Dream Coaster or play a Dream Game, in an interactive universe like no other. ●

The 2024 Docklands Directory is out now

The Directory is a guide to, and celebration of, business throughout Docklands, as well as our world-class waterfront surrounding Victoria Harbour.

To explore all that the precinct has to offer or find a local business, visit docklandsdirectory.com.au.

To get your copy, advertise, contribute or feature your business, please contact jack@hyperlocalnews.com.au



WHAT'S ON June



Docklands comes alive this winter with the return of Firelight Festival, school holiday fun at The District, gallery openings and more.



LIBRARY AT THE DOCK 10TH BIRTHDAY
Join for a special birthday storytime, face painting, craft activities, Makerspace Inductions, sizzling sausages and fairy floss, movies and more. This is an all-inclusive, all ages, alcohol free event.
Library at The Dock, 107 Vic Harbour Prom

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1PM - 4PM



TRAVELING THE PORTILLO WAY: STORIES OF RAIL
Six and a bit stories of rail, from reproductions of the joining of the US transcontinental, to transporting, station architecture and subway observations.

XYZ Photo Gallery, 312/757 Bourke St, Docklands

UNTIL JUNE 23, 1PM - 5PM



NBA FINALS LIVE SITE AT MARVEL STADIUM
Watch the first game on the giant 257-inch screen and enjoy the start of the NBA Finals, complete with special guest appearances from current NBA player Dyson Daniels and NBL legend Lanard Copeland, lip-smacking food and beverages, competitions and games throughout the day.
Stadium Square (Gates 2 & 3), Marvel Stadium

FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 9AM - 2PM



BEYOND THE SEA
Join THECHO!R and esteemed conductor Patrick Burns for an evening of spellbinding Jazz classics. Let the music transport you to a night reminiscent of smoky speakeasies and unforgettable melodies. Bookings at playitforward.org.au
The Mission to Seafarers, 717 Flinders St

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 7.30PM - 9PM



THE ART OF BANKSY: WITHOUT LIMITS
The Art of Banksy: *Without Limits* features over 180 artworks from the worlds most mysterious street artists, including certified art, prints on different kinds of materials, photos, sculptures, installations, digital installations, murals, mapping shows, and more. **The District Docklands Level 1**

OPENING WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12



FIRELIGHT FESTIVAL
Over three fiery nights, Melbourne's epic free winter festival takes over Docklands in a celebration of fire and light. Enjoy everything from captivating fire performers and African drumming to live music and storytelling, as flame jets, fire sculptures, and dazzling installations light up Docklands.

JUNE 28 - 30, 5PM - 10.30PM



THEY SHOOT FILM: AN ANALOGUE PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
They Shoot Film is a captivating exhibition presenting works by women and non-binary artists working in film photography. Opening event - Thursday, May 30, 6pm - 7.30pm.
Library at The Dock, 107 Vic Harbour Prom

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