

FEBRUARY 2026 EDITION #226

FOREVER FREE



Padel Open served up in Docklands

From January 14 to 18, Game4Padel on Lorimer St hosted the FIP Silver Australian Padel Open, a major sporting event for padel players, which saw high-profile competitors play a series of matches, showcasing their high-performance talent at the Docklands venue. More on page 7. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

PLANNING, PAGE 09

The Docklands that might have been – and the ideas it still has time to reclaim

ENVIRONMENT, PAGE 10

City of Melbourne takes over Westgate Park management



MARITIME, PAGE 03

Victoria Harbour Promenade: from precaution to crisis on the wharf

“What began as a precautionary safety measure over the New Year period has now hardened into a far more serious problem for Docklands, with the full extent of deterioration along the Victoria Harbour Promenade only just coming into view.”

The closure effectively removes continuous public access to the waterfront, forcing pedestrians inland along building lines and requiring all boats previously moored along the wharf to be relocated. For a precinct defined by its relationship with water, the implications are significant.

The deterioration appears far more extensive than initially indicated during the New Year's Eve period, when parts of the promenade were closed to reduce crowd loading. At the time, authorities framed the decision as a short-term, precautionary response to early signs of structural issues in some piles supporting the wharf. Since then, however, inspections have revealed problems that are neither isolated nor superficial.

Docklands News understands that visual inspections escalated into more detailed investigations after components of the structure began to fail, including sections of external fendering that have partially collapsed and are now being temporarily held in place.

The wharf, originally designed for a nominal lifespan of around 50 years, is barely halfway through that period. Yet deterioration appears advanced enough to trigger widespread closures while engineers determine how to approach its restoration.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Temporary fencing has now been erected along the waterside edge of Victoria Harbour Promenade from Harbour Esplanade all the way to Library at The Dock.

Continued on page 4.

Farewell to the fleet: Docklands loses its last living links to a maritime past

The quiet departure of Docklands' heritage fleet marks the end of a long and dispiriting chapter for Victoria Harbour, and a moment that demands reflection on how Melbourne's waterfront has been shaped, and what has been lost along the way.



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Drugs, weapons seized in organised crime bust

Victoria Police seized a range of illicit drugs and weapons allegedly linked to organised crime when they raided two properties in Docklands and Newport last month.

WORDS BY
JENNY DENTON



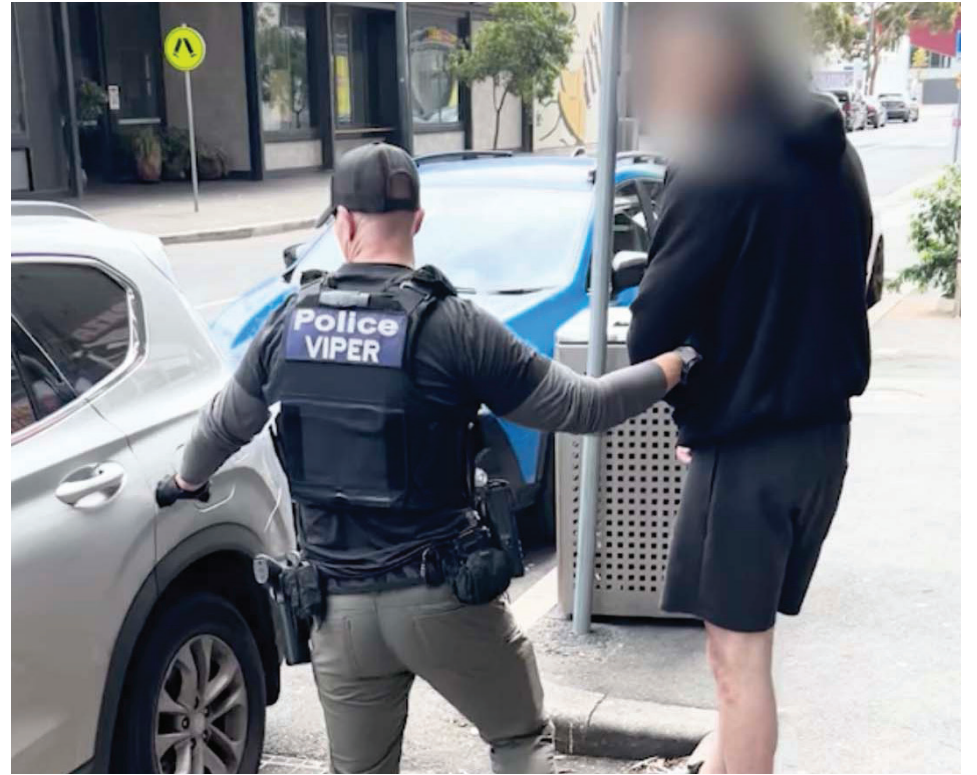
A commercial quantity of methylamphetamine, other illegal drugs and a stash of "taser pens" have been seized from a Docklands residence in a raid carried out last month, with a linked bust at Newport netting more drugs and an array of weapons, including a loaded revolver, police say.

Detectives from the VIPER taskforce, which tackles gangs and organised crime, had received a tip-off relating to a Newport residence last December that led to them also executing a warrant at Docklands, a Victoria Police spokesperson said.

The January 19 raids in both suburbs, executed as part of an investigation into firearms trafficking linked to serious and organised crime, resulted in detectives seizing body armour, OC spray, a gun, cash, drugs, weapons, Rolex watches and the taser pens – an electroshock weapon that is prohibited without a permit in Victoria – from the two residential addresses.

They also charged a 31-year-old Newport man, who was remanded in custody to appear before the Melbourne Magistrates' Court.

A search of the Docklands address had located a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine, traffickable quantities of cannabis, ketamine, cocaine and MDMA and 20 taser pens as well as two Rolex watches, a quantity of cash and varying quantities



of Xanax, Oxycodone, Valium, ecstasy and other prescription drugs, police said.

At the Newport property they had found a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine, a loaded Colt 41 revolver with six rounds of .41 calibre ammunition, 12 cans of capsaicin spray, five body armour vests, varying quantities of GHB, steroids, MDMA, a doctor's stamp and various knives and knuckledusters.

The Newport man has been charged with more than two dozen offences, including trafficking a commercial quantity of methylamphetamine, trafficking in drugs of dependence, possession of an unregistered handgun, dealing with property suspected

to be the proceeds of crime and failing to assist police under warrant.

A 25-year-old man from Brighton and a 25-year-old woman from Sandringham who turned up at the Docklands property while it was being searched were found to have been carrying a flick knife and homemade taser, and Xanax tablets, respectively, police said.

Police expected to charge the pair.

Police officers appealed to anyone with information on illicit firearms or drugs linked to serious and organised crime to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit an anonymous report at crimestoppersvic.com.au ●

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Farewell to the fleet: Docklands loses its last living links to a maritime past

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The quiet departure of Docklands' heritage fleet marks the end of a long and dispiriting chapter for Victoria Harbour, and a moment that demands reflection on how Melbourne's waterfront has been shaped, and what has been lost along the way.

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WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



After years of negotiations, advocacy and public pressure, the last of the Docklands-based heritage vessels are leaving the precinct. The *Alma Doepel*, perhaps the most symbolically significant of the fleet, which also includes the *Enterprize* and steam tug *Wattle*, is relocating to Williamstown following a late-arriving interim deal with the Victorian Government that will fund three years of berthing and workshop costs at Seaworks. It is a reprieve of sorts, but not a resolution. As the *Alma Doepel* Foundation has made clear, it “buys time, not a solution”.

The immediate cause is the redevelopment of Shed 2 at North Wharf by Lendlease, overseen by Development Victoria. The fleet's continued occupation of Docklands was no longer supported under the agency's program, despite more than a year of

discussions and historic commitments to find an alternative location within the precinct. Certainty, when it finally came, arrived late and under pressure, placing enormous strain on volunteer-run organisations that had already invested years of labour and scarce funds into restoration.

This outcome sits uneasily against Docklands' origins. Once Victoria Dock, it was a working heart of the Port of Melbourne. Today, almost every physical trace of that maritime past has been erased. Central Pier is gone. The old sheds and wharves have been demolished or fundamentally altered. Harbour Esplanade has been reshaped beyond recognition. With the departure of the heritage fleet, the last living, working reminders of Docklands' port history are disappearing from public view.

The irony is sharp. The Bolte Bridge was designed with sufficient clearance to allow vessels like the *Alma Doepel* to

pass beneath it, an acknowledgement at the time that large heritage ships would continue to access Victoria Harbour. Now, those same vessels are being squeezed out, even as the Port of Melbourne continues to advocate for a new freight bridge parallel to the Bolte between Webb and Swanson docks, a proposal that would further constrain access and effectively suffocate the harbour for larger ships. In a striking twist, it is Port of Melbourne that has stepped in to provide the *Alma Doepel* with a temporary home while it awaits relocation to Williamstown.

None of this can be reduced to a single decision or moment. Development Victoria has, over the years, supported the heritage operators with space and access, and those efforts should be acknowledged. But support without a long-term plan is fragile. Commitments made in policy documents, including past promises to facilitate berths for heritage vessels, have not translated

into enduring outcomes. The cumulative effect is that Docklands' maritime story has been steadily hollowed out, not through overt hostility, but through neglect, shifting priorities and an overwhelming focus on real estate outcomes over place and identity.

Other port cities offer a different lesson. In Fremantle, maritime heritage is not treated as an inconvenience to be managed away, but as a defining asset that shapes the public realm and sense of place. Wander through Docklands today and there is little to suggest it was once a great working port. Criticisms of its glass-and-concrete anonymity may sound harsh, but they are understandable when every tangible link to history is removed.

That loss makes it all the more important to recognise what the heritage fleet has contributed. For years, these vessels animated the harbour, offered education programs, told stories of sail, steam and trade, and embodied a continuity that no plaque or sculpture can replace. *Docklands News* has documented the painstaking restoration of the *Alma Doepel*, the tireless volunteer hours, and the belief that living heritage matters most when it is seen, touched and used.

Williamstown will now benefit from that passion and expertise, and its maritime precinct will be richer for it. Docklands, by contrast, is poorer, not just culturally but symbolically. The departure of the fleet should serve as a reckoning for Development Victoria and the state government. Cities that sever themselves from their past do not become more vibrant by default. They become thinner, less legible, and less loved.

The farewell to Docklands' heritage fleet is not simply about vessels moving berths. It is about a precinct losing its memory, and a missed opportunity to let history continue to inform its future. ●



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walker

Victoria Harbour Promenade: from precaution to crisis on the wharf

Continued from page 1.

Complicating matters further is the fragmented ownership and construction history of the promenade. Responsibility is split between the City of Melbourne and Development Victoria. As *Docklands News* understands, roughly three quarters of the affected wharf falls under Development Victoria's remit, with the remainder managed by the council. This patchwork makes coordinated assessment and remediation more complex, and potentially more protracted.

One factor emerging from early investigations is the unexpected structural burden imposed by raised grass planters along the promenade. *Docklands News* understands that the weight of these landscaped beds may be contributing to the stress on the wharf structure beneath. Ironically, these elevated lawns have long been criticised for their limited usability, difficult access and poor integration with the waterfront. Their potential role in accelerating structural failure raises uncomfortable questions about design decisions made during Docklands' redevelopment.



At present, no timeline has been offered for reopening the waterside promenade. Investigations are ongoing, and the scope of rectification works remains unknown. In practical terms, Docklands residents and visitors face the prospect of losing meaningful waterfront access for months, if not years.

Yet amid the disruption, there is also a broader question about what happens next. As *Docklands News* understands, some stakeholders see this not only as an

infrastructure failure but as a rare opportunity to rethink how the harbour edge functions. Rather than simply reinstating a like-for-like wharf, there is scope to consider more resilient, publicly engaging designs that better connect people to the water through stepped edges, naturalised treatments and improved durability.

For now, however, the reality is stark. The promenade's closure underscores the vulnerability of Docklands' waterfront infrastructure following similar issues over at



NewQuay Promenade in recent years.

What was originally a precaution is becoming a crisis, and how it is addressed will shape not just access to Victoria Harbour, but confidence in the precinct's future as a genuinely liveable waterfront. ●

COMMUNITY3008 INC.

A safe community is a shared community

As we start the year in Docklands and prepare the second year of the new committee of Community3008 Inc., it is a good opportunity to reflect on how we care for our neighbourhood and the role we all play in maintaining a place that feels safe, welcoming and connected.

WORDS BY
JAMAL HAKIM, CO-PRESIDENT
COMMUNITY3008 INC.

Safety is not the only issue facing our community, but it remains an important one. Docklands is, by and large, a relatively safe place to live, work and visit. Many people choose to be here because of its open spaces, walkability and amenity. Maintaining that sense of safety is less about reacting to crisis and more about constant vigilance, mindfulness and shared responsibility as our neighbourhood continues to

grow and change.

At the recent Community3008 AGM, I shared a safety briefing following the end-of-year Safety Forum I attended, hosted by Melbourne West Police Station. At that safety forum, police confirmed that all action items from the previous meeting had been completed. The top concerns for 2025 remained the same as in 2024, with safety in public spaces and safety of possessions continuing to feature most strongly.

Victoria Police advised that while crime levels have not dramatically increased, the overall feeling of safety in the community has declined. Importantly, most residents still report feeling comfortable engaging with police and Protective Services Officers.

A number of targeted police operations are currently under way across the city, including high visibility patrols, car park operations responding to theft from vehicles, shop theft operations, and proactive outreach with young people and rough sleepers. There are dedicated patrols around Southern Cross Station, Flinders Street Station, and known hotspots such as Rose Lane. Resourcing is improving, with new recruits spending time in the city and Docklands to increase visibility, and recent arrests have been made in relation to car

park theft.

Issues raised that are particularly relevant to Docklands include hoon behaviour, e-scooter and vehicle gatherings, theft incidents around key buildings, and ongoing concerns about noise and safety on NewQuay Promenade related to motorcycle riders. Police also provided updates on protests occurring across the city, noting these are generally predictable and managed, with monitoring in place for impacts on Docklands.

Residents also continue to raise concerns about unsafe behaviour involving e-bikes and e-scooters in shared pedestrian areas. Active transport plays an important role in Docklands, but when devices are used without care in busy spaces, they can create anxiety and risk, particularly for families, older residents and people with disabilities. This is not about opposing these modes of transport, but about encouraging respectful behaviour, better design and clearer expectations in shared spaces.

Police shared new safety information sheets for residents, including guidance on motor vehicle theft prevention and parcel and letterbox security. These include practical steps such as locking valuables, avoiding leaving identification documents in cars,

and securing letterboxes to reduce identity theft risks. These resources will be circulated to the community through our newsletter, on a number of Facebook community pages, and on the website.

Safety in a place like Docklands is not a single issue to solve, but an ongoing practice. It relies on awareness, early communication and collaboration between residents, businesses, community groups and authorities.

As Community3008 prepares for the next local safety forum, we invite residents, workers and local businesses to get in touch with any safety concerns they would like raised. Whether it relates to public behaviour, shared spaces, lighting, traffic or other day to day issues, raising them early helps ensure they are addressed constructively and proportionately.

A safe community is built not through alarm, but through care, mindfulness and collective responsibility. As we begin the year, our focus is on listening, advocating clearly and working together to ensure Docklands continues to be a place people feel comfortable calling home.

Get in touch on contact@community3008.org.au and get involved by signing up to be a member on community3008.org.au ●





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Sod turned on \$600m District Living precinct, set to become Australia's largest build-to-rent community

“

Construction has officially begun on one of the nation's most significant housing projects, with a sod-turning ceremony marking the start of the \$600 million District Living precinct at The District Docklands.

”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



When complete, the two-stage development will deliver more than 925 long-term rental apartments, making it Australia's largest build-to-rent (BTR) community and a major boost to Melbourne's undersupplied rental market.

Victorian Minister for Housing Harriet Shing, Acting Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, and Japan's Consul-General in Melbourne Tokuro Furuya joined senior representatives from developer AsheMorgan, global investment partners Marubeni Corporation, Haseko, Mizuho Leasing, and builder Kapitol to officially break ground.

Located at 10 Little Docklands Drive, beside Docklands Primary School and moments from major transport links, District Living will reshape a strategic corner of Docklands with new housing,

retail, public space and a substantial collection of resident amenities. Designed by Warren and Mahoney Architects, Stage One includes 626 apartments, from studios through to three-bedroom homes and dual-level townhouses.

More than 2200 sqm of communal amenities will include a wellness centre, gym, plunge pool, sauna, steam room and sky terrace, complemented by 1000 sqm of private outdoor space and 1700 sqm of publicly accessible open space that connects directly into the District Docklands retail precinct. The all-electric project is targeting a 7.5-star NatHERS rating.

With vacancy rates in Docklands sitting at just 1.8 per cent, Acting Lord Mayor Campbell said the project marked a timely and much-needed addition to Melbourne's

inner-urban housing supply.

Kapitol co-founder Andrew Deveson said the company would use digital-to-fabrication construction methods – more commonly deployed in data centre and infrastructure projects – to accelerate delivery and reduce disruptions.

"Melbourne needs more rental homes, and it needs them delivered with accuracy and speed," Mr Deveson said. "Construction delays become delays for renters. By solving problems in the model rather than on-site, we shorten the program and deliver consistently high-quality homes."

AsheMorgan principal Mendy Moss said the start of construction was a milestone not only for Docklands but for Australia's maturing BTR sector.

"District Living has been designed as a

long-term rental neighbourhood, with the scale and amenity expected of a precinct residents will occupy for many years. With more than 925 apartments, it will be one of Australia's most substantial BTR communities and a significant addition to Docklands' residential fabric," Mr Moss said.

Marubeni Corporation's Noritake Miyaguchi said the precinct would anchor the company's build-to-rent strategy in Australia.

"We see strong long-term demand for professionally managed rental housing in Australia, particularly in well-connected inner-urban locations. District Living represents an important first step in our platform here," he said.

Stage One is slated for completion in 2027. ●

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OzHarvest volunteers foraging atop Skyfarm. Supplied: OzHarvest

Joni Mitchell warned about paving paradise for a parking lot. We're flipping that, making Melbourne a garden city by turning car parks from grey to green through our Urban Forest Fund.

On the roof of a 9-storey Docklands car park, volunteers harvest vegetables on a farm high above the bustle of the city.

There's an orchard, bees move between planter boxes and birds flit about helping to pollinate. For a moment, the city feels quieter and greener.

"It's described as a mindful experience, even though it's right in the heart of Melbourne's CBD."

That sense of calm is something Alana Roberts, OzHarvest's Engagement Manager, sees time and again among the volunteers who forage for produce on the rooftop farm.

"It's one of our most popular volunteering shifts," Alana said.

Known as Melbourne Skyfarm, the 2,000 m² rooftop was once a high-rise car park.

It's undergoing a transformation, thanks to funding from the City of Melbourne's Urban Forest Fund, and support from the Melbourne



From parking lot to paradise!

Convention and Exhibition Centre. It will open to the public this year.

The Urban Forest Fund is our city-greening community grants initiative that provides matched financial support to help green private property.

Melbourne Skyfarm is one of 21 projects that the fund has invested in since it began in 2017.

The fund has already contributed more than \$3.2 million in funding to help create over 42,400 m² of new green cover.

We've supersized the fund to support more projects this year, with up to \$1 million of total matched funding up for grabs. It's part of our mission to maximise urban greening and establish Melbourne as the garden city.

With almost 75% of land in the municipality privately owned, the future of Melbourne's urban forest depends on the ideas and enthusiasm of the community.

Not all greening projects need to be as big as Skyfarm.

Eight years ago, North Melbourne resident Ying-Lan Dann joined neighbours to apply for an Urban Forest Fund grant.



Ying-Lan Dann, waters a garden made possible through the Urban Forest Fund

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Join us for information sessions throughout February.

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Together, they turned their apartment block's car park into a luscious green space.

"It's been lovely to see the community come together around this project," Ying said.

"Particularly the kids – they all flock to play in the garden, shoot hoops at the basketball net we had installed and play soccer together."

Apartments in the block are selling above reserve, as the community get together for six-monthly working bees and Christmas parties.

"It showed us that this is not just about greening – all these other great benefits emerged."

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CITY OF MELBOURNE

The Australian Padel Open returns to Game4Padel in Docklands

Game4Padel on Lorimer St in Docklands has hosted the FIP Silver Australian Padel Open – a major sporting event for padel players.

WORDS BY
NICOLE MANOLITSAS



From January 14 to 18, high-profile competitors played a series of matches, showcasing their high-performance talent at the Docklands venue.

Padel is a sport similar to tennis and squash. It's played in doubles on a smaller court and requires players to move quickly and think strategically. The surrounding walls around the court can be used for the ball to bounce off, giving players the opportunity to outsmart their opponent. To win a set, a team must win six games and lead by two.

The sport is growing rapidly worldwide, and is the fastest growing racquet-sport internationally.

In Melbourne, the game of padel is growing in popularity. Game4Padel was the first padel facility in Melbourne and Victoria, making the venue a focal point in the sport's growth, increased activation, visitation and engagement in the Docklands area.

Across the five days, men's and women's doubles matches kicked off on the court with prize money to be won and FIP ranking points to be earned.

The Docklands venue had the honour of hosting players from around the world. From France to Japan, England and Italy, the tournament saw elite talent from every corner of the globe.

The quarter finals and semi-finals were held on January 17, before the long-awaited



final on January 18. For the male category, two Spanish teams won the semi-final, leading them to one last battle in the final. In the end, Miguel Morales Domenech and Jordi Casanova Bataller took home the win in two straight sets.

Continued celebrations were in order for Spain after Carla Fernandez Gonzalez and Nerea Guerra Santana won the female category final in straight sets against Victoria Kurz of Germany and Eugenia Guimet Bigas from Spain.

The tournament presented an opportunity

for Game4Padel to contribute to the Docklands precinct in a positive and community-focused way. The venue hosted the Australian Padel Open for the second year in a row, continuing to position Docklands as a growing area that can balance both work and social life.

During the tournament, there was consistent day-to-night activity, with a strong repeat visitation, including 50 per cent of play happening between the hours of 4pm to 11.30pm.

With more than 75,000 people

visiting Game4Panel each year, the venue has helped to associate Docklands with fitness and health, rather than a work and business precinct.

By bringing Docklands to life after regular office hours, the area becomes transformed into a lively social space that embeds health, sports and wellbeing uses for all ages and genders.

Padel is a fun and energetic sport that can be played right in the centre of Docklands. To book a court to play on, visit the Game4Panel website. ●

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SNAP, SEND, SOLVE UNWANTED GRAFFITI

Emily Bardella in Rankins Lane

Melbourne may be famous for street art in iconic laneways, but when graffiti spills into places where it's unwanted or unsightly, emotions can run high.

That's why City of Melbourne's Clean City manager and street art lover Emily Bardella has a watchful eye on the shifting canvas of our streets and laneways as she roams the city.

"Street art in Melbourne's laneways is an ever-changing subculture. It's one of the coolest street art scenes in the world," Emily said.

Originally trained as a graphic designer, she gets a particular kind of job satisfaction from working alongside artists who add beauty to city streets.

"Graffiti is an art form. It can transform everyday laneways into cultural landmarks," Emily said.

"There are places throughout

Melbourne that are well known for street art, like Hosier Lane, AC/DC Lane and Presgrave Place, but even beauty has its place," Emily said.

She oversees the crew that removes illegal tagging and graffiti from private property and public places, helping to keep the city clean and safe.

"We find a strong psychological link between graffiti, general grubbiness like litter, and people reporting that they feel unsafe," Emily said.

"Clean spaces make people feel safe," Emily said.

You can help. We've made it easier and faster than ever to report unwanted graffiti using the popular app Snap Send Solve.

Snap Send Solve: an easy way to report unwanted graffiti

Report graffiti directly to City of Melbourne from your phone in just a few taps when you download Snap Send Solve at the App Store or Google Play.

When you upload photos of the graffiti to the app, the job now goes straight to the contractor.

That means the crew can act fast, and it also frees up our customer experience team to support Melburnians in other ways.

You can also track the progress of the job within the Snap Send Solve app.

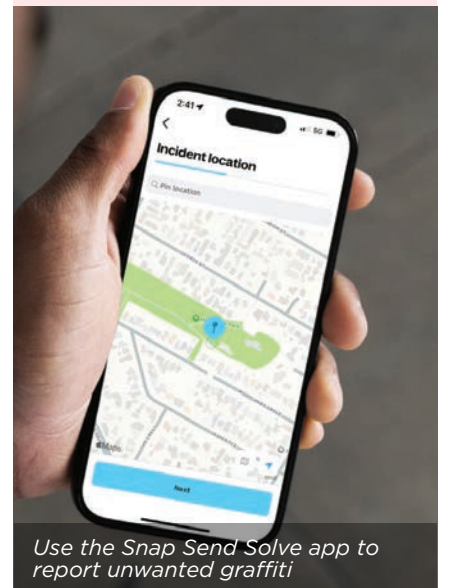
"It's an incredibly powerful tool. I hope people get a lot of satisfaction out of seeing when something they reported has been restored or repaired or rectified," Emily said.

DID YOU KNOW

Since we added graffiti to the list of issues that can be reported through the app, customer satisfaction has increased to **88%**, up from an average of **75%** for graffiti services using the previous system.

Find out more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/managing-graffiti

HOW SNAP SEND SOLVE WORKS



Use the Snap Send Solve app to report unwanted graffiti

- **Snap a photo:** Open the app, select 'Snap' to add your photo
- **Confirm Snap location:** Use the map pin or address bar
- **Select incident type:** Select the relevant incident type
- **Send your Snap:** Select 'Send Snap' to send your Snap off to be solved.
- **Solve it:** City of Melbourne will receive your Snap and solve it swiftly.

The app is growing in popularity for reporting a range of issues within the City of Melbourne, including rubbish and bins, abandoned trolleys, parking and cars, roads and signage.



Melbourne's Hosier Lane, an icon of the city's street art scene.

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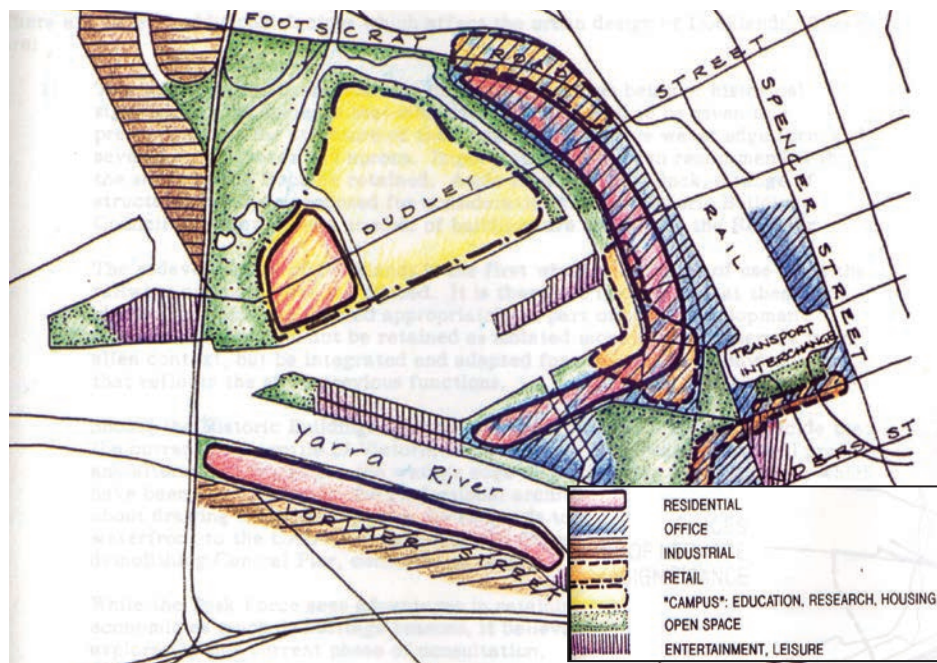
The Docklands that might have been – and the ideas it still has time to reclaim

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When the Public Record Office Victoria opened a new tranche of cabinet records from the Cain and Kirner Labor governments on January 1, it added another layer to a story that continues to shape Melbourne's most debated urban experiment: Docklands.

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WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The cabinet documents reveal just how comprehensive, ambitious and civically minded the early 1990s vision for Docklands truly was – and how sharply it diverges from the precinct that eventually emerged.

Reviewed by *Docklands News*, the newly released draft strategy papers show Docklands was once conceived as a low-rise, mixed-use waterfront extension of the CBD, anchored by education, research, public housing and open space, rather than the large-scale spectacle we know today.

Far from being an afterthought, education sat at the heart of the plan, alongside proposals for a major casino, a technology and research hub, medium-density housing and a highly integrated transport strategy.

At the centre of the 1990s vision was a 24-hectare education and research precinct, initially described as a shared “Docklands campus” for Victoria’s universities. Early documents from 1990 placed the campus near Victoria Dock and Moonee Ponds Creek, between what is now NewQuay and The District Docklands.

By 1992, the thinking had evolved towards a postgraduate or international institution, linked to emerging industries and supported by nearby research-based employment. The intent was clear: Docklands was to generate daily foot traffic, intellectual activity and long-term civic value, not just commercial returns.

Housing was also treated very differently. Cabinet submissions proposed a predominantly low-rise environment, with most buildings under 12 storeys, and medium-density housing forming the backbone of residential development. At least 10 per cent of housing was to be public, and a significant proportion priced affordably by the standards of the time. The aim was “social mix”, not exclusivity, with student housing, family apartments and community

infrastructure all envisaged as part of a balanced neighbourhood.

The documents also confirm that a casino was always part of the Docklands conversation, but not in the form it eventually took on the Southbank riverfront. Planners argued Docklands had the greatest capacity to manage the traffic and scale of an “open casino set in parkland,” with locations canvassed along the Yarra, at North Wharf and Central Pier. The casino was framed as one element within a broader cultural and entertainment mix, not a standalone economic engine.

Transport planning was equally bold. While public transport in Docklands today is very sound, the strategy included a proposal for a rapid transit link to Melbourne Airport, and provision for a future very fast train terminal at Spencer Street Station.

However, the Webb Dock freight bridge, still considered today to be a “killer” for Docklands, also appears in the strategy. While the documents acknowledge that it is “a major barrier to Docklands development”, it proposes to relocate it alongside the Western Bypass (the Bolte Bridge) in a similar area to current day visions, to “unlock land for development”. A Western Bypass tunnel was explored as an alternative to a bridge, partly to protect cruise ship access and preserve waterfront continuity.

The plans also called for wetlands at the mouth of Moonee Ponds Creek, large areas of reclaimed open space, and a continuous chain of parks, plazas and public squares linking the waterfront. Heritage structures were to be recycled and adapted, human-scale design prioritised, and Docklands positioned as a model of contemporary urban sustainability.

“Urban design of Docklands must of the highest possible quality,” one document stated. “The unique character of the area as a maritime and freight centre throughout

Melbourne’s history must be captured and retained.”

“This is not merely a matter of preserving heritage structures but of incorporating the flavour of the past into the developments of the future.”

This original command comes against a backdrop today where much of Docklands’ maritime past, with the odd exception like the Shipping Control Tower, have been almost entirely deleted from memory. This now includes the Heritage Fleet.

What emerges from the newly released papers is not an unrealistic utopia, but a carefully staged strategy that assumed Docklands would take decades to evolve. The Docklands Task Force was charged with extensive consultation, and cabinet acknowledged the risks posed by the early 1990s recession, warning repeatedly that expectations needed to be managed. Internal briefings described the real estate slump as the worst in recent history and questioned the timing of major legislative moves.

Those economic warnings ultimately proved decisive. The collapse of state finances, followed by the election of the Kennett government in 1992, marked a philosophical shift. Docklands was reframed as a market-led project requiring minimal public investment. The site was carved into large precincts and sold to private developers, and many of the social, educational and environmental aspirations embedded in the Labor-era plans were abandoned.

The decision to build Docklands Stadium, now Marvel Stadium, on land originally earmarked for mixed residential and office development crystallised that shift. The stadium delivered visibility and visitation, but it also locked Docklands into an events-driven identity that continues to shape perceptions today.

Three decades later, many of the

criticisms levelled at Docklands echo the issues the early planners were trying to avoid: a lack of everyday street life, weak community infrastructure, monocultural land use and a dependence on peaks rather than continuity. While Docklands has matured, it remains a precinct searching for a deeper civic role.

For former City of Melbourne councillor and Docklands resident Jamal Hakim, the release of these cabinet documents is not about revisiting old grievances, but about recognising deferred opportunity.

“Honestly, it’s a completely different plan, isn’t it? It’s a different picture,” he told *Docklands News*. “That original vision included a full tertiary and research project. That alone would have changed everything.”

Mr Hakim argues that the absence of a university or equivalent anchor has had cascading effects.

“I talk about daily foot traffic, intergenerational life, nighttime economy – and not just bars. I’m talking about food, cafes, entertainment, spin-off housing diversity. You would have seen student housing, that public housing concept, that comes about because of that diversity.”

He believes Docklands is uniquely placed to revive that thinking in a contemporary form. With Docklands Studios now hosting world-scale productions and advanced LED volume technology, the precinct already functions as an informal production campus. What’s missing, he says, is a formal tertiary and research presence to lock those industries in place.

“Let’s revive that original concept of a university, but make it contemporary,” Mr Hakim said. “Film, digital production, climate tech, urban research. We’ve got Docklands Studios. That gives us a once-in-a-generation opportunity to brand this as Australia’s creative engine.”

Mr Hakim envisions a partnership model involving universities, Docklands Studios, the City of Melbourne, state government and industry, embedding students directly into the precinct.

“You could have a dedicated Docklands film and city lab. A place where education, research and production happen side by side. That would transform the streets overnight. It would create identity, trust and community.”

The cabinet documents released by Public Record Office Victoria show that this way of thinking is not new. Education, research and innovation were once seen as the structural glue that would hold Docklands together. Their absence is not accidental – it is the result of political and economic decisions made under pressure.

As Melbourne continues to address long-standing criticisms of Docklands, the newly released records offer more than historical curiosity. They provide a blueprint for what Docklands was meant to be – and a reminder that some of the most important ideas were never tested. ●

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City of Melbourne takes over Westgate Park management

“

Westgate Park – home to Melbourne’s famous pink lake and one of the city’s most distinctive ecological treasures – has officially come under the management of the City of Melbourne.

”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



It marks a significant turning point for the evolving Fishermans Bend precinct and the community groups who have long advocated for the change.

The 36-hectare park, which sits at the mouth of the Yarra River beneath the West Gate Bridge, transferred from Parks Victoria to the City of Melbourne on January 1, 2026.

The move has been warmly welcomed by local restoration group Westgate Biodiversity, whose volunteers have spent

more than 30 years transforming the former industrial wasteland into a flourishing habitat of wetlands, saltmarsh, woodlands and grasslands.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece said the transition represented a major opportunity to elevate one of Melbourne’s most important natural assets at a time when Fishermans Bend is

preparing for extraordinary growth.

“Westgate Park is a great new addition to Melbourne’s status as a Garden City,” Cr Reece said. “Once a forgotten corner of the city, Westgate Park is now one of our largest open spaces – sitting behind only Royal Park and Princes Park. Enhancing this green parkland is a priority for the City as

Fishermans Bend is set to see major population growth and be home to 80,000 people.”

The council’s environment portfolio lead Cr Davydd Griffiths said it was committed to honouring the decades of community stewardship that had shaped the park.

“This is an outstanding green space with significant biodiversity value, shaped by the long-term dedication of Westgate Biodiversity,” Cr Griffiths said.

“We want to thank everyone who has advocated for the City of Melbourne to manage this important parkland. Work is now underway to plan for Westgate Park’s sustainable future – and we look forward to bringing the community along on this journey.”

For Westgate Biodiversity, the announcement is the culmination of more than a decade of campaigning. The group credited former Lord Mayor Sally Capp and community advocates including Lecki Ord, Janet Bolitho, George Fotheringham and the late Tony Flude for helping drive the transition.

“We saw the benefits of this move a decade ago,” the group said in a statement. “We are proud of our 30-year history of volunteers turning this land into the biodiverse gem that is today. We now look forward to working with the City of Melbourne, drawing on their expertise in urban ecology, open space and water management, their interest in citizen science, and their capacity to substantially improve park facilities.” ●

New pump track fuels Melbourne’s growing cycling network

A hidden jumps and pump track underneath CityLink as part of the new West Gate Tunnel Project off Footscray Rd in Docklands is supporting the next generation of riders.

WORDS BY
NICOLE MANOLITSAS



The jumps park opened in late 2025 and has quickly become a popular spot for skateboarders and riders of all ages and skill levels. The space has something for everyone, combining jumps, skills and pump tracks that cater to beginners and more experienced riders.

The pump track is part of the state government’s newly completed West Gate Tunnel Project. The fresh track has transformed the underutilised space beneath CityLink into a high-quality recreation hub, while helping to take thousands of trucks off local streets.

The jumps park features four bike tracks, including a BMX pump track, a trail with

box jumps and two BMX pump circuits. You can expect to ride across several dips and curves along the tracks, with a few benches surrounding the park for spectators to view the new landscaping.

“Opening this during the school holidays is perfect timing – it gives kids the chance to get outside, try the jumps and tracks, and enjoy a space that’s been built for them and their community,” Footscray MLA Katie Hall said.

The West Gate Tunnel Project has seamlessly connected this new pump track to Melbourne’s broader cycling network. A newly built ramp and bridge over Moonee Ponds Creek now allows locals from the inner west, Docklands and the city to easily access the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail and the new Dixon Veloway from the pump track.

These connecting upgrades complement the completion of the Federation Trail extension, which features a new walking and cycling bridge over the Williamstown Rd exit of the West Gate Freeway.

The bridge connects the Federation Trail to the new Hyde St ramps, creating a safer and more direct route for people walking and riding in Melbourne’s west.

“The West Gate Tunnel Project has delivered enormous benefits for the inner west,



and this new jumps park is a great example of what the project offers beyond the tunnel itself,” Ms Hall said.

The government added that the project had delivered close to nine hectares of new parks and wetlands, replacing previously closed-off industrial land as open spaces for communities to enjoy.

More than 14km of new and upgraded walking and cycling paths have also been provided.

The pump track is located in West Melbourne under the CityLink. You can use the ramp and bridge over Moonee Ponds Creek or the Dixon Veloway for easiest access to the track. ●

Sarah Witty

Federal Member
for Melbourne



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Council moves to rein in AI infrastructure impacts as data centres surge

The City of Melbourne is aiming to guide the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, including data centres, as concerns grow about their long-term environmental and community impacts.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The notice of motion, which was debated at the February 2 Future Melbourne Committee meeting (after *Docklands News* published its February edition), was put

forward by Lord Mayor Nick Reece, with support from environment portfolio lead Cr Davydd Griffiths. It calls on council management to develop planning guidance and advocacy frameworks to ensure the city's growing digital backbone does not undermine sustainability goals.

Under the proposal, the council would explore best-practice planning and design principles for data centres and other AI-related infrastructure, while also working more closely with industry, utilities and global city networks to promote cleaner technologies and shared community benefits. These include renewable energy use, recycled water systems and the potential to reuse waste heat for nearby community facilities.

The motion comes amid accelerating investment in AI and cloud computing infrastructure across Melbourne. Around 20 data centres already operate within the City of

Melbourne, with further growth occurring in Fishermans Bend and the city's western suburbs. While recognised as a critical economic driver, council papers warn that data centres are highly resource-intensive, placing increasing pressure on electricity networks, water supplies and emissions targets.

According to the motion's background notes, Melbourne's data centres currently consume about two per cent of the city's electricity grid, a figure projected to rise to eight per cent within five years and to almost 20 per cent by 2050 if growth continues unchecked. Planned facilities in Melbourne's west alone could use up to 20 billion litres of water annually – around four per cent of Greater Melbourne's current drinking water supply.

Lord Mayor Reece's motion also highlights gaps in existing planning frameworks, arguing that councils currently lack the

power to manage the cumulative impacts of data centres on energy, water and greenhouse gas emissions. Many projects are approved through fast-tracked state pathways, limiting local oversight.

If adopted, the motion would see the City of Melbourne advocate to state and federal governments for clearer regulatory standards, mandatory sustainability requirements and transparent monitoring of data centre performance. The motion also seeks to align Melbourne's approach with global efforts, building on commitments made at the C40 World Mayors Summit in Rio de Janeiro last year, where Melbourne co-led a coalition of cities calling for responsible AI infrastructure development.

While acknowledging the role of data centres in supporting Melbourne's digital economy and data sovereignty, the motion frames early action as essential to avoid locking in long-term environmental costs. ●

Councillors back expanded Safe City Camera policy after lengthy debate

Melbourne councillors have endorsed the City of Melbourne's draft Safe City Camera policy following a protracted and at times tense debate that stretched for more than an hour at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on December 2.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The policy, which expands the scope of how the city's existing CCTV network can be used, was ultimately supported by councillors in an eight to three vote, despite attempts by Greens councillor Dr Olivia Ball to introduce amendments aimed at strengthening privacy protections and limiting enforcement powers.

The endorsed policy forms the first phase of a staged overhaul of the city's Safe City Camera Program, which currently allows footage to be accessed by Victoria Police for serious criminal matters. Under the updated framework, authorised council officers will also be able to apply to access recorded footage to support investigations under local laws, including matters such as illegal dumping, graffiti and environmental offences.

Council officers stressed that the policy does not permit live monitoring by local laws officers, nor does it include the use of facial recognition or artificial intelligence, although both technologies are flagged for review in later phases.

Presenting the report to councillors, City of Melbourne executive director of city safety Rick Kwasek outlined a three-stage implementation plan. Phase one focuses on policy changes, governance and upgrades to the existing CCTV network's backend systems. Phase two proposes an expansion of camera coverage, to be evaluated by March 2026, while phase three will review the possible future use of video analytics and AI by mid-2026.

Mr Kwasek said community consultation revealed strong concerns about privacy, data protection and the risk of "function creep", alongside more limited but clear support for using cameras to address issues such as rubbish dumping and environmental damage.

"These concerns are understood," he said. "The policy includes a robust approval process for accessing footage, with written applications and managerial oversight. Authorised officers will not have access to live feeds."

Public submissions revealed deep divisions. Several submitters warned that expanding council access to CCTV footage risked undermining civil liberties, with one

contributor likening the program to "George Orwell's 1984" and warning it could be misused by future governments.

Others argued surveillance would have a chilling effect on public participation, protests and everyday city life. Multiple submissions questioned whether the policy was compatible with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, particularly around privacy and freedom of movement.

At the meeting, privacy advocate Anastasia Beasley addressed councillors in person, criticising what she described as rushed and inadequate consultation. She said planned four-week engagement was reduced to three weeks and claimed one public session at Kathleen Syme Library in Carlton was held "in a corridor" due to a failure to book a room.

"That really speaks to carelessness," Ms Beasley told councillors. She also questioned the program's cost-benefit case, noting inconsistencies in budget figures and the absence of clear estimates about fine revenue or cost savings.

Despite this, business and trader groups voiced strong support. Submissions from the City Precinct, Collins Street Precinct and the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association argued that camera footage could help deter vandalism, illegal parking in loading zones and antisocial behaviour in laneways and shopping strips.

During debate, Cr Rafael Camillo defended the policy, describing it as "many years in the making" and saying it struck the right balance between safety and accountability.

"These cameras play a real role in making Melbourne safer," he said. "We have listened to feedback and strengthened governance

and transparency."

Cr Dr Ball attempted to move two separate amendments. The first sought to explicitly state in the policy that cameras would not be used to enforce camping laws against people experiencing homelessness or for live monitoring of local law breaches. The second proposed broader changes to consultation, evaluation and oversight.

Both amendments were voted down, with council officers confirming they would not alter the practical operation of the policy. Lord Mayor Nick Reece said while he respected the intent behind the amendments, he could not support wording that might prevent real-time intervention in serious local law matters.

"Local laws cover indecent acts, threats and offensive behaviour," he said. "I can think of very practical reasons why you would want to intervene in a live situation for the good of the community."

The final motion was ultimately carried with support from councillors Reece, Roshena Campbell, Camillo, Gladys Liu, Kevin Louey, Philip Le Liu, Mark Scott and Dr Owen Guest. Councillors Dr Ball, Davydd Griffiths and Andrew Rowse voted against.

The policy will be reviewed every two years, with additional public consultation planned before any future expansion into AI-based surveillance tools.

The council also confirmed that authorised officers will continue to rely on on-the-ground investigations, with CCTV footage used only as supporting evidence and retained under existing data management rules.

The Safe City Camera policy now moves into implementation, with infrastructure upgrades and procedural changes expected to begin in early 2026. ●

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Maritime futures, port pressures and Antarctic legacy

This first Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN) Docklands News column for 2026 comes amid ongoing global turbulence. Regrettably, the socio-political instability that escalated in late 2025 has continued into the new year, with clear implications for the maritime sector.

Against this backdrop, a recent report from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute offers a timely reflection on the purpose and preparedness of a modern navy. Contrary to much media focus, the report argues that the Royal Australian Navy's greatest challenge is not nuclear submarines or fleet size, but transitioning its culture from a peacetime force to one capable of sustained maritime war-fighting operations.

Closer to home, MMHN is pleased to welcome Captain Ben Esler, Commanding Officer of HMAS Cerberus, to the MMHN Board. His experience will bring valuable insight to the network.

Port of Melbourne and Docklands

The Port of Melbourne (PoM) continues to have major economic, environmental and social influence over the Docklands Precinct. Its recently released Port Development Strategy 2055, published quietly just before last Christmas, deserves close scrutiny.

MMHN strongly encourages Docklands



residents, investors and maritime stakeholders to review the strategy in detail. Of particular concern is PoM's continued proposal to construct an at-grade freight rail crossing at the Bolte Bridge. Despite extensive community feedback, there remains no clear evidence that the Port acknowledges the severity of the impact such infrastructure would have on the Docklands Precinct and maritime access.

As outlined on pages 84 and 85 of the strategy, the proposed crossing would restrict access to the upper Birrarung/Yarra River and Victoria Harbour, effectively reducing a world-renowned heritage waterway to a confined basin. The implications for water-based recreation, visual amenity and Docklands' iconic harbour outlook would be profound.

The strategy also highlights PoM's

broader footprint across the city, including public open space, cycling and walking trails, and the Port Heritage Trail, which stretches 22 kilometres from Station Pier to Williamstown. While these initiatives are welcome, MMHN maintains that future port development must better balance industrial growth with community, heritage and environmental values.

Antarctic heritage

MMHN also congratulates the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition on the John King Davis Memorial Project. The initiative will restore and re-dedicate Captain Davis's previously unmarked grave at Melbourne General Cemetery on February 19, 2026, marking both the 142nd anniversary of his birth and the 75th anniversary of the ANARE Club.

As a reminder, No. 5 Wharf (now Seafarers Rest Park) on the Birrarung/Yarra once served as the home port for many Antarctic expeditions prior to the Australian Antarctic Division's relocation to Hobart in 1981.

MMHN welcomes feedback on its work and encourages those with an interest in maritime advocacy to consider joining the network in 2026. ●

Jackie Watts

CHAIR

INFO@MMHN.ORG.AU



FEDERAL MP

Melbourne is inclusive, creative, sustainable and confident in its diversity

It's a privilege to spend so much of my time in places where Melbourne comes together to celebrate, to belong, and to imagine what comes next.

WORDS BY

SARAH WITTY
FEDERAL MP FOR MELBOURNE

One of the most moving parts of my role is attending citizenship ceremonies, particularly those held at Melbourne Town Hall and more recently at AAMI Park. These are moments filled with pride, anticipation, and hope. People from every corner of the world stand together, raise their right hands, and commit to a shared future as Australians.

The settings themselves say something important: our civic heart at the Town Hall, and one of our great sporting arenas at AAMI Park, both opening their doors to new citizens. It's a powerful reminder that citizenship isn't just a legal status; it's participation in a community that values fairness, opportunity and respect.

Those values are also reflected in how we invest in our city. Labor's commitment to the Greenline project along the Birrarung/Yarra River is about more than beautification - though anyone who has walked the river knows how transformative that can be. It's about reconnecting people with our most iconic natural asset, creating accessible public spaces, improving biodiversity, and supporting local jobs. The Yarra is central to Melbourne's story, from its deep cultural



significance to First Nations peoples to its role in shaping the city we know today. Investing in the Greenline means ensuring the river can be enjoyed by everyone, now and into the future.

Culture, too, is a cornerstone of who we are. Inner-city venues and festivals give Melbourne its pulse, but they've faced enormous challenges in recent years.

That's why Revive Live grants have been so important. These grants support the small and medium venues where emerging artists cut their teeth, where local audiences

discover new sounds, and where communities gather. The grants also back festivals that spill onto our streets and laneways, bringing energy and economic activity to neighbourhoods that thrive on creativity.

When we support live music and performance, we're not indulging a luxury; we are investing in jobs, good mental health, and the soul of our city.

Sustainability and community wellbeing come together beautifully at the Victoria Point Edible Garden in Docklands. I had a chance to visit the garden recently. This

project turns underused space into something practical and inspiring: a place where locals can grow Indigenous food, learn new skills and recipes, and connect with one another.

Urban gardens like this show what's possible when we think creatively about city living. They promote healthier eating, reduce food miles, and build a sense of shared responsibility for our environment. Just as importantly, they create spaces where neighbours meet - something that matters more than ever in a growing city.

As we move into February, many families across Melbourne will be celebrating Lunar New Year. It's a time marked by reunion, generosity, and optimism; values that resonate far beyond any one community. I want to wish everyone celebrating a Happy Lunar New Year and a year filled with good health, prosperity and joy. The colour, food, and traditions associated with Lunar New Year are a vivid reminder of the multicultural fabric that makes our city such a wonderful place to live.

From citizenship ceremonies to riverside walks, from live music venues to community gardens, these moments and investments are all connected. They speak to a vision of Melbourne that is inclusive, creative, sustainable and confident in its diversity. I am proud to be part of a government that believes in backing our communities and public spaces, and I am grateful every day for the chance to work alongside people who care so deeply about this city.

Melbourne's story is still being written; by new citizens, by artists and volunteers, by families celebrating old traditions and creating new ones. It's a story worth investing in, and one I'm honoured to help tell. ●

Making your 2026 health goals stick: five pro tips from Dr Eunise Yeo

As we step into 2026, the familiar buzz of New Year's resolutions is in the air. We start January with the best intentions – joining the gym, fixing our posture, or finally addressing that nagging back pain. Yet by mid-February, many of these goals begin to fade.

We sat down with Dr Eunise Yeo, a leading chiropractor at Docklands Health, to explore how to break that cycle. With a background in musculoskeletal sonography and functional exercise rehabilitation, Dr Yeo takes a "root cause" approach to health. Here are her five practical tips to help make your 2026 health goals last.

1. Move beyond "pain relief"

"Too often, people set goals only when they're in pain," Dr Yeo says. "But health is about function, not just the absence of symptoms."

Rather than aiming to simply stop pain, she suggests linking goals to real-life outcomes – like

lifting your kids comfortably, hiking without fear, or training for an event. Functional goals are more motivating and easier to maintain.

2. Focus on the root cause, not the quick fix

In a world of instant solutions, Dr Yeo encourages playing the long game. "People want a quick adjustment to undo years of poor posture, but lasting change comes from addressing underlying mechanics."

Choose one foundational habit – such as improving your workstation or committing to daily mobility – instead of chasing fad fixes. Sustainable progress comes from consistency, not shortcuts.

3. Add "functional snacks" to your day

You don't need long gym sessions to improve your health. Dr Yeo believes in regular movement throughout the day – what she calls "functional snacks".

Stretch while the kettle boils. Practice balance while brushing your teeth. Small, frequent movements lower the barrier to entry

and build resilience over time.

4. Listen to your body's signals

"Don't ignore the whispers before they become screams," Dr Yeo warns. Persistent pain or extreme fatigue is a sign to reassess.

Pay attention to how your body responds to exercise, food and rest. Working with your body – not against it – leads to better long-term outcomes.

5. Build a support squad

"Health isn't a solo journey," Dr Yeo says. Whether it's a gym buddy, a running group, or a healthcare professional, accountability matters.

Support systems make it far more likely you'll stay on track when motivation dips – and that's when it matters most. ●



Dr Mike Edgley

CHIROPRACTOR
DOCKLANDS HEALTH



OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

Court ruling strengthens owners' corporation rights to pursue building defect claims

In a recent County Court case, Judge Kirton published a decision confirming the rights of an owners' corporation (OC) in Fitzroy to file a claim for the remediation of building defects and the removal of combustible cladding, without being required to having to guarantee the builder's security for costs if it were to lose the eventual hearing.

The Court discussed at length about the unique nature and characteristics of an OC, which set it apart from other litigants such as companies or private citizens.

If the Court had ruled otherwise, the effect may well have been to discourage other OCs from embarking on its own litigation efforts. It is expensive enough to fund its own legal and expert bills, without also

having to guarantee the costs of the identified defendants as well.

In Victoria, the position is that an OC "is the registered proprietor of a fee simple in the common property and it is the equitable or beneficial ownership but not the legal ownership of the common property which is vested in the lot owners."

It is the OC which must sue for building defects in common property, rather than the private lot owners. OCs do not usually own property or other assets above what they need to fulfil their obligations to administer and maintain the common property.

There would be very few OCs which had sufficient assets to resist an application for security, if they were assessed solely on current assets. However, they are in a special position compared with general corporations, in that the legislation gives them the powers to levy their members.

Lot owners and the committee managing an OC are usually unsophisticated in building regulations, building defects, design and engineering issues, and appropriate

methods of rectification.

Also, an OC has no privity of contract with subcontractors or consultants involved in the original building works. Its rights to claim in negligence for pure economic loss are extremely limited.

The presumption of equal bargaining power to allocate risk which is common in commercial building projects does not usually apply to the OC of a residential building. An OC is dependent on the warranties in the *Domestic Building Contracts Act*. The Victorian Government acknowledged that "often OCs are not adequately governed and resourced to deal with complex, large-scale building matters like cladding rectification."

In response to the combustible cladding crisis in Victoria, the state government established the Cladding Rectification Program as a public safety measure. It put in place a process to identify non-compliant cladding, to issue Building Notices and Building Orders, and to assist OCs to rectify, so that "importantly all Victorians

will benefit from a safer built environment, coupled with the confidence that the Government is also overhauling Victoria's building legislative framework to ensure this never happens again."

The government established Cladding Safety Victoria to (among other things) administer the Cladding Rectification Program, to provide financial assistance for cladding rectification work and register owners and OCs of those buildings, and to provide guidance to owners and owners corporations of buildings in relation to cladding rectification work in order to mitigate risk. ●

Tom Bacon

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Quiz



1. Name the 2013 novel by Tim Winton about a man named Tom Keely.
2. Which Japanese company became a new global partner in Lendlease's \$500 million build-to-rent tower at 899 Collins St?
3. Is a toxophilite an expert at archery, knitting or taxidermy?
4. What key Docklands issue did Community3008 members identify as an ongoing priority at their November AGM?
5. Havana is the capital city of what Caribbean island?
6. Which three vessels make up the now former Docklands-based Melbourne Heritage Fleet?
7. What was Victoria Beckham's (pictured) nickname as a member of the Spice Girls?
8. What immersive Christmas attraction transformed The District Docklands into a festive 'Candy Garden' over summer?
9. In which US state was John F. Kennedy assassinated?
10. The movie *Saving Mr. Banks* tells the story behind the development of which Disney film?
11. What action prompted Docklands residents and maritime supporters to organise a 'Save Our Ships' flotilla protest in December?
12. Which developer received unanimous council backing for its final Yarra's Edge tower, marking the end of a 20-year Docklands precinct build-out?

QUIZ SOLUTIONS

1. *Eyre* 2. Tokyo 3. Archery 4. Public safety and protection of community assets 5. Cuba 6. *Alma Doedel*, *Enterprise* and the steam tug *Wattie* 7. Posh Spice 8. The Great Gummy Bear Escape 9. Texas 10. *Mary Poppins* 11. The heritage fleet being given notice to vacate Docklands 12. Mirvac

5x5

No. 320

Insert the missing letters to make 10 words – five reading across the grid and five reading down.

M		S		N
	B		T	
R		U		E
	U		E	
S		A		S

SOLUTIONS

MASON, ABATE, ROUTE, TUNED, STARS

PUZZLES AND PAGINATION

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February, 2026

Sudoku

No. 055

Fill in the blank cells using the numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block

EASY

		3		1				
6	8		7					
9				4	2	3	6	
	3	6	1		9			7
	9						8	
2			3		8	6	9	
	7	8	5	9				6
					3		5	4
				2		9		

HARD

			4	8		6		
		6			7			
	4				6		5	
		7					6	5
	1			3			9	
5	8					2		
	9		7					1
			2			7		
		2		1	9			

SOLUTIONS

EASY

8	1	6	7	2	4	5	3	9
4	6	1	2	5	3	7	8	9
4	7	8	5	6	9	1	2	3
2	5	4	3	7	8	6	9	1
3	8	5	4	2	6	7	9	1
8	3	6	1	5	9	7	2	4
9	1	7	2	8	4	3	6	5
6	8	2	7	3	5	1	4	9
5	4	3	9	1	6	8	7	2

HARD

3	7	2	8	1	9	5	4	6
4	6	1	2	5	3	7	8	9
8	6	5	7	6	4	3	1	2
5	8	4	3	7	1	2	3	4
9	1	4	5	3	6	8	9	7
2	3	7	4	8	1	6	5	9
7	4	8	1	2	9	6	3	5
1	5	6	3	9	7	4	2	8
6	2	3	4	8	5	6	7	1

Wordfind

Theme: Robin Hood

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

N	A	M	R	O	N	I	B	O	R	S
Y	R	R	E	M	A	R	R	O	W	L
S	H	E	R	W	O	O	D	T	I	E
M	A	H	G	N	I	T	T	O	N	D
Y	N	O	X	A	S	L	N	R	R	S
E	E	A	L	E	I	H	O	A	C	M
L	F	R	R	N	E	B	H	A	R	A
X	O	O	C	A	S	C	R	M	A	R
O	F	O	R	I	I	L	T	H	I	I
L	L	T	G	R	E	E	R	I	R	A
N	C	E	L	T	S	A	C	H	F	N

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| ARROW | MERRY |
| CASTLE | NORMAN |
| FOREST | NOTTINGHAM |
| FRIAR | RICHARD |
| GISBORNE | ROBIN |
| LINCOLN | SAXON |
| LIONHEART | SCARLET |
| LOXLEY | SHERWOOD |
| MARIAN | |

Secret message: Steal from the rich

Crossword

No. 055

ACROSS

- 1 Those who murder important persons (9)
- 6 Needy (4)
- 10 Belly (coll) (3)
- 11 Connection (with) (11)
- 12 Powerful (8)
- 13 Amenable (6)
- 14 Head cook (4)
- 15 Permits (7)
- 20 Country in Horn of Africa (7)
- 21 Light ring (4)
- 25 Peninsula in West Asia (6)
- 26 Sycophant (8)
- 28 Between two races (11)
- 29 Amiss (3)
- 30 Crusted sore (4)
- 31 Relating to the body (9)

DOWN

- 1 Crafty trick (8)
- 2 English county (8)
- 3 Closed up (6)
- 4 Disease caused by common virus (9)
- 5 Preservative (4)
- 7 Egyptian god of the afterlife (6)
- 8 Give up (6)
- 9 Blade affixed to firearm (7)
- 16 British military rank (9)
- 17 Slim dagger (7)
- 18 A male voice (8)
- 19 Potent (8)
- 22 ABCs (6)
- 23 Celebrity chef, - Stewart (6)
- 24 Email address identifier (4,2)
- 27 Fashion designer, - Jacobs (4)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
									9					
10				11										
12										13				
14					15			16						
						17							18	19
					20								21	
22													24	
25								26						
								27						
28														29
30								31						

SOLUTION

T	V	E	R	M	A	R	R	O	W	L	C	O	C	A	S	M	A	R	S
N	O	R	M	A	R	R	O	W	L	C	O	C	A	S	M	A	R	S	
F	O	R	E	M	A	R	R	O	W	L	C	O	C	A	S	M	A	R	S
F	E	L	I	D	O	M	A	N	I	S									
E	L	I	S	V	A	R	A	V	I	B	A	V	A	R	A				
M	A	H	G	N	I	T	T	O	N	D									
O	L	I	V	A	R	A	V	I	B	A	V	A	R	A					
P	B	A	R	Z	P	F	E												
S	E	R	V	E	N	E	F	E	C	H									
E	T	I	C	O	D	O	N	T	F	E	C	H							
D	R	A	R	A	R	A	R	E											
E	N	O	I	L	I	L	T	H	I	I									
N	O	I	L	I	L	T	H	I	I										
E	S	S	B	A	R	Z	P	F	E										
R	O	O	C	A	S	C	R	M	A	R									

Codeword

No. 055

22	20	14	13	1		9	8	7	14	21	9	19	
23		1		23		7		8		17		24	
8	7	22	24	B	23	8		20	7	13	23	8	
12		22				4		22		23		14	
12	8	19	1	23		24	10	18	8	20	14	13	
8				24		14		8		D			
23	24	3	21	2	24		1	B	11	24	3	13	
		1		23		16		7				1	
2	8	6	7	1	6	8			24	5	20	21	2
7		24				7				17		7	
8	1	23	13	8		23	24	5	20	21	23	24	
15		24		13		20		20		13		14	
8		D	D	23	24	14	14		8	B	19	14	14

SOLUTIONS

S	Z	W	N	N	Y	U	I	G	R	E	B	D
9	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
T	M	J	F	L	A	R	V	K	O	P	C	O
5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

9-Letter

No. 055

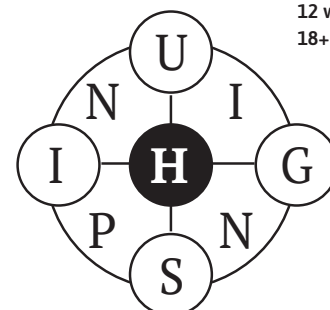
Today's Focus:

7 words: Good

12 words: Very good

18+ words: Excellent

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural nouns ending in 's'.



Reference: Macquarie Dictionary

SOLUTIONS

gunstip, gusht, hips, hugs, hung, nig, pist, punish, PUNISHING, push, pushing, shin, shining, ship, shun, sigh, unhip, unshin

WHAT'S ON February



From art to markets and festivals, you'll find something to float your boat this February in Docklands.



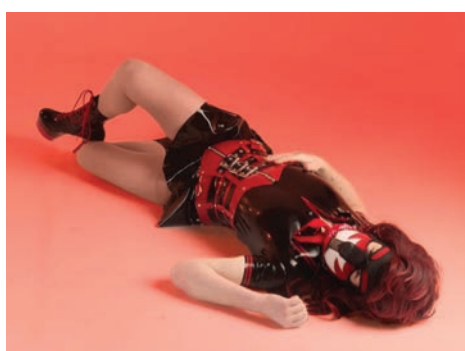
COMMUNITY SOCIAL CRAFTING
 Have you been looking for an inclusive, supportive, creative community crafting group? The Cauldron is a fabulous creative community space in Docklands hosting weekly social crafting sessions.
The Cauldron, The District Docklands
EVERY WEDNESDAY, 5PM – 7PM



VALENTINE'S DAY COUPLES SALSA
 Start your Valentine's evening on the right foot, and set the mood for the evening with bubbles on arrival and a beginner-level salsa lesson.
The MBassy Dance, Shop G22/116 Studio Lane, Docklands
SATURDAY 14 FEBRUARY, 6PM – 7PM



MELBOURNE ICE WOMEN VS PERTH INFERNO
 Melbourne Ice Women, reigning AWIHL champions, showcase Australia's top women's ice hockey talent and face fierce rivals.
O'Brien Icehouse, Docklands
14 & 15 FEBRUARY, 4.45PM – 7.15PM



PRESENCE (PERFORMANCE)
 XYZ continues its tradition of showcasing diverse gay-identifying artists, presenting *Presence (Performance)* – an edgy, playful, and beautiful exploration of visibility, drag, and identity as part of Midsumma Festival.
XYZ Photo Gallery, Docklands
UNTIL 15 FEBRUARY, 1PM – 6PM



LUNAR NEW YEAR AT COLLINS SQUARE
 Celebrate the Year of the Horse at Collins Square with a vibrant Lion and Dragon Dance, blossom tree display, traditional blessings, and a dynamic Lunar New Year procession.
Collins Square, 727 Collins St, Docklands
TUES 17 FEBRUARY, 11.30AM – 12PM



HOLI FESTIVAL MELBOURNE
 Melbourne Holi Festival celebrates unity in diversity, bringing communities together for two vibrant days of colours, music, dance, food, culture, DJs, and multicultural performances joyful.
Ron Barassi Snr Park (West), Docklands
28 FEBRUARY – 1 MARCH, 11AM – 10PM



BOURNE LOCAL MARKET
 Visit the Collins Square main retail plaza and explore a carefully curated variety of local market stalls, featuring handmade crafts to artisanal treasures.
Collins Square, 727 Collins St, Docklands
UNTIL 26 MARCH, 10AM – 2PM

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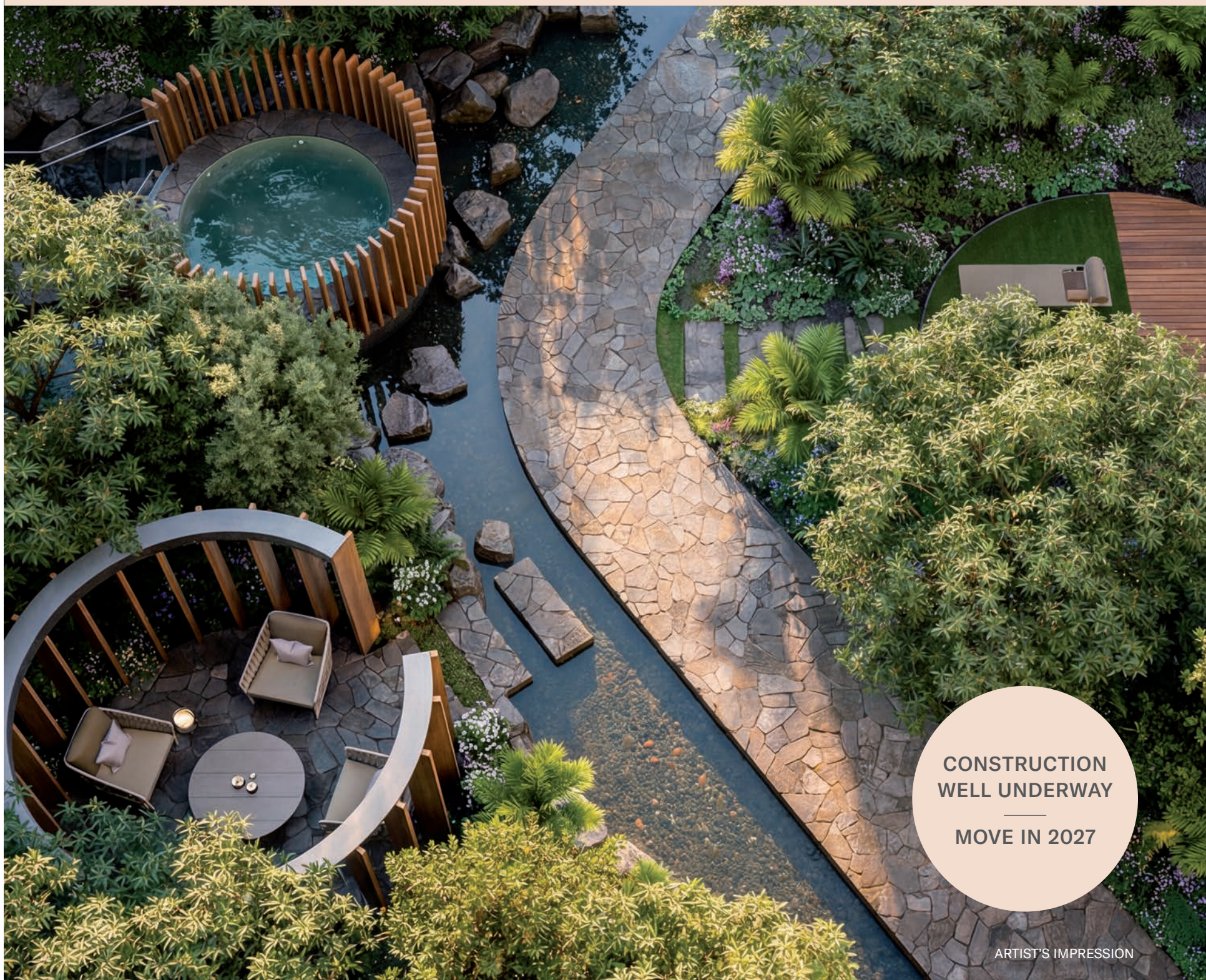
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