

# New Epping Community Development Plan



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the Country upon which New Epping is located. New Epping is at the heart of Wurundjeri Willam Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and express our deep gratitude for our interactions with Wurundjeri Elders to date.

We are committed to collaborating with First Peoples as we imagine and realise new places that hold space for their stories, connect with ancient landscapes, amplify their culture and realise their aspirations and continued connection with Country.



# INTRODUCTION

This community development plan aims to raise awareness, establish objectives and identify areas of importance to the current and future New Epping community. This plan underpins the roles, responsibilities and implementation in accordance with evaluation and reporting requirements.

New Epping, a city in the suburbs, is true mixed use project, being developed for Melbourne's north. It promises a sustainable neighbourhood bisected by Edgars Creek which will provide an 11-hectare rehabilitated green spine.

Epping and its surrounding suburbs take on a typical suburban character with a specific and thriving local culture. Epping is presently experiencing a shift from being an outer-middle ring suburb to a key centre of growth, adjacent to the northern growth corridor, with increasing density, amenity, and activity.

Riverlee has worked with the community and key stakeholders of New Epping to ensure the needs and wants of the community has and will be considered in the delivery of the project. This has been demonstrated in the engagement with the Traditional Owners, current residents, health precinct stakeholders, surrounding community, future residents, workers, government, and stakeholders of New Epping.

[Placemaking+in+New+Epping.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)





Artist's Impression of New Epping's Eat Street



# OBJECTIVES

The community development plan objectives include:

- Demonstration of a commitment to enhancing liveability within New Epping, by providing a mechanism for the community to provide feedback as the development evolves
- Ensuring the community and key stakeholders understand the importance of the Community Reference Group and other feedback mechanisms available
- Ensuring collaboration occurs between Riverlee and stakeholders where possible
- Feedback reflecting the views of a wide range of people, groups, and organisations are considered in project decision making
- Seeking input from the community and stakeholders as to how best communicate any future opportunities and challenges
- Undertaking community consultation, as required and where appropriate, with the community and stakeholders
- Informing the community on the outcomes and actions of community consultation, including opportunities for improvement.





# POPULATION & CONTEXT

Located 18km north of Melbourne's CBD, New Epping sits on 51 hectares of land and is positioned to become a \$2 billion mixed-use community spanning residential, commercial, healthcare and convenience retail.

Situated in the City of Whittlesea with a current population of 223,566 which is set to grow to 382,896 by 2041 – this is a community that will be defined by leading thinking in urban experience, wellness and sustainability and will support the municipality's ongoing growth.

With Riverlee's vision for a greener future, New Epping will revitalise an 11-hectare central green spine and waterway which has laid dormant for decades, providing access to a long stretch of Edgars Creek. Commercial and living options will target Net Zero in operation, providing sustainability benefits through comfort, health, low operating costs and a reduced carbon footprint, further enhancing the urban experience and liveability.

Representing a new approach for business and community, New Epping will provide diverse and inclusive living options for approximately 6,000 people, whilst the 110,000m<sup>2</sup> commercial hub will feature purpose-built spaces, unrivalled amenity and connections to nature which will enhance the way people experience life at work. Both the living and working communities will be linked to a vibrant civic heart that draws on the distinct character of the north to create a new destination to meet, eat, and play.

Sharing a boundary with the established Northern Hospital, New Epping's new Northern Private Hospital, operated by Ramsay Healthcare, will anchor the precinct's 7 hectare health, wellness and knowledge precinct. Set to become the largest health hub in Melbourne's north, the precinct will also offer allied health, education, teaching and research facilities

To be developed over a 10–15 year period, New Epping is expected to provide \$3.4 billion in economic benefit to Victoria, generating approximately 9,330 jobs during construction and approximately 7,209 jobs at completion.

Currently completed in Stage 1 of New Epping is the Northern Private Hospital (Stage 1) operated by Ramsay Health Care, 151 affordable apartments, owned and operated by Haven; Home, Safe and woorike jellicka – a nature playground along with key supporting infrastructure.



# POPULATION & CONTEXT

## Language & culture

- In Epping, 56.1% of people speak a language other than English at home. Arabic is the highest spoken language other than English, with Punjabi, Macedonian, Italian and Greek following, all of which have a greater occurrence compared to the Greater Melbourne area.
- Of the people living in Epping, 61 per cent had parents that were born overseas, compared to 23.4% of Australian residents born with both parents living locally. Additionally, there are 312 Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander people living in the Epping community.

## Site history

- Prior to being purchased by Riverlee in 2015, the current New Epping site was a landfill site which was established in 1984. Prior to that it was a bluestone quarry, and prior to that farming land operated by European settlers.
- The Traditional Owners of the land are the Wurundjeri willem resided on it for at least 35,000 years.
- Riverlee is committed to working with the Traditional Owners to identify opportunities and cultural narratives in the design and delivery of New Epping, and at the time of writing, Riverlee has completed the woorike jellicka which was designed with input from Elders. We thank them and honour their contribution to date, and look forward to our ongoing collaboration with each other, and our connection with each other and to Country.

## Vision

- New Epping will be a community of residential neighborhoods, commercial spaces, a health, wellness and knowledge precinct and a civic heart all connected by a central green spine. A place that puts people, their health, happiness, and wellbeing first and defined by leading thinking in urban experience, wellness and sustainability.

## Opportunities

- Riverlee has undertaken engagement and consultation activities with the Wurundjeri Elders for woorike jellicka (the Stage 1 park), Edgars Creek revitalisation, and the broader masterplan. Key opportunities identified include:
  - Development of a Cultural Narrative Framework and Ways of Working
  - Embedding specific opportunities for storytelling, design, and activation in each precinct across architecture, public realm, landscaping, wayfinding and public art.
  - A relationship built on value exchange and reciprocity, exploring opportunities to deliver tangible outcomes to the Wurundjeri community.
  - Elders noted the importance of early engagement in the project in enabling them to provide meaningful input and direction.

After engaging with the Wurundjeri Elders, Riverlee and project partners gained a shared understanding of how they wanted to provide a culturally safe and responsive outcome for New Epping. This included listening, a shared sense of ownership, and setting a benchmark for Traditional Owner engagement within private property developments, all with the goal of creating an experience that aligns with the Wurundjeri people's vision.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Community Development Officer

The community development officer is responsible for the implementation of the community development plan.

The community development plan will be implemented by Sarah Hardin from the Riverlee Team. Sarah will assume the role as community development officer. Sarah is the Senior Marketing Manager for New Epping and has a strong appreciation of Epping and its community.

Sarah will be a direct contact for engagement purposes, events schedule, planning, and attendance at the Community Reference Group meetings.

## Community information

- The following material will be made available to the public, current and future residents and stakeholders via the following channels:

Material	Channel
Community Development Plan	Website
Events schedule	Website
Newsletters	eDM
FAQs	Website
Masterplan	Website
Community Reference Group minutes	Website
Contact us forms	Website
Vision statement	Website
Roles and responsibilities log (Community Development Officer)	Website



# COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP

In August 2023, Riverlee sent out an expression of interest to current and future community members and stakeholders inviting participation in the New Epping Community Reference Group.

Once formed, this group will meet twice per quarter, with Riverlee chairing each meeting. This group will enable ongoing consultation with the community to aid in determining current and future community needs.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Community Reference Group (CRG) is to:

- Provide valuable feedback at crucial stages of the project's development to help inform and shape key decisions on behalf of the community
- Comment on project updates
- Provide information relevant to the project
- Provide a response to community input
- *Note – the CRG is not a decision-making body.*

## Membership will comprise

- Up to twelve (12) Community members appointed by Riverlee, following an Expression of Interest process
- Representatives from diverse geographic areas
- Representatives from housing providers, groups and a diversity of special interest groups
- Representative from Riverlee (self-nominated)
- Memberships will be for 12 months from initiation of the first meeting
- Where a community member vacancy occurs, Riverlee may appoint a replacement community member at its discretion.

## Meeting conduct

- The meetings will be held quarterly
- The notice and agenda and all papers for each meeting will be forwarded to members at least five working days prior to each meeting
- Notes of meetings are to be kept attached to the agenda of the following meeting and made available at the New Epping website, or on request
- The chairperson will ensure that the discussion remains within the scope of matters set out in the Terms of Reference in the CRG user guide.
- The meetings will be chaired by a Riverlee representative.

## Term and commitment

- The CRG will operate until the completion of the Project.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Monitoring and evaluation

The community development plan will be evaluated and regularly monitored for effectiveness and to ensure the objectives are achieved and are on track. The evaluation program aims to:

- Detail evidence of the outputs and outcomes
- Ensure the community development officer has participated in at least 50% of CRG meetings
- Where outcomes are not being achieved, assess and reflect on the plan and refine strategies
- Ensure materials are maintained and made available for publication and public viewing. Materials may include minutes of CRG meetings, events calendar, website and news updates, community development plan and more.

The community development plan will be reviewed annually.





For further details on  
New Epping, email:

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