

# FUTURE OF OPEN SPACE



## Review of Council's Open Space Strategy and Action Plan - Summary of the Analysis and Discussion Paper

Council is reviewing its current Open Space Strategy and Action Plan to ensure the provision of open space in Greater Dandenong continues to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

As part of this review, an Analysis and Discussion Paper has been prepared to help inform the development of the Open Space Strategy. Key components of this paper are:

- 'Who' – Who is using open space and how is the community using it?
- 'What' – What types of open space exist and what are the proposed classifications?
- 'Where' – Where is the existing open space located?
- 'How many' – Where is future demand and population growth likely to be?
- What is the impact of population growth and the role of open space in the delivery of a healthy community and a healthy environment?
- 'How much' – How does Council maintain and provide open space and open space contributions?
- The social, environmental, economic and cultural demands of the City of Greater Dandenong.

This brochure is a summary of the key components of the Analysis and Discussion Paper. The full document is available at [www.greaterdandenong.com/futureofopenspace](http://www.greaterdandenong.com/futureofopenspace).

## What is open space?

Open space is defined by the Victorian Planning Authority as 'land that provides outdoor recreation, leisure and/ or environmental benefits and/ or visual amenity'.

Open space includes sporting fields, nature reserves, gardens, playgrounds, trails and civic spaces such as Harmony Square in Dandenong.

## What the community has told us previously about open space?

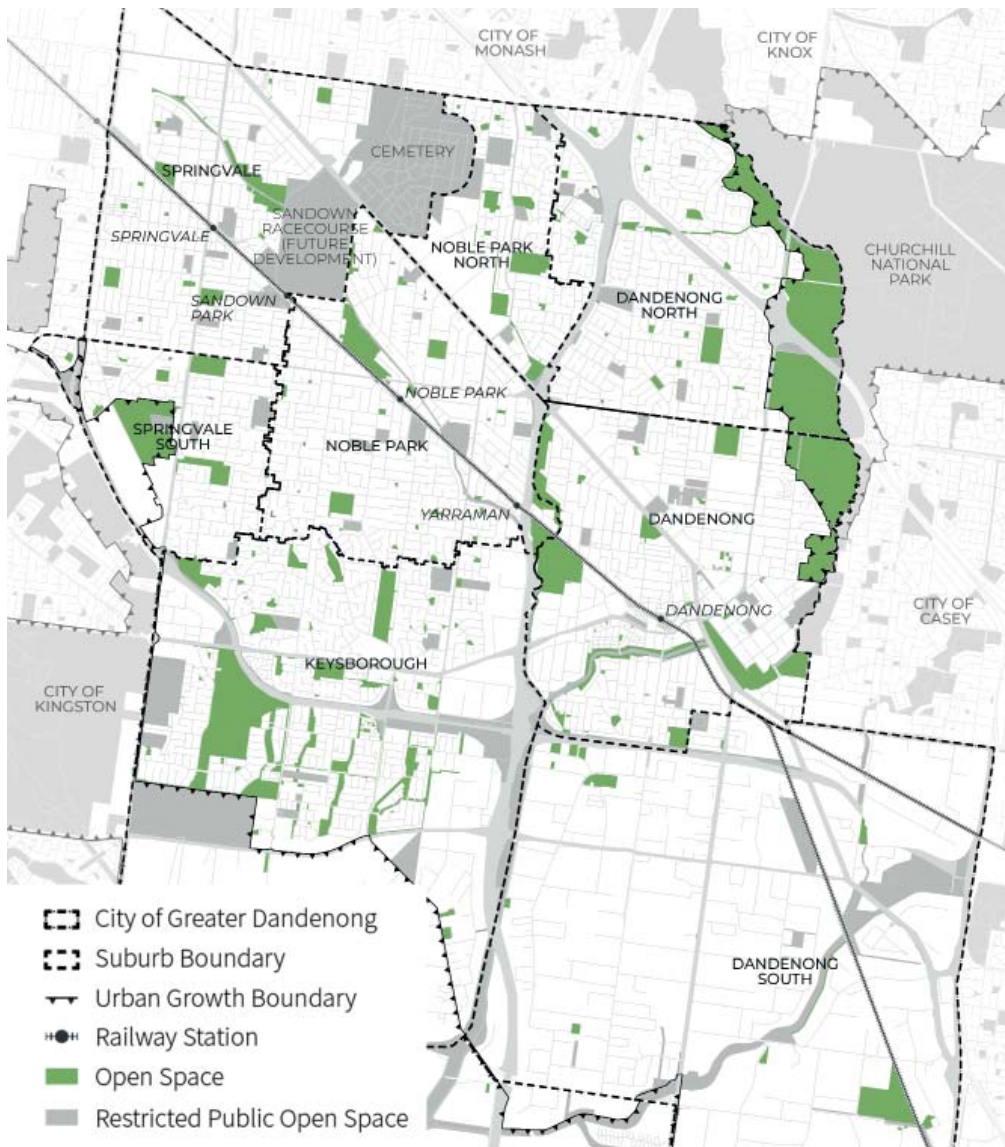
Residents living within Greater Dandenong have previously told Council that they would like:

- More shade
- Improvements to playgrounds and areas for social sports
- A good mix of formal and informal activity spaces
- New and improved path networks for walkers and cyclists
- More space for cultural expression, performance, celebration and events
- Improved access and car parking for all ages and abilities
- More youth spaces
- More picnic facilities, exercise stations, kiosks, seating and drinking fountains
- The same level of variety and quality of open spaces across the municipality
- More signage and wayfinding measures so they can navigate the local area
- More outdoor spaces to provide opportunities to be with trees and nature
- Access to nature and biodiversity



## Where is existing open space located?

The map below shows where open space is located in Greater Dandenong. This map is also available at [www.greaterdandenong.com/futureofopenspace](http://www.greaterdandenong.com/futureofopenspace)



## Who is using open space?

- Greater Dandenong has a growing and incredibly diverse population.
- Current open space usage is dominated by traditional sporting groups (AFL, Cricket, Soccer, etc.)
- Residents have a very low level of physical activity compared to the Victorian average.
- Increased female participation in sport is putting pressure on ground facilities such as change rooms and pavilions.
- Growing need to understand the open space needs of our culturally diverse community.
- Growing need for open space to be used for a range of different activities and non-traditional sports.



## Benefits of open space

Open space is an essential part of our municipality, providing benefits for our community and natural environment, including:

- **Physical:** spaces that allow for a range of physical activities such as walking, jogging, organised sports, social recreation or walking or cycling through safe, green and connected open spaces.
- **Social and Community:** places to socialise and relax, including public displays of culture, ethnicity and diversity, including community events.
- **Mental:** Provide vital experiences to connect with nature helping to improve our mental wellbeing.
- **Environmental:** Play a crucial role in the environmental sustainability and health of our neighbourhoods by providing habitat for plants and animals as well as the health of our waterways.
- **Neighbourhood Character:** contribute to a 'sense of place' for each area.
- **Economic:** Increased health and wellbeing of the community.

## What are the proposed classifications for the different types of open space?

The Discussion Paper recommends a classification system that considers:

<b>Access / Ownership</b>	How accessible is the open space to the community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who owns and manages the open space? (e.g. Council, Melbourne Water)</li> </ul>
<b>Typology</b>	What is the open space used for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports, Passive, Conservation, Linear, Links and Trails, Urban &amp; Civic, Ancillary</li> </ul>
<b>Hierarchy</b>	What is the size of the open space and the area it serves? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional, District, Neighbourhood, Local, Small Local, Pocket Park</li> </ul>
<b>Land Use</b>	What is the potential population density of the surrounding residential areas?

The proposed classifications will recognise the increasing variety of open spaces across our municipality, assist in recording where each type of open space is and help ensure the equitable distribution of open spaces across Greater Dandenong. See page 53 of the Discussion Paper for further information.

## Measuring the Quality of Open Space

The Discussion Paper recommends that the quality of open space be measured to determine how useable and enjoyable open spaces are based on a set of criteria. This quality assessment would assist Council in directing where more capital investment may be required to ensure open spaces are providing a suitable level of amenity for the community.

## How does Council maintain and provide open space?

In conjunction with general rates revenue, government grants and community / user contributions, there are a range of mechanisms available to Council to levy financial or land contributions from developers to implement the Open Space Strategy. This is discussed further in the Discussion Paper at page 142.



## Housing Density and Open Space - Where is future demand and population likely to be?

Greater Dandenong's population is expected to increase by almost 30,000 people by 2031. A significant increase in housing density, such as townhouses and apartments, is projected to occur within and surrounding the Dandenong, Noble Park and Springvale Activity Centres.

The Discussion Paper looks into the follow key considerations for planning public open space and population density:

- Demand by residents for public open space increases in higher density housing areas due to a decrease in private open space and a reduction in traditional backyards.
- Open spaces within a higher density context serve a larger population.
- As the demand for public open space increases with population density it is important to ensure open spaces are of a high quality, provide a diversity of uses and are not overburdened.
- As more people use the open spaces, the pressure on infrastructure including paths, gardens, rubbish disposal, playgrounds, sports fields, public toilets and sports pavilions will increase.
- The needs of children in higher density living environments are particularly important, for health, play, social and physical development.
- Open spaces become critical in providing places for all people to be active, socialise, relax and connect with nature.

Finding opportunities for more open space within already built up areas may result in considering the type and design of open spaces in less traditional ways. For example, occupying streetscapes, smaller public plazas, pocket parks and utilising existing open spaces associated with schools and other community facilities.

A suburb-wide analysis of accessibility to and open space provision for all residents will be undertaken as part of developing the new Open Space Strategy. This analysis will allow Council to see where there are gaps in the provision of or access to open space, help determine where new open spaces may be needed, and which open spaces may need to be upgraded.

## Have Your Say and Next Steps

Help shape the new Open Space Strategy by filling in the survey or go on line:  
[www.greaterdandenong.com/futureofopenspace](http://www.greaterdandenong.com/futureofopenspace)

Feedback received will inform the development of the Draft Open Space Strategy and Action Plan which will be available for comment later in 2019.



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