

# Internal - City Strategy - Open Space Services

## Formal Referral Request



Application Information	
Officer	Lara Fiscalini
Council Reference	PPE22/0103
Address	1-9 Doonside St, Richmond VIC 3121
Proposal	Victoria Gardens Expansion
Zone	MUZ - Mixed Use Zone Comprehensive Development Zone (Schedule 1)
Overlay(s)	EAO - Environmental Audit Overlay DDO9 - Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 9 DCPO1
Previously Referred	No - First Referral <a href="#">D22/121208 - S96A Application - Victoria Ga xpansion - Architectural Plans_compressed</a>  <a href="#">D22/101086 - S96A Application - Victoria Gardens Doonside Expansion - Landscape - Final</a>  <a href="#">D22/101082 - S96A Application - Victoria Gardens Doonside Expansion - Public Realm Strategy</a>  <a href="#">D22/101063 - S96A Application - Victoria Gardens Doonside Expansion - Urban Context Report</a>
Referral IREF22/00740 Due	15 June 2022

**Please note the limited timeframe in providing these comments – the application is being assessed as a joint application/amendment by DEWLP, with Council provided with a restricted timeframe in which to form our position.**

# City Strategy - Open Space Services (Design)

## Referral Type:

Council's Open Space Design (City Strategy) are requested to make comment on the following:

- Landscaping Plan (which shows landscaping proposed within the development's property boundary)
- Landscaping Plan and plant schedules
- Details for planter boxes and other furniture within laneways and communal open spaces
- Irrigation and maintenance
- Clause 58.03-5 landscaping objectives (soil volumes, deep soil planting). The following report may assist in this review. [D22/121245 - S96A Application - Victoria Ga - Section 96A Planning Report compressed](#)

The application also seeks to amend the current wording of Schedule 1 to the Comprehensive Development Zone, please see link below. Whilst still in draft form, this references requirements to be considered for the landscaping aspect of the proposal. Could comments please reference this document as well.

[D22/101127 - S96A Application - Victoria Gardens Doonside Expansion - PSA. Amend Doc - CDZ Schedule 1](#)

## Comments

I have reviewed the plans submitted by Arcadia Melbourne (Issue 6 - 8/04/2022) for the above planning application.

The plans show that landscaping and planting is shown on the ground level through to level 9.

### General Design Strategy

The design strategy starts well with acknowledgement of the Wurundjeri, but then is lacking in any follow through.

*"Building upon existing ties with local First Nations organisations, Arcadia's approach is to develop an Indigenous design strategy that works to inform our approach to placemaking, art and interpretation, planting, spatial programming and material selection.*

*Through a reconciliatory process of collaborative design, it is our position that an Indigenous design strategy offers the following:*

- *Authentic placemaking*
- *Insight into ecological systems*
- *Place-appropriate planting design*
- *Facilitates cultural exchange and education*
- *Supports community health and biophilic connections*
- *Reveals opportunities for land management partnerships*
- *Cares for Country*
- *Respects first peoples through reconciliatory processes*
- *Creates unique neighbourhoods and facilitates civic stewardship"*

Consultant to advise:

- How have they “built upon existing ties with local First Nations organisations”?
- What has the “reconciliatory process of collaborative design” involved? Have they met with the Wurundjeri for an on-site discussion about what the land means to them?
- The landscape narrative talks about “Creation of a ‘river line’ referencing the flow of the Birrarung connecting through the public realm. River bends create spaces for people to slow down and occupy, while river straights encourage pedestrian movement and flow”. Elders would have reflections to add to the proposed ‘river line’ theme and other elements.
- There is opportunity for art, sculpture and plantings that express Wurundjeri values etc. The Wurundjeri would guide on this. Aside from the river line, the “Indigenous Design Strategy” doesn’t appear to shape other elements of the landscape plan (eg. canopy structures etc.). It is noted that all but one of the proposed trees within the development site are exotic.

## **Open Space Land Contributions**

The Yarra Open Space Strategy, adopted by Council in September 2020, identifies the subject site as being in sub-precinct North Richmond C, located between Burnley Street, the Yarra River, and north of Bridge Road. This sub-precinct has a shortage of open space, primarily because of the significant forecast increase in its population. It is expected that an additional 3,600 residents and 1,234 workers will be living in this sub-precinct by 2031.

The Open Space Strategy therefore recommends that an additional Small Local open space be provided in the northwest of sub-precinct North Richmond C. To this end, it instructs that land contributions be sought from large development sites in this sub-precinct, in preference to cash contributions.

The subject site, 1-9 Doonside Street, presents Council with a unique and strategic opportunity to create a Small Local open space in a much-needed area. Given the total land parcel is 8,783sqm, this would equate to approximately 395.23 sq m.

The existing development proposal includes three small “open spaces”, however none of these spaces fulfils in full the developer contribution responsibility for this site for the following reasons:

- a) They function primarily as connective spaces, forecourts, or licensed alfresco dining areas that service ground floor commercial tenancies and present limited community amenity or benefit. They do not appear to offer any significant public open space amenity for rest and relaxation due to pedestrian access requirements and public dining. It is not acceptable for outdoor dining to be in open space. Footpath dining in Yarra is provided within the road reserve.
- b) They are extremely limited in size and offer little in the way of recreational diversity. The “Pocket Garden” and “Market Hall Square” consist largely of connecting pathways and small garden beds. “Doonside Plaza”, the largest of the spaces (276m<sup>2</sup>), is a predominantly hard space which, when the

adjacent pathways and seating areas that service commercial tenancies are subtracted, offers insufficient passive recreation opportunities.

- c) All three of the spaces sit beneath canopy structures which service adjacent commercial uses (by definition, public open space is typically set aside for outdoor recreation, nature conservation and passive enjoyment and is open to the sky).
- d) Doonside Plaza and Market Hall Square are both surrounded by towers and therefore have limited solar access – a key requirement for the provision of new open space in the Open Space Strategy.
- e) Doonside Plaza has limited visibility from Burnley and Doonside Streets, which creates issues around the public's perception of the useability/accessibility of the spaces.

It is therefore requested that the development site be re-designed in such a way that ***a land contribution be provided specifically for the purpose of creating an appropriately sized, publicly accessible open space*** for the new population in this sub-precinct.

### **Criteria for new open space**

In considering the incorporation of a new Small Local open space in the development, the following criteria should be met:

- One single large parcel of open space (min 395m<sup>2</sup>), rather than several fragmented spaces.
- Have a minimum width of 20 metres in one direction, and no boundary less than 10m in length (YOSS p 83).
- Should receive reasonable sunlight between 9am and 2pm on September 22. (YOSS p. 104) and be open to the sky.
- Should be located away from major or secondary arterial roads.
- Should be of shape and size which will be adequate for the proposed use having regard to the nature of open space in an inner-city environment.
- Should be located or capable of being designed to be subject to high degree of casual surveillance.

The following key landscape design principles apply to all new parks within the City of Yarra:

**Local Identity** - Create a network of parks that interpret the environmental values of the site to create a strong local 'sense of place'. The designs must also respond to the rich cultural and industrial heritage of the site.

**Access** - Ensure easy, safe, and appealing access for pedestrians and cyclists to the parks and into the broader Richmond neighbourhood and beyond.

**Flexibility** - Design open spaces to cater for a diverse range activity flexible enough to meet the needs of the current population and the next, as the area and its demographics evolve.

**Safety** - Create active and accessible places for all people with a high degree of both real and perceived safety. Ensure visibility from adjoining streets throughout a majority of each of the sites.

**Environmental sustainability** - Demonstrate a sustainable use of resources through the design of the park network in terms of plant and tree species selection, energy efficiency, water usage and materials selection; and

**Accessibility** – a design review is required by a DDA consultant for each of the park's design.

### **Levels 1 - 9 landscape plans**

No comment provided at this stage, as these spaces are not publicly accessible. However ensure volumes of growing media are adequate for the plant species proposed (use the ELK soil calculator to determine appropriate species for raised planters).

Load bearing weights for the building structure need to be checked and confirmed by a suitably qualified structural engineer against the saturated bulk density of soil media, planter box and plant mass being proposed.

### **Capital Works:**

There are no known planned / approved capital works around the site being led by the Open Space Planning & Design Team.

Landscape Architect: Fiona O'Byrne

Date: 23/6/2022