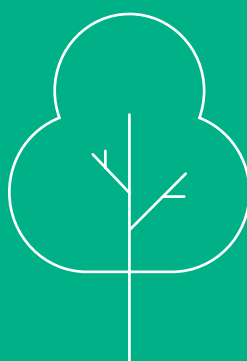




OPEN SPACE PLAN REVIEW

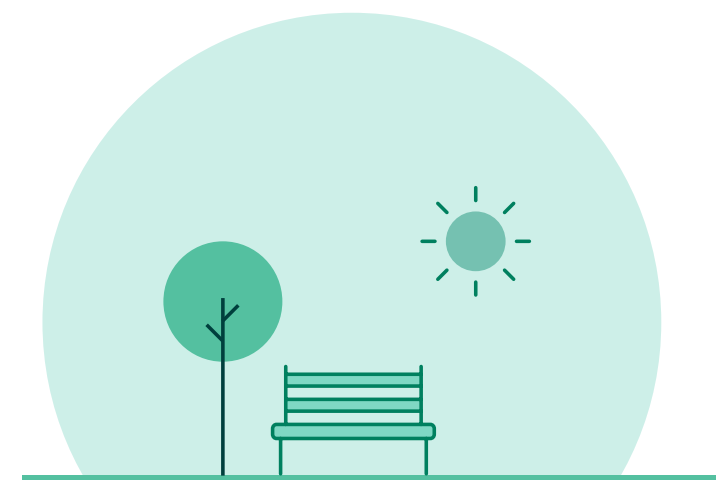
Background report
2025





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Melton City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Kulin Nation. The City celebrates its rich Indigenous history, the diversity of its people and their important ongoing connections to Country. We acknowledge the past injustices faced by our First Peoples and are committed to play our part in ensuring that these injustices are not repeated. We appreciate that we still have a long journey ahead of us. Melton City Council advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' right to self-determination.



Where you see this symbol, tap on it to reveal some fun facts!

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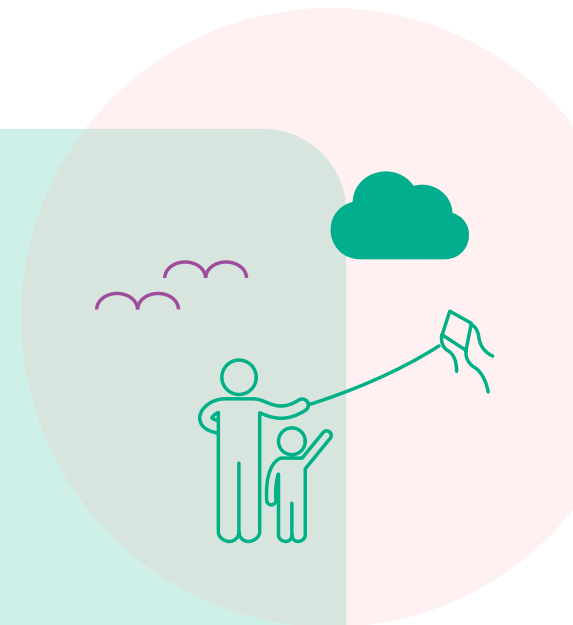
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Ryans Creek

Introduction

Melton City Council is currently reviewing the Open Space Plan. We know our open space network is an important resource for the wellbeing of the community. This is why we must carefully plan for the future of our open space network.



The City of Melton (the city) is a rapidly developing municipality.

Our city is located on the outer western fringe of metropolitan Melbourne, at the eastern edge of the Victorian Volcanic Plains, within a landscape characterised by open plains, remnant grasslands, creek lines, creek valleys and volcanic cones.

The Country has a rich Aboriginal History and deep cultural significance to the traditional peoples. The plains and waterways are the traditional territory of the Kurun jang balug of the Wurundjeri-willam, a clan of the Woi wurrung. The name 'Kurun jang balug' translates to 'red ground people', describing the distinctive red tone of the earth which can be found throughout the city.¹

Since the arrival of European pastoralists in the 1830s and the establishment of the Melton township, the landscape has dramatically changed. Today, the city is continuing to urbanise rapidly, creating a patchwork of established neighbourhoods, large-scale growth fronts and rural areas, spread across an area of 527 square kilometers.

With urbanisation, the city's population is growing at a tremendous rate. We are presently Australia's fourth fastest growing municipality, and the second fastest growing Local Government Area in Victoria. The scale of growth is also remarkable. From a present-day population of 206,070, the city is forecast to grow to 470,596 by 2046 and to ultimately exceed 500,000 - a population larger than Canberra.²

As the city's urban footprint and population expands and evolves, our growing network of open spaces becomes an increasingly vital resource; connecting people with their communities, neighbourhoods, with their landscape and with nature.

Careful and creative strategic planning is essential to optimise and share the benefits of open space, and to meet the changing needs of our community.

¹ Melton Heritage, Kulin Life

² Forecast ID, City of Melton

Open Space Plan 2016-2026

Council's existing Open Space Plan is up for review.

The existing Open Space Plan provides a framework for the categorisation and delivery of Melton's open spaces.

The existing plan has been useful in guiding the delivery of open spaces while navigating Melton's growth over the past nine years. Since the existing plan was adopted, the needs and wants of our community has shifted,

and so has the way open spaces are planned in Victoria.

The new plan has the potential to diversify the types of open spaces we provide in Melton, can cater to the current trends in open space, and will overall ensure we are better equipped to address the challenges we are seeing around our open spaces in 2026 and beyond.

Purpose of this report and consultation

This report provides a brief snapshot of what we know to date including:

- The city's existing and future open space network,
- The current and emerging demographic profile, and
- Emerging open space trends and themes and what this may mean for the city.

Through consultation we want to understand:

- Use and visitation,
- Accessibility,
- Barriers to use, and
- What you value about our open spaces

This information will help guide the upcoming Open Space Strategy and future policies and strategies that will shape our open space network.



Melton Botanic Garden

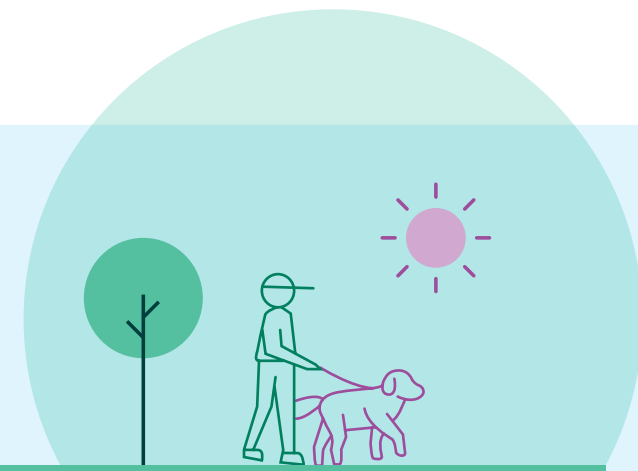


Hannah Watts Recreational Parklands



Eynesbury Dog Park

Benefits of Open Space



Open space is an essential and integral part of city living, contributing to the health and wellbeing of our population.

A well-planned open space network has numerous benefits, allowing us to engage and interact with nature, participate in physical activity and recreation, meet others and socialise, and as a place for our children to explore, learn and play.

Our open spaces provide the breathing space in our urban landscapes, connecting us to places across our neighbourhoods and improving the environment we live in. Open space can also uplift the economic value of homes and neighbourhoods.

Our open spaces also offer intangible qualities that are beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing. They provide refuge and relief from the built-up areas, a place for reflection, and the opportunity to relax and unwind.

Research from across the globe shows that open space is crucial for health and wellbeing, with access to greenery contributing to improvements in both physical health and mental wellbeing.

healthyactivebydesign.com.au/design-features/public-open-spaces/evidence

Current Open Space Provision

City of Melton's open space network consists of approximately 16.75 square kilometres or 1675.9 hectares of open space land area.

There are many different forms of open space, ranging from small linkages between residential streets to large format sport reserves.

Examples of the city's many different types of open spaces include:



Existing Open Space Network Map

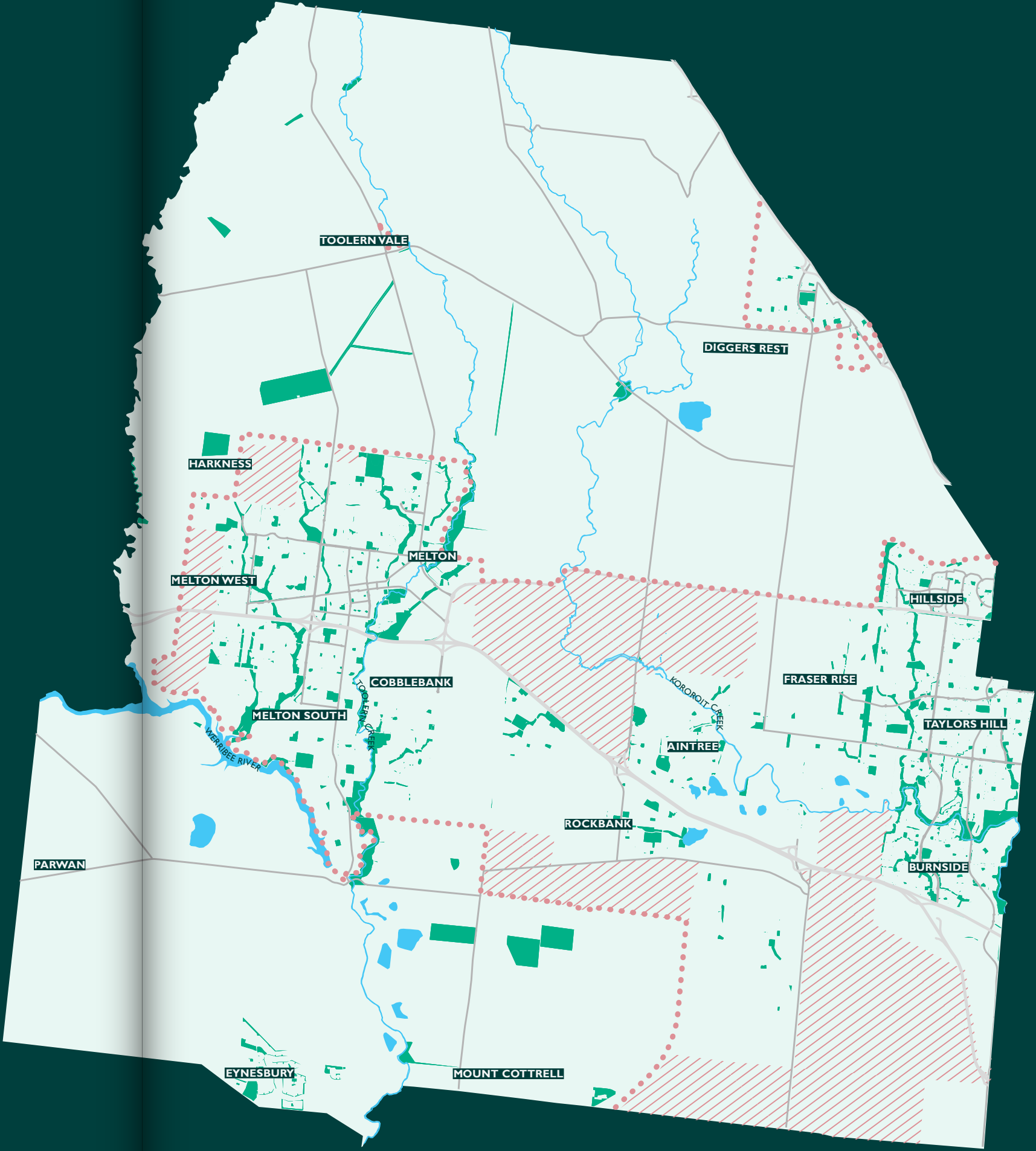
We know that the city's open space network is essential to enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors.

KEY

Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)

Future Growth Areas
Including pre-commenced, under preparation and unprogrammed PSPs

Open Space Land



Upcoming Open Space

With the continued roll out of new residential estates, additional open space will be added to our growing open space network. This is guided by the Precinct Structure Planning (PSP) process which coordinates the planning of new suburban precincts.

Currently, multiple PSPs are either underway or in the pipeline. This will result in hundreds of open space assets added to Council's portfolio over the next decade.

In addition to land managed by Council, there are numerous open spaces within the municipality that are managed or owned by other authorities such as Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria. While in different ownership or management, these open spaces still contribute to the broader network and offering of open space.

An example of this is the Melton Botanic Garden. The land is owned by Council, but the garden is managed by the Friends of Melton Botanic Garden who are an independent group of dedicated volunteers.

City of Melton will be home to a new Regional Park being delivered by the State Government as part of the Suburban Parks Program. Kororoit Creek Regional Park is a planned 260 hectare regional park that sits to east of the municipality bordering Caroline Springs and Bonnie Brook.

The Regional Park land will be restored to its natural state to help protect the Natural Temperate Grasslands and provide important habitat for the Growling Grass Frog.

The Regional Park will be managed by Parks Victoria and will offer the community the opportunity to experience the beauty of the Natural

Temperate Grasslands, along with space for people to gather and recreate.

The city will also be home to the upcoming Harkness Cemetery being delivered by the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust. It will be the largest cemetery in Victoria, comprising 128 hectares (the same size as Melbourne CBD!). The Trust's vision for the memorial park is to invite the community to enjoy the parklands to gather, celebrate life and reflect.



Melton Botanic Garden



Artistic interpretation of Harkness Cemetery, McGregor Coxall

City of Melton today

The below is a summary of City of Melton's current population and demographic profile based on Forecast ID 2021 data.

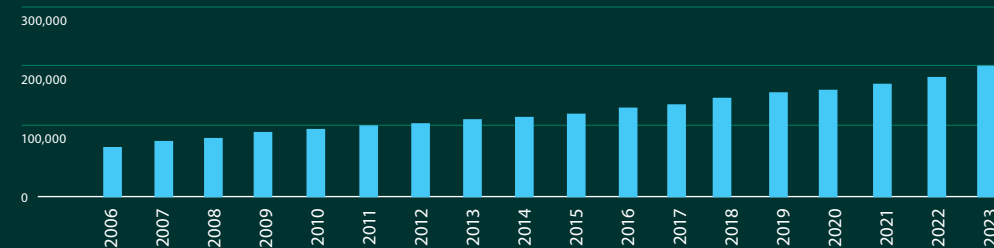
forecast.id.com.au/melton

Population highlights

206,070

^ population grown by 12,785 from the previous year 2023.

Estimated Resident Population



Median age

33

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

1.2%

Couples with children

45%

Older couples with children

6%

Lone person households

16%

Overseas born

36%

Language at home other than English

39%

SEIFA index of disadvantage 2021

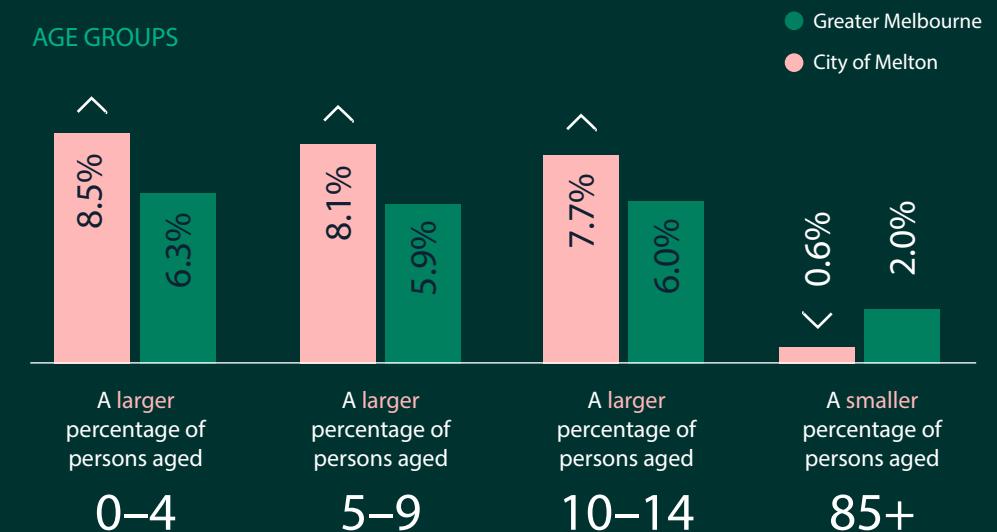
985

Homeless persons estimated 2021

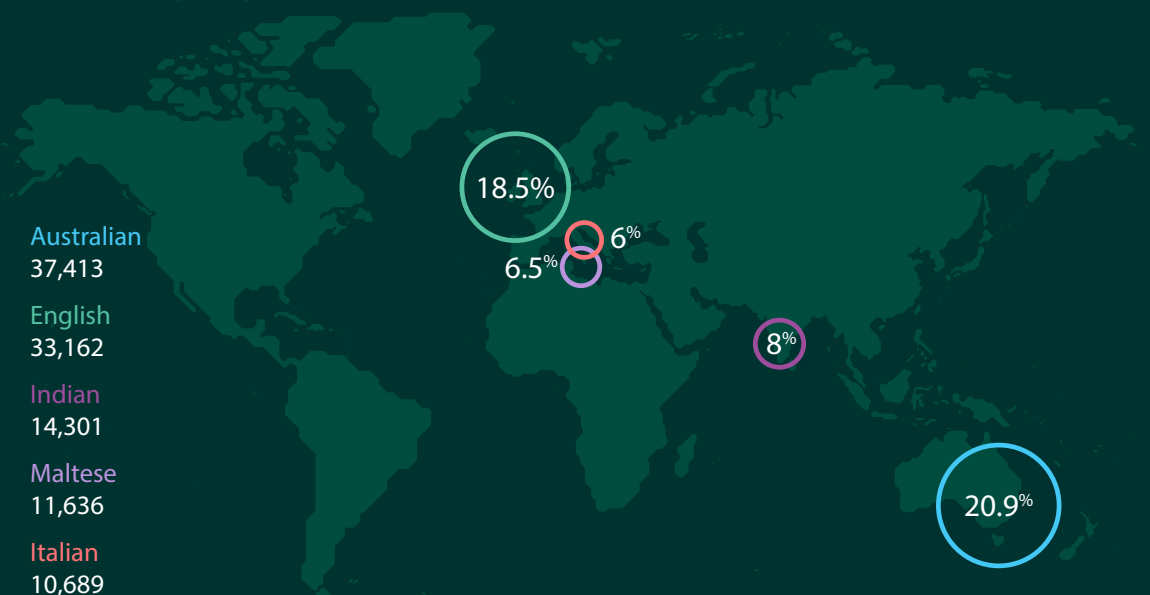
569

Who we are

AGE GROUPS



ANCESTRY – (TOP 5)



As Council looks to develop new strategies and policies to guide the delivery and management of open space, it is important to understand current open space trends and how they impact the City of Melton.

How people participate in recreation and engage with open space has changed over the last few years. This has been influenced by a range of factors such as the increased appreciation for local open space following the COVID-19 pandemic and changing demographics.

Emerging trends

There are emerging trends that impact on how we plan our open space network. These trends include:

INCREASING DENSITIES AND POPULATION GROWTH

What this means for City of Melton?



Black Knight Way Reserve

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTION

What this means for City of Melton?



RISING COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

What this means for City of Melton?



Little Blind Creek

RISING COSTS

What this means for City of Melton?



DOG OWNERSHIP AND EXPECTATIONS ON THE RISE

What this means for City of Melton?



ACCESSIBLE, INCLUSIVE AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN

What this means for City of Melton?



INFORMAL RECREATION ON THE RISE

What this means for City of Melton?



Springside Sport Reserve



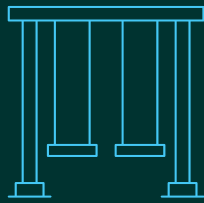
Lake Caroline

What we are hearing

Council receives many requests each year regarding our open spaces. These requests come through via various methods including customer requests, calls, Councillor requests, petitions, or through Snap Send Solve.

Below is a summary of the most popular requests from the last 2 financial years (22/23- 24/25).

01



Park Upgrades

02



Lighting

03



Public Toilets

04



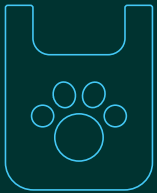
Seating

05



Drinking
Fountains

06



Dog disposal bags
and clean up after
your dog signage

07



Installation of
basketball courts

08



Dog Off Leash
Areas

09



Outdoor Gym
Equipment

10



More Shade



For more information
melton.vic.gov.au