Heart of Knox project
Frequently Asked Questions

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FAQs on this community engagement

1. What are the objectives of this community engagement?

We are planning a place like no other in Knox, transforming land between Burwood Highway and Lewis Park (next to Westfield Knox) which will include a new place for civic, cultural and community activities - a community precinct.

Through the **Heart of Knox project**, we want to create spaces for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

The objective of this community engagement is to understand community participation in, and desire for, arts and cultural activities, and to identify any barriers to participation.

We also want to understand how people are accessing community services so we can plan for services that may operate from the community precinct.

2. Where will the Heart of Knox community precinct be located?

The Heart of Knox includes an area planned to be the focus of community activity – where civic, cultural and community activities can take place. It will be located on Council land between Burwood Highway and Lewis Park, close to Westfield Knox. This area has been identified for future civic, cultural and community uses. The exact location and the type of community facilities have not been decided yet. This community engagement will help Council to understand requirements.

The entire site is known as the Central Precinct because of its location in the middle of the Knox Activity Centre. The entire site is approximately 9 hectares. Council's Civic Centre is located near where the community precinct is proposed, on Burwood Highway.

3. What community services are being considered?

Community engagement will explore services and social support provided by Council and other organisations to the Knox community. Council is keen to understand services the community might wish to access in future at the Heart of Knox community precinct. Community service demands driven by housing and population growth, and demographic changes will also be considered. Understanding services demand will help Council to plan for a community facility that can support these services to operate.

4. What is a community facility?

A community facility is buildings or other assets that support community services or provide community benefit. Services can include health and wellbeing, support services, education, arts and culture, information, community development, employment and training, and active and passive recreation opportunities.

5. How will the results from community engagement be used in the project?

Community engagement is part of an arts and culture, and community services needs analysis. Results from community engagement will be considered alongside technical analyses. This evidence-based approach will help identify the civic, community and cultural spaces that are most needed and suitable for the Heart of Knox.

Results of the engagement and analysis will be reported to Council in 2027 to inform future Council decisions on the Heart of Knox project.

FAQs about the Heart of Knox project

6. What is the Central Precinct?

The Central Precinct is a term used to describe the whole development site, from Burwood Highway to Lewis Park. It is called the Central Precinct because it is in the middle of the Knox Activity Centre. The Heart of Knox project is the planning and redevelopment of the Central Precinct, which is all Council-owned land.

Redevelopment of the site will be guided by the Central Precinct Land Use Plan, which was adopted by Council in August 2024. The future community precinct will be located at the southern end of the entire precinct, near Burwood Highway. The northern half of the Central Precinct is planned to be developed for higher density residential housing.

Further information about the planning for the Central Precinct, **previous community engagement**, and the land uses across the whole site can be found at **Heart of Knox project - Knox Central development**

7. What is the vision for the Heart of Knox project as a whole?

The vision for the Central Precinct was shaped by feedback from the community, Council advisory committees, state agencies, adjacent landowners, Lewis Park user groups, and nearby businesses during consultation on the draft Central Precinct Land Use Plan in 2024. The Council affirmed the Vision when it adopted the Land Use Plan in August 2024.

Vision for the Central Precinct

The Central Precinct is the heart of Knox.

It is a vibrant, safe and desirable destination in Melbourne's outer east for people to live, work and play. High and medium density development showcases excellence in urban design and sensitive integration of apartment living with open spaces and the natural environment.

The Precinct builds on and integrates with Westfield Knox and the broader commercial and employment opportunities of the Knox Central Activity Centre, being the focal point for the community to gather and connect.

It is a green and sustainable place where nature can be found everywhere, and the Blind Creek is celebrated.

The Central Precinct delivers housing and a convenient lifestyle for people at different life stages and of all abilities and backgrounds. It is well connected to nearby retail, employment, sports and community facilities.

The Precinct is a welcoming place with interesting public spaces that enable people to be active and also supports quiet contemplation.

The Precinct connects people and celebrates Country, culture, history and the arts. It is a well-loved place for the community to gather.

8. What is the timeline of the Heart of Knox project?

The indicative timelines can be found here

The project is in the planning phase. We expect this phase to take about 4 to 5 years before we move into design and development.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, we will:

- complete an arts and cultural needs assessment
- complete a high-level civic, customer and community needs assessment
- assess office space requirements to support customers and staff
- explore which community services and activities may work best when located together in the Heart of Knox.

9. When is the development of the community precinct likely to start?

Development in the civic and community precinct is not expected to start for about 8 to 10 years. It depends on several Council decisions over the next 5 years, including funding via the sale of Council land.

10. How will the community precinct be funded?

Delivery of the precinct will require Council to secure funds from the sale of Council land, including the land identified for housing in the northern half of the Central Precinct. Council will also apply for grants from other levels of government. Council decisions on funding will be determined by planning, commercial and legal advice.

11. How are cultural heritage values being considered?

The Central Precinct is on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. Council is working with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation throughout the project.

We have prepared a Cultural Heritage Management Plan to identify, manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage values during development. The Registered Aboriginal Party approved this plan.

12. How are existing trees and vegetation being considered in site planning?

Council will protect two habitat zones from development and consider areas of remaining vegetation and biological significance during planning.

We will prioritise keeping healthy trees where possible and planting climate-resilient, ecologically sensitive species.