

Listening Post for Planning Application: 2022/233 – 23 Dunbar Road, Traralgon

Frequently Asked Questions

This Frequently Asked Questions Sheet has been developed to answer questions and provide information on process following matters raised at the 4 May 2023 Listening Post for Planning Permit Application 2022/233.

Has Council decided on the planning permit application already?

No. A decision has not been made.

Councillors have called-in the permit application so that a decision can be made at a future Council Meeting. The Listening Post session on 4 May 2023 was an opportunity for Councillors to hear the community's views and perspectives on the proposal before making a decision at a future Council Meeting.

People who have made submissions to the proposal and the permit applicant will be notified in advance of the Council Meeting.

What are the key themes raised in written objections to date?

The concerns raised in relation to the proposal to date include, but are not limited to:

- Extent and timeframe of public notification of the proposal
- Accessibility of planning documents
- Impacts of the proposal on:
 - The local street network and intersections
 - On-street car parking availability
 - Existing neighbourhood character
 - Existing services
 - Encroaching into the buffer area of the Graymont plant and other industrial activities
- Specifics of the development
 - Lack of open space in and surrounding dwellings
 - Density of development is too high
 - The concentration of social and affordable housing being too high and negatively impacting safety and amenity of the surrounding area
 - Ongoing maintenance of the development
 - Decrease in safety and local amenity
 - Stormwater management
- Impacts from construction of the development
- Impact on property values

Is the proposal for social and affordable housing?

No. The proposal is for:

“Development of land with 52 dwellings on a lot, 52 lot subdivision of land and the creation and removal of an easement”

Nowhere in the application is there mention of the tenure of the proposed housing.

That said, there is a caveat on the property title advising that the Director of Housing has a purchasers' contract with the registered proprietors of the land.

There have been reports in the community and some news outlets that a portion of the future housing could be used for social and affordable housing, however this is not something that has formed part of the permit application. Further, it is noted that planning assessments cannot factor in the tenure of a dwelling as part of the decision-making on an application.

What is social and affordable housing?

The State Government agency, Homes Victoria, provides definitions on the different types of housing that it works to deliver.

Social housing is an umbrella term that includes both public housing and community housing. It generally indicates housing that involves some degree of subsidy, within this umbrella term there is:

Public housing: owned and managed by Homes Victoria for people who are unemployed, on low incomes, live with a disability or a mental illness or are at risk of homelessness.

Affordable housing: housing suitable for the needs of a range of low to moderate income households and priced (whether bought or rented) so these households can meet their own essential living costs.

Community housing: housing that is owned or managed by community housing providers to house a diverse range of tenants that require both public and affordable homes.

Source: <https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/housing-explainer>

How can I contact Homes Victoria?

Homes Victoria is the State Government's agency responsible for the delivery of the State Government's "Big Housing Build" which is intended to deliver 12,000 new homes over the next four years.

Homes Victoria has a community engagement page however there is not a listing for a project at 23 Dunbar Road, Traralgon: www.homes.vic.gov.au/community-engagement

Information on Key Themes raised during the Listening Post

- Proposal potentially providing a high concentration of social housing, and associated impacts of that concentration (safety, amenity, character, density etc.).

Council is unable to consider the tenure of dwellings when deciding on an application for multi-dwelling applications.

- Fire safety for future residents.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) were not specified as a referral authority for this application under the Planning Scheme. Fire safety matters are dealt with under the Building Regulations and are to be addressed at the building permit stage.

- The density of the development.

Multi dwelling developments will need to meet the ResCode requirements at Clause 55 of the Planning Scheme. Standards of ResCode to be met include Standard B6 Street Setback Objective, B8 Site Coverage Objective, B17 Side and Rear Setbacks Objective, B18 Walls on Boundaries Objective, B21 Overshadowing Open Space Objective, B22 Overlooking Objective, B23 Internal Views Objective and B27 Daylight to New Windows Objective.

- Increase in traffic, particularly a concern when considering other nearby land uses.

The proposal will increase the existing traffic in the area. The proposal was supported by a Traffic Impact Assessment that has been assessed by Council's Engineers and will inform the Officer's assessment of the application.

- Concerns about details within the traffic report.

According to the Traffic Impact Assessment accompanying the permit, it is expected that this development will generate an additional 160 vehicle movements per day in Hickox Street and 275 vehicle movements per day in Dunbar Road. The sections of Hickox Street and Dunbar Road are classified by Council as Major Access Streets which under Council's design guidelines have a nominal capacity of 2,000 vehicle movements per day.

The Hickox Street road pavement is seven metres in width. Under clause 56.06-8 of the Planning Scheme a seven metre wide street has a maximum indicative traffic volume of 3,000 vehicles per day.

On this basis, although traffic volumes along this section of Hickox Street would increase from those at present (about a 10 per cent increase), the expected total traffic volume would be lower than the maximum considered appropriate for the existing width of the street. Dunbar Road has a wider road pavement and therefore a larger capacity. Similarly to Hickox Street, the proposed increase in traffic along Dunbar Road due to the development is not expected to result in traffic volumes exceeding the maximum traffic volume of 3,000 vehicles per day.

- Traffic report does not consider proposed expansion of Graymont that will see a doubling of vehicles to and from that site.

Applications, including supporting documentation, are only able to consider the current use and development of an area. Any future planning permits will require Traffic Impact Assessments in order to enable a consideration of the impacts on the local street network.

- Inadequate visitor car parking.

The proposal seeks a reduction in on-site visitor car parking by three spaces with the justification that there is on-street parking available. This will be considered as part of the Officer's assessment of the application.

- Proposal making it undesirable for people to purchase in the area impacting on property values.

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) has regularly held that impacts on sale and value of properties is not a relevant planning consideration.

- Proximity to Graymont and impact on business expansion and operation.

It is acknowledged that the proposal is within the 500 metre buffer of the Graymont facility and that consideration needs to be given to this matter when a decision on the proposal is made.

- Proximity to Graymont and impact on future residents' health.

It is acknowledged that the proposal is for a sensitive land use that is within the 500 metre buffer of the Graymont facility and that consideration needs to be given to this matter when a decision on the proposal is made.

- Lack of public open space and play areas for the residents.

Multi dwelling developments will need to meet the ResCode requirements at Clause 55 of the Planning Scheme. Standard to be met include Standard B11 Open Space Objective, B28 Private Open Space Objective and B29 Solar Access to Open Space Objective.

Next steps

The applicant has indicated that they plan to submit an updated suite of plans to address concerns raised by Council's planners as well as objections. If an amendment request is received, the plans will be readvertised (in accordance with Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*), and submitters to the application will also be directly notified of the amended application.

Please note, any submissions made to the application will remain valid. You are not required to make an additional submission to continue to be a submitter to this application. However, you can make a supplementary submission if there are additional concerns raised by the proposed changes, or if any of your concerns have been addressed by the amendments.

As previously mentioned, Councillors have called-in this permit application so that a decision can be made at a future Council Meeting. Submitters will be notified in advance of the Council Meeting.

Can a planning decision made by Council be challenged?

The permit applicant and objectors can appeal a decision made by Council at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). The process to lodge an appeal will be detailed in correspondence sent to both parties when a decision has been made on the application by Council.

We note that at any point in time, the Minister for Planning could call in this permit application to make a decision or intervene in other ways. Such interventions are out of Council's control.