



Item 7.1 Petition to purchase a Duke Street, St Kilda site for public open space

A Petition/Joint Letter containing 93 signatures, was received from local residents.

The Petition states the following:-

In December Port Phillip Council adopted *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032* (the Strategy) Council states it *will focus on addressing gaps in the public space network, particularly in the Balaclava/St Kilda East and South Melbourne neighbourhoods.*

The Strategy found the **Balaclava/St Kilda has the lowest amount of public space in our municipality** by a country mile – just 5 per cent compared to the Port Phillip average of 17 per cent and Albert Par/Middle Park with 31 per cent. The Strategy identified the sub-neighbourhood – the area bound by Inkerman St, Carlisle St, Chapel St and St Kilda Road – as particularly lacking in public open space. Apart from open space in front of the St Kilda Town Hall the only available public open space in this area is the tiny Pakington St Reserve – just 0.08 hectares.

Council says that *we prioritise our investment in public space towards ensuring its provision is as equitable as possible across our municipality both now and into the future. The low level of public open space in Balaclava/East St Kilda is not equitable.*

A large vacant site in Duke St, St Kilda, right behind the library and close to St Kilda Primary School and the Carlisle Street shops and other facilities, is available now. It is cleared and flat with some magnificent mature palm trees. It has recently been on the market but remains unsold.

Balaclava and St Kilda residents need open space for their health and wellbeing.

Council don't let a golden opportunity slip through your fingers.

OFFICER COMMENT

Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032

- At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 8 December 2021, Council adopted the *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032*. It was noted in the motion that *'the implementation of the Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032 will focus on addressing gaps in the public space network, particularly in the Balaclava/St Kilda East and South Melbourne neighbourhoods, by trialling temporary new public space, expanding existing public spaces and exploring opportunities to acquire land and close roads to deliver permanent new public space'*.
- This is supported by the following priority actions in the strategy:

Short-term (2022-25)

- Trial a new temporary public space in Lansdowne Road (via a road closure) to test the proposed permanent space (*Note – This has been included in the draft Council Budget for 22/23*)
- Use several carparks in the existing Carlisle Street Activity Centre car park to create a temporary public space until future redevelopment occurs and permanent new public space is delivered. (*Note – This has been included in the draft Council Budget for 22/23*).



- Trial a new temporary public space in Gibbs Street near the corner of Grosvenor Street (via a temporary road closure) to test a potential new space in this location. *(Note – This has been included in the draft Council Budget for 22/23).*
- Prepare a Land Acquisition and Road Discontinuance Strategy, which will inform temporary and permanent road closure projects.
- Provide a new small local open space in Lansdowne Road to fill the gap in the area bound by Alma Road, Inkerman Street, Hotham Street and Orrong Road.
- Temporary partial street closure of Dickens Street to trial additional public space, including potential road closure and removal of carparks and some beautification (e.g. parklet, planter pots and paint treatments). *(Note – This has been included in the draft Council Budget for 22/23).*
- Advocate to, and partner with, VicTrack to beautify a small portion of the Green Line from Balaclava Station down to the rail bridge, including planter boxes and public artwork to test and trial future use and inform future investment over time.

Medium-term (2026-29)

- Provision for land acquisition for new public open space in St Kilda East. Location to be determined as part of a Land Acquisition and Road Discontinuance Strategy. *(Medium and long-term).*
- Investigate opportunities to enlarge Woodstock Street Reserve through reallocation of road space and undertake an upgrade.

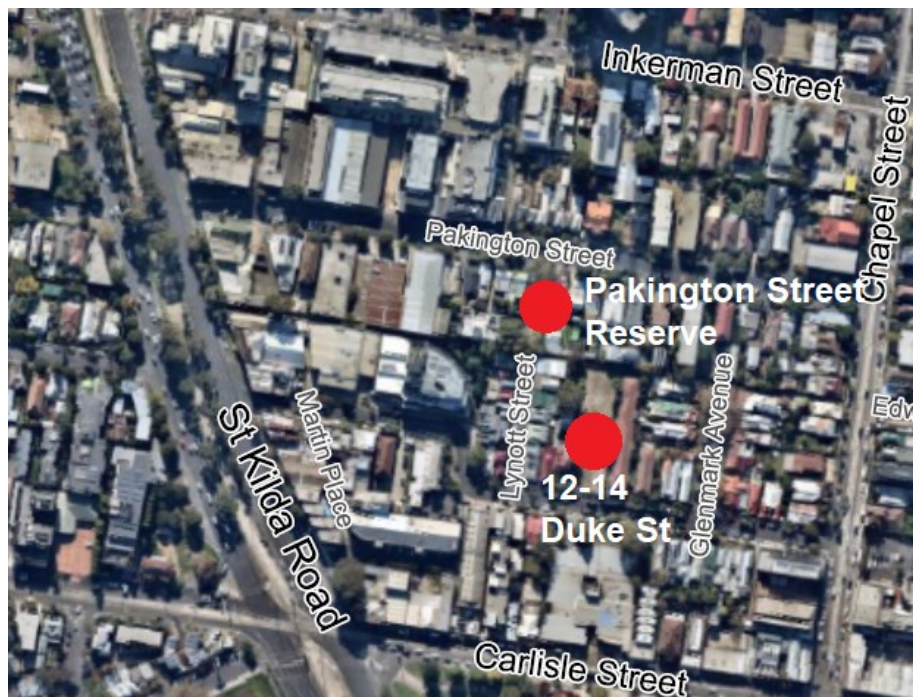
Long-term (2030-32)

- Acquire the site adjoining Pakington Street Reserve with the existing Public Acquisition Overlay to expand and upgrade this open space, including the existing play space.
 - As part of any future redevelopment of the Coles Supermarket site and adjacent car park, investigate options to provide a new open space to fill the gap in this area and create a community heart in the Carlisle Street Activity Centre, consistent with the Carlisle Street Activity Centre Structure Plan 2009.
- The temporary projects identified in the strategy allow Council to deliver short-term outcomes, ensuring the benefits of long-term investment in permanent actions will be maximised. Each temporary project will be assessed in line with the strategic alignment, funding and deliverability assessment process in the strategy, and community feedback, to consider whether a longer-term public open space should be considered for the space.
 - The Land Acquisition and Road Discontinuance Strategy (LARDS) is due to commence in the 22/23 financial year. The project will provide a policy position and guidance for how we acquire land across the municipality, identify potential areas and sites where acquisition could occur, outline key factors to consider when choosing a site and provide a process for undertaking the acquisition. Once it is developed Council will be able to easily identify strategic land purchases which will increase public space in areas of greatest need.

- Council has considered several opportunities that have come to market recently for potential public space but decided not to purchase. We will continue to consider opportunities as they arise in identified areas of need, however full assessments and strategic procurement will not begin until after the LARDS has been adopted.

12 - 14 Duke Street, St Kilda

- 12 – 14 Duke Street in St Kilda (the subject site identified in the petition) is located approximately 200 metres from 43 Pakington Street, which is subject to a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) for the purpose of public open space.
- The site is zoned as Public Park and Recreation Zone (although it is still used as a private residence), and the PAO ensures Council will have the option to purchase the land to expand the existing Pakington Street Reserve. This is reflected in Council's *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032*.
- Given the POA on 43 Pakington Street, Council decided in November 2021 not to pursue purchasing 12 – 14 Duke Street in St Kilda.





OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- Receives and notes the Petition.
- Acknowledges that there are gaps in the public space network in Balaclava and St Kilda East.
- Notes that the *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032* has actions to address gaps in open space provision across the municipality.
- Does not proceed with the purchase of 12 - 14 Duke Street as the Public Acquisition Overlay on 43 Pakington Street is only 200 metres away and provides a better open space outcome, by extending a current public open space.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil