

CITY OF MONASH

PK/NM/KME/HLTH 10

28 June 2011

The Secretary
Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Secretary

INQUIRY INTO ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AND PUBLIC HEALTH

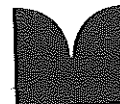
Thank you for the opportunity for the City of Monash to participate in this important inquiry.

As our understanding of the influences on health and wellbeing has evolved, so too has the role of Local Government in shaping the health of communities. Local Government has an important role in providing local leadership, advocacy and planning to engage all stakeholders in a process to create more sustainable health outcomes. Monash Council's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan is guided by key health promotion frameworks and the Environments for Health Framework.

Council makes the following comments for consideration:

- While the contribution that the built/natural environments make to health and wellbeing is recognised in the Environments for Health Municipal Public Health Planning Framework, it is absent from the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The Planning and Environment Act should explicitly identify 'the enhancement, promotion and protection of health and wellbeing' as one of its main objectives
- There needs to be a stronger correlation between the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and the Planning and Environmental Act 1987. The interconnection between these will allow for the better integration and consistency of Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, Council Plans, the Municipal Strategic Statement and Local Planning Policies
- It has been well documented the importance of active transport of our communities to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the community. Environmental and transport infrastructure planning needs to have a greater consideration for this for sustainable long term benefits to a active community

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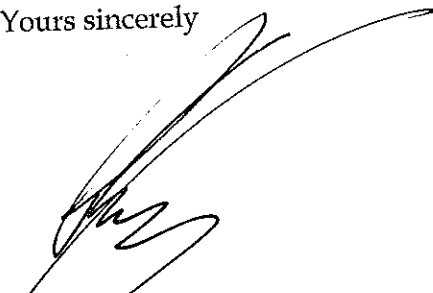
- Affordable housing is a key issue within the Monash municipality and across Victoria. It is important that diversity within communities is seen as a priority and, in particular, that affordable and social housing is distributed equitable throughout Melbourne and indeed Victoria
- Planning makes a contribution to health and wellbeing in terms of facilitating active living and all factors such as the safe public amenities, parking, street lighting, parks, gardens, food security, walking and cycling paths have a social and health impact on our communities. It is vital we work in partnership and acknowledge the inter-relationship between all factors when planning at both a macro and minor level
- Health impact assessment is a useful tool for understanding the impacts of land use planning decisions. There needs to be a greater scope/ability to utilise this in decision making at the local and the State level, as well as the development of tools to assist in this
- Monash Council has acknowledged the relationship between all areas in Council including Social and Health Planning, Transport and Infrastructure Planning, Development and Statutory Planning and Urban Design and Architecture with all departments within one directorate 'City Development'.

In summary, the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and frameworks to guide health and wellbeing planning clearly supports the concepts of the built and natural environment. Council understands that there is a strong correlation between the health and wellbeing of the community and their built and natural environments. We support the Victorian Government's effort into this inquiry to ensure that these links are better recognised in future planning activities.

If you would like further information about these comments, please do not hesitate to contact Nicole Meinig, Team Leader Health Promotion, on 9518 3542 or email nicolem@monash.vic.gov.au

We look forward with interest to the outcome of this inquiry.

Yours sincerely



PAUL KEARSLEY
Director of City Development