

# SHRINE TO SEA

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

## COMMUNITY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

27 October 2021

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OFFICIAL

## INTRODUCTION

Melbourne is evolving. Many of the *Shrine to Sea* Community Panel stated the most exciting segment of this project was taking part in planning a vision for a new boulevard along Albert and Kerferd Roads south of Melbourne. The Panel see their contributions as a small step to support improvements along this well-worn yet commercial, recreational and historically viable urban stretch of landscaped roadway.

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*“I can’t wait to see future improvements and watch the new boulevard take shape!”*

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The Community Panel saw the importance of changes for those living and working around the Albert and Kerferd Roads precinct. The connections to the prominent Shrine of Remembrance. Convenience of the new Anzac Station on St Kilda Road. The boulevard-style thoroughfare for users to journey to the sea and pier for health and entertainment.

DELWP’s Masterplan opens up a treasure trove of opportunities now, and with many still to be realised. The Panel considered both the here and now, and importantly, scenarios and visions for future generations as far as creativity and time would allow.

DELWP consulted widely with the Traditional Owners, local council, project experts, homeowners and tenants, businesses, visitors to the area and road users, to gain valuable insights for analysis. Multiple community webinars were hosted that established transparency and knowledge sharing to underpin the Panel’s understanding whilst also buffering any uncertainty.

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*“It has been very rewarding to be part of a productive team, hear their ideas and stories unfold, and to work with DELWP and other senior leadership.”*

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Panel Leads guided the working group through best practice process, creating an organised, productive working environment. We had our minds opened when subject matter experts inspired us with visionary global boulevard themes and landscaping potential. The Panel gained a healthy respect for design principles, particularly around accessibility and how good planning assists favourable outcomes.

The Community Panel realised that an ocean of quality, deeply thought-out discussion, agreement and decision-making evolved throughout this planning process. The Group talked about their pride and passion at having this opportunity to help bring about positive change for a beautiful, shared boulevard. Potentially a serpentine of stories, wellbeing and enjoyment that continues to grow and evolve into a loved place in Melbourne.

## Background

In 2018, the Victorian Government announced \$13 million for the *Shrine to Sea* project. The aim was to create a 3km boulevard connecting Domain Gardens to Port Phillip Bay, via Albert and Kerferd roads. This report summarises the process that led the working group to determine final recommendations that would be presented to DELWP for consideration in development of the *Shrine to Sea* draft Masterplan.

In 2020, DELWP Victoria called for expressions of interest to join a *Shrine to Sea* Community Panel. Many people showed interest in the project. Through application and subsequent interviews, a DELWP panel chose 27 people from a range of backgrounds who lived or worked in the area in question. The panel took part in two, face-to-face meetings before Covid-19 shifted the workshops online.

The purpose of this Community Panel was to join with DELWP and their project partners, to help shape a new boulevard connecting Domain Gardens to Port Phillip Bay along Albert and Kerferd Roads, considering:

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**Enhancing existing greenery and open spaces**

**Improving safety and experience for people  
walking and bike riding**

**Helping to bring the local history, stories and culture  
to life for the area's many residents and visitors**

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The Panel working group including the government project team, formed recommendations with clear thought and acknowledgement for both the local residents and visitors. They built an understanding of the community's needs and aspirations for the project. "The recommendations are presented to DELWP for their consideration in the draft and final masterplan with anticipated completion of the boulevard by the end of 2023.



## Aims and Objectives

The aim of the *Shrine to Sea* project is to make a welcome and safe boulevard for both locals and visitors to enjoy.

The Panel began with growing awareness of what the local community supported, such as enhancing the quality of green spaces and making them accessible to all ages, and working with the existing tree and palm lined streets and paths, and where improvements would be suitable and acceptable.

The Group also considered landscaping aspects, such as exotic versus native species, how plant selection favoured some for their adaptability and resilience to climate change, that could be added to the existing plants through the area, while poor performing plants may be rationalised. Accessibility, rain gardens, swales (or 'spoon drains') and passive irrigation to treat stormwater run-off in order to promote plant growth were some of the many problems considered.

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*“Good, patient and focused facilitation has been really important in this exercise.”*

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## Workshops and Process

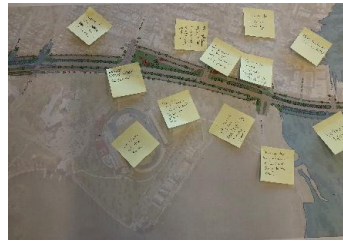
From March to November 2021, the DELWP Team organised the selected Community Panel into four workshops interspersed with online meetings to ensure continuity of understanding, to develop and capture ideas and maintain work progress.

Clear communications were key to success, from Meeting One to final recommendations, information was transmitted via an online Portal and email. Everyone was kept up to date with detailed meeting and workshop information and the Portal was a hub of opinions, ideas and questions.



At the Panel's first online meeting early March 2021, we met the DELWP team and discussed "Our process", our compass guiding the working group through the steps needed to achieve final recommendations by deadline. This meeting was followed by a workshop in late March where we all met face to face. That afternoon we all walked the Albert and Kerferd Road route with the project team to familiarise ourselves with some of the opportunities and constraints along the site.

Workshop Two was held in May and included an "expert" session when planning professionals presented the latest innovations in planning. At that workshop, the anteroom was swathed with very large maps, a plethora of history documents and photographs and examples of flora and local stories.



The Panel was asked to 'Dream Big' for our vision of the boulevard. The breakout room was full of experts, more maps, photographs, and more information about new wave boulevard planning and landscaping. The four areas of recommendations – Green Boulevard; Links and Connections; Celebrating Local Stories and Usable Open Space – were formulated.



Covid tried to spoil our scheduled workshop in October but the DELWP team pivoted into the online workshop world and off we went again, each time reinforcing a clear vision for the project. Our final online meeting and online workshop focused on refining and finalising our recommendations. Some spirited conversations were had, and our recommendations completed.

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*"It's possible for 24 very different people to reach consensus when we all focus on what's achievable and are working for the common good."*

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## Consensus

The consensus and decision-making principles were based on 80% agreement by the Panel for each proposed recommendation for DELWP to consider when developing the Shrine to Sea draft masterplan. The panel report and recommendations were constructed to follow these principles:

|                   |                                                           |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Specific</b>   | Recommendations are clear, succinct and easily understood |
| <b>Measurable</b> | Recommendations can be tracked to determine progress      |
| <b>Actionable</b> | Recommendations are attainable and achievable             |
| <b>Relevant</b>   | Recommendations can demonstrate their benefit             |
| <b>Time-bound</b> | Recommendations are linked to time frames                 |

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## Legal

There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report.

## Conflict of interest

No member of DELWP or the City of Port Phillip, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

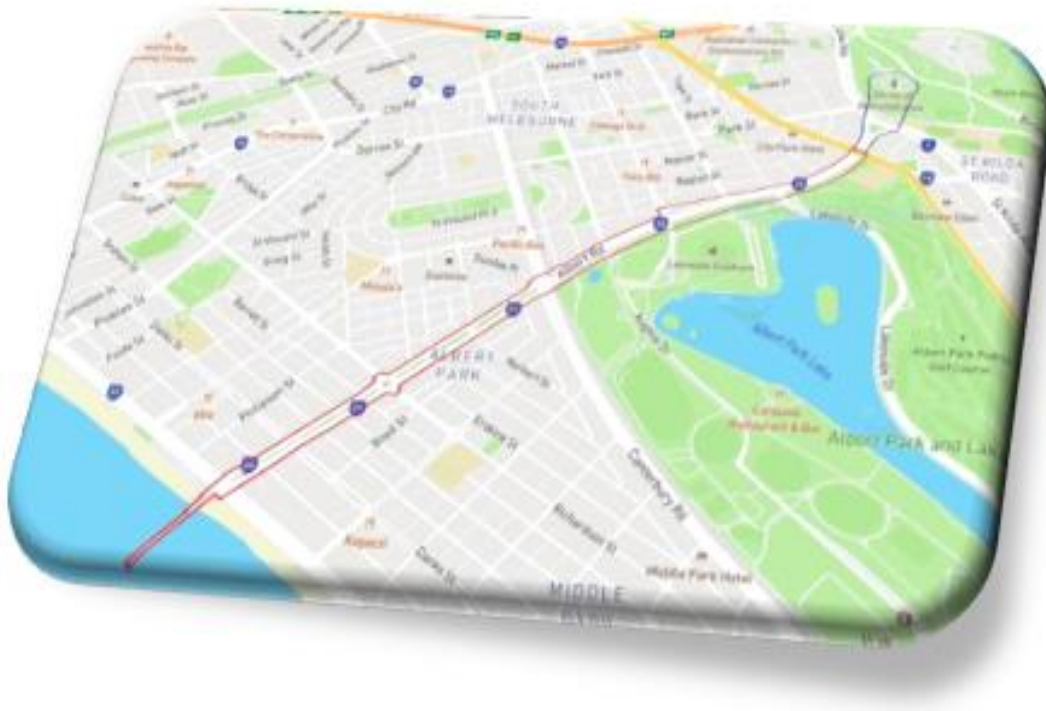
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### Community Panel Recommendations

At the *Shrine to Sea* Community Panel workshops, we sought to explore the needs and impacts of the Albert and Kerferd Roads areas and available spaces for improvements to deliver recommendations in line with the purpose of this project.

Following are the Panel's Final Recommendations – drafted, explored, discussed and agreed to by the Panel on 24 October 2021. The Recommendations fall into four objectives:

1. Green Boulevard
2. Links & Connections
3. Celebrating Local Stories
4. Usable Open Space

## GREEN BOULEVARD



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GB01. Plant species that flower throughout different parts of the year that encourage endemic fauna.

GB02. Create a landscaped gateway entrance to the area at the intersection of Kings Way and Albert Road, similar to Kerferd Road, through distinctive planting that also compliments the rest of the boulevard.

GB03. Plant semi-advanced trees in Albert Park Reserve as soon as possible.

GB04. Replace non-performing trees with new feature trees.

GB05. Liaise with relevant government groups/stakeholders to green the existing tram tracks through planting.

GB06. Beautify the east corner of Ferrars Street and Albert Road and east corner of Canterbury Road and Albert Road with planting.

GB07. Plant understorey planting within the central median reserve of Kerferd Road to help promote safety.

GB08. Low-allergenic plants are preferred to be planted along the boulevard.

GB09. Recommendation to ensure good visibility is maintained through the approach to planting to promote safety.

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GB10. Recommendation to plant understorey planting in front of the South Melbourne Park Primary School to provide safety from roadway.

GB11. Recommendation to improve the boulevard by adding a second row of tree plantings in the road reserve on Kerferd Road.

GB12. To create a sense of arrival at Kerferd Road, introduce distinctive planting on the central median that is consistent with the boulevard's landscape themes.

GB13. Recommendation to develop community gardens, including adding edible native plants.

GB14. Recommendation to extend tree planting from Danks Street to Page Street (planted at edge of central median reserve on Kerferd Road).

## LINKS & CONNECTIONS



LC01. Bike lanes to be interconnected for the entire length of the boulevard.

LC02. Consider a change in materials as a treatment (e.g., sandblasting) to create points of interest, improve wayfinding and slow foot traffic.

LC03. Recommendation for safety, comfort and accessibility using structures/widening crossings and coloured road marking to delineate uses.

LC04. Recommendation to improved wayfinding for foot traffic and cyclists incorporating unified styling for consistency.

LC05. Recommendation to provide access to central median reserve for all users with formalised pedestrian crossings across Kerferd Road and along the boulevard.

LC06. Recommendation to provide access to central median reserve for all users with formalised pedestrian crossings across Kerferd Road and along the boulevard.

LC07. Recommendation to integrate a link between Kerferd Road and Beaconsfield Parade for a safe and comfortable connection for cyclists and pedestrians.

LC08. Use landscaping to define a separate bike pathway on Kerferd Road to isolate bikes from cars.

LC09. Prioritise new green space over increasing new car parks into the future.

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## CELEBRATING LOCAL STORIES



CLS01. Have a summary of all themes at the starting points of the journey so people can navigate and curate their own journey based on interests.

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CLS02. Tell stories that represent the diversity and breadth of community experiences ensuring less-dominant stories have equal representation e.g., Indigenous, migrants, multicultural, LGBTQI+, women.

CLS03. Consider and respect Albert Park Memorial Gate's history and tell stories of the rail bridge over Albert Road.

CLS04. Share stories of the historical Kerferd Road Pier, its recreational use, promenade, costumes, fashion, its food sourcing (links from Traditional Owner/fishing for necessity and now for recreation etc.).

CLS05. Recommendation to ensure the Traditional Owner theme is an anchor for the project and tells the evolution of the area over time across the themes.

CLS06. Recommendation to consider new identity (name) for Shrine to Sea.

CLS07. Recommendation to tell the story of the rail bridge over Albert Road and how it links Melbourne to broader precincts.

CLS08. Recommendation to tell stories through diverse media - but ensure that there is a link to Shrine to Sea.

CLS09. Identify multiple points along the boulevard for telling stories.

CLS10. Recommendation to link the stories of changing social life, employment history, changing built urban form (e.g., from campsites to modern architecture with Victorian and Edwardian periods).

CLS11. Recommendation to consider displaying Country acknowledgment on street signs.

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## USABLE OPEN SPACE



UOS01. Focus project funding on the Albert Park Lake side of Albert Road, inviting the community to use the space, lake etc. given that the Clarendon Street triangle requires further consideration through another planning process.

UOS02. Incorporate tiered level planting into the central median reserve on Kerferd Road at the intersection of Canterbury Road & Ferrars Street.

UOS03. Recommendation to critically review pause point locations (incl. amenities like water fountains) and create consistency to ensure comfortable travel distances for all users, in all weather conditions (under cover).

UOS04. Recommendation to improve navigation, appearance and safety at the Canterbury Road & Ferrars Street intersection (e.g., vertical planting on bridge, artwork, wayfinding and lighting).

UOS05. Recommendation to enhance soft landscaping (planting and mounding) and pause points including seating to create more usable space whilst creating a variety of experiences.

UOS06. Recommendation to improve Kerferd Road Pier layout and sense of arrival, creating less clutter and more usable space.

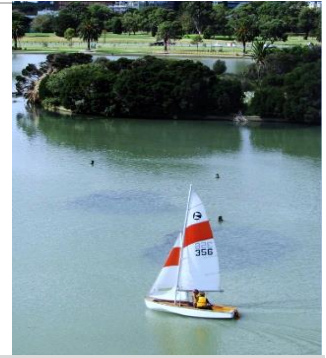
UOS07. Recommendation to create accessible, user friendly, consistent theming, look and feel, sympathetic to local residents and visitors.

UOS08. That the Kiosk near the corner of Kerferd Road and Beaconsfield Parade be used for education, art exhibits, storytelling, play and other activities.

UOS09. Recommendation to create an engaging landing point into the Albert Park Reserve, that incorporates wayfinding and a colourful flowering display working in with Kerferd Road/Canterbury Road landscaping.

UOS10. Recommendation to establish an area of reflection with view (potentially on a mound) and access to the lake with potential to integrate an informal play area.

## PANEL MEMBER REFLECTIONS



*"It has been very rewarding to be part of a productive team, hear their ideas and stories unfold, and to work with DELWP and other senior leadership. I can't wait to see future improvements and watch the new boulevard take shape!"*

*"It's possible for 24 very different people to reach consensus when we all focus on what's achievable and are working for the common good."*

*"I don't see this as the end - just the start."*

*"It's been great to break out of my retiree's silo and find synergy with people of very different backgrounds and ages."*

*"I realised how important the existing trees were to the locals when we went on a walking tour of the boulevard."*

*"Good, patient and focused facilitation has been really important in this exercise."*

*"I've learned so much! So thank you for selecting me for the panel."*

*"Everyone's viewpoint is valid and worth listening to if their heart is in the right place."*

*"We were a really focused group and feel we have some strong recommendations."*

*"It's been a great opportunity to work alongside a lovely group, I have learnt so much about the area from the group, everyone is so passionate and positive."*

*"I enjoyed hearing everyone's viewpoint."*

*"I'm so happy for the impact I can make in this project, so thank you for selecting me for the panel."*

*"Having been part of group processes in various forms for the better part of three decades, I am well aware of the stages that our group went through. I was not sure how such a diverse group could come together to form a consensus. I was very pleasantly surprised when in the third workshop and later the fourth I saw the process come together."*

*I am not convinced that we have come up with the best recommendations on how to use the space allocated as a boulevard. I am however convinced that the general recommendations are truly reflective of the groups' thinking."*

*My thoughts and feelings on the process are that in trying to capture the most prevalent, or most popular ideas a certain degree of mediocrity has crept in."*

*I am thinking a fifth workshop was needed to capture how the group sees the format -- the design, as opposed to the structure of the boulevard. There needs to be a way for the group to share how they see the project once the work has been done and the elements have had a chance to settle in place and mature. Perhaps a virtual walkthrough, as is often used in visualising major architectural projects."*

*As a participant, I was respected by facilitators and participants alike and felt mentally and emotionally safe while sharing thoughts and ideas with others. The use of video conferencing for the workshops helped in this as I could mentally distance myself and allow time to manage any mental and physical fatigue felt throughout the day."*

*Overall, the process was professionally managed and well done. I have no hesitation in recommending this style of participatory democracy to any group looking to plan a major project or change within their organisation."*

*"When we first met in Port Melbourne and went on our fabulous bus expedition."*

*The whole process has also been disrupted by Covid-19, adding a further complication and ensuring there was no chance for a smooth series of discussions and meetings."*

*It is remarkable that anything was able to be achieved this year. The reason? The calibre of the organisers and positive attitude of fellow participants has resulted in creating the vision for a boulevard from the Shrine to the Sea."*

*It is now the responsibility of the relevant authorities to realise this vision. It will become an important attraction for visitors and residents of Melbourne to travel along. This will then enhance Melbourne's position as being the most liveable city in the world."*

*"It's been a great experience being part of the Shrine to Sea community panel this year. Many reflections from our months of busy workshops come to mind, but perhaps above all, I've found a whole new sense of appreciation for the boulevard and its many users. The main activity of a panel member may typically be to advise, but I've in fact found that our workshops have been a tremendous space for learning about people's interests and values, and the ways these might translate into the built environment. Among our diverse group, I am confident that the recommendations put forth reflect, in one way or another, the desires of all of those who are attached to the project, from Port Phillip and beyond. I look forward to many pleasant bike rides along our beautiful boulevard in the future."*

