

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Advisory Committee Report (Part 1)

Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee Report on draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment

22 November 2019

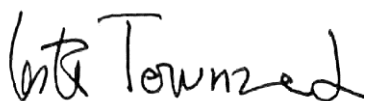
Planning and Environment Act 1987

Advisory Committee Report (Part 1) pursuant to section 151 of the Act

Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee

Report on draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment

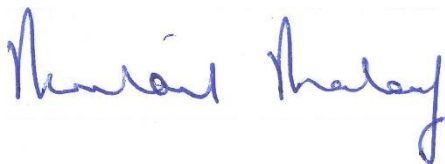
22 November 2019



Lester Townsend, Chair



Geoff Underwood, Deputy Chair



Michael Malouf, Member



Shelley McGuinness, Member



Gabby McMillan, Member

About the Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee

The Standing Advisory Committee (the Committee) was appointed on 11 August 2019 to review and provide the Minister for Planning with advice on:

- the draft *Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment* (August 2019) (the *Guidelines*)
- proposals for redevelopment of golf course land within the Urban Growth Boundary of metropolitan Melbourne.

The Committee consists of:

- Lester Townsend, Chair
- Geoff Underwood, Deputy Chair
- Michael Malouf
- Shelley McGuinness
- Gabby McMillan.

The Committee was guided by Terms of Reference shown in Appendix A.

The Committee's task is in two parts:

- Part 1 – Review and provide advice on the *Guidelines*.
- Part 2 – Advise whether proposals that are referred to the Committee satisfy the *Guidelines* and are consistent with state and local policy.

This is the Committee's Part 1 report submitted to the Minister for Planning.

The Committee was assisted by Amy Selvaraj, Andrea Harwood and Georgia Thomas of Planning Panels Victoria.

The Terms of Reference set specific steps in the Part 1 process for the Committee to follow in its work. These included:

- **Stage 1 – Exhibition** – The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to give notice of the draft *Guidelines*. Submissions were sought between 2 and 30 September 2019 with late submissions accepted on request. A total of 63 submissions were received by the Committee.
- **Stage 2 – Workshops** – The Committee considered the submissions received and decided to conduct a number of focused workshops with different groups of submitters to explore issues arising from the submissions. Workshops were held on 21 and 22 October 2019 in Melbourne.
- **Stage 3 – Outcomes** – The Committee to produce a written report for the Minister for Planning.

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Glossary and abbreviations

The Act	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>
AILA	Australian Institute of Landscape Architects
the Committee	Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
<i>Discussion paper</i>	<i>Planning for Golf in Victoria Discussion paper, 2017</i>
DPO	Development Plan Overlay
EES	Environmental Effects Statement
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Design
the <i>Guidelines</i>	<i>Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment</i>
PIA	Planning Institute of Australia
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PPN	Planning Practice Note
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
UGB	Urban Growth Boundary
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions

Part A:

Executive summary and recommendations

Executive summary

This is the Part 1 Report of the Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee (the Committee). This report provides the Minister for Planning with advice on the draft *Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment (August 2019)* (the *Guidelines*) released for public consultation (Appendix B).

The Part 1 task of the Committee is to:

Review the draft *Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment*, which includes a decision-making framework that will be used to assess proposals for the future redevelopment of surplus golf course land primarily within metropolitan Melbourne and advise how the *Guidelines* can be given effect in the Victorian Planning System.

The report responds to the 63 submissions received from councils, associations, organisations, institutions and academia, Golf Australia, Golf Clubs and individuals.

The Committee's Terms of Reference require it to produce a written report for the Minister for Planning as the output from its Part 1 work. The report is to provide:

- an assessment of the draft *Guidelines* and decision-making framework including any recommended changes
- an assessment of submissions about the draft *Guidelines*
- recommendations on how the draft *Guidelines* could be operationalised in the Victorian Planning System.

As required by the Terms of Reference, this report includes:

- a list of people who made submissions considered by the Committee
- a list of people consulted or heard.

The second purpose of the Committee is to:

Advise whether proposals for the rezoning of golf course land within the UGB of metropolitan Melbourne to facilitate redevelopment for urban purposes satisfy the planning guidelines and are consistent with state and local policy.

At the time of writing no proposals have been referred to the Committee.

Melbourne (and Victoria) has seen many golf clubs convert their courses to urban development and move further out. This has been happening since at least the 1920s. Such relocations can deliver significant improvements to golf facilities and deliver attractive infill development. But they are not without controversy or risk. Golf courses are host to a range of environmental values and these can be lost or compromised by redevelopment.

The Committee notes that a Golf statewide facilities plan is proposed and the approval of such a plan has the potential to give greater clarity on the implications for redevelopment of courses.

Golf course land has a number of special characteristics and planning to convert a golf course to another use should expressly address these special characteristics. Golf courses:

- are large tracts of land – a typical Melbourne course occupies upwards of 50 hectares with most around 60 hectares
- contain environmental values
- are large areas of open space (which may or may not be accessible to the public)
- contribute to stormwater management
- are managed either for the benefit of club members or the community

- often limit vehicle and sustainable transport movement due to the scale of the courses
- often contain heritage values.

Many submissions did not support any redevelopment of golf course land. Melbourne's population is growing rapidly and new forms of development are increasing the density of development in built up areas. Golf courses present unique opportunities and the *Guidelines* should provide a framework to ensure these opportunities are properly considered before opting for conventional infill development.

The Committee thinks that the *Guidelines* need to articulate a 'triage' process to test the fundamental suitability of golf course land for conversion to another use before the process of preparing a redevelopment option is pursued. This step would provide a mechanism to address some of the concerns that golf courses should remain as 'open space'.

To reflect this triage step the Committee thinks that the *Guidelines* would be better called 'Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes'.

Golf courses held in freehold title by Golf Clubs is not public open space, but such courses are significant open areas and the Committee thinks there ought to be an explicit process to check that no open space manager wants to take over the asset. The Committee (and many of the submitters) recognise that would involve compensation to the land owning Golf Club.

The Committee received a number of detailed submissions about the exhibited *Guidelines*. The Committee supports the broad process set out in the exhibited *Guidelines* albeit with more specific steps.

The recommended steps are:

- Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped
- Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site
- Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required
- Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities
- Step 5: Engage the community
- Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit
- Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome

The Committee supports the principle articulated in the exhibited *Guidelines* that redevelopment should deliver a net community benefit, but believes that a number of principles need to put in place to ensure the environmental characteristics of golf courses are not 'traded off' for other benefits and that the communities surrounding a redeveloped course also see a net benefit.

The exhibited *Guidelines* set a benchmark of 20 per cent open space in any redevelopment. The Committee supports this and adds a number of additional benchmarks to ensure that redeveloped land delivers an acceptable outcome. These benchmarks reflect the special characteristics of golf course land articulated above.

To give effect to the *Guidelines* the Committee recommends the use of a Ministerial Direction. This will give clarity to the weight and status of the *Guidelines* in what are often highly contested matters. Based on the experience of recent golf course redevelopment the Committee thinks there is merit in developing a model Development Plan Overlay (DPO) schedule to guide the redevelopment of golf course land, where redevelopment is appropriate.

The potential rezoning of land outside of the Urban Growth Boundary was a feature of many submissions. The Committee concludes that the *Guidelines* should potentially apply to courses outside the Urban Growth Boundary, but any change to a defined settlement boundary or the Urban Growth Boundary would raise issues of broader government policy beyond the scope of the *Guidelines* and the Committee's Terms of Reference.

Recommendations

Based on the reasons set out in this Report, the Committee recommends:

1. **Operationalise the use of the *Guidelines* by way of a Ministerial Direction to direct the use of the *Guidelines* consistent with the model provided in Part A of this Report.**
2. **Where a planning scheme amendment is proposed the *Guidelines* should recommend that a Development Plan Overlay be applied to guide the redevelopment of the land.**
3. **Change the name of the *Guidelines* to *Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes*.**
4. **Restructure the *Guidelines* under the following headings:**
 - **Introductory text including the purpose of the Guidelines**
 - **Scope of the Guidelines**
 - **Determine the assessment pathway**
 - **Assessment method for planning amendment or permit applications.**
5. **Adopt the following assessment steps:**
 - **Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped**
 - **Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site**
 - **Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required**
 - **Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities**
 - **Step 5: Engage the community**
 - **Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit**
 - **Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome**
5. **Update the text of the *Guidelines* as presented in Part A of this report.**
6. **Include a model Development Plan Overlay in the *Guidelines* consistent with the model provided in Part A of this report.**

Recommended Ministerial Direction

MINISTERIAL DIRECTION ON THE CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENTS TO REZONE OR TO AMEND THE CONTROLS ON LAND USED OR FORMERLY USED AS A GOLF COURSE

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Direction is to direct planning authorities in the consideration of requests for an amendment to rezone land, or to amend the planning controls, that includes land used or formerly used as a golf course and to direct planning authorities on the processing of such an amendments.
2. The Direction ensures that a planning authority must have regard to the *Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes* before considering a request to rezone land or to amend the planning controls.
3. The Direction ensures that a planning authority must be satisfied that the proposal will deliver net community benefit before a planning scheme amendment can be prepared.
4. The processing of an amendment in accordance with the *Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes* will ensure the request deals with the relevant issues identified in the *Planning Guidelines* and will bring them forward in early consideration of the proposal.

Application

5. This Direction applies to all planning authorities in Victoria.

Definition

6. In this Direction:
 - a) ***land used or formerly used as a golf course*** means land which is developed and used, or was formerly used, for the purposes of a golf course and includes the land and associated maintenance and club house facilities. It does not include other land owned by a golf course operator for non-golfing purposes.
 - b) The ***Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes*** means the document bearing that title approved from time to time by the Minister for Planning.

Directions

7. A planning authority must not
 - consider a request to rezone land or amend the planning controls for land used or formerly used as a golf course unless the request provides information to support the request consistent with the *Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes*.
 - prepare a planning scheme amendment unless the planning authority is satisfied that the proposal will deliver net community benefit
 - process a request to rezone land or amend the planning controls for land used or formerly used as a golf course unless the process is in accordance with the *Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes*.

Exemption

8. The Minister may grant an exemption from the need to comply with this Direction in relation to a particular proposal. An exemption may be granted subject to conditions.

Recommended Guidelines

Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide guidance on the key planning steps and considerations for proposals to convert golf course land to other uses.

Golf course land means land which is developed and used for the purposes of a golf course and includes the golf course and associated maintenance and club house facilities. It does not include other land owned by a golf course operator for non-golfing purposes.

These Guidelines:

- have been developed following a review of relevant planning panel reports and a consultation process with the community and stakeholders including Golf Australia, golf clubs, golf organisations and developers
- support the existing legislative processes for planning permit application and planning scheme amendments
- are to be read in conjunction with Planning Practice Note 46: Strategic Assessment Guidelines for Preparing and Evaluating Planning Scheme Amendments which has application to all proposed amendments to planning schemes.

The Guidelines outline:

- the assessment pathway for considering the conversion of golf course land
- the considerations that will be applied to assess the merits of a proposal to convert golf course land.

Scope of the Guidelines

These Guidelines apply to proposals to convert golf course land to other uses. They apply to:

- freehold golf course land
- golf course land owned by the Victorian Government or local government where the land ownership would permit conversion from an open space use
- metropolitan and regional golf course land
- the full or partial redevelopment of golf course land
- golf course land inside or outside a settlement boundary, including the Urban Growth Boundary.

Any change to a defined settlement boundary or the Urban Growth Boundary would raise policy issues not addressed in these guidelines.

Determine the planning assessment pathway

The approvals that are required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* depend on the planning controls that apply to the land. A proposal to convert golf course land to another use may require:

- where the land is already zoned for urban development – a planning permit
- where the current zoning does not permit the proposed use – a planning scheme amendment (and potentially subsequent planning permits)
- where the land is within Melbourne's green wedge or outside a defined settlement boundary – ratification of an amendment by each House of Parliament to shift the defined settlement boundary or, in the case of Melbourne's green wedges the Urban Growth Boundary.

Unless specified otherwise in the planning scheme, a planning permit will be assessed by the local council. The Minister may call in a permit application or the responsible authority (the council) may request the Minister to call in a permit application.

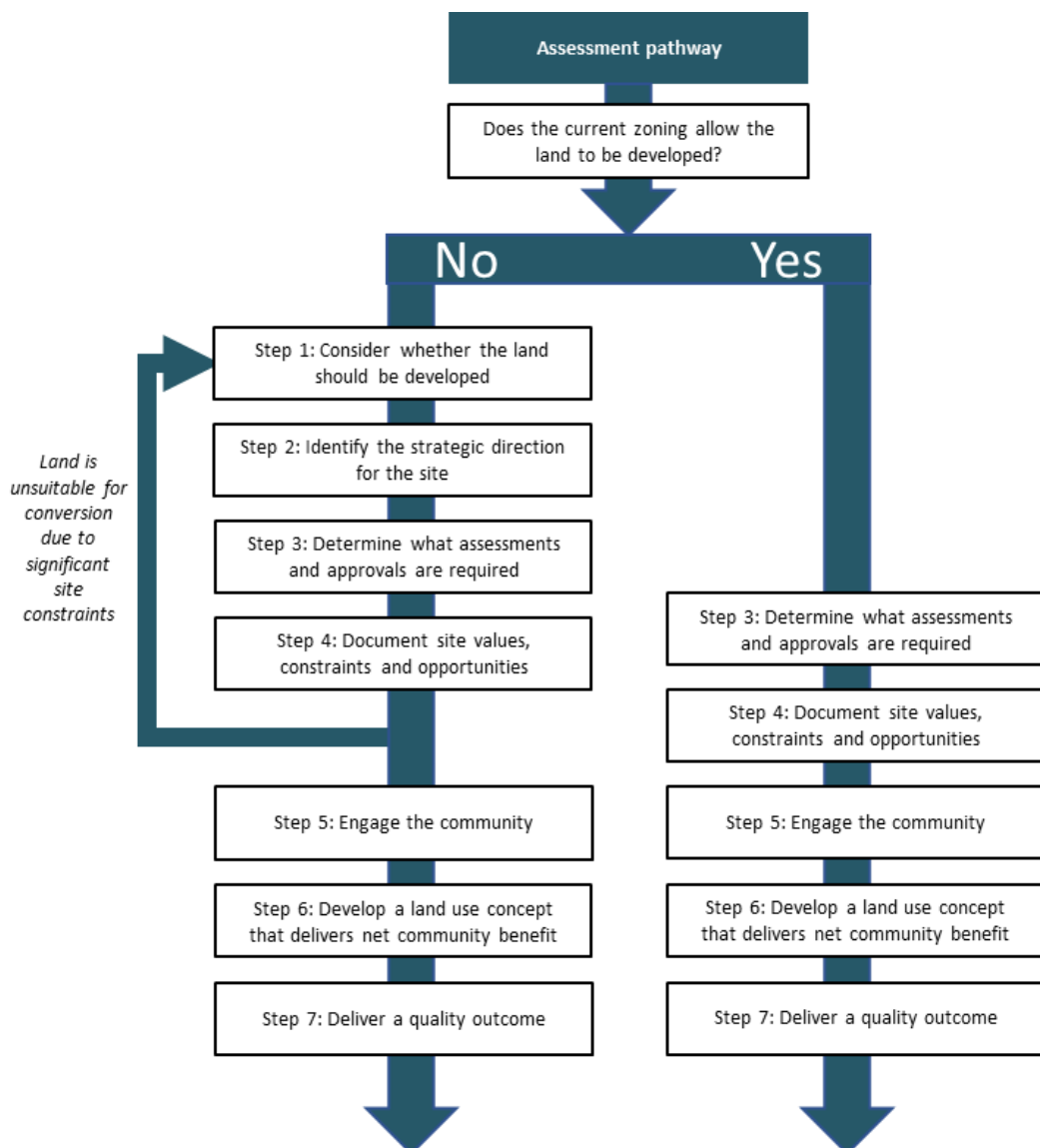
When developing a proposal for the conversion of golf course land, up to seven steps apply in the planning pathway, depending on the controls that apply to the land.

- Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped
- Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site
- Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required
- Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities
- Step 5: Engage the community
- Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit
- Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome.

The planning steps are not intended to be applied for relatively minor approvals associated with changes to an existing operation.

The following diagram sets out the overarching assessment pathway for planning scheme amendments and planning permit applications.

Figure 1: Indicative assessment pathway



Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped

Surplus golf course land, particularly in metropolitan areas, presents a rare opportunity for governments to purchase a significant land parcel for community or public use.

The following questions should be addressed in establishing whether golf course land should be converted to another use:

- Does the land tenure allow for conversion?
- Is the golf course surplus to golfing?
- Are there economic alternatives to conversion?
- Should the land remain as open space?

Proponents should confirm the ownership of the land and that it is available for conversion and document any title or legal restrictions on its future development.

To assess whether the golf course is surplus to the needs of golfing, a proponent will need to identify:

- Whether the course has been identified in a regional golf facility plan as a course that should remain or is a candidate for conversion to another use. If there is no relevant golf facility plan, consider:
 - the demand for golf courses in the region and whether the course is located in an area currently under-supplied or over-supplied with golf courses
 - whether there is capacity for the golf course to be improved to incorporate contemporary design standards and facilities.
- Whether the proposal delivers improved golf facilities consistent with Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy and any relevant golf facility plan.

The proponent should commission independent economic advice on:

- whether golf is likely to remain viable at the course taking into account:
 - the course facilities and layout
 - the club patronage and financial status
- the broader economic implications of the proposal.

Surplus golf course land should be offered at first instance for acquisition to the Commonwealth and Victorian governments and local governments. State-owned public golf course land will be offered under the *Landholding Policy and Guidelines*. All other golf course land must be offered using an equivalent 'expression of interest' process to the satisfaction of the planning authority.

Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site

Establishing the strategic direction for the site is a key step to developing a concept for the site. Any concept for the site should begin with the question: what does policy say is the best use for this site?

Responsibility for assessment of strategic direction for the site will rest with the relevant planning authority.

The strategic direction for a proposal should consider, the following:

- The level of access to transport and activity centres.
- The local greenspace network or wildlife network.
- Whether the proposed conversion is consistent with relevant policies and strategies including:
 - the Planning Policy Framework
 - Plan Melbourne 2017–2050
 - any relevant regional growth plan
 - any metropolitan open space strategy or regional open space strategy
 - the Yarra Strategic Plan, if adjacent to the Yarra River
 - any relevant waterway, catchment, or flooding strategy
 - any adopted council open space strategy

- any adopted council housing strategy.
- Whether proposal has the potential to contribute to broader strategic priorities, such as:
 - Active Victoria Framework
 - Water for Victoria Water Plan
 - Any regional Integrated Water Management Plan or the achievement of water sensitive urban design principles
 - Victorian 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy
 - Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037.

Proponents should also reach out to not for profit sports and education providers to gauge what if any interest there is in use of the land for a community purpose.

Step 3: Determine what other assessment and approvals are required

The proponent should identify the applicable assessment and approvals for the proposal based on the relevant legislation. The proponent should consider all relevant legislation, including:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

The approvals required will determine:

- who are the relevant decision makers
- the level of effort and rigour required to document the site values and constraints
- the program for the preparation of documentation and engagement.

Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities

The values, constraints and opportunities at the golf course land (and any receiving site in the case of a proposal to relocate a golf course) must be clearly documented. The values, constraints and opportunities will be identified by the proponent, relying on technical studies and feedback from community engagement.

The following matters should be considered, as relevant, when identifying the values and constraints of a site:

- the environmental values of the site, including biodiversity values, habitat connectivity and the strategic biodiversity significance or role of the site in the local or regional ecosystem, including the relevant bioregion
- the community values of the site, including community facilities providing for active or passive recreational pursuits, the catchment of the community using the site, whether the site is accessible to the public
- the open space values of the site, including whether the site is accessible to the public, or if it has broader landscape values through the provision of tree coverage and green areas
- any environmental hazards including hazards that are mitigated by the way the golf course land is currently managed, such as flooding or bushfire hazard
- the cultural heritage values of the site, including aboriginal heritage values and other cultural heritage values
- any contamination, including any known or likely sources of contamination that may exist due to historical uses or through the management of the golf course land
- the site's integration with existing infrastructure, such as transport networks (public transport, road, pedestrian and bicycle routes), stormwater infrastructure, electricity transmission links
- the site's relationship to nearby residential areas, rural or green wedge areas including its interface with residential development.

The opportunities for the site should consider:

- more integrated open space networks and recreational facilities
- restoration of environmental values, including protection of biodiversity, native vegetation, water ways, water bodies and wetlands
- opportunity to increase resilience to climate change and natural hazards, including a design response that may increase the community's resilience to bushfire and flooding events and sea level rise
- additional community facilities
- educational and health facilities
- a range of dwelling types including affordable housing
- tourism facilities
- introduction of environmentally sustainable measures and design features, such as the generation of renewable energy, water sensitive urban design, waste water reuse, and waste reduction.

Step 5: Engage the community

Develop a comprehensive community consultation program, and commence consultation before preparing detailed designs.

The purpose of this consultation is to:

- assist the community to understand the need for the golf course land conversion
- allow the community to provide input to identification of site values and constraints
- allow the community to contribute to identification of opportunities and ideas for the golf course land conversion
- foster open channels of communication between the proponents and the community.

Community consultation and engagement will be the joint responsibility of the proponent and the relevant planning authority.

Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit

Proposal to convert golf course land must provide a net community benefit and a high level of sustainability.

Where a proposal involves relocating a golf course, the net community benefit should consider the total proposal, comprising the closed golf course site and future golf course site.

As well as an overall community benefit the proposal should:

- deliver a net increase in public open space
- deliver improved environmental values
- deliver a net community benefit for the community surrounding any redeveloped course.

The following factors should be considered and weighed up to determine if, on balance, the proposal provides a net community benefit and environmental benefit:

- whether a proposal:
 - contributes to achieving state or local government strategies
 - delivers improved golf facilities and whether these are accessible to the public
 - provides additional public open space, sporting or recreational facilities or makes financial contributions to improve or develop regional or local sporting facilities and open space
 - protects and enhances the wider greenspace network and ecological connectivity
 - rehabilitates degraded land or mitigates existing environmental risks
 - contributes to local housing priorities such as the provision of affordable or social housing, sheltered housing or crisis accommodation
 - delivers connected walking and biking paths and general improvements to pedestrian and cycling connectivity

- delivers social or community infrastructure such as libraries, medical or education facilities
- the impacts on local transport and traffic networks
- any proposed commercial uses, and whether any potentially out of centre commercial uses are proposed
- how the proposal will integrate with surrounding land uses, infrastructure and services
- whether the proposal incorporates climate change adaptation measures for communities and the environment.

Other factors may also be relevant considerations depending on the circumstances of the golf course land and the proposal.

Proponents are encouraged to liaise closely with the planning authority in an iterative and negotiated process to arrive at a final position regarding the net community benefit of the proposal.

Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome

Any proposal to convert golf course land must deliver a high quality outcome.

The following benchmarks should be considered as the starting point for assessing the conversion or redevelopment of golf course land:

- in new housing development not less than 20 per cent of the land area is provided as useable open space. This land may be encumbered by easements, reservations, heritage, vegetation or other conditions and make provision for land to be used for passive or active recreation
- high-value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors are protected and enhanced
- the landscape concept for the proposal (excluding active sporting areas) will deliver a tree canopy cover at least equivalent to the surrounding area
- the landscape concept for the proposal (excluding active sporting areas) will deliver an average tree canopy cover consistent with any local adopted tree canopy policy and at least greater than the surrounding area
- active transport links are provided into the surrounding area, even if this means the use of a number of existing lots abutting the golf course land to enhance the connectivity of the proposal.

Planning mechanisms

Where a planning scheme amendment is proposed a Development Plan Overlay should be applied to guide the development of the land.

Any Schedule to the Development Plan Overlay should:

- be in a form similar to the draft model contained in these Guidelines
- make arrangements for infrastructure contributions.

A development plan or permit should carefully manage interfaces, including by specifying building envelope and building setbacks where appropriate.

A development plan or permit should consider mechanisms to limit increases in urban heating by specifying light coloured roofs for dwellings or planted roofs for other uses.

Model Development Plan Overlay

SCHEDULE [NUMBER] TO CLAUSE 43.04 DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **DPO[number]**.

GUMNUT LINKS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Site description

This schedule applies to land generally known as Gumnut Links Golf course, 1-101 Gumnut Highway, Gumnut

1.0 Objectives

The template from the Ministerial Direction On The Form And Content Of Planning Schemes states:

A schedule may specify objectives to be achieved. Insert a maximum of 5 objectives.

- To maximise the amount of open space provided on the land taking account of the natural and man-made features of the land, its topography particularly with regard to the provision of useable open space, and the protection and enhancement of the landscape character where water features, vegetation, canopy trees and open areas are adjacent to residential areas.
- To recognise sites of conservation, heritage and archaeological significance.
- To minimise the visual intrusion of the development when viewed from public areas outside the site.
- To ensure new buildings are appropriate in height and setback from adjoining residential areas and other sensitive uses and the materials used in construction are non-reflective and use colours appropriate for the location.
- To design the management of transport networks to minimise impacts on adjoining residential areas and have appropriate access to main roads.

2.0 Requirement before a permit is granted

The template from the Ministerial Direction On The Form And Content Of Planning Schemes states:

Insert the following words: “A permit may be granted to use or subdivide land, construct a building or construct or carry out works before a development plan has been prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority”.

For example

A permit may be granted to use or subdivide land, construct a building or construct or carry out works before a development plan has been prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. A permit may be granted for the following:

- Any buildings and works required for the operation of the existing golf course or for maintenance of the land once the course is closed.
- Minor buildings and works and any works required to satisfy environmental clean up or audit requirements.
- Earthworks and site preparation works that are carried out in accordance with a Construction Management Plan and Arboricultural Assessment Report prepared and implemented in accordance with *Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites*.
- To create or remove easements.
- Etc.

- A display suite.

Before granting a permit, the responsible authority must be satisfied that the permit will not prejudice the future use and development of the land in the manner contemplated in Map 1 in this Schedule.

3.0 Conditions and requirements for permits

The template from the Ministerial Direction On The Form And Content Of Planning Schemes states:

Where conditions and requirements for permit are specified, determine the specific permit class affected and insert specific conditions and requirements for permits and insert “The following conditions and/or requirements apply to permits:

- [insert conditions and requirements for permits].”

The following conditions and/or requirements apply to permits:

For example

Contaminated sites

Before buildings and works are undertaken, a preliminary soil assessment must be submitted that demonstrates the extent of any contaminated soils that exist on the subject land, and where detected, a more detailed assessment outlining the location of the contaminated soil, the types of contaminants detected and strategies and procedures required to be undertaken to de-contaminate affected areas.

Infrastructure Contributions

A permit for the development of land must contain a condition which requires the owner of the land to enter into an agreement with the responsible authority pursuant to Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to provide for the following matters to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:

- A contribution towards community infrastructure and physical infrastructure required to meet the demands of the future residential population of the site.
- Etc.

The owner **must** pay the Responsible Authority’s reasonable costs associated with the preparation, registration and enforcement of the agreement.

Mitigation and management plans

Conditions must be included to require submission of management plans including:

- An Environmental Management Plan.
- An Integrated Water Management Plan, which implements high quality water sensitive urban design.
- An Environmental Impact Mitigation Plan.
- A Native Vegetation Precinct Plan or Offset Management Plan.
- A Sustainability Management Plan.
- An Environmental Hazard Management Plan, such as a bushfire risk assessment or flood risk assessment.
- A Construction Management Plan.
- A Site Remediation Plan.
- Geotechnical Hazard Management Plan.
- Etc.

4.0 Requirements for Development Plan

The template from the Ministerial Direction On The Form And Content Of Planning Schemes states:

Include requirements for a development plan with the following words: “A development plan must include the following requirements:

- [insert requirements].”

The Development Plan must be prepared to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Prior to the preparation of a Development Plan a Community Engagement Strategy must be prepared to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. The strategy must:

For example

- Establish the mechanisms by which the community will be provided with information and opportunities for feedback during the preparation of the Development Plan.
- Include the mechanisms for consultation on the drafting of the Development Plan.
- Include a requirement that the Development Plan be made available for public submissions prior to its consideration by the Responsible Authority.

Development plan components

For example

The Development Plan submitted for approval must be accompanied by and must address the recommendations of reports which identify the

- Environmental.
- Ecological.
- Arboricultural.
- Landscape.
- Viewshed.
- Archaeological.
- Historical and cultural values and features of the site.
- Transport impacts with transport management proposals.

The Development Plan must respond to a site analysis and design response demonstrating a response to site opportunities and constraints, with particular regard to:

- The physical constraints of the site.
- Public open space requirements.
- The interface with adjoining uses and developments.
- Identified heritage assets.

as well as any adopted policy or code for residential development and subdivision.

The Development Plan must include the following requirements:

Land use

For example

The Development Plan **must** show or make provision for:

- A range of dwelling types to cater for a variety of housing needs.
- Affordable housing.
- Management of amenity impacts to ensure the reasonable amenity of future residents of the site.

Built form

For example

The Development Plan must include Urban design guidelines for the land including but not limited to:

- Building massing showing heights and setbacks with tallest heights at the centre of the site transitioning to reduced heights and increased setbacks along sensitive interfaces.
- Building envelopes including maximum building heights (expressed in terms of the zone provisions as storeys or metres) and setbacks generally in accordance with the concept at map 1.

- Treatment of car parking areas and orientation of garages so that they do not dominate the street or any public open space.
- Building orientation and location, car parking areas, public roads, vehicle access locations, pedestrian and bike paths and areas and locations of private and public open space.
- The preferred design and interface treatments to public open spaces within and adjacent to the land.
- Development setbacks from internal streets to provide for a landscaped and tree-lined network of streets.
- Treatments to achieve reasonable amenity to public urban spaces, streetscapes and pedestrian and bicycle paths by minimising overshadowing and wind tunnelling effects.

Open space

For example

The Development Plan must show or make provision for the following matters, as appropriate:

- Open space integrated into the site which includes not less than 20 per cent of the land area as useable open space. This land may be encumbered by easements, reservations, heritage, vegetation or other conditions and make provision for land to be used for passive or active recreation.
- Existing trees identified in an Arboricultural report to be retained.
- A landscaping concept plan including a maintenance programme.

Circulation and movement

For example

The Development Plan must respond to a Transport Management Plan prepared by an appropriately qualified expert addressing the following matters, as appropriate:

- The impact of the development on the arterial and local road network.
- Mitigation works required on the road network.
- Funding responsibilities.
- Connections to adjoining land.
- Road hierarchy.
- Cross sections.
- Proposed transport management devices.
- Bicycle network.
- Public transport routes.
- Pedestrian links.

The Development Plan must make provision for the internal road and path network for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles to create a high level of permeability through the site generally in accordance with the concept shown in map 1 and considering:

- The primary access and egress from the land for vehicles from Gumnut Highway to the standards of the relevant road authority.
- Future pedestrian links into the site to connect nearby open space.
- Links to public transport services.

Environmental Management

For example

The Development Plan must respond to an Environmental Assessment of the land, including the following matters as appropriate:

- A flora and fauna survey, which identifies existing vegetation or habitat of international, national, state, regional or local significance required to be protected and enhanced in adjacent waterways or the subject site.
- Etc.

Natural hazards

For example

The Development Plan must respond to a Natural Hazard Assessment of the land, addressing the following matters as appropriate:

- A bushfire risk assessment that identifies the bushfire risk at the landscape and site scale and identifies appropriate bushfire mitigation measures.
- Flood risk assessment that identifies the risk of flooding, predicted impacts of sea level rise and identified appropriate mitigation measures.
- Geotechnical hazard assessment.

Social Impact

For example

The Development Plan **must** respond to a Social Impact Assessment Report which addresses the following matters as appropriate:

- An assessment of the adequacy of existing social and community infrastructure to serve the land.
- Any additional social and community infrastructure to be provided as part of the redevelopment.
- Any community infrastructure contribution to be made in connection with the development.

Heritage and Archaeological Survey

For example

The Development Plan must respond to a Heritage and Archaeological Survey and show or make provision for the following matters as appropriate:

- Cultural heritage including places and objects.
- Any buildings to be retained under any conservation controls.

Subdivision

For example

The Development Plan must show the following:

- Indicative lot layout, roads and pedestrian connections and public open space.
- Any proposed staging of development including staging of infrastructure and open space delivery.

Concept plan to illustrate the development

For example



Part B:

Introduction and issues

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Golf is one of Australia's most popular organised recreational activities with over 300,000 participants with a wide spread of age groups. It is experiencing big changes in demand. Overall, traditional Golf Club membership is in decline and clubs are facing changing leisure patterns and increasing operating costs. Some Golf Clubs have been forced to merge or close. This trend has drawn developer interest in golf course land.

Recognising that golf course land, especially within Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) may be considered for rezoning, the Victorian Government is seeking to ensure new proposals for redevelopment are assessed according to consistent criteria.

The Committee has the task of considering the exhibited *Guidelines* (Appendix B) in light of the submissions and the presentations in the workshops before advising on an appropriate form of the *Guidelines*. The various issues considered by the Committee are set out in later sections of the Report.

1.2 About golf – the *Planning for Golf in Victoria Discussion paper*

The *Planning for Golf in Victoria Discussion paper*, 2017, (the *Discussion paper*) “*identifies the key challenges and opportunities for golf in Victoria, short and long term*”.

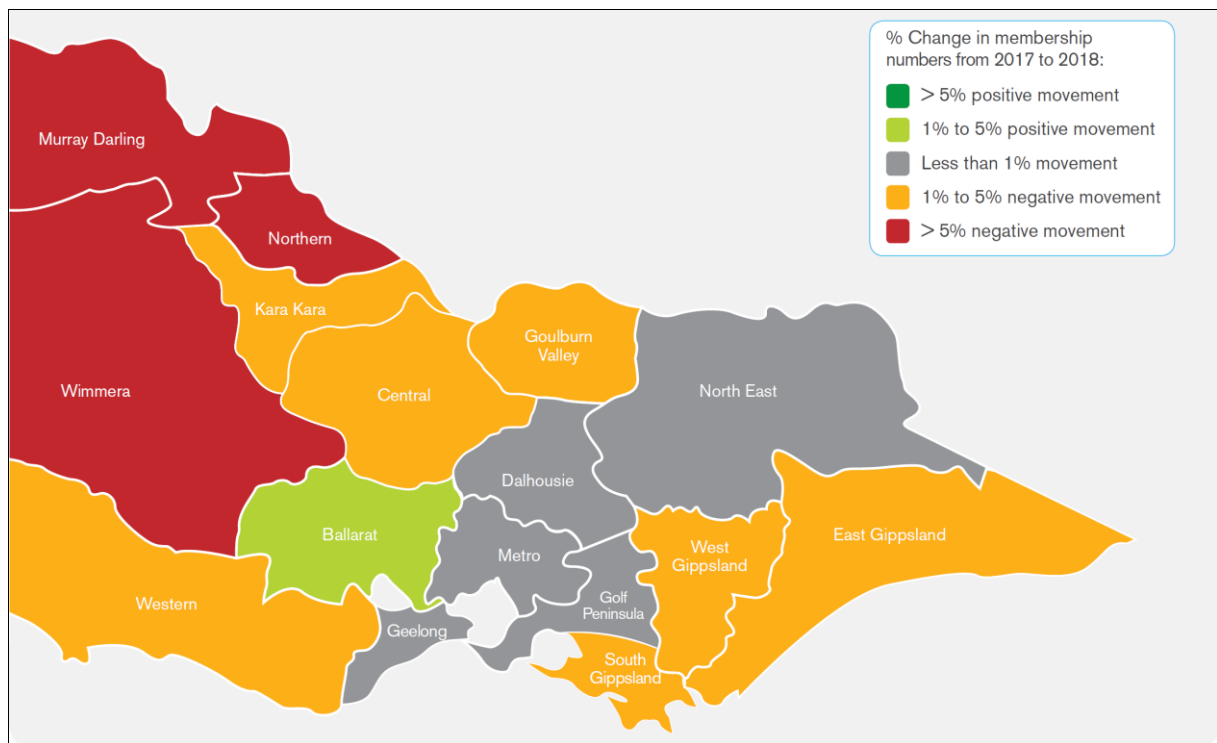
The *Discussion paper* followed extensive research and consultation with the golf industry, and with guidance from the Planning for Golf in Victoria Task Force.

The *Discussion paper* makes a number of statements about golf in Victoria:

- of Victoria's 374 golf courses, 188 clubs in 2013-14 were operating with fewer than 200 members and 145 had fewer than 100 members
- only 21 clubs had more than 1,000 members and they made up 25 per cent of Victoria's total members
- the median membership in Victoria in 2017 was 117.

Golf Club membership is declining in regional areas of Victoria, but relatively stable in metropolitan Melbourne (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Change in Golf Club membership 2017 to 2018



Source: 2018 Golf Club Participation Report Of Australia, Published By Golf Australia June 2019, Page 27

Golf delivers health and wellbeing benefits and supports regular and enduring social interactions across different age groups. Golf and Golf Clubs:

- contribute \$883.6 million in economic and health benefits for the state each year
- generate \$849.7 million in economic activity
- support 6,900 full-time jobs
- generate \$33.8 million of health contributions
- generate \$152 million through golf tourism each year, attracting domestic and international visitors.

As an industry, Golf Clubs are currently experiencing a lengthy period of transition. Local clubs must manage multiple challenges including:

- the number of players is diminishing
- membership of clubs is declining or ageing
- leisure patterns are changing and golfers are less keen to commit the time required to play a round of 18 holes
- costs are increasing including higher rates, operating and infrastructure costs
- casual players and tourism have become more important.

Today's golfer is increasingly a social player without a membership who prefers to participate in an unstructured way. They have budget constraints and limits on their time.

Golf Clubs must balance delivering the entitlements that (a declining number of) club members pay for with the demands of social players. Low levels of innovation and the exclusive nature of many clubs in the past has exacerbated membership decline.

Golf's traditional slower-paced game and strict conservative dress codes and course rules are barriers for younger people to play golf or join a Golf Club.

As a result, many Victorian public and second tier private Golf Clubs are in financial difficulty. In 2012, Golf Victoria¹ reported that almost half of metropolitan Melbourne clubs were experiencing financial stress.² A number have needed to merge and some have closed. Golf Clubs need to address declining membership or find new ways to attract participants to increase their long term sustainability.

1.3 About the exhibited *Guidelines*

The draft *Guidelines* were prepared by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) from the work of the Planning for Golf in Victoria Task Force in 2017. The draft *Guidelines* were prepared in recognition that golf course land, especially land within Melbourne's UGB, can be considered for rezoning and that the Victorian Government wishes to ensure new proposals for redevelopment are assessed according to consistent criteria.³

The draft *Guidelines* were exhibited from 2 to 30 September 2019.

During the exhibition period a public briefing to enable DELWP to present an overview of the background and work undertaken on the Planning for Golf Strategy and the preparation of the draft *Guidelines* was held on Thursday 12 September 2019 at Planning Panels Victoria. The briefing was chaired by the deputy chair of the Committee and attended by a member of the Committee.

The Committee requested further information from DELWP on 29 August 2019 in regard to:

- relevant public background documents or papers including the *Discussion paper* that have informed the draft *Guidelines* to provide background information to the Committee
- the list of submitters who made a submission on the *Discussion paper* and the high-level groupings that were used by DELWP during that consultation
- a copy of the notice or information published at the time the *Discussion paper* was released
- the list of groups and individuals DELWP will notify of the draft *Guidelines*.

A response was provided to the Committee on 3 September 2019.

1.4 Summary of issues raised in submissions

Sixty three submissions were made about the exhibited *Guidelines*. A list of submitters is provided in Appendix C.

Overwhelmingly, people like golf courses – even non-golfers. Submission 50 stated:

We can see that golf courses, like Green Wedges, have intrinsic environmental, social and net community benefits for their local communities, and ought to be protected whether in Green Wedge or urban areas.

Many of the submissions centred on the proposed redevelopment of the Kingswood Golf Course at Dingley and provided the Committee with issues to canvass in the workshops. The Committee recognises the level of interest generated by the redevelopment proposal, and

¹ Now part of Golf Australia

² 2012 *Golf Victoria Governance and Structural Review*, Golf Victoria

³ As explained in Clause 15 of the Committee's Terms of Reference (Appendix A)

the planning process that caused parties to be highly critical of the way the proposal was advanced.

The issues raised by submitters fall into four broad categories.

First, the threshold issue of whether golf course land should be retained as **open space**. A number of submitters were opposed to any development of golf course land on the basis that public open space is a limited resource and required to serve a growing population and has important environmental and community values that should be protected and enhanced.

The *Discussion paper* brought the broad issues of golf and the specific issues of Golf Clubs and courses together in developing the draft *Guidelines*. The draft *Guidelines* focused on planning matters; the submissions received during exhibition of the draft *Guidelines* turn the spotlight on the merits of retaining golf courses as courses or, if change is inevitable, being retained as open space for the benefit of the local community.

Second, the form and content of the draft *Guidelines* including:

- Providing a more expansive explanation of the **approvals process** including more detail on:
 - considerations to be addressed at each step in the approval process
 - the role and responsibilities of the Committee, Minister and Councils in the assessment of proposals
 - the need for community consultation and engagement.
- Clarifying the **scope of the Guidelines** including whether the *Guidelines* apply to:
 - public and private golf course land
 - full and partial redevelopment of golf course land
 - golf course land inside and outside the UGB
 - development of golf course land requiring a planning scheme amendment and development requiring a planning permit.
- Whether proposals to develop golf course land should deliver **net community benefit** and how net community benefit will be assessed.
- Additional considerations in the **assessment of golf course land** were identified including:
 - alignment with policy and strategies
 - environmental hazards and risks
 - community values
 - suitability of the land for contemporary golf design.
- Additional considerations in the **assessment of the development outcome** were identified including: integration with existing infrastructure and surrounding land uses, addressing neighbourhood character and amenity, delivery of open space, protection and enhancement of environmental values.

Third, detailed proposals to develop particular golf courses including Ranfurly Golf Course, Keysborough Golf Course, Kingwood Golf Course and Waverley Golf Course. However, it is not the role of this Report to address specific proposals as no redevelopment proposals have been referred by the Minister to the Committee yet.

Fourth, concerns about the Committee and its proposed role in considering redevelopment proposals. The Committee's Terms of Reference set out the role of the Committee. The Committee notes these submissions, but makes no comment in relation to them.

1.5 Workshops

The Committee's Terms of Reference provide that:

The advisory committee may conduct workshops or forums to explore issues or other matters. Any workshops or forums will be held in public.

A number of submitters attended the workshops held on 21 and 22 October 2019. A list of participants and observers is provided in Appendix D. The workshops were conducted to encourage each presenter to emphasise the main themes or issues in their submission. The Committee then prompted discussion around the table to elaborate on the issues.

The Committee encouraged submitters who attended the community workshops to explain their submissions in the broad so that issues and concerns could be canvassed without reference to a specific proposal. The Committee thanks workshop attendees for their input and assistance in understanding the issues.

Submissions from Golf Australia, other associations, organisations, institutions and academia addressed issues about redevelopment proposals. Each presenter provided the Committee with perspectives from their experience. The Golf Australia presentation provided updated data on participation in golf that was useful context for the Committee.

The workshop with Golf Clubs emphasised the pressures on Golf Clubs to maintain a viable offering, on and off course, to members as their primary focus and to green fee players who are a valuable source of revenue for clubs. The presentations provided a snapshot of issues facing Golf Clubs while emphasising that merger or closure of a Golf Club and course was not a first level strategy but was sometimes necessary for the survival of the club. An essential element of survival in those instances was the opportunity to redevelop the former golf course land and to apply the revenue to provide better facilities elsewhere.

1.6 The Committee's approach

The Committee considered all written submissions made in response to the exhibition of the draft *Guidelines* and submissions, and other material presented to it during the workshops (Appendix E). It has reviewed a large volume of material, and has had to be selective in referring to the more relevant or determinative material in the Report. All submissions and materials have been considered by the Committee in reaching its conclusions, regardless of whether they are specifically mentioned in the Report.

This Report deals with the issues under the following headings:

- Threshold issues
- How the *Guidelines* might be given power
- The *Guidelines*: Introductory text
- The *Guidelines*: 'Scope of the guidelines'
- What is the appropriate planning assessment pathway
- Planning Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped
- Planning Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site
- Planning Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required
- Planning Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities
- Planning Step 5: Engage the community
- Planning Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit
- Planning Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome.

2 Threshold issues

2.1 Golf course redevelopment

With more golf courses per capita in Victoria than the rest of Australia, there is pressure on Golf Clubs to consider their future. Some Golf Clubs have been forced to merge or close, with the number of Golf Clubs in Victoria declined from 337 in 2009 to 320 in 2018.⁴ This is a net decline of about two clubs each year.

The *Discussion paper* highlights a number of considerations that emerge from the challenges facing golf:

- Golf courses have not traditionally been developed on a demand basis. Most have been developed on land gifted by local councils or more recently, as the centrepiece of high-end residential estates. This has created an environment where courses are not necessarily located where demand exists and there are multiple clubs in a region competing for memberships.
- In metropolitan Melbourne, there is an oversupply of golf courses in the southern and eastern regions and an undersupply in the northern and western regions.
- The locational misalignment between supply and demand is further exacerbated in Melbourne's northern and western growth areas. This issue is set to continue if not addressed, with a further 17 new suburbs planned for metropolitan Melbourne to support the demand for housing as our population continues to grow.

Golf courses provide opportunities to preserve green spaces and contribute to biodiversity values.

The *Discussion paper* identified how golf courses in Victoria were established from the 1890s in areas that later faced urban development pressures through to the 1920s post World War 1, to the emergence of the Murray River region as a golf destination in the 1970s and as golf course residential estates in the 1990s-2000s.

Submission 27 pointed out that the relocation of golf courses in metropolitan Melbourne is not a new phenomenon:

Over time, urbanisation expands to surround golf courses, creating two significant forces:

1. Encroachment of housing on the perimeter of golf courses with commensurate safety and adaptation constraints.
2. Increasing the value of the land and the opportunity cost of occupancy for the Golf Club.

When met with these forces, clubs, rightfully considering the most efficient use of their resources, have often in the past decided to sell their existing urban land holding and relocate to inexpensive land on the urban fringe.

The submission stated:

This is a natural evolutionary process that is necessary for the efficient allocation of land. It contributes to the abatement of urban sprawl, unlocks residential land for development in areas where infrastructure is mature, and allows clubs to 'shed their

⁴ 2018 Golf Club Participation Report Of Australia, Published By Golf Australia June 2019, Page 11

skin' over time to adapt to changing demands of their customer base. It is not a new phenomenon.

Submission 27 listed a number of relocated golf courses:

- Commonwealth Golf Club from Carnegie to Oakleigh in 1921
- Royal Melbourne Golf Club and Metropolitan Golf Club from Caulfield to Cheltenham in 1925
- Kingston Heath Golf Club from Elsternwick to Heatherton in 1925
- Yarra Yarra Golf Club from Rosanna to Bentleigh East in 1928
- Eastwood Golf Club from Ringwood to Kilsyth in 1964
- Croydon Golf Club from Croydon to Yering in 2008
- Eastern Golf Club from Doncaster to Yering in 2012.

Submission 41 added:

- Glen Waverley Golf Club operated in Glen Waverley from its formation in 1926 before play moved to the present course in Rowville in 1962
- the predecessor club of the Churchill Park Golf Club played at a course at Endeavour Hills before the Churchill Park golf course opened in 1973 on land leased by the club from Parks Victoria.

The Committee can add other Golf Clubs that are known to have moved from locations where they formerly operated (sometimes under another name):

- Box Hill Golf Club
- Riversdale Golf Club
- Sunshine Golf Club
- Gardiners Run Golf Club.

Planning Panels Victoria's records extend this list again, recording the following courses were subject to panel reports for complete or partial redevelopment since 1994:⁵

- Mooroopna golf course, 1994
- Patterson River Country Club, 2001
- Golden Beach golf course – the Sands Torquay, 2004
- Pakenham golf course, 2005
- Ballarat golf course, 2006
- Geelong golf course, 2006
- Underbank Country Club, Bacchus Marsh, 2006
- Lalor golf course, 2006
- Anglesea golf course, 2007
- Heritage Golf and Country Club, 2008
- Wonthaggi golf course, 2009
- Maryborough golf course, 2009
- Lonsdale golf course, 2012
- Amstel golf course, 2015
- Wangaratta golf course, 2017
- Kingston Links golf course, 2018.

⁵ Not all of these proposals may have proceeded

The relocation of the Eastern Golf Club and the Chirnside Park Golf Club to the Gardiners Run Golf Club are recent moves that required planning scheme amendments to allow conversion of the courses to urban uses. The reports of the panels and advisory committee that considered those changes provide useful background to understand the processes and the issues raised about the redevelopment of the vacated land.

The advisory committee that considered the Chirnside Park relocation concluded:

Planning policy supports relocation of the golf course to outside the Urban Growth Boundary and the development of the existing golf course land.

Also of interest is the planning scheme amendment that rezoned the land formerly occupied by the Kingston Links Golf Course for residential use. In that case, the closed course was not replaced by another golf facility.

The Committee concludes:

- The redevelopment of golf courses has happened many times in Melbourne's history and the changing demands on Golf Clubs will create pressure on future conversions.

2.2 Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy 2018-23

Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy 2018-23 articulates the Victorian Government's vision for the state to be recognised as one of the top five golf destinations in the world and outlines "*an ambitious, achievable plan*" to realise this vision.

The Committee concludes:

- Golf has an important role to play in Victoria's visitor economy that should not be overlooked.

2.3 A golf statewide facilities plan

State planning policy recognises that golf courses are a major land use and important to Melbourne's culture. Golf courses are recognised as part of what makes Melbourne a distinctive and liveable city in the metropolitan planning strategy, *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*, which sets the Victorian Government's priorities and goals to guide the city's long-term growth. The implementation of *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*, has an action under Outcome 4: 'Melbourne is a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity'

Action 67: Golf statewide facilities plan

Work with the golf industry and local government to develop a strategic metropolitan-wide facilities plan that will meet the future needs of the sport, given the increasing pressures for some golf courses to be rezoned for residential use.

Golf Australia told the Committee that a statewide facilities plan will be of benefit to all parties considering the future of Golf Clubs and golf course land through the analysis of viability issues for Golf Clubs and future business strategies to assist their ongoing operation.

Golf Australia advised:

The Victorian state-wide facilities plan is yet to begin. We are awaiting on funding from the Victorian Government, who will guide the process in partnership with Golf Australia. In the lead up to this, Golf Australia will undertake a state-wide facilities audit through a mobile facility auditing process supplied by Inside Edge Sports and Leisure Planning. More information on the audit can be found in the attached brochure.

Like all parties, the Committee must await the plan. Because of the likely future importance of the plan, the Committee thinks that it would be wise to include reference to it in the *Guidelines*.

Once the plan is in place its proposals to address the future needs of golf should supersede any locally specific demand analysis.

The Committee concludes:

- the *Guidelines* should anticipate a Golf statewide facilities plan.

2.4 What makes golf course land special?

(i) The issue

Understanding the attributes or inherent values of golf courses that require a higher level or different type of consideration will inform the *Guidelines*.

(ii) Submissions

Many submitters outlined what they saw as the valued characteristics of golf courses, especially in a situation where Melbourne's population is growing. For example Submission 36 stated:

The proposition that golf course land should be redeveloped poses major changes in land use for Victoria which will be permanent and far reaching. Proposed changes, in light of the many issues facing Melbourne's increased population density and climate change should be carefully considered:

Golf course architect Submission 43 observed:

The balanced development of surplus golf land is a once in a lifetime opportunity to create valuable community facilities including public golf and nature preservation.

(iii) Discussion

The Committee considers that golf courses typically have the following special characteristics– they:

- are large tracts of land – the smallest Melbourne course, Huntingdale, occupies 50 hectares with most around 60 hectares⁶
- contain environmental values – research investigating the ecosystem services and biodiversity benefits of golf courses in southeast Melbourne found that golf courses in that urban landscape support a much greater abundance and diversity of birds, micro-bats, native bees, beetles, and bugs than 'alternative' green spaces such as residential neighbourhoods and public urban parks⁷
- are large areas of open space (which may or may not be accessible to the public)
- contribute to stormwater management
- are managed either for the benefit of club members or the community
- often limit vehicle and sustainable transport movement due to the scale of the courses

⁶ Information supplied by Golf Australia

⁷ Report by Stephen Livesley The University of Melbourne (S44)

- often contain heritage values.

These characteristics lead the Committee to agree that consideration of ‘something more’ than the normal planning process is appropriate when golf course land is under review. The Committee also agrees that the redevelopment of golf course land represents significant opportunities and risks and therefore warrants a planning process to properly address these.

(iv) Conclusion

The Committee concludes:

- golf course land has a number of special characteristics
- planning for golf courses should expressly address these special characteristics.

2.5 The tensions inherent in large expanses of private open space

(i) The issue

About a third of all submissions thought that golf courses should not be redeveloped and should remain as public open space.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The issue of retaining golf course land as open space as raised in submissions has been raised with other advisory committees and panels considering the redevelopment of courses in recent years.

(iii) Submissions

Submissions were concerned that the draft *Guidelines* seemed to be based on a policy position that the redevelopment of golf course was a desirable thing. For example, the Cardinia Ratepayers and Residents Association (S60) stated:

It is very important that the government bodies reconsider this proposed redevelopment of environmentally valuable urban golf courses very carefully.

Other submissions were clear that retaining all of the land for open space was the desired outcome. The Green Wedges Coalition (S50) submitted:

... nothing less than 100% public open space provision should be acceptable for golf courses even if they are genuinely unviable. Golf courses already provide public open space for biodiversity and in some cases for public access beyond their members and players. In areas short of public open space, arrangements should be made for some private Golf Clubs – particularly those that purport to be struggling financially – to provide more public access

Submission 37 stated:

If genuine input was being sought from the public, the base-line premise here would not be ‘facilitate redevelopment for urban purposes’. Rather, it would be open to the public to make a full and free range of submissions as they see fit. Options being considered should include ways of maintaining these sites as golf courses, or conserving for public open space, landscape, conservation, and biodiversity purposes. In other words, the full range of options should be equally considered, not simply ‘facilitate redevelopment for urban purposes’

The Golf Clubs that submitted emphasised that the land was freehold land and not public open space.

(iv) Discussion

The Committee agrees with the submissions that Golf Clubs as freehold owners of land are under no obligation to maintain a golf course in perpetuity. However, there is no expectation under the Victorian Planning System that anyone has the right to convert their land from a low intensity land use to a higher one. Indeed the planning system puts a number of parameters around such conversions.

While there may be policy to support golf as an ongoing recreational activity – and hence support for relocation proposals that improve the ‘golf offer’ – this cannot ignore broader planning policy. Any conversion of golf course land needs to be consistent with broader planning policy. In some situations, for example a golf course in the Green Wedge but removed from urban development, current planning policy would not support anything else but a ‘Green Wedge’ use. The fact that the development site was a golf course would not, of itself, mean that a higher intensity use was appropriate. The Committee notes that the Cardinia Shire Council is fielding enquiries from a golf course in this situation.

Broader planning policy supports the efficient use of land, and this weighs towards the redevelopment of golf course land in urban areas. But the Committee agrees with submissions that the continued growth of Melbourne places all sorts of pressures on existing areas and golf courses present unique opportunities that ought to be considered before opting for conventional infill development.

If the whole of a golf course were to become public open space then it would seem that this would require purchase by a government agency or council. If no agency or council wants to buy the land then policy would, in most if not all cases, support some form of appropriate redevelopment.

(v) Conclusion

The Committee concludes:

- golf courses present unique opportunities that ought to be considered before opting for conventional infill development
- if no agency or council wants to buy the land then policy would, in most if not all cases, support some redevelopment of courses in urban areas.

2.6 Net community benefit

(i) The issue

The Committee thinks there is a matter of principle as to whether a proposal to convert a golf course needs to achieve something more than what would be delivered through the normal planning system.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The planning system calls for decision makers to balance competing policy objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development. This is reflected in section 4(1) of the Act which includes the following purposes:

- (a) to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land.

- (b) to provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity;
- (c) to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria;
- ...
- (g) to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.

In line with this purpose, clause 71.02 (Operation of the Planning Policy Framework) of the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) states that:

The Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure that the objectives of planning in Victoria (as set out in section 4 of the Act) are fostered through appropriate land use and development planning policies and practices that integrate relevant environmental, social and economic factors **in the interests of net community benefit and sustainable development**. (emphasis added)

Clause 71.02-3 (Integrated decision making) states (in part) that:

Planning and responsible authorities should endeavour to integrate the range of planning policies relevant to the issues to be determined and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations.

(iii) Submissions

Many submitters raised issues about net community benefit.

Some submitters were critical of the whole idea of net community benefit; Professor Buxton, RMIT University (S55) felt that:

This criterion has no legitimacy and should never be used in a serious planning document. It cannot reasonably be assessed, is subjective, and no method has been provided to relate economic, environmental and social factors, nor can one be provided

Other submitters agreed with the concept of net community benefit as a principle, but were not sure whether it could ever be delivered. Submission 63 said:

... it's impossible for me to believe that the redevelopment of golf course land could create a "*Net Community Benefit*" greater than the benefit which already exist

Generally, however, there was support for ensuring proposals delivered net community benefit but this was not unqualified. For example, the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) (S62) considered:

... that the draft *Guidelines* presently put too much emphasis on [net community benefit] considerations in the absence of relevant guidance about how to establish whether golf course land is surplus and how to establish appropriate alternative land uses.

The submission by National Golf Club Inc. and National Golf Holdings Ltd (S31) was clear that:

The test of net community benefit should not be of a higher standard than set out in the existing Planning Policy Framework just because the land is a golf course

Mostly the submissions sought greater clarity around how net community benefit would be applied. Bayside City Council (S61) was concerned that some elements that might be counted on the plus side of net community benefit, might also be viewed as 'out of centre' development.

(iv) Discussion

The Committee supports the concept of net community benefit being applied to golf course redevelopment proposals.

The Act states an objective for planning in Victoria is “*to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians*”. In practice, this requires decision makers to consider all relevant policy and particular matters for a development proposal and to take account of the benefits to the community to come from a proposal against any disbenefits to the community. The decision-making body is required to consider and determine a matter after weighing up the pros and the cons of a proposal.

The Committee has already concluded that:

- golf course land has a number of special characteristics
- planning for golf courses should expressly address these special characteristics.

These characteristics mean that the assessment of net community benefit for golf course redevelopment will raise issues not relevant for other development. A critical issue then arises in relation to:

- the ‘trading’ of benefits across widely different impacts
- what should be included as a benefit.

The Committee considers that if the *Guidelines* are to be progressed then it would be a serious omission not to address what net community benefit means in this context. This is discussed in Chapter 12.

(v) Conclusion

The Committee concludes:

- the *Guidelines* should provide detailed guidance around net community benefit.

3 How the *Guidelines* might be given power

(i) The issue

The exhibited *Guidelines* state:

Step 2: Golf course land development proposals will be required to respond to the planning decision framework for golf course land development proposals.

It is not clear how proposals would be required to respond to the *Guidelines*.

The Committee's Terms of Reference (Clause 20c) asks it to provide recommendations on how the *Guidelines* could be operationalised in the Victorian Planning System.

(ii) What are the options for operationalising the *Guidelines*?

The Committee has turned its mind to the broader Victorian planning system to consider the tools currently used to provide information about a specific aspect of the planning system, including:

- those within the planning scheme
- those that sit outside the planning scheme but which provide helpful advice or direction.

The tools in the planning scheme include:

- The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) incorporating state, regional and local policy.
- Particular provisions in the VPP which detail special controls on various land use activities and apply in addition to the requirements of a zone or overlay. Examples include standards for car parking, the use and development of premises including pig farms, brothels and convenience restaurants and take away food facilities.
- Incorporated Documents. For example, Codes of Practice apply controls over land uses including Apiary, Broiler Farms, Cattle Feedlots, Circuses, Racing dog premises, Tennis Courts, Telecommunication facilities and to the development of land through codes such as the Small Lot Housing Code.
- Guidelines documents which a decision maker is called upon to "*Consider as relevant*" in the PPF. Examples include the *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria*, *Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria*, *Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guidelines* and *Activity Centre Guidelines*.

The administrative tools outside planning schemes include:

- Advisory Notes which provide information about a specific planning initiative being implemented and convey point-in-time information about new initiatives, and changes to specific planning scheme provisions.
- Planning Practice Notes (PPN) which cover a range of processes and topics, including preparation of planning scheme content, assessment of permit applications and provide ongoing planning advice. Examples include notes about how to write municipal planning strategies, how to prepare and apply planning controls for specific areas and activities, heritage controls, shipping container controls and numerous other notes.

- Ministerial Directions issued by the Minister for Planning under powers in the Act⁸ on relevant matters that must be considered by planning authorities when considering the preparation and amendment of planning schemes.

(iii) Submissions

Submissions that addressed the form and content of the *Guidelines* were more concerned with their structure than how and how they work in practice than how they would be given legal effect. Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (S58) considered both issues. It stated:

Based on the draft *Guidelines* viewed to date, it is suggested that a Practice Note would be sufficient. In the event that a Golf Strategy, or similar, is adopted by the State Government, clear state or regional policies should be introduced into the Planning Policy Framework and the inclusion of local policy (where needed) should be supported. It is expected that Councils will be consulted on any proposed changes to Planning Schemes to introduce a planning framework for the redevelopment of golf courses, if this approach is pursued.

The question of how to operationalise the *Guidelines* was discussed at the workshop session attended by the submitter councils and representatives of golf courses.

The Committee canvassed the options of planning scheme provisions or administrative tools. The Committee put the view that Ministerial Directions differ from and are superior to guidelines, Advice Notes and Planning Practice Notes issued by DELWP because a Ministerial Direction has a legislative base, a structure with a clear purpose and is directive in what must be done.

After discussion of the merits of the tools against the power of a Ministerial Direction, the common view was to support the use of a Ministerial Direction.

(iv) Discussion

The critical role of the *Guidelines* is to set out for all parties interested in the future conversion of golf course land what matters need to be addressed when considering the possible conversion of sites. Because of that, it is important that the *Guidelines* have status in the planning system that puts them front and centre when a proposal is first contemplated.

The nature of the *Guidelines* suggests that they ought to, at least, be an administrative tool, that is either:

- an Advisory Note
- a Planning Practice Note
- a Ministerial Direction.

Clearly, Advisory Notes and Planning Practice Notes have a role. However, the key consideration for the Committee is whether the use of these tools is strong enough to give the *Guidelines* the necessary status to put them front and centre when a redevelopment proposal is first contemplated.

⁸ Section 12 (2)(a) of the Act states:
In preparing a planning scheme or amendment, a planning authority—
(a) *must have regard to the Minister's directions*

On the basis of the submissions and the presentations in the workshops that the *Guidelines* must have clear status, the Committee believes the best tool to use is a Ministerial Direction to direct planning authorities in the consideration and processing of requests for an amendment to rezone land or to amend the planning controls that includes land used or formerly used as a golf course.

The Ministerial Direction would require that a planning authority:

- must have regard to the *Guidelines* before considering a request to rezone land
- must be satisfied that the proposal will deliver net community benefit before a planning scheme amendment can be prepared
- must process an amendment in accordance with the *Guidelines* to ensure the request deals with the relevant issues identified in the *Guidelines* and will bring them forward in early consideration of the proposal
- must not consider a request to rezone land or amend the planning controls for land used or formerly used as a golf course unless the request provides information to support the request consistent with the *Guidelines*.

The Ministerial Direction would allow the Minister for Planning to grant an exemption from the need to comply with the Direction in relation to a particular proposal. Of course, any exemption may be granted subject to conditions.

The Committee has considered the structure of the *Guidelines* required as a result of the proposed Ministerial Direction. The Committee thinks that clearly setting out the scope of the *Guidelines* would assist users and proposes text under that heading. The process and information requirement can be set out conveniently under the relevant assessment steps.

Implementation in the planning scheme

The redevelopment of golf course land is often contentious. It would not be appropriate to recommend a rezoning to facilitate such a redevelopment without some clear development parameters in the planning scheme. If permits are issued and not acted upon, or if the land is sold and a new owner has a new development proposal, then a planning scheme could be silent as to what is appropriate on the land.

The Committee believes that a Development Plan should be prepared to address relevant matters to ensure that development of the land is managed appropriately.

The Committee considers that the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) is the appropriate tool to manage redevelopment, and thinks that the drafting of any schedule needs to explicitly set out the critical design and development parameters to be reflected in a Development Plan or subdivision permit.

(v) Recommendations

The Committee recommends:

Operationalise the use of the *Guidelines* by way of a Ministerial Direction to direct the use of the *Guidelines* consistent with the model provided in Part A of this Report.

Where a planning scheme amendment is proposed, the *Guidelines* should recommend that a Development Plan Overlay be applied to guide the redevelopment of the land.

Restructure the *Guidelines* under the following headings:

- **Introductory text including the purpose of the *Guidelines***
- **Scope of the *Guidelines***
- **Determine the assessment pathway**
- **Assessment method for planning amendment or permit applications.**

Part C:

Proposed changes to the *Guidelines*

4 The *Guidelines*: Introductory text

4.1 Specifying the purpose

(i) The issues

The exhibited *Guidelines* present a relatively clear explanation of their purpose:

These guidelines provide guidance to local councils, the Victorian Government, golf courses and clubs and the development sector on the key planning steps and considerations for the future development of surplus golf course land.

The guidelines include a planning decision framework for assessing planning applications.

They also state:

The framework has been developed to reflect a review of relevant planning panel reports and follows an extensive consultation process with stakeholders and community.

(ii) Submissions

The submissions implied a number of refinements to the introductory text.

A number of submissions queried the use of the term ‘surplus land’. For example, Protectors of Public Lands, Victoria (S28) submitted:

The proposal refers to ‘surplus golf course land’ but it is questionable that the term ‘surplus’ can accurately be used in this context. How, in a very overcrowded and growing city such as Melbourne can any open space be more than is needed?

Submission 39 pointed out the phrase ‘golf course land’ is applied throughout the *Discussion paper* and the exhibited *Guidelines* but without definition. The submission sought to establish a definition that excuses land owned by the Golf Club but not specifically used as part of golf activities from the application of the *Guidelines*. The definition suggested to the Committee is:

Golf Course Land – means that land which is developed and used for the purposes of a golf course and includes the golf course and associated maintenance and club house facilities.

(iii) Discussion

Listing who the *Guidelines* give guidance to

The Committee thinks it is better to omit the text specifying that guidance applies “to local councils, the Victorian Government, golf courses and clubs and the development sector” because it potentially implies other stakeholders such as government agencies, referral authorities or the community need not have reference to the *Guidelines*.

Use of the term surplus land

The Committee thinks that a key role of the *Guidelines* could be to determine whether in fact the golf course is surplus. For this reason, the purpose should use a more neutral expression; the Committee proposes referring to ‘the potential conversion of golf course land to other uses’.

The Committee thinks that the *Guidelines* would be better called ‘Planning Guidelines for the Conversion of Golf Course Land to Other Purposes’ to avoid the implication that redevelopment is an inevitable outcome.

Relation to other advice

The Committee has already concluded (Chapter 2.4) that golf courses warrant particular treatment in the planning system. The introductory text should clarify the relationship of the *Guidelines* with other advice. The Committee does not think it wise to try to replicate all the considerations that are in other places in the planning system into the *Guidelines*, and indeed the exhibited draft does not try to do this. The *Guidelines* should clarify that this is the case.

Planning decision framework

The exhibited *Guidelines* say they include a ‘planning decision framework for assessing planning applications’. The Committee thinks this framework would be clearer if referred to as:

- the assessment pathway for considering the conversion of golf course land
- the considerations that will be applied to assess the merits of a proposal for conversion of golf course land.

What is golf course land?

The Committee agrees that the *Guidelines* should only apply to land which is developed and currently or formerly used for the purposes of a golf course.

(iv) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide guidance on the key planning steps and considerations for proposals to convert golf course land to other uses.

Golf course land means land which is developed and used for the purposes of a golf course and includes the golf course and associated maintenance and club house facilities. It does not include other land owned by a golf course operator for non-golfing purposes.

These Guidelines:

- have been developed following a review of relevant planning panel reports and a consultation process with the community and stakeholders including Golf Australia, golf clubs, golf organisations and developers
- support the existing legislative processes for planning permit application and planning scheme amendments
- are to be read in conjunction with Planning Practice Note 46: Strategic Assessment Guidelines for Preparing and Evaluating Planning Scheme Amendments which has application to all proposed amendments to planning schemes.

The Guidelines outline:

- the assessment pathway for considering the conversion of golf course land
- the considerations that will be applied to assess the merits of a proposal to convert golf course land.

5 The *Guidelines*: 'Scope of the *Guidelines*'

5.1 Tenure, location and type of development

The exhibited *Guidelines* are intended to apply to freehold land.⁹ The issue is whether they should apply to golf courses on public land.

Any redevelopment of a golf course on public land would raise additional issues to those canvassed in the exhibited *Guidelines*, and indeed in many cases the land ownership may not permit conversion to other uses. But where the land ownership does permit conversion the *Guidelines* should be applicable.

The Committee was told that there are some regional locations where the redevelopment of golf courses may be proposed suggesting that *Guidelines* need to apply across Victoria.

Whitehorse City Council (S22) noted that the exhibited *Guidelines* are silent on the issue of partial redevelopment of golf course sites and, therefore, there is insufficient guidance to help councils deal with such proposals. This could also create potential for the *Guidelines* to be undermined by piecemeal redevelopment of individual golf course sites, for example through successive minor redevelopment (and rezoning) applications.

The Committee can envisage proposals that involve:

- partial redevelopment
- full redevelopment
- redevelopment and relocation.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Scope of the Guidelines

These Guidelines apply to proposals to convert golf course land to other uses. They apply to:

- freehold golf course land
- golf course land owned by the Victorian Government or local government where the land ownership would permit conversion from an open space use
- metropolitan and regional golf course land
- the full or partial redevelopment of golf course land

5.2 Inside and outside settlement boundaries

(i) The issue

Many golf courses abut settlement boundaries, including 23 that abut the UGB. The issue is whether the *Guidelines* should address such courses.

The Term of Reference of the Committee state:

⁹ A number of submitters referred to land being in 'private' ownership. In the case of not for profit Clubs while the land may well be freehold, it is owned by a community entity. Rather than being in 'private' ownership, they are in 'community' ownership. This does not diminish the Club's property rights.

5. The purpose of the advisory committee is to:
 - a. Review the draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment, which includes a decision-making framework that will be used to assess proposals for the future redevelopment of surplus golf course land primarily within metropolitan Melbourne and advise how the *Guidelines* can be given effect in the Victorian Planning System.
 - b. Advise whether proposals for the rezoning of golf course land within the UGB of metropolitan Melbourne to facilitate redevelopment for urban purposes satisfy the planning guidelines and are consistent with state and local policy.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The UGB limits the expansion of Melbourne. Suburban development is not permitted in the green wedges of Melbourne (that is, land outside the UGB). Any planning scheme amendment that proposed to move the UGB or allow suburban development outside the UGB must be ratified by each House of Parliament.

The Act also provides for the designation of a 'protected settlement boundary' in a Statement of Planning Policy prepared for a declared 'Distinctive Area and Landscape'. Changes to a 'protected settlement boundary' also requires ratification by each House of Parliament.

The *Discussion paper* states an important consideration for the Committee about the siting of golf courses and the pressures Golf Clubs face as urban development encroaches:

The Victorian Government made an election commitment to protect the city's green wedges by maintaining the existing Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). There are 23 golf courses abutting and outside the Urban Growth Boundary. Some submissions to the government's 2016 refresh of the metropolitan planning strategy, *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*, related to golf courses on the urban fringe, seeking to have that land included inside the Urban Growth Boundary to enable residential development. This would allow clubs to sell their land and reinvest in less expensive land outside the Urban Growth Boundary to provide a more diverse golf and hospitality experience on a larger site.

(iii) Submissions

Of the 23 golf courses abutting and outside the UGB, three submitted on the draft *Guidelines*:

- Amstel Golf Club (Ranfurlie Golf Course)
- Keysborough Golf Club
- Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club (Waverley Golf Course).

Amstel Golf Club (Ranfurlie Golf Course) (S13) observed that:

There are several golf courses adjacent to the current UGB, where the relevant owners believe they have strong case (supported by the relevant local council) for inclusion within the UGB and rezoning for urban redevelopment purposes. ...

Golf Australia (S18) supported two of its member organisations, Keysborough Golf Club and Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club, whose land both sit outside the UGB and who seek to develop their land. Golf Australia acknowledged that the relocation of the UGB is a significant planning undertaking that requires serious policy consideration by government.

Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club (S41) submitted that consideration of the question 'is there strategic merit in the proposal?' is an appropriate mechanism to consider proposals outside the UGB. The Club urged the Committee to send a strong message to the Minister

for Planning that it is vitally important that clubs outside the UGB are given the same opportunity to adapt as clubs inside the UGB.

Knox City Council (S32) submitted that greater guidance by DELWP is needed to ascertain the ‘appetite’ for considering Waverley Golf Course as a redevelopment proposal and if consequent changes to the UGB will be contemplated in the near future.

Cardinia Shire Council (S12) advised that it has been in recent discussions with the land owners of a golf course in the green wedge requesting an amendment to rezone the land from Rural Conservation Zone to a Special Use Zone to allow for residential development. It submitted that a stronger focus on surplus golf course land within Green Wedge zones would be of benefit, on the basis that the exhibited *Guidelines* imply¹⁰ they apply outside the UGB but do not:

... highlight that the Minister for Planning and relevant state policy such as *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050* does not support the rezoning of Green Wedge land.

The Green Wedges Coalition (S50) opposed any proposed golf course redevelopment that involves relocation of the UGB. The coalition was extremely concerned that the *Guidelines* even raise the prospect of the planning authorities extending the UGB in order to rezone Green Wedge golf courses for residential or other urban development.

Donna Jabke (S52) on behalf of an association of Green Wedge protection groups, environmental coalitions and networks in each of the 12 Green Wedges submitted that any proposed golf course redevelopment that requires relocation of the UGB goes against these permanent policies and guidelines that were put in place to preserve the green wedges.

The Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club (S41) among other submitters, said that the Terms of Reference of the Committee should include consideration of proposals outside the UGB.

(iv) Discussion

While the *Guidelines* are intended to guide redevelopment primarily within metropolitan Melbourne, the Committee thinks that it would be desirable for the *Guidelines* to be broad enough and robust enough to provide relevant guidance about the development of golf courses outside the UGB if a decision to exhibit a planning scheme amendment is made.

It would be undesirable if the *Guidelines* were unclear as to whether they apply or not. Making the application status (or non-application) of the *Guidelines* explicit is desirable. Those Golf Clubs who submitted that their courses outside the UGB are suitable candidates for development have courses that are adjacent to, or surrounded by, urban land so the issues that apply to golf courses within the UGB should also apply (plus of course, the threshold decision about moving the UGB).

The Committee does not see the need for the *Guidelines* to specifically reinforce current policy to protect the green wedges. It is conceivable that a golf course in a green wedge may seek a rezoning to permit uses that are compatible with green wedge policy – although the residential development that Cardinia alludes to would not seem to be one of these instances.

¹⁰ By reference to rezoning land outside of the UGB

The *Guidelines* should have a wider role than to apply just to any course(s) referred to the Committee.

Moving any settlement boundary raises significant policy issues. Moving a boundary, especially the UGB or a protected settlement boundary, would raise broader policy issues that are beyond the scope of this Committee.

The Committee approaches the *Guidelines* on the basis that they should apply to all golf course redevelopment, but should be silent of the question of what makes a move of a settlement boundary, including the UGB, appropriate.

As outlined in the Terms of Reference it is a matter for the Minister to decide which proposals are referred to the Committee for consideration.

(v) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

These *Guidelines* apply to proposals to convert golf course land to other uses. They apply to:

- golf course land inside or outside a settlement boundary, including the Urban Growth Boundary.

Any change to a defined settlement boundary or the Urban Growth Boundary would raise policy issues not addressed in these guidelines.

6 What is the appropriate planning assessment pathway?

(i) The issue

The assessment pathway needs to be articulated more clearly in the *Guidelines* to address various issues raised in submissions.

(ii) Submissions

Two submissions, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (S58) and Amstel Golf Club Incorporated (S13) made suggestions to clarify the steps and roles and responsibilities in the assessment process, including:

- incorporate a process map that demonstrates the stages in the assessment and approval process and the considerations that should be addressed at each stage
- make roles and responsibilities clear, particularly as they relate to the role of local government in the assessment process.

Safety Beach Country Club (S10) sought clarification of how proposals for conversion and rezoning of a part of its golf course land to generate revenue and improve club viability would be treated by the *Guidelines*.

Safety Beach Country Club suggested that the *Guidelines* could facilitate the upgrade of club facilities. For example the installation of an on-course toilet or course signage which require a planning permit under the Special Use Zone schedule that applies to the course.

Further clarification of the steps and roles in the assessment process was a common theme in the Councils and Institutions, and Golf Clubs and Consultants workshops.

(iii) Discussion

The 'assessment method' described in the exhibited *Guidelines* comprises three steps:

- Step 1: Is there strategic merit in the proposal?
- Step 2: Are there particular site values or constraints?
- Step 3: Does the proposal deliver net community benefit?

For each step, a set of questions detail the considerations against which a proposal will be assessed. The Committee agrees that the *Guidelines* would benefit from a more expansive description of the steps in the assessment pathway, clarification of the relevant steps for planning permit approvals and planning scheme amendments and where responsibility rests for assessment.

Determining the planning assessment pathway

Some golf course land is already zoned for urban development. The tenure of some golf course land may also limit the way in which it can be redeveloped or used. The approvals required to convert golf course land to other uses may be:

- a planning permit
- a planning scheme amendment (and potentially subsequent planning permits)
- ratification of an amendment by each House of Parliament.

The *Guidelines* should make these alternative paths clear. The Committee outlines a seven-step process.

Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped

Surplus golf course land, particularly in metropolitan areas, presents a rare opportunity for governments to purchase a significant land parcel for community use or for an alternative public purpose. The first step should be a 'triage' aimed at determining:

- Is the land available for conversion?
- Is the golf course surplus to golfing?
- Are there economic alternatives to conversion?
- Should the land remain as open space?

Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site

Establishing the strategic direction for the site is a key step to developing a concept for the site. Any concept for the site should begin with the question: what does policy say is the best use for this site?

Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required

The proponent should identify the applicable assessment and approvals potentially required to deliver the strategic direction. This could involve permissions beyond the Act.

Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities

The values and constraints of the golf course (and any receiving site in the case of a relocation proposal) should be clearly documented. The values and constraints will need to be identified by the proponent, relying on technical studies and feedback from community engagement.

Step 5: Engage the community

It is appropriate to commence consultation with the community before preparing detailed designs.

Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit

The development of a land use concept for the site should come towards the end of the planning process. Future golf course land redevelopment proposals must provide a net community benefit and high level of sustainability. Where a proposal involves improved golf facilities on another site, the net community benefit should consider the total proposal.

Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome

The final step is to put an appropriate set of planning controls in place to deliver a quality outcome. The *Guidelines* can set out benchmarks for these controls to ensure that any redevelopment delivers an acceptable outcome.

(iv) Recommendations

The Committee recommends:

Adopt the following assessment steps:

- **Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped**
- **Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site**
- **Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required**
- **Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities**
- **Step 5: Engage the community**

- **Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit**
- **Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome**

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text and diagram.

Determine the planning assessment pathway

The approvals that are required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* depend on the planning controls that apply to the land. A proposal to convert golf course land to another use may require:

- where the land is already zoned for urban development – a planning permit
- where the current zoning does not permit the proposed use – a planning scheme amendment (and potentially subsequent planning permits)
- where the land is within Melbourne's green wedge or outside a defined settlement boundary – ratification of an amendment by each House of Parliament to shift the defined settlement boundary or, in the case of Melbourne's green wedges the Urban Growth Boundary.

Unless specified otherwise in the planning scheme, a planning permit will be assessed by the local council. The Minister may call in a permit application or the responsible authority (the council) may request the Minister to call in a permit application.

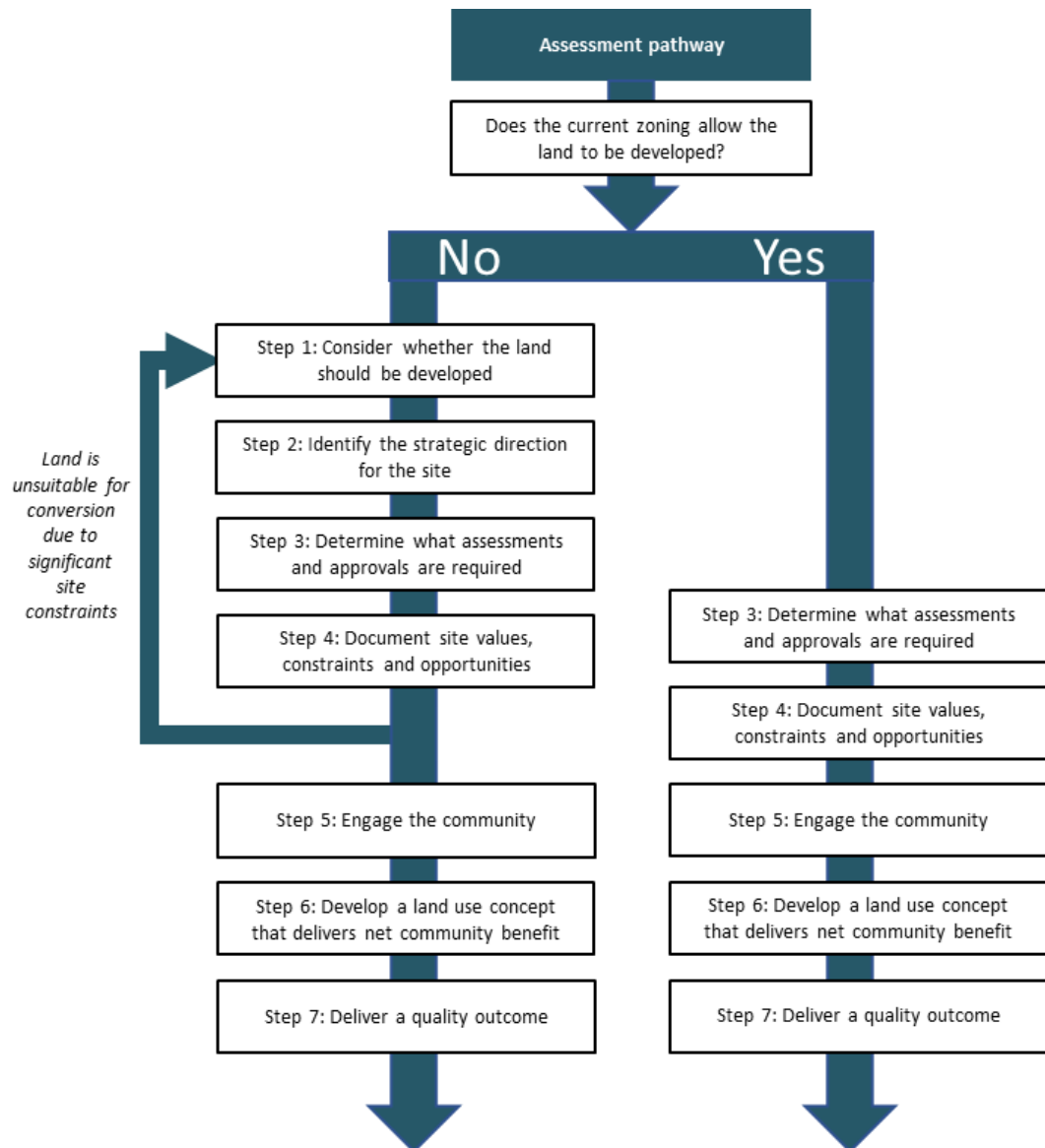
When developing a proposal for the conversion of golf course land, up to seven steps apply in the planning pathway, depending on the controls that apply to the land.

- Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped
- Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site
- Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required
- Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities
- Step 5: Engage the community
- Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit
- Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome.

The planning steps are not intended to be applied for relatively minor approvals associated with changes to an existing operation.

The following diagram sets out the overarching assessment pathway for planning scheme amendments and planning permit applications.

Figure 1: Indicative assessment pathway



7 Planning Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped

7.1 Why include this step?

(i) The issue

The issue is whether the *Guidelines* need to articulate a ‘triage’ process to test the fundamental suitability of golf course land for conversion to another?

(ii) Submissions

Two submissions Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (S58) and Amstel Golf Club Incorporated (S13) suggested that a proposal undergo an initial strategic merit assessment, prior to embarking on a planning scheme amendment, to determine if there is ‘in principle’ support for the proposal. Specifically, Amstel Golf Club suggested:

Strategic assessment prior to a planning scheme amendment being prepared.

- Triggered by a proponent submitting a “strategic” proposal to the Minister, supported by an opinion from the relevant council on the merits of the proposal.
- The Standing Advisory Committee to conduct a strategic assessment and advise the Minister as to whether the proposal is worthy of consideration as a potential Planning Scheme Amendment.

If a proposal proceeds to preparation of a planning scheme amendment application, the Minister could then again refer the application to the Standing Advisory Committee for advice as to whether it is consistent with the strategic proposal and assessment against the full Planning Guidelines.

Initial consideration of strategic merit, site values or constraints and net community benefit by the Standing Advisory Committee could potentially be assessed early in the process of preparing a planning scheme amendment application, rather than after the application has been finalised to the stage of being submitted to the Minister.

This could be facilitated by a mechanism for proponents of a potential golf course redevelopment proposal to apply directly to the Minister for a strategic assessment to be conducted by the Standing Advisory Committee.

A strategic assessment by the Standing Advisory Committee could determine whether a planning scheme amendment is worthy of preparation and if so, what key considerations may need to be addressed.

The concept of an initial strategic assessment received support in the Councils and Institutions and Golf Club and Consultants Workshop. Amstel Golf Club (13) noted that this step is important given the time and cost involved in preparing an application for a planning scheme amendment.

(iii) Discussion

Step 1 of the exhibited *Guidelines* determines the proposal’s strategic merit by assessing its consistency with state and local government plans and policies. This, however, does not address the threshold question of whether golf course land should be redeveloped.

The Committee thinks that the *Guidelines* need to articulate a ‘triage’ process to test the fundamental suitability of golf course land for conversion to another use before the process

of developing a redevelopment option is pursued. This step would provide a mechanism to address some of the concerns that golf courses should remain as 'open space'.

The Committee thinks that there are four elements to this threshold question:

- Does the land tenure allow for conversion? This involves checking that there are no restrictions on the title.
- Is the golf course surplus to golfing? There may be broader strategic reasons related to the needs of golf and maintaining a particular mix of courses, or a course in a specific location that mitigates against the closure of another course.
- Are there economic alternatives to conversion? A broader economic assessment might highlight alternatives to closure or underline the advantages of the closure.
- Should the land remain as open space? Most, if not all courses, identified for redevelopment will not currently be public open space. This does not mean that they shouldn't convert to public open space (or some other public use) if suitable arrangements can be negotiated. These possibilities should be properly explored.

The balance of this Chapter discusses the rationale behind these considerations.

(iv) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 1: Consider whether the land should be redeveloped

Surplus golf course land, particularly in metropolitan areas, presents a rare opportunity for governments to purchase a significant land parcel for community or public use.

The following questions should be addressed in establishing whether golf course land should be converted to another use:

- Does the land tenure allow for conversion?
- Is the golf course surplus to golfing?
- Are there economic alternatives to conversion?
- Should the land remain as open space?

7.2 Does the land tenure allow for conversion?

Private and community run golf courses may be located on freehold land owned by the club or on leased or licensed publicly owned land. Providing the land is not encumbered by any restrictions such as a covenant, freehold land will be available for conversion.

Public golf courses would typically be on Crown land or municipal-owned land. There may be a long term arrangement with a club or a golf professional attached to the course. Conversion of a state or municipal-owned golf course land would trigger procedures under relevant legislation.

Whatever the situation, the first step must be to properly understand the land ownership and whether there are any legal restrictions affecting the land or the entity that owns the land.

The advisory committee considering the redevelopment of the Chirnside Park course recorded that a number of the opposing submitters believed that while the golf course is on private property there was a moral obligation for the land to continue as a public amenity. In that case the relevant council submitted that it did not have the resources to acquire and manage the land. That committee stated:

... the development of the land is consistent with planning policy and is within the legal rights of the owner. We have difficulty accepting the notion that there should be a third basic consideration of 'moral' rights beyond property rights and planning controls.

Ownership and development proposal are from time to time contested, and the legal and planning frameworks have been established to deal with these disputes. We do not think that it would be appropriate for this Advisory Committee to introduce a wholly new framework to deal with the dispute over what should happen to the subject land, namely 'moral' rights.

Having said this, the planning system is not silent on issues of character and amenity, and we think that the decision about what is acceptable on a site should be tempered by the legitimate expectations and amenity concerns of abutting residents. These matters are dealt with in this report.

This Committee agrees that it is not appropriate to look beyond any legal restriction on the land title or on the owner to try to determine whether there is some 'moral' or 'historic' reason why the land should not be redeveloped.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Proponents should confirm the ownership of the land and that it is available for conversion and document any title or legal restrictions on its future development.

7.3 Is the golf course surplus to golfing?

(i) The issue

The issue is determining which golf courses are excess to the needs of golf.

(ii) Submissions

Golf Australia (S18), submitted that there is a need to rationalise golf courses in some areas because:

- they are located in an area where there is an over-supply
- the significant cost of mitigating risks associated with residential encroachment
- some golf courses are no longer fit-for-purpose and have limited capacity to be transformed to meet contemporary design standards and facilities.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (S58) pointed out that the vision in *Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy 2018-23* is:

Victoria will be recognised as one of the top five golf destinations globally, led by Melbourne's Sandbelt and supported by the highest quality courses and experiences on the Mornington and Bellarine Peninsulas. Courses in the Murray River region will add further depth to Victoria's golfing experiences.

AS Residential Property No. 1 Pty Ltd (S23), owners of the Kingswood Golf Course pointed out that:

The Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club ... was created by the merger of two founding clubs, each with over 100 years of independent history. Both the Kingswood Golf Club and Peninsula Country Golf Club were aware of the adverse conditions identified in the Discussion Paper and the merger of the two clubs resulted in the sale of the Site to ASRP1.

It is important for the Committee to be aware that neither of the two clubs could have achieved on their own what has since been achieved, including the investment of \$60 million into the Frankston North site resulting in its transformation into a modern, world class facility, capable of attracting international events.

Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club (S41) outlined a proposal similar to the Peninsula Kingswood merger where through the merger of two clubs consolidation on one site and development of the Waverley site would enable significant upgrade of the Churchill Park Golf Course. In its submission, the Club noted:

The Rowville site has been largely encroached on by development, including residential development, the Polish Social Club, SP AusNet Electrical Company (substation) and a high-density retirement village along the northern boundary, these developments combined with the limited land area available to the Club mean [Waverley Golf Club] is not able to ensure that long term golfing safety standards can be met. The cost to adhere to increasing safety requirements is weighing down the Club's ability to provide for appropriate and safe golfing.

The current course layout does not meet course design standards with respect to proximity of fairways to boundaries, distance between fairways and playing areas closely abutting the club house and related areas. The course also offers a traditional layout (two 9-hole loops) which is not attractive to potential time-poor members.

No further layout changes are feasible on the current site due to the powerline easement and abutting uses. The last major reconfiguration was undertaken in 1998, when several holes were reversed due to traffic issues on Bergins Road.

Further to this, the Rowville site has an area of approximately 50 hectares. Good golf course design suggests that a new contemporary 18-hole course would require an area of 70 to 75 hectares.

Both the Keysborough Golf Club Submission (S16) and the Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club Submission (S41) make reference to a review of golf courses in south-east Melbourne by SGS Economics and Planning, commissioned by Intrapac Property, titled *Future Golf Courses in Metropolitan Melbourne -Supply and Demand Study*.

Keysborough Golf Club submitted that each redevelopment proposal should not need to undertake its own investigations if sufficient information is available within the wider industry to support redevelopment.

Rigby Cooke Lawyers on behalf of the National Golf Club Inc. (S31) submitted:

The [exhibited] *Guidelines* do not provide adequate guidance on the determining factors of whether an area is currently under or over-supplied with golf courses.

The need to rationalise some golf courses was endorsed by participants in the Golf Clubs and Consultants and Councils and Institutions workshops.

(iii) Discussion

The Committee supports the approach of *Plan Melbourne* for a strategic approach to the provision of golf facilities.

The *Discussion paper, Plan Melbourne* and submitters make it clear that there is a need to rationalise golf courses in some parts of Victoria. The Committee agrees but believes it is important that a considered approach is taken to rationalisation to ensure the best outcomes for the sport including:

- better alignment between supply and demand
- golf courses with capacity to adapt and transform to incorporate contemporary design standards and facilities are retained
- alignment with Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy 2018-23.

The proposed statewide golf facilities plan will provide important information to assist in determining whether a particular golf course should continue. In the absence of the golf

facilities plan, proponents will need to undertake an assessment of golf course demand and supply, an assessment of the capacity of the golf course to be transformed to incorporate contemporary design standards and facilities.

The Committee understands that the best interests of golf are served by a range of course lengths and difficulties so that there is a 'pathway' for new players as they learn the skills required to be a competent golfer.

(iv) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

To assess whether the golf course is surplus to the needs of golfing, a proponent will need to identify:

- Whether the course has been identified in a regional golf facility plan as a course that should remain or is a candidate for conversion to another use. If there is no relevant golf facility plan, consider:
 - the demand for golf courses in the region and whether the course is located in an area currently under-supplied or over-supplied with golf courses
 - whether there is capacity for the golf course to be improved to incorporate contemporary design standards and facilities.
- Whether the proposal delivers improved golf facilities consistent with Victoria's Golf Tourism Strategy and any relevant golf facility plan.

7.4 Are there economic alternatives to conversion?

(i) The issue

The issue is determining which golf courses are no longer viable for golfing or have the capacity to be transformed to a viable operation.

(ii) Submissions

The *Discussion paper* referred to the likely rationalisation of Golf Clubs, and submissions highlighted that rationalisation is happening through mergers. Two such mergers are the joining in September 2016 of the Waverley Golf Club and the Churchill Park Golf Club to form the Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club and the 2019 opening of the merged Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club formed by the joining of the Peninsula and Kingswood clubs.

Golf Australia advised that the threshold for viability of courses was:

- public courses 70-80,000 rounds per year
- a private metropolitan club around 50,000 competition and social rounds per year.

Rigby Cooke Lawyers on behalf of the National Golf Club Inc. (S31) submitted:

Any assessment should not solely be based on land use planning principles only. Land use planning must be weighed against the economic viability of the use of the land as a golf course.

Submission 63, suggested that:

The primary focus ... should be to help improve the management, participation and sustainability of golf courses in Victoria, as the best possible outcome for the community is that all golf courses continue to trade successfully well into the future

The *Discussion paper* focused on financial viability, citing it as a reason for closure and redevelopment. Submissions from individuals also focused on financial viability but disputed

whether a lack of viability was a necessary or sufficient reason to close a course and to justify redevelopment of the site.

One submission referred to the prospect of a financial benefit from rezoning as rewarding failure to run a business efficiently. Golf Australia and Golf Clubs emphasised the responsibility on management to cease operations if a club becomes financially unviable.

The submissions and presentations added the quality and standard of a course into the definition of viability by arguing that contemporary course layout standards and safety margins for staff, visitors, the public and property adjoining a course were important considerations as to whether a course was viable as a playing venue.

One submission (S41) drew attention to its course failing to meet modern safety standards for the operation of golf courses. The submitter stated:

The current course layout does not meet course design standards with respect to proximity of fairways to boundaries, distance between fairways and playing areas closely abutting the club house and related areas.

and that

The cost to adhere to increasing safety requirements is weighing down the Club's ability to provide for appropriate and safe golfing.

The Committee explored this issue in the workshops with Mr Ross Perrett, a golf course architect with international experience. Mr Perrett told the workshop that while there was no universal standard for golf course design, there are protocols used as 'standards' to align fairways so as to protect players and property by the placement of vegetation and facilities.

Mr Perrett said these 'standards' for course construction have changed and that now some courses 'fail' current standards as a result of the enhanced technology in golf clubs and golf balls that mean balls travel farther. He said the safety distance usually applied from the centreline of a fairway had progressively increased, making courses designed many years before non-compliant with current standards. To improve safety margins, he said some courses have reoriented fairways but this is often a temporary solution.

(iii) Discussion

The Committee thinks there is merit in having the *Guidelines* directly respond to issues of Golf Club management and whether there are alternatives to relocation or closure to address perceived financial issues or to leverage improved facilities. The Committee thinks that this should be part of a broader economic analysis and should be independently undertaken.¹¹

The Committee accepts that central to many decisions to move are problems with the existing course.

The Committee does not think that a Golf Club needs to demonstrate that the golf course is unviable in order for redevelopment to be considered. However, the fact that the course is not viable should be considered as part of the broader consideration as to whether the land should be redeveloped.

¹¹ The Committee notes that for most (if not all) Clubs their constitution would specify that any funds raised from the sale of the land would need to be reinvested in the club or a like purpose.

(iv) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

The proponent should commission independent economic advice on:

- whether golf is likely to remain viable at the course taking into account:
 - the course facilities and layout
 - the club patronage and financial status
- the broader economic implications of the proposal.

7.5 Should the golf course be converted to public open space?

(i) The issue

The issue is the opportunity for golf course land to be converted to accommodate an essential service, public infrastructure or other use by state and local government.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

Victorian Government *Landholding Policy and Guidelines* outlines the circumstances in which government agencies may purchase and retain land and ensures consistent decision making across government in the management of its land portfolios.

(iii) Submissions

A number of submitters were fundamentally opposed to residential development of golf course land. Underlying the opposition to conversion of golf course land was concern that the land is required to preserve and create both passive and active open space to serve a rapidly growing population. Submission 43 noted:

The balanced development of surplus golf land is a once in a lifetime opportunity to create valuable community facilities including public golf and nature preservation. Innovative denser housing should be encouraged to maximise the land for the benefit of the greater community

Professor Buxton (S55, RMIT University) in his written submission noted:

The terms of reference for the standing advisory committee are disastrously deficient by ignoring the overriding need to retain golf courses either in their current form or as open space.

And at the workshop he stated:

The worst way to approach this issue is on a case by case basis and there needs to be metropolitan open space strategy applying to these state-wide assets.

The desire to see all golf course land, including private golf course land, retained as public open space was the key theme of 26 submissions and was reiterated by participants in the community workshop.

The Protectors of Public Lands (S28) stated:

With such major changes afoot, the precautionary principle must at once be deployed as the results of redevelopment will be permanent and far-reaching.

How, in a very overcrowded and growing city such as Melbourne can any open space be more than is needed?"

Ms Drost OAM for Planning Backlash Inc (S8) at the Community Groups and Individuals Workshop, reinforced a theme made in a number of written submissions:

Can we make a blanket statement? No change to golf courses. We want more golf courses not less.

Hobsons Bay City Council (S17) suggested mechanisms to notify state agencies of surplus golf course land:

Surplus golf course land within metropolitan Melbourne would present unique opportunities to deliver public open space or community infrastructure within existing built up areas. Providing new schools, hospitals or parks in these locations is often hindered by the challenges of land availability and land assembly.

To act on these opportunities, the *Guidelines* should encourage golf course landowners to engage with state government agencies as an initial step when scoping options for the future use and development of their land.

Whitehorse City Council (S22) noted that:

The extent to which existing open space or community infrastructure provision in the vicinity should be considered with regard to permitting the loss (or partial loss) of privately owned golf course land, that is the loss of private open space, would not alter the amount of existing public open space and community infrastructure.

Further investigation may be needed for private golf courses in instances where they may not be factored into municipal and regional open space strategies referred to in the draft *Guidelines*.

(iv) Discussion

The Committee agrees with submitters that golf course land, particularly in metropolitan areas, presents a rare opportunity for governments (or other appropriate organisations) to purchase a significant land parcel for community use or for an alternative public purpose.

The problem the Committee sees in identifying a course for public open space is that for land to become public open space, it needs to be taken on by a land manager. Deciding that land ought to be open space as part of a planning process, is one thing; having a land manager acquire or accept the land is another.

The Committee believes the 'first right of refusal' process for surplus government land under the *Landholding Policy and Guidelines*, provides a model for golf course land, public or private, to be offered for acquisition to the Commonwealth, Victorian and local government.

Upon deciding that the land is surplus to the requirements of the Golf Club, notice could be given to Victorian Government agencies, local government and the Commonwealth Government of the land and expressions of interest invited to acquire the land for a public or community purpose. If an expression of interest is received, the parties would be expected to negotiate in good faith to attempt to agree on the terms of sale.

If the terms of sale could not be agreed between the parties, the golf course owner could proceed to the next step of the assessment pathway.

(v) Recommendation

The issue of other nongovernment uses such as private schools, universities, sporting clubs and the like is addressed in the next Chapter.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Surplus golf course land should be offered at first instance for acquisition to the Commonwealth and Victorian governments and local governments. State-owned public golf course land will be offered under the *Landholding Policy and Guidelines*. All other golf course land must be offered using an equivalent 'expression of interest' process to the satisfaction of the planning authority.

8 Planning Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site

(i) The issue

The issue is how the *Guidelines* should address the issue of strategic assessment.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The exhibited *Guidelines* state:

Step 1: Is there strategic merit in the proposal?

Strategic planning policy issues must be considered, along with the consistency of the proposal with various state and local policies and relevant legislation.

Establishing the level of 'in principle' strategic merit is the key first step. If there is support, then the details of the site and proposal will be worthy of further detailed assessment.

The report on the Eastern Golf Club redevelopment explains how the proponents went about achieving the change with a three-step process. Setting of development principles came before any formal process:

- Step 1: established development principles through a non-statutory approach:

In April 2009, the [Eastern Golf Club] advised Manningham City Council that it would be leaving the subject site, to relocate to a new facility at Yering in the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

In response Council commenced the preparation of development principles for the site, known as the Eastern Golf Course Development Principles, to ensure any future development would respond to the existing site characteristics, including cultural and environmental values as well as integrating a new development with the surrounding community

Following community consultation that resulted in the receipt of 113 submissions, the development principles were endorsed by Council on 2 June 2009.

- Step 2: set the strategic direction and policy into the planning scheme through Amendment C86 in 2011.
- Step 3: rezone and amend specific policy provisions through Amendment C101 in 2014.

(iii) Submissions

PIA (S62) suggested that:

Once it has been established that the relevant golf course land is surplus land, Step 2 under the draft *Guidelines* should be to require a land use change assessment to be prepared.

Submission 22 raised concerns that:

The draft *Guidelines* are not sufficiently transparent because, although they require reference to a number of strategies, they do not highlight relevant key issues or considerations under those strategies.

Submission 32 thought that the list of relevant state or local strategies needs to include:

- Melbourne Water's Healthy Waterways Strategy
- Victorian Integrated Water Management Framework

- the endorsed strategic objectives of the Dandenong Catchment Strategic Directions Statement 2018
- Port Phillip and Westernport Flood Management Strategy
- Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines (CSIRO, 1999)
- Victoria's Biodiversity 2037 strategy.

Submission 24 added:

- the Yarra Strategic Plan, if adjacent to the Yarra River.

(iv) The issue

The Committee agrees with the exhibited *Guidelines* that strategic planning policy issues must be considered early in the process. The strategic planning context of the land is a critical consideration to determining what the mix of replacement land uses should be.

The Committee understands that the purpose of a land use change assessment, as proposed by PIA, is to review state, local and regional planning strategies to determine the strategic direction for the site.

The Committee supports the concept of developing a strategic direction for the site early in the process. This should be in advance of any specific proposal for the site, and would be similar to the development principles articulated for the Eastern golf course site.

The purpose of determining the strategic direction for the site is not to test a specific proposition but to see what mix of uses the various policies suggest ought to form part of any redevelopment. In other words: the strategic directions should emerge from a consideration of policy: policy should not be used to assess or check a preconceived idea.

The Committee thinks that there is merit in separately listing explicit planning policies that the Committee expects will have a strong spatial component from broader state government policies.

The exhibited *Guidelines* ask a decision maker to consider whether there is strategic support for the proposal in the relevant legislation, including:

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?*

The Committee thinks that these Acts are better considered as part of a separate step looking at whether other assessments and approvals are required.

(v) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 2: Identify the strategic direction for the site

Establishing the strategic direction for the site is a key step to developing a concept for the site. Any concept for the site should begin with the question: what does policy say is the best use for this site?

Responsibility for assessment of strategic direction for the site will rest with the relevant planning authority.

The strategic direction for a proposal should consider, the following:

- The level of access to transport and activity centres.
- The local greenspace network or wildlife network.
- Whether the proposed conversion is consistent with relevant policies and strategies including:
 - the Planning Policy Framework
 - Plan Melbourne 2017–2050
 - any relevant regional growth plan
 - any metropolitan open space strategy or regional open space strategy
 - the Yarra Strategic Plan, if adjacent to the Yarra River
 - any relevant waterway, catchment, or flooding strategy
 - any adopted council open space strategy
 - any adopted council housing strategy.
- Whether proposal has the potential to contribute to broader strategic priorities, such as:
 - Active Victoria Framework
 - Water for Victoria Water Plan
 - Any regional Integrated Water Management Plan or the achievement of water sensitive urban design principles
 - Victorian 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy
 - Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037.

Proponents should also reach out to not for profit sports and education providers to gauge what if any interest there is in use of the land for a community purpose.

9 Planning Step 3: Determine what assessments and approvals are required

(i) The issue

Apart from the Act other legislation contains assessment and approval pathways that might be relevant to the development of golf course land, including:

- *Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The exhibited *Guidelines* include:

Key planning steps

- A response is developed that complies with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and other relevant Victorian and Commonwealth legislation and regulations including the *Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*, the *Environment Effects Act 1978*, and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
- A Cultural Heritage Management Plan is recommended for golf course land.

...

Is there strategic support for the proposal in the relevant legislation, including:

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006?*

(iii) Submissions

A number of submitters raised concerns in relation to the documentation requirements for all types of applications, in particular the need for a Cultural Heritage Management Plan in all instances.

(iv) Discussion

The assessment and approval pathway for the conversion of any golf course will vary. The following factors will influence which pathway applies:

- the types of values on the golf course land, for example environmental or cultural heritage values
- the nature and significance of any environmental impacts
- scale of the proposal (for example: partial conversion, full conversion or relocation of a golf course within the existing community or catchment).

The assessment and approval pathway for a site will vary in complexity depending on the factors listed above. The identity of the relevant decision maker will also vary. The following pathways are most likely to apply:

- Assessment under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- Referral under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*

- Referral under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999*
- Environment Effects Statement (EES) under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (which must proceed any statutory authorisations). This process could also occur concurrently with an equivalent environmental impact assessment under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

The level of documentation and rigour required for the assessment of a proposal should be proportionate to the likely impacts of that proposal. For example, it would not be appropriate for a low impact toilet block upgrade to require the same level of assessment as a full redevelopment of a golf course.

The documentation of site values and constraints will need to align with the applicable assessment and approval pathway.

For example, if a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* this will need to be prepared. However, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan will not be required in all circumstances. As another example, if an EES is required, then the Minister for Planning will issue scoping requirements which set out the matters that need to be addressed in that EES. The scoping requirements could be quite prescriptive if there are particularly sensitive environmental assets that need to be considered.

Given the broad range of assessment scenarios that could apply, the *Guidelines* need to be flexible. The Committee considers that the *Guidelines* should not dictate the exact nature of documentation required. Instead the *Guidelines* should identify themes that are likely to be relevant. The *Guidelines* should also direct a proponent to identify the assessment and approval pathway early in the process. This is because the pathway will influence the level of effort required when assessing a proposal and dictate the relevant legislative requirements and assessment processes.

(v) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 3: Determine what other assessment and approvals are required

The proponent should identify the applicable assessment and approvals for the proposal based on the relevant legislation. The proponent should consider all relevant legislation, including:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

The approvals required will determine:

- who are the relevant decision makers
- the level of effort and rigour required to document the site values and constraints
- the program for the preparation of documentation and engagement.

10 Planning Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities

(i) The issue

A proposal to convert a golf course will need to be assessed on its merits. The relevant matters to consider will depend on the complexity of the proposal, values, constraints and opportunity at the site and the relevant planning policy objectives. Despite the need to assess all proposals on their merits, there is a degree of consistency around the assessment themes likely to arise.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The VPP establish a policy framework that requires environmental, social and economic matters to be considered for any proposal. The specific policy considerations that will apply to a proposal will depend on the location of the golf course and the policy direction for that land, or any receiving land for a relocation proposal.

(iii) Submissions

The PIA (S62) agreed with the exhibited *Guidelines* that:

... the site values and constraints should be considered and that this should be a Step in the Planning Decision Framework. In this respect, it will be important for each proposal to be considered on a case by case basis on its merits.

However, it would be useful for the draft *Guidelines* to include a list of studies and investigations that will usually be required to be prepared, which will be likely to include ecological, traffic, contaminated land, surface water, groundwater, arboricultural, tree canopy, business, cultural and heritage, landscape and visual assessments.

Many submitters identified specific matters that should be identified in the *Guidelines* as site values, constraints and opportunities:

- amenity and interfaces and connections to surrounding residential properties (S22, S35, S41)
- potentially contaminated land (S17)
- ecological values (S22, S24, S28, S30, S32, S36, S37, S44, S45, S46, S47, S55)
- the potential for more homes (S30, S41, S63)
- neighbourhood character and the feeling of green open space in the municipality (S37, S63)
- servicing and infrastructure (S4, S6, S32, S33, S50)
- stormwater and integrated water management (S2, S17, S22, S24, S32, S44)
- transport and traffic (S55, S56, S61).

(iv) Discussion

The Committee has identified several environmental and social considerations that are likely to be relevant for proposals, given the special attributes of golf courses. (see Chapter 2.4)

The values and constraints of golf course land must be documented as part of the assessment process. The identification of site values and constraints will rely on technical

studies procured by the proponent and be informed by community feedback (Step 5). The opportunities for golf course land should also be identified after the values and constraints have been identified.

Values and constraints

The matters that should be considered, as relevant, include provisions in the PPF:

- Environmental values of the site, including biodiversity, habitat connectivity, role of the site in the local or regional ecosystem, including the relevant bioregion, having regard to clause 12.01 Biodiversity.
- Community values of the site, including provision of community facilities for active or passive recreational pursuits, the catchment of the community using the site, whether the site is accessible to the public, having regard to clause 19.02 Community infrastructure.
- Open space values of the site, including whether the site is accessible to the public, or if it has broader landscape values through the provision of tree coverage and green areas, having regard to clause 19.02 Community infrastructure.
- How environmental hazards, such as bushfire and flooding, at the site are managed or mitigated as a result of how the golf course is currently managed, having regard to clauses 13.01 Climate Change impacts, 13.02 Bushfire, 13.03 Floodplains.
- Cultural heritage values of the site, including aboriginal heritage values and other cultural heritage values, having regard to clause 15.03 Heritage.
- Contamination of the site, including any known or likely sources of contamination that may exist due to historical uses or through the management of the golf course, having regard to clause 13.04 Soil degradation.
- Integration of the site with existing infrastructure, such as transport networks (public transport, road, pedestrian and bicycle routes), stormwater infrastructure, electricity transmission links, having regard to clauses 11.02 Managing Growth, 18.01 Integrated transport, 18.02 Movement networks, 19.03 Development Infrastructure.
- Integration of the site with other land uses, such as nearby residential areas or other community facilities, having regard to clause 11.02 Managing Growth.

Opportunities

Opportunities associated with the conversion of a site, might include:

- Delivery of additional community facilities, having regard to clause 18.02 Community facilities.
- Delivery of more integrated open space networks and recreational facilities, having regard to clause 18.02 Community facilities.
- Educational and health facilities, having regard to clause 18.02 Community facilities.
- Delivery of affordable housing, having regard to clause 16.01 Housing.
- Protection and restoration of environmental values, including biodiversity, native vegetation, water ways, water bodies and wetlands, having regard to clauses 12.01 Biodiversity, 12.03 water bodies, 14.02 Water.
- Economic benefits (with a focus on the operational phase of the converted site, rather than the construction phase), having regard to clause 17.01 Employment.

- Introduction of environmentally sustainable measures, such as renewable energy, reuse of waste water, waste reduction, environmentally sustainable design features, having regard to clauses 15.02 Sustainable development, 14.02 Water.
- Mitigating the effects of climate change and natural hazards, including a design response that may increase the community's resilience to bushfire and flooding events and sea level rise, having regard to clauses 13.01 Climate change, 13.02 Bushfire, clause 13.03 Floodplains.
- Integration of transport networks for all modes of transport, having regard to clauses 18.01 Integrated transport and 18.02 Movement networks.
- Tourism facilities, having regard to clause 17.04 Tourism.

(v) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 4: Document site values, constraints and opportunities

The values, constraints and opportunities at the golf course land (and any receiving site in the case of a proposal to relocate a golf course) must be clearly documented. The values, constraints and opportunities will be identified by the proponent, relying on technical studies and feedback from community engagement.

The following matters should be considered, as relevant, when identifying the values and constraints of a site:

- the environmental values of the site, including biodiversity values, habitat connectivity and the strategic biodiversity significance or role of the site in the local or regional ecosystem, including the relevant bioregion
- the community values of the site, including community facilities providing for active or passive recreational pursuits, the catchment of the community using the site, whether the site is accessible to the public
- the open space values of the site, including whether the site is accessible to the public, or if it has broader landscape values through the provision of tree coverage and green areas
- any environmental hazards including hazards that are mitigated by the way the golf course land is currently managed, such as flooding or bushfire hazard
- the cultural heritage values of the site, including aboriginal heritage values and other cultural heritage values
- any contamination, including any known or likely sources of contamination that may exist due to historical uses or through the management of the golf course land
- the site's integration with existing infrastructure, such as transport networks (public transport, road, pedestrian and bicycle routes), stormwater infrastructure, electricity transmission links
- the site's relationship to nearby residential areas, rural or green wedge areas including its interface with residential development.

The opportunities for the site should consider:

- more integrated open space networks and recreational facilities
- restoration of environmental values, including protection of biodiversity, native vegetation, water ways, water bodies and wetlands
- opportunity to increase resilience to climate change and natural hazards, including a design response that may increase the community's resilience to bushfire and flooding events and sea level rise
- additional community facilities
- educational and health facilities
- a range of dwelling types including affordable housing

- tourism facilities
- introduction of environmentally sustainable measures and design features, such as the generation of renewable energy, water sensitive urban design, waste water reuse, and waste reduction.

11 Planning Step 5: Engage the community

(i) The issue

Conversion of golf course land can be a source of significant community concern. Engagement provides an opportunity for the community to raise concerns, identify important values and contribute ideas.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

Consultation is a fundamental part of the Victorian Planning System. The objectives of the planning framework established by the Act include:

- to establish a clear procedure with appropriate public participation in decision making when amending planning schemes
- to ensure that those affected by proposals for the use, development or protection of land or changes in planning policy or requirements receive appropriate notice.

Planning Practice Note 46 *Strategic Assessment Guidelines* requires an environmental, social and economic assessment of a planning scheme amendment, including:

- potential changes to the economic and social life of the existing community
- the impact of likely changes in travel patterns for shopping, employment and social and leisure activities
- the likely effect on community infrastructure in the immediate and surrounding areas
- the likely effect on public infrastructure in the immediate and surrounding areas
- potential changes to the attractiveness and physical condition of the immediate and surrounding areas
- the likely effect on the attractiveness, amenity and safety of the public realm.

Planning Practice Note 17 *Urban Design Frameworks* also includes recommendations for community engagement noting that consultation is a key element in the development of a Framework.

(iii) Submissions

A number of submitters suggested that explicit community engagement should be part of the planning process for the redevelopment of golf course land.

Submission S49 was concerned that residents affected by the potential rezoning of golf course land would not have a voice about the overall community benefit and council's position will be weakened on such matters.

Whitehorse City Council (S22) identified the need for consultation with surrounding landowners (prior and ongoing) about future rezoning and development proposals on golf course land, particularly as this can change the level of amenity and expectations for nearby residents (for example, views and outlook for property adjoining a golf course).

(iv) Discussion

It was evident from written submissions and the Community Groups and Individuals workshop that conversion of golf course land is a source of significant community angst. The

angst arises from their concern for that the proposal will negatively impact the future amenity and liveability of their neighbourhood and the loss of environmental and social values. The Committee believes that community consultation that genuinely seeks to engage with the community around the golf course can have multiple benefits. These include:

- promoting an understanding of why the conversion and the planning scheme amendment is sought
- providing an opportunity for communities to:
 - articulate their concerns
 - provide input to identification of site values and constraints
 - have input to identifying appropriate responses and solutions to problems that affect them
 - have some input to decisions that affect their lives by involving them in the proposed design.

Community consultation will not eliminate all differences of opinion or conflict. However, genuine, respectful and effective consultation may reduce objections to a planning scheme amendment as well as improve the outcomes of the golf course conversion or redevelopment.

The consultation and engagement process should be the joint responsibility of the proponent and the relevant planning authority. It would not be appropriate given its responsibilities for the planning of the area for the planning authority to absent itself from the process. The proponent will need to be involved if it is to be meaningful consultation.

(v) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 5: Engage the community

Develop a comprehensive community consultation program, and commence consultation before preparing detailed designs.

The purpose of this consultation is to:

- assist the community to understand the need for the golf course land conversion
- allow the community to provide input to identification of site values and constraints
- allow the community to contribute to identification of opportunities and ideas for the golf course land conversion
- foster open channels of communication between the proponents and the community.

Community consultation and engagement will be the joint responsibility of the proponent and the relevant planning authority.

12 Planning Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit

12.1 Should all benefits be traded?

(i) The issue

Concerns were raised that environmental values of golf course land ‘could be traded off’ against other policy objectives.

(ii) Submissions

The Green Wedges Coalition (S50) did not believe affordable housing or any of the other inducements involving urban uses listed in the exhibited *Guidelines* would justify the destruction of golf courses. The coalition said that it was “*unfair and deplorable*” to cite opportunities for other social ‘goods’ such social housing, crisis accommodation, education, health and legal services as a justification for handing over golf course land for residential development.

This point was also made by Professor Buxton (S55) at the workshops.

The Save Kingswood Group Incorporated (S53) were concerned that residents may experience very little benefit and, in fact, have a poorer quality of amenity.

The Protectors of Public Lands, Victoria (S28) submitted that net community benefit is not meaningful without comparing it with the benefit that the community derives from the current situation either directly or indirectly.

Submission 45 pointed out that golf course land provides certain benefits to that proportion of the public that play golf, but also confer benefits on the wider community through the delivery of environmental and social benefits.

Golf course relocation can deliver significant community benefits. For example, Knox City Council (S23) advised that the Kingston Links redevelopment includes:

- approximately 800 new dwellings
- new parks and public open spaces
- new wetlands and other flood mitigation works
- new multi-purpose community facilities
- rehabilitation of ecological corridors along the Corhanwarrabul Creek.

(iii) Discussion

As with any proposal, the decision maker would need to integrate all policy objectives (as they relate to all values of a golf course) in favour of net community benefit. However, the Committee considers that the most significant values should be afforded a higher significance when balancing the net community benefit ‘equation’.

The Committee outlined what it thinks makes golf courses special in Chapter 2.4, and discussed the broader issue of net community benefit in Chapter 2.6.

Of those attributes, the Committee considers that the contribution golf courses make to open space, community facilities and environmental values are the most significant when compared with the other attributes. This is not to say the other values are not significant, but that these other values would be typical of any larger (potential) strategic redevelopment site.

In relation to open space and environmental values the Committee agrees that it would open the door to poor outcomes if these characteristics could be traded off for other benefits in any conversion proposal.

The Committee thinks that any proposal should demonstrate a 'net positive' outcome for those values that cannot be balanced against the other values – the *Guidelines* could call for any golf course redevelopment to demonstrate a net positive in the provision of open space, and environmental values above the normal requirements in the planning scheme. For example, it would not be possible for a proponent to argue that a net increase in construction jobs 'balanced' a loss of open space.

For other elements of the proposal, such as stormwater, transport, economic or heritage the normal expectations of the planning scheme would apply.

Such an approach would be similar in effect to the current bushfire policy at clause 13.02 and clause 71.02-3 of the VPP that require the risk to life to be considered as a higher order policy consideration.

The Committee recognises that there could be an uneven distribution of community benefits, and that some members of the community may see no benefit (or incur disbenefit) as the consequence of a proposal. The *Guidelines* could also make it clear that there should be a net benefit for the community surrounding any redeveloped course.

It is appropriate that the any proposal consider the 'total package' delivered by the proposal, accepting that the benefits (or disbenefits) may fall to geographically separate communities.

(iv) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 6: Develop a land use concept that delivers net community benefit

Proposal to convert golf course land must provide a net community benefit and a high level of sustainability.

Where a proposal involves relocating a golf course, the net community benefit should consider the total proposal, comprising the closed golf course site and future golf course site.

As well as an overall community benefit the proposal should:

- deliver a net increase in public open space
- deliver improved environmental values
- deliver a net community benefit for the community surrounding any redeveloped course.

12.2 What should be included

(i) The issue

A number of submissions made specific suggestions on the text in the exhibited *Guidelines* that defines net community benefit.

(ii) Submissions

Suggested additions

Submissions suggested a number of additions to what could be included in the assessment of net community benefit:

- any benefits from a Golf Club's redevelopment proposal (S41)
- the value of creating connected walking and biking paths (S24)
- local transport and traffic (S2, S33, S55, S56, S61))
- any proposed commercial uses, and whether any potentially out of centre commercial uses are proposed (S61)
- the reference to social housing, sheltered housing or crisis accommodation could also be expanded to including reference to affordable housing (S61).

Submission 33 thought that net community benefit should also include *"majority support from council"*.

A case-by-case approach

Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club (S41) stated their expectation that provision of other social or community infrastructure such as libraries, medical or education facilities:

... would be considered on a case by case basis as part of developing a residential scheme.

(iii) Discussion

The Committee generally supports the suggested additions – they would appear to be particular factors that ought to be considered when assessing proposals for golf course land.

The Committee does not support a reference to the support of council. The attitude of council ought to be considered as part of the process, and submissions by council could illuminate the relative importance of certain benefits, but support of council is not a benefit in and of itself.

The Committee agrees that an assessment needs to be made on a case-by-case basis but this does not mean that guidance cannot be given.

(iv) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

The following factors should be considered and weighed up to determine if, on balance, the proposal provides a net community benefit and environmental benefit:

- whether a proposal:
 - contributes to achieving state or local government strategies
 - delivers improved golf facilities and whether these are accessible to the public
 - provides additional public open space, sporting or recreational facilities or makes financial contributions to improve or develop regional or local sporting facilities and open space
 - protects and enhances the wider greenspace network and ecological connectivity
 - rehabilitates degraded land or mitigates existing environmental risks
 - contributes to local housing priorities such as the provision of affordable or social housing, sheltered housing or crisis accommodation
 - delivers connected walking and biking paths and general improvements to pedestrian and cycling connectivity
 - delivers social or community infrastructure such as libraries, medical or education facilities

- the impacts on local transport and traffic networks
- any proposed commercial uses, and whether any potentially out of centre commercial uses are proposed
- how the proposal will integrate with surrounding land uses, infrastructure and services
- whether the proposal incorporates climate change adaptation measures for communities and the environment.

12.3 Is a definitive list possible?

It is important that the *Guidelines* do not restrict consideration of other factors where these are relevant – the exhibited *Guidelines* took this approach.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (S58) submitted that the *Guidelines* should include an indicative process for negotiating the specific net community benefit to be achieved in golf course redevelopments. The clear message from the workshops was that this would be an iterative process. The *Guidelines* need to say no more than this.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Other factors may also be relevant considerations depending on the circumstances of the golf course land and the proposal.

Proponents are encouraged to liaise closely with the planning authority in an iterative and negotiated process to arrive at a final position regarding the net community benefit of the proposal.

13 Planning Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome

13.1 Benchmarks

(i) The issue

The exhibited *Guidelines* proposed a benchmark of 20 per cent open space. Submissions imply the need for other benchmarks.

(ii) Relevant policies, strategies and precedents

The Chirnside Park panel and advisory committee noted for that redevelopment proposal:

By our rough analysis, such open space provision would approximately equate to 20 per cent of the site, and go some way toward overcoming the objections of the existing abutting residents.

We recommend:

Planning controls or approvals require:

- a public open space provision of at least 20 per cent of the total site area;

(iii) Submissions

Submissions had implications for benchmarks for:

- open space contributions
- environmental assets and biodiversity corridors
- tree canopy cover
- active transport links.

The 20 percent open space benchmark

Under ‘defining net community benefit’, the exhibited *Guidelines* state:

The following guidelines should be considered when designing a proposal’s net community benefit:

- Open space is provided in the proposal that offsets the space that has been lost and provides open access to public and environmental benefits. The level of open space provided should be informed by local and regional open space strategies. This can be captured by:
 - a substantially higher public open space provision in new housing development on golf course land of 20 per cent unencumbered open space for sport and social recreation play and retention of high-value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors due to the site’s proximity and landscape amenity value to existing residential and environs
 - public open space contributions (either land or financial) directed to improve or develop regional and local sport facilities and open space in line with regional or municipal open space strategies
 - Providing a replacement golf course of like-for-like size and quality.

The Green Wedges Coalition (\$50) did not think this was enough:

Particularly not the miserable proposal that “20% *unencumbered open space*” might be enough to justify net community benefit: nothing less than 100% public open space provision should be acceptable for golf courses even if they are genuinely unviable. Golf courses already provide public open space for biodiversity and in some cases for public access beyond their members and players. In areas short of public open

space, arrangements should be made for some private Golf Clubs – particularly those that purport to be struggling financially – to provide more public access

Submission 23 pointed out that it was not clear if the dot points in the exhibited *Guidelines* were meant to be joined by an ‘and’ or an ‘or’:

In the context of master plans having to balance multiple conflicting site conditions typical of golf course land, it is our view that the term ‘or’ should be used. Conflicting conditions may include site typography, water retardation requirements, tree retention, and an identified need for active open space in the area.

High-value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors

Many submissions (S22, S24, S28, S30, S32, S36, S37, S44, S45, S46, S47, S55, S63) raised concerns about ecological issues.

The University of Melbourne (S44) submitted that *Guidelines* should require the development to incorporate existing habitat elements such as waterbodies, large trees, and areas of complex vegetation structure into the design for the development.

Tree canopy cover at least equivalent to the surrounding area

Whitehorse City Council (S22) submitted that:

The *Guidelines* should acknowledge that trees on golf course land are frequently substantially larger than in surrounding urban land and encourage their retention for their contribution to the amenity and environmental values of an area.

Submission 63 stated:

... the large number of golf courses in Kingston contributes to the feeling of green open space in the municipality and as such we should protect this open space from future pressures to redevelop the land to create more housing in the area

Active transport links

Submission 2’s main concern with golf courses was:

... the obstacle they create for active transport around cities. Planning authorities should seriously consider the inclusion of cycling and walking paths around and within golf courses, especially where they create major barriers between different activity centres in the city.

(iv) Discussion

The Committee believes that the *Guidelines* should specify benchmarks that should serve as an indication as to what might be an acceptable outcome, though the Committee stresses that determining an acceptable outcome should always consider the merits of a particular proposal

Open space

The Committee supports the 20 per cent benchmark for open space. This should be provided as useable open space. This means that land may be encumbered by easements, reservations, heritage, vegetation or other conditions provided these do not undermine the active or passive role of the open space.

High value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors

High value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors should be retained

Tree canopy cover at least equivalent to the surrounding area

The Committee agrees that golf courses contribute to the broader character and feeling of green open space in an area. The Committee thinks that a benchmark for addressing character would be that the redevelopment delivers a tree canopy cover (excluding active sporting areas) consistent with any local tree canopy objectives. In many areas there have been recent steep declines of tree canopy on private sites and delivering a tree canopy equivalent to the surrounding area might reinforce this trend; such a canopy would not recognise the role golf course land currently plays in the existing character.

Active transport links

The Committee agrees that creating active transport links is an important consideration in any redevelopment. Achieving these links may necessitate purchase of one or more abutting lots where long runs of residential back fences abut a golf course. The *Guidelines* should expressly recognise this and state that these links need to be delivered even if this means using a number of existing lots abutting the golf course land.

(v) Recommendation

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Step 7: Deliver a quality outcome

Any proposal to convert golf course land must deliver a high quality outcome.

The following benchmarks should be considered as the starting point for assessing the conversion or redevelopment of golf course land:

- in new housing development not less than 20 per cent of the land area is provided as useable open space. This land may be encumbered by easements, reservations, heritage, vegetation or other conditions and make provision for land to be used for passive or active recreation
- high-value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors are protected and enhanced
- the landscape concept for the proposal (excluding active sporting areas) will deliver a tree canopy cover at least equivalent to the surrounding area
- the landscape concept for the proposal (excluding active sporting areas) will deliver an average tree canopy cover consistent with any local adopted tree canopy policy and at least greater than the surrounding area
- active transport links are provided into the surrounding area, even if this means the use of a number of existing lots abutting the golf course land to enhance the connectivity of the proposal.

13.2 What control might be appropriate?

The Committee recommended in Chapter 3 that a DPO be applied when rezoning is required. The *Guidelines* should explicitly state this. It would be useful if the *Guidelines* presented a model DPO Schedule based on the experience of redevelopments that have had a DPO Schedule applied in the past.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Planning mechanisms

Where a planning scheme amendment is proposed a Development Plan Overlay should be applied to guide the development of the land.

Any Schedule to the Development Plan Overlay should:

- be in a form similar to the draft model contained in these Guidelines

13.3 Delivering infrastructure

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

Any Schedule to the Development Plan Overlay should:

- make arrangements for infrastructure contributions.

13.4 Protecting amenity

A number of submissions addressed amenity issues including:

- Whitehorse City Council (S22) submitted that the *Guidelines* should specifically address appropriate treatment of any altered interface between golf course land and residential (or other) land
- The Dingley Village Community Association (S35) said that the *Guidelines* must include a category weighting for enjoyment of local amenity.
- Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club (S41) agreed that interfaces and connections to surrounding residential properties was a valid consideration.

The Committee agrees that interface issues are important, but how these should be addressed is likely to vary from proposal to proposal.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

A development plan or permit should carefully manage interfaces, including by specifying building envelope and building setbacks where appropriate.

13.5 Delivering Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)

A number of submissions addressed ESD issues:

- any 'green roofs' must ensure no net loss of biodiversity (S9)
- use open space for growing food (S30)
- preserve the cooling benefits by requiring roofing materials that do not exacerbate the urban heat island effect (that is no black roofs), and possibly by requiring a higher level of roof insulation similar to those used in passive house designs (S44)
- carefully define 'environmental sustainability' (S59)
- reference the need for greater environmental performance standards in any development (S61).

Other submissions addressed the urban heat island effect.¹²

The Committee thinks that the cooling effect of a golf course, noted by the University of Melbourne (S44) is a particularly relevant feature that should be given specific consideration in their redevelopment beyond broader ESD issues that would apply anywhere in a municipality. The use of green roofs or simply light coloured roofs to increase the albedo effect and hence reduce heat gain could be referenced in the *Guidelines*. The Committee understands that installing white roofs helps reduce heat build-up in cities.

¹² The urban heat island effect is the observation that metropolitan areas can be significantly warmer than their surrounding rural areas due to human activities.

The Committee recommends the *Guidelines* be updated to include the following text:

A development plan or permit should consider mechanisms to limit increases in urban heating by specifying light coloured roofs for dwellings or planted roofs for other uses.

Part D:

Appendices

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee

Version: 11 July 2019

The Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee is an advisory committee appointed under Part 7 section 151 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to consider Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment and proposals for redevelopment of golf course land within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) of metropolitan Melbourne.

Name

1. The advisory committee is to be known as the 'Golf Course Redevelopment Standing Advisory Committee'.
2. The advisory committee is to have members with the following skills:
 - a. Strategic and statutory land use planning
 - b. Urban design and landscape architecture
 - c. Environment and biodiversity
 - d. Traffic/transport planning.
3. The committee will include a Chair, Deputy Chair(s) and other appropriately qualified members.
4. The committee may seek specialist advice as appropriate.

Purpose

5. The purpose of the advisory committee is to:
 - a. Review the draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment, which includes a decision-making framework that will be used to assess proposals for the future redevelopment of surplus golf course land primarily within metropolitan Melbourne and advise how the guidelines can be given effect in the Victorian Planning System.
 - b. Advise whether proposals for the rezoning of golf course land within the UGB of metropolitan Melbourne to facilitate redevelopment for urban purposes satisfy the planning guidelines and are consistent with state and local policy.

Background

6. Golf is one of Australia's most popular organised recreational activities. There are over 1.2 million golfers Australia wide, and more than 300,000 Victorians played golf in 2015 at more than 350 golf clubs across the state.
7. A 2016 study commissioned by Golf Victoria found golf in Victoria contributes \$883.6 million in economic and health benefits to the Victorian community and there are 6,900 full-time equivalent jobs in the golf industry. Visit Victoria figures showed \$564 million in total expenditure from visitors to and within Victoria who played golf while visiting Victoria in 2017.
8. The sport is experiencing big changes in demand. Overall, traditional golf club membership is in decline and clubs are facing changing leisure patterns and increasing operating costs. Some golf clubs have been forced to merge or close. This trend has drawn developer interest in golf course land.

9. Victoria has more golf courses per capita than the rest of Australia. There is a need for some rationalisation and possible redistribution of golf course locations to match population growth and strengthen the viability and continuity of clubs.
10. Melbourne is under constant pressure from urban development and competing land use demands. Approximately 290 hectares of golf course land has been sold in recent years.
11. Golf courses provide social, environmental and cultural heritage values in metropolitan Melbourne:
 - a. 139 are located next to parks
 - b. 69 are on waterways, with some land subject to flooding
 - c. Sixty-five per cent of golf course land provides for biodiversity and native habitat.
12. Acting on Action 67 of the *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050* Implementation Plan, the Victorian Government established a taskforce to inform the development of a Planning for Golf in Victoria *Discussion paper*. The *Discussion paper* was published in July 2017 and was followed by a six-week engagement process.
13. The Planning for Golf in Victoria *Discussion paper* proposed a suite of ideas to help navigate five key challenges for golf in Victoria. These were:
 - a. Participation challenge — How will golf adapt and attract new participants?
 - b. Membership challenge — Golf Club membership has been in decline and operational costs are rising. How will golf clubs reverse this trend and balance a club's competing interest?
 - c. Supply and demand challenge — Victoria has more golf courses per capita than the rest of Australia. How do we best provide for golf courses in the future?
 - d. Land use challenge — Victoria is faced with a range of land use challenges. How do we protect the land values of golf courses and consider opportunities the land may present to help meet other land use needs?
 - e. Governance challenge — Golf club and course administrators must address multiple challenges and increasing responsibilities as office bearers. How can we support the golf workforce to meet facility and land use challenges?
14. There was broad support from stakeholders, industry groups and the community for many ideas raised in the *Discussion paper*, particularly for addressing the land use challenge presented by proposals for the rezoning and redevelopment of golf course land.
15. Recognising that golf course land, especially land within Melbourne's UGB can be considered for rezoning, the Victorian Government wishes to ensure new proposals for redevelopment are assessed according to consistent criteria outlined in a planning decision-making framework.

PROCESS

Part 1: Review of draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment

Scope

- 16 The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has prepared draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment.
- 17 The advisory committee is to provide advice on the draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment.

Stage 1 – Exhibition

18. DELWP will give notice of the draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment for at least 20 business days. Notice will include:
 - a. all Victorian councils
 - b. Golf Victoria
 - c. Any person or organisation that made a submission to the Planning for Golf in Victoria *Discussion paper*.

Stage 2 – Workshops

19. The advisory committee may conduct workshops or forums to explore issues or other matters. Any workshops or forums will be held in public.

Stage 3 – Outcomes

20. The advisory committee must produce a written report for the Minister for Planning providing the following:
 - a. an assessment of the draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment and decision-making framework including any recommended changes
 - b. an assessment of submissions about the Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment
 - c. recommendations on how the guidelines could be operationalised in the Victorian Planning System
 - d. a list of people who made submissions considered by the advisory committee
 - e. a list of people consulted or heard.

Part 2: Review of redevelopment proposals

Referral

21. The Minister for Planning or delegate may refer redevelopment proposals in one or more locations to the advisory committee for advice on future planning controls on the land.
22. The Minister for Planning may include land owned by the Victorian Government or local government where it enables a more comprehensive delivery outcome for the state. The inclusion of this land must be agreed to by the Minister for Planning as part of any referral.
23. In making a referral, the Minister for Planning or delegate must be satisfied that the proposed planning controls for the land make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions and are prepared and presented in accordance with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
24. A proposal may be in the form of changes to the planning scheme or a combined planning scheme amendment and planning permit.

Scope

25. The advisory committee may inform itself in anyway it sees fit, and must consider all relevant matters, including but not limited to:
 - a. the suitability of the proposal against the Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment reviewed by the advisory committee

- b. whether the proposed planning provisions make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions and are prepared in accordance with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes
- c. relevant provisions of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the Victoria Planning Provisions and *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*
- d. the relevant local planning schemes, including any exhibited or adopted planning scheme amendments
- e. any adopted plans or strategies
- f. strategic work by government in, or affecting, the area where the golf course land rezoning and/or redevelopment proposal is located, such as regional land use framework plans and sport and recreation facility provision plans
- g. the views of project proponents and all relevant material prepared by or for project proponents, including any amended documentation
- h. the views of the relevant council in the area where a proposal is located
- i. the views of relevant referral and servicing authorities and Crown land management agencies
- j. all relevant material provided the advisory committee by all other participating parties
- k. all relevant submissions and evidence received
- l. any additional matters as directed by the Minister for Planning.

Process

Stage 1 – Exhibition

- 26. Following the referral of a redevelopment proposal, the advisory committee will liaise with DELWP to agree:
 - a. the public exhibition period dates
 - b. a directions hearing date (if applicable), and
 - c. the public hearing dates
- 27. DELWP will give notice of the proposal for at least 30 business days. Notice will include:
 - a. direct notice to owners and occupiers who may be materially affected by the proposal
 - b. a notice in a local newspaper generally circulating in the area
 - c. direct notice to government agencies and servicing authorities
 - d. direct notice to relevant councils.
- 28. The advisory committee is not expected to carry out any additional public notification or referral but may do so if it considers it to be appropriate.

Stage 2 – Public hearing

- 29. The advisory committee is expected to carry out a public hearing and provide all submitters with an opportunity to be heard. Submitters are not required to have formal representation at the hearing.
- 30. The advisory committee may limit the time of parties appearing before it.
- 31. The advisory committee may prohibit or regulate cross-examination.

Stage 3 – Outcomes

- 32. The advisory committee must produce a written report for the Minister for Planning providing the following:

- a. an assessment of each referred matter against the planning guidelines and decision-making criteria
- b. an assessment of relevant state and local policy for each referred matter
- c. an assessment of submissions to the advisory committee
- d. any other relevant matters raised during the advisory committee process
- e. recommendations to the Minister for Planning on whether a proposal should proceed and under what planning controls
- f. a list of people who made submissions considered by the advisory committee
- g. a list of people consulted or heard.

General – Applicable to Part 1 and Part 2

- 33. The advisory committee may meet and invite others to meet with it when there is a quorum of at least two members.
- 34. The advisory committee may seek advice from experts when it considers this is necessary.
- 35. Submissions will be collected by the Office of Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) in accordance with the 'Guide to Privacy at PPV' and collected through the Engage Victoria website. Electronic copies of the submissions will be made available to the proponent, each relevant council and DELWP. Electronic copies may also be provided to other submitters upon request.
- 36. Petitions and proforma letters will be treated as a single submission and only the first name to appear on the submission will receive correspondence about advisory committee matters.
- 37. The advisory committee may conduct workshops or forums to explore design issues or other matters. Any workshops or forums will be held in public.
- 38. The Minister for Planning may seek additional advice from the advisory committee consistent with the Terms of Reference.
- 39. The advisory committee may apply to the Minister for Planning to vary these Terms of Reference in any way it sees fit before submitting its report to the Minister for Planning.
- 40. Following the submission of the report, the advisory committee may deliver an oral briefing to Department staff or the Minister for Planning.

Submissions are public documents

- 41. The advisory committee must retain a library of any written submissions or other supporting documentation provided to it directly to it until a decision has been made on its report or five years has passed from the time of its appointment.
- 42. Any written submissions or other supporting documentation provided to the advisory committee must be available for public inspection until the submission of its report, unless the advisory committee specifically directs that the material is to remain 'in camera'.

Timing

- 43. **Part 1:** The advisory committee is required to submit its report as soon as practicable but no later than 40 business days from the collection of submissions or 20 business days from the completion of workshop or forums.
- 44. **Part 2:** The advisory committee is required to submit its report as soon as practicable but no later than 40 business days from the completion of its hearings.

Fee

45. The fee for the advisory committee will be set at the current rate for a panel appointed under Part 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
46. **Part 1:** The costs for the advisory committee of 'Stage 1: Review of Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment', are to be met by DELWP.
47. **Part 2:** The costs of the advisory committee of 'Stage 2: Review of redevelopment proposals', are to be met by project proponents unless the Minister for Planning directs otherwise.



Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning

Date:

11/8/19

Appendix B: Exhibited Guidelines

August 2019

Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment

These guidelines provide guidance to local councils, the Victorian Government, golf courses and clubs and the development sector on the key planning steps and considerations for the future development of surplus golf course land.

The guidelines include a planning decision framework for assessing planning applications.

Planning decision framework

The planning decision framework outlines the key planning steps for developing golf course land in a sustainable way to support the land use and infrastructure objectives for Victoria and enhance open space, environmental and landscape values.

The framework has been developed to reflect a review of relevant planning panel reports and follows an extensive consultation process with stakeholders and community.

The framework supports the existing statutory planning and legislative processes.

- **Step 1:** Golf course land development proposals will be required to follow the relevant planning processes, and applications that involve rezoning may require ratification by both Houses of Parliament.
- **Step 2:** Golf course land development proposals will be required to respond to the planning decision framework for golf course land development proposals.
- **Step 3:** Future golf course land development proposals will be required to provide a net community benefit and high level of sustainability.

The location of the golf course is an important consideration in the assessment of the proposal.

Golf course land within the Urban Growth Boundary can be considered for rezoning, subject to all the overlays and issues being investigated and resolved.

Rezoning land outside of the Urban Growth Boundary involves an authorisation process requiring approval by the Minister and ratification by both Houses of Parliament in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Key planning steps

- The history of how the land was originally provided for a golf course is considered.
- A golf demand assessment is completed that considers whether the golf course is located in an area currently under- or over-supplied with golf courses.
- A response is developed that complies with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and other relevant Victorian and Commonwealth legislation and regulations including the *Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*, the *Environment Effects Act 1978*, and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
- A Cultural Heritage Management Plan is recommended for golf course land.
- A recreation and open space assessment is completed. The assessment should consider local and regional sport and open space planning strategies, the Victorian Planning Authority Metropolitan Open Space Portal to see whether the golf course is within an area short of open space, and the demand for sport and recreation facilities in the area.

- An assessment is conducted against relevant *Plan Melbourne 2017–50* actions or regional growth and land use plan actions, including those identifying the need for community, education, health and legal services, and those relevant to the environment and biodiversity.
- A place-making approach is adopted by applying design and development principles outlined in the *Creating Places for People* (Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council, 2011) and *Healthy by Design Guidelines* (National Heart Foundation, 2012), *Urban Design Guidelines* (Department of Land, Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017) to design future development proposals.
- The proposal must have a net community benefit and achieve a high level of environmental sustainability.

Defining net community benefit

Assessment of a proposal's net community benefits should consider:

- strategic planning objectives
- environmental factors such as the rehabilitation of land and the mitigation of existing effects
- social factors including the provision of publicly accessible open space, sporting facilities and affordable housing
- economic factors including the economic activity and employment opportunities generated by the proposal.

The following guidelines should be considered when designing a proposal's net community benefit:

- Open space is provided in the proposal that offsets the space that has been lost and provides open access to public and environmental benefits. The level of open space provided should be informed by local and regional open space strategies. This can be captured by:
 - a substantially higher public open space provision in new housing development on golf course land of 20 per cent unencumbered open space for sport and social recreation play and retention of high-value environmental assets and biodiversity corridors due to the site's proximity and landscape amenity value to existing residential and environs
 - public open space contributions (either land or financial) directed to improve or develop regional and local sport facilities and open space in line with regional or municipal open space strategies
 - Providing a replacement golf course of like-for-like size and quality.
- The proposal supports other state, regional or local public policy objectives, such as contributing to social and community infrastructure such as libraries, medical or education facilities housing or other strategic or local housing priorities such as social housing, sheltered housing or crisis accommodation.
- The proposal complies with *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050* principles including access to transport and activity centres.

All of these factors will be considered and weighed up when determining if, on balance, the proposal provides a positive net community and environmental benefit.

Assessment method for planning amendment or permit applications

When assessing the merits of golf course land proposals, there are three questions that arise from the planning decision framework.

Step 1: Is there strategic merit in the proposal?

Strategic planning policy issues must be considered, along with the consistency of the proposal with various state and local policies and relevant legislation.

Establishing the level of 'in principle' strategic merit is the key first step. If there is support, then the details of the site and proposal will be worthy of further detailed assessment.

Is the proposal consistent with:

- *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050* or a relevant regional growth plan
- key directions in the State Planning Policy Framework
- relevant directions in the Local Planning Policy Framework?

Is it consistent with other relevant local or state strategies, such as:

- any council open space strategy
- any council housing strategy
- Active Victoria Framework
- Water for Victoria Water Plan
- Victorian 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy
- Creating Places for People
- Healthy by Design Guidelines?

Is there strategic support for the proposal in the relevant legislation, including:

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Environmental Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*
- *Environment Effects Act 1978*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*?

Step 2: Are there particular site values or constraints?

The nature and values of the site itself must be considered and whether there are environmental or other factors that constrain its development potential and, if so, whether these can be adequately addressed or mitigated.

- Does the golf course site have a high landscape value, and is it defined in the planning scheme (e.g. Significant Landscape Overlay)?
- Does the site accommodate important biodiversity or wildlife assets and, if so, are they capable of being protected or enhanced through the development?
- Does the site form part of wider greenspace network or wildlife network and would the proposed redevelopment harm this network?
- Does the site have Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity and has this been fully assessed?
- Does the site provide public access and informal recreation opportunities in addition to its golf course functions?
- Does the site have a private amenity value to neighbouring properties that would need to be considered in a development proposal?
- What is the history and origin of the golf course? Was the land purchased by the club, or was the land previously public or gifted to the club?

Step 3: Does the proposal deliver net community benefits?

Assessment of the proposal should identify what other benefits might be provided by the development.

- Does the proposal provide additional public open space, sports or recreational facilities?
- Does the proposal deliver improved golf facilities with public access?
- Does the proposal provide other social or community infrastructure such as libraries, medical or education facilities?
- Does the proposal contribute to other strategic or local housing priorities such as the provision of social housing, sheltered housing or crisis accommodation?

All of these factors will be considered and weighed up when determining if, on balance, the proposal provides a positive net community and environmental benefit.

Other factors may also be relevant considerations depending on the circumstances of the golf course site and the proposal.

Appendix C: Submitters

No	Submitter	No	Submitter
1	Edouard Le Lesle	33	James Campbell
2	Martin Zakharov	34	Anthony Torney
3	Matthew Lowe	35	Dingley Village Community Association
4	Sean McAleer	36	Mary-Lou Howie
5	Yvonne Lynch	37	Friends of the Glenfern Green Wedge Inc
6	Joseph Giarrusso	38	Kingston City Council
7	Paul Leitinger	39	Michael Barlow (Urbis Pty Ltd)
8	Planning Backlash Inc	40	Judith Odgaard
9	Jennifer Petinatos	41	Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club
10	Safety Beach Country Club	42	Carolyn Ebdon
11	Margaret Hunter	43	TP Golf, Golf Course Architects and Planners
12	Cardinia Shire Council	44	The University of Melbourne
13	Amstel Golf Club Incorporated	45	Ian Hundley
14	Susan K O'Brien	46	Friends of Braeside Park Incorporated
15	Royal Park Protection Group, Friends of Royal Park & Protectors of Public Land	47	John R Stansfield
16	Keysborough Golf Club	48	Michael Goodfellow
17	Hobsons Bay City Council	49	Celia Goncalves
18	Golf Australia	50	Green Wedges Coalition
19	Margit Alm	51	Casey City Council
20	Warwick Boardman	52	Donna Jabke
21	Sheila Newman	53	Save Kingswood Group Incorporated
22	Whitehorse City Council	54	Nina Earl
23	AS Residential Property No. 1 Pty Ltd	55	RMIT University (Michael Buxton)
24	Yarra Riverkeeper Association	56	Tapan Pathi
25	The Hills Common Alliance	57	Kevin Poulter
26	Jacqueline Stanley	58	Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
27	Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club	59	Australian Institute of Landscape Architects
28	Protectors of Public Lands, Victoria	60	Cardinia Ratepayers and Residents Association
29	Save the Casey Foothills Association	61	Bayside City Council
30	Craig Burton	62	Planning Institute of Australia
31	The National Golf Club Inc. and National Golf Holdings Ltd	63	Chris Hill
32	Knox City Council		

Appendix D: Parties to Committee Workshops

Golf Workshop – Monday 21 October 2019, 10.00am to 11.30am

Submitter	Represented by
Golf Australia	Fiona Telford

Community Groups and Individuals Workshop – Monday 21 October 2019, 1.00pm to 4.00pm

Submitter	Represented by
Dingley Village Community Association	David Madill
Friends of Braeside Park Incorporated	Margaret Hunter
Planning Backlash Inc	Mary Drost OAM
Protectors of Public Lands, Victoria	Jill Quirk
Royal Park Protection Group, Friends of Royal Park & Protectors of Public Land	Margaret Jungwirth
Save Kingswood Group Incorporated	Kevin Poulter
James Campbell	
Chris Hill	
Susan K O'Brien	

Workshop was also attended by Michael Everett, Planning Implementation, DELWP

Councils and Institutions Workshop – Tuesday 22 October 2019, 9.30am to 12.30pm

Submitter	Represented by
Bayside City Council	Juliana Aya
Cardinia Shire Council	Celeste Grossi
Kingston City Council	Rita Astill
Knox City Council	Madeleine Cheah
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council	Sarah Lane
AILA	Bernard Hogan and Ross Perrett
RMIT University	Prof Michael Buxton

Workshop was also attended by Michael Everett, Planning Implementation, DELWP

Golf Clubs and Consultant Workshops – Tuesday 22 October 2019, 1.30pm to 4.30pm

Submitter	Represented by
Amstel Golf Club Incorporated	Peter Butler
AS Residential Property No. 1 Pty Ltd	Tamara Brezzi and Megan Schroor (Norton Rose Fulbright), Anna Martiniello (ISPT) and Neil Harvey (Australian Super) Nick Clements (Tract Consultants) and Nevan Wadeson (Tract Consultants)
Australian Super	Hang Do – Neil Harvey and Hang Do
Churchill-Waverley Golf and Bowls Club	Matthew Taylor (General Manager, Churchill-Waverley Golf & Bowls Club), Ian Robins (Member, Churchill-Waverley Golf & Bowls Club) and Tamara Brezzi (Norton Rose Fulbright solicitors)
Commonwealth Golf Club	Ken Stumbles
Intrapac Property	David Hodge and Hamish Macdonald
ISPT	Nick Clements and Anna Martiniello
Keysborough Golf Club	Darren Eckhardt
Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club	Heath Wilson
Safety Beach Country Club	Philip Sein
TP Golf, Golf Course Architects and Planners	Ross Perrett

Workshop was also attended by Michael Everett, Planning Implementation, DELWP

Appendix E: Document list

No.	Date	Description	Presented by
1	29/08/19	Letter from the Committee to DELWP requesting further information	Geoff Underwood, Deputy Chair SAC
2	3/09/19	Letter from DELWP to the Committee in response to request for further information	Alana Macwhirter, Acting Director, Places and Precincts
3	"	Planning for Golf in Victoria Discussion Paper - 3 09 19	"
4	4/09/19	List of Submitters to ' <i>Planning for Golf in Victoria</i> ' Discussion Paper 2017	"
5	"	List of Stakeholders notified of Golf Course Redevelopment SAC 2019	"
6	13/11/19	Email from Golf Australia supplying information from Workshops	Fiona Telford, Government Relations Manager, Golf Australia
7	"	2018 Golf Club Participation Report - June 2019	"
8	"	State of Play Report - Golf 2019 – April 2019	"
9	"	Sports Facility Auditor Brochure 2017	"