

East Clifton Hill Residents Incorporated (No A0114110I)

	<p>Guidance</p> <p>Unless specifically identified, these questions relate solely to the Yarra Bend Ward of the City of Yarra, and the forthcoming council elections to be held in October 2024.</p>
1Q.	<p>Are you a representative of any political party, or have any other affiliations with other candidates running for Council? If yes, which Party please? (please send us a copy of any policy statements especially in regard to heritage protection and planning)</p>
1A.	<p>The Victorian Labor party. No applicable policy statements.</p>
2Q.	<p>In no more than 30 words, what do you see as the major issues facing East Clifton Hill relevant to the City of Yarra?</p>
2A.	<p>Inadequate community consultation, council making decisions that are not in the best interest of our community, neglected services, leisure centre affordability, budget mismanagement, in-home aged care privatisation, regulation of e-scooters.</p>
3Q.	<p>East Clifton Hill is subject to a heritage overlay, and other heritage protections. Do you favour strengthening these protections, weakening them, or that they remain the same?</p>
3A.	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remain Same. <input type="checkbox"/> Weaken/remove </p> <p>I am not currently aware of a need to change the heritage protections in East Clifton Hill, so I support retaining the status quo. However, if elected as your representative, I'm committed to being guided by the community on this matter.</p> <p>Heritage overlays are an essential control in our area, contributing to the character, liveability, and identity of our neighbourhood. As our population grows and more dwellings are built, these overlays provide certainty about the level of change that can happen. This is important, as many residents have told me they feel their views are not considered when decisions are made. Many have also acknowledge the need for increased housing density and urban renewal, but stress that new developments must respect the environment and the character of our neighbourhood while contributing positively to the local economy, community interaction, and cohesion.</p> <p>Beyond new larger developments, there are concerns about the difficulty in obtaining permits to modify homes, particularly when trying to reduce reliance on costly, environmentally damaging energy sources. Necessary upgrades like electrifying homes, installing solar panels, double glazing, and installing rainwater tanks often require planning and building permits. Unfortunately, in Yarra, these permits take longer to process than in any other council. It is unclear if these delays stem from restrictive heritage rules, confusion around the application process, or inefficiencies within council systems. I will</p>

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	<p>investigate this and if heritage overlays are the issue, we should review how they affect the ability of homeowners to make their properties more sustainable and make changes accordingly. However, any changes must be made with thorough community consultation and a full understanding of options and their impact.</p> <p>Where the community supports stronger heritage protections, I am very open to listening and advocating for these. Again, these should be considered properly, I am committed to engaging with residents on this issue.</p>
4Q.	Are you in favour of the protection of the designation of The Spensley-Berry and Ramsden-Myrtle commercial precincts as Local Activity Centres?
4A.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES. <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNDECIDED
	<p>As above, at this point, I am not aware of a need to change the designation of these LACs, so I support retaining the status quo. However, if elected as your representative, I'm committed to being guided by the community on this matter.</p>
5Q.	Do you support introduction of mandatory height limits in The Spensley-Berry and Ramsden-Myrtle Local Activity Centres? (as is the case in some other council areas)
5A.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES. <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNDECIDED
	<p>From community conversations I've had and my observations as a resident, I believe we can increase housing without losing the character of our area. Height limits, setbacks, overshadowing restrictions, and other design features are important controls.</p> <p>The argument against making these controls mandatory is that it allows for more flexibility. That might make sense when everything's running smoothly, but in practice, residents of Yarra have been vocal about feeling they're not well consulted and that decisions often aren't in their best interests.</p> <p>I'm leaning towards supporting mandatory limits and I think they would potentially fall into the 'exceptional circumstance' which provide for the application of mandatory control (as opposed to discretionary controls) as 'significant heritage places where other controls are demonstrated to be inadequate to protect unique heritage values' under the Victorian Government <i>planning practise note 60</i>. I would, however, need to get more info from the council and hear from the community to understand the options better before I lock in my position.</p>
6Q.	East Clifton Hill has numerous heritage buildings designated as 'individually significant'. Do you favour strengthening these protections, weakening them, or that they remain the same?
6A.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remain Same. <input type="checkbox"/> Weaken/remove

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	<p>Without hearing other views on this matter, I support retaining the status quo but again, I am very open to hearing from residents and your group about whether this is adequate.</p> <p>When I close my eyes and think of Clifton Hill, I picture my morning view while drinking coffee outside the Ramsden Street Milk Bar, watching the sun bounce off the top of the Royal Hotel. Though I acknowledge it's not the only building designated as individually significant I'm not opposed to some sensitive development of this site (although I do wish it was a pub again). On these matters, I will listen to residents and support objections to proposals that do not comply with community expectations or respect the character of our neighbourhood.</p>
7Q.	The City of Yarra in its current term has reduced the ability of the public to ask questions at Council Meetings. Do you favour making it easier for the public to ask questions without notice at Council meetings?
7A.	<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES. <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNDECIDED</div> <p>Of course. A major issue facing our community is the feeling of disempowerment and the lack of community input in decisions that affect us. We need to make it easier for the public to participate in council meetings and other council processes.</p> <p>In the <i>Yarra 2036 Community Vision</i> that was adopted in 2021, the second theme is 'shared governance'. This plan states that future actions should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the Council actively engages with Yarra's diverse community at all stages of the decision-making process in an open, honest way that aligns with the values and needs of the community.• Actively remove barriers to participation and support everyone to get involved.• Promote the role of the Council more actively so people understand the decision-making process and how they can participate. <p>That has not occurred, in fact the opposite.</p> <p>People feel unheard, unrepresented, and unsupported. According to the council's own annual residents survey, people in Yarra increasingly don't believe decisions are made in their best interests. Residents are dissatisfied with how the council communicates, engages, and advocates on our behalf, and people in Yarra feel that the council does not act in our community's best interests.</p> <p>Instead of opening the doors and welcoming the public back into the room, Yarra Council has progressively made it harder for community participation, which goes against the vision outlined in the 2036 plan.</p>

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	<p>I am committed to putting forward and supporting changes that will make it easier for people to be involved in council meetings and other council processes.</p> <p>I am also committed to seeking out the voices, perspectives, and experiences of people that might be harder to reach. I believe it is essential that councillors work hard to ensure our community's voices are at the centre of every decision and prioritise reaching out to those whose schedules don't align with evening meetings, as well as those who are often left out of consultations. That's a commitment I can make.</p>
8Q.	Do you support improving the <u>transparency to residents</u> of the processes of planning within the City of Yarra and in particular those that relate to heritage values of any area under consideration of planning change or development?
8A.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES. <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNDECIDED
	<p>Transparency is paramount for good governance. Treating consultations as a box-ticking exercise has contributed significantly to the breakdown of trust between our community and the council.</p> <p>By involving people early in the process, we can potentially avoid costly disputes and approve developments and changes that truly benefit our community.</p> <p>If I'm elected to council, I will prioritise staying informed about upcoming plans and potential changes. I will organise meetings for residents with council officers and other relevant stakeholders to ensure transparency throughout the process and to help everyone understand how to provide input. I will also hold regular meetings myself with residents and be accessible and available throughout my term.</p> <p>I'd also be interested in making council documents and submissions from online consultations available to the public. Reading submissions from other interest groups, residents, and organisations can be valuable for understanding the different opinions and views within our community. We could implement measures for anonymity where necessary. I believe providing access to submissions is one transparency measure that could enhance trust and lead to a better functioning relationship between the community and the council as well as better decision making.</p>
9Q.	The CoY Transport strategy has determined that on designated cycleways, angled parking will be replaced by parallel parking. If implemented in East Clifton Hill this will lead to a dramatic reduction in available parking in both Spensley Street and Roseneath Street. Both streets are relatively quiet, and we have no evidence to suggest that cyclist safety is an issue on these two roads. If

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	elected, will you seek to ensure that angled parking is retained on both Spensley and Roseneath Streets?
9A.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES. <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNDECIDED
	<p>The shift from angled to parallel parking in certain areas is part of Yarra's Transport Strategy 2022-23, a plan that was unanimously adopted by the entire council, including the Greens and Independents. The Transport Action Plan 2024-34, which outlines how this strategy will be implemented, was also endorsed unanimously by councillors in March this year.</p> <p>I do not support removing angle parking in Clifton Hill. We know that people rely on cars for various reasons. We need to ensure there's adequate parking for residents and visitors alike, especially if we're leaving cars behind for the day to jump on a train or bike. Public transport, walking, and cycling are critical for reducing our carbon footprint and improving community health and wellbeing. It's the council's responsibility to make these options accessible, safe, and convenient for everyone. But advocating for a car-free Yarra isn't realistic, it overlooks the diverse needs of our community.</p> <p>There will always be competing interests, especially in areas like transport, but if elected, I'm committed to being guided by evidence and community input while ensuring liveability in Yarra for both current and future generations.</p>

Additional Comments from the Candidate are welcome here

I'd like to address a perception among some in our community that political parties shouldn't be involved in council. While I disagree with this view, I understand it may come from concerns about party influence over councillors' decisions. This will not be the case if I am elected as a Labor councillor.

I joined the Labor Party at decade ago at the Royal Hotel, where the Clifton Hill branch used to meet. This branch was filled with people who genuinely cared about their communities and demonstrated what Labor values look like in action. On the state and national level, our party platform is developed with input from rank-and-file members. However, **there's no specific platform for councils, we are only expected to make decisions informed by Labor values.**

Labor values for me mean equality, democracy, liberty, and social cooperation. I'm committed to ensuring that the benefits of rising prosperity are shared fairly for a better future for the next generation.

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If elected, I will make decisions based on evidence, community input, and the goal of ensuring liveability in Yarra for both current and future generations.

The state government has significant power over issues affecting our area, and I want to ensure our council works collaboratively rather than combatively or just for individuals to score political points. Smaller reforms, even if imperfect, are often better than doing nothing. My main concern is ensuring that public money is spent in a way that maximises benefits for the public.

For example, in managing changes to public housing and housing in general, while the council has limitations, we need to advocate for our community to the government whether that be Labor or not. It's essential that plans are clear and that community input is sought early in the process. I do support increasing the number of dwellings in Yarra and I think we can reach State Government housing targets, but this must involve community input. It's also vital that the council ensures services keep pace with population growth, and that's something I'll always push for.

My commitment is to demonstrate Labor values on council without getting caught up in politics, that's unhelpful. If elected, my responsibility will be to represent everyone, not just those who voted for me. This is the essence of representative democracy, and I take it very seriously.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this survey. I believe I'd be a good Yarra Bend Ward representative. I'm organised, proactive, and consistent; I'd do a good job.

I'll work hard to rebuild trust between our council and community through open and honest communication. I'll protect and support essential services that keep us connected. I'm committed collaborating with the council and community to drive positive change for everyone in Yarra.

I care deeply about where I live. This is my home.

I've learned a lot from speaking with people who live and work in the Yarra Bend Ward this year. I really do think that the solutions to our challenges already exist within our community; we just need to seek them out. I'm ready to do that work.