

Introduction

Dingley Village Community Association, in representation of all Dingley Village residents, **oppose the plans** for the proposed residential development of the Former Kingswood Golf Course site.

Victorian Planning Minister Hon. Sonya Kilkenny said as recently as February 2025 (referring to the nearby Keysborough Golf Club): *"We know we need more homes, but where those homes go matters - that's why we've been focused on getting more homes off the ground in areas close to train stations, trams, jobs and services"*. She also reiterated that *"our green, open spaces are what make Melbourne so liveable."* We completely agree with these statements which indicate that **government should only approve new housing that is suitable to its surrounding area**.

Dingley Village is clearly not a significant activity centre or "hub", not on any train or tram line, and has limited bus services (for example, to get from Dingley Village to the adjacent suburb Clarinda by bus, passengers must go via Cheltenham). In fact, **Dingley Village has already met its housing and planning quotas as per the recent Kingston Council Planning Scheme Amendments C203king and C206king**, notably with General Residential Zone added to areas within 200m of the existing shops.

For these reasons, we firmly believe that a residential development of this density is at odds with the neighbourhood character of the surrounding area and **does not provide net community benefit for incoming and existing residents** as per the requirements of the Golf Course Standing Advisory Committee's 2021 findings and report.

DVCA appreciates that there is a housing accessibility shortage in Greater Melbourne, and that the former Kingswood Golf Course site has now been rezoned. DVCA now regretfully expects that there will be some form of residential development on this site. To be clear, DVCA does not expect the re-establishment of a golf course, nor for the site to remain permanently vacant. **Our frustration and disappointment come from 12 years of our community's calls for a more practical use of the site being ignored and/or rejected**. We have suggested land swaps for the Suburban Rail Loop, a secondary school, aged care and medical centres, all of which are needed and would provide net community benefit for incoming and existing residents, and none of which have been seriously considered.

On the other hand, DVCA were satisfied that the community feedback on the 2021 plan for 823 homes was heard, and that that plan was rightfully rejected as inappropriate for Dingley Village by the state government-appointed **Standing Advisory Committee which called for a new plan**. Three years on and under a new developer, we expected that these lessons would have been learnt, and that this "new" plan would have density appropriate to Dingley Village and offer net community benefit. Sadly, it does not. **This plan is largely the same Tract plan that was rejected in 2021 with only minor changes, most notably an increase in density, from 823 to 941 lots**.

Density

The Golf Course Standing Advisory Committee report states clearly that 20% of the 53.34 ha site (10.66 ha) is the minimum requirement for “useable open space”, additionally specifying that this should not include bodies of water, or any space less than 10m wide. This plan instead redefines this requirement by “developable area”, **offering only 8.66 ha open space**.

Despite the 823 homes rejected as inappropriate in 2021, the new Satterley plan includes 941 lots. **This would be 3.7 times as dense as the surrounding area**, as demonstrated in the summary below.

| Item | Current Dingley (2021 Census) | Proposed Development | If approved, new Dingley Village |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Households | 3,771 | 941 | 4,712 (24.95% increase) |
| Population | 10,126 | 2,531 (est.) | 12,657 (25.00% increase) |
| People per household | 2.78 | 2.78 (est.) | |
| Average lot size | 650m² | 273m² | Under half size (42.00%) |
| Area | 7.9 km ² | 0.533 km ² | |
| Density | 1,281.77 people/km ² | 4,748.59 people/km ² | - 3.7 times the density of Dingley Village now |

There is no precedent for an increase this large, this quickly. Such an increase **would require an equivalent 25.00% increase in infrastructure and services**, which is clearly not evident in the plan, and would not be met by estimated developer contributions to Council of only \$4-5 million. If the plan is approved, the 25.00% additional residents would occupy only 6.75% of the area of Dingley Village.

Lot analysis

| Block Sizes | Individual | | | | Cumulative | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--------|--------|--------|------------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Homes | % | Area | % | Homes | % | Area | % |
| <150 sq/metres | 256 | 27.21% | 32684 | 12.72% | 256 | 27.21% | 32684 | 12.72% |
| 150 to 200 sq/metres | 82 | 8.71% | 14644 | 5.70% | 338 | 35.92% | 47328 | 18.42% |
| 200 to 300 sq/metres | 220 | 23.38% | 55902 | 21.76% | 558 | 59.30% | 103230 | 40.18% |
| 300 to <400 sq/metres | 217 | 23.06% | 76111 | 29.62% | 775 | 82.36% | 179341 | 69.80% |
| 400 to <500 sq/metres | 128 | 13.60% | 54284 | 21.13% | 903 | 95.96% | 233625 | 90.93% |
| 500 to <650 sq/metres | 29 | 3.08% | 16450 | 6.40% | 932 | 99.04% | 250075 | 97.33% |
| Over 650 sq/metres | 9 | 0.96% | 6854 | 2.67% | 941 | 100.00% | 256929 | 100.00% |
| | 941 | | 256929 | | | | | |

- **95.96%** of lots would be **below** the current average lot size of Dingley Village
- **59.30%** of lots would be **below half** of the current average lot size of Dingley Village

As one resident put it recently, any development that is in keeping with the neighbourhood character of its surrounding area would blend in seamlessly, looking in 20 years' time like it was always there. By contrast, **this plan as provided is visually and functionally at odds with its surroundings**, due to the high number of lots and the small size of many lots. Such a drastic change **would not be approved on current Dingley Village blocks** for good reason. Such density is clearly not suited to this suburb, let alone more than 900 times.

Other concerns

- **Flood risk**, due to the loss of the golf course open space as a “big soak” being replaced by approximately 80% impermeable roads and roofs.
- Tree and habitat loss, cooling and the resultant **urban heat island effect**.
- **Traffic congestion and road danger**, especially as very narrow roads do not allow for emergency and service vehicle access.
- **Parking** – with no train or tram services, every resident in Dingley Village uses car travel. The reduced parking requirements applied for adds further pressure and danger to local roads.
- **Impact on adjoining roads and intersections** near the site, particularly at Spring Rd / Westall Extension, Rowan Rd / Westall Extension, Tootal Road and Centre Dandenong Rd.
- **Demand on schooling**
Specifically, an increase of approximately 2,531 additional residents suggests approximately 900 additional school places. All these children would be zoned to Dingley Primary School, which has a current enrolment of 380 students. Pressure also increases on the two secondary schools in the zone, Cheltenham (1000 students) and Parkdale (1850 students).
- **Demands on other services**, especially medical and aged care.

None of these concerns are provided for in this plan.

Additionally, DVCA’s proactive suggestion of a **pedestrian link onto Marcus Road** to reduce car traffic and provide connectivity to Dingley Primary School **cannot be seen on this plan**.

Respectfully, the DVCA remind The Hon. Sonya Kilkeny that overdevelopment is opposed by over 8,000 residents, dozens of local groups, the previous three councils of the City of Kingston, and all Labor state and federal members and Liberal opposition candidates throughout the 12 years since the site was sold, including our Federal Member The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP and State Member Meng Heang Tak MP. There has been no change in the sentiment of residents or any of these representatives. **Only the developer** argues for and stands to benefit from the overdevelopment proposed.

We implore the Hon. Sonya Kilkeny to stand by her statements regarding balance and appropriateness of proposed developments to protect the neighbourhood character and limited infrastructure of Dingley Village.

An Alternative Plan

DVCA believe that government should demand a more suitable balance, in which:

- some housing is built, contributing some assistance to Victoria's housing accessibility shortage, without the significant loss of local amenity this development proposes
- the Former Kingswood Golf Course site development is reflective of Dingley Village, its neighbourhood character and typical lot sizes, with provision of:
 - **An average lot size above 400m²**
 - **No lots smaller than 300m²**
 - **A green 'buffer' around the site, to increase open space, connectivity, and tree retention, while minimising impact on existing residents**
- Satterley still get a return for their investment and develop a site that strengthens their reputation for building based on quality, rather than quantity

For example, in 2023, a 639m² vacant block sold in Dingley Village for \$940,000.

396 blocks of this area would fit on the Kingswood site, generating \$372,240,000 in sales for Satterley (still allowing for the required open space). Subtracting Satterley's purchase price and land works, DVCA believe that Satterley would still garner a handsome return on investment from this venture.

Most importantly, larger blocks mitigate flood risk, heat concerns, traffic congestion and demands on schools and services, whilst also assisting with tree retention and mental health through suitably sized back yards.

In the estimation of DVCA, any number of lots above 396 constitutes trading neighbourhood character and net community benefit for profit.

We call upon the Victorian Planning Minister to protect our community by rejecting this development and considering alternatives that provide net community benefit, and remain in line with neighbourhood character, existing residents' needs, and government commitments to appropriate development, open space, mental health and the environment.

Thank you for your consideration and representation.

Dingley Village Community Association

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