

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

RIPPLESIDE INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACE

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

AUGUST 2020

Introduction

The Rippleside Inclusive Playspace will be a unique place where people of all ages and abilities will be able to play alongside each other in an engaging and beautiful setting. It will incorporate multi-sensory and nature play elements and play opportunities for physical, creative, social and passive play.

The City has partnered with Variety – the Children’s Charity for this exciting project. In addition to an on-line ‘Have Your Say’ survey, Council officers, in partnership with Variety, undertook a number of on-line meetings and workshops with stakeholders from organisations supporting people living with disabilities and access experts

This report presents the outcomes from the second round of consultation for this project. The first round of engagement was conducted in November 2019 and provided us with information about the types of elements and experiences that were most important to the community. The second round was to present the draft concept design for comment.

ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this engagement was to share the draft concept designs with the community and raise awareness of the project.

The draft playspace concept has been created with the data from previous engagement, Universal Design and inclusive design principles.

We wanted to hear what the community thought about this draft and understand their feedback.

Method

Due to COVID19 face to face engagement was not an option for this piece of engagement.

The draft concept plans were available for the community to view and leave their comments between 20th July 2020 to 30th August 2020.

HAVE YOUR SAY PROJECT PAGE

The Have Your Say platform was the main engagement tool. <https://yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au/RSIPS>

The draft plans were available for viewing and an interactive “social map” tool was also available where the community could add markers/comments/reactions directly to the plans. Responders could also leave written comments in a box provided rather than on the interactive plans.

The Have Your Say page also had links to past engagement findings, news articles and to Variety’s Play Space project page.

WORKSHOPS

Variety -the Children’s Charity, conducted on-line workshops with **BCYF** (Barwon Child Youth & Family, a not-for-profit community organisation supporting children, young people and their families), parents from Hamlyn Views (Specialist School) and the **Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee** (a community group providing advice on universal access and inclusion for all).

COMMUNICATIONS

Social Media

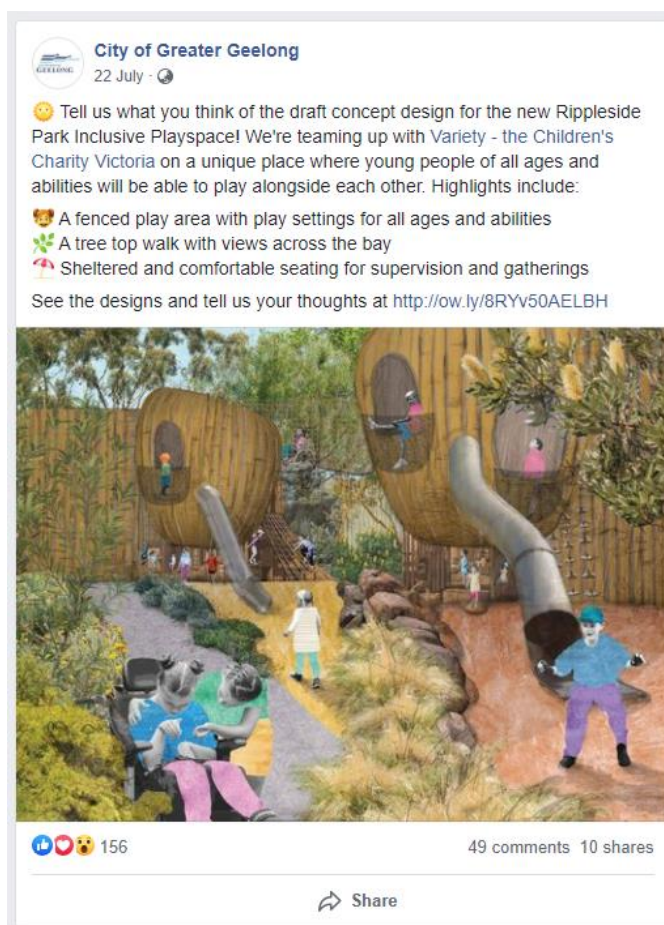
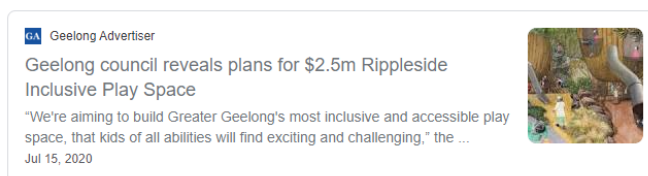
The engagement was also promoted via Social media, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Concept plans on-site at Rippleside Park

The plans were displayed on site at Rippleside Park (next to the existing playground) with an explanation on how to respond via webpage or written submission.

Printed Media

Media releases were published and picked up by the local press including the Geelong Advertiser.



Cr Anthony Aitken, Acting Mayor Kylie Grzybek, Member for Lara John Eren and Lachie Anderson at the current Rippleside playground

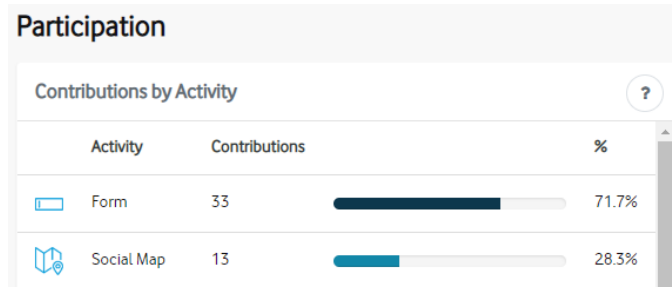
Findings

Have Your Say Findings

FEEDBACK RECIEVED

No formal questionnaire was undertaken but an open-ended opportunity for the community to leave their thoughts, comments and suggestions.

46 comments were made during this time. 33 comments were received in the feedback form and 13 comments were added to the 'social Map' (a tool where you could add a point to the plans and add a comment)



The Have Your Say Web Page received 1,816 views.



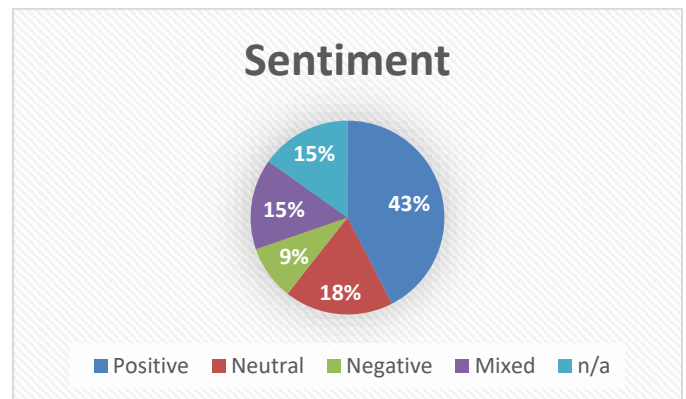
Most of the feedback provided suggestions around design and elements they would like to see included in the plans.

Comments around retaining the existing equipment were made and returning the named fence pickets back to those who sponsored them was also mentioned.

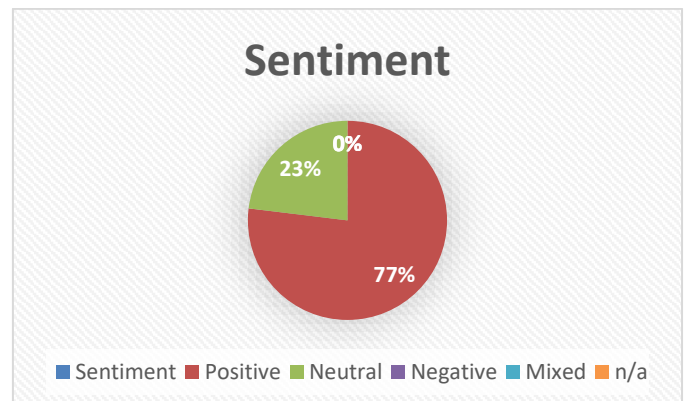
Most of the feedback was positive

KEY FINDINGS

The sentiment from the **feedback form** was in the majority positive (14). Neutral (6) Negative (3) and Mixed (5) and n/a (5) were the other recorded sentiments.



The sentiment from comments associated with the **Social Map** were Positive (10) and Neutral (3)



Quote

"I have a son with Autism who always runs off. If this play space was surrounded by a large fence with multiple latch gates that would be awesome! Not many parks in Geelong have fences to help keep kids safe from absconding."

The table below shows that the most frequent type of feedback was design suggestions followed by positive support.

Theme	Count
Provide design suggestion - ie types of art, play activities & equipment, signage and access	31
Supports elements of the plan - ie fencing, natural elements, types of equipment and plantings	16
General Comments - ie comments relating to existing equipment, scale of playground within the park and dogs.	8
Opposes elements of the plan - ie nature play and stylised equipment.	3

Please note some responses had more than one suggestion

Quotes

"I am concerned about the playgrounds proximity to the car park and road"

"Rippleside is such a big park, I think the playground should spread out more"

"I have concerns that the design does not fit within the existing footprint."

"The plan looks fantastic. It will be such an amazing addition to Geelong."

"There is nothing wrong with the old playground"

"This looks like an imaginative & stimulating experience for all children"

"I think the new park is going to be awesome. I was involved in the kids consultation and I think my ideas are shown here"

Online Workshop Findings

Due to COVID19 face to face meetings were not an option for this piece of engagement.

BCYF (Barwon Child Youth & Family, a not-for-profit community organisation supporting children, young people and their families).

The Inclusive Play Manager from Variety conducted an on-line meeting with BCYF and three families who are users of the BCYF services and who had children living with disabilities.

The feedback received was

- Importance of fencing
- Would like to keep named fence picket from the old (current) playspace
- Lots of swings please

Variety also attended a board meeting of BCYF. The concept plans were presented and were received with great support.

Hamlyn Views School (Specialist School) was asked for their comments and they believe it is a much-needed space for the Geelong community. Many parents find it very hard to find a suitable space that is not only accommodating but safe, especially as many are single parent families, sometimes with multiple children that have never been able to take their children to a playground without the help of informal supports or a support worker.

Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee to the City of Greater Geelong, provide a role providing advice on universal access and inclusion for all.

The Inclusive Play Manager from Variety, along with Social Planning and Investment Officers presented current concept design for the Inclusive Play Space. The overall feedback from the Committee was very positive.

The following points were made by the Committee for consideration:

- Ensure all weather path surfaces for wheelchairs and mobility devices.
- Ensure compliant gradients and suitable landings are provided.
- Consider monitoring and security measures.
- Provide places for children on the autism spectrum: consider hidey holes and quiet places.
- Consider dedicated Recharge points for wheelchairs and mobility devices.
- Upgrade toilets to reflect the standard of the proposed playground and consider permanent installation of a Changing Places facility.

Participants of all the workshop meetings were referred to Councils Have Your Say website to contribute further comments

Social Media Findings

1,762 engagements were received through the COGG Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts

Total posts: 7

3 Facebook

3 Instagram

1 Twitter

Total reach: 27,980

All responses to the social media were either “thumbs up”, “surprise” or “love” emoji reactions



Quotes from Social media;

“Looks great. Please support local manufacture for this project - we have the capabilities! #Keepitlocal Queens Park playground refurbishment included climbing ropes sourced from Europe!”

“Some nice scented plants/ foliage would be good especially for disabled children”

*“Something like this would be amazing
<https://ultimateplay.com.au/riverbend-park-opening-launceston-tasmania/?fbclid=IwAR2gcyMKD1ThAx6-cCT5TE4RLQbjYvBqCi8QZgPJksyzjq1adKOhx3KI1aQ>”*

Variety the Children’s Charity and BCYF also shared the engagement page and link on their social pages

Feedback via written correspondence

Feedback was received from a local community group with the following points via email

- “In principle we support the concept of the integrated playground proposal
- Do not accept the size – over twice the existing footprint
- The proximity of the playground to the road *[safety concerns]*
- *[fear]* The loss of further green space to car parking and expanded toilet facilities “

Conclusion

The majority of responses had a positive sentiment supporting the concept plans. Many design considerations were also received through this engagement.

Full responses to questions will be provided to the landscape architects to make design inclusions incorporating the feedback on specific design features.

This report will be used to brief Councillors and stakeholders on the outcomes of the engagement.

Engagement findings will be presented to all Councillors at the Council Meeting 27 April 2021.

If the draft concept and its footprint are endorsed by Council the landscape designers will be given the approval to proceed to finalising the concept plans and detailed design phase.

The Have Your Say webpage will be updated to summarise the engagement outcomes.

Appendix A – Survey hardcopy



Artist Impression of Tree Top Walk

About the Project

The City of Greater Geelong and Variety - The Children's Charity are creating a new inclusive playspace at Rippleside Park. This will be a unique place where people of all ages and abilities will be able to play alongside each other, creating a key community hub.

Jeavons Landscape Architects have been engaged to design the new playspace to replace the much-loved existing playground. Additional associated infrastructure such as external path connections and accessible toilets are planned future projects with elements on the plan subject to funding.

Community Consultation

The first round of consultation in November last year helped us to understand the needs of future users and surrounding communities. Through school and public workshops and an online survey we gathered data about the elements and experiences that were most important to community members. The project web-page had over 2220 hits with 158 people completing the initial survey. Around 40% of respondents reported to have a child or family member living with a disability.

We discovered that shade, multi-aged experiences, toilet location, cleanliness and nature play are all important. Top play experiences include swinging, climbing, sensory play, water play and nature play.

Wherever possible, we have included these elements and experiences into our Draft Concept Design and are pleased to present it for your review and comment. Note that all elements on the plan are subject to funding. You can view and comment on the design at www.geelongaustralia.com.au/yoursay.

Design Approach

Universal design principles have been used to create considered layouts that offer a broad choice of activities and types of play. The design aims to be safe, foster social interaction, provide amenity for all users and appeal to both the internal and external senses.

Design objectives for Rippleside Inclusive Playspace

To create:

- a wide variety of play settings for all ages and abilities with a focus on natural and sensory play
- an iconic tree top walk with views through trees, across the playspace and towards the bay. The structure has multiple entries for all abilities, including wheelchair access up to almost 2.5m high
- resolved complex site levels to ensure wheelchair accessible routes
- an engaging planting palette suited to the local area, robust enough for a playground and an adventure for the senses
- sheltered and comfortable seating for supervision and gatherings
- a surrounding fence with two gated entries.

We understand that the users are at the heart of creating a successful playspace and look forward to your feedback.



Draft Concept Design Rippleside Park Inclusive Playspace



1/4

01 Main Entrance

The main gated entry is from Rippleside Park Drive. While another entry gate is located next to the existing toilet block. The entire playspace will be enclosed by fences.



02 Rocking, Spinning & Jumping

This zone includes inclusive in-ground trampolines, carousel and rocker beneath new shade trees.



03 Toddler Play

A dedicated space for toddlers with a slide, play panels, and swings with inclusive seating options beneath new shade trees.



04 Sand Play

A generous sand play area with wheelchair accessible sand play table and water pumps beneath a pergola with climbing plants over.



05 Tree Top Walk

A unique feature timber structure that allows everyone to play among the tree tops. Separate junior and senior zones ensure everyone can find a challenge to suit their ability. The walk is accessible via wheelchair up to 2.5m above ground and includes:

- A choice of high exciting slides
- Adventurous wheelchair accessible swing bridge
- A variety of climbing challenges for differing abilities
- Shaded cubbies, artistic elements, sensory experiences and exploration beneath.



Draft Concept Plan for Community Consultation

06 Swinging

A range of seating options for people all abilities including a flying fox, large swivel birds nest swing, smaller birds nest swing and various swings with back support.



07 Nature Play

Loose surfaces, plants, trees, water, sand and natural elements throughout the playspace provide inclusive opportunities for rich nature play. The area shown includes a gently undulating lawn, wheelchair accessible living tunnels and cubbies with cosy planted spaces for creative play with natural materials.



areas accessible and comfortable. These spaces include accessible formal picnic settings, barbecues and informal seating. As well as lawns beneath mature trees.

08 Agility & Fitness

Accessible hand cycle, exercise bike, balance courses and monkey bars will challenge users to increase their upper body strength and balance.



09 Water Play

A water play area to engage the senses and cool down in hot months. Including mist, accessible boats, spurts and water play activities under shady trees and a new pergola.



10 Sensory Experience and Artistic Elements

Accessible sensory experiences including sound, smell, touch and kinesthetic awareness.



Draft Concept Design Rippleside Park Inclusive Playspace





Artist Impression of Water Play Area



Materials Palette

\$2.5m play upgrade

HARRISON TIPPET

ONE of Geelong's most popular playgrounds is set to receive a \$2.5 million facelift, under newly released council plans.

The City of Greater Geelong has voted to release draft concept plans for the new Rippleside Inclusive Play Space, which it will deliver in partnership with children's charity Variety and with \$800,000 in state government funding.

The playground will cater to children of all abilities, and has

been designed using suggestions from the city's 2019 community consultation, which found shade, multi-aged play settings, toilet location, cleanliness and nature play were the main desired features.

The concept plans for the playground include a feature treetop walk, a variety of play options focusing on natural and sensory activities for all ages and abilities, a surrounding fence with two gated entries, sheltered seating and universal access.

"We're aiming to build Greater Geelong's most inclusive and accessible play space, that kids of all abilities will find exciting and challenging," the city's access and inclusion advisory committee chair Anthony Aitken said.

"We're incredibly excited to be working with Variety on an innovative project that will create a rich community hub for local families and visitors.

"With 14,000 community members in the region living with a disability, many of whom are young people, council has an important responsibility to provide accessible play

spaces."

The major project will receive \$1.5 million in city funding, \$800,000 in state funding and require a "community funding campaign" to raise the final \$200,000 needed.

It will not be the first time the community has kicked in support to ensure it gets a top-of-the-line playground, with more than 1500 volunteers donating time and money to get

the existing playground built in 2001.

Lara State Labor MP John Eren this week announced the Inclusive Play Space would receive \$800,000 from the 2020-21 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund.

"Congratulations to the Geelong community. This boost will go a long way to support the growing number of people in Geelong keen to get involved in local sport and recreation," Mr Eren said. "It's a

great example of how the Victorian Government is making sport and recreation more accessible, welcoming and inclusive for all Victorians."

Go to [yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au](https://www.yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au) from July 20 to view designs and provide feedback. The consultation period ends on August 28.

VANDALISM ANGER: P7



An artist's view of the water play area.

Briefs

Park makeover

Geelong council next Monday will release a draft design for "a world-class inclusive playspace" at Rippleside Park to replace the existing playground built in 2001. The draft concept design, including a treetop walk, was created following community consultation in November 2019. The survey results showed that shade, multi-aged play settings, toilet location, cleanliness and nature play were all important features, according to City Hall.

Design of Rippleside playground to be released

 Listen

Thursday, 16 July 2020

A draft concept design of a world-class inclusive playspace on the Geelong waterfront has been released for public comment.

The City of Greater Geelong has partnered with Variety - The Children's Charity to build a flagship new play area for children of all abilities to play together at Rippleside Park.

The existing playground, which opened in 2001, could not have been delivered without huge community support, with more than 1500 volunteers donating their time and money.

The City is looking to again meet the needs of the community by creating play experiences and equipment that will provide fun and challenges for children of all abilities.

The draft concept design was created after the first round of community consultation was completed in November 2019.

The survey results showed that shade, multi-aged play settings, toilet location, cleanliness and nature play were all important features.

The most popular play experiences were swinging, climbing, sensory play, water play and nature play.

This feedback was incorporated into the draft concept design, which includes:

- a variety of play options for all ages and abilities, with a focus on natural and sensory activities
- a feature treetop walk, with views through trees, across the playspace and towards the ocean. The structure has multiple access points
- universal access
- sheltered and comfortable seating for supervision and gatherings and
- a surrounding fence with two gated entries.

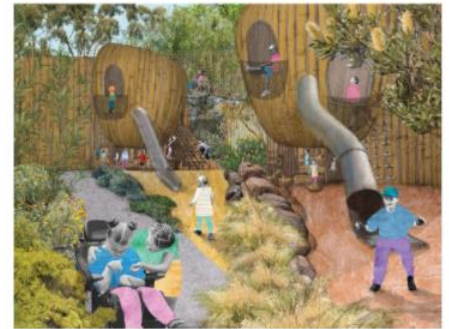
An allocation of \$400,000 is included in the Council's 2020-2021 Budget to progress the detailed design for the new playspace.


The Victorian Government has announced that it would provide \$800,000 through the Sport and Recreation Community Infrastructure Program.

The funding will be supported by Variety, which is seeking financial donations from Geelong businesses and individuals to realise the estimated \$2.5 million total project cost.


Variety has successfully partnered with other local governments to deliver similar playspaces in Bankstown and Taree.

Residents can visit the [Your Say](#) page from Monday 20 July 2020 to view the designs and provide feedback during a consultation period that runs until Friday 28 August.



 Draft concept design



 Cr Anthony Aitken, Acting Mayor Kylie Grzybek, Member for Lara John Eren and Lachie Andison at the current Rippleside playground

Appendix C – Qualitative Responses

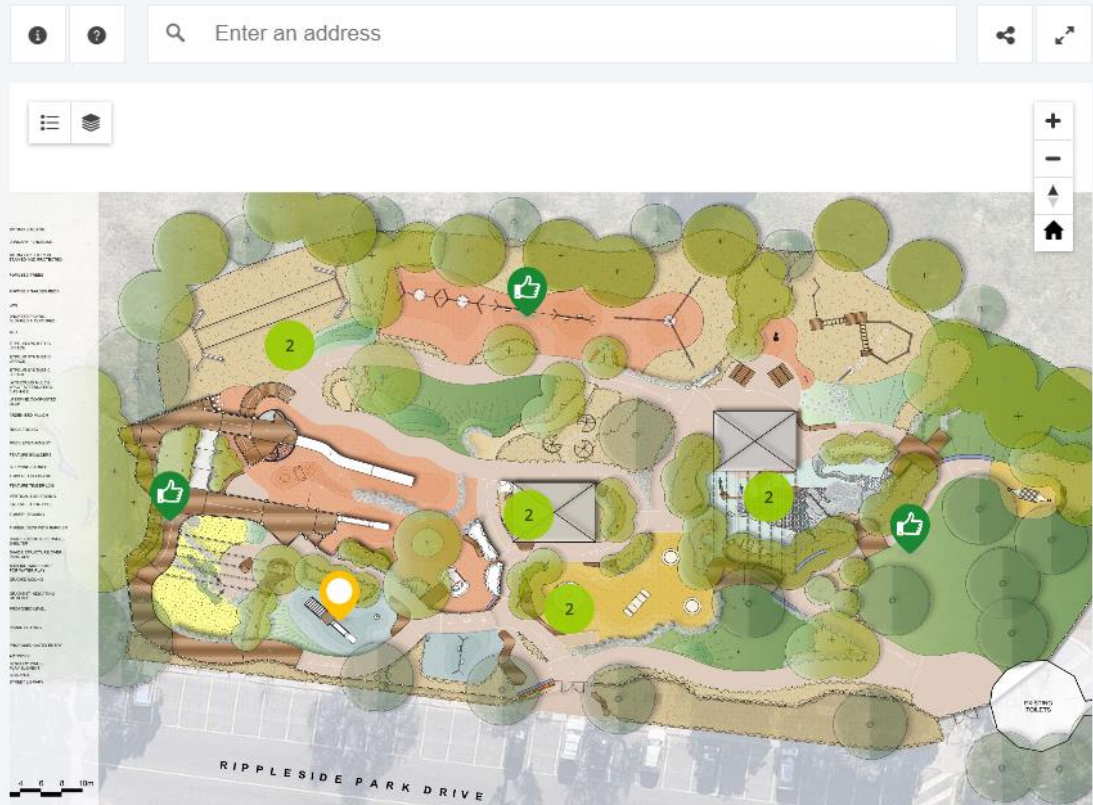
Rippleside Inclusive Playspace Concept

You can add your comments to the plans below.

Zoom in to see detail, click and use the “Add Marker” tool to add your feedback to the different elements of the plan.

Please note your user name and response will be shown publicly

13 contributions




We would love your feedback.

Please leave comments below and/or alternatively add your comments to the plan above.

Written comments below

Any additional information

 Choose file...

Allowed file types: pdf,doc,docx,txt,xls,xlsx,rtf,png,gif,jpg,jpeg Size limit: 1.00 MB

Submit

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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG


PO Box 104
Geelong VIC 3220
P: 03 5272 5272
E: contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au
www.geelongaustralia.com.au

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