

Community Local Law Review 2025

Hobsons Bay's Community Local Law plays a crucial role in ensuring a safe, fair, and well-managed community. As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we recently undertook a comprehensive review of the Local Law to identify areas where we can work more effectively, efficiently, and transparently.

With the current Local Law set to expire in September 2025, we have proposed several changes to enhance its impact and support the work of City of Hobsons Bay Compliance Officers. Throughout this review process, we identified seven key issues that were either unaddressed or insufficiently addressed in the existing Local Law. Key areas of focus include regulations around shipping containers, roosters in residential areas, chimineas and braziers on private property, storage of vessels, caravans, and trailers, long vehicle storage in residential zones, building site operating hours, and protection for trees on council land.

Building site operating hours

The proposed local law consolidates and updates building site regulations, setting clear operating hours for construction and demolition. These changes aim to minimise disruptions to the community while ensuring alignment with best practices and state legislation. The new hours reflect EPA guidelines, supporting a balanced approach to urban development and neighbourhood amenity preservation.

Chimineas/braziers on residential property

The proposed local law expands fire regulations to allow chimineas, fire pits, and braziers on residential land for heating purposes. This change acknowledges the growing trend of outdoor living spaces and the availability of safe products. It also considers cultural and religious traditions while ensuring health, safety, and amenity concerns are managed under both local and state regulations.

Roosters in residential areas

The proposed local law introduces restrictions on keeping roosters in residential areas - a permit will now be required, unless keeping roosters in that area is allowed under the Planning Scheme. This change aims to address growing complaints about noise disturbances, particularly early morning crowing. Unlike neighbouring councils that impose outright bans, this approach allows rooster ownership in cases where no negative impact on neighbourhood amenity is expected.

Shipping containers

The proposed local law introduces permit requirements for placing shipping containers on council land, roads, and residential land. This regulation aims to reduce pressure on on-street parking, preserve local amenity, and enhance road safety. Storage on commercial or industrial land remains governed by the Planning Scheme provisions. The changes address growing urban and logistical demands.

Protection for trees on council land

The proposed local law strengthens tree protection by expanding coverage to significant trees and remnant vegetation on all council-controlled land, including reserves and foreshore reserves. A new clause requires builders to safeguard nature-strip trees near construction sites. These changes align with the Council Plan 2021–2025, supporting environmental sustainability and preserving the municipality's tree canopy for future generations.

Storage of vessels, caravans and trailers

The proposed local law introduces permit requirements for storing boats, personal watercraft, caravans, and trailers on roads, council land, or related areas for more than 28 consecutive days in a 12-month period. This aims to reduce on-street parking congestion, improve road safety, and maintain neighbourhood aesthetics as population growth and post-pandemic recovery increase demand for parking space.

Storage of long vehicles in residential areas

The proposed local law expands regulations to include long vehicles on residential land, requiring permits for storage. As online shopping and deliveries increase, long vehicles present similar challenges as heavy vehicles, including noise, blocked access, and visibility issues. This amendment seeks to improve road safety and minimise disruptions for drivers and pedestrians in residential areas.

We invited the community to share their thoughts on the proposed changes through both online and in-person engagement sessions. Respondents from across Hobsons Bay participated, providing valuable insights. Whether you attended a session or completed the online survey, your feedback has been carefully reviewed and compiled.

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WHAT WE HEARD

The community engagement process

Between 28 March and 9 May 2025, we invited residents to share their thoughts on Hobsons Bay's Community Local Law, including its effectiveness, areas for improvement, and its impact on the community. This feedback has been invaluable in identifying key concerns and priorities.

To ensure broad participation, we offered a variety of engagement opportunities, both in-person and online, including:

- An online survey hosted on Participate Hobsons Bay
- Market stalls at Altona Beach Market on 1 April (9am–1pm) and Williamstown Farmers Market on 13 April (9am–1pm)
- A pop-up session at Homestead Run Reserve, Seabrook on 5 April (1pm–5pm), Newport Lakes Reserve on 27 April (8am – 12pm), Apex Park Reserve on 4 May (12pm – 4pm)
- Respondents also had the opportunity to submit questions online

The community engagement process saw strong participation, with 375 survey responses and 11,000 views of the survey on Participate Hobsons Bay. Respondents discovered and accessed the survey through various channels, with the majority (63%) responding via an email campaign. Other sources included direct access (17%), social media (9%), search engine results (9%), and websites (1%).

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their perspectives—your insights are helping shape the future of the Community Local Law.

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WHAT WE HEARD

What we heard

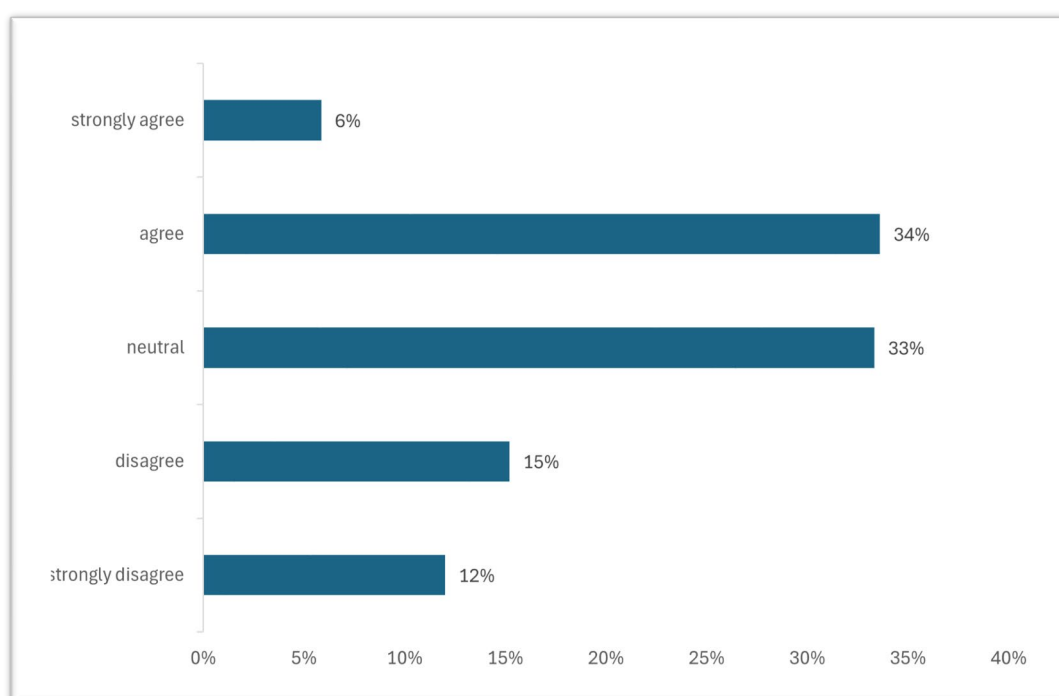
The proposed changes address several key concerns raised during the community consultation.

Survey results

1) How much do you agree with the following statement?

It is easy to find the information I need in the new draft Local Law.

Answered: 375



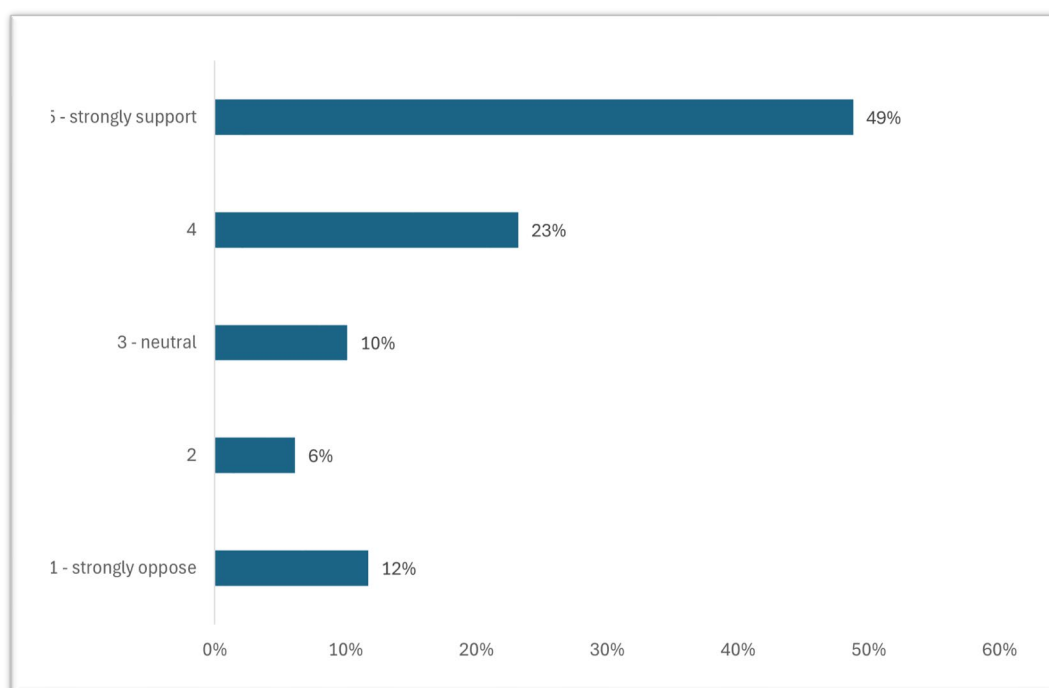
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WHAT WE HEARD

2) How much do you support the following statement?

Adding a new clause, that requires people to obtain a permit before placing a shipping container on council land, roads and related areas, or storing on residential land.

Answered: 375



3) Share your comments on shipping containers here: Answered: 44

Key themes

Permits for public land

Many residents agree that permits should be required for placing shipping containers on public land:

- Permits are necessary to ensure safety and manage the use of public spaces.
- Containers on roads and council land should be regulated to prevent congestion and hazards.

Private land usage

There is some opposition to requiring permits for shipping containers on private land:

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- Residents believe they should have the freedom to place containers on their own property without needing a permit.
- Concerns about additional costs and bureaucratic hurdles associated with obtaining permits.
- Many argue that if the container does not obstruct views or services, it should be allowed on private property.

Temporary use and exemptions

Suggestions for temporary use and exemptions include:

- Allowing short-term use of containers without a permit, such as for moving or renovations.
- Exempting storage containers like 'Taxi boxes' used for temporary storage during home improvements.
- Clarifying the difference between shipping containers and temporary storage solutions.

Visual impact and neighbourhood aesthetics

Concerns about the visual impact of shipping containers in residential areas:

- Containers in front gardens or visible from the street can be considered eyesores.
- The need to balance personal property rights with maintaining neighbourhood aesthetics.

Practical considerations

Practical issues related to the management and enforcement of container regulations:

- Questions about how permits would be enforced and the criteria for approval.
- Concerns about narrow streets and congested areas being unsuitable for shipping containers.
- The potential impact on community groups and volunteer organisations if permits are required for council land.

General opposition to additional regulations

A few residents oppose additional regulations on private property:

- Belief that council should focus on public assets and not interfere with private land use.

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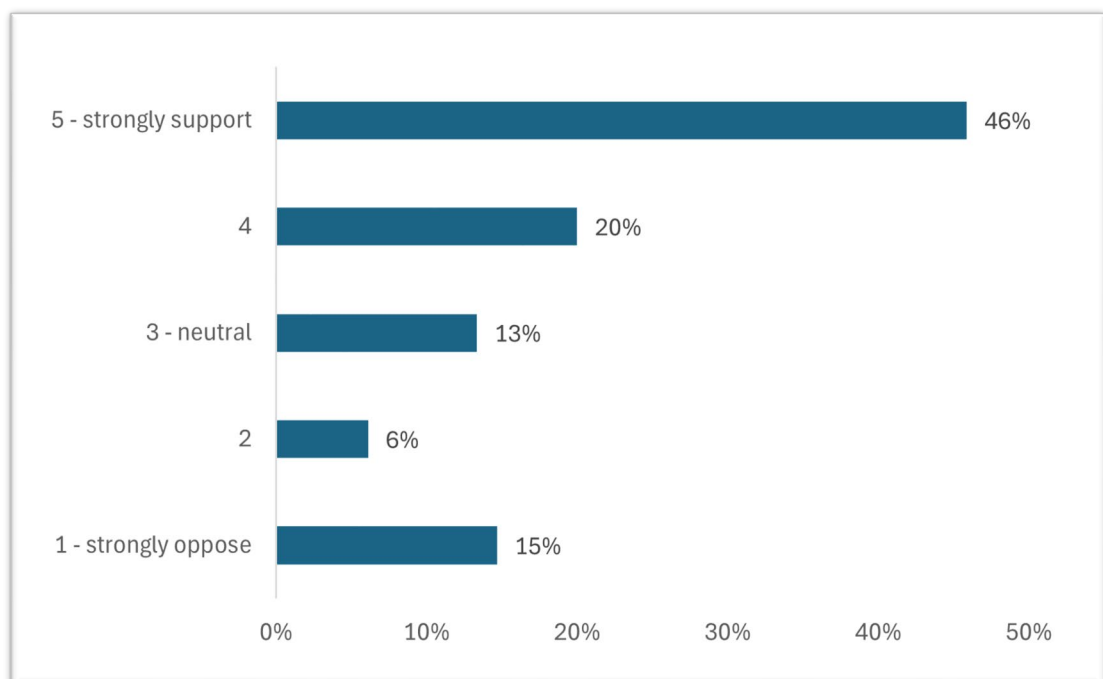
WHAT WE HEARD

- Comparisons to other regulations, such as those for sheds or caravans, which do not require permits.
- Frustration with perceived overreach by the council into residents' private lives.

4) How much do you support the following statement?

Revising the existing clause to prohibit keeping roosters, unless a permit is obtained from council, or keeping a rooster is allowed under the Planning Scheme.

Answered: 375



5) Share your comments on roosters in residential areas here: Answered: 44

Key themes

Noise and disturbance

A few residents express strong opposition to allowing roosters in residential areas due to the noise they create:

- Roosters crowing early in the morning disrupts sleep and daily life.
- Complaints about noise often take a long time to resolve, causing prolonged distress.
- Roosters crow throughout the day, not just at dawn, leading to continuous noise.

Health and safety concerns

There are concerns about health and safety related to keeping roosters in residential areas:

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- The potential spread of diseases such as H5N1 (avian influenza).
- Roosters attracting pests like mice and rats, which can pose additional health risks.
- The impact on mental health due to lack of sleep and constant noise.

Permit system and costs

- Concerns about the permit system being a revenue-raising venture rather than addressing the core issue.
- Questions about how permits would be enforced and the potential added costs for owners.

Impact on quality of life

Residents highlight the negative impact of roosters on their quality of life:

- The constant noise from roosters can lead to a lack of sleep and increased stress.
- The presence of roosters can make it difficult to enjoy outdoor spaces and maintain a peaceful living environment.
- Roosters are seen as unsuitable for high-density residential areas due to noise overlap.

Exemptions and alternatives

Some residents suggest possible exemptions or alternatives:

- Existing roosters could be exempt from new regulations.
- Consideration of breeds that do not crow as loudly.
- Detailed guidelines on the circumstances under which permits would be issued.
- Permits should be based on the land area of the property, with high-density areas being ineligible.

General opposition

A small number of residents are completely opposed to allowing roosters in residential areas:

- Roosters are deemed unsuitable for suburban living due to noise and health concerns.
- The belief that roosters should be banned entirely from residential areas to maintain peace and safety.
- Roosters are seen as unnecessary in urban settings and more appropriate for rural areas.

Practical considerations

Practical issues related to the management and enforcement of rooster regulations are also raised:

- Clarification on the proximity of roosters to neighbouring properties.
- Protection for residents who file complaints against rooster owners.
- The need for clear and enforceable regulations to prevent ongoing issues.
- Addressing language barriers and ensuring effective communication between neighbours and council.

Cultural and lifestyle considerations

Some residents appreciate the presence of roosters as part of their lifestyle:

- Roosters are seen as a charming part of the community and homesteading values.
- The current noise ordinance laws are viewed as sufficient by some residents.

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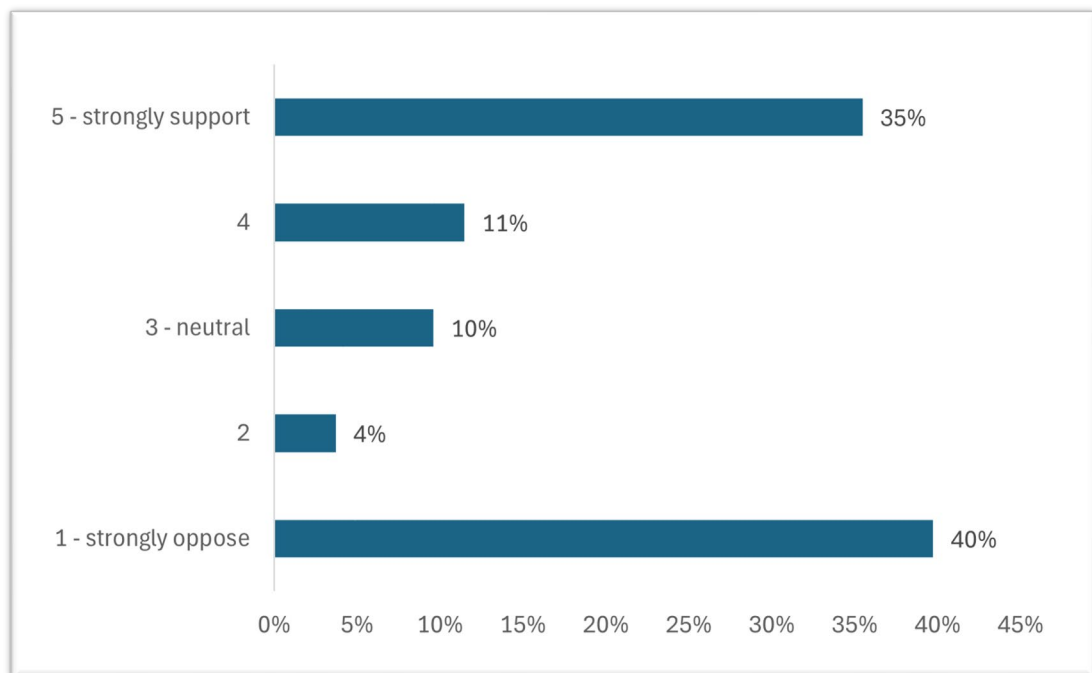
WHAT WE HEARD

- The enjoyment of hearing roosters crowing is valued by some, suggesting a balanced approach with permits and conditions.

6) How much do you support the following statement?

Expanding the existing clause to allow for the use of chimineas, fire pits and braziers on residential land, for the purpose of heating.

Answered: 375



7) Share your comments on open-air fires here: Answered: 131

Key themes

Health and environmental concerns

Many residents express strong opposition to open-air fires due to health risks and environmental impact. Key points include:

- Smoke from fires can trigger asthma attacks and other respiratory issues.
- Concerns about air quality, with smoke contributing to pollution and health problems such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and other serious conditions.
- The contradiction between allowing open-air fires and the council's climate emergency declaration and environmental policies.
- Residents warn that allowing open-air fires could lead to increased medical expenses, loss of work, and the need for air purifiers and other measures to mitigate the impact.
- The burning of wood emits fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and other harmful pollutants, posing serious health risks, especially to children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing conditions.
- Smoke is already a significant issue with home heating fires and large outdoor BBQs, exacerbating health problems for vulnerable populations.

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- Major organizations, including the ACT Environment and Sustainable Department, NSW EPA, and Asthma Foundation NSW, oppose solid fuel fires due to health impacts.
- Residents are shocked and appalled by the proposal, emphasising that woodfire smoke is far worse than cigarette smoke and can cause severe health issues and even death.

Impact on daily life

Residents highlight the negative impact of open-air fires on their daily lives:

- Smoke can ruin outdoor activities and force residents to keep windows closed.
- Issues with laundry being contaminated by smoke.
- The nuisance of smoke and smell, especially in densely populated areas.
- Personal anecdotes describe the distress caused by neighbours' fires, including health deterioration and increased anxiety.
- Townhouses and units are particularly problematic for fire pits due to proximity and the amount of smoke affecting neighbouring properties.

Safety issues

There are some safety concerns, with residents pointing out the dangers associated with open-air fires:

- Risks of burns and accidents, particularly with children and during dry conditions.
- The need for spark-proof covers and fire safety equipment to prevent accidents.
- Concerns about the chemical composition of wood smoke and its potential to emit harmful substances like carbon monoxide.

Community relations

Open-air fires can strain relationships between neighbours:

- Fires are seen as unneighborly and can lead to disputes.
- The importance of maintaining a respectful and considerate community environment.
- Questions about the right to invade others' spaces with smoke without consent.

Alternatives and solutions

Residents suggest alternatives and solutions to open-air fires:

- Encouraging the use of electric heating options that do not produce smoke.
- Implementing stricter regulations and enforcement to minimize harm from smoke emissions.
- Prohibiting open-air fires in residential areas to protect health and well-being.
- Supporting the purchase of electric heaters as a healthier and more environmentally friendly option.

Legal and ethical considerations

Residents emphasise the legal and ethical implications of allowing open-air fires:

- Potential lawsuits and legal actions against those responsible for permitting harmful practices.
- The need for councillors to be educated about the harmful effects of wood smoke and to prioritise public health and safety.

- Full disclosure of the proposal and its implications is requested to ensure transparency and informed decision-making.
- Comparisons to cigarette smoke highlight the severe health risks associated with wood smoke, including cancer-causing pollutants like formaldehyde and benzene.
- Encouraging open fires is contrary to actions needed to mitigate the climate crisis and undermines the council's environmental credentials.
- Allowing open-air fires would violate human rights to clean air and pose significant challenges in enforcement and locating sources of smoke.

Social benefits

Some residents acknowledge potential social benefits of open-air fires:

- Outside fires can be good for family bonding, community gatherings, ceremonies, and mental health. However, these benefits must be balanced against the significant health risks.

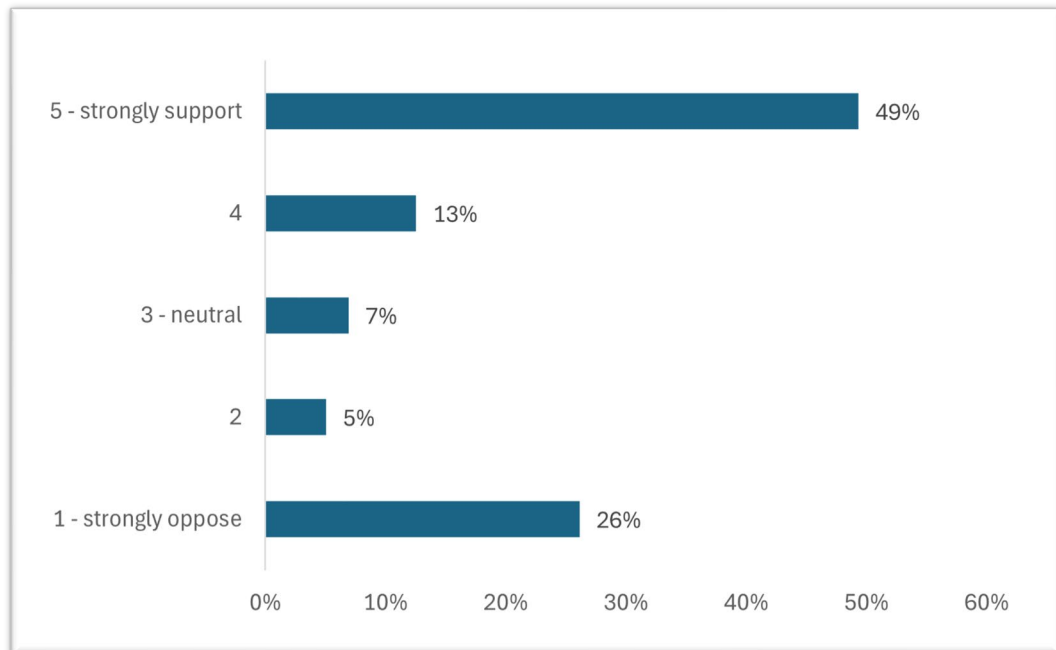
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WHAT WE HEARD

8) How much do you support the following statement?

Adding a new clause that requires a person to obtain a permit to keep/store a vessel (boat, jet ski etc.), caravan or trailer on a road, road related area, or council land, IF the person wants to keep/store it for longer than 28 consecutive days in any 12-month period.

Answered: 375



9) Share your comments on the storage of boats, personal watercraft, caravans and trailers here: Answered: 87

Key themes

A few residents oppose the idea of requiring permits for storing these vehicles:

- They believe there is no shortage of parking options in the area, making the rule unnecessary.
- The additional cost and inconvenience of obtaining permits are seen as burdensome.

Adequate parking and minimal impact

Residents argue that there is plenty of space in the streets and that most vehicle owners take care not to impact others:

- Many feel that if the vehicles are road registered, there is no need for a permit system.
- The current situation is viewed as manageable without additional regulations.
- Some suggest that if a person can afford a pleasure craft, they should factor in the cost of storage.

Safety and visibility concerns

Some residents highlight safety and visibility issues caused by these vehicles:

- Vehicles parked on nature strips or narrow streets can block views and create hazards.

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- There is a call for better enforcement of existing road rules to address these concerns.
- Suggestions include reducing the period before a permit is required to address parking impacts.

Temporary use and time limits

Suggestions for temporary use and time limits include:

- Allowing short-term parking (e.g., up to 14 days) without a permit.
- Implementing a time limit that is policed to prevent permanent storage on streets.
- Proposals for limited-time parking permits (e.g., 6 or 12 months) to manage long-term storage.

Practical considerations

Practical issues related to the management and enforcement of vehicle storage regulations:

- Questions about how permits would be enforced and the criteria for approval.
- Concerns about the impact on residents who do not have off-street parking options.
- The need for clear guidelines on when permits would be refused and the associated costs.
- Residents emphasise that vehicle registration costs should cover the right to park on the street without additional permits.

General opposition to additional regulations

Some residents oppose additional regulations on private property:

- Belief that council should focus on public assets and not interfere with private land use.
- Comparisons to other regulations, such as those for sheds or caravans, which do not require permits.
- Frustration with perceived overreach by the council into residents' private lives.
- Calls for council to provide data to justify the need for new regulations.

Suggestions for improvement

Residents offer suggestions to improve parking and storage solutions:

- Creating off-road parking on nature strips in areas with high-density housing.
- Designating specific parking areas for boats, caravans, and trailers to reduce street clutter.
- Reviewing planning permits for new dwellings to ensure adequate parking spaces are provided.

Quality of life considerations

Concerns about how permit requirements could impact residents' quality of life:

- The high cost of commercial storage facilities may be unaffordable for many residents.
- Boats, caravans, and trailers contribute to the quality of life for those who own them, making restrictive regulations potentially harmful.
- Residents emphasise the importance of balancing regulations with the practical needs and financial realities of the community.
- Some residents highlight the negative impact of long-term storage on street aesthetics and property values.

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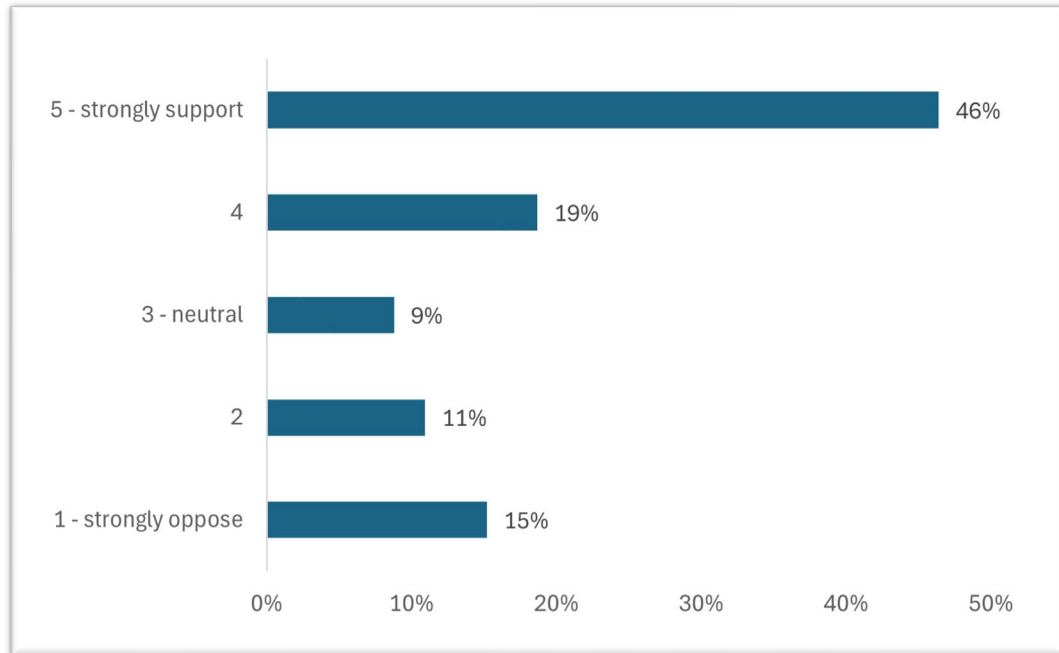
WHAT WE HEARD

10) How much do you support the following statement?

**Expanding the existing clause to require a permit for stopping, storing or keeping a long vehicle on land in an area zoned primarily for residential purposes
Owners/operators may apply for permits to keep these vehicles.**

****Please note "long vehicles" DO NOT include vessels, caravans or trailers****

Answered: 375



11) Share your comments on the storage of long vehicles here: Answered: 45

Key Themes

Opposition to permits

Some residents oppose the idea of requiring permits for storing long vehicles:

- They believe there is no shortage of parking options in the area, making the rule unnecessary.
- Concerns that the permit system is a revenue-raising effort rather than addressing a real issue.
- The additional cost and inconvenience of obtaining permits are seen as burdensome.

Adequate parking and minimal impact

Residents argue that there is plenty of space in the streets and that most vehicle owners take care not to impact others:

- Many feel that if the vehicles are road registered, there is no need for a permit system.
- The current situation is viewed as manageable without additional regulations.
- Some suggest that if a person can afford a long vehicle, they should factor in the cost of storage.

Safety and visibility concerns

Some residents highlight safety and visibility issues caused by these vehicles:

- Vehicles parked on nature strips or narrow streets can block views and create hazards.
- There is a call for better enforcement of existing road rules to address these concerns.
- Suggestions include reducing the period before a permit is required to address parking impacts.

Temporary use and time limits

Suggestions for temporary use and time limits include:

- Allowing short-term parking (e.g., up to 14 days) without a permit.
- Implementing a time limit that is policed to prevent permanent storage on streets.
- Proposals for limited-time parking permits (e.g., 6 or 12 months) to manage long-term storage.

Practical considerations

Practical issues related to the management and enforcement of vehicle storage regulations:

- Questions about how permits would be enforced and the criteria for approval.
- Concerns about the impact on residents who do not have off-street parking options.
- The need for clear guidelines on when permits would be refused and the associated costs.
- Residents emphasize that vehicle registration costs should cover the right to park on the street without additional permits.

General opposition to additional regulations

A significant number of residents oppose additional regulations on private property:

- Belief that council should focus on public assets and not interfere with private land use.
- Comparisons to other regulations, such as those for sheds or caravans, which do not require permits.
- Frustration with perceived overreach by the council into residents' private lives.
- Calls for council to provide data to justify the need for new regulations.

Suggestions for improvement

Residents offer suggestions to improve parking and storage solutions:

- Creating off-road parking on nature strips in areas with high-density housing.
- Designating specific parking areas for long vehicles to reduce street clutter.
- Reviewing planning permits for new dwellings to ensure adequate parking spaces are provided.

Quality of life considerations

Concerns about how permit requirements could impact residents' quality of life:

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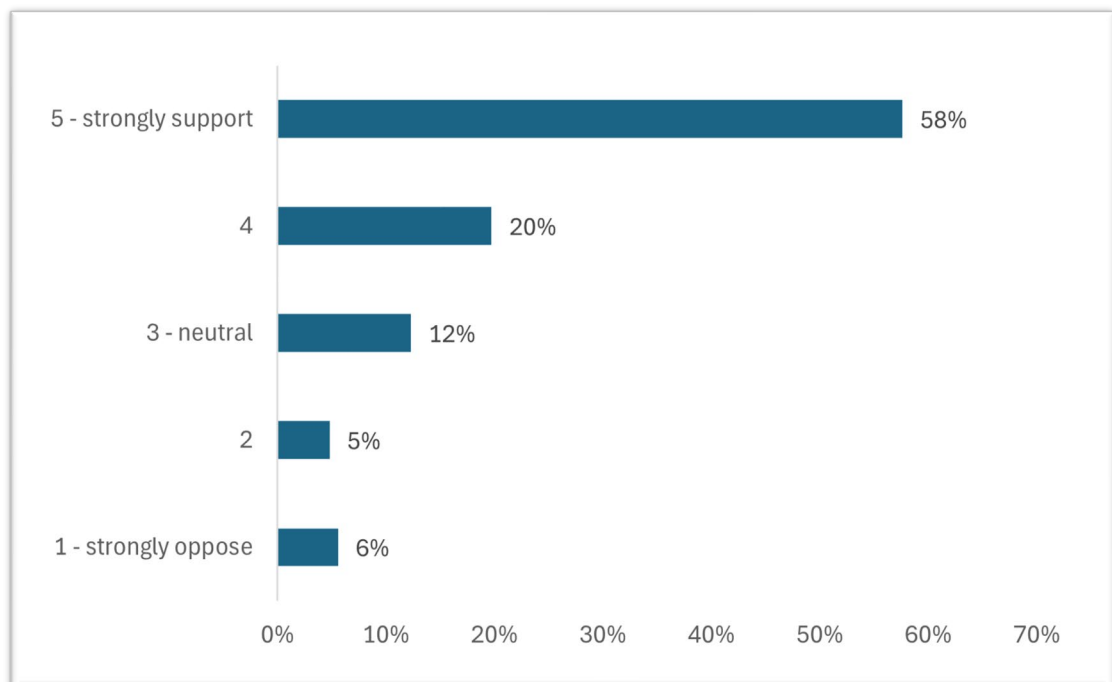
WHAT WE HEARD

- The high cost of commercial storage facilities may be unaffordable for many residents.
- Long vehicles contribute to the quality of life for those who own them, making restrictive regulations potentially harmful.
- Residents emphasise the importance of balancing regulations with the practical needs and financial realities of the community.
- Some residents highlight the negative impact of long-term storage on street aesthetics and property values.
- Long vehicles are seen as dangerous and unsuitable for residential streets, with calls for stricter regulations or outright bans.

12) How much do you support the following statement?

Adding a new clause to building site management provisions that limits building activity to the hours of: 7.00am-6.00pm Monday to Friday, 9.00am-1.00pm Saturday (residential construction) or 7.00am -1.00pm (Commercial construction), No work on Sundays and Public Holidays (unless otherwise allowed by Planning, EPA or Council issued permits).

Answered: 375



13) Share your comments on building site operating hours here: Answered: 37

Key themes

Noise restrictions

Many residents emphasise the need for stricter noise restrictions, particularly during early mornings and weekends. High-pitched construction noise and loud radios are common complaints. Suggestions include:

- Banning noisy activities before 8am.
- Aligning construction hours with EPA noise pollution regulations.
- Prohibiting loud radios on construction sites.

Weekend and public holiday work

There is a divide in opinions regarding construction work on weekends and public holidays:

- Some residents advocate for no construction on Sundays to ensure rest and peace.
- Others argue that DIY projects should be allowed on weekends, as it is often the only time full-time workers can undertake such tasks.

Consistency with existing laws

Several comments highlight the need to align new regulations with existing noise abatement laws. There is also a call for clear definitions of what constitutes "construction sound" and how it should be regulated.

Impact on DIY projects

Many residents express concern that restrictive hours could negatively impact those who do DIY projects on their own properties. They suggest that DIY work should have more flexible hours compared to commercial construction.

Economic considerations

Some comments point out that additional regulations could increase housing costs by adding more "red tape." There is a call for balancing noise control with economic impacts, especially in the context of affordable housing policies.

Enforcement and compliance

Residents stress the importance of effective enforcement of noise regulations. Suggestions include requiring permits for work on public holidays or Sundays and ensuring that enforcement officers are proactive in addressing complaints.

Specific recommendations

- Allow residential building works from 9am to 5pm on weekends and public holidays.
- Exempt commercial areas from curfews if noise does not affect residential areas.
- Ensure that any new regulations are clear, enforceable, and considerate of both residential and commercial needs.

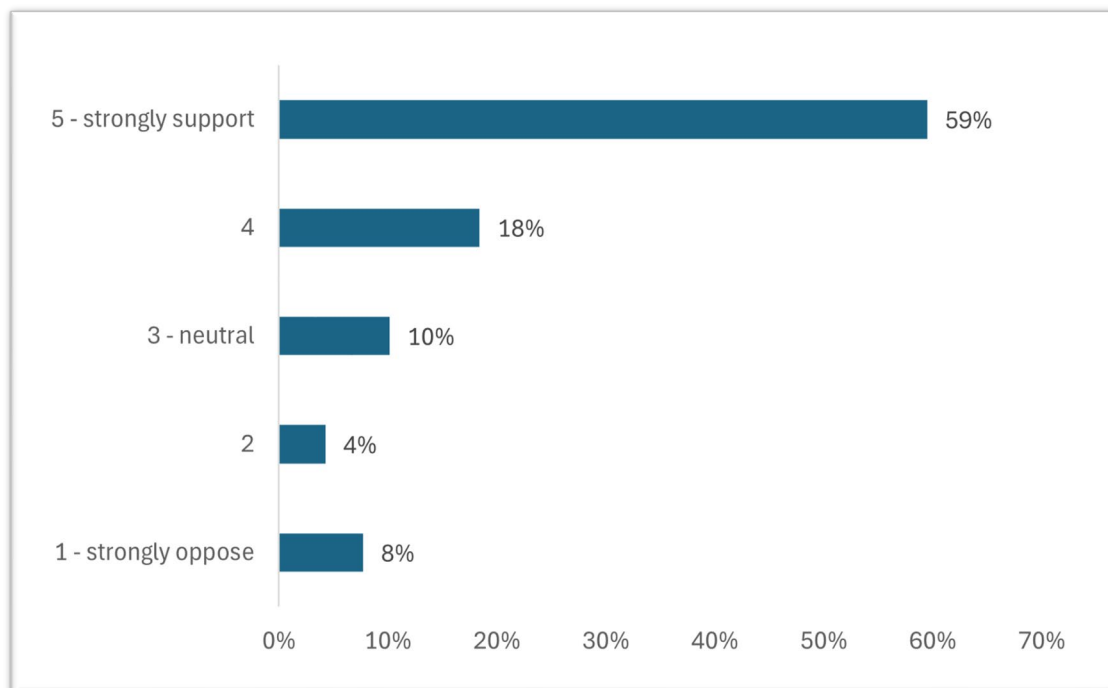
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WHAT WE HEARD

14) How much do you support the following statement?

Expanding the existing clause expanded to include trees on any council-controlled land, including reserves and foreshore reserves. As well as addition of new clause that requires builders to take steps to protect trees on nature-strips adjacent to building sites.

Answered: 375



15) Share your comments on the protection of trees here: Answered: 24

Key themes

Protection during building works

Residents emphasise the need to protect nature strips from damage during building works:

- Nature strips support tree health, biodiversity, and local amenity.
- Protection should include preventing soil compaction, contamination, and vehicle access.
- Safeguarding these areas aligns with Council policy and the Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic).

Maintenance and responsibility

There are calls for the council to take responsibility for maintaining and protecting trees:

- Council should ensure regular pruning and maintenance to prevent dangerous branches from falling.
- Residents believe that if they have no say in the installation of vegetation, the upkeep should be the council's responsibility.

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- Suggestions include installing sprinklers in parks and reserves to maintain plant health.

Regulations and penalties

Opinions on existing regulations and penalties for tree protection vary:

- Some residents feel current regulations are adequate but suggest increasing fines and penalties to deter damage.
- Others believe more stringent laws are necessary to protect significant trees on private land.
- There is a call for a common-sense approach to removing unsightly or problematic trees, with suitable replacements enhancing the area.

Impact on private property

Concerns about the impact of trees on private property are raised:

- Issues include tree roots infiltrating properties, causing structural damage, and blocking visibility.
- Residents suggest that property owners should have the right to remove or prune trees on adjacent nature strips that obstruct access or cause damage.
- The need for appropriate tree species selection to avoid future problems is highlighted.

Environmental and community benefits

Residents recognise the importance of protecting trees for environmental and community benefits:

- Trees are seen as valuable assets that contribute to greenery and habitat.
- There is support for council initiatives to protect and enhance tree canopy cover, particularly in areas with inadequate coverage.
- The role of trees in supporting biodiversity and improving local amenity is acknowledged.

Practical considerations

Practical issues related to tree protection and management are discussed:

- The need for clear guidelines on tree protection during building works and development projects.
- Ensuring that builders and site managers are accountable and respectful of neighbourhood concerns.
- Addressing the placement of large vehicles like caravans that can damage areas designated for tree growth.

General support and suggestions

Overall, there is strong support for tree protection measures, with additional suggestions:

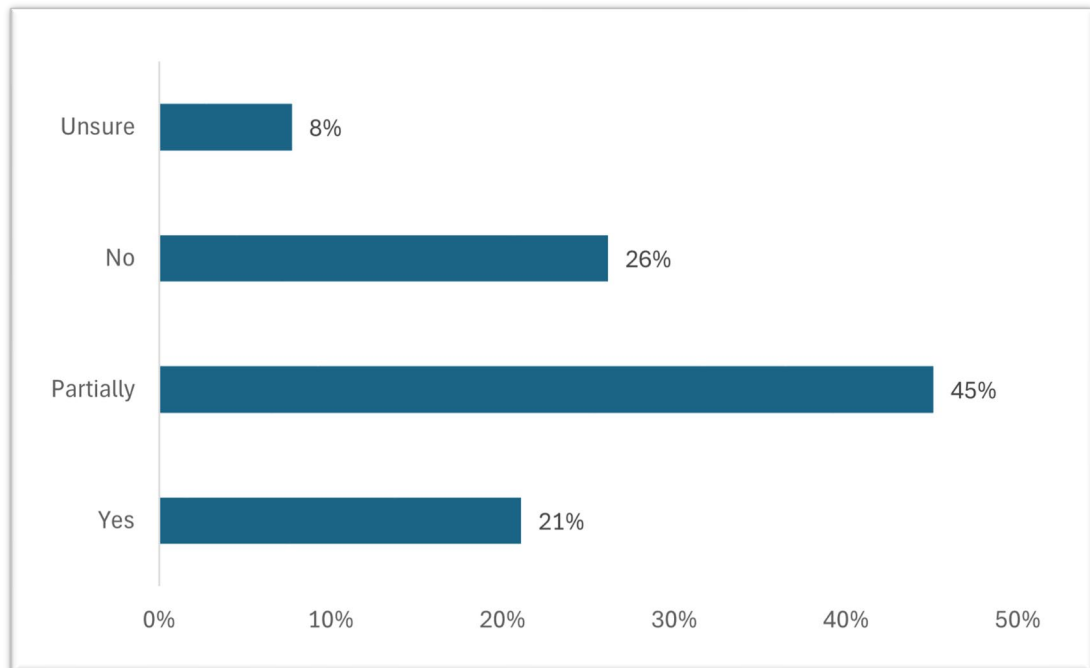
- Increasing penalties for damaging trees on public land.
- Implementing a more strategic approach to tree planting and maintenance.
- Ensuring that tree protection measures are practical, enforceable, and considerate of both public and private interests.

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16) Overall, do you think the draft Community Local Law meets the needs and values of the community?

Answered: 375



17) Do you have any further feedback you would like to share? Answered: 369

Key themes

Consistent enforcement of Local Laws

Residents emphasise the need for consistent enforcement of all local laws, not just parking fines:

- Issues like nature strip damage, illegal parking, tree protection, and neglected property maintenance are often overlooked.
- Fair and proactive enforcement builds trust and supports environmental and community standards.
- Concerns about the lack of parking officers on weekends, particularly in areas like Altona North.

Concerns about wood burning

There is strong opposition to allowing fires in built-up residential areas:

- Studies show that wood smoke is harmful to health, particularly for vulnerable groups like children and pregnant women.
- Burning wood is seen as outdated and detrimental to the environment, climate, and air quality.
- Allowing chimineas, fire pits, and braziers contradicts the Council Plan 2021-25 and the Hobsons Bay Response to Climate Change Action Plan.
- Residents call for a complete ban on wood burning, both indoors and outdoors, due to its significant health risks.

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- Wood smoke contains harmful gases and particulate matter, including carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, benzene, formaldehyde, and heavy metals like arsenic and mercury.
- Wood smoke can cause cancer, Alzheimer's, strokes, heart attacks, asthma, respiratory distress, and premature deaths.
- Alternatives like electric or gas heaters, solar lights, and battery-operated lanterns are suggested as safer options.
- Woodfire burning is not necessary. One log of wood emits more smoke than a packet of cigarettes. The community should not be exposed to harmful PM 2.5 particles, which can cause severe health issues.
- Clean air is a human right. Woodfire smoke contaminates the air, contributes to climate change, and poses significant health risks. Allowing wood burning would lead to numerous complaints, increased anxiety, stress, and health issues among residents.
- There is no safe level of wood fire smoke. It is toxic and causes various health problems, including cancer, asthma attacks, heart attacks, strokes, and respiratory distress. It also causes anxiety and stress among neighbours who cannot enjoy clean air.

Barking dogs and noise complaints

Residents call for more action from the council regarding barking dogs:

- Barking dogs are a common issue, and residents feel that complaints are not adequately addressed.
- More feedback from council in writing when a complaint is made would be appreciated.

Communication and transparency

Residents express frustration with how they are informed about new laws and changes:

- Major changes should be communicated directly to residents, not during holiday periods.
- There is a need for better transparency and timely communication from council.

Environmental and health priorities

Residents highlight the importance of clean air and environmental protection:

- Clean air is fundamental to the amenity of neighbourhoods, and all community members should minimise offensive emissions.
- Council's role is to provide a safe and healthy environment, prohibiting activities that may be dangerous or unsafe.
- Allowing wood burning for heating outdoor areas is seen as a step backward and harmful to the environment and public health.
- Council should address pollution from diesel-fuelled vehicles and wood burning heaters, which contribute to respiratory issues.
- Changes to local laws should be based on community health and well-being. Encouraging the phase-out of wood heaters is essential as they pollute large areas of Hobsons Bay.

Community engagement and decision-making

Residents appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback through surveys:

- Community opinion should inform council decisions, and past instances where council decisions went against majority opinion are noted.
- Residents hope that their feedback will be considered in future decisions.

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WHAT WE HEARD

Specific suggestions

Respondents offer specific suggestions for improvement:

- Ban roosters in residential areas.
- Require cats to be contained on their owners' properties, like dogs.
- Strengthen regulations on keeping pigeons to minimise health risks.
- Avoid dictating what residents can keep on their own properties, such as shipping containers and caravans.
- Ban wood heaters and open fires completely to protect public health and the environment.
- Install speed humps on Nelson Avenue to address speeding issues.
- Ensure that proposed laws account for common community issues and are well-publicised to gather comprehensive feedback.
- Address the issue of barking dogs and the need for better enforcement and communication regarding complaints.
- Improve oversight of building projects to prevent damage to neighbouring properties and ensure prompt resolution of issues.
- Manage street parking more effectively, particularly around schools and congested areas, to enhance safety and accessibility.
- Address neighbourhood disputes and nuisance complaints more effectively, especially in high-density housing areas like Altona.
- Encourage the protection of trees and vegetation, ensuring green spaces are maintained and enhanced.
- Enforce dog on leash requirements more strictly to prevent issues caused by off-leash dogs.
- Increase crosswalks on Blackshaws Road to improve pedestrian safety.
- Implement a cat curfew to prevent cats from roaming and causing issues in neighbourhoods.
- Expand regulations to include disused, unregistered, disassembled motor vehicles as unsightly property.
- Maintain the friendly and authentic character of the community while implementing necessary improvements.
- Ensure that planting at roundabouts and middle strips does not restrict drivers' vision.
- Educate the public on the harmful effects of wood burning and promote healthier alternatives.
- Long-term storage of large vehicles like caravans and boats over 7.5m should be restricted. These vehicles should be moved to storage facilities to prevent obstruction and damage to public areas.
- Operating hours for certain activities should be revised to 7.00am-6.00pm Monday to Friday, 9.00am-1.00pm Saturday, with no operations on Sunday and Public Holidays, unless otherwise allowed by Planning or EPA permits.

Next steps

Finalisation of the new Community Local Law	May - June 2025
Adoption and transition of the new Community Local Law	July - August 2025
Commencement of new Community Local Law	September 2025