

# **Affordable housing on Wilkinson St, Brunswick**

## **Gender Impact Assessment**

### **1. Summary**

In June 2021 Moreland Council approved the commencement of a process to consider the sale of land at 2-12 Wilkinson Street Brunswick to Moreland Affordable Housing Ltd (MAH). MAH is a charitable not for profit company that was set up by Council in 2018. MAH has the express purpose to provide affordable housing options in Moreland.

The land that was proposed for sale is the western portion of the car park at 2-12 Wilkinson Street, Brunswick. Council will not be paid for the land, rather it will have a binding agreement on its future use to benefit the community. The agreement will ensure that 85% of the proposed 34 apartments developed on the site must be affordable housing; at least half of these will be provided as social housing. The agreement means that the apartments must remain as affordable and social housing into the future.

A review of the proposal found that the following issues may have gendered impacts that should be assessed to ensure the Affordable housing on Wilkinson St, Brunswick will not have adverse gendered impacts:

- Provision of social and affordable housing at 2-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick
- Removal of parking at 2-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick

Based on a review of broad literature and research, Moreland-specific existing datasets (including Council surveys, Census data, and service data), and stakeholder engagement through a formal submissions process, the following possible gendered impacts are identified:

- **Provision of social and affordable housing at 2-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick:**  
The provision of social and affordable housing is likely to benefit women experiencing housing insecurity who make up a substantial portion of people experiencing housing insecurity in Moreland and of people accessing Specialist Homelessness Services in Australia. While data is limited on non-binary people and members of the LGBTIQ community experiencing homelessness in Moreland, broader research indicates they are overrepresented in people experiencing housing stress and homelessness, and therefore are likely to benefit from the provision of social and affordable housing. Research indicates that different genders experience housing insecurity and homelessness differently and the provision of social and affordable housing should be informed by those different experiences.
- **Removal of parking at 1-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick:**  
The removal of parking as a part of the proposal is unlikely to have a substantial gendered impact. While research is limited into the gendered needs for parking, stakeholder engagement indicates that genders were equally concerned with the removal of parking and place similar levels of importance on parking in Moreland. Consideration for the impacts of the removal of parking is recommended for community members of all genders as well as the continued collection of gender disaggregated data to assess future gendered impacts given the limited research available on gender and parking.

## **2. Gender Impact Assessment: Key Issues**

The proposal for Affordable housing on Wilkinson St, Brunswick aims to provide additional social and affordable housing in Moreland. This proposal is needed to address the social and affordable housing need in Moreland and more broadly in Victoria.

All people affected by the proposal were invited to make written submissions between 12 July 2021 and 9 August 2021. Additionally, people affected by the proposal were invited to make oral submissions at a Hearing on Tuesday, 17 July 2021. Submissions were received from people identifying as men, women, and self-described. The genders of submitters closely reflect the overall gender breakdown in Brunswick and Moreland overall.

Two aspects of this proposal may affect people of different genders differently and therefore require a gender impact assessment:

1. The removal of parking (the site's current use) may impact on genders differently.
2. The provision of social and affordable housing (the site's future use) may also impact on genders differently.

These two possible issues will be explored in greater detail below.

### 3. Issue 1: Gender & Affordable Housing

This section explores possible gendered impacts of the provision of social and affordable housing in Moreland and aims to address the following questions:

- What information is available to understand who is likely to be affected by the proposal?
- What information is available to understand the lived experiences of the diverse groups who will be affected?
- How is this proposal likely to have different impacts for different people?

This section draws on existing research and literature on gender and affordable housing, research and data conducted at the Moreland Local Government Area level, and stakeholder engagement data collected as a part of a formal submission process for this proposal.

#### 3.1 Summary of desktop research

This section contains a brief review of research and literature on the gendered impacts of social and affordable housing in order to determine whether the provision of social and affordable housing at 2-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick will have a disproportionately impact genders differently and have any unanticipated adverse gendered effects. The following list contains research that may be relevant:

- The majority of people who received assistance from homelessness agencies in 2019-20 were female (60% or nearly 174,700 clients)<sup>1</sup>. Likewise, the overall rate of clients was higher for females: 1 in 73 females in the Australian population received support in 2019-20 compared with 1 in 109 males<sup>2</sup>.
- Research highlights the relationship between gender, family violence and housing security. Family and domestic violence is the main reason women and children leave their homes in Australia<sup>3</sup> and the leading cause of homelessness for women in Australia<sup>4</sup>. In 2019-20, 41% of women and children who were Specialist Homelessness Services clients had experienced family and domestic violence<sup>5</sup>.
- LGBTIQ people are over-represented among those with current or recent experiences of homelessness, and report experiences of and fears of discrimination when accessing homelessness services<sup>6</sup>.
- Research suggests older women are especially vulnerable to experiencing housing insecurity. Older women represent the fastest growing group of people experiencing homelessness in Australia<sup>7</sup>. Increasingly unaffordable housing has led to fewer older women owning homes, resulting in higher risk of housing stress and homelessness<sup>8</sup>.

This summary of research indicates that gender and sexuality may impact on experiences of homelessness. The provision of additional social and affordable housing is likely to benefit women and non-binary people. The provision of housing should be informed by a gendered understanding of housing insecurity and by the lived experiences of women and non-binary people experiencing housing insecurity.

## 3.2 Summary of existing data

A variety of datasets exist relating to housing need, housing stress, and homelessness in Moreland. This section outlines housing stress data from the Moreland Household Survey, homelessness service data from Vincent Care, and homelessness estimates data from Australian Bureau of Statistics.

### Households experiencing housing stress

The Moreland Household Survey asks respondents how much stress they feel their rental or housing payment places on their household's finances in an average month. When broken down by gender, 52% of female respondents and 45% of male respondents reported feeling heavy or moderate stress from their rental or housing payments<sup>9</sup>.

A higher percentage of male respondents reported feeling heavy stress (14% male versus 11% female), but a higher percentage of female respondents reported feeling moderate stress (31% male versus 41% female). A much higher percentage of male respondents reported experiencing no stress than female respondents (6% male versus 20% female). See Figure 1 for a full outline of housing stress by gender.

*Figure 1. Level of self-reported housing stress by gender from Moreland Household Survey*  
Question: How much stress do you feel the rental and housing payment places on this household's finances in an average month?

Level of housing stress	Female	Male
Heavy stress	11%	14%
Moderate stress	41%	31%
Low stress	35%	30%
No stress	6%	20%
Can't say	3%	2%
N/A	4%	2%

Source: Moreland City Council Household Survey 2019

Findings from the Moreland Household Survey indicate that all genders report experiencing some level of housing stress. While male respondents reported higher instances of heavy stress, female respondents reported overall higher instances of combined heavy, moderate, and low stress.

### People accessing Vincent Care support

Vincent Care provides support to people experiencing homelessness in Moreland accommodating them in emergency options, and through the private rental access program by establishing new tenancies or providing financial support to retain the tenancy. Their contacts are primarily rough sleepers, people experiencing housing unaffordability, and housing crisis.

In 2020, Vincent Care provided Intake and Assessment (IAP) services to 823 people in Moreland. Of these 823 people who accessed services, 50% were male, 49% were female, and 1% reported another gender identity<sup>10</sup>.

### Australian Bureau of Statistics Homelessness Estimates

According to homelessness estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, a person is considered homeless when they do not have suitable accommodation alternatives or if their current living arrangements is in a dwelling that is inadequate; has no tenure; or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations<sup>11</sup>. A gender breakdown of these estimates is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Homelessness Operational Groups by gender

Homelessness Operational Groups	Female		Male	
	#	%	#	%
Persons living in improvised dwellings, tents, or sleeping out	0	0%	12	100%
Persons in supported accommodation for the homeless	95	44%	120	55%
Persons staying temporarily with other households	35	44%	44	55%
Persons living in boarding houses	48	36%	84	63%
Persons living in 'severely' crowded dwellings	108	32%	227	68%
Persons living in other crowded dwellings	267	35%	487	64%
<b>Total estimated experiencing homelessness</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>64%</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness 2016

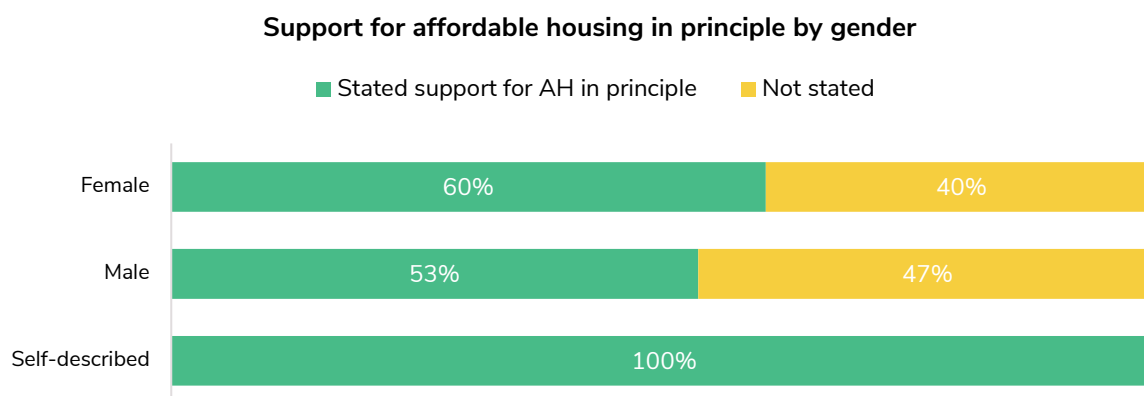
## 3.3 Summary of stakeholder engagement

Data was collected as a part of a submission process that was open to the public from 12 July to 9 August 2021. 88% of submitters volunteered information on their gender which informs this analysis. Submissions were analysed for sentiment towards the proposal as well as overall support for affordable housing in principle. These findings broken down by gender are explored in greater detail below.

### Support for affordable housing in principle

60% of submissions made by women were generally in support of affordable housing in principle. By comparison, 53% of submissions by men were generally supportive, and 100% of submissions by people with self-described gender were generally supportive. While there was higher levels of support among women and people with self-described genders, the majority of all submitters were found to be supportive. Figure 3 contains a summary of support for affordable housing in principle.

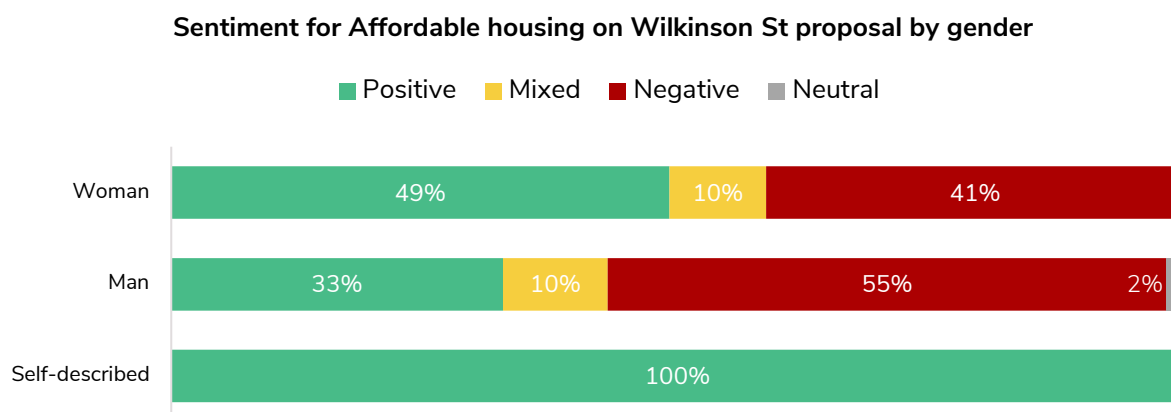
Figure 3. Support for affordable housing in principle by gender



### Overall sentiment towards proposal

Sentiment towards the Wilkinson St Proposal was also captured in the submission data. Overall, people with self-described gender had the highest level of positive sentiment (100%), however this was a very small sample size. This is followed by women (49% positive), and men (33%). Figure 4 provides a complete overview of sentiment by gender.

Figure 4. Sentiment for Wilkinson St Proposal and general support for affordable housing in principle by gender



Submissions with mixed or negative sentiment were further analysed to understand concerns and issues raised through the submissions process. The most common themes in submissions made by women were parking-related concern (17 submissions) and over-development concern (10 submissions). Men were also concerned with parking (18 submissions) but the second most reported concern from men was relating to green space (12 submissions). Parking-related concern is explored in greater detail below in Section 4.

Figure 5. Most common themes in mixed and negative-sentiment submissions by gender

#### Most common themes for **women**:

1. Parking-related concern (17 submissions)
2. Over-development concern (10 submissions)

#### Most common themes for **men**:

1. Parking-related concern (18 submissions)
2. Green-space related concern (12 submissions)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Does not support location (8 submissions)</li> <li>4. Other (6 submissions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Concern that their own property will be devalued</li> <li>b. Concern that rates will increase</li> <li>c. Concern with engagement/governance process</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Does not support use of land for affordable housing (8 submissions)</li> <li>4. Over-development concerns (7 submissions)</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Note:** there were no negative or mixed submissions from people with **self-described gender**.

### 3.4 Summary & Key concerns

#### Summary

- A review of literature and research on gender and housing security indicates that gender and sexuality may impact on experiences of homelessness, particularly in terms of the risks of housing insecurity people of different genders face. The provision of additional social and affordable housing is likely to benefit women and non-binary people. The provision of housing should be informed by a gendered understanding of housing insecurity and by the lived experiences of women and non-binary people experiencing housing insecurity.
- A review of existing data in Moreland indicates that people of all genders experience housing insecurity but their experiences of homelessness may differ. The Moreland Household Survey 2019 found that women experienced higher overall levels of housing stress, but men experienced higher levels of heavy stress. Homelessness estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate that the majority of people experiencing homelessness in Moreland are male, but Vincent Care specialist homelessness service data indicates a more even split between men and women accessing support, as well as a small portion of people with another gender identity.
- Analysis of submissions by gender found that people with self-described gender were entirely supportive of affordable housing in principle and of the proposal, however this was a very small sample size. Women had higher levels of support than man for both affordable housing in principle as well as for the proposal.

#### Conclusions

**The provision of social and affordable housing is likely to benefit women experiencing housing insecurity who make up a substantial portion of people experiencing housing insecurity in Moreland and of people accessing Specialist Homelessness Services in Australia. While data is limited on non-binary people and members of the LGBTIQ community experiencing homelessness in Moreland, broader research indicates they are overrepresented in people experiencing housing stress and homelessness, and therefore are likely to benefit from the provision of social and affordable housing.**

**While not in scope for this proposal, future work to provide social and affordable housing should apply a gendered lens and endeavour to provide affordable housing that meets the needs of women and people with self-described genders, as well as people with other needs in social and affordable housing including accessibility.**

## 4. Issue 2: Gender & Removal of Parking

This section contains an assessment of the gendered impacts of the removal of parking at the 2-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick site in order to address the following questions:

- What information is available to understand who is likely to be affected by the proposal?
- What information is available to understand the lived experiences of the diverse groups who will be affected?
- How is this proposal likely to have different impacts for different people?

This assessment includes a review of the literature on parking availability and gender, a review of existing data collected by Moreland City Council on importance and performance of parking facilities by gender, and a review of stakeholder engagement submission data by gender relating to parking.

### 4.1 Summary of desktop research

This section contains a brief review of research and literature on the gendered aspects of access to parking in order to determine whether the removal of parking at 2-12 Wilkinson St, Brunswick will have a disproportionately impact on women and people of other genders. While there is substantial research investigating the difference in travel patterns and transport mode across different genders, there is limited research into the gendered impacts of the reduction or relocation of car parking. The following list contains a summary of research that may be relevant:

- Research conducted overseas has concluded that women are less likely to drive than men and tend to be less car dependent than men<sup>12131415</sup>.
- Several studies have found that women are more sensitive than men to parking pricing as a result of earning less overall than men and are therefore more likely to change transport mode and travel behaviour when parking the cost of parking increases<sup>1617</sup>.
- Car parking sites that are inclusive to women, other genders, and other sub-populations including people living with disabilities should consider design elements such as space for prams and wheelchairs, good lighting, and nearby pedestrian infrastructure that links parking to destinations<sup>18</sup>.

This research provides some indication of gendered transport patterns and behaviours, and gendered needs for car parking sites, however there is insufficient research to determine whether the removal of parking will have a gendered impact or will impact some genders disproportionately.

### 4.2 Summary of existing data

There are limited existing datasets relating to parking and gender in Moreland. This section outlines parking importance and performance data from the Moreland Community Satisfaction Survey 2021 and method of travel to work for local workers from the ABS Population Census 2016. There was no gendered data available on who is using the car park in this proposal or on who uses parking around the site. There was also no gendered data available on car ownership.



## Moreland Community Satisfaction Survey 2021

In Moreland, a review of data from the Moreland Community Satisfaction Survey 2021 indicates that women placed a slightly higher level of importance on parking facilities than men (Index score\* of 73/100 for women versus 71/100 for men), and also had a slightly higher level of satisfaction with the performance of parking facilities than men (Index score of 52/100 versus 51/100)<sup>19</sup>. However, overall men and women place a very similar level of importance on parking and likewise report a similar level of satisfaction. See Figures 6 and 7 for overall importance and performance data by gender.

Figure 6. Importance of parking facilities by gender in Moreland

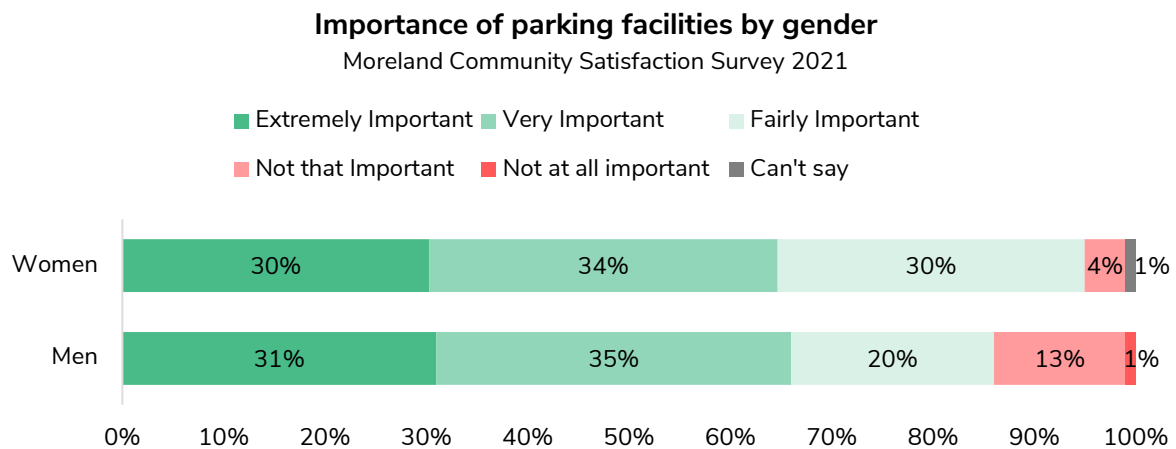
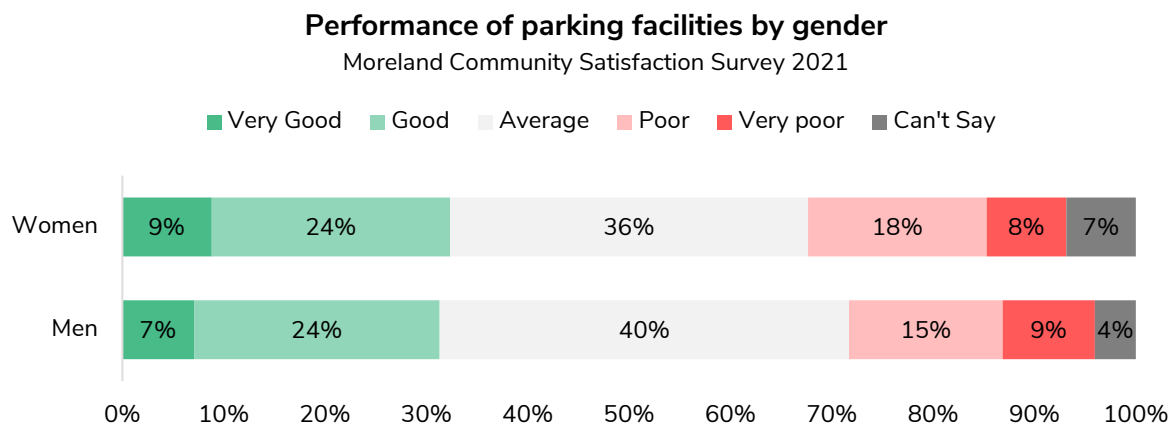


Figure 7. Performance of parking facilities by gender



\* Index Score is calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale), with 'Can't say' excluded from the analysis. See the [Community Satisfaction Survey 2021](#) report, p. 106 for a full description of this process.

## Australian Bureau of Statistics – Method of Travel to Work for Local Workers

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, a higher percentage of male local workers travel to work by car than female local workers in Brunswick (64% male versus 59% female)<sup>20</sup>. Figure 8 provides an overview of method to travel to work for local workers in Brunswick by sex. This breakdown indicates that female workers in Brunswick may have slightly smaller need for parking in Brunswick based on their method of travel to work. However, it should be noted that this data is only current to 2016 and therefore may not reflect the current method of travel to work in Brunswick by sex. This is the most current data available.

**Please note:** ABS Population Census data only reports data by male and female and does not provide data for people of other genders.

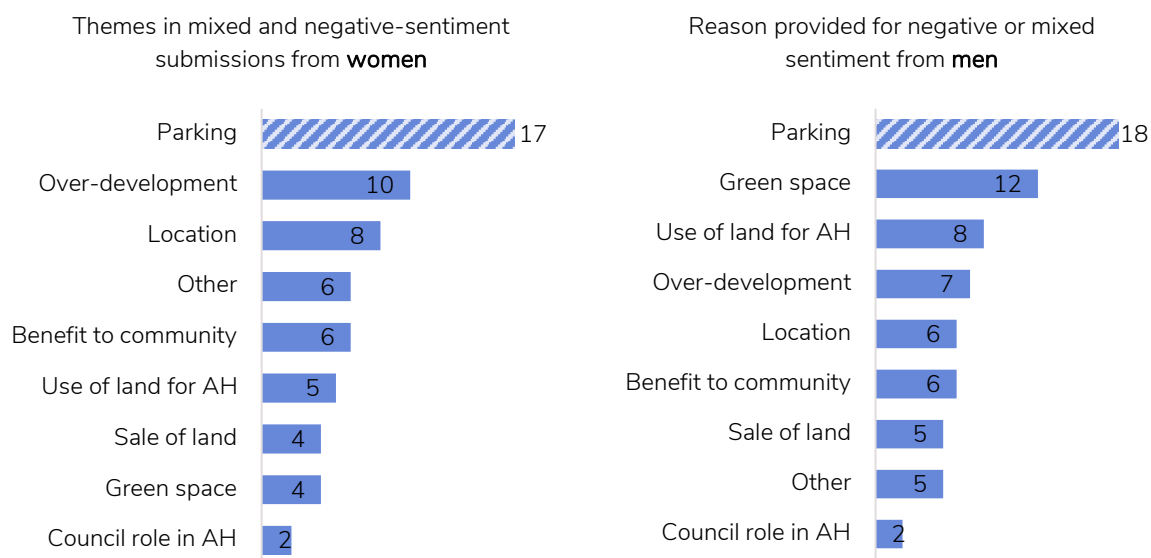
Figure 8. Method of Travel to Work for Local Workers in Brunswick by sex

Method of Travel to Work	Female	Male
Car (total)	59.3%	63.8%
Car, as driver	54.4%	61.6%
Car, as passenger	4.8%	2.2%
Public Transport	8.5%	7.2%
Train	3.7%	3.6%
Bus	1.2%	0.9%
Tram	3.6%	2.7%
Walked Only	5.3%	5.0%
Bicycle	4.0%	4.9%
Worked at home	5.3%	5.0%
Other	6.2%	7.4%
Did not go	11.3%	6.4%
Not stated	0.9%	1.0%

## 4.3 Summary of stakeholder engagement

Data was collected as a part of a submission process that was open to the public from 12 July to 9 August 2021. “Parking-related concern” was identified as the most common concern cited by both men and women who made submissions (See Figure 9). While people with self-described gender did make submissions, their submissions were assessed to have positive sentiment and did not contain parking-related themes.

Figure 9. Overall themes of mixed and negative-sentiment submissions from women and men

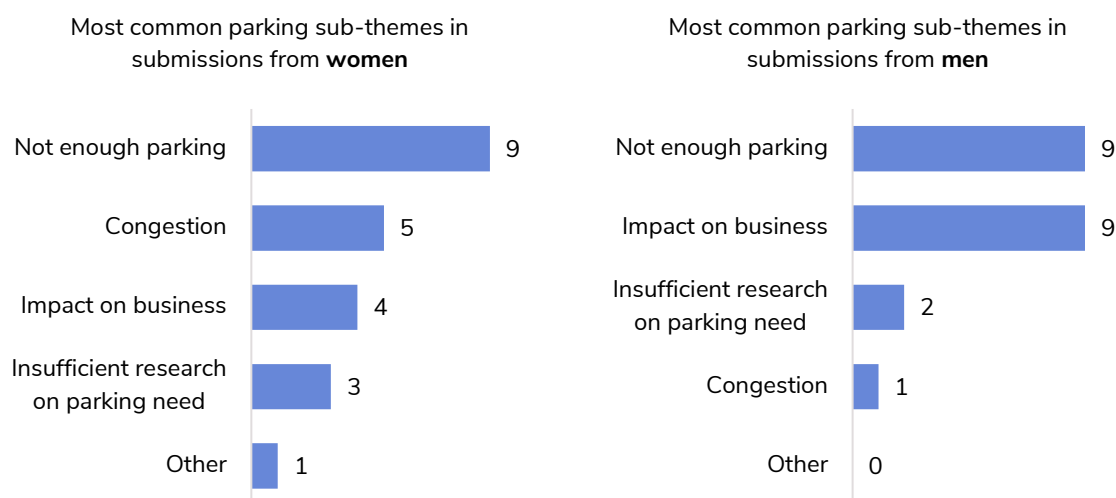


Submissions identified as containing parking-related concern were sub-themed to further understand parking concerns among submissions. Five key sub-themes were identified: Not enough parking; Impact on business; Congestion; Insufficient research on parking need; and other. These sub-themes were also assessed by gender (See Figure 10 and Figure 11). The most common parking-related concerns from women were **not enough parking** around the site (9 submissions) and concerns relating to **congestion** resulting from lack of parking (5 submissions). Men were equally concerned with **not enough parking** around the site (9 submissions) and **impact on business** (9 submissions).

Figure 10. Parking-related sub-themes disaggregated by gender

Gender	Woman	Man	Self-described	Not Stated	Total
Not enough parking	9	9	0	2	20
Impact on business	4	9	0	3	16
Congestion	5	2	0	1	8
Insufficient research on parking need	3	3	0	2	8
Other	1	0	0	0	1

Figure 11. Parking sub-themes in submissions from women and men



## 4.4 Summary & Conclusions

### Summary

- According to research conducted broadly on the relationship between gender and parking, there is limited evidence that the removal of parking has a disproportionate gendered impact.
- According to existing Moreland data on parking, women and men place a similar level of importance on parking and have similar levels of satisfaction with parking facilities in Moreland. Though somewhat out-of-date, Census data suggests that in 2016 a lower percentage of female local workers in Brunswick drove to work compared with male local workers.
- According to stakeholder engagement, men and women had a similar level of concern relating to parking. There was no parking-related concern among people with self-described gender. When analysed for sub-themes, men and women were equally concerned with not having enough parking. Women were more concerned with congestion than men, and men were more concerned with impact on business.

### Conclusions

**The removal of parking as a part of the proposal is unlikely to have a substantial gendered impact. While research is limited into the gendered needs for parking, stakeholder engagement indicates that genders were equally concerned with the removal of parking and place similar levels of importance on parking in Moreland. Consideration for the impacts of the removal of parking is recommended for community members of all genders as well as the continued collection of gender disaggregated data to assess future gendered impacts given the limited research available on gender and parking.**

## References

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- <sup>2</sup> Specialist Homelessness Services Collection 2020, '[Clients, services and outcomes](#)'
- <sup>3</sup> Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) 2009, '[FaHCSIA Annual Report 2008-2009](#)'
- <sup>4</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2020, '[Specialist homelessness services annual report: Clients who have experienced family and domestic violence](#)'
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- <sup>7</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission 2019, '[Older Women's Risk of Homelessness: Background Paper](#)'
- <sup>8</sup> Faulker, D & Lester, L, '[400,000 women over 45 are at risk of homelessness in Australia](#)', The Conversation
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- <sup>12</sup> Christiansen, P, Engebrestsen, O, Fearnley, N & Hanssen, J 2017, 'Parking facilities and the built environment: Impacts on travel behaviour', *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, Vol. 95, pp. 198-206.
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- <sup>18</sup> Bloomingrock 2017, '[Designing Safe Cities for Women](#)', Smart Cities Dive
- <sup>19</sup> Moreland City Council 2021, '[Community Satisfaction Survey](#)'
- <sup>20</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census – Counting Employed Persons