

Prepared for Nillumbik Shire Council  
August 2023

DRAFT REPORT



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Version E

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We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which Nillumbik is located.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Peoples have lived on this land for millennia, practicing their customs and ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their Elders past, present and emerging and the continuing spiritual connection to the land, waters and skies of all Aboriginal peoples.

We respect the enduring strength of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and acknowledge the ongoing impacts of past trauma and injustices from European invasion, massacres and genocide committed against First Nations People. We acknowledge sovereignty was never ceded.

## Overview

This Creative Infrastructure Framework has been developed to guide Council's decision making on the delivery and development of creative spaces across the municipality for the next 10 years. Its purpose is to:

- Identify critical gaps in creative infrastructure across the municipality
- Identify key opportunities to upgrade/re-purpose existing infrastructure
- Identify strategic opportunities to guide the development of new creative infrastructure
- Identify opportunities for enhanced governance and advocacy arrangements to support improved creative outcomes across the municipality

Nillumbik Council's 'What We Know' community consultation report provides invaluable insights into the needs and aspirations of the Nillumbik community. These community perspectives informed the development of Council's Arts & Culture Strategy and are now informing the development of this Creative Infrastructure Framework.

## Existing context

Nillumbik has a strong creative community and a proud history of artistic excellence. Overall, there are 76 creative spaces that have been identified in Nillumbik in 2023. The creative spaces span a range of industries, with particularly high numbers in Art, Design, Photography and Music. Strengths in these industries were recorded in a 2019 and this 2023 study, echoing Nillumbik's strong reputation for traditional art forms. The majority of creative spaces are located in three clusters – in Eltham, Diamond Creek, and St Andrews. Four major creative space – Montsalvat, Edendale Farm, Baldessin Press and Melbourne Polytechnic – anchor creative activities within and near these clusters.

## The challenges to enhancing creative infrastructure provision in Nillumbik

Through a program of research and analysis, a series of key challenges were identified that are currently hindering the development of creative spaces across the municipality. These challenges include:

- Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity
- The needs of all creatives are not being met
- Lack of exhibition spaces
- Support for contemporary and emerging art forms is limited
- Funding & resourcing challenges for creative infrastructure
- Need for more communication and advocacy from Council
- Greater representation & inclusion
- More diversity of spaces for creativity

The Framework has been developed to ensure that recommendations are provided that adequately address all of these challenges.

## Overarching principles to guide Council's approach

Three overarching principles have been adopted to guide this Framework.

- Principle 1: Equity and inclusion - This Framework has been guided by a commitment to delivering Council's vision for a municipality that is equitable, safe and inclusive for all people
- Principle 2: Recognition of First Nations - First Nations history and contemporary experiences must be central to the development of creative infrastructure and creative programs in Nillumbik
- Principle 3: Playing to your strengths - The Shire has a long and proud history of artistic excellence and this creative heritage is a key strength for the municipality.

Together these principles anchor this Framework in an inclusive, respectful and pragmatic approach.

# Executive Summary

## Strategic Directions to deliver on Council's aspirations for Arts and Culture

The application of these principles has led to the establishment of 4 Strategic Directions to guide Council's efforts and decisions over the next 10 years, towards enhancing the creative ecosystem across the municipality.

The four Strategic Directions are:

### 1. Optimise the use of existing Council Facilities

Ensure facilities cater for creative uses and are utilised for creative activity. This includes upgrading existing facilities, identifying opportunities for new facilities and reviewing the operation of facilities.

### 2. Build Partnerships

Ensure effective partnerships support enhanced creative outcomes in Nillumbik. Build upon existing partnerships and establish new partnerships to enable sharing of facilities, more effective funding/resourcing of creativity, greater levels of creative collaboration, and expand the Shire's creative offer into more contemporary and emerging art forms.

### 3. Celebrate Nillumbik's art collection

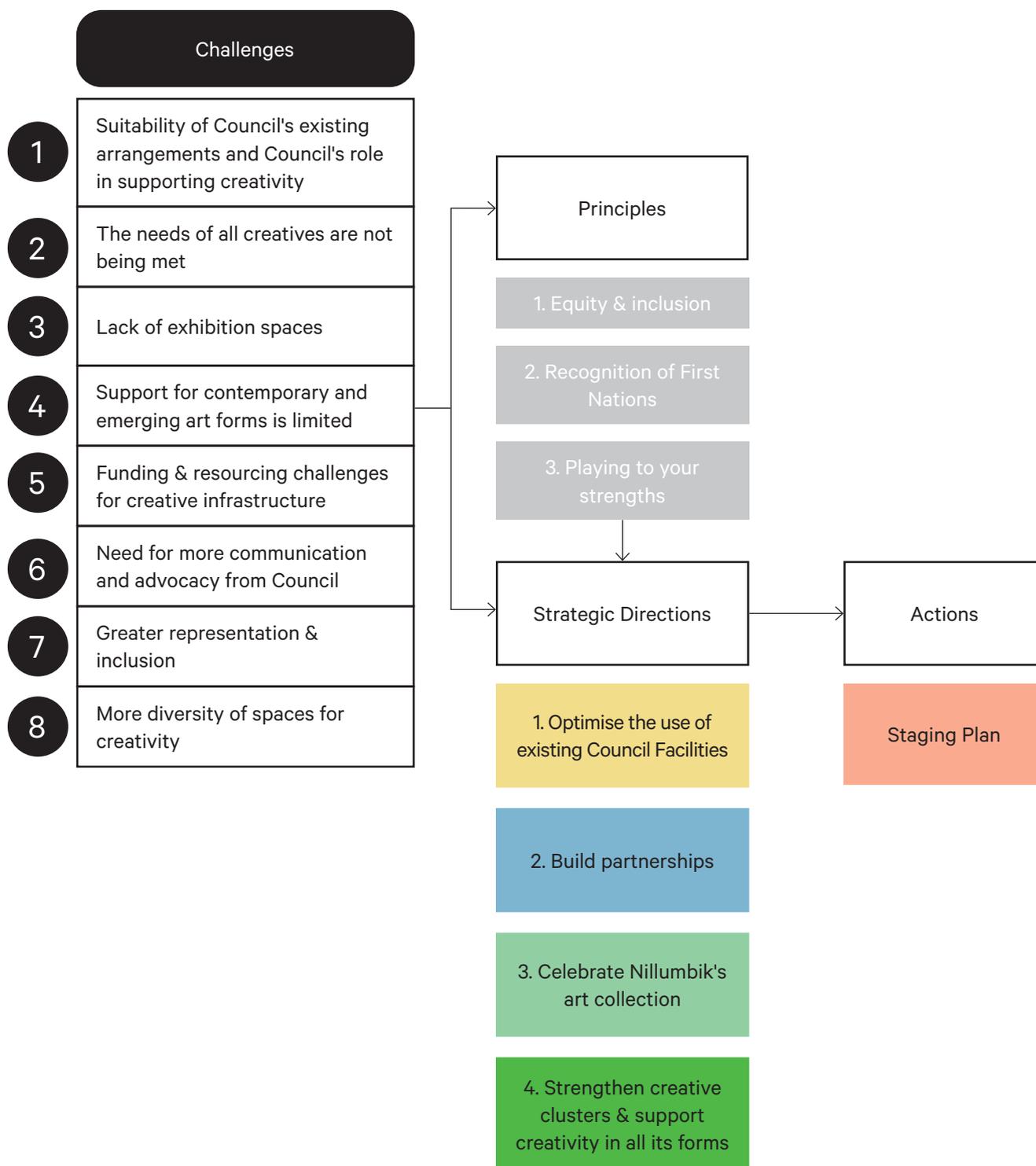
Allow for the public exhibition of Nillumbik's art collection in secure, gallery-grade facilities to support greater levels of audience attraction and local tourism. Enable more contemporary and emerging art forms to become part of Nillumbik's creative offer.

### 4. Strengthen Creative clusters and support creativity in all its forms

Build upon existing clusters of creative activity across the municipality to enable enhanced creative and economic outcomes for Nillumbik. Support greater levels of creative activity and collaboration for a range of creative industries and enhance place outcomes for local communities.

## Making it happen

Each of the Strategic Directions include specific actions that articulate how the outcomes sought can be realised. Overall, 28 actions have been identified that Council can lead to provide 'safe, best practice art spaces for performance, exhibition and creation through creative infrastructure development opportunities' as sought through Council's Arts and Culture Strategy. An indicative 10-year staging plan provides guidance on how the actions can be prioritised and programmed to realise this ambition.



# Definitions

## Artist

A person who produces works in any of the arts. This can include professionals (their arts practice is central to their working life) and hobbyists.

## Creative infrastructure

Infrastructure is the basic structure of an organisation or system which is necessary for its operation. In the context of this study, it is the physical spaces and digital platforms that support the creative and cultural industry.

## Creative clusters and ecosystems

Creative ecosystems can be conceptualised as a "complex, socially interconnected and diverse environments of creative and knowledge spaces characterised by a mix of organisations and businesses, including social and recreational practices."<sup>1</sup>

Creative ecosystems are associated with the concept of creative clusters, in which geographical concentrations and networks of creative activity enable particular places to achieve a competitive advantage through being home to a diversity of interactions, skills, knowledge, organisations, services and supply chains that enable creative production, innovation and knowledge creation.

## Creative practitioner

Individuals creating new and original work within any sector within the creative and cultural industry.

## Creative spaces

Creative spaces refers to a wide range of spaces at varying scales that support creative practitioners. In general, these spaces fall into three functional categories:

- Production (e.g. painting or recording studios)
- Consumption (e.g. galleries or live music venues)
- Education (e.g. dance or music schools)

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1 Mengi, O, Bilandzic, A, Foth, M & Guaralda, M 2020, Mapping Brisbane's Casual Creative Corridor: Land use and policy implications of a new genre in creative ecosystems

## Creative and cultural industry

There is no generally accepted definition of the term creative industries. Conceptually they 'can be distinguished from other industries in that creativity is used to create value for their consumers'<sup>2</sup>

This report utilises the definitions of creative industries established through Hodyl & Co's Creative Neighbourhoods Report, in which the data is categorised according to 13 industry categories. The categorisation is based on the predominant use of the creative space. The following sectors are included:

- Art
- Co-work
- Cultural
- Dance
- Design
- Fashion
- Film & television
- Local manufacturing
- Mixed
- Music
- Photography
- Publishing
- Theatre

Figure 1 outlines the sub-industries included in each industry definition.

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2 SGS Economics and Planning Pty Ltd, December 2013, Valuing Australia's Creative Industries

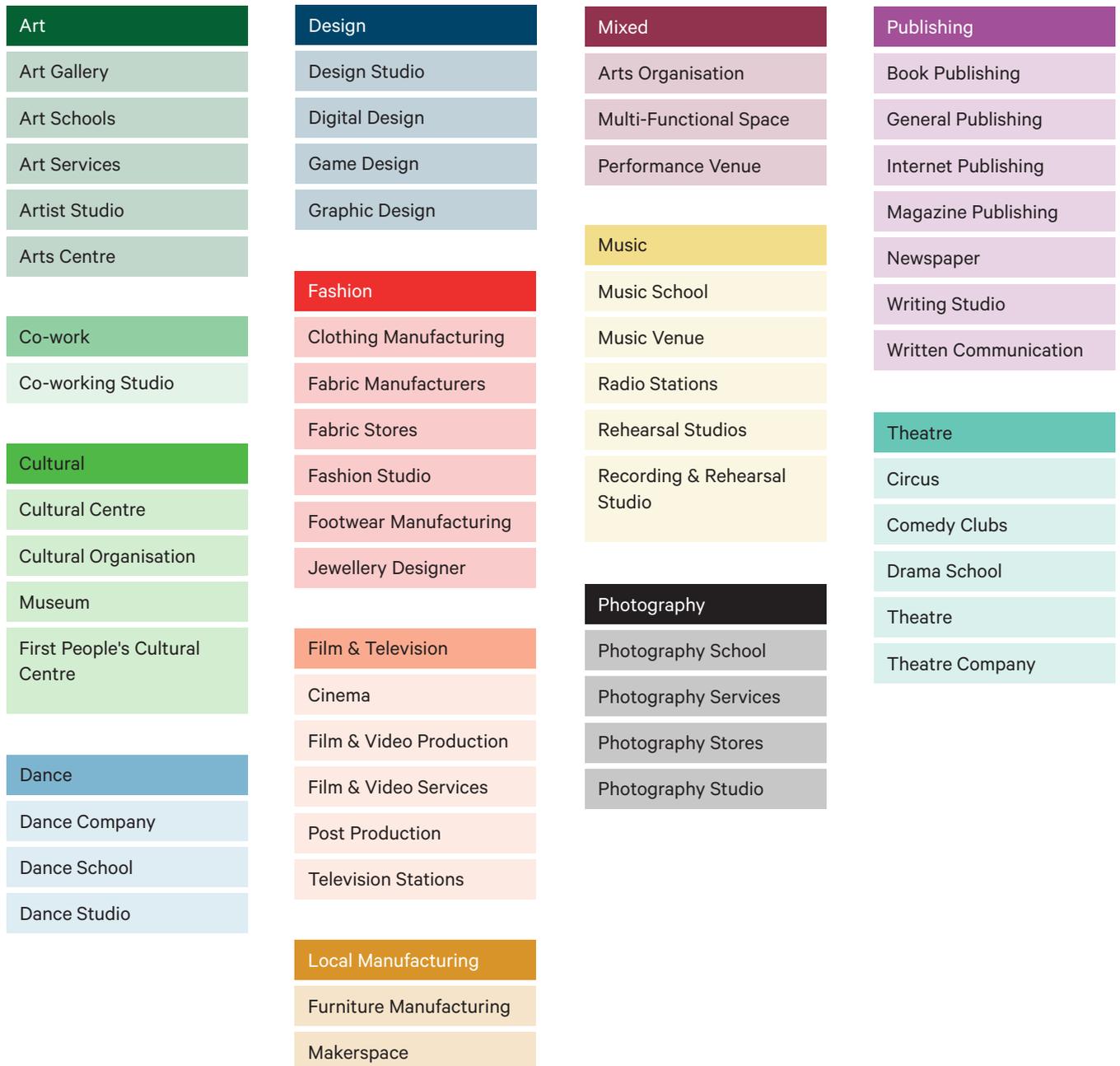


Figure 1. Creative industry categories

# Introduction

Hodyl & Co have been engaged by Nillumbik Shire Council to develop a Creative Infrastructure Framework to guide Council's decision making on the delivery and development of creative spaces across the municipality for the next 10 years.

This project delivers on Council's Arts and Culture Strategy 2022-26 Year 1 Action Plan:

'Council will provide safe, best practice art spaces for performance, exhibition and creation through creative infrastructure development opportunities, specifically through the development of a Creative Infrastructure Framework.'

The project aims to improve the use of existing spaces and resources and develop future spaces, resources and initiatives to support creative activity in all its forms.

The Creative Infrastructure Framework is aligned with the Australian Government's Cultural Policy 'Revive' which aims to strengthen cultural infrastructure through restoration, upgrades and new developments to enable Australia's creative sector to flourish.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of the Creative Infrastructure Framework (the Framework) is to:

- Identify critical gaps in creative infrastructure across the municipality
- Identify key opportunities to upgrade/re-purpose existing infrastructure
- Identify strategic opportunities to guide the development of new creative infrastructure
- Identify opportunities for enhanced governance and advocacy arrangements to support improved creative outcomes across the municipality

The Framework takes a whole-of-government approach in recognition of the essential benefits that creativity brings to broader economic, community and place outcomes. There is a need for all areas of Council to work together in implementing the Framework, in order to achieve Council's creative vision for Nillumbik to be "collaborative, creative and forward thinking".<sup>4</sup>

The development of Nillumbik Shire Council's Arts and Culture Strategy was informed by the largest consultation ever undertaken on arts and culture in the Shire, with over 2,200 people taking part.<sup>5</sup> The 'What We Know' community consultation report provides invaluable insights into the needs and aspirations of the Nillumbik community that have also been brought into the development of this Creative Infrastructure Framework.

Key findings from this community consultation related to creative infrastructure include the need for more physical spaces for connection and creation, and spaces that support both the production and consumption of art. Priority considerations for the community related to creative infrastructure include:

## A PROFESSIONAL-LEVEL MUNICIPAL GALLERY SPACE

Establish Nillumbik as a cultural destination by building a dedicated exhibition space to display significant works of mid-career and established artists. The purpose of this space is to showcase the best visual art the municipality has to offer to inspire and educate.

## A CENTRAL CREATIVE HUB/PRECINCT

Enhance creative output and a sense of connection through establishing a central creative hub/precinct that includes studio and rehearsal spaces, performance and exhibition spaces and spaces to eat and socialise. The purpose of this space is to build connections and facilitate the production and enjoyment of art.

## SATELLITE CREATIVE HUBS

Increase cultural activity and exposure to the arts through establishing physical spaces for performance and exhibitions in smaller townships. The purpose of these spaces are to reflect local town character and cultivate intimate settings for creativity.

## AFFORDABLE VENUES

Expand the number of performance events, art workshops and studio spaces (including affordable rehearsal space) by making venues affordable for artists and cultural organisations.<sup>6</sup>

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3 Australian Government 2021, Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place

4 Nillumbik Shire Council, Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

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5 Nillumbik Shire Council, Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

6 Nillumbik Shire Council, What We Know Community Consultation Summary Report

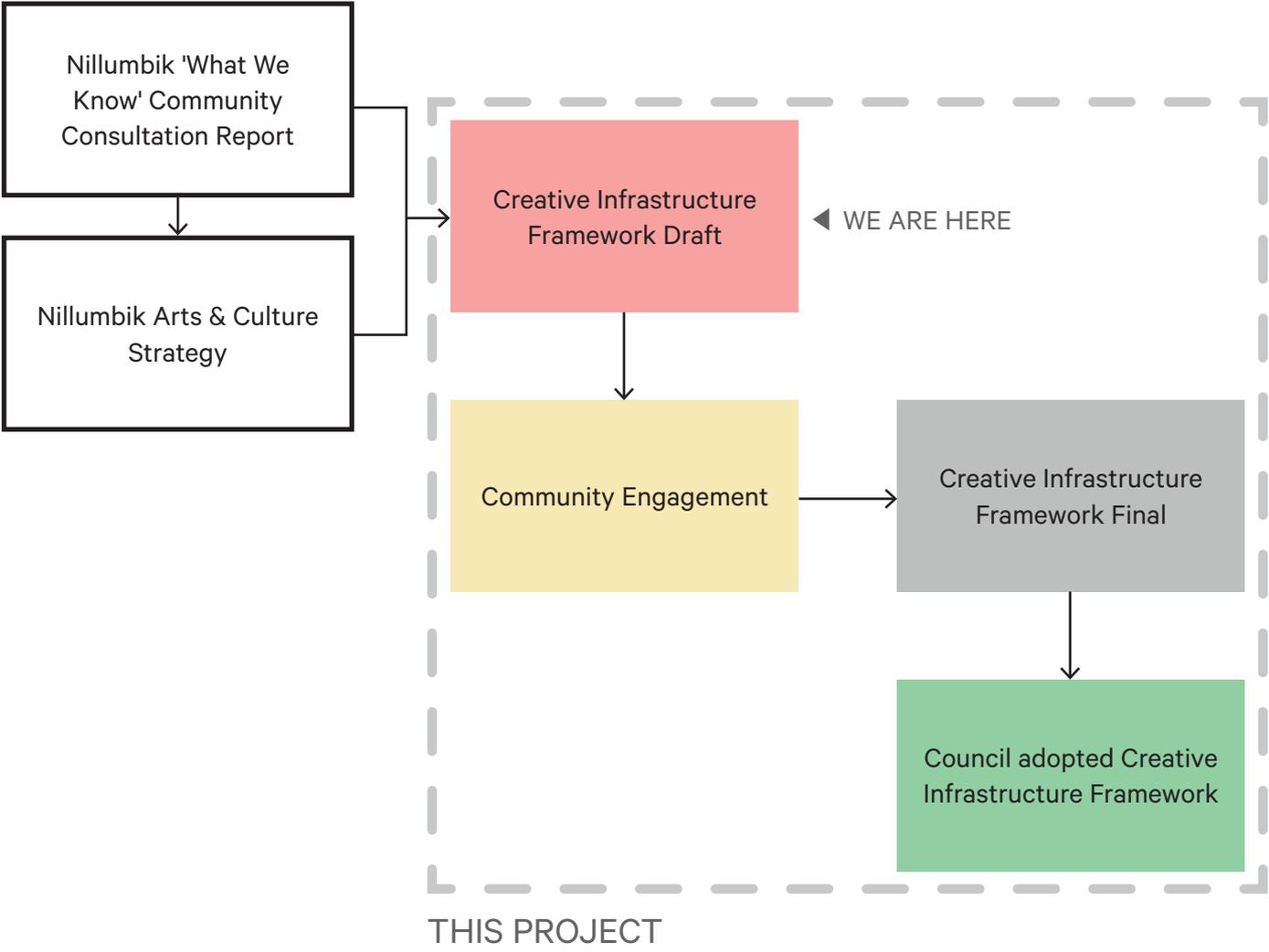


Figure 2. What has informed the Creative Infrastructure Framework and its project stages

# Introduction

## Creative Infrastructure in Nillumbik

Nillumbik is currently home to a range of spaces that support different creative uses. Creative infrastructure across the municipality includes both purpose-built spaces for creativity, to other types of community infrastructure that is used for creative uses. There are also a range of established and recognised private and not-for-profit creative spaces that act as key anchors for creativity in the municipality.

As demonstrated in Figure 4 there are existing clusters of creative activity concentrated in the more suburban parts of the municipality, where the majority of the population lives. The activity centres and small industrial areas in these locations play a significant role in supporting creativity. Structure Planning is currently underway in Diamond Creek and Eltham to manage change and growth in these areas, and opportunities exist to support and enhance creativity in these locations through the provision of new community infrastructure.

The accessibility of creative infrastructure in Nillumbik is a key challenge. Limited public transport options and the area's topography make it difficult for creative practitioners, audiences and the community to access creative spaces, particularly in areas within the Green Wedge of the Shire and for people with mobility constraints.

Overall, there are 76 creative spaces identified in Nillumbik in 2023. The creative spaces span a range of industries, with particularly high numbers in Art, Design, Photography and Music. These top 4 industries had the highest numbers in both 2019 and 2023, echoing Nillumbik's strong reputation for traditional art forms.

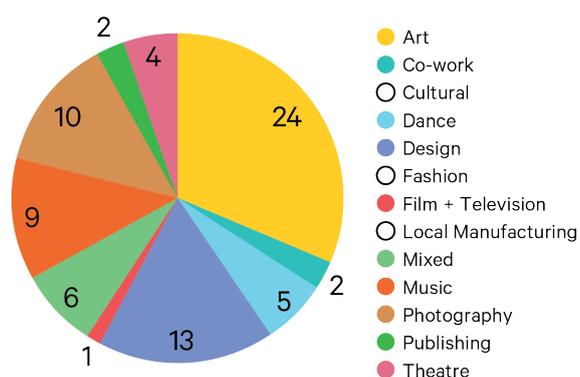


Figure 3. Industry breakdown of creative spaces in Nillumbik in 2023. Note: this does not include the Creative Infrastructure Audit data provided by Council.

## A Creative Infrastructure Framework that supports the delivery of Council's strategic priorities.

Arts and culture is strongly supported across various Council strategies and policies. This includes positioning the value of the arts within wider strategic work, sector specific strategies and place specific opportunities through structure plans.

This Creative Infrastructure Framework has been developed to support Council's delivery of the Arts and Culture Strategy 2022-2026. This strategy was informed by in-depth engagement with the Nillumbik community, identifying the importance of space for connection and creation, supporting creative industries, encouraging greater diversity of cultural expression including connection to Wurundjeri Culture, and supporting under-represented art forms.<sup>7</sup>

The key goals of the Arts and Culture Strategy 2022-2036 are:

- Goal 1: An interconnected and creative community
- Goal 2: A visible and supported creative community
- Goal 3: A diverse and resilient creative community
- Goal 4: A distinctly Nillumbik creative community

The Creative Infrastructure Framework also helps deliver on Council's strategic aspirations related to the Nillumbik Community Vision 2040, Council Plan 2021-2025 and Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030.

A summary of how the Creative Infrastructure Framework helps deliver on Council's broader strategic priorities is provided for each of the four Strategic Directions later in this report. See Appendix A for a detailed review of these key policies and a summary of their relationship to the Creative Infrastructure Framework.

<sup>7</sup> Nillumbik Shire Council, What We Know - Arts and Culture Strategy 2022-26 Community Consultation

This map shows the existing creative spaces by industry in Nillumbik Shire, along with identified creative anchors, public transport networks, and identified creative clusters.

A detailed map of each creative cluster is provided on the following pages and discussed further in Strategic Objective 4, related to strengthening creative clusters.

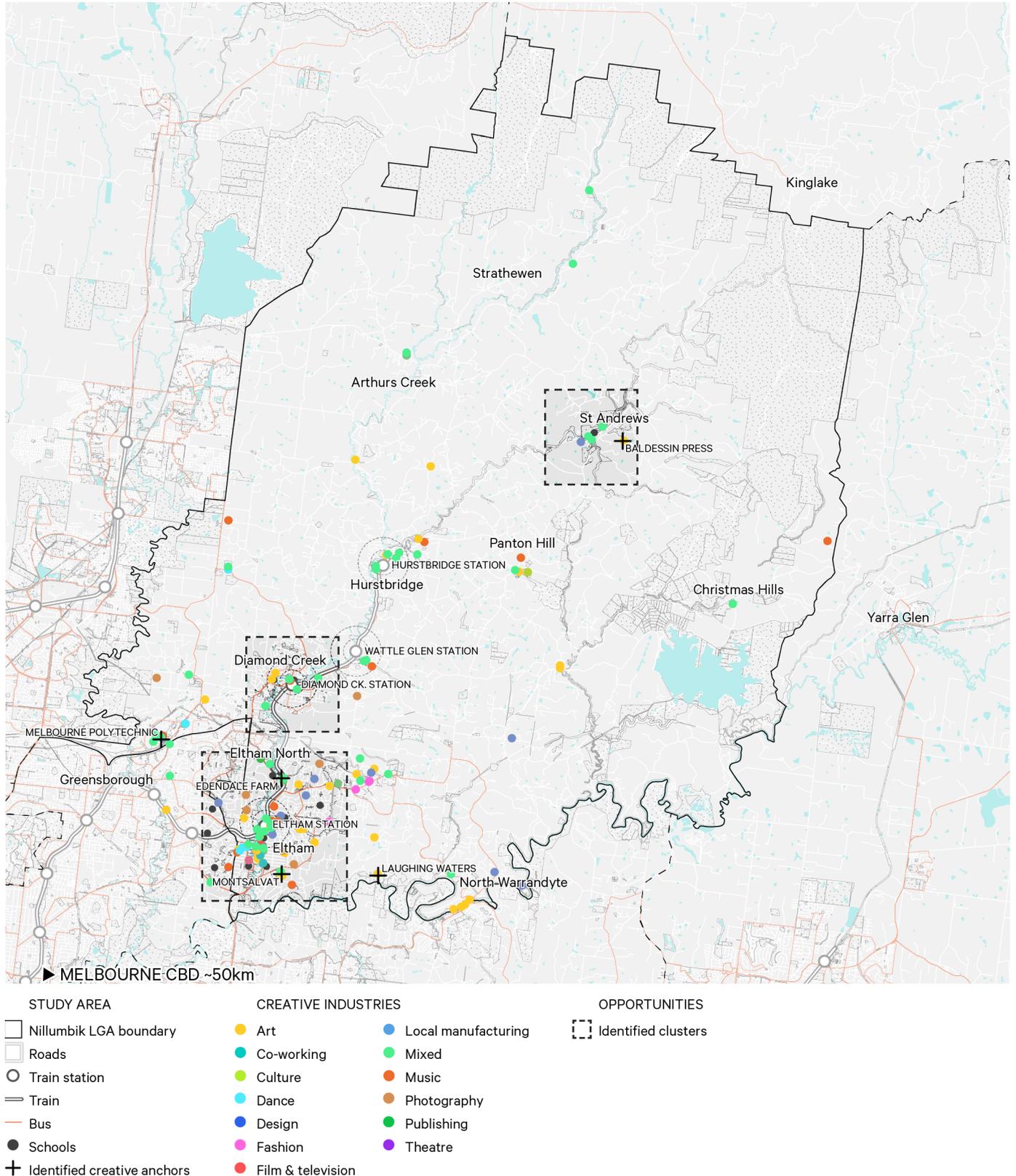


Figure 4. Map of creative spaces across Nillumbik Shire. Both the Creative Spaces data and the Creative Infrastructure Audit data have been mapped to show all creative activity across Nillumbik.

# Introduction

## ELTHAM CREATIVE CLUSTER

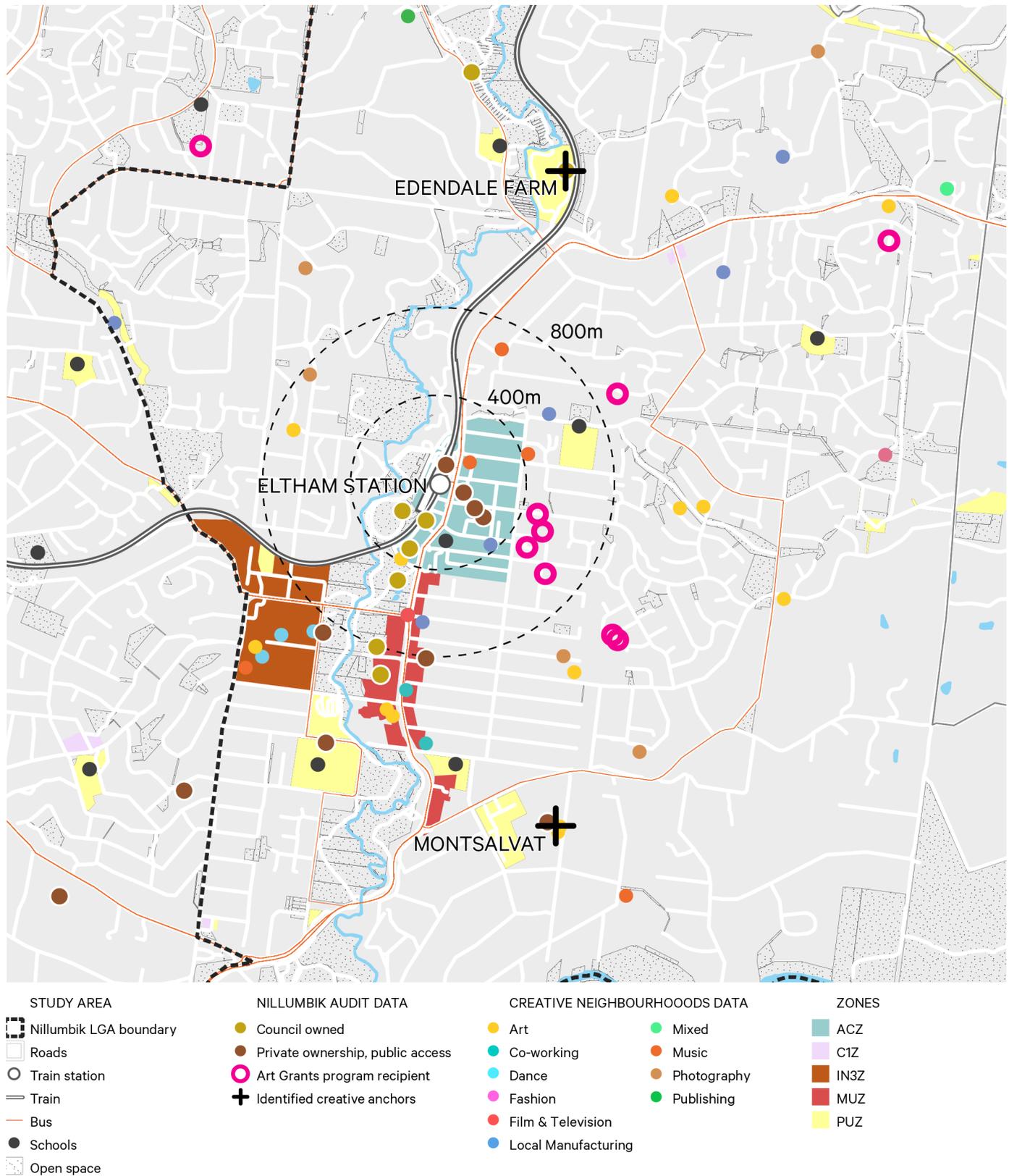


Figure 5. Eltham Creative Cluster Map

DIAMOND CREEK CREATIVE CLUSTER

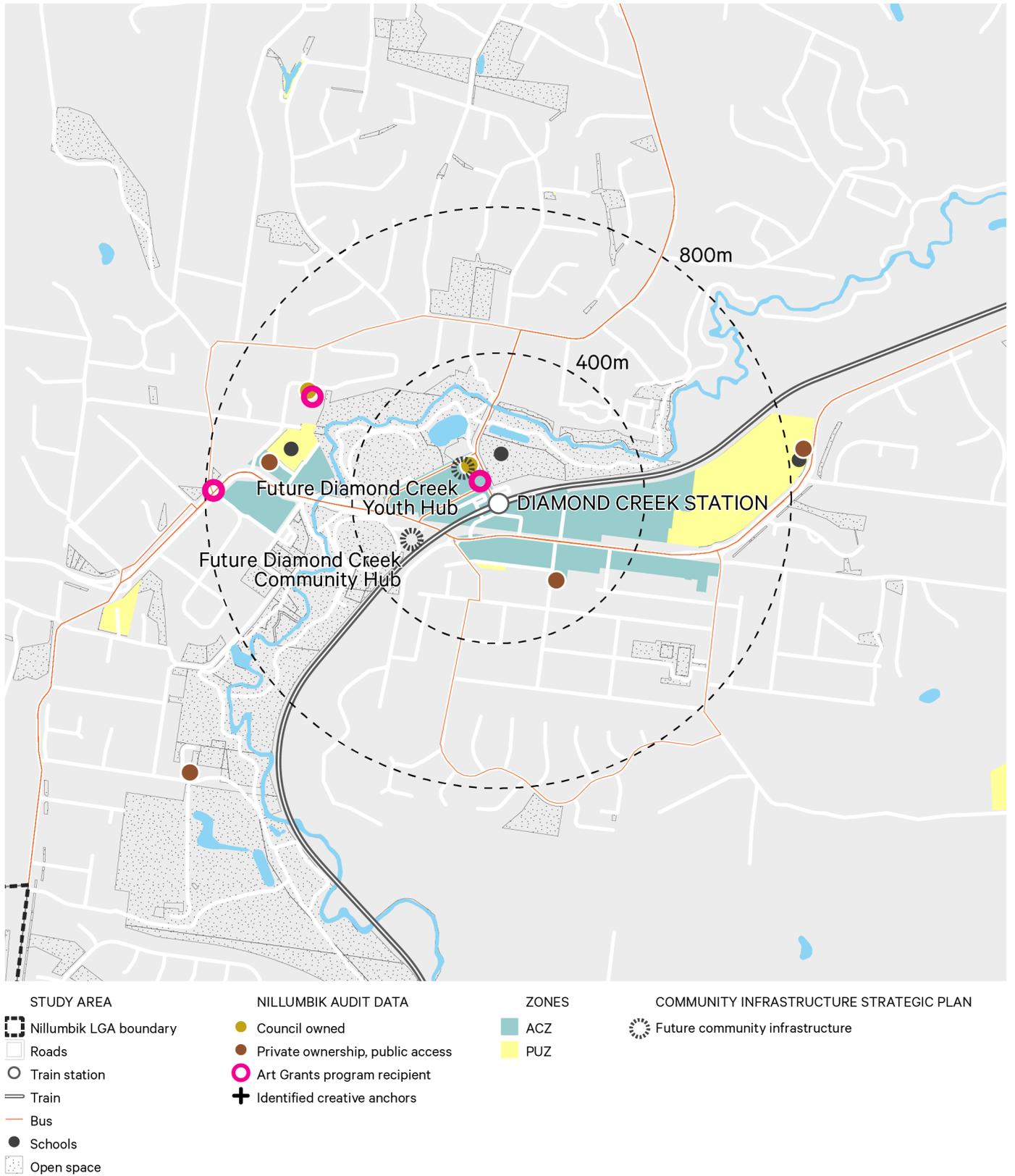


Figure 6. Diamond Creek Creative Cluster Map

# Introduction

## ST ANDREWS CREATIVE CLUSTER

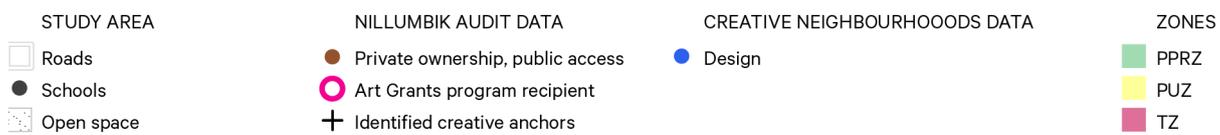
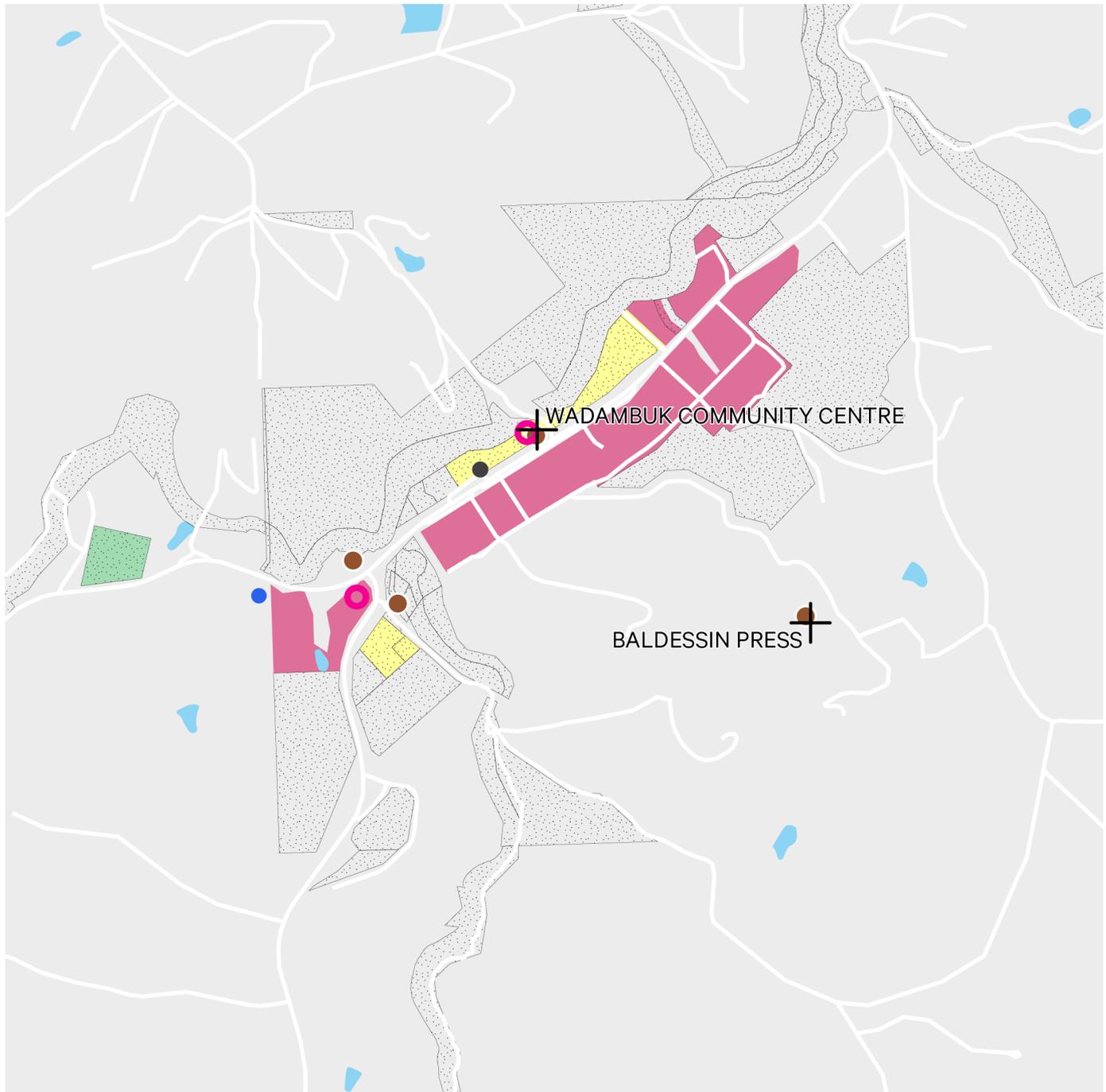


Figure 7. St Andrews Creative Cluster Map



Image 1. Montsalvat Meeting Pool

# Introduction

## Overarching principles

The following overarching principles have been developed to guide the implementation of the Creative Infrastructure Framework. Each principle articulates insights and values that are critical to the delivery of creative infrastructure in Nillumbik, and should be central to Council's decision-making, planning and delivery processes.

### Principle 1: Equity and inclusion

Nillumbik Shire Council plays a central role in ensuring equitable and inclusive practices and outcomes across the municipality. This Framework has been guided by a commitment to delivering Council's vision for a municipality that is equitable, safe and inclusive for all people:

"Nillumbik Shire Council will be fair and equitable by providing access, opportunity and resources to enable equal outcomes for all people."<sup>8</sup>

With this Framework, Council are seeking to ensure that creative spaces are developed in a way that promotes equity and inclusion for artists, creatives and audiences, as well as for the community as a whole. To deliver on this aspiration, the principle of 'equity and inclusion' ensures that creative spaces are planned, designed, managed and operated so that they are:

- Inclusive and welcoming
- Safe and accessible
- Suitable for different age groups
- Supportive of diverse cultural expression
- Affordable

This principle has also been informed by a Gender Impact Assessment process, see Figure 8.

## Gender Impact Assessment

A Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this project to identify how the process of developing the Creative Infrastructure Framework, and the Framework itself, is inclusive and enhances outcomes for all people.

The Creative Infrastructure Framework addresses the diverse needs of people on the basis of the following identity categories: gender, LGBTQIA+, disability, ethnicity and culture, faith, age, socio-economic status, and locality (where someone lives or works). Such diverse and intersecting identities have been considered through exploring how people may access and experience creative infrastructure, as well as potential barriers to all people's safe and inclusive participation.



Image 2. Artwork (artist TBC) at Eltham Reception Centre  
Source: Hodyl & Co 2023

Figure 8. Gender Impact Assessment

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8 Nillumbik Shire Council, Gender Equity Policy Statement 2018

**“Art is intrinsic to Wurundjeri culture and heritage and cannot be separated into different art forms. It is embedded in all parts of the Wurundjeri culture.”**

- Quote from Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elder <sup>9</sup>

### Principle 2: Recognition of First Nations

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of the Country on which Nillumbik is located and hold a deep and ongoing connection to this place.<sup>10</sup> This history and culture must be preserved and presented, with art and creativity offering opportunities to connect to this rich history and enhance connection to Country.

"Arts and culture are one and the same for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people."

First Nations history and contemporary experiences must be central to the development of creative infrastructure and creative programs in Nillumbik. Council should work in partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, artists and community members to ensure Aboriginal culture, knowledge, heritage and stories are central to creative expression across Nillumbik Shire.

### Principle 3: Playing to your strengths

Nillumbik is committed to creativity.<sup>11</sup> The Shire has a long and proud history of artistic excellence and this creative heritage is a key strength for the municipality. In addition, the natural environment of the Nillumbik Green Wedge, which covers 91 percent of the Shire, is a much loved and protected element of the municipality for residents, workers and visitors. Together, these strengths create unique opportunities for creativity in Nillumbik and should guide the development of creative infrastructure that promotes creative excellence, environmental sustainability, and connection to the natural environment.

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9 Nillumbik Shire Council, Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

10 Nillumbik Shire Council Acknowledgment of Country 2023

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11 Nillumbik Shire Council, Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

# Introduction

## Methodology

The following methodological approach has been undertaken for the development of the Creative Infrastructure Framework.

### GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken to in collaboration with Nillumbik Shire Council to identify how the process of developing the Creative Infrastructure Framework, and the Framework itself, is inclusive and enhances outcomes for all people.

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Internal engagement with Council was undertaken to develop a holistic understanding of the key priorities, challenges and opportunities for different work areas across Council.

### POLICY REVIEW

A review of local policy related to creativity and economic development was undertaken to identify strategic opportunities for prioritising creative infrastructure across the municipality.

### SITE VISITS

Site visits were carried out to visit key Council facilities and creative anchors across the municipality.

### LOCAL CREATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT ANALYSIS

In-depth analysis of Council's Creative Infrastructure Audit data was undertaken to identify key gaps in infrastructure provision and opportunities to repurpose, upgrade or expand Council-owned and privately-owned creative facilities.

### CREATIVE SPACES DATA ANALYSIS

Hodyl & Co's established creative spaces data collection process was used to identify creative spaces across the municipality. This data was used to identify clusters of creative spaces and key creative anchors, and understand how creative industries were represented across the municipality.

## 8 KEY CHALLENGES

From this research and analysis, 8 key challenges have been identified as the core challenges to be addressed by Nillumbik Shire Council to enhance creative infrastructure outcomes across the municipality. The following pages outline these 8 key challenges.

## 3 PRINCIPLES

3 overarching principles have been identified as essential elements to the delivery of creative infrastructure in Nillumbik. These principles should be central to Council's decision-making, planning and delivery processes.

## 4 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

4 strategic directions have been identified to respond to the identified 8 key challenges. A series of 28 actions underpin the strategic directions and sets out the 10-year plan for the future of creative infrastructure in Nillumbik.

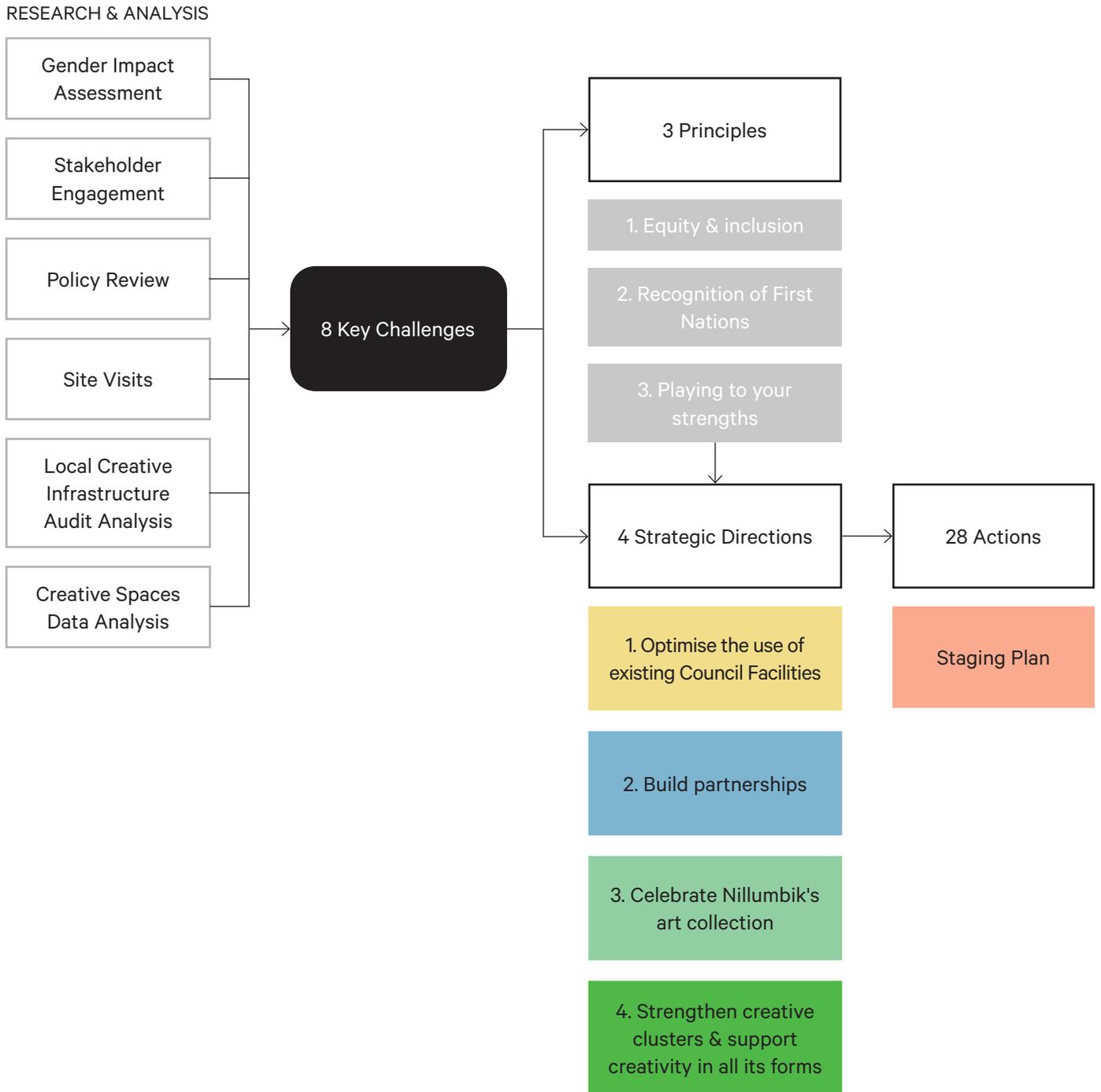


Figure 9. Method and outcomes of the Nillumbik Creative Infrastructure Framework

# 8 Key Challenges

1

## Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity

### CHALLENGE

Existing spaces (and lease arrangements/partnerships) do not make the most of available spaces across the municipality for a range of creative uses. Silos across Council negatively impact the inclusion of the arts in other work areas.

The direct provision of spaces and funding for creative activity is only one of many options available to Councils in supporting creativity.

### OPPORTUNITY

More productive lease arrangements, partnerships and re-purposed infrastructure could provide new opportunities for a range of creative uses.

There is the opportunity for Council to expand its role beyond direct funding and space provision toward brokerage and partnership for enhanced creative outcomes.

### ASPIRATION

More effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and stronger and more collaborative governance frameworks in place to better support creative spaces, creative practitioners, creative audiences and the inclusion of arts and culture aspirations across Council.

Nillumbik's creative ecosystem is collectively resourced and supported by Council, private industry, and philanthropy.

### ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"I would open up an art space that was artist-run, funded by Council and businesses, open to everyone, inclusive of everyone. You could run workshops. An art space devoted to the arts in all its breadth and complexity."

2

## The needs of all creatives are not being met

### CHALLENGE

Different groups have different creative space requirements - from established artists, to emerging professionals, to home practitioners, to community members - and not all of these needs are being met.

### OPPORTUNITY

Understanding creativity as existing across a spectrum with needs diversified across the continuum will help inform the development of a diversity of creative spaces and experiences targeted at different groups. There is also the opportunity for people with differing levels of creative expertise to connect, share experiences and learn from each other.

### ASPIRATION

Creativity is understood as existing across a spectrum and the needs of diverse creative practitioners are recognised and responded to. There are spaces for different groups to come together and connect over their creative practice.

### ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"The provision of what I call ecologies of arts and creative business practice doesn't seem to be there in a structured way—there's no clear pathways, we don't have the assets and the capabilities to take someone from the beginning and allow them to go on a bit of a journey from emerging through to mid-career or established artist. This is something we should be looking to offer as best we can."

## 3

## Lack of exhibition spaces

## CHALLENGE

There is a lack of suitable spaces for exhibition, particularly at-grade facilities for display of Council's significant art collection. The spaces that are available are viewed as being unaffordable for many creative practitioners which acts as a significant barrier to use.

## OPPORTUNITY

Existing infrastructure could be re-purposed or re-programmed to enable expanded exhibition programs. Planned infrastructure could incorporate purpose-built spaces for creative exhibition and performance.

## ASPIRATION

Nillumbik has a range of dedicated and purpose-built gallery spaces that can host a wide range of exhibitions.

## ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"The most important goal for artists is to have a dedicated Art Gallery and Performance Space. There is no real space in Nillumbik and we have to exhibit our work in other Shires."

## 4

## Support for contemporary and emerging art forms is limited

## CHALLENGE

While Nillumbik has a long and established creative history and visual arts heritage, more contemporary and emerging artforms are not well represented or supported and existing infrastructure is not suited to showcase contemporary artforms.

## OPPORTUNITY

Council has the opportunity to connect with contemporary and emerging creative practitioners to identify the needs and opportunities of this specific group to inform future policy and planning for creative infrastructure.

## ASPIRATION

Nillumbik's creative production and exhibition spaces are designed to compliment more contemporary art practices and emerging art forms (i.e. new media). The Nillumbik community embraces these new forms of creative expression as a core part of Nillumbik's creative identity.

## ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"There's no places to go for other forms of art and culture. We have been very strongly focused in the visual arts and it is definitely one of our strengths, but I think it might be time to think of contemporary and different sorts of arts and culture as well."

# 8 Key Challenges

5

## Funding & resourcing challenges for creative infrastructure

### CHALLENGE

Constrained fiscal environments and a lack of understanding of the importance of creativity for healthy, vibrant and connected communities is a challenge for funding and resourcing of creative infrastructure in Nillumbik.

### OPPORTUNITY

Reposition creativity as an investment, not a cost. Consider opportunities to share funding and resourcing of creative spaces and activity through partnerships.

### ASPIRATION

Creativity is understood as a key contributor to Council's economic, social and liveability performance and creative infrastructure is funded/resourced accordingly.

### ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"For an industry that has been integral to building the culture of the area (which brought the people, the development and created the covetable nature of the region), the arts deserves a much more sophisticated and financed position in Nillumbik."

6

## Need for more communication and advocacy from Council

### CHALLENGE

There is a lack of communication between Council and the community about what currently exists (i.e. creative spaces, funding, programs etc.) and Council's commitment to supporting creativity.

### OPPORTUNITY

There is opportunity for Council to better communicate and advocate for the value of creativity in Nillumbik to ensure the community understand Council's commitment to supporting art and culture.

### ASPIRATION

All members of the Nillumbik community feel that creativity is supported by Council, and understand the 'creative offer' in Nillumbik and the broader value of this to the community.

### ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"Currently there is a perception that Council do not value the arts as much as they should. Better communication and promotion of the arts from Council would be welcomed."

# 7

## Greater representation & inclusion

### CHALLENGE

There is an inclusivity gap for creative practitioners, creative activity and experiences in Nillumbik related to First Nations, LGBTQI+, young people, people with a disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

### OPPORTUNITY

Opportunity to ensure creative spaces are welcoming and inclusive of people from a diversity of backgrounds.

### ASPIRATION

All people feel safe, welcomed and represented in Nillumbik's creative spaces. First Nations culture and creativity is celebrated as a core part of Nillumbik's creative profile.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"Aboriginal, Rainbow & Trans flags at Council buildings—be on the right side of history, don't be afraid to make a stand for inclusion."

"Welcoming and inclusive space that encourages interaction amongst all generations."

# 8

## More diversity of spaces for creativity

### CHALLENGE

Existing spaces for creativity in Nillumbik are limited and unsuited to a range of creative uses.

### OPPORTUNITY

Understand more about the different types of spaces that could be re-purposed for creative uses on either a temporary or permanent basis, i.e. warehouses, vacant commercial spaces, flexible spaces, formal and informal spaces, indoor/outdoor spaces etc.

### ASPIRATION

Nillumbik is home to a diversity of spaces suited to a wide range of short and long-term creative uses.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH 'WHAT WE KNOW' COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

"People embrace opportunities to express themselves in many different ways and venues. It might be a special art installation or a piece of work created by a family at their front gate. Nillumbik art can take any form."

# Strategic Directions

Four strategic directions have been developed with a series of actions in response to the 8 key challenges facing Nillumbik's creative infrastructure.

1. Optimise the use of existing Council facilities

2. Build partnerships

3. Celebrate Nillumbik's art collection

4. Strengthen creative clusters & support creativity in all its forms

Table 1 shows the relationship between the 8 key challenges and the 4 strategic directions.

The following pages outline each strategic direction and identify a list of key actions recommended to achieve the strategic direction. The actions are informed by evidence from the research and analysis outlined in the methodology (see Figure 9).

		1. Optimise the use of existing Council facilities	2. Build partnerships	3. Celebrate Nillumbik's art collection	4. Strengthen creative clusters & support creativity in all its forms
1	Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity	●	●	●	●
2	The needs of all creatives are not being met	●	●		●
3	Lack of exhibition spaces	●	●	●	●
4	Support for contemporary and emerging art forms is limited	●		●	●
5	Funding & resourcing challenges for creative infrastructure	●	●	●	
6	Need for more communication and advocacy from Council	●	●	●	●
7	Greater representation & inclusion	●		●	●
8	More diversity of spaces for creativity	●	●		●

Table 1. Summary of the key challenges that are addressed by each of the strategic directions

# 1. Optimise the use of existing Council facilities

## What does this mean?

Ensure facilities cater for creative uses and are utilised for creative activity. This includes upgrading existing facilities, identifying opportunities for new facilities and reviewing the operation of facilities. This strategic direction addresses the following challenges:

- 1 Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity
- 2 The needs of all creatives are not being met
- 3 Lack of exhibition spaces
- 4 Support for contemporary and emerging art forms is limited
- 5 Funding & resourcing challenges for creative infrastructure
- 6 Need for more communication and advocacy from Council
- 7 Greater representation & inclusion
- 8 More diversity of spaces for creativity

## What does the evidence say?

Council has a range of facilities that they own and manage. The majority of these spaces are not purpose-built for creative uses, but are being used as such, and require modifications to better support this role.

Analysis of Council's arts and heritage grant application data gives an indication to the types of creative activity happening in across the municipality. The top industries for grant applications, were Writing, Art, Crafts, Music, Exhibitions and Sustainability (see Table 4 and Table 5).

Analysis of existing facilities and usage, creative grant applications, and identification of creative anchors has shown there is a lack of spaces for creative performance and exhibition, particularly for community-based creative activity and emerging creatives. A key priority for the community is ensuring smaller regional townships have access to creative spaces for performance, exhibition and creative connection.<sup>12</sup>

Further to this, there is a need for creative spaces to, where possible, be accessible by public and active transport (i.e. cycling & walking), to enable a greater diversity of practitioners, audiences and users to access these spaces. This analysis has informed the selection of eight Council-owned facilities to explore for potential upgrade and re-purposing (see Figure 11 - Figure 18).

<sup>12</sup> Nillumbik Shire Council, What We Know Community Consultation Summary Report

## How does this help deliver on Council's aspirations?

ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY 2022-2026	OPTIMISE THE USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES
GOAL 1: AN INTERCONNECTED AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	●
GOAL 2: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED CREATIVE COMMUNITY	●
GOAL 3: A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT CREATIVE COMMUNITY	●
GOAL 4: A DISTINCTIVELY NILLUMBIK CREATIVE COMMUNITY	●

Table 2. Relationship between strategic direction and Council's Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

OTHER COUNCIL DOCUMENTS	OPTIMISE THE USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES
COMMUNITY VISION - NILLUMBIK 2040	●
COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025	●
NILLUMBIK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030	-

Table 3. Relationship between strategic direction and key Council documents.

## Proposed actions:

### UPGRADING COUNCIL OWNED FACILITIES

The following Council-owned facilities have been identified for exploration for potential upgrade and re-purposing. These include:

1. Explore upgrading the Civic Drive Performance Centre to function as a makerspace or messy space in addition to its existing uses.
2. Explore upgrading Edendale Farm Homestead as a creative event and exhibition space, with a secondary use for creative production (i.e. art and craft).
3. Explore re-purposing one of the meeting rooms at Eltham Community and Reception Centre to provide a dedicated and affordable exhibition space for emerging artists, and to exhibit works from Council's art collection.
4. Explore re-purposing the meeting room at Eltham Library to provide more exhibition space and expand on the existing community gallery offer.
5. Explore upgrading Community Halls across the municipality to enable these spaces to function as exhibition, rehearsal and performance space for local artists and communities.

### COUNCIL OPERATIONS

There are opportunities to improve the management of Council facilities, to ensure high quality facilities that can function at their full potential and be used by all members of the community. The following actions are recommended to achieve this:

6. Streamline booking systems for creative spaces.
7. Continue the development of an online public directory of creative spaces.
8. Review existing lease arrangements, to ensure the facilities are being used to their full potential (being made the most of).
9. Collect and monitor space usage data to enable greater understanding of the demand for, and use of, Council's facilities. This evidence-base can be used to inform future decisions on infrastructure provision and programming.
10. Establish an assessment checklist for prioritising facilities for upgrade. This checklist should consider a range of factors including accessibility, cost, local demand, and proximity to creative spaces and anchors.

# 1. Optimise the use of existing Council facilities

Creative industry type	Number of Grant Recipients	Percentage
Writing	80	46%
Art	43	25%
Crafts	13	7%
Music	12	7%
Exhibition	6	3%

Table 4. Grant recipients by creative industry type between 2019-2022 (including COVID-19 grants).

Creative Industry Type	Number of Grant Recipients	Percentage
Art	5	16%
Exhibition	5	16%
Music	4	13%
Photography	3	9%
Sustainability	3	9%

Table 5. Grant recipients by creative industry type between 2019-2022 (excluding COVID-19 grants).

## Creative Council facilities

Figure 7 maps all the council owned facilities and creative grant locations across the municipality and highlights those identified as facilities to be upgraded to further support creative industries and activity.

It is important to note that some regional townships (i.e. Strathewen, Yarrambat and Arthurs Creek) do not have existing Council-owned infrastructure. Although the community has expressed a desire for creative spaces in these locations, this will need to be explored by Council through partnerships with different infrastructure owners (see Strategic Direction 2).

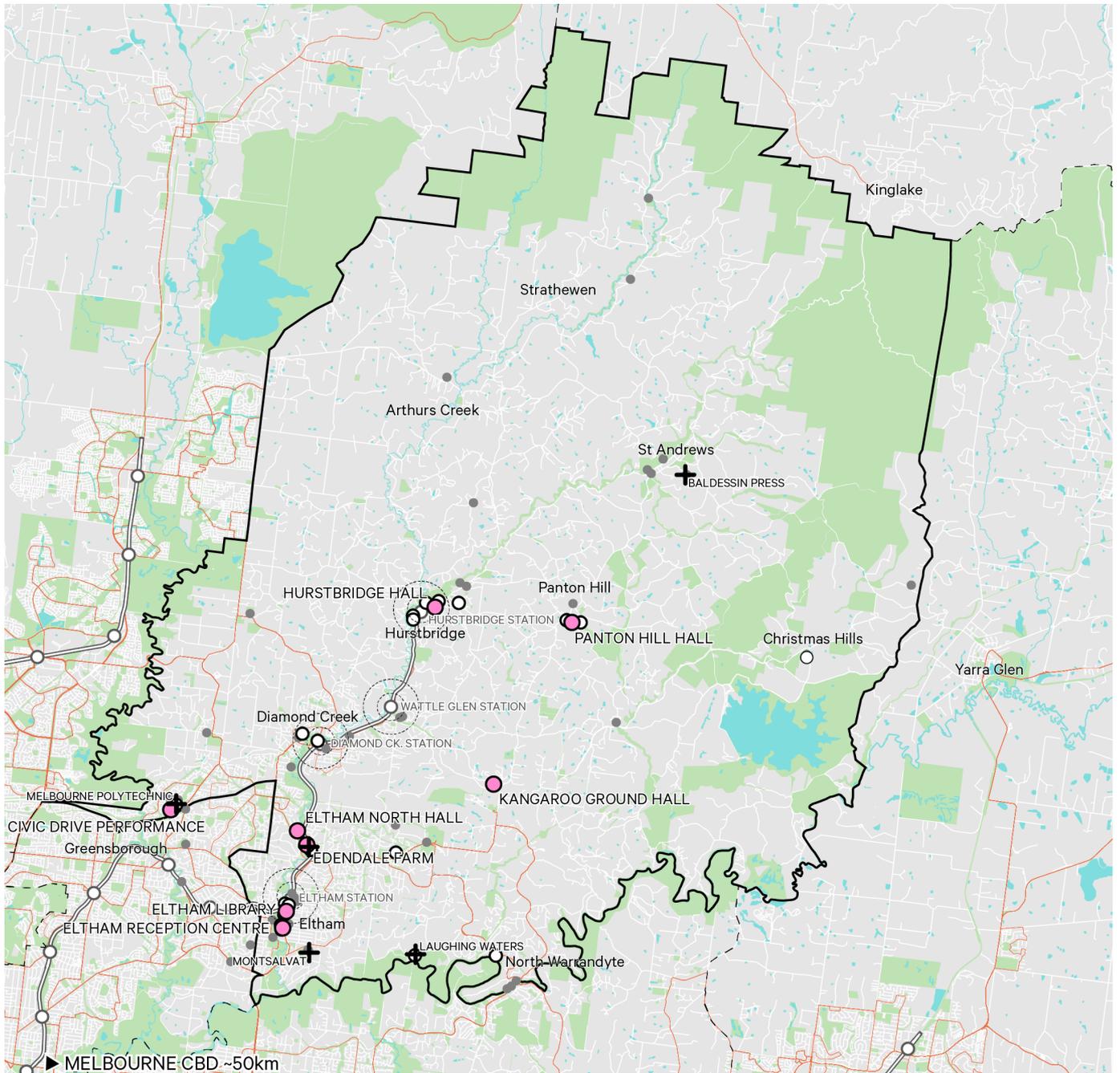


Figure 10. Map of Council facilities across Nillumbik Shire.

# 1. Optimise the use of existing Council facilities

## Re-purposing Council facilities spaces for multi-functional uses



Figure 11. Civic Drive Outdoor Performance Area

The large floorspace, durable materiality and open format of the Civic Drive Outdoor Performance Area lends itself to being suitable for a creative makerspace or messy space. Low impact interventions are required to transform this space, including the introduction of workbenches, basic tools and secure storage.



Figure 12. Edendale Farm Homestead

The Homestead at Edendale Community Farm has been investigated by Council for refurbishment as an arts and cultural center. The space offers opportunities for programmed creative activities and exhibitions aligned with Edendale's Strategic Pillars: Connecting, Learning & Leading. Any future upgrades must be aligned with the heritage status of the facility, and subject to building assessment. Opportunities exist to align the future creative use with the broader sustainability and climate-action aspirations of Edendale Farm.



Figure 13. Eltham Community & Reception Centre

The location and accessibility of this centre provide opportunities to re-purpose part of the centre to provide a dedicated and affordable exhibition space for emerging artists and to exhibit works from Council's art collection. The centre is staffed and has both theatre and exhibition capacity that is underutilised.



Figure 14. Eltham Library, Multi-purpose room

The multi-purpose room at Eltham Library offers a space to expand on the existing community gallery that operates in the library foyer area. With minor upgrades the space could be suitable for temporary exhibitions to enable multiple public exhibitions to be run from this established creative space.

## Upgrading Council halls for performances, rehearsals and temporary exhibitions

Nillumbik has a number of community halls that provide large open spaces suitable for a range of creative uses. With upgrades these facilities could offer more suitable spaces for creative exhibitions, rehearsal and performance, particularly in regional townships where community consultation identified a desire for greater creative levels of activity and spaces to support this.



Figure 15. Eltham North Hall

The halls with existing stages create great opportunities for delivering higher quality performing arts spaces through additions including a stage curtain, back drop, lighting and amplified sound capabilities. Temporary exhibition infrastructure could be shared between halls to enable temporary exhibitions for community groups without significant costs to creatives.

Enhancing the creative identity of these spaces through investments in public art would also enhance these spaces as key to supporting creativity in a way that reflects each township's distinct creative identity.



Figure 16. Hurstbridge Hall



Figure 17. Panton Hill Hall

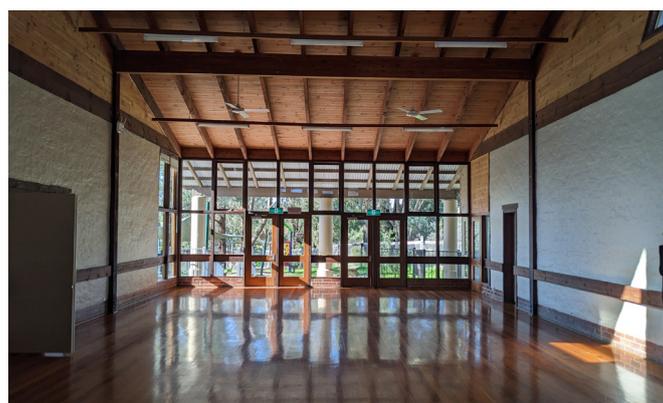


Figure 18. Kangaroo Ground Hall

## 2. Build partnerships

### What does this mean?

Ensure effective partnerships support enhanced creative outcomes in Nillumbik. Build upon existing partnerships and establish new partnerships to enable sharing of facilities, more effective funding/resourcing of creativity, greater levels of creative collaboration, and expand the Shire's creative offer into more contemporary and emerging art forms. This strategic direction addresses the following challenges:

- 1 Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity
- 2 The needs of all creatives are not being met
- 3 Lack of exhibition spaces
- 5 Funding & resourcing challenges for creative infrastructure
- 6 Need for more communication and advocacy from Council
- 8 More diversity of spaces for creativity

### What does the evidence say?

Engagement with Council officers and site-tours of creative anchors highlight opportunities for enhanced partnership arrangements with a range of government, private, not-for-profit and philanthropic organisations. Building collaborative partnerships will help Council shift its role from direct provision and funding of creative spaces to a collaborative partner and broker within an ecosystem of creative actors. Effective partnership arrangement also have the potential to enable greater levels of creative infrastructure and activity in regional townships where Nillumbik Shire Council does not currently own facilities.

### How does this help deliver on Council's aspirations?

ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY 2022-2026	
	BUILD PARTNERSHIPS
GOAL 1: AN INTERCONNECTED AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 2: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 3: A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 4: A DISTINCTIVELY NILLUMBIK CREATIVE COMMUNITY	-

Table 6. Relationship between strategic direction and Council's Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

OTHER COUNCIL DOCUMENTS	
	BUILD PARTNERSHIPS
COMMUNITY VISION - NILLUMBIK 2040	
COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025	
NILLUMBIK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030	

Table 7. Relationship between strategic direction and key Council documents.

## Proposed actions:

### PARTNERSHIPS TO SHARE FACILITIES

11. Explore partnering with local schools to provide the community with use of schools' creative facilities after hours or over the weekend. In particular, there are numerous performing arts spaces within local schools in the area, these include facilities listed in Table 8.

### CREATIVE ORGANISATIONS

12. Strengthen existing partnership with Montsalvat to explore opportunities for exhibiting more contemporary art forms.
13. Explore new partnership opportunities with creative organisations and creative space owners, including key creative anchors in the region i (i.e. Heide Gallery, Potters Cottage and Tarrawarra) that have at-grade facilities through which Council's collection could be exhibited.
14. Explore opportunities to partner with philanthropic organisations to support investment in creative infrastructure and programming

### NEIGHBOURING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

15. Explore collaboration opportunities with neighbouring Local Government Areas (including Yarra Ranges, Murrindindi and Manningham) and the Northern Councils Alliance<sup>13</sup> to identify more strategic and sustainable use of creative facilities and creative resources across the region in line with broader economic development and local tourism opportunities.

### STATE GOVERNMENT

16. Explore partnership opportunities with health and social services to incorporate creative exhibitions and programs as part of health and social infrastructure
17. Explore funding opportunities with Creative Victoria including public art commissioning as part of infrastructure upgrades
18. Explore enhanced partnership opportunities with State Government departments, i.e. Melbourne Water & Parks Victoria, to enhance creative outcomes across the municipality (i.e. Garambi Baan (Laughing Waters) Artist in Residence Program)

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<sup>13</sup> The Northern Councils Alliance is a committee including Mayors and CEOs of seven Councils including Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek, Mitchell, Nillumbik & Whittlesea.

## 2. Build partnerships

Case study example of a partnership approach to creative infrastructure



Image 3. St Albans Community Centre and The Bowery Theatre  
Source: Brimbank City Council

### The Bowery Theatre at St Albans Community Centre

St Albans Community Centre (STACC) and The Bowery Theatre (St Albans, Victoria) offers a range of arts and community spaces, including a 202 seat performing arts theatre, community hall, exhibition spaces, performance stair (pictured), dance studios arts and craft studio and rehearsal rooms. The Bowery Theatre hosts leading contemporary performances through partnerships with Footscray Community Arts, Live FM, Melbourne Fringe Festival, Midsumma Westside, The Australian Ballet and more.

## Performance spaces available through partnerships

Nillumbik has an identified a lack of infrastructure for creative performance, which may inform its future infrastructure planning. However, analysis of the local area indicates significant amenity for performing arts exists across the municipality and in neighbouring municipalities. While the affordability of such spaces is a key consideration, the opportunity to share this existing infrastructure through partnership arrangements with secondary schools and privately owned theaters is an key opportunity for Council to explore. This opportunity provides a more sustainable and less resource intensive option for providing spaces for creative performance in Nillumbik.

NAME	SUBURB	CAPACITY	COUNCIL OWNED
ELTHAM PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE	ELTHAM	200	YES
HAROLD MITCHELL PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE (ELTHAM COLLEGE)	RESEARCH	Unknown	NO
DIAMOND VALLEY SECONDARY COLLEGE	DIAMOND VALLEY	150	NO
ELTHAM COMMUNITY RECEPTION CENTRE	ELTHAM	300 (Dorian LeGallienne Room) 140 (Walter Withers Gallery)	YES
ELTHAM LIBRARY MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM	ELTHAM	70	YES
EMPOWER 365-360 CENTRE	LOWER PLENTY	567	NO
HURSTBRIDGE HALL	HURSTBRIDGE	120	YES
ELTHAM NORTH HALL	ELTHAM NORTH	120	YES
GREENHILLS NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE	GREENSBOROUGH	40	NO
PLENTY RANGES ARTS & CONVENTION CENTRE	SOUTH MORANG	UP TO 497	NO
BANYULE THEATRE	HEIDELBERG	250	NO
NILLUMBİK YOUTH HUB	DIAMOND CREEK	Currently in development	YES
WADAMBUK ST ANDREWS COMMUNITY CENTRE	ST ANDREWS	Unknown	NO
COMMUNITY BANK STADIUM	DIAMOND CREEK	900	YES

Table 8. Performing arts facilities in Nillumbik.

# 3. Celebrate Nillumbik's art collection

## What does this mean?

Allow for the public exhibition of Nillumbik's art collection in secure, gallery-grade facilities to support greater levels of audience attraction and local tourism. Enable more contemporary and emerging art forms to become part of Nillumbik's creative offer. This strategic direction addresses the following challenges:

- 1 Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity
- 3 Lack of exhibition spaces
- 4 Support for contemporary and emerging art forms is limited
- 5 Funding & resourcing challenges for creative infrastructure
- 6 Need for more communication and advocacy from Council
- 7 Greater representation & inclusion

## What does the evidence say?

Nillumbik's art collection is extensive and notable. The lack of purpose-built gallery spaces in Nillumbik means there are limited opportunities to display the collection in a safe and secure space that complements the quality of the artwork.

The creative spaces data shows a lack of spaces for creative consumption. Most creative spaces in Nillumbik are used for production, however, the lack of consumption spaces means there is not enough capacity to display the work that is being produced.

High-quality gallery spaces are designed to enhance the artworks they host. Such facilities need to have appropriate lighting, temperature control, circulation routes, blank walls, structured walls to support heavy artworks, and outlets required to display digital works.

Sharing Council's collection with the community is understood to have broader benefits for Council by enhancing the community's understanding and appreciation of the significant role that creativity plays in the municipality.

## How does this help deliver on Council's aspirations?

ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY 2022-2026	
	CELEBRATE NILLUMBIK'S ART COLLECTION
GOAL 1: AN INTERCONNECTED AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	-
GOAL 2: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 3: A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT CREATIVE COMMUNITY	-
GOAL 4: A DISTINCTIVELY NILLUMBIK CREATIVE COMMUNITY	

Table 9. Relationship between strategic direction and Council's Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

OTHER COUNCIL DOCUMENTS	
	BUILD PARTNERSHIPS
COMMUNITY VISION - NILLUMBIK 2040	-
COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025	-
NILLUMBIK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030	

Table 10. Relationship between strategic direction and key Council documents.

### Proposed actions:

19. Explore options for delivering a purpose-built, gallery-grade exhibition space to display the collection and works of established artists, suggested options include:
  - » Advocacy to support the funding and delivery of a municipal gallery.
  - » Delivering a purpose-built gallery space in the new Diamond Creek Community Centre.
  - » Renovating Edendale homestead to become a purpose-built gallery space.

### Case study example of a Council-owned gallery-grade exhibition space



Image 4. Realm, Ringwood  
Source: urban.com.au

## Realm

Realm in Ringwood, Victoria is an integrated community centre owned and managed by Maroondah City Council. It offers a contemporary gallery (ArtSpace), regional library, business resource hub, bookable meeting rooms, an interactive local history display, a cafe area and exhibition spaces throughout.

Realm offers the local community a place for participation and connection. ArtSpace is programmed with contemporary visual and performing arts with pop-up exhibition and performance spaces.

ArtSpace offers a curated program of exhibitions by leading multi-disciplinary artists and participatory arts experiences, exhibitions, activities and events for the community and visitors.

### 3. Celebrate Nillumbik's art collection

	Will it maximise tourism?	Is it located within the creative clusters?	Is it affordable for Council?	Can it be delivered with minimal intervention?
<b>Option 1</b> A new municipal gallery	●	N/A	●	●
<b>Option 2</b> Diamond Creek Community Centre	●	●	●	●
<b>Option 3</b> Edendale Community Farm Homestead	●	●	●	●

Table 11. Comparative analysis of the options for delivering on an exhibition space to display Nillumbik's art collection



#### Option 1 Advocacy to support a new Municipal Gallery

Building a purpose-built gallery space would provide high quality exhibition space to display Council's art collection, the works of established artists in the area and visiting artists. The municipal gallery would serve as a creative destination and attraction for visitors to Nillumbik. However, with the high costs associated with building a new municipal gallery, there is an opportunity for Council to take on an advocacy role and seek funding support through government and philanthropic bodies.



#### Option 2 Diamond Creek Community Hub

The plans for Diamond Creek Community Hub currently provide a new performance space and multi-functional gallery space. Given the numerous performing arts facilities that could be available for use through partnerships, the Diamond Creek Community Hub provides an opportunity to expand the planned gallery space to be a purpose-built and vibrant exhibition space with on-site staff to ensure the effective and secure delivery of exhibitions.



### Option 3 Edendale Homestead

Edendale homestead presents an opportunity for re-purposing the existing space into a gallery suited to display the collection. This option could present challenges given there is limited space and the existing building is old and subject to building assessment.

## 4. Strengthen creative clusters & support creativity in all its forms

### What does this mean?

Build upon existing clusters of creative activity across the municipality to enable enhanced creative and economic outcomes for Nillumbik. Support greater levels of creative activity and collaboration for a range of creative industries and enhance place outcomes for local communities.

- 1 Suitability of Council's existing arrangements and Council's role in supporting creativity
- 2 The needs of all creatives are not being met
- 3 Lack of exhibition spaces
- 4 Support for contemporary and emerging art forms is limited
- 6 Need for more communication and advocacy from Council
- 7 Greater representation & inclusion
- 8 More diversity of spaces for creativity

### What does the evidence say?

Eltham and Diamond Creek have been identified as creative clusters due to the significant number of creative spaces that span a range of industries (see Figures 5 and 6 in Introduction). Both areas are in close proximity to key creative anchors (including Council- and privately-owned spaces), accessible by public transport, and proximate to local retail, hospitality and recreation offerings. In addition, these spaces have local industrial areas that are essential to supporting spaces for creative production.

St Andrews has also been identified as a creative cluster as, compared to other regional townships, it has a high number of creative spaces, creative anchors, and is proximate to other creative clusters to support a municipal-wide creative ecosystem (see Figure 7 in introduction).

It is important that Council invests in creative infrastructure in areas identified as creative clusters in order to support the existing types of creativity underway in these locations and support opportunities to expand on this creative offer.

### How does this help deliver on Council's aspirations?

ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY 2022-2026	STRENGTHEN CREATIVE CLUSTERS & SUPPORT CREATIVITY IN ALL ITS FORMS
GOAL 1: AN INTERCONNECTED AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 2: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 3: A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
GOAL 4: A DISTINCTIVELY NILLUMBIK CREATIVE COMMUNITY	

Table 12. Relationship between strategic direction and Council's Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026

OTHER COUNCIL DOCUMENTS	BUILD PARTNERSHIPS
COMMUNITY VISION - NILLUMBIK 2040	-
COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025	-
NILLUMBIK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030	

Table 13. Relationship between strategic direction and key Council documents.

### Proposed actions:

20. Celebrate and support Montsalvat, Edendale Community Farm and Baldessin Press as key creative anchors for local creative clusters and to offer a greater range of creative experiences.
21. Utilise vacancies in High Street environments for temporary/pop-up ephemeral art connected to creative clusters.
22. Maximise opportunities for creative activity in Eltham and Diamond Creek through structure planning processes to support emerging creative industries and a nighttime economy.
23. Explore opportunities for spaces for live music performance outside of residential areas in areas identified as creative clusters to support nighttime economy.
24. Create local tourism opportunities through promotion of creative clusters and related activity.
25. Commission public art to contribute the public realm and creative placemaking.
26. Review Council's 1% public art contribution and explore policy implementation at a precinct scale as well as individual site scale.
27. Look into pop up opportunities for temporary creative exhibition in the public realm of the creative clusters. (i.e.. Cube Z).
28. Explore opportunities to establish a co-working space in a creative cluster to support home based creatives and emerging creatives to collaborate.

## 4. Strengthen creative clusters & support creativity in all its forms

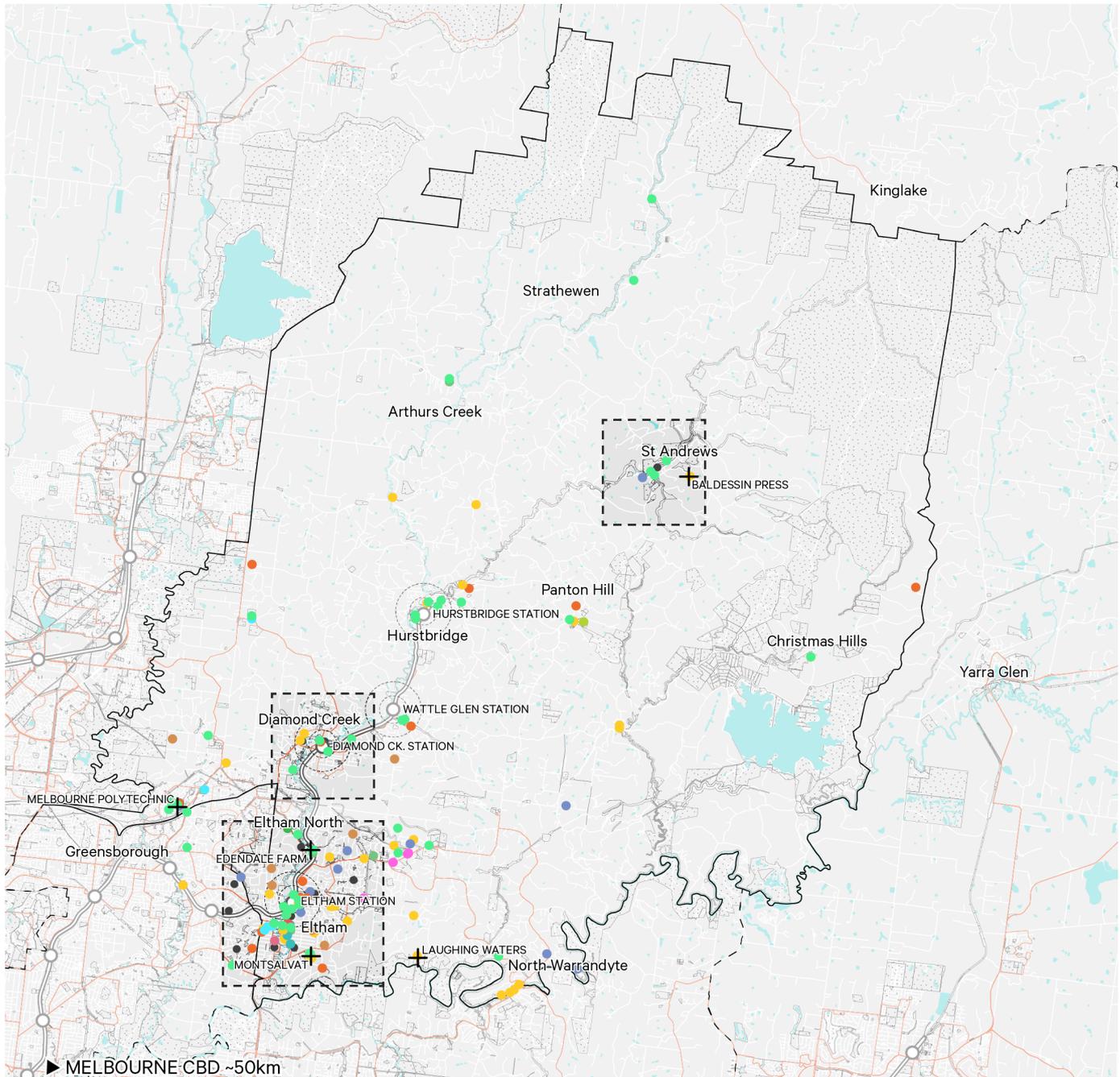


Figure 19. Map of creative clusters in Nillumbik.

## Creative spaces and functions in Nillumbik's creative clusters

The following diagrams show the number of creative spaces in each creative cluster and the function of these spaces. The data includes both the Creative Spaces data and the Creative Infrastructure Audit data.

Over half of creative spaces in Nillumbik are located in Eltham, which is home to 63 creative spaces across a diverse range of creative industries. Diamond Creek has 7 creative spaces across three key creative industries, while St Andrews has 5 creative spaces across three creative industries. The dominant creative industry in all creative clusters is Art, and the dominant creative function is creative production, particularly in Eltham.

### ELTHAM CREATIVE PRECINCT

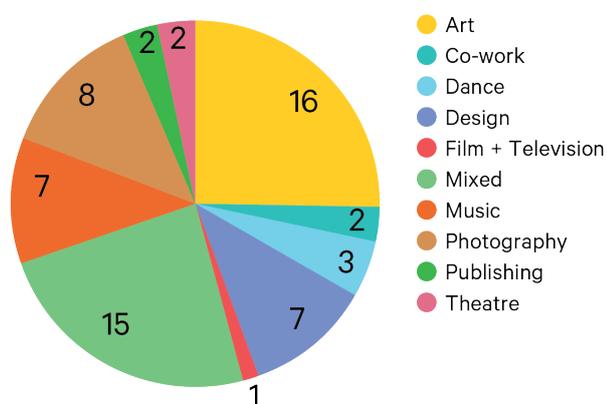


Figure 20. Creative spaces by industry in Eltham.

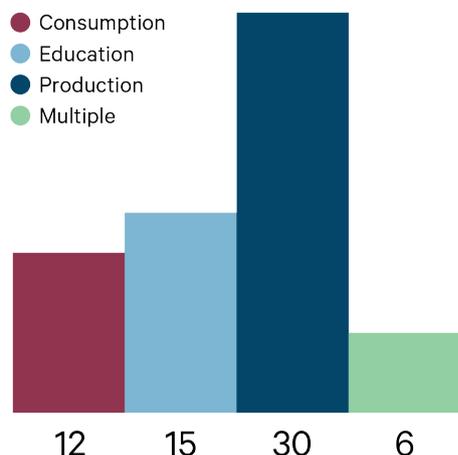


Figure 21. Creative spaces by function in Eltham.

### DIAMOND CREEK CREATIVE PRECINCT

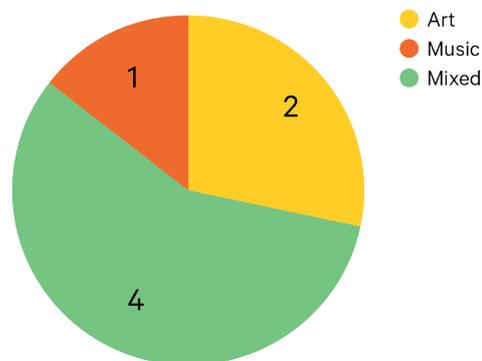


Figure 22. Creative spaces by industry in Diamond Creek.

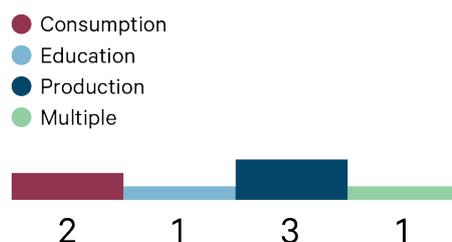


Figure 23. Creative spaces by function in Diamond Creek.

### ST ANDREWS CREATIVE PRECINCT

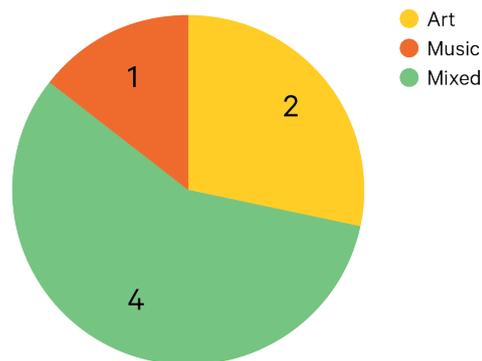


Figure 24. Creative spaces by industry in St Andrews.

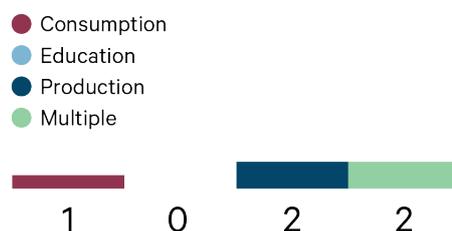


Figure 25. Creative spaces by function in St Andrews.

# Creative Infrastructure Staging Plan

The Creative Infrastructure Framework will guide Council's decision making for the next 10-years. The 30 Actions included in the Framework have differing timelines for delivery across this period. The following Staging Plan identifies each action as either a short, medium or long term action.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION	ACTION	SHORT-TERM (1-2 YRS)	MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YRS)	LONG-TERM (6-10 YRS)
1. OPTIMISE THE USE OF EXISTING COUNCIL FACILITIES	1. Explore upgrading the Civic Drive Performance Centre to function as a makerspace or messy space in addition to its existing uses.		●	
	2. Explore upgrading Edendale Farm Homestead as a creative event and exhibition space, with a secondary use for creative production			●
	3. Explore re-purposing one of the meeting rooms at Eltham Community and Reception Centre to provide a dedicated and affordable exhibition space for emerging artists, and to exhibit works from Council's art collection.		●	
	4. Explore re-purposing the meeting room at Eltham Library to provide more exhibition space and expand on the existing community gallery offer.		●	
	5. Explore upgrading Community Halls across the municipality to enable these spaces to function as exhibition, rehearsal and performance space for local artists and communities.		●	
	6. Streamline booking systems for creative spaces.	●		
	7. Continue the development of an online public directory of creative spaces.	●		
	8. Review existing lease arrangements, to ensure the facilities are being used to their full potential	●		
	9. Collect and monitor space usage data to enable greater understanding of the demand for, and use of, Council's facilities. This evidence-base can be used to inform future decisions on infrastructure provision and programming.	●		
	10. Establish an assessment checklist for prioritising facilities for upgrade. This checklist should consider a range of factors including accessibility, cost, local demand, and proximity to creative spaces and anchors.	●		

STRATEGIC DIRECTION	ACTION	SHORT-TERM (1-2 YRS)	MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YRS)	LONG-TERM (6-10 YRS)
2. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS	11. Explore partnering with local schools to provide the community with use of schools' creative facilities after hours or over the weekend.	●		
	12. Strengthen existing partnership with Montsalvat to explore opportunities for exhibiting more contemporary art forms.	●		
	13. Explore new partnership opportunities with creative organisations and creative space owners, including key creative anchors in the region (i.e. Heide Gallery, Potters Cottage and Tarrawarra) that have at-grade facilities through which Council's collection could be exhibited.			●
	14. Explore opportunities to partner with philanthropic organisations to support investment in creative infrastructure and programming.	●		
	15. Explore collaboration opportunities with neighbouring Local Government Areas (including Banyule, Whittlesea, Yarra Ranges, Murrindindi and Manningham) and the Northern Councils Alliance to identify more strategic and sustainable use of creative facilities and creative resources across the region in line with broader economic development and local tourism opportunities.	●		
	16. Explore partnership opportunities with health and social services to incorporate creative exhibitions and programs as part of health and social infrastructure		●	
	17. Explore funding opportunities with Creative Victoria including public art commissioning as part of infrastructure upgrades		●	
	18. Explore enhanced partnership opportunities with State Government departments, i.e. Melbourne Water & Parks Victoria, to enhance creative outcomes across the municipality		●	
3. CELEBRATE NILLUMBIK'S ART COLLECTION	19. Explore options for delivering a purpose-built, gallery-grade exhibition space to display the collection and works of established artists.			●
4. STRENGTHEN CREATIVE CLUSTERS AND SUPPORT CREATIVITY IN ALL ITS FORMS	20. Celebrate and support Montsalvat, Edendale Community Farm and Baldessin Press as key creative anchors for local creative clusters and to offer a greater range of creative experiences.		●	
	21. Utilise vacancies in High Street environments for temporary/pop-up ephemeral art connected to creative clusters.	●		
	22. Maximise opportunities for creative activity in Eltham and Diamond Creek through structure planning processes to support emerging creative industries and a nighttime economy.		●	
	23. Explore opportunities for spaces for live music performance outside of residential areas in areas identified as creative clusters to support nighttime economy.		●	
	24. Create local tourism opportunities through promotion of creative clusters and related activity.	●		
	25. Commission public art to contribute the public realm and creative placemaking.		●	
	26. Review Council's 1% public art contribution and explore policy implementation at a precinct scale as well as individual site scale.		●	
	27. Look into pop up opportunities for temporary creative exhibition in the public realm of the creative clusters.	●		
28. Explore opportunities to establish a co-working space in a creative cluster to support home based creatives and emerging creatives to collaborate.		●		

# Appendix A: Policy Review

Arts and Culture in Nillumbik is strongly supported across various strategies and policies. The following key policies were analysed as part of this project, to understand how the arts have been positioned within wider strategic work, sector specific strategies and place specific opportunities through structure plans.

- Arts & Culture Strategy 2022 - 2026
- What We Know - Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-26 Community Consultation Summary Report
- Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040
- Council Plan 2021 - 2025
- Economic Development Strategy 2020 - 2030
- Diamond Creek MAC Structure Plan 2030
- Eltham MAC Structure Plan 2030

Through this analysis, a number of key themes have been identified as important to delivering a range of creative outcomes in Nillumbik. These include:

- Developing Nillumbik's creative identity
- Under-represented art-forms
- More small and affordable creative spaces
- Activation of non-traditional and vacant spaces
- Creative spaces in smaller townships
- Council's art collection
- A central creative hub/precinct
- Public art and creative placemaking
- Festivals, events and markets that showcase local artists
- Co-location of creative infrastructure
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Dedicated exhibition space for mid-career and established artists
- More numerous and diverse artist residency programs
- Rezoning of commercial/industrial areas to facilitate the emergence of creative industries
- Supporting local businesses including creative industries
- Connection with Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Culture

Table 14 demonstrates how these themes align across Council's key strategic policies and planning. This demonstrates how arts and culture is part of a whole-of-government approach, and the importance of Nillumbik's creative identity to the Council and community both today and into the future.

	ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY 2022-2026	ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT	COMMUNITY VISION - NILLUMBIK 2040	COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030	DIAMOND CREEK MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTRE STRUCTURE PLAN 2030	ELTHAM MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTRE STRUCTURE PLAN 2030
Developing Nillumbik's creative identity	●	●	●	●	●		●
Under-represented art-forms	●	●					
More small and affordable creative spaces		●					
Activation of non-traditional and vacant spaces	●						
Creative spaces in smaller townships	●	●					
Council's art collection	●	●					
A central creative hub/precinct	●	●		●	●	●	
Public art and creative placemaking	●			●			●
Festivals, events and markets that showcase local artists		●	●				●
Co-location of creative infrastructure	●		●				
Partnerships and collaborations	●						
Dedicated exhibition space for mid-career and established artists		●					
More numerous and diverse artist residency programs	●	●					
Rezoning of commercial/ industrial areas to facilitate the emergence of creative industries						●	●
Supporting local businesses including creative industries	●			●	●		
Connection with Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Culture	●	●	●	●			

Table 14. Relationship between key themes and Council's policy documents.

# Appendix A: Policy Review



Figure 26. Front cover - Arts & Culture Strategy 2022 - 2026, Artwork title: Family and Future (Past, Present and Future... Emerging) by Fiona Clarke, Kirrae Whurrong Woman- First Nations Artist

## Arts & Culture Strategy 2022 - 2026

The Arts & Culture Strategy 2022 - 2026 includes four goals that will drive arts and culture in the Shire of Nillumbik over the next four years.

### GOAL 1: AN INTERCONNECTED AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY

"Community and Connection encourages inclusion and participation to support health and wellbeing and equitable access to services, programs, events and initiatives. Arts and culture can contribute to this theme in many ways."

Council commitments include:

- Build an interconnected creative ecology through physical spaces for connection and creation.
- Demonstrate the value of arts and culture in the community.
- Enhance connections with our heritage, and champion socially engaged practice.

Key considerations towards supporting this goal include:

- Prioritisation of under-represented art-forms (live music, literature, and dance);
- Using the library service as an exhibition and events space;
- A central and multi-functional creative space.

### GOAL 2: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED CREATIVE COMMUNITY

"We know that if we nurture the support of our creative businesses and individual practitioners, we seed fertile soil for our creative community to grow and flourish. Our creative industries can make positive contributions to a vibrant local economy and cultural tourism."

Council commitments include:

- Encourage strong collaborative relationships to build trust and elevate the reputation of the creative community in the non-cultural arena.
- Support creative practitioners with programs to enhance skills for growth.
- Celebrate Nillumbik as a creative centre through proactive promotion and marketing of cultural

programs and activities.

Key considerations towards supporting this goal include:

- Encouraging affordable pop-up spaces in vacant tenancies;
- Streamlining Council venue hire processes;
- Creating artist residency programs in inspiring places;
- Events that showcase local artists (particularly musicians);
- Ensuring best-practice care and management of Council collections.

#### GOAL 3: A DIVERSE AND RESILIENT CREATIVE COMMUNITY

"Arts and culture can assist in ensuring our community remains sustainable and resilient, by supporting our First Nations people, encouraging diversity of people and practice, developing and supporting our creative industries to be adaptive and flexible."

Council commitments include:

- Collaborate with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal Corporation and local First Nations people to share truth-telling stories with the wider community.
- Recognise and support diversity.
- Support emerging artists.
- Ensure that Nillumbik develops cultural longevity for the future.

Key considerations towards supporting this goal include:

- The activation of non-traditional spaces across the Shire;
- Supporting an open-studio model for under-represented art forms;
- Partnerships with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung for outdoor cultural programs;
- Celebrating literature.

#### GOAL 4: A DISTINCTIVELY NILLUMBIK CREATIVE COMMUNITY

"In Arts and Culture, we want to establish Nillumbik as a creative destination with its own unique flavour, where inspiring art is produced and consumed, which sparks civic pride in our community. A place where we create a mutually supportive ecology between artists, Council and community."

Council commitments include:

- Celebrate and enhance local character.
- Champion art in everyday life.
- Encourage closer connections between Council and the creative community.

Key considerations towards supporting this goal include:

- Placemaking that celebrates and enhances local character;
- Quality events showcasing unique Nillumbik identity;
- Digitisation of the Nillumbik Art Collection.

# Appendix A:

## Policy Review

### What We Know - Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-26 Community Consultation Summary Report

What We Know - Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-26 Community Consultation presents key findings from Artbeat -- a pulse check for arts and culture in Nillumbik Shire. This consultation supports the development of the Arts & Culture Strategy 2022-2026.

Identified in the consultation data are three key themes supported by six sub-themes:

#### INTERCONNECTEDNESS

- Physical spaces for connection and creation.
- Demonstrating the value of Arts & Culture in the community.
- Connecting to our heritage in engaging and contemporary ways.

Key considerations include the establishment of a central creative hub/precinct; a greater number of more affordable creative spaces; and, a greater number of creative spaces in smaller townships.

#### CREATIVE CAPITAL

- Celebration of the unique identity of Nillumbik.
- Promoting and supporting our artists and creative industries.

Key considerations include:

- The creation of new spaces, such as an exhibition space for mid-career artists;
- Performance space with 70-100 seats and an arthouse cinema;
- The digitisation of Council's art collection;
- Creation of an online calendar/directory of events and spaces;
- The provision of mentoring and development programs for artists.

#### DIVERSITY IN CULTURAL EXPRESSION AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE

- Share creative skills, understanding and a sense of delight.

Key considerations include:

- Supporting the practice and display of under-represented art forms in intimate venues
- Implementing an open-studio program for creatives who produce non-visual work;
- Engaging a wider audience with Wurundjeri Culture through storytelling sessions, bushwalks and the inclusion of Wurundjeri art in the Nillumbik Art Collection.

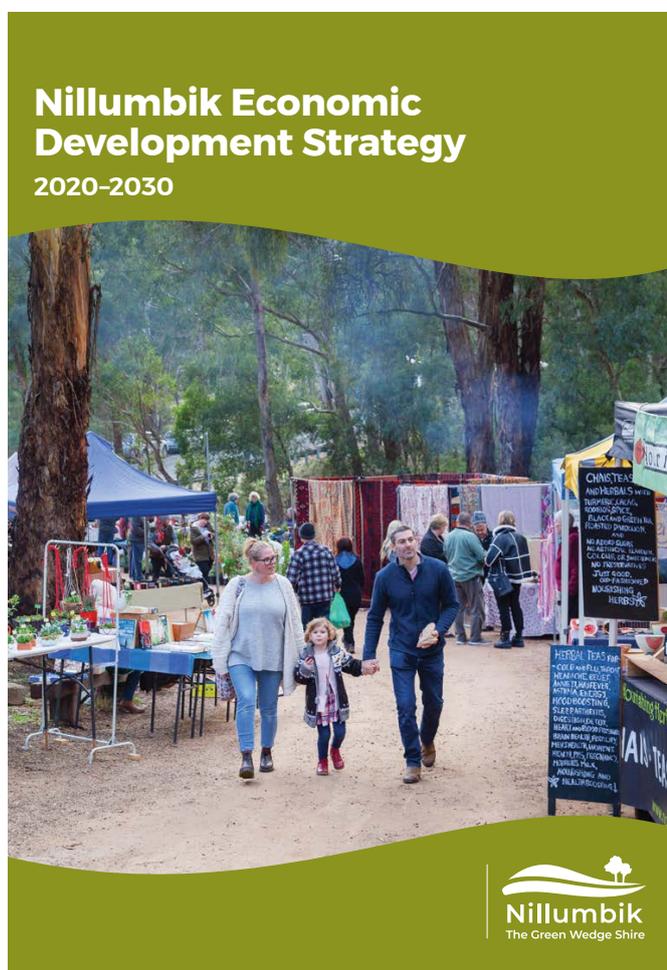


Figure 27. Front Cover - Nillumbik Economic Development Strategy 2020 -2030

## Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030

The Nillumbik Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030 is intended to strengthen the economy and facilitate job creation over the next 10 years. 'Creative and culture -- arts, culture, recreation and tourism' is recognised in the Strategy as one of Nillumbik's four key industry areas. The Strategy includes four Objectives that will guide its implementation. One of these has a direct relationship to the cultivation of a vibrant and prosperous creative and cultural industries sector.

### OBJECTIVE 4: ENHANCE THE VISITOR ECONOMY SHOWCASING NATURAL, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL STRENGTHS.

In addition to vast open spaces including recreation reserves that accommodate both organised and unstructured sports and recreation, Nillumbik has long been recognised as a creative and cultural Shire.

Two other Objectives are indirectly related to arts and culture:

### OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS TO ASSIST LOCAL BUSINESSES

### OBJECTIVE 2: CREATE VIBRANT ACTIVITY CENTRES AND EMPLOYMENT PRECINCTS IN ELTHAM AND DIAMOND CREEK.

# Appendix A: Policy Review

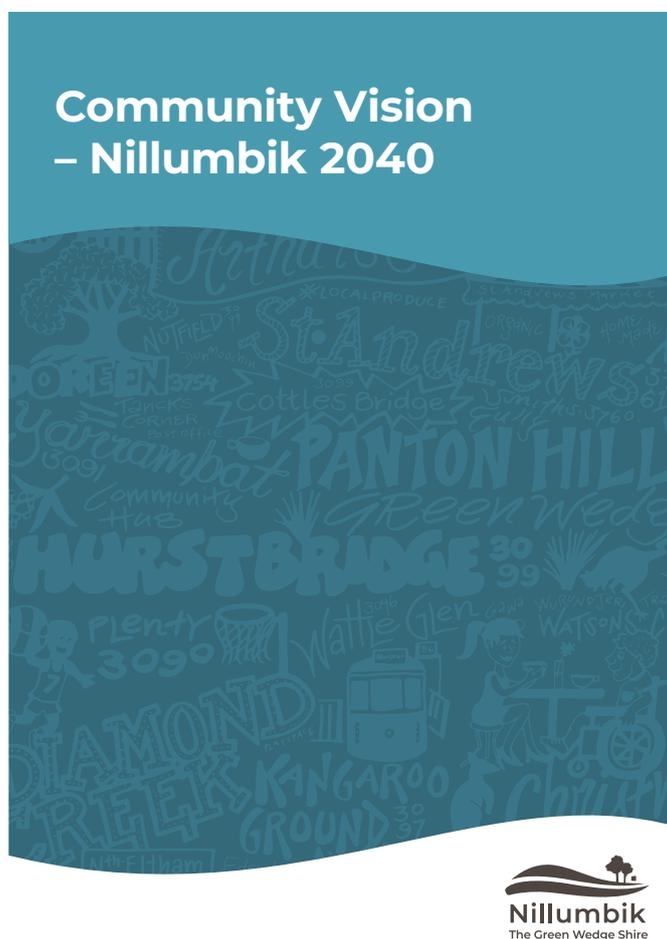


Figure 28. Front cover - Community Vision - Nillumbik 2040

## Community Vision — Nillumbik 2040

The Community Vision -- Nillumbik 2040 sets out a vision that reflects the collective aspirations of the Nillumbik community to inform future Council strategic planning, budgeting, service delivery and advocacy.

The Community Vision statement recognises the importance of places and spaces for cultivating culture:

"... Nillumbik's places and spaces make an important contribution to health, wellbeing, culture, the environment, biodiversity and economic success ..."

The framework for the community vision is designed using four themes; Our People, Our Place, Our Future, Our Council. Each of the four themes contains several aspirations. Those community aspirations directly related to the cultivation of a vibrant and prosperous creative and cultural industries sector are:

### OUR PLACE

- The promotion of our shared heritage, history, arts and artistic culture strengthens our community.

### OUR FUTURE

- The strong character and offering of the Shire are actively promoted, supporting a vibrant and sustainable economy and an actively involved community.



Figure 29. Front Cover - Council Plan 2021 - 2025

## Council Plan 2021 - 2025

The Council Plan 2021-2025 includes two goals that drive Council activity during these years. Two of these have a direct relationship to the cultivation of a vibrant and prosperous creative and cultural industries sector:

### GOAL 2: PLACE AND SPACE

We celebrate and prioritise the protection of our heritage, arts and culture, places and spaces by focusing on the diversity of experiences that have shaped our shared history.

We recognise and celebrate our community's significant contributions to art and culture.

We value everyday arts and cultural experiences through the development of public art.

#### Priority actions:

- Further investigate suitable sites for a gallery and exhibition spaces.
- Develop a Performing Arts Policy.

### GOAL 2: SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT

We provide spaces, places and opportunities that develop, and actively support our creative industries.

#### Priority actions:

- Support local businesses and the local economy through the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.

# Appendix A: Policy Review

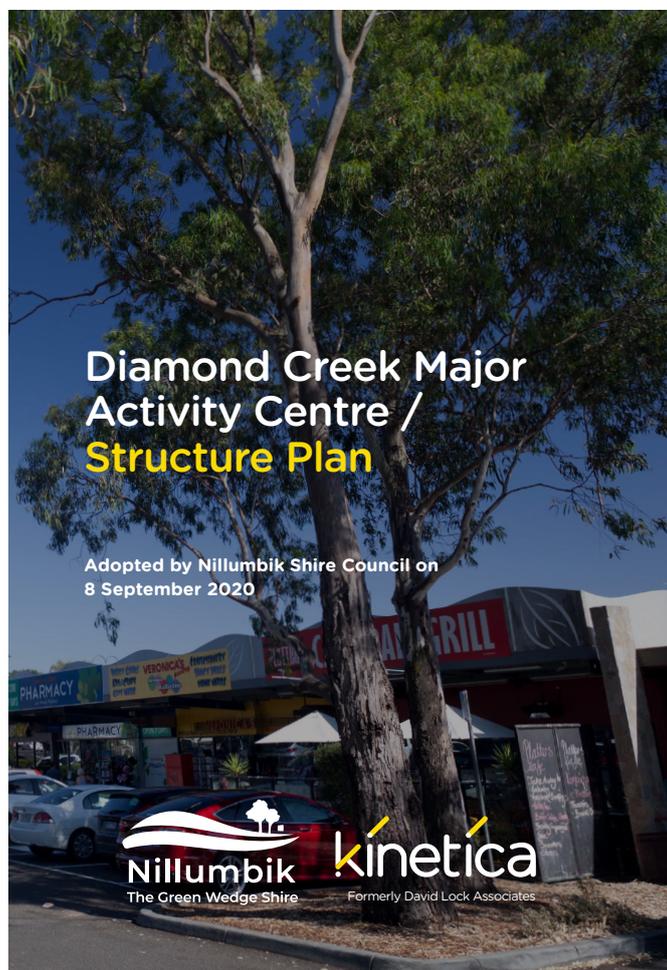


Figure 30. Front cover - Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2020)

## Diamond Creek MAC Structure Plan (2020)

The Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2020) sets a vision for the area until 2030 to manage change and growth.

Two precincts in the structure plan are identified as having a preferred character linked to creative industries:

- Precinct 3 is the block bounded by Elizabeth and Station Streets and falls within the ACZ2. The precinct is envisioned to become a mixed use precinct where existing local trades and services continue alongside small-scale manufacturing, start-ups and creative industries.
- Precinct 5 is bounded by George Street to the east, Main Hurstbridge Road to the south and the rail line to the north and falls within the ACZ2. The precinct is envisioned to become a mixed use precinct where existing industrial uses continue alongside start-ups, small-scale manufacturing and creative industries.

The Structure Plan speaks to supporting creative and cultural industries through:

- Potential rezoning of Precincts 3 and 5 to a Commercial 3 Zone (C3Z) which would allow small businesses and creative industries to emerge.
- Consideration of a multi-purpose community building that could include youth friendly community space, community arts and performance space and a library. This could be provided through redeveloping the Diamond Creek Community Centre.

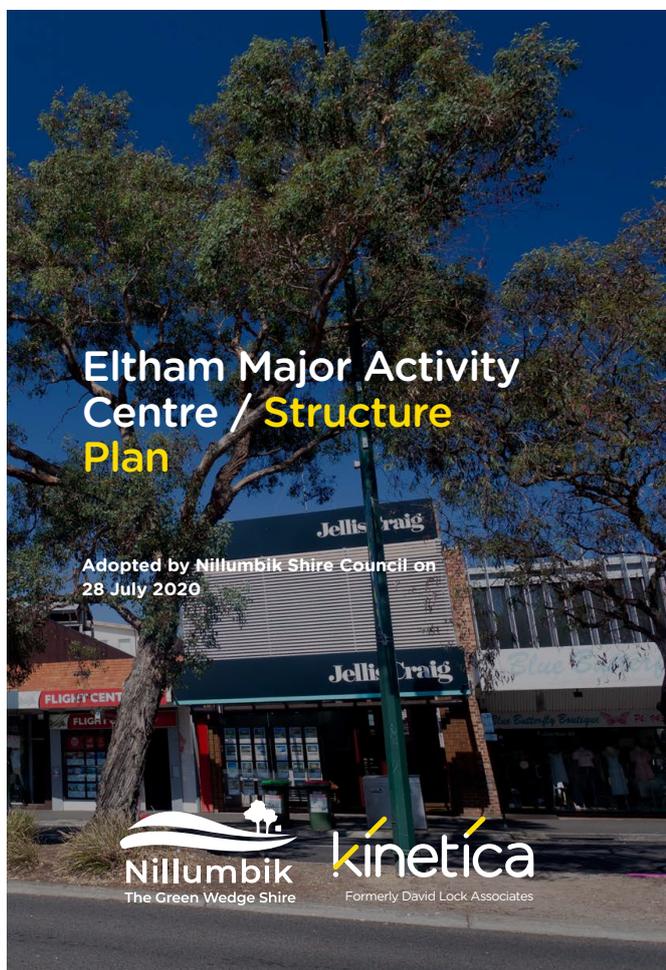


Figure 31. Front cover - Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2020)

## Eltham MAC Structure Plan (2020)

The Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2020) sets a vision for the area until 2030 to manage change and growth.

Two precincts in the structure plan are identified as having a preferred character linked to creative industries and cultural expression:

- Precinct 5: Community Precinct is bounded by Main Road and the Diamond Creek associated open space with Eltham Station to the north and Panther Place to the south. It falls within the ACZ1. The precinct is envisioned to become the cultural heart of Eltham where people celebrate local community and artistic spirit. Underused existing sites and buildings in the precinct are identified as opportunities to attract new facilities to accommodate events and activities.
- Precinct 9: Cultural Precinct encompasses the community, sports and recreation uses bounded by Bridge Street, Susan Street, Withers Way and Main Road. It is envisaged the indigenous landscape will be enhanced while the Eltham Community and Reception Centre, the Eltham Leisure Centre and the Living and Learning Centre will continue to be maintained.

The Structure Plan speaks to supporting creative and cultural industries through:

- Creation of a lively and people-based centre with civic and community spaces that enhance community interaction and general health and well-being, accommodating a wide variety of community functions, including the display of community art and artefacts which reflect the artistic and cultural aspirations of the community.
- Application of the Activity Centre Zone 1 (ACZ1) to the Bridge Street Business Area (BSBA) to enable some diversification of uses such as creative industries, small manufacturers, start-up business offices and limited food and drink premises.
- Consideration of a community hub in Precinct 5 that has a focus on cultural development, learning and social support.
- Consideration of other key facilities in Precinct 5 such as an auditorium, regional art gallery, community cinema, community kitchen, office and activity spaces.

# Hodyl & Co



Relief Ink

GROUND  
ROLLERS  
NOT FOR INK!

NEWSPRINT (SMALL)