

ADRIAN

RECENT POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Authorised by Adrian King 160 Barkly Street, St Kilda, VIC 3182

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Middle Park residents pay private security company to patrol neighbourhood at night



Regan Hodge Follow 2 min read Jan 4, 2025 5:00am

602 Comments

Fed-up residents smashed by a soaring crime wave across Melbourne's suburbs are increasingly hiring private security companies to patrol the streets at night.

There are now several suburbs and individual housing estates across the city forking out cash for specialist security firms to respond to criminal incidents overnight in their own cars.

A surge in crime across Melbourne, including home invasions, car thefts and aggravated burglaries, accompanied with under-resourced police is leaving some residents on edge.

Crime across Melbourne jumped nearly 20 per cent, the Whitehorse area rose 17.5 per cent while the Mornington Peninsula spiked by 29.1 per cent over the past year.

Other private security companies have already been patrolling areas in Werribee, Wyndham Vale, Camberwell, Hawthorn, Toorak, Brighton, Caulfield and Balwyn for months.

A four-week trial of additional security patrols kicked off in Middle Park this week with anxious residents chipping in to pay for the overnight crew to catch and deter crooks.

A marked patrol car has been circling the luxury inner suburb to catch home invaders, aggravated burglars and any other dodgy criminal activity.

Overall crimes in Middle Park alone have almost doubled, rising over the past year by almost 76 per cent.

Property damage in Middle Park doubled, theft increased by more than 90 per cent and burglaries rose by more than 50 per cent in that suburb.

Adrian King from the Preserving Middle Park Village, who have enlisted Monjon Australia to conduct the night time patrols, said locals were fed up.

He said 100 residents had signed up for the patrols since Christmas Day.

"What ultimately led to this security initiative were local residents' concerns with the state of our judiciary, concerns that were expressed at a local community meeting last month," he said.

"Hence prevention better than cure because today the existing deterrents appear inadequate."

Grant Burton, who has worked in security for 25 years, said his crew, Your Protection Group, have been asked to patrol an increasing number of residential areas.

He said crooks know that police are struggling to commit to proactive patrols at night given their current resourcing woes.

“We are growing, we now look after three estates across Melbourne and have been approached recently by more estates in the southeast,” he said.

“The right security car and company can be a visible deterrent for criminals.

“The presence alone can distract and deter from a criminal being comfortable at night, breaking into cars and homes.

“There’s definitely a shift, criminals know that police aren’t going to be patrolling these areas at night.”

Victoria Police said Middle Park was “an overwhelmingly safe place to live”.

“We understand any crime is a concern for the community, especially when people are in their own home,” a statement read.

“It is important to recognise Middle Park remains an overwhelmingly safe place to live. The suburb recorded one residential aggravated burglary offence in the last 12 months compared with three the previous year.”

But the police union said residents forking out their own cash for patrols “is an indictment on the government’s failure to properly resource our police force.”

“The consequence we’re now seeing is neighbourhoods banding together to fund their own private security, and not for the first time. This is simply unacceptable.”

The state government said the force was backed by a record $4.5bn with more than 3600 new officers.

“We understand any sort of offending causes concern in the community. Police will be where they are needed most, when they are needed most,” a spokesperson said.

“Only one party closes police stations and refuses to fund Victoria Police’s workforce – and that’s Brad Battin’s Liberals.”

At the Meeting of Port Philip City Council held on 18 March 2026, the response to public questions about the Lagoon Reserve Pavilion contained inaccuracies and did not fully address all the matters raised. A corrected and complete response is provided below.

1. Question:

Please can Council explain why is the new pavilion at Lagoon Reserve painted in the colours of Albert Park College, a State funded education organisation?

The colours used on the pavilion were chosen by the consultants and approved by Council officers to fit with the look and feel of Lagoon Reserve. They are based on the native vegetation in the area, particularly wattle and banksia.

2. Question:

Did Albert Park College at any point whatsoever indicate its desire for the 2nd floor that has been built? Noting this additional 2nd floor has come at a cost to ratepayers of circa $3m+.

Yes. At Council briefings in December 2019 and March 2020, Councillors were advised that Albert Park College met with officers (August 2019) and corresponded in November 2019, outlining its interest in contributing funding to a Pavilion redevelopment. The school was seeking to include a 160 m2 double classroom, and suitable toilet, change and access arrangements to support their educational programs.

There was discussion about community groups potentially accessing the classroom out of hours. Albert Park College proposed this as an upper storey to the Pavilion.

The Scouts verbally contacted officers in mid-2019 to also flag interest in potential inclusion of scout facilities in a new Pavilion at either Elder Smith Reserve or Lagoon Reserve.

3. Question:

Did Albert Park College at any time communicate to any Council personnel its willingness to fund all or part of the cost of the additional 2nd level?

Yes. At Council briefings in December 2019, March 2020 and June 2022, Councillors were advised that Albert Park College had indicated it had some funds to put towards the proposal, however no specific dollar amounts were mentioned.

These briefings also highlighted that the Scouts had contacted officers to flag interest in potential inclusion of scout facilities in a new pavilion and they could contribute $500k to the project.

At a Councillor briefing in March 2020, three design options were presented to Councillors for consideration. Councillors provided feedback to progress with a new small pavilion.

At the March 2020 briefing Councillors also supported investigating the possibility of external funding partners for the pavilion project if a second storey was progressed. Councillors supported officers engaging with Albert Park Secondary College and the Scouts to consider their aspirations (and funding) in consideration for the pavilion.

At a Councillor briefing in June 2022, officers provided four options for Councillor feedback including: Option 1 – Do Nothing; Option 2 – Investigate modular design option; Option 3 – Single story pavilion constructed with an option to include a second story into the future; and Option 4 – two-storey pavilion. This briefing recommended progressing with a single storey pavilion (Option 3) and completed further investigations to undertake minimal upgrades to the Reserve. This briefing highlighted the only way to include either the Scouts or Albert Park College requests into the build would be to include a second storey.

Councillor feedback from this briefing informed the project direction including that most Councillors did not support receiving funding from external sources as this could impact broader community use and most supported building a two-storey pavilion to future proof the facilities.

In September 2022, at a public Council meeting, Council endorsed progressing the detailed design for a two-storey pavilion and viewing balcony (Option 3) for the Lagoon Reserve Pavilion. At this meeting Council also committed additional funding for the project from Council's Open Space Reserve and rates.

The Lagoon Reserve Community Room is available for community hire as a Council-managed space. More information is available here:

Lagoon Reserve Community Room - City of Port Phillip

On 26/11/2024 11:42, Jacky Bailey

wrote:

> Good afternoon, Adrian.
>
> Thank you for bringing it to my attention that the Community Satisfaction Survey results have not yet been published on the website. I will ensure this is rectified.
>
> For your convenience, I have also attached the report to this email.
>
> Warm regards,
>
> **Jacky Bailey**
> Head of Corporate Planning
> T: 03 8563 7309 | W: www.portphillip.vic.gov.au
> St Kilda Town Hall | 99a Carlisle Street, St Kilda, Victoria 3182
>
> 
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> 
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>
> Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations.
> We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.
>
> *This message and any attachments may be confidential and/or legally privileged. If you received this message in error, please do not copy or distribute it. Instead, destroy it and notify the sender immediately. To the extent that this email contains information provided to Port Phillip City Council by other sources, Port Phillip City Council does not warrant that it is accurate or complete. To the extent that there are opinions or views expressed in this email, they are those of the individual sender and may not necessarily reflect the views of Port Phillip City Council. Please do not delete or alter this notice.*

Community slams City of Port Phillip Council over contentious public seating proposal

Aninner southeasterncouncilhasvotedonacontroversialpublicseatingplan,whichcommunityfearswill increase already rife violent crime.

Gemma Scerri Reporter Follow

@gemmascerri

2 min read July 17, 2024 - 5:23PM **Port Phillip Leader**

0 comments



Traders on Fitzroy St have dealt with dangerous and anti-social behaviour surrounding public seating areas, including the notorious “mushroom seats”, a well known sport for vagrants to sleep and congregate – here pictured is a home made bong. Picture: supplied.

An inner-city council voted to put a pause on a contentious public seating proposal after it sparked public outrage among traders, residents and the cops.

Passionate Fitzroy St community members from St Kilda attended the Port Phillip Council meeting on Wednesday night in droves to have their voices heard over a public seating proposal that could see the increase in already rising crime rates.

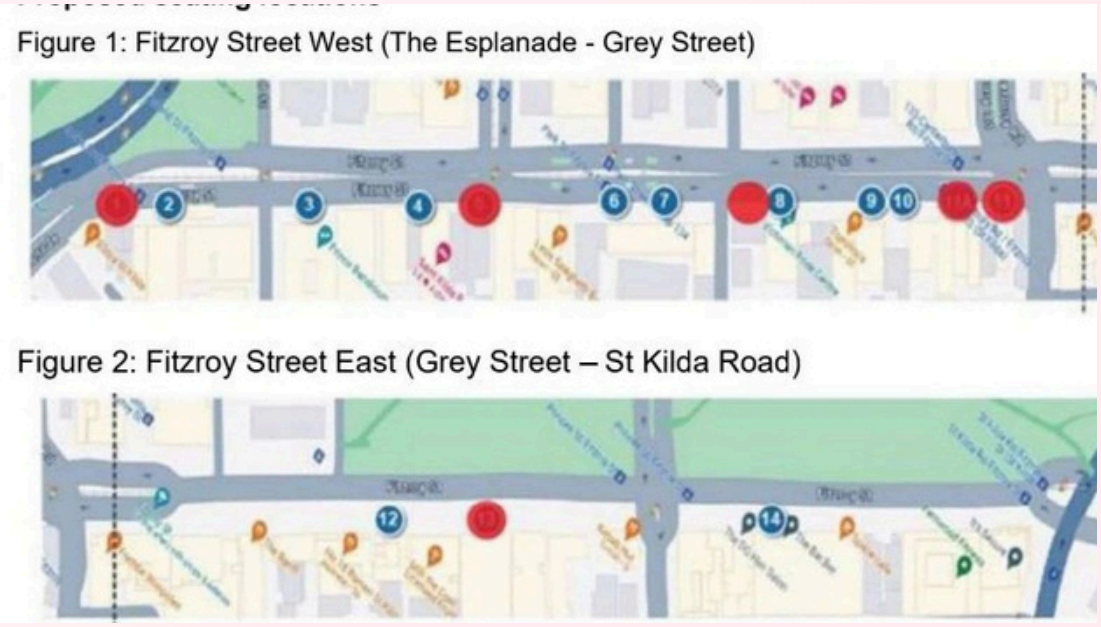
The community vehemently opposed the council’s proposal to add further public seating along the Fitzroy St retail and residential strip, as CCTV footage reveals the dangerous behaviour already occurring in the area.

The controversial proposal would see new public seating installed along the strip between The Esplanade and Grey St, and further between Grey St and St Kilda Rd.

After getting into the community to speak with traders and residents, Councillor Christina Sirakoff said most people she spoke to “were not supportive of the seating”.

“I think we should listen to the requests of the community, our residents, our traders and our police,” she said.

The council voted to put a pause on the proposal in an unanimous vote, after it was clear the motion would not make it through in it’s current form.

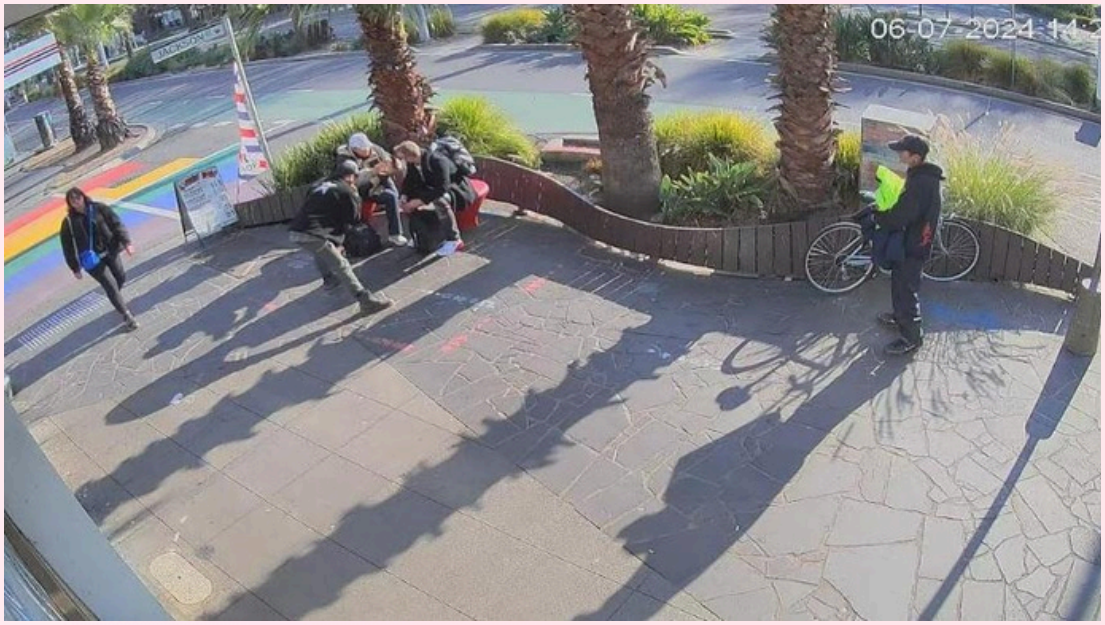


The City of Port Phillip Council has put forward a strongly opposed proposal to increase public seating along Fitzroy St in St Kilda. Picture: Port Phillip Council July 17, 2024 Agenda.

The pictured proposal was inserted into the July 17 agenda ahead of the Wednesday night meeting, accompanied with a quote of apparent support of local police, who only opposed seating outside specific businesses – 77 Fitzroy St and 121 Fitzroy St.

However, in emails seen by the Herald Sun, two police members have written to the council on separate occasions opposing the entire proposal and further, requesting the removal of pre-existing ‘red mushroom seats’.

CCTV footage of the mushroom seats shows images of anti-social behaviour, including loitering, drug paraphernalia and weapons, demonstrating behaviour which traders and residents say is already rife along the street.



CCTV footage captured outside 7-Eleven on Fitzroy St capturing alleged drug dealing, using and general public disturbance. Picture: supplied.

Owner of Care More Bain & Co Pharmacy Charlotte Frajman said in 34 years of owning her business, she has never been more scared than now.

“We lived through the worst of Gatwick House, and not once was I scared,” she said.

“Everyday for the last two years we have lived in terror.”

Ms Frajman and her husband have both been assaulted and threatened by local alleged drug dealers, forcing them to take out intervention orders.

“We call the police at least seven times a day,” she said.

“They might attend once every five calls.”

Similar development along Fitzroy St has previously caused ire with the community when a public toilet block was proposed outside the St Kilda Park Primary School.

The public toilet proposal was ultimately rejected due to community backlash.



A trader at Fitzroy St in St Kilda found an axe left outside their store, following anti-social behaviour at and around already existing public seating. Picture: supplied.

Middle Park resident Adrian King said the behaviour that will follow the installation of the seats will take up more of the already overwhelmed police resources in the bayside area.

“I frequent St Kilda daily and there is no healthy St Kilda without a healthy Fitzroy St,” he said.

Inner South

Don't miss out on the headlines from Inner South Followed categories will be added to My News.

Follow

"St Kilda is the centre of the municipality. Police resources are finite, St Kilda's problem is Middle Park's problem, Elwood's problem, South Melbourne's problem."

"The challenge requires a collaborative and sustained approach, with joint ownership of the issue – council, police, other support agencies and the community."

More Coverage



Elwood physio accused of sexual assault returns to male patients



Frankston support worker busted speeding on meth



Should more seats be added along Fitzroy St?

Subject **FormerIchiNi - Parklet - Urgent**
From <adrian_[redacted]
To <Heather.Cunsolo@portphillip.vic.gov.au>
Cc 06/06/2024 11:59
Date

Dear Mayor Cunsolo,

The following, given its seriousness, I kindly request your reply by close of play **Monday 10 June 2024.** The request of you is a simple one. This new topic goes to the very heart and right of this Council to continue in its current form.

This fresh issue is against a backdrop of multiple outstanding (and growing) issues on the same theme - the Council's governance and integrity.

To ensure transparency this email has been copied to Cr Sirakoff for information purposes only. It has also been copied to Rebecca Tepper, Preserving Middle Park Village's Secretary (PMPV).

The Core Facts

1 - I am in possession of Council documentation.

The Council documentation states that due to traffic safety concerns the business parklet at the Ichi Ni restaurant (the restaurant subsequently shutdown down in February 2024) would be greatly reduced in size owing to the fact the business parklet blocked car drivers line of sight exiting from Victoria Street.

2 - I am in possession of documentation from a resident.

The resident states that following receipt of the Officer's written decision to reduce the size of the business parklet the resident was subsequently stonewalled multiple times over an extended period by the Council.

The resident sought an explanation as to why the Officer's decision to reduce the size of the Ichi Ni business parklet had not been carried out. The resident approached the Council multiple times via telephone, email and physically in person over a six month period. Each time the resident was unable to access a relevant Council representative.

The Ichi Ni business parklet was never reduced in size.

For completeness and for the record, I note today the Ichi Ni business parklet physically remains in place 'as is' despite the restaurant shutting down 4 months ago. Furthermore, I note the subsequent fraudulent application by Australian Venue Co (AVC) with regard to this now redundant business parklet. That application by AVC is itself a very serious outstanding matter.

Moreover, AVC's current documented plans to redevelop the former Ichi Ni site includes full utilisation of the redundant business parklet space, a physical area in size deemed unsafe by the Council Officer.

The Issue Before Us Today

Which Councillor or Councillors led the process to overrule the Officer's decision to reduce the Ichi Ni business parklet size due to traffic safety concerns?

The Council's own Councillor Code of Conduct policy states in black and white that Serious Misconduct includes:
"a Councillor must not direct, or seek to direct, a member of Council staff"

It is clear a Councillor or Councillors has overruled a member of Council staff. On a topic of public safety.

A Councillor or Councillors has overruled Council staff in favour of a 'for profit' entity's benefit at the expense of public safety.

Which Councillor(s)?

Hidden cameras: Residents hire private eye in rooftop bar brouhaha



Tom Cowie

December3,2023 — 5:00am

Residents' groups will often go to great lengths to try to stop a development from cropping up in their neighbourhood, but this may be a first.

A community organisation has hired a private investigator to collect video evidence from Melbourne's pubs in their efforts to block the Middle Park Hotel's owners from building a new rooftop bar.



Residents are objecting to a proposed rooftop bar at the Middle Park Hotel. JOE ARMAO

Bodycam footage recorded at establishments owned by pub conglomerate Australian Venue Co was shown in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal last week as part of a tense battle between the company and Middle Park residents.

Australian Venue Co is pushing ahead with plans to increase the three-storey Victorian era hotel's capacity by 200 people, introduce seven-day operating hours until 1am and install a new floating terrace to host DJs.

About 1900 people have signed a petition opposing changes to the 134-year-old venue, with residents raising $200,000 to take the fight as far as they can. They claim it will turn a quiet neighbourhood village that is home to families and the elderly into a magnet for anti-social behaviour linked to heavy drinking.

“We’re not anti-St Kilda, we go there,” Preserving Middle Park Village president Adrian King told the VCAT hearing. “But we don’t wish to become another St Kilda.”



Residents hired a private investigator to show behaviour at Australian Venue Co pubs. RIVICA

The footage from Australian Venue Co’s other pubs is intended to show that Middle Park Hotel will not be a family-friendly “food-led concept” as claimed, but instead a boozy venue that will create excessive noise.

“During the time we conducted surveillance at a number of premises, we didn’t see any families, no children, no dining taking place,” private investigator Richard James told *The Sunday Age*.

James, whose career has included a stint at the Office of Police Integrity, said he was hired to observe pubs that were similar to the proposal for the Middle Park Hotel rooftop.

He said the aim was to show the age of patrons, whether music was being played and how the tables were set up. He said a decibel reader was also used.

“This might be the first time that any audiovisual evidence has been used like this,” he said.

The footage was recorded on a Friday night in April between 9pm and midnight at venues in Richmond, Abbotsford and Fitzroy.

In addition to the Middle Park Hotel proposal, residents have also expressed concern about the recent approval of a Dan Murphy’s liquor outlet just across from the pub on Armstrong Street.



Golding’s view. MATT GOLDING

The outlet has been given a council permit but is still waiting on a liquor licence.



A screen grab of footage recorded by a private investigator inside Australian Venue Co pubs. RIVICA

During his submission, King raised issues about parking in Middle Park and a potential problem with public urination. As well as the footage from the private investigator, he said there was video evidence of people urinating outside the Espy.

“We simply do not believe [Australian Venue Co],” King told the hearing. “It’s not about the food.”

A spokesperson for Australian Venue Co did not address residents' concerns or the use of cameras inside their venues.

"The application for a rooftop is currently subject to the continuation of a VCAT hearing," they said. "We will await the outcome of that hearing."



The Middle Park Hotel. JOE ARMAO

The hospitality giant lodged plans with the City of Port Phillip in late 2021. A decision was due in the middle of 2022 but was taken to VCAT after the council failed to decide on granting a permit.

At a meeting, councillors agreed on a position to take to VCAT that would restrict the proposed rooftop deck's trading hours to 9pm during the week and 10pm on weekends, with no live music allowed at any time.

The tribunal hearing was due to be completed over four days last week, but will not finish until next year due to the length of the submissions and evidence given so far.

It is being heard by VCAT senior member Philip Martin and member Phil West, who recently approved a beer garden at the Terminus Hotel in North Fitzroy amid community objections.