

Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Standing Advisory Committee - Member Biographies

Updated September 2021

Surname	First Name	Biography
Chair		
Mitchell	Kathy	Kathryn (Kathy) Mitchell AM is the Chief Panel Member of Planning Panels Victoria. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Planning, a Graduate Diploma in Urban Sociology and a Master of Arts in Planning (Research). She has previously worked in the private sector, local government, and as an academic, specialising in social and strategic planning, and Activity Centre development. She was a Senior Panel Member with Planning Panels Victoria from 1996 until her appointment as Chief Panel Member in June 2004. Kathy was an occasional sessional member with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal from 1999 – 2004, and is the immediate past President and a Fellow of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association. Kathy was appointed as a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia (General Division) in the Queen’s Birthday 2021 Honours List in recognition of her significant service to urban planning and to professional associations. Kathy regularly chairs planning and environmental matters of State and regional significance, including the Priority Projects Standing Advisory Committee, Distinctive Areas and Landscape Standing Advisory Committee, Crib Point EES, Fishermans Bend Review Panel, Melbourne Metro EES, East West Link, Logical Inclusions Advisory Committee, Standard Development Contributions Advisory Committee, amongst many others. She has a strong reputation for chairing hearings with certainty, fairness, and timeliness.
Deputy Chairs		
Townsend	Lester	Lester was appointed as Senior Panel Member in 2005, following several years as a sessional member. He has undergraduate qualifications in town and regional planning and post graduate qualifications in sociology. Lester has significant expertise in strategic and statutory planning, project implementation and plain English communication and drafting. He has previously worked in the Local Government and private sectors. Lester is a Fellow of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association.
Tsotsoros	Con	Con Tsotsoros was appointed as the Deputy Chief Panel Member in August 2021 and has been with Planning Panels Victoria since July 2013. Con has a Bachelor of Applied Science in Planning, with 14 years’ experience in the private sector focussed on planning and economics. This includes retail and commercial, tourist precincts, major residential, business parks, golf/residential estates, and mixed use developments in Victoria and interstate. He has held positions in local government, and has been with state government planning since 2006 as Assistant Director Statutory Systems, where he led major planning reform initiatives. At PPV, Con has specialised in retail, economic, strategic and master planning and heritage. These include retail proposals and structure planning involving economic issues in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Other matters include solar energy facilities proposals with state-significant economic considerations and industrial strategies. Con is a registered planner and a Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia and member of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association.

Members		
Boyle	Peter	Peter Boyle is a sessional member of Planning Panels Victoria. He has master's degrees in urban design and landscape architecture and undergraduate qualification in horticultural science. He has worked in senior roles in state and local government and private consulting over four decades. From 2002-15 as Principal Urban Designer with the Victorian government he delivered across the areas of urban programs, projects, policy, advocacy and advice. He led the preparation of Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria, as well as Higher Density, Activity Centre and Safer Design Guidelines and the development and delivery of training to planning and development professionals, including VCAT members. He has provided high level assessment and advocacy to improve outcomes of major transport infrastructure, structure planning, and urban development projects. Working for local government and private consulting he has led the design, documentation and implementation of public realm improvement projects in Melbourne and regional Victoria. Peter is a member of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association.
Burdett	Tanya	Tanya holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Planning (Distinctions, 1995), Masters in Environmental Studies (1 st Class Honours, 2002), and is currently a graduate research student, Doctor of Philosophy – Architecture, Building and Planning, at the University of Melbourne. Tanya has been involved in over 170 projects, from large scale infrastructure programs and projects such as High Speed Rail proposals in the UK, state-government level engagement programs such as the Victorian Infrastructure Strategy Victoria and Level Crossing Removal Projects, to smaller development applications and strategic planning assignments throughout the UK and Asia-Pacific. Tanya is skilled in: program/project management; social impact assessment; community engagement; training, facilitation and capacity building; strategic environmental assessment; sustainability appraisal; environmental impact assessment; and strategic planning, research and analysis. Tanya is a Registered Planner with the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), Member of the PIA Registered Planner Assessment Panel, Quality Mark Panel member for the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), and Licensed Trainer with the International Association for Public Participation. She is also a member of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association and Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand.
Davies	Shannon	Shannon is a skilled planner with a wide range of experience in strategic and statutory planning in coastal, peri-urban, regional and rural contexts. She has practical experience working in strategic policy development, writing planning schemes and gaining development approvals. Shannon has a Bachelor of Science (Geology and Environment) from Monash University, a Master's Degree of Science (Planning and Environment) from RMIT.
Edwards	Peter	Peter Edwards is an experienced engineer providing local and strategic traffic and civil engineering expertise to and for several local, and state agencies as well as private industry. He has extensive experience in feasibility and traffic impact assessments for various developments, traffic and transport planning issues and parking strategies and investigations, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance. Peter has previously worked in private practice at HDS Australia and John Piper Traffic, VicRoads, and a number of local councils. He has been involved in a range PPV matters since being appointed as a Sessional Member in 2015 including the Fishermans Bend Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Landfill Expansion (Ravenhall) and Westfield Doncaster Development Plan. Peter has a Bachelor of Engineering, Graduate Diploma in Municipal Engineering and Business Administration, and is a Member of the Institute of Engineers Australia.

Hamm	Ian	A Yorta Yorta man, Ian has extensive government and community sector experience, particularly at executive and governance levels. Ian has overseen major policy and strategic reforms for government and community organisations. He works with people from a vast array of backgrounds, managing complex and sensitive relationships to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Ian was CEO of a major Aboriginal community organisation from January to August 2018. He is now devoting himself to improving the representation of Aboriginal people on boards and other high level governance, through strategic action, advocacy and mentoring.
McMillan	Gabby	Gabby is a planning and environmental lawyer and runs a legal and planning practice. Prior to establishing her business, Gabby worked in various roles in State government, local government and private practice in Australia and the UK. She has practical experience in environmental assessment, infrastructure projects, bushfire, statutory and strategic planning.
Reifschneider	Natasha	Natasha Reifschneider is a sessional member of Planning Panels Victoria. She has a Bachelor of Applied Science (Planning), and Diploma of Natural Resource Management. Natasha is an environmental assessment and planning practitioner with over twenty years' experience in the management and delivery of impact assessment and environmental approvals for the industrial and infrastructure sector. Natasha's technical area of focus is navigating environmental approvals for projects and providing strategic advice on the development and delivery of projects to manage and achieve environmental approval requirements, coupled with the development and delivery of community and stakeholder engagement programs. Natasha's core strengths are in management of multidisciplinary teams, options assessment, statutory approvals and consultation/ engagement. Natasha has previously worked in both State and Local Government in statutory approvals prior to her current employment in the private sector as a consultant.