

# Commercial Food Business Handbook



# Introduction

**Maroondah City Council's Commercial Food Business Handbook aims to assist proprietors in designing a food business that meets the legislative provisions of the *Food Act 1984* and the *Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code (The Code)*.**

The Code defines that handling of food for sale includes all activities that may take place in relation to food including preserving, processing, preparing, cooking, packing, storing and transporting.

The information provided in this handbook is for people setting up a new commercial food premises. It can also be useful for anyone wishing to take over an existing business or if conducting major refurbishment work throughout your already existing premises. The Home-based Food Business Handbook is available for those wishing to register a domestic or community group kitchen and is available to download from Council's website.

There may be other Council approvals or permits to consider as well as other external agencies including electricity, gas and water authorities to ensure compliance is being met in these areas and to avoid delays in the approval process.

**July 2023**

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# Requirement to register or notify registration authority

Under the *Food Act 1984*, all entities that handle food for sale must register or notify with the Council in which the food premises or vehicle is located and receive a "Certificate of Registration" or acceptance of their Class 4 Notification, issued by Council before commencing the sale of food.

The scale of the business, risk of food handling activities and number of employees will be assessed to determine the regulatory requirements that apply to the premises and proprietor.

In Victoria, food businesses are placed into one of five classes, based on the type of food handled and the processes conducted at the premises. These classes are defined below:

| Food business classification | Food handling activities   |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Class 1</b>               | Businesses that handle/prepare potentially hazardous foods for vulnerable persons such as hospitals, aged care facilities and childcare centres.   |
| <b>Class 2</b>               | Businesses that handle/prepare un-packaged potentially hazardous foods such as meat dishes, rice dishes, sandwiches, custard or cream filled baked products. Class 2 also includes low risk foods that are manufactured, where allergen free claims are made.  |
| <b>Class 3A</b>              | Businesses that prepare foods which are served for immediate consumption at an accommodation getaway premises or food made using a hot-fill process such as chutney, relish, salsa, tomato sauce or other similar products.  |
| <b>Class 3</b>               | Businesses that handle/prepare low risk un-packaged foods such as biscuits and muffins (stored at room temperature) or potentially hazardous pre-packaged foods such as frozen foods.  |
| <b>Class 4</b>               | Businesses that store or serve low risk such as confectionery, tea, coffee, soft drinks, packaged low risk cakes, or a simple sausage sizzle.<br><br><b>Note:</b> Registration is not required for Class 4 activities given the low-risk nature. A Class 4 notification needs to be completed. The form can be obtained from Council's website available at <a href="http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au">www.maroondah.vic.gov.au</a> |

Further information on the risk classification system can be found on the Department of Health's website at [www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-business-classification](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-business-classification)





# Approval process for registration

## Other Council permits/approvals

To assist you to determine what other approvals/permits you require, please contact Maroondah's BizHub team to guide you through the application process or visit [www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Community-support-business/Business-permits-and-support/Starting-or-growing-your-business](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Community-support-business/Business-permits-and-support/Starting-or-growing-your-business)

Starting or growing your business? Contact Maroondah City Council on 9298 4678 (9am to 5pm) or email [bizhub@maroondah.vic.gov.au](mailto:bizhub@maroondah.vic.gov.au)

These approvals must be obtained **prior** to seeking Food Act registration from Community Health Services.

## Pre-application

### New food business

Before undertaking any works, prospective proprietors are advised to initially discuss the proposal with their area **Environmental Health Officer (EHO)** by submitting a *New Food Premises Pre-application* form including the applicable fee.

The *New Food Premises Pre-application* form provides Council with information regarding the type of food you will be preparing and selling, along with the floor plan of the premises which identifies the fittings, finishes and workflow of the premises.

### Existing food business

It is highly recommended that existing businesses who are refurbishing or undertaking major internal works to their premises also submit plans to ensure all proposed changes comply with Food Act legislation.

Floor plans not less than 1:100 must include the following:

- every part of the food premises
- the nature of work process to be carried out in each area
- the location of all fixtures, equipment, fittings and finishes with specifications describing the materials to be used.

Further information and the online pre-application form is available on Council's website by searching 'new food premises registration.'

Please allow **10 working days** for the application to be processed and a written response issued by Council.

Note: You may be required to submit additional copies of your floorplan to other Council departments or external agencies.

It is recommended enquiries be made at this stage of the application process.

## Inspection requirements

A final inspection must be carried out before a Food Act registration will be granted. One progress inspection is also offered as part of the application process.

Ensure you contact the Community Health team at least **five working days** prior to needing the inspection.

Please ensure that:

- all works are finalised
- power and hot water is connected
- fridge/freezer are turned on and operating at correct temperatures
- the premises is clean and ready to commence trade
- a copy of the Food Safety Program is onsite (if applicable)
- a copy of the Food Safety Supervisor certificate is available to be given to the inspecting EHO (if applicable)
- a food grade sanitiser is onsite
- a working digital probe, food grade thermometer is onsite.

Once the above requirements have been completed and the premises complies with The Code, a Food Act Registration Application Form and fee will need to be completed and paid and you will be given permission to commence trade.

Your Certificate of Registration will be issued to you shortly thereafter.

# Commercial food business requirements

All food businesses must comply with the *Food Act 1984* and *FSANZ Food Standards Code* including Standard 3.2.2 and Standard 3.2.3 and Part 1.2 – Labelling and Other Information Requirements.

This guidance has been extracted from the *FSANZ Food Standards Code* to assist proprietors when preparing their application for registration.

Further information is available at [www.foodstandards.gov.au/code](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code)



## Premises design and construction specifications

### Premises layout

There must be adequate space for all food handling activities to be undertaken by the business.

Consider the flow of activities and whether adequate space is available to prevent the likelihood of contamination. Separation of cleaning and food preparation activities is important.

Where allergen free food is made the layout is important to ensure cross contamination is eliminated.

The premises must be in good condition and food should flow in one direction through the premises as shown in diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1

### Floors

Floors are required to be appropriate for the area, able to be effectively cleaned, impervious to grease, food particles and water and must not provide harbourage for pests.

Approved finishes include:

- sealed quarry or ceramic tiles
- laminated thermosetting plastic sheeting
- polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams
- epoxy resin
- sealed hardened concrete
- any other smooth, impervious and easy to clean material.

### Coving

Although there is no longer any requirement for coving at the junction of the floor and wall, it is still highly recommended to allow for easy and effective cleaning and to minimise the accumulation of dirt and grease.

Where coving is installed, it needs to be made from a smooth, impervious and easy to clean material and the surface finish of both the floor and wall must form a continuous uninterrupted surface.

If vinyl or similar sheeting is installed where the sheeting turns up to form a cove, a solid preformed coving fillet shall be used to support the sheeting.

### Floor waste

Floors draining to a floor waste must be evenly graded to a minimum fall of 1 in 100 (1:100) so that water falls to the floor waste. They must also be drained to the sewer in compliance with the relevant Water Authority.

### Grease traps

The location of any grease trap as required by the Water Authority should be shown on the floor plan.

The Water Authority should be contacted to ensure compliance with its regulations and to discuss the Trade Waste Agreement requirements.

For assistance with completing your Trade Waste application form, call YVW on 1300 771 865 or email [commercialcustomer@yvw.com.au](mailto:commercialcustomer@yvw.com.au)

It is recommended that a grease trap should not be installed in a room used for preparation, processing, packing or storing foods for sale. Access to grease traps for emptying shall not be through areas where open food is handled or stored, or where food contact equipment and packaging materials are handled or stored.

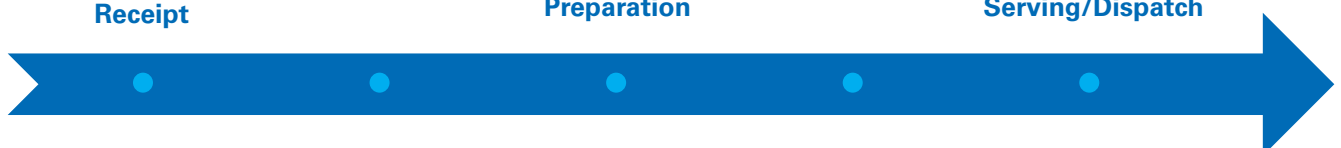
Receipt

Preparation

Serving/Dispatch

Storage

Packaging



### Ceilings

Ceilings in areas where food is manufactured, prepared, packed or stored, must be of a rigid, dustproof, non-absorbent material painted with a light-coloured washable gloss paint and be free from cracks and crevices and of a continuous seamless nature.

Drop-in, removable ceiling panels cannot be used in food preparation areas or where open food is displayed or served.

### Walls

The surface of internal walls must be:

- designed and constructed in a way that is appropriate for the activities conducted on the premises
- sealed to prevent entry of dirt dust, pests and must protect food from contamination
- unable to absorb grease, food particles or water
- able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

Walls in food preparation or storage areas must be finished with one or a combination of the following materials:

- glazed tiles
- stainless steel or
- polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams
- similar impervious material adhered directly to the wall for example high gloss light coloured paint.

All service pipes shall be concealed beneath the surface of walls, floors and ceilings or alternatively pipes can be fixed clear of the wall, floor and ceiling at such distances as to enable easy and effective cleaning.

### Lighting

Food premises must have a lighting system that provides adequate natural or artificial light to safely undertake the activities conducted on the premises.

All lighting in areas where food is to be prepared must be a minimum of 500 lux (level of illuminance) and lighting in all other areas including retail, storage and toilet areas must have a minimum 110 lux.

In areas where open food is handled or stored, light fittings must be:

- designed and constructed to prevent contamination of food
- flush mounted or recessed within the ceiling or have wrap – around dust and shatter proof diffusers
- free from any features that would harbour dirt, dust or insects or make the fitting difficult to clean.

### Ventilation

All food premises must ensure that they provide either natural or mechanical ventilation which works effectively to remove fumes, smoke, steam and oily vapours from the food premises.

Where mechanical ventilation will be used, all cooking and food heating appliances must be located beneath and within an approved mechanical exhaust system in

accordance with *Australian Standard 1668* Parts 1 and 2 to also satisfy the requirements of the *Building Code of Australia*.

The capture velocity must not be less than 0.5 metres/second and the canopy must extend 150mm over the front and sides of all cooking equipment.

Ventilation must also be provided where there is any dishwasher and other washing/sanitising equipment that vents steam into the area to the extent that there is or is likely to be condensation collecting on walls and ceilings.

### Refuse disposal

Storage facilities for garbage and recyclable matter must be provided and needs to be suitable for the volume and types of garbage and recyclable material produced by the food business.

All garbage and refuse is to be contained in impervious containers with tight fitting lids so they are not providing a breeding ground for pests. They must also be capable of being easily and effectively cleaned.

### Toilet facilities

Adequate toilet and hand washing facilities must be provided for staff and customers in accordance with the sanitary requirements of the *Building Code of Australia* and therefore Council's Building Department should be consulted for further advice.

In addition, toilets must also:

- be properly designated and not open directly into any room in which food is manufactured, prepared, stored or served
- be located so that the public must not have to go through food preparation or storage areas to access them
- must be accessible via an airlock, hallway or other room and all doors must be fitted with self-closing devices.

Dedicated hand wash basins must be provided within or adjacent to the toilet facilities and be provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold water through a single outlet, liquid soap, disposable paper towels or a hand dryer and suitable waste bins.

## Appliances, fixtures, fittings and equipment

### General

In general, all fixtures fittings and equipment must be designed, constructed, located and installed so that they can be easily and effectively cleaned, be suitable for their intended use and so there is no likelihood that they will cause food contamination.

Fixtures, fittings and equipment that are designed to be connected to a sewage and waste water disposal system and discharge sewage or waste water must be connected to a sewage and waste water disposal system.

### Location

All equipment appliances (including stoves, ovens, deep fryers etc) used in the manufacture, preparation, storage and sale of food must be:

- raised up off the floor at least 150mm high, unless sealed to the wall or floor in a way to eliminate any open gap and which prevents liquids, food particles, grease or other refuse from collecting or
- placed no closer than 150mm to any wall to allow for easy cleaning (unless sealed to the wall as described above)
- mounted on wheels so as to be easily movable enabling easy access for cleaning (unless sealed to the wall as described above).

### Construction

All surfaces of tables, benches, shelving, counters, food preparation areas, equipment and fittings should be constructed of rigid, durable impervious materials and should be free of cracks and crevices.

All counters displaying food including self-serve counters need to be fitted with glass or other material to protect food from contamination by customers.

### Safe drinking water supply

Potable water must be used for all food handling activities including washing food, cooking, making ice, cleaning and personal hygiene, including hand washing.

### Hand-washing facilities

Dedicated hand wash basins must be provided to the food handling and preparation areas to enable food handlers to adequately wash their hands.

They must also be:

- unobstructed
- easily accessible
- set at bench height either permanently fixed to a wall or set in a bench top
- located within at most, 5 metres from any food handling activity/area.

Hand wash basins must have:

- a permanent supply of warm running potable water delivered through a single outlet
- supplied with liquid soap and disposable paper towels at all times
- they should also be hands free (sensor, knee or foot operated) or a single-lever mixer tap.

Where the supply of water is automatically timed, warm water shall be available for a minimum time of 15 seconds before flow ceases. The hand wash basin must be clearly designated for the **sole purpose of hand washing**. This means it must be identifiable in a way that indicates its sole purpose. Putting up a sign that states **for hand washing only** or an illustration of hands being washed is acceptable. Each hand basin should also be provided with minimum 450mm splash back above the basin which is constructed out of a smooth and impervious material.



### Sinks

An adequate number of stainless-steel double bowl sinks must be provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold water.

#### Food preparation sink

Where food handling involves washing or preparing of ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables or any other food handling activity, for example, when draining cooked food or washing ready to eat salad items, a separate food preparation sink must be provided.

#### Dishwashing and sanitising

Equipment washing facilities are required to be large enough to clean and sanitise the largest utensils/appliances. Where a dishwasher or chemicals are not provided for sanitising, the hot water temperature must be 80°C at minimum. Where commercial dishwashers are used, temperatures must reach 80°C – 85°C during the rinse cycle. A designated area to allow clean dishes and equipment to air dry must also be provided.

#### Cleaner's sink

Food premises must provide facilities to dispose of mop water and similar liquid waste. The cleaners sink will need to be connected to the sewer and be supplied with hot and cold water. It must be located in a suitable area to prevent against any cross contamination between wastewater and food.

### Waste disposal areas

Where mobile garbage bins are in use and privately arranged collection services are in place, the area around the bins must be kept secured, clean and free of waste spill over or kept in accordance with any private site Waste Management Plan.

## Storage

#### Cool rooms/freezers

Adequate refrigeration space must be provided for the storage of perishable food. The amount and location of units required depends upon the activities conducted at the premises as well as number of meals served, and ordering/delivery arrangements etc.

Cool rooms and freezers should have:

- internal and external lined surfaces of a smooth impervious and easy to clean material which can include aluminium or stainless steel
- all joints and seams must be sealed
- adequate artificial lighting a smooth and impervious floor fitted with approved coving
- adequate shelf storage that has a smooth and impervious and easy to clean finish
- cooling unit discharge connected and directed to the sewer
- temperature gauge installed externally.

Where large amounts of water are required for cleaning, the floors should be graded to a minimum 1:100 and drained towards the sewer as per the Water Authorities requirements.

### Dry storage area

An adequate storage area must be provided for the storage of dry ingredients. Shelving in this area must smooth, impervious and easy to clean. There must be adequate shelving to store food 250mm off the floor.

#### Personal belongings

A separate area should be provided for the storage of employee's personal belongings eg a designated cupboard or a locker is acceptable.

#### Cleaning chemicals

Separate facilities must be provided for storing chemicals and cleaning equipment which is in an area that is kept away from where food is stored or prepared.

## Insect and rodent proofing

#### Windows

Every window and ventilator opening to the outer air must be covered with a fly screen or otherwise must be permanently kept shut.

#### Openings

Where service pipes pass through walls, floors and ceilings, the area surrounding the pipes must be sealed to prevent the entry of pests.

## Doorways

Doorways must be provided with either:

- a full door fitted with an efficient heavy duty self-closer or
- a self-closing commercial fly wire door or
- heavy duty plastic strips properly designed and fitted for the door. Strips must be of a suitable thickness and weight and span the entire height and width of the doorway or
- an air curtain.

## Insect control devices

Insect control devices should be installed where they are not located directly over food preparation areas, exposed equipment or any packaging material.

Where insect control devices are designed to electrocute the flying insect, it must also be able to retain the insect within the device.

## Yards

All yards and rear areas must be maintained in a sanitary condition to prevent the harbourage of vermin or other pests.

This area must not be used to store hard waste or unused equipment.

## Packaging, traceability and transport

### Food packaging and labelling requirements

If you package food, the packaging material must be fit for the intended use and the product must be labelled in accordance with

*Part 1.2 of the Food Standards Code*. It is recommended you consult a NATA accredited food analyst to validate shelf-life dates and accuracy of food labels.

Food labels should include (at a minimum):

- product name/description
- batch/lot number
- name and address of the manufacturer, importer, supplier
- list of ingredients in descending order
- warning and advisory statement
- allergen information
- date markings – used by or best before
- nutritional information panel
- country of origin
- storage instructions.

Further information on labelling can be found by visiting [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

The Nutrition Panel Calculator can also assist when developing food labels, please visit: [www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/npc/Pages/nutrition-panel-calculator.aspx](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/npc/Pages/nutrition-panel-calculator.aspx)

### Traceability and recall procedures

All food manufacturers, importers and wholesalers must have a documented food recall system. This is important to ensure unsafe food is quickly traced and removed from the supply chain.

The food recall plan should cover the procedures, records and staff responsibilities in the event of a food recall.

Further guidance including a template food recall plan can be found by visiting: [www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/foodrecalls/recalltemplates/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/foodrecalls/recalltemplates/Pages/default.aspx)

## Food transport

If you intend to transport/deliver your food products, you must ensure food is covered and protected from contamination.

Potentially hazardous foods must also be maintained under temperature control or time monitored during transport:

- refrigerated foods must be kept at or below 5°C
- frozen foods kept frozen solid or below -15°C and
- hot foods kept at or above 60°C.

## Allergens

To learn more about allergens and their associated risks, please visit: [www.foodallergytraining.org.au/resources/allergen-menu-matrix](http://www.foodallergytraining.org.au/resources/allergen-menu-matrix)



# Temporary or mobile food premises – FoodTrader registration

*FoodTrader* is an online registration system for mobile and temporary food businesses.

If you plan to sell your products at market stalls or events, you must also register the temporary or mobile food premises on *FoodTrader* and lodge a *Statement of Trade (SOT)* at least 1 day prior to trading.

For further information or to apply for registration, visit [www.foodtrader.vic.gov.au](http://www.foodtrader.vic.gov.au)



# Classifications, Food Safety Program and Food Safety Supervisor requirements

## Food safety risk classifications

Depending on the risk classification of your food business, you may be required to implement a **Food Safety program** and nominate a **Food Safety supervisor** as part of the registration process.

The below table outlines the requirements based on the Victorian food businesses classification system.

| Food business classification | Food Safety Program (FSP)  | Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Class 1</b>               | Independent/non-standard, third party audited FSP required.  | Required                     |
| <b>Class 2</b>               | Required for all high risk processes only, these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sous vide cooking below 75°C</li> <li>• handling of potentially hazardous foods without temperature control to minimise the growth of pathogens. For example cured meats, Chinese style roasted meats</li> <li>• preparation of acidified or fermented foods/drinks. For example sauerkraut, kombucha</li> <li>• preparing ready-to-eat foods containing raw unpasteurised eggs</li> <li>• preparing ready to eat raw or rare minced or chopped meats. For example steak tartare, rare/raw hamburgers</li> <li>• preparing ready to eat raw or rare poultry or game meats. For example duck, kangaroo</li> <li>• off-site catering</li> <li>• any complex food process activity that does not use temperature control as described in the <i>Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code</i>. For example dehydration.</li> </ul> | Required                     |
| <b>Class 3A</b>              | Not required   | Required                     |
| <b>Class 3</b>               | Not required<br>Warehouses and distribution centres are required to keep a food suppliers record.  | Not required                 |
| <b>Class 4</b>               | Not required   | Not required                 |

## Food Safety Program

In Victoria, some Class 2 food businesses that conduct higher risk food processes as detailed in the table above are required to implement a **Food Safety Program (FSP)**. A Food Safety Program is a written document based on the HACCP principles that outlines the food safety risks and controls associated with the business.

Class 2 food businesses can use a generic Food Safety Program template that has been developed by Department of Health (DH). The document can be found on the DH Food Safety website at [www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/food-safety-programs](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/food-safety-programs)

Alternatively, Class 2 businesses may choose to write an independent Food Safety Program that is specific to their businesses. This may be necessary for food manufacturers or businesses that have processes that are not covered in the generic template.

For further information on food safety program templates and classification requirements, please visit: [www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/food-safety-programs](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/food-safety-programs)



## Food Safety Supervisor

All Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3A food businesses are required to nominate a suitably qualified **Food Safety Supervisor (FSS)** to oversee food handling practices at the business. The nominated FSS must have appropriate skills and knowledge for the food sector they are working in.

Further information on Food Safety Supervisor training and industry specific course codes can be found by visiting the DH Food Safety website at: [www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/food-safety-supervisors](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/food-safety-supervisors)



## DoFoodSafely

Food handling staff must have the skills and knowledge to keep food safe. **DoFoodSafely** is a free online learning resource for food handlers or people looking for work in the food industry. The program provides information and skills for safe food handling, however it does not meet the requirements for accredited Food Safety Supervisor training.

Refresh your food safety knowledge by completing DoFoodSafely at: [www.dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/index.php/en](http://www.dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/index.php/en)





## Ready to start?

Visit Maroondah's New Food Premises page and complete the new food premises pre-application form. This will assist the EHO to determine your classification, advise of your requirements and assess your food premises prior to registration.

[www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Community-support-business/Business-permits-and-support/Business-permits-and-registration/New-food-premises-registration](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Community-support-business/Business-permits-and-support/Business-permits-and-registration/New-food-premises-registration)



## Further information

If you require any further information, please contact Maroondah City Council's Community Health team on 9294 5603.

## Other useful resources

- **Food Safety Victoria (DH)**

[www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/starting-a-food-business](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/food-safety/starting-a-food-business)



- **Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ)**

[www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodsafety/standards/Pages/Home-based-food-businesses.aspx](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodsafety/standards/Pages/Home-based-food-businesses.aspx)



- **Business Victoria**

[www.business.vic.gov.au/setting-up-a-business/location-and-set-up-premises/start-a-home-based-business](http://www.business.vic.gov.au/setting-up-a-business/location-and-set-up-premises/start-a-home-based-business)



- **National Association of Testing Authority (NATA)**

[www.nata.com.au](http://www.nata.com.au)



### Contact us

1300 88 22 33 or 03 9298 4598

SMS 0480 020 200

TIS: 131 450 (Translating and Interpreting Service)

NRS: 133 677 (National Relay Service)

maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au

**[www.maroondah.vic.gov.au](http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au)**

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 CityofMaroondah

 Maroondah City Council

PO Box 156, Ringwood 3134

### Visit us

#### Croydon

Croydon Library, Civic Square, Croydon

#### Realm

179 Maroondah Highway, Ringwood

