

22.03 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR RETAIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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C129(Part 1)

This policy applies where a planning scheme amendment or planning permit application is required for new or expanded provision of retail floorspace.

Policy Basis

This policy sets out retail assessment criteria which are to be used as a basis for considering applications for new or expanded retail floorspace.

The criteria consists of the following:

- Information required to be submitted with an application.
- Issues to be considered in the preparation and consideration of an economic impact assessment and contribution to net community benefit.
- Issues to be considered in the preparation and consideration of an out-of-centre retail proposal.

Objectives

- To ensure that applications for new centres establish the retail need for such use and development and demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts on the operation of the retail activity centres hierarchy.
- To ensure that applications involving a planning scheme amendment in or adjoining existing activity centres clearly establish a retail need for such use and development and demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts on the operation of the retail activity centres hierarchy.
- To ensure all major retail use and development provide clear net community benefit.
- To allow/guide consideration of applications involving an increase in an identified floor space cap, in order to accommodate the changing retail trends and retail demands.

Policy

Exercising discretion

Where a permit or planning scheme amendment is required to increase the leasable retail floor area, it is policy to require the following information and address the following issues as appropriate:

Economic Impact Assessment

An economic impact assessment should be provided for:

- New major retail development involving 2,000m² or more in gross leasable floor area.
- Proposals involving a key major tenant such as a supermarket.
- Out-of-centre proposals.
- Applications relating to an increase in an existing floor space cap.

The responsible authority may waive a requirement to prepare an economic impact assessment.

The following issues and information are required to be addressed as part of an economic impact assessment. The level of information required will depend on the size of the retail floorspace and will be at the discretion of the responsible authority:

- General
 - Amount of retail floorspace (in m2).
 - Number of retail tenancies and sizes.
 - Type of retail floorspace (eg, supermarket; discount department store, etc).
 - Other non-retail components where applicable.
 - Assessment of the proposals compliance with the recommendations of the City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy 2006, including any specific recommendations for the centre.
 - Supporting evidence of retail demand.
 - Assessment of any likely impact on existing or planned (i.e. approved) retail facilities.
 - Description of anticipated benefits to community (measurable and non measurable).
 - Estimated contribution to employment (in both construction and retail operation), and noting the flow-on effects (although these generally accrue to a wider area, including the State and national economies).
 - Overall contribution to net community benefit.
- Retail Demand:
 - The need or demand for new or expanded retail floorspace provision to serve the identified catchment.
 - The current catchment population level, and the forecast population and retail spending growth rate for the next 5 and 10 years.
 - The extent to which the proposal will draw trade from beyond the catchment, and from passing trade.
 - Whether the proposed or expanded retail provision would mean an expansion in the size of the catchment of that centre.
- Retail Supply:
 - The existing supply of retail floorspace serving the catchment, by type.
 - Details of any other proposals for new or expanded retail development in the catchment or beyond, which could have an effect on the viability of the proposal.
 - The main features of the existing hierarchy of retail centres which serve the catchment, and show where the proposed retail floorspace would fit into the Greater Geelong retail activity centre hierarchy as detailed in Clause 21.07-8 of the Municipal Strategic Statement.
 - Evidence as to the extent to which the existing supply of retail floorspace is adequate to meet existing and foreseeable demand levels over the next 5 and 10 years.
 - Whether there are any existing retail gaps in merchandise/services which the proposal will fill.
 - Details, where required by the responsible authority, on any relevant alternative sites to the proposed site, and demonstrate why the proposed site is the preferred site for the proposal.

- **Escape Spending:**
 - Estimates of existing levels of escape spending from the catchment and indicate how the proposal will address this issue.
 - Estimates on the share of this escape spending that could reasonably be retained by the proposal.
- **Impact On Existing Retail Facilities**
 - Assessment of the expected trading effect on existing retail facilities if the proposal was approved.
 - Demonstration of the extent to which the proposal is expected to lead to an overall improvement in the provision of retail facilities to the catchment population, and highlight the potential for retaining spending that would otherwise escape to other centres.
 - Assessment of the estimated employment impact of the proposal, including potential loss of employment at centres which may be negatively impacted by the proposal.
- **Net Community Benefit**

Assessment of the contribution of the proposed development to Net Community Benefit, including but not limited to the following considerations:

- Employment generation (or loss) during construction and operation.
- Impact on shopper's retail choice and availability of goods and services.
- Impacts on overall levels of vibrancy and sustainability of existing centres servicing the catchment and in the proposed new centre.
- Contribution to increased levels of public transport use.
- Contribution to enhancing levels of liveability, social interaction and other community related goals.

Out-of-Centre Proposals

If the application is for an out-of-centre development, in addition to providing an economic impact assessment, the application must demonstrate why the proposed out of centre development location is being considered for retail development. This is to be achieved through the following sequential approach which comprehensively demonstrates why the proposal:

- Cannot be accommodated in an existing activity centre, or failing that,
- Cannot be accommodated on an edge of centre location (which has a functional relationship with an activity centre) or, failing that,
- Cannot be accommodated in the nominated homemaker precincts.
- An out-of-centre proposal should then demonstrate that the location is consistent with urban context of the surrounding area, including potential impacts of the proposed development on local character and amenity.

References

City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy, June 2006.