

21.0224/09/2009
C65**KEY INFLUENCES**

The development of this planning scheme has been strongly guided by Council's understanding of the key influences affecting planning and development and the corresponding critical land-use issues which the City of Monash will face over the next three years.

These factors include the global drive for more sustainable living conditions; regional changes in demographics and lifestyle choices; activity centre growth, the location of employment and level of economic development; the changing nature of industry and retail; and local conditions, such as the importance of neighbourhood character, in particular maintenance and enhancement of the Garden City Character, cultural elements and heritage.

Issues for land use planning and development as a result of these key influences include consideration of the current suburban form of predominantly single dwellings on large blocks; appropriate locations for and design of multi dwelling housing and new development; the continued success of and activities associated with the Monash University and Monash Medical Centre precinct; the need for more sustainable transport patterns; maintaining and enhancing the City's natural areas and managing the changes that will occur within Monash's activity centres.

A brief summary of the key issues affecting land-use decisions is provided below. Council's response to these issues is defined in the objectives, strategies and implementation actions detailed in this Municipal Strategic Statement.

21.02-130/07/2009
C57**Moving towards sustainability**

Sustainable development is about achieving environmental, social and economic sustainability now and into the future. The aims of sustainability are to enable a community to achieve economic growth together with social advancement balanced with conservation and enhancement of the natural environment that results in better quality of life for the present and future population.

There are a wide range of environmental issues, including water quality and management, air quality and noise, soils, flora and fauna, open space, waste management, energy use and transport, that impact on the future development of the City.

Monash has a range of environmental landscapes, from the wetland systems along Dandenong Creek and other waterways, to areas of significant flora and fauna habitats within parkland areas. The continued maintenance, enhancement and renewal of these environments is important.

There is a global push towards sustainability which addresses not only environmental elements, but also economic and social aspects of the environment and how we use it.

The move towards sustainability requires a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and resultant generation of greenhouse gases. Fossil fuels are used primarily in the production of electricity for households and industry, and for transport via motor vehicles, freight vehicles, trains and aircraft.

Water conservation and re-use, together with minimising the production of wastes and maximising recycling are also vital actions if we, the community, are to be successful in moving towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

21.02-230/07/2009
C57**Maintaining the Garden City Character**

The Garden City Character is a legacy of the early planners of Monash and a very important defining feature of the municipality. It is characterised by a general feeling of "greenness" created by significant tree canopy cover contained within large, vegetated set backs and areas of open space.

Monash's heritage, urban character and vegetation all contribute to the Garden City Character. In areas predating the 1960's the vegetation is mainly introduced species, while in more recently developed areas, native species dominate.

Monash's policy of large front setbacks has facilitated the retention and enhancement of canopy tree cover, which acts to soften the built form and provide shelter and shade. The presence of "greenery" and vegetation within developed areas is also visually appealing and results in benefits to the environment in terms of air quality and water balance.

Erosion of the Garden City Character, through loss of significant vegetation and tree canopy and inappropriate redevelopment of residential and industrial areas is a key concern, as its value is recognised by both Council and the community.

Council has invested significant resources to ensure the Garden City Character dominates most areas within the municipality through the planting of street trees along arterial roads and consistently applying a decision making process within which the Garden City Character is a core factor.

The Garden City Character has been identified as an important factor in attracting residential, commercial and industrial investment in the City. Many large firms have designated this element as a key determinant in influencing their choice of location.

Maintenance and enhancement of tree canopy and the "green, open space" feel, particularly in residential, industrial and business areas is a key goal of Council. Policies have been developed to ensure that new development, provides adequate setbacks and open space areas that allows for new planting that will augment the leafy, treed ambience of the City. Although already incorporated into Monash's local planning policy framework, maintaining the Garden City Character remains a key influence on planning decision making.

21.02-3

30/07/2009
C57

Changing lifestyle choices and the demands of an ageing population

Monash has traditionally catered for families in single storey detached housing with substantial gardens. Recent trends have seen an increase in redevelopment of this housing stock to multi dwelling developments, as more people are seeking homes that require less maintenance. There is also a noticeable increase in preferences for housing of a more intense nature, close to shops, restaurants and other commercial and community services and facilities.

Household size has been steadily decreasing from 3.61 in 1981 to 3.23 in 1991 to 2.86 in 1996 (compared to the metropolitan average of 2.9 in 1996). Household size in Monash is expected to fall further to 2.55 by 2021.

Due to the established nature of the suburban area, Monash generally has an older population that is ageing in place with almost one fifth aged over 60 (9.9% of the City population is aged 60-69, 8.8% aged between 70-84 and 1.5% aged 85). The population's average age is increasing, with older empty nesters preferring to remain in the family home, or requiring aged accommodation within proximity to their social networks.

Since the mid 1970s the decline in the number of persons per dwelling has had a latent effect on Monash's housing stock. In particular, the growth of multi-unit development, dual occupancies, retirement villages, special accommodation homes and other forms of housing, have assumed a growing proportion of new housing construction.

The changing age structure of Monash with declining household sizes and changes in household structures together with the desire for broader housing choice are regarded as key drivers of Monash's future development. Council intends to ensure that construction of a diverse range of housing including aged accommodation is sufficient to cater for the desires of the population in the future.

21.02-424/09/2009
C65**Activity Centre growth**

Melbourne 2030, the State Government's policy for developing a more sustainable city, predicts that activity centres will be the focus of major change over the next 30 years (State of Victoria, 2002). The Principal and Major Activity Centres are important locations for the development of different types of housing. This will ensure that a range of housing types is available to satisfy the housing needs of the Monash population.

High rise residential development will be encouraged in the Glen Waverley Principal and Oakleigh Major Activity Centres, which are the primary locations of change in Monash. The other Major Activity Centres will also accommodate change. This position is consistent with the objectives and recommendations of *Melbourne 2030*. In developing this position, consideration has also been given to community opinion, which is generally opposed to more intensive new development which does not respect existing neighbourhood residential character.

Locating residential development in activity centres facilitates the creation of safer, more attractive and lively community hubs. The scale of development must be appropriate to the character of the Activity Centre. Residential development increases the population base utilising the services of the centre, which in turn creates the opportunity for increased employment and installation of a wider range of services and facilities.

Melbourne 2030 also identifies land within the Monash Technology Precinct as one of the nine Specialised Activity Centres (SAC's) in Metropolitan Melbourne which performs a specialised function outside of retailing, commercial and residential uses. It is one of the remaining areas designated as a Technology Precinct in Metropolitan Melbourne and is considered to be an important location for further development of high technology, research and development institutions and businesses.

Council is committed to maintaining and enhancing the cosmopolitan range of activity centres across the municipality to continue to meet community needs and preferences for retail, entertainment, office and other commercial services. These activities contribute to the significant level of economic activity and employment in Monash.

21.02-524/09/2009
C65**Employment and economic development**

People are attracted to live and work in Monash primarily due to the availability of local employment, proximity to good public transport, and the lifestyle attributes of the suburban areas within the City.

Monash caters for approximately 90,000 full time jobs, substantially in white collar occupations in approximately 11,500 businesses operating within the City. Growth in employment for professionals is anticipated, particularly in the high technology and service industries as a result of development in the Monash Technology Precinct and the Monash University Science, Technology, Research and Innovation Precinct (STRIP). It is also recognised that manufacturing is a key sector within the Monash economy.

The completion of the Australia Synchrotron Project will result in further investment from high technology, research and development institutions and businesses and the creation of further employment opportunities within the Precinct. The potential level of this investment and its consequent benefits will be substantial and will have multiplier effects on the local economy.

Council will remain abreast of timing and employment requirements of major projects so that detailed and timely responses can be developed, including identification of any special development requirements, such as new industrial premises and transitional accommodation.

21.02-630/07/2009
C57**The importance of neighbourhood character and heritage**

Monash is essentially fully developed and is now experiencing a resurgence of housing development through dual occupancy and multi-unit developments. Redevelopment of

Waverley Park, former school sites, other government land and poorly positioned industrial sites into other urban uses is occurring. Monash offers significant residential, commercial and industrial opportunities.

Facilitation of the development of these opportunities while managing both the existing and developing areas in a manner that seeks to protect, enhance and develop the physical, economic and social environments of Monash as a place that people want to conduct business as well as live is an ongoing challenge.

Neighbourhood character is an important element of the residential areas within the City of Monash. Competing interests of the need for housing diversity and maintenance of existing neighbourhood character require careful planning to ensure that development outcomes are of a high quality design standard and are sympathetic to the preferred neighbourhood character and streetscape. An important element contributing to neighbourhood character in most areas is the Garden City Character, which describes the tree-lined and vegetated aspect of the municipality.

Also, the Vegetation Protection Overlay identifies existing treed environments where the special leafy character valued by the community is protected. It also aims to stop development sites from being “moonscaped” of significant canopy vegetation prior to development occurring.

The majority of the identified heritage precincts and buildings are located in Oakleigh, relating to the original Oakleigh township and the later New Oakleigh Estate. The Victorian, Edwardian, Federation and Inter-War buildings (particularly some fine public buildings and places) contribute considerably to the historic character of Oakleigh and provide a link with the origins of the municipality.

Conservation or sensitive redevelopment of these places is a key issue for the future image of the municipality. Monash is committed to the ongoing review of heritage sites within the municipality to ensure the protection of important elements of architectural, cultural or historical significance to the community.

21.02-7
30/07/2009
C57

The changing nature of industry and retail

The strong industrial base of Monash is gradually moving from blue collar to white collar industry, with a consequent change in the nature of industrial employment. Monash is therefore facing the issue of balancing the needs of existing industry and the growth of demand for more office, warehouse and high technology uses in traditional industrial areas.

Small businesses in Monash’s activity centres will continue to generate a significant proportion of employment. However, the changing structure and location of households as well as the changing workforce are key factors in influencing retailing and business services. These will affect expenditure patterns and floor area needs. Some of the general emerging trends include:

- The segmentation in consumer behaviour.
- Growth in discount and home brand/seconds goods.
- Demand for convenience and bulk stores.
- Partly prepared and highly accessible goods.
- An increase in telemarketing, e-commerce and internet purchasing.
- An increased recreational role of higher order centres.

In Monash, existing activity centres are being refurbished to maintain competitiveness. In terms of new retail development, there is a “blurring” between peripheral sales type facilities and traditional retail which has implications for both the activity centres and industrial areas.

The quantum of retail locations satisfactorily serves the municipality and, as a mature municipality, no new centres are anticipated.