

## 1.1 MOUNT WAVERLEY ACTIVITY CENTRE STRUCTURE PLAN – CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS AND ADOPTION

(SMC: File No. F17-4975)

Responsible Director: Peter Panagakos

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

- 1. Receives and notes the submissions made in response to the community consultation for the Draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan.*
- 2. Notes the Officer's response to submissions as outlined in this report and in Attachment 1.*
- 3. Endorses the proposed changes to the draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan as set out in this report.*
- 4. Adopts the revised Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan in accordance with the proposed changes set out in this report and appended as Attachment 3.*
- 5. Notes that a report will be presented to a future Council meeting to consider changes required to the Monash Planning Scheme to give effect the vision of the Structure Plan.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to consider the feedback received following the community consultation undertaken for the draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan (the draft Structure Plan), consider adopting revisions to the draft Structure Plan in response to the community engagement and to resolve to adopt the revised Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan.

A copy of the revised Structure Plan is provided at **Attachment 3**.

An outline of the consultation and a summary of the submissions received are set out in **Attachment 1** to this report.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan is listed as a 'priority project' in the Council Plan 2017-2021 and received funding in the 2018/19 Council Budget. State Government guidance for structure planning for activity centre is set out in Planning Practice Note No. 58 – Structure planning for activity centres, and this has been followed in preparing the brief, the preparation of background reports, the discussion paper and the draft structure plan by the consultants (Tract Consultants).

### **Stage 1 Consultation – Discussion Paper**

To assist in the development of the Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan, a discussion paper was released for community consultation in May 2019 for a period of one month (1 May to 31 May). The purpose of the consultation was to seek community

involvement in shaping the draft Structure Plan. The main consultation activities included:

- utilising the planned Listening Post to ask open questions about the activity centre,
- workshops with key stakeholders, and
- gathering feedback on the discussion paper through an online survey and written submissions.

The consultation on the discussion paper confirmed that the community values the village feel, a different and convenient shopping experience, and a good mix of retail and services.

In terms of what the community wanted to change about the centre, the following comments were noted:

- Improvements to the layout of the central car park to increase pedestrian safety, and the area around the station and the underpass
- Improvements to the quality of the public realm and improving access for those with limited mobility
- Additional community and health services (e.g. more dentists, childcare) and art /cultural event spaces to harness the community spirit
- Improved cycling connections (but avoiding conservation areas like Valley Reserve)
- Less commuter parking in local streets
- Two supermarkets are currently sufficient for the centre. Any more supermarkets may impact on the variety of speciality food retailers in the centre
- More tree planting in the centre and enhancing / maintaining the treed environment surrounding the centre

The findings from the consultation assisted in the preparation of the draft Structure Plan.

## ***ISSUES AND DISCUSSION***

### **Draft Structure Plan**

The draft Structure Plan provides a clear framework to guide growth and improvement of the Mount Waverley Activity Centre until 2036.

The overarching theme of the draft Structure Plan is to create a place for people that encourages development that respects and promotes the village feel of the centre.

The draft Structure Plan includes a vision, which emphasises the centre as one for all ages, as a local place that is easy to get to and also a destination for visitors, providing opportunities for social interaction as well as local convenience shopping, and a place that is green and with high quality accommodation.

To achieve this vision, the draft Structure Plan includes six key directions:

- **Direction 1 – Foster a vibrant village**

Creating and strengthening a retail core (particularly speciality retailing) west of Stephensons Road.

- **Direction 2 – Support diverse housing choices**  
Providing housing growth in the form of “shop top” housing within the core of the activity centre, and facilitating incremental, low scale housing growth within the surrounding residential areas.
- **Direction 3 – Boost the health and wellbeing of local people**  
Activating and integrating the external spaces around the Library, Youth Centre and Community Centre, and encouraging health and wellbeing services on the eastern side of Stephensons Road.
- **Direction 4 – Create a village that puts people first**  
Creating a central pedestrian spine linking community facilities north and south of the central shopping precinct with shopping and car parking areas, and creation of public plazas in key locations to allow people to sit and relax.  
Revamp parking and traffic circulation to prioritise people movement over vehicle movement.
- **Direction 5 – Enable people to move easily and safely through the village**  
Improving pedestrian and cyclist comfort and safety. Improve links to the community facilities, the station precinct and the shopping areas. Deliver missing links in the shared path network.
- **Direction 6 – Strengthen the village’s sense of place**  
Providing high quality architecture with active frontages to public spaces, commissioning public art and allowing spaces for community markets and events. Set out a range of building heights to encourage redevelopment but at a village scale and no greater than 5 storeys in the key commercial areas and lesser in the surrounding residential and commercial precincts.

These directions are supported by a range of key policies and actions that are provided in Part B (key directions) of the draft Structure Plan. Part C (the Village Centre) of the draft structure plan provides further detail on the key actions and integrates urban design, land use and access/movement interventions.

### Stage 2 Consultation - Draft Structure Plan

The formal consultation on the draft Structure Plan occurred from Monday, 17 February to Friday, 20 March 2020.

Several engagement activities were undertaken during the consultation period. These included:

- **Direction notification and brochure:** Direct notification to 933 owners and 447 occupiers of all properties within the study area boundary was given. Each direct notice included a covering letter and 4-page brochure explaining the vision, direction and key policies / actions in the draft Structure Plan. The brochure is included as **Attachment 2**.
- **Article in Monash Bulletin:** The start date for the consultation was aligned with the circulation date for the Monash Bulletin.
- **Drop-in information session:** This session was held on Thursday, 5 March 2020 at the Mount Waverley Community Centre from 3pm to 7:30pm.

- **Stakeholders/interested people:** Emails/letters to stakeholders and people who expressed interest in the project during the first round of consultation.
- **Information availability:** Information available in folders in the Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley Libraries and in the Civic Centre, on Council's website, and availability of strategic planning officers to respond to phone calls and emails.
- **Interactive website and online submission form:** This project was the first to use Monash's new HiVE platform, Shape Monash. This platform allows for the easy flow of information in accessible and interactive ways, and works well on mobile devices. An online submission form (through OpenForms) was also created to allow people to make a submission, upload attachments and offered the ability to save it to return to later.

People were able to provide their feedback using the online form, by email or through the mail.

### **Submissions received**

A total of 78 submissions and one petition containing 25 signatories (6 of which had also made separate submissions) have been received, this includes 3 late submissions received after 20 March 2020.

In addition, approximately 50 people attended the Drop-in information session at the Mount Waverley Community Centre. The Drop-in session was also attended by the Mayor, Cr James and Cr Paterson.

An outline of the broad themes of the submissions is provide below:

- **What did people support?**
  - General / overall support for vision and directions, the approach to the consultation and the need for a structure plan, the Village Centre Plan
  - New / improved / utilisation of public spaces (Winbourne plaza, station forecourt)
  - The pedestrian spine, improvements to pedestrian safety and connectivity
  - The extension to the rail trail
  - Focus on improving the Hamilton Place car park
- **What did people not support?**
  - The proposed building heights, especially the 5-8 storeys on two sites. This was considered to undermine the village feel of the centre and create more of an urban feel.
  - The potential development of the southern car park, stating excessive heights (compared to Glen Waverley), loss of public land, loss of sense of openness / and trees, loss of car parking supply
  - Increasing housing density within the Development Intensification Area, and resulting increase in car parking demand, traffic congestion and drainage issues

- Station forecourt design limiting vehicles to one-way access, pedestrian/cyclist conflicts, and limiting drop off areas
  - Retail / office: additional supermarket or supermarket floor area, increase in cafes or increase in retail or office floor space
  - There was opposition from residents of the Sherwood Road estate and a submission from the preschool parent advisory group to the potential for a pedestrian link through the Woolworths site and kindergarten should the site ever be redeveloped.
- **What did people want to add?**
    - Car parking: more in general and more commuter parking specifically, and consideration for disabled/elderly drivers, ensure sufficient parking for dwellings, developers to contribute to parking scheme
    - Careful management of traffic and parking, and carefully design of underground car parking
    - Consideration of loading/unloading areas for businesses
    - Station forecourt design: retain / plan for drop off areas, manage pedestrian / cyclist conflicts, consider transport interchange needs, electronic signage at station
    - Comfortable and increased supply of public seating
  - **What do people want us to fix now?**
    - Car parking: limit commuter parking in residential streets, increase car parking efficiency and safety (particularly Hamilton Place car park), reduce restrictions in commercial areas, increase restrictions in residential areas
    - Manage traffic and parking around local schools, and manage congestion more generally, and make changes to improve pedestrian safety – including intersection changes
    - Increase traffic flow on Stephenson's Road by removing on-street car parking and creating clear ways
    - Improve street lighting
    - Amenity: reduce footpath trading clutter, replace brick paving with a safer surface, vigilance with graffiti removal, improve appearance of vacant blocks, prosecute rubbish dumping
    - Open space: improve facilities and improve maintenance / watering.

Where a resident was specific about the location of the issue, the matter has been referred to the appropriate area of Council for a response.

Refer to **Attachment 1** for more detail about the submissions.

## Officer responses to issues raised in submissions

A full response to the issues raised in submissions can be found in **Attachment 1** to this report.

In summary, the main issues were:

1. Proposed building heights of up to 8 storeys undermining the village feel
2. Redevelopment of the southern car park and loss of car parking and sense of openness
3. Increasing housing density and resulting car parking, traffic congestion and other concerns
4. Encouraging an additional supermarket not considered necessary or may undermine the retail mix
5. The design of the station forecourt and potential conflicts of cyclists/pedestrians and vehicles
6. Extension of pedestrian spine to Sherwood Road
7. Amenity impacts to adjoining residential properties
8. Wanting there to be more car parking provided (including commuter parking)
9. Greater provisions of public seating and toilets
10. Need for consideration of loading and unloading of goods

The following table outlines the Officer responses to these major issues.

Issue raised	Summary of Officer response and recommendations
1. Proposed preferred building heights of up to 8 storeys undermining the “village feel”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently no building heights within the planning scheme for this centre, particularly land in the Commercial 1 Zone.</li> <li>• There is need to comply with state policy to accommodate a reasonable level of future residential growth.</li> <li>• The scale of preferred heights within the Development Intensification Area (DIA) is generally limited to 3-4 storeys where there is an interface with residential areas, with additional height permitted elsewhere but only to 4-5 storeys for properties along Stephenson's Road, and additional height for two sites where the impact of the heights can be mitigated. The heights for these two sites can be reduced.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduce the height of the Ritchies site from 5-8 storeys to 4-5 storeys (consistent with the heights along Stephenson's Road)</li> <li>○ Reduce the height of the southern portion of the Virginia Street car park site to 3-4 storeys and include specific requirements to limit overshadowing to the southern footpath of Virginia Street.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. Redevelopment of the southern car park in general – loss of car parking and openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Structure Plan sets out a range of potential options for additional growth in the centre. Where Council land is identified it is ultimately a decision for Council as whether redevelopment of that land has an overall community benefit.</li> <li>• Options for redevelopment of the at-grade car park would be explored during any future master planning process for the site.</li> </ul>

Issue raised	Summary of Officer response and recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining the current car parking provision rate can be assessed as part of any possible future redevelopment, where car parking numbers can be considered in the context of any proposed redevelopment.</li> <li>• The Winbourne Road and Virginia Street site is considerably larger and much less visibly prominent in the Activity Centre than the IGA site. With careful design requirements, this is capable of redevelopment at height up to 8 storeys in specific locations, closer to the northern, commercial land interfaces. The sensitive interfaces would have lower building heights and active frontage to enhance the village feel.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Include a statement in the Structure Plan that with any possible redevelopment of the land, parking will be provided to meet the needs of the community in accordance with the requirements of the planning scheme.</li> <li>○ Modify the building heights in the Winbourne Road and Virginia Street precinct to allow 5-8 storeys generally in the northern portion, 3-4 storeys in the southern portion of the block and include detailed design criteria to avoid overshadowing to the southern footpath of Virginia Street, and continue to provide recessed upper storeys and active frontages.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3. Increasing housing density - car parking, traffic congestion and other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modest level of residential population within the Development Intensification Area (DIA) would assist with the centre's economic growth and allow people to live close to shops, services and public transport.</li> <li>• Limiting housing growth within the activity centre (principally in the form of shop-top dwellings) is inconsistent with state policy, and what is already permitted in the Commercial 1 Zone.</li> <li>• Spillover impacts of car parking demand can be addressed through parking restrictions and requiring on-site car parking for dwellings in accordance with the planning scheme requirements.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No change.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4. Opposition to additional supermarket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The economic analysis has noted scope for additional retail floorspace in the Activity Centre. This would be in part in response to additional development in and around the Activity Centre and would offer increased competition.</li> <li>• There are no retail floor space limits in the Activity Centre.</li> <li>• The centre benefits from a wide range of fresh food retailers that meet the weekly shopping needs of residents.</li> <li>• It is possible to increase the competitiveness of the supermarkets in this location while not reducing the viability of the fresh food retailers.</li> </ul>

Issue raised	Summary of Officer response and recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A supermarket is an as-of-right use in the Commercial 1 Zone and a new supermarket could be built in the centre regardless of whether the structure plan encourages it or not.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No change.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5. Station forecourt design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft structure plan included actions to redesign the station forecourt and advocacy actions for the extension of the Waverley Rail Trail from Jordanville to Mount Waverley Stations.</li> <li>• All of the impacts can be minimised through careful design. Creating a predominantly pedestrian environment, where bicycles, cars and delivery vehicles are guests is something that urban designers deal with all the time.</li> <li>• The final design of the station forecourt would involve working closely with state government agencies and would naturally involve further consultation.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Revise actions to ensure that the design of the rail trail bike path and station forecourt is safely integrated.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6. Extension of pedestrian spine to Sherwood Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of the walkway is aspirational and would facilitate pedestrian access between the activity centre and the MCH/Kindergarten only in the event that a redevelopment of the respective sites were to occur. All concerns raised could then be properly mitigated through design. Separate and additional consultation would occur in the event that this outcome was sought to be achieved. It is not crucial for the success of the activity centre but would assist in improving pedestrian access / pedestrian permeability.</li> <li>• It also relies on the redevelopment of the Woolworths site and on any future refurbishment to the MCH/Kindergarten.</li> <li>• The design of the walkway would consider maximising visual surveillance, visibility and lighting.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Add more notations to the section of the pedestrian spine between Virginia Street and Sherwood Road to make it clear that it is aspirational and dependent on other things happening, including additional consultation and redevelopment of the respective sites.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
7. Amenity impacts to adjoining residential properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amenity impacts are addressed through consideration of ResCode at the planning permit stage, specifically Clause 58 that applies to apartment developments in the Commercial 1 Zone.</li> <li>• There can be special requirements for direct abuttal to properties that have a northern boundary with the DIA, such as the interface between Woolworths and the Sherwood Road residential properties to ensure that development recognises this sensitive interface.</li> <li>• <b>Recommendation:</b></li> </ul>



Issue raised	Summary of Officer response and recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Add a special interface requirement for the Woolworths site / Sherwood Road interface</li> </ul>
8. Provision of more commuter and general car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Whilst Council is not responsible for the provision of commuter parking there is an action in the structure plan advocating for commuter parking improvements.</li> <li>● The addition of large amounts of commuter parking for the rail station into the Activity Centre would be counterproductive and contrary to the objectives of enhancing the village feel of the centre. It would also bring additional vehicles into the activity centre and residential streets for limited benefit to that Activity Centre itself.</li> <li>● The current level of public car parking to the southern Council car park could be maintained in any redevelopment of that site. (Refer to Issue #2)</li> <li>● <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Minor changes to the policies and actions for advocacy with VicTrack / State Government around the provision of commuter car parking in an appropriate location along the rail line, but easily accessible to residents of Mount Waverley and beyond.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9. Provision of more public seating and toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Detailed master planning of station forecourt, Winbourne Plaza and the Hamilton Place car park would include details of additional public seating.</li> <li>● Council is currently undertaking a Public Toilet Strategy to assess the current and future demand of toilets, improve service levels and guide future development of toilets.</li> <li>● The Structure Plan can be modified to strengthen the need for public seating as part of the requirement for a streetscape master plan.</li> <li>● Council is currently undertaking a Public Toilet Strategy to assess the current and future demand of toilets, improve service levels and guide future development of toilets.</li> <li>● Further provision of public toilets in this centre would be considered in light of this strategy.</li> <li>● <b>Recommendation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strengthen requirements for the provision of public seating as part of the streetscape master planning work.</li> <li>○ Review the provision of public toilets in light of the Public Toilet Strategy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10. Consideration of loading and unloading of goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilitating the safe and efficient loading and unloading of goods within the centre is important.</li> <li>● The existing on-site loading facilities on larger sites and on-street loading bays disbursed within the centre are poorly located and somewhat ad hoc.</li> <li>● The Structure Plan can include further consideration for loading areas for retail premises as part of the built form and access considerations, and for streetscape master planning.</li> <li>● <b>Recommendation:</b></li> </ul>

Issue raised	Summary of Officer response and recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Add considerations for loading areas into relevant sections of the Structure Plan.</li> </ul>

All of these issues, along with responses to other issues can be found in **Attachment 1**.

### Recommended changes to the Structure Plan

The following are the main changes that are recommended and have been made to the Structure Plan (as provided in **Attachment 3**) in response to the submissions (and any consequential changes):

- Reduction to the southern portion of the Virginia Street car park from 5-8 storeys to 3-4 storeys (maintaining 5-8 storeys across the northern portion that interfaces with the commercial area), inclusion of design criteria to avoid overshadowing to the southern footpath of Virginia Street.
- Introducing a new interface type for commercial land (Woolworths) and the residential land (Sherwood Road).
- Additional detail and explanations to drawings.
- Additional cross-section diagram illustrating potential views from Sherwood Road Reserve to the Woolworths site to balance commercial/residential interface issues.
- Statement about any future redevelopment of the southern (Virginia Street) car park will accommodate car parking in future to meet the needs of the community.
- Allowing for future housing change in residential areas along Stephenson's Road in lieu of consolidating it completely within the Development Intensification Area.
- Revise actions to ensure that the design of the rail trail bike path and station forecourt is safely integrated.
- Streetscape upgrades should include locations for more public seating and public toilets. The provision of the latter would be assessed against the Public Toilet Strategy, which is currently being prepared.
- Adding in consideration for loading areas in commercial / retail areas.
- Adding in requirements for integrated water management.
- Specifically encouraging health, fitness and wellbeing services east of Stephenson's Road, and adding an action to investigate the installation of fitness equipment in Council open space reserves.
- Changing references and notations to the extension of the north/south pedestrian spine to Sherwood Road indicate that it is aspirational and dependent on several things occurring before it would be viable.
- Detailed considerations for the design of the Mount Waverley station forecourt.
- Minor editorial corrections.
- Further investigation of embedding Aboriginal cultural values into place-making beyond the Structure Plan.
- Update the land use maps in the Structure Plan to label local churches.

## **Implementation Plan**

The online form also allowed people to tell us their priorities with respect to the implementation of the Structure Plan. The most important priority was for Council to improve the safety and efficiency of the Hamilton Place car park, followed by creating new public plazas and activation of existing spaces.

Other implementation actions that were suggested as priorities included improving connectivity between the library and the station, advocating for commuter car parking and providing more car parking, limiting building heights, reducing clutter on footpaths and planting more street trees.

The priorities have been recognised in Part D of the structure plan, the Implementation Plan. Refer to **Attachment 3**.

## **CONSULTATION**

The consultation for both stages 1 and 2 for this project is outlined in previous parts of this report.

Further consultation will occur a project by project basis for any actions flagged in the Structure Plan. This may include the statutory notification required to exhibit a planning scheme amendment to introduce policy, zoning changes and overlay controls. Any such changes would be considered at a future Council meeting.

Consultation would also occur in relation to other implementation actions such as the master planning of car parking areas, the station forecourt, Winbourne plaza, street tree planting and streetscape upgrades.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Plan 2017-2021**

As discussed previously, the Mount Waverley Structure Plan is listed as a 'priority project' in the Council Plan 2017-2021. This project is supported by strategies that aim to strengthen the Monash Planning Scheme and local policies, and advocate for local needs.

### **Monash Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2018**

The development of the Structure Plan is supported by Objectives 2.2 and 2.3 in the adopted *Monash Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2018*, which aim to:

- *Objective 2.2: Plan for attractive and vibrant employment precincts and work in collaboration with other parts of Council to promote employment precincts and activity centres as places to work, recreate and learn.*
- *Objective 2.3: Support the ongoing development of contemporary, vibrant and economically viable retail and commercial Activity Centres.*

### **Monash Integrated Transport Plan 2017**

The draft Structure Plan aligns with the adopted *Monash Integrated Transport Strategy 2017*, which seeks to improve and increase pedestrian and cycle connections, encourage

DDA compliant public access links, lower speed limits and pedestrian prioritisation in activity centres, and to advocate for better public transport to connect residential areas to activity centres.

#### **Monash Housing Strategy 2014**

The draft Structure Plan identifies opportunities for housing growth within the activity centre and surrounding accessible area. These are identified as Categories 1 and 2 within the residential development framework in the *Monash Housing Strategy 2014*.

The approved Amendment C125 Part 2 has removed the accessible area around Mount Waverley Activity Centre from the proposed General Residential Zone – Schedule 3, retaining it in GRZ2 for now. Further work to identify suitable residential zones for this area would be undertaken as part of an amendment to implement the structure plan, including the potential application of the Residential Growth Zone and the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The development of the Structure Plan (including background reports and the discussion paper) was funded in Council Budgets.

The Structure Plan is an aspiration statement of Council's intent to address the future needs of the Mount Waverley Activity Centre, and the recommendations from this plan will ultimately assist future decisions around capital works and future planning scheme amendments.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Both consultation stages have illustrated that the centre is well-regarded by the local community, and there is a high level of interest in improving the centre while not destroying what makes it special. The changes to the draft Structure Plan in response to the submissions attempt to strike this balance.

Further reports will be prepared for future Council meetings to start implementing the Structure Plan.

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#### Attachments

1. Consultation Report including Summary of Submissions
2. Consultation Brochure
3. Mount Waverley Structure Plan (Final)