

7.4 OAKLEIGH ACTIVITY CENTRE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE DESIGN REVIEW

(PM: CF2018183)

Responsible Committee: Oakleigh Activity Centre Steering Committee

RECOMMENDATION*That Council:*

1. *Notes and adopts the Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018, including the suggestions within the Urban Design Principles, Key Moves and Individual Site Proposals.*
2. *Notes that the Mayor will write to the major State political parties, including the local candidates in the 2018 State election, advocating for a funding commitment and seeking a meeting to discuss the aspirations of the opportunities identified within the Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018 and their associated benefits for the Oakleigh Activity Centre.*
3. *Directs officers to write to and where appropriate have discussions with key Government Departments and key land owners, such as Vic Track, Vic Roads, Vicinity and the Oakleigh Traders Association, and provide an opportunity for them to give feedback and comments on the Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018.*
4. *Releases the report to the broader community for feedback including the opportunity for people to lend their support or otherwise via various means including:*
 - (a) *online;*
 - (b) *Council bulletin;*
 - (c) *e-newsletter;*
 - (d) *Waverley/Oakleigh Monash Leader (Newspapers); and*
 - (e) *handouts outside Oakleigh station in morning and evening peak periods.*
5. *Notes that the outcomes of the above consultation activities will be presented to Council at the appropriate time and provided to the major political parties as part of Council's advocacy on this issue.*
6. *Notes that if the Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018 receives funding commitments in the future, it will be the subject of detailed design, traffic analysis etc. and extensive stakeholder and community consultation before any works commence.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the findings and recommendations within the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018* (refer Attachment A).

It is proposed that this document be used to seek funding commitments from the major parties in the lead up to the 2018 State election. This report also recommends discussion with Government Departments, key land owners, the Oakleigh Traders association.

Additionally, the report further recommends that the general public be made aware of the work and be provided the opportunity to lend their support or otherwise to what is proposed.

Any feedback will be presented to the major political parties and reported back to Council at the appropriate time.

BACKGROUND

Oakleigh Major Activity Centre (MAC) is an important part of the historical, cultural, economic and physical environment of the City of Monash. It is a compact precinct with excellent access to public transport, and a diverse range of businesses and services. Previous strategic work, aimed at planning for future growth in the Oakleigh MAC, identified opportunities for future public realm works aimed at improving safety and amenity and creating a sense of identity for the Oakleigh Station precinct.

The subject area of this work is commonly known as the Western Gateway precinct and includes the transport interchange and the area surrounding the Warrigal Road bridge.

This area has been the subject of various pieces of work over the years dating back to 2002 including:

- Oakleigh Urban Design Framework (Context Conybeare Morrison, 2002)
- Urban Design Guidelines (City of Monash, 2007)
- Oakleigh Village Rejuvenation Schematic Design Report (ASPECT Studios, 2010)
- Placemaking study (Village Well, 2011)
- Oakleigh MAC Structure Plan (City of Monash, 2012)

The Oakleigh Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2012) has also identified the following opportunities for this area:

- Secure the role of Oakleigh Railway Station as a key gateway to the Centre, providing an attractive alternative to car access.
- Provide a safe, efficient and expanded bus interchange convenient to rail, taxi, 'kiss and ride' facilities and Oakleigh Town Centre activities.
- Provide equitable access and synergy between all forms of public and private transport, including commercial, service, pedestrian and cyclist activity.
- Promote synergies between transport interchange and core centre users.

- Provide legible vehicular access and car parking convenient to the Oakleigh Town Centre.

In May 2017, the State government announced that it would spend \$10M on Oakleigh Station in association with the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) grade separation works. This money would see upgrades to the existing station including works like new lifts and regrading of existing ramps. The exact details of this spending is as yet unknown.

Understanding that there was an opportunity to influence how some of this money might be spent, as well as the ability to influence better and more appropriate outcomes for the precinct with the opportunity of an upcoming State election, Council at its meeting of 28 November 2018 resolved:

That Council:

1. *Engage a suitably qualified consultant to undertake a review and update of Precincts 2 and 3 of the Oakleigh Western Gateway Project 2010 in relation to potential public realm works in the Oakleigh Station precinct.*
2. *Approve expenditure of up to \$150,000 for the project to be funded from savings or underspends in the 2017/18 financial year.*
3. *Notes that the revision of the Oakleigh Western Gateway Project 2010 will provide a sound basis for pursuing State and Federal joint funding opportunities through existing programs for improvements to the Oakleigh Station Precinct.*
4. *Seek funding commitments for the improvements identified as part of the review to the Oakleigh Station Precinct from the major parties in the lead up to the 2018 State election.*
5. *Consider appropriate capital works spending in the upcoming 2018/19 budget towards the capital improvements identified as part of the review.*

Following this resolution a consultant group led by urban design specialists *Global South*, in collaboration with *BKK Architects*, *Charter Keck Cramer* (urban economists) and *Rider Levett Bucknall* (quantity surveyors), to deliver the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review* report were engaged.

The consultant group was asked to develop an integrated vision for the station precinct, including public and private landholdings, which would demonstrate both technically and economically how co-ordinated interventions would strengthen a sense of arrival and place and improve safety and amenity.

DISCUSSION

The *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018* frames an integrated vision for the station precinct based upon four key moves:

1. **Extended Activity** – Drawing of pedestrian activity to both sides of the Station and extending Oakleigh's vibrant retail precinct to the southern side of the railway line.

2. **Station Forecourt** – Creation of high quality, attractive arrival experience and safer pedestrian environment that connects the station with the bus interchange and surrounding Oakleigh Village.
3. **Connected Pedestrian Network** – Extension of the streetscape character of the Village Centre towards the transport hub, while improving bus movements and removing barriers to walking and cycling.
4. **Consolidated Parking** – Facilitation of integrated, mixed-use developments on the substantial car park sites, while accommodating equivalent or increased commuter parking, will redress the sense of isolation and expansive asphalt areas around the transport hub and bring increased patronage for local shops and businesses, as well as activity levels on the streets.

These four key moves will guide current and future public and private investment in transport infrastructure, streetscape upgrades and private site development. They also compliment and build upon the following key themes that were synthesised during the desktop review of previous urban design, place-making and planning studies:

- Protecting and reinforcing the qualities and character of the village.
- Encouraging intensification of land use and redevelopment in appropriate locations.
- Enhancing the transport environment and arrival experience.
- Improving the pedestrian environment and connectivity to the Station and bus interchange.

This co-ordinated urban design vision has already been instrumental in discussion with the LXRA, in relation to the station upgrade works.

Encouraging mixed-use development on underutilised sites around the Oakleigh Station is the key to delivering a vibrant public realm, which when well-designed will deliver a range of benefits, including activation, safety, passive surveillance and an improved 'look and feel' of the area.

The proposals for redevelopment within the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018* are predominantly on publicly owned land, while opportunities for future development on private land are also identified. All proposals are consistent with Oakleigh Major Activity Centre Structure Plan 2012.

It is recognised that enhanced streetscapes and public realm conditions act as a catalyst to new development, as the locality becomes more attractive, walkable and amenable and will enhance the attractiveness of the location for private-sector-led development opportunities.

Commuter car parking is considered an inefficient and sub-optimal use of land immediately adjacent to Oakleigh Station and does not contribute to activation, visual interest or passive surveillance. Whilst it is proposed that there would be no net loss of commuter car spaces at Oakleigh, there is significant economic and amenity benefit associated with developing the car park sites around the station. Whilst this requires further discussion with Vic Track, it is

suggested in the report that the commuter car parking from the station forecourt be removed and replaced south of the rail line at the Johnston, owned by Vic Track. This solution will be the basis of further discussions with Vic Track, as they consider the future of the Johnston Street site.

The land on the Vic Track NE car park, in the area identified as Zone A and adjacent to Oakleigh Central, has been identified as being able to be developed so as to provide containment of the public realm and an active edge to the new station forecourt. This could be achieved as a standalone project or as part of a future development opportunity with Vicinity but remains for Vic Track to determine.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The review has considered all relevant planning policy, including Clause 21.15 of the Monash Planning Scheme (OMACSP) and the Oakleigh MAC Structure Plan (City of Monash, 2012)

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposals set out in the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018* build upon previous strategic work aimed at creating an attractive, safe and highly accessible place, which retains its strong sense of identity and remains the focal point for the community, fostering its social and cultural development.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

Proposed access, activation and public realm improvements have no negative impact upon human rights as outlined in and addresses the four key themes: freedom, respect, equality and dignity of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

CONSULTATION

In developing the report, the consultant group held four workshop and numerous meetings with many key stakeholders and neighbouring landowners, including:

- Vic Track
- Vic Roads
- Public Transport Victoria (PTV)
- Transport for Victoria
- Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA)

Subject to Council consideration, the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018* is proposed to be used in the following ways:

- The Mayor writing and advocating for support and funding commitments from the major parties as in the lead up to the 2018 State election.
- Discussion with key Government Departments, key land owners, the Oakleigh Traders association who will be able to provide feedback and comments on the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018*.

- That the general public and other stakeholders be made aware of the work and be provided the opportunity to lend their support or otherwise to what is proposed.

The outcomes of the above activities will be presented to Council at the appropriate time and provided to the major political parties as part of Council's advocacy on this issue.

It should be noted that if the *Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018* receives funding commitments in the future, it will be the subject of detailed design, traffic analysis etc. and extensive stakeholder and community consultation before any works commence.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Estimated costs of proposed public realm improvements are:

Zone A (Station forecourt)	\$ 3.65M
Zone B (Bus interchange)	\$ 3.60M
Zone C (Vic Track NW car park)	\$ 0.85M
Margins and adjustments	\$ 6.05M
Total	\$14.15M*

*estimated costs are for public realm areas only and do not include any costs associated with private developments.

In addition there would be costs associated with the relocation and consolidation of approximately 200 commuter car parking spaces, from Zone A (~83 spaces), Zone B (~40 spaces) and C (~78 spaces), into the base of a future development on Johnson Street. The Oakleigh Major Activity Centre Structure Plan identifies the Johnson St site as a future development parcel, so it stands to reason that the provision of these spaces would be considered and costed as part of any future development of the land. Alternatively, some or all of the car parking spaces within Zone A could be incorporated into a future redevelopment on the land that Zone A occupies.

It is important to note, however, that the development of the Johnson St site, being in public ownership, should be notified to provide a net benefit to the centre, whereby costs associated with public realm improvements and provision of relocated commuter car parking could be considered against development revenue and potential land sales, whilst still delivering a viable project.

CONCLUSION

As one of our largest and successful activity centres, there is a significant opportunity to bring further improvement to Oakleigh and build upon the planned LXRA Station Upgrade works, which will improve the presentation of the station and rail corridor.

More expansive streetscape improvements around the transport hub would be a catalyst for development and contribute to this area becoming more attractive, amenable, safe and comfortable.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Oakleigh Activity Centre Transport Interchange Design Review 2018