

1.2 DRAFT MOUNT WAVERLEY ACTIVITY CENTRE STRUCTURE PLAN

(SMC: File No. F17-4975)

Responsible Director: Peter Panagakos

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the feedback received in response to the community consultation on the Mount Waverley Activity Centre discussion paper released in mid-2019.*
- 2. Notes the content and recommendations of the draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan appended to this report.*
- 3. Release the draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan for community consultation in accordance with the consultation program set out in this report.*
- 4. Note that a further report will be presented to Council upon the completion of the community consultation.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to consider the draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan and to seek endorsement of the draft Structure Plan for community consultation.

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).

Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan Discussion Paper

After consideration by Council, the Mount Waverley Activity Centre 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 consultation confirmed that the Mount Waverley Activity Centre is well regarded by local residents.

The consultation was centred on the Discussion Paper, which provided some useful background information, outlined the challenges for the centre and proposed up some potential opportunities for community consideration.

As part of the consultation process a number of engagement activities were undertaken during the consultation period. The engagement activities included:

- **Listening Post:** As part of the planned Listening Post held on Saturday, 4 May 2019, we asked specific but open questions about the activity centre itself. We received feedback to the questions about the activity centre from 29 people.
- **Stakeholder workshops:** Two workshops were held in the afternoon/evening on 29 May 2019 with a range of invited stakeholders. Those invited included community groups that use the community centres, local schools, government agencies and utility providers, local environment groups, landowners of key development sites, interested local businesses, local sporting clubs, and interested local residents. There were 20 attendees across both sessions.
- **Survey:** A survey was available online from 1 to 31 May 2019. There were 27 questions centred on the key themes and questions asked in the Discussion Paper. Respondents had the ability to skip over whole sections of questions if they wished. Hardcopy surveys were made available in the Mount Waverley Library, in the Civic Centre and mailed out upon request – and these were manually entered into the survey. We received a total of 139 survey responses.
- **Written submissions:** People had the ability to send us a written submission. Eleven written submissions were received.

Key consultation findings

The consultation on the discussion paper found that the community values the following aspects of the centre and felt that these should be protected:

- The village feel
- Offers a different shopping experience to other centres (e.g. Glen Waverley)
- A convenient local shopping destination
- 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 is 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

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

The draft Structure Plan comprises an Executive Summary and three, more detailed sections. The set out of the draft Structure Plan is as follows:

- Executive Summary
- Part A - Overview and context,
- Part B - Key directions, and
- Part C - the Village Centre.

An Implementation Plan, as the fourth part (Part D), will be developed after the community consultation and finalisation of the Structure Plan to guide implementation.

A copy of the draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan is included as **Attachment 1** to this report.

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

The draft Structure Plan includes a draft 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 also contains six key directions:

- **Direction 1 – Foster a vibrant village**
Creating and strengthening a retail core (particularly speciality retailing) west of Stephenson's 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 Stephenson's 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 the shopping and car parking areas, and creation of public plazas in key locations to allow people to sit and relax.

Revamp the 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 appropriate 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.

CONSULTATION

Subject to Council endorsement, community consultation on the draft Structure Plan would be undertaken for 4-5 weeks from mid-February to mid/late-March 2020. The exact dates would be determined by the distribution dates of the Monash Bulletin.

The proposed consultation approach includes the following engagement activities:

- Direct mail out to owners/occupiers, traders/business owners and schools within the study area boundary.
- Direct mail out to submitters and interested people from the initial consultation, key stakeholders and government agencies
- An updated project webpage and an interactive webpage containing all key information, including the draft structure plan
- A brochure summarising the key recommendations of the draft structure plan
- Information drop in session
- Hardcopies of all of the consultation material available in the Mount Waverley Library, Glen Waverley Library and the Civic Centre
- Notice in the Monash Leader
- Article in the Monash Bulletin

The discussion paper and the background report that informed the draft Structure Plan will also be available online.

POLICY IMPLICATIONSCouncil 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 GR22 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.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development of the Structure Plan (including background reports and the discussion paper) was funded in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 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 guide future decisions around capital works and future planning scheme amendments.

CONCLUSION

A draft Structure Plan has now been prepared for the Mount Waverley Activity Centre that has been informed by background analysis and an initial round of community and stakeholder consultation on a discussion paper.

While Mount Waverley Activity Centre is well regarded by the local community who enjoy its village atmosphere and broad range of services and facilities, there is an opportunity to improve the centre. Improvements to public areas, better connections north south and to the railway station, car parking layout and functionality, cycling and pedestrian safety and the range of retailers are some of the issues that the draft Structure Plan highlights as needing to be addressed

The next stage of the project is to seek feedback from the community and stakeholders on the draft Structure Plan.

Attachment 1: Draft Mount Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan