

21.21 DONCASTER HILL ACTIVITY CENTRE

21.21-1 Overview

General

Doncaster Hill Activity Centre is a 58 hectare area located in Doncaster stretching along the major corridors of Doncaster Road, Williamsons Road and Tram Road. It is located approximately 12 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District and is one of the highest points in Melbourne showcasing views of the Dandenongs, Kinglake Ranges and the panoramic Melbourne City skyline.

The Doncaster Hill Activity Centre is regarded as a prime location for redevelopment based on topographic features and existing physical and community infrastructure assets.

The Metropolitan Strategy Melbourne 2030 identifies Doncaster as a Principal Activity Centre.

To meet changing demographic trends and achieve residential targets identified by Council there is a need to provide a greater diversity of dwelling types. As part of the Manningham Residential Strategy (February 2002), high and medium density housing densities will be encouraged within identified Activity Centres whilst residential development outside identified Activity Centre areas will be the focus for low density, detached housing development. Doncaster Hill Activity Centre has been identified as a focus for high density residential development.

Manningham has a commitment to sustainability. Doncaster Hill Activity Centre is an opportunity to showcase an integrated land-use planning and development framework which:

- challenges mainstream community planning and building design to achieve desired environmental outcomes;
- provides more local jobs to reduce journey to work trips;
- provides housing where residents may walk to facilities and services; and
- encourages reduced levels of car ownership and increased public transport usage.

Vision

The Doncaster Hill Strategy (October 2002) envisages that the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre will be a destination in Melbourne's East. It will be a high density, sustainable, vibrant, contemporary mixed use urban village with a strong sense of place and civic identity based on the following key vision objectives:

- To implement the objectives of Melbourne 2030 in respect of Principal Activity Centres as a focus for retail, social, commercial, entertainment, civic and residential uses.
- To integrate ecologically sustainable development principles and techniques into every facet of the design, construction and operation/occupancy stages of new development to raise the aspirations of all users, appropriate for a city looking towards a long-term, responsible and sustainable future.
- To ensure that built form outcomes demonstrate the use of contemporary architecture combined with innovative urban design and building techniques that incorporate ecologically sustainable design principles.
- To emphasise the existing dramatic landform of Doncaster Hill through built form that steps down the hill.
- To encourage high density, high rise residential development.
- To provide a greater diversity of dwelling types.
- To alleviate pressure for more intense residential development in established urban areas.
- To reduce travel demand and change travel behaviour.
- To meet the future infrastructure requirements of Doncaster Hill in a comprehensive, timely and equitable way.

- To develop an integrated mixed-use precinct for Doncaster Hill Activity Centre which provides for an appropriate mix of uses and functions on a location specific level, including the provision of:
 - mixed uses within buildings, particularly along boulevard locations;
 - small scale retail opportunities at ground floor level in conjunction with other mixed use developments;
 - additional commercial/office floor space; and
 - flexible floor spaces within buildings to ensure life cycle adaptability.

The key strategic directions for future land-use planning and development are illustrated by the Doncaster Hill Strategy Framework Plan, included as Map 1 to this Clause. The Framework Plan provides the design vision as a stimulus for private and public sector developments.

Precincts

Seven distinctive development precincts have been identified and delineated within the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre. The precincts are delineated in accordance with their topographic orientation and aspect on Doncaster Hill, their relationship to main roads, and their present and future uses.

The precincts provide guidance to the expected outcomes in each area and a framework for the assessment of appropriate mixes of functions, building scale and character to create a distinctive sense of identity and character for each of the precincts.

In addition to the seven precincts, guidance to the expected outcomes for the intersection of Doncaster, Williamsons and Tram Roads is also outlined. The seven precincts of the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre and the intersection are identified on Map 2 to this Clause.

Precinct 1

Existing conditions

This precinct contains existing civic, education and art infrastructure for Doncaster Hill Activity Centre, including the defining historic buildings and most of the existing open space. It also features commanding views of the Kinglake ranges to the north and the Dandenong ranges to the east.

Vision

The creation of a consolidated, prominent and accessible civic centre with an expanded community and education focus, with gateway presence. It will also include a major urban open space/green spine for Doncaster Hill Activity Centre residents and the wider Manningham community. It is also envisaged to incorporate strong pedestrian links to other areas of Doncaster Hill Activity Centre and enhance the historic/arts sub-precinct.

Precinct 2

Existing conditions

This precinct is a north-facing strip on the south side of the Doncaster Road ridgeline, commanding 360-degree panoramic views and already containing a significant component of the commercial development for Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.

Vision

The focus for high-density mixed use development on Doncaster Hill, this precinct will include cafes, restaurants and outdoor eating at ground level taking advantage of the north-facing aspect, forming the backbone of a vibrant and active boulevard. It is also envisaged that strong pedestrian links will be established between both sides of Doncaster Road and that the heritage buildings will be retained to reinforce heritage/arts character of the area.

Precinct 3

Existing conditions

This precinct is the interface zone between the Civic and Education Precinct 1 to the east and Doncaster Shoppingtown (Precinct 4) to the west. It falls away dramatically to the

north maximising northern views and exposure. The Precinct presently comprises mainly low-density housing, with several rear lanes, and commercial development abutting Doncaster Road.

Vision

In light of its strategic location between Precincts 1 and 4, the future fabric in Precinct 3 will be highly permeable, including well-defined public spaces with linking pathways and with development addressing rear laneways and well designed public plaza(s). Precinct 3 will be well connected to high-density mixed-use development along Doncaster Road and Westfield Shoppingtown Doncaster. Development will step down the hill and should fully exploit the northerly aspect and commanding views to the northern ranges.

Precinct 4

Existing conditions

Westfield Shoppingtown, is a major regional shopping centre centrally located within the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre. The site has significant frontages to the main roads and occupies the dominant corner of the main intersection. It commands panoramic views to the north and west. The precinct also contains residential and community uses along the northern boundary.

Vision

As the Principal retail and entertainment focus of the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre it is envisaged that Westfield Shoppingtown will be better integrated into Doncaster Hill Activity Centre and the surrounding community. Future developments of Westfield Shoppingtown should be consistent with the vision of Doncaster Hill Activity Centre by incorporating activated street frontages and external spaces, a greater mix of uses, pedestrian accessibility, an accessible and prominent public transport interchange and library and improved engagement with the main intersection.

Precinct 5

Existing conditions

This precinct extends along the Williamsons Road ridgeline – it contains the only existing high-density housing development on the Hill and the Doncaster Hotel, the third largest single consolidated site within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre. The precinct features panoramic city skyline views to the west and direct access to open space and parkland along its southern boundary.

Vision

It is envisaged that high-density development continues along the Williamsons Road ridgeline, with strong links to Lawford Reserve, Shoppingtown and the public transport interchange. Strategic view corridors are to be created from the west side of Williamsons Road (in the vicinity of the Shoppingtown Hotel site) towards the city skyline, including from public open space abutting Williamsons Road.

Precinct 6

Existing conditions

This precinct comprises the northwest area of Doncaster Road and Doncaster Hill Activity Centre. The precinct presently has a strong commercial/light industrial character, and older residential stock along Firth Street. It commands city views from the higher reaches at the east end.

Vision

It is envisaged that the mixed-use village character will continue on a smaller scale to that proposed for precincts further east and strong pedestrian links will be created to Lawford Reserve and to the south side of Doncaster Road. Commercial and mixed-uses will be located along Doncaster Road with medium-density residential uses located towards the rear of the precinct. Together with Precinct 7 it forms the major gateway entry to Doncaster Hill Activity Centre along Doncaster Road comprising of a consistent built edge and tree-planting with a gateway building located at west entry point.

*Precinct 7**Existing conditions*

This precinct comprises the south-west area of Doncaster Road and Doncaster Hill Activity Centre, and is presently characterised by light industrial and commercial uses, including a number of restaurants at the west end and also including some residential land uses to the south. It commands city views from the higher reaches at the east end.

Vision

It is envisaged that a mixed-use village will be created on a smaller scale than that proposed for precincts further east. Together with Precinct 6, it forms a major gateway entry to Doncaster Hill Activity Centre with consistent tapering of the built edge - to preserve the views of the city. It is envisaged that a gateway building be located at west entry point and that boulevard tree planting be located along the length of Doncaster boulevard. Commercial and mixed-uses will be located along Doncaster Road.

*Intersection of Doncaster, Williamsons and Tram Roads**Existing conditions*

This intersection comprises the major cross roads and physical centre of Doncaster Hill Activity Centre with views to the city skyline and Box Hill. The intersection forms part of the major arterial road networks in the municipality, with access from the intersection to the Eastern Freeway, CBD and Box Hill Activity Centre. Doncaster Road is the municipality's main east west arterial road and major bus route.

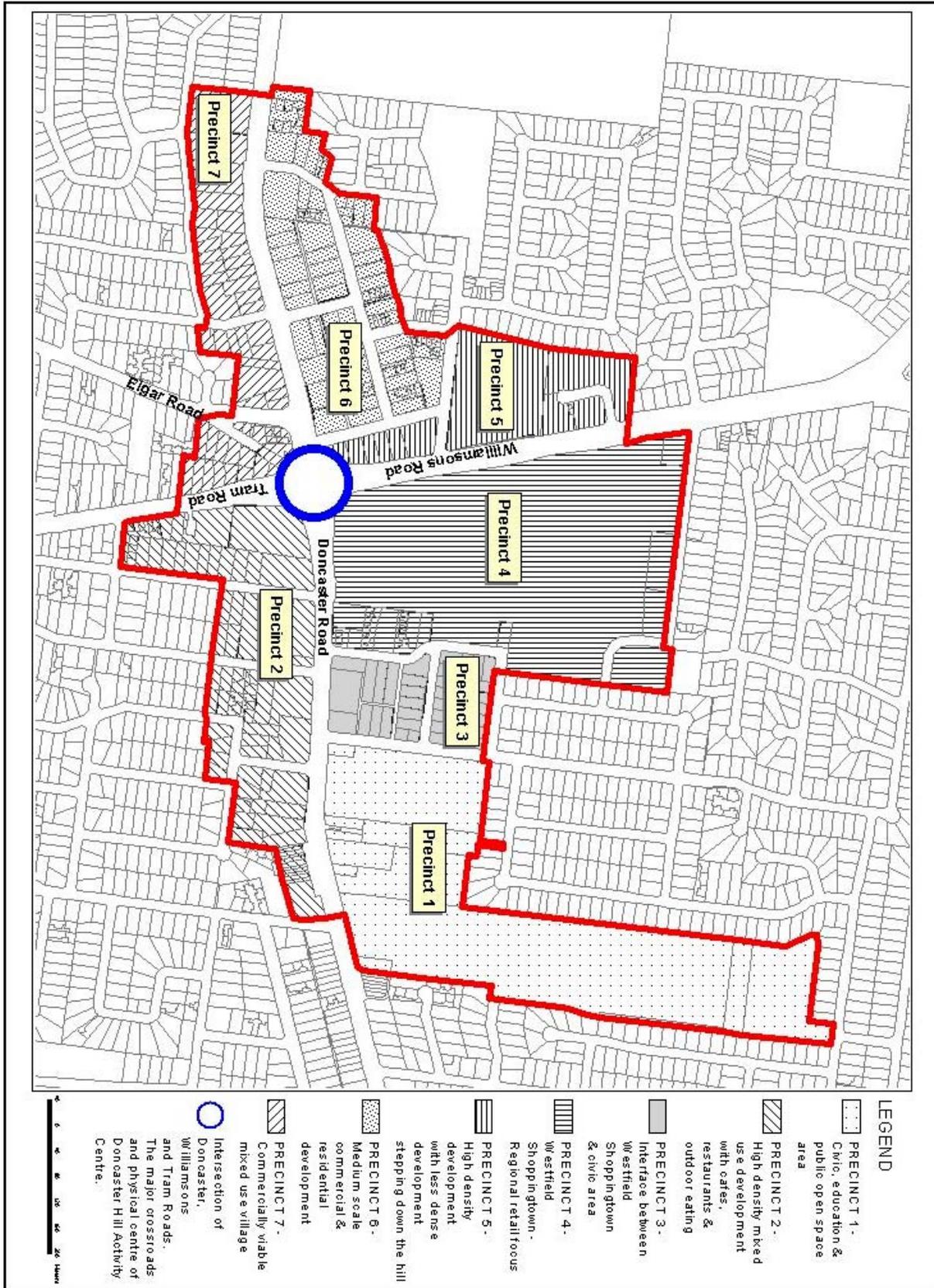
Vision

The Strategy supports the provision of iconic artwork at the intersection which:

- defines its significance as the major cross roads and physical centre of the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre;
- creates a focal point of iconic status for Doncaster Hill Activity Centre visible from all directions;
- visually unifies the 4 corners of the intersection; and
- preserves the street level pedestrian focus and retains views along Doncaster Road.

It is envisaged that this intersection will have greatly increased pedestrian safety and amenity, connecting all precincts abutting the Doncaster Road, Williamsons and Tram Roads intersection.

Map 2 Location of Doncaster Hill Activity Centre Precincts



21.21-2 Key issues, objectives, strategies and implementation

The key issues relating to the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre together with the objectives, strategies and implementation measures are set out below.

Key issue 1

- Incorporating ecologically sustainable development principles in every facet of design, demolition, construction and operation.

Objectives*Building Energy Management*

- To maximise energy conservation and increase use of renewable energy resources.

Water Sensitive Urban Design

- To achieve water sensitive urban design that offers a superior alternative to the traditional approach to water management.

Construction Materials

- To minimise the environmental impacts of input and output materials as well as any material used in the external construction and development of buildings and works.

Indoor environment quality

- To achieve healthy indoor environment quality.

Waste Management

- To achieve a reduction in waste generated by building occupants that is collected, hauled to and disposed of in landfills.

Quality of Public and Private Realm

- To achieve building design which includes accessibility and reduces the need to modify or alter buildings, in response to future changing needs and uses.

Transport

- To maximise alternative modes of transport and minimise environmental impacts associated with car parks.

Demolition and Construction

- To minimise environmental impacts associated with site construction practices.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- Address and incorporate ecologically sustainable design principles into developments at the earliest opportunity as an important design and development consideration, rather than be incorporated once concepts and plans are well advanced.
- Demonstrate the full potential of ecologically sustainable development, by incorporating current best practice, use of emerging design solutions and technologies and embracing a 'beyond compliance' approach to mandatory standards into proposals.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Using Local Policy (Clause 22.13 Doncaster Hill Activity Centre Sustainability Management Plan Policy) to provide specific ecologically sustainable development requirements for land use and development within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.

Zones and overlays

- Applying the Design and Development Overlay to provide specific guidelines for the use and development of land within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.

Further strategic work

- Investigating the development of performance standards and the identification of 'beyond compliance' approaches for Sustainability Management Plans.

Other actions

- Requiring applicants to document and deliver sustainability requirements for individual use and development within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre through a Sustainability Management Plan.
- Requiring applications for new use and development of land to apply the objectives and requirements of the Doncaster Hill Strategy (October 2002).
- Requiring applications for new use and development to have regard for the Manningham Residential Strategy (February 2002).

Key issue 2

- Achieving innovative contemporary design and built form for all new development that is based on the best of current architectural design practice and sustainability principles.

Objective

- To achieve innovative contemporary design and built form for all new development that is based on the best of current architectural design practice and sustainability principles.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- Create an Activity Centre of a more human scale and character, which enhances the uniqueness and attractiveness of Doncaster Hill.
- Ensure built form provides a range of building heights stepping with and emphasising the existing landform of Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.
- Protect and enhance key views and vistas.
- Provide buildings which are visually diverse and contribute to the public realm through the use of varied, high quality, durable and environmentally appropriate materials.

- Incorporate unique architectural and/or ecologically sustainable design features in identified design element areas so that they substantially contribute to overall building form and appearance.
- Apply appropriate building setbacks for new development, ensuring that building occupants and users of Doncaster Hill Activity Centre have a high level of amenity in terms of ventilation, daylight access, outlook, view sharing, wind mitigation and privacy.
- Achieve the development of a strong boulevard character along Doncaster Road, Williamsons Road and Tram Road based on creating:
 - a strong sense of place and a safe and comfortable environment;
 - active street frontages and mixed uses within buildings along Doncaster and Williamsons Roads (and part of Tram Road) as a focal point for appropriate uses and vibrant pedestrian generating activities including, café, leisure and other entertainment activities; and
 - boulevard landscape treatment that comprises of high quality landscape treatment (including boulevard planting, canopy tree planting, screen planting, extensive tree plantings and theme plantings in appropriate locations) to be complemented by appropriate setbacks and built form.
- Apply gateway treatments to signal entry into and to enhance the special identity of the Activity Centre including the main intersection of Doncaster Road, Williamsons Road and Tram Road. Gateway treatments can include buildings showcasing unique contemporary architecture, artwork, lighting, distinctive tree planting and well-designed signage.
- Ensure that signage and displays are well designed and positioned to respect the amenity and safety of users, including the protection and enhancement of view lines and vistas and the boulevard character.
- Ensure that development incorporates high quality public and private open spaces that are useable, accessible, safe, well landscaped and provide opportunities for recreation and social interaction. These spaces should be well linked to major facilities for pedestrian networks to assist with permeability and pedestrianisation.
- Provide high quality pedestrian and bicycle linkages in both public and private areas, which improve the street level environment to create connections that are accessible, safe, interesting and pleasant.
- Provide high quality public art which significantly contributes to the development of a contemporary and distinctive sense of place by creating an appropriate scale and location marker, defining image and reflecting the character for individual precincts.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Using Local Policy (Clause 22.13 Doncaster Hill Activity Centre Sustainability Management Plan Policy) to provide specific ecologically sustainable development requirements for land use and development within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.

Zones and overlays

- Applying the Design and Development Overlay to provide specific guidelines for the use and development of land within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.

Further strategic work

- Investigating the need for more detailed design guidelines for specific areas and elements.

Other actions

- Requiring applicants to document and deliver sustainability requirements for individual use and development within Doncaster Hill Activity Centre through a Sustainability Management Plan.
- Requiring applications for new use and development of land to apply the objectives and requirements of the Doncaster Hill Strategy (October 2002).
- Requiring applications for new use and development to have regard for the Manningham Residential Strategy (February 2002).

Key issue 3

- Infrastructure requirements in the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre.

Objectives

- To ensure that the future infrastructure requirements of the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre are met in a comprehensive timely and equitable manner.
- To apply a Development Contributions Plan that will ensure the provision of all relevant infrastructure, with all costs equitably apportioned between developers and the responsible authority.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- Identify future infrastructure needs of the Doncaster Hill community.
- Implement a Development Contributions Plan that will proportionately allocate identified developer contributions, according to projected share of usage.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Using local policy to provide direction on the use and development of land within the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre (*Doncaster Hill Activity Centre policy, Clause 22.13*).

Zones and overlays

- Applying the Development Contributions Plan Overlay for the purpose of levying contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities before development can commence.

Further strategic work

- Applying the Development Contributions Plan to ensure that the future infrastructure requirements are met in a comprehensive, timely and equitable way.
- Applying appropriate car parking rates, supporting public transport use, creating highly permeable pedestrian networks and providing pedestrian and cyclist links to reduce dependency on private car use.