



Activity Centres Urban Design Review – Project Reference Group – Minutes

Date: Wednesday 4 April 2018

Time: 6:30 - 8:30pm

Venue: Council Chamber

Present:

- Councillors: Peter Clarke (*Chair, 6.30-7.30pm*) and Peter Perkins (*Chair, 7.30-8.30pm*)
- Community Members (CM): Lynnsay Prunotto, Frank Lynch, Stefano Scalzo, Gill Di Pasquale, Heidi Crundwell and Peter Koiker
- Council Officers (CO): Naomi Paton, Fae Ballingall, Anthony Calthorpe, Paul Fyffe
- David Lock Associates (DLA): Mark Sheppard and Julia Bell

Apologies: None

Item	Key discussion point	Actions Arising
1	<p><u>Introductions</u></p> <p><i>Summary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crs. Clarke and Perkins: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ introduced themselves and welcomed all attendees to the group ○ discussed the differences between Eltham and Diamond Creek Activity Centres. • All other attendees introduced themselves to the group. 	N/A
2	<p><u>Procedural Matters</u></p> <p><i>Summary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bi-monthly schedule, at the same time and week night was agreed. • Cr. Clarke requested that officers prepare and circulate dates for the next three meetings. 	Action: CO
3	<p><u>Overview of Urban Design Review</u></p> <p><i>Summary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul and Fae provided a presentation which gave an overview of State Government Activity Centre Policy, the Eltham and Diamond Creek Activity Centres, the purpose of the revising the Urban Design guidelines and, some of the other projects that will have input into the broader review. 	N/A

<p>4</p>	<p><u>Expectations from Community Members</u></p> <p><i>Summary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr. Clarke explained Council’s rationale for commencing the review and the intended outcomes. Following this, Cr. Clarke invited community members to summarise their expectations. • This led to a broad discussion on some of the key concerns of the PRG: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of involving the community ○ Diamond Creek is growing at a faster pace than Eltham. May be better positioned to meet affordable and diverse housing needs in the Shire. ○ Major challenges relating to traffic congestion and other related transport impacts associated with population growth. ○ Both centres are constrained by limited access points. It is important not to ‘choke’ the centres. ○ Balancing impacts of growth without compromising what residents love about the place. ○ Both town centres are fragmented and require new strategic plans. ○ Design guidelines should avoid being superficial and convey community values. ○ The PRG should be bold in vision. ○ The Activity Centres are mainly reviewed in their relation to Metropolitan Melbourne but they are also significant gateways to important rural regions. They need to be considered in this broader context. ○ Eltham and Diamond Creek have an important role in accommodating growth in the Shire. ○ Challenges with fragmented land ownership. ○ Lack of community infrastructure. ○ Land use mix should not just focus on residential and commercial, but also for civic and community purposes. ○ Unlock opportunities to attract investment, public/private partnerships ○ Escape expenditure of 60% from retail trade in Eltham. This is a major challenge for the Eltham Centre. ○ Understand different population profiles of the centres. Eltham has longer-term residents, Diamond Creek has newer. The openness to change might be influenced by this. ○ Diamond Creek – concern that road reserves which currently provide parking for the Shopping Centres may be acquired by VicRoads in the future. 	
<p>5</p>	<p><u>Eltham and Diamond Creek Design Elements</u></p> <p><i>Summary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLA led the discussion on the preferred design elements for Diamond Creek and Eltham. • Diamond Creek: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rural character, has a country town ‘feel’, ○ Materials - post and rail fences, use of stone, Castlemaine Slate, corrugated iron. ○ Colours - balance between control of colour palette and being too bland, uniform. 	<p>Action 1: DLA Action 2: CM</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strong sporting culture and active lifestyles ● Eltham: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mud brick, organic architecture (Eltham Library is an excellent example). ○ Modernist architectural legacy – risk-taking epitomised by Knox, Gunn. ○ Value proposition – bold, visionary. ○ Opportunity for re-interpretation, truthful, values driven design. ○ Topography influences design outcomes. ○ Value of trees ○ No single architectural style but united by vegetation. ○ Cenotaph and associated gardens act as a Gateway. ● General Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both centres dealing with issue of veneerism (facadism) where fake timber/ stone cladding is used rather than the real materials. The quality is poor and tokenistic to the character of the area. ○ Bring back elements that support history. ○ Improve pedestrian, cycling connectivity. Centres need better legibility. ○ Urban amenity is poor in both centres. ○ Both need a strong, purposeful public realm (not just planter boxes, seats etc.). ○ Town Centres could also reflect what’s beyond it. ○ Issue of vacant CFA sites, opportunities for redevelopment ○ Impacts of railway and stabling. 	
6	<p><u>Closing</u></p> <p><i>Summary:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Committee Members were invited to provide additional comments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ consider what could be kept from the existing urban design guidelines ○ consider values, design elements to protect/strengthen or to remove. <p><i>Meeting closed at 8.40</i></p>	Action: CM