INCORPORATED DOCUMENT

Royal Melbourne Showgrounds Redevelopment Master Plan – December 2004

This document is an incorporated document in the Melbourne Planning Scheme pursuant to Section 6(2)(j) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Melbourne Planning Scheme Incorporated Document Royal Melbourne Showgrounds Redevelopment Master Plan December 2004

INTRODUCTION

This document is the Master Plan for the redevelopment of the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds, Epsom Road, Ascot Vale. The Master Plan presents a viable, long- term plan for the re-vitalisation of the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds. It will be implemented as a joint venture between the State Government, the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited with a private sector partner selected through a competitive tender process. The redevelopment of the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds is a project of genuine State significance and involves a substantial financial contribution from the State Government and the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited.

The Master Plan provides the broad planning and design framework for the integrated development of the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds in the future. It does not provide a high level of detail for the individual buildings proposed to be constructed. However, it provides the vision for the redevelopment of the Showgrounds and it shows the relationship between functional areas/precincts, new buildings and public spaces and landscaping, pedestrian movements and traffic and parking. The Master Plan includes functional precincts that will facilitate the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show and a range of uses proposed on land no longer required for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show. The Master Plan also includes design objectives that will be used to develop the more detailed plans for new buildings proposed within the various functional precincts.

The Master Plan divides the Showgrounds into two parts:

- The "Core" land, required for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show and available for other events and activities during the rest of the year;
- The "Non-core" land that is not required for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show and is available for development that will contribute to the viability of the new buildings and facilities proposed on the Core land.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Royal Melbourne Showgrounds is recognised as a major educational, recreational, tourist, and entertainment resource of State and metropolitan significance. It is also a site of cultural heritage

significance and is included in the Victorian Heritage Register. One of the objectives of the Master Plan is to ensure an appropriate balance is achieved between the retention of buildings of heritage significance and the demolition of other buildings to make way for new facilities that better meet the functional and commercial requirements of the annual Royal Melbourne Show. A balanced outcome will ensure that the Showground's cultural heritage significance is not lost and that its integrity as the place where the Royal Melbourne Show has been held continuously for 121 years is not compromised. The Master Plan builds on this tradition but takes the Showgrounds forward to offer a better Show experience and the opportunity for new events and activities outside Show time. The opportunities for new events and activities are a key objective for the redeveloped Showgrounds.

The redevelopment of the Showgrounds as a year-round venue for major events and activities including those requiring special train services is one of the initiatives specifically identified in Melbourne 2030 supporting Direction 6- A Fairer City.

At the local policy level, the Melbourne Planning Scheme recognises the critical role of the cultural and exhibition facilities available at the Showgrounds in showcasing the State's capabilities and attracting related businesses to cluster around them. The Showgrounds redevelopment is identified as an infrastructure improvement area and the City of Melbourne's policies support plans for the revitalisation of the Showgrounds as a showcase for the Victorian food industry.

The objectives for the redevelopment of the Showgrounds reflected in the Master Plan are consistent with these State and Local Planning Policy initiatives and include:

- To achieve a balanced heritage outcome that retains significant heritage buildings and allows the demolition and replacement of other buildings, maintains the cultural heritage significance of the Showgrounds and provides new facilities that revitalise the Showgrounds;
- To facilitate the use and development of the Showgrounds for the annual Royal Melbourne Show and provide a range of additional entertainment, recreational, tourist, educational, commercial and community events and activities held at the Showgrounds during the rest of the year;
- To facilitate commercial, office, retail, entertainment, leisure and other uses within the Showgrounds on the Non-core land that is not required for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show;
- To provide the facilities necessary for the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited to achieve its objectives for the Showgrounds;
- To encourage the multiple use of land and buildings within the Showgrounds in order to facilitate use throughout the year;

- To ensure that the combination of uses, their operation, and the scale and nature of any development do not prejudice the amenity of the surrounding areas by way of unreasonable noise levels and traffic congestion on local streets;
- To ensure that the future use and development of the Showgrounds occurs in an integrated manner and generally in accordance with the Master Plan.

TIME FRAME

The Master Plan anticipates the redevelopment of the Showgrounds over a five- year time frame. The Master Plan allows a staged approach to the redevelopment of the Showgrounds to ensure that the 2005 and 2006 Royal Melbourne Shows and other event commitments can be held with a minimum of inconvenience due to on-going construction activity.

FUNCTIONAL PRECINCTS

The Master Plan identifies the functional precincts for the Showgrounds including the Core land (Precincts 1 to 7) required to accommodate the functional requirements for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show and the Non-core land that is not required for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show.

The Non-core land is identified as Precinct 8: Non-core Commercial/Retail /Entertainment /Leisure in the Master Plan. Precinct 8 is located on part of the Epsom Road frontage of the Showgrounds. This land can be developed for uses that will contribute to the viability of the redevelopment of the balance of the Showgrounds.

The Master Plan identifies the following functional precincts for the Showgrounds:

- 1: Agribusiness
- 2: Rural life
- 3: Carnival/parking
- 4: How it works
- 5: Education
- 6: Back of House
- 7: Support
- 8: Non-core Commercial /Retail/ Entertainment/Leisure

The boundaries between the precincts are indicative only and may be modified over the life of the Showgrounds Redevelopment Project.

There are no particular uses allocated to Precincts 1 to 7. These precincts will accommodate a range of uses and events including all activities associated with the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show.

Buildings and facilities within these precincts will be available for other events and uses when they are not being used for the annual Royal Melbourne Show.

Precinct 8 is identified as the Non-core Commercial/Retail/ Entertainment/Leisure precinct. It is proposed to accommodate approximately 16,300 sqm commercial/office uses, approximately 8000 sqm retail and mixed uses, and entertainment/leisure/other uses of approximately 1000 sqm in new buildings to be constructed in the precinct. The six level commercial /office building is proposed to be located in the south-east part of the precinct between Epsom Road and the railway line. The retail uses are likely to comprise a supermarket and specialty shops that address Epsom Road and activate the street frontage. The entertainment and leisure uses are proposed to be accommodated in the retained Woodfull Pavilion and new buildings proposed on the Epsom Road frontage and in the north-west part of the precinct. During the life of the project, other uses suitable for the Woodfull Pavilion may be identified.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The following design objectives underpin the Master Plan:

- To create an exciting event venue;
- To locate buildings and spaces likely to accommodate "noisy" events in the more central parts of the Showgrounds to increase the separation distance to the residential areas to the north;
- To protect and retain the significant Cape Chestnut Tree;
- To protect and retain, where practical, items and buildings of heritage significance identified by Heritage Victoria;
- To balance the demolition and retention of heritage buildings with opportunities to create new buildings and spaces that will enhance the Showgrounds as an attractive venue for events;
- To separate pedestrian and vehicle traffic within the Showgrounds;
- To create a new, clearly defined main pedestrian entry on Epsom Road at its alignment with Union Road;
- To improve the landscape quality of the Showgrounds using plants, paving, lighting, seating, etc;
- To create attractive useable pedestrian spaces including an east-west pedestrian promenade through the Showgrounds and a Town Square;
- To activate internal streets and pedestrian spaces, in particular the uses on the edge of the main east-west pedestrian promenade must present an activated facade and avoid a blank wall;

- To improve the visual permeability and connections with the surrounding neighbourhoods
- To improve the external street frontages using open picket style fencing that encourages views into and out of the Showgrounds;
- To activate the Epsom Road frontage with appropriate forecourts to new buildings;
- To design new buildings that are sympathetic in scale and type to the retained heritage buildings;
- To improve pedestrian links to the railway station and the car parking areas at Flemington Racecourse.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN CONCEPT

The Master Plan proposes significant improvements to the landscape qualities of the Showgrounds. The landscape plays a vital part in energising the site. It creates a dynamic ground plane that directs movement flows, unifies the diverse built elements, and facilitates a multitude of activities and events.

The key components of the landscape concept are:

- The Central Spine a dynamic and 'playfully' articulated promenade which traverses the site from the main entry on Epsom Road, links to the Town Square and connects to the western gateway. The graphical pavement design splays into functional activity nodes.
- Secondary Links pedestrian corridors, which link from secondary entries and the train station, and feed into the Central Spine. Links are arranged as strong formal linear avenues which contrast with the more 'playfully' detailed Central Spine, and provide a structural integrity to the overall layout. These links further enforce this ordering framework and enhance legibility and orientation.
- Town Square an active and functional space during the Show and outside Show time. A dynamic multi-functioning urban plaza and relaxing community park.
- Carnival Grounds a functional hard paved area during the Show that becomes a car park outside Show time and is therefore available to support other activities and events held at the Showgrounds. The space is energised with playful pavement detailing and softened with bands of trees.
- Show Park a "soft" park area of grass, planting and trees for passive recreation. The space also provides an ornamental water body, fed by storm water run-off, that possibly would be available for irrigation.

DEMOLITION

The Master Plan provides for the demolition of buildings and structures that no longer meet the functional requirements of the Royal Melbourne Show or are required to be removed to make way for new buildings and facilities to enhance the Showgrounds as an all year round event venue. The Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Bryce Raworth Pty Ltd supports the demolition of the selected buildings and demonstrates that the cultural heritage significance of the Showgrounds will not be diminished as a result of the proposed demolitions.

The buildings proposed to be demolished include, but are not limited to:

- Cattle pavilion No. 3
- Cattle pavilion No. 5
- Harness Shed
- Hall of Manufactures
- William Cockbill Pavilion
- Graeme Head Pavilion
- Exhibition Centre on Epsom Road (retained in part)
- Main Arena
- AG Hunter Stand
- Animal nursery
- Chirnside Stand
- Cliff Stand
- PB Ronald Pavilion
- Dalgety Pavilion
- Poultry Pavilion
- Sheep Pavilion part of eastern end only
- Pie in the Sky totem

RETENTION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

The Master Plan provides for the retention and refurbishment of the following buildings for identified uses:

- Clydesdale Pavilion stables
- Royal Luncheon Rooms catering
- Corrigan Building Arts and crafts exhibitions
- Cattle Pavilion No. 1 Dogs Pavilion
- Horticultural Hall Exhibition building
- Woodchop Pavilion Wood chop competition
- Cattle Pavilion No. 4 Dogs
- Centenary Hall Animal nursery

- Cattle Pavilion No. 6 Back of House
- Sheep pavilion (part only) Exhibitions
- The Woodfull Pavilion Possibly entertainment/leisure uses of 2500sqm gross on ground floor and mezzanine (to be decided in the future).

The Master Plan also provides for the retention and protection of the significant Cape Chestnut Tree.

NEW BUILDINGS

The Master Plan provides for the construction of new buildings in the Core land to provide innovative and flexible spaces that are suitable for the staging of the annual Royal Melbourne Show as well as a range of other events and uses proposed to be held at other times of the year. A key objective of the Master Plan and the Showgrounds Redevelopment Project is to provide new facilities that will be available and attractive for a range of events all year round. New buildings are also proposed in the Non-core land to accommodate the commercial, retail, entertainment, leisure and other uses proposed in this area of the Showgrounds.

The new buildings include:

- The main Exhibition Hall on Epsom Road providing some 10,000 sqm of exhibition floor area;
- An open air Arena with tiered seating on three sides for a total of 4300 spectators;
- The Grand Pavilion, the main focus at the centre of the revitalised Showgrounds. It provides 8,000 sqm of exhibition space beneath an exciting fabric roofed structure;
- The Town Square Pavilion, a two level building providing the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Ltd with new administration offices on the first floor and a flexible exhibition space at ground floor;
- A six level office building on the Epsom Road frontage (16,300 sqm gross);
- A tavern or similar entertainment /leisure use on the Epsom Road frontage (2 levels, 1000 sqm gross);
- A retail facility likely to be a supermarket and specialty shops on the Epsom Road frontage (6000 sqm gross) with a mixed use component of some 2000 sqm gross at the rear addressing the main east-west pedestrian promenade through the Showgrounds.

Other new buildings may be constructed on the Showgrounds over the life of the redevelopment project.

The Master Plan provides an indicative building footprint and the general location of the new buildings as well as an indication of the proposed building height.

The information provided in the Master Plan may change during the detailed design process. However, all new buildings will be generally in accordance with the information provided in the Master Plan.

RELOCATABLE BUILDINGS

The Master Plan proposes the retention of many of the relocatable structures and buildings at the Showgrounds as they form highly flexible and functional spaces in addition to the permanent structures. The Hoecker pavilion style relocatable buildings have been a feature of the Showgrounds in the past. The Master Plan provides for the retention, relocation and extension of two Hoecker buildings. These buildings are proposed to accommodate the show bags sales adjacent to the carnival precinct and the Epicure Centre that addresses the Town Square.

The Wood chop arena will also be relocated.

PEDESTRIAN AND PUBLIC SPACES

The Master Plan strengthens the pedestrian environment within the Showgrounds and provides more cohesive and legible visual and physical connections into and through the Showgrounds. Improved visual permeability and connections with the surrounding neighbourhoods are important design objectives for the redevelopment of the Showgrounds.

The Master Plan introduces a central, landscaped, east-west pedestrian promenade and makes Epsom Road the defined main pedestrian entry point into the Showgrounds. The main pedestrian entry and the pedestrian promenade align with Union Road. This alignment enhances the Showgrounds as the ultimate vista and destination for this main road and make a major contribution to opening up the Showgrounds to the surrounding area. The east-west promenade will be a generous landscaped spine that incorporates major public open spaces and activates and connects all precincts within the Showgrounds.

The Master Plan also provides clearly defined north-south view corridors and shared secondary pedestrian links from Leonard Crescent and Langs Road into the Showgrounds to further emphasise the permeability of the site.

The removal of various buildings along the Langs Road frontage will also contribute to a more open Showgrounds and provide views into the site from this important street frontage.

The Master Plan provides for a large, open "Town Square" framed on the north side by the Town Square Pavilion and the Epicure Centre that will accommodate exhibitions that will spill out into the Town Square. On the south side, it will be framed by the refurbished Public Stand and Horticultural Hall which will provide cafe areas, seating and exhibitions.

The new and refurbished buildings on the Core land will be used for a variety of events and activities during the annual Royal Melbourne Show and throughout the year.

STREET FRONTAGES

The Master Plan proposes to make the Leonard Crescent, Langs Road and Epsom Road frontages of the Showgrounds more attractive and permeable by providing new picket fencing that allows views into and out of the site. The Master Plan also proposes removing some of the buildings along Langs Road to further open up the site.

The new buildings proposed on the Non-core land along the Epsom Road frontage are proposed to address the street and to activate the Epsom Road frontage of the site.

These changes to the treatment of the boundaries of the Showgrounds will open up the site and provide more cohesive and legible visual and physical connections into the Showgrounds from the surrounding streets.

CAR PARKING

The Master Plan provides for car parking to be available for members and officials in the Back of House precinct during the Royal Melbourne Show. Outside Show time additional car parking areas along the Langs Road frontage and the Carnival Precinct will be available to support other events and activities proposed at the Showgrounds.

Car parking will be provided in accordance with the Car Parking in the Special Use Zone Schedule 2 – Royal Melbourne Showgrounds Parking Precinct Plan.

The following car parking rates apply in the Non-core land (unless otherwise agreed with the responsible authority):

- Supermarket: 5.5 spaces per 100 sqm of floor area
- Specialty retail: 4 spaces per 100 sqm of floor area
- Office: 2.5 spaces per 100 sqm of net leasable floor area
- Restaurant: 0.3 spaces per seat available to the public
- Tavern: 20 spaces per 100 sqm of net leasable floor area available to the public.

TRAFFIC and ACCESS

The Master Plan provides for four vehicle connections off Langs Road and two vehicle connections off Epsom Road. The detailed design of these intersections will be addressed in consultation with VicRoads

as part of the detailed planning approval for the Showgrounds Redevelopment project. Two access points off Leonard Crescent are also provided. However, the design and location of these points is outside VicRoad's responsibilities.

The Master Plan also provides for vehicle access to the Non-core land from the main internal road.

NOISE

The Master Plan does not directly address the potential for noise nuisance associated with new buildings and spaces. However, a key objective is to locate buildings and spaces likely to be used for the more "noisy" events in the more central parts of the Showgrounds to increase the separation distance to the residential areas to the north and west. The noise provisions in the Special Use Zone Schedule 2 Royal Melbourne Show grounds will continue to apply to all future events and activities at the Showgrounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT

The Master Plan must address matters contained in Ministerial Direction No. 1 'Potentially Contaminated Land' under Section 12(2)(a) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, to ensure that potentially contaminated land is suitable for any future sensitive use, agriculture, or public open space, which could be significantly adversely affected by any contamination.

NON-CORE LAND REDEVELOPMENT

Royal Melbourne Showgrounds Eastern Non-core land Epsom Road, Ascot Vale

The site

The Eastern Non-core land is situated at the south-east corner of the Showgrounds site and has a primary frontage to Epsom Road. The site is characterised by a number of significant physical features. The contours of the site grade up from Epsom Road to a peak located near the existing station building and there are a number of existing buildings and shelter sheds dispersed across the site - the most significant of these being the very impressive Woodfull Pavilion.

Objectives

The design concept for the site is to connect and integrate a mixed-use development into the Showgrounds broader master plan and the wider neighbourhood precinct. This concept is supported by a number of urban design principles:

- Ensure an active edge to the Epsom Road frontage.
- Create a focal point at the intersection of Union Road and Epsom Road.
- Retain the existing Woodfull Pavilion.
- Establish an address for the site independent from the Showgrounds, to minimise conflict while major events are occurring in the showgrounds facilities.
- Develop a mixed retail offer and promoting a strong indoor/outdoor character.
- Create an architectural language, which embraces contemporary ideas and aesthetics.
- Incorporate maximum daylight within the buildings and hence reducing the demand for artificial lighting.
- Develop a landscape design, which creates a hierarchy between vehicular and pedestrian paths.

Urban design

A retail centre is proposed as a key component of the development, ideal for generating a connection with the local community and contributing to a high visitation rate to the site.

An important urban design objective is the activation of the Epsom Road frontage. The design proposes a range of retail outlets and street cafes on the street edge. This mix of uses creates a strong sense of identity for the centre and encourages a perception that the Showgrounds site is open throughout the year. Similarly, the activation of the Eastern Non-core precinct boundary with the principal Showgrounds pedestrian boulevard has also been a central design philosophy.

The retail centre, comprising a supermarket and a number of specialty shops will attract customers both locally and from the emerging/growing residential areas west of the Maribyrnong River.

A contemporary style corner tavern is proposed to be located on the Epsom Road frontage addressing the intersection of Union Road. This building establishes an important landmark for the project and creates a sense of definition for the Showgrounds forecourt area. The activity generated by this building will be important in signalling a sense of daily life beyond the operating times of the Showground venues.

A further urban design strategy is the introduction of a new access road into the site. This road connects Epsom Road with the carnival precinct and provides an address for the Woodfull Pavilion, commercial office building and retail centre.

This strategy allows the Eastern Non-core precinct to be developed as a series of discrete zones, creating a more urban and integrated environment. Further, this road establishes an address independent of the Showgrounds, deemed essential during the Show period and while major events are occurring in the Showground facilities.

Retail centre

(Approximate floor areas)

Retail Supermarket- 3700 sqm.

Tenancies to the mall and facing Epsom road -2300 sqm.

The retail centre is anchored with a supermarket while the tenancies facing Epsom Road will respond to daily needs such as cafes, food outlets and convenience retail. The tenancies located with shopfronts facing the mall and adjacent to the supermarket entry will likely be convenience and service based and generally provide for bakers, butchers, newsagent and fresh food specialists.

The retail centre will be one level above ground.

The design reflects a mixed retail offer. The centre represents a new generation approach by encouraging a stronger indoor-outdoor character.

The existing Woodfull Pavilion will inform the materiality of the new centre. In this regard the contemporary architectural response will use materials complementary to the Woodfull building.

The design will also use a combination of canopies and verandahs along the shopfront edges to provide a sheltered walkway enhancing the indoor – outdoor character of the new centre.

Cafes, where located on the Epsom Road frontage will be designed with retractable glass doors creating a seamless transition between the retail tenancies and the street. The central mall will be flooded with daylight further reinforcing the indoor-outdoor character of the centre. The architecture of the centre will also embrace contemporary ideas and aesthetics creating a strong visual identity to Epsom Road.

Although the Supermarket will provide the main focus for the retail offer, the project will also accommodate a number of smaller traders, important for giving the centre a character and a sense of local identity. The benefit of the main anchor tenant however is that trading hours can be extended, ensuring the site remains active during most times of the week.

Woodfull Pavilion

The existing ground floor and proposed mezzanine – 2500 sqm (approximately).

It is proposed to retain the Woodfull Pavilion and convert the existing structure into a mixed use format, subject to current market trends.

The existing Woodfull Pavilion is one level above ground.

Car parking for the Woodfull Pavilion will be housed within the new commercial building.

The volume of the interior and the tall proportions of the windows suggest that an upper level could be inserted into the existing fabric with minimal impact to the structure or façade (subject to consideration by Heritage Victoria). The new road allows the entrance to the Pavilion to remain in its current location with small gardens and existing marble statues of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert to become part of the

landscape strategy.

It is also proposed to retain the large established trees and the open lawn area, currently at the rear of the

Woodfull Pavilion.

Commercial Office Building.

Commercial Office Building – Approximately 16,300 sqm (approximately).

The Commercial Office Building will comprise of 6 levels above ground.

Car parking for the Commercial Office Building will comprise approximately 230 cars that will be

accommodated at basement car parking levels.

Tavern.

Tavern – 1000 sqm (approximately).

The Tavern building will be 2 levels above ground.

Car parking for the Tavern will be housed within the new commercial building.

Proposed as a contemporary style corner pub located on the Epsom Road frontage addressing the intersection of Union Road, this building will establish an important landmark for the precinct and create a sense of definition for the Showgrounds forecourt. The activity generated by this building will be

important in signalling a sense of daily life beyond the operating times of the Showgrounds venues.

Future Retail/Mixed Use Centre.

Future Retail/Mixed Use Centre – 2000 sqm (approximately).

This building will have a mixed use format, subject to current market trends.

This building will be 2 levels above ground.

Car parking for this building will be provided within a new building behind the retail centre.

This building is seen as an integral component of the Non-core Development scheme as it provides a strategic interface between the activities of the Showgrounds Core precinct and the Retail Centre. Architecturally the building will "present" itself to both the Core precinct pedestrian boulevard and Retail Centre car park and will therefore provide an important visual link between the Core and Non-core precincts. Equally, the incorporation of this building at this location further enhances the overall precinct philosophy of activating street edges and precinct boundaries. It is intended to adopt a transparent design philosophy through the use of appropriate structural and glazing systems that will allow pedestrians the opportunity to view the activities within, be they recreational or commercial in nature.

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