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This 2008 Urban Design Framework is an amended and updated version of the 2003 Urban Design Framework. Amendments were made by the Hobsons Bay City Council’s City Strategy Department.
Future Vision

The Pier Street Centre is the heart of the Altona community. It will use to its advantage its beachside location, its open spaces, its compactness and its character to provide a safe and easily accessible environment, a unique range of goods, services and facilities for the Altona community.

The Centre will evolve as a beachside destination for the northern and western regions of Melbourne. It will strategically accommodate new development that accords with its principles and will develop in a fashion that respects the ‘human scale’ and village character, history and attributes that make it such a desirable and distinctive location.

The Centre will accommodate higher density and forms of residential development in order to generate activity and cater for a broad range of households and age groups.
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1 Introduction

1.1 What is an Urban Design Framework?

“In a diverse, but increasingly urbanised world, there are some truths. People everywhere want to lift themselves and their children to better lives. People are better able to lift themselves when they live in economically and socially diverse communities where there are jobs and businesses, where there is a linkage between development and the environment. In those places, environmental concerns are addressed, and those communities are healthier places to live, where we recognise a stewardship of the land and the open spaces, of the air and the water, and we undertake explicit strategies to reduce waste and to recycle and to be attentive to the environmental and design implications of life. Regional guidance is vital, but local initiative is essential…”


The aim of an Urban Design Framework (UDF) is to identify and scope a preferred physical, social, economic and environmental future for a specific location in an integrated fashion, taking account of a broad range of aspects including:

- Local character
- Community aspirations and values
- Centre management
- Business development
- Infrastructure
- Movement and access
- Relationship with its environs and open space
- Land use activities
- Sustainable development
- Design and form of public and private spaces
- Image and identity
- Heritage
- Safety and security
- Planning and development provisions
- Landscape design and materials

A UDF typically takes a long-term view of the area and identifies actions and initiatives that can be pursued within a 10-15 year period. Whilst recognising that many of the initiatives will require a long term horizon, the UDF must also recognise the importance of pursuing actions in the short term to address the present issues facing the Centre and to instil community and investor confidence in the project and its processes.

This UDF has been funded jointly by the Hobsons Bay City Council and the State Government’s Department of Sustainability and Environment through its “Pride of Place” program. It is principally guided by the motivation of the community to create a sense of regional identity and pride that reflects local aspirations. It is also designed to contribute to the vision for Metropolitan Melbourne contained in “Melbourne 2030 – Planning for Sustainable Growth”, namely;

“In the next 30 years, Melbourne will grow by up to one million people and will consolidate its reputation as one of the most liveable, attractive and prosperous areas in the world for residents, business and visitors.”

Accordingly, the UDF has responded to the key directions of Melbourne 2030. That is:

- A more compact city
- Better management of metropolitan growth
• Networks with the regional cities
• A more prosperous city
• A great place to be
• A fairer city
• A greener city
• Better transport links
• Better planning decisions, careful management

In addition, the UDF complements the Hobsons Bay Activity Centres Strategy 2006.

1.2 Objectives

The project brief identified that Altona is emerging as a desirable and sought after place to live, work and visit. The Council is anticipating that this will place pressure on the area for significant social, economic, cultural and environmental change in form and function over the next 10-15 years. The objective of the UDF is to enable such changes and the inherent implications to be identified, addressed and where appropriate facilitated in an effective fashion that respects important elements of character of the area and enables Altona to emerge as an attractive, functional and prosperous urban location.

The Council has also identified the opportunity, through the preparation of the UDF, to engage with the community and ensure that the UDF reflects aspirations and desires of the community, the Council and State Government. Key objectives in this regard are to enable the community to:

• Explore and analyse the environment.
• Expand their understanding of the possible futures for the Altona Beach Activity Centre.
• Articulate a vision for the Altona Beach Activity Centre.
• Identify practical, integrated and coordinated actions that will achieve the vision for the Centre over the next 10-15 years.

1.3 The Altona Beach Major Activity Centre – Contributing to Melbourne’s and Hobsons Bay’s Sustainability

‘Activity Centres provide the focus for services, employment and social interaction in cities and towns. They are where people shop, work, meet, relax and live’ (Melbourne 2030).

The Altona Beach Activity Centre (the Centre) has been classified in Melbourne’s Metropolitan Strategy, Melbourne 2030, as a ‘Major Activity Centre’. While the Centre has comparatively limited long-term retail growth potential, it’s classification as a Major Activity Centre is considered appropriate (Hobsons Bay Activity Centres Strategy 2006 pg 2). The Centre displays all of the attributes and ingredients of a vibrant and successful 'Major Activity Centre' in line with this classification. Its beachside location; the significant open space areas; the broad diversity of businesses, community services, leisure and recreation facilities, the characters and personalities, its history, its accessibility by foot, car, rail, bicycle, bus and potential ferry, its residential surroundings and its compactness, all combine to make it a very special, different, desirable and distinctive place.
Some of the strategic development objectives for a Major Activity Centre identified by Melbourne 2030 are:

- Encourage more mixed-use development in appropriately located sites.
- Continue broadening the range of uses.
- Encourage a wider range of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities.
- Location for high density housing.

It is important to recognise that over 11,000 new dwellings will be needed in Hobsons Bay by 2030 (Hobsons Bay Activity Centre Strategy 2006). At both the State level and Local level clear guidance is provided that a large proportion of this new housing should be within activity centres. Increased housing density within the Altona Beach Activity Centre can bring benefits such as:

- An increased population base to support the Centre. This in turn provides the local population with a wider range of services and facilities.
- Increasing the population within walking distance of the core Pier Street activity precinct.
- Stimulating local employment.
- Enabling greater access to services, facilities and the public transport available within the Centre.
- Increasing housing choice and thus create more opportunity for people throughout different stages of their lives to remain in their local community.

The consolidation of the Centre’s role as a Major Activity Centre will help achieve key sustainability objectives. These include:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (for example, reducing the number and length of motorised trips by providing a range of services within walking distance to people’s homes).
- Reduce pressure for Melbourne’s urban expansion (for example, by accommodating more housing within established urban areas as opposed to greenfield sites).

Reinforcing the role of Altona Beach as a Major Activity Centre is a fundamental objective that underlines this Urban Design Framework. To achieve this objective, it is recognised that the existing low density character will change over time. The Urban Design Framework seeks to ensure that this change occurs in an appropriate manner.

In addition, consolidation of higher density development within the Altona Beach Activity Centre is aimed at taking development pressure off and protecting the traditional low rise garden character of the surrounding neighbourhood. This document makes it clear that high density development is to be focused within the Centre and not the residential hinterland outside the Centre.

### 1.4 Study Area

Whilst defining precise boundaries for an urban design framework can be somewhat problematic due to the nature of activities and how they blend into each other, it is appropriate to define the area being considered as part of this study. The Altona Beach Activity Centre is defined as the area bounded by McBain Street to the west, the Altona Beach and foreshore to the south, Davies Street to the east and the southern shoreline of Cherry Lake in the north. The Centre therefore includes not only the commercial area of Pier
Street, but also abutting residential areas defined as the ‘Residential Interface Precinct’ (refer to Figure 6 Framework Plan). The residential areas included within the Centre are all within easy walking distance to Pier Street.

The specific focus of the project is Pier Street, from Civic Parade to the Esplanade including the train station. This is referred to as the ‘Pier Street Precinct’, and lies at the centre of the study area. The existence of this precinct has established the primary need for the project and is the major focus for actions, initiatives and major future development.

1.5 Process

Hobsons Bay City Council Strategic Development Department has managed the project. A steering committee comprising representatives from the residential community, business community, the Council and the Department of Sustainability and Environment met throughout the project to review work and assist in the development of the UDF. The framework was adopted by Hobsons Bay City Council in December 2003.

Key elements of the process included:

- Project information sheet distributed to 5000 houses and the businesses in the Pier Street precinct.
- Survey of businesses in the centre.
- Survey of customers in the centre.
- Public ideas and information session.
- Business information session.
- The Council officer and key stakeholder forum.
- Review of existing materials and strategies.
- A month long public consultation exercise.
- The distribution of 5000 information brochures outlining the draft framework.
A presentation of the draft framework to the Council.
A public meeting to discuss the draft framework.
A Saturday morning “sausage sizzle” in Pier Street to discuss the draft ideas and engage with the community.
Letters to property owners and major infrastructure and government agencies.
A presentation of the draft plan to the key implementation stakeholders to enlist support and commitment to the implementation program.

The adopted 2003 UDF was proposed to be given statutory recognition via Amendment C51 to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. C51 was placed on public exhibition in February 2005.

In 2006, following the public exhibition period, Council’s City Strategy Department reviewed the 2003 version of the UDF. This included a review of submissions and consultation with the Pier Street Implementation Committee (PIC) and Urban Planning and Development Advisory Committee (UPDAG).

This 2008 Urban Design Framework includes a number of changes to the document adopted by the Council in 2003. Principally, these changes relate to strengthening the linkages between the framework and the role of Altona Beach as a ‘Major Activity Centre’ and reflects some of the recommendations provided by the Panel.

1.6 Implications and status of the Urban Design Framework

It is very important that the UDF is viewed in its proper context. The framework identifies important principles that development must be consistent with. It does not identify specific design details on any site.

It establishes agreed future directions, identifies the desires of the various communities, scopes opportunities, identifies the principles that need to be adhered to and illustrates potential solutions to be pursued through a partnership between public and private interests. A key function of the UDF is to ensure that all stakeholders are able to work in a collaborative fashion towards common objectives. The UDF identifies opportunities for the future design and development of the Centre that will impact on both public land and private properties.

The Council will not acquire or purchase specific properties without the preparation of more detailed proposals, consultation with property owners and the preparation and public exhibition of formal amendments to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme.

It is the Council’s desired wish to work closely with the community, property owners and businesses and other government agencies and authorities, towards the achievement of the opportunities identified in the UDF over the next 10-15 year timeframe.
2 Snapshot of Altona Beach Activity Centre and Environs

The Altona Beach Activity Centre is a unique and attractive beachside community. The cultural and business centre is located predominantly in and around Pier Street, between Cherry Lake and Altona Beach. It is approximately 12km to the west of the Melbourne CBD on the western coastline of Port Phillip Bay.

2.1 Key physical features

The key physical features of the Centre are:

- The open space areas, specifically Weaver Reserve, Logan Reserve, Lee Reserve and Cherry Lake.
- Altona Beach, its safety, attractiveness, accessibility and the pier.
- Altona Homestead.
- The quality and unspoilt nature of the Esplanade and Foreshore.
- The Norfolk Island Pines and the coastal vegetation.
- The views and vistas over Port Phillip Bay.
- The Hobsons Bay Civic Centre and the community, cultural and recreation facilities.
- Accessibility by road, bike, foot, bus, train and potential ferry.
- Its central location in, and accessibility from, the residential areas of Altona.
- The compactness of the Pier Street Precinct and its diverse range of individually owned businesses.
- The predominance of low scale, low density development.

The Centre has all the attributes required to enable it to function as the “heart” and “focus” for the Altona community and as the first choice location for a broad range of retail, business, community, cultural, medical, social, leisure, recreational and transport facilities.

It is easily accessed by road, rail, bicycle, bus, foot, car and potential ferry by the Altona community and indeed the northern and western regions of Metropolitan Melbourne.

The Pier Street Precinct contains in excess of 100 business and community activities. Key retail tenants include Coles Supermarket and Bendigo Bank. A significant number of businesses are of an independent nature and provide a traditional mix including pharmacy’s, bakery, butcher, deli’s, clothing, shoes, sporting goods, newsagency, giftware and professional and personal services. It has an estimated floor area of some 14,544 sqm (based on figures from Ratio ODP 1999 updated to reflect Coles Supermarket expansion).
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>3434sqm</td>
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<td>Peripheral sales</td>
<td>1230sqm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>446sqm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14544sqm</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2: Land Use*
A survey of customers and businesses in the Pier Street Precinct and a review of current activities were undertaken as part of this project. A summary of the results is provided in Appendix 3 to assist in the definition of the roles, functions and perceptions of the Precinct.

The predominant role of the Pier Street Precinct is as a weekly shopping and convenience destination, evidenced by 61 per cent of customers visiting weekly food and convenience businesses. This role is substantially supported by the presence of the supermarket, however there remains a limited offering of weekly food items. The Pier Street Precinct also serves an important professional and personal services role and community and civic role.

Altona Beach is one of only two swimming beaches (the other being Williamstown) in the west of metropolitan Melbourne. As such, it is a regional and potentially a metropolitan recreation facility. Visitation levels during summer pose significant stress on existing parklands and associated amenities.
Community activities or facilities located in or nearby the Pier Street Precinct include the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre, Logan Reserve, Weaver Reserve, Lee Reserve, Grant Reserve, Cherry Lake, Altona Theatre, Altona Library, Altona RSL, churches, Altona Senior Citizens, Altona Bowls Club, Finnish Hall and the Louis Joel Centre.

The Centre is close to a range of natural environmental, bird and wildlife sanctuaries, including wetlands, swamps and conservation zones, and bird breeding and habitat areas (e.g. Black Swans and Pelicans). These areas are accessible from the Pier Street Precinct via a network of walking and cycle paths.

2.2 Current Planning Scheme provisions for Altona Beach Activity Centre

Clause 21.08 of the Hobson Bay Planning Scheme gives clear recognition of the importance of the “Altona Pier Street Village” as one of six major activity centres in the municipality. Specific reference to the Centre appears in Objective 5 of this clause which details a range of strategies to maintain and enhance the role of the Centre and references the Pier Street Altona Shopping Centre Outline Development Plan (Ratio 1999) as the document to guide the use and development of land in the Centre.

The Centre is covered by a mixture of:

- Business 1 Zone (B1Z), which covers the original core of the Centre.
- Public Use Zones which cover the community and railway facilities.
- Public Open Space Zones, which cover Logan Reserve and Lee Reserve.
- Mixed Use Zones which cover Pier Street north of the railway line and an area to the west of Pier Street around Blyth Street.
- The remainder of the Centre, outside the Pier Street Precinct is zoned R1Z.
- The areas outside and surrounding the Centre are also zoned R1Z.
- Clause 22.06 provides a policy to address specific design and development issues in the Mixed Use Zones.

A Design and Development Overlay (DDO4) covers properties in the Centre adjacent to the foreshore. The major impact of this overlay is to prevent development exceeding 2 storeys. The DDO runs along the whole foreshore of Hobsons Bay typically covering properties within the first “block” adjoining the foreshore. Within the Altona Pier Street Shopping Centre however, the DDO4 extends further to the north to include properties on the north side of Queen Street between Sargood and Pier Street.

A heritage overlay covers 6 specific properties within the Centre, these are:

- Logan Reserve.
- Church in Sargood Street.
- Church in Railway Street North.
- Finnish Hall in Pier Street (Former Red Robin Hosiery Factory).
- The Council Chambers in Civic Parade.
- Altona Pier.

The existing zones and planning scheme provisions appear generally in line with other comparable activity centres throughout Melbourne and reflect the current activities and boundaries in the Centre. Issues that may need to be addressed are:

- The specific height restriction on properties in the core of the Centre covered by DDO4.
The current zoning of ‘Weaver Reserve’ as B1Z.

The lack of reference to detailed urban design provisions for the Centre.

The lack of reference to specific car parking policy provisions.

The lack of specific design guidelines for Pier Street north.

The provision of clear direction within the Mixed Use Zones to ensure that they can fulfil their potential to maintain a mixture of land use activities rather than being seen as transitioning to or having a bias towards residential activity, noting that the Mixed Use Zone forms part of the residential “suite” of zones in the Planning Scheme.

2.3 Proposed Planning Scheme Controls - Amendment C51 to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme

Amendment C51 to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme proposes to address many of the issues identified above, including:

- Changes to the Municipal Strategic Statement to reinforce the role of the Altona Beach Activity Centre as a Major Activity Centre.
- Deletion of Clause 22.06 ‘Mixed Use Policy – Altona Activity Centre’.
- Removal of the DDO4 and introduction of a DDO12 that would specifically relate to the Altona Beach Activity Centre, including design and development principles for the Centre in line with this Urban Design Framework.
- Rezone part of Weaver Reserve from Business 1 Zone to Public Park and Recreation Zone.
- The Urban Design Framework to be included as a ‘reference document’ within the Planning Scheme.

2.4 Car Parking Arrangements

The _Pier Street Outline Development Plan 1999 (ODP) _indicates that there were 767 car parking spaces in the Centre. The ODP surveyed car parking on Friday 13th and Saturday 14th February 1998. The peak demand surveyed was 598 spaces, at 12 noon Friday. This analysis suggests that there were an adequate number of spaces to meet demand. A review of the current facilities and the activities in the Centre undertaken as part of this study suggest that in the years since the ODP was completed some minor expansion of both the business activities and car parking facilities have occurred so as to maintain this status quo.

It is considered that the current provision of on-street and off-street car parking is adequate to meet the needs of current activities south of the railway line. North of the railway line, the provision of mostly long-term parking means that at times there is an under supply of short-term parking. Some of this long-term parking is obviously commuter parking associated with the railway station.

Deficiencies in the current parking arrangements relate mainly to the management, accessibility and awareness of the parking facilities. Off street parking is provided in a range of locations throughout the precinct. A number of these areas are small, isolated and hence not fully effective. (Weaver Reserve, Bent Street, Logan Reserve). There also appears to be a shortage of commuter car parking in the vicinity of the railway station, evidenced by the amount of parking in the residential streets around the station.

The availability and effectiveness of car parking has not emerged as a major issue facing the Pier Street Precinct or the Centre. However, significant development and density changes may make car parking supply and demand a more prominent issue, both real and perceived,
in the future. It is recognised that the Centre has excellent public transport accessibility and offers a range of services within walking distance to people who reside within the Centre. The Centre offers reasonable alternate choices (i.e. walking/public transport) to the automobile that are not available in most other areas of the municipality. Therefore, while cars will still be used and needed, the Centre is an appropriate location to encourage reduced car dependency via reduced car parking requirements for development. Hobsons Bay City Council will investigate the development of a car parking policy for the Centre that will deal specifically with:

- The amount of car parking required in association with a change of use or a new development within the Centre, including residential, commercial and retail car parking rates.
- The most appropriate locations for car parking in the Centre, especially in the Pier Street Precinct, in order to maximise the efficient use of each space over a 24 hour, seven day a week period.
- The design, layout and location of car parking spaces and areas to meet the needs of all able and disabled users of the Pier Street Precinct.
- The establishment of shared or common use car parking facilities wherever practicable and the necessary management procedures to support such a scheme.
- The collection of cash in lieu/special rates schemes for the provision of physical car parking spaces.
- The management and monitoring of privately owned car parking areas by the Council.

2.5 Vehicular Traffic

The Centre is relatively isolated from the major metropolitan road network. Whilst this has advantages in terms of limiting ‘through’ traffic it also places limitations on the future commercial development of the Centre, from a point of view of the limited capacity of the road network to handle significant increases in traffic volumes. Of interest and as evidence of the relative remote and isolated nature of Altona, in terms of the broader Metropolitan area, there are currently no traffic lights in the Centre.

The traffic management treatments in Pier Street, south of the railway line are relatively good. Roundabouts and pedestrian crossings control vehicle speeds and provide designated places for pedestrians to cross the road. However, the section to the north is in need of attention in terms of speed control and safe pedestrian crossing points. Pier Street north of the railway crossing is too “unconstrained” for a shopping centre and vehicle speeds are significantly higher than for the section south of the crossing.

A detailed Local Area Traffic Management scheme including the Pier Street Precinct was prepared for the Council by Turnbull Fenner in 2001. The study indicated that apart from the high traffic volumes and speeds on a number of collector streets, particularly Queen Street, there were no significant accident issues on the roads in the vicinity of the precinct. It included some recommendations in relation to the existing pedestrian crossings within the study area.

The railway level crossing, which is located in the mid-section of Pier Street, disrupts north-south vehicle movement and pedestrian movement along Pier Street. Alternative crossing points for vehicles are available only at Millers Road, 750 m to the east and at Grieve Parade approximately one kilometre to the west.

Pedestrian access to and through the Pier Street Precinct is relatively good due to its compact nature and the nature of the subdivision grid pattern. The roundabouts can create
some anxiety for pedestrians wishing to cross the road but vehicle speeds through the roundabouts are typically low and the safety record of the roundabouts are relatively good.

The railway line is abutted by narrow roads to both the north and south known as Railway Street North and Railway Street South. Railway Street South between Millers Road and McBain Street is designated for one-way traffic and hence restricts west-east access through the area. The Traffic Management Report recommended making Railway Street North one-way west to east over its entire length.

**Assessment of key traffic routes**

The *Local Area Traffic Plan (Turnbull Fenner, 2001)* provides the following analysis and assessment of key traffic routes in the area:

**Civic Parade** is a secondary arterial road controlled by VicRoads. It provides a traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction. It carries in the order of 11,000 vpd (vehicles per day) on an average weekday.

**Queen Street** is a collector street providing a traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction over the majority of its length. Queen Street, west of Pier Street, carries in the order of 10,000 vpd (east of Pier Street it carries in the order of 6,000 vpd). These average daily volumes are also not evenly split between eastbound and westbound. Volumes favour eastbound at a ratio of 55 to 45 (i.e. 5,500 vehicles per day eastbound and 4,500 vpd westbound). Queen Street immediately to the west of the Pier Street Precinct is relatively narrow for a collector street.

**The Esplanade** is a collector street providing a traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction. In addition to providing access to local residential areas and the Pier Street Precinct. It is a scenic route for motorists providing views and vistas over Port Phillip Bay. The Esplanade carries in the order of 5,000 vehicles per day in the vicinity of Pier Street. However, these average daily volumes are not evenly split between eastbound and westbound. Volumes favour westbound at a ratio of 3 to 2 (i.e. 3,000 vehicles per day westbound and 2,000 vpd eastbound. Whilst detailed seasonal breakdown of traffic volumes are not available it is assumed that the Esplanade is likely to carry much heavier volumes of traffic in summer period.

**Blyth Street** is a collector street providing a traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction. It carries in the order of 4,000 vpd.

**Pier Street** is a collector street providing a traffic lane and a parking lane in each direction. It carries in the order of 6,000 vpd.

**Traffic and parking implications of future development**

A number of development sites have been identified in Pier Street north for additional retail development, (peripheral or bulky goods type activity,) From a traffic point of view it is considered that Pier Street and the adjoining road network has the capacity to accept the additional traffic generated by such development up to around 10,000 sqm of retail floor space in addition to current provision. Approximately 250 car parking spaces would be required for 10,000 sqm of peripheral or bulky goods type activity. These spaces would need to be accommodated in off-street car parking areas associated with the developments, preferably in one or more “shared facilities” strategically located in Pier Street between the railway station and Civic Parade.
An important aspect of the current and future traffic situation in the Centre is the seasonal nature of activities associated with the beach and foreshore. It will be necessary to consider future development in terms of their potential to impact on the overall traffic situation but more particularly how they may specifically add to the summer peak volumes, especially in the vicinity of the Esplanade, the southern end of Pier Street and Queen Street.

2.6 Public Transport

Rail

The Centre is served by the Altona Railway Station, which is on the Werribee line of the Melbourne Metropolitan electric rail network, currently operated by “Connex”. Whilst it is currently a single line operation, it provides high frequency services both weekday and weekend between Altona, Werribee and central Melbourne. Altona Station is not currently classified as a premium station and therefore is not required to be ‘manned’ from first to last train.

Bus

The Centre is also served by two bus routes. Route 415 connects the Centre to Laverton and Williamstown and Route 411/2 runs from the Centre to Altona Meadows. Route 415 has a stop adjacent to the Railway Station while route 411/2 has stops in Blyth Street.

Ferry

The presence of the Altona Pier provides future potential to establish ferry services connecting Altona with other bay side locations and central Melbourne. Recent cost benefit analysis reports undertaken by Parks Victoria suggest however, that these services are unlikely to be viable in the short term.

2.7 Infrastructure

Drainage

Concerns have been expressed through consultation regarding the existing drainage issues that exist in the Centre, particularly the Pier Street Precinct and the potential for drainage issues to be exacerbated through further development. The Centre is inherently susceptible to drainage problems due to its low lying nature and proximity to the coast. Localised minor flooding of roads (but not properties) occurs in the areas to the south of the railway line on a regular (typically once a year) basis associated when heavy storms coincide with high tides. The Centre is covered by two drainage systems. The area to the south of the railway line has a drainage system that discharges to Port Phillip Bay at Sargood Street. The area to the north of the railway line discharges into a Melbourne Water system (Nellie Street Drain – now Civic Parade).

Further, it should be noted that concerns have also been expressed throughout the consultation process regarding the impact of the high water table in this precinct. As a result, the Arup Car Parking Study 2005 has identified that there are difficulties with constructing car parking within the area due to the nature of the high water table and general difficulties in constructing basement car parking below the water table. In light of this the Arup report has suggested that the Council need to carefully consider its position of height restrictions and basement car parking within the Activity Centre.
Area to south of railway line

The Council has improved the drainage system to the south by installing a gross pollutant trap in Logan Reserve along the main drainage pipeline from the Pier Street Shopping Centre to the discharge point to the bay. This has enabled all the individual litter traps previously installed in each pit of the existing system to be removed. This has alleviated drainage problems in the southern section. The Council has also undertaken an assessment of the drainage issues for the Sargood Catchment area south of the railway line (*Sargood Street Catchment and Coastal Areas Flood Mapping GHD 2005*). This assessment has identified specific actions to improve drainage such as removal of raised sections of pedestrian crossings and large diameter pipes under Blyth Street & Queen Street intersection along Pier Street to address the issues. However, it is important to note that these studies and actions have not taken into account increased water run-off as a result of increased site coverage over time as the Centre develops. An assessment of the effects of increased site coverage is required as the proposed flood mitigation works will need to be reviewed and potentially altered (see ‘Increased Site Coverage’ below).

As development in the southern section of the Pier Street Precinct is already considered to be producing close to 100 per cent run off, additional development in this area is not expected to create additional drainage or flooding issues unless development occurs on the Council’s reserves which are currently open space. Current studies have identified 1 in 100 year flood levels for the southern section of the Pier Street Precinct which will enable the Council to carry out any necessary flood mitigation works and advise developers of minimum floor levels required to prevent potential flooding. This is especially important for any large building works contemplating basement car parking facilities.

Area to north of railway line

Flood levels have been determined and a flood mitigation study undertaken (*Investigation of Civic Parade Drain Mitigation Options, GHD, July 2005*). This has indicated that there are difficulties undertaking economically viable solutions to drainage problems experienced in this area. As development in this area is currently not creating 100 per cent run off additional major development could exacerbate the drainage and flooding potential and hence will need to be carefully considered. Recent developments in the area have been advised of recommended minimum floor heights based on an initial flood mapping project carried out for the Council by consultant group GHD. Future development would need to be constructed with floor levels above the 1 in 100 year flood level to alleviate the potential for flooding of buildings during major floods. The overall intensity of development and hard sealing of properties in the area is a separate issue that will need to be considered in light of the current capacity of the drainage system and the potential and viability of upgrading such system.

Increased site coverage

Higher residential density within the Centre is a key feature of a vibrant Altona Beach Activity Centre. With this will come increased building footprints and site coverage, especially within the Residential Interface Precincts which currently have low site coverage. Over time this will result in increased water run-off and pressure on drainage systems, especially in the absence of adequate on site retention systems. Existing drainage studies completed to date have not taken into account increased run-off as a result of higher site coverage in the currently low density Residential Interface Precinct. This is a catchment wide issue, that affects land both in and out of the Centre. A catchment wide approach/strategy on this issue is therefore required.
2.8 Summary Analysis of Landscape Values

There is a strong north and south visual axis, drawing views out to the gentle, subtle forms of the coastline and sea beyond. This is reinforced by the linearity of the built form and the relatively small scale with the exception of Coles.

There is an important relationship between the sea / coastal foreshore and community of Altona. This relationship exists not only in the physical form, but also in a social context. The coast and foreshore have played an important role in creating a lifestyle for the area, in the form of local business, industry and recreation. The people in turn have also shaped the coast and influenced its evolution over the years.

A visual analysis of the study area (see Figure 4) has identified five distinct precincts based on their specific landscape character and context:

The ‘recreational node’ encompasses the area around J.K. Grant Reserve and Cherry Lake. The mature trees in this precinct are visually prominent and give the appearance of flowing from the reserves, into the adjacent residential areas. Cherry Lake is also a bird sanctuary and habitat of the endangered species of Skipper butterfly.

Moving south into Pier Street, the ‘mechanical village’ emerges. The character of this precinct differs greatly. It has a more utilitarian, ‘industrial’ feel due to the juxtaposed nature of the blocks and building form.

The ‘civic village’ is defined by the layered character of residential, industrial and commercial open space. It extends out from the ‘mechanical village’ precinct to J.K. Grant Reserve and the lake.

The ‘coastal village’ is delineated by a more enclosed visual envelope. The buildings, canopies and trees in this precinct are of human scale and there is a strong sense of rhythm of the built form within this space.

The southern most precinct is the ‘coastal node’, which extends along the Esplanade and appears to flow north into the reserves. This precinct and it’s subtle, almost benign seascape, has a more ‘organic’, ‘natural’ appeal and creates a sense of arrival as you move into it either from the east and west. This ‘gateway’ experience is reinforced by Logan and Weaver Reserves.
Figure 4: Landscape character and context precincts.
2.9 Summary Analysis Of History And Cultural Values

Altona’s alluvial plains once consisted of an extensive lignum swamp system which occurred right around Altona and south west to Pt Cook. The dune area between the swamps and the coast extended from Altona to the present Pt Cook Metropolitan Park.

The Aboriginal people who originally inhabited the area of Altona are known as the Yalukit-Willam, a name meaning ‘river camp’ or ‘river dwellers ‘ they form part of the Boon Wurrung (Bunurong) clan of the Kulin nation. For the last fifty years the neighbouring Wurungjeri have looked after sites of significance in the municipality of Hobsons Bay.

The first white person to set foot in Altona was Lieutenant Grimes. The first settler was Alfred Langhorne, owner of what was originally the ‘Laverton’ homestead. The area of Altona was originally occupied for pastoral purposes.

The Altona homestead was named after a village in Germany on the River Elbe. This later became the name of the town.

The Moreton Bay Figs planted by the Langhornes within the Logan Reserve have been dated back to at least the 1850’s.

In 1884 dynamite became a major import. Rather than bring it up through crowded shipping channels, a dynamite storage hulk (the 'Sydney Griffiths') was kept anchored to the west of the main Hobsons Bay shipping path, in the quiet water off Altona. In the 1880’s, as the metropolis expanded, this was seen as inappropriate and dangerous and it was proposed a new site would be found.

A small number of Nissen huts were introduced to the area to serve as migrant housing, factory and production buildings.

In the 1920's and 1930's Altona, like most places, was hit hard by the depression. With unemployment at an all time high, the community spirit at this time was very important and many locals are still remembered for their selfless acts. One of these people was Mary Borrack, who worked hard, often walking miles, to ensure all the local families had enough food, blankets and medical attention during these tough times.

Tree planting along the foreshore was initiated by a resident with special botanical knowledge, Samuel Stephenson who worked at the Royal Melbourne Botanical Gardens. From the early 1920’s he lived in Altona and advised on planting the foreshore with shade and shelter trees including Tea trees, Cypress and Norfolk Island Pines.

Migrants from all over the world contributed significantly to the tally of new Altona residents in the 1940's. Many of the people had been displaced from their own countries by the Second World War. They came from a wide variety of places including Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Ireland, England, Malta and Italy. Former Dutch colonials from Indonesia also migrated to Australia. In 1961, 43 per cent of Altona residents were born outside of Australia the 2001 census shows that this has dropped to 35 per cent. Because of this, ethnic and cultural diversity is recognised as an important defining feature of the area and has led to the provision of a wide variety of “ethnic” foods and the introduction of a diverse range of sports, cultural celebrations and traditional trades.

In 1923 the Commonwealth Oil Refineries were established in Altona.

In 1949, a branch of Red Robin hosiery was established, with 25 staff members producing 1,500 dozen pairs of socks per week. In 1972 this building was sold and re-opened as the
Finnish hall, originally serving not only the 23 Finnish families living in Altona, but also those from the rest of Melbourne.

In 1949 the PRA Oil refinery was established, the largest facility of its type in Australia at the time, providing significant employment opportunities for immigrants and locals.

The pioneering history and primary industries of the past and present have not only shaped the Altona community but have created strong working values and defined solid ethics among local residents. There is a strong sense of kinship within the community, underpinned by cultural values and ethics.

The strong sense of community and community pride is very important to local residents. It is imperative to the community that Altona’s unique local identity be retained and enhanced. Altona is a ‘local’ place, of and for local people. This is reflected in the requests and needs put forward by the residents, both in the past and present. People don’t want to be constantly forced to look beyond their local area for retail, entertainment and work requirements.
Figure 5: Cultural Values and Appreciation.
3 Future Directions

The community and businesses of Altona have clearly demonstrated their ongoing passion for, and commitment to, the Centre. Key desires identified by the community are to maintain and enhance its role as the major activity centre for Altona, maintain its essential character and its open spaces and develop the precinct as a location that can attract customers and visitors from further afield.

The combination of retaining the area’s essential character and points of difference, whilst facilitating its growth and development raises complex issues. It is these issues that the framework seeks to identify and address in a strategic fashion, enabling the community and the Council to advocate for; influence and shape in a positive fashion, the future design / development, activity mix and management of the Centre.

Consultation sessions suggest that the community acknowledge that the Centre will change and develop over time and have signalled the community’s willingness to accept such change provided that:

- It occurs in response to a clearly established strategy; and
- It respects the essential characteristics that make the Pier Street Precinct so attractive and different.

The Pier Street Precinct is an essential component of the Altona community. Its future viability and the retention and enhancement of its essential characteristics, features and attributes, are of fundamental importance to the future community development of Altona.

3.1 Community desires

A broad range of issues and aspirations were identified through the various public consultation phases of the project. A summary of key issues raised appears in Appendix 4. The key points and aspirations raised include:

- Recognise the importance of the beach and that the Pier Street Precinct is much more than a shopping centre.
- Maintain the character, the open spaces, the free parking, the trees and peaceful quiet nature.
- Improve the range of businesses, especially café and restaurants.
- Improve linkages between the beach and the precinct.
- Provide opportunities for lifestyle, leisure and recreational retailing.
- Provide a clean and safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Encourage ‘shop top’ housing and other styles of residential development in the Pier Street Precinct.
- Change the name to recognise the beach.
- Link all the areas from the beach to Cherry Lake.
- Retain backyards and low density of the surrounding residential areas.
- Refurbish the railway station.
- Improve the design, safety and appearance of Pier Street north of the railway.

It is important that the aspirations identified are considered prior to adopting the future vision for the Centre. However it is also important to recognise that not all members of the community share the same aspirations. In addition, some aspirations may conflict with the enhancement of Altona beach as a Major Activity Centre. For example, the retention of low
density housing within the Centre, including the Residential Interface Precinct, is not considered appropriate for a Major Activity Centre and is contrary to Hobsons Bay Activity Centres Strategy 2006 and the achievement of the Vision for the Centre outlined below.

3.2 Future Vision

The Pier Street Centre is the heart of the Altona community. It will use to its advantage its beachside location, its open spaces, its compactness and its character to provide, in a safe and easily accessible environment, a unique range of goods, services and facilities for the Altona community.

The Centre will evolve as a beachside destination for the northern and western regions of Melbourne. It will strategically accommodate new development that accords with its principles and will develop in a fashion that respects the ‘human scale’ and village character, history and attributes that make it such a desirable and distinctive location.

The Centre will accommodate higher density and forms of residential development in order to generate activity and cater for a broad range of households and age groups.

3.3 Elements and Characteristics that define Altona Beach Activity Centre.

What makes Altona Beach Activity Centre special, distinctive and attractive?

Cultural and community identity

- The passion for, pride in, and commitment to, the Centre by the local community.
- The beach, pier and foreshore.
- The broad ethnic and working class origins of the community.
- The country town feel and the relaxed, unhurried nature of activity in the Centre.

The unique physical characteristics

- The open space areas, specifically Weaver Reserve, Lee Reserve, Logan Reserve and Cherry Lake.
- Altona Beach, its safety, attractiveness and accessibility and the Pier.
- Altona Homestead.
- The quality and unspoilt nature of the Esplanade and Foreshore, The Norfolk Island Pines and the coastal vegetation.
- The views and vistas over Port Phillip Bay from the Centre.
- The Civic Centre and the community, cultural and recreation facilities.
- Accessibility by road, bike, foot, bus, train and potential ferry.
- Its central location in, and accessibility from, the residential areas of Altona.
- The compactness of the Pier Street Precinct and its diverse range of individually owned businesses.
- The predominance of low scale, low density development.
- Its relative isolation / proximity to Melbourne’s CBD.
3.4 Design, Development and Activity Principles

Character and environment

- Encourage high density development whilst respecting character and points of difference from Williamstown and other locations (for example the Pier, the trees, the open space reserves, the unspoilt beach and foreshore, Cherry Lake, the broad range of public and private activities and facilities, the walkability and compactness and integration with the surrounding residential areas.)

- Maintain the ‘human scale’ character of the Centre. Recognise that through appropriate design, ‘human scale’ development is compatible with high density built form.

- Reinforce the Centre as an attractive alternative and different location that wishes to celebrate and retain individuality, local history, community and beachside “address” through marketing and promotional activities.

- Create an exciting, enjoyable and safe environment that reflects and respects the character and history of the Altona community, attracts people to visit and stay, and supports a range of activities that operate over seven days and evenings per week.

- Celebrate the history, local characters and events, community triumphs and disappointments (eg the Aboriginal history, the coal mining, explosives, the links with early aviation, the attraction of major industries and employment, the original role of the Pier, the Homestead, the community meetings and protests in Logan Reserve and the building of the highly innovative Hobsons Bay Civic Centre).

- Tell and celebrate the “story” of Altona’s origins from the original Aborigines through to modern times through public art, memorials, interpretive displays, landscape form, story boards, signage, branding information boards and by retaining built form and landscape that add to the character and defines the precinct. (eg Altona Homestead, Finnish Hall, the Churches and the Council Chamber).

- Require environmentally sustainable design and development throughout the area through built form, streetscape design, materials, landscape and plants.

Business development and centre management

- Promote the professional and coordinated management and marketing of the Pier Street Precinct through the maintenance and support of a representative traders association.

- Seek to actively influence the mix of business activities to maintain range and fill gaps.

- Skill businesses to respond to the customer demands and expectations.

- Strategically position the Pier Street Precinct to fulfil its identified roles and functions.

Development and design

- Encourage new development, increased densities and higher forms of development. Adopt a strategic approach and use design tools to ensure that such development
does not result in unreasonable amenity impacts for existing residents and retains the ‘human scale’ of the built form.

- Ensure new developments in proximity to the foreshore are consistent with the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2002*, in particular the principles for coastal planning and management.

- Protect and enhance the sight lines along Pier Street to and from the foreshore and the views to and across Logan Reserve and Weaver Reserve to the foreshore, the Esplanade and the Pier.

- Protect solar access to all public parks and footpaths along Pier Street at mid-winter.

- Design the Centre to fully integrate activities and movement between the beach, the Esplanade and through Pier Street to the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre and beyond, to Cherry Lake.

- Seek to make the best most effective use of each commercial property, especially those with views or aspects over the foreshore and open space areas.

- Recognise the infrastructure limitations of the Pier Street Precinct (traffic, drainage etc) and ensure that future development will not compromise the area.

- Introduce appropriate public art that reflects the values, skills and character of the local community into the Pier Street Precinct to enliven public spaces, blank walls, pedestrian access ways and streetscapes.

- Design streetscapes to provide a safe and secure “human scale” environment for pedestrians, vehicles and bicycles throughout the Centre. Emphasis in streetscape works should be to provide a high quality environment with ample public spaces and the use of long lasting, robust and easily maintained materials suited to reflect the character and image of the Centre. The streetscape should be designed to provide a sturdy foundation for the Centre rather than forming its dominant feature.

- Improve waste storage areas/facilities to commercial premises.

**Activities and facilities**

- Market and promote the Pier Street Precinct as a friendly, relaxed beach side location, and as a focus for specialist owner operator businesses that are not likely to be found in “purpose built and managed centres.”

- Encourage higher residential development throughout the Centre, including above and behind commercial activities but do not allow such residential development to have a detrimental impact on the operation or integration of business activities and the enjoyment of the beach, foreshore and open space areas.

- Ensure a variety of housing types are provided to cater for all household needs.

- Maintain a diverse mix of housing styles and forms to meet the needs of a broad range of income groups.
• Retain the parkland and open relationship between the Centre and the foreshore.

• Ensure no net loss of public open space in the Centre and adopt the Melbourne 2030 Parklands Code in regard to the future provision, location and design of open space.

• Provide high standard public amenities / visitor and tourist facilities to extend time spent in the area and attract additional visitors.

• Support and promote the outdoor market currently held weekly on a Tuesday on Pier Street, Railway Street South and Logan Reserve.

Access and safety

• Provide safe and easy pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular access throughout the Centre, day and evening seven days a week, linking the beach and foreshore to Cherry Lake and the recreation facilities through Pier Street.

• Promote public transport usage and facilitate easy and safe access to public transport facilities in the Centre by establishing a bus, bike, taxi, rail and car interchange at the railway station.

• Provide facilities for safe bicycle access and secure storage throughout the Pier Street Precinct.

• Design and locate car parking facilities in shared, central, safe and well signposted, appropriately lit locations, easily accessible from traffic routes.

• Promote the “permeability” of the Pier Street Precinct by providing safe and secure access ways and walk through facilities between businesses and car parking areas, create an interesting variety of pedestrian routes throughout the Precinct.

• Ensure the Hobsons Bay City Council Footpath Trading Code of Practice is enforced to maintain adequate and safe movement for all people in commercial areas.

Image and identity

• Strengthen the relationship between the Centre and its beach side location on Port Phillip Bay by branding it and its services and facilities as “Altona Beach” to raise the profile, give clearer indication of the proximity of the Centre, and heighten Metropolitan awareness of its attributes.

• Market and promote the Centre as a friendly, relaxed environmentally aware, beach side location.

• Reflect the natural environmental features, for example, the beach, Cherry Lake and indigenous flora and fauna in the image.
3.5 Future Roles and Functions for the Altona Beach Activity Centre

Having established the guiding principles that will govern the future design and development of the Centre it is necessary to define the specific range of roles and functions that can be pursued.

In determining the roles and functions for the Centre, it needs to be considered in terms of its role as part of a “network of centres” within Hobsons Bay, its status as a Major Activity Centre within the context of the Metropolitan Strategy 2030 and its physical limitations, which include:

- Its limited capacity to accommodate additional major retail activity.
- Its location and relative isolation from through traffic routes.
- Its limited infrastructure capacity (traffic volumes, drainage etc).
- Plans, proposals and strategies for other activity centres in the region.
- The principles identified here which will require the Centre to maintain its “village feel”.

The future desired and sustainable roles and functions for the Centre are:

- As the “neighbourhood convenience retail centre” for the Altona community, providing a comprehensive range of daily convenience goods, services and facilities.
- As a destination centre for casual and quality eating establishments, specialist “leisure orientated” retailers and tourist facilities serving the local community and the broader regional communities of north and western metropolitan areas.
- As a destination centre for a limited range of household goods and hardware outlets for the Hobsons Bay community.
- As the personal and professional services community, entertainment, social and cultural centre for Altona.
- As a public transport focus and interchange for the local community, commuters and tourists through bus, rail and potentially ferry connections and the provision of long term car parking for public transport users.
- As a focus for high density and diversity of residential development.
- As a beach destination and “tourism service centre” on Port Phillip Bay for Metropolitan Melbourne, in particular the north and western regions, taking advantage of the Port Phillip Bay Trail, the attractive foreshore, the Esplanade, open space areas and the safe family swimming opportunities.

It is considered that these roles can be achieved largely within the existing boundaries of the Centre. The combination of these roles will enable the Centre to fulfil its functions and responsibilities associated with its status as a “Major Activity Centre” in a Metropolitan context.
4 The Future Framework for the Altona Beach Activity Centre

In order for the Centre to achieve its desired future and for change to be accommodated in a proactive rather than responsive fashion, a coordinated and integrated approach is required to its future planning, development, design and management.

An integrated approach is required as tackling any one aspect of the future development of the Centre, be it physical, economic, environmental or social, in isolation from the others will not be effective.

A coordinated approach is required because no one group or organisation has the skills, resources, networks or financial capacity to achieve everything alone. A partnership will be required between the community, the Council, businesses and property owners.

The objectives for the commercial components of the Pier Street Precinct can be achieved largely within its existing boundaries. The framework does not envisage or consider appropriate, major expansion of the commercial activities into the residential areas.

4.1 Key precincts

Cherry Lake

This area contains a wealth of community, cultural, sporting, and recreational and leisure activities, walking trails and major metropolitan bicycle paths, centred around the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre and Cherry Lake. The area operates in relative isolation from the southern portions of the precinct and opportunity exists to improve its integration with Pier Street and the Beach, especially for pedestrian and cyclists.

Northern (Civic Parade to Railway Station)

This area provides major opportunity for change, physical enhancement and expansion of retail and residential activities. It contains large sites which traditionally have accommodated household goods retail activities, hence creating a cluster of “destination” retail activities in the Pier Street Precinct. Significant streetscape and traffic management works will be required to facilitate redevelopment and to fully integrate the area with and attract pedestrian traffic from, the railway station and areas to the south.

The service industrial and automotive industries in the area are likely to come under pressure to relocate as property values and development expectations increase. These activities play an important role in terms of providing local access to services and employment. Where redevelopment or changing environment makes their
continued operation in the precinct unviable or inappropriate, opportunities should be pursued to facilitate their relocation elsewhere within Altona. The continued existence of service industrial activities in north Pier Street also raises issues for the development of residential accommodation in the area due to potential noise and environmental issues.

Core Business (the railway station, Pier Street from railway station to Queen Street and South Railway Street)

This area represents the core convenience retail areas of Pier Street. It has a compact style and limited opportunity for major redevelopment but plays an essential role in the provision of convenience goods, services and facilities to the local community. Opportunity exists in this area for the provision of additional dwellings in the form of ‘shop top’ housing.

The streetscapes in the area have been upgraded and they provide a safe and attractive environment. Major opportunity exists to improve the design and configuration of the railway station and environs. VicTrack also advised that if duplication would occur to the north of the existing track and that the railway reservation was wide enough to cater for two tracks.

Foreshore (Pier Street, Queen Street to the Esplanade and the Esplanade, Sargood Street to Davies Street)

This area contains many of the features and elements that make the Centre special and attractive. Logan and Weaver Reserves are the quintessential defining feature of the Centre. They create a unique entry statement to Pier Street as an undeveloped green space, un-paralleled and envied by many. The strong contextual relationship between the beach, foreshore and Pier Street is underpinned by the expanse of green open space across Logan and Weaver Reserves. The integrity of this contextual relationship must be protected and treasured.

Weaver Reserve accommodates the Altona Lifesaving clubrooms and is an active open space focus for the Centre and the beach. Pedestrian access and safety from the reserves to the beach needs to be improved. Open space areas should be designed to enable easy access and surveillance to ensure personal safety.

Lee Reserve will also form an important public park that will enhance the Esplanade’s relationship with the foreshore by providing another quality green space in the Centre. Works were undertaken to remove the existing underutilised buildings on Lee Reserve.

Opportunity exists to make better use of the properties and spaces that adjoin or overlook the open spaces and foreshore by facilitating their appropriate redevelopment and use. This will enable maximum community enjoyment of the foreshore, the open space areas and the beach. Tourist and visitor facilities...
should be focused in this precinct. Opportunity exists to redesign the Esplanade in this vicinity, to shift its emphasis on vehicular traffic and create a shared pedestrian / vehicular environment.

**Altona Beach**

Altona Beach is one of only two sandy, swimming beaches on the western side of Port Phillip Bay. As such it represents a regional facility for the communities of the north and western region of Metropolitan Melbourne. The beach area is a major attribute of the Centre and a major element that attracts visitors to the area. The beach requires a management plan in its own right to ensure that it is managed and maintained in a fashion that protects its existing character as an open, largely undeveloped and uncommercial area. The Altona Pier is a major component of the beach and needs to be retained in its current timber character in the future. A major attribute of the beach is its safety and suitability for families. This aspect will need to be taken into account when considering the future development of the beach area and the potential impact of use of powerboats or the concept of ferries and pleasure craft using the pier.

**Residential Interface Precinct**

The location of the Pier Street Precinct within a predominantly residential area creates potential for conflict at the edges where residential and commercial activities adjoin, or where the density of development changes. The framework identifies these as interface areas and seeks to establish design principles that will enable higher density development to be accommodated in these areas within walking distance of Pier Street, whilst maintaining the ‘human scale’ of the area. Specific initiatives in the framework encourage the consolidation of car parking in the core of the Centre, identify opportunities to recreate residential edges to the precinct in place of current at grade car parking facilities.

The *Hobsons Bay Activity Centres Strategy 2006* identifies the Residential Interface Precinct as a ‘Preferred Development Area’. While high density development is to be encouraged within this precinct it should be discouraged outside of these areas. This will provide added protection to the existing neighbourhood character of the residential hinterland.

**4.2 Physical Framework Plan**

To illustrate how the Centre should develop in order to achieve the vision and the specific design and development principles a Physical Framework Plan has been prepared (Figure 6). The plan is strategic in nature and the boundaries and specific locations for access depicted are not necessarily intended to identify precise locations for future development or change.

The plan indicates in broad terms how the Centre could develop in the future. It identifies:

- The functional precincts in the Centre.
- Broad land use areas, identifying the preferred or predominant ground floor land use activities.
- Access and movement routes through the Centre for bikes, cars and pedestrians.
- Identification of areas where pedestrian access through commercial premises should be encouraged, to improve access to rear car parking areas and circulation.
• Indicative locations for large shared car parking facilities to service future development in the centre.

Figure 6. Framework Plan
5 Elements of the Framework

5.1 Land use activities

It is essential that the Pier Street Precinct retains its diverse range of land use activities and that the style and nature of business activities, (that being, an emphasis on owner operated businesses rather than chain outlets or franchises,) be maintained. The existence of such a broad range of unique businesses is a major feature and attractor for the Pier Street Precinct. Whilst it is not possible or necessarily beneficial to legislate for specific business activities in particular premises, it is possible to encourage and influence the business mix through a range of centre management and business development initiatives (discussed at Section 8).

It is essential that the Pier Street Precinct maintains and expands its range of convenience retail goods. Whilst the Precinct is anchored by a major supermarket (Coles) it has a limited range of fresh food shops. Therefore, the establishment of fresh produce retailers in the centre is encouraged.

Consultation processes identified a range of additional activities that were desired in the Pier Street Precinct. Those most often identified, and which are considered potentially viable or appropriate given the identified roles of the Precinct are:

- Cafes and restaurants, open all weekend, providing opportunities for “alfresco” dining and offering views and vistas over the foreshore.
- Leisure retailing such as book or music store, antiques, bric-a-brac etc.
- Fresh food (fruit and vegetables, healthy, organic produce, delicatessen, etc).
- Bank.
- Clothing stores.
- More specialist independent stores.
- A Cinema.
- Boutique home wares and household goods stores.

The range of activities that the Pier Street Precinct should seek to accommodate include:

Core convenience retail

Ideally these should be located in the core retail area, south of the railway on the major pedestrian routes. Additional activities to support existing range that should be recruited include fruit and vegetables, specialist fresh food, organic food, delicatessen, specialist grocer, banks, clothing stores, giftware. Opportunity to accommodate a second supermarket in the core area of the Precinct is limited but should not be ruled out.

Specialist “destination retail”

These activities include leisure or recreational style retailing, for example, book shop, music store, giftware, antiques and bric-a-brac. The tourism and hospitality role of the Precinct may expand opportunities for this style of business in the future. Limited potential (due to shortage of land, infrastructure issues and absence of major traffic frontages) exists for the Centre to build its existing niche hardware and small household goods and appliance activities. These activities typically require larger floor space and hence could only be accommodated in the North Pier Street area. They operate well in clusters and often in conjunction with cafes and leisure orientated retail activities hence attracting additional weekend customers to the Centre.
Service business activities

At the present time the Pier Street Precinct contains, predominantly in the northern section of Pier Street, a range of service business activities. Whilst these activities contribute positively to the operation of the Pier Street Precinct, (automotive services and repairs, petrol station, car wash, printing, etc) it is considered likely that changing trends, competition, increased demand for retail and residential development, may increase property and rental prices to a level that will make their continued operation in the Precinct problematic. The existence of service industrial activities may also reduce the attractiveness of the area as a residential location. The framework recognises the viability and contributory nature of these activities to the Altona community and hence the need to ensure that if they are displaced, that they are encouraged and assisted to relocate to suitable locations within Altona.

Eating and hospitality facilities, cafes, restaurants

A strong desire was evident from the community in regard to the need for additional quality restaurant and café facilities, open on weekends and evenings. Whilst such facilities could be accommodated throughout the Pier Street Precinct the most appropriate place for a concentration of restaurant and cafes would be close to the beach, open space and foreshore areas. The community also expressed a desire to attract a cinema to the precinct.

Beach, tourist and visitor facilities

To fulfil its role as a beach destination for the northern and western regions of Metropolitan Melbourne, the Centre will require a range of quality services and facilities for beach goers and visitors within close proximity to the foreshore, including change rooms, public toilets, showers, shade, picnic and barbeque facilities, bicycle and skate hire, visitor information, beach equipment, drink and ice-cream kiosk, casual cafes, beachwear, children’s beach-play supplies. Cherry Lake visitors should also be catered for through the establishment of an activity focus adjacent to the Fresno Street car park area, a small kiosk could be constructed to complement the existing facilities in this vicinity.

Offices and personal and professional services

The Pier Street Precinct requires an ongoing presence of local commercial offices, personal services (hairdressers etc) and professional services (eg Travel Agents, Real Estate Agents, Accountants, Solicitors, Financial managers etc).

Concern was raised through consultation in regard to the growing number of professional and personal services (principally real estate agents) in the Pier Street Precinct. These activities should not ideally occupy key ground floor locations, hence taking up valuable core retail space on major pedestrian routes. Opportunities to influence activity location within the Pier Street Precinct should discourage ineffective use of ground floor frontages discussed in Section 8 (Business Development) of this framework.
Health and community services and facilities

For the Centre to maintain and enhance its status as the community hub for Altona, it is important that the range and diversity of health and community services and facilities be maintained (for example the Library, Senior Citizens, Louis Joel Centre, RSL, sporting clubs, Hobsons Bay Civic Council, medical clinics, churches and, arts and cultural facilities). The location of all of these activities in a central and easily assessable area of Altona encourages multi-purpose trips, facilitates access by all groups in the community and reduces the reliance on motor vehicles.

Residential

The Altona Beach Activity Centre being identified as a Major Activity Centre within the Metropolitan 2030 strategy brings an expectation that the Centre will be able to accommodate a significant amount of higher density residential accommodation, primarily in the form of shop top housing along Pier Street and through apartments and townhouses in the Residential Interface areas of the Centre.

Residential development within an activity centre such as Altona Beach needs to be considered carefully to ensure that the residents are afforded an acceptable quality of life, and that the operation of business activities in the Precinct is not restricted in order to facilitate the expectations of residents.

People choosing to reside in an activity centre should acknowledge that the level of residential amenity, in regards to aspects such as noise, car parking, traffic, open space and activity, is not likely to be as high as could be expected in a pure residential environment. Conversely, businesses in the Precinct should recognise the potential benefits of having residential development in close proximity of their premises as providing benefits such as increased patronage, security, surveillance and extended weekend and evening activity. Businesses should therefore be prepared to moderate activities and respect the resident’s needs.

Whilst residential development is currently very attractive to the development and investment community it is important to maintain a balance within the Pier Street Precinct and ensure that key sites that may be appropriate for non-residential activity in the longer term are not inappropriately developed for residential in the short term, hence restricting future development opportunities. A range of opportunities has been identified on the accompanying plans for residential development.

Centre operating hours

Societal trends indicate that consumers prefer flexible and extended trading hours. The majority of businesses close Saturday afternoon and Sunday. The Centre should seek to extend and promote coordinated trading hours over the weekend. On this point, it should also be noted that an increased number of people residing within or in close proximity to the Centre will increase the economic viability, and therefore likelihood, for businesses to trade over extended hours. This is another benefit of increased residential densities in the Centre.
5.2 Access and Circulation

Vehicular access

Vehicular access and circulation to and through the Centre is restricted due to the railway line and the relative narrowness of most streets. The framework adopts a principle that traffic should be provided with good access opportunities to move around the Centre. Currently, there are no proposals to create pedestrian malls or otherwise permanently close streets. The framework does however seek to establish a pedestrian friendly environment along all streets in the Centre and encourage traffic to travel slowly and be more aware of pedestrian activity. Speed limits in the Precinct have been reduced to 50 kmph. Further speed reductions (to 40 kmph or lower) in areas of high pedestrian activity should be implemented. Lowering speed limits in these areas will encourage cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles to share the same space in a safe manner.

Opportunity to improve traffic management has been identified in a number of specific locations around the Centre:

- Introducing road narrowing at key points in Pier Street north of the railway to reduce the width of the traffic lanes, better control vehicle speeds and provide designated pedestrian crossing points, whilst still accommodating buses and bicycles to use the road.
- Create improved pedestrian environment and safer access to the beach by narrowing the through traffic lanes, repaving and providing designated pedestrian crossing points in the Esplanade, between Bent and Sargood Streets. These actions would reduce traffic speed and improve pedestrian access between the reserves and the beach. This represents a further stage to the existing traffic calming exercises that have been introduced along the Esplanade and seeks to balance the traffic access needs with the pedestrian circulation and safety between the precinct and the foreshore. The existing car parking along the Esplanade is to be retained. Any initiatives to alter the Esplanade will require detailed assessment and further analysis of specific traffic activities particularly over the summer period.
- Introduce two road narrowing/pedestrian refuge treatments in Civic Parade at appropriately identified locations approximately 50m each side of Pier Street to indicate "arrival" at the precinct, improve pedestrian and cyclist access between Pier Street and Cherry Lake and to reduce traffic speed.
- Improve the streetscape of Fresno Street to make it an attractive and inviting entry point to Cherry Lake for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles by incorporating a designated bicycle and pedestrian path into an overall streetscape upgrade.
- Widen the existing pedestrian crossings in Pier Street to make a more effective six metre long flat-top slow point. This can be achieved without the loss of any on-street parking in Pier Street.
- Review the Turnbull Fenner recommendation to install flashing signals at each of the pedestrian crossings in Pier Street and investigate alternate ways to improve pedestrian safety that have less impact upon visual clutter associated with flashing lights.
- Install designated pedestrian crossings across each leg of the two existing roundabouts in Pier Street to improve pedestrian mobility and safety and to further control vehicle speeds.
- Improve signage and line marking of the one-way streets, Railway Street South and Railway Street North, near the railway line to clearly identify where drivers are not allowed to enter.
Pedestrian access and safety

The ability for pedestrians to move safely around the Pier Street Precinct both day and night is of great importance to its future viability. The framework plan seeks to make the Precinct as “walkable” and as permeable as possible through facilitating easy and safe pedestrian access across all roads, widening the pedestrian crossing areas in Pier Street, installing designated pedestrian crossings across each leg of the two existing roundabouts, encouraging the provision of pedestrian walk-throughs of business premises to car parking areas and by improved lighting along pedestrian routes and through pedestrian walkways.

Physical changes to the environment as noted above, along with vehicle speed limit reductions will emphasise that the Pier Street Precinct is a shared pedestrian/cycling/car zone. Physical changes should be aimed to modify motorist behaviour to adapt to this environment, which is considered critical to improved pedestrian safety.

Bicycle access

Pier Street has the opportunity to link two of Western Melbourne’s major bicycle path networks, the Bay Trail and the Federation Trail. It has opportunity to facilitate the safe movement of bicycles and to attract cyclists to the centre. The framework identifies a preferred bike route from the Esplanade through Pier Street to Cherry Lake. Secure bike storage facilities will need to be provided at the Esplanade, Railway Station and Cherry Lake.

Public transport access

The Centre is currently serviced by train and bus routes, the facilities for both however require significant upgrading. At the present time the station is not a “premium” station and hence is not “manned” or required to provide basic facilities such as public toilets. The framework identifies opportunity for major reconfiguration of the railway station, to improve access, visibility, safety and surveillance and to raise it to premium status. These redevelopments will enable the railway station to effectively link the north and south sections of Pier Street rather than acting as a barrier to movement along Pier Street. This proposal is detailed at Section 6.3 of the report.

Opportunity also exists to better integrate the bus stops with the railway station to facilitate more convenient and safer interchange between the two services. Removal of part of the existing buildings and platform would create sufficient road width in Railway Street South to enable the provision of a bus stop adjacent to the station.

Ferry access

A relatively unique attribute of the Centre is its beachside location and the existence of the Altona Pier. Opportunity to establish ferry services from Altona to Williamstown and potentially docklands and the Melbourne CBD deserve further investigation. Whilst recent studies still suggest that ferry services are not likely to be financially viable in the short term it is not an initiative that should be totally dismissed.
Car parking

A review of the existing car parking areas suggests that the total provision of on-street and off-street parking is adequate to meet the needs of current activities south of the railway line. At times there is a lack of parking within the “premium” spaces along Pier Street and along Railway Street South. North of the railway line, the provision of mostly long-term parking means that at times there is an under supply of short-term parking. However, the availability and effectiveness of car parking has not emerged as a major issue facing the Pier Street Precinct or the Centre as a whole.

Deficiencies in the current parking arrangements relate mainly to the management, accessibility and awareness of the parking facilities. Off street parking is provided in a range of locations throughout the Centre. However, a number of these areas are small, isolated and hence not fully effective (specifically, the parking area in Pier Street, north of Weaver Reserve, corner Bent Street and Blyth Street). The redevelopment of these parking areas into more appropriate land uses (such as public open space or residential use) and improved design, access, visibility and management of the existing parking areas would improve the viability of the Centre and still provide sufficient parking.

The time limits on parking throughout the Centre should be reviewed to provide more effective use of each space and to provide for short and longer-term users in appropriate locations. Signs directing people to the parking areas and indicating the number of spaces should be erected on Pier Street to improve awareness. Safety and security for both the parked vehicles and pedestrians is essential in ‘off street’ locations especially if evening uses are to be encouraged in the Pier Street Precinct.

Car parking areas in the Pier Street Precinct need to meet the needs of all users, shoppers, staff, commuters, beachgoers, day trippers and short pick up drop off needs. Car parking areas should be designed to adequately cater for all able and disabled groups in the community and parents with prams.

Future provision of car parking in the Pier Street Precinct should be encouraged to be provided in common shared locations, rather than each business attempting to provide its own car parking on its own site. This initiative will require the Council to play an active part in purchasing land for shared car parking facilities in the most effective locations and facilitating a cash in lieu/special rates program. This action will be subject to the findings and direction of the current car parking review being carried out by the State Government. Large developments, such as supermarkets or hardware outlets, should be encouraged to provide car parking in a fashion that suits both their requirements and the overall requirements for the Centre.

Large shared car parking areas should be designed and landscaped, to reduce their visual impact. Shade for cars should be provided through the provision of canopy trees, and adequate lighting provided to create a safe and secure environment. Wherever possible, direct access to the adjoining activities should be provided via pedestrian access lanes or walk through premises. Storage for shopping trolleys should also be provided within the car parks. The design, layout and configuration of major shared car parks should also facilitate their closure during specific events, festivals and activities and their temporary conversion to public pedestrian areas. Opportunity to build over car parking areas to create an active edge to the car park rather than an open expanse of car parking should be considered in suitable locations.

Opportunity to expand commuter-parking facilities in the short term has been identified in Railway Street North. In the longer term the issue of commuter car parking will require major
review if the duplication of the railway line occurs. As the second line is to be provided in the 
reservation to the north of the existing line, the majority of commuter parking will be lost.
Potential exists to create a long-term car park through the construction of a deck over the 
existing car park to the south of Railway Street South. This would be an expensive option 
and would need to be carefully considered. The issue of promoting Altona as a major 
commuter interchange is something that also requires further consideration, as there may be 
other stations in the vicinity with better access to the major road network and hence better 
suited for commuter car parking, eg Aircraft or Laverton.

At the present time there are no decked car parking facilities and the low lying nature of the 
Centre may make the provision of basement parking problematic. As the Pier Street Precinct 
develops and if appropriate sites cannot be found for new car parking, it may be necessary to 
consider the provision of decked parking facilities especially to meet long term parking 
requirements of staff and commuters. Experience in other centres suggests that short-term 
customers (shoppers) will be reluctant to use decked facilities as first preference especially in 
a Centre that has traditionally not included such facilities. The design and location of any 
decked structure will need to be carefully considered to ensure that such facilities do not 
create visual blight or unattractive streetscapes.

A range of initiatives have been identified to improve car parking. A principle to be adhered to 
when pursuing these initiatives is that there should be no net loss in the overall supply of car 
parking in the Centre at any time in the future.

**Long term development of strategic car parking**

- The Council should seek opportunities to purchase appropriate properties in the 
  Centre to facilitate the development of shared car parking facilities.
- The Council should prepare a Car Parking Policy or Precinct Plan for the Centre to 
  establish appropriate car parking rates and the principles of shared parking provision.
- A cash in lieu/special rates program should be established to enable businesses to 
  contribute towards the creation of large shared parking facilities.
- Pursue the strategic car parking initiatives identified in the framework for Pier Street 
  North and the Sargood Street car park.

**Car parking management initiatives**

- Provide clear signage of parking opportunities throughout the Centre indicating 
  location of, access to and capacity of the parking areas.
- Increase turnover of parking in the large “Coles” car park by introducing 2P 
  restrictions.
- Consider additional short-term (15-minute and 30-minute) parking restrictions in Pier 
  Street to increase turnover of spaces near the supermarket, bank and fast food 
  outlets.
- Extend the 2P parking restrictions further north in Pier Street past the former Mitre 10 
  site to provide more convenient customer parking.

**Short term alteration of parking arrangements**

The following initiatives have been identified for further consideration by the Council during 
the detailed planning phases of the program;

- Change parallel parking to angle parking in Sargood Street adjacent to Logan 
  Reserve, whilst retaining bus access associated with the Senior Citizens Centre and 
  facilitating the integration of the Louis Joel centre.
5.3 Image and Identity

The Pier Street Precinct requires an image and identity through which to attract customers and raise its awareness. At the present time the area is promoted through signage and banners "Altona Village". This image has not received strong support from the community. Clear desire to link the name of the precinct with the beach has been conveyed through consultation.

The Name ‘Altona Beach’ is recommended as an appropriate name for the Centre. The study area within this Urban Design Framework has therefore been named the ‘Altona Beach Activity Centre’. It would be beneficial that ‘Altona Beach’ be used for the naming of the railway station as well. However, discussions with Connex (lessee of the of the Metropolitan Rail Infrastructure) have indicated that the Council would be required to fund significant costs for a name change.

The images that are used to support ‘Altona Beach’ should include references to the character, natural environment, culture, heritage and aspirations of the area. The inclusion of the Pelican image, currently shown on the Hobsons Bay City Council logo would be appropriate, along with other natural environmental features including the beach, trees, references to basalt and references to the activities that occur in and around the centre, for example sailing, sail boarding, fossicking, fishing, paddling, water play, cycling and walking. The image should also convey the commitment by the local community towards the natural environment and the array of natural environmental, bird and wildlife sanctuaries that exist in the area.

5.4 Information and Directional Signage

The Centre requires an integrated approach to information and directional signage, both within and on major approach roads. A common theme using the

Queen Street sign giving no indication of the proximity of the Pier Street Precinct.

Existing sign at beach

Themed sign at beach composed of Pier and marine materials.
adopted colours and logo name of the Centre should be used throughout to:

- Identify location and capacity of car parking areas.
- Identify pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle access routes to, for example, the beach, Cherry Lake and Logan Reserve.
- Identify the location of Public Transport facilities.
- Identify the location of major activities and facilities.
- Acknowledge arrival points to the precinct in:
  - Civic Parade,
  - Queen Street,
  - Blyth Street, and
  - The Esplanade.

Erect directional and information signs on major approach roads to the Pier Street Precinct including:

- Queen Street at Maidstone Street,
- Millers Road at Esplanade, and Civic Parade,
- Maidstone Street at Kororoit Creek Road, Civic Parade, Blyth Street and Queen Street,
- Grieve Pde and Kororoit Creek Road, and
- Kororoit Creek Road and Millers Road.

5.5 Physical Design And Development

Built form & scale

Development in the core area of the centre

A key principle of the framework is to emphasise its role as a Major Activity Centre through the concentration of new larger scale built form within the core of the Centre. Within this area there are benefits and synergies to be gained by encouraging development at the upper levels. Some of these benefits include:

- Improved informal surveillance of public streets and infrastructure including the station area and car parks.
- The ability to accommodate smaller households within an activity centre where greater levels of activity and service are available.
- The ability to provide hospitality venues with views to the water and parklands.
- The ability to provide community facilities with elevated views of the parklands and municipalities.

The major opportunities for higher density and larger scale development is along Pier Street where it is considered appropriate to accommodate new development with a predominant three storey (10m) character, potentially including some four storey (13m) elements in exceptional circumstances. (Note: that 3m floor to ceiling heights have been allowed for each storey with the exception of ground floor retail where a 4 m floor to ceiling height is allowed for).

All development in this area should:

- Contribute positively to the built form of the street and any site specific design principles.
• Be achieved without inhibiting the views to valued cultural and natural elements of the precinct.
• Not cause any additional increased overshadowing at the winter solstice between 10am and 3pm to areas enjoyed by the public such as parks and footpaths along Pier Street.
• Not cause unreasonable overshadowing to private open spaces of individual households.
• Be designed with exemplary standards of design.
• Contribute to more active streetscape activity and safer environments.

Architectural form should be well modulated so that the predominant scale at the pedestrian interface is generally two storey commercial in scale with any other level(s) appropriately setback so as to not have a significant presence in the street. This is a critical principle to ensure the ‘human scale’ / ‘village character’ of the core precinct is retained.

As noted above, it is important that solar access is maintained in parks and on footpaths in Pier Street. The Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development (DSE, 2004) states:

"A key decision about overshadowing is the appropriate time of the year to measure when additional overshadowing might occur – there are two choices: equinox (22 September) or winter solstice (22 June). The appropriate measure for private open space is typically accepted as equinox, but local policy can identify spaces that should be protected at the winter solstice. These spaces will typically include local open spaces and plazas. Where a shopping street currently enjoys sun at mid-winter there will usually be a reasonable presumption that the sun access will be preserved."

Apart from shade provided by trees, footpaths in Pier Street and Logan and Weaver Reserve receive good solar access at mid winter. This provides high public amenity and will be protected by ensuring new development at upper levels is appropriately setback.

Residential interface areas
The Residential 1 Zoned areas within the Centre are predominantly included in Precinct 4 of the Neighbourhood Character Study (Planisphere December 2002). The report describes the area as having a diversity of architecture and eclectic use of building materials.

Design guidelines for the area included in the Neighbourhood Character Study include:

• “Parts of buildings over two storey should be recessed from the façade of lower levels.”
• “New buildings should be individually designed to respond to the characteristics of the site and dominant building forms in the area.”

The framework endorses these principles.

The scale of the residential areas surrounding the commercial centre, and indeed much of the development within the commercial area, are single storey. Emerging demand, higher land prices, changing housing needs and broader state-wide policy review have resulted in larger scale built form both on the beach front along the primary boulevards and streets and in the vicinity of public transport and the commercial centre.

Based on demographic change and underlying policy for this Centre, this trend is likely, and is indeed encouraged, to continue. Hence, the need emerges to ensure that new development and consequent built form is appropriately sited and scaled to respect the existing character, whilst recognising that this existing low scale character will gradually
intensify within the Centre over time. It is important to recognise that respecting character does not mean preventing change. The Altona Beach Activity Centre is an identified ‘Major Activity Centre’ and the existing predominantly single storey character is encouraged to change to accommodate higher density. The preferred character for the Centre is therefore different to the existing character. However, it is equally important to ensure that new development retains the ‘human scale’ of the built form. Limiting development to two storeys (6 metres) with visually recessive third storey (9 metres) development will ensure the ‘village feel/ human scale’ of residential interface area is retained, whilst allowing for higher density that is required for a healthier and more vibrant activity centre.

It is also important that reasonable standards of amenity in both the public and private realm of interfacing properties are protected.

Whilst the increase of residential accommodation within the Centre is to be encouraged in order to facilitate both ongoing vitality and prosperity and increased choice, it is also an objective of the framework that families retain opportunities for housing in close proximity to the Centre.

Analysis of the precinct illustrates an emerging trend for the redevelopment of detached house sites for unit development in the streets around the centre (eg Bent Street and Sargood Street). The relatively narrow and long nature of the sites has often led to an unsatisfactory design outcome, for both new residents and abutting residents, through the creation of long shared driveways. The consolidation of narrow lots to create larger land parcels with larger street frontages is therefore strongly encouraged. Larger land parcels provide greater opportunity for appropriate and better designed high density development. Such development should minimise the use of driveways and excessive hard surfaces. Residential development should be encouraged with relatively small street setbacks (3 to 4 metres), regular pedestrian entrances, balconies and windows oriented to all abutting street and open space interfaces and no front fences.

Residential areas in the Centre are within easy walking distance to public open spaces such as the foreshore, Logan Reserve, Grant Reserve and Cherry Lake. In consideration of this, the private open space needs for residents are reduced. Therefore, traditional backyards may not be necessary. The use of balconies and terraces (subject to overlooking issues) for private open space is encouraged in this area.

High residential density development incorporating smaller front and rear setbacks (compared to the predominantly existing scenario of 6-8 metre front setbacks and large backyards) will result in significantly reduced opportunity for on-site landscaping. In this context, tree planting within the public realm will become critically important.
Figure 7. Indicative Building Heights

Note: This plan has been prepared to illustrate how the design + development principles may be achieved in the precinct. It should be read in conjunction with the text.
Environmental sustainability
All development and activity in the Centre should pursue environmental sustainability objectives of minimising use of energy, making the most effective use of natural daylight, minimising waste and utilising energy efficient building materials. All development should accord with the five star rating of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Victoria “First Rate” system or equivalent.

All businesses and activities in the Centre should be encouraged to pursue waste minimisation initiatives, practice sound environmental management and employ systems that minimise energy use.

Street front activities
A key objective of the Centre is to reinforce the experience of the street for pedestrians and the increased opportunity for social interactions, resting and meeting places. All frontages to Pier Street and reserves should be predominantly transparent and active with regular entrances to the building and displays. Blank walls and inactive frontages that diminish views both in and out from ground floor activities within the Pier Street Precinct should be actively discouraged.

5.6 Respect of Heritage and Character

The Centre is fortunate to have a community committed to retaining valued elements of its natural and built environment. These include, the Council Chamber, a fine example of twentieth century international style architecture, Logan Reserve, Cherry Lake, Altona Homestead, the foreshore and pier, provide important structural elements to the organisation of the built environment. In order to build a meaningful future for the Pier Street Precinct these and other distinctive elements should continue to play important roles in defining the character and values.

Reduction of the visual separation of Logan Reserve from the beach through the redesign of road pavements and introduction of landscaping in the road reserve, could enhance the response to valued heritage.

5.7 Streetscapes and public spaces

Streetscape and public realm should be designed to provide a safe, inviting and attractive spaces for the Centre. It should facilitate and promote the activities that attract people to the Centre rather than seeking to be the dominant feature for the Centre. Environmental sustainability objectives to reduce water and maintenance should be pursued wherever possible.
Materials

The colours, textures and associated patterns of the materials used in the streetscapes and built form should relate to the character and identity of the Centre. The materials used should be durable.

As a basic principle, large areas requiring feature paving should be created using colours, forms and textures that reflect the subtlety of Altona’s ‘passive’ coastal landscape and the ‘working class’ nature of the local community. This could be achieved using durable low cost material such as coloured bitumen.

Planting

Plantings within the reserve areas will aim to capture and draw in the flowing characteristics of the bay whilst recognising and maintaining their original character and style and the different experiences and activities that are appropriate in each. For example, Logan Reserve has a much more formal character than Weaver Reserve and the Cherry Lake area has a natural indigenous character.

Logan Reserve plantings could reinforce its traditional theme and capture the qualities of the Esplanade with new, large scale plantings to reinforce the connection between the reserve and foreshore. Weaver Reserve could incorporate more intimate, small scale spaces, which would be defined by simple shrub plantings and subtle mounding. Cherry Lake should maintain indigenous flora and fauna.

The identification of specific plant species for each area will need to be considered during more detailed streetscape design stages. As a general principle, plantings throughout the precinct should be used as screens, shade, to define spaces, and create visual links to landscape elements within and beyond the immediate study area. Although the use of indigenous planting is encouraged throughout the Centre, species for new plantings may also include non-indigenous species such as Plane trees, Moreton Bay Figs and Norfolk Island Pines. Planting should change through the precinct reflecting the diverse range of activities and themes that are proposed to develop.

Public open space

The existing public open space areas in and around the Pier Street Precinct form a critical component of its character and greatly add to its identity and opportunities for the future. The regional, and potentially metropolitan recreation roles, that the Centre fulfills primarily due to Altona Beach, creates great pressure on the open space areas. In addition, the future higher density built form of the Centre will make the open space areas even more valuable. Consequently, due regard is required for their future protection and enhancement. Reference in this regard is made to "Linking People + Spaces (A strategy for Melbourne’s open space network, prepared by Parks Victoria in 2002) and the ‘Parklands code: urban open space principles’ (Melbourne 2030, page 104) which provides that there should be no net reduction in open space as a consequence of any development or redevelopment.

The stated objectives of Linking People + Spaces are:

- To improve equity of access to open space throughout Melbourne.
- To maximise community awareness, use and benefit of open space.
- To plan for future open space needs in order to guarantee equitable access for future generations.
- To ensure that there is no net loss of open space.
With respect to “Changing land use”, *The Parklands Code* provides:

“When proposals arise to change the land use of parkland, a decision should be made only once the proposal has been exposed to public scrutiny through the processes under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. If a change in land use or in the nature of occupation is to occur that will result in a reduction of open space, the overall network of open space should be protected by way of additional or replacement parkland of equal or greater size and quality. Planners should also seek to ensure that areas that are presently under supplied with parkland are given priority when new areas of parkland are being established”.

The framework endorses these approaches and principles.

### 5.8 Public Art

Opportunities for installation of urban art elements have been identified throughout the Centre. These could be created through sculptural forms, mosaics or become part of an interpretive trail. They may be located around important nodal points such as the Esplanade and Pier Street intersection, or at the plaza / congregation areas along the northern end of Pier Street. They would become an important link throughout the Centre and combined with paving, street furniture, lighting and other feature elements, could be used to entice people to move along Pier Street between Cherry Lake and the Esplanade. These public art elements would also reinforce the ‘sense of arrival’ in the Pier Street Precinct.

Potential locations for these elements include:

- Weaver and Lee reserve
- Car parking areas
- Cherry Lake
- Footpaths & Road narrowings
- Structures on Roundabouts
- Logan reserve
- Railway station
- Civic Parade
- Pedestrian access lanes
- Entrance points
- Esplanade, Pier and foreshore

Opportunities exist through the precinct to ‘bring to life’ stories from Altona’s community, both past and present. There is potential for public art elements to reflect themes of Altona’s pioneering, industrial and migrant history, emphasising the importance of local values and a sense of community. Public art could be used to interpret these stories about local characters and the events associated with sites both in the Centre and the wider Altona region. They could also reinforce the importance of community values and create opportunities for public participation or input, allowing locals to gain a sense of ownership of the Centre. The recently painted mural in Edwards Lane is an excellent example of interpretive public art.

Stories, characters and events could reference:
• The Aboriginal history of the region.
• Historical characters such as Lieutenant Grimes, William Cherry, Alfred Langhorne, Mary Borrack, Alice Patton, Will Fife and Samuel Stephenson.
• Local business and industrial ventures, Coal Mining, Explosives, Oil refinery and Aviation.
• Migrant history.
• The Local Government history.
• The Altona Hospital and The Australian Natives Association.

5.9 Future Vision Plan

To illustrate how all the physical initiatives could be developed in the Pier Street Precinct in the future, a Future Vision Plan has been prepared (Figure 8, page 46) This plan indicates in broad terms how the Centre could appear in 10-15 years time when all the streetscape works and physical improvements have been implemented. The plan identifies:

• Physical improvements to the streetscape of Pier Street, the Esplanade, Civic Parade and Fresno Streets.
• Redevelopment of the railway station.
• Enhancement of Logan, Weaver and Lee Reserves.
• Creation of shared car parking locations.
• Improved access and circulation patterns.
• Improved integration of the whole precinct from Altona Beach to Cherry Lake.
• Identification of sites throughout the Centre where opportunity exists for redevelopment. The location and configuration of the sites shown is indicative only and is not meant to depict, either the only, or the preferred approach to site assembly or development.

Specific components of the Future Vision Plan are considered in more detail in Section 6 of the report.
FIGURE 8: Pier Street Precinct – Future Vision

Incorporate bicycle lane, wider landscape and footpath strip along Pier Street north.

Retain and Reuse Lee Reserve
6 Major site or area specific opportunities

6.1 Cherry Lake link to Pier Street.

Key opportunities are:

- Improved streetscape of Fresno Street to create attractive access to Cherry Lake for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Dedicated pedestrian and bike path from Cherry Lake to Pier Street.
- Improved pedestrian / bike crossing facilities in Civic Parade.
- Creation of a northern gateway to the Centre at the intersection of Pier Street and Civic Parade.
- Creation of a “sense of arrival” in Civic Parade in the vicinity of Pier Street.
- Improved integration of the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre, memorial and theatre with Pier Street.

Opportunity exists to greatly improve pedestrian and bicycle linkages between the Cherry Lake walking and bicycle trails and the Port Phillip Bay walking and bicycle trails by providing a defined pedestrian and bicycle route from the edge of Cherry Lake (near BBQ and parking facilities at Fresno Street) to Pier Street.

Two options exist, one, via Fresno Street and the other, via the “gap” between the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre and the Bowling Club. The preferred option is via Fresno Street. As the Fresno Street streetscape requires attention if it is to be promoted as a major vehicular access point to Cherry Lake and sign posted as such from Civic Parade, an upgraded streetscape could easily accommodate a dedicated shared pedestrian and bicycle path along the side of the tennis courts and the reserve.

Pedestrian and bicycle access across Civic Parade can be facilitated through a suitably located road narrowing/pedestrian refuge treatment between Fresno Street and Pier Street. Bicycles could then access Pier Street via the open space reserve on the corner of Pier Street and Civic Parade, hence linking up with Pier Street.

Opportunity may also exist for a small kiosk facility at Cherry Lake, near the access point to Pier Street. This would act as a destination for pedestrians and cyclists and raise awareness of the access opportunities to the foreshore via Pier Street. The Cherry Lake Future Directions Policy 1997 should be consulted in this regard to ensure compatibility and to ensure that the natural environment is not jeopardised.

Opportunity also exists to create a “northern gateway” and make better use of the small open space area on the eastern side of Pier Street at the Civic Parade intersection.

Longer term opportunities to enhance the properties along the link should be investigated as part of the detailed planning phase, in consultation with property owners and occupiers.
FIGURE 9
PIER STREET PRECINCT FUTURE DIRECTIONS
6.2 Pier Street North of Railway Line

Key opportunities are:

- Accommodate new retail, commercial, residential development.
- Improved traffic management.
- Off street parking.
- Improved streetscape.
- Creation of pedestrian areas.

This area contains large sites suited for a mixture of higher density redevelopment and expanded facilities for “destination household goods retailing” (For example, former Mitre 10 and Retravision stores or similar).

A major upgrade to the streetscape is required including:

- Narrowing of road pavement to slow traffic down and allow a safer shared bicycle/automobile space.
- Widening of the footpaths to cater for outdoor dining and an improved pedestrian environment.
- Provision of three pedestrian nodes to encourage pedestrian activities, break up monotony of the street and create pedestrian gathering points:
  - Northern, near Civic Parade intersection.
  - Mid block, in the vicinity of the former Nissen Hut site.
  - Southern, in the vicinity of the railway crossing.
- Introduce street trees.
- Introduce paving and lighting.
- Undergrounding of electricity (Completed in 2007).
- Accommodate major off street car parking areas to be shared by new development.

Design Guidelines would need to be prepared to ensure that development complements the desired streetscape for Pier Street North and minimises impact on adjoining residential properties referring to such issues as:

- Building to frontage.
- Ensuring active, glazed, commercial frontages to Pier Street.
- Pedestrian access opportunities from Pier Street.
- Car parking in shared facilities located along “side” of development.
- Loading facilities at rear of development accessed from shared car parking areas.
- Landscaped setbacks and acoustic fencing to adjoining residential areas.
- Establishing a predominant height of three storeys, with levels above two storeys set back from Pier Street to reduce bulk, and set back from residential interfaces to the west and east, to prevent unreasonable overshadowing and visual bulk to residential properties.
- To enable the consideration of built forms that incorporate some four storey elements in situations where no unreasonable detriment is caused to surrounding areas and where the final structure contributes positively to the design of the precinct.

The streetscape theme in this area should build on the unique character of the “mechanical” built form and offer opportunities for mixed land uses of a more eclectic nature. A nodal point or “cluster” could be created which reflects the social and cultural background of the Altona community, a place and space for social inclusion and congregation, meeting and gathering of people.
The use of local paving materials, (basalt for example) and medium size trees would reinforce human scale activity. Paving in the pedestrian nodes should be designed to be continuous from property boundary to property boundary, including the road pavement area. This paving may be raised or at the existing road pavement level and would need to be designed to accommodate commercial traffic and buses.

The significance of the nodes could be reinforced through integrated public art and captured in appropriate infrastructure for example seats, bins, bus shelters and tree grates.

The story of the development of Altona and the relationship between the landscape and the early pioneers can be told through interpretation by capturing forms and elements in the design and appearance of the streetscape. For example, shelter structures incorporating subtle forms of early housing and industrial buildings i.e former Nissen hut site, making use of simple, austere materials such as corrugated sheeting cast iron and forged steel.

Lighting, furniture and shelters located on Pier Street North could capture themes associated with local industry and architecture using simple colours, textures and forms. Signage, lighting and bins could also be created using similar materials, colours and forms.
Through traffic lanes designed to accommodate buses, trucks and cars between Civic Parade and Railway Street North.

Proposed future developments:

- Outdoor activity node with shady trees and alfresco dining
- Create a safe and exciting location for a range of specialist destination retail activities and residential development
- Provide a dedicated bike lane along the road and maintain parallel parking
- Create interesting and attractive pedestrian focal points along Pier Street
- Facilitate major new retail development
- Create shared car parking facilities

PLANNING BY DESIGN
HEMISPHERE design
McGauran Giannini Soon Architects
Client: Hobsons Bay City Council
Andrew O'Brien & Associates
Updated by Hobsons Bay City Council October 2008

FIGURE 10
PIER STREET PRECINCT FUTURE DIRECTIONS

PIER STREET NORTH
6.3 Altona Railway Station and Railway Street South

Key opportunities are:

- Create a public transport focus and interchange facility.
- Design new station to reflect the theme of the area as Altona Beach.
- Improve the streetscape of Railway Street South.
- Improve pedestrian access across the railway line.

The railway station, rather than being the physical barrier, can be redeveloped to be a central activity node for the Centre, integrating areas to the north and south.

Opportunity exists for a total redevelopment of the railway station to open up the facility to Pier Street and Railway Street South shops and introduce a ‘pier and beach theme’ into the station structure using materials traditionally associated with pier and beach locations. This would signify arrival at a beach location and create a clear point of difference between Altona railway station and other stations along the line. Major redevelopment and consolidation of station facilities will provide opportunity to incorporate a dedicated bus stopping area, taxi facilities and bike racks, creating a safe public transport focus for the Centre.

The streetscape of Railway Street South can be improved by providing kerb extensions to facilitate outdoor eating and improve pedestrian access to the station and Pier Street north whilst maintaining the angle parking and ample footpath areas to cater for outdoor eating activities. Further development in this area could incorporate residential activities over the top of business activities. Any alterations to traffic management in Railway Street South should not result in the loss of the existing angle car parking arrangements or in the narrowing of footpaths, adjacent the businesses.

Opportunity exists to make better use of the Sargood Street off street car park to the south by raising awareness of the pedestrian lanes. Public art and improved lighting in the walk through to the car park would also encourage more activity.

Premises adjoining the rear car park should be encouraged to improve the design and appearance of rear yards and where possible integrate such yards with the car park to achieve more effective use of space and to provide walkthrough opportunities linking the area with rear car park. Businesses and property owners should be provided with incentives to pursue these initiatives such as discounted car parking requirements or reduced fees for permits and approvals.
6.4 The Esplanade, Davies Street to McBain Street

Key Opportunities are:

- Improve integration of Logan, Lee and Weaver Reserves with the Beach.
- Maintain and enhance Logan and Weaver Reserves.
- Create active frontages to Weaver Reserve.
- Improve traffic management on the Esplanade.
- Improve range and variety of tourist facilities, cafes and restaurants near the beach.

Traffic on the Esplanade

Opportunity exists to greatly improve traffic management and pedestrian access across the section of the Esplanade, adjacent to Logan and Weaver Reserve, hence integrating the reserves with the foreshore and beach areas. Concept design introduces traffic calming treatments, including pedestrian crossings and speed cushions in the Esplanade between Bent and Sargood Street. This will create a pedestrian environment that vehicles can travel through, rather than a roadway where pedestrians have to give way to vehicles.

The temporary bollards that are currently used to close the area to traffic on an “as appropriate” basis during the summer months will remain. Existing angle parking arrangements will be maintained in the short term, it may however be considered desirable to relocate such parking in the longer term. The nature of the paved area will allow the Council to potentially close the area to through traffic in the future should it be considered desirable, as occurs now at peak times.

The design principles being applied here could easily be extended in the future to include additional roads in the area, for example, the section of Pier Street that runs between Logan and Weaver Reserve.

Active frontages to Weaver Reserve

At the present time the adjoining properties turn their back on, or have blank walls adjoining, Weaver Reserve. Opportunity exists to develop the existing car park to the north of the reserve to create an attractive two storey café, restaurant and public amenities facility. This facility will overlook the reserve and the foreshore, creating a vibrant and active edge to the reserve and adding to the quality and range of tourist and casual eating facilities in the Pier Street Precinct. This facility will complement the Life Saving development built on the eastern edge of the reserve.

Maintain Logan, Lee and Weaver Reserves

This scheme recognises the primary importance of the open space reserves that link the Pier Street Precinct to the foreshore and seeks to integrate them into the Centre and enable the community and visitors to make effective use of the spaces for a broad range of activities and passive pursuits.

Detailed design of the area should have regard to the Logan Reserve Masterplan and a companion plan should be developed for Weaver Reserve and Lee Reserve.
Design principles

Design principles being applied to this area are:

- Opening up of views and vistas, improving surveillance and reducing the impression of the “separation of spaces” eg the physical, visual and style of Logan Reserve as opposed to the Esplanade or foreshore.
- The creation of social points with quality feature paving, shelters seating and interpretative and public art.
- Narration, information and direction signage, which implements the Council initiatives regarding public art.
- Additional planting of Norfolk Island Pines to compliment the existing specimens adding shade and improving the visual amenity. Plantings were undertaken in 2008.
- The designation and delineation of a shared recreational path for cyclists and pedestrians as part of a wider metropolitan initiative.

The current arrangement of plantings along the foreshore boundary create a very enclosed, inward orientated space. New ‘succession’ plantings can be introduced to plan for the replacement of existing trees as they eventually pass maturity. These trees can be arranged in a layout to embrace and integrate the foreshore rather than exclude it. The use of indigenous under storey, ground cover and shrub planting will reinforce this linkage as well as providing some shelter from the prevailing summer sea breezes.
7 Other Physical Initiatives

7.1 Coles Car Park and Supermarket

Whilst this site has only recently been renovated, further redevelopment in the future should not be discounted. Any long-term redevelopment of this site should create an active frontage to Queen Street overlooking Logan Reserve and the foreshore. Potential future redevelopment to provide residential accommodation over the supermarket should be encouraged. Short-term opportunity exists to improve access, safety and circulation by:

- Reviewing layout of car park.
- Improve appearance and design of pedestrian access through the space and to the Coles Car Park.
- Relocate trolley bays.
- Relocate large waste bins.
- Improve vehicular access from Queen Street.
- Introduce trees to provide shade in the car park.
- Improve design and appearance of the loading bay and rubbish storage areas fronting Queen Street.

7.2 Existing Petrol Station corner Sargood Street and Blyth Street

Potential future development site for higher density residential development (subject to environmental audit).

7.3 Altona Library

Whilst the library facility is a major attribute of the Centre and should not be lost, opportunity exists through reorganisation of space, to make better use of the southern edge of the Library to create a more active frontage onto Queen Street, overlooking Logan Reserve. Potential redevelopment of the site in the future (retaining library facilities) should be multi storey in scale and include residential development and additional community facilities within the one building.

7.4 Senior Citizens Centre

The Senior Citizens Centre and its associated car parking facilities currently occupy a large section of Logan Reserve. Opportunities to relocate the facility elsewhere in the precinct, in order to open up Logan Reserve could be investigated.

7.5 Car Parking at rear of properties on eastern side of Pier Street between Blyth Street and Queen Street

Opportunity exists to improve access to this privately owned car park through improvements in design of access lanes and configuration of the space.
7.6 Car park on corner of Blyth Street and Bent Street

This car park is remote and isolated from the Pier Street Precinct. The site presents opportunity for residential development hence re-establishing the residential character of the block. The car parking could be relocated to a more central location.

7.7 Properties on north east corner of Sargood Street and Blyth Street

This group of properties, including the Altona Telephone exchange provides potential for major future residential, retail or commercial office development and to make more effective use of the adjoining car parking area. It adjoins the major core retail area, major off street car parking area and links Blyth Street to the railway station. Whilst discussions with Telstra representatives indicated the retention of the Altona Telephone exchange, communications technology is emerging at a speed that could result in a reduced requirement for the facility in the future.

7.8 Private Car park at rear of Pier Street properties between Pier Street and Bent Street (between Weaver Reserve and Queen Street)

Access to, and effectiveness of, this private car parking area could be greatly improved through rationalisation of spaces and redesign of entrances and improvements to the access lane from Bent Street. This could be facilitated in conjunction with the redevelopment of the property adjoining the laneway.

7.9 Sargood Street Car park west of Pier Street (between Railway Street South and Blyth Street)

This is a major car parking facility for the Centre but it is relatively hidden and isolated. The car park is in proximity to the railway station and hence has the long term capacity to provide commuter car parking via a decked structure. Short term opportunities exist to improve access, effectiveness and circulation through car park by:

- Improving access arrangements from Blyth Street.
- Encouraging adjoining properties to remove existing fences and further open up the car parking area.
- Improve pedestrian links to Pier Street and Railway Street South.
- Develop activities at the upper levels that will enhance surveillance and safety.
- Enhance lighting and designation of pedestrian movements.

7.10 Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre

The Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre (former Altona Hospital premises) occupies an important site adjacent to Logan Reserve and the Library. The facility was redeveloped in 2005. As part of the redevelopment an art gallery, exhibition space and community meeting rooms have been established. The recent works have also significantly increased the
number of car parks. These car spaces should be made available for shared public use when the facility is not in use. The facility redevelopment has removed high gates and a fence and now provides a more attractive active frontage to Logan Reserve and Altona Homestead.
8 Business Development and Centre Management

Experience has shown that the collective effort of businesses, property owners, the community and the Council can have a positive impact on the revitalisation and development of traditional centres. The work to maintain and develop Melbourne traditional centres has largely been founded on principles of town centre management with more than 60 centres having successfully introduced professional management and marketing programs. The better known examples include Chapel Street, Glenferrie Road, Puckle Street, Burke Road and High Street Armadale to name a few, however, many smaller and lesser known centres have also followed suit.

Whilst the majority of these programs have been funded by special rate or charge schemes, it should be noted the success of each program is not reliant simply on having such a scheme alone. Success requires the pursuit of a combination of factors including:

- An effective trader association with a positive and opportunistic outlook;
- A collective vision for the precinct;
- A strategic business plan for the management, marketing and development of the precinct;
- Adequate and ongoing physical and financial resources;
- Ongoing communication, involvement, passion and commitment from local businesses, property owners, the Council and the community.

Centre management

The role of centre management is usually the responsibility of a traders association. An active traders association must be maintained to represent, liaise, communicate, advocate and coordinate Pier Street Precinct’s needs and aspirations to key stakeholders including the Council, businesses, property owners, developers, service providers and State Government. In the case of Altona Beach Activity Centre, the traders association should be representative of what is essentially the commercial/retail dominated Pier Street Precinct and the associated businesses in this area, rather than representative of the entire geographic boundary of the Centre which includes the Residential Interface Areas. While it is recognised that many issues may affect, and require collaboration with, residents in the Residential Interface Areas, the primary role of the traders association will be to represent businesses. This is essentially the role of the existing Altona Traders Association. The Altona Traders Association has been meeting for approximately 15 years in various different formats.

A strong relationship between the traders association, local businesses, property owners and the Council is critical. The most important aspect of the relationship between the Council and a traders association is to ensure that ongoing communication occurs and that each party is kept up to date on activities that affect them.

Regular contact between the traders association, relevant Council officers and Councillors is important to keep all parties informed of key issues, activities and decisions that may impact on the precinct or the Council. The development of a business plan that builds on the analysis and opportunities identified in this report, identifies the strategic direction and priorities for the precinct, provides a schedule and timeline for implementation and is endorsed by both parties can facilitate this process.

A detailed strategic three to five year business plan for the precinct should be prepared by the traders association in collaboration with the Council, property owners and all businesses. The plan should clearly identify its roles, responsibilities and its objectives and identify a detailed 12 month action plan with priorities and identifying funding sources.
The business plan can be used to influence key stakeholder decisions in the following ways:

- The Council’s capital works budget.
- Support applications for funding from the State Government and other bodies e.g. infrastructure providers like telecommunications and power companies.
- Support a business argument to property owners and external businesses to attract identified business activities to the precinct.
- Support investment decisions by existing business and property owners.
- Improve business trade within the precinct e.g. addressing customer service, merchandising, shop presentation, product mix etc.
- Manage the associations responsibilities, the effective administration, compliance with annual incorporation obligations and management of funding is essential to the association’s success and credibility.

The role of the association is essentially to represent the collective best interests of the businesses and property owners in a centre, however with so many diverse interests, this can be challenging. Involving, delegating and managing people to produce results is critical. However, more often than not trader associations lack the resources and skills to achieve the outcomes it seeks.

Trader associations need to be opportunistic in seeking available resources through finding businesses who can offer resources and in-kind services, seeking partnerships with community groups and educational institutions and pursuing community and government grants.

Trader associations that have a marketing or centre coordinator tend to be more effective. The amount of work a coordinator can do is limited by the budget available, however, generally coordinators enable the association to tackle day-to-day activities as well as plan for the future of the precinct without putting too much pressure on the individual committee members. A coordinator can also bring professional marketing expertise, organisational abilities, networks, contacts and an awareness of consumer demands and expectations. Furthermore, a good coordinator can attract significant additional funding to the precinct through sponsorships, networking and bulk purchasing that can add to the total budget available to the precinct.

Ongoing and two-way communication must be maintained with all stakeholders, particularly businesses, property owners and the Council. All too often members and the community are unaware of an association’s activities and therefore cannot attribute the benefits of these to the organiser and assess any value. The association should hold regular meetings, distribute information newsletters, conduct surveys, visit businesses individually, invite Councillor and officer attendance at association meetings, attend the Council meetings and seek representation of the Council and community committees that are of importance and seek regular meetings with the Council officers to pursue ongoing issues.

8.1 Marketing

A marketing strategy can also be included in the business plan and should be aimed at building relationships that will improve patronage, investment, business activity and expenditure. The strategy should outline a program of communication that creates awareness, interest and preference for the precinct. The plan should identify the main target markets and segments, major attractions and establishes key marketing initiatives, activities and events. Once this has been established it will then be possible to develop an appropriate
image and identity for the precinct that can be used in marketing the precinct with possible applications in advertising, signs, banners, correspondence and promotional material about the precinct.

In the interim, it is possible that the association establish an initial 12 month calendar of promotional and communication initiatives for the precinct focusing primarily on targeting the local catchment and existing customers.

8.2 Business Development Initiatives

Professional development

Businesses must operate in a professional and efficient fashion, meeting and exceeding the expectations of current and future customers and maintaining an awareness of emerging business trends and consumer demands. Opportunity exists for the trader association and the Council to pursue training opportunities through educational institutions and other bodies including the Retail Traders Association Victoria and Community and Business Centres Victoria. Key development areas include customer service, merchandising and window display, selling skills and marketing.

Business attraction

Whilst it is not possible or necessarily appropriate to legislate for specific businesses in specific premises, it is possible to seek to influence decision making through a program of business attraction and retention. Maintaining and developing an appropriate business mix relies on well-developed relationships with businesses, property owners, property developers and estate agents. The process involves identifying activity gaps, preferred businesses that could be approached to fill these gaps and strategies to attract these businesses. Often there are opportunities to approach existing businesses to diversify or modify their business to fill activity gaps.

A proactive approach to attract specific businesses to the precinct can include:

- Producing and distributing a business prospectus for the precinct - the prospectus can promote the precinct to potential business operators, investors, developers and financiers by telling the story of the precinct and highlighting its attributes and opportunities.
- Targeting businesses in other centres and approaching directly by the traders association.
- Providing real estate agents with a list of desired activities.
- The Council can be encouraged to actively facilitate the establishment of particular businesses by reducing, deferring or waiving particular planning and development provisions as an incentive to businesses that are prepared to take up the challenge and test the market in the precinct.
- A business attraction and retention program needs to be constantly monitored - once targets are reached incentives should be withdrawn to prevent over representation of business categories.

Property development

Given the limited amount of space available in the precinct, it is essential that the most effective use be made of all premises. The traders association should work with the Council
to identify sites that are under utilised and prepare conceptual development schemes to illustrate their optimal use. It is important to develop positive relationships with property owners and investors to ensure the precinct is aware of market opportunities and proposals as well promoting those directions being pursued by the precinct to these stakeholders.

Property improvement guidelines could be developed to:

- Encourage businesses that are located on the ground floor and do not require street frontage to move to an upper floor location. Lifts should be encouraged to provide easier access for people with limited mobility.
- Promote appropriate colour schemes, signage and design elements.
- Prevent the development of residential accommodation at ground floor in the core of the precinct.
- Encourage the adaptive re use of existing buildings for activities that will strengthen the precinct rather than necessarily requiring demolition and re development. In this way buildings that reflect the heritage and character of the precinct and its roots can be retained and given a new lease on life. Examples of such buildings in the precinct include the Altona Homestead, Finnish Society (both covered by heritage controls in any case) and the Churches.

Precinct appearance was identified as a major issue and can be addressed through the individual improvement of buildings. Some Councils have Verandah and Façade Improvement Programs where subsidies are offered to property owners and businesses that improve their premises. Where a number of adjacent properties agree to improve their façade, cost reductions can be achieved through the bulk purchase of paint and services. There is also opportunity to approach local hardware stores to sponsor a project to improve building appearance. A program such as this can achieve greater effect when it combines consultancy advice, where an audit report is prepared, and design advice to property owners and businesses about the presentation of properties.

**Centre operating hours**

Flexible and extended trading hours are preferred by consumers. Many businesses are closed Saturday afternoon, weekday evenings and Sundays. The traders association should seek to extend and promote coordinated trading hours, especially over the weekend.

**Performance measurement**

Measuring the Pier Street Precincts performance is an important aspect of monitoring change and assessing the effectiveness of any Council and Association activities and initiatives. When measuring performance, it is also important to acknowledge and monitor change in the broader environment. Performance measurement should not be an expensive or lengthy process, however some work will be required to establish base information. Knowledge and support of the trader associations activities by the retail and business community should be considered as well as changes to business mix, customer perceptions, investment, increased patronage and employment.

**8.3 Funding of Centre Management**

The pursuit of any ongoing collective business development, marketing, management and physical improvement requires funding and this rarely comes from one source.
Traders associations traditionally collect a membership fee to fund the activities of the organisation. While this funding method is still a legitimate and appropriate source, over time this has been replaced by special rate or charge schemes that provide a more significant and secure source of funding for management, development and marketing activities. Approximately sixty schemes have been established throughout Melbourne. Special rate and charge schemes tend to be less susceptible to the Council’s normal budgetary process and provide significant and secure funding for a determined period and function.

In many cases, the Council will enter into an agreement with the representative traders association enabling special rate or charge proceeds to be forwarded to them for expenditure. Traders associations often fail to function effectively without a secure source of funds like a special rate or charge scheme.

It is considered that the Council should only pursue a special rate or charge where a properly established and representative traders association is in place, where a record of achievement already exists and where the proposal to establish a special rate has broad support from the business community.

Other funding sources for management and marketing initiatives include:

- General Rates, i.e. the Council funds activities from general revenue or a specific differential rate.
- State and Commonwealth Government programs and grants.
- Sponsorship and provision of in-kind services and products – generally provided by businesses, service providers and sometimes the Council.
- Membership of the representative traders association – although special rates and charge schemes tend to replace the collection of membership fees.
- Other Government programs and grants, for example, Community Arts Programs can be focused on providing arts programs within Altona.

In most cases, the Council, or the Council in conjunction with a Government funding grant remains the major provider of funds for special projects such as infrastructure development. This is usually generated from general rates, car parking fees and development contributions. Special rates and charges can also be used to fund physical improvements and are a common method of funding car parking development.
9 Implementation of the Framework

9.1 Approach to the implementation of the program

The implementation of the Urban Design Framework (UDF) will require significant financial resources, with the Council’s assistance and the support of a broad range of other public and private groups. For these reasons it is essential that the momentum developed through the preparation of the UDF be maintained and that all stakeholders see some positive change in the Centre over the short term.

The implementation must be a partnership between the Council, the local community, business and other arms of Government. With these aspects in mind, an implementation strategy has been developed which aims to:

- Tackle short-term remedial issues immediately to demonstrate ability to achieve results and act on the issues and concerns raised during the project.
- Identify key landmark projects for each “stakeholder group” to allow each party to demonstrate their commitment to the project.
- Identify a work program for short, medium and long term.

9.2 Directing the implementation program

A Project Implementation Committee (PIC) was established to drive the overall implementation program. The committee comprised representatives from:

- Local Businesses, operating businesses within the Pier Street Precinct.
- Local residents, living in or close to the Pier Street Precinct.
- Property owners in the Pier Street Precinct.
- Local ward Councillors.
- State Government.

The committee is chaired by the Ward Councillor.

9.3 Management of the implementation program

During the formation of the UDF, a Council officer from the Strategic Development Unit of the Council was appointed to coordinate the implementation of the project and to act as executive officer to the PIC. The role included coordination of all the implementation actions, preparation of regular newsletters to stakeholders, regular communication with the traders association, liaison with government departments to identify opportunities for financial support, ensuring that all the Council departments were aware of, and working in a complementary fashion with, the project.

For the project to succeed it was considered that a whole of the Council response, where all relevant departments recognise their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the UDF. In line with the pending appointment of the new Council, in November 2008, the role and function of this committee will need to be reviewed and determined.
9.4 Key Landmark Actions in the short term

Since the Altona Urban Design Framework was first adopted in 2003 a number of projects have been completed in accordance with the framework. These include:

- Louis Joel Community Arts Centre redevelopment.
- Construction of the Life Saving Club.
- Re-grassing of the under-utilised car park in Logan Reserve.
- Public art such as the mural in Edwards Lane.
- Establishment of the successful Altona traders market.
- Drainage and pedestrian crossing upgrades.

It is important that further programs and projects are undertaken in line with the principles of the UDF. The following significant initiatives have been identified for commencement in the short term. They have been chosen on the basis for their potential to significantly contribute to the achievement of the overall vision for the Centre, the opportunity they provide for commencement in the short term and the opportunity they provide to involve all stakeholder groups in the process.

Public / Private development partnership

The development of the Café and public facilities proposal on the car park to the north of Weaver Reserve.

Council initiative

To introduce the vision and principles of the design framework into the Planning Scheme to establish the statutory basis for future development of the Centre.

Commencement of improvements to the streetscape of North Pier Street and the Northern Gateway.

Business community initiative

The introduction of an integrated approach to the management and marketing of the Centre. The improved appearance of business premises and properties throughout the Centre.

Community initiative

Involvement in the creation of an image and identity for the Centre and the introduction of more public art.

9.5 Funding Sources and Implementation Processes.

Funding sources for the framework will come from a variety of sources, including:

- Private development contributions.
- The Council funding.
- State Government.
Private development contributions

Through the application of a Developer Contributions Policy by the Council and developers wishing to take advantage of the opportunities to develop land or premises in the Centre can be asked to provide a contribution towards the improvement of infrastructure, services and facilities in the Centre.

A cash in lieu parking program, for example, can provide the Council with funds to purchase and construct shared car parking facilities in the Centre. This action will be subject to the findings and direction of the current car parking review being carried out by the State Government.

Council funding

The Council can contribute to the implementation of the framework in a broad range of initiatives through:

- Using the strategic parcels of the Council owned car parks in the Centre as its contribution to Public Private Partnerships.
- Directing existing budgets towards specific components of the framework.
- Ensuring that routine maintenance is carried out in a fashion that supports the overall objectives of the framework.
- Establishing a five year capital works program for the precinct through which to prioritise and schedule works within budget parameters.
- Consideration of the disposal of land (for example, car parking areas) that are identified as being surplus to requirements and using the revenue generated to purchase other strategic properties in the Centre, hence creating a “rolling fund”.

State Government

- Community Support Fund may be a source of funds for community infrastructure in the Centre.
- Programs similar to the State Government Streetlife program can provide funds for business improvement activities in the Centre.
- The Department of Infrastructure has an objective to improve patronage levels on Public Transport. A component of this objective is providing funds for the upgrading of public transport facilities.
- VicRoads has funds for bike paths and pedestrian crossing improvements.
- Department of Youth Sport, Recreation, and Parks Victoria have funds for pedestrian walking tracks.
- VicUrban has a role in urban renewal projects and may be able to assist in the assembly and redevelopment of land parcels in the Centre.
- VicTrack, as the owner of railway reserves has a role in the redevelopment of the railway station and in the use of its land for commuter car parking or the sale of land that is surplus to its requirements.

The Council has recently tapped into the Department of Sustainability Better Places Program and obtained a grant for streetscape design works in Pier Street. This design work is now nearing completion following exhibition of plans during 2008. In addition, the Department of Infrastructure, via the Powerline Relocation Scheme, granted the Council $190,000 for the undergrounding of powerlines in Pier Street. This work was completed in 2007.
9.6 Implementation Schedule

The implementation tables below set out the actions and indicative project timelines for the completion of the actions.

Timeframes are as follows:

Short term (S) – actions to be achieved in one to three years.
Medium term (M) – actions to be achieved in four to eight years.
Long term (L) – actions to be achieved in nine to fifteen years

The major physical initiatives identified below are considered to be the high priority components of the framework.

At this stage it is problematic to identify precise timelines or stages for the projects as each requires further detailed consideration before final configuration can be determined.

The initial actions are identified along with a target commencement date in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Projects</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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| **North Pier Street physical improvement project.**  
  - Develop detailed streetscape plan, including possibilities to increase footpath width.  
  - Review of street parking regime.  
  - Discuss with property owners and business operators, opportunities to redevelop properties and reflect the principles and initiatives of the UDF. | S |
| **Railway Station redevelopment.**  
  - Discuss opportunities for redevelopment of the station with Vic Track, DOI and other relevant authorities.  
  - Advocate for and initiate a process to rename the station Altona Beach with Vic Track, DOI and other relevant authorities.  
  - Prepare detailed design concepts and identify specific traffic management and road realignments that may be required to facilitate bus access to the station area.  
  - Identify sources of funds to assist in the redevelopment project.  
  - Discuss with VicTrack, DOI and Connex, their ability to assist in funding additional commuter car parking in the vicinity of the railway station by extending the angle car parking along Railway Street North to increase commuter car parking facilities. Review time limits of parking near the station to encourage commuters to use appropriate spaces.  
  - Seek information on plans for track duplication, service variations, new stations or extensions on the Altona line. | S - L |
**Café and public facilities on car park north of Weaver Reserve.**
- Prepare design concepts for the café, public facilities building proposed to be built on the car park north of Weaver Reserve, and establish process for development and management or sale of the facility.
- Prepare a financial and project management process for the project.
- Prepare detailed design and construction drawings.
- Identify opportunities to relocate car parking spaces lost through the development and to meet the needs of the additional activity.
- Commence planning and development approvals processes.

**Pier Street South of railway line.**
- Prepare detail designs for alterations to the streetscape.
- Explore opportunities for outdoor eating.
- Improvement to pedestrian safety and circulation.
- Reconfiguration of some on street parking spaces.
- Discuss with Coles the opportunities identified in the UDF to improve appearance and effectiveness of the car park area, alter waste storage areas and improve appearance of the loading bay.
- Prepare a detailed plan to illustrate how opportunities could be achieved and seek Coles interest in contributing to an improvement scheme in conjunction with the Council and potentially State Government.
- Discuss with adjoining property owners the opportunities to improve the safety and accessibility of the pedestrian lanes in the Centre, primarily off Pier Street and Railway Street South. Introduce additional lighting and public art into the laneways encourage adjoining premises to provide active frontages to the laneways.

**Esplanade Precinct**
- Improve the integration between Logan Reserve and the Esplanade.
- Review the Logan Reserve Masterplan to ensure consistency with the UDF.
- Monitor traffic and pedestrian flows along and across the Esplanade.
- Introduce Bicycle node along Esplanade and clearly signpost opportunities to access Cherry Lake and Railway Station via Pier Street.
- Implementation of traffic management works related to Life Saving Club development.
- Undertake detailed traffic counts in the foreshore precinct of the centre over the summer period, specifically in the Esplanade and Queen Street areas, to provide sound data by which to judge the impact of future traffic management initiatives in the area.
- Prepare plans to consider and pursue the remodelling of the interface between Logan Reserve and the Esplanade.
- Assess the financial viability and prepare detailed design for the café, public facilities building proposed to be built on the car park north of Weaver Reserve, and establish a process for development and management of the facility. Identify opportunities to re locate the existing car parking spaces.
- Prepare an Altona Beach and foreshore management strategy to pursue integrated coastal zone planning and management objectives.
- Create a quality green public open space area at Lee Reserve.
### Cherry Lake Link and Civic Parade Gateways

- Develop a detailed streetscape plan for the area.
- Refer to Cherry Lake Future Directions Plan to ensure that design of the area is consistent with its objectives.
- Prepare a detailed plan for Civic Parade in the vicinity of Pier Street to enable introduction of road narrowings and bicycle lanes.
- Consider in consultation with property owners additional opportunities to enhance the link.
- Review design and pedestrian access arrangements to the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre from Civic Parade.
- Investigate potential to establish a kiosk in the car park adjacent to Cherry lake.
- Review the configuration of the open space area on the corner of Pier Street and Civic Parade to facilitate partial development and a more effective gateway entrance area.
- Discuss with property owners opportunities to encourage and facilitate redevelopment of corner properties to reflect principles and initiatives of the UDF.

### Public Art

- Introduce further public art into the Centre, similar to the recently completed murals and sculptures.

### Car parking

The redesign, location and configuration of car parking areas is pivotal to many of the development initiatives for the Centre. For this reason high priority has been placed on the preparation of a car parking policy for the centre, building on the principles of the UDF through which to:

- Identify the mechanisms for shared car parking facilities.
- Establish the basis for accepting cash in lieu or a special rates scheme.
- Establish appropriate car parking rates for various land use activities.
- Establish the management system for shared car parking facilities.
- Establish the financial viability and practicality of the car parking initiatives identified in the framework.
- Establish a project management strategy to fund the assembly of land and development of parking facilities.
- Establish a staged process for the reorganisation of car parking facilities in the Centre.
- Review of parking time limits to provide effective car parking for customers, staff, commuters and beach visitors.

In 2005 a detailed car parking study was completed which canvasses many of the above issues. However, the study (*ARUP, March 2005*) needs to be expanded to cover important issues such as analysis of recommended residential car parking rates and summer surveys. This information should form the basis for the development of a car parking policy to be adopted by the Council and incorporated into the Planning Scheme.
**Branding**
- Prepare a brand, logo and identity of the centre as: “ALTONA BEACH ACTIVITY CENTRE.”
- Commence implementation of an information and directional signage program throughout the precinct and on major approach routes as identified in the UDF using the adopted brand and image.
- Rename Altona Railway Station to Altona Beach Station. Discussions have commenced with Connex regarding the renaming of the Altona Railway Station. While not opposed to renaming, Connex have provided indicative costs associated with the renaming which are currently prohibitive.

**Statutory Controls**
- Review of planning scheme provisions to ensure consistency with the Urban Design Framework and specifically address the rezoning and Design and Development Overlay initiatives required to facilitate the key initiatives of the framework. The following list of issues and potential approaches has been prepared as a guide to Council officers during the preparation of a planning scheme amendment:
  - Rezoning of Weaver Reserve (south of the existing car park and running from Pier Street to the eastern boundary of the proposed Life Saving facility) from B1Z to PPRZ.
  - Rezoning of “northern gateway” properties including 114 and 130 Civic Parade, and 123 and 125 Pier Street from R1Z to MUZ. Investigate opportunities to facilitate the creation of “triangular” open space areas on either side of the intersection, as shown on the concept plans through exchange of land, or suitable setback of development.
  - Introduce DDO12 over the Centre.
  - Delete DDO4 within the Centre.
  - Revise Clause 21.08 to reflect the vision and principles of the UDF.
  - Delete Clause 22.06 (Mixed Use Policy)
  - Introduce Altona Beach Car Parking Policy or precinct plans (similar to Clause 22.05 referring to Williamstown.)
  - Review the Neighbourhood Character Policy to ensure compatibility with the UDF and add additional level of detail provided by the UDF and reflect amendments in the planning scheme.
### Business Development

- In conjunction with the Traders Association, run a series of workshops with property owners in specific precincts of the Centre to discuss specific development opportunities in order to identify level of interest, impediments and opportunities for partnerships between the Council and property owners or between property owners.
- Assist the Traders Association to prepare a business plan to guide the future management, marketing and strategic positioning of the precinct specifically identifying:
  - Centre management organisational structure, roles and responsibilities.
  - Annual marketing plan.
  - Desirable business and activity mix.
  - Marketing and promotional opportunities.
  - Professional development opportunities for business operators.
  - Potential funding mechanisms.
  - Business attraction and facilitation program.
  - Opportunities to strengthen relationship with the local community.
  - Provide seeding funds to the traders association upon successful completion of the business plan to assist them carry out promotions, marketing and training activities.
- Prepare and distribute a “development prospectus” for the Centre to attract new development and activity in line with the Urban Design Framework including:
  - Summary of the design framework.
  - Conceptual sketches of preferred development of key sites and precincts.
  - Outline of the attributes of the Centre.

### Bicycle access and parking

- Promote bicycle access from the Beach to Cherry Lake through signage, information and design improvements that slow down vehicle traffic. Provide bicycle storage facilities at beach, railway station, Hobsons Bay Civic Centre and Cherry Lake.

### Pier Street Precinct – Private realm amenity improvements

- Initiate a promotional scheme to encourage private businesses to clean up rear yards, providing additional on site parking and pedestrian access and/or improve the physical appearance of business frontages,(for example, repaint shopfronts, replace damaged advertising signs, blinds, remove security grills from shop facades).
- Investigate opportunities to provide financial initiatives to businesses that comply by offering rate reduction and provide financial assistance to those businesses willing to be involved in a pilot scheme.
### Monitoring

- Review of progress and performance measurement and reference back to original UDF documentation.
- Performance measurement of the project should be assessed on how the tasks have been implemented.
- A survey of customers and businesses should be undertaken in the Centre to enable comparison of perceptions with the survey completed as part of the UDF preparation.

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<tr>
<td>Performance measurement of the project should be assessed on how the tasks have been implemented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A survey of customers and businesses should be undertaken in the Centre to enable comparison of perceptions with the survey completed as part of the UDF preparation.</td>
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</table>
Appendix 1: List of reference documents


Altona Neighbourhood Character Study, for HBCC by Planisphere 2001


Altona Local Area Traffic Management Study for HBCC by Turnbull Fenner Oct 2001

Cherry Lake future Directions Plan for Melbourne Water & HBCC by Thompson Berrill Landscape Design 1997

Civic Parade Flood Mapping Project, GHD, February 2004

Footpath Furniture & Trading Code, Hobsons Bay City Council.

Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, City of Hobsons Bay.

Hobsons Bay Activity Centres Strategy (2006), for HBCC by Peter Tesdorpf and Associates.

Investigation of Civic Parade Drain Mitigation Options, GHD, July 2005


Kororoit Creek Strategic Plan (Draft) for HBCC and DSE by Chris Dance Land Design Pty Ltd 2003


Logans Reserve Master Plan HBCC, for HBCC by Thompson Berrill Landscape Design

Melbourne 2030 Department of Sustainability and Environment October 2002.


Sargood Street Catchment and Coastal Areas Flood Mapping 2005, GHD

The Yalukit-willam The first people of the City of Hobsons Bay. HBCC 2001


Appendix 2: Scoping document for Altona Beach Car Parking Policy

Note the wording provided here is meant only to illustrate the type of issues to be covered in the Car Parking Policy. It should not be regarded as constituting a policy or a draft of such a policy. It will also be subject to the directions and outcomes of the car parking review currently being undertaken by the State Government.

This policy applies to land in the Altona Beach Activity Centre, bounded by Cherry Lake to the north, Port Phillip Bay to the south, McBain Street to the west and Davies / Fresno Street to the east.

Policy basis

This policy sets the context and basis to ensure that adequate car parking is provided to meet the needs of all activities in the Altona Beach Activity Centre, to enable the centre to achieve the objectives established in the Altona Beach Urban Design Framework.

It deals specifically with:

- The amount of car parking required in association with a change of use or a new development within the Centre.
- Determining appropriate residential car parking rates
- The most appropriate locations for car parking in the centre in order to maximise the efficient use of each space over a twenty four hour, seven day a week period.
- The design, layout and location of car parking spaces and areas to meet the needs of all able and disabled users of the centre.
- The establishment of a principle for the provision of shared or common use car parking facilities wherever practicable and the necessary management procedures to support such a scheme.
- The collection of cash in lieu or a special rates scheme for the provision of physical car parking spaces.
- The management and policing of privately owned car parking areas by the Council.

Objectives / Policy

To recognise the particular parking requirements of the Altona Beach Activity Centre

To ensure that sufficient car parking provision is provided at all times in the Centre to meet the broad variety of current and future activities.

To establish a practical and equitable level of car parking provision for all activities in the Centre that takes account of such factors as, the peak operating times, the length of visits, the type of users, the size and scale of the activity and the availability of on street car parking.

To enable the Council to use discretion in the application of car parking provision and hence facilitate and encourage activities that will benefit the overall operation of the Centre and to defer the provision of or payment for car parking facilities in order to assist a desirable activity to commence.

To establish a transparent and equitable process for the Council to purchase land required for shared car-parking facilities.

To indicate how a cash in lieu or special rates scheme will operate.
To ensure a fair and equitable treatment of all land owners, businesses and users.

To ensure that car parking areas are appropriately located and designed to facilitate their effective use and to minimise the impact of car parking areas or structures on the design of the Centre.

To encourage the provision of car parking, wherever possible in shared facilities, recognising the inherent efficiencies that can be achieve through such facilities.

To maintain adequate access to free car parking in the Centre for short term customers and visitors.

To establish an equitable funding and charging mechanism for the provision of and use of car parking facilities in the Centre.

**Policy reference**

*Altona Beach Urban Design Framework 2008*

*Altona Beach Car Parking Strategy*
Appendix 3. Business activity in the precinct and demographic summary

A survey of customers and businesses in the centre and a review of current activities were undertaken as part of this project. A summary of the results is provided below to assist in the definition of the roles, functions and perceptions of the centre.

- The predominant role of the centre is as a weekly shopping and convenience destination, evidenced by 61.36% of customers visiting weekly food and convenience businesses. This role is substantially supported by the presence of the supermarket, however there remains a limited offering of weekly food items beyond this activity. The Pier Street Precinct also serves an important professional and personal services role, community and civic role and regional tourism role, a role that is significant during summer months due to the close proximity of Altona Beach and Pier.

- 90 per cent of customers live in the “local” area with 56 per cent of survey respondents from Altona followed by Altona Meadows (9.20%) and Seaholme (5.4%).

- 64.60 per cent of survey respondents travelled to the precinct by car followed by 23.80 per cent who walk and 9.20% who travel by train.

- 85.4 per cent of customers visit the precinct at least once a week. 23.10 per cent visit daily, 43.10 per cent more than once a week and 19.20% weekly.

- The supermarket was the business most frequently nominated store to be visited, by 24.3 per cent of customers surveyed, followed by the bakeries (8.37%), chemist/pharmacy (6.37%) and the bank and Newsagency (5.98% each).

- Features most often recognised and valued by customers, businesses and residents were the convenience and accessibility of the precinct to the local area, the village feel, friendly atmosphere and proximity to beach and waterfront.

- Businesses perceive the activity mix, particularly the over representation of non-retail activities such as real estate agents and hairdressers and lack of variety as the major issues facing the precinct. Residents commented on the untidy and ‘old fashioned’ nature of the precinct.

- Businesses and residents desire more quality cafes and restaurants, clothing and accessories and retail generally with a focus on variety, specialty items and quality. Customers are seeking improved variety and increased car parking and fewer real estate agents.

- 60% of survey respondents indicated that Pier Street Precinct was their main for food and convenience shopping centre followed by Altona Gate (9.10%) and Central Square/Altona Meadows (7.7%).

- Other centre regularly visited by survey respondents included Altona Gate (30.86%), Highpoint (17.14%), Central Square (8%) Williamstown (5.71%), Werribee (5.14%) and Werribee Plaza (5.14%).

- Survey respondents rated range of businesses, quality of goods and services, personal safety, pedestrian safety, customer service, car parking, traffic and access
aspects to be good or satisfactory, however the range of businesses, quality of goods and services and traffic also rated significantly as satisfactory to poor.

- Businesses rated centre marketing and promotion, physical streetscape improvements, shop front appearance and image and identity development as the most important issues to address.
- The physical improvements desired by residents included keeping the area clean, more greenery, development of Pier Street north of Railway, improving or modernising shop appearance, removing graffiti and increased lighting. The cleaning up of the precinct and business development were identified as the most important issues to address. Customers most frequently nominated improved variety of businesses as a way to improve the precinct.
### Demographic Profile of Altona from 2001 census

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Appendix 4: Key Issues identified through the process

The key Issues identified by the various communities as needing to be addressed in the precinct are:

**Physical Environment**

- The need to maintain and enhance open space area in the precinct.
- Streetscapes do not adequately reflect the beach environment.
- Lack of linkages between Cherry Lake and the Beach.
- Road network is relatively narrow which will restrict future development and growth.
- Poor appearance and security at Railway Station.
- The design and appearance of the commercial area is aging and tired.
- Fragmentation of Pier Street north of Railway Line.
- Car parks are fragmented and hidden.
- Poor appearance of buildings and businesses. (particularly from the rear)
- Precinct has limited drainage capacity to accommodate significant further development.
- Need to protect the residential amenity of surrounding residential areas and maintain the open “back yard” character of the area.

**Community Environment**

- Potential for conflict due to loss of residential amenity if precinct develops.
- Desire to retain detached, low rise, low density housing which is contrary to the provisions in Melbourne 2030.
- Divergence of views varying from keeping the precinct as it is and encouraging the precinct to evolve and change.
- Concern over Increased cost of housing and affordability for low income residents.

**Business Environment**

- Limited variety within important activity categories e.g. weekly food shopping and potential dominance of precinct by professional and other services at the detriment of food and non-food retailing.
- Fledgling Traders association with no management system and limited funding for collective management, marketing and business development.
- Community perceives business standards to be low with limited product offering.
- Limited trade on Saturday and Sundays.
- Few destination businesses to attract patronage from outside local area.
- Precinct has only major supermarket (Coles) with no immediate competition.
- Ageing population with smaller households is impacting precinct viability.
- Conflict between residential and commercial amenity could prevent ongoing commercial development.
- Limited supply of land for commercial development.
- Need to provide a diverse mix of activities and product offering to suit changing community e.g. low income and ageing to younger residents with greater disposable income.

**Safety and Security**

- Pedestrian access in and around the precinct particularly at roundabouts.
- Lighting in and around the precinct.
Security at the Railway Station.

**Image and Identity**

- Precinct is relatively unknown outside Hobsons Bay.
- Precinct has poor information and directional signs.
- Lack of community ownership over precinct’s name “Altona Village.”
- Loss of retail focus north of Railway Line.
- Precinct has limited appeal to younger people.
- Poor linkages between Beach and Commercial activities.
- Importance of retaining the essential character of the precinct as it changes and develops.