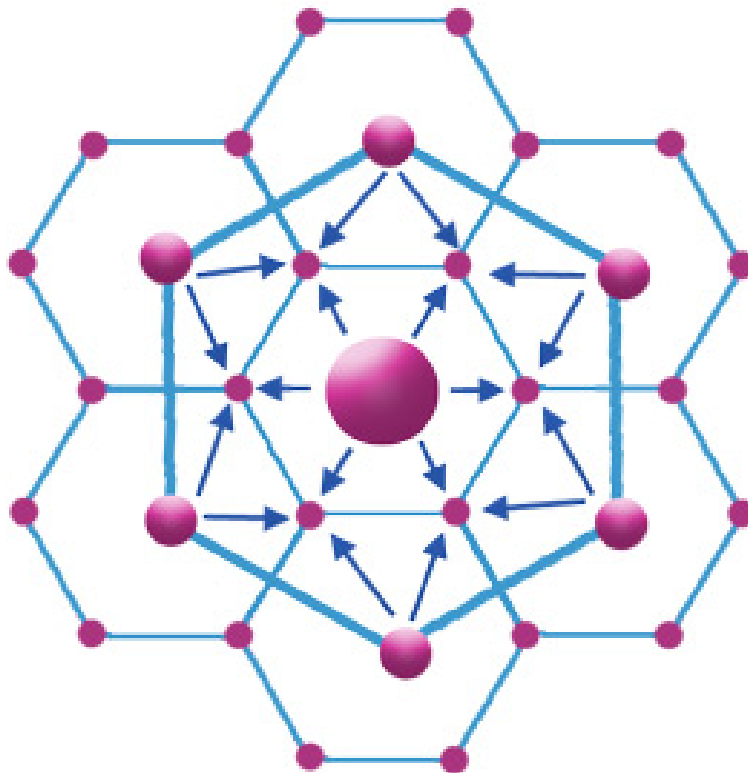


# ► City of Melton Retail and Activity Centres Strategy

Prepared for **Melton City Council**  
By Tim Nott with Harvest Digital Planning and Hansen Partnership  
► March 2014





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## Note

The assessment in this report has relied on consultant estimates and forecasts as well as on primary and secondary data from a variety of Government and commercial sources. In parts, the analysis has relied on reasonable assumptions. However, the reader should bear in mind that there is no certainty in predicting the future.

The report has been prepared for Melton City Council. No responsibility is taken for its use by other parties.

## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AC	Activity Centre
CAD	Central Activities District
CBD	Central Business District
CDZ	Comprehensive Development Zone
DDS	Discount Department Store
DPCD	Department of Planning and Community Development
DTPLI	Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure
GAA	Growth Areas Authority (now the MPA)
MAC	Metropolitan Activity Centre
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Authority (formerly the GAA)
MSS	Municipal Strategic Statement
NAC	Neighbourhood Activity Centre
NC	Neighbourhood Centre
PAC	Principal Activity Centre
PPTN	Principal Public Transport Network
PSP	Precinct Structure Plan
UGB	Urban Growth Boundary
VPP	Victorian Planning Provision

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# City of Melton Retail and Activity Centres Strategy

## 1 Introduction

The City of Melton has been growing rapidly for more than a decade and is expected to continue growing rapidly for at least several more decades. Planning for new communities is proceeding apace. In order to ensure that residents have access to effective, equitable and sustainable services and opportunities for employment, Melton City Council has commissioned a retail and activity centres strategy. This strategy will provide, “a robust policy framework to support the long term integrated land use planning and delivery of a hierarchy of Retail and Activities Areas across the municipality”.

Tim Nott and a team comprising Harvest Digital Planning and Hansen Partnership have prepared this draft Strategy. This team has worked closely with Council planning and development staff to deliver the project.

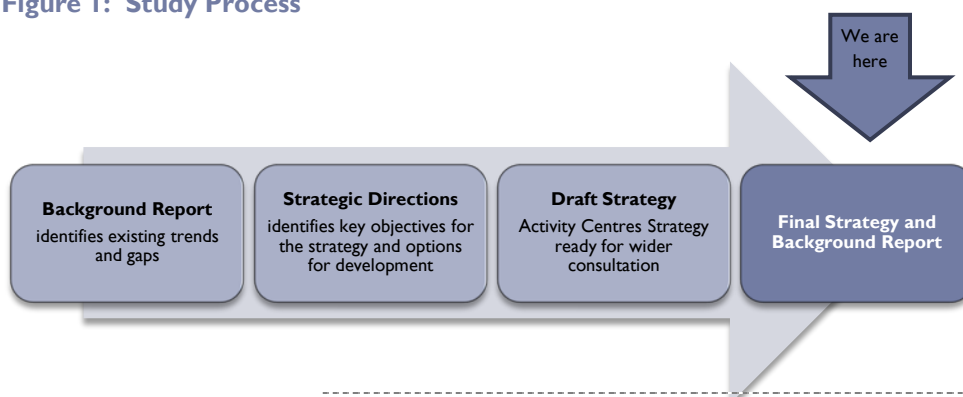
### 1.1 About this Report

The Melton Retail and Activity Centres Strategy is in two parts:

- **Strategy** (this report); and
- **Background Analysis & Discussion** which provides supporting analysis and details of our consultations

This report is intended to provide directions for Council in its deliberations on the planning and support for retailing and activity centres throughout the municipality. The draft strategy will be tested through consultation.

Figure 1: Study Process



## 2 Context for the Strategy

### 2.1 Growth, Services and Jobs

The City of Melton provides one of Melbourne's key urban growth corridors. Currently growing at 4.7% per year, the population is expected to grow from 117,000 in 2012 to approximately 400,000 at full development in mid-century. This means an additional 280,000+ people in the municipality will be seeking access to services over the next 40 years or so.

These people will be looking for well-located shops, health and community facilities, educational opportunities and all the other services that are typically provided in activity centres.

In addition, we know from our analysis, surveys and consultations that many existing residents of Melton are keen for a higher level of service from our activity centres that will reduce the need to travel to access goods and services from elsewhere. For some, this will be resolved as growth triggers new investment. In other parts of the municipality, though, some centres require assistance to regain the vibrant level of service that residents deserve.

Our residents will also be looking for local job opportunities in a wide range of occupations and skill levels. Currently, there is only one job for every four working residents in Melton. This leads to a very high level of commuting outside the municipality with high costs for families, for employers and for the environment. Our aim is to move towards a ratio of one job for every household. At full development, this means around 140,000 jobs will be required, an increase of 124,000 compared with the present situation. Our activity centres will need to generate a substantial share of this growth – at least 60% or an additional 76,000 jobs.

### 2.2 The Many Roles of Activity Centres

Council recognises that, whilst jobs and services are at the core, activity centres have many roles. These are represented in Figure 2 below.

Community members have a wide variety of expectations about the way in which activity centres will function and what their key services are, whether they be shoppers, workers, students, traders or simply people.

Between 2012 and mid-century, the population of Melton will have grown

from **117,000** to

**400,000**

In order to meet our target of one local job per household, by mid-century, the number of jobs in Melton's activity centres will need to grow from **8,000** to at least

**84,000**

**Figure 2: Roles and expectations of activity centres**



As the local planning authority, Council has a role in shaping development to deliver a network of centres that individually and collectively meets the needs of our citizens, businesses and institutions.

### 2.3 The Policy Context

Activity centre planning has been undertaken by Council and, for the newly developing parts of the municipality, by the Growth Areas Authority (GAA, now the Metropolitan Planning Authority). This planning has been within the framework set by the State Government through its various Metropolitan Plans. The work undertaken by the GAA provides a rational hierarchy of centres based largely on their retail function. The latest metropolitan plan – Plan Melbourne – also has a hierarchy of centres but this focuses on the jobs and services aspects of the centres without nominating concrete retail functions. This strategy for Melton blends the hierarchy outlined by the GAA and that in Plan Melbourne.

### 2.4 The Need for a Network Strategy

The strategy in this document works within the framework provided by the draft Metropolitan Plan and carries forward the relevant parts of the existing design for activity centres provided by the Growth Corridor



Plan and the approved Precinct Structure Plans. These highlight the need for a network of centres organised in a hierarchy in which activities with similar “reach” can be clustered together; a network which provides highly accessible every day services; and in which a small number of centres can act as higher order suburban service nodes, providing the jobs and services that people might otherwise have to travel into central Melbourne to access.

The reasons to direct investment to a planned network of activity centres include:

1. To improve the viability of individual activities
  - Most private sector and many public sector activities providing services directly to consumers benefit from being co-located in activity centres with other services because of the increased pedestrian traffic, opportunities to share costs of infrastructure and other services, and marketing advantages
2. To provide certainty for substantial investments by firms, householders and the community
  - Investors need to know that the location they choose will remain appropriate and viable for the term of the investment
  - Service providers often have a particular market size at which their service is viable and wish to locate in a centre that serves such a market
3. To provide fair access to services for current and future residents
  - By planning a network of centres, we can ensure that current residents are served now and that future residents also have viable and accessible centres (the alternative would lead to a situation in which the centres developed first would grow to serve the available market whether or not they were in accessible locations)
4. To improve the sustainability of urban development
  - By placing services at the closest possible point to the consumer (whilst ensuring the commercial viability of the service) travel costs and energy consumption are reduced

The following strategy is designed to lay the foundation for servicing the needs of our growing municipality over the coming decades. Council will need to revise the Strategy from time-to-time in response to changes in demography and industry organisation as well as to encourage innovation and new thinking.

### 3 Principles for the Retail and Activity Centres Strategy

#### Ensure **Equity** of access to services and jobs

Have services as close as possible to residents (ensuring that services are of a scale that is viable)

Ensure that present and future residents are catered for

Ensure access via a variety of transport options, including walking, cycling and public transport

#### Improve **Sustainability** of urban development

Cluster activities in centres to reduce resource use (including energy used for travel and infrastructure requirements)

Improve the resilience of the local economy by ensuring that the area is not dependent on one industry

#### Improve local **Employment** opportunities

Encourage strong growth in diverse employment opportunities at activity centres to meet the target of one job per household

Reduce the need for residents to commute long distances by providing local jobs in a variety of industries and skill requirements

#### Provide for **Community** focal points

Create focal points for informal socialising and community development, especially important in new suburbs

Ensure that centres are the focus of relevant public investment

#### Encourage the **Viability** of services

Ensure that activities cluster in centres to maximize demand

Encourage activities to locate in centres that have a market of an appropriate scale for viability

#### Improve the **Quality** of service

Encourage the provision of higher order goods and services in order to reduce travel requirements by residents

Encourage high quality, site responsive urban design that creates unique and valued places

## 4 The Proposed Network

The proposed network is based on the hierarchy emerging from the latest metropolitan plan<sup>1</sup>, with retail and service roles similar to those envisaged in the work of the former Growth Areas Authority (GAA); that is, the proposed network has:

**Neighbourhood Centres** – focal points of the local community providing highly accessible day-to-day requirements such as food and groceries, pharmacy, newsagents, take-away food, hairdressing, childcare and local health and fitness services.

**Activity Centres** – substantial focal points for the Melton community providing a broad range of retail and service activity and jobs. In most cases, Activity Centres will have a sub-regional retail role providing a wide range of routine comparison goods (such as clothes, furniture and household items) as well as food and groceries. Many community services will be delivered from these centres.

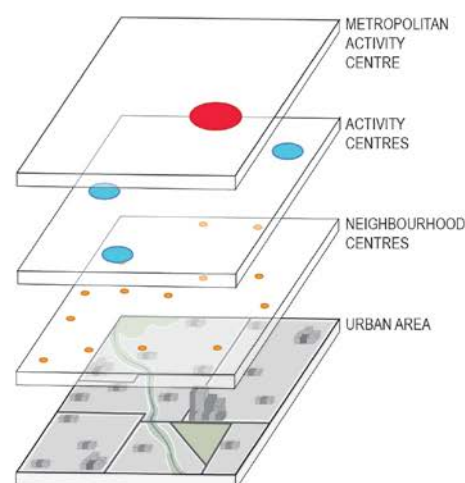
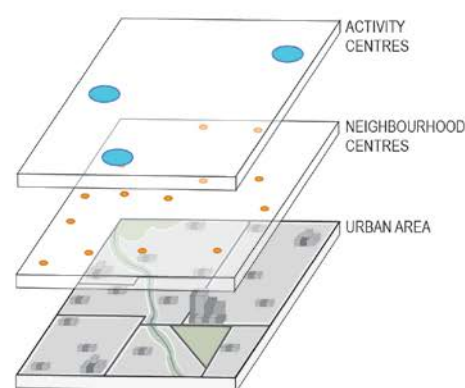
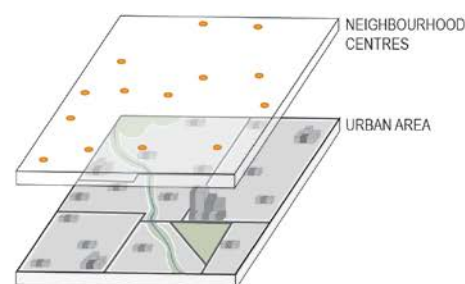
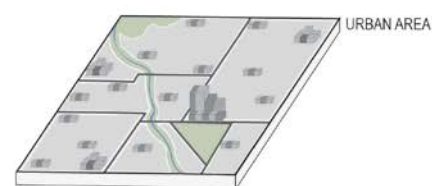
**Metropolitan Activity Centre** – at Toolern, will eventually be the largest centre for the municipality providing higher order goods and services as well as providing all the goods and services found in other centres. Toolern will be strongly connected to the rest of the metropolitan area via public transport. It will contain job-rich service activities that generate income for the region.

All residents in the municipality will be served by at least one of these centres in the hierarchy.

In addition to these centres, in some areas there may also be:

**Local Centres** – small collections of commercial activities that can provide top-up retail goods and services or small office premises. These centres can be important in providing services in areas that are beyond a comfortable walk to larger centres.

**Bulky Goods Precinct** – the concentration of large format retailers at the Melton Homemaker Precinct forms a stand-alone centre that focuses on bulky goods and home-maker items, especially important in a strongly developing residential area. Elsewhere, concentrations of bulky goods outlets will be encouraged to locate adjacent to larger activity centres.



<sup>1</sup> The established hierarchy of centres has changed somewhat from the old Metropolitan Plan (Melbourne 2030). Neighbourhood Activity Centres have become Neighbourhood Centres; Central Activities Areas, Principal, Major and Specialised Activity Centres have become Activity Centres except where they have become Metropolitan Activity Centres

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## 5 Neighbourhood Centres

### 5.1 Role

Neighbourhood Centres, along with primary schools and early learning hubs, are the basic building blocks of community infrastructure. They should provide reliable access to basic necessities such as fresh food and groceries, first contact health care, childcare, local dining options and other local services.

### 5.2 Expectations of Neighbourhood Centres

Whilst each Neighbourhood Centre may be different, the following services are expected:

- Supermarket (or equivalent)
- A range of smaller shops delivering everyday goods and services
- Urban design that promotes quality built form outcomes, pedestrian access to and within the centre and which encourages interactions between local residents
- Public open space
- Accessibility via the public transport network

In addition, Neighbourhood Centres will be encouraged to accommodate appropriately scaled health and community services, offices and recreational activities. They should be seen as employment nodes as well as locations for the distribution of goods and services.

Where appropriate, Neighbourhood Centres should be co-located with parks, community hubs and schools.

Higher housing densities will be encouraged around these centres in order to improve the use and vibrancy of each centre and to increase the accessibility of its services. Housing within centres will be encouraged in appropriate locations.

There is an expectation that the majority of people in the catchment of each Neighbourhood Centre will be able to walk to the centre. These centres should be highly accessible to their local community, the centre of a network of footpaths and bike trails. The design of these centres should be responsive to their site and the community, and should be unique in order to provide local identity and a sense of place.

### 5.3 Catchment Population

The size of neighbourhood catchments is different in each case; however, the optimum size is one that is big enough to support strong services but small enough so that a majority of residents can readily walk to the centre if they wish. Following on from work for the GAA (see Essential Economics, 2012), the optimum catchment population is around 10,000, although the range could be 5,000 to 15,000. A catchment of 10,000 people is large enough to support a full-line

supermarket (that is, a supermarket that is at least 3,000 sq m and has perhaps 30,000 product lines) and yet be contained within a radius of 1 to 1.5 km from the centre in a fully developed urban area.

## 5.4 Centre Size

The existing Neighbourhood Centres within the City of Melton range in size from 24,000 sq m of retail space in Burnside (although this is to be promoted to an Activity Centre) to 2,000 sq m at Hillside. The optimum size for new centres will depend on the population to be served and the mix and attractiveness of the activities. Ideally the centre will be large enough to deliver a high quality service to residents whilst not so large that it reduces the ability of adjacent centres to do the same for their residents.

### 5.4.1 Retail Space

There is an expectation that Neighbourhood Centres should provide 25% to 33% of retail needs in their catchment. This Strategy expects that for new centres, a ratio of 7,000 sq m of retail space for every 10,000 people in the catchment would be provided, with provision biased towards food and groceries and every-day needs. This level of floorspace will allow the provision of:

- a full-line supermarket of 3,000 to 4,000 sq m
- further food and grocery provision such as greengrocers, butchers, bakers and other specialist food providers
- Non-food providers such as chemists, newsagents
- Cafés, restaurants and take-away food outlets
- Local service providers such as hair-dressers and repair outlets

### 5.4.2 Non-Retail Space

Non-retail activities in Neighbourhood Centres could include commercial activities such as travel agents, wholesalers, real estate agents, banks and professional services as well as community activities such as child-care and front-line health services for example. Neighbourhood Centres are often also important locations for start-up businesses of all kinds.

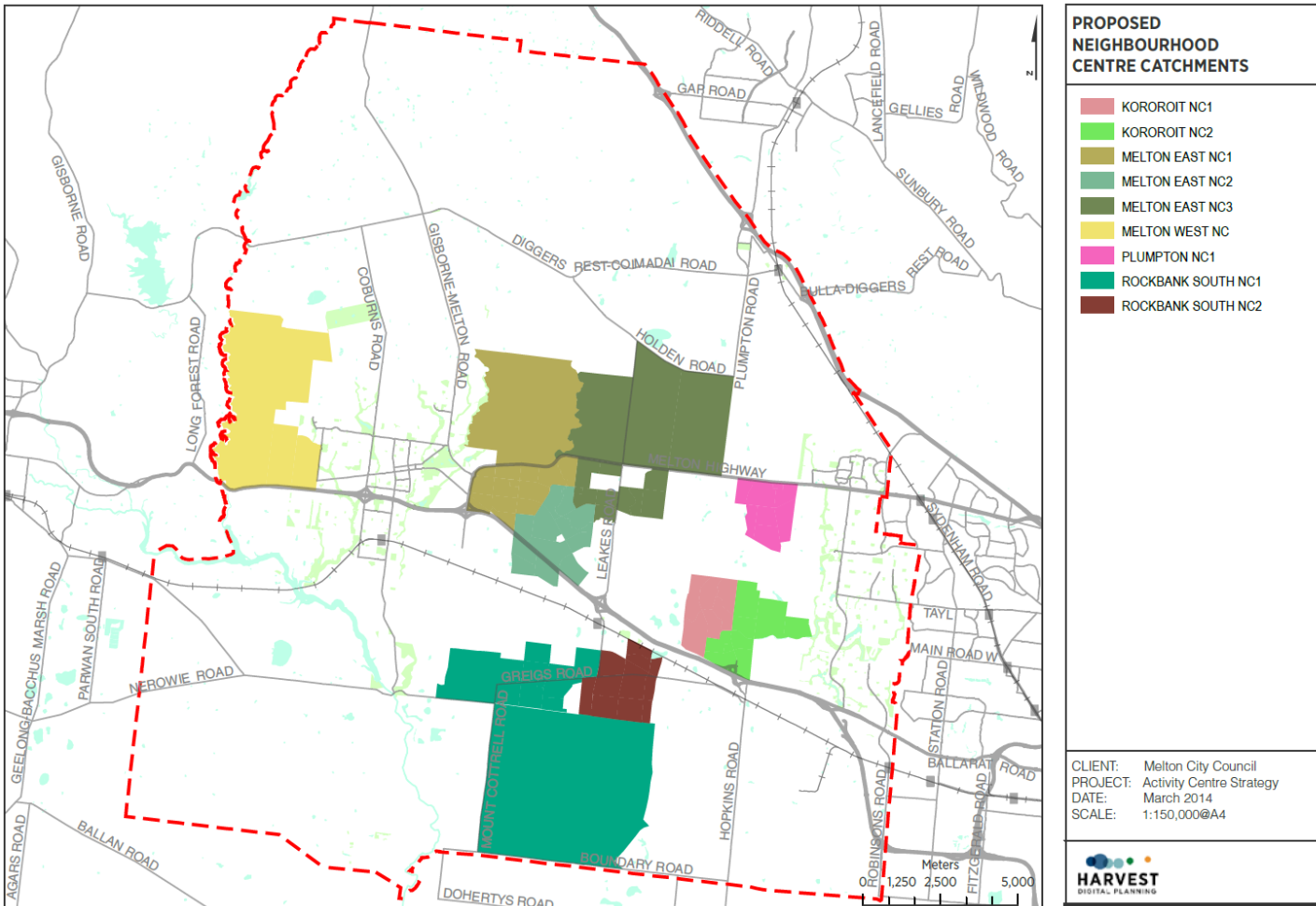
These various services can occupy shop units, offices, community buildings or other premises. The extent and diversity of the activities will depend on the nature of the catchment, the location of the centre with respect to transport options and the capacity of local investors.

In order to maximise the number and diversity of local employment opportunities, there is an expectation in this Strategy that at least 30% of the space of any new Neighbourhood Centre will be devoted to non-retail activities. This means that 3,000 sq m of building area should be allowed for a catchment population of 10,000 people.

### 5.5 Development of New Neighbourhood Centres

New Neighbourhood Centres will be required in the growth areas that have yet to be planned in detail, including Kororoit, Melton East, Plumpton, Rockbank, Rockbank South and Warrensbrook. In addition, new or expanded centres are likely to be required in Brookfield and Melton West as a result of the extension of the urban growth boundary (Logical Inclusions Advisory Committee 2011). Neighbourhood centres in other precincts may be required if these are to accommodate a sufficient number of residents.

The precise location of these centres will need to be finalised through the PSP process or other relevant development plan mechanisms. This process should be done according to the “Local Town Centre Guidelines” established by the GAA in its most recent precinct structure plans such as that for Rockbank North. Nevertheless, broad locations are indicated by the catchments to be served in the following diagram.



Note: These catchments have been identified through a GIS network analysis using small area population forecasts – see background report

The size of each new Neighbourhood Centre needs to be determined with reference to the size of its catchment. Detailed catchment analysis will be undertaken at the precinct planning stage. In general, the boundaries of a centre catchment should be taken as a line that is equidistant (in travel time) from centres of a similar or higher order in the activity centre hierarchy. In other words, in establishing the network, the analyst should enable consumers to travel the shortest possible distance to access the goods and services that they require. This method of analysis ensures some measure of equity between geographic areas and between current and future residents. A network planned on this basis should enable a rational allocation of resources over the long term even if, from time to time, individual centres do not perform well.

The planning scheme allows for the provision of floorspace caps on development in growth areas in order to allow for the establishment of an appropriate retail network. The caps proposed in this strategy are based on expected catchment population at full development. An analysis using GIS techniques has estimated the catchment for each of the Neighbourhood Centres yet to be developed in the growth areas. Based on this population estimate, a cap on retail floorspace is proposed for each centre, taking 7,000 sq m of retail floorspace for 10,000 people as a benchmark, as shown in the following table.

**Table 1: Cap on Retail Floorspace in Neighbourhood Centres in Precinct Structure Plans**

Proposed centre	Catchment population at full development	Cap on retail floorspace
	no.	sq m
Diggers Rest	12,000	8,000
Exford Road	11,000	7,500
Melton North	16,000	11,000
Rockbank Local Town Centre	10,000	7,000
Taylor's Hill West	13,000	900
Toolern NC 1	11,000	7,500
Toolern NC 2	17,000	12,000
Waterford	5,000	4,000
Rockbank South 1	13,000	9,000
Rockbank South 2	13,000	9,000
Kororoit 1	8,000	5,500
Kororoit 2	12,000	8,000
Plumpton 1	11,000	7,500
Melton East 1	14,000	9,500
Melton East 2	13,000	9,000
Melton East 3	11,000	7,500
Melton West (outside current PSP area)	10,000	7,000

Notes:

In Taylors Hill West, a permit has already been issued for a centre with a retail component of 900 sq m including a small supermarket. This is less than may be demanded by local residents but is the same as the allowance in the PSP.

Residents of Taylors Hill West will have access to full-line supermarket services in surrounding centres at Taylors Hill, Caroline Springs and Plumpton.

At Waterford, the existing cap in the structure plan is 4,000 sq m and it is fair to keep that existing cap rather than reduce it to 3,500 sq m as per the ratio outlined above. Melton West is in the Urban Growth Zone but no PSP has yet been declared for the area.

These caps are provided as an indication of the likely size of the respective neighbourhood activity centres until such time as they are confirmed by detailed catchment analysis in Precinct Structure Plans.

In order to provide some measure of flexibility, development beyond the retail floorspace cap could be allowed through the permit process if the expansion is warranted because of changes in circumstance (such as higher than expected population levels) and would produce net community benefit and no disruption of the activity centre hierarchy or detriment to the service levels of future residents.

In order to encourage employment, no cap is proposed for non-retail space. However, in planning for these centres, Council expects that 30% of floorspace will be for non-retail uses.

## 5.6 Further Recommendations for Neighbourhood Centres

### Hillside

1. Review the potential for urban design improvements, including tree planting, to make the best of this centre

### Melton South

1. Assist the development of a traders' group for the centre to engage in collective action on issues of common concern
2. Development of a Structure Plan and Urban Design Framework for the centre, including an investigation of the potential for investment in non-retail uses that can make use of proximity to the railway station



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## 6 Activity Centres

### 6.1 Role

The role of Activity Centres is to provide a broad range of jobs and services to a substantial catchment comprising a suburb or several suburbs. Activity Centres are significant town centres, generating large numbers of trips for a variety of retail, entertainment, community and business purposes.

### 6.2 Expectations of Activity Centres

Every Activity Centre will be different in its offering and emphasis. However, this strategy expects that each Activity Centre will generally contain:

- A sub-regional retail function – usually represented by the presence of a discount department store (DDS) as well as supermarkets and many specialty stores
- Community services
- Entertainment and recreational activities
- Commercial accommodation
- Office activities
- Extensive public open space
- Public transport interchange

Activity Centres will make a significant contribution to employment within the municipality.

Activity Centres will be accessible via public transport from their catchment areas. There is an expectation that these centres will be connected by walking and cycling routes throughout their catchment areas. Activity Centres are expected to demonstrate high levels of design excellence, reflecting the important role they play in the life of the community as meeting and entertainment places, service delivery points and employment precincts.

Activity Centres are expected to accommodate residential development within them (usually above ground floor level) and will have higher density housing in close proximity to provide access particularly for small households.

### 6.3 Catchment Population

Each Activity Centre has a different catchment population depending on the nature and extent of the surrounding urban development. However, the optimum catchment size is one that is large enough to support the expected activities but not so large that it affects the ability of adjacent centres to service their residents.

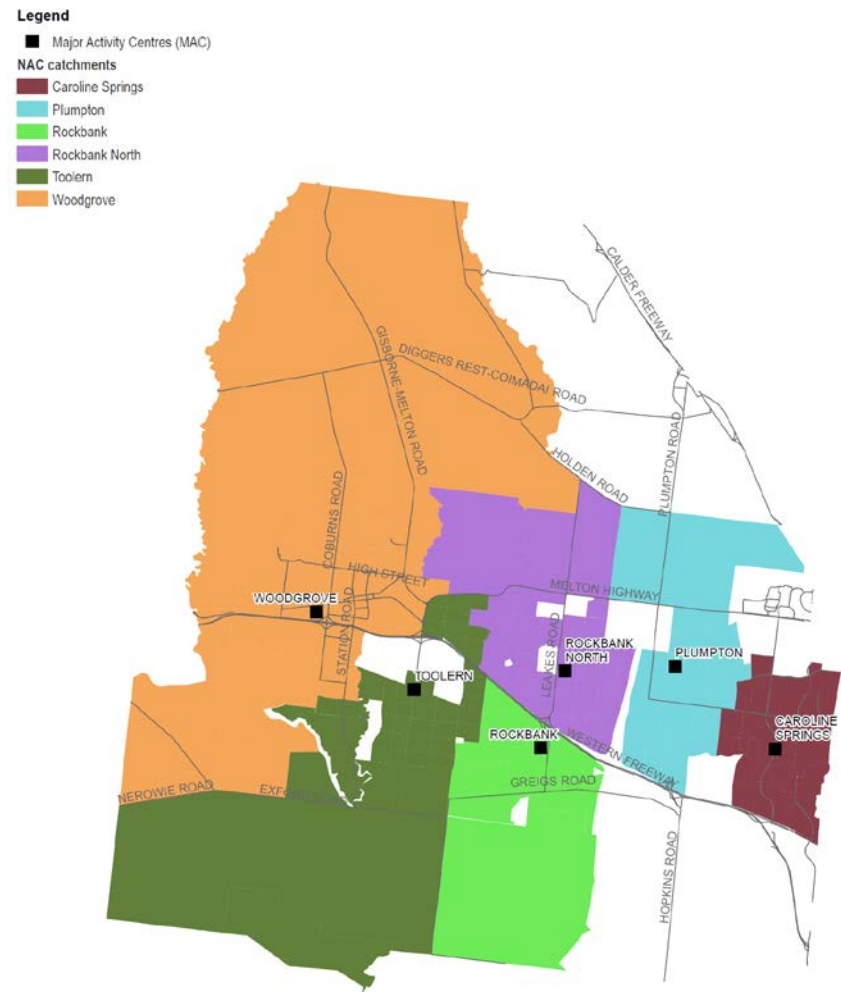
In Melton an appropriate catchment size for planning purposes is 50,000 people. This could vary between a minimum of 35,000 and perhaps

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70,000. This catchment has been set on the basis of being able to support particular sub-regional services (a DDS or double DDS, for example).

A GIS analysis of catchment size was undertaken for this Strategy and this determined that, taking into account the existing and planned centres, that no further sub-regional retail centres are warranted given the expected population at full development. The notional sub-regional retail catchments are shown in the following figure.

**Figure 3: Residential catchments for sub-regional retail centres in Melton**



**Notes:**

1. The white areas on the map include areas which are exclusively employment precincts, planned parks, the Outer Metropolitan Ring Road, or where residents look to large activity centres outside the municipality – Watergardens and Sunbury – for their regional and sub-regional services.
2. Even though Melton Town Centre is a significant Activity Centre it has a neighbourhood retail role and has been omitted from this exercise.
3. Hopkins Road Activity Centre has not been included in this exercise since the extent of any residential development in this precinct has not yet been decided.

## 6.4 Centre Size

In planning new Activity Centres and enabling the expansion of existing centres Council's aim is to encourage the strongest possible provision of services and jobs in the municipality. No floorspace caps are proposed for the new centres at this level. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the expectation of the type of services that will be provided in the Activity Centres of the municipality. This will guide the appropriate area of land to be designated for the relevant centres.

### 6.4.1 Retail Space

The background analysis for this report suggests that sub-regional Activity Centres should capture broadly 40% of the retail spending in their catchment. This is based on the floor area needed for viable retail types whilst also allowing spending to support viable services at other levels of the centre hierarchy.

The retail provision at most Activity Centres will be biased slightly towards non-food goods but will provide a balance of both food and non-food. The provision of stores at most centres will include:

- Discount department store(s) to provide a large selection of routine non-food goods
- Several supermarkets
- Large number of specialty stores providing food and non-food goods and services
- A variety of dining and take-away food options
- Provision for bulky goods/homemaker outlets in some cases

For a catchment of 50,000 people, the retail floorspace is likely to be approximately 35,000 sq m of conventional retailing and up to 20,000 sq m of bulky goods floorspace.

### 6.4.2 Non-Retail Space

Activity Centres are the delivery point for a wide range of services and will be expected to make a substantial contribution to employment in the municipality. The scale of non-retail space will depend on a wide variety of factors. The Activity Centres should be the focus of investment by Council and others in the delivery of health and community services such as libraries, with encouragement of investment in sub-regional offices and entertainment options such as cinemas, clubs and hotels.

Evidence from existing Activity Centres across Melbourne suggests a wide variation in the provision of non-retail space. The single-owner centres tend to focus more on retail activity and generally have a lower provision of non-retail services; centres in multiple ownerships tend to have a higher than average non-retail provision. In order to generate a breadth of employment choices for the municipality it would be prudent to encourage the provision of at least 40% of non-retail space. This could be achieved through appropriate land-use zoning in activity centre plans.

### 6.4.3 The Case of Woodgrove

The Toolern activity centre is intended to be the largest centre for the municipality, eventually growing to deliver regional scale services, including regional retailing. However, the scale and location of our residential development suggests that a regional retail offering will be viable at the established and growing centre at Woodgrove well before it is viable at Toolern. Further, the area of Melton west of the Outer Metropolitan Ring Road will ultimately be able to accommodate two regional shopping facilities, particularly taking into account the population growth in neighbouring Bacchus Marsh. (Melton to the west of the Outer Ring Road will have broadly 275,000 people at full development; combined with 25,000+ in Bacchus Marsh, this population will trigger the need for two regional retail centres each servicing 150,000 people.)

This Strategy therefore proposes to identify Woodgrove as a regional retail centre in order to encourage the provision of regional-level retailing for this part of the municipality as quickly as possible.

Toolern (refer Section 7) and Woodgrove will be 6 km apart but this situation of having adjacent major centres with different roles is common throughout suburban Melbourne – Footscray and Highpoint, Box Hill and Doncaster Hill, and Northland and Preston, for example.

### 6.4.4 The Case of Burnside

Caroline Springs is presently the nominated Activity Centre for East Melton and has developed to provide a small sub-regional retail offering and a substantial non-retail service. It is central to its catchment which would be broadly 50,000 people at full development, bearing in mind the location of the nearby existing and planned large activity centres.

The Burnside site on the corner of Westwood Drive and the Western Highway has 4.5 ha of vacant land zoned Commercial 1 (and a further 7 ha zoned Mixed Use) adjacent to the existing shopping centre. Whilst the centre is presently designated a neighbourhood activity centre it does have surrounding uses that provide sub-regional services including two major hardware outlets and a growing bulky goods precinct.

A Panel hearing evidence on a previous attempt to expand Burnside rejected the proposal on the grounds that it was not justified by the economic evidence. However, the new zoning regime has done away with floorspace caps and the owners now do not need a permit for retail or office uses on the land (although permits for buildings and works are still required). The area of vacant Commercial land is sufficient to accommodate a DDS, a supermarket and further specialty shops.

Given this, it is prudent to nominate Burnside as an Activity Centre and for Council to influence the design to produce the best outcome for residents and centre users (including maximising non-retail employment uses, ensuring connectivity with surrounding parts of the centre, encouraging sensible location of any dwellings on the site, and developing

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a pedestrian friendly approach to internal circulation and external access).

At full development, Burnside and Caroline Springs would share a catchment of around 60,000 to 70,000 people. This would be sufficient to support small sub-regional retail facilities at each centre (that is, a single DDS, two full line supermarkets and specialty stores). Burnside could also host a more extensive bulky goods offering because of its location on the Western Highway; it could also accommodate specialist services for the adjoining industrial area to the south of the site. Caroline Springs would be likely to continue to host a strong business services sector since it is now an established office location.

Further expansion of commercially zoned land at Burnside would not be warranted by foreseeable demand.

#### 6.4.5 The Case of Hopkins Road

Hopkins Road is an Activity Centre suggested in the Growth Corridor Plan to be located in the Mt Atkinson PSP area. The development strategy for the Mt Atkinson PSP (the area in the south east quadrant of the intersection of the Outer Metropolitan Ring Road and the Western Freeway) has yet to be commenced. Presently, the West Growth Corridor Plan indicates that this area will be a mix of industrial and business with some residential. However, any residential community here would be cut off from other housing areas.

If there is to be some housing in this precinct, then the residents will require a commercial service node with appropriate retailing and local services. Such an activity centre would also provide services to the surrounding businesses and could include a significant wholesale and office component.

Should a residential precinct not be created in this location, a service node will still be required to provide lunchtime services and wholesale and business services to the surrounding employment precinct.

The size of the centre should be commensurate with the expected population in the neighbourhood around the area with some allowance for businesses to service the industrial area. It is unlikely that the residential catchment will be sufficient for a sub-regional centre and would more likely be a neighbourhood centre. These issues will be resolved through the PSP process.

## 6.5 Activity Centres Proposed

The Activity Centres for Melton will be:

- Burnside (promoted from a Neighbourhood Centre currently)
  - Caroline Springs Town Centre
  - Hopkins Road - although the retail role of this centre is likely to be providing services for a relatively small residential
-

neighbourhood, if any, whilst providing more extensive commercial services for surrounding employment activities

- Melton Town Centre – although this is not expected to accommodate a strong sub-regional retail offering it does provide specialist retailing and a wide variety of services such as entertainment, health, community and municipal services, and wholesaling
- Plumpton Town Centre - as proposed in the Growth Corridor Plan
- Rockbank Town Centre - as proposed in the Growth Corridor Plan
- Rockbank North Town Centre - as proposed in the approved Rockbank North PSP
- Woodgrove - providing regional level retail services as soon as possible

## **6.6 Further Recommendations for Activity Centres**

### **Burnside**

1. Redesignate Burnside as an Activity Centre with a sub-regional retail role
2. Develop a structure plan with land-owners to address zoning issues and to maximise non-retail employment uses, ensure connectivity with surrounding parts of the centre, encourage sensible location of any dwellings on the site, and develop a pedestrian friendly approach to internal circulation and external access

### **Caroline Springs Town Centre**

1. Review the existing zoning and its effects on the competitiveness of this centre
2. Support a future structure planning process that reflects the emerging commercial realities for the centre and which plans to preserve and improve the high quality urban design of the centre

### **Hopkins Road**

1. Ensure that the retail provision at Hopkins Road is appropriately scaled for the residential and employment catchment of the centre once this is known through the PSP process

### **Melton Town Centre**

1. Assist the formation of a traders' group for the Melton Town centre
2. Review the existing High Street structure plan in the light of changes to competitive conditions and zoning

### **Woodgrove**

1. Prepare a structure plan for the centre, working with the landholders to ensure that the centre can deliver a regional retail service as quickly as possible and identifying opportunities for non-retail activity as well as urban design improvements particularly focusing on accessibility, circulation and open space
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## 7 Metropolitan Activity Centre

The Metropolitan Activity Centre (MAC) at Toolern will become the key regional centre for the Melton community and the pinnacle of the activity centre network in the municipality.

Metropolitan Activity Centres are intended to have the broadest mix of uses and to be a location for many higher order activities that deliver services to the whole region. These could include major health services, further and higher educational institutions, substantial recreation and entertainment venues and hotels, a wide range of dining options, corporate and government regional headquarters, as well as major retailers - department stores, discount department stores, supermarkets and the widest range of specialty shops. In this regard it is important that there be no unnecessary limit on the capacity of the centre to accommodate retailing. The Urban Design Framework nominates a limit of 30,000 sq m of retail floorspace but this is unlikely to be sufficient to cater for the population at full development. Planning instruments should reflect the policy aim to create a regional level retail offering and will be changed to reflect this by removing the cap on retail floorspace.

The MAC at Toolern will be connected to the principal public transport network via the railway station and will be the focus of regional and sub-regional roads and trails.

The design of Toolern MAC will reflect the highest aspirations of the regional community and be a showcase for innovative design.

Subject to design constraints and the municipal housing strategy, Toolern MAC will also be the focus of higher density housing in order to improve access to services for a wide variety of households but particularly small households. The housing in and around MACs should be subject to the same design considerations as the rest of the urban form.

**Figure 4: Toolern Main Street (from the Urban Design Framework)**





## 8 Other Centres

Every Melton resident will be serviced by a Neighbourhood, Activity and/or Metropolitan Centre. However, other centres will also be appropriate in some circumstances.

### 8.1 Local Centres

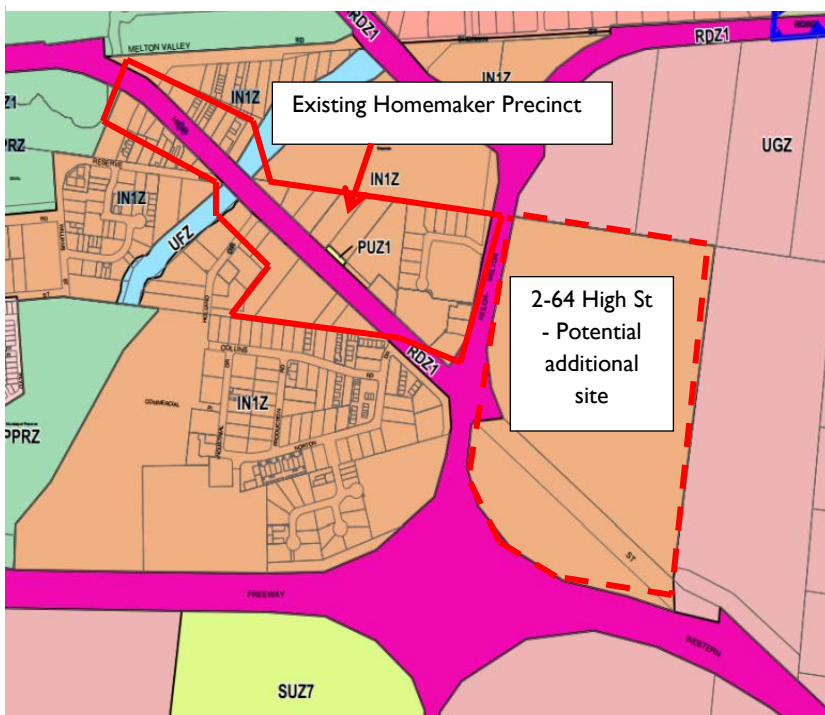
Local Centres include corner stores and small groups of shops that provide top-up groceries and local services such as hairdressing. Local centres are a useful addition to the activity centre network in areas that are beyond a comfortable walk to the nearest Neighbourhood or larger centre. The size of a Local Centre will vary with the population to be served but should be less than 1,000 sq m and would more typically be in the range of 300 to 800 sq m.

Local Centres should be located on collector roads and ideally should connect to local walking trails.

### 8.2 Melton Homemaker Precinct

The Melton Homemaker Precinct at the corner of the Melton Highway and High Street has emerged as a bulky goods centre taking up the highway frontage of the surrounding light industrial area. This area provides a useful service in an accessible location and further growth and consolidation should be expected here.

Figure 5: Zoning around Melton Homemaker Precinct




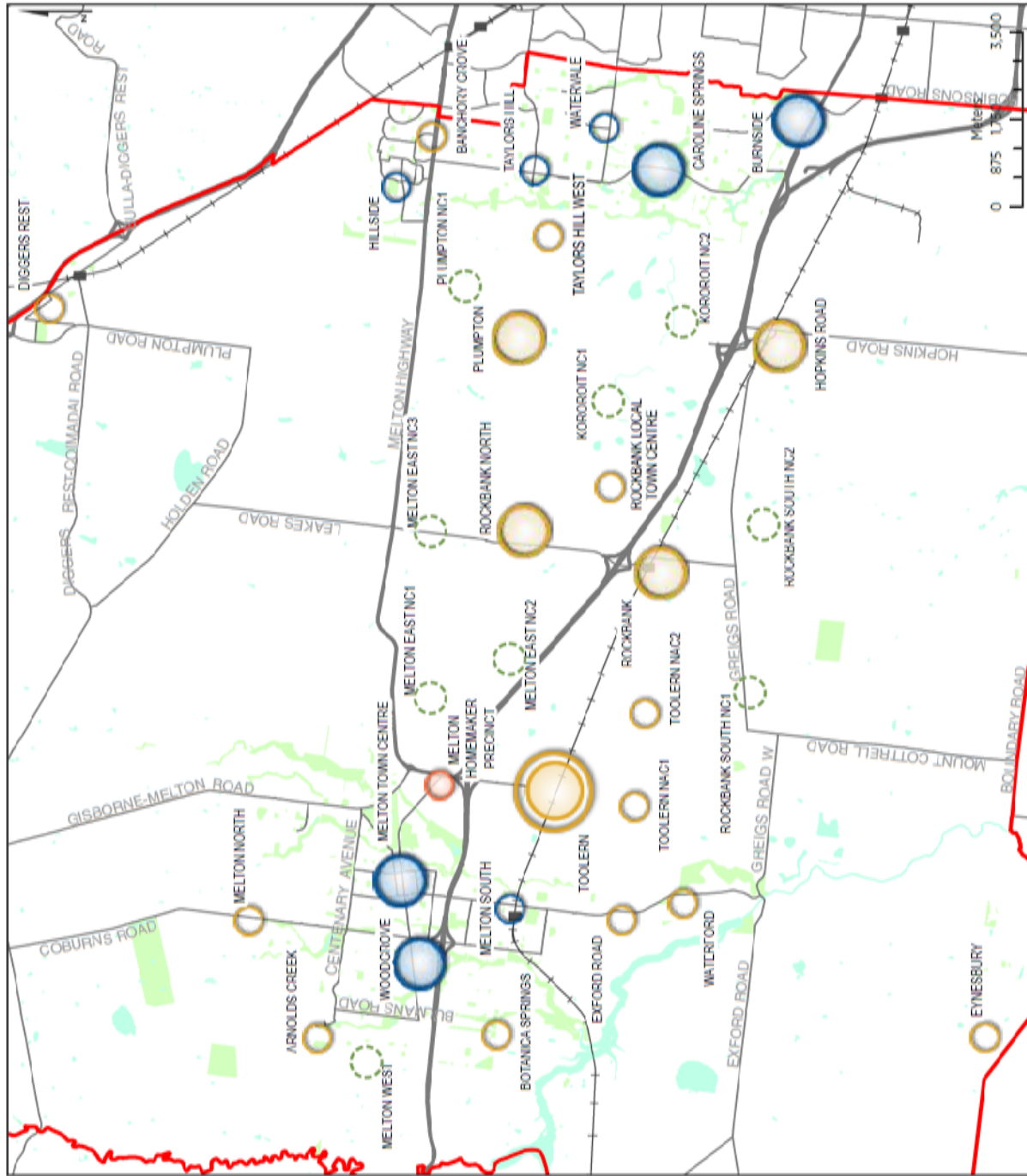
A large area of land at 2-64 High Street Melton has previously been zoned for industrial purposes on the east side of the Melton Highway (see Figure 6). This site will form an important component of the surrounding community and should be planned in conjunction with the Melton East Precinct Structure Plan. However, this will be some years away as will the development of alternative bulky goods precincts adjacent to the Toolern MAC. Some further development of bulky goods outlets may be warranted here in the short term.

Any development of the site at 2-64 High Street should recognise its importance as the entrance to the Melton township in design terms and should preserve opportunities for connections through to Melton East. Given the existing and proposed hierarchy of activity centres, the site should not be rezoned to allow conventional retail development.





<b>FINAL PROPOSED ACTIVITY CENTRE NETWORK</b>	 METROPOLITAN ACTIVITY CENTRE (PLANNED)
	 ACTIVITY CENTRE (EXISTING)
 ACTIVITY CENTRE (PLANNED)	
 NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE (EXISTING)	
 NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE (PLANNED)	
 NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE* (PROPOSED)	
 BULKY GOODS PRECINCT (EXISTING)	
 MELTON BOUNDARY	
*Precise locations to be determined through future precinct structure planning processes	
CLIENT: Melton City Council PROJECT: Activity Centre Strategy DATE: March 2014 SCALE: 1:105,000@A4 	



## 10 Framework for Decision-Making

This Strategy provides a framework for the development of activity centres throughout the municipality. There is a strong expectation that retail and other appropriate commercial and community activities will be located within one of the nominated centres.

Exceptions to this rule could include:

1. Introduction of local activity centres into areas of need which are beyond a reasonable walk to the nearest Neighbourhood Centre or larger centre. Any such local activity centres should be located on a collector road, preferably at the confluence of local trails. They should generally provide retail space in the range of 300 to 800 sqm .
2. Minor retail provision associated with rural or tourism enterprises, where such provision amounts to no more than that of a local centre.
3. Expansion of an existing activity centre through rezoning to enable a higher level of retail provision. This could be required as a result of higher than expected population growth in a particular catchment or where the network needs to be adjusted in order to better meet resident needs. Any such proposal for expansion would need to be accompanied by documentary justification commensurate with the scale of the expansion and with any change of role envisaged for the centre. A minor expansion to allow a couple of new specialty stores in a centre which is constrained would require a low level of justification. A proposed expansion that would enable over 1,000 sq m in additional specialty retail floorspace (or 3,000 sq m of additional bulky goods floorspace in a centre that already accommodates bulky goods retailing) or which enabled the development of a significant store such as a major supermarket or discount department store would require a much higher level of justification (at Council's discretion). Such justification would need to identify the net community benefit of the proposal including:
  - Identification of the catchment to be served and how this affects the catchment of surrounding centres
  - Retail supply and demand analysis
  - Assessment of economic impact on other centres in the network and how this will affect their expected role
  - Assessment of net social and employment changes brought about by the proposal
4. Introduction of a new activity centre (other than a local centre) or bulky goods precinct into the network in areas where there has been higher than expected population growth or where the network needs to be adjusted in order to better meet resident needs. Land for any such new centre would need to be rezoned and the proposal justified in detail. In addition to the detailed design of the proposed new centre and its key occupants, the proposal should contain an assessment of net community benefit comprising:

**There is a strong expectation that retail activity will be located within one of the nominated centres.**

- Identification of the catchment to be served and how this affects the catchment of surrounding centres
- Retail supply and demand analysis
- Assessment of economic impact on other centres in the network and how this will affect their expected role
- Assessment of net social and employment benefits of the proposal

## 11 Planning for Individual Centres

Discussion of individual existing centres is provided in the Appendix to the Background report. Recommendations for planning of centres are collected here.

### 11.1 Structure Planning Requirements

Structure Plans are required for all new centres and are provided as part of Precinct Structure Plans and the development approvals process.

Council will continue its extensive input to the PSP process in order to achieve its overall objectives for activity centres. However, some existing centres may also benefit from more detailed planning to ensure that they remain up-to-date and continue to meet the needs of their catchment. **Melton Town Centre** already has a structure plan – the High Street Town Centre Structure Plan (Shire of Melton, 2007). This plan may require updating in order to take account of new residential zoning, the development of the new library and changes in the competitive environment.

Other centres that would benefit from having a structure plan are:

- **Burnside** – to guide the evolution of Burnside to Activity Centre status; to ensure that the activities in various land-ownerships are integrated; and to ensure that retail, non-retail and housing uses are appropriately located and connected
- **Caroline Springs** – to update the existing Masterplan as necessary in any translation of uses from a Comprehensive Development Zone to regular zoning
- **Melton South** – to provide a plan for improvements to the function and design of this centre, responding to community concerns about attractiveness and safety and to make the most of the railway station and transport connections
- **Woodgrove** – to guide the development of this centre towards a regional retail centre whilst improving the provision of non-retail functions, accessibility to and through the centre, and urban design outcomes

Of these, Melton South is a priority for Council with potential for substantial improvements in service for residents of this area through a coordinated investment regime including rail authorities, land-holders and Council.

### 11.2 Zoning Recommendations

During the evolution of this Strategy, a number of proposals have been made for changes to the land-use zoning.

- **Burnside** – given that the existing quantum of zoned land is more than sufficient to meet the retail demand no change is recommended to the existing land-use zoning. Council may

consider changes to the location of the zones if this results in a significantly better urban design outcome

- **Caroline Springs** –consideration should be given to translating the existing Comprehensive Development Zone to more regular Commercial and other zones.
- **Melton Homemaker Precinct** – the parcel of land at 2-64 High Street Melton is adjacent to the existing bulky goods precinct and can be seen as a logical extension of it. Ideally, the use of the land would be planned in conjunction with the PSP for Melton East, although this may be some time in the future. In the meantime, while permits may be granted for bulky goods outlets, the land should not be rezoned in order to prevent a major new activity centre on the site.

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## 12 Assistance to Traders

Council recognises that effective traders and willing land-holders are required to generate employment in activity centres; and that small businesses are often the cornerstone of activity centres. Direct assistance from Council, especially to small businesses, may be appropriate in some instances. Council already provides programs that are open to all businesses in the municipality including access to training, networking, buy local campaigns, business expos and awards. The following recommendations are aimed specifically at traders.

### 12.1 Traders' Groups

Traders' groups often represent the interests of particular activity centres to Council and the wider world, especially in centres with many land-owners. They are especially useful in:

- working together with Council on streetscape design and implementation of urban design frameworks, development plans and structure plans
- policing standards of cleanliness, reporting vandalism and noting repeated parking infringements
- working together to improve trader skills (such as stock control, window display, staff management, business planning etc)
- working together to promote the centre, from the traditional Christmas lights, to paid advertising and online marketing strategies

Funds are occasionally available from State government to provide assistance to traders groups.

Whilst there is a municipal-wide Chamber of Commerce, there are presently no centres in Melton which have an active traders' group. This is understandable in single-owner centres where it is in the interests of the centre owner to look after the individual traders (up to a point). However, multi-owner centres such as Melton Town Centre and Melton South may benefit from having a traders' group, particularly where capital funds are to be expended on centre improvements. These centres have relatively low vacancy rates presently; however, this may change with the opening of the next stage of the Woodgrove centre and as more neighbourhood activity centres are developed around the Melton township.

Council will investigate the role it can play in the development of traders' groups as a means of creating effective input to capital works schemes and to improve the success of local businesses. This support could include a small outlay of funds for establishment costs. .

### 12.2 Special Rate Schemes

In the future, special rate schemes may be viable to generate funds from traders to support such activities as centre business planning, marketing schemes, centre managers and capital works. The presence of an active

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traders' group would be a prerequisite for development of a special rate scheme.

### **12.3 Online and Social Media Marketing**

Online trading and marketing will generate an increasing share of revenues for retailers and other service providers. There is a need for activity centre managers to ensure that their centre takes advantage of this emerging channel to reach new and existing customers.

Council will link to and promote activity centre sites through its own online information and marketing activities. It may also offer services to improve the online presence of existing centres in conjunction with traders' groups.

### **12.4 Council Presence in Centres**

Council is a major employer in the municipality. Purchasing by Council and its staff supports a wide variety of wholesalers, business services, retailers and lunchtime services. This support is maximised where Council facilities are within centres.

Wherever possible, Council will place its facilities within or adjacent to activity centres. It will also encourage other public services to locate their planned facilities within appropriate centres.

Council will market the activity centres of the municipality as excellent locations for investment by State and Commonwealth Government.

In cases where long-term vacancies appear in centres as a result of structural adjustment, Council will encourage the use of vacant shop units for short-term community and cultural activities, pop-up-shops and artists workshops.



## 13 Planning Implementation

One of the key means of implementing the City of Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy will be through changes to the Melton Planning Scheme. Changes that may be required include amendment to the existing Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and / or Local Planning Policies, or changes to existing zoning or overlay controls.

Given that Council is currently in the process of reviewing its MSS, and the recently released metropolitan strategy, Plan Melbourne, has indicated that some changes to the preferred structure of MSSs can be anticipated, this chapter does not provide guidance on specific changes to the existing clauses of the Melton Planning Scheme. Rather, it provides a structure and direction for how the aims of the Strategy should be considered in any revised MSS. It also provides direction regarding other changes that may be required to existing zoning or overlay controls.

### 13.1 Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)

The following is the recommended structure for inclusion of the recommendations of this strategy within any revised MSS. It provides broad direction and the wording identified is intended to be indicative only. Numbering of clauses is also indicative only. Where possible phrasing should be consistent with the City of Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy, however, the focus must be on the use of plain and unambiguous language.

#### **CLAUSE 21.07 ACTIVITY CENTRES AND RETAIL PROVISION**

Wording to indicate that this clause is intended to apply Clauses 11.01 'Activity Centres' and 17.01 'Commercial' of the State Planning Policy Framework within the Melton context.

#### **Clause 21.07-1: activity centre network**

##### **Overview**

A summary of the role of activity centres and list of key issues affecting activity centres within Melton, with particular reference to the relationship between growth areas and established areas.

##### **Objective 1:**

**To identify and support a network and hierarchy of activity centres.**

##### **Strategies**

The strategies should identify:

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- The need to provide easy access to a range of centres to meet the retail, commercial, community and other services and facilities to meet the needs of the Melton community
- The existence of a hierarchy with reference to Table 2 and Figure 7 showing existing centre hierarchy
- The need to facilitate staged development (i.e. why Woodgrove needs to develop now and the importance of allowing centres to expand over time)
- The need to have reference to residential catchments in considering the potential for new or expanded centres (reference to Figure 3 identifying catchments for additional centres)
- The need to set floorspace caps for Neighbourhood Centres within growth areas to ensure equitable and sustainable access to goods and services (refer Table 1)
- The need to remove floorspace caps from larger centres in order to maximise employment outcomes
- When additional centres beyond those identified on Figure 7 could be added to the hierarchy

### **Objective 2:**

**To ensure centres in the City of Melton develop as genuine mixed use areas.**

#### Strategies

Strategies should:

- Identify the need to ensure that centres contain not only retail components but also residential, entertainment and community uses and other commercial opportunities
- Include requirements for the integration of residential components as part of any new centre development
- Support the establishment of medium and higher density housing of an appropriate scale in and adjoining other centres
- Include policy that no cap is to be set on non-retail uses to encourage employment uses, diverse commercial opportunities and small business to establish in activity centres

### **Objective 3:**

**To ensure residents in the City of Melton have access to a range of fresh food and convenience goods and services within a reasonable distance of their homes (and preferably within walking distance).**

#### Strategies

Strategies should include:

- Recognition of the importance of neighbourhood centres and the need for centres within future PSPs to consider the catchments identified in Figure 3
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- The need to set floorspace caps to manage distribution of supermarket based centres to ensure that a network remains feasible
- Support for other retail or other opportunities which increase local access to fresh produce
- Support for the introduction of local activity centres of generally no more than 300sqm (retail) on collector roads in areas of need which are beyond a reasonable walk to a centre identified in the existing hierarchy

#### **Objective 4:**

**To ensure appropriate provision of bulky goods retail opportunities.**

##### Strategies

Strategies should:

- Clearly identify the existing and planned Activity Centres and Melton Homemaker Precinct as the preferred locations for bulky good retailing
- Clearly identify future locations (i.e. expansion of the Melton Homemaker Precinct, adjoining activity centres)
- Identify the need to protect land to allow for this future development
- Identify the need to consider the design outcomes in bulky goods areas where they have highly visible road frontages
- Establish parameters for consideration of additional areas of bulky goods retailing

#### **Objective 5:**

**To ensure centres have access to adequate land.**

##### Strategies

Strategies should:

- Clearly identify the existing hierarchy and anticipated land required at full capacity
- Monitor and review the zoning of land and population figures to ensure commercial land availability responds to population growth
- Identify the parameters for expansion of centres
- Aspire to ensure that development of centres is on land within multiple parcels to encourage diversity

#### **Objective 6:**

**To recognise other areas of economic importance.**

##### Strategies

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Strategies should:

- Detail allowable exceptions to the provision of retail floorspace outside activity centres where it supports an identified use of the land with economic or employment benefits for the municipality
- Identify in what circumstances that retail will be supported outside activity centre (such as that associated with tourism or rural activity, for example)

### **Implementation**

- Clearly outline the requirement for a **retail analysis where floorspace beyond indicative caps** is proposed. This should include a comprehensive retail analysis that identifies the catchment of the centre and surrounding centres and demonstrates that the growth within the catchment has been above that anticipated by the Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy (2014) and that the establishment of additional retail floorspace will not compromise the establishment of any centres identified within this clause.
- Document **decision criteria for additional centres or retail proposals** outside of identified activity centres.

### **Additional actions**

This should document additional work to be undertaken by Council related to the above objectives such as monitoring and review, resolution of the scale of residential development anticipated in and around existing centres and developing bulky good design guidelines.

### **Reference documents**

- The Melton Retail and Activity Centres Strategy (2014)
- Other relevant reference documents such as the GAA local town centre design guidelines, activity centre design guidelines and relevant design guidelines for bulky good areas etc

### **Clause 21.07-2: activity centre design**

This section of the MSS should include design objectives and aspirations for all centres in Melton.

#### **Objective 7:**

**To ensure activity centres in the City of Melton provide high quality urban environments.**

#### Strategies

Strategies should include (but should not be limited to) policy such as:

- Ensuring provision of range of open spaces within any activity centre including central gathering spaces.
  - Requiring activity frontage in core retail areas and employ Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.
  - Requiring highly permeable and legible street and pedestrian path networks.
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- Identifying landmark building sites and specification of appropriate design responses.
- Prioritising pedestrian movements and amenity.
- Requiring appropriate treatments at the transition between commercial and residential uses.
- Locating larger format goods retailing to the periphery of centres.
- Providing opportunities for upper level residential or office space to increase vibrancy.
- Encouraging medium density housing and home office opportunities at the periphery of centres.
- Carefully considering the design and siting of pad sites.
- Outlining preferred design responses to advertising signage in relation to size and location.

### **Objective 8:**

**To ensure activity centres in City of Melton are accessible to all.**

#### Strategies

Strategies should include (but should not be limited to) policies such as:

- Requiring any new local centres to be located on connector roads.
- Requiring consideration of the availability of public transport in any assessment of activity centre development.
- Requiring the integration of pedestrian and cycle paths with any new centres, including connections to wider networks and clear signage and lighting.
- Not supporting the establishment of any new centre where access by means other than private vehicle will be difficult.
- Ensuring principles of universal access are considered in any plan or proposal for development in Melton's activity centres.

#### **Implementation**

- Prepare and implement urban design frameworks or town centre plans for all new centres.
- Undertake structure plans for all existing Activity Centres, and as a priority for the Melton South Neighbourhood Centre.
- Update existing Structure Plans for Woodgrove (2007) and the Melton High Street (2007).

#### **Reference documents**

- Relevant reference documents such as the GAA local town centre design guide, and relevant design guidelines for bulky good areas etc.

#### **Clause 21.07-3: specific activity centres**

This should include the specific objectives and strategies for particular centres. The key policy from any centre specific plans should be included within this clause and any relevant structure plans or urban design frameworks would be included as reference documents.

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### **Toolern**

The overall aspirations for the Toolern Metropolitan Activity Centre should be identified as an objective. Relevant strategies from the PSP and UDF for the centre should be included as strategies. Aims of the Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy, such as the emphasis on higher density housing and the location of major new social infrastructure and government investment should also be included.

### **Woodgrove**

The overall aspirations for the Woodgrove Activity Centre should be identified as an objective, with particular reference to its regional role in relation to retail activity. Relevant strategies from the existing and any future Structure Plan for the centre should be included as strategies.

### **Melton Town Centre**

The overall aspirations for the Melton Town Centre should be identified as an objective, with particular reference to its relationship to Woodgrove and the diversity of uses, and the importance of public spaces and community facilities within the centre. Relevant strategies from the existing and any future Structure Plan for the centre should be included in this section.

### **Caroline Springs**

The overall aspirations for the Caroline Springs Activity Centre should be identified as an objective, with particular reference to its key role as the centre for the eastern parts of Melton and the need to support its on-going development. Reference should also be made to the need to transition the centre from the Comprehensive Development Zone and any relevant strategies from the development plan and any future Structure Plan for the centre should be included as strategies.

### **Burnside**

The overall aspirations for the Burnside Activity Centre should be identified as an objective, including the recognition of this centre as having capacity to grow significantly as a mixed use centre. It will also be important that key objectives for the centre in terms of integrating activities and promoting pedestrian access and connections be identified. Other objectives around the integration of higher density housing and the need for higher quality design outcomes, particularly having regard to the highly visible location of the centre should also be included within this section of the clause. Relevant strategies from the existing and any future Structure Plan for the centre should be included as strategies in this section.

### **Hopkins Road**

The overall aspirations for the Hopkins Road Activity Centre should be identified as an objective, with particular reference to the role of the centre as a supporting centre for employment activity and the need for

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any retail provision to be scaled appropriately to service proposed population and local needs for workers and businesses.

### **Melton South**

The overall aspirations for the Melton South Neighbourhood Centre should be identified as an objective, with reference to the important role of this centre given the train station and the extensive community and educational facilities in the area, and the potential renewal opportunities, particular having regard to land around the station. Issues around the connectivity of the centre and the integration of higher density housing to increase activity and perception of safety should also be referenced. Relevant strategies from any future Structure Plan for the centre should be included.

### **Implementation**

This should clearly identify what additional work needs to be done in relation to the different centres. As a start the following should be identified:

- Remove floorspace caps for Toolern Metropolitan Activity Centre.
- Review and update the Woodgrove Structure Plan (2007).
- Review and update the Melton Town Centre Structure Plan (2007).
- Review the Masterplan for the Caroline Springs Town Centre and rezone land from the Comprehensive Development Zone.
- Undertake a Structure Plan for the Burnside Activity Centre.
- Undertake a Structure Plan for the Melton South Neighbourhood Centre.

### **Reference documents**

This should include the City of Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy, but also relevant PSPs where they contain design frameworks or particular direction regarding centres, and any relevant adopted Structure Plans, Urban Design Frameworks etc.

## **13.2 Zoning and Overlays**

### **13.2.1 Rezoning of Land**

No specific rezoning is identified as part of this strategy although there may be a future need for rezoning of land within the following centres. However, the particular nature of this rezoning and the specific parcels will need to be defined through a structure planning or other process, having regard to the following directions:

- **Caroline Springs:** To ensure the centre continues to develop in a manner consistent with State and local planning policy, a review of the existing masterplan should be undertaken for this centre, with the aim of translating the existing Comprehensive Development Zone to the broader suite of commercial and other zones.
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- **Burnside:** Following a structure planning process, consideration will need to be given to the appropriate mix of zoning within this area to facilitate identified design outcomes, and having regard to the appropriate mix of uses for an Activity Centre.
- **Melton Town Centre:** Following a structure planning process, consideration will need to be given to the appropriate mix of zoning within this area to facilitate identified outcomes, having regard to the appropriate mix of uses for an Activity Centre.
- **Melton South:** Following a structure planning process, consideration will need to be given to the appropriate mix of zoning within this area to facilitate the land use and design outcomes sought by that plan.

### 13.2.2 Zone Schedules

While no rezoning is proposed, the following schedules contain identification of floorspace permit triggers (caps) which do not align precisely with the recommendations of the Strategy:

- Clause 37.02, Schedule 1 - Caroline Springs Town Centre Area
- Clause 37.07, Schedule 1 - Taylors Hill West Precinct Structure Plan
- Clause 37.07, Schedule 2 - Melton North Precinct Structure Plan
- Clause 37.07, Schedule 3 - Toolern Precinct Structure Plan
- Clause 37.07, Schedule 4 - Rockbank North Precinct Structure Plan
- Clause 37.07, Schedule 5 - Diggers Rest Precinct Structure Plan

Clause 37.02, Schedule 1 identifies a retail cap of 22,000sqm for Caroline Springs. The Strategy supports the removal of this cap to ensure the centre remains competitive with other centres in the established areas of Melton which are no longer subject to floorspace caps under recent changes to the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs). However, this cap should be removed as part of the implementation of the new suite of commercial zones, and so no additional action is required.

The recent changes to the VPPs have retained the ability to provide caps within growth areas and the Strategy makes recommendations in regard to this. The table below identifies the differences between the floorspace caps recommended for centres by the Strategy and the caps currently identified in the relevant schedules.



**Table 3: Differences in floorspace caps**

Proposed centre	PSP/UGZ Schedule	Current identified cap	Proposed new cap
Toolern	Toolern (UGZ schedule 3)	30,000sqm	No cap for centre overall – noting that retention of existing cap identified in table 5 should remain
Rockbank North (referred to as Rockbank Local Town Centre in the Strategy)	Rockbank North (UGZ schedule 4)	36,500sqm	No cap for centre
Melton North	Melton North (UGZ schedule 2)	5,000sqm	11,000sqm
Exford Road (referred to in the schedule as Exford Road north)	Toolern (UGZ schedule 3)	4,000sqm	7,500sqm
Waterford (referred to in the schedule as Exford Road south)	Toolern (UGZ schedule 3)	4,000sqm	4,000sqm
Ferris Road (referred to in the Strategy as Toolern NCI)	Toolern (UGZ schedule 3)	4,000sqm	7,500sqm
Rockbank North	Rockbank North (UGZ schedule 4)	5,700sqm	7,000sqm
Diggers Rest	Diggers Rest (UGZ schedule 5)	6,000sqm	8,000sqm

While consideration was given as to whether the existing caps should be retained as interim targets, the Strategy recommends that the relevant schedules to the UGZ be amended to reflect the ultimate floorspace caps identified by the Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy to provide flexibility for the market. The clear identification of the longer term capacity of each centre will ensure decisions on retail investment are made with an understanding of the anticipated size of all centres. Structure plans and design frameworks will guide the location of this floorspace.

The following changes to the existing schedules should also be considered:

#### Melton North UGZ schedule

- The extent of land to which the Commercial I Zone is to be determined by the relevant UDF required by the schedule. This should have regard to the indicative floorspace figures for the centre identified in Table 2.

#### Toolern UGZ schedule

- As with other areas, the extent of land to which the Commercial I Zone is to be determined by the relevant UDF required by the schedule. This should have regard to the indicative floorspace figures for the centre identified in Table 2. As noted above the

references within the schedule should be amended to ensure consistent naming of the centres.

- An alternative to the applied zone (currently Commercial I Zone) should also be considered in relation to land east of Ferris Street and north of the railway line to better reflect the proposed use of the land as identified by the Toolern Precinct Structure Plans.

#### Rockbank North UGZ schedule

- The schedule should be amended to ensure that the reference to a permit trigger for office floorspace above 100sqm does not apply to the Commercial I Zone, to encourage the development of mixed use centres.
- The reference to the need to address the Local Town Centre Concept Plan at 3.3 may need to be amended to provide more flexibility to reflect the increase in proposed floorspace identified in Table 2, given the concept plan will have been developed on the basis of a smaller centre.

#### Diggers Rest UGZ schedule

- The schedule should be amended to ensure that the reference to a permit trigger for office floorspace above 100sqm does not apply to the Commercial I Zone, to encourage the development of mixed use centres.
- The reference to the need to address the Local Town Centre Concept Plan at 3.3 may need to be amended to provide more flexibility to reflect the increase in proposed floorspace identified in Table 2, given the concept plan will have been developed on the basis of a smaller centre.

### 13.2.3 Incorporated Documents

Given that the PSPs associated with the different schedules to the UGZ are included within Clause 81.01 as incorporated documents, any inconsistencies between the proposed MSS, and amendments to the schedules to Clause 37.07 must be considered.

The current wording and requirements of the PSPs which apply to Toolern, Taylors Hill West and Melton North should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the changes identified through the Melton Retail and Activity Centre Strategy. However, the PSPs for Diggers Rest and Rockbank North are more prescriptive, both in their specification of maximum floorspace that must not be exceeded, as well as in the specific area allocated to accommodate the centre and the distribution of retail floorspace. Given that the scale of retail floorspace identified by this Strategy is more than that identified within the PSP, there is a need to either amend the Rockbank North and Diggers Rest PSPs to reflect this, or to ensure that the contradiction is acknowledged and addressed by any relevant policy.

In addition to the amendment of the cap in the UGZ schedule, a paragraph should be added to the relevant UGZ schedule to identify the difference between the caps and to clearly state that the cap contained within the UGZ schedule takes precedence over any cap identified within the incorporated document. This could be included under section 2.5 – Resolution of doubt.

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## 14 Monitoring and Review

Any strategy built on population and development forecasts will require monitoring and adjustment from time to time.

### 14.1 Housing and Population

A variety of statistical sources are available to monitor population and development including:

- ABS, Regional Population Australia, Census and other products
- DTPLI, Victoria in Future

Council will also conduct or commission its own small area population forecasts where necessary.

Council will monitor the dwelling pipeline from structure plans to planning approvals to building permits. It will also undertake research on changing household sizes and housing densities.

A population and housing monitor will be prepared on a regular basis, with implications for the Retail and Activity Centres Strategy (amongst other aspects of Council policy) highlighted.

### 14.2 Reporting

Annual reporting of progress on the action program of the Retail and Activity Centres Strategy will be led by Council's planning department, with input from the economic development team and others as required.

### 14.3 Review

A substantial review of the Retail and Activity Centres Strategy should be undertaken every 5-10 years so that the strategy can take into account changing data and keep up-to-date with industry trends. Particular events or emerging trends may trigger the need for ad-hoc reviews more frequently.

## 15 Council Action Program on Activity Centres

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Performance indicator</b>
<b>1</b>	Promote the Retail and Activity Centre Strategy to the community and key stakeholders	Conformity of development proposals to objectives in the Strategy
<b>2</b>	Incorporate the <i>Retail and Activity Centres Strategy</i> into the Melton Planning Scheme as detailed in the Planning Implementation section of this report	Successful planning scheme amendment to incorporate the Retail and Activity Centres Strategy into the Planning Scheme
<b>3</b>	With land-holders, update the Structure Plan for Melton Town Centre and undertake the preparation of structure plans for Burnside, Melton South and Woodgrove activity centres, with Melton South as the priority	Incorporation of structure plans into the Melton Planning Scheme
<b>4</b>	Work with landholders, State Government and other stakeholders to develop Toolern MAC as a key investment destination for the region	Development of major, well-regarded regional service centre at Toolern
<b>5</b>	Investigate the ways in which Council can assist in the formation of traders' organisations in relevant centres	Development of traders' organisations in appropriate centres
<b>6</b>	Update Council's website to promote the activity centres of the municipality, providing assistance for online and social media marketing to centres where necessary	External recognition of innovation in online marketing of activity centres
<b>7</b>	Ensure that new Council facilities are appropriately located within or adjacent to activity centres	All Council facilities that can be located in activity centres are so located
<b>8</b>	Promote centres as a location for investment by other public agencies	In-centre investment by public agencies
<b>9</b>	Consider the need and/or opportunities for special rate schemes, trader training and strategies to reduce vacant spaces and improve vibrancy should the need arise	Development and implementation of strategies as required
<b>10</b>	Undertake monitoring of population change and retail demand and report to Council on progress of the action program for this strategy, with a substantial review of activity centres strategy every 5-10 years	Development monitor and annual reporting of progress on this action plan; revised strategy every 5-10 years

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