

Danaster Hill Strategy 2021

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MacroPlan

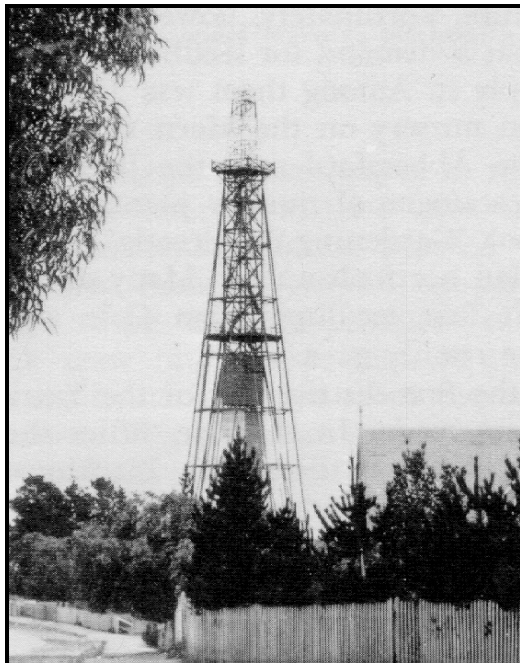


November 2000

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The Alfred Hummel Tower (Built in 1879)



Doncaster Hill Strategy

A pressing issue facing the community of Manningham is resolution of an area referred to as Doncaster Hill. Three strategic issues are being considered:

- Should the Manningham City Council take a pro-active approach in planning for this precinct?
- If not what are the consequences?
- If so what strategic options are available?

Map 1: Eastern Region – Manningham



Background

Since the 1980's, the Council has been considering the future pattern of development in the area generally described as the Doncaster Hill.

In 1994 the Council adopted a strategy for the Doncaster Activity Centre which, amongst other things, recommended maximum building heights of 3 to 4 levels. Since the adoption of the strategy, the Sovereign Point apartment buildings have been constructed in Williamsons Road, at a height ranging from 7 to 9 levels.

In this context and given that the new format Manningham Planning Scheme does not specifically address the pattern of land use and development in the precinct area it is timely to review strategies, particularly in relation to built form and the factors which influence it.

In the absence of strategic frameworks several high rise development approvals have occurred including a 14 storey proposal on the former Zerbes site, which now accommodates the high rise Sovereign Point and Sovereign Crest developments.

The current low level of amenity along Doncaster Road and Manningham Road, suggests that a 'no strategy' approach is unlikely to result in net community benefit. The Manningham City Council is now faced with resolving a number of issues:

- The expansion of Westfield Shoppingtown which is currently moving into detailed planning stages
- The significant reduction in traffic in the precinct due to the expansion of the eastern freeway
- Responding to a development applications for a high rise residential building with commercial uses at street level
- Providing certainty for residents and businesses located in and proximate to Doncaster Hill

Recommendations

The key strategy recommendations seek to develop an integrated urban village accommodating:

- Up to 6000 residents
- Up to 10,000 jobs
- Major new cultural facilities
- Major upgrading of Doncaster Road to become one of Melbourne's most prominent boulevards
- Active cafés, restaurants, clubs and entertainment are to be encouraged along Doncaster Road
- Strict adherence to ecologically sustainable development principles to develop a profile and positioning for the precinct
- Encouragement of a wide range of uses including:
 - education
 - medical
 - health
 - professional services to reduce the need to travel
- Acceptance that to achieve an integrated urban village:
 - increased residential density is essential
 - the increase in density will result in an increase in the height and scale of building
 - detailed planning is essential to protect surrounding residential amenity and to ensure high quality outcomes
- The introduction of new requirements for all new buildings to ensure that the precinct is not only sustainable but also smart
- A zone of transition around the precinct to protect residential amenity.

OUR OPPORTUNITY

The community of Manningham has the opportunity to become a key stakeholder in the development of Australia's first sustainable and smart urban village. This opportunity is available because of:

- Significant community need and demand for a more diverse range of housing
- Relatively high levels of housing affordability which makes redevelopment in this middle ring location possible
- The Doncaster Hill land form which provides some of the best views in Melbourne.

To realise this opportunity, a detailed business plan and implementation strategy will be required in addition to this strategy.

MOTIVATING FACTORS

Demand & Need for More Diverse Range of Housing

Manningham City Council commissioned MacroPlan Pty Ltd to undertake detailed market research as part of the preparation of its housing strategy. The 500 surveys of Manningham's residents (112,000 persons) revealed that:

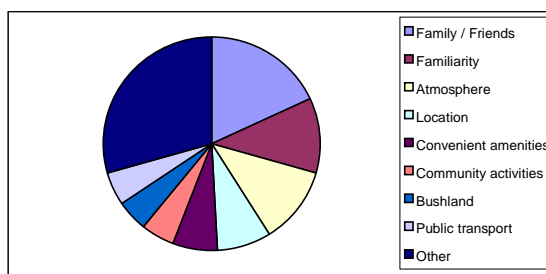
- 21.9 % of the households intended to move dwellings in the next five years
- In relation to the most important housing issues for Council to address, 24.1% indicated a desire for less unit development however, 13.5% indicated the most

important issue for Council was the need for more appropriate housing types including accommodation for the elderly and smaller housing options

- 12.8 % of those households intending to move in the short term (ie next 5 years) require medium or high rise multi unit development
- 52 % of these households moving in the next five years preferred to remain in Manningham. Only 20.3% intended to move to inner or central Melbourne
- The main reason for wishing to stay in Manningham were family / friends, familiarity and convenient amenities.

The Doncaster Hill strategy analysis has also recognised that the precinct will play a sub-regional housing role in addition to its regional shopping role because there are few if any precincts with similar attributes which could provide high quality, sustainable smart medium and high density residential life style opportunities, on the eastern side of Melbourne in a middle ring location.

Graph 1: Why do you have a Preference of Suburb?



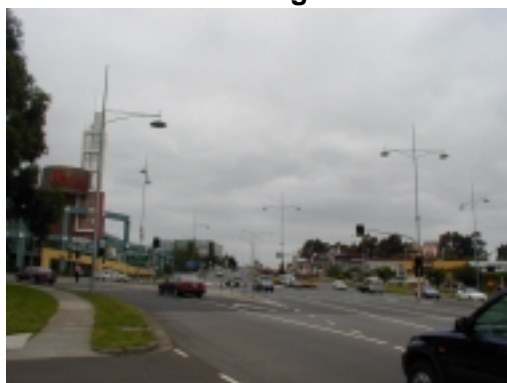
Source: MacroPlan Pty Ltd (2000) – survey sample 800

Precinct Amenity

The Doncaster Hill precinct has suffered from high levels of traffic, particularly trucks. As a result, many buildings (eg Westfield) have ‘turned their back’ on roads and many sites have become vacant as owners and tenants have struggled with ingress / egress or more recently, significant reduction in vehicle numbers. The intersection of Doncaster Road and Manningham Road could be described as a ‘traffic canyon’.

The pre-eminence of ‘traffic’ in development decisions is also primarily responsible for poor quality landscaping, narrow footpaths and generally a ‘people free’ poor quality public realm.

Doncaster & Manningham Road



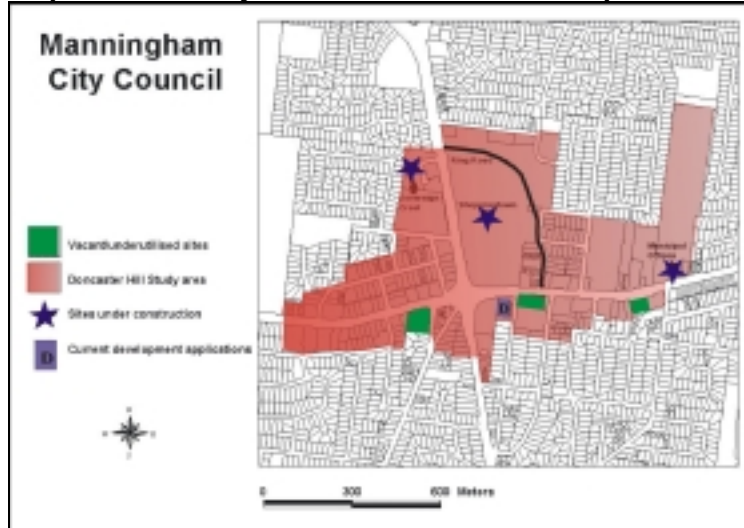
Emerging Developments

Despite low levels of amenity, significant reductions in traffic together with:

- The imminent next stage of Westfield Shoppingtown

- The development of Manningham City Council Function Centre and Gallery
- The current construction of the second Sovereign Crest 7 storey apartment block
- A number of vacant / under-utilised sites, has meant that a number of development proposals have been formally or informally canvassed with officers of the Manningham City Council. The challenge for Manningham City Council is to decide whether to assess each proposal individually 'on its merits' or whether to pursue a strategic approach as advocated in this report.

Map 3: Major Construction & Development Sites



MANNINGHAM'S POLICY FRAMEWORK

Council's Key Corporate Objectives

Council's Corporate Plan (2000-2003)

Council's 'blue print for the future', the Corporate Plan highlights the requirement to meet the current and future needs of the community and proposes that the people of Manningham "*share a sense of pride in a community that boasts its own distinct identity and in which everyone feels they belong*".

The plan seeks to sustain a "*diverse, high quality residential community complemented by a vibrant and prosperous business sector and supported by an expansive and well maintained physical infrastructure*".

The plan embraces the vision for a sustainable future detailed in GreenPrint and supported by the planning framework of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS).

Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)

Manningham's MSS outlines critical land-use issues, which are likely to challenge Manningham's future growth and sustainable development. The balance between the provision of appropriate housing and supporting infrastructure is highlighted as a key focus and challenge for Council.

"In meeting future housing needs, the challenge is to provide for residential development in appropriate locations, to reduce pressure for development in more sensitive areas, and in a manner that respects the residential character and amenity valued by existing residents".

The MSS highlights Council's proactive stance as a shaper and advocate of balancing conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development. Importantly, through the MSS, Manningham commits to and seeks to help create a healthy, vital community, environment and economy and aims to create a better place to live, visit and work for all our present and future citizens.

The on-going need to consolidate, promote and enhance activity centres along Doncaster Road is promoted.

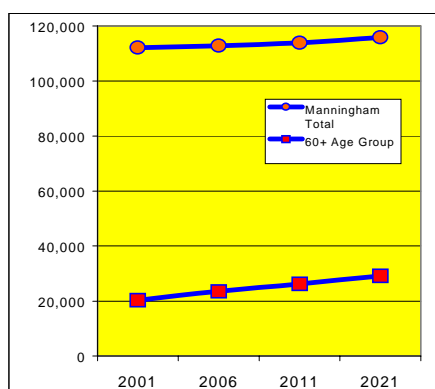
Strategies contained within the MSS relating to the Doncaster Activity Centre include:

“Encourage interesting contemporary architecture, and diverse and distinctive treatment of elevations that are of a high standard.

Ensure that development within the Doncaster Activity Centre is of high quality and takes into account the capacity of existing infrastructure. Promote mixed use development and development of a vibrant public realm”.

Other key objectives/strategies of the MSS include:

- Design and construction of buildings using Best Practice Environmental Design
- The reduction of reliance on private cars and enhancement of community mobility
- The provision of housing to cater for all stages of the lifecycle and changing family structure
- To ensure that people with a disability have the same level of access to buildings, services and facilities as any other person
- Maintenance of population levels sufficient to sustain high quality physical and community infrastructure.



Integrated Land-Use Planning Framework for Doncaster Hill

Doncaster Hill is an opportunity to showcase an integrated land-use planning and development framework, which challenges mainstream community planning and building design.

The project can build upon the vision and ecological sustainable principles set out in Council's Corporate Plan and MSS.

It is an opportunity to lead for example, the progression of development from its present conventional production of polluting, energy wasting and socially isolating buildings, towards an integrated development framework for Doncaster Hill, which facilitates equitable and supportive communities.

In partnership, Council, the community and the development sector can contribute towards the goal of a sustainable future via the development of an integrated land-use planning and development framework for Doncaster Hill. This approach avoids ad-hoc planning leading to unsupportable built environments and aims to achieve a preferred future for Doncaster Hill.

There are three documents incorporated into the Manningham Planning Scheme, which provide the current policy basis for the Doncaster Hill precinct:

- Manningham Centre Structure Plan, December 1996
- Doncaster Activity Centre Development Strategy – Final report, October 1990 and
- Doncaster Activity Centre Town Centre Project, April 1994.

These documents, in addition to the Doncaster Activity Centre Town Centre Design and Siting Guidelines (April 1994) provide the basis for two Design and Development Overlays, DDO1-Doncaster Road Strategy Area and DDO2- Manningham Centre Structure Plan, in the Scheme.

All of these documents are now dated and are in urgent need of review. In particular, these documents were all developed at the 'tail-end' of the commercial property boom of the early 1990's and are premised on considerable amounts of commercial floorspace underpinning development in the area.

Urban Planning Strategic Frameworks

The requirement for a strategic framework for Doncaster Hill is further supported by key policy gaps including:

- The development of a comprehensive new code for residential development and release of Draft ResCode which intends to replace the Good Design Guide for Medium Density Housing and VicCode 1
- The development of a Metropolitan Strategy which will address major development issues facing the metropolitan area and the State over the next 20-30 years (draft not expected to be released till late 2001).

Development of Manningham's Residential Strategy

Council's Residential Strategy is currently being developed. Key trends and issues identified include:

- An ageing population and increased demand for retirement accommodation
- Increased demand for high rise accommodation (the 'Crest product') was well received by the market
- The need to maintain and enhance residential amenity and neighbourhood character
- Changing demographics which lead to residents changing housing aspirations
- Lack of diversity of tenure and dwelling stock.

Current Situation Manningham Road



Doncaster Road



The preparation of the Doncaster Hill strategy can provide a planning framework, which facilitates the creation of an urban village, which responds to issues identified to date from the preparation of Manningham's Residential Strategy.

Ageing

A pivotal component of the Residential Strategy is the demographic analysis and population forecasts. Council's analysis supported by population projections prepared by MacroPlan (consultants) determined that there will be significant growth in numbers in the 55+ age group from 2006 onwards in Manningham and some adjoining municipalities. Specifically, MacroPlan estimate that by the year 2021 there will be an additional 41,390 people in the 55+ age group in Manningham, Whitehorse and Banyule.

This demographic presents Council with an opportunity to focus on planning for and developing an urban village for the 45+ age group, while not excluding other age groups.

Employment

A principal objective of Council is to support the role of the Doncaster Hill precinct as the regional activity centre. The strategy actively promotes the precinct as a 'place to do business'. Significant economic benefits will be generated through the ongoing implementation of the strategy. More local jobs are required to reduce the journey to work trips. For example, Manningham has the second highest proportion of employed persons in metropolitan Melbourne who travel to work by car, 68.3% of residents in comparison to the metropolitan average of 62.6%.

Community Viability

Based on the forecasts undertaken by MacroPlan, it is estimated conservatively that the Doncaster Hill precinct could not only be a primary policy tool necessary to maintain population levels, but it is likely to increase the current rate base by approximately \$5m per annum in real terms by 2021.

PRINCIPLES

The key principles derived from Manningham City Council policy framework are as follows:

- From a corporate perspective the Council wishes to show leadership
- The strong commitment to sustainability objectives sets the following agenda:
 - the need to travel should be reduced where possible this means that:
 - more local jobs are required to reduce the journey to work trips
 - housing opportunities are required to give at least part of the community the opportunity to walk to facilities and further to provide viable opportunities to reduce levels of car ownership.
- net energy use should be minimised:
 - buildings need to be designed and developed to minimise energy use and
 - the need to be designed and developed to minimise energy use and maximise energy production
- waste production should be minimised:
 - lifestyle opportunities which reduce waste (eg lawn clippings) and promote recycling should be made available
- The corporate approach to housing and ageing suggests that a basic principle, which should drive the strategy, is the need for housing diversity and new design parameters for the public and private realm to encourage independent living in later years.
- Urban Planning – Manningham City Council has a wide range of planning policies, which are relevant to the Doncaster Hill Precinct. These include:
 - design and development policy
 - accommodation premises policy
 - eating and entertainment premises policy
 - advertising signs policy
 - access for disabled people policy.
- Lifestyle / Art / Culture – Manningham City Council has a commitment to provide quality art and cultural facilities, together with relevant lifestyle opportunities. It is clear given the rapidly ageing population that support facilities such as:
 - quality medical facilities
 - entertainment
 - lifelong education
 - libraries and galleries

to name a few, are not only necessary but are required to provide realistic opportunities for the community to remain in the municipality in later years.

STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

An Integrated Environment

Doncaster Hill is to be consolidated as a regional focus for a diversity of residential living, commercial, office, community and entertainment activities. It is to be developed as a vibrant self-contained urban village.

An environment where people can live work and interact in close proximity. A mixed use urban centre with medium to high density housing, shops, workplaces and entertainment facilities with direct access to public transport and proximate car parking. The urban village provides safe attractive streets, access to a diverse range of public facilities, open space areas and opportunities for recreation. The design, through its economies of movement and space, promotes energy efficiency, pedestrian activity and social interaction.

Strategy Essentials

Essential elements in the development of an integrated urban environment for the Doncaster Hill precinct

Viable Village

- Business strategy
- Employment
- Industry linkages

Smart Village

- Education
- Research
- Innovation
- Technology
- Access to knowledge

Cultural Village

- Arts/Public art
- Cultural heritage
- Events
- Sport and recreation

Human Village

- People focussed
- Community services
- Liveability

Diverse Village

- Diversity of program
- Diversity of Type
- Diversity of design

Sustainable Village

- Environmental planning
- Ongoing sustainability initiatives

Attractive village

- Urban design
- Open space
- Parks
- Active streets
- Landscape

The following defined objectives form the framework from which urban design guidelines may be developed. They are a statement of intent and provide an indication of the framework direction and key design elements, which require consideration.



Celebrating The Hill

Built form

Built form will provide a range of building heights stepping with the existing dramatic land form in a manner which reinforces the Doncaster Hill as a major focus of Melbourne's Eastern region.

Significant view corridors from both the public and private realm will be protected and enshrined in the response of built form to the natural attributes of the site.

By stepping down away from the hill, buildings will be required to achieve an appropriate change of scale and moderate its impact on the streetscape and adjacent built form, minimising the overlooking and overshadowing of dwellings both within and beyond the development.

Buildings will provide a level of visual diversity and contribute to the public realm through the use of varied, high quality, long life span and appropriate materials.

Identification and Inclusion of Appropriate Uses

Housing

- Providing a range of housing types appropriate to the changing requirements of the local community. Accommodation and services for a cross section of the community, including young people and the elderly. Equitable access for an ageing population, providing shorter walking distances, lower gradients and proximate parking.
- Housing which supports the possibility of future diversity and change.

Entertainment

- Including dining, cultural events, films and sport and recreation.

Health and beauty

- Community services necessary to support and develop a diverse and varied population including health care, well being and fitness.

Education

- Inclusion of facilities supporting education, information technology, multimedia, research and innovation.

Commercial

- Embodying a variety of green and healthy building design principles. Flexible and adaptable space supporting a variety of current and future uses which include cafes, restaurants, convenience retailing and support facilities such as gyms and spas. Inclusive of the highest levels of communications, management and environmentally sustainable design technologies contributing to the definition of the character and aspiration of this unique landmark region.

Cultural

- Inclusion of facilities supporting the arts, cultural heritage, education, festivals and street activity.

Public Open Space

To create a number of significant urban spaces in both the public and private realms providing an enhanced pedestrian and community experience.

Development of a strong boulevard character supported by a consistent built edge formal tree planting extending into required setbacks.

Spaces which are well connected and integrated within a permeable urban environment and include:

- A variety of sizes, characters and use
- Uniform boulevard tree planting and high quality landscaped buffer zones
- Generous and uniform building setback zones
- Activated and engaging building frontages supporting a variety of street focused activities and functions
- The integration of urban art and sculpture within the public realm
- The enhancement of adjacent residential areas through the extension of formalised planting and streetscape treatment

Sustainable Development

To set and maintain high environmental and energy conservation standards in line with best practices will enable this landmark area to define its own character within the broader development context of Melbourne and raise the aspirations and profile of all users. Developments will be required to reflect environmental, construction and amenity standards appropriate for a city looking towards a long term, responsible and sustainable future.

Buildings will address a range of sustainability issues including:

- Passive solar design
- Siting and orientation
- Energy usage minimisation
- Thermal efficiency
- Waste minimisation and potential reuse
- Energy production
- Materials selection including analysis of embodied energy levels
- Ongoing energy auditing of all buildings proposed for the precinct
- Eventual reuse and recycling

Access and Circulation

Pedestrian amenity will be a priority in the development of any circulation networks proposed for the precinct. Vehicle crossings will be limited and strictly controlled to minimise any potential conflicts with pedestrian activity zones. Protection of adjacent residential streets from the impact of any increased traffic flows and the provision of adequate, concealed, on site parking will be a requirement of any new development proposal

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Scenarios

Essentially there are two basic ways of meeting community housing needs for multi-unit development. First, dispersing development throughout the municipality. This outcome, as is the current case, can result in fragmentation in appropriate scale and bulk and a high level of community anxiety.

The second basic strategy is to consolidate multi-unit development in one or two nodes. This is likely to be unrealistic if pursued in isolation because it does not provide sufficient community choice.

Detailed research undertaken as part of the preparation of the housing strategy indicated in Graph 3 for example, that the community believes that multi-unit developments should be dispersed, but also located in nodes or specific areas. Doncaster Hill is considered as the prime candidate for a node because it meets three of the most important locational criteria indicated by the public. That is, it is close to services and facilities, in a specific area and located on a main road. Approximately 50% of responses from the community cited those criteria to guide the location of multi-unit developments in the municipality.

In practice, a better outcome is to combine a policy of dispersal with limits on scale and bulk, together with the identification of a major residential development node consistent with the wishes of the community. This strategy suggests that Doncaster Hill should become the major residential development node for Manningham because:

- It is close to facilities and services
- It is located on two main roads
- Has public transport access
- It already accommodates significant buildings
- There are potential development sites
- The existing environment is low amenity
- The land form is attractive for more dense development.

It should be noted that this strategy could:

- Reduce residents affected in many locations by redirecting growth
- Provide an opportunity to reduce bulk and density in other areas of the municipality.

Graph 3: Where do you think Multi-Units should be built in Manningham?

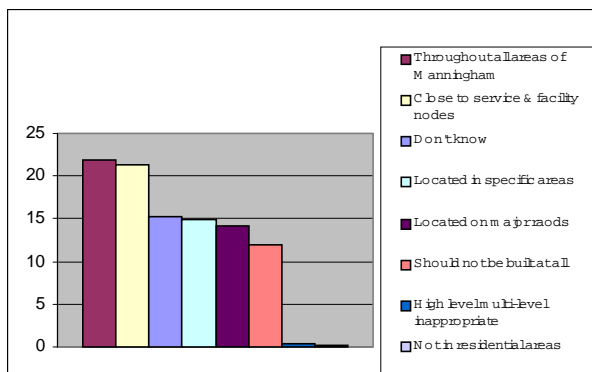


Table 1: Local Government Areas

L.G.A	1999-2021 New Households	New Population 18 - 24	25 - 34	55+
Manningham	5,091	-2,430	-577	12,320
Whitehorse	13,518	-575	2,345	15,905
Banyule	5,006	-2,049	-1,701	13,165
Total	23,615	-5,054	67	41,390

Source: Department of Infrastructure

STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Critical mass is required in order to support the viable development of a wide range of services and facilities. A candidate list of appropriate land uses is included in Table 2. This is based on achieving a target of 6000 residents and 7 – 10,000 employees in the strategy area. The targets have been set having regard to the feasibility requirements of retail and support services and the likely densities required for electronic ordering / delivery, efficient car parking solutions, likely feasible local / shuttle bus solutions and having regard to the likely demand and long term role of the Doncaster Hill urban village.

The targets form the basis for a triple bottom line analysis (social, environmental, economic) of the costs and benefits of the proposed strategy compared with continued dispersal.

In addition to the candidate land uses, other requirements are as follows

- Integration in terms of:
 - pedestrian and vehicle circulation
 - trips / movement patterns
 - Shoppingtown
 - municipal facilities
- to maximise pedestrian movement and minimise vehicle trips
- Activation of:
 - public realm
 - street edges / uses
 - To create a sense of vibrancy / security and community through the intensification of uses:
 - to achieve an increase in a range of services / new service critical mass
 - to provide opportunities for mixed use developments
 - Consolidation to achieve:
 - innovative parking outcomes
 - best use of public and private land
 - sustainable public transport
 - Quality:
 - to establish a quality benchmark for the community
 - Innovation:
 - to create a leading edge profile and sense of adventure.

Candidate Land Uses

Table 2: Candidate Land Uses

ADDITIONAL FLOORSPACE / UNITS		COMMENTS
RESIDENTIAL		
RETAIL		<i>Integrated car parking</i>
Convenience	3,500units	
Small supermarket & shops	2,000sqm	<i>Shoppingtown / Freestanding</i>
Food & Beverage	1,500sqm	
Restaurant		
Bistro		<i>Freestanding / Shoppingtown</i>
Cafe		
Services	2,000sqm	<i>Freestanding / Recycled</i>
Retail		
Personal		
Professional		
ENTERTAINMENT	2,000 – 4,000sqm	
Club		<i>Part of residential development / Shoppingtown / Freestanding</i>
Cinemas		
CULTURAL		
Library	1,000 – 2000sqm	<i>Freestanding or integrated with other facilities</i>
Gallery		
Function Centre		
OFFICE		
Serviced	2,000 – 3,000sqm	<i>Based on long term absorption rate</i>
Corporate	4,000 – 10,000sqm	
WESTFIELD	20,000sqm – 75,000sqm	<i>Redevelopment plan under review assume 20,000sqm net of retail / entertainment. Could be up to 50,000sqm</i>
MEDICAL / HEALTH & BEAUTY SERVICES	1,000 – 4,000sqm	<i>Medical, health, beauty</i>
Consulting		
Gym		
Spa, etc		

Source: MacroPlan Pty Ltd

THE WAY FORWARD

The Doncaster Hill Strategy 2021, has been prepared with a sense of urgency to help the community of Manningham plan strategically for the future of the area and achieve high quality design and sustainability.

This strategy is a statement of intent and forms the basis for:

- A series of working papers and detailed design guidelines to maximise net community benefits. These include:
 - detailed demand / supply analysis for the candidate land uses
 - a triple bottom line analysis of dispersal versus a consolidated multi-unit housing strategy
 - traffic and parking analysis
 - detailed urban design guidelines
 - sustainability and high technology working paper on building and area requirements
- A structure planning process which will provide for significant community input and refine the proposed strategic model
- Changes to the regulatory framework including the Municipal Strategic Statement, a new design development overlay, new building requirements and developer contributions
- An implementation plan and business plan including both the private and public realm

