

13 August 2020

Martin Cutter
Chief Executive Officer
City of Greater Geelong

By email: mcutter@geelongcity.vic.gov.au

Dear Martin,

Submission to the Draft Saleyards Precinct Plan May 2020

The Urban Development Industry of Australia, Victoria Division (UDIA Victoria) is a non-profit advocacy, research and educational organisation supported by a membership of land use and property development organisations, across the private sector and Victoria's public service. We are committed to working with both industry and Government to deliver housing, infrastructure, and liveable communities for all Victorians.

We would like to congratulate the City of Greater Geelong for its preparation of the Draft Saleyards Precinct Plan, May 2020. We understand that Council has been preparing this plan for some time and we applaud Council for finalising the draft document.

Overall, we support the direction and vision of the Precinct Plan to facilitate the growth and development of the Saleyards Precinct. The Precinct Plan clearly recognises the ability of the precinct to accommodate infill medium to high density residential development in order to assist in meeting the population growth targets for the established urban areas of Geelong.

As recognised in the Precinct Plan, Geelong is expected to experience significant growth; specifically, an additional 73,400 dwellings will be required to cater for the predicted population increase. Importantly the framework acknowledges the expectation that in 2047 50 percent of all new dwellings will be provided for by infill development, noting that at present infill development is approximately 15 percent of all new development.

The Saleyards Precinct must therefore ensure that it can maximise its potential to accommodate dwellings in the future while at the same time protect some of the heritage character and vegetation amenity of the precinct. The UDIA strongly supports the precinct encouraging a mixed-use outcome with a focus on residential as the preferred land use.

The Precinct Plan articulates seven key design principles, being:

1. Provide spacious public open space and improved habitat.
2. Respect the heritage of the site.
3. Connect to surrounding streets.
4. Enhance pedestrian and bicycle networks through the precinct.
5. Provide a community node.

6. Provide a critical mass for housing.
7. Create a framework that supports best practice environmentally sustainable design.

UDIA Victoria supports these principles and agrees that they provide a reasonable basis for the finalisation of the Precinct Plan and the ultimate delivery of the recommended outcomes.

However, with respect to Principle 3, being “Connect to surrounding streets”, we feel that this principle could be even bolder and address the aspiration of ensuring that the precinct is adequately connected to the nearby North Geelong Train Station. UDIA Victoria feels that without ensuring that the precinct is adequately linked with the Train Station, it will be difficult to achieve the residential densities being proposed by Council.

We support the street network principles that seek to integrate the street network with the landscape response, provide variation in street typology and promote active transport. The Precinct Plan street cross sections are unique, and we note that some cross-section elements do not strictly align with standard design guidelines and CFA access requirements. As such UDIA Victoria recommends that all street cross sections allow some flexibility in detailed design.

We support the general principals, land use and built form guidance, and aspiration residential densities illustrated and articulated in the Framework Plan.

However, with respect to building heights, we submit that heights should be clearly defined as guidance only and a performance based approach, measured against design excellence, contribution to the public realm, use and dwelling diversity, ESD (including WSUD, views to and from the site) and community contribution should be encouraged.

We support that future proposals should include ESD principles. That said, we are concerned that the framework includes ESD requirements that are a duplication of, or a variation to, the newly adopted ESD tools set out in Clause 22.71 of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. As such we submit that new proposals within the precinct be required to meet the objectives of this clause. Inclusion of ESD requirements are therefore not required to be included within the framework as they are clearly articulated elsewhere within the Planning Scheme.

At this time, we also request that UDIA Victoria be consulted regarding any potential developer contributions plan for the precinct. We note that the Precinct Plan identifies that S173 Agreement(s) may be prepared in the future and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss the preparation of the agreement(s) with you.

In relation to the concurrent drainage study and the extensive drainage basin illustrated in the Framework Plan, we submit that Council should maintain flexibility around the potential reduction in the scale of the drainage basin currently shown. We acknowledge that we do not have detailed advice to hand to counter what has currently been shown, however we do submit that that drainage basis appears to be overly scaled in the context of the wider precinct.

Lastly, we acknowledge that Council has stated that following feedback on the draft Precinct Plan, Council will determine suitable planning tools to aid in the delivery of the vision for the site. We would ask that Council engages early with the UDIA in this regard as we feel that we could positively contribute to the selection of appropriate planning controls.

Overall, we congratulate Council for its extensive work on the Saleyards Precinct Plan and support the overall vision for the precinct.

Should you seek to discuss this submission in greater detail please contact the UDIA Geelong Chapter Committee Chair Greg Bursill (greg@lovelybanks.com.au) or Committee Member Nick Clements (nclements@tract.net.au).

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Danni Hunter'. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping 'D' and a long, horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Danni Hunter
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Urban Development Institute of Victoria

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