

Port of Melbourne  
Corporation



## **Comments on the Footscray Central Activities District Draft Strategic Framework Report**

Classification: Public

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## 1 Purpose

To provide comments to Maribyrnong City Council (**MCC**) and Department of Planning & Community Development (**DPCD**) on the Footscray Central Activities District (**FCAD**) Draft Strategic Framework Report.

## 2 Background

In October 2009, MCC and DPCD released the FCAD Draft Strategic Framework Report. The public was invited to comment on the report by 25 November 2009. Port of Melbourne Corporation (**PoMC**) was granted an extension till 30 November 2009.

The purpose of the FCAD Draft Strategic Framework Report is to:

- provide guidance on land use and development;
- help prepare for anticipated private sector investment in Central Footscray; and
- help achieve the community's vision of Footscray being a more attractive place to live, work, learn and invest.

As some of the strategic issues in the draft report relate to land use mix, design and built form outcomes as well as transport and access arrangements, PoMC would like to take this opportunity to share its knowledge and expertise on land use and transport planning in the western Melbourne region.

## 3 Overview of Port of Melbourne Corporation (PoMC)

### 3.1 General Overview

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The Port of Melbourne handles approximately 36% of Australia's container trade and is one of the nation's most important supply chain interfaces. A major strategic asset of the Victorian economy, the port is an important trading gateway. It generates employment for tens of thousands of people directly and indirectly through the wider logistics industry across metropolitan Melbourne as well as regional Victoria.

PoMC is a government business entity with responsibility for the strategic management and development of the Port of Melbourne. In line with legislative requirements, the *Port Services Act 1995 (Vic)* requires that PoMC undertake the following:

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- Manage and develop the port in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner
  - Ensure essential port services are available and cost effective
  - Ensure effective integration of the port with other systems of infrastructure in the state of the port with other systems of infrastructure in the state
  - Facilitate sustainable trade growth
  - Manage the channels in the port for use on a fair and reasonable basis

### **3.2 Relevant policy settings – Land use and transport planning**

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In recognition of the critical role that the Port of Melbourne has in Victoria, the Government has assigned a range of land use planning and development responsibilities through various government policy initiatives. As the port lies in direct proximity to Footscray, the following policies will be potentially relevant to the FCAD's land-use and transport planning process.

#### **3.2.1 Port Futures Strategy**

In the recently released *Port Futures Strategy (2009)*, it was acknowledged that ports cannot be located anywhere as the number of sites around the Victorian coastline with necessary attributes of deepwater access, weather protection, suitable backup land and proximity to markets are vital to the competitiveness of a state. Hence, the connecting freight network must be organised around the ports to service them efficiently and effectively rather than the other way around. Therefore, one of the key priorities in *Port Futures* is the State Government's commitment to introduce measures to improve planning and buffer protection for ports.

Some of the relevant planning measures for consideration in the FCAD are as follows:

- Protecting ports and their supporting infrastructure and services from encroachment of residential and other sensitive uses.
- The consideration of a planning framework, including appropriate zones and controls for effective two-way buffer protection for ports.
- Ensuring that the interests of the ports are explicitly considered in the evaluation of planning scheme amendments involving policy or zoning changes in the environs of port controlled land.

#### **3.2.2 Port Environs Review**

In September 2009, the Minister for Planning appointed an Advisory Committee under s151 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)* to conduct a *Review of Planning Controls for the Port Environs*. The review evolved out of the policy

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settings in *Port Futures (2009)*, which builds on and advances policy and strategy settings established in the *Victorian Ports Strategic Framework (2004)* to ensure that the ports remain competitive and sustainable over the next ten years and beyond.

The Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee include:

- The review of issues raised in the draft *Port Environs Planning Framework*<sup>1</sup> and provide recommendations on how the framework can be implemented rather than undertake a broad review of the buffer issues from the start;
- Make recommendations as to how ports can be protected from encroachment of sensitive uses through consideration of appropriate planning policy and applications of the *Victoria Planning Provisions*.

### 3.2.3 Victorian Planning Scheme

The *State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF)*, common to all planning schemes sets out the policy and requirements for the use, development and protection of land in Victoria.

Section 12.04-2 (Transport & Freight) lists objectives to further develop key transport gateways and freight links and maintain Victoria as the nation's premier logistics centre by:

- Identifying and protecting options for access to, and future development at, the ports of Melbourne, Geelong and Hastings
- Ensuring port areas are protected by adequate buffers to minimise land-use conflict
- Improving rail freight access to ports

Section 18.05 (Ports) has as objectives:

- To recognise the importance to Victoria of economically sustainable major ports (Melbourne, Geelong, Portland, Hastings) by planning for appropriate access, terminal areas and depot areas.
- To plan the land resources adjacent to ports to facilitate the efficient operation of the port and port-related uses and minimise adverse impacts on surrounding urban development and the environment.
- The requirements for implementation are:
  - o The land resources adjacent to ports should be protected to preserve their value for uses which depend upon or gain significant economic

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the draft *Port Environs Planning Framework* is available for download at <http://www.portofmelbourne.com/portdev/pepf.asp>

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advantage from proximity to the ports' particular shipping operations.

- Port and industrial development should be physically separated from sensitive urban development by the establishment of appropriate buffers which reduce the impact of vibration, intrusive lighting, noise and air emissions from port activities.
- Planning for the use of land adjacent to ports should aim to achieve and maintain a high standard of environmental quality, be integrated with policies for the protection of the environment generally and of marine environments in particular and take into account planning for adjacent areas and the relevant catchment.

### 3.2.4 Freight Futures Strategy

Under the directive of *Freight Futures (2008)*, the government has indicated its intention to establish a Metropolitan Freight Terminal Network (MFTN) with a new Melbourne International Freight Terminal to be developed to the north of Footscray Road, integrated with the Port of Melbourne.

### 3.2.5 Department of Transport (DoT) Plan 2009

As indicated in the recently released *DoT Plan 2009*, the government will commence planning and community consultation for significant road initiatives with the aim of improving long-term planning and securing strategic reservations for future transport system. An example will be the WestLink tunnel project – which will connect our western suburbs and cater for future growth in Melbourne and the Port of Melbourne. It also aims to remove cars and trucks from local roads and provide an alternative to the West Gate Bridge between Geelong / Sunshine Road and Dynon / Footscray Road in Footscray.

### 3.2.6 Truck Action Plan

The Government has commenced planning for a practical two-stage *Truck Action Plan* to provide better access to the Port of Melbourne and remove trucks from residential areas of the inner west.

- Stage One- VicRoads will manage the project for a new connection that will be built from the West Gate Freeway to the port precinct via Hyde and Whitehall Streets, Yarraville.
- Stage Two- The upgrade of Paramount Road and Sunshine Road, in combination with the West Gate Bridge Alternative tunnel project is called the WestLink project (as indicated in section 3.2.4 above). This will be managed and delivered by Linking Melbourne Authority.

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### 3.2.7 PoMC Port Development Strategy 2035 vision

The *Port Development Strategy 2035 vision* (August 2009) was recently released by PoMC and endorsed by the Victorian Minister for Roads and Ports. It outlines the Port of Melbourne's infrastructure needs to 2035 and provides for the better management of road, rail and shipping access to the port. It also facilitates the effective integration of the port with the broader systems of land transport infrastructure.

**Recommendation:**

The land-use planning and development of the FCAD should be planned in context of the statutory and planning policies listed in Section 3.2 of this submission.

## 4 Analysis and discussion of the FCAD Drafts Strategic Framework Report

### 4.1 General Comments

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PoMC applauds the government's strategic initiative for managing Melbourne's growth by developing key Central Activities Districts (CAD). In line with the CAD, the draft FCAD report sets an excellent platform for the City of Maribyrnong to thrive socially, economically and environmentally.

To facilitate the alignment of planning functions, PoMC actively engages with its surrounding communities on sustainable environment, ports safety and land use planning issues. As such, the port would like to provide the following feedback.

### 4.2 Comments on Section 4 – The Strategic Role and Function of the Footscray CAD (Pages 10-11)

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PoMC strongly supports the Footscray community's vision for the FCAD to be a more attractive place to live, work, learn and invest in. Based on the PricewaterhouseCoopers "Economic Analysis of the Port of Melbourne" study (March 2007) commissioned by DTF and DoI, the port provides the following economic and employment benefits to the City of Maribyrnong.

<u>Economic Benefits</u>	<u>Employment</u>
Direct benefits (Value- added benefits) = \$11.8m	Direct Effects (Employment) = 150
Flow-on effects (Value- added benefits) = \$10.8m	Flow-on Effects (Employment) = 123

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<b>Total Impact (Value- added benefits) = \$22.7m</b>	<b>Total Impact (Employment) = 273</b>
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As Melbourne's population grows, the FCAD and Port of Melbourne will have to play more strategic and interlinked roles in facilitating the movement of goods and people in and out of the western regions of Melbourne.

**Recommendation:**

It will be strategically sound for the FCAD and PoMC to complement each other when planning for land-use, transportation and access issues in the western region of Melbourne. As such, PoMC would like to offer the latest version of the *Port Development Strategy 2035 Vision* (Aug 2009) (available for download at <http://www.portofmelbourne.com/portdev/portdevstrategy.asp> ) to complement the strategic plans of the FCAD.

#### **4.3 Comments on Section 6 - Design and Built Form Outcomes (Pages 16-21)**

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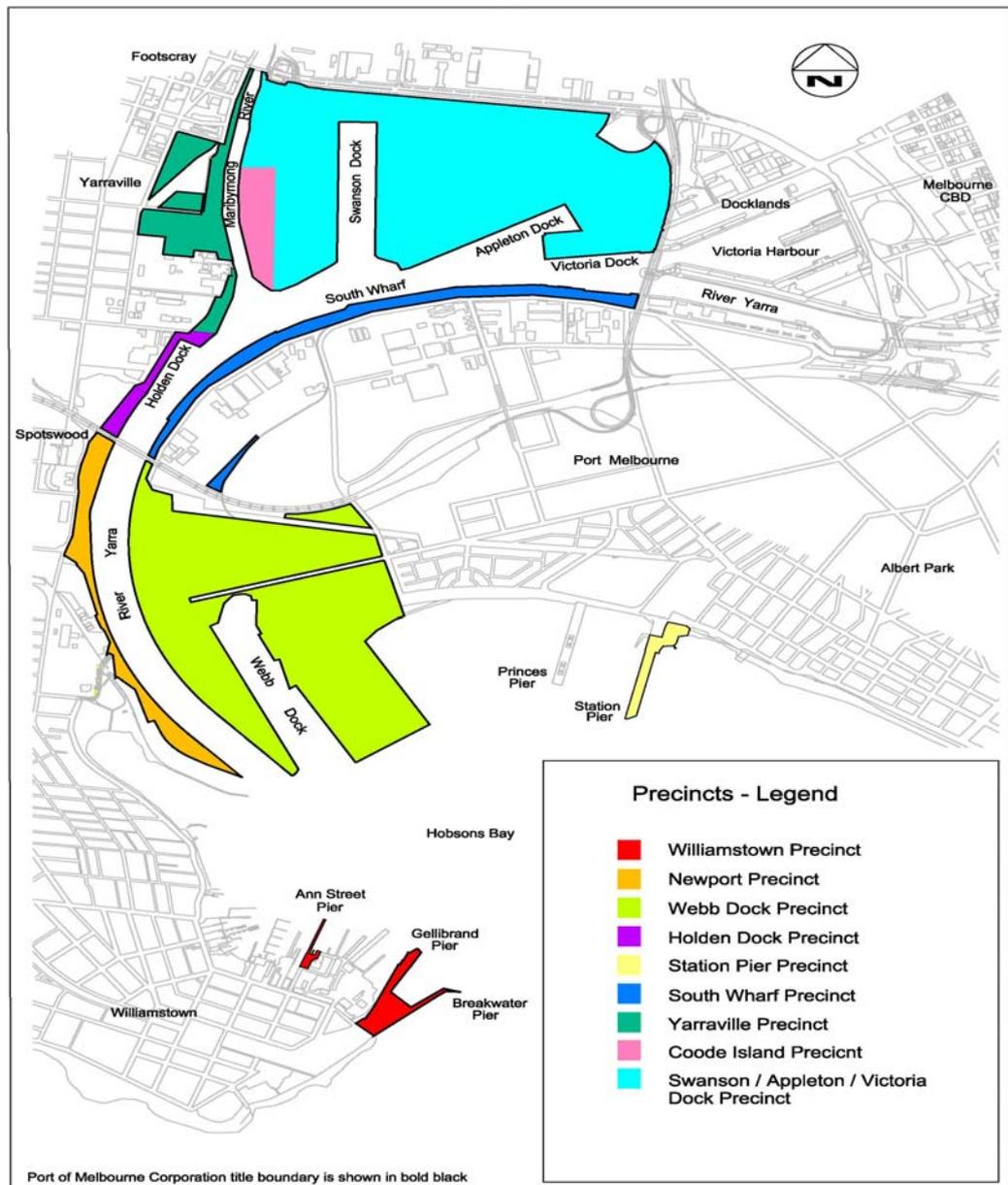
As a key strategic asset of the state of Victoria, the long term sustainability of the Port of Melbourne requires both the port and its surrounding areas to be managed and protected from any impact from each other. The relationship of land uses outside the port and their implications on the sustainability of port operations as a 24-hour working port is crucial.

As part of the design and built form outcome objectives listed in the report,

- Page 17 suggests "A number of opportunities remain to further improve Footscray's built form and public realm. These include the need to further integrate the centre with the Maribyrnong River environs by ensuring new development fronts onto the river."
- Page 21 outlines an objective "To improve provision and use of open spaces in strategic locations throughout the centre, within both public and private developments".

Given the port's significance to the Victorian economy and local communities, development in the port environments must support/ protect and not restrict the 24/7 industrial operations of the port. However, PoMC is also mindful of its social, environmental and safety responsibilities and therefore strives to incorporate amenity considerations in the port's development plan.

Figure 1- Port of Melbourne Port development precincts



(Source: PoMC's Port Development Strategy 2035 Vision (Aug 2009))

With reference to Figure 1 above, the following paragraphs provide an overview of the port development plans in the precincts closest to the FCAD.

Yarraville precinct - Yarraville will retain its multi- purpose dry and liquid bulk functions in the short-to medium term. Appropriate development of newly acquired PoMC properties for port related functions will also be encouraged. Suitable long term uses may include motor vehicle terminals or other acceptable port related operations.

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 Coode Island precinct- This precinct is used as a storage facility for importing and exporting bulk liquids and will remain so for the long term as it serves as a vital State role.

 Swanson Dock precinct- Swanson Dock East and West will continue to be used for international containers for the long term.

Port Waterways- The port waterways precinct covers all waterways adjacent to the wharves. The area south of Shepherd Bridge on the Maribyrnong River is closest to the FCAD's Precinct 4. PoMC notes the renewed focus in Melbourne that using and living near the waterways will continue to be a major issue for its operations. However, it is for Victoria's strategic economic and trade interest that the Port of Melbourne remains committed to maintaining the use of port precincts for the strategic development of waterways for large ships in an environmentally sustainable manner.

**Recommendation:**

- Given the proximity of the port to the east bank of the Maribyrnong River, careful consideration must be given to potential amenity impacts from port land. Any future land uses adjacent to port land should be assigned with due regard for the port's development plans.
- Any land-use planning for land south of Footscray road would need to consider the port's development plans for the Yarraville precinct.
- In accordance to the Victorian Planning Scheme (VPS) which dictates the need to ensure port areas are protected by adequate buffers to minimise land-use conflict, there should be considerations for buffer zones when planning for open spaces in the FCAD.
- All design requirements in the FCAD should cater for amenity impacts from the port's industrial precinct.

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#### 4.4 Comments on Section 8 – Transport and Access ( Pages 25)

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PoMC agrees that transport and access is an essential consideration for land use planning in any jurisdiction. In line with PoMC's goal to ensure the effective integration of the port with land transport systems, PoMC is keen to share its knowledge on facilitating freight transportation and access in the western Melbourne region.

The FCAD is an important gateway for the movement of freight between the Port of Melbourne and metropolitan/ regional areas in Victoria's western hinterland. As the FCAD grows to become a regionally significant activity centre

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in Melbourne's west, PoMC acknowledges that it will play a broader role as a pivotal transport hub forming part of a wider strategic road and public transport network.

**Recommendation:**

- To prevent conflicts in land-use planning, PoMC would like to recommend that part of the objectives listed under page 25 should include "To recognise and protect the major rail freight route/ corridor along Bunbury Street into the tunnel".
- The government has plans to expand Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary in the outer west of Melbourne. PoMC has advocated for land to be reserved for freight terminal development supporting the western suburbs economic development. Any transport and access issues in the FCAD should consider integration with future transport corridors/ linkages in the western region of Melbourne.

PoMC is aware of the sensitivities of truck amenity issues in the Maribyrnong community and notes the report's ( page 25) mention that "One of the issues that currently affect Footscray's transport network is the arterial network can become heavily congested due to high volumes of freight traffic associated with the Port".

In a recent 2009 study commissioned by the Department of Transport, the percentage of port traffic during peak period was measured and defined as approximately 10–15% of traffic in the immediate vicinity of the port. The study also found that this is generally a small percentage of total traffic and a very small percentage (less than 5%) on major corridors such as M1.

**Recommendation:**

- Arterial network congestion is primarily caused by commuter traffic with freight traffic being both industrial and port-related. In understanding the congestion impact on its immediate amenities, it would be necessary for the MCC and DPCD to take a more holistic and impartial view as well as accurately identify other sources of congestion in the Footscray area.
- As for the volumes of freight traffic associated with the port, PoMC is working closely with various government agencies to reduce the volume of truck traffic through residential areas. Examples of some current initiatives include the Truck Action Plan; High Productivity Freight Vehicles (HPFVS) trials as well as the WestLink project. These projects will assist the FCAD in meeting its objectives "to avoid through-traffic within the centre and encourage freight movements onto the existing

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arterial road networks". As such, PoMC recommends that these projects be supported as part of the objectives listed on page 25 on the report.

#### 4.5 Comments on Section 9 – Precinct Provisions

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##### 4.5.1 Precinct 4: Riverside Precinct- Objectives (Page 40)

PoMC supports the objective "To provide opportunities for sustainable employment and business activity within the precinct, provided that commercial developments do not compete with the business core of the centre. Appropriate uses may include small offices of less than 1500sqm, existing industry, service industries, indoor recreation facilities, indoor commercial display areas, trade and landscape supplies..."

**Recommendation:**

PoMC is strongly supportive of the objective provisions related to scale of commercial and office development in this precinct.

PoMC appreciates the acknowledgement that "Proximity to the Port of Melbourne remains as an important contextual feature with access to the riverfront constrained by the branch line to the Port and some of the land to the south of Napier Street located within the buffer to Coode Island bulk liquid storage facility".

**Recommendation:**

As part of the third objective on page 40, "To ensure development along Bunbury Street reinforces heritage values, pedestrian feel, fine grain presentation, and the general low scale built form of the street", PoMC recommends that this objective include "Development along the eastern end of Bunbury St should also recognise the 24/7 operation of the freight rail line".

Figure 2: Rail Corridor along Bunbury Street (Source: Melway)



**Recommendation:**

To ensure consistency as well as minimise land-use planning conflicts, PoMC would like provide clarifications on the FCAD Precinct Plan (Figures 6, pg.29) and Riverside Precinct Plan (Figure 11, pg. 41). Both of them should be corrected to acknowledge the existing freight line crossing the Maribyrnong River along Bunbury Street (as indicated by the green arrows in Figure 2 above).

#### 4.5.2 Sub-precincts 4A-4J: River and Hopkins Street Gateway (Page 42)

This sub-precinct is situated close to some of the 24/7 operations of the port and its related transport infrastructure. Development within the sub precincts abutting the Bunbury Street Rail tunnel entrance and the preferred *Truck Action Plan* route must ensure that the 24/7 operation of this infrastructure is not compromised.

**Recommendation:**

To ensure consistency with the port's and government's plans, PoMC would like to recommend that the following objective be included in page 42 of the report: "To support the rail corridor transport function of the Bunbury Street Rail tunnel entrance and the preferred *Truck Action Plan* route to ensure that the 24/7 operation of related infrastructure and services are not compromised".

## 5 Conclusions

PoMC looks forward to working closely with the Maribyrnong City Council and Department of Planning & Community Development to ensure the planning of the FCAD is complementary with PoMC's port development plans. This cooperation should seek to ensure closer alignment between the port and the FCAD.

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