



ESSENTIAL ECONOMICS

# Mildura Retail Strategy Review 2018

## Memorandum: Response to Submissions

23 July 2018

### 1 Introduction

The draft *Retail Strategy 2018*, along with the draft *Special Use Zone Review* were on formal public exhibition from Friday 25 May 2018 to Monday 11 June 2018. In total, 14 submissions across both documents were received. Those submissions of specific relevance to the draft Retail Strategy were:

- Submission #5: Mildura City Heart
- Submission #6: Paul Little on behalf of Pinnacle Mildura Pty Ltd
- Submission #7: Vicinity Centres
- Submission #8: Dante & Eileen Pelle.

A brief overview of each submission, the key issues raised, and possible responses is provided in this memorandum.

### 2 Submission #5: Mildura City Heart

#### *Submission Overview*

Mildura City Heart (MCH) is an incorporated body that represents over 300 businesses in the central Mildura CBD area. The MCH submission makes a number of general comments in relation to the Strategy, along with specific comments on the Objectives, Actions and Implementation Plans. Responses (where relevant to the Retail Strategy) to these comments are provided below.

Note that a number of comments are directed to how Council intends to engage with the community and businesses, and support centres and economic development. These are considered out of scope for the Retail Strategy.

In summary, the following three general comments are made in response to the Retail Strategy:

- 1 What is the benchmark for level of sophistication, competitiveness and innovation outlined in the Vision?

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EE Response: The Vision Statement provided in the Strategy is intended to guide the ongoing development of activity centres in Mildura and to provide the basis for subsequent objectives. Ultimately, achieving a level of sophistication, innovation and competitiveness that meets the expectations of consumers will lead to more vibrant centres and profitable businesses. It should be noted that benchmarks for sophistication and innovation change overtime, for instance, what was considered innovative in 2010 may now be considered behind the times. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.

- 2 The submitter comments that the range of partnerships identified in the Action and Implementation Plans are ‘narrow’ and economic-centric, with little consideration for the cultural richness and liveability concerns of an isolated regional community.

EE Response: The Strategy is a retail strategy and has been prepared with the intention of providing Council with guidance on what Council can do within its jurisdiction to improving the performance of centres in the municipality. Land use planning is one of the key roles Council has in supporting centres and partnerships with land owners, developers and retailers are integral to achieving good planning outcomes for centres. We have reviewed the partnerships under each action and propose some additions/changes which are outlined later in this memorandum.

- 3 How will the Responsible Authority implement with any consistency or accountability across departments within General Corporate, Planning and Community?

EE Response: This is beyond the scope of the Retail Strategy. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.

In addition to general comments, the MCH also makes the following specific comments relating to the Objectives, Actions and implementation Plans:

- 4 Action Plan 1: To support the viability of existing centres in Mildura so that they continue to perform their roles in the retail hierarchy.

MCH Comment: MCH give in-principle support to supporting the viability of the CBD and provide comment on the need for funding for events, and improved amenity and safety throughout the CBD.

EE Response: Support for the objective is noted. Action Plan 7: Well-designed Activity Centres, provides actions relating to the amenity of centres, including the CBD.

***Recommended change to Strategy - add a comment relating to ‘safety’ in Actions 7.1 and 7.2.***

- 5 Action Plan 2: To respond to future retail requirements of residents and visitors to the region, having regard for forecast population growth and potential growth in tourism.

- MCH Comment: MCH note that numerous key stakeholders are missing from the partnerships list, namely MRD, RDV and MCH.

EE Response: The consultant is of the understanding that Council already does and will continue to partner with MRD, RDV and MCH on numerous issues and projects. The actions outlined in Action Plan 2 are specific Council-related actions.

***Recommended change to Strategy - add MRD as a partner to Action 2.4.***

- MCH Comment: MCH gives in-principle support to convenience-based centres in Mildura East and Mildura South.  
EE Response: Support is noted. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.
  - MCH Comment: MCH provide comment of how Council, MCH and MRD can work together to share statistics and information.  
EE Response: This is beyond the scope of the Retail Strategy. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.
- 6 Action Plan 3: To support the Mildura CBD as the primary activity centre in Mildura for a mix of activities including retail, business, entertainment, tourism, civic, health, education, medium-density residential development, etc.
- MCH Comment: MCH seeks clarification on when the Mildura CBD Plan review will commence:  
EE Response: It is understood the Mildura CBD Plan Review has already commenced. It is recommended MCH be consulted during this project. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.
  - MCH Comment: MCH have concerns that the primary focus of Action Plan 3 is around discussions with property owners and developers, and not with traders, management, tourism, regional development, etc.  
EE Response: Refer EE Response under Point 2. ***Recommended change to Strategy - add MCH as a partner to Action 3.1.***
- 7 Action Plan 4: To support the sub-regional shopping role of the Mildura City Gate Precinct.
- MCH Comment: MCH support the co-existence of the CBD and Fifteenth Street but have concerns if “smaller scale restricted retail and associated business services” were included in Fifteenth Street.  
EE Response: These types of uses are already part of the Mildura Planning Scheme, refer definition of SUZ9. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.
- 8 Action Plan 5: To support Fifteenth Street as the principal location for homemaker retailing.
- MCH Comment: MCH have some concerns regarding the SUZ9.  
EE Response: These concerns may be addressed in the SUZ Review. However, the apparel retailers noted in the submission do not fall with the ‘restricted retail’ category, as such, any impact on the CBD would be limited. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.
- 9 Action Plan 6: Support Development of Accessible Neighbourhood and Town Centres.
- MCH Comment: MCH gives in-principle support to convenience-based centres in Mildura South and Mildura East.  
EE Response: Support is noted. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.

- 10 Action Plan 7: To ensure activity centres in Mildura are places where people enjoy shopping, doing business, and taking part in community activities through the implementation of appropriate design guidelines.
- MCH Comment: MCH fully supports this action but queries the lack of partnerships with key stakeholders in the CBD.  
EE Response: **Recommended change to Strategy - add 'Traders Associations' as a partner to Action 7.1.**
  - MCH Comment: MCH would like to see 'walkability' as a key consideration for the Mildura CBD Plan.  
EE Response: Comment is noted, and this should be identified in consultation as part of the Mildura CBD Plan project. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.

### 3 Submission #6: Paul Little on behalf of Pinnacle Mildura Pty Ltd

Paul Little of Planning & Property Partners acts on behalf of Pinnacle Mildura Pty Ltd, land owners at 634-670 Ontaria Avenue, Mildura. The land is within the Urban Growth Zone 1 and has been identified in the Mildura South Precinct Structure Plan as the location for a future neighbourhood centre.

The submitter notes that their client does not object to the review of the 2010 Retail Strategy and acknowledges several reasons why the need for a review of the strategy has eventuated.

However, the submitter noted that the client did not have sufficient time to make a submission.

The submitter's comments are noted. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.

### 4 Submission #7: Vicinity Centres

Vicinity Centres owns and operates the Mildura Central Shopping Centre, located in the 'City Gate Precinct'. The submitter supports the continued recognition of the City Gate Precinct as a sub-regional centre.

The submitter seeks clarification on the following matters:

- 1 How Council intends to define a "major retail proposal" to which a number of new assessment criteria would apply?

EE Response: The Retail Planning Assessment Criteria in Chapter 8 of the Strategy notes the following regarding the definition of 'major retail proposal':

*"at the discretion of Council, but generally applying to those proposals involving 5,000m<sup>2</sup> or more of retail floorspace, or the provision of a key major tenant such as supermarket, etc"*

While some guidance is provided to Council, it will ultimately be at Council's discretion whether a proposal is defined as a major retail proposal.

- 2 References to forecasts of 'limited retail growth' in what is the second major activity centre within the municipality, particularly as there are references elsewhere to non-food growth in the City Gate Precinct.

EE Response: Retail floorspace forecasts presented in the Strategy identify demand for approximately 25,000m<sup>2</sup> of non-food retail floorspace of which approximately 10,000m<sup>2</sup> would be accommodated in large format retailing along Fifteenth Street and the balance distributed between the Mildura CBD and City Gate Precinct. In light of the City Gate Precinct being largely occupied with only limited vacant sites for retail development, it is considered the City Gate Precinct will accommodate 'limited retail growth' in the future. From a strategic perspective, it will also be important to support major retail development in the Mildura CBD.

No changes are recommended to the Strategy.

## **5 Submission #8: Dante & Eileen Pelle**

The submitter notes that they have not studied the Retail Strategy in detail but wanted to note that "*Council's commitment to the Mildura CBD, Merbein and Red Cliffs*" is certainly required. Comment is also made on the recent focus on Fifteenth Street and that the CBD is now seen as the main professional area as opposed to the main shopping area.

The submitter's comments are noted. No changes to the draft Strategy are required.