

12/10/2021

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Victorian Planning Authority
Level 25, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Mr Moseley,

**Draft Amendment C407melb to the Melbourne Planning Scheme –
Arden Structure Plan**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Victorian Planning Authority (the VPA) on Draft Amendment C407melb. The VPA is to be commended for its efforts in the preparation of the Arden Structure Plan that underpins the draft amendment and the collaborative nature in which it has engaged with agencies including Melbourne Water in the detailed planning for this precinct.

Melbourne Water's Role

Melbourne Water is responding pursuant to its role under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as the determining referral authority for all planning and subdivision applications as defined in the structure plan area as well as in our capacity as the Floodplain Manager for the Port Phillip and Westernport region under the Water Act 1989. Melbourne Water has a statutory responsibility to ensure that land use and development appropriately manages flood risk in order to protect life and property. Given the importance of the Arden Priority Urban Renewal Precinct for Melbourne, Melbourne Water has worked with the VPA and other State Government agencies to develop a Flood Management Strategy which will enable State Government to realise the vision for regeneration of the Arden Precinct.

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Flooding in Arden

Flooding is a threshold issue for development in Arden. As noted in the Structure Plan, the area's history as a low-lying wetland means that many parts of the Arden precinct are currently subject to extreme flooding both from riverine and overland stormwater inundation. Planning Scheme Amendment C384melb to the Melbourne Planning Scheme is proposing to update the flood extent based on new modelling which includes the consideration of climate change for a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storm event by 2100. The new modelling within the City of Melbourne includes the area of the Arden Precinct. This amendment has recently received Ministerial authorisation and is currently on exhibition. The new flood information is being used across the City of Melbourne area, including the Arden Precinct, to determine new development applications.

Proposed changes in zoning and land use from largely industrial to a mixed use residential and innovation precinct will require a change to the level of service for flood protection. The current drainage system is inadequate under existing conditions and the future development scenario.

Flood Management Strategy

Melbourne Water supports the strategic vision and intent of Draft Amendment C407melb, particularly the drive for sustainable development, energy efficiency and safe management of water, and the use of green spaces, trees and water to help the precinct become a "cooler, greener version of the city".

Throughout the development of the Arden Structure Plan Melbourne Water worked collaboratively with the VPA, the City of Melbourne, and other key stakeholders in the preparation of the Flood Management Strategy to manage existing and future flooding in the precinct, enabling more of Arden to be developed, and in a safer way. The Flood Management Strategy is an essential part of the Arden Structure Plan. We note that the range of flood protection measures required to facilitate the development of the Arden precinct are reflected in the Arden Structure Plan.



The success of this collaboration, and the successful delivery of the Strategy, is underpinned by the ongoing and collective agreement to the following important principles:

- That the current drainage system is inadequate to effectively manage stormwater runoff, inundation or riverine flooding from Moonee Ponds Creek under the exiting or future development scenario with climate change for a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storm event by 2100;
- That the Arden Structure Plan and vision cannot be realised without delivery of the identified flood mitigation measures proposed in the Flood Management Strategy and reflected in the Structure Plan; and
- That Melbourne Water will use a developer contributions scheme (the Urban Renewal Cost Recovery Scheme, URCRS) to fund regional drainage infrastructure as proposed in the Structure Plan.

The key components of this drainage infrastructure include:

- Raised and extended levees for Moonee Ponds Creek.
- Above ground flood storage.
- An underground flood storage tank beneath Arden Street Oval.
- Upgrades to pump stations.
- Upgrades to gravity and pressure pipe infrastructure.
- Site specific works.

The exhibited structure plan acknowledges that the severity of flooding is not compatible with urban development without significant infrastructure being designed and delivered to manage this risk. However it is also important to note that some parts of Arden will still experience residual flooding. This is consistent with Arden's vision for innovation and "celebrating water", and we commend VPA for this strong narrative about the unique character of the Arden precinct.

Urban Renewal Cost Recovery Scheme (URCRS)

The Urban Renewal Cost Recovery Scheme (URCRS) is Melbourne Water's cost recovery mechanism to fund the construction of the critical drainage infrastructure outlined above.

The URCRS comprises both a Flood Management Strategy, which outlines the



necessary infrastructure, as well as a pricing arrangement detailing how Melbourne Water will recoup the infrastructure costs through financial contributions applicable to all development within Arden, including Government land.

Integrated Stormwater Management Open Space (ISMOS)

A critical component of the Arden flood management strategy is the use of areas of above-ground flood retarding basin, shown as 'integrated stormwater management open space' (ISMOS) on the Arden Structure Plan.

It is important to note that the primary purpose of these areas is to provide flood storage, and that they play a significant role in managing flood risk in the Arden precinct, particularly the largest storage adjacent to Langford Street.

Whilst we understand the desire for the ISMOS to meet multiple needs within the precinct, such as year-round recreational use, and Melbourne Water supports the creation of cool, green, liveable spaces, these outcomes must not compromise its primary function for stormwater and flood management and must ensure community safety during flood events.

As above, Melbourne Water's support for Draft Amendment C407melb is contingent on support for Melbourne Water's use of a developer contributions scheme and the delivery of flood management infrastructure. Melbourne Water notes that the Structure Plan and draft Amendment package does not explicitly note the timing of land acquisition associated with the ISMOS. We understand that this will be agreed within the Development Strategy and Melbourne Water welcomes the opportunity to support this key element of the planning.

What does this mean for the delivery of the Arden Structure Plan and Amendment C407melb?

The planning, funding and timely delivery of this infrastructure is both critical and integral to the realisation of the development opportunity at Arden. Each of the components of the flood management package of works are interdependent, as distinct from isolated. There is a symbiotic relationship between all of the proposed works and if any works are delayed or removed,



there is a significant risk that the development expectations of the precinct will be compromised and pose a risk to life and property from flooding events.

If the planned flood management works cannot be delivered in their entirety, the assumed minimum finished floor levels and access and egress arrangements for properties within the precinct will need to be reconsidered. This may affect the ability for properties to be developed in line with the aspirations of the Arden Structure Plan.

Next Steps

Melbourne Water welcomes the opportunity to continue to advance discussions in relation to these matters with the VPA, which may include a more detailed further submission. Noting the importance of also resolving our aligned approaches to agency representation.

Melbourne Water also requests the right to be heard by any Advisory Committee appointed in relation to this matter, and also intend to present evidence in support of the matters raised in this submission

Please contact [REDACTED]
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any of the above items or seek further input from Melbourne Water.

Regards,



Michael Wandmaker

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