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Making a submission Form Submission

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Arden Precinct

I welcome the update concerning Arden and the ongoing progression which is occurring in outlining the ongoing development of the Precinct. However, the Structure Plan raises a series of concerns as detailed below.

Moonee Ponds Creek Revitalisation

The precinct plan has limited detail about the actual timeline for implementation of the long proposed Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan. Moonee Ponds Creek will be a vital aspect of the Arden Precinct, yet the VPA has failed to provide a material update on the project since 2019. The lack of update to the Moonee Ponds Creek could have a significantly detrimental impact on the overall amenity of the Arden Precinct as well as the cross-over to the Macaulay Precinct.

The development of Arden Precinct should be in step with the revitalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek, as otherwise it will be left as an afternoon with limited funding and will deprive the significant increase in population in the Arden Precinct of valuable open green space.

The VPA should provide a detailed overview of the actual implementation plan for the Moonee Ponds Creek Revitalisation as well as a clear pathway for funding through the DCP. The Moonee Ponds Creek has the potential to become an opportunity that is never executed upon which will have detrimental impact on the entirety of the Arden and Macaulay Precincts.

High-Capacity Transport

Several references refer to the Arden as a 'Transport Precinct' however there is very limited detail or insight into the translation of the high-capacity transport mentioned throughout the document into actual infrastructure. It should be a priority for the Government to provide funding for the implementation of the proposed tram-routes in the Arden Precinct.

The implementation of the high-capacity transport infrastructure from early on in the Arden Precinct will significantly assist the development and amenity of both the Arden and Macaulay Precincts.

High School

The inclusion of a High School in the Arden Precinct is vital to the full integration of local community into the precinct, especially given the building a primary school in the heart of Arden. Whilst a high school may be proposed for the Macaulay Precinct, strong consideration should be given to the inclusion of a high school in the Arden Precinct instead, especially given the location of a primary school in the heart of Arden.

The inclusion of a High School in Arden will maximise the impact of the technology precinct on the Victorian economy by providing strong connections between industry and students throughout the precinct. This may include mentoring sessions between employees or work placements throughout the Arden Precinct. The inclusion of a high-school in the heart of Arden is vital to a truly successful innovation ecosystem.

Residential vs Commercial Mix

Arden is being proposed with a focus on technology, health and science, however the current Structure Plan has a very significant portion of buildings allocated to residential purposes, especially when considering the neighbouring Macaulay. An increase in Commercial and mixed innovation uses would help strengthen Arden as an Innovation Precinct, as opposed to significant tall residential towers. There is already a significant number of residential properties in neighbouring North Melbourne and Kensington. With Arden acting as a transport precinct there provides significant opportunity for people to access the jobs and innovation ecosystem of Arden. A greater proportion of Arden, beyond Arden Central, should be focused on commercial, start-up and health related businesses with the majority of residential options provided in the Macaulay Precinct.

'North Arden' Oval

Arden Precinct will have a significant increase in both residents and workers, and as a result green space is highly valuable. The 2020 Structure Plan proposed a North Arden Oval which consisted of a series of ponds with a community centre in the middle of the oval. Disappointingly, the 2021 Structure Plan has altered this for the 'North Arden' Oval to be a series of playing fields. Several media reports highlight that these playing fields will be heavily utilised by the North Melbourne Football Club.

It is sad to see that valuable public space which would have provided significant amenity to the precinct has been lost to the demands of a member based organisation. The 'North Arden' Oval should be a community oval, not an oval that the community gets access to at some times of day based on NMFC requirements and local sport. As a result, a consideration should be made to transferring the park back to the format proposed in the 2020 Structure Plan.

Regards,

Zac Sweeney