

6.2.3 Response to Notice of Motion - Officer Town Centre update

Responsible GM: Lili Rosic
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Recommendation(s)

That Council note the progress of development within the Officer Town Centre area.

Attachments

Nil

Executive Summary

The Officer Precinct Structure Plan which was gazetted in September 2011 and amended in November 2019 identifies Officer Town Centre as a future Major Activity Centre to provide a diverse and vibrant town centre that accommodates a variety of uses including a range of retail and commercial premises, community facilities and higher density residential options. Officer Urban Design Framework was approved in February 2024. Since the PSP gazettal, development in the Officer Town Centre has been slow moving and based around the Council owned civic centre. Councillor Radford put forward a notice of motion at a Council Meeting on 19 February 2024 to receive an update on the progress of Officer Town Centre and this report is in response to this.

Background

Cr Tammy Radford put forward the following notice of motion at the February 2024 Council Meeting:

“That a report is provided at the April Ordinary Council Meeting that provides an update on the progress of Officer Town Centre noting the Precinct Structure Plan was endorsed in September 2011 and amended November 2019. The report is to include information that is not deemed confidential, on any current planning applications or permits for both residential and commercial developments, details about the land ownership with state and private providers, and any actions taken by the council to facilitate development in the Officer Town Centre.”

Key documents relating to Officer Town Centre are listed below:

- Officer Precinct Structure Plan (PSP)
 - Guides the development of the Officer area within the Urban Growth Zone, north of the freeway.
 - Sets the land uses, development types and subdivision requirements applicable through the Cardina Planning Scheme.
 - Developed by Council and the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA)
 - Gazetted in 2011.
 - Amendment approved in November 2019 - focused on opening of the Officer Town Centre.
- Officer PSP is supported by Officer Development Contributions Plan (Officer DCP)
 - Supports Officer PSP by providing funding contributions towards identified transport and community projects and land acquisitions.
- Officer Town Centre Urban Design Framework

- Provides guidance and direction on development in the area to ensure a cohesive outcome .
- Adopted by Council on February 19, 2024.

Key functions of Officer Town Centre:

- Major Activity Centre (MAC)
 - Identified and defined by Officer PSP.
 - Provide a variety of uses including retail and commercial premises, community facilities and higher density residential options.
 - Linked by pedestrian, cycling and road access that creates a permeable and safe environment.
 - Linked to major public transport corridors of the Pakenham Rail Line via Officer Station and the bus routes along Princes Highway.
- State Government Major Activity Centre
 - Identified within Plan Melbourne strategic document.
 - Provide diverse roles of housing, retail, commercial and civic services.
- Regionally significant commercial area
 - Identified and defined in Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (MICALUP).
 - Provide for future retail and office floorspace and supporting delivery of 20-minute neighbourhood.
 - Provide for significant office development and higher-order, knowledge-based jobs.
- Neighbourhood level role
 - Provide retail opportunities, including several supermarkets and associated shops and services.
- Regional level role
 - Provide a range of uses including commercial offices and business centres, entertainment activities, recreation and community services, educational and medical facilities and high-density housing.

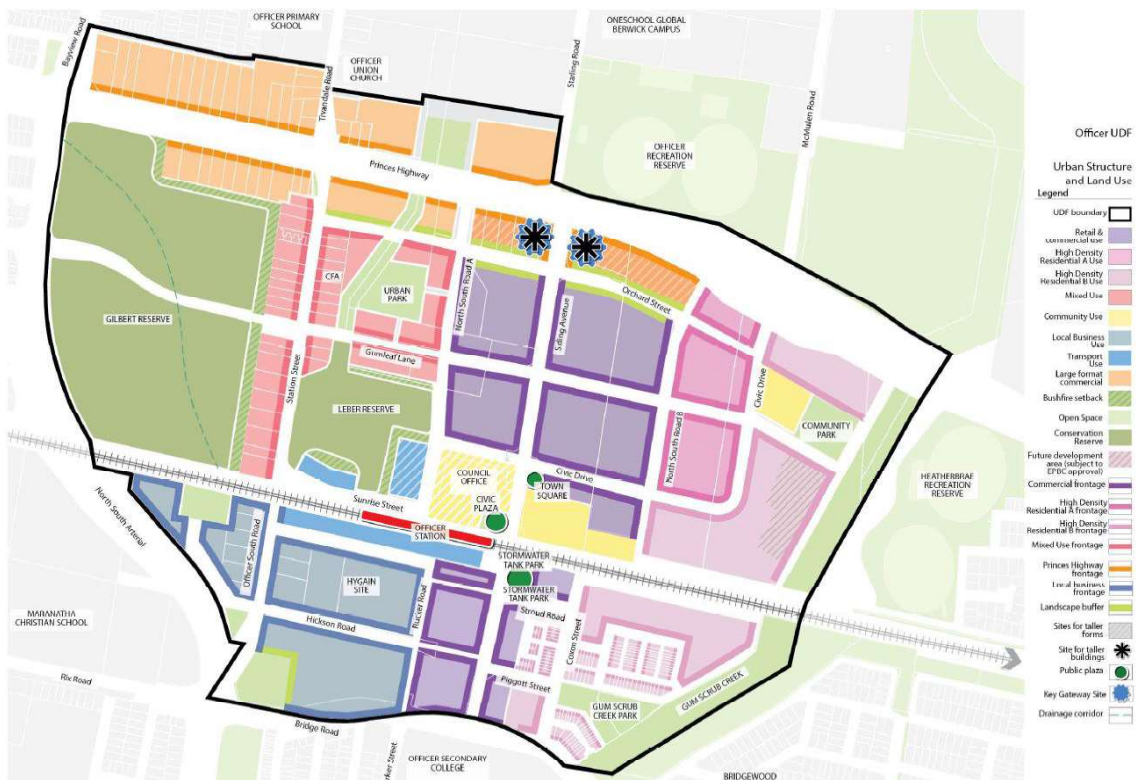


Figure 1: Image from UDF of desired ultimate outcome and land uses

The Officer Town Centre (OTC), much like most areas of the Officer PSP, is held in fragmented ownership, with many small, individual lot owners. Figure 2 shows the current ownership of the larger land parcels within OTC split into Council owned land, state government owned land and privately owned land. The balance (uncoloured) land is also all privately owned through multiple small land holders.

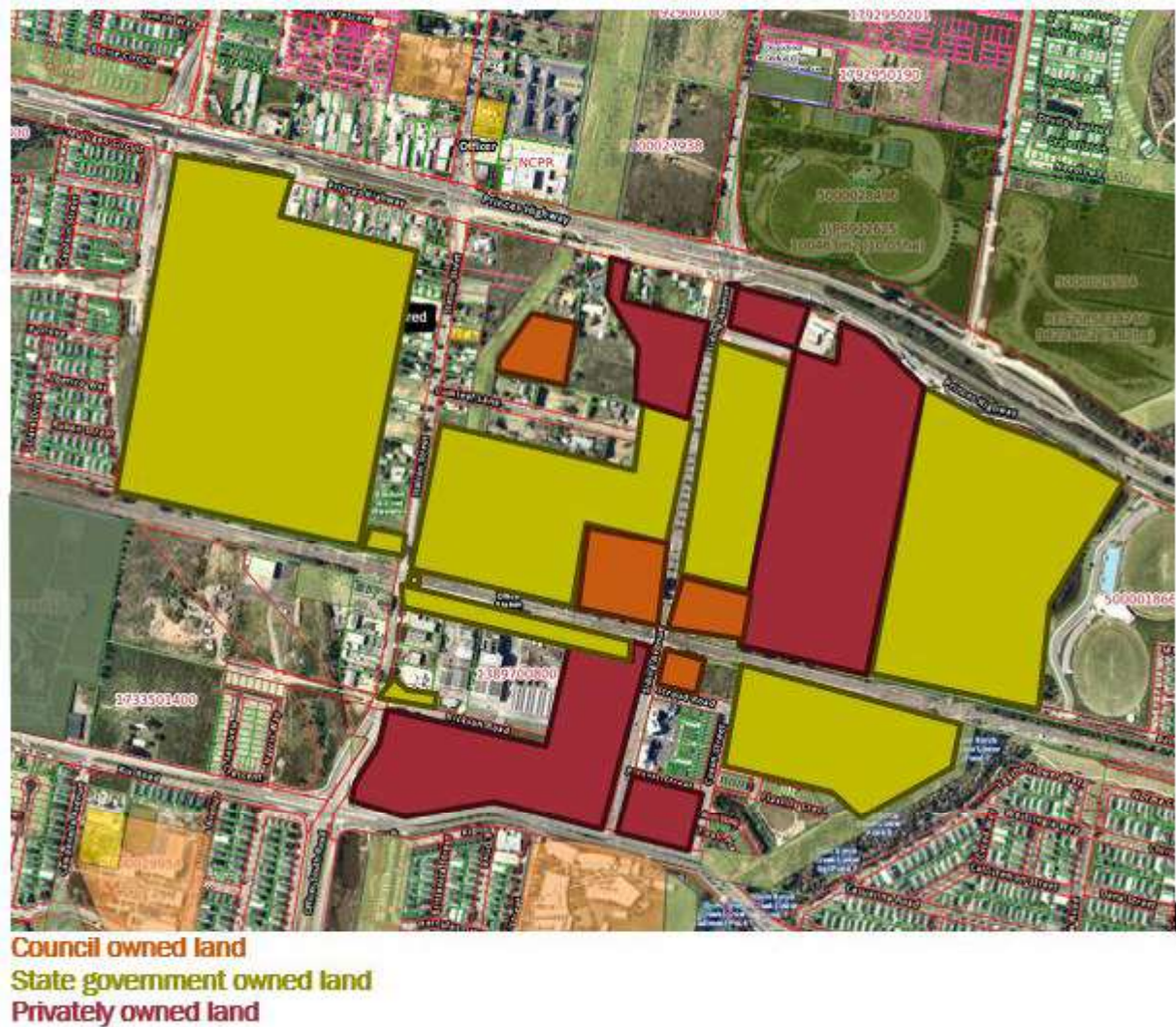


Figure 2: Image showing public, private and state land holdings within Officer Town Centre

As can be seen in Figure 2 a significant portion of the land within the town centre is owned by the state government, with the majority being held by Development Victoria, the state's development delivery arm. Development Victoria (DV) have delivered the major roads within the OTC including Siding Ave, Stroud Rd, Coxon, Piggot and Orchard Streets along with the rail underpass and associated landscaping in these areas. DV are currently developing the residential zone in the southeast corner known as Olio and have also submitted a permit application for the balance residential land on the northeastern side of the precinct which is under review through the planning application process. Whilst they have a subdivision permit for the balance land either side of Siding Avenue north of the railway line, they have not progressed the commercial development aspects of their land holdings to permit application stage. Recently the land on the eastern side of Siding Avenue in the commercial precinct has been listed for sale. It is anticipated that the sale will be to another developer looking to invest in the OTC to deliver this key commercial component. It is worth

noting that the land holdings of DV have reduced over time, as the areas either side of Siding Avenue south of the railway line were sold to various private owners after completion of the road construction.

Of the Council owned land, these parcels are either the Civic Centre, public open space, or future community facilities as identified in the PSP.

The remaining land is all in private ownership, with a couple of large single landowners within the commercial and Siding Avenue precinct and the remainder being small private landowners of businesses or residential properties.



Figure 3: Image showing permits issued, completed, or being assessed

Permits that have been issued or planning permit applications currently being considered for development in line with the PSP within OTC are shown in figure 3 and detailed in table 1 (correct at 19.03.24). Not all permits are listed, with permits for signage or change of use of businesses not included, nor permits for the existing uses prior to the PSP being gazetted. Permits issued that have now lapsed or been withdrawn are also not included in this list. The planning scheme and underlying zone of Urban Growth Zone Schedule 4 (UGZ4), dictates the type of land use, development and subdivision that can occur and planning applications need to be generally in accordance with the Officer PSP to be approved.

Permit	Address	Permit description	Status
T210884	458 Princes Highway, Officer	Application for construction of supermarket, shops and offices, display of signs, reduction in carparking, alteration of access to land adjacent to a road in transport zone (commercial)	under assessment – with applicant awaiting CHMP

T230119	Princes Highway, Officer	Subdivision of land and associated works, removal of waterbodies, creation of access to a road in transport zone 2 (residential)	under assessment – on RFI with applicant
T230474	1 Station Street, Officer	Development of land with a land sales office and display of signage	permit issued – works progressing onsite
T230097	48-56 Station Street, Officer	Use and development of the land for a retail premises, office and medical centre and reduction of car parking	under assessment – applicant working with MW on their concerns
T230396	18 Station Street, Officer	Use and development of the land for a childcare centre with reduction in car parking	under assessment – S50 lodged and on RFI with applicant
T220623	432 Princes Highway, Officer	Development of the land for offices	under assessment – on RFI waiting on CHMP
T210909	Princes Highway, Officer	Subdivision of land – creation of easements and reserves	under assessment – with applicant on RFI
T240090	496 Princes Highway, Officer	redevelopment of existing service station including provision of 5 food and drink premises and car wash	under assessment – recently lodged
T230030	474 Princes Highway, Officer	Use and development of land with 8 food trucks, construction of car park and alteration of access to a trz2	completed - timeframe of use is five years
T230167	11 - 13 Station Street, Officer	Use and development of the land for a childcare centre	permit issued – condition 1 plans and plans to comply submitted for review
T210039	33 Station Street, Officer	Use and development of the land for a medical centre and display of business identification signage	permit issued – condition 1 plans approved
T220584	4 Station Street, Officer	Use and development of the land for a medical centre and display of signage	permit issued – under construction
T230089	414 Princes Highway, Officer	Development of the land for trade supplies (plumbing)	permit issued – detailed design plans being assessed by engineering
T220803	389-391 Princes Highway, Officer	Use and development of convenience restaurant, display of advertising signage and reduction in bicycle parking	permit issued – detailed design plans being assessed by engineering
T120692	433 Princes Highway, Officer	Development of land for office buildings	completed
T220281	435 Princes Highway, Officer	Development of land for offices, display of signage, alteration of access to a road in TZ2, reduction in car parking and creation of easement	permit issued – detailed design plans being assessed by engineering
T170600	437 Princes Highway, Officer	Use and development of the land for offices and shops, a reduction in car parking, alteration of an access to a Road Zone Category 1 and advertising signage.	Completed

T140410	24 Tivendale Road, Officer	Commercial premises incorporating a service station, shops (including a licensed premise - bottle shop), food and drink premises, offices, medical centres, advertising signage, a reduction in car parking and loading bay requirements and access to a RZC1	Completed
T220617	465 Princes Highway, Officer	Use and development of a mixed-use commercial development including business identification signage and alteration of access to a road in TZ2	permit issued – plans to comply on RFI with applicant
T110741 & T130562	20 Siding Avenue, Officer	civic centre	completed
T220531	67 Officer South Road, Officer	use of land for dwellings, building and works associated with dwellings, retail premises, offices and medical centres, reduction in car parking, subdivision, and removal of an easement	permit issued – with applicant to progress
T170584, T200656, T190381	Siding Avenue, Officer	Building and works in stages associated with the construction of residential dwellings, shops/food and drink premises, offices, medical centres, gymnasium, supermarket, restaurant, internally illuminated signs, use of land to sell liquor and a reduction in carparking. And associated subdivision permits	completed
T210824	Coxon Street, Officer	staged multi-lot residential subdivision	Permit issued – detailed design plans being assessed by engineering
T200320	Bridge Road, Officer	staged multi- lot residential subdivision	under construction – Stage 1 & 2 complete, Stage 3 & 4 underway
T220427	63 Officer South Road, Officer	use and development of an emergency services facility and associated works	under construction
T120590	Siding Avenue, Officer	Multi lot staged subdivision, access to TRZ1, earthworks, road works, creation of a reserve, creation of easement and removal of easement.	permit issued (note that this is the subdivision of land only, not use or development). Stage 1, 2 & 2A completed
T140094, T150376	Siding Avenue, Officer	Subdivision, creation of easements, creation of reserves and associated works (including road works)	Completed – creation of Siding Ave and lots south of the railway line

Table 1: Planning permits within Officer Town Centre

Whilst the issuing of permits is a significant milestone, and the key process that Council is involved in for the development of OTC post PSP and UDF endorsement, it does not guarantee development. Depending on various commercial and market factors individual to each permit holder or property owner, development may progress with the approval of plans in line with permit conditions into development and use of the site, alternatively the land may be sold with the permit, or the land may continue to sit, undeveloped, for some time. Council and Council officers are unable to progress

development on behalf of private or state government landowners and can only engage with developers and permit holders on their terms and provide assistance, guidance and connections.

Of the permits that have been issued in recent times, some of the key developments are shown below.

Planning Permit T220617 – north of Princes Highway, on the western corner of Starling Road a permit has been issued for a mixed used commercial development including a supermarket and other retail and/or café style premises.

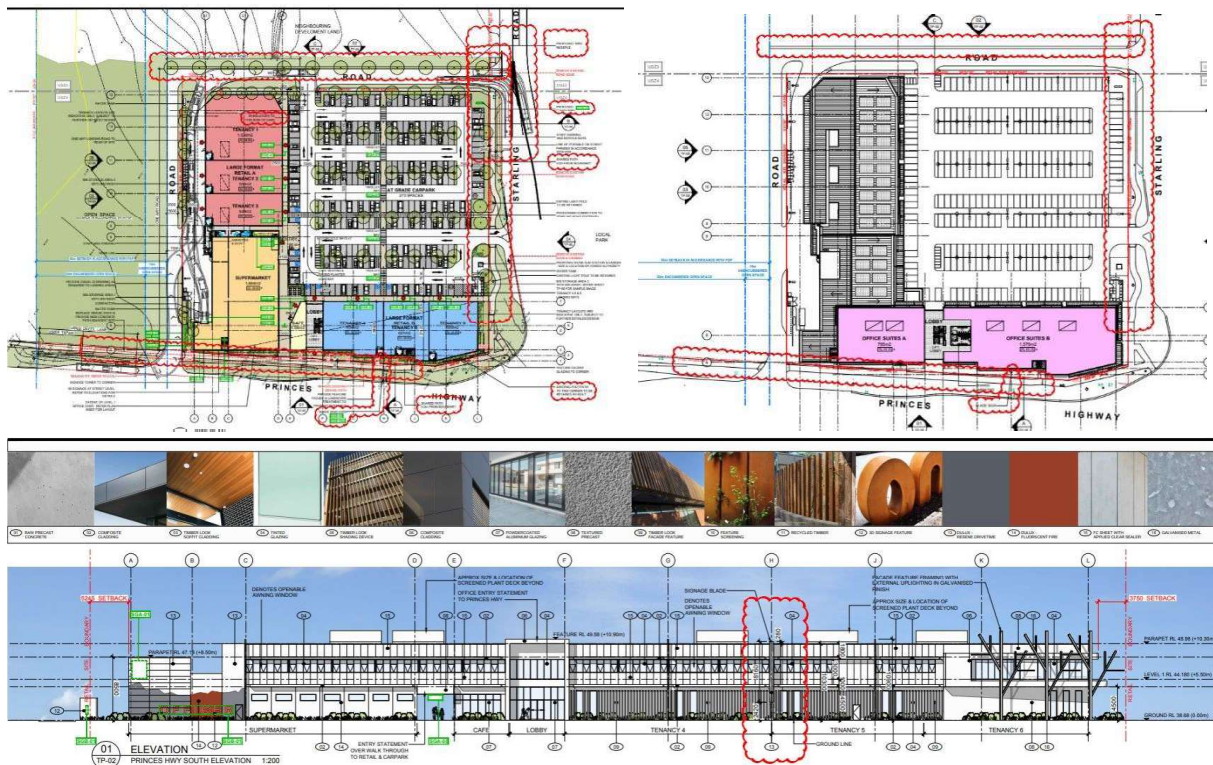


Figure 4 – examples of T220617 mixed use development proposal

Planning Permit T220531 – located along the southwestern side of Siding Avenue, directly south of the railway line, the initial permit for this land includes a large office building adjacent to the railway line, retail/cafe shop fronts along Siding Avenue and residential dwellings behind, similar to what has been built on the southeastern side of Siding Avenue. There continues to be balance land on this site and in this ownership with further permit applications to come.



Figure 5 – proposed development of T220531 (67 Officer South Road)

Planning Permit T220803 – On the southeastern corner of Bayview Rd and Princes Hwy, a permit has been issued for a convenience restaurant and drive through.

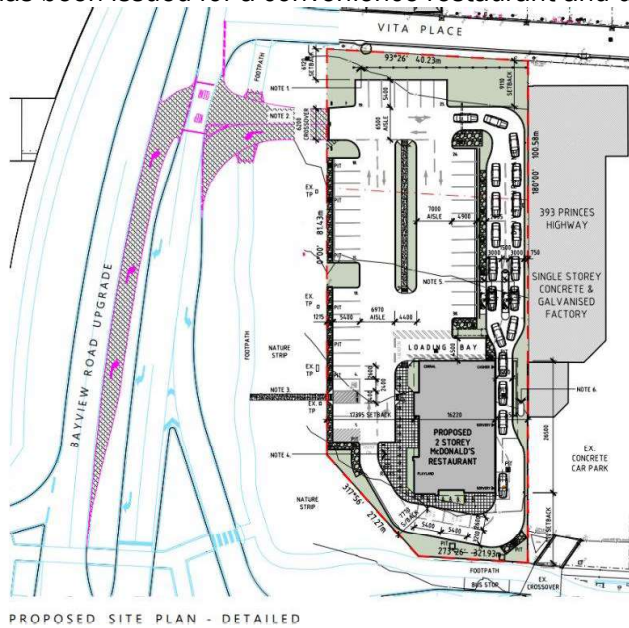


Figure 6 – proposed convenience restaurant development T220803

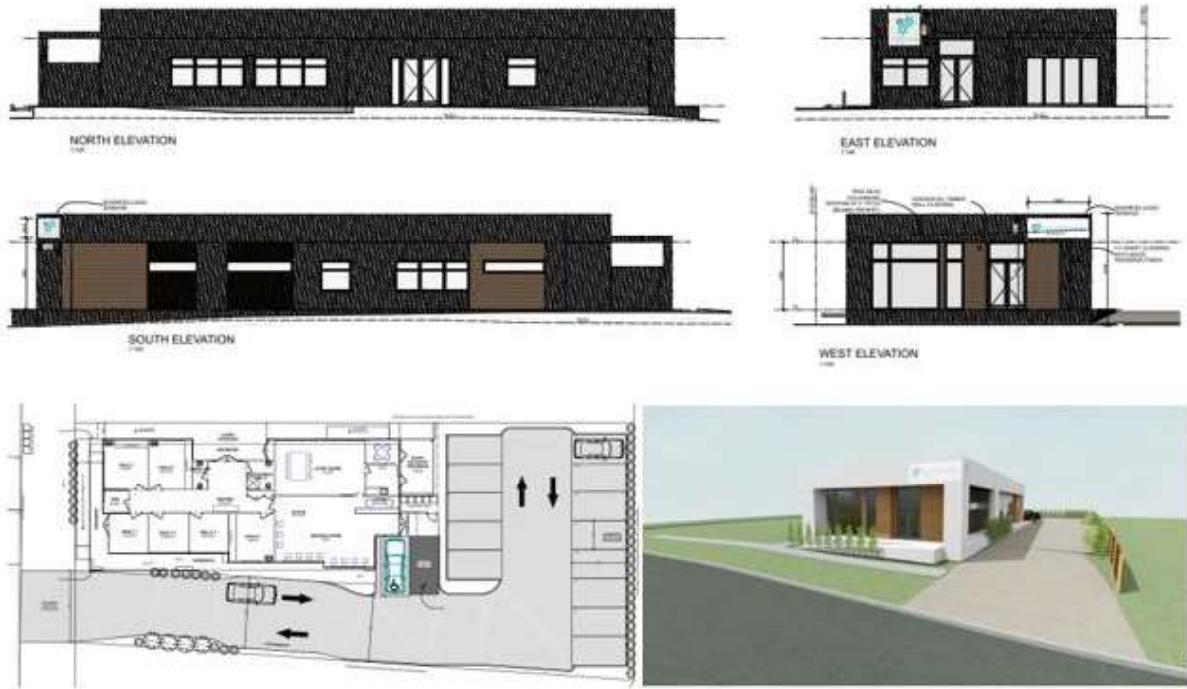


Figure 7 – proposed medical centre T210039 (33 Station Street, Officer)



Figure 8 – Proposed medical centre T220584 (4 Station Street, Officer)



Figure 9 – Proposed Childcare centre T230167 (11 – 13 Station Street, Officer)



Figure 10 – proposed SES building T220427 (63 Officer South Road, Officer)

Policy Implications

The development of Officer Town Centre is guided by the Officer Precinct Structure Plan with the most recent amendment gazetted in November 2019. The requirements and ordinances within this document, along with the Cardinia Planning Scheme guide how permits can be assessed and issued and the uses and development that can occur on the land. All permits issued must be generally in accordance with the Officer PSP and the requirements of the Cardinia Planning Scheme. The recently adopted Officer Town Centre Urban Design Framework provides further guidance and direction on development in the area to ensure a cohesive Major Activity Centre outcome. It does not change the land uses and principles outlined in the PSP but provides a framework for development outcomes in the area.

Relevance to Council Plan

2.1 We support the creation of liveable spaces and places

- 2.1.1 Advocate, plan for and deliver accessible community infrastructure and services that address community need.
- 2.1.2 Plan and maintain safe, inclusive and connected open spaces, places and active travel routes.
- 2.1.3 Plan for housing diversity that meets community need, is affordable and delivers environmental sustainability, safety and healthy living outcomes.

4.1 We support our productive land and employment land to grow local industries

- 4.1.2 Plan for sustainable employment precincts to entice new industries to the region and support new business.

Climate Emergency Consideration

The Officer Precinct Structure Plan and Officer Town Centre Urban Design Framework require a number of Environmentally Sustainable Development initiatives to be undertaken as development occurs throughout the precinct. The precinct is designed to make use of active transport with walkability, and other passive transport options such as cycling favoured for movement throughout the town centre with key connections to the Officer Train Station and Princes Highway bus network.

Consultation/Communication

- Officer Precinct Structure Plan
 - Consultation was undertaken with the residents of Cardinia as well as the landholders within the precinct at the time.
 - Community consultation in July 2011
 - Adopted in September 2011.
 - Community consultation from March to April 2018 for the PSP amendment
 - Adopted in November 2019.
- Officer Urban Design Framework
 - Consultation was undertaken with the residents of Cardinia as well as the landholders within the precinct at the time.
 - Community consultation in February and March 2023
 - Adopted in February 2024.

Permit applications for use, development and subdivision proposals are exempt from notice (advertising) requirements due to the UGZ4 zoning. All permits issued are required to be generally in accordance with both the PSP and the UDF, in particular the underlying planning zones for use and development. Councillors are kept up to date via the Councillor Bulletin as permits are considered and issued within this area.

Council's Growth Area planning team continue to engage with developers at pre-application meetings prior to planning permits being lodged and through ongoing discussions with existing landowners or interested purchasers as requested. The finalisation of the UDF has increased discussion around the area and has triggered several meetings to be arranged and held with existing landowners at their request. It is anticipated that as some of the larger commercial developments that have permits or are being assessed for permits proceed to construction and use that this will stimulate increased activity in the area.

Council's Economic Development team also assists with discussions with developers and connecting interested developers with local businesses and community organisations looking to establish in the OTC. Council's Major Projects team has also engaged with the Office of Suburban Development and the Level Crossing Removal Authority around the closure of Station Street at the level crossing and

the need to upgrade the Officer Station as per the PSP and provide pedestrian and cycle linkages. Businesses will be encouraged to set up base near this transport hub as it transitions from a rural station that has minimal cover and difficult access to a more suburban station as envisaged by the PSP.

Financial and Resource Implications

The development of Officer Town Centre is critical in providing a Major Activity Centre for the growing Officer PSP area and providing local shopping and entertainment functions for Cardinia residents, as well as being a key employment area. Council manages contributions to construction of critical intersections, road projects and community facilities via the Development Contributions Payments (DCP) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments collected as outlined in the PSP.

Staff from the Growth Area, Statutory Planning and Urban Design, Development, Development Contributions and Economic Development teams are involved in conversations with current and prospective owners and developers of the land and spend significant amounts of time and resource in reviewing plans, engaging with land owners and permit holders and ensuring that the applications made for permits in this area meet the criteria of the PSP and UDF as well as the strategic and economic intent. Officers also prioritise review of applications within this area due to the strategic and economic significance of the precinct.

The land for OTC is privately owned by a number of proponents and Council does not control the timing of when or how the land will be developed except through the planning permit process. Where possible Council officers facilitate discussions, negotiations and connections to streamline permit applications and provide a path forward for the commercial development of this area. Major supermarket and commercial businesses rely on significant catchments to be viable when developing and will make the decisions on when to act on permits based on multiple market and commercial factors beyond Council control.

Further investment is required from Council in the area of an activity centre strategy and associated economic development policy to assist with ensuring that these areas meet the underlying zoning requirements. Achieving the targets of the state government's Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Policy (MICLUP) and supporting the surrounding State Significant Industrial Land are key components of permit assessment as well as ensuring the future development is economically viable for both land owners and the community.

Investment is also required from the state government to upgrade the Officer Station including creation of a bus interchange to improve the public transport in the area and the attractiveness of the activity centre for commercial development.

Conclusion

Officer Town Centre is identified as a Major Activity Centre within the Officer Precinct Structure Plan. Major supermarket and commercial businesses rely on significant catchments to be viable when developing. Whilst the surrounding Officer area has continued to grow and develop, as per the vision of the Officer PSP, the town centre has remained generally stagnant commercially. The development of the Officer UDF, along with the continued residential development in the Officer area combined with a resurgence in commercial interests post covid is anticipated to assist with seeing further development occurring within the town centre area. There have been several permits issued in the last 12 months, along with a number of new permits received and being assessed which Council officers hope will spark development within this zone.

Development of OTC continues to be a priority of the Planning and Design team and the associated teams within the Infrastructure Services, Community Infrastructure Delivery and Economic

Development teams at Council. Continued engagement with the state government is required as they are the largest individual landholder in the key commercial precinct and have not moved on their commercial landholdings in several years. They are also required to invest in the upgrade of Officer Station and the linkage with the wider bus network.