

18 February 2013

East Werribee Employment Precinct Structure Plan
Growth Areas Authority
Level 29, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Via email: amendments@gaa.vic.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: WYNDHAM C179 – EAST WERRIBEE EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Wyndham C179 East Werribee Employment Precinct. The Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) supports the East Werribee employment precinct development, particularly the wider vision to integrate employment, health, learning and living precincts into a mixed-use area.

The GBCA encourages the Growth Areas Alliance to consider how the newly released Green Star – Communities rating tool can be used as a set of best practice benchmarks and a method of measurement to ensure guidelines are followed, and to ensure the East Werribee Employment Precinct vision, and the underpinning objectives and requirements, are met.

About the GBCA

The GBCA is the nation's authority on sustainable buildings, communities and cities. Our mission is to accelerate the transformation of Australia's built environment into one that is healthy, liveable, productive, resilient and sustainable. We work together with industry and government to encourage policies and programs that support our mission. We educate thousands of people each year on how to design and deliver sustainable outcomes for our buildings, communities and cities. And we operate Australia's only national, voluntary, holistic rating system for sustainable buildings and communities - Green Star.

The GBCA is also a founding member of the World Green Building Council (WorldGBC), which was established to provide a federated 'union' of national green building councils with a common goal to support the sustainable transformation of the global property industry; there are now 93 such councils worldwide.

The Green Star rating tools

Green Star is a national, voluntary rating system that encourages, recognises and rewards best practice and innovation in the property industry. The first Green Star rating tool was released in 2003 in response to market demand for a rating tool that would evaluate the environmental design and construction of buildings as well as establish a common language for green buildings.

There are currently nine Green Star rating tools which address a range of building types and 550 projects have now achieved Green Star certification across Australia, with a further 490 projects registered. The Green Star rating system is designed to take an holistic approach within each class and building sector, addressing nine categories in total; Management, Indoor Environment Quality (IEQ), Energy, Water, Materials, Land Use and Ecology, Emissions, Innovation and Transport; and defining 'best practice' in each.

Green Star - Communities

Green Star – Communities is a rating tool for community scale developments. In developing the rating tool the GBCA conducted extensive consultation with industry and all levels of government to establish a framework for more productive, liveable and sustainable communities. The national framework, sponsored by government, including Places Victoria, consists of five principles, as well as the encouragement for innovation. The first step in developing the Green Star – Communities rating tool was to develop a national framework consisting of five best practice principles, plus Innovation:

1. Enhance liveability
2. Create opportunities for economic prosperity
3. Foster environmental responsibility
4. Embrace design excellence
5. Demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance.

In the second stage of the rating tool development, 38 credits were developed to support the five principles. The credits were identified in consultation with the 38 rating tool sponsors and supporters and 135 technical working group members. These credits include a range of benchmarks against which communities can be measured, assessed and certified as demonstrating Best Practice (4 Star), Australian Excellence (5 Star) or World Leadership (6 Star). The Green Star – Communities Framework, a pocket guide to the rating tool credits and the rating tool scorecard are attached. Further information about the Green Star – Communities rating tool can be found at www.greenstarcommunities.org.au, or on the GBCA's website at www.gbca.org.au.

The 13 objectives for East Werribee outlined in the principal structure plan (PSP) closely align with the Green Star – Communities framework principles. With this in mind, the GBCA would encourage the Growth Areas Alliance to consider using the 38 Green Star – Communities credits, which are peer reviewed and nationally agreed to, as guidelines or benchmarks against which the the PSP requirements and the subsequent development can be measured.

For example, PSP employment guideline three (G3) states “the built form of new employment development... should either provide for substantial new employment opportunities or be designed in such a way as to enable future intensification.” The Green Star – Communities credit *Econ-1 Employment and Economic Resilience* can act as a measurable guide for G3 as it requires projects demonstrate that a net gain on existing employment opportunities will be achieved by development.

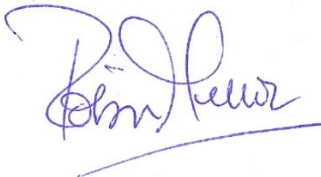
Guideline four (G4) in the PSP states “opportunities for home based business should be provided throughout the residential parts of the precinct.” The Green Star – Communities credit *Econ-7 Digital Economy* can be referenced here as a guide or requirement as it rewards development that delivers digital infrastructure that can support work-from-home policies, online enterprise and local commerce. Specifically the credit requires development to, as a minimum, provide infrastructure that can support 100mbps download, and 20mbps upload internet connection speeds.

Further assistance

The GBCA worked with several major developments across Australia during the beta testing phase of the Green Star – Communities rating tool and there are now multiple projects registered to use Green Star – Communities across the country. We encourage Growth Areas Alliance to review the Green Star – Communities framework and scorecard attached, and we would welcome the opportunity to further discuss how we can work together to ensure the vision for the East Werribee Employment Precinct is achieved.

Please do not hesitate to contact Emma Kelly, Advocacy Coordinator, by phone on 02 8239 6288 or via email at emma.kelly@gbca.org.au, should you require any further information or to arrange further consultation.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Mellon

Executive Director – Advocacy & Business Services
robin.mellon@gbca.org.au