

Customer Relations Team
City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

27 March 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET PRECINCT RENEWAL DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the *Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal Draft Master Plan (Master Plan)*. The Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) commends The City of Melbourne (the City) on the draft *Master Plan* and the commitment to seek Green Star – Communities certification. As identified in the *Master Plan*, this is the largest project investment in the city of Melbourne's history. The GBCA agrees that an integrated approach to planning for buildings, infrastructure, transport networks and communities is essential if the Queen Victoria Market Precinct is to continue to be a contemporary world-class market and improve its productivity, liveability, resilience and sustainability.

The GBCA believes it is vital that sustainable development principles are considered during the earliest stages of planning in order to achieve the best long-term outcomes for communities. The Queen Victoria Market Precinct is a project that provides the City of Melbourne to demonstrate visionary leadership through a commitment to meeting best practice benchmarks and the GBCA is looking forward to working with the City of Melbourne on this important project.

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. We operate Australia's only national voluntary and holistic rating system for sustainable buildings and communities – Green Star.

The Green Star rating system

The first Green Star rating tool was released in 2003 in response to market demand for a rating tool that would evaluate the sustainable design and construction of buildings as well as establish a common language for buildings.

Green Star rating tools can be applied to almost all building types. Over 830 projects have now achieved Green Star certification across Australia, including several Green Star – Communities projects such as Alkimos Beach (WA), Brisbane Airport (Qld) and Greater Curtin University Master Plan (WA), with a further 15 projects registered.

Green Star – Communities

The GBCA worked in consultation with industry and all levels of government on the development of a rating tool for sustainable development projects on a community scale; examining issues of economic, social and environmental importance. VicUrban, now Places Victoria, was a key supporter and sponsor of the Green Star – Communities rating tool, along with all other government land organisations. Sponsorship also came from local government, the Australian Government and industry.

The first step in developing the Green Star – Communities rating tool was to develop a national framework consisting of five best practice principles:

- Enhancing liveability
- Create opportunities for economic prosperity
- Foster environmental responsibility
- Embrace design excellence
- Demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance

Stage 2 of the project involved establishing best practice benchmarks and metrics for assessing and certifying sustainable communities. A set of 38 credits (now refined to 35 under Pilot 0.2) was then developed and tested on a number of projects across Australia. The Green Star – Communities PILOT rating tool was launched in June 2012.

The strategic directions of the *Master Plan*, listed below, are closely aligned to a number of categories and credits of Green Star – Communities:

- **A Market of Markets:** A place that supports and encourages sustainable market trading in all its varieties
- **A Melbourne Experience:** A place to experience Melbourne's local character, liveability and identity
- **A community meeting place:** A place to meet and connect with the diverse and vibrant communities of Melbourne.

The City of Melbourne, by making a commitment to seeking Green Star – Communities certification early in the planning process, has the ability to identify which of the Green Star – Communities credits could be referenced or adopted as guidelines, benchmarks or community indicators against which the *Master Plan* can be measured. Several examples of how the credits relate to the Strategic Directions and key outcomes outlined in the *Master Plan* are detailed below.

Design

As indicated in the *Master Plan*, Melbourne's central city is growing faster than any other area in Australia. The purpose of the Design category is to encourage sustainable urbanism through best practice planning and design practices. It seeks to create places for people, by encouraging smart growth, which is compact, connected and people-focussed.

Des-4 Urban Design, which is closely linked to the strategic vision of the *Master Plan*, aims to encourage and recognise projects that apply world-class urban design practices to their developments. Within the context of the Green Star – Communities rating tool, good urban design is that which enables the creation of coherent urban structures and connectivity between places. Urban design must take into account the needs and desires of a community and provide effective connectivity between transport, communication, social and physical infrastructure systems.

Governance

The purpose of the Governance category is to encourage and recognise developers and development that demonstrate leadership within the sector, by the establishment and maintenance of strong governance practices. The category promotes engagement, transparency, and community and industry capacity building. It also seeks to ensure that community developments are resilient to a changing climate.

Gov-4 Engagement is very much at the foundation of involving the community in proposed plans. The *Master Plan* and strategic brief prepared by the Queen Victoria Market management are two steps in producing an accessible engagement framework for the community. This credit aims to encourage and recognise projects that develop and implement a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy that is specific to the project, early in the planning process. Effective engagement is necessary for the development of a vision that is shared by all stakeholders across the community, industry, and government.

Liveability

The purpose of the Liveability category is to encourage and recognise developments that deliver safe, accessible and culturally rich communities. The category encourages the development of healthy and active lifestyles, and rewards communities that have a high level of amenity, activity, and inclusiveness.

Liv-1 Access to Amenities, which relates to ‘enhancing street life’; aims to encourage and recognise projects that have a high level of access to amenities. Having a diversity of amenities close to where people live and work contributes to convenience, walkability and wellbeing. The credit established a benchmark for the distance between residential uses, workplaces and/or educational facilities in the community to frequently used amenities.

Liv-2 Community Development, is closely aligned to ‘creating shared experiences that encourage social connections’; the credit aims to encourage and recognise projects that engages in and facilitates the development of the projects community. Providing facilities, programs and events for a community promotes cohesion and interaction. In turn this allows people to establish networks, build friendships and support each other. This credit encourages the development of activities in accordance with the needs of the community.

Liv-3 Healthy and Active Living, which relates to; ‘creating a pedestrian heart’; aims to encourage and recognise projects that promote healthy and active living. Effective planning, urban design and landscape architecture that support physical activity and social engagement contribute towards healthy and active living in the community. This credit encourages the delivery of tangible options which lead to health benefits and promotes an active lifestyle such as paths for walking, bicycle riding, or recreation facilities for exercising.

Liv-4 Access to Fresh Food, which relates to ‘promote our local produce’; aims to encourage and recognise projects that have access to fresh food locally. The credit rewards providing easy access to fresh food. It does so by promoting access to fresh food all year round by ensuring that the community is close to a source of fresh food, whether a retailer, or fresh food garden.

Liv 5 – Safe Places, is closely aligned to ‘welcome people 7 days a week’; the credit aims to encourage and recognise projects that are designed to reduce the opportunity of crime. The aim of the credit is to encourage projects to take measures towards reducing the likelihood of crime by ensuring good visibility and passive surveillance around potentially problematic areas.

Liv-6 Culture, Heritage & Identity, which relates to ‘celebrate our heritage’; aims to encourage and recognise the interpretation and celebration of culture, heritage and identity. The credit encourages projects to plan and implement the interpretation and celebration of culture, heritage and identity.

Economic Prosperity

The purpose of the Economic Prosperity category is to encourage and recognise developments that promote prosperity and productivity. The category encourages affordable living and housing, investment in education and skills development, and the facilitation of community capacity building. The Economic Prosperity category also promotes greater productivity via emerging opportunities in the digital economy.

Econ-1 Employment and Economic Resilience, which relates to ‘supporting emerging small business’; aims to encourage and recognise projects with local and diverse employment opportunities. The credit addresses the requirement by awarding points for a percentage of the generated job demand in specific fields that is locally serviced.

Econ-7 Digital Economy, aims to encourage development to deliver infrastructure that will enable efficient remote working facilities, best practice enterprise connectivity and the highest standards of wireless connectivity. These technologies can assist in the start of a long-term shift towards more flexible working arrangements and is aligned with ‘bringing people together’ within the precinct.

Environment

The purpose of the Environmental category is to reduce the impact of urban development on sensitive ecosystems. It encourages resource management and efficiency by promoting infrastructure, transport, and buildings, with reduced ecological footprints. The Environment category seeks to reduce the impacts of developments on land, water, and the atmosphere.

Env-1 – Sustainable sites, which is closely aligned to ‘become a sustainable site’; aims to encourage projects that avoid or minimise impacts on environmentally sensitive sites while recognising projects that reuse previously developed land and reclaim contaminated land using best practice remediation.

Env-11 Transport, encourages projects that reduce the environmental impact of transportation. The credit requires an Integrated Transport Plan to be developed which sets out how various forms of transport outcomes, particularly the existing and future public transport network and planning and provisions for active transport will be planned. This credit can assist in achieving the aim of the project to ‘create a pedestrian heart’.

Green Star – Communities Guide for Local Government

The Green Star – Communities Guide for Local Government is a resource for local governments to encourage development projects in their local government areas that will enhance liveability, contribute to local economic prosperity and deliver sustainable outcomes. Considering the alignment of the *Master Plan* with Green Star – Communities, the guide will be a useful resource for the City of Melbourne as it works through the development and implementation of the *Master Plan*. Please find a copy of the guide included with this submission and on our website at www.gbca.org.au.

Once again we commend the City of Melbourne on their commitment to apply the Green Star – Communities rating tool to the Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal Project. The GBCA looks forward to assisting the City to achieve a Green Star – Communities rating. I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you, your team and stakeholders involved further about this exciting project. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Luke Farr, Advocacy Coordinator – Local Government on 02 8239 6200, or via email at luke.farr@gbca.org.au, for further information, or to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely

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