



25 October 2024

Sarah Raso
Lead Chair
Activity Centres Standing Advisory Committee
Planning Panels Victoria
planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au

Dear Sarah,

Referral No. 9: Activity Centres Program – Niddrie and North Essendon Activity Centre Plan Referral to the Activity Centres Standing Advisory Committee

I refer to planning matters that form part of the Activity Centres Program (ACP), an initiative from *Victoria's Housing Statement, The decade ahead, 2024-2034*.

This referral relates specifically to the Niddrie (Keilor Road) Activity Centre Plan and North Essendon Activity Centre Plan. These Activity Plans will be implemented through a forthcoming Planning Scheme Amendment to introduce new planning controls for the activity centre.

Background

The Activity Centres Program is included in the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and seeks to deliver an additional 60,000 homes around an initial 10 activity centres across Melbourne. The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) is leading the ACP in partnership with the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA).

The Niddrie (Keilor Road) Activity Centre Plan and North Essendon Activity Centre Plan have been prepared by the VPA on behalf of DTP and will enable delivery of approximately 8500 – 10,100 dwellings in proximity to established jobs, services and public transport.

On 22 August 2024, the Minister for Planning appointed the Activity Centres Standing Advisory Committee (the Committee) to provide consistent advice for activity centre planning and outcomes in relation to the ACP in a transparent, timely and cost-efficient process on any matter referred to it.

Between 22 August and 29 September 2024, DTP and the VPA undertook public consultation for the Niddrie (Keilor Road) and North Essendon Activity Centre plans. The project has generated significant community interest and a total of 1804 submissions, including survey responses (numeric and free text), in-person feedback at consultation events, and written submissions were received for the Niddrie (Keilor Road) and North Essendon activity centres. Responses were received from current and potential future residents, businesses, government agencies, authorities, community groups, members of the development industry and Moonee Valley Council.

A summary of the targeted engagement undertaken and analysis of the matters raised following the targeted engagement, and changes proposed to the Niddrie (Keilor Road) and North Essendon Activity Centre plans in response to these submissions, is included with the referral of documentation.

Referral

In accordance with Clause 14 of your Terms of Reference (August 2024), and delegation provided to me, I have determined to seek advice and recommendations from the Committee on activity centre planning matters. Only select submissions received during consultation which are relevant to the matters listed in the table below are being referred to the Committee. The Committee's advice is only sought on the matters listed in the table below.

MATTER	ADVICE TO BE PROVIDED
Landscape setbacks	<p>It is proposed that landscape setbacks will support urban greening. Please advise whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the designated locations in the <i>draft Niddrie (Keilor Road) & draft North Essendon Activity Centre Plans (September 2024)</i> for landscape setbacks are suitable to achieve the intended purpose, including: 4m deemed to comply front landscaping setback as a (local variation) along sections of Queen Street for Fringe typology to align with the existing subdivision pattern. 2.5m deemed to comply front landscaping setback as a (local variation) along Limited Sensitivity typology on Mt Alexander Road. 1.5m deemed to comply front landscaping setback as a (local variation) to street frontages zoned Commercial 2 Zone (C2Z) to align with Moonee Valley's Development Overlay, Schedule 7 (DDO7).
Sun access	<p>It is proposed that sun access and protection is vital for public spaces and the open space network. It is proposed that sun and solar access standards are applied to streets, parks and open spaces. Please advise whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the designated locations in the <i>draft Niddrie (Keilor Road) & draft North Essendon Activity Centre Plans (September 2024)</i> is suitable to achieve the intended purpose.
Active Frontages	<p>It is proposed that some public interfaces should be designed to contribute to the use, activity, safety and interest of the public realm. Please advise whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the designated locations in the <i>draft Niddrie (Keilor Road) & draft North Essendon Activity Centre Plans (September 2024)</i> are suitable to achieve the intended purpose.
Master plans	<p>It is proposed that sites over 5,000sqm require additional controls to manage built form outcomes. The <i>draft North Essendon Activity Centre Plan (September 2024)</i> designates the sites recommended for a master plan. Please advise whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the designated locations in the Activity Centre Plan are suitable to achieve the intended purpose. <p>Note: Master planning requirements are not proposed in the <i>draft Niddrie (Keilor Road) Activity Centre Plan (September 2024)</i>.</p>
Building Height	<p>Please advise whether the proposed changes to the Building Height standard provide sufficient clear guidance for responsible authority's decision-making. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing deemed to comply height of 203-211 Keilor Rd from 10 storeys to 8 storeys as a (local variation) due to the conflict with Essendon Fields Airport's operation.

Catchment boundary	Having regard to the advice sought on the catchment boundary in the common matters (Referral 2), please advise if the extent of the proposed catchment boundary in Niddrie (Keilor Road) & North Essendon is consistent with the intended purpose.
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In accordance with Clause 12 of your Terms of Reference, the Committee must conduct its work with a view to maximising efficiency and timelines. As such, I look forward to the Committee providing its report to the Minister for Planning no later than 10 business days from receipt of this referral, in accordance with Clause 18 of the Terms of Reference.

Please find enclosed the supporting documents required by Clause 15 of the terms of reference.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Stefan Bettiol, Planning Manager at the Department of Transport and Planning.

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Reiter
Deputy Secretary Strategy & Precincts
Department of Transport and Planning

- Encl. The following referral documents have been shared with you electronically:
- Att A: Report addressing matters
 - Att B: Urban Design Draft Background Summary Report
 - Att C: Urban Design Draft Background Summary Report (Engagement version)
 - Att D: City of Centres Report
 - Att E: Schedule to the Built Form Overlay (example)
 - Att F: Niddrie Draft Activity Centre Plan
 - Att G: North Essendon Draft Activity Centre Plan
 - Att H: Submissions
 - Att I: Document list

- cc. Stuart Moseley, CEO, Victorian Planning Authority
Emily Mottram, Executive Director - Activity Centres, Department of Transport and Planning