



Fishermans Bend Draft Framework

Submission to public consultation

14 December 2017

An opportunity for a world class innovation precinct

The University of Melbourne welcomes the release of the *Draft Fishermans Bend Framework* and the opportunity to provide feedback. The *Draft Framework* provides a sound foundation to guide this significant urban regeneration project and to ensure that the bold vision set out in the *Fishermans Bend Vision* is realised.

The University believes the Employment Precinct represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to further enhance Melbourne's reputation and create a world class innovation precinct using the former GMH site as a catalyst project.

As a world class research, teaching and learning institution, the University of Melbourne already plays a key role in making Melbourne a thriving and innovative city. The University is committed to helping develop innovation precincts – places where 21st century jobs, research-based innovation and specialised local industries come together to create economic value.

There are many examples of innovation precincts that are effective in facilitating collaboration through place-based co-location. Precincts enable the free movement of ideas, and add dynamism to the social, cultural and economic development of its participating communities. In the research-intensive university context, the precinct model fits well with the existing strengths and social characteristics of universities, and is a means through which to amplify opportunities for innovation.

The *Draft Framework* highlights that the plan for the Fishermans Bend Employment Precinct is still in its early stages, in contrast to the more advanced plans for the neighbouring precincts of Montague, Sandridge, Lorimer, and Wirraway. The University notes that planning for the Employment Precinct over the next 12 months will see State and local government collaborating with industry and key stakeholders on the development of the National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC). The University of Melbourne will remain engaged as the planning process for the Employment Precinct unfolds, and welcomes the opportunity to further refine and realise the aspirations for the Employment Precinct over the coming months.

Key points

The University of Melbourne's submission provides comment on the plans for the development of the Employment Precinct as well as the transport connections required for the area and supports:

- identifying key features of successfully established innovation precincts to help inform planning decisions relating to the Employment Precinct and NEIC.
- adopting the eight 'Sustainability goals' proposed in the *Draft Framework*.
- extending tram services to Fishermans Bend to support connections to the CBD and other parts of Melbourne.
- further investigating the possibility of locating Metro stations and an underground line in Fishermans Bend.
- recognising the importance of 'appropriate management of contaminated land use to maximise user safety'.
- ensuring that the governance framework facilitates ongoing collaboration between the Government and relevant stakeholders.
- carefully developing appropriate funding models for the delivery of essential infrastructure.

For further information, or to discuss this submission, please contact Dr Julie Wells, Vice-Principal Policy and Projects at julie.wells@unimelb.edu.au or on (03) 8344 2639.

Innovation precincts

The development of a new innovation precinct at Fishermans Bend can draw on the experience of a number of well-known and pioneering global innovation districts. These include Kendall Square in Boston (MIT and Harvard); Silicon Valley (Stanford); Tel Aviv (Tel Aviv University, Technion and Hebrew University); Ideon in Lund, Sweden (Lund University) and BrainPort Eindhoven (TU/e).

Drawing from these international exemplars, along with experience of innovation precincts already established in Melbourne, a set of core elements of successful precincts stand out:

- **A leading university as an anchor tenant**, with active and growing links to other research and innovation precincts around the country.
- **Talented people**, along with the infrastructure, policy settings and projects to attract that talent. Successful precincts drive innovation outcomes by concentrating scarce resources on the people most likely to deliver breakthroughs. Talented people look for institutional reputation, career pathways, accommodation, project support and visa settings that can accommodate their professional aspirations.
- **A critical mass of high-performing companies** with complementary interests.
- **Co-location of collaborators**. There is growing empirical evidence for a causal link between proximity and research and innovation impact.
- **A culture of trust amongst participants**. Physical proximity supports relationships of trust, personal interaction and interdisciplinary collaboration, which maximises innovation outcomes.
- **A convergence of disciplines**, working on inquiries of mutual or complementary interest.
- **Activity density** around a core research enterprise.
- **Visibility and sociability** such that the precinct is embedded in a broader community.
- **Transport infrastructure** that allows movement within the precinct, and between it and the other parts of the metropolitan area.
- **Conscious design** as an area development process to ensure planning and design of the physical places is not left to chance and the 'adjacent possible' zone between potential collaborations is enhanced.¹

The University would welcome the opportunity to work with the Government in planning for the realisation of these core elements in the Employment Precinct.

Sustainability goals

The University of Melbourne strongly supports both the strategic directions, reconfirmed in the *Draft Framework*, and the newly identified 'Sustainability Goals'. These goals reflect a detailed and comprehensive approach to the development of Fishermans Bend, encompassing the social, cultural, environmental and economic considerations that ought to guide this development.

In our view, the key sustainability goal is 'a connected and liveable community'. Effective public transport links to the CBD and the rest of Melbourne are crucial to delivering the sustainability vision

¹ The idea of 'adjacent possibilities' started with evolutionary biologist Stuart Kauffman, who argued that people arrive at the best new ideas when they combine prior (adjacent) ideas in new ways.

and to realising the precinct's potential. Fishermans Bend, with a future 60,000 jobs and 80,000 residents, will require first-rate transport links across multiple transport modes if the potential of the precinct is to be optimally realised. Accordingly, the University strongly supports the medium-term and long-term actions around transport infrastructure, including the expansion of tram services from Collins Street into Fishermans Bend by 2025.

Tram services

Planned tram routes will complement existing transport links for employees in the Employment Precinct. These routes should be delivered as soon as practically possible to unlock the opportunity and ensure the future success of the precinct.

Recent analysis conducted by transport planners Arup reveal that a tram connection to the city would reduce travel time to Southern Cross Station by approximately 20 per cent (compared to existing bus services).

Extending regular bus services offers no significant time savings, adds to traffic congestion and should only be used as an interim measure before tram infrastructure, and eventually extended Metro services, connect Fishermans Bend to the city.

Melbourne Metro

The University supports further investigation of the possibility of locating Metro stations and an underground line in the Fishermans Bend area. Metro rail routes have the potential to reduce travel times from Fishermans Bend to the Southern Cross Station by 25 per cent, and would deliver significant reductions in travel time to other parts of Melbourne, improving access to the city for people living in the key transport corridors in the city's west and south.

Connecting Fishermans Bend to the Melbourne Metro network will also contribute to the recognition of the area as a centre of social and economic activity. Experience tells us that the cultural amenity which is an essential feature of a thriving innovation precinct tends to cluster around urban rail infrastructure. Metro stations based within Fishermans Bend would encourage this type of clustering.

The University acknowledges the level of investment required in order to extend Melbourne Metro into Fishermans Bend. A critical first step will be investment in public and active transport links to catalyse further investment in the precinct. Nonetheless, the inclusion of Fishermans Bend in the Melbourne Metro network should be part of the Government's long-term planning for the area.

Environmental remediation

It is essential that future planning around heritage controls and environmental remediation involves close collaboration between Government and private landowners. The University of Melbourne is pleased that the *Draft Framework* explicitly acknowledges the importance of "appropriate management of contaminated land to maximise user safety" (Objective 3.11). We also endorse the central role that the Environment Protection Authority is to play in achieving this objective.

Governance

This governance structures for Fishermans Bend should be tailored to recognise both the employment and residential aspirations for the precinct. In terms of employment growth this requires governance structures that foster collaboration across industry partners, attracts new employers to the precinct, and can deliver the hard and soft infrastructure that is so critical to a successful employment precinct.

As the Brookings Institute notes, successful innovation precincts rely on good governance:

Long-term success demands a collaborative approach to governance. An innovation district's work ethic and culture is "collaborate to compete". A bottom-up horizontal governance model—involving business, academic and civic institutions, government, workers, and residents—can best orchestrate what must be done collectively: identifying assets; design, finance and strategic initiatives; public space management; and evaluating progress.²

In innovation precincts, good governance involves having the right mix of entities and people engaged in the precinct, the right proximity to a research hub and businesses, the right policy settings, the right spaces and infrastructure to support collaboration and workload, and the right narrative or messaging to position the precinct for success and to attract new participants.

It is encouraging that the *Draft Framework* acknowledges that this work is important and necessary and will form part of the future work plan. Close collaboration between government and relevant partners will be critical to taking advantage of the opportunities that Fishermans Bend offers.

Planning Process for the Employment Precinct

The University is keen to understand the process for the planning of the Employment Precinct as plans and details of implementation are progressed in 2018. The University acknowledges that the framework planning for the Employment Precinct is preliminary in nature.

A crucial part of these plans are the funding models for delivering essential infrastructure. The *Draft Framework* refers to "a mix of funding sources, including direct developer pays systems such as an Infrastructure Contributions Plan." The University will be pleased to contribute to these discussions as the details of funding are further developed.

The University looks forward to the finalisation of the Framework Plan and to contributing to the ongoing planning for the realisation of the vision for this significant urban regeneration project.

² Julie Wagner et al. 'Twelve principles guiding innovation districts', Brookings Institute, 2017.