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C63**HOBSONS BAY KEY ISSUES AND STRATEGIC VISION****Snapshot of Hobsons Bay**

Hobsons Bay is sometimes described as the hidden gem of Melbourne's west. It is located on the northern shore of Port Phillip Bay between seven and 20 kilometres south-west of central Melbourne. It shares boundaries with the City of Wyndham to the west and the Cities of Maribyrnong and Brimbank to the north. To the east and the south, the municipality is bounded by water. The municipality has an area of 66 square kilometres.

Hobsons Bay is home to the diverse and vibrant communities of Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North, Brooklyn, Laverton, Newport, Seabrook, Seaholme, South Kingsville, Spotswood, Williamstown and Williamstown North. Each of these communities has its own unique character, ranging from the historic seaport of Williamstown, with its range of heritage buildings, to the newer residential areas of Altona Meadows and Seabrook.

Over the next decade or so, Hobsons Bay's population is forecast to increase to 89,800 in 2015 and reach 91,500 by 2020. Most of that growth is expected to be in the Altona North and Spotswood – South Kingsville neighbourhoods.¹ This can largely be attributed to suburb regeneration and the transition of Strategic Redevelopment Areas to residential use.

The age structure of the population is generally similar to that of the MSD. Approximately 17 per cent are aged under 18 years and a further 18 per cent are aged 60 years and over.² Like the rest of metropolitan Melbourne, Hobsons Bay has an ageing population.

While families with children under 15 years make up 40 per cent of all family types and are the predominant family type, one quarter of all households comprise people living alone. This is about two per cent above the MSD rate.³

The number living in each household is 2.53 people, lower than the MSD figure of 2.61.⁴ By 2020 the average household size in Hobsons Bay is forecast to drop to 2.43 people.⁵

Hobsons Bay is located on the eastern extremity of the lava plains that stretch from Melbourne to Mount Gambier in South Australia. The volcanic plains of Melbourne's Western Region are characterised by flat topography, basalt rock and originally, extensive native grasslands with relatively few substantial trees.

Hobsons Bay's rich natural environment is one of its greatest treasures. The area boasts over 20 kilometres of beaches and foreshore areas and is home to significant coastal wetlands, several creek systems, remnant native grasslands, and important flora and fauna habitats. The coastline is a major feature of the geography of Hobsons Bay and contains sections that are relatively unchanged by urban or recreational development.

The municipality shows huge potential for economic development due to its proximity to Melbourne's CBD and accessibility to ports and airports. The municipality is bounded by the Westgate Freeway/ Princes Highway to the north and the west. It is traversed east – west by the national freight rail line. The large tract of industrial land at the western end of the municipality is particularly well placed to take advantage of this road and rail network.

Areas where there are major concentrations of industry have been designated as Core industrial. These areas are relatively unconstrained by sensitive uses and provide opportunities for new growth. Some of the State's most significant industries, including petrochemical and petroleum refining industries are located here. Secondary Industrial areas designate smaller concentration of industry that remain of strategic importance to Hobsons Bay in terms of local economic development and employment. Protection of Core and Secondary Industrial areas is vital and non industrial protrusions that do not support the purpose of Core and Secondary Industrial areas will not be supported.

The culture of Hobsons Bay embraces a sense of pride and belonging. It celebrates the diversity of its people, their traditions, values and heritage to create and enhance an active community life for its people.

- 1 id Consulting, Hobsons Bay Population Forecasts
- 2 Australian Bureaus of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006
- 3 Australian Bureaus of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006
- 4 Australian Bureaus of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006
- 5 id Consulting, Hobsons Bay Population Forecast

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Key influences

The key influences in relation to the municipality are:

- Accommodating residential growth for future generations to facilitate urban consolidation.
- Increasing residential development pressure on heritage areas and coastal areas.
- Protection of environmentally significant areas for future generations.
- Operation of the municipality's national and state significant industries.
- Expansion of the Port of Melbourne.
- Increasing freight and traffic movement associated with the expansion of the Port of Melbourne and residential growth to the west of Melbourne.
- Protecting the local economy to ensure long term economic development and employment opportunities.
- The impacts of climate change, particularly the threat of sea level rise.
- Supporting healthy and sustainable activity centres.
- Managing the impacts associated with increasing tourism.

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Key Issues

The key issues facing Hobsons Bay are focused around the following strategic themes:

Settlement and Housing

- Protecting the quality and character of existing suburbs from pressure associated with urban consolidation.
- Protecting places and precincts of local heritage significance from inappropriate development.
- Protecting the foreshore from increasing high rise residential development pressure.
- The use of basement parking in areas potentially at risk from climate change, particularly sea level rise and storm surge events.
- Pressure to rezone and develop Strategic Redevelopment Areas prior to completion of a necessary planning framework.
- Defining a new neighbourhood character for the Strategic Redevelopment Areas which balances character and costs associated with remediation of former industrial sites.
- Accommodating urban growth largely in Strategic Redevelopment Areas to facilitate urban consolidation.
- Encouraging environmentally sustainable development.
- Balancing sustainable design with the protection of local heritage.

Environment

- Protecting and managing biologically significant areas including the Cheetham Wetlands, Williamstown Foreshore, Altona Bay, Kororoit Creek, Altona Foreshore, Truganina Drainage Basin and Greenwich Bay to ensure their environmental values for future generations.

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- Protecting and managing the municipality's creeks, waterways and wetlands to ensure their environmental and /or recreational value for the enjoyment of future generations, including:
 - Kororoit, Cherry, Skeleton and Laverton Creeks.
 - Cherry Creek Wetland (incorporating Cherry Lake).
 - Newport Lakes.
 - Truganina Swamp.
 - Altona Coastal Park.
 - Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve.
 - Williamstown Wetlands.
- Balancing development with the protection and management of areas of Native Grasslands.
- Protecting and managing the foreshore and the coast for public use and enjoyment.
- Protecting residents from the impacts of the increasing attraction of the foreshore and coastal areas as tourist destinations, particularly with regard to traffic and parking.
- Protecting and enhancing natural and cultural heritage significance for the enjoyment of future generations.
- The impacts of climate change, particularly sea level rise and storm surge events.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Encouraging environmental sustainability.

Economic Development

- Protecting National and State significant industries, including some of Victoria's largest petroleum, chemical and manufacturing industries from encroachment of residential or other sensitive uses.
- Supporting the growth, development and expansion of industrial enterprises in Core and Secondary industrial areas.
- Limitation on the establishment and redevelopment of industries due to the application of Employee Population Density Controls.
- Managing the movement of freight and industrial traffic through the municipality to minimise local impacts.
- The sustainable growth of designated major activity centres.
- Responding appropriately to development pressure and activity to support the growth of other sustainable activity centres.
- Supporting and strengthening existing businesses.
- Managing the impacts of increasing tourism on local amenity, particularly in respect of traffic and parking.
- Developing a balanced local economy and local employment opportunities for residents.

Infrastructure

- Increasing traffic congestion from growing freight movement and residential growth in Hobsons Bay and neighbouring municipalities, particularly Wyndham.
- Increasing traffic congestion due to the limited number of access roads to the municipality and lack of north - south transport routes in the municipality.
- Improving connectivity by facilitating the provision and enhancement of north - south linkages.

- Increasing shortage of on-street parking in Williamstown associated with existing historical built form and on - site parking dispensations.
- Providing new and replacing ageing infrastructure to meet the needs of existing and future residents, businesses and industries in response to increasing populations, particularly in and around Strategic Redevelopment Areas.
- Providing well designed community facilities in convenient locations throughout the municipality.
- Ensuring the provision of appropriate community and social infrastructure to integrate new residential neighbourhoods within established areas.
- Providing attractive, functional and sustainable built form in existing and future developments.
- The restructure of inappropriate subdivisions.

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Strategic Vision

The Council's vision for Hobsons Bay is:

- 'Working together to achieve a vibrant, diverse and sustainable community that simultaneously pursues economic success, environmental quality and social equity to provide opportunities for all.'
- Hobsons Bay has a strong commitment towards achieving positive environmental, cultural, social, economic and urban planning outcomes that promote an equitable and inclusive community through a City that:
 - Allows for increased housing growth and provides for diverse housing needs in a way that complements the valued urban village characteristics of its neighbourhoods.
 - Encourages sustainable development and design excellence.
 - Encourages built form that achieves harmony between the old and new fabric.
 - Values and protects its natural, historic and cultural landforms and buildings as local, regional and state tourist attractions.
 - Values its retail strip shopping centres and maintains their village character and atmosphere.
 - Recognises the contribution of its National and State significant and major industrial enterprises and protects and supports their continued operations.
 - Balances and manages the expansion of industries with residential growth to protect amenity.
 - Provides employment opportunities through a diversity of industrial uses.
 - Encourages 'green' industry which respects the community and the environment.
 - Manages and appropriately addresses the interface between industry and other sensitive uses.
 - Provides for an integrated network of convenient, functional, accessible and sustainable modes of transport.
 - Protects and enhances the coast, waterways, flora and fauna, parks and open spaces with their distinct natural features.
 - Encourages residents and visitors to value the environment and use it to enhance their health and wellbeing.
 - Supports a diverse range of tourism, leisure and cultural attractions and experiences to enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors without detracting from the municipality's village character and atmosphere.

The key to achieving this vision is the recognition that various parts of the municipality have to be managed differently and that development potential must consider and respond to local neighbourhood context. A 'one size fits all approach' across the municipality cannot be applied.

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Strategic Framework Plan

The Hobsons Bay Strategic Framework Plan (Figure 1) provides an overview of land use in Hobsons Bay. It identifies locations where specific land use outcomes will be supported and promoted.

The major strategic directions identified in the Hobsons Bay Strategic Framework Plan include:

- Transitioning appropriate Strategic Redevelopment Areas and major activity centres to accommodate urban growth.
- Significant open space areas, including:
 - The coastline and foreshore.
 - Biologically significant Cheetham Wetlands, Williamstown Foreshore and Altona Bay.
 - Areas of faunal significance including Kororoit Creek, Altona Foreshore, Truganina Drainage Basin and Greenwich Bay.
 - Laverton North Grasslands.
 - Valuable ecological and environmental areas of Cherry Lake, Newport Lake, Truganina Swamp, Altona Coastal Park and the Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve.
- Areas of local heritage significance.
- Coastal areas at risk from high rise residential development.
- Areas at risk from climate change.
- Major transport links.
- Areas identified for Core industrial and Secondary industrial areas.
- Areas and features identified for tourism potential.

Figure 1 - Strategic Framework Plan

