

Part 3

A sustainable Coburg

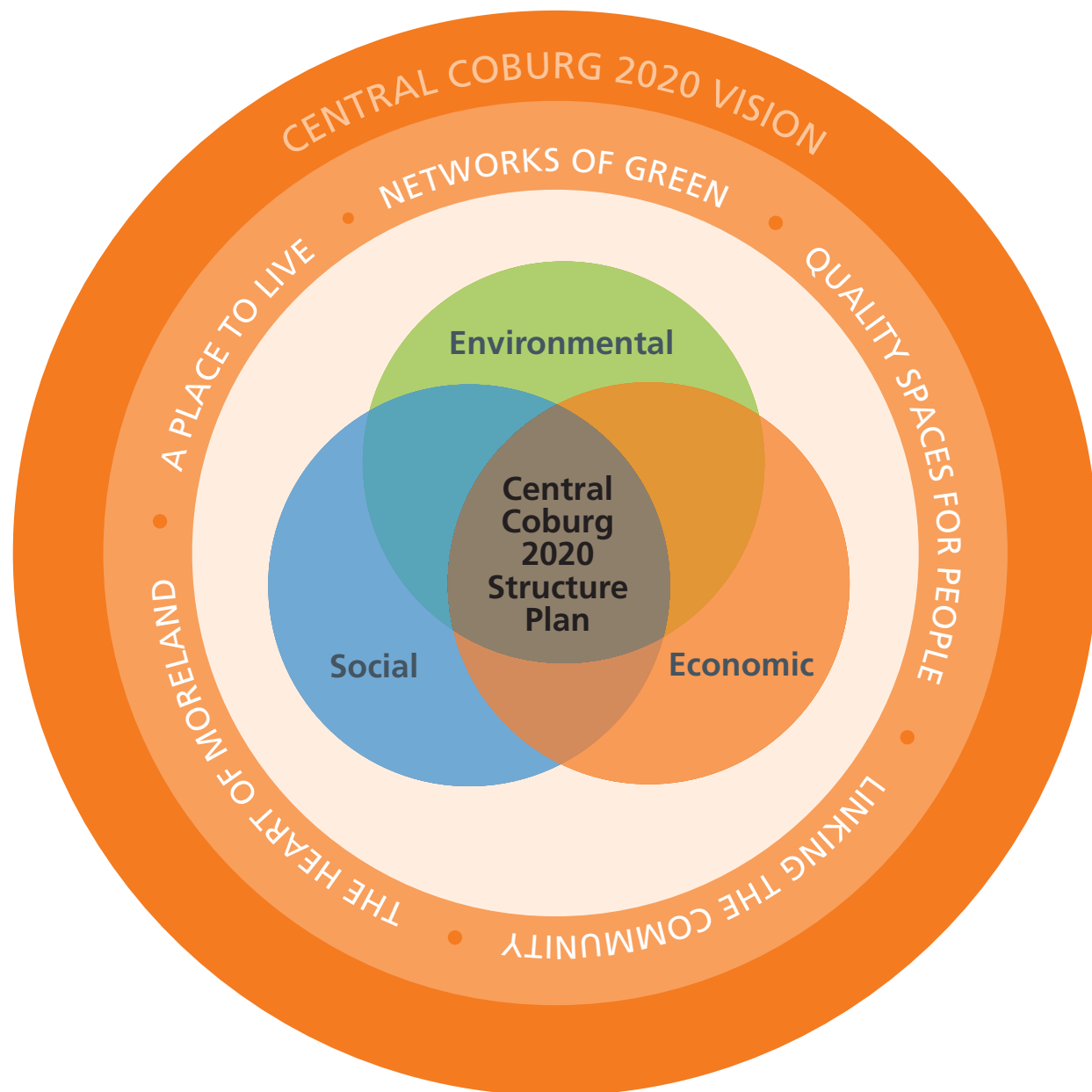
Council is committed to ensuring that the *Central Coburg 2020 Structure Plan* is developed and implemented with sustainability firmly in mind. Sustainability is defined as development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Implicit within this definition is the notion of inter-generational equity.



Sustainability requires Council to ensure that social, cultural, economic and environmental factors are considered in all decisions that affect the activity centre.

Figure 3.1 illustrates how the *Central Coburg 2020 Structure Plan* has been developed from a sustainability or triple-bottom line perspective.

Figure 3.1 Developing Central Coburg 2020 Structure Plan from a sustainability perspective



Central Coburg 2020 strives to:

- be a catalyst for change by providing the cornerstone of sustainable development in Moreland
- provide innovation, design excellence, vibrancy and healthy living, working and recreational environments
- maximise the ongoing environmental, social and economic benefits of all new development.

Social, environmental and economic objectives have been developed to outline in more detail these key drivers of the plan.

Environmental

While predominantly a built-up urban area, Central Coburg also comprises pockets of natural environment that play a significant role in maintaining human spiritual and physical wellbeing. Green spaces, including Coburg City Oval and McDonald Reserve, along with private gardens, landscaped areas and planted streetscapes, serve to break up the hard built form, providing increased permeability and natural filters for Moreland's air, land and waterways. They also provide shade and shelter, habitat, and relief from the hustle and bustle of life in a busy, thriving centre, as is Coburg.

In addition, Coburg gains notable environmental, social and economic

benefits as a result of its proximity to the Merri and Moonee Ponds Creeks; these creeks are now recognised as regional habitat corridors and as part of the regional open space network for recreation. All stormwater in Coburg drains to the Merri Creek via the Harding Street main drain which is currently operating at capacity, meaning that stormwater management is critical to the area.

Healthy soil and air are an integral part of a healthy ecosystem. But unfortunately, historic development and land-use practices, in combination with increased traffic congestion have had a serious impact on the quality of our soil and air. Central Coburg has a number of identified areas where soils are eroded and/or land is contaminated.

Moreland's green spaces also serve to combat a phenomenon known as the 'urban heat island' (UHI) effect, where urban areas can experience a rise in ambient temperatures and hence a rise in energy usage, due to the increased use of mechanical cooling and air conditioning. The higher temperatures can be attributed mainly to heat-absorbing dark hard surfaces (asphalt paving in roads and car parks, black-topped roofs, etc.) that often dominate the urban landscape. Minimising UHIs can be achieved most effectively by increasing the amount of green space in cities – increasing vegetation – which cools

the surrounding air through evapo-transpiration and also helps to mitigate the creation of smog.

Development in Coburg aims to reduce the UHI effect through several initiatives: by enhancing green, landscaped areas; consolidating open, asphalt parking areas; incorporating water sensitive urban design into car park and road network redevelopment; and encouraging building roof design that minimises heat absorbance and where appropriate, incorporates roof top gardens.

A sustainable future for Coburg can only be achieved if we begin to use our resources more efficiently and reduce the environmental impact of our land-use and development practices.

The three most critical resource use areas for the City of Moreland and Coburg are considered to be:

- water
- energy
- materials.

Management of these resource areas is intended to address the critical environmental impact issues of greenhouse gas emissions, the generation of waste, and urban planning and development.

Moreland City Council has long recognised the importance of integrating ecological considerations

into all levels of decision making and operations. Since 1996, Council has developed 10 Council and community strategies, focused on specific aspects of environmental sustainability, and has incorporated sustainability principles into each of its four high-level policy documents: the Mayor's Speech, the Council Plan, the *Municipal Strategic Statement* and the Municipal Public Health Plan.

Moreland's environmental leadership and commitment to the sustainability agenda can also be recognised in Moreland's Sustainable Tools for Environmental Performance Strategy (STEPS), which has led to the development of two on-line tools for the evaluation of the environmental performance of residential and non-residential development. These tools, Moreland STEPS and the Sustainable Design Scorecard Non-residential, have been trialled by Council on a voluntary basis since May 2005.

Broad ESD objectives

The *Central Coburg 2020 Structure Plan* seeks to maximise opportunities to meet the following ESD objectives.

Healthy waterways and efficient water use

- Adopting an integrated urban water cycle management plan for the Harding Street main drain catchment.

- Ensuring all road network redevelopment integrates water sensitive urban design.
- Maximising on-site stormwater collection, treatment and re-use for all new development.
- Maximising the use of alternate water supplies for non-potable uses (e.g. open space irrigation).
- Appropriate landscaping to minimise water use and increase permeability.

Greenhouse gas reduction and efficient energy use

- Creating the 'Coburg Solar Village' as part of the Solar Cities Program with the assistance of the Moreland Energy Foundation.
- Ensuring adequate solar access for new and existing development.
- Maximising energy efficient design and the use of renewable energy technologies within new development in the activity centre.
- Retro-fit renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency improvements with existing businesses and residents.

Clean air

- Promoting and enhancing sustainable transport options to relieve vehicle congestion and associated air pollution:

- redevelop the Coburg public transport interchange
- widen footpaths
- provide greater amenity through creation of thoroughfares.

- Increasing streetscape planting, where appropriate.
- Fostering co-location/mixed-use development to encourage less trips.

Enhanced biodiversity

- Improving provision of open space (public and private) and vegetation outcomes.
- Planting street trees.
- Ensuring appropriate landscaping for all new developments.
- Maximising weed management and habitat vegetation.

Healthy soil

- Undertaking site remediation where required.

Efficient materials use and waste minimisation

- Ensuring construction and waste management plans required for all development sites.
- Maximising use of environmentally preferable construction materials.
- Minimising waste to land fill.



Social

Social sustainability is the investment and use of social resources to meet the need of current generations without compromising the capacity of future generations to realise their aspirations. The social sustainability of Coburg requires foresight in planning to ensure that investment in social infrastructure facilitates just and equitable social outcomes now and into the future. Additionally, the established communities within Coburg must not be disadvantaged or displaced by the development of the centre.

Social planning objectives have been developed to guide decision making with respect to the planning and provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services in Central Coburg. These reflect existing state and local policy directions and the findings of the research and consultation process undertaken to develop the social and cultural needs assessment. The objectives have been developed to support an integrated approach to planning and service delivery and to ensure that key social values inform future initiatives.

Social planning objectives for Central Coburg 2020 include:

- integrating municipal and regional community services that will support the role of the centre as a community hub

- developing the role of the centre in building community capacity and creativity through access to space, resources, knowledge and learning
- planning for sustainable models of service delivery, that are effective in the delivery of identified social outcomes and responsive to changing needs over time
- optimising the use of public space for informal leisure and social interaction
- providing opportunities for the expression and integration of cultural heritage and identity
- providing multi-modal access to the centre (i.e. planning for the use and integration of different types of transport into the centre)
- optimising pedestrian and cycling connectivity of the centre with surrounding areas
- supporting the value of social diversity through the housing, service and facility mix provided in the centre.

These objectives acknowledge the complementary role of the centre as a focus for civic and community activity, both through the provision of facilities and services and the design of public spaces to support community interaction. A key theme is the support for and reflection of social and cultural diversity through services, spaces and design. The

principles support key state and local policy objectives to improve the integration, flexibility and efficiency of social infrastructure, and imply a partnership approach to future initiatives. The principles therefore have implications for all stages of the planning process, including the nature of future housing, the development of physical spaces, location of future development and the service models that are integrated into the activity centre.



Economic

Economic sustainability is a critical component of the wider sustainability agenda, in context with environmental and social development. Achieving economic sustainability requires working for a fair and prosperous local economy that maximises employment opportunities, builds on the strengths of local, traditional industry and develops new economic opportunities. These benefits need to be spread throughout the community. A key priority for Central Coburg 2020 will be to pursue economic prosperity by protecting and enhancing employment opportunities. This will be achieved through broadening the mix of economic and community benefits in context with achieving environmental quality and social equity.

The Coburg Activity Centre is one of the municipality's major shopping and community centres, catering significantly to a local catchment and primarily a food-orientated centre which also offers a wide range of local convenience weekly shopping and personal and professional services. Coburg's key strength is also as a community centre, indicated by the presence of a diverse range of community activities.

Economic objectives for Central Coburg 2020 include:

- developing business and employment practices that promote economic, social and environmental sustainability
- ensuring that new building design and infrastructure is based on environmentally and economically sound design that is sustainable, healthy and affordable
- broadening the mix of uses appropriate to enhancing the broader lifestyle/cafe culture and destination stores
- encouraging economic activity and business synergies via a range of initiatives as supported by Council's economic development and employment strategy policies
- supporting the viability and growth of existing and new business including:
 - retail and retail-related business
 - office and service sector within the centre
 - home-based business within and on the periphery of the centre
- providing training and education opportunities within the centre
- continuing to work with a range of partners to further strengthen the Coburg economy via land use planning strategies, facilitating infrastructure improvements, identifying local economic development priorities, developing sustainable business practices and advocating on behalf of business.