

Theme 3

A Prosperous National Employment Cluster

Promote the development of the La Trobe NEIC and ensure the Banyule economy is a key beneficiary of the cluster's future economic success.

Overview

The La Trobe NEIC is a critical economic precinct for the Banyule economy. The precinct includes La Trobe University, the Northland Shopping Centre and the Austin Biomedical Alliance Precinct, plus a concentration of other health, research, commercial and retail activities in and around the Heidelberg MAC.

Given the limited planning for the cluster to date, Council and government need to distil La Trobe's value proposition for target industry sectors, enterprise and service providers. Industry sectors that stand to benefit from the cluster and its future amenity, service and infrastructure advantages need to be identified and targeted for facilitation and investment attraction.

The following strategic directions and projects are designed to leverage Banyule's specialisations within the precinct and ensure substantial economic benefits are captured within the local economy.

Strategic Directions

3.1: Support completion of planning for the cluster

3.2: Understand the future role of HWBP and ensure its sustainability

3.3: Facilitate growth of the health and food industries

Indicators of Success

- Planning for the cluster progresses towards completion
- Support growth in the health and food industries within the cluster
- Increase in infrastructure funding from the public sector for the precinct in Banyule



Strategic Directions



3.1: Support Completion of Planning for the Cluster

To date, there has been limited work undertaken to understand the economic development opportunities for the La Trobe NEIC. The Framework Plan for the cluster has remained in draft form since 2017 and is supported by very limited economic research.

Council must encourage completion of planning for the cluster given the significant economic benefits, particularly from an employment perspective, expected to flow into Banyule as a result of the precinct's future growth. Although cluster planning is a state-led initiative, Council has an opportunity to facilitate (and fast-track) the planning phase through advocacy efforts and can also ensure the municipality is positioned to maximise benefits as the precinct develops over time.

There are significant assets within the NEIC that sit outside the Banyule municipal boundary, including La Trobe University and Northland Shopping Centre. These two sites are planning significant investment over the next decade to expand their footprint within the broader economy.

This presents a strong opportunity for Banyule to leverage the significant investment planned in proximity to its municipality. This will need to consider the nature of the planned investment, as well as alignment to existing strengths of the Banyule economy.



3.2: Understand the Future Role of HWBP and Ensure its Sustainability

There is an emerging and changing role for the Heidelberg West Business Park, which is considered an important asset for Banyule's economy. Whilst the precinct continues to provide manufacturing and warehousing in a traditional industrial form, there is an evolving role for the precinct to support higher technology production and services.

Understanding the future profile of the industrial precinct is important to ensure the growth potential of the precinct is maximised. Opportunities exist to explore the potential of leveraging future investment at La Trobe University in the food science and biotech industries, as well as activating the precinct via the night time economy.

Consultation indicated existing issues associated with parking, lighting, streetscape, amenity and public transport access (particularly the southern end) that also need to be addressed in future planning. There is also an opportunity over the longer term to transition the management model of the activity centre network to include industrial precincts and provide a more holistic approach to the management of all economic precincts in Banyule, including HWBP.



3.3: Facilitate Growth of the Health and Food Industries

Ensuring the health precinct is able to reach its growth potential in a sustainable and orderly manner should be a focus for the Strategy. Supporting the precinct is also important given the substantial share of economic value associated with the health industry in Banyule.

Consultation with the local health sector revealed the potential for much stronger collaboration between the industry and Council, as well as an opportunity to implement training and skills support that aligns with the employment needs of the health sector.

Food manufacturing and warehousing is an emerging industry that can attract significant business (and government) investment and support domestic market opportunities, including tourism. There is an opportunity to grow this sector further through targeted investment attraction.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

Note: Indicative costs are subject to confirmation and are assumed to be expenditure beyond the existing budget. In instances where projects are able to be delivered within existing resources, or where costs are unknown, these are listed as 'N/A'. Importantly, these costs do not refer to specific internal staffing requirements for Council.

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Planning & Advocacy*	Continue advocacy work with state government to complete planning for the cluster. Council should also establish a steering committee that includes a mix of key industry and government stakeholders to regularly meet and discuss progress of the cluster's development. The committee could also explore the key economic development opportunities for the cluster, with a focus on benefits accrued in Banyule.	Economic Development, Strategic Planning & Urban Design, Advocacy, Engagement & Communications	Industry representatives, Darebin City Council	High	Ongoing	N/A
HWBP Masterplan	Develop a masterplan to understand and address the future industry profile and role of the HWBP. The investigation should have consideration for the evolution of surrounding areas, such as La Trobe University, and the precinct's ability to leverage changing economic landscapes (e.g. food science, biotech industries).	Strategic Planning & Urban Design, Economic Development		High	Medium	\$50k
HWBP Governance Review	Undertake an investigation into the ideal governance and funding model for the HWBP going forward.	Economic Development		Medium	Medium	\$20k
HWBP Renewable Energy Feasibility Study	Investigate the feasibility for HWBP to transition to renewable energy generation.	Transport & Environment, Economic Development		High	Long	N/A

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Industry Attraction Strategy	Develop an Industry Attraction Strategy for the health and food industries that includes business attraction strategies promoting Banyule's advantages, and also identifies measures that encourages businesses to relocate. This should be linked to Council's business attraction services.	Economic Development		Medium	Long	N/A
Employment Land Assessment	Ensure adequate zoned land supply to attract new industry in appropriate locations within the cluster (in Banyule). This includes provision of sufficient commercial and/or industrial land, to ensure there is availability for potential businesses to invest.	Strategic Planning & Urban Design		Medium	Medium	N/A

*Note these actions/programs are already delivered by Council in some capacity.

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicator	Monitoring
<i>Planning for the cluster progresses towards completion</i>	Annually, via Council's records
<i>Support growth in the health and food industries within the cluster</i>	Annually, via ABS data/Council's records
<i>Increase in infrastructure funding from the public sector for the precinct in Banyule</i>	Annually, via Council's database