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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **VCAT AFFIRMS COUNCIL'S VISION FOR DONCASTER HILL**

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) has upheld a decision by the Manningham City Council to refuse to grant a permit for the establishment of a Mercedes Benz showroom and service centre at 632-640 Doncaster Road, Doncaster.

Manningham Mayor Cr Bill Larkin said the VCAT decision sends a strong message of support for Council's vision for the development of an integrated 'sustainable urban village' on Doncaster Hill.

"The Mercedes proposal was deemed by Council (and supported by VCAT) as an underdevelopment of a key site within the Doncaster Hill precinct and VCAT's ruling affirms Council decision that a permit not be granted. This is a significant step in the implementation of Council's long term vision for the Doncaster Hill Activity Centre."

"The VCAT order was glowing in its praise for Council's Doncaster Hill strategy. The decision is a great result for those who have been supporting the Doncaster Hill project and the long term development of a high density residential and mixed use precinct, that showcases ESD (ecologically sustainable development) principles and best practice."

"Council is keen to have discussions with the owners regarding interim uses of the land that will satisfy their short term requirements, prior to development of the land in accordance with the Doncaster Hill Strategy," he said

In handing down the decision, the Tribunal stated:

"... we find that this proposal fails to meet the objectives set out in the planning scheme for Doncaster Hill and this precinct in particular. The development is not high-rise or high-density but is dramatically lower than the preferred height. It is not mixed use but caters only for a single use, namely motor vehicle sales and service. No interaction will occur between the public and the private realms through the provision of people-generating uses such as cafes, restaurants and outdoor seating and no advantage is taken in this respect of the north-facing aspect or views. The building does not contribute towards the preferred style of urban form along Doncaster Road by providing a continuous built edge and an active pedestrian space within the setback. The building may be contemporary in style and incorporate ESD features, but it contributes nothing to the broader

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sustainability objectives of mixed use development underlying the notion of a sustainable urban village.”

The VCAT order went on to state:

“We further find that not only will the proposal fail to meet the objectives of the planning scheme, it will undermine the potential for those objectives to be achieved in a broader context because:

- It will compromise the urban design vision for Doncaster Hill.
- It will compromise the potential to achieve the levels of development which are planned for Doncaster Hill.
- It will set an undesirable precedent and send a message to other developers that the planning scheme objectives can be ignored.
- It will detract from the preferred future character of the area.”

Cr Larkin said the Tribunal acknowledged that Manningham Council is at the forefront of Council’s that are preparing structure plans for their activity centres.

“The VCAT decision sends a clear message to residents and developers that Council’s strategic vision for Doncaster Hill and its place in the State Government’s Melbourne 2030 strategy, is alive and well.”

“Through the Doncaster Hill Strategy, Manningham Council will continue to encourage development within the precinct that is high density, mixed use and sustainable.”

“Doncaster Hill is an exciting project that will become one of Melbourne’s most prestigious residential areas and set a benchmark in urban and environmental planning,” he said.

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