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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **DONCASTER HILL – A VIRTUAL EYE ON THE FUTURE**

Minister for Planning, Hon Mary Delahunty, stepped into the future today launching the Virtual Reality Model (VRM) and taking a Virtual Tour of Manningham's Doncaster Hill urban village.

Manningham Mayor, Cr Patricia Young, said Council appreciated the Minister taking the time out from her hectic schedule to see the application of the VRM technology first hand.

"The development of a three dimensional model of existing and potential built form, has allowed Manningham Council to view built forms options, including appropriate building heights and physical form."

"Virtual Reality Modelling is incredibly useful for property developers and planners who can use this digital technology to help their audiences better understand development proposals," she said.

In February 2000, Manningham City Council commissioned RMIT's Interactive Information Institute (I-Cubed) to develop a planning and presentation tool to assist Council in determining an appropriate scale of development for Doncaster Hill.

In 2002, the model was further refined allowing testing of the urban design guidelines for Doncaster Hill.

Manningham City Council and the Urban Futures Foundation, a part of I-Cubed were funded in 2003 through the Melbourne 2030 Implementation Local Government Assistance Grants to progress research into VRM techniques as a planning and communication tool.

The upgraded model features extra detail of the public domain of Doncaster Hill. The VRM can also be widely accessed through various formats including a DVD, CD-rom, website and an advanced capability of running the model real time on Council's own computers.

The latest addition to the Doncaster Hill model also includes the proposed Doncaster Westfield Shopping Town expansion.

Cr Young said Virtual Reality Modelling of an urban development project enables viewers to 'walk through' and visualise future urban environments.

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“The model is an invaluable planning and communication tool, it allows Council, planners, developers and the community to experience and evaluate the future urban environment for the whole precinct. Confident judgements can be made about scale, height, relationship to context and long distance views and vistas.”

“Users can navigate along roads, around sites, building exteriors and facilities. It also allows viewers to examine proposed built forms from various vantage points and to assess the impact of future developments,” she said.

**Media enquiries contact Noel McMahon on 9840 9328.**