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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **DONCASTER HILL VIRTUALLY LEADS THE WAY**

Minister for Planning, Hon Mary Delahunty, will step into the future when she takes a Virtual Tour of Manningham's Doncaster Hill urban village.

Minister Delahunty will visit Manningham Council offices at 699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster at 10 am on Friday 5 November, 2004 to launch the Virtual Reality Model (VRM) and the Doncaster Hill Sustainability Guidelines.

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.

Manningham Mayor, Cr Patricia Young, said the visit will enable the Minister to see the application of 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.

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

“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.”

Cr Young said the launch of the Sustainability Guidelines, a joint public-private project between Manningham City Council and DesignInc, was an equally important occasion.

The Guidelines are part of a wider ESD package, which also includes

- Provisions under the Manningham Planning Scheme
- A Sustainability Design Taskforce
- And an In-house Process Manual

“The Sustainability Guidelines demonstrate Manningham Council’s leadership in local government in encouraging and supporting genuine sustainable development.”

“Manningham City Council is especially committed to ensuring that ESD principles are incorporated into future development projects located on Doncaster Hill.”

“The Sustainability Guidelines have been developed as a direct response to the industry’s and community’s need for a clear and user-friendly tool about sustainable practice.”

“The Guidelines break new ground by consolidating into a single publication an outline of the numerous techniques that constitute current world best practise in the theory and application of sustainable design and construction,” she said.

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