

Port Pirie CBD Regeneration and Master Plan

Summary

Council is proposing a major upgrade of the Port Pirie CBD in accordance with a Master Plan. This project is based upon the findings of a Retail Assessment and Employment Lands Study and involves the Regeneration of the CBD environs to improve Port Pirie as a Regional Service Centre, increase retail spend and employment opportunities.

The overall project has an estimated cost of \$20M and would involve the upgrade of the roads and Infrastructure. There would be improved landscaping, foot path paving, and improved road surfaces, provision of suitable street furniture and installation of public art features. Stage one would be the upgrade of Florence Street, Norman Street and Alexander Street, has an estimated cost of \$7.1m. Council is seeking \$5M to add to the Councils proposed \$2.1M to facilitate stage one.



Port Pirie CBD Rejuvenation – Geographical Location

Background

Port Pirie CBD has been identified as being tired with increasing retail vacancies, currently at 10%, and lacking in vitality. The environment of the CBD is not considered conducive to destination retailing and as a result the City is not capturing all available spend within its catchment.

Port Pirie is also a City reliant on a single employer and to improve the robustness of the local economy, diversification is required. As the major employer by sector, the retail industry offers significant opportunities to improve and diversify economic activity.

In 2012 the Port Pirie Regional Council undertook an award winning Employment Lands Survey and a Retail Assessment for Port Pirie. The Employment Land Study identified the retail sector as being the largest employer in the City, employing some 1043 people and accounting for 17.4% of jobs. The Port Pirie Retail Analysis, June 2012, identified that the City secures almost all of its convenience shopping expenditure and approximately 70% of its comparison shopping expenditure from the primary catchment. However, the City only secures some 30-40% of the convenience expenditure and 40-50% of comparison expenditure in the secondary catchment.



The combined primary and secondary catchments extend across a number of Local Government Boundaries from Melrose in the North to Port Broughton in the South and East to Peterborough and have a total population of in excess of 26,000 people.

In order for Port Pirie to increase the overall retail expenditure in the City, it has been identified that there is a need for investment in services, infrastructure and an improved image to stimulate an increased level of penetration into the secondary catchment and decrease leakage from the primary and secondary catchment. If the retail spend in the Port Pirie CBD as a regional centre is maximised, it would improve Port Pirie as an opportunity for retail investment, resulting in an increased and broader offer of goods and services and an increase in employment. The Retail Assessment has identified that for every 100sqm of retail floor space there are in the order of 3 full time equivalent employment positions.

If it were possible to attract retailers to occupy the 8,100sqm of vacant retail floor space, this would equate to in the order of 243 new jobs.

The CBD Master Plan is considered to provide a platform to change the image of Port Pirie and to secure additional retail expenditure. This in turn would improve the viability of other retailers establishing in Port Pirie and reduce leakage to other centres, including Adelaide. These additional retailers are expected to be predominantly comparison goods retailers and the improved provision of this type of retailing would address an underlying community need. The diversification of the local economy into a service centre is seen as important to the long term growth of the town. The City and region has historically been reliant on a single major employer, the smelter, which has created a city whose economic growth and stability is based predominantly on the success or failure of that employer. Recently the smelter has announced a significant upgrade to its plant that will reduce emissions and provide a cleaner and more environmentally friendly operation. This is significant in terms of the perception of Port Pirie and offers an opportunity to enhance the image of the City and Region. However, it is anticipated that the upgrade will also reduce the reliance of the smelter on its contract workforce for much of the maintenance program. This has the potential to negatively impact on the long term employment in the city.

To decrease the reliance of the economy of the Region on the smelter and to diversify the economy it's sensible to expand upon existing strengths. The retail sector, its catchment size and the connectivity and accessibility of Port Pirie provides an opportunity for sustainable economic growth. The growth of the retail centre would improve employment and the attractiveness of Port Pirie as a place to live, work and invest.



CBD Master Plan

The aim of the Master Plan is to improve the CBD, including the streetscape, signage, branding and essential infrastructure to make it a major retail and recreation destination for the mid north region. The total cost of the upgrade works is in the order of \$20m, which would be undertaken over time. Stage one of the overall project, being the upgrade of Florence Street, Norman Street and Alexander Street, has an estimated cost of \$7.1m.

Physically, the proposal would involve the upgrade of the roads and Infrastructure. There would be improved landscaping, foot path paving, and improved road surfaces, provision of suitable street furniture and installation of public art features.

The project would not include any enhancements to any land that is privately owned or out of Council care and control. It is envisaged that a partnership arrangement with the Chamber of Commerce would see an improvement in the buildings in the CBD by landowners being encouraged to act on their own initiative.



Outcomes

The CBD Regeneration and Master Plan is a regeneration project aimed at the retail sector of Port Pirie. It also reflects a broader aim to diversify the local economy in a sustainable way by facilitating the development of Port Pirie as a Regional Service Centre for the Mid North. This is particularly important for Port Pirie, which has a reliance on a single employer, the smelter.