



Activity Centres Development Framework

In August 2004, the State Government endorsed the *Network city Framework* and the *Network city Action Plan* as the strategy framework for planning for the Perth and Peel metropolitan regions. Since this time, various pieces of work have been carried out that analyse and detail the metropolitan structure, however this has not come together to form a comprehensive policy to guide the planning, development and management of activity centres and corridors. Many local governments understand the social and economic consequences of one-dimensional retail-dominated employment profiles. They are unable to develop or maintain vibrant activity centres; they are unable to attract new businesses to their area; their labour force productivity is low, unemployment rates are high; and they carry a large burden of providing social welfare support services in their communities.

Transport planners see increasing peak hour transport congestion, because residents must travel large distances to work in the knowledge economy. Knowledge intensive occupations are concentrated in the CBD and surrounds, but the numbers of knowledge workers is increasing right throughout the metropolitan area. Rising private transport costs and environmental consequences are pushing the transport network towards failure.

Part of the solution can be found in decentralising knowledge-intensive occupations into selected activity centres to reduce the frequency and duration of work trips. To do so, activity centres must become more comprehensive in the services and amenities they offer (rather than the focus on retail floorspace which has occurred under the Metropolitan Centres Policy); and understand how to use regional and local characteristics as leverage to attract higher-order, knowledge-intensive employers.

Outcome

Pracsys was engaged by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure to provide research and analytical support to assist in the development of a policy to define a spatial framework of activity centres and corridors for the Perth and Peel development areas. The report represents a brief summary of the outcomes of that analysis, with particular emphasis on the pivotal issue of decentralised employment growth in activity centres. The report is not intended to provide a comprehensive strategy for implementing the Activity Centres Policy. It is intended to be read in association with the draft Policy Statement and introduces some new concepts and terminology. Further work is required to develop a quantitative model of Activity Centres employment and dwelling targets that incorporates the findings from this research exercise.

Client: Department for Planning & Infrastructure

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