



ratio consultants newsletter June 2009

this months featured project is.....

Safe Travel Strategy for the City of Darebin

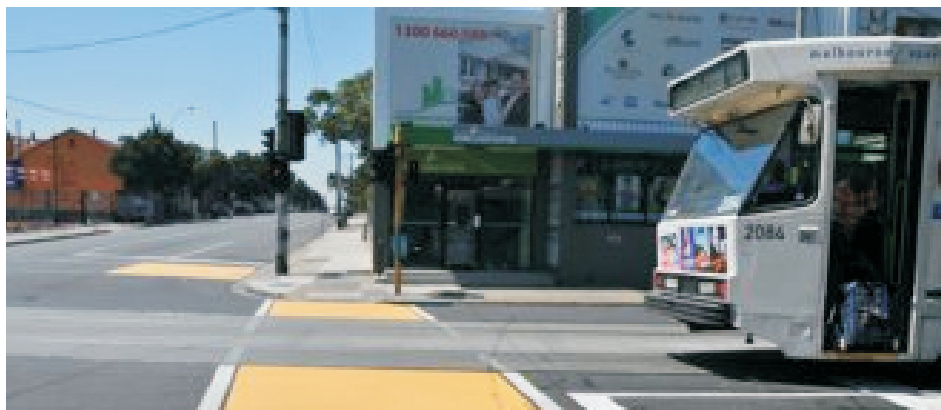
Ratio Consultants, in association with Hennessy Services, is preparing a 'Safe Travel Strategy' for the City of Darebin, with the aim of making Darebin a safer place to live, work and visit for all road users.

The 'Safe Travel Strategy' reviews the effectiveness of the initial Darebin Road Safety Strategy (2001 – 2006) as well as VicRoads Arrive Alive - Road Safety Strategy 2008 – 2017, Vision Zero, other best practice road safety initiatives, and aims to build on some of the relevant initiatives arising from the 'Going Places - Darebin Transport Strategy 2007 – 2027', which established a new approach to transport planning in Darebin.

The 'Safe Travel Strategy' has been developed in consultation with the community and stakeholders, and has the adopted vision of:

'Reduce the risk of injury on our roads and paths to a level where there are no fatal or permanently disabling injuries, so that people of all ages and abilities are free to travel on the road and path network to their chosen destinations, safely and with confidence'.

A range of targeted and specific Action Plans have been developed to ensure that Darebin will be a safer place to travel around with reduced levels of social isolation by helping to reduce barriers to travel. The actions will also encourage a greater shift to the use of sustainable transport modes and create a healthier community.



5 minutes from the Ratio office

Ratio Consultants has the ability to provide our clients with a variety of maps for inclusion in reports. Mapping is a useful tool in ensuring the reader is able to identify a site as well as providing additional information that is not readily available. Some of the maps we can produce include:

- * Drive time analysis
- * Local Government & Postcode Maps
- * SEIFA maps for Gaming Applications
- * ABS Data Analysis



We are currently in the process of updating our software to include the Melways which will enable us to produce more maps on an easily identifiable base. These services compliment our already well established graphics capabilities.

2-4 Old Heidelberg Road, Alphington

Ratio Consultants was engaged by ENA C town planning advice and submit an application to develop 2-4 Old Heidelberg Road with eight (8) double storey dwellings. Ratio worked closely with David Watson Architects to develop a highly contemporary design solution for the site, which met the client's brief, whilst also maintaining the amenity of adjoining dwellings.

The site was used as a car park associated with the Tower Hotel, located immediately opposite. Council raised concern with the potential amenity impacts caused by the development on the adjoining dwellings and also raised a legal issue, which stemmed from a condition imposed on a planning permit relating to the extension of the Tower Hotel, issued in 1962.

An interesting factor in the case was that the Tower Hotel building and the car park were under separate ownership and that the Tower Hotel had ceased operating.

By working closely with Council officers and objectors, Ratio was able to achieve a compromise and address the amenity concerns, with the focus of the VCAT hearing being squarely on the issue of the 1962 permit.

The Tribunal focused on the principle matters of: whether the subject site must be retained for use as a car park for the Tower Hotel; would the grant of a permit for the proposed development effectively discharge the Tower Hotel of the obligations of its permits; and whether the closure of the hotel, the sale of the hotel and the car park site to separate owners, and the lodgement and processing of planning permit applications for both sites for purposes other than a hotel are relevant matters to be considered.

Ultimately the Tribunal found:

Having considered the submissions, plans, council officer's report and the evidence of Mr Bromhead, I am satisfied that in other respects the proposed development represents an attractive modern medium density development of eight two-storey dwellings that exhibits a satisfactory level of compliance with the provisions of the Yarra Planning Scheme.

Any proposal to reopen the hotel must deal with the conditions surrounding that use or fail. That is a transaction between the responsible authority and the owner/applicant of the hotel site at the time. In my view, it is not the concern of the parties involved in the subject site.



(Image courtesy of David Watson Architects)



This issue, we cast our eyes on Russell Fairlie

- Passions:** Family, the Melbourne Football Club (looking to the future ... yet again), the theatre/movies and dining out, music and property development.
- Favourite Website:** Demonland and Demonology – yes I am a tragic.
- Happiest day of your life:** It has to be my wedding day, the birth of my three children and that one day in September that I'm still waiting for (lucky I'm a patient man)
- What am I reading right now:** Recently finished Clapton the Biography (the man's a legend in terms of his music, ability to survive the drugs and alcohol, and his exploits with women).



ratio

Planning Applications Online

Planning Applications Online (PAO) is an exciting new initiative that changes the method in which a planning application are lodged and processed. This is achieved by remedying the existing labour intensive lodgement process by developing a modern and streamlined Internet based system that ameliorates many of the current deficiencies in processing a planning permit application.

Put together in partnership between the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) and Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), PAO boasted successful results during its six month pilot program and is now being rolled out across Victoria.

Members of Ratio's planning team recently attended a training and registration course, and we are pleased to announce that we are equipped with the skills and knowledge of using PAO to allow us to take advantage of the benefits it provides.

Why use PAO?

Essentially, PAO enables Ratio to lodge and manage your application online, which should reduce timeframes.

It is an internet system that can be used for any application type (e.g. from a modest residential dual occupancy to an intensive mixed use development).

The key benefits of PAO are:

- * It improves efficiencies in all stages of the planning process (from 'end to end');
- * Its speeds up the process to achieve quicker decisions;
- * It reduces administrative time taken;
- * It saves costs;
- * It facilitates transparency;
- * It provides convenient access to plans, referrals and other information;
- * It enables an easier way of tracking progress of an application; and
- * It is environmentally friendly by saving on paper.

At present, only a selection of Victorian Councils are utilising the new PAO system. Based on the benefits PAO brings to all parties in the planning process (including applicants, Councils, VCAT, referral authorities and the public), it is anticipated that the number of participating Council's will actively grow in due course.

For further information or for any enquiries regarding PAO, please contact a member of Ratio's planning team on (03) 9429 3111

Congratulations

Ratio congratulates Loui Le for successfully completing his Masters of Traffic and Masters of Transport through Monash University. By undertaking the double post graduate degrees, Loui has gained specialist knowledge in a range of fields including traffic analysis, road safety and transport planning.

Well done Loui!

Viva Las Ratio



Ratio recently left their inhibitions behind, attending the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association (VPELA) ball in fancy dress. While most tables opted for black tie and flashy dinner dresses, Ratio emersed itself into the spirit of the Las Vegas theme of the night and arrived on the red carpet as a unison of 'Elvis' and 'Priscilla' Presley's. Our team was the hit of the party with the dance floor alight with a sea of Elvis and Priscilla's shacking their hips and rocking the night out to a number of distinguishable beats. Best on ground performance was Daniel Soussan, who dared to not only expose a genuine Elvis chest of hair, but don a tight white jumpsuit!

\$230 million Biosciences Research Centre

The Plenary Group together with a leading team of consultants including Ratio, was appointed the successful design /construct tenderer for the \$230 million Biosciences Research Centre located within the La Trobe University, Bundoora

The Biosciences Research Centre will be world-class facility for agricultural biosciences research and development and is a joint venture between La Trobe University and the Victorian Government, through the Department of Primary Industries. It will accommodate up to 400 staff, including scientists and support staff and incorporates laboratory space, external glass house and head house, ancillary office space including reception areas, meeting rooms and data centre.

Significant transport initiatives planned by Ratio include limiting the provision of on-site parking (90 spaces for approximately 25,000m² of research floor area) to foster and support more sustainable transport alternatives, the provision of better public transport access with a new bus stop and shelter located along the frontage of the site, motorcycle and bicycle parking and improved pedestrian facilities and access within the vicinity of the site. Ratio also assisted with the functional design of commercial vehicle loading and wash down facilities for semi-trailers.

Construction of this exciting project commenced in June 2009 five months ahead of schedule with the facility planned to be fully operational by April 2012. This project is an example of Ratio's fundamental philosophy to continually advocate for progressive improvements of the environment through innovative planning and creative design solutions particularly with regards to more sustainable forms of transport.

Social Housing Update

Many readers of this newsletter will recall an email sent from Ratio on 21 May 2009 outlining the introduction of Social Housing provisions within the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs), which sought to fast track planning applications for residential developments, which had been recommended by the Department of Housing as a priority project.

Ratio has received significant interest from new and existing clients seeking to provide a level of social housing within new developments. Ratio was informed this week that by the Department of Housing that due to the number of applications they have received in relation to social housing, that they have sufficient numbers to satisfy their funding requirements to provide 5000 new social housing units by the end of 2010.



Climate Change . . . our future is in your hands

Ratio Traffic Engineer Tina Webb and her family were among over 5,000 people who gathered on St Kilda beach to form part of the human message "Climate change — our future is in your hands".

"Getting my 2-year old to sit still on a beach was probably more challenging than solving the climate change crisis, but it felt good to be part of something so important". The purpose of the 350-metre long human sign was to raise public awareness and send an urgent message to the government. Tina and the Ratio team are all doing their bit to support green travel, and are currently putting together a Green Travel Plan for the Ratio office.

quirky facts

The present population of 5 billion plus people of the world is predicted to become 15 billion by 2080.

Shrinkage: The Eiffel Tower shrinks 6 inches in winter.

Earth is the only planet not named after a god.