

Saleyards go 'Metro'

Leader 26/7/2004

By Andrea Kellett

DANDENONG'S historic saleyards will be known as *Metro 3175*, with a massive housing development approved last week.

Greater Dandenong Council approved a subdivision of the 28ha site to make way for construction of 1400 houses and ultimately, 4000 new residents.

Construction is expected to start by the end of the year.

Greater Dandenong Mayor Clare O'Neil said the \$250 million project would be the catalyst for Dandenong's transformation into the "economic hub of the south east".

It is tipped to generate thousands of jobs in the next five years.

"*Metro 3175* is central to our city's regeneration," Cr O'Neil said.

"The development will provide an injection of life, activity and vibrancy into Dandenong, the benefits of which will flow to existing residents and businesses right cross the city."

Cr O'Neil said the development would revitalise Dandenong's centre.

Chamber of Commerce president Peter Helmore described the project as "a great move forward".

"We think it will revitalise trade in the area because there will be more people in close proximity to Dandenong, so we anticipate that they will spend their money in the city," he said.

"It's been a long time in the planning so it's great to see it's going ahead."

Dandenong Retail Traders' Association chairman Roy Aspinall said *Metro 3175* was "excellent news".

"This project is one of the major features in the future of Greater Dandenong."

The planning permit comes two years

after Premier Steve Bracks announced the development during a tour of the site with Planning Minister Mary Delahunty.

It was, Mr Bracks said, to be a key part of the State Government's Transit Cities program.

At the time, he said work would start at the beginning of 2004.

The site has sat idle, however, while Greater Dandenong Council and project partner VicUrban held discussions with VicRoads on changes to Cheltenham Rd.

Strategic and statutory planning manager Andrew McCulloch said VicRoads had agreed to realign Cheltenham Rd to the north, along Brighton Rd.

He said speed limits would eventually be reduced along

Cheltenham Rd through the new residential area, but its capacity would remain unchanged.

VicUrban spokeswoman Sally Gibson said design work for Cheltenham Rd would now be carried out and would be presented to VicRoads for approval.



Mayor Clare O'Neil with Dandenong MP John Pandazopoulos at the historic site.

Picture: HILTON STONE N05OS210