



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## BGRA supports Melbourne 2030 progress

Bulky Goods Retailers Association members voiced their support for the general direction of the Department of Sustainability and Environment planning proposals within Melbourne 2030 at their quarterly forum in Melbourne, while at the same time voicing some concerns with out of centre planning policy.

Keynote speaker Genevieve Overell, Deputy Secretary, Built Environment, Department of Sustainability and Environment, acknowledged to members that bulky goods planning policy is outdated and must be amended to reflect current retail trends.

“Retail policy needs further work,” said Ms Overell. “We’re looking at how the policy works in practice but recognise the need for more design guidance.”

Clause 12 of the State Planning Policy Framework provides general guidance on out of centre development which is of the highest importance to the retailers.

Ms Overell said that there is a need to develop criteria for assessing out of centre proposals for bulky goods developments in keeping with Melbourne 2030.

“We recognise that development proposals will come forward for large new retailing in and out of centres so we need a planning framework for out of centre development which focuses on design, location and a clear policy context,” she said.

BGRA president Ian Robinson, who has previously voiced strong concerns about out of centre planning approval processes and the definition within Victorian Planning Provisions, was very supportive of the need to update policy and improve design guidance as outlined by Ms Overell.

“We have always supported the vision of Melbourne 2030 and we applaud the move towards safer shopping precincts and cleaner environments. We also acknowledge that there is a shift among Australians, particularly younger generations, away from suburban living, and this necessitates a change in town planning. We don’t see bulky goods as the best use of the valuable resource within activity centres and would like to see greater emphasis on residential construction in activity centres,” said Mr Robinson.

“Bulky goods retail is a very distinct form of retailing when compared to the high intensity environment of shopping centres and we’re delighted that this is now recognised by the Victorian government,” he concluded.

BGRA executive director Philippa Kelly said that Association members are extremely happy with the consultation progress to date but that there’s still much work to be done between the two parties.



“The Association will be working closely with the DSE to ensure the retailers’ needs are understood and addressed in future policy development, in particular in developing a practice note on bulky goods retailing, and planning and design guidelines for bulky goods premises,” said Ms Kelly.

The BGRA has always stressed the need for a planning system that allows bulky goods retailers to continue to meet consumer demand. “Today’s consumers want low prices, easy access our retailers in the one place, and sufficient parking. We can’t continue to meet this demand within the current planning framework in Victoria,” Ms Kelly highlighted.

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For more information or to arrange interviews please contact:

Philippa Kelly, Executive Director

Bulky Goods Retailer Association

T 9859 0534

F 9859 0535

M 0412 787 505

E [pkelly@bgra.com.au](mailto:pkelly@bgra.com.au)

W [www.bulkygoodsretailers.com.au](http://www.bulkygoodsretailers.com.au)

Angela Bishop

BishopCunliffe Public Relations

T 03 9522 1100

F 03 9522 1199

M 0414 392 181

E [angela@bishopcunliffe.com.au](mailto:angela@bishopcunliffe.com.au)