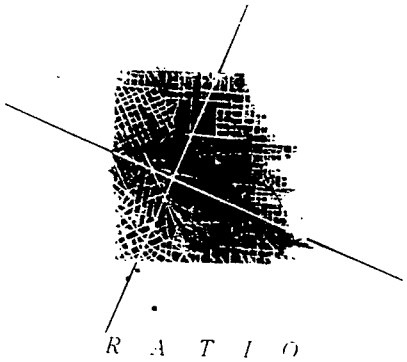

R A T I O

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BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

BUSINESS STRATEGY

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September 1994

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. BUSINESS STRATEGY CONCEPT

The Business Strategy for the BRVC is a set of recommended principles and actions designed to progressively improve the Centre's image, level of patronage, trading position, presentation and shopping environment. The Strategy provides for actions to be undertaken both individually by traders and co-operatively in association with Council. It provides for the implementation of a program to be undertaken over a three year period and to be reviewed at the conclusion of the period. It is proposed that the Strategy be in part funded by a special rate to be levied on the BRVC together with a contribution to be made by Council. It is also proposed that incentives be made to encourage traders to improve their businesses and stores in accordance with the principles of the Strategy.

2. BENEFITS OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy is directed to achieving the following benefits for the BRVC:-

- *enhanced range and level of goods at the Centre;*
- *improved presentation of the Centre and its constituent stores and buildings;*
- *enhanced pedestrian safety and amenity;*
- *improved customer perceptions of the Centre (customer knowledge and acceptance of the Centre);*
- *consolidated trade potential of the Centre;*
- *wider level of professional services.*

In summary, the Strategy is about improving the competitive position of the BRVC. Within this context individual traders will have a higher potential to improve their levels of trade and viability. The extent to which this occurs will depend on particular services being offered, level of professionalism and empathy of staff to the needs of customers.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROPOSED BUSINESS STRATEGY

The BRVC Business Strategy comprises the following major elements:-

- ***Organisation and Management** - An outline of the organisational structure proposed to ensure the efficient implementation of the Business Strategy, including representation of traders and local residents and liaison with Council;*

- ***Budget Resources*** *- A statement of the resources sought to implement the Strategy over a three year time limit;*

- ***Centre Content*** *- Part of the Strategy is directed to progressively improving the quality and range of tenancies in the Centre by targeting and recruiting particular types of traders and tenants when opportunities arise;*

- ***Centre Presentation*** *- The physical presentation of buildings, shops, stores, carparks and other areas is of particular importance in forming positive perceptions of customers including first-time visitors to the Centre. The Strategy outlines principles for the progressive upgrading of the Centre's presentation including an incentive program to encourage owners to individually and co-operatively improve their premises;*

- ***Pedestrian Safety and Parking*** *- The Strategy recommends allocation of budget resources to selectively improve pedestrian safety in the Centre and signage to carparks;*

- ***Centre Marketing*** *- The Strategy provides a set of inter-related actions to market the Centre within defined budget constraints;*

- ***Residential Development*** *- The Strategy provides for new residential development in and around the Centre, either on residential sites or in the redevelopment of existing buildings. The provision of additional residential units within and close to the Centre will add to the diversity and colour of the Centre and help improve the BRVC's trade prospects;*

- ***New Development Initiative*** *- The Strategy strongly advocates the establishment of tea rooms and a restaurant on the Beach Reserve on the west side of Beach Road.*

4. ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT : CONCEPT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommended concept for the organisation and management of the Strategy for the BRVC is as follows:-

- *Centre Co-ordinator*

  It is recommended that Council approve the appointment of a regular part-time Co-ordinator to manage the Strategy for the BRVC. The principal duties of the Co-ordinator will include:-

  - *development of the Centre's budget within the framework recommended in this report;*

  - *chairmanship of inaugural workshops and supervision of an election of trader and local resident representatives to the BRVC Committee;*

- *specification of particular projects and responsibilities for the first year of the Strategy;*

- *chairmanship of regular meetings with the Committee;*

- *leadership in the presentation and management of adopted projects;*

- *active recruiting of selected store, services and tenant types when opportunities arise;*

- *co-ordination of festivals/special events;*

- *co-ordination of marketing;*

- *liaison with participating building owners and traders in a building and store front improvement program.*

It is recommended that payment for the Co-ordinator (assumed at a maximum of three days per week) should be funded equally from the ***proposed BRVC Special Rate*** *(Category "A" funds, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1), and from the recommended* ***special purpose grant*** *by Council to the BRVC (Category "B" funds, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1).*

- *Election of a BRVC Committee*

Following the appointment of the Centre Co-ordinator by Council, it is recommended that the BRVC Working Party form the basis of the BRVC Committee. The BRVC Committee will be representative of local residents, traders, Council and property owners. The Committee should comprise no less than six and no more than 10 persons. The Committee should reflect an age and gender balance and a diversity of views and interests that best reflect the Centre.

It is recommended that any new members of the Committee be appointed on a voluntary basis.

- *Project Groups*

In particular circumstances and for special events, it is recommended that the Committee seek wider participation of traders and local residents. For example, the organisation of a fair or festival for the BRVC should be chaired by the Centre Co-ordinator and include Committee members and additional traders and local representatives. It is understood that Project Groups need only continue for the life of a particular project. Participation by members of Project Groups should be on a voluntary basis.

5. *BUDGET AND RESOURCES : RECOMMENDATIONS*

The Business Strategy for the BRVC is concerned with the optimal allocation of available human and financial resources to best advance the image, patronage, trading position, presentation and amenity of the Centre. A clear statement of the range of financial and human resources likely to be available to the Strategy is, therefore, essential as it provides realistic constraints and parameters for the program of actions recommended in the Strategy. Indeed, it can be reasonably argued that no business strategy has any force or meaning in the absence of an explicit and clear linkage to committed financial and human resources.

It is recommended that Council adopt the principle that the BRVC Business Strategy must be explicitly linked to committed financial and human resources.

It is recommended that Council adopt the principle that the BRVC Business Strategy must allocate resources to improving the range and quality of services and presentation of the Centre, together with improvements to pedestrian safety and shopper amenity. Marketing the Centre is one aspect of the Business Strategy, and will be of no lasting benefit to the Centre, if undertaken independently of, or in the absence of, recommended programmes to improve the Centre.

It is recommended that Council adopt the funding principles for the BRVC Strategy as exemplified in the Budget and Resources Statement (Table 5.1). These principles are:-

- *a recommended BRVC Special Charge or Rate to be levied on all commercial properties in the Centre (Category "A" funds);*
- *a special purpose grant for the BRVC to be made available by Council on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the proposed Special Rate;*
- *establishment of Category "C" funding support for the BRVC, proposed as rebates against municipal rates for approved improvements to building facades, verandahs or shop fronts;*
- *recognition by Council that a significant amount of work in the implementation of the Strategy will need to be undertaken without any prospect of direct or indirect funding support from Council (Category "D" programmes);*
- *it is recommended that Council adopt the expenditure programmes for the BRVC Strategy as exemplified in the Budget and Resources Statement (a summary is provided in Table 1, further details are provided in Table 5.1). The recommended expenditure programmes are as follows:-*

- **a recommended total budget for category A and B funds of $100,000 per annum comprising:-**

  - **an amount of $50,000 to be generated by the proposed Special Rate (Category "A" funds);**

  - **an amount of $50,000 to be provided by Council as a matching special purpose grant (Category "B" funds).**

- *recommended funding for a Centre Co-ordinator and the running of a Centre Co-ordinator's office. It is recommended that a Centre Co-ordinator be employed on a contract / permanent part-time basis (suggested 2 - 3 days per week). The estimated total cost by Council of the Centre Co-ordinator and the running of the Co-ordinator's office is $30,000 per annum comprising:-*

  - *an amount of $25,000 for the remuneration of the Centre Co-ordinator to be funded from the Special Rate (Category "A" funds);*

  - *an amount of $5,000 for the running of the Co-ordinator's office (to be funded from Category "B" funds);.*

- *recommended funding for a marketing programme for the BRVC to be drawn from the balance of available funds to be generated from the BRVC special rate (Category "A" funds). It is recommended that the marketing programme be required to operate within a budget limitation of $25,000 per annum being available from Council;*

- *recommended funding for programmed urban design, landscaping, pedestrian safety and parking improvements be drawn from the balance of available special purposes Council grants to the BRVC (estimated at $45,000 per annum);*

- *it is recommended that Council undertake steps to obtain SECV funding assistance for the undergrounding of overhead wires at the BRVC (or bundling of wires) and the installation of thematic line standards.*

Table 1

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE : BUDGET SUMMARY

RECOMMENDED BUSINESS STRATEGY COMPONENT	*RECOMMENDED BUDGETED ANNUAL FUNDING $*	*RECOMMENDED FUNDING SOURCE*	
		Category "A" Funds (Special Rate)	*Category "B" Funds (Special Purpose Matching Council Grants)*
Centre Co-ordinator	*30,000*	*25,000*	*5,000*
Marketing Programme	*25,000*	*25,000*	-
Urban Design, Landscaping, Pedestrian Safety and Parking Improvements	*45,000*	-	*45,000*
Total : Recommended Budgeted Programmes	*100,000*	*50,000*	*50,000*

Two other types of recommended programmes are outside the proposed annual budget for the BRVC (refer Table 5.1, category C and D programmes).

6. *CENTRE SERVICES AND PRESENTATION : RECOMMENDATIONS*

Perhaps the single most important factor attracting customers to any centre is the presentation and store and services content of a centre. Part of the Business Strategy is directed to progressive improvements of existing stores and services and to the recruitment of attractive and competitive new stores and services.

The recommended programs for improvements to services and presentation of the BRVC fall into three categories related to proposed access to funds.

- ***Category 'B' Programs** (recommended to be financed from special purpose Council funds to be allocated to the BRVC on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the recommended special rate, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1).*

  It is recommended that Council's Urban Designer prepare a priority plan for the introduction of themed street furniture together with selected improvements to pedestrian pavements and landscaping for the BRVC. The street furniture, pedestrian pavement and landscaping should be compatible with the marine theme already established with the bollards. These physical, external elements are to be limited to Council's special purpose funds net of contributions to fund the Centre Co-ordinator. It is estimated that the required contribution from Category "B" funds to fund the physical improvements will amount to $45,000 per annum.

  It is recommended that these Category "B" funds ($45,000 per annum) be made available to fund programmed improvements to urban design and landscape elements, pedestrian activated traffic signals and centre signage. Within this budget constraint, it is recommended that Council's Urban Designer refine and then implement the existing BRVC urban design plan.

It is clear that the likely available funds will only cover a limited range of improvements to the public environment of the BRVC. Therefore, critical choices will need to be made as to how the funds should best be spent to achieve maximal benefits to the community, traders and building owners. One of the purposes of the recommended Committee and Centre Co-ordinator will be to establish these priorities. The Consultants' review of the Centre indicate that the priorities most likely to achieve the highest levels of public benefit to the Centre are those which have been recommended, that is seating, street lights and bins with selected improvements to pedestrian pavements and landscaping. In particular, it is strongly recommended that high priority be placed on improving the street lighting level in the Centre and to the provision of attractive seating as these elements will act to change visitor perceptions.

- ***Category 'C' Programs** (recommended to be capable of being undertaken at the discretion of individual building owners and traders and supported by a rebate on Council rates in the year in which costs for the improvements are applicable).*

It is recommended that Council's Urban Designer in consultation with the Centre Co-ordinator and the BRVC Committee prepare a facade, shop front and verandah improvement guidelines/details, taking into account of the range of issues listed above. The guidelines and details should be building specific but provided within an overall theme for the Centre which reflects its style, heritage and seaside setting. The guidelines should, for example, provide an overall style concept for each building and the Centre and recommend optional colours for buildings and verandahs. Buildings should be prioritised according to the contribution that improvements to them will make to the streetscape. The guidelines should also provide for harmonious presentation of signage in terms of the locations of signage on building facades, the style of signage used and signage colour.

It is recommended that the building owners undertaking improvements to the facades, verandahs or shop fronts of buildings in accordance with the guidelines and details be exempt from Council rates equivalent to the costs incurred in undertaking the improvements in the year in which the costs for the improvements were incurred. It is highly likely that most improvements will exceed rates in any year. The exemptions will only serve as a partial subsidy or incentive to undertake the recommended facade, shop front and verandah improvements.

In the Consultants' experience improvements to building facade, use of painting schemes, improvements to verandahs and extensive use of lighting (both above verandah facade lighting and under verandah spot lighting) tend to result in dramatic improvements to initial perceptions of a centre.

- *Category 'D' Programs (Advisory programs to improve the level of professionalism in relation to customer service, business management and marketing. These programs should be available for access by individual traders and operators of other businesses. The costs of undertaking these programs will not be rebatable from rates or funded from other sources).*

  It is recommended that the appointed Centre Co-ordinator prepare an information bulletin for traders and other business operators in the Centre on the range of programs available to assist small business in:-

  - *business management;*
  - *marketing;*
  - *customer and staff relationships;*
  - *merchandise display.*

  It is further recommended that the Centre Co-ordinator organise an information workshop on these programs to be held on an annual or twice yearly basis as an information session for traders and other business operators. A listing of business trading programs is provided in the Appendix of this report.

7. PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND PARKING : RECOMMENDATIONS

Perceived levels of pedestrian safety and parking convenience are important elements of customer comfort and convenience in a centre. Accordingly, part of the Business Strategy is directed to improving these elements in the BRVC.

The recommended improvements to pedestrian safety and parking will need to be funded from special purpose funds recommended to be allocated to the BRVC on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the proposed special rate (Category 'B' Programs, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1).

It is recommended that Council adopt the Pedestrian Space and Circulation Strategy outlined in Figure 7.1.

It will be noted that key elements of the Strategy include:-

- *pedestrian priority routes (consistent with the purpose set out above);*
- *key pedestrian spaces;*
- *selected crossing points;*
- *areas for bus stops and taxi ranks.*

It is recommended that Council approve the installation of pedestrian activated lights at Bluff

Road as generally indicated in Figure 7.1.

It is recommended that Council's Urban Designer prepare a signage concept for Council's carparks. Subject to the costs of these signs it is recommended that they be installed during the period 1994-95 to 1996-97. It is recommended that the design of seating areas and the provision of additional street lights be co-ordinated with the locations of bus stops, taxi ranks and pedestrian crossings in the Centre.

8. CENTRE MARKETING : RECOMMENDATIONS

Part of the Business Strategy is concerned with improving the service levels, presentation and pedestrian amenity of the Centre (Sections 6.0 and 7.0); an important part of the Business Strategy is the marketing of the Centre to the local and regional community. It is emphasised that the marketing program should not be seen in isolation or as a substitute for fundamental service, presentation and pedestrian safety improvements to the Centre but rather as a complement to these programs.

It is recommended that the Centre Co-ordinator in co-operation with the BRVC Committee prepare a centre marketing plan consistent with the concept outlined in Section 8.2. The centre marketing program is proposed to be financed from **Category 'A'** *(that is from funds to be generated by the proposed special rate for the BRVC, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1). It is recommended that the highest priorities for centre marketing be accorded to image development, in-house advertising and the proposed Centre brochure and mutual referral system.*

It is recommended that the Committee seek to foster a community development project involving the creation of a new focal element in the Centre (e.g. flower garden, fountain, gazebo). It is recommended that the Committee seek the assistance of community groups to develop the project.

It is recommended that advertising in the local press and radio should not be used indiscriminately and should be linked to sales campaigns, special events or to milestones in the improvement of the Centre (e.g. opening of new stores or services, completion of selected public works, etc.).

It is recommended that consideration of special events, festivals and fairs be undertaken by the Co-ordinator and community in consultation with Centre members. Successful events will need to be multifaceted (i.e. incorporating a wide range of activities. Thus, there will need to be a long lead time (ideally not less than six months) in the planning of major festivals and fairs.

9. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT : RECOMMENDATIONS

Residential development offers a positive new force for changes in Melbourne's inner and middle suburbs. The Business Strategy envisages the incorporation of new residential units within and immediately around the BRVC. It does not propose the allocation of the Centre's Business Strategy budget to assist or facilitate this project. However, the Business Strategy should provide policy support and members should be encouraged to support residential

development initiatives where these do not impede on the trading position and amenity of the Centre.

It is recommended that Council support the principle of residential redevelopment within the BRVC, consistent with the concept and objectives in Sections 9.1 and 9.2.

10. NEW DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES : RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of the Study, the Consultants have investigated the possibilities for new commercial developments within and immediately adjoining the BRVC. Two development concepts were examined. These were:-

- *the proposed new major supermarket to be developed on the east side of Bluff Road, south of Karrakatta Street (incorporating the existing service station, elderly citizens facilities and former banking premises. There is no question that a new major supermarket would make a dramatic improvement to the viability of the Centre, and particularly if the operations of the existing licensed supermarket could be transferred to the new facility. However, it is likely that a major supermarket chain has expressed interest in the proposal. However, assistance would be required from Council to consolidate the site and some costs would need to be incurred by Council. Essentially, likely political difficulties limit the prospects of the project. It has therefore not been put forward as a final recommendation from the Study;*

- *the second development initiative which was reviewed was the concept of new tea rooms and a restaurant on the beach reserve. Historically, there have been tea rooms and subject to urban design, landscaping and related site design guidelines, the project may achieve Council support. The concept is regarded as realistic and is proposed as part of the Business Strategy for the BRVC.*

It is recommended that Council:-

- *instruct its landscape architects and planners to prepare siting guidelines for the tea rooms and restaurant. The siting guidelines should include:-*
  - *definition of an overall boundary;*
  - *location of car parking and service areas;*
  - *general location of the proposed buildings;*
  - *delineation of the landscape area and pedestrian ways;*
  - *location of preferred traffic access points from Beach Road;*
- *prepare a submission of preferred licence and operating conditions for a prospective tenant;*

- *prepare tender documents for potential operators;*
- *invite registrations of interest for the right to develop and operate the facility;*
- *select a short list of applicants on the basis of their relevant professional experience, business standing and quality of submission;*
- *request a short list of candidates to prepare a detailed submission;*
- *examine the submissions and select a preferred operator;*
- *establish heads of agreement with the operator;*
- *the operator will then proceed with the applications for planning and development, and be subject to a licence agreement for a planning development permit;*
- *maintain a process of regular monitoring of the operations of the tea rooms and restaurants once the development has been completed, to ensure that conditions of the licence are adhered to.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In September 1993, Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd was commissioned by the City of Sandringham to prepare a business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre (BRVC).

The aim of the strategy, as set out in the project brief, was to *'prepare an overall business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre to improve the performance and function of the Centre as a local convenience centre'*.

In November, 1993 the Consultants prepared an initial report for Council entitled *'Black Rock Village Centre Business Strategy'* (attached to rear of this report). The initial report introduced the concept of a business strategy as applied to a centre and provided a framework for a business planning process. This report outlines the proposed Business Strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre and recommends a set of actions, policies and principles to guide the future of the Centre and assist traders, building owners and Council to improve the trade, function and presentation of the BRVC.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The detailed objectives of the present study are listed below:-

- to recommend a management structure for the Centre and an appropriate role for the traders and residents;
- to recommend priority marketing program requirements;
- to recommend appropriate new tenancy requirements;
- to recommend appropriate shop and shop front improvement concepts;
- to recommend funding arrangements;
- to recommend new retail and commercial development concepts, locations and actions by council;
- to recommend residential redevelopment areas.

These objectives have been addressed in the following sections of the report.

2.0 CENTRE CONTEXT

The physical setting and trading situation of the BRVC was outlined in Section 4.0 in the November, 1993 report. The purpose of this section is to summarise the current situation in which the BRVC is placed to provide a comprehensive basis for the business plan recommendations.

The context of the BRVC is discussed in the following terms:-

- Centre location and setting;
- Centre role, structure and function;
- the Centre's physical form and presentation;
- the Centre's customers;
- perceptions of the Centre;
- the competitive environment.

2.1 Centre Location and Setting

The BRVC is a small neighbourhood retail and services centre comprising approximately 90 tenancies. It is located at the confluence of Bluff, Balcombe and Beach Roads, on a rise overlooking Port Phillip Bay, approximately 20 kilometres south of the Central Activities District. The most important aspects of the Centre's location and setting are as follows:-

(a) **The Centre's Seaside Location**

This aspect of the Centre's location and setting is a paradoxical issue. On the one hand it is clear that the location of the BRVC effectively limits its potential catchment. It is also clear that the Centre's origin and evolution are strongly related to its original role as a seaside centre at a tramway terminus. Parts of the Centre are also exposed to prevailing winds across Port Phillip Bay. Yet, the potential positive aspects of a seaside location have not been fully utilised. For example:-

- the potential of a stronger link between the Centre and Beach Reserve aided by a safer pedestrian crossing;
- the continuation of the beach or seaside theme in the Centre through integrated landscaping and urban design;
- greater identification of the Centre with integrated signs or flags on Beach Road.

(b) **The Pattern of Roads in and Around the Centre**

The Centre is effectively divided into three sectors by the convergent pattern of roads which define it. The pattern of roads which dissect the Centre provide an unusual physical setting and sense of enclosure. However, this pattern restricts alternative access around the Centre. The well established residential and other development around the Centre makes a ring road solution such as that previously considered linking Bluff and Balcombe Roads, both financially unfeasible and socially undesirable. **Therefore, any business strategy for the BRVC must work within the existing road pattern.** However, it is realistic and reasonable to focus on pedestrian safety and more effective parking access.

2.2 Centre Role, Structure and Function

The BRVC fulfils a small local centre role with a small component of specialised service activities. The principal characteristics are:-

- the Centre is overwhelmingly used for daily purchases and visits. A recent survey (March 1994) by Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd show that some 84% of patrons visited the Centre on a daily basis;

- the major activities undertaken in the Centre were for purchases of food and groceries (51% of shoppers) and use of a range of convenient shops and services (including banking, postal services, visits to the newsagent, chemist or hairdressers). Some 19% of shoppers indicated that their primary purpose for visiting the BRVC was for these types of purchases;

- the Centre has an emerging specialised services role including the development of new cafes and well established professional suites. Approximately 9% of shoppers were attracted to the BRVC for these types of services.

A detailed Land Use Survey was undertaken by Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd in September, 1993. This information, together with a survey of traders provided a clear understanding of the Centre's structure and function. As indicated in the November, 1993 report (refer Figure 3.B) the BRVC comprises:-

- a **core retail sub-area** which extends from the carpark opposite Karrakatta Street on the west side of Bluff Road to Beach Road. This area contains a liquor store and small supermarket, several fresh food shops, cafes, a bank and other services;

- **supporting retail services areas.** The balance of the Centre was placed in this category. However, the stronger components of the balance of the Centre appear to be:-

  - immediately opposite the core retail area on the east side of Bluff Road;

  - north of the carpark opposite Karrakatta Street on the west side of Bluff Road;

- the area on the south side of Balcombe Road and adjoining frontages on Beach Road appears to be the weakest component of the Centre.

Where realistically possible, the Business Strategy should seek to consolidate the core retail area of the BRVC and encourage other activities into peripheral areas (including residential development).

2.3 The Centre's Physical Form and Presentation

The Centre is comprised of single and two storey structures. The built form of the Centre is generally of a consistent scale and presents a strong sense of enclosure to visitors. The scale and style of buildings should be seen as a resource to be enhanced in the BRVC Business Strategy.

2.4 The Centre's Customers

A recent survey by Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd (March 1994) is drawn from a highly localised area (more than 80% of the BRVC's customers are drawn from within one and a half kilometres of the Centre).

The Centre's customers are generally reflective of the surrounding population. In particular, BRVC customers have the following characteristics:-

- they are heavily represented by middle age and elderly patrons. More than 50% of customers at the BRVC are more than 50 years of age;
- a substantial proportion of the BRVC customers live very close to the Centre (within 500-800m). The survey undertaken by Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd indicated that almost 40% of BRVC patrons walk to the Centre;
- BRVC customers tend to be overwhelmingly Australian born, Anglo-Celtic and generally have higher than average incomes (that is, higher than the Melbourne Statistical Division average);

The proposed Business Strategy for the BRVC should focus on the characteristics and needs of the predominant group of existing customers.

2.5 Perceptions of the Centre

The recent In-Centre Survey at the BRVC (Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd, 1994) measured the perceptions of customers in relation to a number of aspects in the Centre. Key findings were:-

(a) Perceived Strengths of the Centre

These were:-

- the Centre's convenient location to home (78% of respondents);
- the Centre's village atmosphere (38% of respondents);

- proximity to the beach (12.6% of respondents);
- food shops and restaurants located at the village (5%).

(b) **Perceived Weaknesses of the Centre**

The major perceived weaknesses of the Centre were:-

- inconvenient parking (37%);
- traffic, particularly perceived speed of traffic and heavy vehicles (29%);
- lack of variety or price competitiveness, especially for food items (14%);
- lack of banks and personal services (5%);
- exposure to prevailing winds (3%).

(c) **Suggested Improvements to the BRVC**

These included:-

- the most popular response was to improve the range of variety of shops in the Centre;
- improve banking services (and in particular provide an Automatic Teller Machine);
- save the post office (Australia Post has advised that post office functions will be retained in the BRVC);
- provide better food shops;
- suggestions for a haberdashery, tavern, shoe repairs, increased fashion stores, amusement parlour, improvement to the newsagency;
- improvements to pedestrian safety, particularly in Bluff and Balcombe Roads.

As indicated above, an important part of the Strategy should address the characteristics and needs of existing shoppers. Some of the suggestions put forward by shoppers can be acted upon, particularly when opportunities for tenanting vacant stores arise (refer Section 6.0).

2.6 The Competitive Environment

The recent In-Centre survey undertaken by Ratio Consultants (March 1994) provided information on other centres frequented for both food and non-food purchases (i.e. other centres frequented by BRVC patrons). The principal centres frequented for food and grocery items and the proportion of BRVC patrons surveyed, who visited them were:-

- Southland (25.2%);
- Community and local centres in the southern suburbs (58.3%);

- City (1.3%);
- centres in other areas of metropolitan Melbourne (15.2%).

The grouping of community and local centres in the southern suburbs included:-

- Sandringham (20.1%);
- Concourse/Beaumaris (13.4%);
- Mentone (11.1%);
- Hampton (4.7%);
- Cheltenham (4.0%);
- Church Street, Brighton (3.3%).

The principal centres frequented by BRVC patrons for **non-food** items were:-

- Southland (42.5%);
- City (13.8%);
- Chadstone (5.4);
- Local centres in the southern suburbs (21%) included:-
  - Sandringham (6.1%);
  - Hampton (5%);
  - Cheltenham (3.8%);
  - Concourse (3.4%);
- Centres in other areas (17.3%)

The **reasons given for shopping at centres** other than the BRVC were:-

- a greater variety and range of goods (56.1%);
- convenience[1] (25.3%);
- perceived lower prices (8.9%);
- perceived high quality of goods or services (4.6%);
- presence of banks, air-conditioned facilities, wider range of services (4%).

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1 Most trips by local residents to other centres are by car.

The foregoing results of competing centres indicate widely diverging patterns of visitation for food and non-food items. The survey results clearly show that almost 60% of BRVC patrons' shopping centre preferences for food and groceries were for **community and local centres in the southern suburbs.** In terms of non-food shopping however, local centres account for only 21% of "other centre" preferences by BRVC patrons, reflecting the greater significance of regional centres for non-food shopping.

The high level of visitation to other local centres for food and grocery items is of concern, as food and grocery shopping should be the mainstay of a strong local and community centre. The survey results indicate a high level of dissatisfaction with the existing food and grocery facilities in the BRVC which, as indicated in previous workshops, is extremely difficult to address, given the limited opportunities of structural change in the Centre and the difficulty in developing a larger supermarket.

There is potential however, to provide more speciality food shops which should achieve some marginal improvements in trading for the BRVC. This point would address the reasons given by shoppers for shopping in other centres (refer above) which show that variety, presentation and quality of store merchandise underlie the perceptions of shoppers. Improvements in this area are likely to assist the trading position of the BRVC (refer Sections 6 and 7).

3.0 A BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR THE BRVC: CONCEPT AND BENEFITS

3.1 Concept of the Strategy

The Business Strategy for the BRVC is a set of recommended principles and actions designed to progressively improve the Centre's image, level of patronage, trading position, presentation and shopping environment. The Strategy provides for actions to be undertaken both individually by traders and co-operatively in association with Council. It provides for the implementation of a program to be undertaken over a three year period and to be reviewed at the conclusion of the period. It is proposed that the Strategy be in part funded by a special rate to be levied on the BRVC together with a contribution to be made by Council. It is also proposed that incentives be made to encourage traders to improve their businesses and stores in accordance with the principles of the Strategy.

3.2 Benefits of the Strategy

The Strategy is directed to achieving the following benefits for the BRVC:-

- enhanced range and level of goods at the Centre;
- improved presentation of the Centre and its constituent stores and buildings;
- enhanced pedestrian safety and amenity;
- improved customer perceptions of the Centre (customer knowledge and acceptance of the Centre);
- consolidated trade potential of the Centre;
- wider level of professional services.

In summary, the Strategy is about improving the competitive position of the BRVC. Within this context individual traders will have a higher potential to improve their levels of trade and viability. The extent to which this occurs will depend on particular services being offered, level of professionalism and empathy of staff to the needs of customers.

3.3 The Structure of the Proposed Business Strategy of the BRVC

The BRVC Business Strategy comprises the following major elements:-

- **Organisation and Management** - An outline of the organisational structure proposed to ensure the efficient implementation of the Business Strategy, including representation of traders and local residents and liaison with Council;

- **Budget Resources** - A statement of the resources sought to implement the Strategy over a three year time limit;

- **Centre Content** - Part of the Strategy is directed to progressively improving the quality and range of tenancies in the Centre by targeting and recruiting particular types of traders and tenants when opportunities arise;

- **Centre Presentation** - The physical presentation of buildings, shops, stores, carparks and other areas is of particular importance in forming positive perceptions of customers including first-time visitors to the Centre. The Strategy outlines principles for the progressive upgrading of the Centre's presentation including an incentive program to encourage owners to individually and co-operatively improve their premises;

- **Pedestrian Safety and Parking** - The Strategy recommends allocation of budget resources to selectively improve pedestrian safety in the Centre and signage to carparks;

- **Centre Marketing** - The Strategy provides a set of inter-related actions to market the Centre within defined budget constraints;

- **Residential Development** - The Strategy provides for new residential development in and around the Centre, either on residential sites or in the redevelopment of existing buildings. The provision of additional residential units within and close to the Centre will add to the diversity and colour of the Centre and help improve the BRVC's trade prospects;

- **New Development Initiative** - The Strategy strongly advocates the establishment of tea rooms and a restaurant on the Beach Reserve on the west side of Beach Road.

4.0 ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

4.1 Context

The essential foundation for the effective implementation of a business strategy for the BRVC commences with the development of a responsive organisation and management system for the Centre. The organisation and management should:-

- encourage different levels of participation by traders;
- maintain the interest and moral support of traders and building owners;
- provide professional and executive leadership to the Centre;
- draw upon the creative skills and enthusiasm of traders, building owners and local residents;
- provide a channel of communication for traders, building owners and local residents.

It is essential that a committee be established for the Centre (refer Section 4.2) and must be fully representative of traders, building owners, local residents and Council. In this sense, the committee must represent all traders, not merely a particular group of traders, which has characterised the establishment of most chambers of commerce in a wide range of centres in the southern suburbs.

Professional and executive leadership to the BRVC is most effectively provided by a Centre Co-ordinator. The principal tasks and responsibilities of the Centre Co-ordinator are set out in Section 4.2. However, in summary, the Centre Co-ordinator is to provide management and leadership in relation to:-

- day-to-day marketing;
- shop front improvement programmes;
- organisation of special events;
- tenancy co-ordination (work at attracting new tenancies to the Centre).

A significant number of Councils have recognised the need for leadership in local centres and many of these have funded co-ordinators through special rate schemes.

Centres with co-ordinators funded in this way include:-

- West Heidelberg Mall, Heidelberg Central and East Ivanhoe in the City of Heidelberg;
- Prahran District Centre and Toorak Village in the City of Prahran; and,
- Moonee Ponds District Centre in the City of Footscray.

Other municipalities which are investigating the appointment of Centre Co-ordinators include, Nunawading, Brighton and Moorabbin.

It is important that funding the organisation and management of the Centre be supported by Council. Failure to proceed with the development of a professional day-to-day management system for the BRVC will mean that improvements cannot be made to the Centre on a regular basis. In summary, it is submitted that the need for effective organisation and management of the Centre is a precursor condition for the ongoing revitalisation of the BRVC.

4.2 Objectives

The principal objectives for this component of the Strategy are:-

- to ensure that the Centre has professional leadership dedicated to the progressive implementation of the Strategy;
- to ensure that trader interests are fully represented in decision making and implementation of the Strategy;
- to ensure the critical interest of local residents relevant to the BRVC and that its immediate surrounds are taken account of;
- to maintain close context and liaison with Council;
- to maintain a high level of interest among traders and business owners in the progressive implementation of the Strategy;
- to ensure that work to be undertaken in a range of support activities is distributed as widely as possible;
- to ensure that representation in decision making and implementing body for the BRVC covers the range of opinions and interests which exist in the Centre.

4.3 Concept and Recommendations

The recommended concept for the organisation and management of the Strategy for the BRVC is as follows:-

- **Centre Co-ordinator**

  It is recommended that Council approve the appointment of a regular part-time Co-ordinator to manage the Strategy for the BRVC. The principal duties of the Co-ordinator will include:-

  - development of the Centre's budget within the framework recommended in this report;
  - chairmanship of inaugural workshops and supervision of an election of trader and local resident representatives to the BRVC Committee;
  - specification of particular projects and responsibilities for the first year of the Strategy;
  - chairmanship of regular meetings with the Committee;
  - leadership in the presentation and management of adopted projects;

- active recruiting of selected store, services and tenant types when opportunities arise;

- co-ordination of festivals/special events;

- co-ordination of marketing;

- liaison with participating building owners and traders in a building and store front improvement program.

Co-ordinators for centres in other municipalities tend to be employed on a part-time basis, working two to three days per week. It is considered that two days is the minimum required to carry out the tasks listed above and is necessary for contact to be fostered between traders and the Co-ordinator. The size of the BRVC does not justify a Co-ordinator working more than three days per week.

It is recommended that payment for the salary of the Co-ordinator (assumed at a maximum of three days per week) should be funded from the **proposed BRVC Special Rate** (Category "A" funds, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1).

- **Election of a BRVC Committee**

Following the appointment of the Centre Co-ordinator by Council, it is recommended that a representative Committee of local residents, property owners, traders and Council be formed. The Committee should comprise no less than six and no more than 10 persons. The Committee should reflect an age and gender balance and a diversity of views and interests that best reflect the Centre and will be largely based on membership of the current Working Party.

The principal role of the Committee may be summarised as follows:-

- to provide a collective leadership and day-to-day responsibility for the management of the BRVC;

- to endorse any financial decisions for marketing or recommendations for improvements to the Centre;

- to allocate funds available for the Centre;

- to receive reports from the Co-ordinator and review the performance of the Co-ordinator;

- to regularly report to Council on the programs of the Centre;

- to make budgets on an annual basis and to adopt a three-year plan for the Centre.

It is recommended that the Committee be appointed on a voluntary basis.

- **Project Groups**

  In particular circumstances and for special events, it is recommended that the Committee seek wider participation of traders and local residents. For example, the organisation of a fair or festival for the BRVC should be chaired by the Centre Co-ordinator and include Committee members and additional traders and local representatives. It is understood that Project Groups need only continue for the life of a particular project. Participation by members of Project Groups should be on a voluntary basis.

5.0 BUDGET AND RESOURCES

5.1 Context

The Business Strategy for the BRVC is concerned with the optimal allocation of available human and financial resources to best advance the image, patronage, trading position, presentation and amenity of the Centre. **A clear statement of the range of financial and human resources likely to be available to the Strategy** is, therefore, **essential** as it provides realistic constraints and parameters for the program of actions recommended in the Strategy. Indeed, it can be reasonably argued that no business strategy has any force or meaning in the absence of an explicit and clear linkage to committed financial and human resources.

Since the completion of the BRVC Townscape Study, the City of Sandringham has undertaken capital works to the value of $370,000 in the Centre. Improvements to the roundabout accounted for $250,000 of this total amount. Other works have included the Beach Car Park, banners, street furniture and landscaping.

It is recommended that commitment to improvements in the Centre such as these, be continued but be based on the principle of **shared responsibility**. The Budget and Resources Statement which follows provides a method whereby traders contribute funding for the Centre via a Special Rate which can be imposed by Council under Section 163 of the **Local Government Act** 1989. Under this Act, a Special Rate or Charge can be levied on properties which will receive a benefit from Council actions not shared by the general community. It is recommended that in a similar way to the City of Heidelberg providing funding for the East Ivanhoe Centre, Council provide matching funds (equal to amounts raised by the proposed Special Rate) for the purpose of partly funding the function of the Centre Co-ordinator, and to enable selected urban design, traffic, and pedestrian safety improvements to the Centre and surrounds. It is also recommended that in certain restricted circumstances, Council gives consideration to the provision of rebates on general rates to encourage approved improvements to building facades, verandahs and shopfronts. The legal basis to do this is provided for under Section 169 of the **Local Government Act** 1989

It should be emphasised that a Special Rate is necessary for the achievement of the Business Strategy as it is a compulsory form of revenue raising. This is considered to be a far more effective system of raising special funding for a centre than voluntary contributions. Voluntary contribution to Chambers of Commerce is often an inequitable system due to the traders and owners who fail to contribute, yet reap the benefits of centre improvement.

It should also be emphasised that Council's contributions support Council's interests in the long term for if the Centre deteriorates, a wide range of local services will still need to be provided **irrespective** of the Centre's ability to pay for these services. Lack of public sector investment in the Centre will merely be expressed as **ongoing subsidies in later years**. Thus, there is no saving if Council does not continue to invest in Centre improvements as this will result in a perceived relative decline in the amenity of the Centre which will in turn reduce the potential for the maintenance of trade and employment.

It is important to note that the proposed budget for the BRVC **should replace** existing cyclical maintenance expenditures which are currently drawn from a variety of sources (eg. roads, engineering services).

5.2 Objectives

The objectives for the budget resources statement underlying the Business Strategy are as follows:-

- to clearly establish the range of financial resources likely to be available to a Business Strategy program for the BRVC for the period 1994-95 to 1996-97;
- to quantify the component of financial resources likely to be available to the Business Strategy program, to be generated from a special rate to be levied on commercial properties within the Centre;
- to identify the programs to which the special rate will be allocated;
- to establish the level of special purpose funds for the Business Strategy to be committed from Council;
- to identify the programs and actions which will be financed by the special purpose funds;
- to investigate the availability of the special purpose funds, incentive beneficial schemes or co-operative programs available through other agencies, including the State Electricity Commission of Victoria and the Department of Planning and Development (eg. support programs for undergrounding of electricity, heritage enhancement programs);
- to investigate possible improvement programs which may be based on rate rebate incentives for building owners;
- to outline possible actions and principles which business owners and traders can undertake to improve buildings and business performance;
- where no direct incentives may be available. The commitment to particular actions and principles would in this case depend on the judgments of individual traders and business owners. The objective is to extend as far as possible the range of positive improvements, actions and policies which can be undertaken by traders and building owners beyond any committed financial resources of Council and other authorities (either directly or indirectly);
- to establish the range of voluntary human resources which will be required to ensure the effective implementation of the Strategy.

5.3 Concept

The proposed Budget and Resources Statement underlies the BRVC Business Strategy. It is set out in Table 5.1. The concept of the Statement may be summarised as follows:-

- the Statement is a clear statement of direct and indirect financial resources likely to be available to the Strategy over the triennium commencing 1st October, 1994;
- it comprises a classification of the types of financial resources likely to be accessible, explicitly linked to specific types of actions and programs;

- it incorporates a statement of improvement programs for business and properties recommended to be available on a Council rate rebate basis;

- it also incorporates identification of possible programs and actions recommended as being beneficial to business owners and traders but lying outside any direct or indirect financial assistance package;

- identifies human resources required to implement the Strategy outside direct and / or indirect funding processes (i.e. voluntary labour requirement);

- identification of land or other resources of Council which may be available to the Strategy.

5.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council adopt the principle that the BRVC Business Strategy must be explicitly linked to committed financial and human resources.

It is recommended that Council adopt the principle that the BRVC Business Strategy must allocate resources to improving the range and quality of services and presentation of the Centre, together with improvements to pedestrian safety and shopper amenity. Marketing the Centre is one aspect of the Business Strategy, and will be of no lasting benefit to the Centre, if undertaken independently of, or in the absence of, recommended programmes to improve the Centre.

It is recommended that Council adopt the funding principles for the BRVC Strategy as exemplified in the Budget and Resources Statement (Table 5.1). These principles are:-

- a recommended BRVC Special Charge or Rate to be levied on all commercial properties in the Centre (Category "A" funds);

- a special purpose grant for the BRVC to be made available by Council on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the proposed Special Rate (Category "B" funds);

- establishment of Category "C" funding support for the BRVC, proposed as rebates against municipal rates for approved improvements to building facades, verandahs or shop fronts;

- recognition by Council that a significant amount of work in the implementation of the Strategy will need to be undertaken without any prospect of direct or indirect funding support from Council (Category "D" programmes);

- it is recommended that Council adopt the expenditure programmes for the BRVC Strategy as exemplified in the Budget and Resources Statement (Table 5.1). These principles are:-

- **a recommended total budget for category A and B funds of $100,000 per annum comprising:-**
  - **an amount of $50,000 to be generated by the proposed Special Rate (Category "A" funds);**
  - **an amount of $50,000 to be provided by Council as a matching special purpose grant (Category "B" funds).**

- recommended funding for a Centre Co-ordinator and the running of a Centre Co-ordinator's office. It is recommended that a Centre Co-ordinator be employed on a contract / permanent part-time basis (suggested at 2 - 3 days per week). Running costs of the Co-ordinator's office would include:-
  - rent for office space;
  - office furniture;
  - paper and stationery;
  - secretarial help;
  - photocopying
  - telephone and fax
  - electricity

  If savings on the co-ordinator's office (through resource sharing of Council facilities and equipment) amount to less than the estimated cost, these can be placed into consolidated funds for the Centre.

- The total cost estimated by Council, of the Centre Co-ordinator and the running of the Co-ordinator's office is $30,000 per annum comprising:-
  - an amount of $25,000 for the remuneration of the Centre Co-ordinator to be funded from the Special Rate (Category "A" funds);
  - an amount of $5,000 for the running of the Co-ordinator's office to be funded from Category "B" funds.

- recommended funding for a marketing programme for a defined period of 3 years for the BRVC to be drawn from the balance of available funds to be generated from the BRVC Special Rate (Category "A" funds). It is recommended that the marketing programme be required to operate within a budget limitation of $25,000 per annum; ;

- recommended funding for programmed urban design, landscaping, pedestrian safety and parking improvements for a defined period of 3 years to be drawn from the balance of available special purposes Council grants to the BRVC (estimated at $45,000 per annum). This funding would also cover the cost of all new cyclical maintenance and preparation of guidelines for the buildings in the Centre;

- it is recommended that Council undertake steps to obtain SECV funding assistance for the undergrounding of overhead wires at the BRVC (or bundling of wires) and the installation of thematic line standards.

TABLE 5.1

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE : BUSINESS STRATEGY

BUDGET AND RESOURCES STATEMENT (1994/95 - 1996/97)

RESOURCE TYPE	SOURCES AND CONDITIONS	TARGET BUDGET (May 1994 Prices) $	RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMES AND ACTIONS	REPORT REFERENCE
A) BRVC Special Rate	To be levied on all commercial properties in the BRVC. There are two options:- ▪ a fixed annual levy per commercial property; ▪ as a rate in the dollar on site values. The rate should be levied for a defined period of 3 years and subject to a review within 6 months of the due expiry of the rate.	It is recommended that a target for Category "A" funds be set at $50,000 per annum.	It is recommended that Category "A" funds be used to finance the cost to employ a **contract part-time Centre Co-ordinator** (estimated at **$25,000** per annum). It is recommended that an allocation of Category "A" funds be made for the **marketing programme**; that is, for a project of a commercial nature, which some traders would be likely to undertake on their own if no special rate existed; and for which there is likely to be a broad consensus that marketing is clearly **not** a Council responsibility. The marketing programme will be required to operate within a budget limitation of **$25,000 per annum.**	Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3.

RESOURCE TYPE	SOURCES AND CONDITIONS	TARGET BUDGET (May 1994 Prices) $	RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMES AND ACTIONS	REPORT REFERENCE
B) Special Purpose Council Grants to the BRVC	It is recommended that Council provide special purpose funding to the BRVC on a dollar-for-dollar basis with funds levied by the proposed Special Rate	It is recommended that a target for Category "B" funds be set at $50,000 per annum	It is recommended that Category "B" funds be used to finance part of the operational costs of the Centre Co-ordinator's office and business function (estimated at $5,000 per annum).[2] It is recommended that the balance of Category "B" funds ($45,000 per annum) be used for improvements and the provision of:- ▪ pedestrian pavements ▪ street furniture landscaping ▪ pedestrian activated lights ▪ pedestrian shelters ▪ parking signage It is recommended that programmed urban design, landscaping, pedestrian safety and parking improvements be constrained within part of Category B funds (estimated at $45,000 per annum). It is recommended that Council seek the co-operation of the SECV to undertake a joint evaluation of the cost of undergrounding or bundling overhead wires and installing acceptable thematic light standards. This process may result in financial assistance being available from the SECV for this purpose.	 Sections 6.2 (e), 6.3 Sections 6.2(f), 6.3 Sections 6.2(g), 6.3 Sections 7.1, 7.2 Sections 7.1, 7.2 Sections 7.1, 7.2

2 Estimates by the City of Sandringham

RESOURCE TYPE	SOURCES AND CONDITIONS	TARGET BUDGET (May 1994 Prices) $	RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMES AND ACTIONS	REPORT REFERENCE
C) Approved privately funded improvements rebatable against municipal rates	It is recommended that certain improvements to building facades, verandahs or shop fronts to be undertaken by building owners may qualify for funding assistance by way of rebates of municipal rates in the year in which costs were incurred. To qualify for rebates of municipal rates, proposed improvements by building owners must accord with guidelines and details to be prepared by Council's Engineering Department in consultation with the Centre Co-ordinator	In 1992/93 "general" municipal rates generated by the Black Rock Village Centre were approximately $32,100 (i.e. excluding the State Government Levy, garbage bin collection rates and a flat $130 Council charge levied on each property). No estimate has been made of temporary draw on these rates if Category "C" type funding is approved in principle.	It is recommended that Council adopt Category "C" type funding on a trial basis for the BRVC (for no less than 1 year and no more than 2 years). It is recommended that the programme be evaluated in terms of costs and benefits, following the trial period.	Sections 6.1, 6.2 (b, c, d), 6.3
D) Non-Fundable work, programmes, actions	The Business Strategy will require extensive assistance of volunteers (the recommended BRVC Committee). There are a range of programmes which are likely to benefit traders for which direct or indirect funding assistance will not be available.	Not applicable Not applicable	It is recommended that Council and the Centre Co-ordinator assist with the election and appointment of the BRVC Committee. It is recommended that Council and the Co-ordinator inform traders of the range of professional assistance training programmes. This should be seen as an overall business support service by Council. It is recommended that participation by traders not be rebatable against municipal rates.	Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 Sections 6.2(a), 6.3, Appendix

6.0 CENTRE SERVICES AND PRESENTATION

6.1 Context

Perhaps the single most important factor attracting customers to any centre is the presentation and store and services content of a centre. Part of the Business Strategy is directed to progressive improvements of existing stores and services and to the recruitment of attractive and competitive new stores and services.

6.2 Objectives

The principal objectives relating to the provision and performance of stores and services are as follows:-

- to facilitate the improvement of services at existing stores and other enterprises in the Centre;
- to facilitate progressive improvements of shop fronts, verandahs and building facades and the internal layout and amenity of premises of existing stores and other enterprises in the Centre;
- to actively recruit designated store, trader or service types into the Centre as opportunities arise. Stores and services sought should widen the range of goods and services available in the Centre and compliment existing tenancies. Tenants sought should contribute new attitudes and a spirit of modernity and innovation to their businesses and the Centre.

6.3 Concept

The range and quality of services and presentation of a Centre comprises a number of component elements. These include:-

(a) Range of Goods and Services

Critical factors include:-

- perceived range and quality of goods;
- level of professional services associated with the selling function (includes product knowledge, customer relations, staff quality and control), (includes important considerations of day to day communication with customers, attitudes of proprietors and staff and compatibility with customers, perceived dedication to personal needs and level of service);
- availability and level of services for post-sales enquiries, complaints, follow-up and product advice;
- level of professionalism/skill in the display of merchandise/layout of services;

- business management skills (includes cash flow management, stock control, basic accounting principles, maintaining acceptable records for audit and taxation purposes, establishment of budgets for the immediate financial year).

(b) Buildings and Facades

Key aspects included:-

- original style/design concept;
- current physical condition and appearance;
- colour concept/co-ordination with adjoining buildings;
- signage. Location, scale, colour and style of business signage;
- facade lighting. Above verandah, back lighting of building facades.

(c) Shop fronts and Windows (Below verandah or canopy level)

Considerations include:-

- style and layout;
- physical condition and appearance;
- lighting and presentation themes;
- signage themes.

(d) Verandahs and Canopies

- Style (related to original concept where practical or related to a theme for the Centre);
- physical condition and appearance;
- colour concept (related to an overall theme for the Centre which is empathetic of a character, heritage and seaside setting of the Centre);
- under verandah lighting.

Development of guidelines for (b), (c) and (d) above is recommended in Section 6.3.

(e) Pedestrian Pavements

- Style and layout;
- physical condition;
- level of practical utility and/or safety for pedestrians.

(f) **Street Furniture**

- Style and design concept;
- physical condition;
- colour treatment;
- important contributory street furniture includes:-
  - seating;
  - lights;
  - bins;
  - bollards;
  - planter boxes;
  - street and business signs.

(g) **Landscaping**

- Design concept (including intended scale and intensity of landscaping);
- species by types of locations;
- protective elements (tree guards);
- landscape maintenance (watering, protection from elements, regular and cyclical maintenance of plants).

6.4 Recommendations

The recommended programs for improvements to services and presentation of the BRVC fall into three categories related to proposed access to funds.

- **Category 'B' Programs** (recommended to be financed from special purpose Council funds to be allocated to the BRVC on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the recommended special rate, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1).

  It is recommended that Council's Urban Designer prepare a priority plan for the introduction of themed street furniture together with selected improvements to pedestrian pavements and landscaping for the BRVC. The street furniture, pedestrian pavement and landscaping should be compatible with the marine theme already established with the bollards. These physical, external elements are to be limited to Council's special purpose funds net of assistance to fund the Centre Co-ordinator's office ($5,000, refer Section 5.4). It is estimated that the required contribution from Category "B" funds to assist in the funding of the physical improvements will amount to $45,000 per annum.

It is recommended that these Category "B" funds ($45,000 per annum) be made available to fund programmed improvements to urban design and landscape elements, pedestrian activated traffic signals and centre signage. Within this budget constraint, it is recommended that Council's Urban Designer refine and then implement the existing BRVC urban design plan.

It is clear that the likely available funds will only cover a limited range of improvements to the public environment of the BRVC. Therefore, critical choices will need to be made as to how the funds should best be spent to achieve maximal benefits to the community, traders and building owners. One of the purposes of the recommended Committee and Centre Co-ordinator will be to establish these priorities. The Consultants' review of the Centre indicate that the priorities most likely to achieve the highest levels of public benefit to the Centre are those which have been recommended, that is seating, street lights and bins with selected improvements to pedestrian pavements and landscaping. In particular, it is strongly recommended that high priority be placed on improving the street lighting level in the Centre and to the provision of attractive seating as these elements will act to change visitor perceptions.

- **Category 'C' Programs** (recommended to be capable of being undertaken at the discretion of individual building owners and traders and supported by a rebate on Council rates in the year in which costs for the improvements are applicable).

  It is recommended that Council's Urban Designer in consultation with the Centre Co-ordinator and the BRVC Committee prepare a facade, shop front and verandah improvement guidelines/details, taking into account of the range of issues listed above. The guidelines and details should be building specific but provided within an overall theme for the Centre which reflects its style, heritage and seaside setting. The guidelines should, for example, provide an overall style concept for each building and the Centre and recommend optional colours for buildings and verandahs. Buildings requiring upgrading should be given priority based on analysis of their contribution to the appearance of the Centre. The guidelines should also provide for harmonious presentation of signage in terms of the locations of signage on building facades, the style of signage used and signage colour.

  It is recommended that the building owners undertaking improvements to the facades, verandahs or shop fronts of buildings in accordance with the guidelines and details be exempt from Council rates equivalent to the costs incurred in undertaking the improvements in the year in which the costs for the improvements were incurred. It is highly likely that most improvements will exceed rates in any year. Rates from the Centre are approximately $32,000 per annum. Rebates will therefore only serve as a partial subsidy or incentive to undertake the recommended facade, shop front and verandah improvements.

In the Consultants' experience, improvements to building facade, use of painting schemes, improvements to verandahs and extensive use of lighting (both above verandah facade lighting and under verandah spot lighting) tend to result in dramatic improvements to initial perceptions of a centre.

- **Category 'D' Programs** (Advisory programs to improve the level of professionalism in relation to customer service, business management and marketing. These programs should be available for access by individual traders and operators of other businesses. The costs of undertaking these programs will not be rebatable from rates or funded from other sources).

  It is recommended that the appointed Centre Co-ordinator prepare an information bulletin for traders and other business operators in the Centre on the range of programs available to assist small business in:-

  - business management;
  - marketing;
  - customer and staff relationships;
  - merchandise display.

  It is further recommended that the Centre Co-ordinator organise an information workshop on these programs to be held on an annual or twice yearly basis as an information session for traders and other business operators. A listing of business trading programs is provided in the Appendix of this report.

7.0 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND PARKING

7.1 Context

Perceived levels of pedestrian safety and parking convenience are important elements of customer comfort and convenience in a centre. Accordingly, part of the Business Strategy is directed to improving these elements in the BRVC.

Analysis of current pedestrian patterns has found that the most heavily used area by pedestrians is on the north and south sides of Bluff Road near the intersection with Balcombe Road. Pedestrians most frequently use the designated crossing point in Bluff Road approximately midway between Balcombe Road and Karrakatta Street. Pedestrians also use the crossings at the intersection of Bluff and Balcombe Roads and the crossing in Balcombe Road located approximately midway between Beach Road and Ebden Avenue. Two pedestrian crossings are provided across Beach Road (one signalised) but these are used less frequently than those in Bluff and Balcombe Roads.

The current pedestrian crossings do not provide a high level of safety for pedestrians although the pedestrian crossings in Bluff and Balcombe Roads are identified with bollards and have been designed to provide a narrow crossing point for pedestrians. The crossings are not very visible to motorists as the widened footpaths and bollards are often obscured from view.

There are currently four municipal car parks in the Centre. Those in Bluff Road are restricted to 2-hour parking whereas the car parks off Balcombe Road and Ebden Avenue are unrestricted. The 1991 BRVC Townscape Study found that these car parks, along with on-street and private car parking provided an adequate supply for the Centre. One car park (Ebden Avenue) was found to have poor identification and visibility however. Investigations for this strategy have found that the identification of the other car parks could be improved with better signage.

If parking demand increases beyond capacity in the future, land for off-street public parking would need to be acquired.

7.2 Objectives

The pedestrian safety and parking objectives for the Business Strategy are as follows:-

- to identify pedestrian priority routes within and around the BRVC for the purpose of co-ordinating the provision and location of protective devices and elements, signage, street lighting, seating and areas of shelter;
- to identify key pedestrian areas and spaces within and immediately surrounding the Centre. The spaces will include hard-paved areas, grassed and treed areas;
- to identify selected safe pedestrian points at major roads consistent with the pedestrian priority routes;
- to review the location of bus stops and taxi ranks in the Centre and to ensure that these are linked to the provision of shelter, high levels of street lighting and seating;
- to ensure the provision of clear and attractive signage to the Centre's primary off-street parking areas.

7.3 Recommendations

The recommended improvements to pedestrian safety and parking will need to be funded from special purpose funds recommended to be allocated to the BRVC on a dollar-for-dollar basis with the proposed special rate (**Category 'B' Programs**, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1).

It is recommended that Council adopt the **Pedestrian Space and Circulation Strategy** outlined in Figure 7.1.

It will be noted that key elements of the Strategy include:-

- pedestrian priority routes (consistent with the purpose set out above);
- key pedestrian spaces;
- selected crossing points;
- areas for bus stops and taxi ranks.

It is recommended that Council approve the installation of pedestrian activated lights at Bluff Road as generally indicated in Figure 7.1.

It is recommended that Council's Engineering Department prepare a signage concept for Council's carparks. Subject to the costs of these signs it is recommended that they be installed during the period 1994-95 to 1996-97. It is recommended that the design of seating areas and the provision of additional street lights be co-ordinated with the locations of bus stops, taxi ranks and pedestrian crossings in the Centre.

FIGURE 7.1

8.0 CENTRE MARKETING

8.1 Context

Part of the Business Strategy is concerned with improving the service levels, presentation and pedestrian amenity of the Centre (Sections 6.0 and 7.0); an important part of the Business Strategy is the marketing of the Centre to the local and regional community. It is emphasised that the marketing program should not be seen in isolation or as a substitute for fundamental service, presentation and pedestrian safety improvements to the Centre but rather as a complement to these programs.

8.2 Objectives

- To develop a clear, attractive and relevant image for the BRVC which takes full account of the Centre's village atmosphere, history and seaside location and reflects the priorities and needs of the local and regional communities.
- To facilitate the preparation of articles and elements which reinforces and communicate the defined image to the public on a day-to-day basis.
- To utilise cost effective advertising programs for the Centre which achieve defined levels of communication to the local and regional communities.
- To facilitate special events at the BRVC to promote the Centre's special identify, range of goods and services and benefits to the local and regional community.

8.3 Concept

The concept underlying a marketing program for the BRVC is that an effective marketing comprises several inter-related elements. These are:-

- **Image Development.** A clear attractive and concise image of the BRVC as a village centre with close ties to the local community and reflective of a seaside location needs to be developed.
- **In-House Advertising.** Having defined the image this needs to be reinforced in a range of elements in the Centre. For example, the selection of a **distinctive logo** applicable only to the BRVC should be displayed on all shop fronts (window transfers). It should also appear on restaurant menus, street signs, facility signs, Centre brochures, etc. The use of identifiable centre colours, a BRVC flag or bunting should also be considered as part of in-house advertising. The use of co-ordinated in-house advertising is a simple and very powerful method of re-enforcing a positive Centre image, on a day-to-day basis, to the general public.
- **Centre Brochure and Mutual Referral System.** An important cost effective element in the marketing of a neighbourhood centre is the preparation of the Centre brochure outlining the goods and services available in the Centre. The brochure should appear with the Centre's logo and be attractively presented. Copies of the brochure should be

available to all traders and services and freely distributed. The brochure should be combined with a Mutual Referral System whereby traders and other business operators become fully cognisant of the full range of goods and services available in the Centre and provide this information to customers on request.

- **Local Press and Radio.** These forms of media are acknowledged as the most cost effective forms of advertising to the local and regional communities. Advertising should only be undertaken in conjunction with special events or with the achievement of milestones in improvement of the Centre or where there are co-ordinated sales campaigns at the Centre. In other words, if you are going to advertise there must be some point to the advertising program (something special, new or innovative or something of particular interest to shoppers when they take the effort to go to the BRVC).

  News items in the local press or local radio will often have a higher degree of retention among residents than "pure" advertising. Once again, news stories need to be related to particular special events or milestones in the improvement of the Centre.

- **Cinema Advertising.** This form of advertising could be investigated, although it would appear to be less cost effective than local press and radio.

- **Joint Initiatives with Community Groups.** The adoption of a specials centre project in co-operation with community groups (eg. Lions, Rotary) is a useful way in which the Centre can maintain a close relationship with the local community. The more supportive the centre is shown to be with the local community the more positive the empathy of the local community towards the Centre is likely to be.

- **Special Events, Festivals and Fairs.** An important part of advertising and promoting the Centre will revolve around special events to be organised for the BRVC. These could include events which emphasise changes in the seasons (eg. summer or autumn festival) or events which reflect major holidays (eg. Australia Day, Easter Monday). The events need to be well planned in advance and require the input of entertainment and street stalls together with agreement with traders on shopping hours and a sales campaign.

8.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Centre Co-ordinator in co-operation with the BRVC Committee prepare a centre marketing plan consistent with the concept outlined in Section 8.2. The centre marketing program is proposed to be financed from **Category 'A'** (that is from funds to be generated by the proposed special rate for the BRVC, refer Section 5.0, Table 5.1). It is recommended that the highest priorities for centre marketing be accorded to image development, in-house advertising and the proposed Centre brochure and mutual referral system.

It is recommended that the Committee seek to foster a community development project involving the creation of a new focal element in the Centre (e.g. flower garden, fountain, gazebo). It is recommended that the Committee seek the assistance of community groups to develop the project.

It is recommended that advertising in the local press and radio should not be used indiscriminately and should be linked to sales campaigns, special events or to milestones in the improvement of the Centre (e.g. opening of new stores or services, completion of selected public works, etc.).

It is recommended that consideration of special events, festivals and fairs be undertaken by the co-ordinator and community in consultation with Centre members. Successful events will need to be multifaceted (i.e. incorporating a wide range of activities. Thus, there will need to be a long lead time (ideally not less than six months) in the planning of major festivals and fairs.

9.0 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

9.1 Context

Residential development offers a positive new force for changes in Melbourne's inner and middle suburbs. Additional, higher density residential development supports local business by increasing the population of an area and thus the market for local services. Higher density living also creates a greater demand for and usage of public spaces, thus adding to the "life" of public areas.

The attractiveness of the BRVC to new housing has been demonstrated through recent developments comprising small numbers of apartments located near the Centre. This type of development could provide a more viable land use in those parts of the Centre which are not performing well with commercial uses.

The Business Strategy envisages the incorporation of new residential units within and immediately around the BRVC. It does not propose the allocation of the Centre's Business Strategy budget to assist or facilitate this project. However, the Business Strategy should provide policy support and Council should be encouraged to support residential development initiatives where these do not adversely affect the trading position and amenity of the Centre.

9.2 Objectives

The principal objectives are:-

- to encourage residential development within and around the BRVC in areas designated as priority residential development areas;
- to discourage residential redevelopment in the core retail area of the Centre;
- to ensure that any residential redevelopment does not impinge on car parking supply in the Centre, access to car parks or vehicular access to existing stores or services;
- to ensure that residential redevelopment does not destroy the fabric, scale and character of the existing Centre or of significant parts of the Centre.

9.3 Concept

The residential redevelopment concept for the BRVC and surrounds is based on the following considerations:-

- it provides for the ongoing enhancement and strengthening of the retail core area (refer Figure 9.1);
- it provides for mixed use areas outside the retail core area subject to provision being made for the car parking requirements of residential units (refer Figure 9.1), and subject to the maintenance of the essential fabric, scale and character of existing buildings in the Centre.

9.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council support the principle of residential redevelopment within the BRVC, consistent with the concept and objectives in Sections 9.2 and 9.3.

FIGURE 9.1

10.0 NEW DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

In the course of the Study, the Consultants have investigated the possibilities for new commercial developments within and immediately adjoining the BRVC. Two development concepts were examined. These were:-

- the proposed new major supermarket to be developed on the east side of Bluff Road, south of Karrakatta Street (incorporating the existing service station, elderly citizens facilities and former banking premises. There is no question that a new major supermarket would make a dramatic improvement to the viability of the Centre, and particularly if the operations of the existing licensed supermarket could be transferred to the new facility. However, it is likely that a major supermarket chain has expressed interest in the proposal. However, assistance would be required from Council to consolidate the site and some costs would need to be incurred by Council. Essentially, likely political difficulties limit the prospects of the project. It has therefore not been put forward as a final recommendation from the Study;

- the second development initiative which was reviewed was the concept of new tea rooms and a restaurant on the beach reserve. Historically, there have been tea rooms and subject to urban design, landscaping and related site design guidelines, the project may achieve Council support. The concept is regarded as realistic and is proposed as part of the Business Strategy for the BRVC.

10.1 Objectives

The principle objectives relating to the new development initiatives for the BRVC are as follows:-

- to foster the development of tea rooms and a quality restaurant on the beach reserve, subject to siting, building design, parking and traffic access criteria;

- to ensure public ownership is being maintained over the land on which facilities may be developed;

- to determine acceptable standards of operation (e.g. in relation to trading hours, provision of a liquor licence, types of activities permitted, etc.) to be applied to conditions which should attach to a licence for the facilities. These conditions will ensure Council maintains high amenity and operational standards at the facility.

10.2 Concept

The concept for the tea rooms and restaurant on the beach reserve may be summarised as follows:-

- it envisages the development of a low rise quality structure as a focal point of the Centre to be located immediately opposite the clock tower;

- it envisages a structure and landscape of high quality and reflective of a rotunda or gazebo type structure. The structure and design should incorporate extensive internal / external landscape elements;

- the tea rooms and restaurants should provide adequate onsite parking;
- provision will need to be made for safe and effective access to Beach Road, ideally incorporating existing access roadways;
- high quality pedestrian access should be provided to the site consistent with the Pedestrian Space Circulation Strategy outlined in Figure 7.1.

10.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:-

- instruct its landscape architects and planners to prepare siting guidelines for the tea rooms and restaurant. The siting guidelines should include:-
  - definition of an overall boundary;
  - location of car parking and service areas;
  - general location of the proposed buildings;
  - delineation of the landscape area and pedestrian ways;
  - location of preferred traffic access points from Beach Road;
- prepare a submission of preferred licence and operating conditions for a prospective tenant;
- prepare tender documents for potential operators;
- invite registrations of interest for the right to develop and operate the facility;
- select a short list of applicants on the basis of their relevant professional experience, business standing and quality of submission;
- request a short list of candidates to prepare a detailed submission;
- examine the submissions and select a preferred operator;
- establish heads of agreement with the operator;
- the operator will then proceed with the applications for planning and development, and be subject to a licence agreement for a planning development permit;
- maintain a process of regular monitoring of the operations of the tea rooms and restaurants once the development has been completed, to ensure that conditions of the licence are adhered to.

APPENDIX 1

A Summary of Selected Course Information on Professional and Small Business Training and Support Programmes*

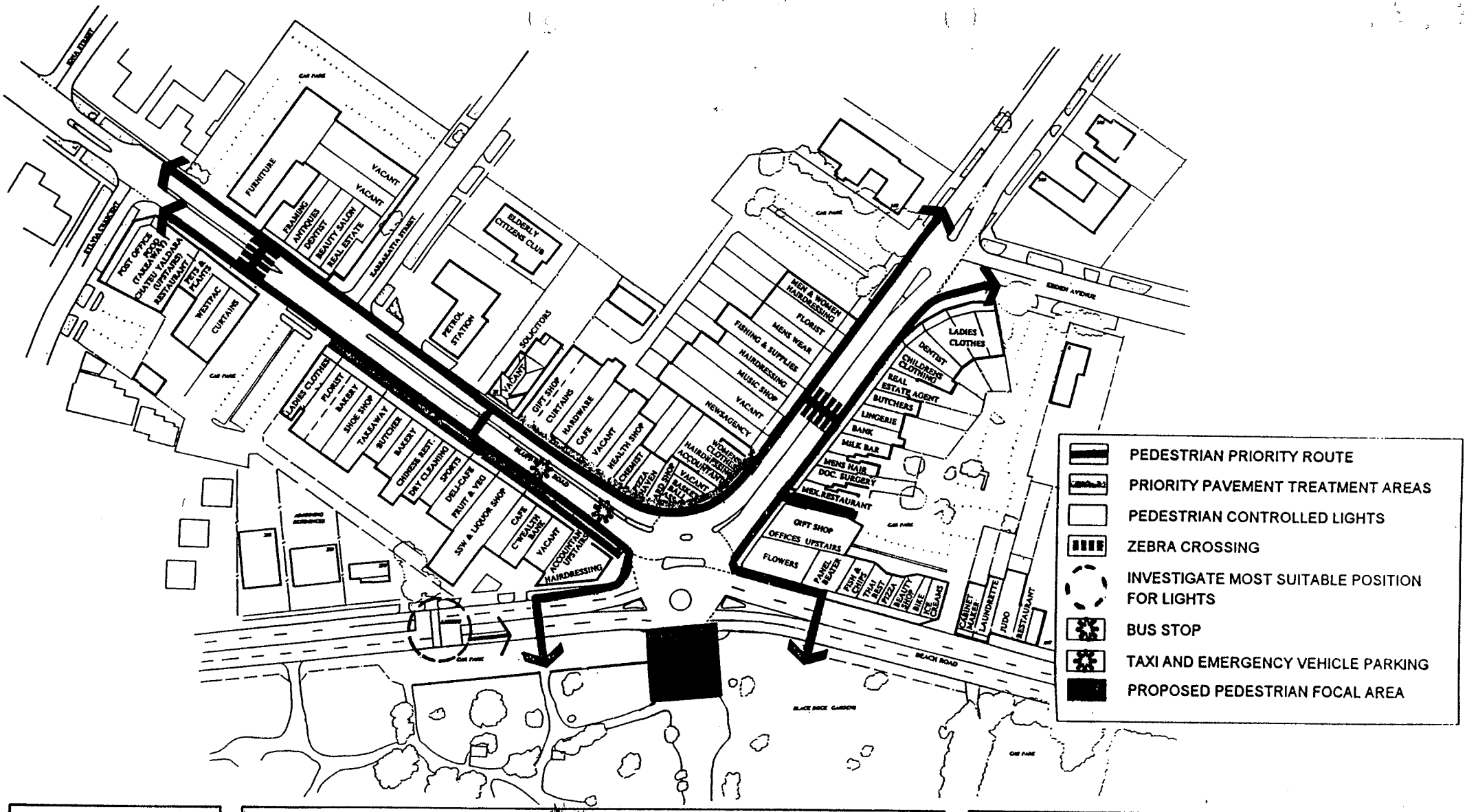
NAME	PLACE OF CONTACT	COURSE INFORMATION
Planning & Running a Small Business Cost: $395	Swinburne University of Technology, 523 Burwood Road, Hawthorn 3122 Tel: 819-8164 Fax: 818-0004	This course is intended to help those who are wanting to establish or purchase a small business or those who are already operating a small business. The course details available options, providing some analytical tools and also provides information on the business environment. The course will serve as an ideal introduction to the more intensive and highly focused small business courses run by the Centre. Duration: 15 hours - 5 evenings
Writing & Implementing a Business Plan Cost: $295	"	There is an adage in business that says: "..... if you don't know where you are going, how will you know when you get there...?". This course will provide participants with a detailed overview of the business planning and marketing process, the implementation plan and its critical importance to business and non-commercial ventures. Duration: 2 Days
Performance Management Systems Cost: $295	"	This workshop style program is designed for managers seeking to achieve peak performance from a motivated work-force. The Performance Management System has recently emerged as a major managerial and organisational process assisting the shift from rigid, hierarchical structures to a more flexible, open style of management and has developed as a result of the failure of standardised appraisal processes to bring about the changes in staff performance required by a rapidly changing environment. Performance Management is a comprehensive, yet common sense approach aimed at integrating a variety of organisational systems. Issues examined include: strategic planning, organisational goals and objectives, job descriptions, personal work plans and review, staff development and training, job enrichment, career development, job recognition and reward. The course is conducted by professionals working currently in the implementation of performance management systems in a variety of work place settings. Who will benefit from this program?: senior executives, managers with significant staffing responsibilities, Human Resources Managers, Staff development & training personnel. Duration: 2 Days
Managing People Cost: $295	"	The key to successful business is good people. "Managing People" is a course designed to assist the small business manager / owner with methods and techniques which will maximise potential and performance of valuable staff. It is much cheaper and infinitely more efficient to treat and train your staff well than it is to constantly replace them. Issues covered include: current issues in industrial relations, legal obligations, effective communication and negotiation techniques, motivational strategies. Duration: 2 Days

NAME	PLACE OF CONTACT	COURSE INFORMATION
Strategic Planning & Leadership Cost: $295	Swinburne University of Technology, 523 Burwood Road, Hawthorn 3122 Tel: 819-8164 Fax: 818-0004	Primarily designed to address the public sector, this two day workshop will benefit executives and managers interested in their organisation's strategic direction. Strategic Leadership is management at an executive level with strong focus on positioning an organisation to effectively meet the customer focus pressures of any modern business or service organisation. Such leadership establishes and promotes an organisational vision, and ensures that all internal organisational processes are working in support of that vision and direction. The workshop will introduce a wide range of topics including concepts of strategic thinking, creating a united and supported organisational vision, integrating internal processes for a customer driven organisation, developing organisational strategies and business plans, establishing a strong internal and external customer focus, methods in developing staff in support of an organisational vision and direction, management and leadership styles. The program will ideally benefit managers in the public sector with an interest in or responsibility for strategic thinking and planning. It will also assist managers responsible for implementation of strategic direction, quality service and TQM programmes. Workshop facilitators are industry based with extensive experience in assisting public sector managers to overcome many of the impediments to effective strategic change. **Duration:** 2 Days
Effective Marketing Skills Cost: $295	"	This practically oriented course is designed to provide participants with knowledge and skills necessary for undertaking an effective marketing approach within their organisation or business. Each participant will be provided with comprehensive course material. Topics include internal and external factors, market research and information, consumer, business and service markets, buying habits and financial matters. **Duration:** 2 Days
Advanced Marketing Skills Cost: $295	"	This follow on course is ideally suited for people who have either completed Effective Marketing Methods 1 or have some experience in the marketing function within an organisation. Course participants will investigate the more advanced elements of marketing with a view to formulation of an effective marketing plan. Each participant will be provided with comprehensive course material. Topics include pricing and terms of trade, the selling process, advertising, promotion, publicity and P.R. preparing the marketing plan. **Duration:** 2 Days
Professional Selling Skills Cost: $295	"	This is a course of self development which covers goal setting, attributes of a professional sales person and the structure and content of a sales presentation. **Duration:** 2 Days
Associate Diploma of Business Office Administration Cost: State government fees apply	Moorabbin College of TAFE Business Computing & Office Technology Centre Tel: 556-9694	Provides academic training to work at the para-professional level as a skilled administrator. The course has been designed to incorporate current office automation technologies and develop skills, knowledge and attitudes which can be adapted and developed within a changing office environment with specialist studies in stenography, medical, accounting, marketing and personnel. **Duration:** 2 years full time or on a part time basis at night

NAME	PLACE OF CONTACT	COURSE INFORMATION
Advanced Certificate in Management Cost: State government fees apply	Moorabbin College of TAFE Business Computing & Office Technology Centre Tel: 556-9694	This course is designed for people who wish to be or are employed as middle level managers in private businesses and public corporations throughout Australia. It offers subjects covering aspects of human, financial and project management, project marketing and office and computer systems management. **Duration:** 2 years part-time (1 evening per week).
Advanced Certificate in Personnel Cost: State government fees apply	"	The aim of the course is to train students in personnel practices appropriate to the position of personnel officer, working as support staff in the personnel function of a public or private organisation. It offers subjects such as staffing, personnel practices, training and development, wage and salary administration and communication skills. **Duration:** 3 years part time (2 evenings per week)
Certificate in Supervision Cost: State government fees apply	"	The supervision Certificate is designed to assist people to: ▪ strengthen their personal skills, attitude and knowledge in dealing with people and organisations; improve their powers of communication; develop a better understanding of human relations and develop effect supervision techniques. **Duration:** 1½ years part time (one evening per week).
Advanced Certificate in Management Cost: State Govt. fees apply	Holmesglen College of TAFE Administration Office Tel: 564-1640 / 564-1603	The course is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for the performance of a competent manager. On completion of the course, students should be able to:- ▪ analyse and assess the financial needs of business; ▪ determine the marketing needs of business; ▪ provide for the human needs of the people who work for and are associated with the business organisation; ▪ determine the industrial relations needs of business; ▪ provide for the information and computer based needs of business; ▪ prepare meaningful business plans for upper management. **Duration:** 2 years part time (2 evenings per week).
Advanced Certificate in Sales Management Cost: State Govt. fees apply	"	This course, which is the first year of the Associate Diploma of Business (Marketing), is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to obtain knowledge of the basic principles of marketing and sales philosophy and to impart some basic skills and techniques employed by marketing practitioners. **Duration:** 2½ - 3 years part time (2 evenings per week).
Marketing Cost: State Govt. fees apply	Swinburne University of Technology, 523 Burwood Highway, Hawthorn 3122 Tel: 819-8164 Fax: 818-0004	This course is designed to qualify people for middle management positions in the areas of marketing and sales management. It will provide the academic base for career advancement for those working in the marketing and sales management areas. After the successful completion of first year, students are eligible for the award of the Advanced Certificate in Sales Management (3300DCC). Students who successfully complete the second year will be awarded the Associate Diploma and are academically qualified for admission to the Australian Marketing Institute. **Duration:** 4 - 5 years part time.

NAME	PLACE OF CONTACT	COURSE INFORMATION
Associate Diploma of Business Accounting Cost: State Govt. fees apply	Swinburne University of Technology, 523 Burwood Highway, Hawthorn 3122 Tel: 819-8164 Fax: 818-0004	The Associate Diploma of Business (Accounting) encompasses practical training for a variety of para-professional accounting positions. Candidates will be able to work independently in small organisations or be involved in positions requiring a minimum of supervision while working under a professional accountant. **Duration:** 5 years part time.
Advanced Certificate in Management Cost: State Govt. fees apply	"	To prepare middle management and intending middle managers with knowledge, skills and attitudes to direct the managerial functions of planning, leading, organising and controlling in a small business or medium to large scale organisation. **Duration:** 2 years part time.
Office Administration Cost: State Govt. fees apply	Swinburne University of Technology, 523 Burwood Highway, Hawthorn 3122 Tel: 819-8164 Fax: 818-0004	This a two year full-time course with either a general program offering broad-base skill development and the choice of specialisations in accounting and / or desktop publishing. The general program and specialist stream provide extensive training for students seeking employment in middle management positions requiring secretarial and administrative expertise. After the successful completion of first year, students are eligible for the award of the Advanced Certificate in Office Administration (3300DGA). Students who successfully complete the second year will be awarded the Associate Diploma. **Duration:** 2 years full-time.
Purchasing and Planning	"	The general aim of this course is to provide a range of vocational subjects designed to educate: 1. support staff for professional officers and higher-level management, including department supervisors, senior clerical staff and staff with important specialist areas of responsibility, e.g. production managers, purchasing and supply officers; 2. smaller operators who need to be proficient in a variety of business tasks as well as management decision-making. **Duration:** 4 - 5 years part time.
Management Advanced Certificate Cost: State Govt. fees apply	Western Metropolitan College of TAFE Cnr. Nicholson & Buckley Streets, Footscray 3011 Tel: 284-8593 / 284-8544	This course aims to: ▪ prepare and develop competent and suitably qualified profit-centre or divisional managers for small business or for medium to large scale corporations; ▪ develop in students the ability to direct the managerial functions of planning, leading, organising staffing and controlling; ▪ enable students to understand the work performed in other functional areas of business; and ▪ develop in students the ability to function effectively in the overall disciplines of management. Duration: 2 years part time.

NAME	PLACE OF CONTACT	COURSE INFORMATION
Associate Diploma of Business in Operations Management Cost: State Govt. fees apply	Western Metropolitan College of TAFE Cnr. Nicholson & Buckley Streets, Footscray 3011 Tel: 284-8593 / 284-8544	The courses are designed so that students obtain an understanding of the operations management functions within an organisation and the techniques, skills and knowledge which are required to manage these functions. On satisfactory completion of the **Advanced Certificate in Operations Management** the student should be able to perform the duties and tasks of one or more of the following operations management functions: - Planning - Purchasing - Materials Management - Work Study / Industrial Engineering - Occupational Health and Safety **Duration:** 2 - 4 years part time.
Advanced Certificate in Management	RMIT, City Campus, TAFE Sector GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne 3001 Dept. of Management and Administrative Studies Tel: 662-0611 Fax: 663-2764	This course aims to:- ▪ prepare and develop competent and suitably qualified profit-centre or divisional managers for small business or for medium to large scale corporations; ▪ develop the ability to direct managerial functions of planning, leading, organising, staffing and controlling; ▪ enable students to understand the work performed in other functional areas of business; and ▪ develop the ability to function effectively in the overall disciplines of management. **Duration:** 2 years part time.
Graduate Diploma in Business Management	Monash University (Caulfield Campus) Admin. Officer Syme Division of Management Tel: 573-2615 Fax: 573-2718	The aims of this course are to develop the ability to:- ▪ identify issues, problems and opportunities, analyse the surrounding circumstances, evaluate the options available and effectively communicate the recommended course of action, taking into account the requirements of the organisation and of the people involved; ▪ integrate the academic program and the work environment and experiences of the participants; ▪ understand the need for and provide effective leadership; ▪ be increasingly outward looking and apply the concepts to a global market; ▪ manage multi-disciplinary teams and projects; ▪ be aware of the importance of technology to gain a strategic and competitive advantage.



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PEDESTRIAN SPACE AND CIRCULATION STRATEGY (MAY 1994)

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

RATIO CONSULTANTS PTY LTD

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS, TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT & CIVIL ENGINEERS, URBAN DESIGNERS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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FIGURE

7.1

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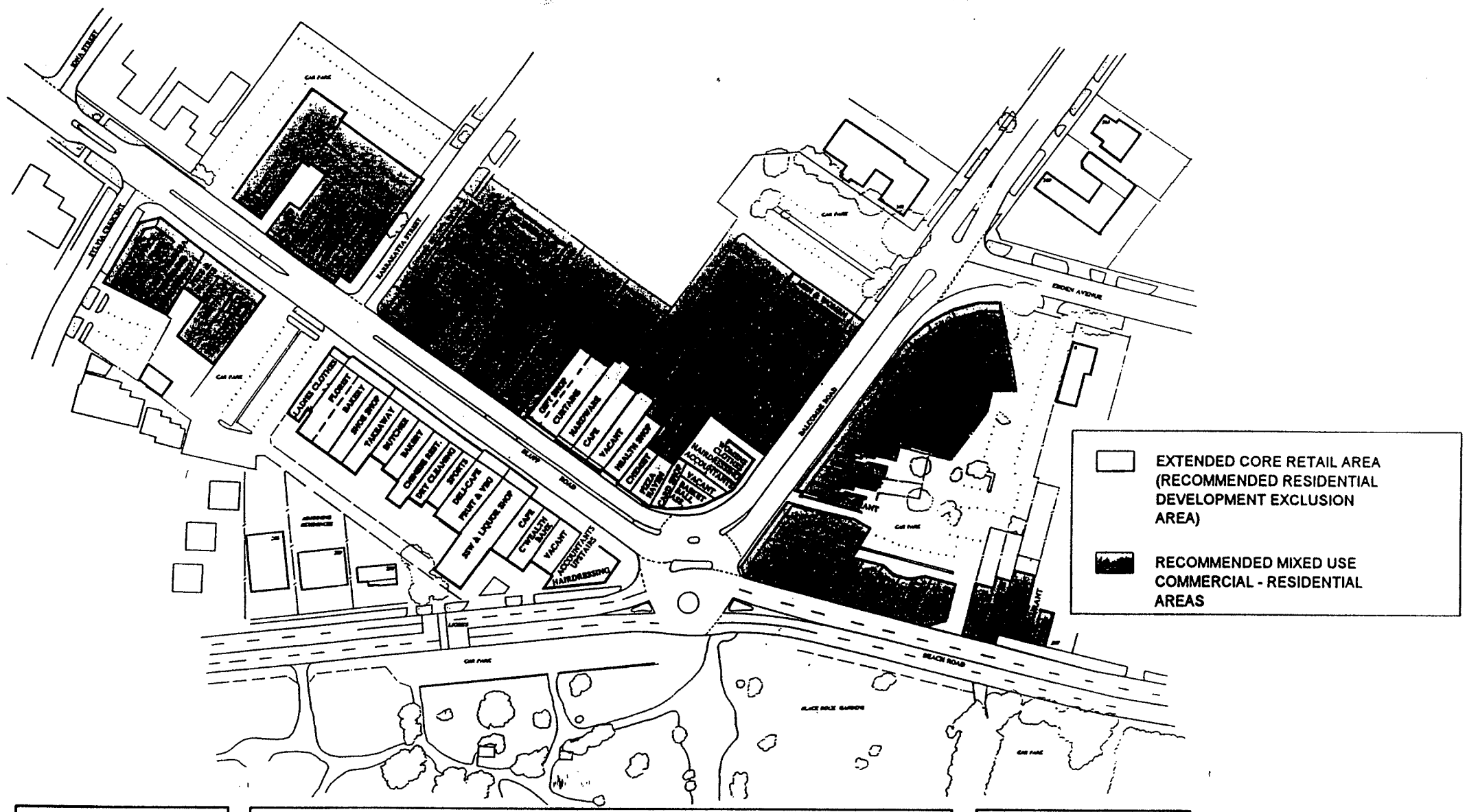

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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (MAY 1994)

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

RATIO CONSULTANTS PTY LTD

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS, TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT & CIVIL ENGINEERS, URBAN DESIGNERS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

FIGURE

9.1

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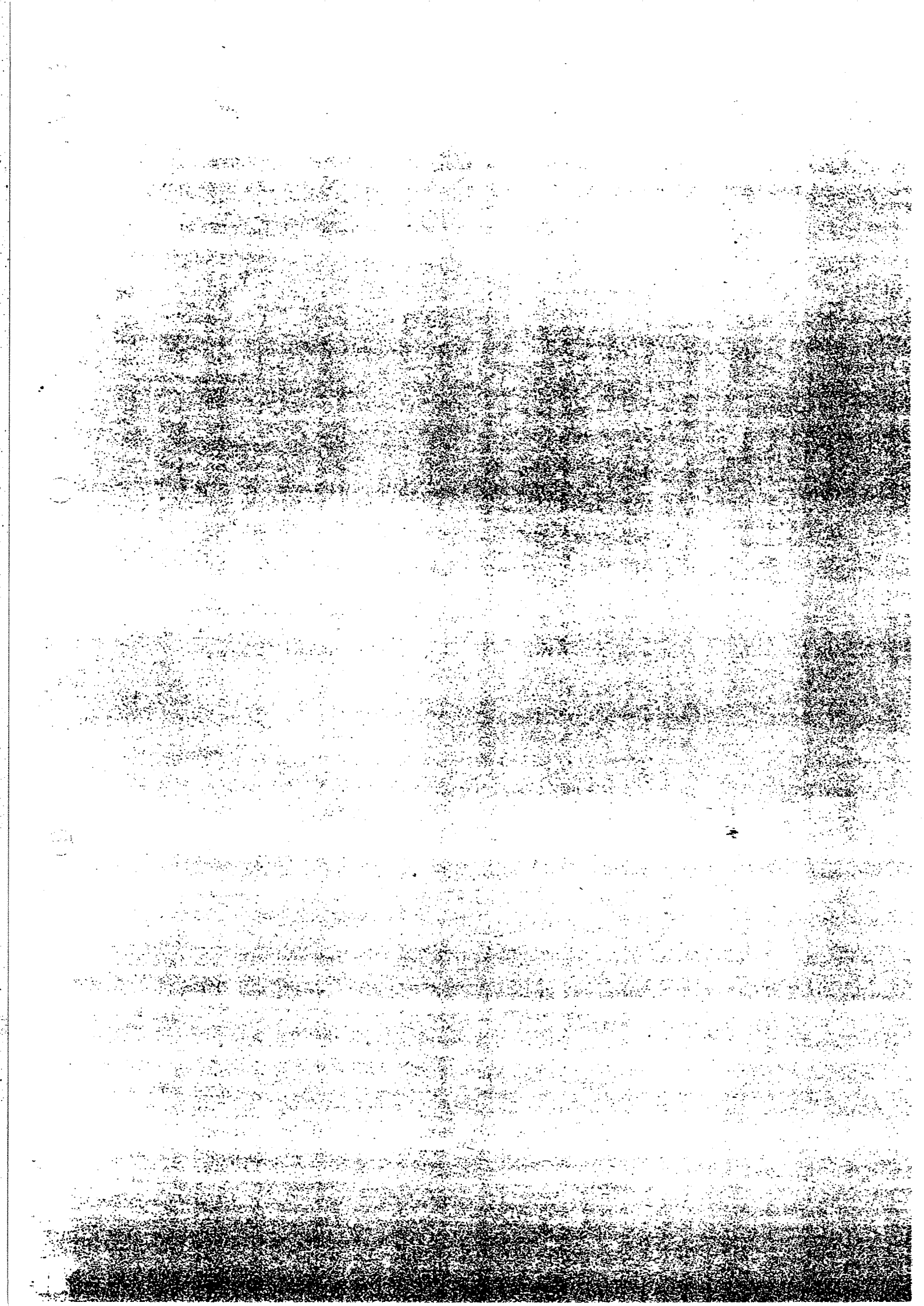

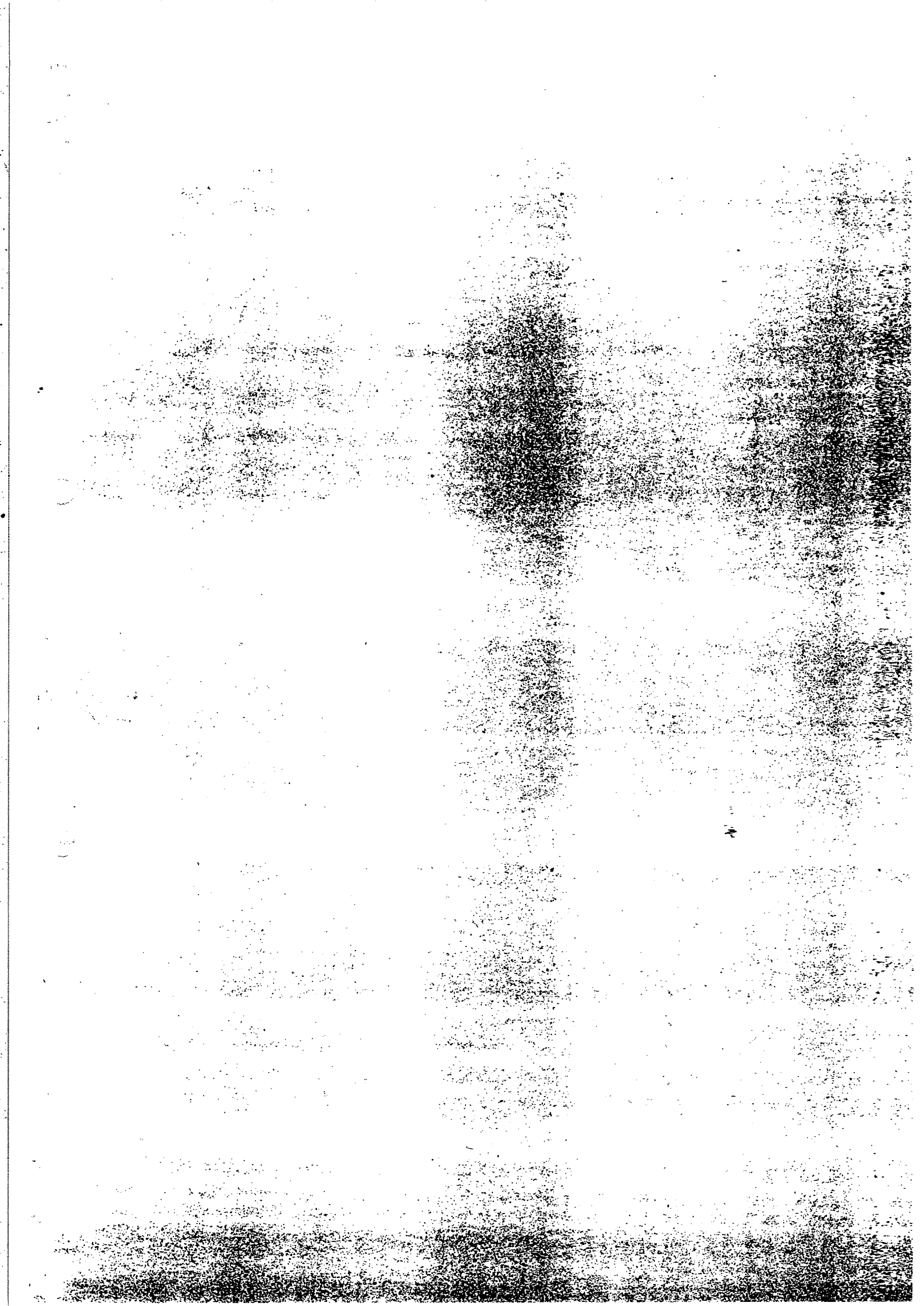

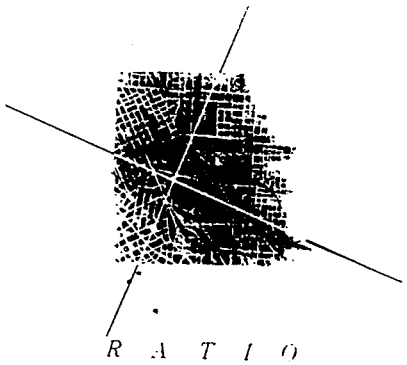

R A T I O

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BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

BUSINESS STRATEGY - CONCEPTS AND INITIAL RESEARCH

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November 1993

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In September 1993, Ratio Consultants was commissioned by the City of Sandringham to prepare a business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre.

The aim of the strategy, as set out by the project brief, was to *'prepare an overall business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre to improve the performance and function of the centre as a local convenience centre'.*

The supporting objectives were as follows:-

- to prepare an economic and retail evaluation of the centre;
- to review the retail mix of the centre, evaluate its appropriateness for a local convenience centre and recommend improvements to the retail mix-composition;
- to evaluate/assess the economic strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the centre;
- to recommend actions, priorities and resources that should be implemented to improve the function/role and performance of the centre as a local convenience centre within current regional retail network and likely expansion of Southland;
- to prepare a set of performance measures to monitor the centre and which can be used to monitor the economic and broader performance of the centre and the effectiveness of revitalisation initiatives implemented in the centre;
- identify and comment upon the retail trends likely to be faced by the centre;
- to involve, motivate and enhance the skills of local traders, property owners and the business association in the preparation of individual business strategy and the implementation of the overall business strategy for the Centre;
- to review the current centre management and recommend actions to improve the management of the centre including identifying centre-wide issues and strategies;
- to prepare a strategy for improving the retail mix of the centre in its function as a local centre;
- prepare a marketing/promotions strategy for the centre;
- prepare a strategy for improving the skills of traders and the business association to improve the performance of their businesses and the Centre.

The above objectives are being addressed in two reports:-

- this report introduces the concept of a business strategy applied to a centre and sets out a **framework for a business planning process** (refer Figure 1). The **application** of the framework to the Black Rock Village Centre has been undertaken as far as available information allows;
- a subsequent report will complete the process and provide a specific business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre.

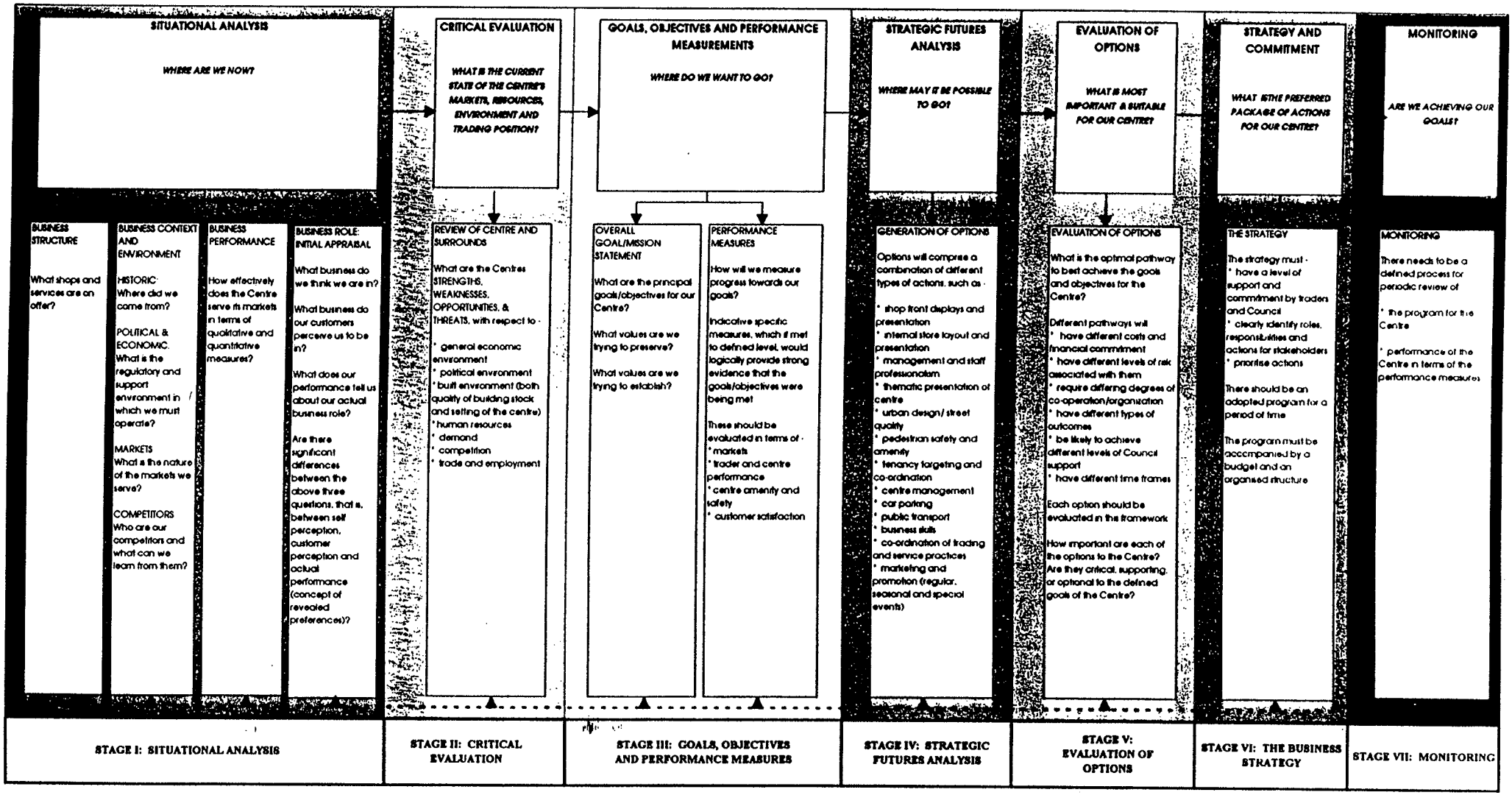


FIGURE 1: BUSINESS STRATEGY PROCESS

2.0 WHAT IS A BUSINESS STRATEGY?

In this section, an outline is presented of the **process** required to prepare a business strategy for a centre.

2.1 Objectives and Scope of a Business Strategy

A business strategy for a centre is a systematic process to plan a course of action for the centre to meet defined objectives. A business strategy commences with the development of goals and objectives for the future, defined through consideration of the centre's trading strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. An important component of a business strategy is the consideration of optional courses of action and their evaluation to select a programme which is likely to best meet desired objectives. A business strategy establishes a framework and pattern of thinking for a centre at a particular point in time and must necessarily allow for future change and modification subject to market conditions, consumer behaviour and needs, changed social attitudes etc.

The single most important "ingredient" for a business strategy is **commitment by the stakeholders**. No business plan for a centre can succeed without a high level of commitment and participation by traders, in co-operation with Council, building owners and resident groups. **The most important part of the business plan is the process of preparation.**

The scope of a business strategy is very wide. It takes into account **internal** as well as **external factors.**

Internal factors are factors within in a centre. These are issues such as:-

- the organisational structure/management of a centre;
- outlook and attitudes of the traders in a centre;
- outlook and attitude of the customers in a centre;
- outlook and attitude of the owners of shop properties;
- current economic performance of a centre;
- the product/market mix of a centre (that is, are the products on offer at the centre satisfying the markets it is serving);
- internal layout of shops and appearance of building stock;
- layout of centre;
- quality of fit-out and efficiency of plant and equipment;
- skills present within the centre;
- access to finance, knowledge of finance usage by traders and owners.

External factors are factors affecting a centre which are beyond the centre's control. Examples of such factors are:-

- the national economy (broader micro economic forms);
- the political environment (both local and state);
- the markets a centre is serving;
- the centre's competitors;
- retailing environment:-
  - extended trading hours;
  - working hours;
  - changed shift allowances;
  - network marketing;
  - catalogue sales;
  - enterprise agreements;
- customer expectations;
- demography and social behaviour changes.

All these issues must be taken into account if one is to achieve a realistic and workable business strategy.

2.2 Business Strategy Process

There are seven major stages in preparing a business strategy (refer Figure 1). These are:-

Stage I

Situational Analysis - Where are we now?

Stage II

Critical Evaluation - What is the current state of the Centre's markets, resources, environment and trading position?

Stage III

Goals, Objectives and Performance Measurements - Where do we want to go?

Stage IV

Strategic Futures Analysis - Where may it be possible to go?

Stage V

Evaluation of Options - What is most important to our Centre?

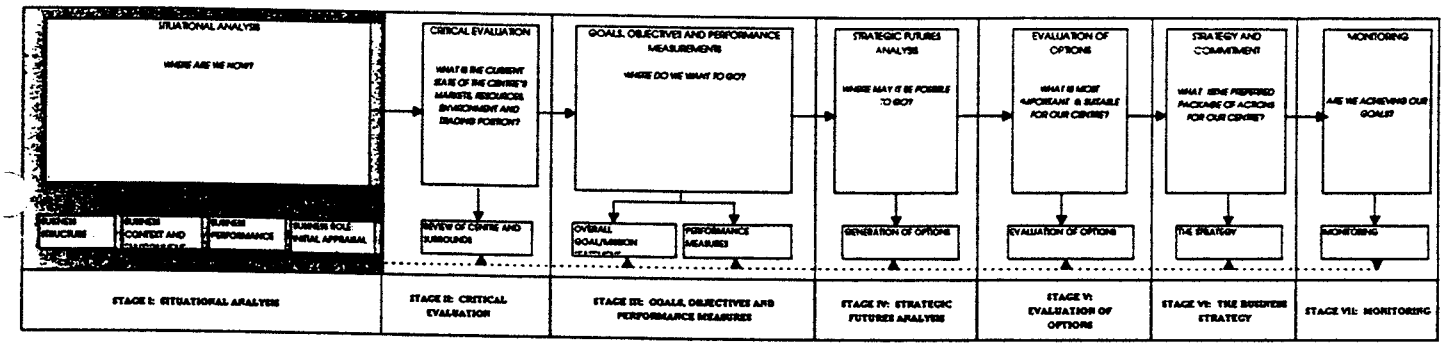
Stage VI

Strategy and Commitment - What is the preferred package of actions for our Centre?

Stage VII

Monitoring - Are we achieving our goals?

2.2.1 Stage I: Situational Analysis - Where are we now?



The process commences with a review of the centre's current situation. The review considers the following aspects of the centre:-

- business structure (including layout of the centre/spatial relationships with the centre);
- business context and environment (including comparison to "typical" centre types and relationship to other centres);
- business performance;
- business role: and initial appraisal.

Business Structure

Business structure is the pattern of retail stores and services provided by the centre. It is important that the business structure of the centre be analysed to assess the centre's:-

- trading strengths;
- trading deficiencies;
- grouping/clusters of stores and services (layout of centre/spatial relationships).

Business Context and Environment

There are six components to this part of the analysis. These are:-

- historic;
- political and economic;

- markets;
- competitors;
- comparisons with characteristics of "typical" local centres;
- relationship to other centres.

An examination of the history of a centre may be very useful to explain:-

- the centre's pattern of development;
- the scale and type of built form and building styles.

The political and economic factors, such as the regulatory and support environment in which the centre is placed should also be known to assist in drafting options to improve the centre. No matter how competent the proposed business strategy is at reaching its set goals and objectives, unless there is support for it by local and state authorities little will be achieved.

It is also important to know what the nature of the markets the centre is serving is as there is no use in setting priority actions which do no meet these markets' needs.

The major competitors must be known as much can be learnt from them. Once it is clear who the competitors are and what they are offering that the centre under review is not, much can be done to combat the weaknesses of the centre.

A comparison of patterns of activities and trade at the centre under study with successful (local) centres should be undertaken to provide a clear indication of:-

- the desired range of store types and patterns of clustering;
- desired levels of trade, shopper catchments, etc.

An assessment of the centres in the sub-regional local centre network is desirable to clarify:-

- current levels of service and indicative patterns of trade of likely competing centres;
- the most suitable role for the centre under study (i.e. exploiting relative strengths of the centre and weaknesses in the local centre network).

Current Business Performance

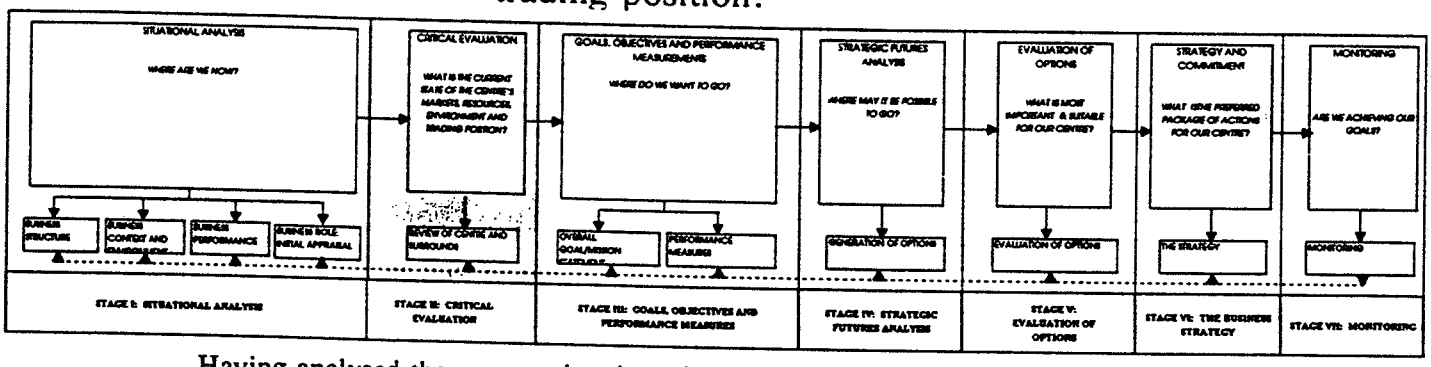
Business performance relates to **quantitative** as well as **qualitative** measures. Quantitative measures are those which can be measured in physical units, such as dollars spent or market share, while qualitative measures relate to quality issues such as customer satisfaction (in terms of issues such as value for money, satisfaction with staff and the centre's environment). These issues are important to know when drafting up a business strategy as the qualitative measures can say much about how the customers say they perceive the centre and the quantitative measures usually reinforce this perception.

The types of quantitative and qualitative measures which would be used to assess a centre's **current performance** should be the same as those used to assess a centre's **future performance**. These are set out in Section 2.2.3.

Business Role: Initial Appraisal

Having taken the last three components into account, an initial appraisal of the centre's present role can now be ascertained. However, there may be **different perceptions** as to the centre's role depending on whether one is a trader, customer or owner. It is important in this section to understand what the traders, customers and owners perceive the role of their centre to be and to assess whether this is what the 'business performance' of the centre is suggesting. The concept of "revealed preferences" reconciles **actual business performance** with **perceived business roles**. If shoppers say that they prefer one centre but actually shop at another, then their actions are 'revealing' their true preferences. Once these preferences are revealed, an initial appraisal of what the centre's **actual** role is can be determined.

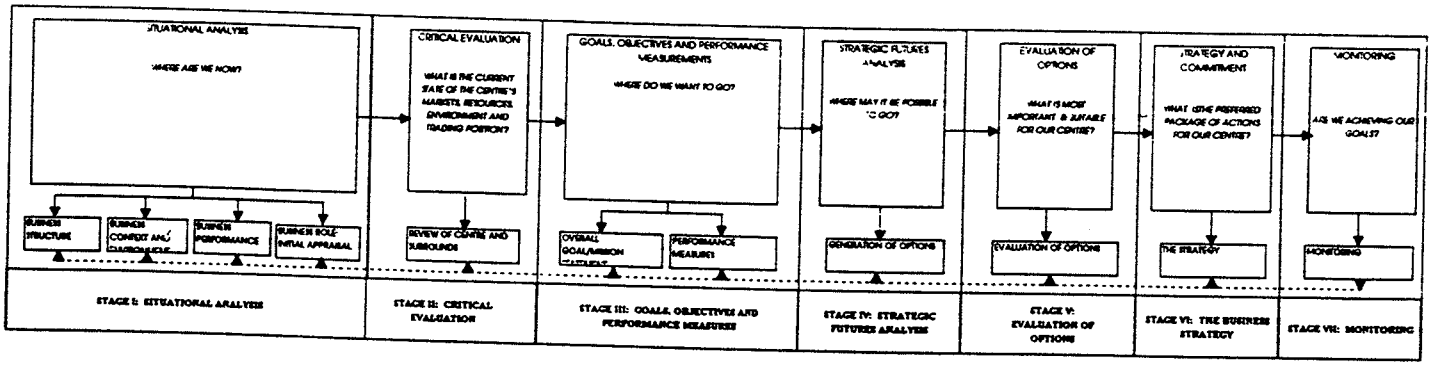
2.2.2 Stage II: Critical Evaluation - What is the current state of the centre's markets, resources, environment and trading position?



Having analysed the current situation of the centre, one should be in a position to critically assess the centre's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is usually best accomplished in a workshop situation or by a committee where the committee reflects the wider trader/community interest. The issues discussed in the workshop should be specifically linked to:-

- the general economic environment;
- the political environment;
- the built environment (in terms of the quality of building stock and the setting of the centre);
- human resources;
- demand for shops, services, and range of goods;
- competition from other shops and services;
- trade and employment issues.

2.2.3 Stage III: Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures: Where do we want to go?



For any strategic plan to have some chance of success, clear goals, objectives and performance measures need to be established. It is usually most beneficial if these goals and objectives are set by an established committee as there is more chance of the Strategy succeeding if the traders/community feel responsible to it. In order to establish any goals or objectives however, one must answer two questions. These are:-

- what values are trying to be preserved in the centre?;
- what values are trying to be established in the centre?

Once these two questions are answered it becomes clearer where the centre's direction should be.

However, answering these questions is not enough. One must establish clear performance measures to measure progress towards the established goals and objectives. These performance measures must be indicative specific measures, which if met to a defined level, would logically provide strong evidence that the goals and objectives were being met. It is no use in setting down goals and objectives if one can not evaluate if there has been progress towards them. The types of performance measures one might use are in terms of:-

- markets;
- trader and centre performance;
- centre amenity and safety; and
- consumer satisfaction.

Markets

Possible evaluation criteria for the market category is as follows:-

- types of consumers (patterns of purchases depending on the centre) by residential location;
- mode of travel;

- demographic characteristics of shoppers.

Trader and Centre Performance

Possible criteria for this category are issues such as:-

- patronage levels;
- frequency levels of shopping at the centre;
- retail sales produced at the centre;
- shopper and trade catchments;
- market share of the centre;
- retail turnover densities;
- employment densities;
- store vacancies;
- turnover of tenancies (changing occupancy);
- changes in retail mix;
- changes in the role of the centre;
- property rentals;
- maintenance of property value;
- state of appearance of shops (internally and externally).

Centre Amenity and Safety

Centre amenity and safety are important aspects of the centre for if the community does not feel comfortable in a centre, very few will regularly frequent it. Possible evaluation criterion to examine whether the centre amenity and safety is acceptable to the community is as follows:-

- overall presentation of the centre;
- quality of verandahs/continuous shelter;
- street lighting;
- under-verandah lighting;
- consistency of trading hours;
- seating and street furniture;
- safe pedestrian access across major roads;

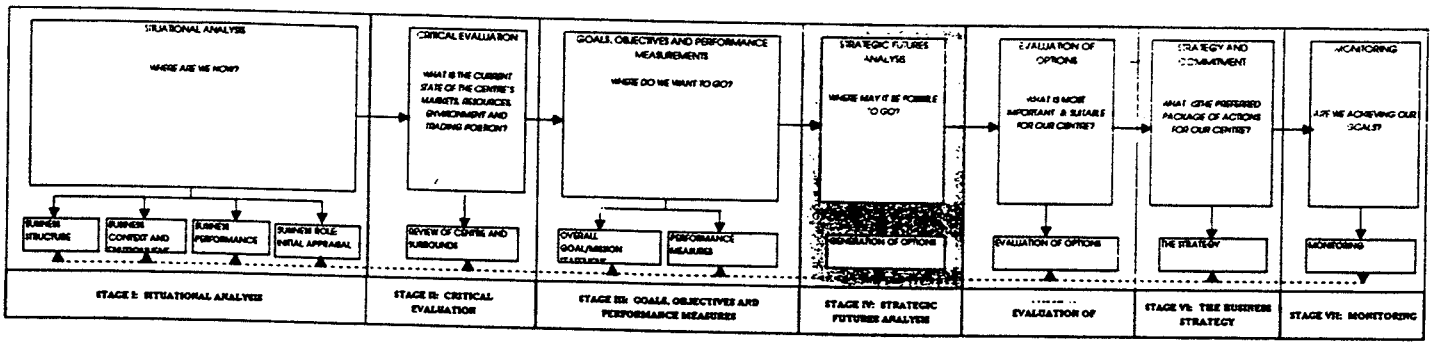
- on-street parking;
- off-street parking;
- clear signage to indicate:-
  - range of stores, services and locations;
  - parking;
  - convenience and public facilities;
  - access to the beach.

Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is a very important aspect of the centre as ultimately it is this which will dictate whether or not people frequent the centre. Possible criterion for this category are as follows:-

- range of stores and services;
- range of goods available in stores;
- quality of goods and services;
- price and perceived value for money of goods and services;
- attractiveness of stores;
- effective parking access;
- hours of trading;
- delivery services;
- friendliness of staff - do the residents feel at ease in the Centre;
- perception as to whether the staff care;
- perceived professionalism of staff;
- perceived cleanliness of shops;
- attractiveness of window displays;
- presentation of merchandise;
- satisfaction with shops 'sales'.

2.2.4 Stage IV: Strategic Futures Analysis - Where may it be possible to go?

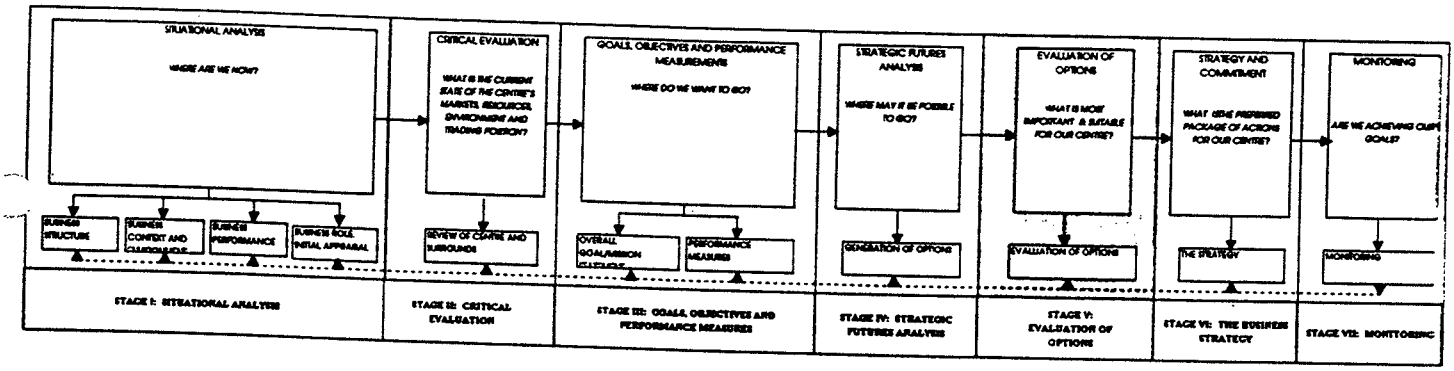


Having defined the goals and objectives a set of options to achieve these should then be developed. These options may comprise of a combination of different types of actions, such as:-

- focus on main attractors (i.e. specific actions to either **attract** new selected major stores/services into the centre of to **consolidate/improve** existing major stores/services in the centre. In both cases the **selection** of the major stores/services should be undertaken to maximise the Centre's viability, trading position and perceived role);
- structural improvements:-
  - optimal new types of stores;
  - attractors to best suit the catchment and centre;
- encourage each individual business to develop their own business strategy;
- shop front displays and presentation;
- internal store layout and presentation;
- management and staff professionalism, and business skills (how well they interact with their customers, how well they manage their own business) that is, a focus on the **quality of service** provided by shops and other businesses;
- thematic presentation of centre;
- urban design/street quality;
- pedestrian safety and amenity;
- tenancy targeting and co-ordination;
- centre management;
- car parking;

- public transport;
- co-ordination of trading and service practices;
- marketing and promotion (regular, seasonal and special events).

2.2.5 Stage V: Evaluation of Options - What is most important and suitable for the Centre?



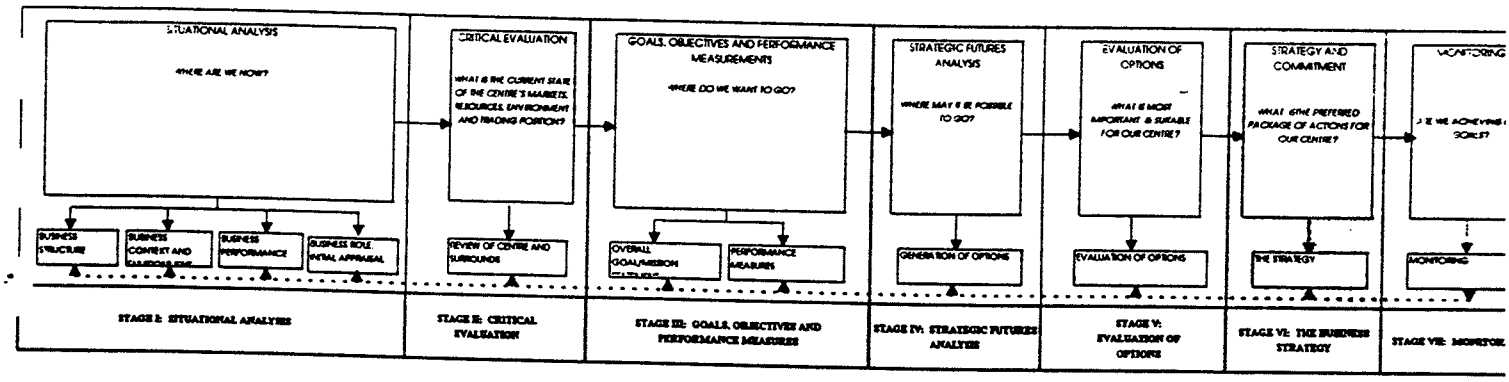
One will find that there are many ways to achieve the goals and objectives set in Stage Three. In the development of an optional pathway an assessment will be required of alternative implementation strategies. Each of these strategies is likely to comprise a combination of different types of actions. Each of the possible strategies is likely to be associated with the following characteristics:-

- different costs and financial commitment;
- different levels of risk associated with them;
- require differing degrees of co-operation/organisation;
- have different types of outcomes;
- be likely to achieve different levels of support by all stakeholders - traders, owners, customers and Council in terms of time/resources/money/endorsements;
- have different time frames.

All the possible options (generated in Section 2.2.4) should be evaluated in terms of the above issues.

If the options one is evaluating are not likely to provide the outcomes one wants for each of the criterion, then it logically follows that the option is not critically important to the centre. However, on the other hand, the outcomes of an option might be desirable but the cost immense. This is where one has to evaluate how important the actions are to the centre - are they critical, supporting or optional to the defined goals of the centre?

2.2.6 Stage VI: Strategy and Commitment - What is the preferred package of actions for the Centre?

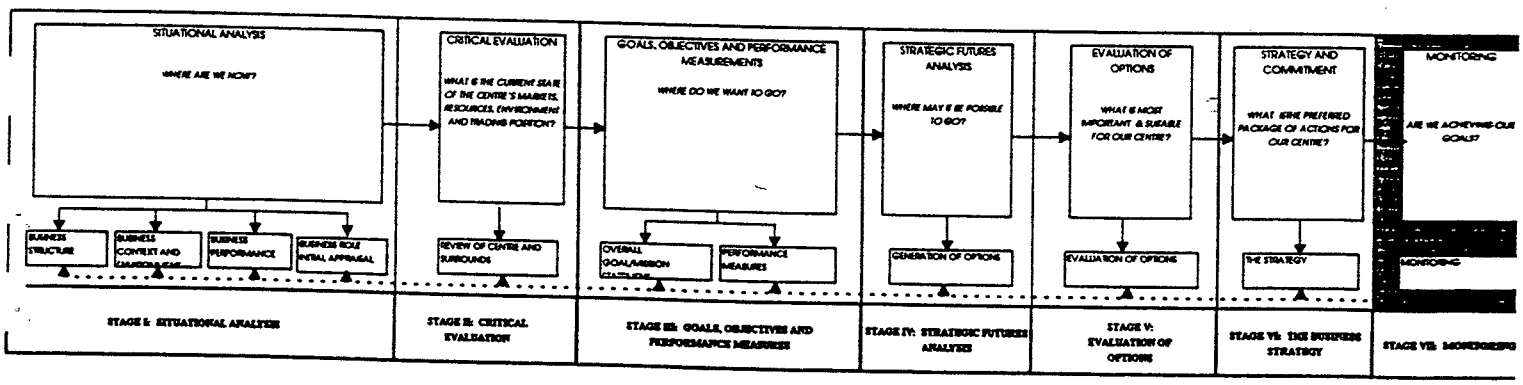


Once all the options have been evaluated, a preferred package of actions need to be specified. This becomes the centre's business strategy. However, it is not enough to simply have a business strategy. In order for anything of significance to happen in the centre, the strategy must:-

- have a level of support and commitment from the traders, owners and the Council;
- clearly identify roles, responsibilities and actions for stakeholders (including leadership roles);
- strategically prioritise actions;
- include finance/funding arrangements;
- include a program for implementation.

There should be a specified time frame in which to carry out the business strategy and the strategy must be accompanied by a budget and an organised program of implementation. These requirements are of paramount significance to the achievement of the overall goals and objectives for the centre.

2.2.7 Stage VII: Monitoring - Are we achieving our goals?



As previously stated, there needs to be a defined process for periodic review of:-

- the strategy set for the centre; and
- the performance of the centre in terms of the performance measures set.

It is likely that two types of monitoring processes will be required. These are:-

- progressive "on-line" monitoring, that is, regular reviews (e.g. quarterly) of the trading performances of businesses in the centre, patterns of patronage, consumer perceptions;
- "cyclical" detailed reviews of the progress and response to the Plan (e.g. biannually). The following questions should be addresses:-
  - is the Plan being implemented on time and on budget?;
  - what types of responses are emerging from traders and the general community to the plan and implementation program?;
  - what modifications/changes in direction may be required to improve the performance and amenity of the centre?

If the results of the strategy are not meeting the goals and objectives set in Stage III, then this is an indication that there is a need to review the strategy and modify either the priority action or the goals and objectives.

3.0 THE BASIS FOR A BUSINESS STRATEGY IN THE BLACK ROCK BUSINESS CENTRE

In order to provide a comprehensive context for the strategy it is important to outline the environment in which the centre is currently based. The need for a business strategy for the Black Rock Business Centre is presented in terms of:-

- understanding of the general national economy and the impacts of it on local centres;
- appreciation of the regional context of the Black Rock Village Centre;
- an understanding of emerging patterns of responses by strip centres;
- an appreciation of the likely range of outcomes and benefits of a business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre.

3.1 National Economic Environment

Since 1989, Australia has moved through a severe recession unprecedented in the post war period. The severity of the recession has impacted on the retail industry in the following ways:-

- there has been real declines (unprecedented in the post war period) in real household retail expenditures. In Victoria, household retail expenditures have continued to decline through 1993;
- significant real declines in retail expenditures have occurred across a range of competitive goods including clothing, textiles and footwear and a range of furniture furnishings and household goods;
- the significance of the food shopping trip (as a proportion of household expenditure) has increased during the recession years. Emerging sales information appears to indicate that ongoing changes in patterns of food expenditure represent a structural shift rather than a short term cyclical change;
- the participation rate of women in the work force has increased steadily during the recession period. This has been in part reinforced by the real decline in median wage levels over the past four years;
- the increasing scarcity of discretionary time for shopping and food purchases has in turn led to the emergence of late night and 24 hour trading in the major supermarket chains;
- the recession has substantially increased competitive pressures among local retailers (both in terms of price and non-price competition including pressure for delivery services);
- the recession has also provided an impetus for the introduction of new single categories stores (termed "category killers" in the United States). Examples of these types of stores include the new toy hypermarket chains eg "Toys-R-Us" and "World 4 Kids";

- specialised service stores are also emerging in this environment including, for example, a new chain of stationery and business service stores to be developed by Coles/Myer primarily oriented to the small business sector.

The emerging outcome of the above factors and a range of related issues is likely to substantially increase economic and social pressures on local centres. Local centres will have to compete to maintain economic viability and social significance in the emerging economic environment.

3.2 Regional Context

The regional context is discussed in terms of:-

- regional centres;
- the network of sub-regional and local centres.

Regional Centres

The regional level of the centre hierarchy in the southern suburbs (encompassing several municipalities including Moorabbin, Mordialloc and Sandringham) is dominated by a single centre : The Southland Shopping Centre. A recent decision by the Minister for Planning (29 April, 1993) to allow a further significant expansion of the Southland Shopping Centre will further increase the dominance of the centre over the southern region. It is likely that the extension will increase the significance of the Centre for a range of leisure activities, food shopping and comparison goods shopping.

The expansions are likely to have a far more significant effect on established major shopping centres in the southern suburbs including Brighton (both the Church Street and Bay Street Centres), Bentleigh and Hampton. However, a downstream effect on the Black Rock Village Centre is likely to occur, in the sense that there will be a smaller retail market in which the centre will be realistically able to compete for potential trade.

Sub-regional and Local Centre Network

The Black Rock Village Centre faces intense competition from the network of centres in the vicinity of the Centre. In the absence of on-site assessments by the Consultants, it is not possible at this stage to clarify the extent and nature of local centre competition, but it is likely that there are three tiers of competitive Centres in the local centre network. These are:-

- subregional/large neighbourhood centres. These centres have an extensive range of stores and services, command extensive catchments and provide an increasing diversity of leisure and entertainment services and comparison goods shopping facilities. Centres in this category include:-
  - Church Street, Brighton;
  - Hampton Street, Hampton;
  - Bay Street, Brighton;

- larger local centres with a significant district and services role. Centres in this category include:-

  - Sandringham;
  - The Concourse;
  - Mentone;

- smaller local centres. These stores and services in these centres are essentially limited to the provision of fresh food and fast food outlets and a restricted number of services (including hairdressing, dry cleaning, postal and/or banking agencies). Centres in this category include:-

  - Balcombe Park;
  - Seaview.

As in many cases where simple hierarchical concepts are used, the Black Rock Village Centre does not easily fit into any of the categories discussed above. It is certainly a local centre, and most of its functions would appear to place it more in the second grouping of local centres (that is smaller local centres). It is important to note that the addition of a medium sized supermarket together with an upgrading of food stores within the centre would be sufficient to push the centre into the higher of the local centre categories.

3.3 Emerging Patterns of Responses by Strip Centres

Strip centres (and in this context local centres) are responding to the changed economical and social environment in the following ways:-

- a number of centres have undertaken urban design programs to improve their amenity and presentation. (eg Ashburton, Black Rock, Balwyn, Clayton, Glenferrie Road, Malvern, Croydon, Moe and Moonee Ponds);

- some municipalities have implemented or commenced heritage and conservation programs to enhance the character and amenity of their centres. (eg Ballarat, Williamstown, South Melbourne and Bendigo);

- the Main Street concept which originated in Canada and which is a program of guided help for traders has been applied in a range of centres throughout NSW and Victoria (examples include Ashburton, Morwell, Bendigo, Sale, Lithgow and Paddington).

The Main Street concept focuses on five major areas in seeking to improve the existing resources of strip centres. The major areas of the Main Street program are:-

- organisation (or the co-ordination and management of strip centres);

- design;

- heritage conservation;

- business development;

- promotion.

The Main Street concept is about upgrading strip centres. Its focus is on improving existing services and working within an existing physical fabric and framework. The approach appears to be deficient in that:-

- it places no significance on the need for structural change within centres (for example, on the need for new or improved stores or services or for new parking areas or public spaces);

- it does not apply sufficient focus on the role of business planning in the upgrading and renovation of centres (that is on the precise discipline required in the preparation and execution of development plans and marketing strategies within a business planning framework).

The approach currently being developed by Ratio is designed to specifically address these deficiencies in the Main Street approach and will be applied in the Black Rock Village Centre.

3.4 Desirable Business Strategy Outcomes and Benefits for the Black Rock Village Centre

Business Strategy Outcomes

The Business Strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre should meet a number of outcomes. These fall into the major following areas:-

- **Objectives.** The strategy should result in a clear exposition of a hierarchy of objectives for the Black Rock Village Centre;

- **Recommended Organisational/management structure;**

- **Performance measures.** Performance measures are required to help assess the progress of the strategy in relation to:-

  - penetration and utilisation of markets ;
  - trader and centre performance;
  - improvements to centre amenity and safety;
  - improvements to consumer satisfaction. The range of possible performance measures has been discussed in an outline of Stage 3 of the business strategy process (refer Section 2.2.3).

- **Recommended principles for the financing of the budget;**

- **Recommended urban design works, co-ordinated improvements to stores and marketing programs;**

- **Recommended implementation program for new stores or services in the Centre**

Likely Benefits from a Business Strategy

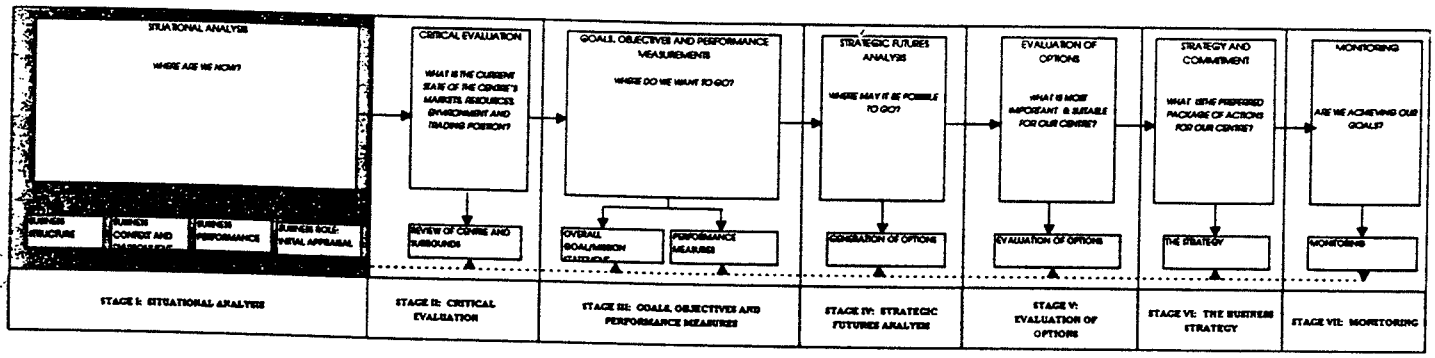
Regardless of whether a centre is performing satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily, it is desirable to have a Business Strategy for a centre. Planning for a centre can bring about many positive results, such as:-

- optimal use of available investment resources;
- long term viability;
- optimal level of services employment;
- optimal level of tourism attraction and benefit;
- optimal use of infrastructure resources and minimal long-term maintenance costs/unit usage;
- optimal level of on-going investment;
- proposals to achieve the highest levels of net community benefit.

Due to these reasons, it is desirable for any centre to have a Business Strategy.

4.0 THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE : SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

In this section, the business strategy process as outlined in Section 2.0 is commenced. Stage 1 of the business strategy process (Situational Analysis - Where are we now?) has been applied to the Black Rock Village Centre.



The Centre has been assessed in relation to:-

- context and trading environment;
- the Centre's structure;
- the Centre's function and performance.

4.1 Context and Trading Environment

The context and trading environment of the Black Rock Village Centre is presented in terms of the following factors:-

- location;
- historic context;
- demographic and behavioural context;
- political context;
- competitive environment.

4.1.1 Location of the Centre

The Black Rock Village Centre is a small neighbourhood retailing and services centre comprising of approximately 80 tenancies. It is located at the confluence of Beach, Bluff and Balcombe Roads in the City of Sandringham, approximately 20 kms south of the Central Activities District, on Port Phillip Bay (refer Figure 2). The visual focus of the Centre is the clock tower located at the intersection of the major roads referred to above. While the Black Rock Village Centre is accessible from Beach Road, the Centre's principal trading focus is located in Bluff Road and to a lesser extent in Balcombe Road. The Centre presents no significant trading address to Beach Road (refer figures 3, 3A and 3B).

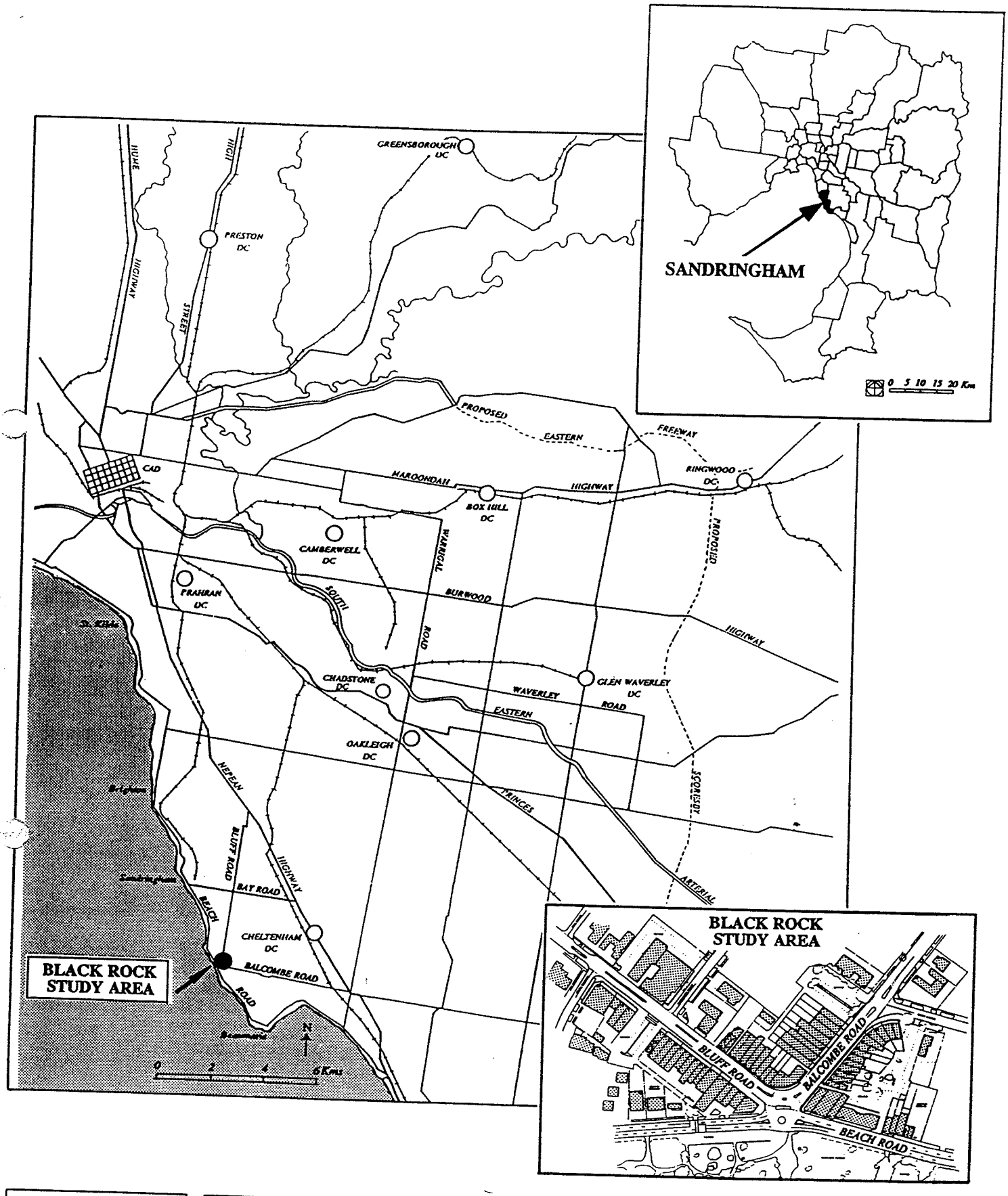
The location of the Centre by the Bay provides key potential resources for the future development of the Village Centre by the provision of safe pedestrian access across Beach Road to Beach Reserve. The proximity to the sea and orientation of the Centre, also exposes the Centre to prevailing southerly and south-westerly winds, especially during the winter months. The pattern of development of the Centre (that is largely along Bluff & Balcombe Roads) and the built form of the Centre (that is essentially of two storey scale) tends to provide a significant level of protection from the prevailing elements particularly during the winter months. The most exposed sections of the Centre are along Beach Road and in the immediate vicinity of the clock tower. These issues appear to have been significant in the development and evolution of the Centre.

Beach, Bluff and Balcombe Roads define the edges and core of the Black Rock Village Centre. They also constitute the traffic circulation system both for through vehicle movements and for patrons accessing the Centre. Midweek winter time traffic flow data (Tuesday 3/7/85, *"Black Rock Village Shopping Centre, Townscape Improvement Study, April 1992"* City of Sandringham, refer Appendix Three) indicates the following characteristics:-

- traffic flow in and around the clock tower circus is approximately 20,000 vehicles a day;
- Beach Road, south of the clock tower roundabout, incurs approximately 10,000 vehicles a day;
- Beach Road, north of the clock tower, incurs approximately 14,000 vehicles a day;
- Balcombe Road has approximately 9,500 vehicles a day;
- Bluff Road has approximately 6,000 vehicles a day.

It will be appreciated that these traffic flows would be significantly expanded during the summer period. The extensive use of the traffic circulation system and the absence of peripheral routes around the Centre has resulted in perceived pedestrian access and amenity problems. A recent survey of traders undertaken by Ratio Consultants (1993) has found that approximately 26% of identified weaknesses of the Centre related to traffic speed or pedestrian safety (refer Table 1).

The Centre is serviced by buses (routes 642 and 901). These traverse Bluff and Balcombe Roads bus stops and are located within the Centre on Bluff Road.



NORTH

METROPOLITAN CONTEXT

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

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FIGURE

2

PROJECT

2356

DEPARTMENT STORES

DISCOUNT DEPARTMENT STORES

SUPERMARKETS

FOOD SPECIALTY

CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR & DRAPERY SPECIALTY

HARDWARE, HOMEWARE, APPLIANCES INCLUDING FURNITURE & FURNISHINGS

OTHER HOUSEHOLD GOODS
INCLUDES NEWSAGENTS, PHARMACIES, SPORTING GOODS, PET SHOPS, TOYS, JEWELLERY, STATIONERY

CONVENIENCE SHOPS & TAKE AWAY FOODS

RESTAURANTS

RETAIL SERVICES
(INCLUDING HAIRDRESSERS, SHOE REPAIRS, VIDEO HIRE, DRY CLEANERS, TAB, PHOTO PROCESSING, TRAVEL AGENCIES, MEDIBANK)

FINANCIAL SERVICES
(INCLUDES BANKS, CREDIT UNIONS, BUILDING SOCIETIES)

MEDICAL SERVICES

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
(INCLUDES ARCHITECTURAL, ENGINEERING & DRAFTING, ACCOUNTING & TAX SERVICES)

SERVICE STATION

AUTO SALES & PARTS, BOATS & CARAVANS

LIGHT INDUSTRY (AUTO REPAIRS, FABRICATIONS & PARTS CABINET MAKING)

CIVIC, GOVERNMENT, INSTITUTIONAL
(INCLUDES EDUCATION, HOSPITALS)

MOTELS, RESIDENTIAL HOTELS

ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE
(INCLUDING BARS, CINEMAS, TEN-PIN BOWLS, AMUSEMENT PARLOURS, MASSAGE PARLOURS)

V VACANT LAND & BUILDINGS

CAR PARK

NORTH

SCALE

0 20 40 60 80 M

LAND USE SURVEY
(SEPTEMBER 1993)

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

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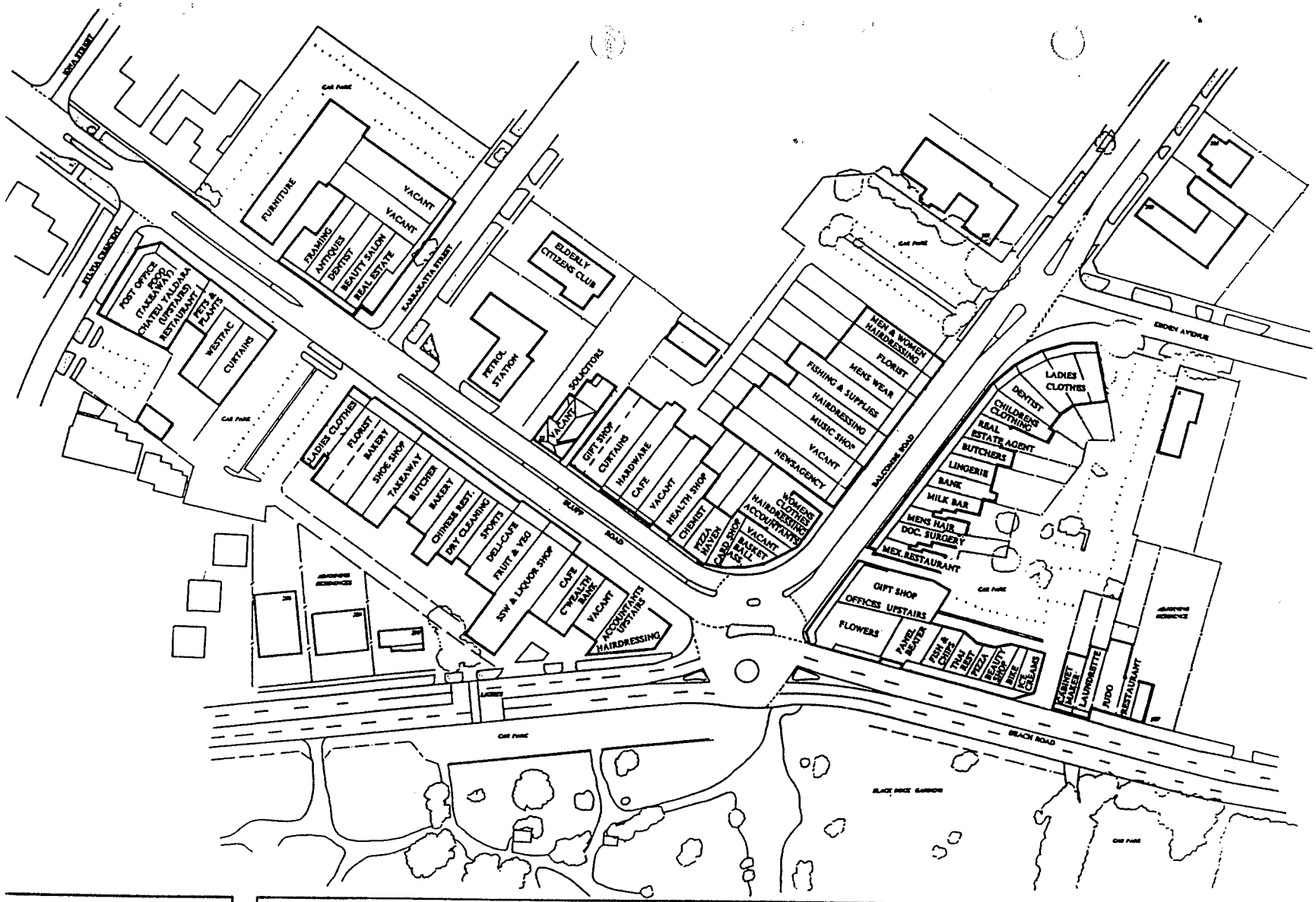
FIGURE

3

PROJECT

2356



NORTH

SCALE

0 20 40 60 80 M

LAND USE SURVEY
(SEPTEMBER 1993)

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

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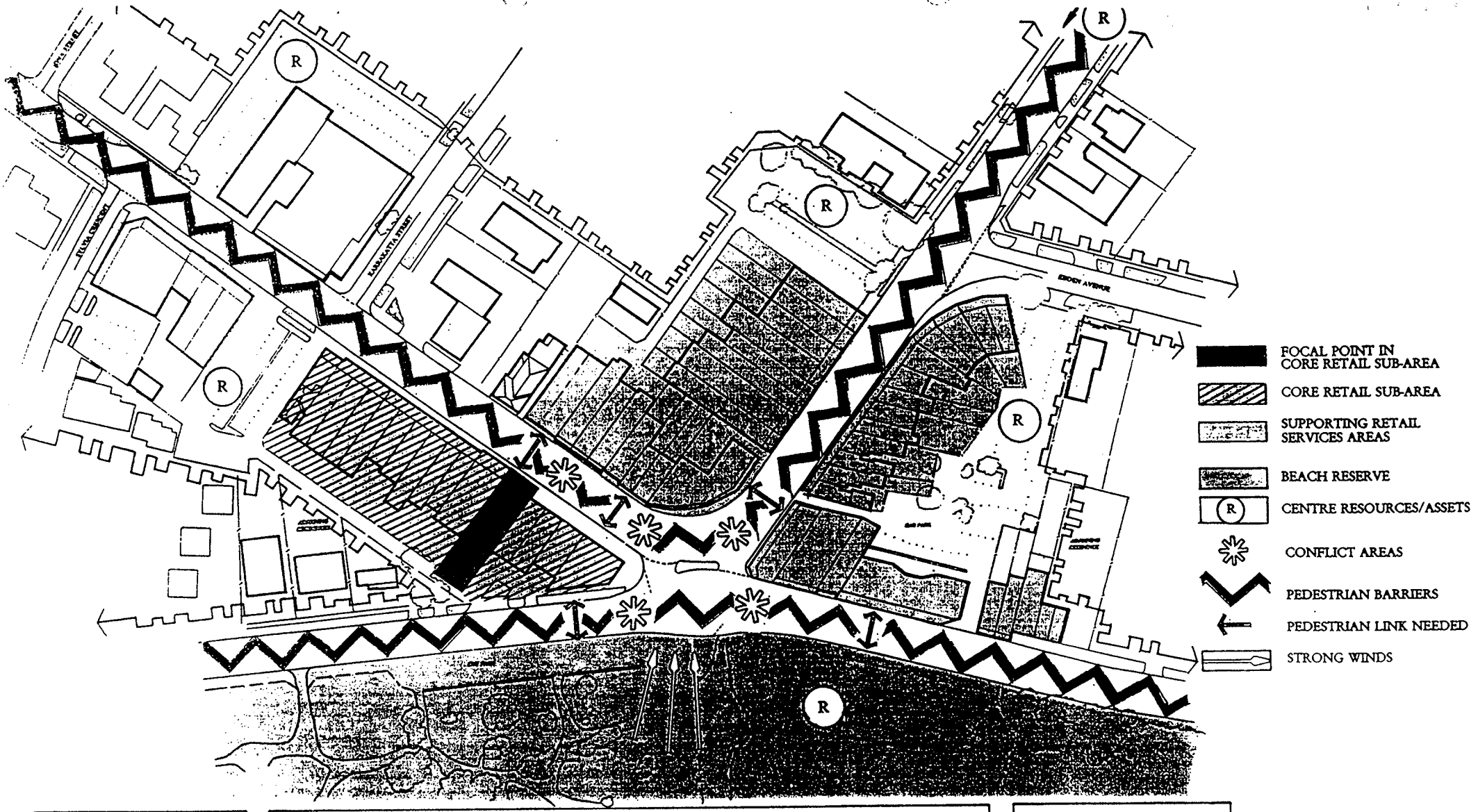
FIGURE

3A

PROJECT

2356



NORTH

SCALE

0 20 40 60 80 M

SITE ANALYSIS OF THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

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FIGURE

3B

PROJECT

2356

Table 1:

Traders views of weaknesses in the Black Rock Village Centre

Source: Traders Survey, 1993

	No.	%
No Answer	5	14.7
Parking, Access & Traffic	10	29.4
Limited parking	4	11.8
Speed of vehicles through centre	3	8.8
Needs more signage for parking	2	5.9
Not enough passing trade	1	2.9
Services/Facilities/Retail Mix	9	26.5
No A.T.M	4	11.8
Needs library/community centre for the young	1	2.9
Lack of personal conveniences/public toilets	1	2.9
Needs a larger supermarket	1	2.9
Needs better fruit shop	1	2.9
Retail mix	1	2.9
Attitudes of Traders & Owners	2	5.9
Attitude of shop owners, lack of commitment	1	2.9
No promotion of Centre	1	2.9
Atmosphere/Amenity	4	11.8
Unsafe - lack of pedestrian crossings	3	8.8
Lack of weather protection	1	2.9
Other	4	11.8
Demographics	2	5.9
Proximity to Southland	1	2.9
Expensive real estate	1	2.9
TOTAL	34	100.0

4.1.2 Historic Context

The built form and layout of the Centre is a strong legacy of its evolution commencing in the period following World War I. The historic development of the Centre has occurred over several distinct periods. These were:-

- the period from 1919 to approximately 1950;
- the period 1950 to mid 1960s;
- the period 1965 onwards.

In its initial phase of evolution, precursors for the Black Rock Village Centre were established by the Beach Park Reserve as *"a popular destination for visitors using the foreshore for recreational activities"* (Black Rock Village Centre, Townscape Improvement Study, Op. Cit. page 13). The development of the electric tramway terminus at Bluff and Balcombe Roads in March 1919, was a pivotal event in establishing the Centre as an activity focus. The Centre progressively developed during the 1920's and 1930's with a series of two-storey shop developments along Bluff Road and around the corner to Balcombe Road.

"By 1950, a strong nucleus of shops had formed around the Black Rock intersection along Bluff and Balcombe Roads. By this time, the use of the electric trams had diminished as buses and automobiles had taken over as the popular form of transport. The Centre during this period was characterised by its array of shops and their consistent front verandah which extended the entire length of the shopping centre. Notably the Ducats repair workshop and the now State Bank building in Bluff Road were prominent buildings within the Centre in 1950. The building on the east corner of Bluff and Balcombe Roads facing the main intersection was also a feature building and its design in the 1950's is imitated by the current Elizabeth building at 2-4 Bluff Road, Black Rock." (Black Rock Village Centre, Townscape Improvement Study, Op. Cit).

In the period following the 1950s, details to the development of the Black Rock Village Centre are not known. Generally, car ownership levels began to rise steeply and suburbanisation increased rapidly fuelled by high levels of post war migration.

Specific historic research is required on the following in relation to the Black Rock Centre:-

- When was the Black Rock residential area developed?;
- When did the Centre reach its zenith as a local service centre?;
- When did the period of decline of the Centre begin, and how did this occur?;
- What was the effect of rapid increase of motor vehicle ownership on the use of the Black Rock Village Centre?;
- What structural changes have occurred in the Centre over the past 30 years?

4.1.3 Demographic and Behavioural Context

In this section, the consultants briefly review:-

- the extent of the estimated shopper catchment of the Black Rock Village Centre;

- demographic characteristics of the estimated shopper catchment;
- modes of travel by shoppers to the Black Rock Village Centre;
- reasons for frequenting the Black Rock Village Centre and competing centres.

The Extent of the Estimated Shopper Catchment of the Black Rock Village Centre

Surveys were undertaken of patterns of use of the Black Rock Village Centre in 1991, as part of the Black Rock Village Townscape Study (op.cit). Unfortunately, the surveys appear to be statistically invalid from the information available. The surveys indicated that some 78% of shoppers come from the Black Rock postal area (refer Black Rock Village Townscape Study op.cit Table 7, page 19). Based on the professional experience of the consultants, available tenancies in the Black Rock Centre and the proximity of strong competing centres, it is extremely unlikely that the shopper catchment of the Black Rock Village Centre is as extensive as that indicated in Table 7. On the basis of the above factors the consultants have estimated that the core catchment area is likely to exist within 1 to 2 kilometres of the Centre (refer Figure 4). In any event, more recent statistical information is required to accurately define the Centre's shopper and trading catchments.

Demographic Characteristics of the Estimated Shopper Catchment

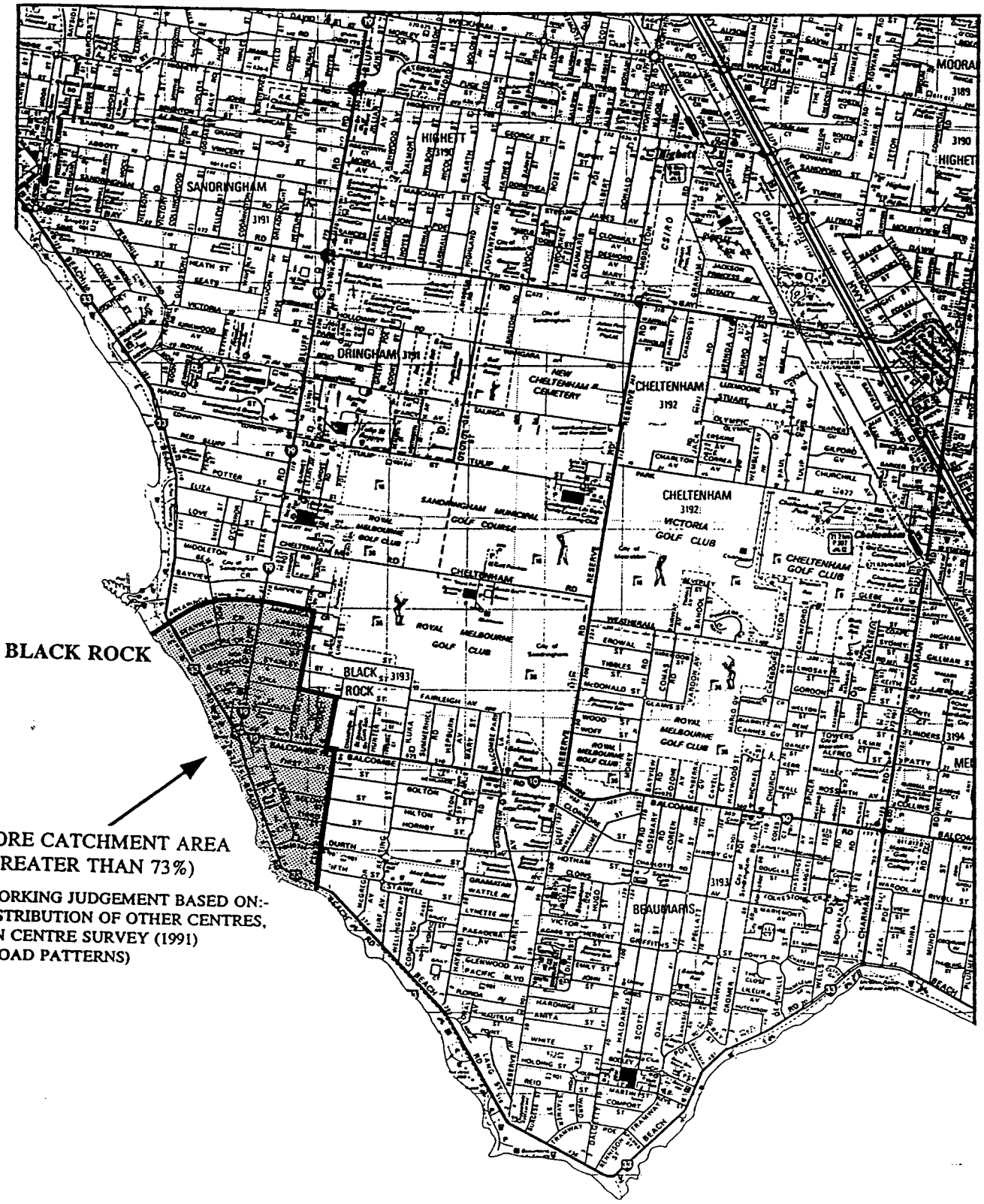
The catchment area of the Black Rock Village Centre has the following distinctive demographic and household characteristics:-

- it has a significantly highly concentration of elderly population with the core catchment area containing approximately 50% more elderly people than the metropolitan average (at the 1991 census, the Black Rock area contained approximately 11.4% of people aged over 70 years compared to some 7.1% in metropolitan Melbourne). In certain areas of the Black Rock Village Centre, the proportion of persons aged over 70 years is double to three times the metropolitan average (refer Figure 5);
- the area contains some preponderance of both lower and higher income groups. There is a notable statistical concentration of households in the highest quintile income groups (refer Table 2);
- the area contains predominantly people whose main language is English (91.6%). This is markedly higher than the M S D average (73.3%).

Modes of Travel of Shoppers to the Black Rock Village Centre

The In-Centre Survey conducted in 1991 as part of the Black Rock Village Centre Townscape Study (op.cit) (refer Table 3) show that:-

- approximately 61.3% of shoppers came to the Centre by car;
- approximately 34.2% walked to the Centre;
- less than 2% came by public transport;
- about 2.7% came by bicycle;



NORTH

SCALE

0 200 400 600 M

ESTIMATED CATCHMENT OF BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

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FIGURE

4

PROJECT

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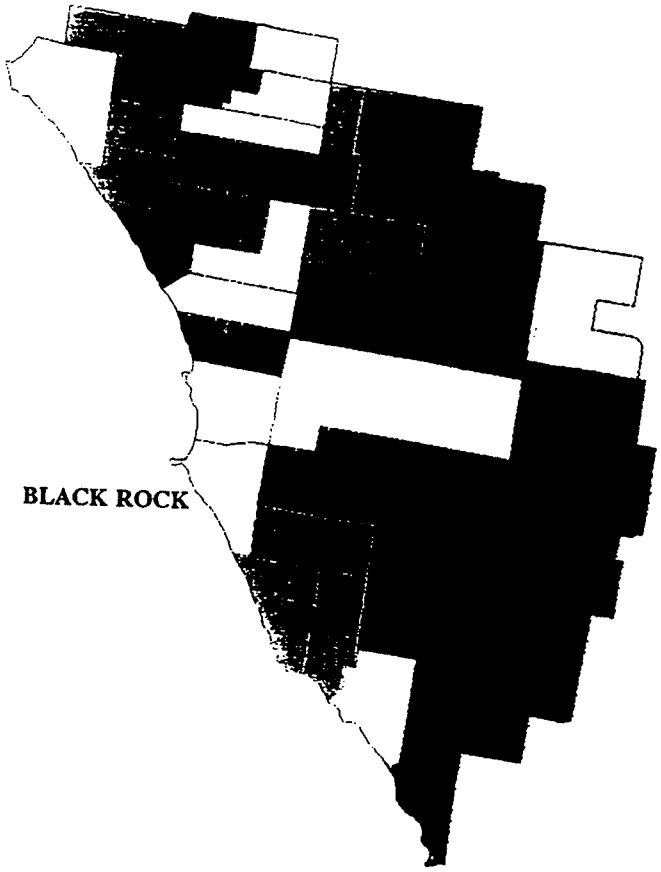


Figure 5
DISTRIBUTION OF PEOPLE AGED 70+
WITHIN A 3 km RADIUS FROM
THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

Table 2:
Black Rock Core Catchment Area: Distribution of Household Income by Quintile Groups
Source: ABS 1991 Census

TOTAL CORE CATCHMENT AREA	MSD HOUSEHOLD INCOME GROUPS					
	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	TOTAL
No of households	411	320	373	317	469	1889
%	21.74%	16.95%	19.75%	16.76%	24.81%	100.00%
Location Quotient*	1.09	0.85	0.99	0.84	1.24	n.app

* Location Quotient is a measure of relative concentration. In this case the quotient = % households in each MSD quintile group resident in the Black Rock core catchment area /20.0

Table 3:

MODE OF TRANSPORT USED BY SHOPPERS AT THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

Source: In-Centre Survey, 1991

LOCALITY	CAR	WALK	PUBLIC TRANSPORT	BIKE	TOTAL NO.
Local (within Black Rock)	43	36	0	2	81
Elsewhere within Municipality	16	1	2	1	20
Neighbouring Municipality	2	1	0	0	3
Elsewhere within Southern Region	3	0	0	0	3
Elsewhere within Metropolitan Region	4	0	0	0	4
TOTAL NO.	68	38	2	3	111
TOTAL %	61.26%	34.23%	1.80%	2.70%	100.00%

- as mentioned previously in relation to the shopper catchment, these results need to be seriously questioned in the light of the very small sample and statistical invalidity of the information. Nonetheless, they do indicate a relatively very low order of motor vehicle use by shoppers. In typical small suburban local centres, use of vehicles average approximately 75%. A very high level of walking trips to the Centre indicated by the survey is very significantly validated and indicates a very high percentage of residential areas within 500 to 800 metres of the Centre;

- the survey indicated a very low use of public transport to the Centre. Public transport usages of centres tend to increase by centre size, function and proximity to central Melbourne. In larger, older centres (e.g. Footscray, Coburg and Prahran), public transport levels are in the range of 15 to 20%). However, in the case of local centres, it is not meaningful to analyse the use of public transport trips in isolation, as often these comprise part of a linked trip where shoppers may stop off at the Centre by public transport, undertake some shopping and walk home. Any review of the shopper usage of the Black Rock Village Centre should investigate the extent to which public transport and walk trips are combined.

Reasons for Frequenting the Black Rock Village Centre

The In-Centre survey conducted in 1991 as part of the Black Rock Village Townscape Study (op.cit Tables 2, 3 and 9) surveyed the factors listed by shoppers for frequenting both the Black Rock Village Centre and competing centres. The principal reasons for frequenting the Black Rock Centre were:-

- for purchases of "delicatessen items" eg. bread, milk, soft drinks and confectionery) together with purchases of fruit, vegetables and meat, banking and purchases of groceries, (refer Figure 6);

- the survey indicated the Centre had a non-significant role for purchases of clothing or other comparison goods (e.g. furniture and electrical appliances);

- the primary overall reasons for selecting the Black Rock Village Centre are provided in Table 9 (Black Rock Village Townscape Study op.cit). The leading factors motivating shoppers,appear to be:-

  - "convenience" (approximately 69% of the sample indicated this factor);
  - pleasant and friendly atmosphere (approximately 11% of the sample indicated this factor);
  - variety of shops (10% of the sample);
  - close to or connected with place of employment (4%);
  - "value for money" (1%).

The surveys presented no indication of market share or the proportion of goods purchased at the Black Rock Village Centre vis-a-vis other centres by local residents. Other centres frequented for all purposes by Black Rock Village shoppers are indicated in Table 4. The table shows that:-

Figure 6
FREQUENCY OF GOODS PURCHASED AT BLACK ROCK VILLAGE
Source: In-Centre Survey, 1991

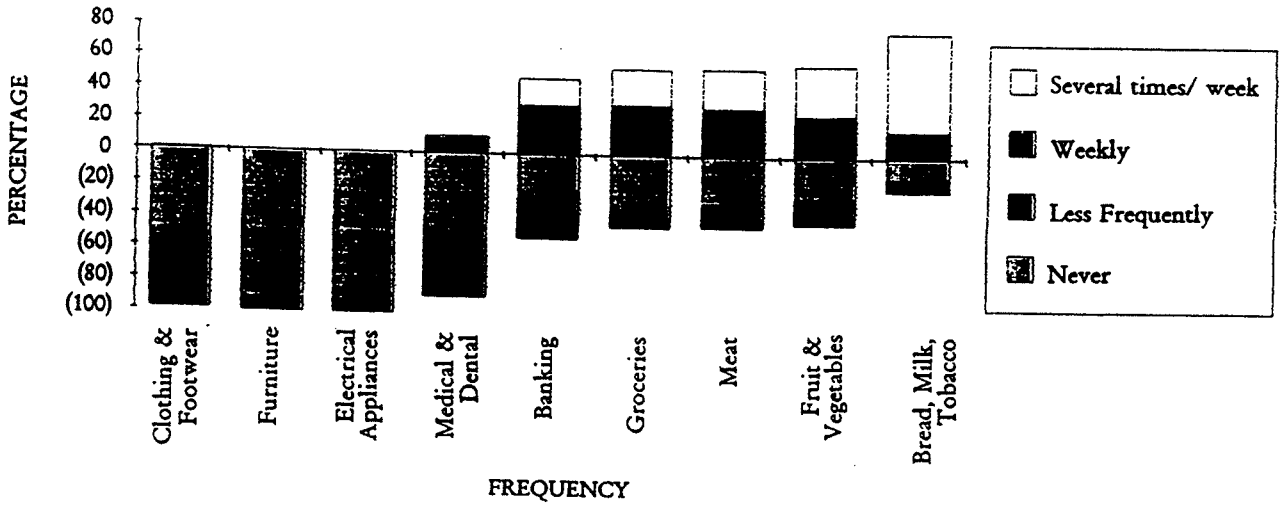


Table 4:
OTHER CENTRES FREQUENTED BY BLACK ROCK VILLIAGE SHOPPERS
Source: In-Centre Survey, 1991

OTHER CENTRES	NO.	%
Southland	51	48.1
Concourse	19	17.9
Sandringham	18	17.0
Seaview	3	2.8
Hampton	3	2.8
Other	12	11.3
TOTAL	106	100.0

- the leading "other" centre frequented is the Southland Shopping Centre. This result is consistent with the role of the Southland Shopping Centre as the dominant regional centre in the southern suburbs;

- other centres frequented by Black Rock Village shoppers were primarily local centres and included the Concourse (17% of shoppers);

- Sandringham (16% of shoppers);

- Seaview in Hampton (3% of shoppers).

No information is available of centres frequented for food and non-food purchases which would provide a far more meaningful measure of the extent of local centre competition for convenience items (food purchases and retail services including dry cleaning, banking, hair dressing).

4.1.4 Political Context

The City of Sandringham is very supportive of improvement to the Black Rock Village Centre. However, given the range of services in the municipality and the need to provide resources for other centres (Hampton, Sandringham and the Concourse), programs to promote the Black Rock Village Centre will require the support and commitment of traders within the Centre.

In the region, the State Government's policies contain several dimensions:-

- the State government is furthering the policy of the previous government in supporting further expansion and consolidation of the region's principal centre : the Southland Centre. As mentioned in an earlier context, current proposals to further significantly extend the Southland Shopping Centre which has been approved by the Minister for Planning will be likely to have a "downstream effect" on the Black Rock Village Centre, in the sense that it will reduce the available local centre's market potential. The State government has a coastal policy and a tourism strategy in the discussion phase. Both the policy and strategy are supportive of the need to maintain and promote attractive areas of interest and activity focus around the bay and in this context, these policies are supportive of the need to upgrade and improve the Black Rock Village Centre;

- the State government, through its key servicing agencies is also supportive of amenity improvements to centres including the Black Rock Village Centre, and in this context, the available State Electricity Commission of Victoria' systems for the undergrounding of wires in centres should be noted;

- in recent years, the State government has provided the lead in the improvement of the Main Street programme. Initiatives, however, are being undertaken by Councils. Some State funding is available for special heritage and conservation projects which would not be relevant to this Centre.

Competitive Environment

The competitive environment of the Centre was discussed in Section 3.2.

4.2 The Centre's Structure

The structure of the Black Rock Village Centre is discussed in terms of:-

- the Centre's built form and presentation;
- the spatial structure of activities.

4.2.1 The Centre's Built Form and Presentation

As indicated in the previous section, the Black Rock Village is characterised by two storey building structures which line Bluff Road for a distance of 300 metres and Balcombe Road for a distance of 200 metres.

The consistent scale of buildings and the convergent pattern of Bluff and Balcombe Roads provides a strong sense of enclosure for the centre. This factor together with the proximity to the sea and glimpses of vistas at various points along Bluff Road endowers the centre with a great deal of character and charm. Most of the buildings have verandahs in various states of repair. There is no consistent pattern of signage or thematic treatment. Thematic treatment of the Centre should encompass building facade elements as well as street furniture. Street furniture elements which have been designed with a consistent character, style, colour and scale include street lights, seating, bins, bollards, street and community signs. Building facade elements include lanterns, shop signs, window shutters, flower boxes.

4.2.2 Spatial Structure of Activities

An analysis of the pattern of activities (refer Figures 3, 3A, 3B) in the Centre indicates clearly distinctive functional/disfunctional areas in the Centre. Principal elements include:-

- retail core zone;
- supporting service areas;
- beach reserve;
- residential areas.

Retail Core Zone

On the south side of Bluff Road focussed on the licensed grocery store. The sub-area comprises:-

- Foodtown & liquor store;
- butcher;
- fruit & vegetables;
- bakers;
- take-away foods, cafes & a restaurant;
- dry cleaners;

- sports store;
- florist;
- Commonwealth bank;
- carparking.

This appears to be the prime retail trading sub-area of the Centre, but the amenity of many of the stores is relatively poor and in need of renovation.

Supporting Service Areas

Several areas in Bluff, Balcombe and Beach Roads contain some additional shops and a range of services. The sub-areas vary significantly in terms of amenity and shop quality. The sub-areas along Balcombe and Beach Roads appear to be the weakest sections of the Centre in terms of patronage and trade. The sub-area on the Bluff Road (south side) west of the carpark generally comprises a grouping of relatively modern tenancies. There are isolated modern shops in the balance of the Centre, but generally most of the sub-areas are comprised of old building stock in need of renovation.

Beach Reserve

The Beach Reserve is an important public space which flanks the western side of Beach Road and immediately abuts the Centre. It affords panoramic views across the bay and has a close historic association with the founding and evolution of the Black Rock Village Centre. The Reserve appears to be extensively used for active and passive recreation. It has many community facilities including:-

- an extensive beach area;
- playgrounds and gardens;
- a life saving kiosk.

The area has great potential to be enhanced and to serve as a key attraction in the upgrading of the Black Rock Village Centre. Ideas which could be carried through into the evaluation of options stage of the Business Strategy (stages 4 and 5) is the concept of developing tea rooms at the Reserve. Care would need to be taken that the tea rooms were developed in harmony with the location and setting of the reserve. There is also the need to substantially improve safe pedestrian access across Beach Road. This should be further explored in the development of a business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre.

Residential Areas

The Centre is encompassed on three sides (northern, eastern and southern boundaries) by residential areas. Most of these areas were built in the post-war period and contain mature residential areas with extensive landscaping and a relatively high proportion of multiple units. This fact, taken together with the demographic characteristics of the area has the following implications:-

- the area has a significantly high concentration of elderly people and this factor is unlikely to diminish in significance in the future;

- the area has a mixture of detached dwellings and modern units and immediately abuts the Black Rock Village Centre. It is neither realistic or reasonable to contemplate any strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre which would place stress on or require acquisitions of residential properties, particularly given the intensive nature of residential development around the Centre;

- the pattern of housing around the Centre provides an important resource for the Centre : A significant and stable household base within walking distance of the Centre. Any business strategy for the Centre, should, among other things aim to enhance safe pedestrian access from the immediate surrounding residential area to the Centre.

4.3 Centre's Function and Performance

4.3.1 Centre Function

As indicated in Section 4.1.3, there is insufficient data to accurately indicate the performance and extent of role/s played by the Black Rock Village Centre. However, observations by the consultants of the structure of the centre, discussions with traders and professional experience would indicate that there are elements of several roles which appear to be provided with varying degrees of success by the centres. The roles are:-

- daily and weekly convenience shopping centre role;
- community centre retailing role;
- commercial and professional services role;
- leisure role.

Daily and Weekly Convenience Shopping Centre

Most of the retail stores and services in the Centre tend to reflect this role, that is they are concerned with the supply of food, groceries, liquor and a range of services which are required on a daily and weekly basis including:-

- stationery and newsagents' goods;
- pharmaceutical items;
- dry cleaning;
- banking;
- personal services;
- hair dressing requirements;
- florists.

Community Retailing Role

Strictly, a range of community retailing services provided by the Centre are not typical of local centres and are usually found in "community sized centres" i.e. **centres serving a number of local areas**. That is not to say these services are inappropriate in the Black Rock Village Centre, only that they will need to serve a non local catchment in order to be strongly viable. The types of stores and services provided in this category include:-

- clothing and footwear stores;
- fishing supplies;
- hardware;
- furniture, furnishings and antiques.

Commercial and Professional Services Centre

The Black Rock Village Centre provides a number of services in this category which are found in large local centres in addition to a wide range of regional centres and commercial districts throughout the metropolis. The types of services provided in this category include:-

- accountants;
- medical and dental services.

Leisure Centres

There is some evidence of emerging tenancies endeavouring to meet this role. In this context, these are typified by the presence of cafes and restaurants. In the absence of further information it is not clear whether the new cafes are serving a wider catchment or are really an ancillary local service and in this sense not necessarily heralding the emergence of the Centre as a niche focus.

4.3.2 Centre Performance

In previous sections key aspects of the current structure, function and role of the Black Rock Village Centre have been presented. The Consultants have clearly indicated that the extent to which the Centres function and role can be assessed has been severely limited by lack of statically valid information. Much of the conclusions drawn have been based on the Consultants experience rather than any accurate information.

In providing the foundations for a Business Plan assessment needs to be undertaken of the Centre's level of performance. Performance measures required were set out in Section 2.2.3. Comprehensive information is required on (interalia) trends in retail sales, employment and levels of patronage. This information, when interrelated with tenancy types and floorspace and monitored over time, provides simple and powerful measures of the Centre's economic performance.

Information currently available enables a first assessment of:-

- store vacancies;
- tenancy turnover rates.

Store Vacancies

Currently (August 1993) approximately 15% of the Centre's gross leasable area is vacant. This proportion is significantly higher than the suburban rate for Metropolitan Melbourne (it is currently estimated that the average vacancies rate for suburban Melbourne strip centres is 9.6%, refer Melbourne City Marketing, 1992)[1]. Most of the vacancies are located in two clusters:-

- the former Payless store on the corner of Karrakatta Street and Bluff Road;
- several tenancies on the south eastern side of Bluff Road and the eastern side of Balcombe Road (refer Figure 3).

The concentration of vacancies particularly close to the heart of the centre tends to reinforce a strong negative perception of the centre.

Tenancy Turnover Rates

There are two measures of tenancy turnovers which usually indicate instability or decay in a centre. These are:-

- high frequency of short term occupancy tenancy turnovers. As a general rule where tenancy turnovers (of less than a year occupancy) exceed more than 4% of total tenancies, this is usually indicative of high levels of instability in the centre. The observation made from the traders survey information is approximately at this level. It may be fairly concluded that the Centre currently has a significantly high level of tenancy turnovers indicating that the Centre is currently proceeding through a period of instability and change;
- high preponderance of very long term tenancies. In typical suburban centres there needs to be a balance between the "age structure" of establishments in a centre. In Metropolitan Melbourne where the proportion of long term tenancies (that is, leased and operated by the same person or family exceeds 20 years), exceeds 25% of tenancies this may be indicative that the centre has entered a period of decay. The reasoning for this is that in normal circumstances most individuals and families involved in shops will at some point in their professional careers change establishments or stores. A high proportion of individuals or families maintaining the same business or establishment for more than 20 years may be reflective of a long term real decline of land and business values in a centre. The outcome this process is almost certainly a high level of conservatism and unwillingness to take new shops in reforming business centre performance.

4.3.3 Outlook and Attitude of Traders

In seeking to provide a basis for performance measures, the consultants have undertaken a survey of the Centres traders (September 1993). The survey has provided useful information on the outlook and attitudes of traders.

---

[1] Melbourne City Marketing (1992) City Indicators Report : Number 1

A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix 1. A return rate of 40% was obtained, however it will be noted that some sections of the questionnaire incurred lower response rates.

Of those responses that were obtained, the following results were found in relation to the individual businesses current practices:-

- more than half (63%) of the businesses felt that they had business objectives. Of these 63%:-
  - 5% were to increase turnover;
  - 8% were to satisfy demand (refer Figure 8);
- less than 40% currently measure if their business objectives are being met (refer Figure 9);
- 60% of businesses indicate that they undertake some sort of business planning for their own businesses (refer Figure 10);
- only approximately 30% of respondents currently work co-operatively or liaise with other traders (refer Figure 11).

In relation to the traders' support and commitment to the Black Rock Village Centre, it was found that:-

- 50% of businesses indicated that they would definitely support in principle the concept of a business strategy for the Centre, while 5% said that they definitely would not support the idea (refer Figure 12);
- 41% of businesses indicated that they would definitely work co-operatively with other traders to prepare a business strategy for the Centre, while 7% said that they probably would support that idea. Similar proportions of businesses indicated that they would work co-operatively with other traders to prepare special events, marketing etc (refer Figure 13 and 14);
- only 18% of businesses indicated that they would definitely or probably support a 'special rate' to implement a business strategy for the centre, while nearly 35% indicated that they probably or definitely would not support such a rate (refer Figure 15).

There appears to be, at this time, a lack of commitment to a business strategy for the Centre or even to the concept of planning their own business. Note the declining levels of support where increasing levels of commitment and co-operation are required. The indication that only 18% of businesses would be prepared to support a special rate of approximately $10.00 per week is worrying. It means that the first priority in the second phase of the business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre must be:-

- to fully explain the concept and potential benefits of business planning;
- to stress to traders that business planning is something that cannot be done for trader but requires active participation and commitment if it is to be meaningful and beneficial to stakeholders;

Figure 8
TYPES OF BUSINESS OBJECTIVES OUTLINED BY BUSINESSES IN THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE
Source: Traders Survey, 1993

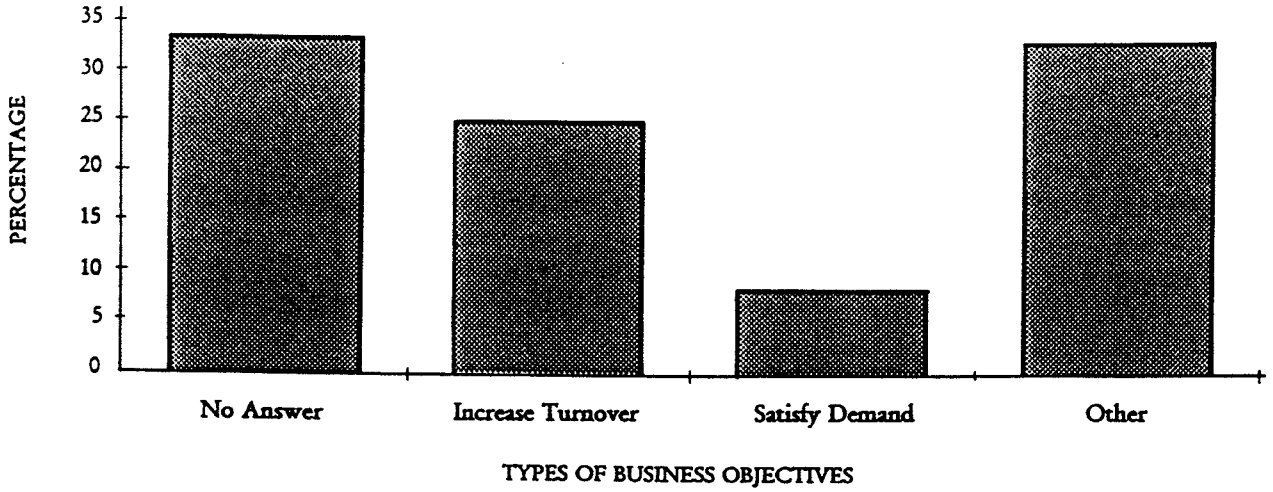


Figure 9
WHETHER BUSINESSES MEASURE PROGRESS TOWARDS THEIR BUSINESS OBJECTIVES
Source: Traders Survey, 1993

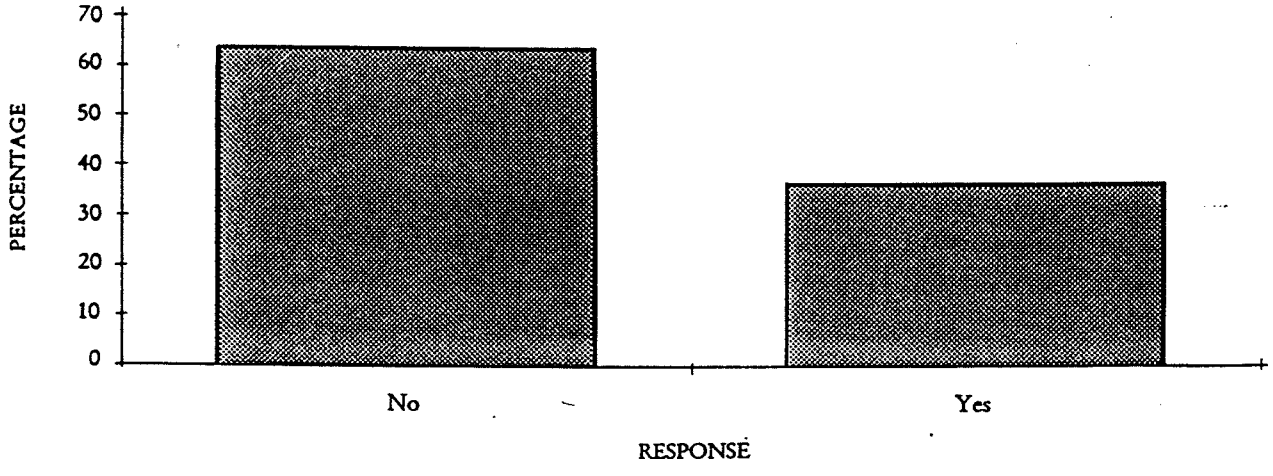


Figure 10
WHETHER THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE BUSINESSES UNDERTAKE ANY BUSINESS PLANNING
Source: Traders Survey, 1993

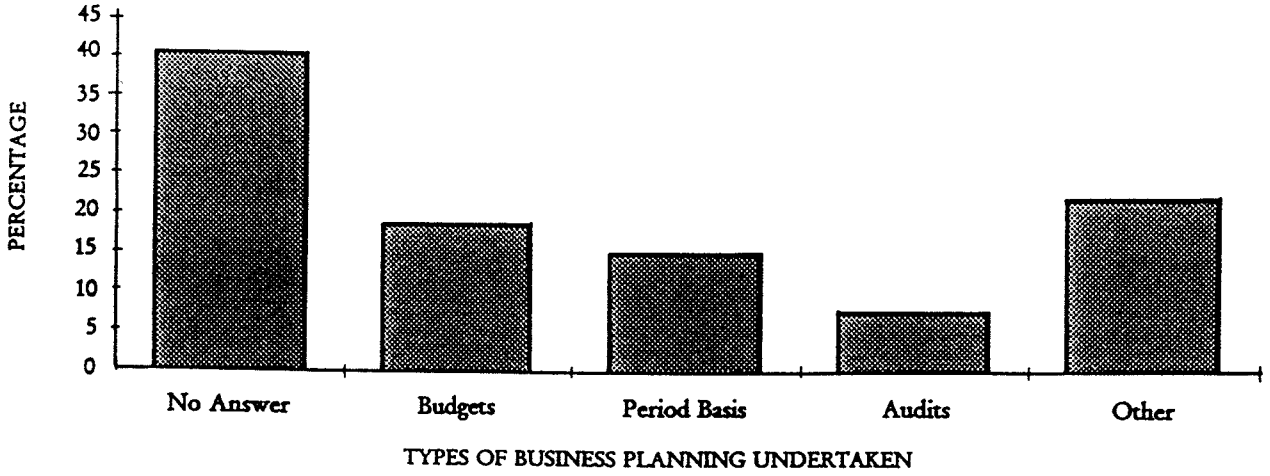


Figure 11
WHETHER BUSINESSES IN THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE CURRENTLY LIAISE OR WORK CO-OPERATIVELY WITH OTHER BUSINESSES IN THE CENTRE
Source: Traders Survey, 1993

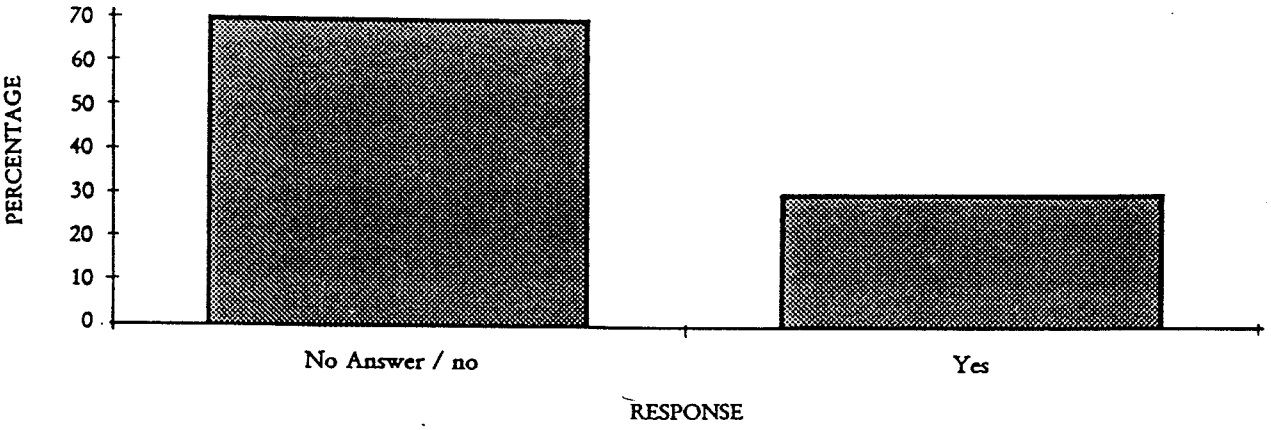


Figure 12
WHETHER BUSINESSES WOULD SUPPORT IN PRINCIPLE THE CONCEPT OF A BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR THE CENTRE
Source: Traders Survey,1993

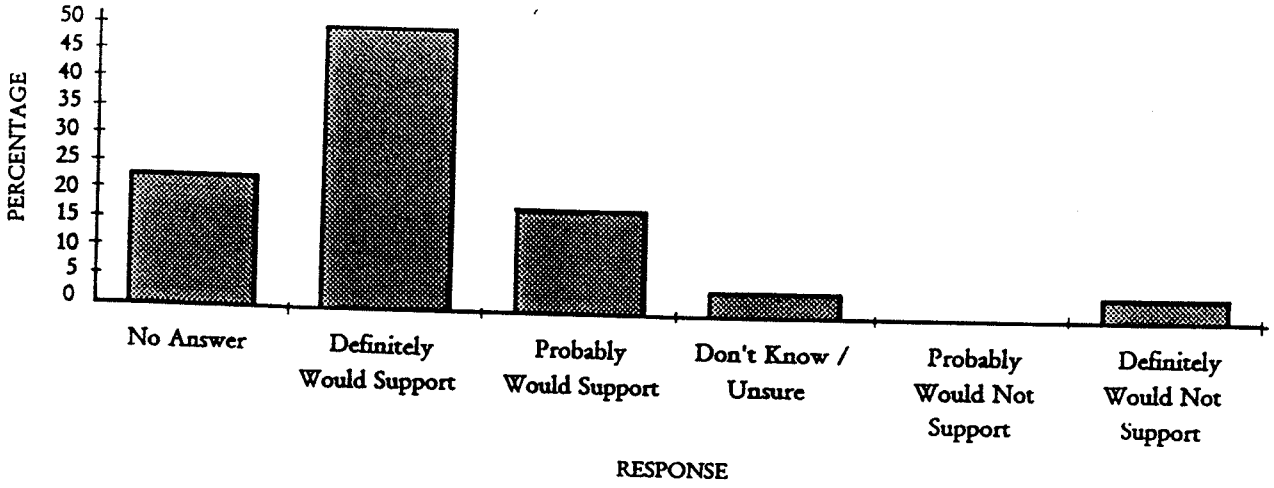


Figure 13
WHETHER BUSINESSES WOULD BE WILLING TO WORK CO-OPERATIVELY WITH OTHER TRADERS TO PREPARE A BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE VILLAGE
Source: Traders Survey, 1993

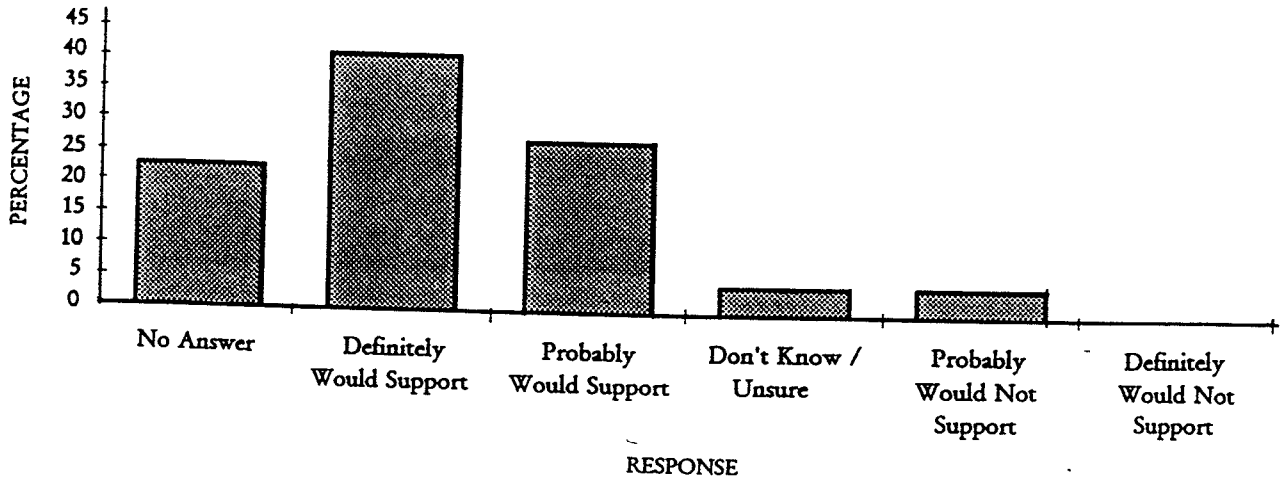


Figure 14
WHETHER BUSINESS WOULD BE PREPARED TO WORK CO-OPERATIVELY WITH OTHER TRADERS TO PREPARE ' SPECIAL EVENTS, MARKETING ECT' FOR THE CENTRE
Source: Traders Survey, 1993

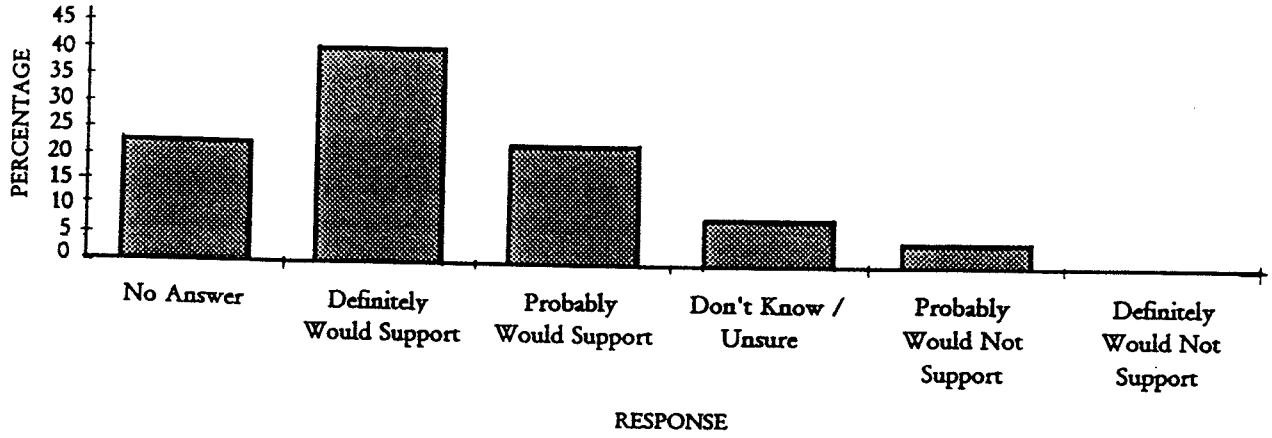
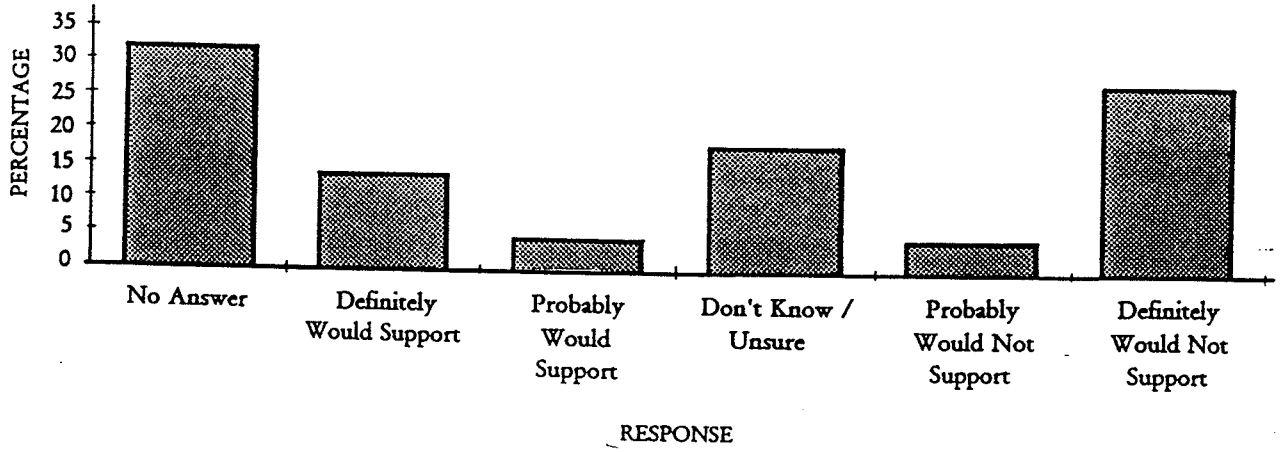


Figure 15
WHETHER BUSINESSES WOULD SUPPORT A 'SPECIAL RATE' (APPROXIMATELY $10/ WEEK/ TENANCY) TO IMPLEMENT A BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE VILLAGE
Source: Traders Survey, 1993



- to enlist a high level of support of traders and other stakeholders (building owners, Council, representatives of resident groups), even if it can only be achieved on a "trial basis";

- to bring traders to the point where they understand that real benefit can only be generated by the careful allocation of resources resulting from the business strategy. Ongoing investment in the Centre by traders, through contributions to a business strategy is critical to the success of a strategy for the Centre. This message is obviously not yet understood by traders as evidenced by the recent survey.

In the framing of options for a business strategy for the Centre, consideration needs to be given to:-

- the current business structure of the Centre;

- the range of roles currently provided by the Centre;

- opportunities to establish new tenancies; and

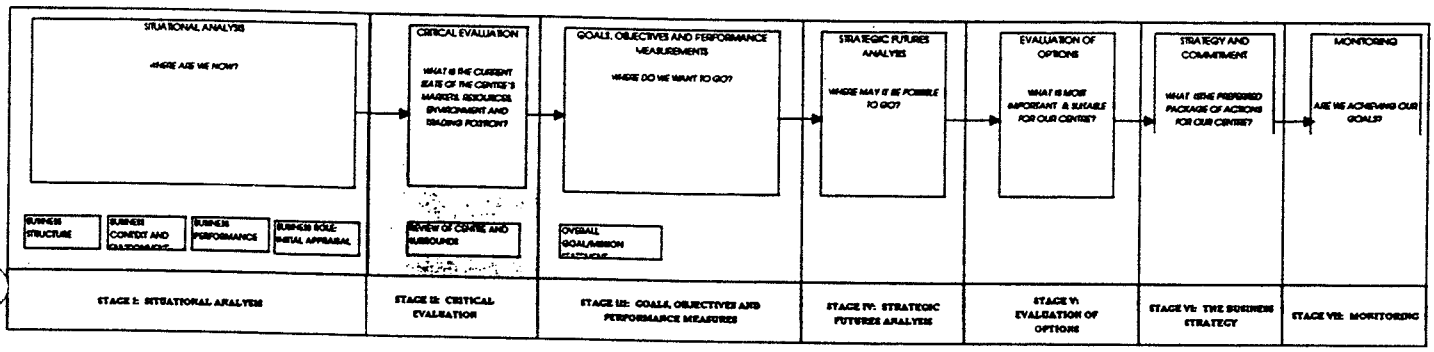
- an assessment of:-

  - the roles which can be most easily consolidated;

  - new roles which would readily complement the emerging patterns of trade in the Centre and changing market conditions.

5.0 THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE: CRITICAL EVALUATION

This section completes Stage II of the business strategy process by critically evaluating the Black Rock Village Centre.



A workshop with traders and residents was held at the Council chambers in July 1993 to identify the Centre's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Many issues were raised at the workshop. These issues along with the above analysis of the Black Rock Village Centre identified the many strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the Black Rock Village Centre.

Principal strengths of the Centre are:-

- close proximity to the beach and the beach reserve;
- The Clock Tower as a landmark;
- friendly traders;
- exposure to passing traffic;
- clubs - Elderly Citizens, Civic Hall;
- restaurants;
- adequate parking;
- professional services.

Principal weaknesses of the Centre are:-

- retail mix - needs; more competition within the Centre, a video shop and an automatic teller machine;
- prevailing winds;
- presentation - lacks atmosphere;

- lacks weekend after hours and co-ordinated trading;
- signage of Centre and signage of parking within the Centre;
- not safe - needs pedestrian lights on Beach Road;
- ageing population in catchment area;
- lacks public conveniences;
- lacks unified promotion;
- speed of traffic through the Centre;
- proximity of Southland and other centres;
- vacancies interspersed throughout the Centre.

Opportunities exist to capitalise on the strengths of the Centre and overcome its weaknesses. Principal opportunities of the Centre are:-

- to capitalise on the friendly environment in the Village and create a Village atmosphere;
- to improve the retail mix of the Centre through Council restrictions and incentives;
- to create precincts within the Centre through grouping of shops;
- to raise the level of products to higher quality;
- to have memorial plaques educating visitors about the Centre's history;
- improve outlook of traders by strengthening the Traders association and educating them about the value of co-operative action and business strategies;
- let out the upstairs of shops to residents to bring more people into the Centre;
- promote special activities and days such as sausage sizzles, busking;
- create a logo for the Centre including the Clock Tower.

The major threats faced by the Black Rock Village Centre fall into several categories. These are:-

- possible loss of the centres supermarket function. This is by far the most severe threat which faces the Black Rock Village Centre;
- significant retail developments at competing local centres (that is, at the Concourse, Sandringham, Seaview, or at the sub-regional/large neighbourhood centre, Hampton Street). Significant threats could emerge from a range of development initiatives at other centres including new supermarket developments, food markets, major comparison goods stores.

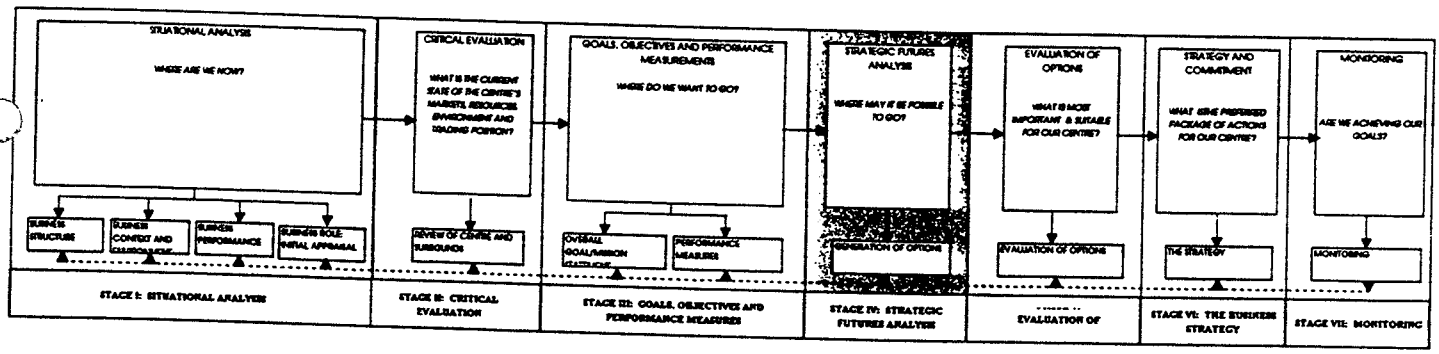
To prepare a workable and successful business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre, the range of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats should be addressed. As part of this process, the probability of threats emerging should be assessed (that is, the level of risk should be assessed attached to each of the possible threats). In addition the relative level of feasibility of identified opportunities should also be assessed.

The provision of a business strategy for the centre should be linked to the structure and process to enable individual businesses in the Centre to prepare their business plans. Ideally, this will result in:-

- an overall coherent business strategy for the Centre with a high level of commitment and participation by the businesses;
- business strategies for establishments in the centre with a high degree of consistency of goals, objectives and adopted performance measures.

6.0 PREPARATION OF A BUSINESS STRATEGY FOR THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE: POSSIBLE ACTIONS

As Stage III of the business strategy process required the input of Council, traders and residents, it could not be completed in this report. As such, this section completes the report be generating options and defining *where it may be possible for the Black Rock Village Centre to go* (Section IV of the business strategy process). A graphical representation of these actions is presented in Figure 17.



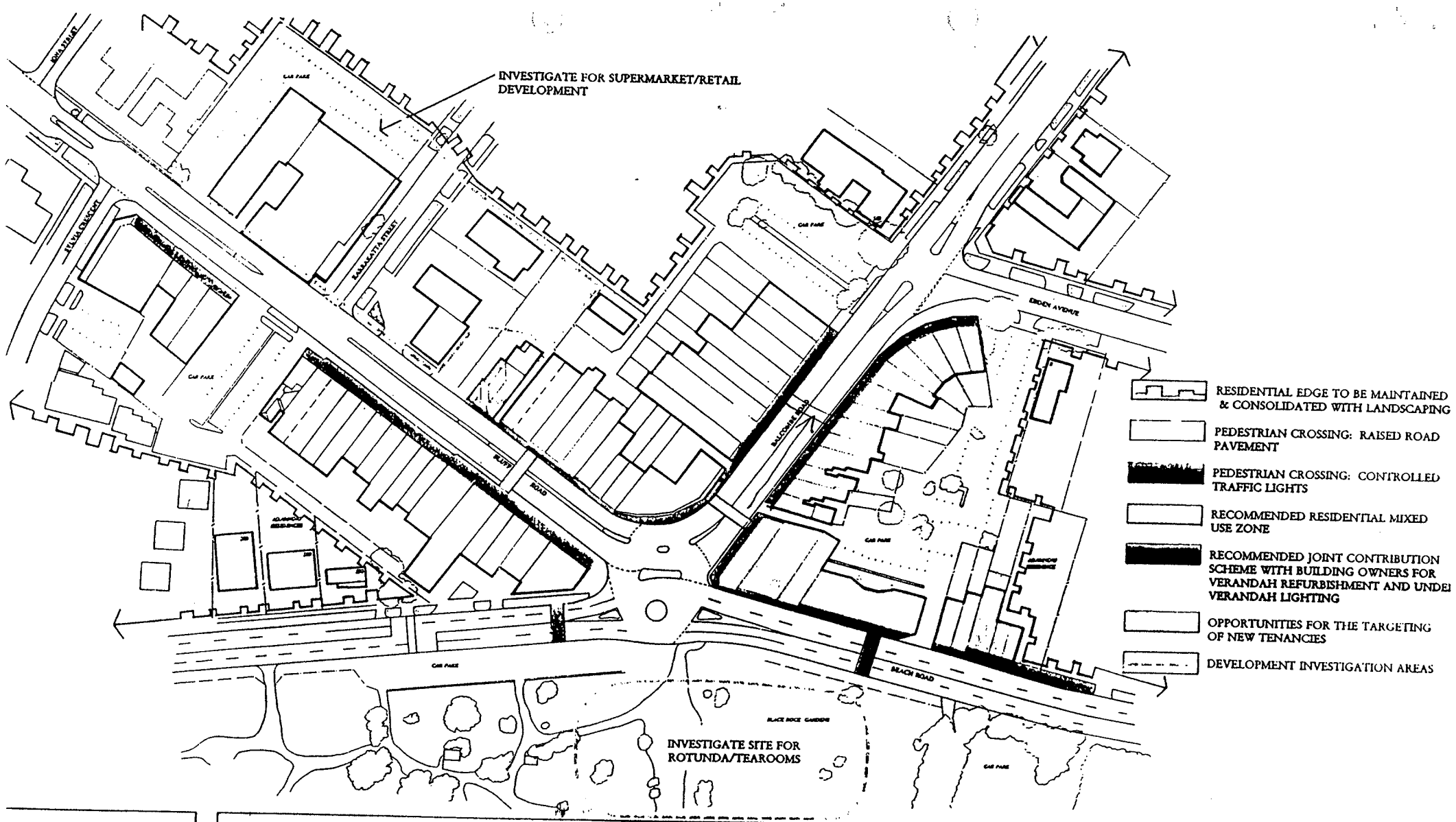
A business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre should be drawn from a number of elements including:-

- organisation and trader outlook and attitude;
- access to markets;
- trader performance;
- centre structure and performance;
- centre amenity and safety.

6.1 Organisation and Trader Outlook and Attitude

There are certain measures which need to be taken to secure co-operation between traders in terms of managing the Centre. Primarily, these are:-

- appointing a co-ordinator;
- formulation of a Business Strategy Committee;
- regular workshops.



NORTH

SCALE

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RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR THE BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE

BLACK ROCK VILLAGE CENTRE BUSINESS STRATEGY

RATIO CONSULTANTS PTY LTD

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS, TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT & CIVIL ENGINEERS, URBAN DESIGNERS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

51 Camberwell Road, Hawthorn East, Victoria 3123 Facsimile (03) 813 3764 Telephone (03) 813 3422

FIGURE

17

PROJECT

2356

6.1.1 Appointing a Co-ordinator

It is recommended that a full-time or part-time professional person be appointed to manage the process of revitalisation and the preparation, updating and monitoring of a business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre. The job description and duties of the co-ordinator are shown below:-

"*Job Description*

Position: Shopping Centre Manager

Employment Conditions:

The Shopping Centre Manager is employed by a traders committee, which includes representation from the Council.

The position provides for employment on two days a week with the days to be agreed between the committee and the manager. There is an allowance for additional work above those two days, if required, for the development of special events or activities.

The manager will be covered for Workcare, superannuation and pro rata leave entitlements.

The salary for the position is based pro rata on an annual salary of $35,000 ($134.60 per day).

A car allowance should be paid to the manager for the use of their own vehicle in the execution of their duties.

The position is funded by contributions from the traders and a grant from the Council for a 12 month period and continuation of employment will be subject to a review of performance and the availability of ongoing funding.

A review of the performance of the manager will be undertaken by the committee after six months.

Education and Experience:

There are no specific qualifications required for this position. However, an applicant with previous experience or qualifications in retailing, business management or marketing and promotions would be favourably considered.

The position could suit male or female applicants and there is no preference on age, although it would be expected that applicants would need to have a number of years knowledge and experience in an appropriate field to equip them for this position.

An outgoing personality, organisational and planning skills, and an ability to work will with other people will be key personal attributes for the manager.

Duties of the Manager:

1. Develop a marketing plan for the centre which will incorporate promotional events, activities and advertising and to implement that program.

2. To act as a communication link between traders, the community and Council and to encourage media coverage of events, promotions and activities within the centre.

3. To identify improvements which could be made to the centre and to liaise with the Council, various other public and government organisations as required to implement those improvements.

4. To undertake consumer and other research, as necessary, to provide a basis for planning for the centre and to assist individual businesses in their planning.

5. To identify opportunities for new businesses within the centre and to assist in the attraction of those types of businesses to the centre, and to assist in the marketing of vacant shops.

6. To co-ordinate (or provide) training programs and seminars for retailers and staff.

7. To advise individual businesses on upgrading of their premises and operating changes they can make to improve their businesses.

8. To identify opportunities to enhance the role of the centre in attracting tourism.

9. To attend meetings of the traders Committee and provide administrative support to the committee.

10. To assist in the planning of urban design strategy improvement works.

11. To identify new funding opportunities for the centre through grants, sponsorship and other sources as well as opportunities for traders to reduce their costs through co-operative buying of appropriate goods or services.

12. Other duties as directed by the traders committee.

13. To prepare a mid-term report at six months and a final report at 12 months to review activities undertaken by the Manager and the achievements of the program."

* Notes provided by Bruce Atkinson, June 1992.

6.1.2 Formulation of a Business Strategy Committee

There is a traders association in existence at the Black Rock Village Centre. This should be encouraged to continue and expand. However, it is also important to establish a committee which reflects the wider trader/community interest. The Committee should be the 'generator' of the Strategy and should:-

- set the goals and objectives for the Business Strategy;
- set clear performance measures on which the Strategy should be monitored;
- establish principles for a framework of funding and co-operation with the Council;
- ensure wide spread public and trader involvement.

6.1.3 Regular Workshops

Workshops are a useful method to actively involve traders and the general community in a positive atmosphere. Regular workshops should be held to ensure all information and progress is shared with those people involved or affected by the Business Strategy. As well, workshops should be used to enable traders to acquire the additional skills they require (in terms of business skills, presentation skills, customer relation skills).

6.2 Access to Markets

Improvement of access to markets can be achieved through marketing and advertising. Co-operative marketing and advertising is essential to promote the Black Rock Village Centre as a 'Centre'. Before this is attempted, however, a clear identity for the Centre must be established. This could be achieved through establishing a defined logo for the Centre or a capitalising on the existing street furniture to create an 'atmosphere' and 'theme' for the Centre.

6.2.1 Creating a Theme

To create an appropriate atmosphere or theme for the Centre it is useful to survey the general community about:-

- what positive issues they associate with the Black Rock Centre;
- what they like about the Black Rock Centre;
- where there favourite place is (whether it be in the Centre or elsewhere) and why.

From this survey what the public perceive as the important elements of the Centre can be established and these should be used in the theme. Where the communitys' favourite place is can be established and elements of this place might be able to be transferred to the Black Rock Centre. Also, it is important to listen to the language and words used in the responses as there might be an emerging type of 'language' that can be best used to promote the Village.

From existing sources of information, the emerging logo should include the Clock Tower and the theme should have a 'sea-side' feel to it.

6.2.2 Marketing and Advertising the Centre

Examples of types of marketing and advertising for the Centre are:-

- preparation of a brochure:-
  - listing all the Centre's services;
  - advertising the weekly 'specials, sales and promotions' in the Centre;
  - advertising the coming events in the Centre;
- advertising through community radio stations;
- regular advertising in the local paper;

- advertisements and information on the Centre displayed:-
  - on community notice boards;
  - in local railway stations;
  - in local primary and secondary schools;
  - in community libraries.

This information should be distributed at least to the catchment area and if funds are available to a wider catchment.

It must be noted, however, that there must be something to advertise in the Centre, that is, improvements must be made before a marketing and advertising campaign is set in place.

6.3 Trader Performance

Trader performance is one of the Black Rock Village Centre's major weaknesses. Principal ways to overcome weaknesses in this area is through improvements to:-

- business and staff management (including business, planning and merchandising);
- customer relations;
- quality, range and price of goods and services.

6.3.1 Business and Staff Management

The Traders Survey undertaken by the Consultants indicated that not very many of the traders have undertaken any business or staff management courses. Small Business and Staff Management courses are available at most TAFES, Colleges and Universities. One should not underestimate the usefulness of these courses as they can provide greater certainty, professionalism, and direction for individual businesses, hence the Centre as a whole.

6.3.2 Customer Relations

Although identified as one of the Village's strengths, continuous effort must be committed to this aspect of trader performance. Finding out what makes people feel at ease in a shop and what qualities the customer feels are good or bad can provide insights into what constitutes positive and negative customer relations.

This responsibility should lie with the traders. Simple measures such as comment sheets on counters or incentives (such as discounts on goods purchased) can coax customers into providing details to what they like/dislike in a centre. This will not only benefit the Centre as a whole, but will also benefit individual businesses.

6.3.3 Quality, Range and Price of Goods and Services

Improvement to the quality, range and price of goods and services is essential if significant improvements to the Black Rock Village Centre are to be made. Types of improvements to be made can be ascertained by comparisons of the Black Rock Village Centre to its competitors. Alternatively, customers can be questioned about such issues.

From the existing sources of research it can be seen that the Black Rock Village Centre needs to:-

- offer a better range and higher quality of goods, especially where fresh fruit and vegetables, and clothing are concerned;
- offer more competitive prices in all aspects of goods and services.

6.4 Centre Structure and Performance

Desirable characteristics of successful local and neighbourhood centres are summarised below (refer Table 7). The Centre can be significantly strengthened as a local retail centre by:-

- an implementation strategy to target successful specialty food as ideal service operators to locate in vacant stores;
- structural changes within the village including:-
  - investigating the possibility of incorporating the Caltex site with the former Payless site and developing a substantial supermarket/retail development;
  - investigating the opportunities to develop the Beach Reserve site for a rotunda/tearooms development;
- co-ordinate and publicise trading hours of tenancies to provide certainty for shoppers frequenting the centre;
- protection of the retail core;
- encourage residential activities above the shops to bring more people into the Black Rock Village Centre.

Table 7
LOCAL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES: CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL CENTRES

CHARACTERISTICS
ROLE Local/neighbourhood centres should have a strong convenience role - they should account for all/most daily/weekly shopping needs (food and services)
LOCATION Should be visible and safely accessible from a main road. Ideally should be at the intersection of a main road and secondary road.
ACTIVITY **Food** - 'after hours' convenience store/milk bar; - hot bread - butcher - fruit and vegetables - delicatessen - attractive and competitive supermarkets **Food - Services** - take-away food - restaurant/cafe **Clothing and Footwear** - not a necessity in local/neighbourhood centre **Household Goods** - newsagency (should include tattslotto) - chemist - hardware **Services** - banks - hairdresser - dry cleaners - video library - shoe repairs - TAB

PARKING

Parking should be visible, very easy to access and as close to shops and services as possible - preferably in front. There should be adequate off-street parking available (including spaces for employees)

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Shoppers should be and feel safe when crossing roads through/adjacent to the centre

COMMUNITY ASPECTS

The local/neighbourhood centre should have a strong community focus. Examples of community facilities are;-

- community halls
- elderly citizens clubs
- bowling club
- church
- medical/dental
- other recreational activities
- public toilets

DESIGN AMENITY

The centre must appear to be clean and tidy, attractive and welcoming. It gives the shopper a feeling that the centre is successful. Elements which help to achieve this are improvements to:-

- building facades
- signage
- lighting (both under verandah and street lighting)
- shopfront displays
- pedestrian pavements
- trees
- seating and bins
- street appearance
- carparking areas
- service areas

6.5 Centre Amenity and Safety

As more and more people are combining their social activities with their shopping activities, it is important to make sure the Centre's environment is pleasing and that the shopper feels comfortable in the Centre.

Principal ways to improve the amenity and safety of the Black Rock Centre are:-

- to create a theme in the Centre (see section 6.2.1);
- ensure that all marketing and promotion is undertaken in line with this theme;
- to make parking in the Centre as easy as possible and ensure there is clear signage to the existing car parks;
- provide ample lighting (both in the street and under verandah) in the Centre;
- to ensure pedestrian priority in the Centre. This could be achieved implementation of a combination of the following:-
  - pedestrian lights along Beach Road;
  - pedestrian crossings along Balcombe and Bluff Roads;
  - speed humps along Balcombe and Bluff Roads;
- refurbish verandahs along the shops;
- link the beach with the Shopping Centre. This could be achieved through a combination of pedestrian lights along Beach Road and providing some facilities (such as a Tea Rooms or a Rotunda) along the beach.

6.6 Customer Satisfaction

As customer satisfaction ultimately dictates whether a Centre is successful or not, constant monitoring of this issue needs to be undertaken. Regular analysis of what customers like and dislike about the Centre can identify whether the actions taken in the Centre are appropriate. Some methods to achieve this monitoring aspect are:-

- regular in-centre surveys (e.g. quarterly) - surveys undertaken on the customers of shopping at the Centre;
- regular in-home surveys (e.g. quarterly) - telephone surveys on surrounding residents of the Centre;
- 'are your needs being met' pamphlets located in every store - asking for comments on the Centre or on particular businesses.

These surveys could be regular 'all inclusive' surveys or regularly concentrate on different aspects of the Centre at different times.

7.0 CONCLUSION

As a result of the Consultants research on the Black Rock Village Centre, options exist to improve the Black Rock Village Centre. Primarily these are through improvements to:-

- organisation and trader outlook and attitudes;
- access to markets;
- trader performance;
- centre structure and performance;
- centre amenity and safety.

However, there are several tasks which must be undertaken before a Business Strategy can be completed. These are:-

- defining goals, objectives and performance measures appropriate for the Black Rock Village Centre (Stage III of the business strategy process);
- evaluating the options specified in this document (Stage V);
- determining the preferred package of actions for the Black Rock Village Centre (Stage VI);
- outlining detailed methods of monitoring progress towards the goals and objectives of the Centre (Stage VII).

To achieve the most out of the Black Rock Village Centre Business Strategy the above tasks must be undertaken with the understanding, commitment and a degree of financial support of traders working closely with building owners, the Council and representatives of resident groups. Only if the traders and the community are willing to be involved will a workable and suitable business strategy result.

APPENDIX I

Black Rock Village Traders Survey

City of Sandringham

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
BLACK ROCK VILLAGE TRADER SURVEY©
September 1993

Dear Trader,

As you may be aware Council has engaged Consultants to prepare a business strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre. The purpose of the Strategy is to improve the trade, level of service and appearance of the Centre.

As part of the preparation of a Business Strategy for the Black Rock Village Centre, it is necessary to gain access to detailed information about business type, performance and views on improvements to the Village. Please be ensured that all information given in this survey will be completely confidential and will only be used to assist in the preparation of the Business Strategy for the Village.

DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS

What is the full name and address of your business or service?

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Manager's Name: _____

What is the description of the type of services provided by your business?

_____

© Subject to Copyright, Ratio Consultants

How many on-site car parks are provided at your site ? (number including private parking spaces):

Public: _____

Private: _____

Does your business presently:

Own your own premises	1
Purchasing premises at present	2
Lease/rent existing premises	3

Building owners name: _____

What is the approximate leasable floor area of your business? _____

How many years have your business been operating in the Black Rock Village? _____

1. TRADERS BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

1.1 What was your businesses approximate turnover for the year ended June 1993?

_____

1.2 What was your businesses approximate turnover for the year ended June 1992?

_____

1.3 Approximately what proportion of your annual turnover would be generated for each of the following periods?

Period	Approximate Proportion of Annual Trade
1 July - 30 September	
1 October - 31 December	
1 January - 31 March	
1 April - 30 June	

2. BUSINESS ROLE AND CURRENT PRACTICES

2.1 What do you regard as your primary business role in the Village?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.2 Do you currently have business objectives? If so, what are they? (If no, go to 2.4)

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.3 Do you attempt to measure if these objectives are being met? If so, please give details.

2.4 What types of business planning do you currently undertake for your business? eg. budgeting, business auditing, business plans

2.5 Have you or your staff undertaken any management or customer relations courses over the last few years? If so, please give details.

2.6 What training have you provided for your staff on any occasion?

4. TRADERS VIEW OF THE CENTRE AND ITS SURROUNDS.

4.1 What do you see as the primary strengths of the Black Rock Village Centre?

4.2 What do you see as the current major weaknesses/deficiencies of the Black Rock Village Centre?

4.3 What do you believe are the major factors likely to detrimentally impact on the future of the Black Rock Village?

5. IMPROVEMENTS

5.1 Improvements to local centres usually require improvements in a range of areas including:-

* Appearance of shops and the Centre
* Trade
* Resident interest and use of the Centre
* Safety
* Weather Protection
* Access

What ideas in relation to the **above issues**, could you suggest to improve **your business?** Please give details

What ideas in relation to the **above issues**, could you suggest to improve the **Black Rock Village Centre?** Please give details.

6. TRADERS SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO THE CENTRE

6.1 Would your business be prepared to (please tick appropriate box):

ACTION	Definitely would support	Probably would support	Don't Know/ Unsure	Probably would not support	Definitely would not support
Support in principle the concept of a business plan for the Black Rock Village Centre to improve trade and level of service of the centre.					
Work co-operatively with other traders to prepare a business plan for the Village					
Support a 'special rate' (approx. $10/week per tenancy) to implement a business plan for the Village					
Work co-operatively with other traders to prepare 'special events, marketing, etc' for the Village					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION AND ASSISTANCE, IT HAS BEEN GREATLY APPRECIATED

2.7 What types of marketing/advertising practices do you currently undertake to promote your business?

2.8 Do you currently undertake any work co-operatively or liaise with any other traders for any reason (eg. co-operative marketing)? If so, please give details.

3. PRESENTATION OF SHOP/BUSINESS

3.1 Does your business often change the internal layout of your shop/business? If so, on what basis? (eg. seasonal, weekly etc)

3.2 Does your business often change the shop front displays? If so, on what basis?

3.3 Does your business currently budget for upkeep of your shop's/business's facade and interior? If so, please give details.