

# **From Plan to Place: Logis Eco-Industrial Park**

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## **Logis Eco-Industrial Park: Australia's best industrial estate**

### **Introduction**

Logis Eco-Industrial Park demonstrates excellence in planning a functional high-amenity industrial estate and then building it. The 154 hectare site contains 190 lots, ranging from 2000 m<sup>2</sup> to 10 hectares. The site is now home to a wide variety of factories, offices and warehouses. Logis has attracted major companies that want a high-amenity location, including Kraft Foods, Ego Pharmaceuticals and Spicers Paper. Development Victoria, in its first ever industrial estate, has succeeded in its aim to create a world-class mixed-use industrially based business park.

### **The planning vision**

Logis is on the site of the former Dandenong Treatment Plant, which received trade and domestic liquid waste for primary and secondary treatment between 1939 and 1996. The 180 hectare site then lay unused for nine years.

Development Victoria took on the redevelopment of the site to meet state and local government planning objectives to regenerate Dandenong. Development Victoria worked closely with the City of Greater Dandenong to ensure the redevelopment achieved objectives in the City's municipal strategic statement, open space strategy, and environmental sustainability strategy.

The site was deemed to be an ideal location for a high-quality mixed-use precinct, as it was just five minutes from central Dandenong and next to the then-planned EastLink and the Dandenong Bypass. The position thus offered convenient access to a major centre and easy access to all of metropolitan Melbourne.

### **The master plan**

Following extensive consultation, Development Victoria prepared a design brief for the master plan, including both industry requirements and identified community needs. Development Victoria aspired to set a benchmark for quality, innovation and sustainability. Plus Architecture prepared a master plan based on 2000 m<sup>2</sup> land units. The plan provided a variety of lot frontages and sizes, with lots facing the surrounding streets wherever possible and with a main road through the site. The master plan provided flexibility to combine smaller lots and divide larger ones, depending on market demand.

Logis' proposed street layout was integrated with the surrounding network. It was designed to make circulation through the estate easy for everyone from pedestrians to B-Double drivers, being very legible and with no roundabouts or dead-ends. It also had extensive public open space - 14% of the site's area.

### **The design guidelines**

The Logis Design Guidelines are clearly expressed in plain language and very detailed. They demanded development achieve high aesthetic, environment and amenity standards. For example, lots on Logis Boulevard, the main street, were required to provide a high level of visual interest, while those on the side streets required only a low to moderate level. Other controls included:

- Offices must face the street.
- Front facades must be free of large unrelieved surfaces.

- External walls must be painted, and in tasteful colours.
- Rooftop plant must be screened.
- Premises are limited to one roller-shutter door per street façade.
- Size, placement and appearance of signs must be approved.

The design guidelines continue to apply to a lot for ten years from the date of sale. Although the guidelines are mostly concerned with the initial development of a lot and any subsequent additions, they also contain a requirement to maintain each building and grounds in good condition. Initially prepared by Plus Architecture, the design guidelines have been substantially modified by Alexander Urbanism in the light of their experience and comments from designer applicants. The design guidelines are now twenty-one pages long and in their tenth version.

### **The design review panel**

Development Victoria set up a Design Review Panel (DRP) to assess whether development applications complied with the design guidelines. The DRP has been run by Alexander Urbanism since 2012, working in close association with Development Victoria's development manager. Alexander Urbanism has now assessed over 460 development applications for lots at Logis. Applicants have enjoyed a quick turnaround, averaging less than two days in 2016. When the application contains unusual or problematic issues, Alexander Urbanism refers them for a second opinion to Development Victoria. If requested by the applicant, the application will be externally assessed by an independent reviewer. Over the many years of the estate's development, Development Victoria and Alexander Urbanism have continued to improve decision making, collaboration with the building designers, and the quality of the DRP's response.

### **Development process**

Between 2005 and 2009, the site was extensively remediated to decontaminate it and make it ready for new uses. Extensive infrastructure was demolished and many tonnes of soil decontaminated. Most of the site's River Red Gums were retained, and two kilometres of concrete channel removed from the adjacent Dandenong Creek.

The first development stage to be completed was the 360 dwelling Meridian residential estate, north of the Dandenong Bypass. Land in Logis South was first released in 2009, and development there was largely complete by 2013. Land in Logis North was sold between 2011 and 2015. Roads and titling at Logis are fully complete, and construction on the lots is now at 85%.

### **The result: quality streetscapes**

The streets themselves are generously sized, with footpaths and wide treed verges. Most buildings are set back from the street 9m or more, providing large front gardens. Careful attention has been paid to the design of buildings to ensure they create harmonious and interesting streetscapes. Logis now sports a diverse range of architect-designed, visually exciting contemporary buildings. The prominent building entrances and well-placed business identification signs mean visitors can easily find their destinations.

### **The result: excellent community facilities**

Logis offers a variety of facilities available for public use, namely ten soccer fields, seven parks, two cafes, shops, and a wetland. The Soccer 5s soccer fields bring the general community into the estate, especially after business hours, increasing the estate's security. The 4.5 hectare Central Park has been lavishly detailed and planted. The café overlooking the lake will open in 2018. The CALM, a 12 hectare artificial hill, will be landscaped late this year for use as a multipurpose park.

### **The result: sustainability**

As an eco-industrial estate, Logis is both literally and figuratively green. The parks, streets and large front gardens contain a significant coverage of mostly endemic trees, shrubs and groundcovers, and extend the habitat of the adjacent Dandenong Creek. Most of the trees that were on the site have been retained. The former Dandenong Treatment Plant has been decontaminated and remediated. All premises are plumbed into on-site rainwater tanks, most to the reticulated Class A recycled water supply. At least 5% of each lot's area must be permeable. Many premises include rain gardens. Central Park contains a retarding basin. The southern wetland purifies stormwater before it enters Dandenong Creek. Street lighting is T5 energy efficient and automatically dims after midnight.

While motor vehicle access is very important for an industrial estate, Logis was planned to encourage active transport modes as well. Every lot is within a 400 m walk of one or more public open spaces. Every street has footpaths on both sides. All premises provide bike parking, lockers, and showers.

### **The result: a shared vision and collaboration**

The planning of the Logis Eco-Industrial Park is an outcome of a long process of problem-solving, collaboration and negotiation by Development Victoria, the City of Greater Dandenong, Plus Architecture, Alexander Urbanism, numerous lot owners, developers, architects and building designers, and others. Planning advice and applications related to the development of the estate proper have been by SJB Planning.

The project team continues to work closely with the City of Greater Dandenong to shape the master plan and guidelines to accord with the City's vision for the municipality. The parties still work closely together to assess new development proposals and to enforce the guidelines.

Lot owners and their designers are strongly supportive of the design guidelines and design review process, recognising the financial value it has created for them.

### **Conclusion**

Development Victoria's Logis Eco-Industrial Park has achieved an attractive high-amenity environment by communicating a vision, by careful planning attention over years, and by working with the developers and designers of each allotment. The master plan achieves a clearly structured and very legible layout that provides lots in a wide range of frontages and lot sizes. The design guidelines, now finely honed after ten versions, demand functional, visually interesting and environmentally responsible designs. The design review process has improved the overall standard of design. All the parties involved – the estate developer, municipal authority, master planner, statutory planner, lot developers, architects and design reviewer – have worked closely together over many years to bring into reality a common vision of Logis as a high-amenity 'eco-industrial park'.

Apparent on even a cursory visit, Logis has a sense of space, legibility, visual interest, visual clarity and greenery. Logis demonstrates the worth of achieving high-quality planning and design in Australia's industrial estates and business parks.

## Logis Eco-Industrial Estate in summary

### At the estate scale

- Workplaces created for approximately five thousand people
- A distinctive, consistent and spacious character
- Addresses the surrounding streets and the abutting Dandenong Creek
- Endemic plants extend the habitat of Dandenong Creek
- Easy for large freight vehicles to navigate

### The public realm

- 14% of the estate's area is public open space
- A very high-quality park at its heart
- A very legible street pattern
- Public open space within 400 m of every lot
- Encourages walking and biking

### At the allotment scale

- A wide range of lot sizes
- Use of detailed design guidelines on site layout, building design, materials and colours, and landscaping
- Buildings have a variety of sizes, styles and functions
- Excellent worker amenities within each premises
- Buildings' active use areas are close to the street
- Potable water use is minimised by the use of rainwater tanks and third-pipe treated water.
- Ground water is recharged through rain gardens and unpaved areas
- The standard of visual interest is set highest in the main street, lower in the side streets

### Materials palette

- Warehouses in painted concrete
- Vast majority of public and private planting is endemic species
- Front fencing of black steel pickets
- Distinctive 'industrial' street lights
- Minimal number and size of signs

### Project cost

- Estate development cost (remediation, civil works, landscaping) \$165 m
- Land sale revenue \$260 m
- Construction costs on allotments to date \$780 m
- Total estimated expenditure on the estate at build-out \$1.08 bn

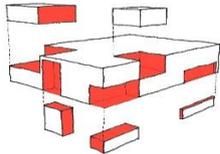
## Images



The former Dandenong Treatment Plant has been transformed into the Logis Eco-Industrial Park and the Meridian residential estate. [Source: Alexander Urbanism using a Nearmap aerial photo]



The Logis master plan and indicative lot layout and development. The master plan achieved a clear and well-connected street structure and 14% public open space. [Source: Plus Architecture]



The design guidelines suggest design strategies to create interesting buildings. This one – 'Subtraction'. [Source: Plus Architecture]



A typical street at Logis: wide, green and with quality architecture. The posts in the foreground mark the location of reticulated recycled water



The new Central Park is a 4.5 hectare park that has been lavishly detailed and planted. It will include a café and a retention basin. [Source: Nathan Alexander]



The ten mini soccer fields at Logis attract the community into the estate and improve security after-hours. [Source: Ken Munro]



The planting at Logis in both the public and private realms is overwhelmingly endemic species. [Source: Nathan Alexander]