

City of Melbourne - Central City Built Form Review

The Victorian Government, in collaboration with the City of Melbourne, have recently introduced new permanent planning controls to guide future development and enhance the long-term livability of Melbourne's central city. GWTS was commissioned by the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning to review the preceding wind controls in practice and are proud to announce their involvement in developing Melbourne's new wind planning controls.

Since 1999, there had not been a significant update to the central city built form and most outdated provisions were more than 30 years old. As these provisions were no longer adequate for the current scale and density of development in Melbourne, the Minister of Planning announced a review of Melbourne's central city built form. In September 2015, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning led the review to form the basis for the new planning control provisions.

Specialists from various backgrounds conducted studies to develop new provisions that, most notably;

- Provide adequate separation between tall buildings and to the street,
- Ensure that public spaces and important landmarks are protected from wind and overshadowing and
- Establish a reasonable floor area ratio for new developments.

GWTS conducted an extensive review of academic papers, investigated the wind environments at ten locations in the Melbourne CBD using continuous full-scale measurements and finally, our team conducted an interactive survey of pedestrians, workers, residents and visitors in the city to better understand their comfort requirements.

From our studies, we introduced an important shift from the existing criteria that includes measures for both wind safety (avoiding strong gust conditions) and wind comfort (creating desirable wind speeds, relative to the primary use of a space, for 80 percent of the time).

We recommended that any new development more than 40m in height, within the Central City, should be required to have a wind environment assessment conducted by a qualified wind engineer to ensure pedestrian comfort and safety in the city.

Additionally, we recommended that a wind environment assessment be triggered, at the discretion of the planning authority, for any new development where the wind conditions would have a significant effect on the success of the development and its surroundings, such as:

- Locations with high wind exposure (hilltops, areas adjacent to open space)
- Outdoor theatres (e.g. Sidney Myer Music Bowl), outdoor retail and dining
- Public open space for both private and publically accessible developments.

For further reading, the Central City Built Form Review Wind Assessment may be found online at:

http://delwp.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/330218/Central-City-Built-Form-Review-Wind-Assessment-Report-2016_web.pdf

Following the success of several informative presentations to architects and developers throughout Melbourne, we'd be more than happy to visit you to further discuss the new wind planning controls and explain how they will likely impact design in Melbourne. Please direct all enquiries and requests to info@gwts.com.au. We look forward to hearing from you.

Press Contact: Tiffany:

+613 993 994 90 or email
press@gwts.com.au