Consultation Outcomes 2013

Background

The City of Melbourne is developing an urban forest precinct plan for North & West Melbourne, which will guide tree planting for the precincts over the next ten years. A workshop was held for local community members to participate in the development of the precinct plan. On 20 October, 2013, more than 100 community members attended a 3-hour Sunday morning workshop at North Melbourne town hall.

What We Were Told: Community Workshop, 20 October
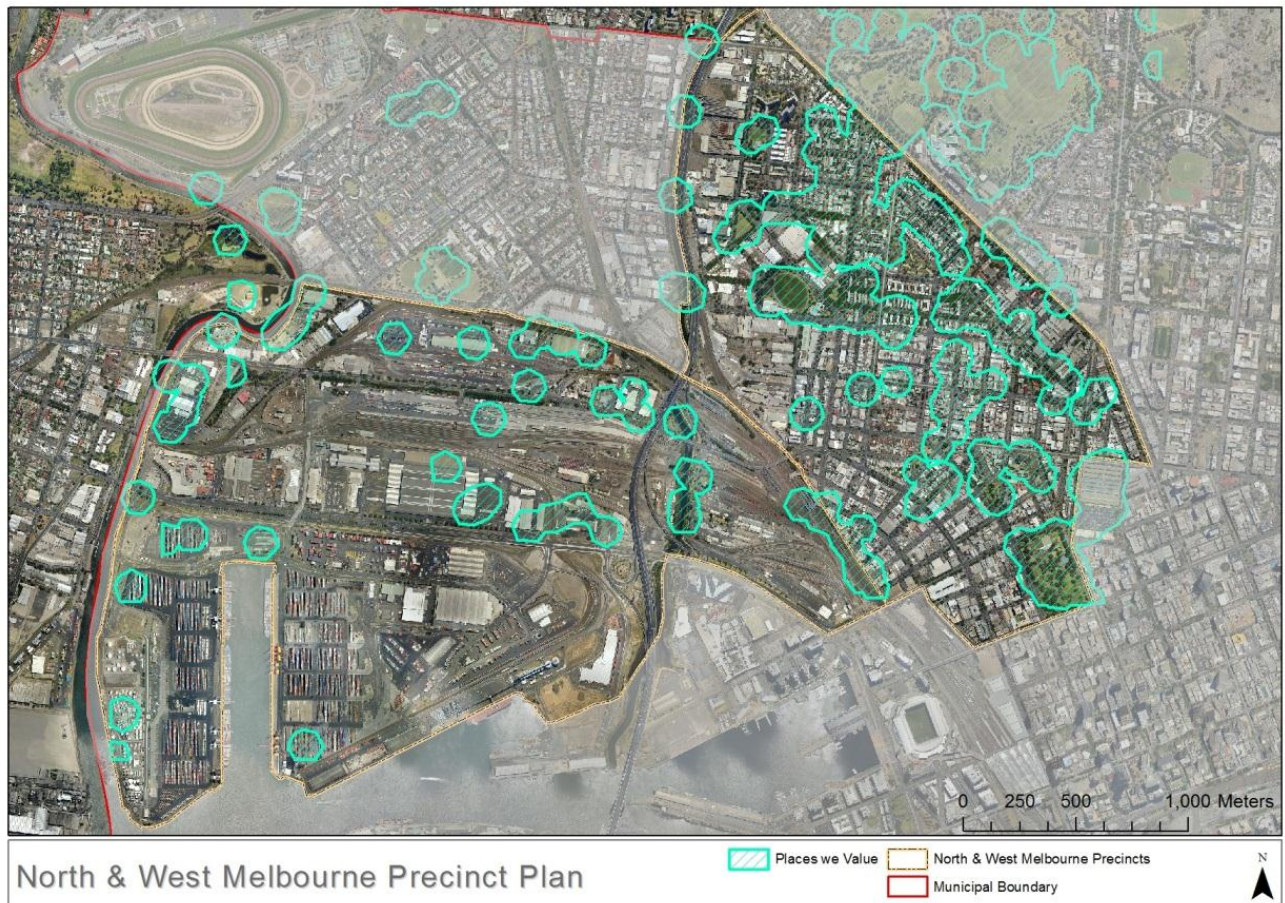
Place We Value

Participants were asked to introduce themselves to the other people at their table and to identify their favourite landscapes in North and West Melbourne. The Participatory Mapping methodology for this exercise was developed by Dr. Dave Kendall from the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology and the results are being used to guide the development of the precinct plans, and for Dr. Kendall's research into what people think about street trees in urban streetscapes.

Participants were provided with a sheet of stickers and a key that defined what each colour represented. Each colour sticker represented one of the following values or an area in need of more trees:

1. Beautiful and Spiritual: These areas are important because they contain scenery including sights, smells and sounds, or the area has sacred, religious meanings and I feel reverence and respect for nature here.
2. Natural: These areas are important because they represent natural places where trees and other plants can grow, where birds, animals or insects could live, or natural processes can occur.
3. Culture and heritage: these areas are important because they represent human history and allow me or others to continue and pass down the wisdom and knowledge, traditions, and way of life of our ancestors.
4. Social: these areas are important because they provide opportunities for meeting or being with other people for social or sporting activities.
5. Life sustaining: these areas are important because they help produce, preserve, clean, and renew air, soil and water and they provide shade and protection from wind or rain.
6. More trees needed: These areas would be improved by more or new tree planting.

Participants were asked to place stickers representing one of five values (Beautiful and Spiritual, Natural, Culture and Heritage, Social, Life Sustaining) on maps of the North Melbourne precinct. Map 1 indicates all the places/streets which were identified by the participants as valued places. The polygons were created in ArcGIS software by running a kernel density analysis of the sticker points and then converting those to polygons to show outlines of where values were located. For maps of each value, please see Appendix1.

Map1. Places valued by participants

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Locations for More Greening

Participants also used stickers to identify locations where more trees were needed and the locations are shown in Map 2.

Map2. Opportunities for tree planting identified by the participants

North & West Melbourne Precinct Plan

(Note: opportunities outside the boundary of North and West Melbourne will not be reflected in the North and West Melbourne Urban Forest Precinct Plan)

Preferences for the Future

Each table was given a set of the same 44 photos (all photos were numbered consecutively from 1 to 44, with each photo numbered on the back). Participants were asked to divide the photos into three groups based upon the future urban forest character they envisaged for North & West Melbourne. Photos were to be grouped into the following:

1. Photos that best represent the future of North & West Melbourne.
2. Photos that represent the future you don't want.
3. Photos you are unsure about or cannot agree upon.

Depicted below are the combined photos chosen as the best & the least representation of the future of North & West Melbourne.

The photos that were generally agreed (by 7 out of 9 groups) to represent a most wanted future:

Participants were then invited to add a word or phrase on post it notes to describe their favourite photos. A summary of these key words from all the tables has been combined into the following Wordle.

Photos that Represent an Unwanted Future

Comments related to each least preferred image were:

- **No.29:** 'no connection to anything', 'not appropriate for the area', 'too American', 'environmental impact'
- **No. 11:** 'no focal point', 'these landscape need feature trees', 'monoculture', 'lack of diversity'
- **No.26, 11, 26, 30:** 'Lack of canopy', 'bare', 'large area of asphalt', 'not enough shade', 'needs more green'
- **No.11, 13:** 'not practical for narrow streets', 'two big for most Melbourne streets', 'pest tree'

Despite the fact that No.38, 39, 41 were also least liked, there was no any specific comment explaining why other than 'poor image'; therefore these images will not be used in future workshops.

Character Statement - North and West Melbourne

Using the photos they had selected, each group was asked to draft a character statement and the results were as follows:

Table A (Chapman Street)	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will: • Complement existing spotted gum • Provide kerbside rather than footpath plantings • Provide placement critical for not blocking light too much (not of concern to everyone) • Have scale relative to houses and spotted gums • Have visual appeal and block less attractive street scape • Provide lower + medium storey of plantings , not just grass and big trees • Have natives + local endemic favoured for native fauna • Allow Chapman Street to form a model for surrounding suburbia
Table B	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will be: • Colourful • Shady • Native, dense foliage • Multifunctional • Inviting • A place to relax and escape the hustle and bustle • Peaceful • Environmental friendly • Community focused • Immersive • Attractive to social activity

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Table C	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will be:
	• Green
	• Grand
	• Appropriate
	• Survival
	• Shady
	• Layered
	• Alive (we mean birds, healthy, insects)
Table D (Chapman Street)	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will have:
	• Diversity of character in different locations. E.g. North Melbourne different to West Melbourne
	• Continued improvement to development of 'pocket parks'
	• Increased diversity of plant species
	• Wide streets
	• Bird life
	• A solution to possums
Table E	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will be:
	• A relaxing refuge
	• A healthy environment for everyone
	• A social space for families and friends
	• Reflect the landscape heritage of the area
	• Provide relief from urban heat
	• A well prepared space for the increasing population
	• Aesthetically pleasing, well designed space
	• A wild life corridor
	• Shady space for all street users
Table F	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will be:
	• Large canopy trees (shade)
	• Right tree in the right location (avoid conflict between trees + infrastructure + leaf composting)
	• Diversity in fragrance, flower, colour, time
	• Species diversity – exotic, native, deciduous, evergreen
	• Interconnecting canopy (wide life corridors, aesthetic appeal)
	• Low maintenance
	• Shady community space for social interaction
	• Community garden (for fruit trees)
	• Sustain native wild life
	• Water retaining
Table G	The character we want for North & West Melbourne is:
	• Attractive, colourful, well designed, well maintained, diverse, liveable, sustainable, useful (productive and edible)and flexible ecosystem

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Table H	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will have:
	• Diversity in terms of colour, height, form, species, deciduous & evergreen, under planting where appropriate, native & exotic
	• More planted islands/ road reservation/ pockets parks
	• Summer shade/ winter sun
	• Professional tree pruning
	• More green open spaces
	• New + redevelopments offsets by more public open spaces
	• Community education regarding benefits of vegetables
	• Industrial areas to be included in urban forestation
	• Appropriate tree selections for appropriate places/spaces
	• Shrub 'avenues' to encourage birds/butterflies
	• Maintain historic tree avenues
Table I	The future urban forest in North & West Melbourne will have:
	• Scale of tree appropriate for the setting/ site (i.e. street trees vs reserve trees)
	• Good canopy cover across entire street but with clear visual access across the street
	• Variety – exotic + natives strongly supported
	• Light canopy that provides shade to the street but still lets light in
	• Variety in colour – leaves + trunk
	• Heritage to be considered.

What We Were Told: Online Conversation

The online conversation is continuing at http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-melbourne

Comments to date have supported:

- More trees planted in centre medians
- Convert unused road sections to plantable space (e.g., Arden Street and Chetwynd)
- Make Railway Place a resident only street and plant trees on the railway side
- More little 'cozy'/attractive spaces created in little parks with low hedges
- Plant greenery other than trees including use of low shrub hedges instead of fences, shrubs, grass and general greenery
- Green laneways with deciduous vines
- Plant trees on King Street between La Trobe St and Batman St, and on Footscray Road
- Increase urban forest diversity

Other comments
- Ensure planting maintains driver's lines of sight for safety
- Maintain adequate parking (e.g., Chetwynd St)
- Locals could maintain shrubs or understory planting on streets
- Develop more community gardens
- Consider making the small parks and reserves more user-friendly by installing more public toilets, which is especially important for families.

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Summary of Key Messages from North and West Melbourne Consultation

The North and West Melbourne is full of opportunities for greening to create safe and inviting habitats for people. Diverse solutions, both in terms of species and typologies, are needed for different streetscapes.

Desired future states defined by the community:

- Shady, leafy, big – canopy, scale, shady space for all street users
- Beautiful, green, colourful, interesting – form, shape, uniformity, sensory variety, aesthetically pleasing
- Native, European, diversity, variety, layers – grasses, alive (birds, healthy, insects), shrubs to encourage birds/butterflies, maintain historic avenues, use native and exotic trees appropriate to the location
- Good, friendly, inviting, peaceful – well designed and maintained, multifunctional, community focused social spaces
- More public open space – underutilised spaces, development contributions
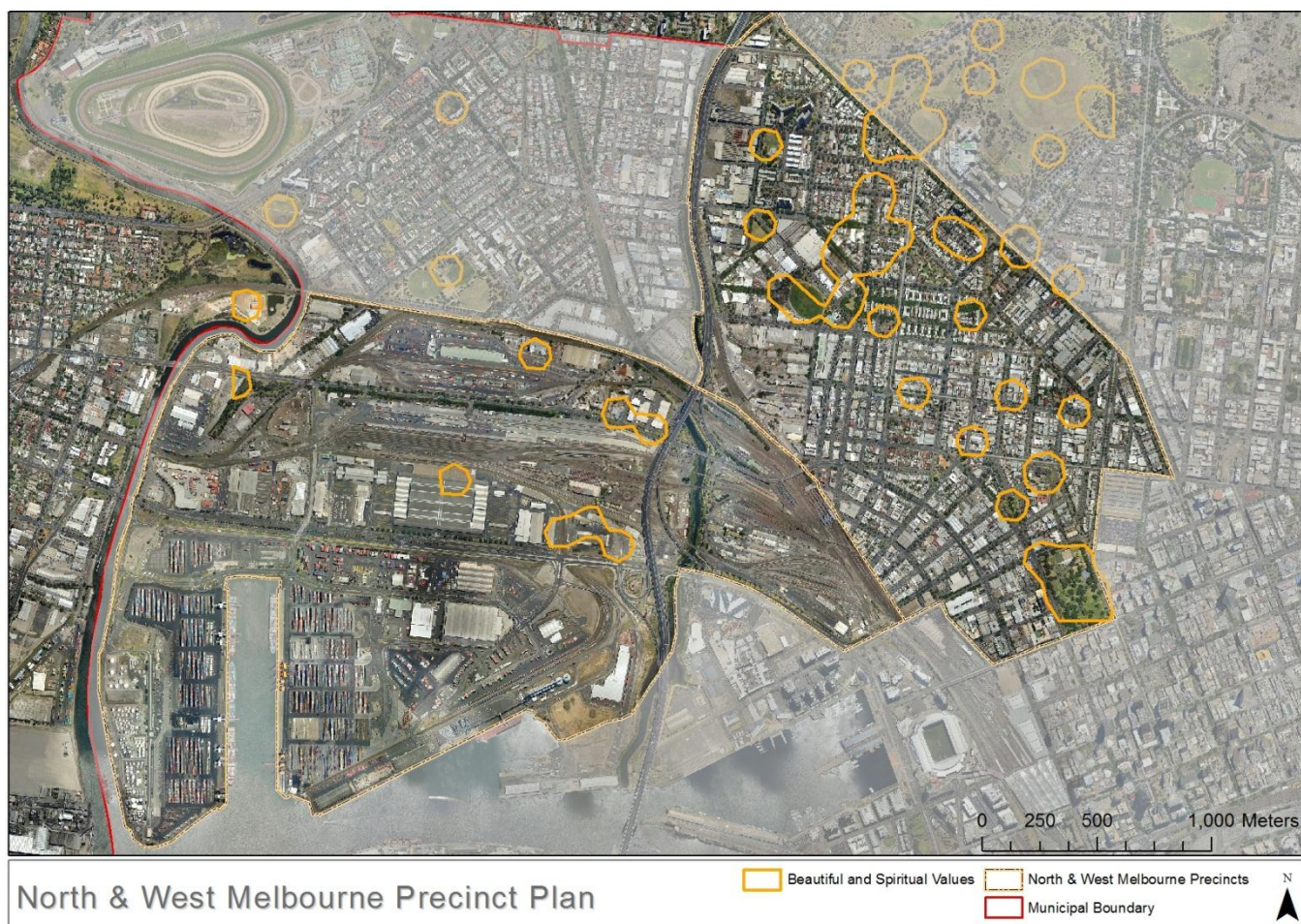
Urban forest benefits highlighted through community consultation:

- Shade
- Winter light
- Biodiversity
- Aesthetic beauty
- Psychological benefits (e.g., sense of calm, soothing etc.)
- Social cohesion
- Health
- Cultural (e.g., historic tree avenues, heritage streets)
- Water capture and storage

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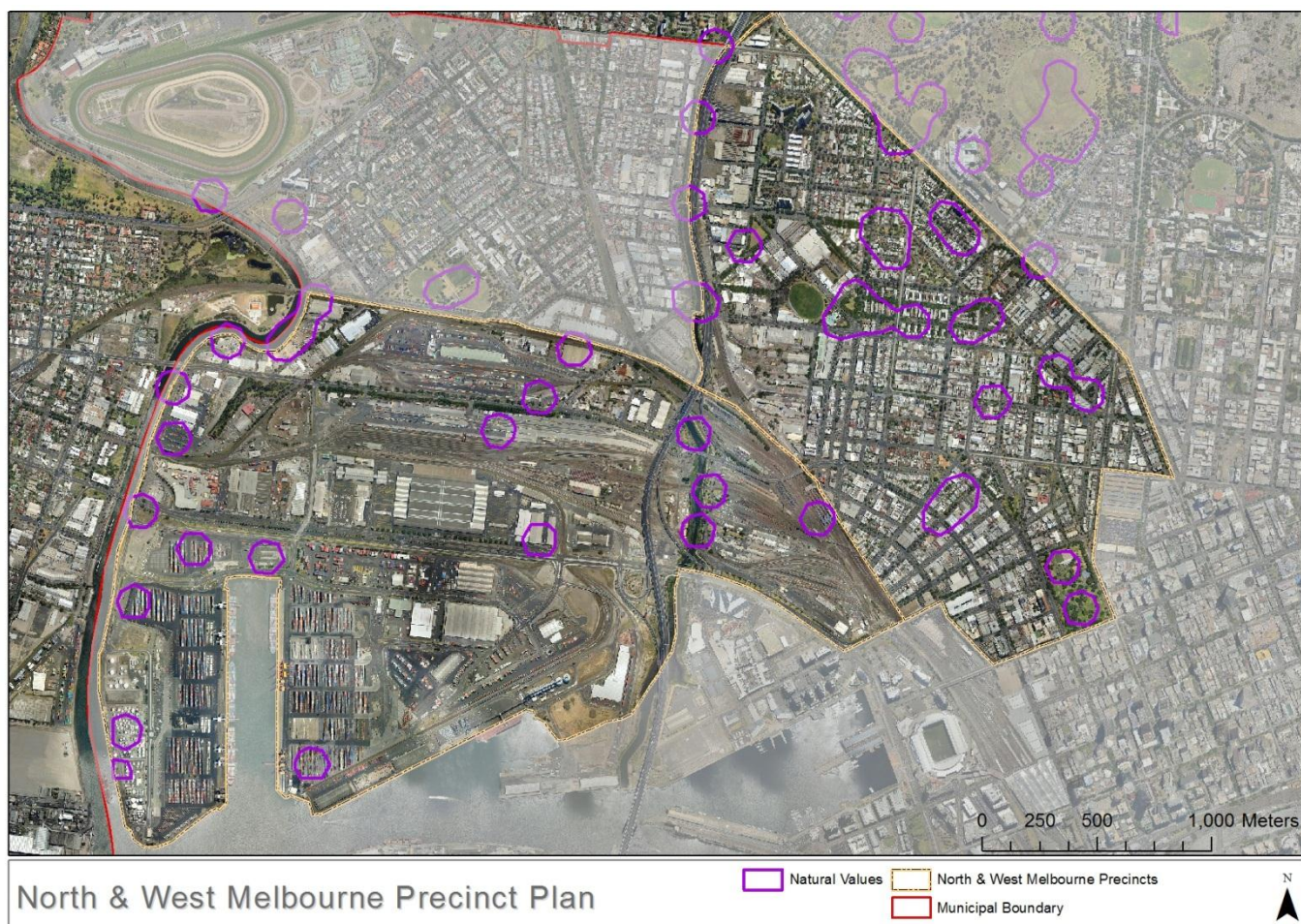**Map – Places identified for beautiful and spiritual value**

These areas are important because they contain attractive scenery including sights, smells and sounds, or the area has sacred, religious meanings and I feel reverence and respect for nature here.

North & West Melbourne Precinct Plan
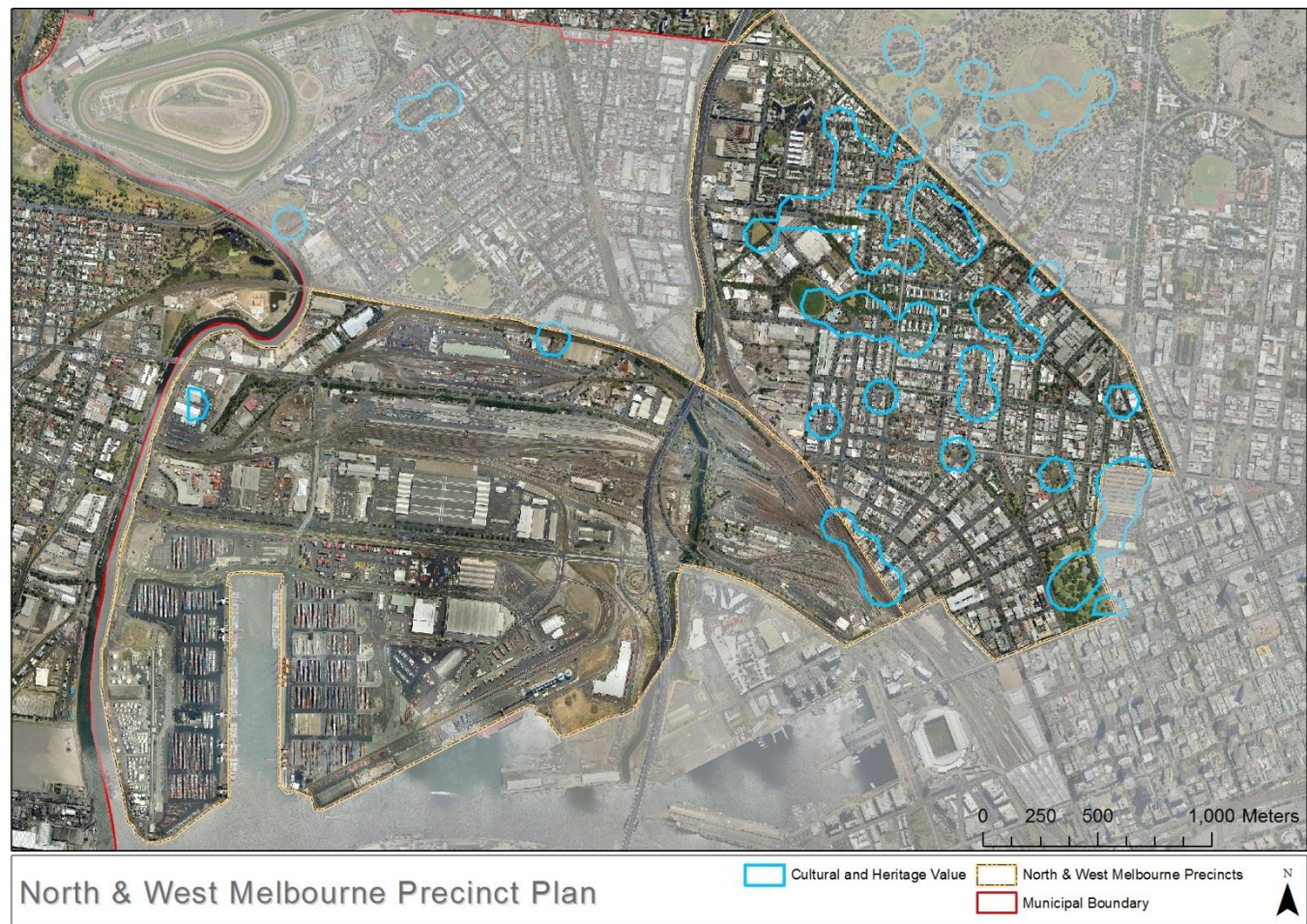
Map – Places identified for natural value

These areas are important because they represent natural places where trees and other plants can grow, where birds, animals or insects could live, or natural processes can occur.

North & West Melbourne Precinct Plan

Natural Values | North & West Melbourne Precincts | Municipal Boundary

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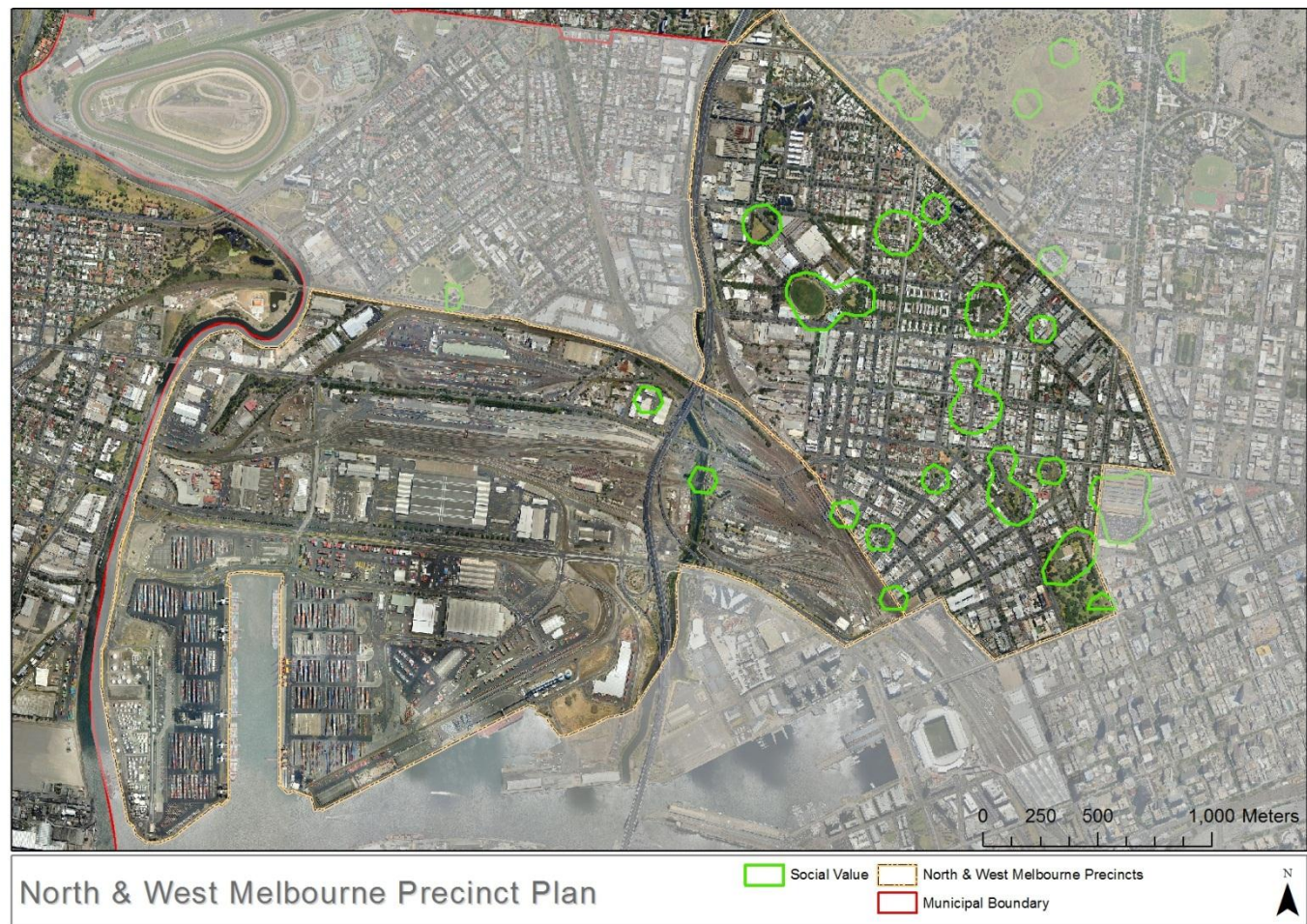## Map – Places identified for culture and heritage value

These areas are important because they represent human history and allow me or others to continue and pass down the wisdom and knowledge, traditions, and way of life of ancestors.

North & West Melbourne Precinct Plan

| Cultural and Heritage Value | North & West Melbourne Precincts |
| Municipal Boundary | |

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Map – Places identified for social value

These areas are important because they provide opportunities for meeting or being with other people for social or sporting activities.

North & West Melbourne Precinct Plan

Social Value North & West Melbourne Precincts
Municipal Boundary

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Map – Places identified for life sustaining

These areas are important because they help produce, preserve, clean, and renew air, soil and water. And they provide shade and protection from the wind or rain.

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