

# UNDERSTANDING WEST MELBOURNE

## BASELINE REPORT

DECEMBER 2016





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Baseline Report - West Melbourne Structure Plan

December 2016

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## What is West Melbourne?

West Melbourne is an established inner urban neighbourhood located between stable heritage areas of North Melbourne and the dynamic central city and renewal areas of City North and Arden-Macaulay. West Melbourne features a mixture of uses and building types, and accommodates a diverse population of around 5000 people, over one third of whom were born overseas. It is close to destinations of metropolitan, national and global significance including universities, markets, retail, entertainment and employment centres.

## What is a structure plan?

The purpose of a structure plan is to ensure that West Melbourne continues to develop as a great place to live, work and visit into the future; a place that supports the community's growth. A structure plan sets out a vision for the area to guide planning and sustainable growth, translating wider policies and strategies into a precinct-specific framework. It addresses land use, transport integration, open space provision and infrastructure. It includes recommendations for policies, development controls and projects to achieve the vision.

## Do we need a new plan?

A structure plan for West Melbourne completed in 2005 informed current planning controls for the area. Subsequent shifts in Melbourne's wider economy are driving change in the neighbourhood and surrounding precincts. Former industrial and commercial sites are being redeveloped for more intensive residential and mixed use. Construction in some areas is failing to achieve current planning objectives. A new plan is needed to update the strategic vision for the area and to guide the formulation of more effective controls.



Figure 1.1: West Melbourne Structure Plan study area

The suburb of West Melbourne is split between a mixed industrial, commercial and residential area in the east, and rail yards and heavy industry to the west. The study area for the Structure Plan is confined to the mixed use area east of Railway Place. To the north, West Melbourne flows into North Melbourne across Victoria Street. To the east it is buffered from the CBD by the Flagstaff Gardens and Queen Victoria Market, while the southern area makes a more gradual transition into the Hoddle grid.

### What are the plan's objectives?

The objectives for the structure plan are to:

- Reflect the concerns of the community and key stakeholders.
- Establish a shared vision for the future of West Melbourne.
- Ensure that public space and infrastructure provisions meet the growing population's needs.
- Support wider City strategies and policy objectives that apply in West Melbourne.
- Identify actions to deliver the vision for West Melbourne, potentially including a planning scheme amendment and capital works proposals.

### How are we preparing the plan?

The City of Melbourne is working with the community to prepare a new structure plan. The Traditional Owners of the land are stakeholders in this process.

The process features three separate phases of engagement.

The first phase (March to May 2015) helped to identify key issues and opportunities for the project and has informed this report.

A second phase will allow a discussion with the community about opportunities to address the identified issues.

This feedback will be used to draft a structure plan. The community will be invited to comment on the draft during a third phase of engagement, in 2017.

### What is the role of this report?

This report is intended as a resource to support informed discussion about West Melbourne's future and future preparation of a new structure plan, identifying issues and opportunities to guide change into the future. To do this, it summarises:

- Wider strategies, policies and objectives to be translated into West Melbourne's particular context.
- An analysis of the current conditions in West Melbourne.
- Feedback from community and stakeholder consultation.
- Specialist consultant investigations including a Community Engagement Report, Economic and Employment Study, Transport and Access Study, and Heritage Review.



Figure 1.2: West Melbourne Structure Plan project timeline

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

## What has our community said?

The Phase One community engagement in mid 2015 was a chance for people to express their likes, concerns and visions for West Melbourne.

- 130 people attended two afternoon workshops and information sessions.
- There were 168 overall contributions through the City of Melbourne's online engagement forum, Participate Melbourne.
- There were 594 document and information downloads from the Participate Melbourne website.

A series of key messages emerged from this process:

- A sense of community is important to the people of West Melbourne.
- People are concerned about reduced parking, increased traffic and increased building heights.
- People would like more parks, open spaces, trees and street greening.
- People would like more public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure.
- People supported appropriate redevelopment in certain areas but would like more certainty in the planning process.

## Key Issues

### No centre of activity

- With limited local services and no retail hub, West Melbourne relies on surrounding areas to meet many needs.

### Poor connections

- Poor connections and barriers make it difficult to access nearby areas.
- Arterial roads with heavy traffic create barriers and detract from amenity (Spencer, King and Dudley Streets).
- The neighbourhood is cut off from Docklands and Moonee Ponds Creek by railways.
- There are few safe cycle routes to key destinations.
- Most public transport services are located at edges of the study area.

### Lack of open space

- There is insufficient recreational open space to cater to the growing population, and the amenity of existing space is compromised by vehicular traffic.
- Streets are wide and closely-spaced, so there is abundant street space, but even streets carrying light traffic are dominated by cars.
- Streets are mostly paved surfaces and the coverage of private land by buildings is high. There is little greenery to ameliorate the urban heat island effect, and there are few permeable surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff rates.

### Significant development activity

- There is significant development activity, particularly near the central city and North Melbourne Station.
- New developments often exceed current discretionary height controls in the Planning Scheme, creating uncertainty for the community.
- The diversity in property and building scale across the study area is not well reflected in current built form controls.
- Recent development is mostly one and two bedroom apartments, with little or no affordable housing, and does not cater to the diverse population.
- There are insufficient mechanisms in place to gain community benefit from redevelopment of large sites.

### Heritage fabric at risk

- Development has resulted in a loss of heritage buildings.

### Reduction in mixed use character

- The current dominance of residential development threatens a loss of the area's mixed-use character, and existing planning controls do little to protect this mix.

### Lack of sustainable infrastructure

- There is little in the way of solar panels, water sensitive urban design and poor tree canopy cover.



Figure 1.3: Workshop discussion held during Phase One community engagement.



Figure 1.4: Workshops and panel beaters (Stanley Street - left) are increasingly making way for residential and mixed use development (Roden Street - right)

# A HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT

West Melbourne is rich in history. The area's underlying topography and its location in relation to the central city, industrial areas and transport facilities have shaped it over time. It has evolved to include a mix of building types and uses, from cottages and factories to office buildings, warehouse conversions and apartments. Several local landmarks tell important stories from the past, including Melbourne's oldest cathedral, Festival Hall, Flagstaff Gardens, and North Melbourne Station. Many of these places are heritage protected.

## Aboriginal Country

The area now known as West Melbourne has been the country of the Wurundjeri (Woiwurrung) and Boon wurrung (Bunurong) people of the Kulin nation for tens of thousands of years. The hill now occupied by the Flagstaff Gardens was a meeting place for local clans with expansive views across the salt lakes and flats to the You Yangs in the west. The hills of West Melbourne were once covered in grasslands and eucalypt woodland leading down to salt marshes, billabongs and floodplains to the west, which teemed with fish and bird life.

## The Hoddle Grid

When Robert Hoddle laid out the town grid in March 1837, Spencer Street and Latrobe Street formed its western and northern edges. With population growth fuelled by the gold rush, the city was extended into the area. The development of the railways and North Melbourne Station soon led to flour and wool mills popping up throughout the area as well as cottages to house workers and their families.

## The Benevolent Asylum

The first local building, the Benevolent Asylum was opened in 1851 to house immigrants, orphans, the blind and the physically and mentally unwell. Located on the hilltop at the west end of Victoria Street, the site was eventually subdivided and Victoria Street extended through it.



Figure 1.5: Map showing the original Hoddle Grid (darker hatching) with its extension into West Melbourne via Adderley, Spencer and King Streets into West Melbourne. Source: State Library of Victoria



Figure 1.6: The Benevolent Asylum. Source: State Library of Victoria

### **The Flagstaff Gardens**

The Flagstaff Gardens were reserved in 1873. Throughout their history they have served as a cemetery, an observatory, a telegraph station and a quarry.

### **St James' Old Cathedral**

St James Anglican church is Melbourne's oldest cathedral. It was first built at the corner of William and Little Collins Street in 1839. Plans to demolish it in the early 20th century outraged many community members and it was moved in 1914 to its current site on King Street.

### **Victoria Dock**

In the 1880s, the Yarra was realigned and widened and Victoria Dock created. Excavating the dock involved removing 2.3 million cubic metres of earth that was used to fill the former wetland around the dock. Victoria Dock was Melbourne's busiest dock handling a wide range of cargo including coal, steel, animals, wool and wheat. It was used as the main port for navy vessels, with most Victorian troops returning from both wars to this location.

### **Festival Hall**

Festival Hall was built in 1915 as a boxing and wrestling venue and was known as West Melbourne Stadium. It was rebuilt after a fire and hosted boxing, basketball and gymnastics for the 1956 Olympic Games. It was renamed Festival Hall in the 1960s and continued hosting acts like The Beatles in 1964.

### **Preparing for WWII**

In the lead up to WWII West Melbourne became a centre of industry with machine works and military ship, jeep and aircraft parts manufacturers. Its proximity to Victoria Dock, which was the main port for military vessels, made it a prime location for such industries.



Figure 1.7: VF Harris premises at 100 Rosslyn Street in the 1940s.  
Source: State Library of Victoria

### Cars and traffic

Automobiles became a common sight in local streets during the 1950s, and panel beaters, petrol stations and mechanics' workshops, proliferated. By the 1960s, King, Spencer and Dudley Streets had become busy arterial roads. Construction of CityLink and Wurundjeri Way in the 1990s influenced traffic through the area. Growth in northern and western suburbs has also increased West Melbourne's role as the portal to the central city.

### Railways and stations

The City Loop opened in 1981, changing the dynamics of areas near Flagstaff Station. More intense development of the legal precinct along William Street also influenced the area including the 1989 construction of the Melbourne Assessment Prison in Spencer Street.

Redevelopment of Spencer Street Station with large retail outlets has also stimulated development in the area. North Melbourne station was upgraded in 2009 and an express bus service was commenced between the station and Parkville hospitals and Melbourne University to enable commuters to avoid the city loop and reduce congestion.

### Docklands

Victoria Dock fell into disuse by the 1990s after large container port facilities were built downstream. Redevelopment of Docklands began with construction of the stadium in 1996 and has transformed the area into a mixed business and residential suburb.

### New Institutions

The Australian Red Cross Blood Service refurbished the Austin Motor Company building on Batman Street as their testing and distributions laboratory in 2012. This reuse of a heritage building retained much of the original interior.

In 2015 Haileybury College opened an early learning to year 12 city campus on King Street in an existing commercial building. The school has commenced operations for the early learning centre and will phase in the opening of later school years from 2017 onwards.



Figure 1.8: Petrol station on the corner of Errol and Victoria Streets in the 1950s. Source: State Library of Victoria



Figure 1.9: Australian Red Cross Blood Service, at Batman and Adderley Streets. Source: Diane Snape, ArchDaily

# THE COMMUNITY TODAY

## Who lives and works here?

About 5000 people lived in West Melbourne (in 2011), with a similar number employed in the area (in 2014).

The average age is 30 years; the Melbourne municipality average is 28.

37 per cent of residents were born overseas and 30 per cent spoke a language other than English at home.

The median income was \$798 per week compared to \$711 for the municipality.

People in West Melbourne enjoy higher than average levels of socio-economic advantage than other areas of the city.

The most common household type is families of two or more persons (46 per cent), with lone person households accounting for 23 per cent, and group households 17 per cent.

There is a high rate of residential mobility with 48 per cent of the local population living at another address in the previous year, compared to the municipality-wide rate of 42 per cent.

Of people working in West Melbourne, 62 per cent drive to work, 28 per cent catch public transport, two per cent walk and two per cent cycle.

## What are the trends?

There has been a rapid transition over the past decade towards higher density residential uses in West Melbourne. Since 2004, dwelling numbers almost doubled from 1251 to 2374, with three quarters of new dwellings being apartments. About 2800 dwellings are currently under construction, approved or awaiting planning approval. Forecasts indicate a further 2700 people are likely to live in the area by 2036 (Geografia, 2016).

The split between housing types in 2014 was 74 per cent apartments to 26 per cent houses and townhouses. The proportion of apartments will increase in the future which will increase demand for things like open space requirements.

Some of this residential growth has converted commercial and industrial spaces into dwellings, resulting in a 20 per cent reduction in employment over ten years, from 7112 jobs in 2004 to 5667 in 2014.

Despite that reduction, over 850,000 people come to the City of Melbourne every day to work, study and visit, and this number is forecast to increase to over one million by 2030. West Melbourne will play a part in supporting this growth.

# 30 YEARS

Average age of residents

# 37%

Residents born overseas

# \$798

Median personal weekly income

# 46%

Family households

# A CHANGING URBAN CONTEXT

West Melbourne is surrounded by diverse and rapidly changing precincts, which will influence the future of West Melbourne, including:

- Intensified development in the central city, Docklands, key urban growth and renewal areas including Arden-Macaulay and City North, and future development of E-Gate
- New major transport infrastructure including Melbourne Metro Rail and Western Distributor.
- Gentrification of North Melbourne.
- The Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal project.
- Future redevelopment of industrial areas along the Dynon corridor.
- West Melbourne Waterfront

## Major growth areas

Two existing structure plans overlap the West Melbourne study area: Arden-Macaulay and City North. The MSS promotes these as areas for significant growth and intensification of activity.

Arden-Macaulay is expected to transform from an industrial to a mixed use precinct. City North will become an extension of the central city, as well as supporting growth in the health and education sectors centred around Parkville.

Redevelopment in these areas will create a significantly changed context for West Melbourne, generating land use and development pressures as well as opportunities for synergies between the areas.

## West Melbourne and E-Gate

The Dynon Road corridor has been identified as a future mixed use redevelopment opportunity. The transformation of this area will enhance the connection between the city and western suburbs. The Transport Strategy (2012) promotes extension of the Spencer Street tram route through this area, potentially via Spencer Street and Dynon Road.

To the west of the Dynon corridor is the West Melbourne Waterfront. This private development is proposed to include mixed use buildings ranging in height from three to fourteen stories.

E-Gate is an urban renewal project led by the Victorian Government. The 20 hectare site is to the west of the study area, across the railway yards. The timing of this development is uncertain. The site has many challenges to redevelopment including significant road and rail barriers on all sides and flooding issues. One of the key opportunities it presents for West Melbourne is creation of a link or links across the railway to Docklands.

### Queen Victoria Market Renewal

The Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal Master Plan was approved by Council in 2015. Community benefits that will be delivered by the project include improved public spaces, upgraded market infrastructure, new community infrastructure, and improved accessibility for all. For West Melbourne to gain maximum benefit from this project it is important to improve access between the study area and the market.

### Melbourne Metro

The Victorian Government’s Melbourne Metro Rail Project is a high capacity rail project, which entails a tunnelled connection between the existing Sunbury and Cranbourne-Pakenham lines with five new stations at Arden, Parkville, CBD North, CBD South and Domain. Arden Station will be to the northwest of the West Melbourne study area, about half a kilometre from North Melbourne Station.

### Western Distributor

The Victorian Government announced in 2015 that it will build the Western Distributor in partnership with Transurban. This will provide a crossing of the Maribyrnong River as an alternative to the West Gate Bridge. It links from the Geelong Freeway under Yarraville, across the Maribyrnong and via an elevated freeway to CityLink, Port of Melbourne, Footscray Road, Dynon Road and Wurundjeri Way. It is likely to affect traffic in the West Melbourne study area but details of these impacts are unclear.

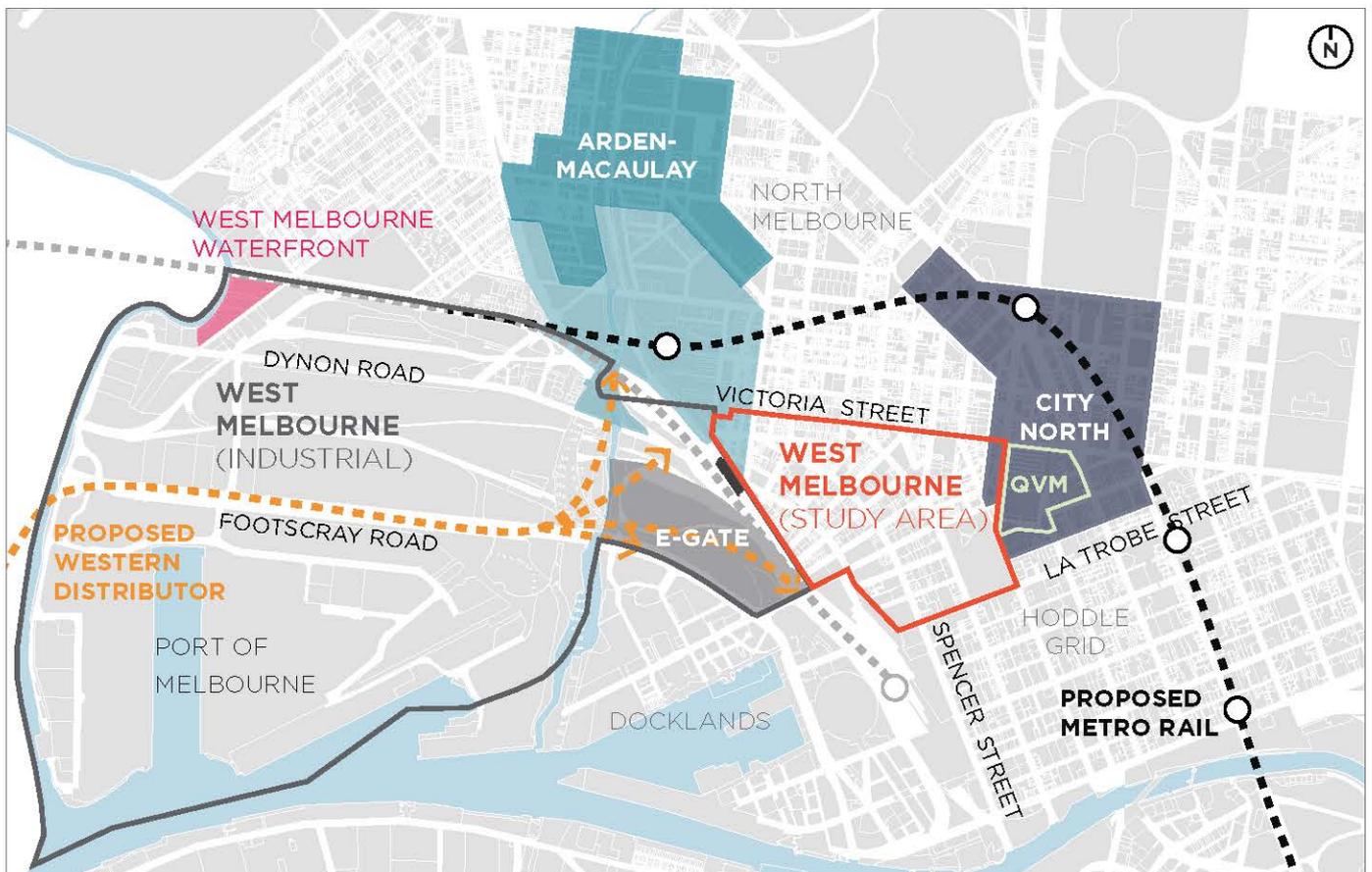


Figure 1.10: West Melbourne study area context

# PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

## Metropolitan context

Plan Melbourne (2014) is the Victorian Government's metropolitan planning strategy and outlines a forty year vision for the city. It is currently under review. West Melbourne is located in the central metropolitan subregion.

The City of Melbourne plays a significant economic role within the metropolitan context. It attracts knowledge-intensive and high-skilled businesses and is a major area for tourism, retail, residential, entertainment, sporting and cultural activities.

The number of jobs in the City of Melbourne is expected to double in the foreseeable future, largely because the area is positioned to capture the benefits of agglomeration. To support this growth, new space for offices, retail, tourism, education, health, entertainment and cultural activities will be required.

Plan Melbourne identifies the following key challenges for Greater Melbourne:

- Congestion
- Affordability
- Diversity of housing
- Accessibility
- A changing climate
- Rural encroachment

In the first phase of community engagement on the West Melbourne Structure Plan, participants discussed many similar challenges in relation to their neighbourhood.

## Municipal Strategic Statement

The 2013 Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) sets out the vision, objectives and strategies for managing land use change and development in the City of Melbourne through the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

In the MSS, West Melbourne is identified as an 'Other Local Area' of incremental growth. It sits alongside the relatively stable area of North Melbourne, but is otherwise surrounded by areas of significant growth in the Hoddle Grid, City North, Arden-Macaulay and E-Gate.

Some key points about West Melbourne in the MSS include:

- North and West Melbourne should provide a balance of residential and commercial uses that maintains an emphasis on local community and liveability.
- There should be a clear distinction in scale from the Central City with higher scales of development expected to be located at the central city fringe and around the North Melbourne railway station.
- In all other areas, a lower scale of development should be maintained.
- Maintain the predominantly low scale of the Mixed Use Zone in West Melbourne, south of Hawke and Roden Streets.
- Ensure the area bounded by Latrobe Street, southwest of the Flagstaff Gardens provides a contrast in scale between the lower built form of West Melbourne and the higher scale of the Hoddle Grid.
- Support higher building forms in West Melbourne in the area adjacent to the Hoddle Grid.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections between Docklands and West Melbourne.

## Future Melbourne

Future Melbourne 2026 sets out the community's aspirations for the city. The framework of goals and priorities builds on the strengths and attributes that make Melbourne the world's most liveable city now and for future generations.

Future Melbourne is underpinned by nine goals:

**A city that cares for its environment**  
Sustainability requires us to choose how to meet our needs today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**A city for people**  
A city for people welcomes all, is safe, accessible, affordable, inclusive, and engaging.

**A creative city**  
Melbourne encourages innovation. It fosters and values a creative community.

**A prosperous city**  
Melbourne will excel in its chosen fields. Its entrepreneurs and businesses will thrive and all its people will enjoy its prosperity.

**A knowledge city**  
The collective power of mind and experience drives the city's prosperity, its ability to compete globally and the quality of life its people enjoy.

**A connected city**  
People and goods can move efficiently to, from and within a connected city.

**A deliberative city**  
Melbourne will be a world leader in using participatory democratic approaches to decision-making.

**A city managing change**  
Melbourne will be a leader in managing change driven by growth and technological advancement.

**A city with an Aboriginal focus**  
Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage will enrich the city.

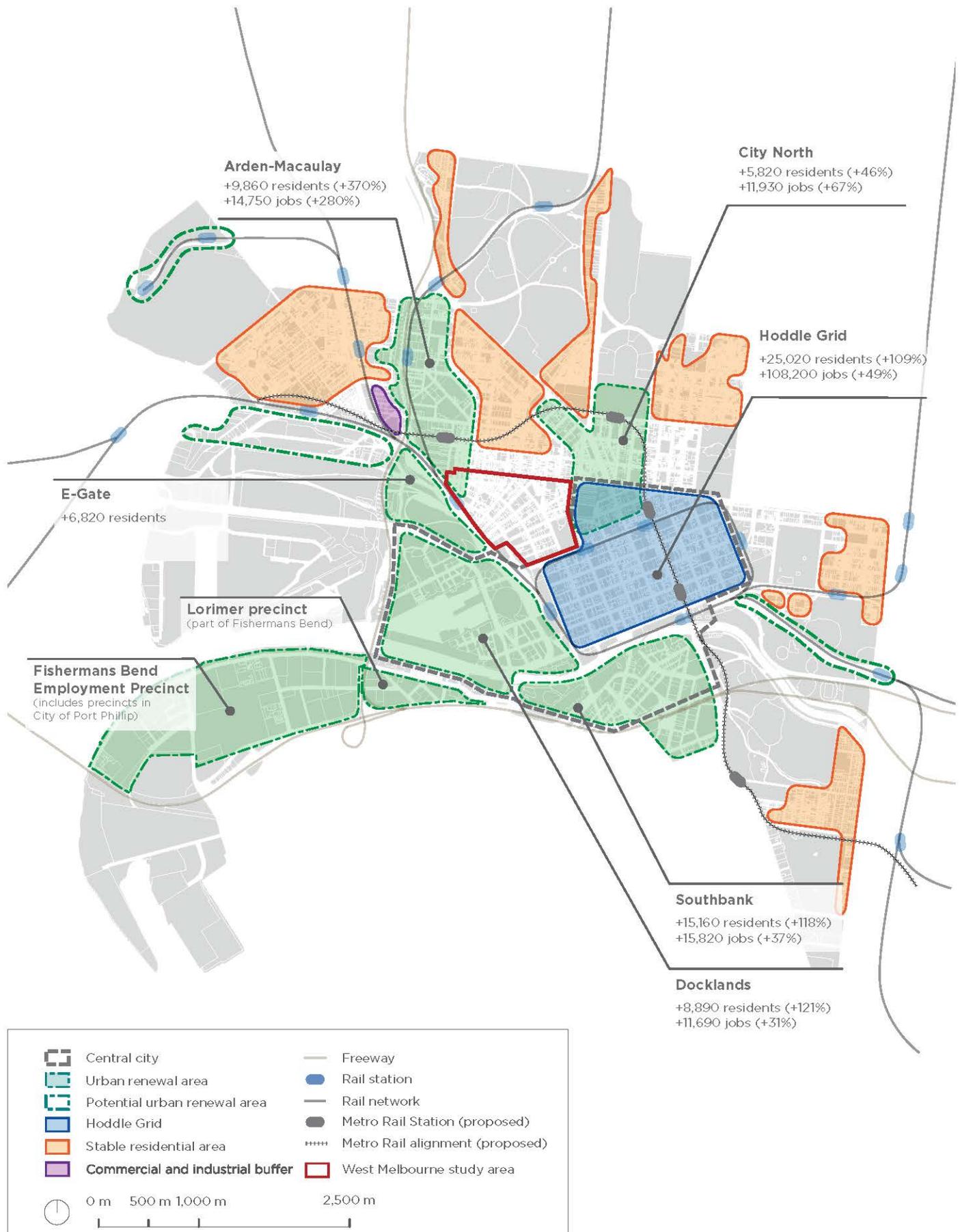


Figure 1.11: Melbourne Planning Scheme Growth Area Framework Plan (Clause 21.04-1)

## 2. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Community infrastructure means spaces, facilities and services that help people meet their social needs, maximise their potential and enhance community wellbeing. It includes facilities for residents as well as those that work, study or live in the area. It includes:

- Recreation facilities
- Arts, cultural facilities and libraries
- Youth services and aged services
- Primary and secondary education
- Child care
- Health and disability services
- Social assistance services
- Shops, cafes, bars and cinemas

Community infrastructure is provided by the City of Melbourne, other government agencies, non-government not-for-profit organisations, and private enterprise.

Facilities provided in West Melbourne by the City of Melbourne include the tennis and bowling clubs in Flagstaff Gardens, but most services are by non-government providers.

In some instances, residents rely on facilities in nearby neighbourhoods for services with wider catchments. The North Melbourne Library is located on Errol Street and is considered a municipality wide service. Primary schools also fall into this category.

While this reliance on infrastructure in surrounding areas is acceptable for some kinds of services, for others, like maternal and child health, it is considered important to deliver services within the local area.

Improved access within West Melbourne and to and from surrounding areas, via improved bicycle and pedestrian paths and public transport services, can help to better connect the community to services in surrounding areas.

Responding to the increasing demand on community infrastructure is the responsibility all organisations that have an influence on local planning and service delivery.

The City of Melbourne's Community Infrastructure Development Framework (2014) is a tool with which to assess demand, plan for and deliver community facilities. A Community Infrastructure Quantitative Analysis contributed data about infrastructure, gaps in provision, and future requirements. This focused on services provided by council, but made reference to needs that are the responsibility of the state government such as primary and secondary schools.

The framework identifies West Melbourne as a stable area where needs for services of types provided by Council are largely considered to have been met. The exception is a demand for early years services and community health across Kensington and West Melbourne. The analysis found that West Melbourne shows a high future demand for state-provided educational facilities.

When the framework was prepared, population growth in West Melbourne was expected to be limited. The need for new community infrastructure was therefore deemed to be low. However, growth in West Melbourne has exceeded projections, requiring a review of community infrastructure needs.

The preferred way to provide community infrastructure in growth areas is within community hubs, integrating facilities in one location to provide better access to diverse services and more cost effective delivery. Classification of West Melbourne as a stable area meant it is not planned as a location for a new hub. New hubs are planned in neighbouring areas including near Queen Victoria Market and in Arden-Macaulay. This reinforces the need to improve connectivity to surrounding areas.



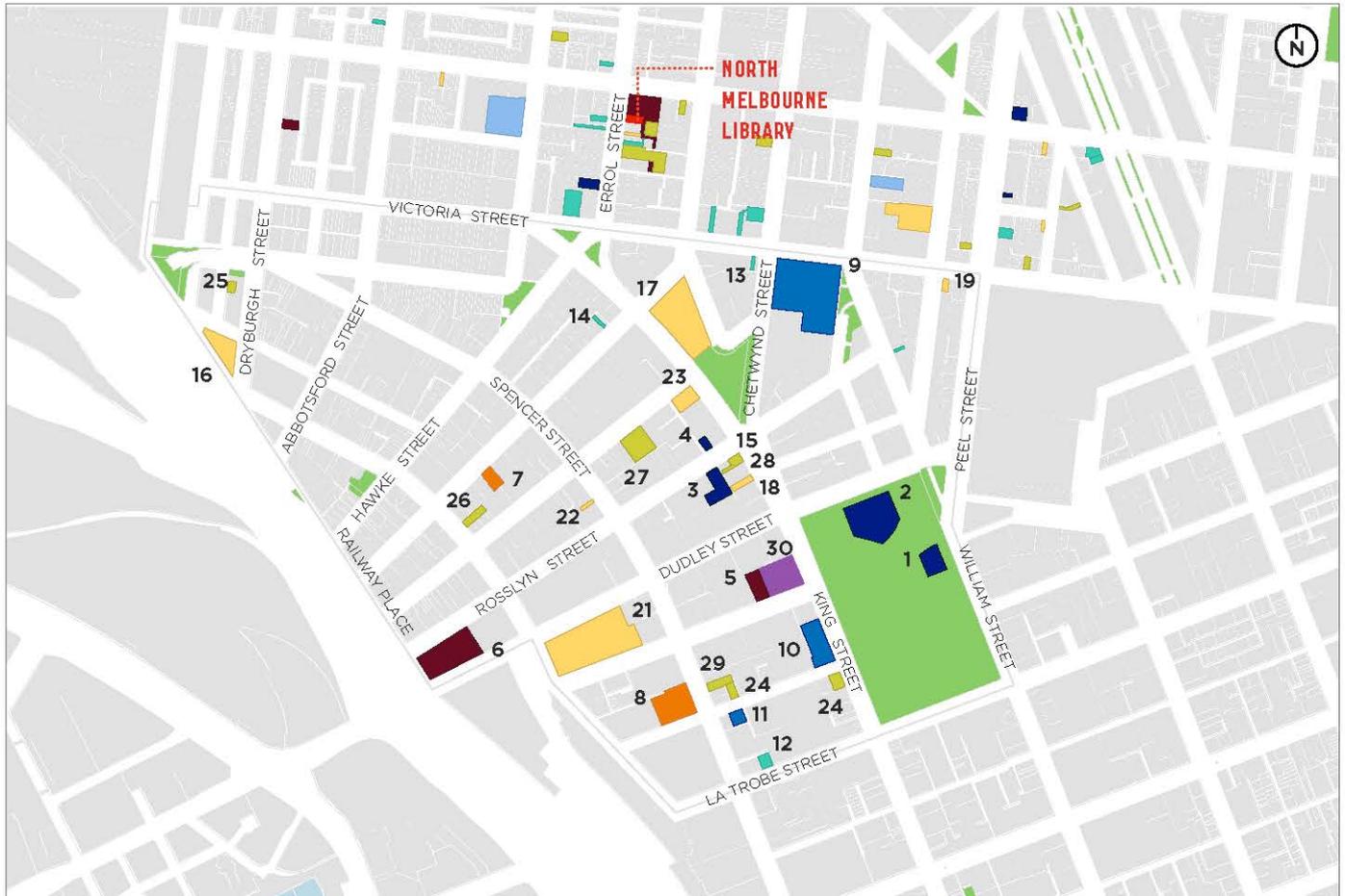


Figure 2.1: Existing community infrastructure in West Melbourne and North Melbourne, CLUE data 2015

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Recreation facilities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Flagstaff Gardens Tennis Club</li> <li>2. City of Melbourne Bowls Club</li> <li>3. Melbourne Budokai</li> <li>4. CrossFit - U</li> </ol> <p><b>Arts and cultural facilities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Lucy Guerin Incorporated</li> <li>6. Festival Hall</li> </ol> <p><b>Youth services</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Open Family Australia</li> <li>8. Doxa Youth Foundation</li> </ol> <p><b>Primary / secondary schools</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Simonds Catholic College</li> <li>10. Haileybury College</li> <li>11. Western Senior Secondary School</li> </ol> | <p><b>Health services</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Menzies Dental Clinic</li> <li>13. Chinese Medicine Centre</li> <li>14. Fit and Well Physiotherapy</li> <li>15. Premier Health Partners</li> </ol> <p><b>Social assistance services</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Asylum Seeker Resource Centre</li> <li>17. The Salvation Army Adult Services</li> <li>18. The Asthma Foundation of Victoria</li> <li>19. Victorian Elderly Chinese Welfare Society</li> <li>20. Australian Drug Foundation</li> <li>21. Australian Red Cross Blood Service</li> <li>22. Camp Quality</li> <li>23. Challenge Cancer Support Network</li> </ol> | <p><b>Religious/Interest groups</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24. Islamic Council of Victoria</li> <li>25. Cephalonian Society of Victoria</li> <li>26. Conservation Volunteers</li> <li>27. Our Community</li> <li>28. Volunteering Victoria</li> <li>29. WIRE Women's Information</li> <li>30. St James' Old Cathedral and Community Conference Centre</li> </ol> <p><b>Libraries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no existing libraries in West Melbourne. North Melbourne library is the closest, located in Errol Street.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

### Access to early years services

There are no existing early years services in West Melbourne, although there are three in North Melbourne, provided by the City of Melbourne:

- North Melbourne Childrens Centre
- Lady Huntingfield Childrens Centre
- Hotham Hub Childrens Centre

The following investments are being made to these services:

- \$8.6 million redevelopment of Lady Huntingfield Childrens Centre.
- \$1.6 million upgrade to Hotham Hub Childrens Centre.

A new 120 place child and family service centre to be provided near Queen Victoria Market will also improve access to services for the West Melbourne residents.

### Access to education

There are no government primary or secondary schools in West Melbourne. North Melbourne Primary School in Errol Street and University High School are the closest. There are two established independent secondary schools in the study area: Simonds Catholic College and Western Senior Secondary College. Haileybury City College was recently established and will provide private early learning to year 12 programs progressively from January 2017.

The Victorian Government released the first stage of a 'School Provision Review for Docklands' in early 2016, which included West Melbourne in its study area assessing the need for primary and secondary schools. The report found that by 2031 there will be a shortfall of around 4,800 primary and 2,000 secondary places across the study area (mostly within the City of Melbourne, but also including parts of the City of Maribyrnong and City of Port Phillip).

Places Victoria indicates that the Victorian Government has secured a site in Docklands for a future public primary school. The site is understood to be located in the 'Digital Harbour' precinct, adjacent to the southwest boundary of the West Melbourne study area.

### Access to arts

Participation in the arts builds social cohesion and connectedness and helps to reduce social isolation. There is evidence that arts participation improves community wellbeing. VicHealth use arts and cultural participation as an indicator of community wellbeing: 'Most types of arts involvement have a social dimension that is an important basis for building social capital and community identity.'

There are two existing arts and cultural facilities in West Melbourne. Nearby facilities in North Melbourne include Arts House at the North Melbourne Town Hall (a performance space) and the Meat Market (a mixed use creative space).

The Arts Strategy (2014-17) provides a vision for the arts in Melbourne. Several commitments made in the strategy relate to the provision of affordable spaces for artists to work, live and present their work in. There are also commitments to present the work of artists in the public realm.

The City of Melbourne is developing an Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Framework to identify gaps and guide the future development of spaces that support the arts. Some examples of arts and cultural infrastructure include:

- Theatres
- Concert halls
- Galleries
- Group artist studios

While some places do not primarily support the making and presentation of art, they contribute to cultural infrastructure in the municipality.

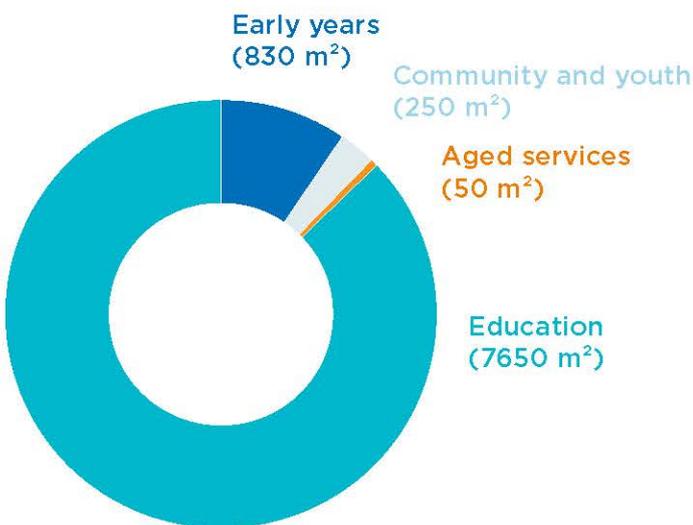


Figure 2.2: Forecast additional community infrastructure floor space required for West Melbourne by 2031 from the Community Infrastructure Quantitative Analysis.

### Access to affordable housing

The City of Melbourne’s aspiration through its housing strategy *Homes for People 2015* is for an inner and central city where housing is affordable, well-designed and meets residents’ diverse needs. The City’s goal is at least 1721 affordable homes (subsidised) for low and moderate income earners by 2024.

Affordable housing refers to housing that is subsidised and provided to specified eligible low and moderate income households whose needs are not met by the free market. This includes people who are not usually so poorly paid that they require housing assistance from the Victorian Government.

In West Melbourne, a new residential development was recently approved at the intersection of Hawke Street and King Street that has a component of affordable housing.

### Access to food

The way we eat is an important part of the way we connect as people and as communities.

There are few food related businesses in the West Melbourne in comparison to Docklands, the central city and North Melbourne. The Queen Victoria Market is an important source of healthy and fresh food. Residents also rely on Errol Street businesses. There are no supermarkets in the study area but one is planned as part of the redevelopment of 185 Rosslyn Street (Australia Post site).

Food services also provide access to affordable meals, food vouchers, community gardens or other resources that help people access fresh and healthy food. There are no food services in West Melbourne but there are several community gardens in North Melbourne.

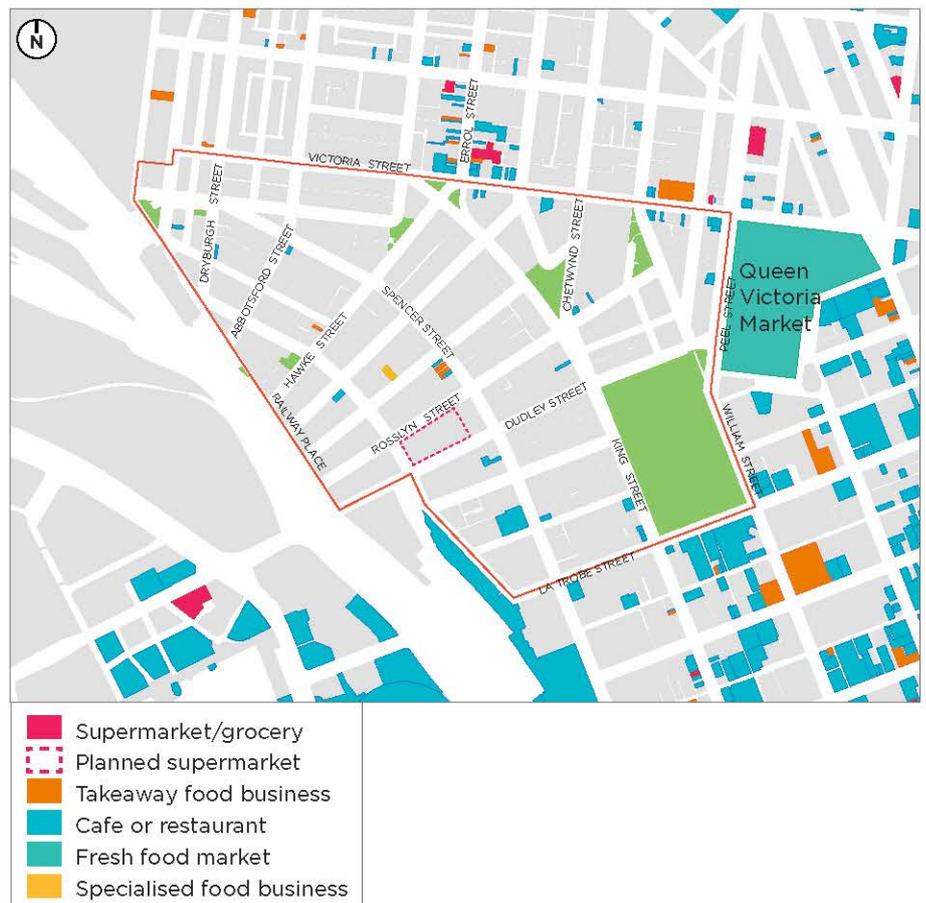


Figure 2.3: Food related businesses in West Melbourne and surrounding areas.

# 3. URBAN STRUCTURE AND PUBLIC REALM

West Melbourne is spatially structured by the streets' arrangement and widths, the relatively pronounced hills, the rail lines which define its western edge, and other elements. It is also shaped by busy arterial roads that form paths for movement along their length and barriers to movement across them.

This chapter analyses the urban structure of West Melbourne and considers the role these elements play in influencing the experience of the public realm, which include the streets, footpaths, laneways, parks and squares that are publicly accessible.



## Topography

West Melbourne is fundamentally shaped by its topography, which generally slopes down from the northeast to the southwest.

Historically, significant buildings were often located on hills so they could be seen from a distance. St Mary's Star of the Sea Church and the former Benevolent Asylum on Victoria Street were built on two of these hills.

Flagstaff Gardens is located on the third of these hills. When King Street was surveyed, this hill was cut back, creating the escarpment at the western edge of the Gardens. This allows for views from the Flagstaff Gardens across West Melbourne.

Construction of the railways west of Railway Place similarly created an escarpment that provides views across the railways to Docklands.

Two of the lowest points in West Melbourne are the Dudley Street underpass and the area below the Dynon Road Bridge. These are subject to flooding during heavy rainfalls.

The street layout also responded to the topography. The north-south streets approximately follow the contours, with almost flat gradients making them attractive routes for walking and cycling.

In contrast, the east-west streets slope more steeply, particularly to the west of Spencer Street. This makes movement more difficult for some people.

Whilst it presents some challenges, this change in gradient also allows for excellent views to the west and adds to the character of West Melbourne.

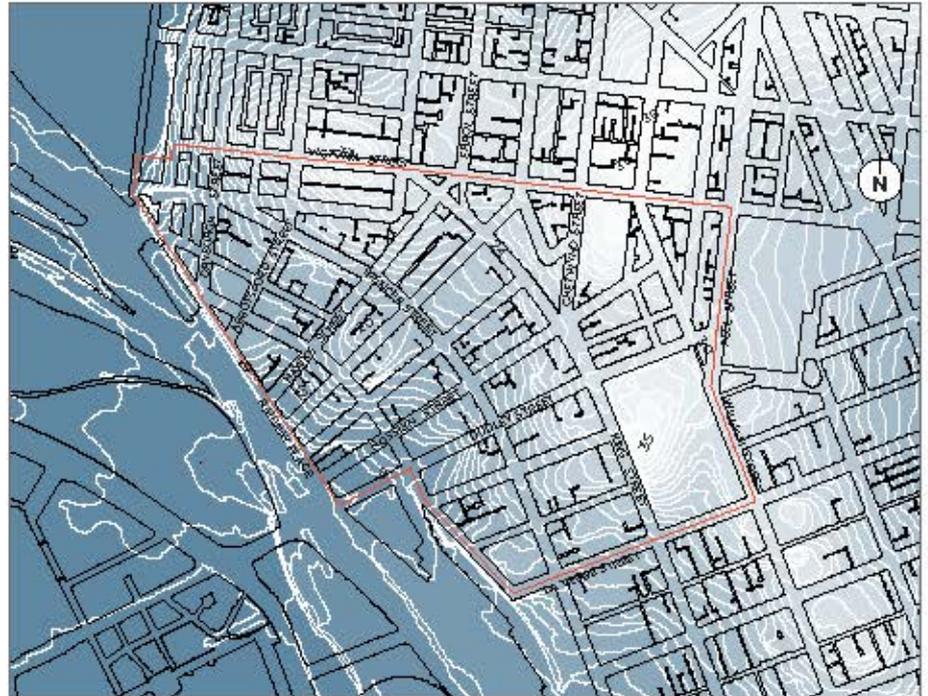


Figure 3.1: Topographical map of West Melbourne showing the three hills sloping down towards the west.



Figure 3.2: View from Flagstaff Gardens looking west along Batman Street.

## Street network

West Melbourne's street network forms a transition between the Hoddle grid and the street pattern of North Melbourne. When the Hoddle grid was extended in the 1800s, the wide streets of the central city were continued northward into West Melbourne.

Most of the streets are 30 metres wide. While some of these carry large volumes of traffic, others have a more local function but continue to be predominantly dedicated to roadway and parking.

The remainder of West Melbourne's streets are 20 metres wide (e.g. Jeffcott Street) or less (e.g. Railway Place).

West Melbourne's wide streets provide significant opportunities for uses other than vehicle movement and parking. Reallocation of space could be used to improve conditions for walking and cycling, to create new open spaces for the community, expand the urban forest, and integrate sustainable water management infrastructure.

The street network also creates some very large irregular shaped intersections including the junction of King, Hawke, Errol and Victoria Streets that could be redesigned to improve pedestrian and cycling access to create useable public open space.

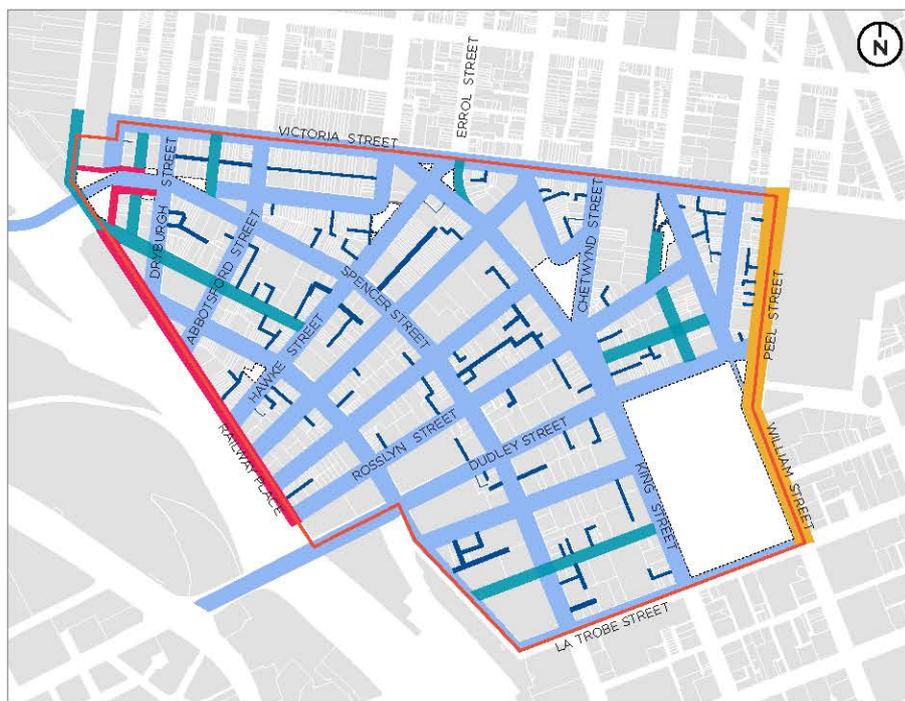


Figure 3.3: Widths of streets in West Melbourne



### Traffic volumes

Spencer, King, Dudley and Peel Streets carry high volumes of traffic. Victoria Street, Latrobe Street and a sections Hawke Street carry moderate traffic volumes.

Problems arising from this traffic include:

- Barriers to movement across the line of heavy traffic
- Interference with movement by other transport modes
- Safety
- Reduced amenity of the public realm due to noise and air pollution.
- Social impacts resulting from reduced opportunities for pedestrians to meet in public spaces.

While not a part of the physical fabric of West Melbourne, traffic volumes have a significant impact on how the neighbourhood is used and perceived.

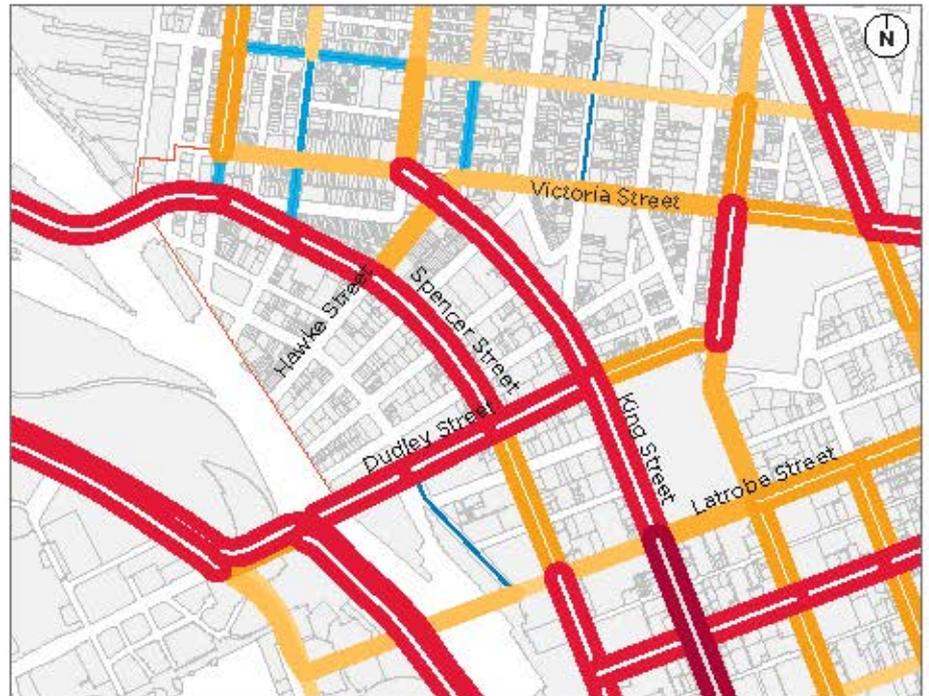


Figure 3.4: Annual average of daily traffic volumes in and around West Melbourne. Source: VicRoads (2016)

Light Traffic	Moderate Traffic	Heavy Traffic
0-500	3501-5000	11001-18000
501-1000	5001-6500	18001-101000
1001-2000	6501-8000	
2001-3500	8001-11000	



Figure 3.5: Looking south-west across King Street.

## Street blocks and laneways

West Melbourne is characterised by long but relatively narrow street blocks (200 x 100 m) with few side streets or through laneways. The scale of the West Melbourne grid is similar to the central city but with 30 metre wide streets every 100 metres (or less) rather than alternating 30 metre and 10 metre 'little' streets.

West Melbourne also has fewer through block links than in the retail core, where lanes and arcades provide options for pedestrian movement. There are about seventy laneways in West Melbourne that provide secondary access to properties, protecting main street frontages from interference by service functions, but few of these serve as links where pedestrians can cut through blocks. A handful are used as primary entries where properties have been subdivided.

The laneways vary in width but most are about four metres wide. Many feature historic bluestone pinner paving, which adds to their charm but limits access for people with disabilities.

The walking network in most of West Melbourne is therefore categorised in the City of Melbourne Walking Plan (2014-17) as 'low accessibility' and a 'coarse grain' urban fabric.

Laneways can provide opportunities to improve this walking network, as well as for an enhanced public realm as demonstrated by the City of Melbourne's 'Greening Your Laneway' program which helps transform the laneways in the central city into leafy, green and useable spaces.

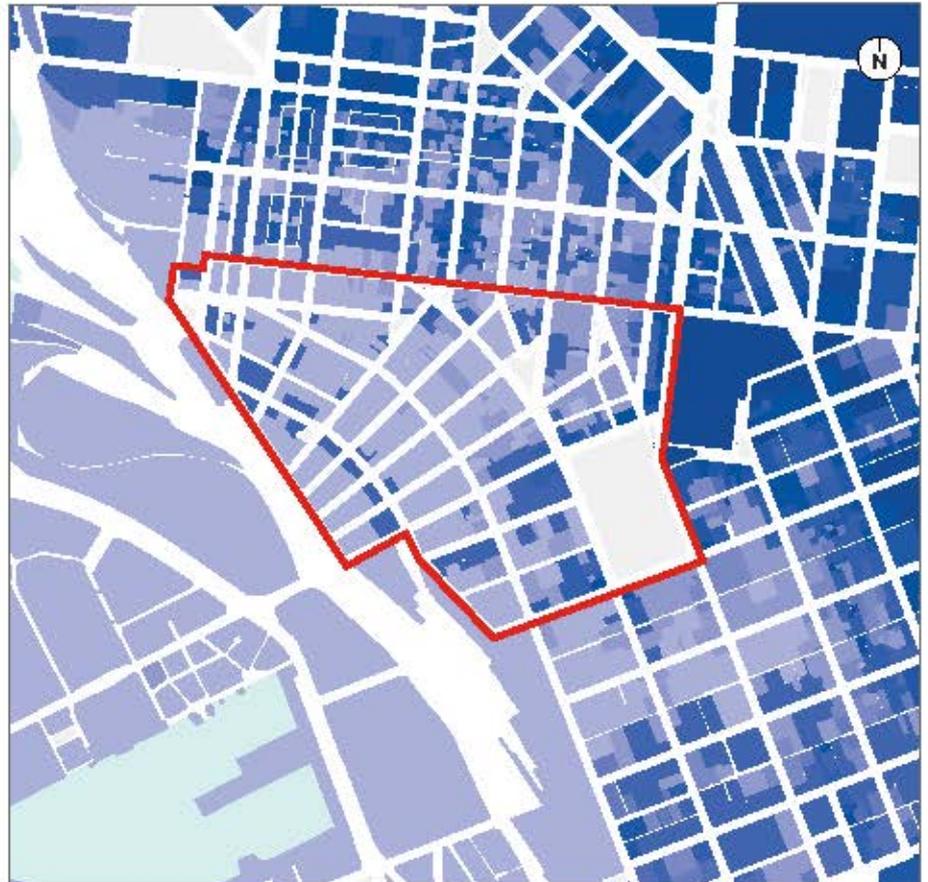


Figure 3.6: Pedestrian accessibility as determined by block size. (Walking Plan 2014-2017)

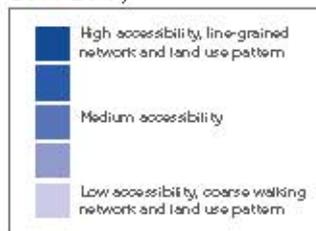


Figure 3.7: Typical West Melbourne laneway.

### Individual property sizes

There is a great variety of property sizes in West Melbourne. This reflects the historic periods of subdivision, land use and development in the area. For example, the block bounded by King, Stanley, Spencer and Roden Streets has larger plots with a coarser grain due to its historic warehouse, light industrial and storage uses. The block to the northwest between Roden and Hawke Street has a finer grain with predominantly residential uses.

This variety of plot sizes offers different development opportunities. Plot size has a significant influence on the type, density and scale of development that can occur on a site.

Larger sites can generally accommodate more intensive development without impacting adjacent properties, as they allow greater space for building setbacks. Setbacks can help to reduce the visual bulk of a building and protect the amenity of the street or adjoining properties by reducing impacts such as overshadowing. Smaller sites often do not offer the same opportunities.

The benefits afforded by larger sites can lead to developers seeking out multiple neighbouring sites that can be combined with the potential of increasing development yields.

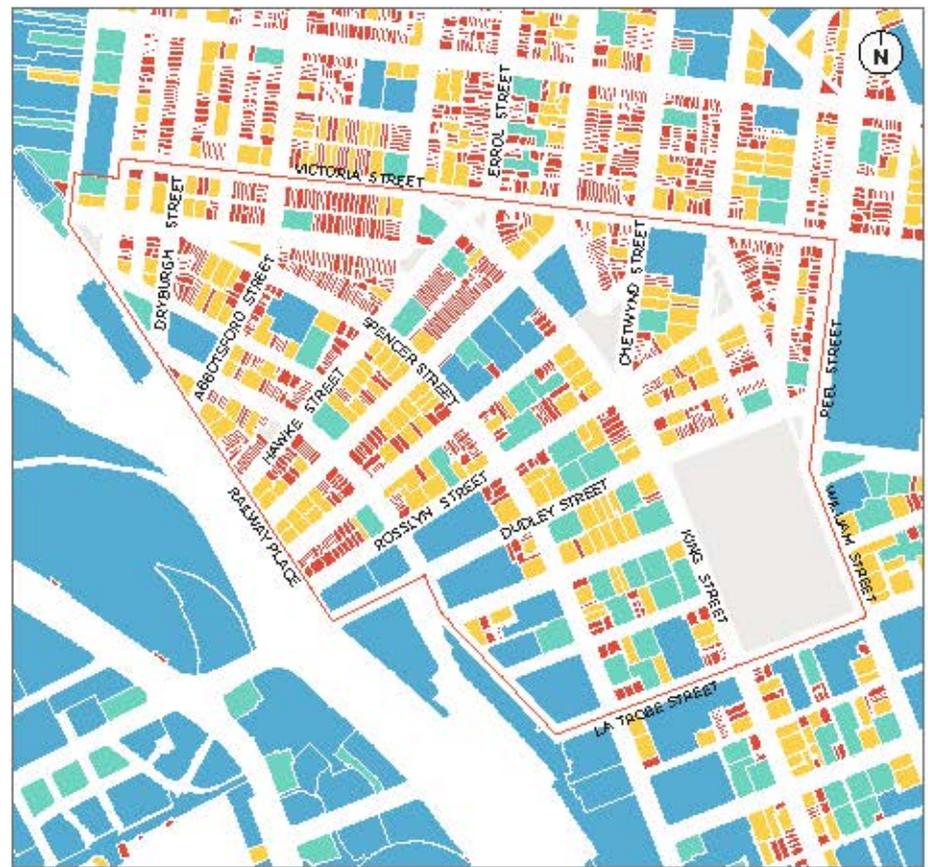


Figure 3.8: Individual property sizes

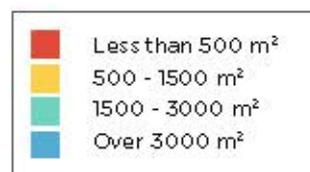


Figure 3.9: A mix of individual property sizes on Hawke Street

### Active property entrances

There are few entertainment, tourism, food and drink and retail uses in West Melbourne when compared with surrounding areas. The entry points to such nonresidential buildings are considered active property entrances as they are used by the public.

Where there are clusters of active property entrances there is typically a clustering of people that have come to use those services, creating activity in the streets. This activity is important for safety, particularly at night around public transport stops, as more people means more 'eyes on the street'.

There are few active property entrances, with the exception of Victoria Street, Peel Street and parts of Spencer Street.

There are few active entrances around North Melbourne Station, which can make this area feel less safe, particularly at night. There is a concentration of active property entrances on Victoria and Peel Streets and a small cluster on Spencer Street between Stanley and Rosslyn Streets. Other streets generally have residential or commercial entrance that are not considered active.

There is also a strong relationship between the extent of active property entrances and public transport access. This is clearly demonstrated along Victoria, Errol and Queensberry Streets.



Figure 3.10: Active property entrances and tram routes in West Melbourne.

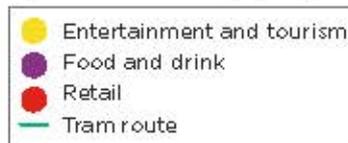


Figure 3.11: Active property entrances along Spencer Street

### Character areas

West Melbourne can be divided into a number of different character areas that are defined by common features, including many of the components of urban structure discussed above, as well as heritage, built form, open space and land use. Some feel more like the central city, others are more like North Melbourne, and some have distinctly 'West Melbourne' character.

### Dynon Road Bridge

This area is characterised by wide, busy roads where the industrial and logistics areas to the west meet North and West Melbourne. Some former industrial buildings have been adapted for residential use at the interface of the Arden-Macaulay urban renewal area. To the south, several apartment buildings of five to seven storeys have been recently completed. Mature eucalypts, large advertising billboards and traffic guard rails flank either side of Dynon Road.

### North Melbourne Railway Station

The North Melbourne Station entrance is the focal point of this area at the meeting point of Dryburgh and Adderley Streets. Several large island sites near the station frame the wide, tree-lined streets. There is a mix of contemporary and heritage row housing in Ireland and Dryburgh Streets with some contemporary warehouses and commercial buildings on Spencer and Abbotsford Streets.

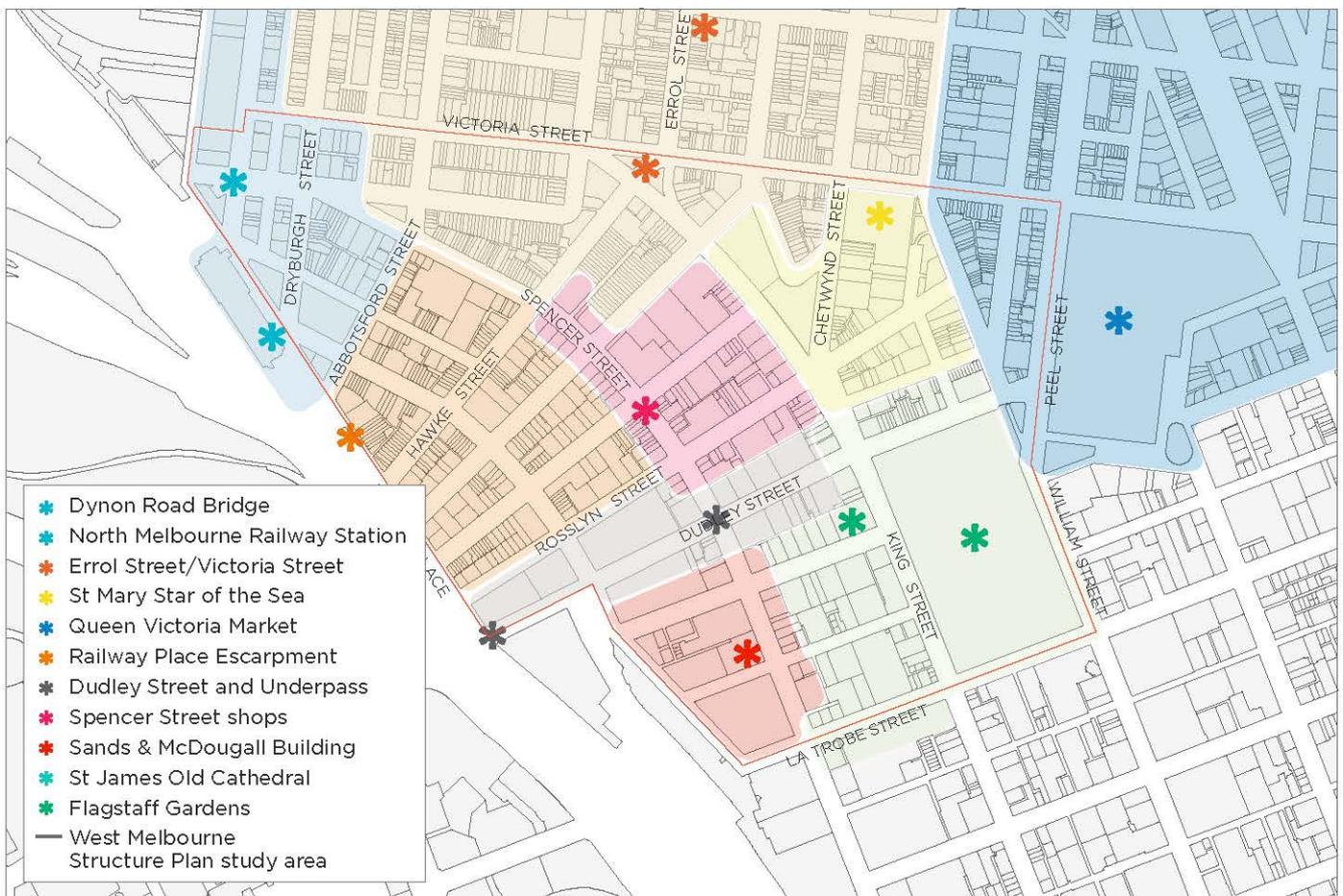


Figure 3.12: Character areas in the West Melbourne study area

### **Errol Street/Victoria Street**

This predominantly residential area is focused around the shopping strip on Victoria and Errol Streets. Terraces, workers' cottages and detached houses are found along Miller Street, Roden Street, Hawke Street and Eades Place. The junction of Victoria, King, Errol and Hawke Streets covers an area of just under one hectare and comprises wide traffic lanes, on-street parking, grassed medians and small parks. It experiences heavy traffic and is difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate.

### **St Mary Star of the Sea**

St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church and Simonds Catholic College sit at the highest point in the study area. Other institutional and commercial buildings of around four storeys are common toward Flagstaff Gardens. Flagstaff Crisis Accommodation (formerly the West Melbourne Central School) and Eades Park adjoin King Street. There are small terraces and cottages on William, Chetwynd, Rosslyn and Dudley Streets.

### **Queen Victoria Market**

The Queen Victoria Market adjoins the study area and its influence as a shopping destination can be seen in the surrounding retail, entertainment and commercial uses. The market's broad verandahs over footpaths, the tram line and tree planting give Peel Street a distinctive character. A mix of row housing and small warehouses with metered central median car parking in Capel and William Streets typify the surrounding area.

### **Railway Place Escarpment**

This area is characterised by its wide streets leading to the railway cutting at Railway Place, where there are expansive views across E-gate to Docklands from a viewing platform between Hawke and Abbotsford Streets. The topography is a significant feature as the land slopes from the highest point around Hawke and Spencer Streets to the lowest point near Festival Hall. Existing and converted warehouses, heritage row housing and new apartment buildings of up to six storeys are mixed through the area.



Figure 3.14: Looking south-west along Hawke Street.



Figure 3.13: Howard Street with St Mary Star of the Sea in the background.

### **Dudley Street and underpass**

Dudley Street is a vehicle-dominated environment, despite its broad footpaths and mature trees. It is an important link between the Queen Victoria Market and Docklands. There is change in elevation of 25 metres from the underpass at the rail lines to the market in the east. The street's character is adversely affected by large sites with blank interfaces and long distances of up to 200 metres between cross streets.

### **Spencer Street shops**

The blocks on Roden, Stanley and Rosslyn Streets have generally larger properties of over 1500 m<sup>2</sup> that are either vacant or occupied by light industrial or commercial uses. Rosslyn Street is lined with semi-mature trees, Stanley Street has striking views to the St Mary Church and Roden Street has mature trees and forms an important interface with the heritage precinct. The topography levels off at Spencer Street where a relatively fine grain mix of heritage shop fronts, warehouses, corner pubs and small offices run from Hawke Street to Dudley Street.

### **Sands & McDougall Building**

This area is characterised by several large brick buildings on Spencer and Batman Streets including the Sands & McDougall Building, Melbourne Assessment Prison and Australian Red Cross (formerly Austin Motor Company). Distinctive native tree planting on Spencer Street and elms on Batman and Jeffcott Streets add to the character. Adderley Street has a direct interface with the rail yards and accommodates bus access to Southern Cross Station.

### **St James and Flagstaff Gardens**

This area is characterised by a mix of contemporary offices and residential buildings of two to 15 storeys with reasonable preservation of heritage warehouse facades. The area is adjacent to the Flagstaff Gardens, from which there are views to the west. The gardens are accessible via staircases at Batman and Jeffcott Streets, but heavy traffic on King Street presents a barrier to movement. St James Old Cathedral is a landmark of the area.



Figure 3.15: Queen Victoria Market, Peel Street.



Figure 3.17: Melbourne Assessment Prison.



Figure 3.16: Dudley Street at the railway underpass.

# 4. HERITAGE

Heritage is integral to community identity. This includes both physical heritage and intangible aspects of heritage such as memories and rituals.

A heritage review of the buildings in West Melbourne is currently underway that will make recommendations to update heritage controls in the Planning Scheme and result in a Planning Scheme Amendment.

The Heritage Strategy is the overarching document that sets out the City of Melbourne's plan to understand, protect, manage and celebrate our city's heritage over the next 15 years. Heritage is defined in the Heritage Strategy as 'the full range of our inherited traditions, monuments, objects and culture'.

The roles and responsibilities of the City of Melbourne in relation to heritage include:

- Understanding the value of our heritage today and for the future
- Identifying places, buildings, objects and stories to be conserved.
- Sustaining heritage through protection, adaptations, reuse and creative interpretation.
- Communication through signs, marketing and promotional materials, and various other print and online media.
- Celebrating the city's heritage, with events and activities, publicity, community gatherings.
- Partnering with communities and other heritage organisations such as Heritage Victoria and the Heritage Council.



Austin Motor Company on the corner of Dudley and Adderley Streets, circa 1950.  
Source: State Library of Victoria.

## Aboriginal Heritage

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the First Nation people of this land and have strived to retain their culture and identity through the period of colonial and post-colonial settlement.

The Indigenous Heritage Action Plan (2012-2015) established an approach to the protection, maintenance and recognition of identified sites that have cultural importance to Victoria's Aboriginal communities in or connected to the City of Melbourne.

Currently, no Aboriginal Heritage places in West Melbourne are listed on the Victorian Aboriginal Historical Place Register. However, the Indigenous Heritage Study (2010) identified Flagstaff Gardens as a potential significant place as it marks the site where the first settlers were killed in conflict with the Aboriginal people.

The Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan (2015-2018) is the second part to the Indigenous Heritage Action Plan. This focuses on the themes of conservation, celebration and collaboration. The following actions are the most relevant to the West Melbourne Structure Plan:

- Updates made to areas of cultural heritage sensitivity mapping.
- Work with Traditional Owner and Aboriginal community groups to acknowledge and protect Aboriginal heritage in a culturally appropriate and meaningful way.



Figure 4.1: Looking west from Batman's Hill (Docklands) across the salt flats to the You Yangs. Source: State Library of Victoria

## Existing heritage controls

Statutory protection of heritage places in the City of Melbourne is primarily controlled by the Heritage Overlay (HO) in the Melbourne Planning Scheme. Under the overlay, a planning permit is required to demolish, remove, construct, externally alter or paint a building. Heritage Overlays can apply to heritage precincts and/or to individual heritage places.

Precinct Heritage Overlay 3 (HO3) applies to part of the West Melbourne Structure Plan study area and extends into North Melbourne. Several significant buildings and places are covered by individual Heritage Overlays that apply to individually significant heritage places outside of this precinct.

The precinct was developed from the mid-nineteenth century as part of the extension of Melbourne to its north and west during a period of significant population growth. Buildings with heritage value are largely from the mid-nineteenth century through to the interwar period, although Victorian development predominates. The precinct is mainly residential with historic mixed use development and several commercial streetscapes.

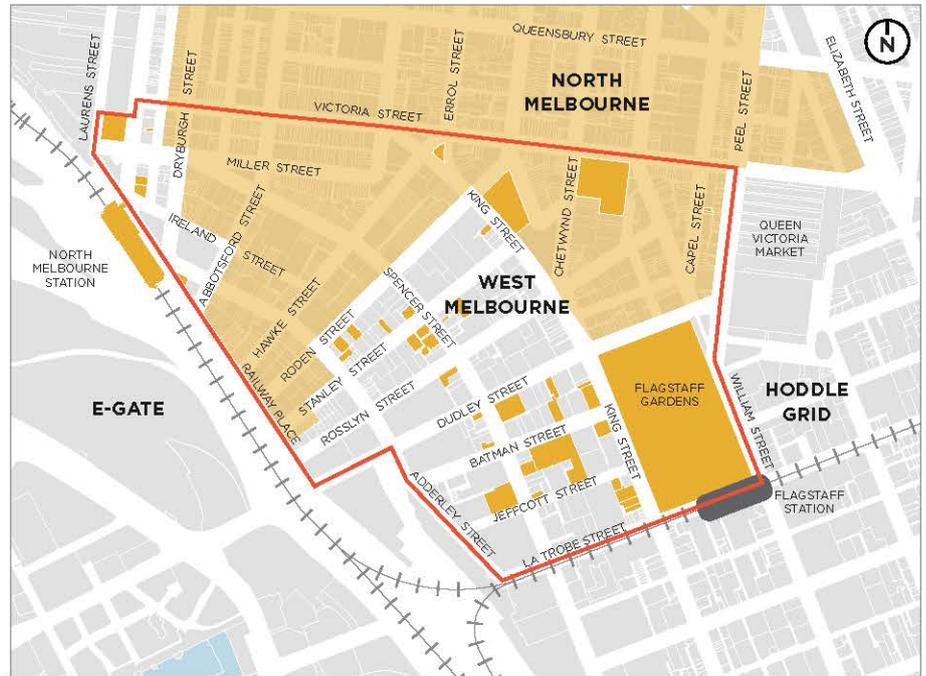


Figure 4.2: Heritage Overlays in the Melbourne Planning Scheme



## West Melbourne Heritage Review

The City of Melbourne commissioned Graeme Butler and Associates to undertake a heritage review of West Melbourne in 2015. The review included assessments of currently protected heritage places and other sites that may merit heritage protection. The outcome is a series of recommendations about places that warrant heritage protection.

Some of the buildings recommended for heritage protection or upgrade include:

- Autocar Industries Proprietary Limited Assembling and Motor Body Works (now Red Cross Blood Service), Batman Street.
- Dixon & Co. cordial factory, later Felton Grimwade & Duerdins P/L chemical laboratory, factory & store complex, Rosslyn Street.
- Melbourne Remand Centre, later Assessment Prison, Spencer Street.
- Flagstaff Place, corner of Spencer Street and Batman Street.

Two amendments to the Melbourne Planning Scheme are currently underway to implement these recommendations.

Amendment C272 seeks to implement the findings of the Heritage Review by proposing changes to the heritage controls on a permanent basis. It proposes adding, removing, and modifying existing Heritage Overlays, altering heritage gradings and changing the description of places in the Heritage Overlay. The amendment will go through the normal planning scheme amendment process, including public exhibition and the opportunity to make a written submission and be heard by a panel.

Amendment C273 is proposed to provide immediate protection on an interim basis for all of the properties included in Amendment C272. This is to be implemented through a Ministerial Amendment and, as is the case for all Ministerial Amendments, normal notification processes do not apply.



Figure 4.4: Flagstaff Place, circa 1951.  
Source: State Library of Victoria.



Figure 4.3: West Melbourne Heritage Review - Proposed changes to building grades in the Melbourne Planning Scheme

# 5. BUILT FORM

West Melbourne's built form includes a mix of building types and scales that reflect the suburb's changing history. There is a transition across the study area from central city high rise buildings to the lower scale of North Melbourne.

The development context for West Melbourne has changed in recent years, with growth in the central city's west end and Docklands. Construction of Melbourne Metro and the renewal of Arden-Macaulay and City North will intensify development to the north.

In recent years, there has been a significant level of development in West Melbourne, with a concentration near North Melbourne Railway Station and the CBD fringe.

Many of the approved applications have been well above the discretionary height limits set out in existing planning controls. This has caused uncertainty for the community and the development industry regarding what is considered appropriate in the area. During the community engagement for the West Melbourne Structure Plan, a number of residents questioned the effectiveness of discretionary planning controls and suggested a move towards mandatory planning controls and in particular maximum building heights. Generally there was a desire for greater certainty around built form outcomes.



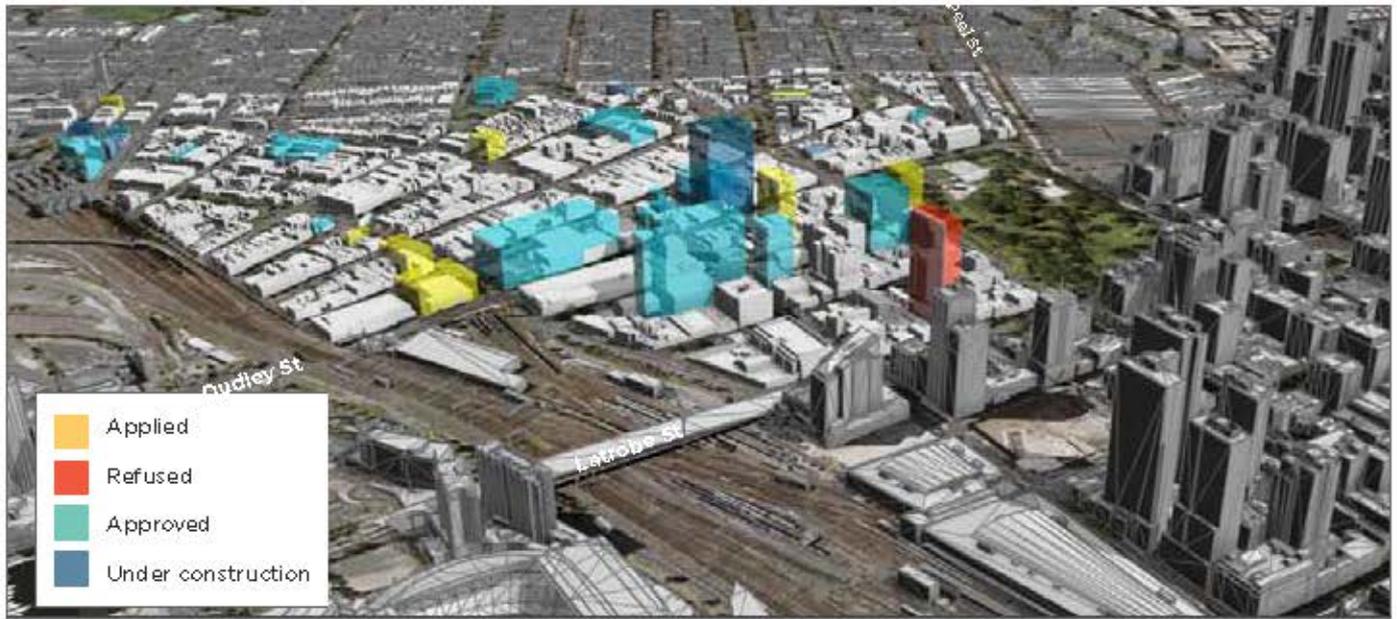


Figure 5.1: A representation of West Melbourne Development Activity Monitor, August 2016. This indicative model shows sites extruded to their maximum height and doesn't account for built form detail such as height variation or setbacks. This illustrates the divergence in the building heights of new developments from the prevailing heights of existing built form in West Melbourne.



Figure 5.2: West Melbourne Development Activity Monitor, August 2016. This shows applications, refused, approved, under construction and completed developments. The numbers on the map indicate the number of storeys of each development. When this map is read in conjunction with Figure 5.3 it is clear that there has been a significant divergence from the preferred maximum building height in DDO33.

## Existing planning controls

The form of new development is regulated largely by zones and overlays in the Melbourne Planning Scheme. Some of these were first introduced as early as 1999. The 2005 West Melbourne Structure Plan led to adoption of a new suite of controls in the form of design and development overlays (DDOs).

The DDOs set out objectives and requirements for built form in new development in specific areas. These may relate to building setbacks, height, plot ratio, landscape or other factors. Some of these are mandatory, where a permit cannot be issued for a building that differs from the controls; mandatory controls are particularly related to the high heritage value of areas that overlap with Heritage Overlays. Most DDOs are discretionary, and guide built form outcomes but allow a degree of freedom in how the objectives may be achieved.

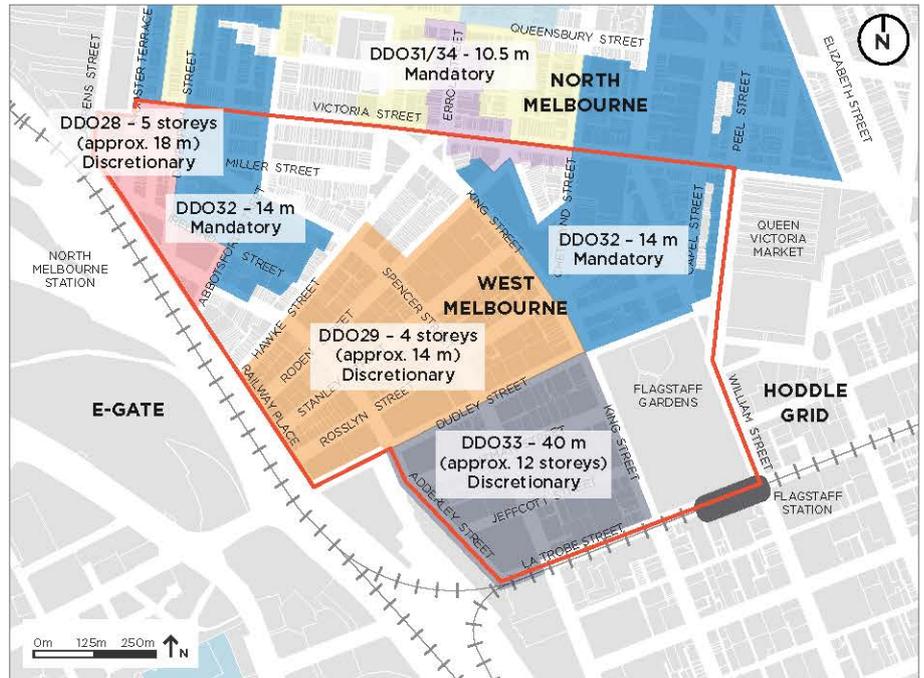


Figure 5.3: Design and Development Overlays in the Melbourne Planning Scheme

- DDO28 (North Melbourne Station) - 5 storeys, discretionary
- DDO29 (West Melbourne) - 4 storeys, discretionary
- DDO31 (North Melbourne central) - 10.5 m - mandatory
- DDO32 (North Melbourne peripheral) - 14 m - mandatory
- DDO33 (CBD fringe area) - 40 m - discretionary
- DDO34 (Errol Street and Victoria Street) - 10.5 m - mandatory
- West Melbourne Structure Plan study area

## DDO28 North Melbourne Station

This area is characterised by a mix of medium sized industrial sites, several large island sites and some finer grain residential sites. Building heights range from single storey up to five storeys. Several six and seven storey buildings are currently under construction, and the site at 109-115 Ireland Street has planning approval for a 10 storey building.

### Current Policy

The objectives of DDO28 are:

- To acknowledge the transitional nature of the area.
- To encourage development of the area as a distinctive urban activity node.
- To encourage the development of a new built form character and the retention of the mixed use nature of the area.
- To acknowledge the potential for higher density development near the North Melbourne railway station.

DDO28 applies a discretionary five storey (approximately 18 m) Maximum Building Height to the area.

The built form outcomes that DDO28 aims to achieve are:

- Higher development and a new built form character.
- Development that complements the scale of and provides a transition to adjoining lower heritage buildings.

### Assessment of Policy

Recent approvals in the DDO28 area have been generally in accordance with the design objectives of the DDO.

The site at 109-129 Ireland Street received VCAT approval for a ten storey development, reduced from the original proposed height of 14 storeys. This is double the maximum building height and demonstrated the willingness of VCAT to consider greater built form on sites with unique conditions. This is an island site (three street frontages) and is opposite North Melbourne Station.

Most of the development sites in DDO28 are recently built out or have planning approval with the exception of 13-37 Abbotsford Street. This strategic redevelopment site is an island site (four street frontages) and is directly opposite North Melbourne Station.

This site has recently been sold and an application for redevelopment is likely to be lodged in the near future. At approximately 4700 square metres it has the potential to deliver significant benefit to the community and contribute to the design objectives of DDO28.

The State Government recently released the vision and framework for the urban renewal of Arden, this precinct overlaps with the West Melbourne study area and a section of DDO28, specifically in the area bounded by Dryburgh Street, Railway Place, Laurens Street and Victoria Street. This vision was informed by the Arden-Macaulay Structure Plan.



Figure 5.4: Looking north along Dryburgh Street, North Melbourne Station in the foreground (left). Source: Google Earth

## DDO34 Errol Street and Victoria Street

DDO34 applies to the Victoria Street and Errol Street commercial land in North and West Melbourne. The area is characterised by its low scale, fine grain Victorian architecture. It features a well preserved example of a 19th century shopping precinct and is covered by the heritage overlay.

### Current Policy

The objectives of DDO34 are:

- To maintain the predominant low scale nature of the area.

DDO34 applies a mandatory 10.5 metre maximum building height to the area.

The built form outcomes that DDO34 aims to achieve are:

- Development in the Errol Street and Victoria Street shopping precinct is consistent with the prevailing two storey heritage buildings scale.

### Assessment of Policy

There are no recent development approvals in DDO34. The current policy appears to be providing sufficient development control for the heritage streetscape. The outcome of the West Melbourne Heritage Review will inform the review of DDO34.



Figure 5.5: Looking southeast along Errol Street from the corner of Queensberry Street and Errol Street. Source: City of Melbourne.



Figure 5.6: Looking north-east along Errol Street and Victoria Street. Source: Google Earth

**DD029  
West Melbourne**

This area is characterised by a mix of large to very large sites along Dudley Street, Rosslyn Street and Stanley Street and small to medium sized sites southwest of Spencer Street.

**Current Policy**

The objectives of DD029 are:

- To acknowledge the transitional nature of the area.
- To encourage the development of a new built form character and the retention of the mixed use nature of the area.
- To acknowledge the potential for higher density development near North Melbourne Railway Station.

The built form outcomes that DD029 aims to achieve are:

- Higher buildings and a new built form character.
- Development that reflects the higher building forms in the area.
- Development that respects the scale of, and provides a transition to, adjoining lower scale heritage buildings.

DD029 applies a discretionary four storey (approximately 14 m) Maximum Building Height to the area.

**Assessment of Policy**

In the area to the west of Spencer Street, several warehouses have been converted to residential use. In other instances, warehouses have been demolished and new apartment buildings have been developed in their place.

The built form typology of these new developments is dependent on site characteristics. Medium size sites have commonly resulted in 4-6 storey apartments. More recently, applications have been approved for 6+ storey podium tower developments. Most recently, a podium tower development has been approved for the largest site in West Melbourne, the Australia Post site.

The variation in site sizes has led to different built form outcomes across the area. Near Dudley Street, larger sites are obtaining approvals for development of up to nine storeys, which is well over the discretionary four storey height control. The finer grain subdivision pattern in the remainder of the area has seen development of up to six storeys that is generally consistent with the discretionary height control.

This suggests that the current application of a blanket height control is inappropriate in an area known for its diverse site characteristics.



Figure 5.7: Looking north along Spencer Street between Dudley Street and Roden Street. Source: Google Earth

## DDO33 CBD fringe area

DDO33 was introduced to the Melbourne Planning Scheme in 1999, and at this time the overlay only included podium controls. It was amended in 2007 following the West Melbourne Structure Plan (2005) to include a height and setback controls.

This area is characterised by its intense built form of the central city to the south and the Flagstaff Gardens to the east. Flagstaff Gardens is the highest point in West Melbourne and King Street was cut into this hill creating a steep escarpment at the interface of the street and the gardens. There is a mix of medium to large sized sites and an existing built form ranging from two storeys to 17 storeys, including several large heritage buildings. The oldest cathedral in Melbourne is located in this area at the corner of Batman Street and King Street.

### Current Policy

The objectives of DDO33 are:

- To provide a transition between the taller built form of the central city and the lower scale built form of West Melbourne.
- To maintain the heritage characteristics of the area by ensuring new development respects the scale of, and provides a transition to, adjoining heritage buildings.
- To ensure development limits impacts on the amenity and outlook from Flagstaff Gardens.

DDO33 applies:

- A discretionary 40 metre Maximum Building Height (approximately 12 storeys) to the area.
- A 16 metre podium height control.
- Building setbacks above the podium of 6 m from site boundaries and 2 m from laneways.

The built form outcomes that DDO33 aims to achieve are:

- A visual transition between the taller buildings of the Hoddle Grid and the lower scale built form to the north.
- A transition to adjoining lower scale heritage buildings by the use of podiums and upper level setbacks.
- Avoid overshadowing the Flagstaff Gardens between 11 am and 2 pm on the equinox.
- Strengthen the pedestrian scale.
- Maintain a sense of open outlook from the Flagstaff Gardens

### Assessment of Policy

Recently, there has been a significant divergence from the discretionary controls that apply to DDO33. Originally the height control proposed for DDO33 was mandatory but it was converted to discretionary due to the recommendations made at planning panel (2006). At the time, a significant divergence from the discretionary height limit was not expected. It was also felt that the application of the 40 m height limit was arbitrary and unsupported by rigorous urban design analysis.



Figure 5.8: Looking east from Flagstaff Gardens along Jeffcott Street.



Figure 5.9: Site on the corner of Batman Street and Spencer Street.

Recent approval for developments in the area have ranged from 16 to 38 storeys. The 40 m discretionary height control has been largely ignored. This increase in height reflects a change in development intensity across the city and the proliferation of development to the south of the CBD fringe area.

The first design objective that refers to the 'transition between the taller built form of the central city and the lower scale built form of West Melbourne' is important in understanding the divergence from the discretionary height control in DD033. The increase in building heights that has occurred in West Melbourne reflects the increase in building heights in the central city.

The design objective effectively ties built form outcomes to the central city. Without a defined method to measure performance based objectives there is limited certainty for the community and developers of the appropriate built form outcomes for DD033.

While a significant portion of the area has been built out, there is still a number of sites in the area that will significantly influence the future built form outcome in West Melbourne.



Figure 5.10: Looking west towards Flagstaff Gardens between Latrobe Street and Dudley Street.  
Source: Google Earth

## DDO 32 North Melbourne peripheral

DDO32 extends outside the study area into North Melbourne. The areas it covers are characterised by a mix of fine and coarse grained sites and irregular shaped blocks. These represent a unique West Melbourne character of mixed uses, building types and scales. The majority of the area overlaps the Heritage Overlay 3 (HO3) which also extends into North Melbourne.

### Current Policy

The objectives of DDO32 are:

- To maintain the predominant low scale nature of the area.
- To ensure that development retains views to significant landmarks.
- To ensure development supports high levels of pedestrian amenity related to access to sunlight and sky views and a pedestrian friendly scale.

DDO32 applies a mandatory 14 metre Maximum Building Height (approximately four storeys) to the area.

The built form outcomes that DDO32 aims to achieve are:

- New development respects existing built form especially low scale of the existing older building stock in the street.
- Development in streets with higher typical built form provides a transition in scale to the lower building forms.
- Development in the vicinity of the Queen Victoria Market which enhances and respects the importance and general low scale environs of the market as a heritage place and pedestrian focus.
- Enhancement of the character of Peel Street by retaining the skyline dominance of the street trees along the median.
- Development which retains views to the landmark Meat Market building and the North Melbourne Town Hall roof and tower.

### Assessment of Policy

DDO32 covers a wide area through North and West Melbourne with a varied character and scale. The area to the northeast of King and Dudley Streets has a mixed built form with a significant number of buildings of different eras already well in excess of the 14 metre mandatory height control.

Several of the Built Form Outcomes refer to the retention of views to specific landmarks in the area (Queen Victoria Market, Meat Market, North Melbourne Town Hall). Within the study area this is only relevant to development in the vicinity of the Queen Victoria Market.

The application of mandatory controls in DDO32 reflects the high heritage value in the area. DDO32 is unlikely to be amended significantly as part of the West Melbourne Structure Plan. However, there are several strategic sites on which a different development outcome may be desirable in return for a defined public benefit.

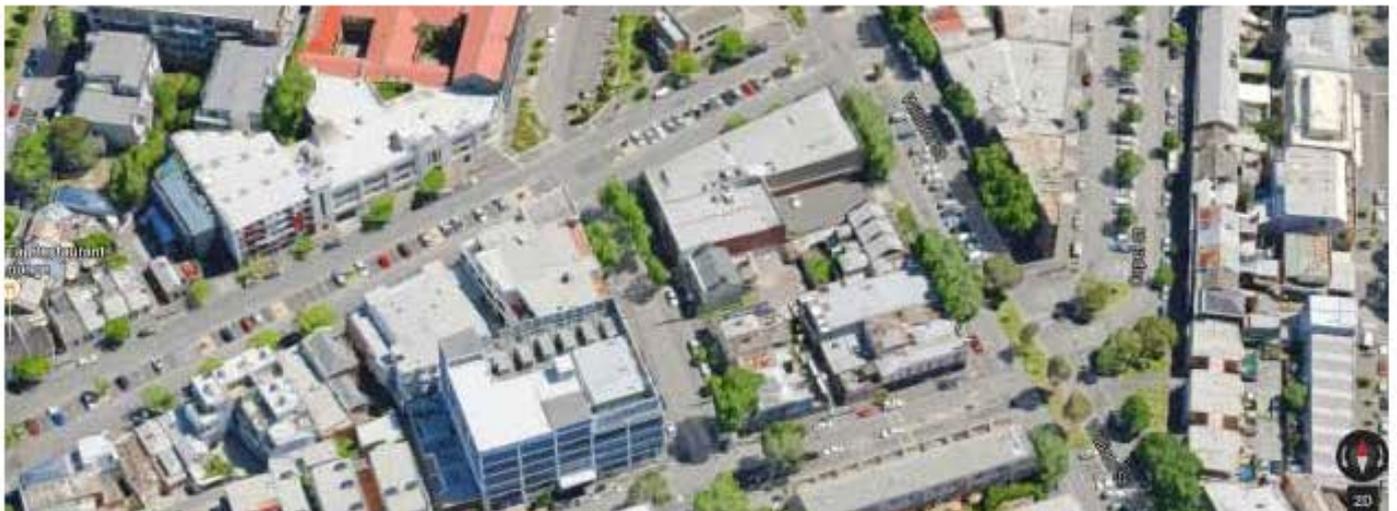
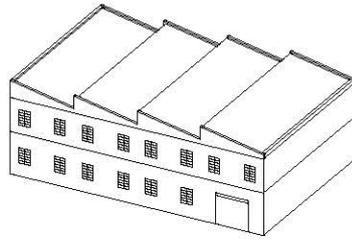
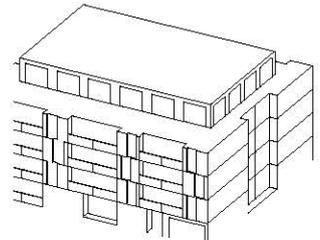


Figure 5.11: Looking north-east along Errol Street and Victoria Street. Source: Google Earth

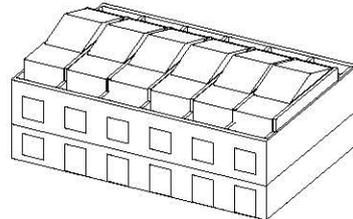
Warehouse



Mid-rise apartment



Converted warehouse



Podium tower

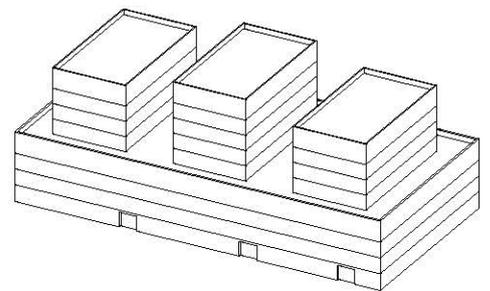


Figure 5.12: Common built form typologies emerging in West Melbourne.

The built form typology of new developments in West Melbourne is dependent on combinations of site characteristics including land area and types of existing buildings on and adjoining the development site.

In the area to the west of Spencer Street, several warehouses have been converted into residential dwellings. In other instances, warehouses have been demolished and new residential apartments have been developed in their place.

Medium size sites have commonly resulted in 4-6 storey apartments. More recently, applications have been approved for 6+ storey podium tower developments. Most recently, a podium tower development has been approved for the largest site in West Melbourne, the Australia Post site.

# 6. OPEN SPACE

Open space as addressed here includes public parks, gardens, reserves, waterways, publicly owned forecourts and squares.

The Open Space Strategy 2012 is the City of Melbourne's key policy document informing delivery of open space in West Melbourne.

There are now ten open spaces in West Melbourne with a combined area of 8.4 hectares. This is about 9.7 per cent of the total land area in the precinct, and 1.5 percent of the open space in the municipality. The Open Space Strategy treats these in three different groups:

- Small local (0.03 to 0.25 hectares)
- Local (0.25 to 0.99 hectares)
- Regional (unspecified)

Within these categories, the existing open spaces in West Melbourne are:

- Flagstaff Gardens (regional)
- Eades Park (local open space)
- Eight 'small local open spaces'

As a regional space Flagstaff Gardens is large enough to accommodate a number of facilities which cater to residents and workers in West Melbourne. Most of the open space is within Flagstaff Gardens; only three percent of the total is located to the west of King Street, so access to open space is poor for a lot of the area.

Other opportunities for active recreation are lacking in the study area with eight out of ten spaces characterised as small local spaces, which are less useful for active recreation due to their scale.

The Open Space Strategy indicates that the growing West Melbourne community will require more open space and a more diverse range of spaces than is currently available, in order to provide adequate amenity and recreational opportunities.

Population growth in West Melbourne is also currently exceeding projections from the time when the Open Space Strategy was prepared.

The majority of this growth will be in apartments, with approximately 2800 dwellings currently awaiting approval. This will provide residents with minimal private open space, and mean public spaces are increasingly relied upon.

Furthermore, new stakeholders such as Haileybury College are likely to have open space and recreation requirements that will increase pressure on existing open space and facilities.

While no clear guidelines exist for the optimum amount of open space relative to each person, the Growth Areas Authority suggest that the provision of just over 20 m<sup>2</sup> of open space per person is reasonable. There is currently approximately 17 m<sup>2</sup> of open space per person in West Melbourne.



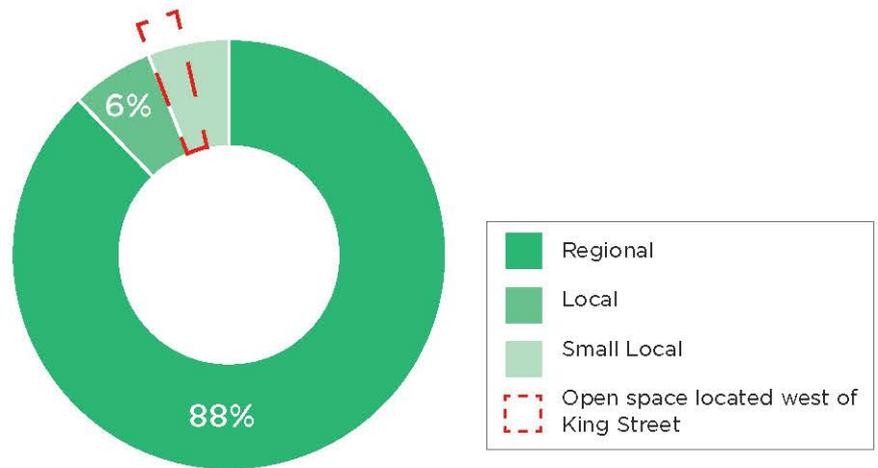


Figure 6.1: Proportion of different types of open space in West Melbourne.

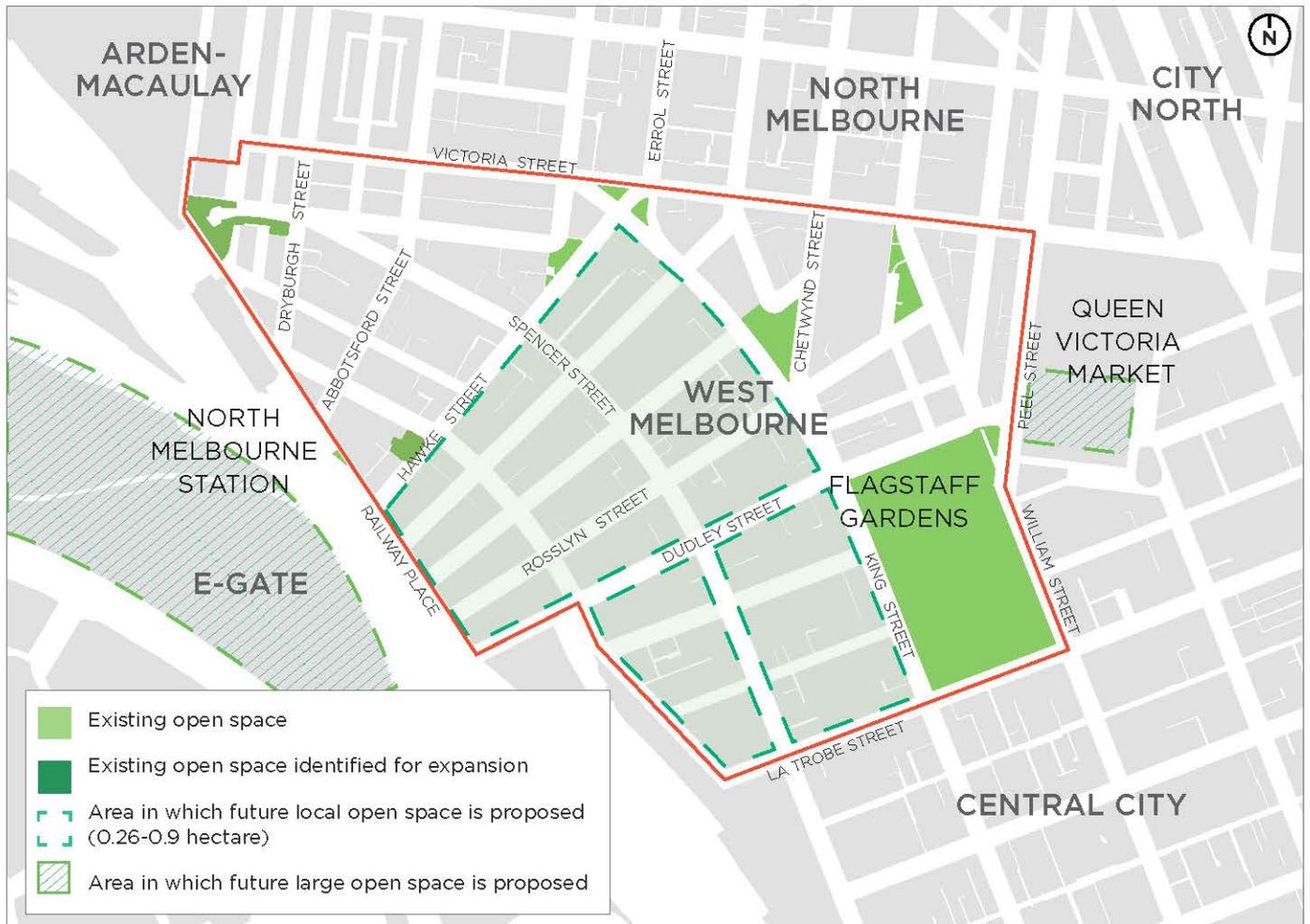


Figure 6.2: Existing open space and Open Space Strategy.

## Current Park Expansions

Two small local open spaces are undergoing expansion in response to previously identified opportunities for open space delivery in West Melbourne. These respond to a previously identified lack of open space in the study area.

A concept to expand the Hawke and Adderley Street park has been developed with the community. Council has acquired a private property adjacent to the park and the plan also involves extension of the park into Hawke Street (retaining two way traffic but with a loss of 10 to 12 parking spaces). The open space gain is about 740 m<sup>2</sup>. The park will accommodate:

- Open lawn for informal use
- Play space for preschool children;
- Social space for informal gatherings
- Plaza space.

Community consultation on the proposed expansion of Railway Place and Miller Street Reserve was undertaken in 2012 and the design of the park is underway. The proposed park expansion involves reclamation of space from within Dryburgh Street and Miller Street. The open space gained is approximately 3800 m<sup>2</sup>. The park will accommodate:

- Open lawn for informal use
- Rain garden/ water sensitive urban design treatment
- Off-leash dog park
- Multi- purpose area
- Shared bike/pedestrian path



Figure 6.4: Proposed expansion of Hawke and Adderley Street Park



Figure 6.3: Proposed expansion of Railway Place and Miller Street Reserve

## Open Space Contributions

The Open Space Contributions Framework provides a basis for financial and land contributions from developers and government towards new open space and open space improvements over the next 15 years.

As part of the implementation of the Open Space Strategy, Amendment C209 introduced public open space contribution rates into the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The adopted framework includes three different rates of contribution. West Melbourne is specified as having a required open space contribution of five per cent for all new developments. A higher contribution rate applies to suburbs with higher growth which generates a greater need for new open space.

Considering the increased growth that has occurred in West Melbourne since 2012, the open space contribution rate may need to be revised.

The amendment also introduces a policy that states when the contribution of land is preferred over a monetary contribution, this is the case for the majority of the municipality including West Melbourne.

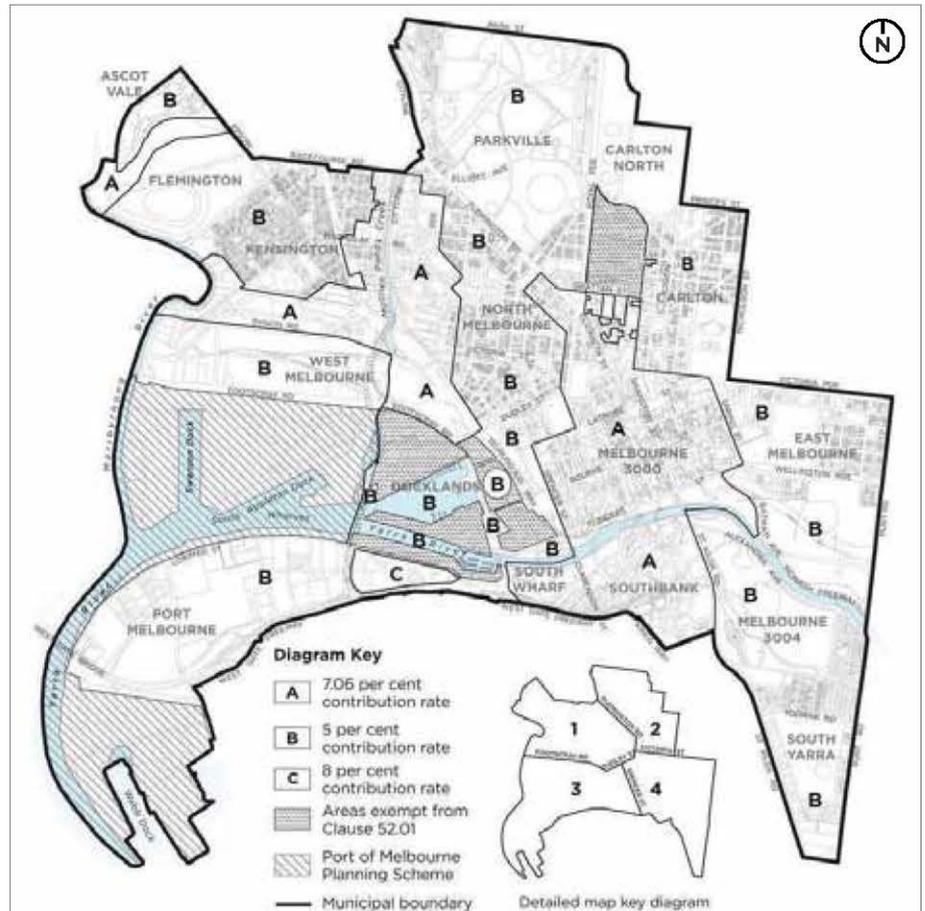


Figure 6.5: Open space contribution precincts (Clause 52.01: Melbourne Planning Scheme)

## Open space context

Nearby urban renewal areas need to be considered as part of a holistic approach to open space provision.

### Queen Victoria Market

The Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal Master Plan proposes making the existing open air car park into a public open space, supporting:

- Markets and programmed events.
- Spill out areas and outdoor facilities.
- Recreational opportunities that complement Flagstaff Gardens.
- Space for informal recreation with public seating and shade.

This space will support residents of West Melbourne. It will therefore be important to improve the access from West Melbourne to the QVM precinct.

### Arden-Macaulay

The urban renewal of Arden-Macaulay will include new and upgraded open spaces, which will be accessible from West Melbourne. The Arden Vision and Framework released in September 2016 as the basis for community consultation recommends:

- A plaza at the entry to Arden Station
- A local open space in the south of the precinct.
- A green spine linking Racecourse Road, Arden Central and North Melbourne Station.
- Enhancement of the Moonee Ponds Creek and CityLink corridor.
- Options to deliver open space through road closures and other creative design solutions.
- Link to existing assets, particularly Royal Park, through improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- Maximise the use of existing and new public space in the precinct. e.g. through sharing between schools and the wider community.



Figure 6.6: Proposed open space as part of the Queen Victoria Market Renewal.



Figure 6.7: Artist's Impression of Arden Urban Renewal Precinct after redevelopment, viewed from south-east.

## E-Gate

The Open Space Strategy specifies types of spaces that should be included in redevelopment of E-Gate, including:

- A Capital City open space near Moonee Ponds Creek, supporting unstructured and organised sport and recreation, and informal uses.
- A Municipal open space (at least 3 hectares) near Moonee Ponds Creek.
- Local open spaces (between 0.26 hectares and 0.99 hectares) and Small Local open spaces (between 0.03 hectares and 0.25 hectares).

In addition, upgrading the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor would create an important ecological link and open spaces for residents of Arden-Macaulay, E-Gate and West Melbourne. A new pedestrian and cycling bridge over the rail corridor will be needed to ensure that these spaces are accessible from West Melbourne.

## Moonee Ponds Creek

Moonee Ponds Creek was home to the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation and it is widely believed that the creek is named after an indigenous inhabitant called Moonee Moonee. In 1838, Moonee Moonee and Tullamareena escaped from and burnt down the first gaol in Melbourne. The City of Melbourne is working with various stakeholders to create a master plan for Moonee Ponds Creek. This plan will consider focus on the entire creek catchment and ways to restore the creek to its natural condition. Community engagement with West Melbourne residents indicated that the creek was considered a valuable asset that should be more accessible from the study area.



Figure 6.8: Moonee Ponds Creek and E-Gate



Figure 6.9: View of Moonee Ponds Creek looking south from Dynon Road.

# 7. MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT

The City of Melbourne Transport Strategy (2012) sets directions, targets and plans to support future growth. The key directions for advocacy and action are:

- Integrate transport and land use planning
- Go anywhere, anytime public transport for inner Melbourne
- Optimise the transport effectiveness of inner Melbourne's roads
- Create pedestrian friendly high-mobility public transport streets in the central city
- Make Melbourne a cycling city
- Foster innovative, low-impact freight and delivery in central Melbourne.

A transport and access study has also been undertaken to inform the West Melbourne Structure Plan (by Phillip Boyle & Associates). The study reviews West Melbourne's strategic and spatial context and assesses the performance of different transport modes against the criteria of capacity, priority, accessibility and amenity. It also gives consideration to the potential impacts of nearby major transport projects including the Western Distributor and Melbourne Metro Rail.

The study found that space and priority in West Melbourne is currently given to private motor vehicles ahead of other modes. This is a result of the area's industrial history. As the mix of uses has changed, the transport network has not been changed to best support this.

The increasing number of people working, visiting and living in West Melbourne will require greater capacity in the overall transport system. As there is no available space to increase the capacity for private motor vehicle movement and storage, opportunities must be found to reallocate space to more space efficient modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

Prioritising these modes can have multiple benefits. It will increase the overall people carrying capacity of the transport system, and as these modes are far more space efficient, will release space for other uses such as open space expansion and street greening.

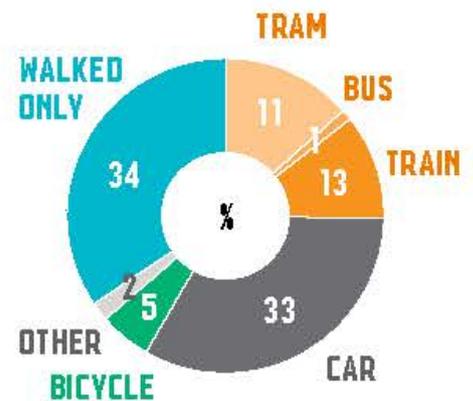


Figure 7.1: Method of travel to work for West Melbourne residents. One in three drives to work, but over 80 per cent of street space is allocated to cars. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011





Figure 7.2: Existing transport network in West Melbourne

## Walking

The City of Melbourne's policy is to place walking at the top of the modal hierarchy, but in West Melbourne, pedestrians are not now given highest priority. Pedestrian amenity and access has been compromised in many areas in favour of motor vehicles.

Arterial roads and large intersections act as barriers to pedestrian movement, making areas difficult for pedestrians to move through and making unpleasant environments due to noise, pollution, heat and hard surfaces. Pedestrian access to the west and south is either nonexistent or of very poor amenity.

The City of Melbourne's Walking Plan (2014-17) looks at the many ways walking contributes to the city and how the walking network could be improved through planning, street management and capital works.

Improvements proposed by the Walking Plan include changing traffic signal operation to reduce delays to pedestrians; increasing the number of pedestrian streets, road crossings and shared zones; improving legibility and way finding and access around public transport stops.

Another means of improving the walking network is to amend the planning scheme to require new through-block pedestrian links to be provided on private land. There are several areas in West Melbourne that would benefit from a more fine-grained network.

The central part of West Melbourne around Dudley, Spencer and King Streets has limited pedestrian access to train stations and existing services on Errol Street.

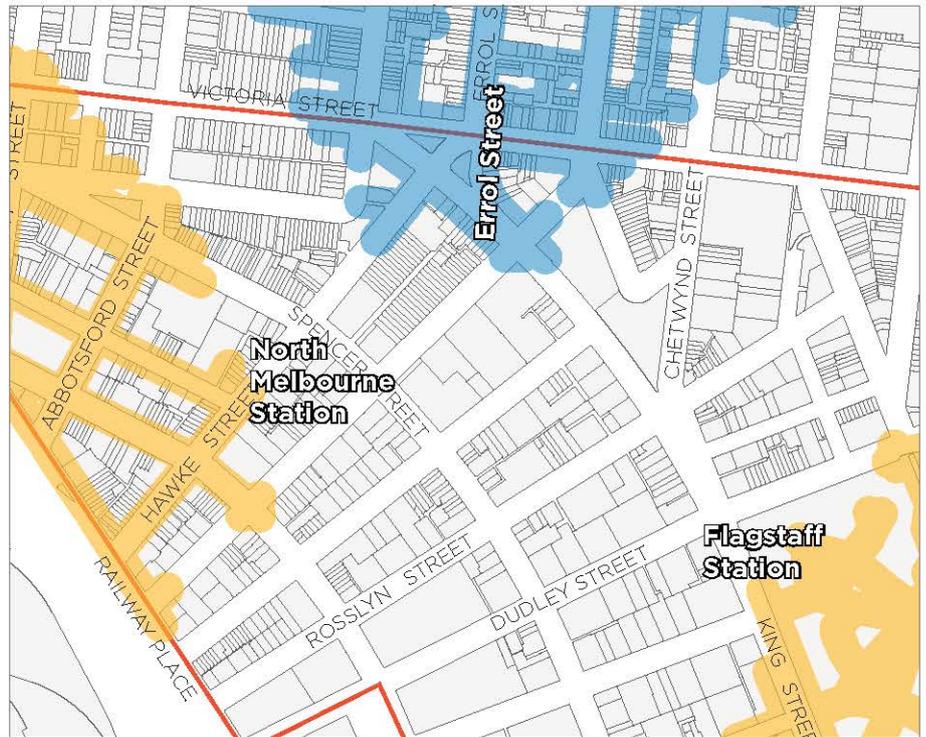


Figure 7.4: 400 m (5 to 10 minute) walking catchment analysis from North Melbourne Station, Flagstaff Station and Errol Street in North Melbourne.



Figure 7.3: High Mobility Streets will have high frequency tram and priority bus services and excellent pedestrian access, and will generally have highest density and diversity of destinations along them. (Transport Strategy, 2012)

## Cycling

Cycling is an under-represented mode in West Melbourne with the potential for a more significant contribution to the transport network. Given the proximity of the central city and other local destinations, cycling provides a convenient and space efficient choice for travel to, from and in West Melbourne.

The existing network comprises four designated bicycle routes on Dryburgh, Adderley, Abbotsford and Latrobe Streets. These are located at the periphery of West Melbourne, vary in quality, and do not provide a safe, convenient and connected network with access to local destinations.

The City of Melbourne Bicycle Plan (2016-2020) outlines capital works for the next four years, but includes only relatively minor upgrades in West Melbourne. These include new bike lanes on Peel Street from Victoria to Franklin Street and upgrading the Dynon Road underpass as part of the Railway Place and Miller Street Reserve expansion.

The City of Melbourne Transport Strategy (2012) includes Spencer Street as a future Bicycle Priority Route. This is consistent with the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Network Vision and the VicRoads SmartRoads 'Principle Bicycle Network' (2012).

Upgrading cycling access on Spencer Street would provide a direct and visible connection through the centre of West Melbourne to the northwest. An east-west route would improve access to Errol Street and, in the future, E-Gate.

Adequate bicycle parking both in new developments and on-street would support greater bicycle use in West Melbourne.

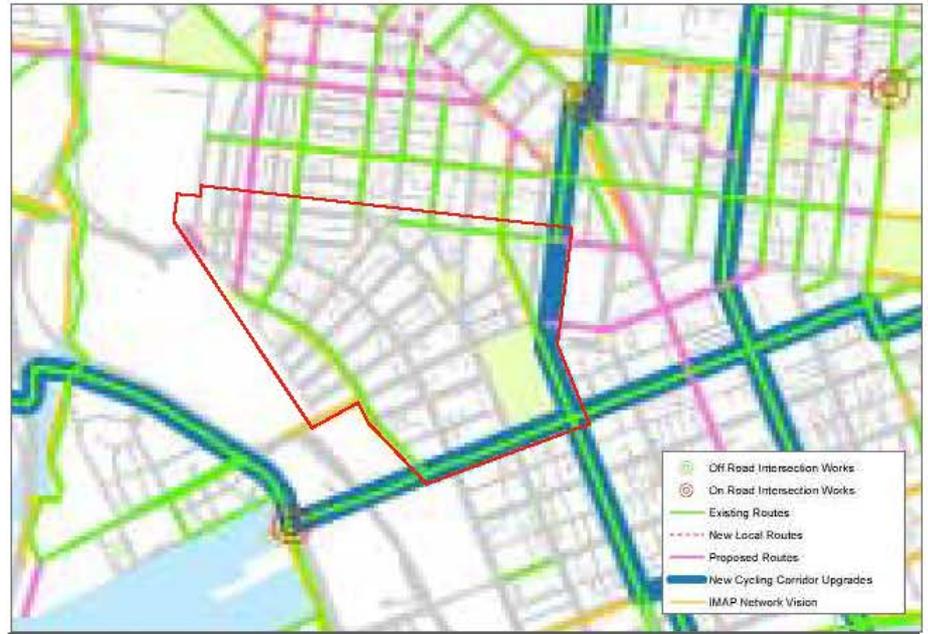


Figure 7.5: Bicycle Plan (2016-2020) - Existing and proposed bike network



Figure 7.6: Transport Strategy (2012) - Proposed Bicycle Network

## Public and shared transport

By metropolitan standards, the study area is well served with public transport although the network's accessibility, amenity and priority is poor relative to some other inner city neighbourhoods.

Two train stations service the study area:

- North Melbourne - access to six lines
- Flagstaff - access to 15 lines

The Melbourne Metro Rail project will add stations at Arden and Parkville.

Three tram lines service the study area:

- Route 30 - Latrobe Street
- Route 55 - William and Peel Streets
- Route 57 - Victoria Street

The Transport Strategy identifies an opportunity to extend the Spencer Street tram to Footscray via Dynon Road. This would significantly improve access to public transport in the area.

Three bus routes service the study area:

- Route 216 - Spencer Street
- Route 219 - Spencer Street
- Route 220 - Dudley Street

Buses run every 15 minutes and provide connections to the west and southeast. Passenger amenity at stops is poor.

Other special bus services include:

- Route 952 Night Bus - City to Broadmeadows on Spencer Street
- Route 401 - North Melbourne Station to University of Melbourne - Express service on Abbotsford Street

There are three low amenity taxi ranks in West Melbourne: two in Peel Street and one in Roden Street.

Car and bike share facilities include:

- About 20 car share vehicles, with the greatest number in the southeast.
- Two bike share nodes, at North Melbourne Station and Flagstaff Gardens on William Street.

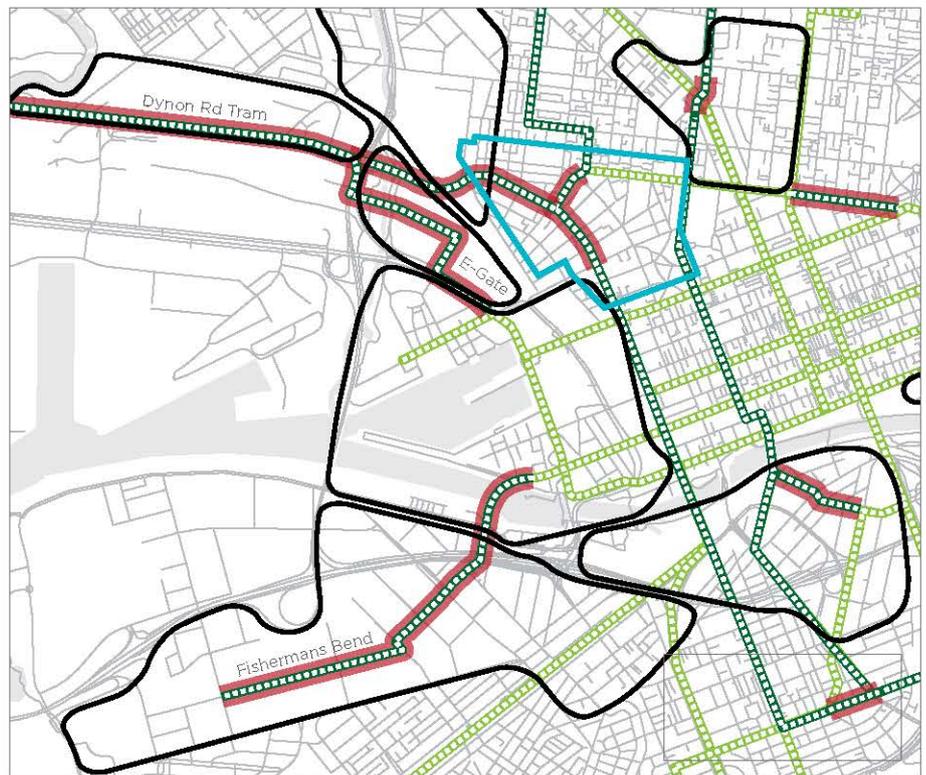


Figure 7.7: City of Melbourne Transport Strategy (2012) - Proposed Tram Network

## Motor vehicles and freight

Existing conditions in West Melbourne support private motor vehicles as the highest priority transport mode. The majority of space in the road network is allocated to carriageways and parking. Multiple arterial roads run through the area and signalised intersections are optimised for vehicle throughput.

West Melbourne's road network is now at capacity for motor vehicle transport and there is no space available for further expansion.

Private vehicles will remain a significant part of West Melbourne's transport mix but more space-efficient modes need to be prioritised to move more people in the same road space. City of Melbourne policy supports a move away from cars to more efficient modes.

Freight in West Melbourne is influenced by its proximity to the Central City, the port and transport and logistics services located to the west.

There are several existing heavy vehicle routes through West Melbourne which are not consistent with the changing use of the area and are likely to become obsolete in the near future.

The City of Melbourne's Last Kilometre Freight Plan (2016) establishes policies and actions and sets a framework for private and public sector innovation to reduce the impact of freight delivery and to improve its efficiency. Innovative solutions to freight will need to be considered if West Melbourne is to retain its diverse mix of uses.

The reference design for the Western Distributor toll road project includes on and off ramps at Dynon Road, Footscray Road and Wurundjeri Way that may have significant impacts on West Melbourne. Early traffic modelling for the Western Distributor indicates a potential increase in traffic on Victoria, Hawke, Dryburgh and Adderley Streets and a potential reduction in traffic on Spencer Street.



Figure 7.8: Poor pedestrian environment dominated by motor vehicles at the corner of Spencer and Dudley Streets.

# 8. LAND USE, EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY

West Melbourne accommodates a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses. It benefits from its proximity to the central city and transport infrastructure while also maintaining a village-like feel that is highly valued by the community. However, the mix of land uses in West Melbourne has changed historically and continues to do so in response to economic pressures.

Australia's economy has evolved from a focus on manufacturing to a more diverse range of knowledge generation and service delivery activities. Heavy industry and warehousing have generally moved out of central city locations.

Central Melbourne has instead become a crucial economic location for growth in higher order, professional services activity as well as becoming a major tourism and retail destination.

West Melbourne has held onto its industrial character longer than other inner city areas due in part to its links with the port, rail and highways. However, growth of the central city into a vibrant place for living, working and cultural offerings has raised the profile of areas like West Melbourne as locations for commercial and residential development, raising land values and driving out historical industrial uses.

Understanding this dynamic context of land use and employment requires a consideration of:

- Existing uses
- Existing policies and controls
- Recent and ongoing trends
- Emerging pressures and issues

The City of Melbourne engaged SGS Economics and Planning to undertake an Economic and Employment Study for the West Melbourne area. The study provides an understanding of economic drivers of land use in the context of population and jobs growth in the inner city.

The study analyses the attributes that make West Melbourne a desirable place to locate for a variety of land uses. It identifies possible future pathways in tourism and culture, health and research and administrative support, concluding that it is ultimately up to Council, the community and local businesses to decide on the future of the precinct.

The City of Melbourne is also developing a Land Use and Infrastructure Plan (LUIP), which will set out a long-term vision for land use and infrastructure in the municipality. LUIP will propose an integrated approach to land use and infrastructure planning that is both strategic and measurable. The LUIP is currently being drafted and will help inform the structure plan.





Figure 8.1: Predominant land use 2015. CLUE data

## Existing land use and employment

The City of Melbourne conducts a Census of Land Use and Employment (CLUE) of all businesses in the municipality every two years. This provides information about land use, employment and economic activity across the municipality. The data collected includes floor space types and uses, and identifies the predominant land use of each building.

This data has been used to map the predominant land use. The maps show land uses in 2002 and 2015 to give an indication of the changes occurred over the past 13 years.

### Residential

There has been an increase in residential uses since 2002.

### Office use

While office use is dispersed throughout the study area, since 2002, there is a notable increase around North Melbourne Station.



Figure 8.2: Sites with predominantly residential use in 2002 and 2015. CLUE data



Figure 8.3: Sites with predominantly office use in 2002 and 2015. CLUE data

### Low yield uses

'Low yield uses' combine a number of distinct uses including manufacturing, equipment installation, car parking, car retailing, car showrooms, wholesaling, and workshops or studios that require a large amount of space in proportion to the economic return from the activity. As land becomes increasingly expensive this type of use becomes increasingly unfeasible. Since 2002, many of these uses have left West Melbourne, and if this trajectory continues the remaining low yield uses may substantially disappear.

### Unoccupied sites

Unoccupied buildings can signify future redevelopment. In 2002, there were a number of unoccupied buildings clustered in the central part of West Melbourne. Similarly, in 2015 there is a concentration of unoccupied buildings in the same area, this may indicate that change is likely to occur here in the near future.



Figure 8.4: Sites with predominantly 'low yield' use in 2002 and 2015. CLUE data



Figure 8.5: Unoccupied sites in 2002 and 2015. CLUE data

### Retail Uses

Significant retail facilities are accessible from various parts of West Melbourne, but there is little retail in the area itself. Nearby retail areas include Errol Street, the Queen Victoria Market, Spencer Street Coles, Harbourtown (Docklands) and the central city in general.

There has been an increase in retail uses within the wider municipality since 2002 and this is also true for West Melbourne, with a modest increase of retail activity around Victoria Street, Peel Street and along parts of Spencer Street.

Some recent planning applications have included retail components. Most notably, the Australia Post site between Dudley and Rosslyn Streets has a permit which includes an Aldi supermarket and several smaller retail tenancies.

Around North Melbourne Station there is very little retail clustering, despite the objective of DDO28 (North Melbourne Station) to encourage development of the area as an activity node.

Some larger development sites have the potential to accommodate retail. Retail uses are likely to continue to evolve in the area to service the growing residential population.

### Knowledge intensive uses

A Knowledge City Strategy 2014-18 outlines the City of Melbourne's contribution to the development of the municipality's knowledge capacity, culture and reputation.

Through this strategy, the City of Melbourne has assumed four principal roles that seek to create a future in which the knowledge sector is better branded, understood, valued and experienced. The roles are as Promoter, Leader, Partner and Enabler of the knowledge city.

The role of Enabler is most relevant to the structure plan, where the City of Melbourne will assist the growth of emerging businesses by providing infrastructure, information, financial support and connections to networks.



Figure 8.7: Sites with predominantly retail use in 2002 and 2015. CLUE data

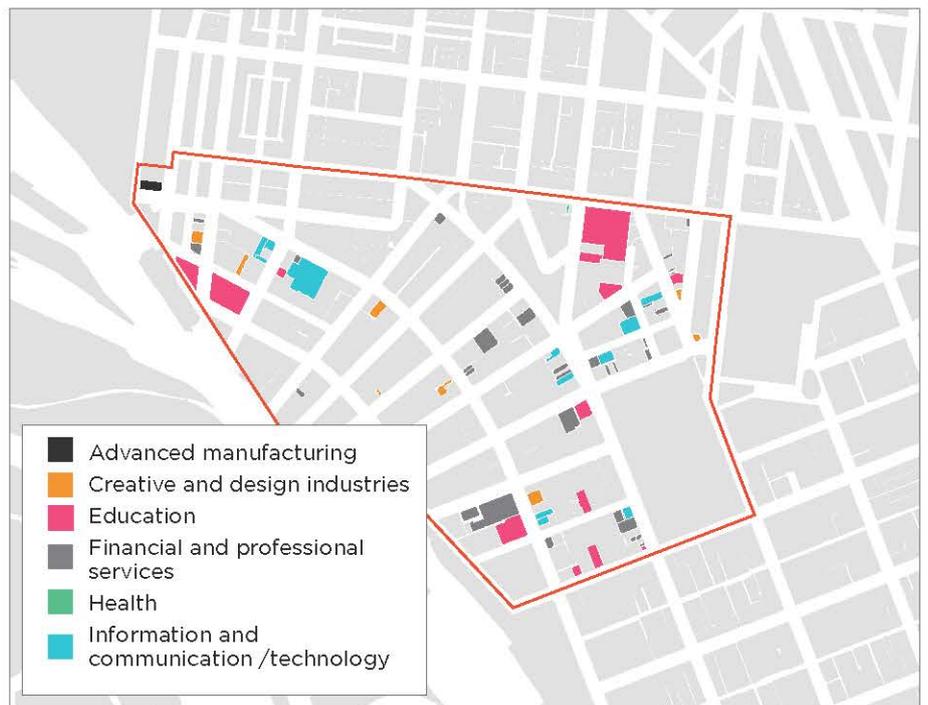


Figure 8.6: Knowledge intensive industries in West Melbourne

## Existing policies and controls

The Melbourne Planning Scheme (including the MSS and Clause 21.08 Economic Development) sets out objectives to support a mix of uses in West Melbourne and to provide a liveable and sustainable environment with jobs, infrastructure and industry to service the growing population and the central city functions. Key policy directions in relation to land uses in West Melbourne are:

### Retail

The central city is the municipality's retail core and this role is to be maintained. There is a need for local shops to serve residential and working communities in neighbourhoods like West Melbourne, but these should not undermine the central city's offer.

### Business

Central city Mixed Use and Commercial zoned areas traditionally provided locations for businesses that support central city functions, but like many areas under a mixed use zone, West Melbourne is under economic pressure to accommodate residential growth at the expense of other uses. It is important to consider the capacity of local land to continue to support uses serving central city businesses needs.

### Industry

Inner city manufacturing will continue to relocate to more competitive locations in outer metropolitan Melbourne, but the central city's accessibility benefits some advanced manufacturing industries. These are also often more compatible with dense inner urban settings and should be supported. Industries in West Melbourne are already shifting away from traditional manufacturing.

### Knowledge

Innovation in business is central to Melbourne's economic vitality and its status as a competitive city. The city is a dense centre of world standard services and research, particularly in the financial, engineering, biotechnology and design sectors. This co-location of business, education, medical and research centres will be supported to strengthen the city's competitive capacity.

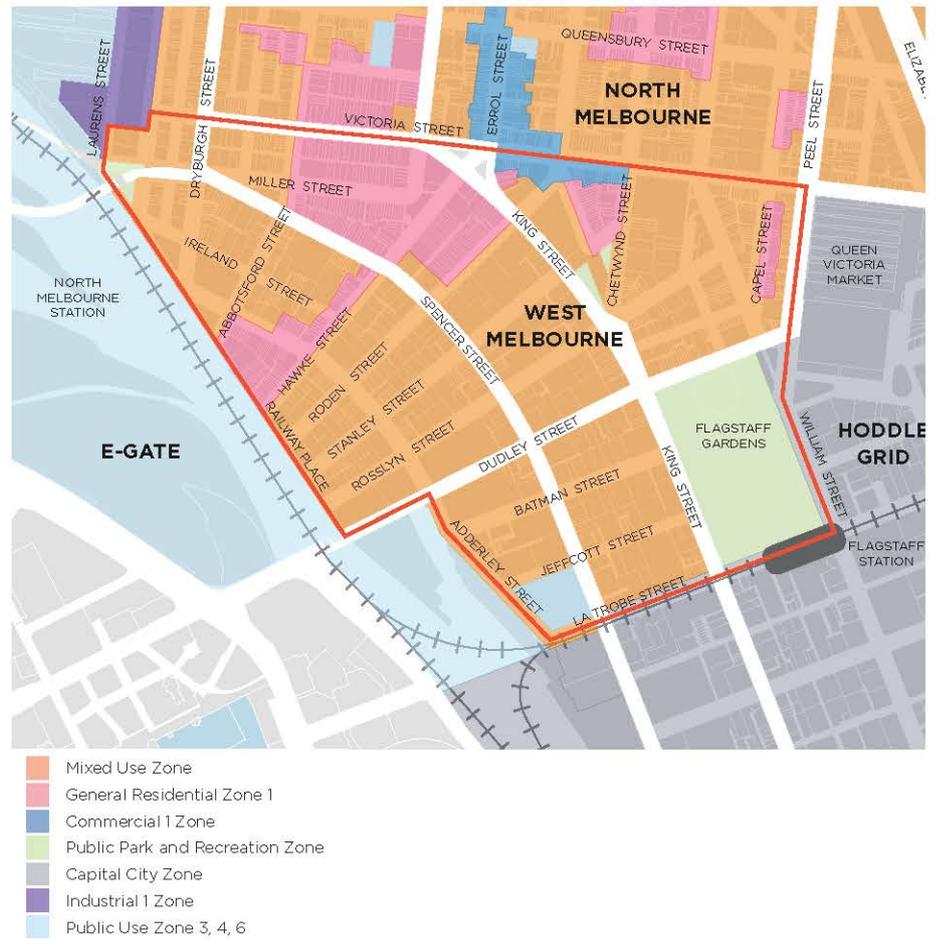


Figure 8.8: Existing Land Use Zoning in West Melbourne

## Key challenges and risks

### Decline of employment opportunities

West Melbourne experienced a 20 per cent decline in employment over the ten year period from 2004 to 2014, which coincided with a doubling of dwelling stock during this period. There has been a gradual decline in most employment sectors, with the exception of health care and education, which have seen strong growth supported by proximity to universities and the Parkville Medical Precinct. An example is the Australian Red Cross, which in 2012 refurbished a large warehouse as a manufacturing and distribution hub servicing all of metropolitan Melbourne's major trauma units and hospitals.

### Roads and traffic

West Melbourne has excellent access to the freeway network, port and rail network. This is essential to the operation of some businesses like the Red Cross. However the traffic this generates also has negative implications for the area's amenity, safety and connectivity to surrounding areas. Congestion is an issue for businesses in the suburb that are car dependent, and for the amenity of other businesses choosing to locate here.

### Limited retail and services

There is a fairly limited service offer in West Melbourne. This reduces the attractiveness of the area for certain types of businesses. However this is likely to change as developments like the recently approved Australia Post site provide the amenities required to support the growing neighbourhood.

### Employment clustering

West Melbourne has a low Effective Job Density (EJD) which represents how connected jobs are to each other as affected by proximity of jobs and connectivity provided by the transport network. West Melbourne's mixed use character and limited internal transport options contribute to this low rating. These are barriers to business clustering, as is the limited availability of sites, so West Melbourne is unlikely to attract top tier businesses that require clustering.

An example is the National ICT Australia, who are moving to Docklands. However West Melbourne can provide an opportunity for second tier or emerging sectors of the economy to locate close to the central city.

### Dominance of residential development

Outside the areas zoned Residential (a small part of West Melbourne) the Planning Scheme promotes a mix of uses including retail, small scale businesses, and light and service industries. These are important complements to the adjoining Capital City Zone and to the shopping and service strips along Errol Street and Victoria Street, as well as supporting objectives for diversity of employment opportunities.

However, while the Mixed Use Zone aims to encourage a mix of uses, economic pressures have seen residential use dominating recent development. The zone allows but cannot ensure a true mix of uses. Residential development is outbidding other uses. The return on investment on residential property development in comparison to other uses will make it difficult to maintain the diversity of mixes in the suburb.

Once a site is developed for apartments and strata titled, future adaptation for other uses is difficult. This is an issue if there is a need to introduce uses requiring larger floor plates, like community infrastructure, office or artist spaces.

If West Melbourne is to retain its valued mixed use character, the structure plan will need to assess potential planning mechanisms to achieve this outcome.



Looking north-east along Spencer Street towards Rose's Office Furniture.

# 9. SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Melbourne has a number of strategies, policies and targets to become a more sustainable city and to guide adaption to impacts of climate change. *Zero Net Emissions* is a strategy for Melbourne to become a carbon neutral city and create a sustainable future.

The City of Melbourne recognises that this goal cannot be achieved alone, as Council operations cause less than one per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality, so we have developed a plan for stakeholders to work together towards this goal.

Achieving zero net emissions will require structural, economic and policy change to increase energy efficiency, decrease the use of carbon intensive fuel sources and offset any remaining emissions.

West Melbourne now makes only a limited contribution towards meeting these goals. The existing built form, public realm, transport system and essential infrastructure is not doing enough to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the proportion of renewable energy and the ability of West Melbourne to adapt, survive and thrive in the face of the stresses and shocks of a changing climate.

Opportunities for new buildings, neighbourhood development and work with authorities and stakeholders include:

- Identify channels to engage with developers and building designers in the early stages of new projects.
- Apply industry-recognised standards in new buildings.
- Create and strengthen partnerships with key utility and manufacturing companies on energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities.
- Incorporate environmental design considerations into urban planning guidelines, policies and provisions.

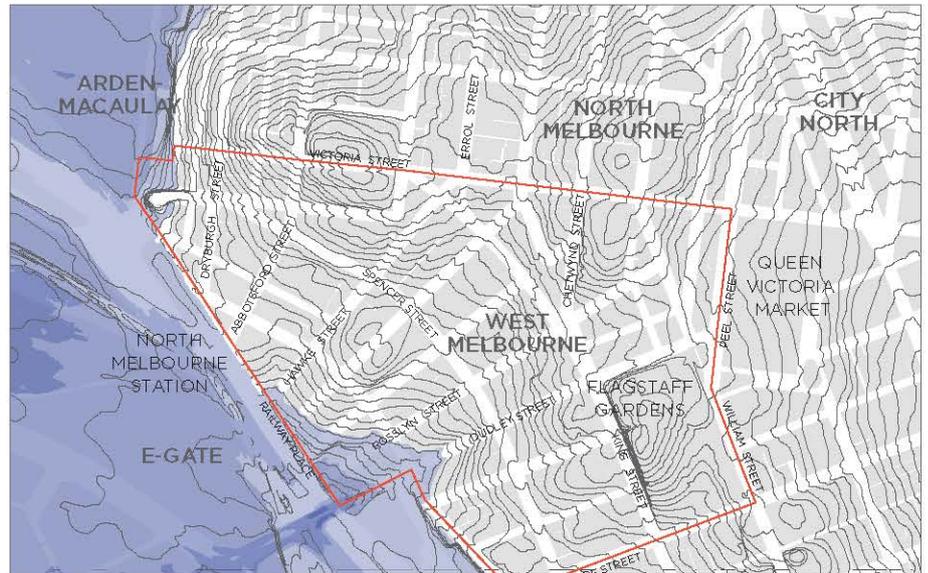
The environmental performance of new buildings has significant room for improvement, most notably in the high-rise apartment sector. Working with existing and new building owners' corporations to find ways to create and manage sustainable infrastructure is complex, but has significant potential.



## Total Watermark

Total Watermark: City as a Catchment (2014) is the City's plan for integrated water cycle management. Our vision is a healthy city in a healthy catchment. The strategy addresses climate change adaptation, flood management, water for liveability and for the environment, and efficient water use. Actions relevant to the structure plan are to:

- Enhance the urban planning process
  - Consider flood risks in design of the public and private realm.
  - Further integrate our city with waterways and water systems.
  - Consider flood, drought and heat risks during planning
  - Make provisions for water infrastructure.
- Enhance infrastructure and buildings
  - Use green infrastructure to respond to flood risk.
  - Use fit-for-purpose water in open spaces and buildings.
  - Undertake new technology trials of fit-for-purpose water use.
  - Create a third pipe network for urban renewal areas.
  - Continue to require development to meet water efficiency standards and to incorporate integrated water cycle management design principles.
- Enhance people's health and amenity
  - Improve waterway and public space quality to enhance use.
  - Encourage developments to include public spaces.
  - Enhance public spaces to cool the environment
- Ensure access to clean, affordable water
  - Incentivise and regulate the efficient use of potable water.
  - Develop and communicate models to manage water use.
- Enhance stormwater quality
  - Continue to implement systems to improve pollutant loads in stormwater releases and
  - Reduce runoff through infiltration and reuse.



**Figure 9.1: Flood extent and land contours in West Melbourne**  
 Parts of the West Melbourne study area are subject to flood risk. The topography of the study area sees a significant slope from higher areas around Victoria Street and Flagstaff Gardens, to lower areas near the intersection of Dudley Street and Railway Place. The low areas are subject to flooding in moderate rainfall events.



## 'Green' buildings and rooftops

Green Star and NABERS are systems for assessing and benchmarking sustainable building design, construction and fit out. There is one Green Star rated building in the 3003 postcode, and two buildings with NABERS ratings.

The City of Melbourne also runs three programs to improve existing buildings' environmental performance:

- CitySwitch helps office tenants to improve energy and waste efficiency (four signatories in the study area).
- 1200 Buildings works with owners to support retrofitting (two signatories in the study area).
- SmartBlocks works with owners' corporations to improve energy performance in common areas of apartment buildings (four subscribers in the 3003 postcode).

In addition, environmental benefits can be achieved using rooftops with photovoltaic or solar thermal panels, finishes that reflect heat, and green (planted) roofs. New developments are encouraged to integrate solar, green roofs and cool roofs through Planning Scheme Clause 22.19 Energy Water & Waste.

The City of Melbourne has also undertaken research into the potential for adaptation of existing rooftops. This identifies levels of constraints including area, pitch, structural capacity, exposure to sunlight, and accessibility for construction, use and maintenance. Support is available to owners who are interested in adaptation measures, but there has been limited take-up to date in West Melbourne, equivalent to about 0.7 per cent of the total roof area.

New development can affect nearby buildings' ability to contribute towards climate goals, for example by overshadowing. Solar access may be partially protected through controls such as building height limits and requirements for setbacks and separation distances. These tools can also help to ensure daylight and amenity to neighbouring buildings.

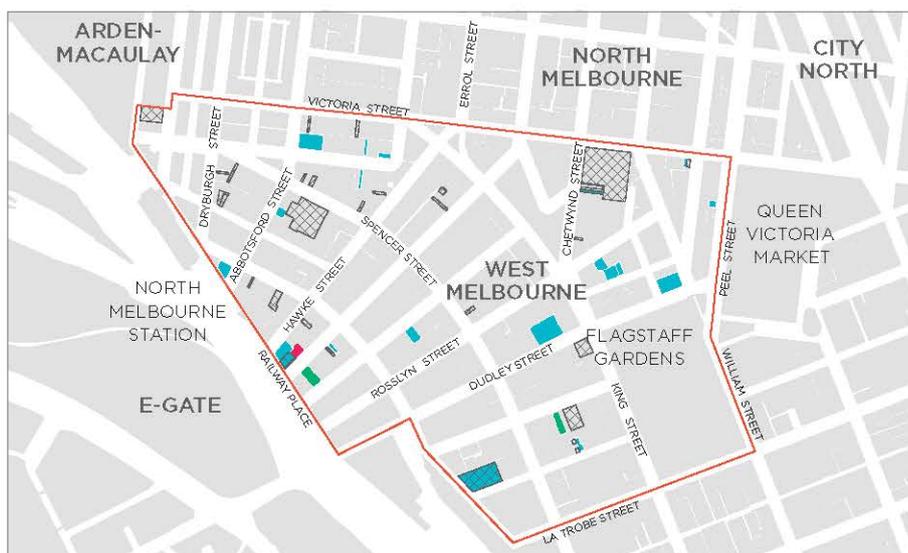


Figure 9.2: Existing roof adaptations in West Melbourne

	Solar hot water	799 square metres
	Photo voltaic panels	779.6 square metres
	Green roof	399 square metres
	Rooftop garden	23.3 square metres

ROOF TOP USE AND CONSTRAINTS	BUILDING HEIGHT	AREA (SQM)
Solar - No constraints	< 5 metres	4066
Solar - No constraints	5 to 10 metres	62,884
Solar - No constraints	Other	76,583
Solar - Low constraints	< 5 metres	787
Solar - Low constraints	5 to 10 metres	30,144
Solar - Low constraints	Other	52,211
Green roofs (intensive) - no constraints	-	53,482
Green roofs (intensive) - low constraints	-	23,337
Green roofs (extensive) - no constraints	-	64,858
Green roofs (extensive) - low constraints	-	35,375
Cool roofs - no constraints	-	17,382
Cool roofs - low constraints	-	71,207

Figure 9.3: Roof adaptation potential in West Melbourne

## Greener streets

The City of Melbourne's urban forest comprises the trees and other vegetation in the municipality, and the soil and water that supports it. An urban forest makes a critical contribution to the urban environment by:

- Cooling the city
- Contributing to the health, well-being and happiness of urban dwellers
- Attracting people to live, work and visit in Melbourne
- Stimulating economic activity in retail and entertainment precincts

The Urban Forest Strategy 2012-2032 sets out strategic directions to achieve a healthy urban forest including targets to:

- Increase canopy cover
- Increase urban forest diversity
- Improve vegetation health
- Improve soil moisture and water quality
- Improve urban ecology
- Inform and consult the community

The Urban Forest Strategy is supported by precinct plans to guide ongoing tree planting and street greening. The West Melbourne study area is covered by the North and West Melbourne Urban Forest Precinct Plan 2014-2024.

The Precinct Plan identifies planting priorities over the next four years, with the majority of planting planned for the northwestern area of West Melbourne.

The Precinct Plans have generally been prepared on the assumption that the role of streets and their overall design will not change. As the future role of streets such as Spencer Street and Victoria Street may change in the future, there may be a need to revise these planting plans.

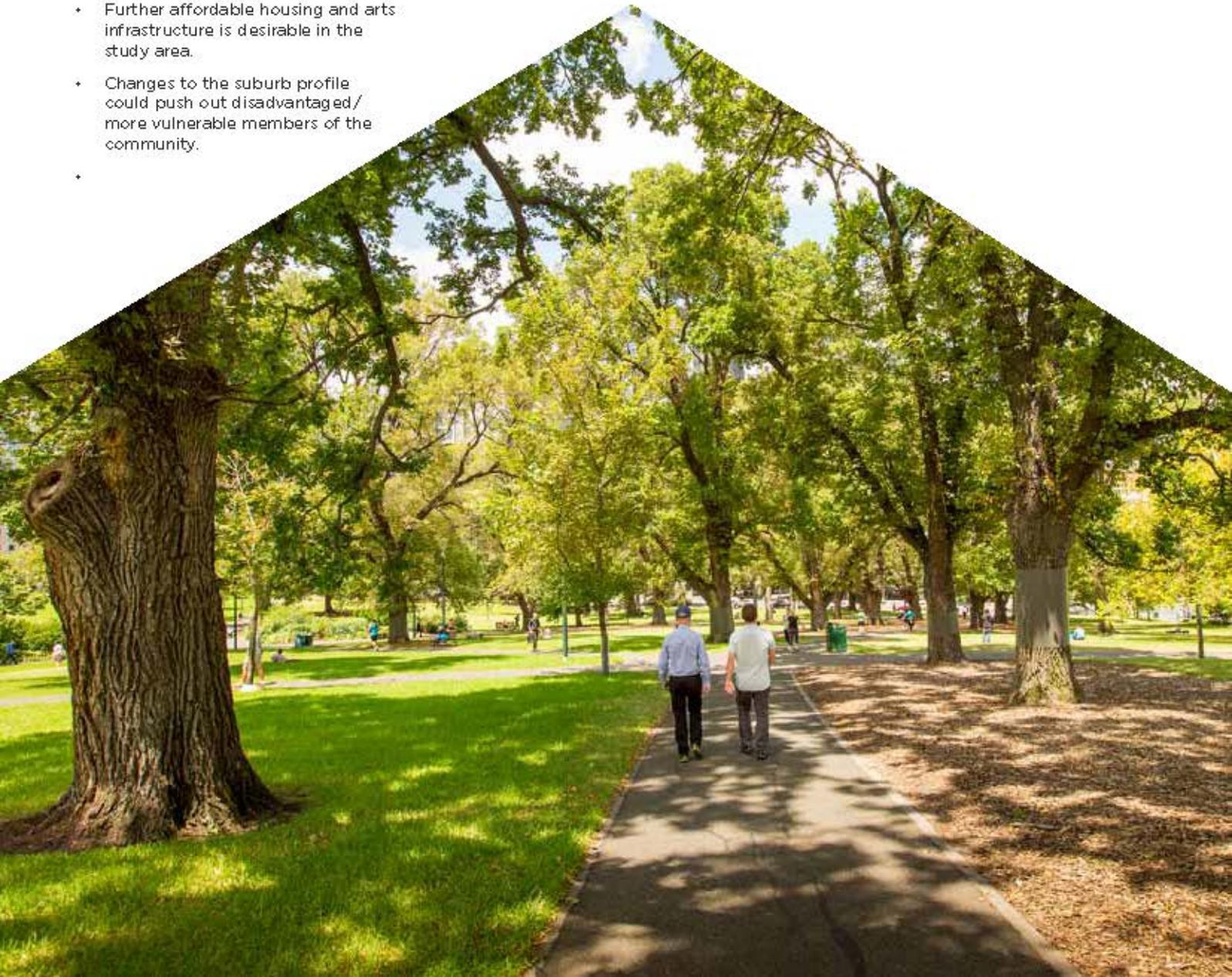


Figure 9.4: The extent of street tree planting varies across West Melbourne. Some streets are very exposed to sun.

# 10. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

## Community Infrastructure

- Limited community services in West Melbourne make it important to improve access to surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Revised population projections need to be considered to plan required local services.
- An appropriate location for new services that are likely to be appropriate in West Melbourne needs to be determined.
- There are no food services and limited food related businesses in West Melbourne.
- Further affordable housing and arts infrastructure is desirable in the study area.
- Changes to the suburb profile could push out disadvantaged/ more vulnerable members of the community.



## Urban structure and public realm

- There is limited on-street activity in the study area compared to other neighbourhoods in the municipality.
- The railway lines form a barrier to movement to the west.
- Walking and cycling from west to east can be more difficult for some people due to the steep topography.
- There is a risk of flooding at the Dudley Street underpass and underneath the Dynon Road Bridge.
- Arterial roads with high traffic volumes create barriers to movement and reduce social interaction.
- Large blocks with few laneways limit the number of potential walking routes through the area.
- Property pooling in the study area is consolidating smaller plots into larger ones, changing the grain of the area.

## Built form and Heritage

- There has been significant divergence from the discretionary height controls particularly in DDO29 and DDO33.
- The community has expressed a desire for mandatory controls but the planning scheme is performance based and mandatory controls are considered an exception.
- Blanket height controls insufficiently respond to the diversity of plot sizes and plot characteristics in the DDOs.
- There is no mechanism in place to capture community benefit from redevelopment of large sites, which generally negotiate heights above the DDO.
- The increase in building heights has an impact on overshadowing.
- There is insufficient public open space in the study area and the increase in overshadowing may have amenity impacts on these spaces.
- Heritage controls are in the process of being updated.

## Open space

- The growing community in West Melbourne will require additional open spaces and a more diverse range of spaces than is currently available.
- The Open Space Strategy identified a need for three local open spaces and identified E-Gate as an area for future large open space.
- Major roads impede access to existing open space and future planned open spaces.
- The amenity of open spaces is compromised by exposure to heavy traffic.
- Existing open space will be under pressure from future development and population growth.
- Existing space within streets is not well designed or managed to support its use as public open space.

## Movement and transport

- The existing transport network in prioritises motor vehicles ahead of walking, cycling and public transport and provides limited access to surrounding areas for these modes.
- There is no capacity for the road network to carry more car traffic, so a shift towards more space efficient modes is needed to accommodate increased demand.
- Connections to the west and south are weak, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Large intersections with fast moving traffic make walking difficult and unpleasant.
- Multiple arterial roads have a negative impact on other modes, particularly pedestrians, through congestion, noise, pollution and safety issues.
- Existing public transport is either concentrated around the perimeter of the area, or lacks visibility, priority and amenity for passengers.
- Priority bicycle routes largely bypass West Melbourne and do not integrate with key destinations such as Queen Victoria Market and Errol Street.

## Land use, economy and employment

- There is no retail or activity core within West Melbourne and it relies on surrounding destinations like Errol Street, Queen Victoria Market and the central city for retailing.
- West Melbourne's proximity to the central city and transport networks make it an attractive location for a mix of uses, but this is restricted by the land value and zoning.
- There is the potential to lose the area's mixed use character, business activities that support central city functions, and local employment opportunities due to residential development displacing other uses from the mixed use zone.
- Traffic and access impact on the operation of certain types of businesses and the amenity and safety of the area.

## Sustainability

- There are few examples of high quality sustainable Green Star or NABERS rated developments in West Melbourne, particularly residential developments.
- The lack of certainty around expected development outcomes is compromising West Melbourne's rooftop solar potential.
- There is a high percentage of impermeable surfaces in the public realm, and there are few on-site rainwater collection systems, increasing flood risk and failing to take advantage of non-potable water supply.
- There are existing flooding issues at the western end of Dudley Street and Railway Place, and in Miller Street in moderate rainfall events
- The limited tree canopy coverage across the area fails to achieve potential mitigation of the Urban Heat Island effect.

# 11. APPENDICES

## STREET SECTIONS

These indicative cross sections are a selection of some of the major streets through West Melbourne. Each is unique and can change significantly along its length. The cross sections indicate the distribution of space at particular points along selection of streets in West Melbourne.

While the physical characteristics of the street are important, other aspects of the street are just as critical to understanding the way these places are experienced by people. Sunlight access, traffic and adjacent land uses are just some elements that influence the experience of the street.

### Adderley Street

- North-south orientation
- 30 m wide
- Mixed use street
- Two traffic lanes
- North-south bike paths
- Kerbside parking
- Trees in footpaths or nature strip
- Road carriageway repurposed to create nature strips along street at south end

### Hawke Street

- Arterial route in section between Spencer Street and Victoria Street
- East-west orientation
- 30 m wide
- Predominantly residential
- Four traffic lanes
- Kerbside parking
- Median parking
- Trees in footpaths and in a centre median



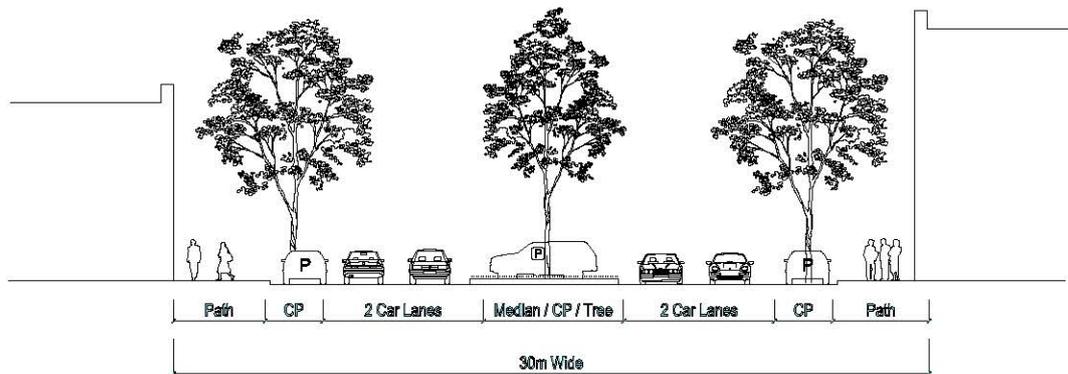


Figure 11.1: Indicative Hawke Street section between Ireland Street and Spencer Street looking east.

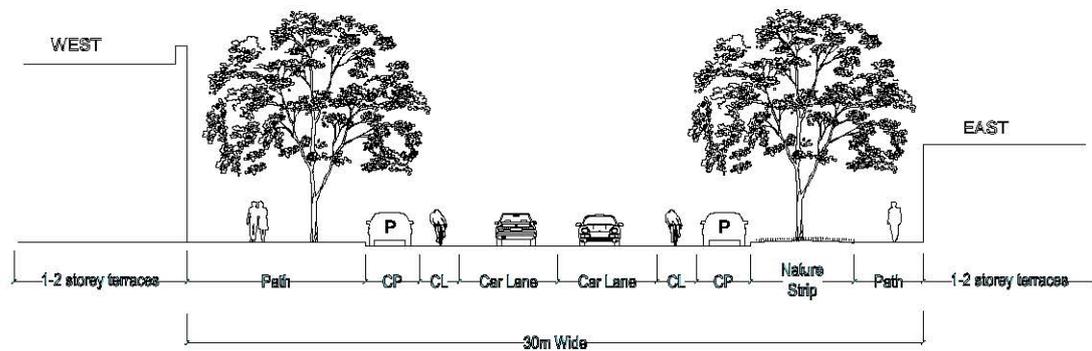


Figure 11.2: Indicative Adderley Street section between Rosslyn Street and Stanley Street looking north.

#### Dudley Street

- Arterial route
- East-west orientation
- 30 m wide
- Mixed use street
- Four traffic lanes
- Kerside parking
- Trees in footpaths
- Proposed future link to Franklin Street via a new street to be developed as part of the Queen Victoria Market redevelopment

#### Victoria Street

- Arterial route
- East-west orientation
- 30 m wide
- Mixed use street
- Four traffic lanes
- Tram route (east of Errol Street)
- Kerside parking
- East-west bike paths
- Median open space - nature strip east of Curzon Street
- Trees in footpaths and centre median

#### Peel Street

- Arterial route
- North-south orientation
- 40 m wide
- Tramway in median protected from vehicular traffic
- Mixed use street
- Four traffic lanes
- North-south bike lanes
- Kerside parking
- Trees in footpaths and medians flanking tramway



Looking south along Spencer Street towards the central city.  
Source: City of Melbourne

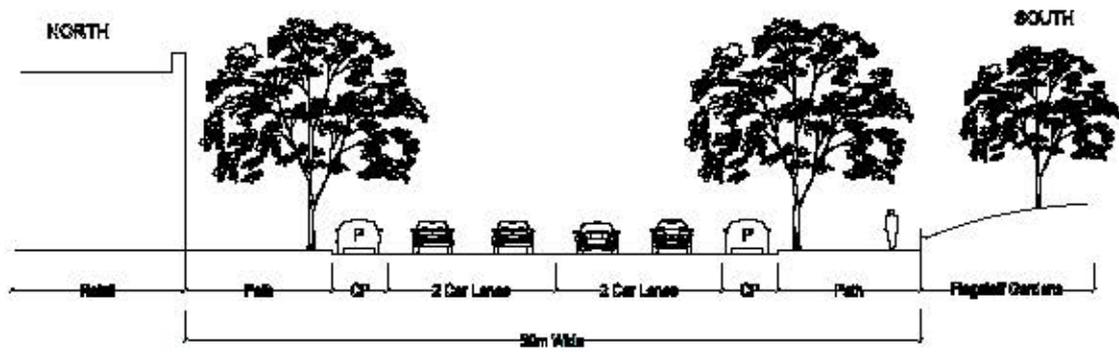


Figure 11.3: Indicative Dudley Street section between King Street and Milton Street looking east.

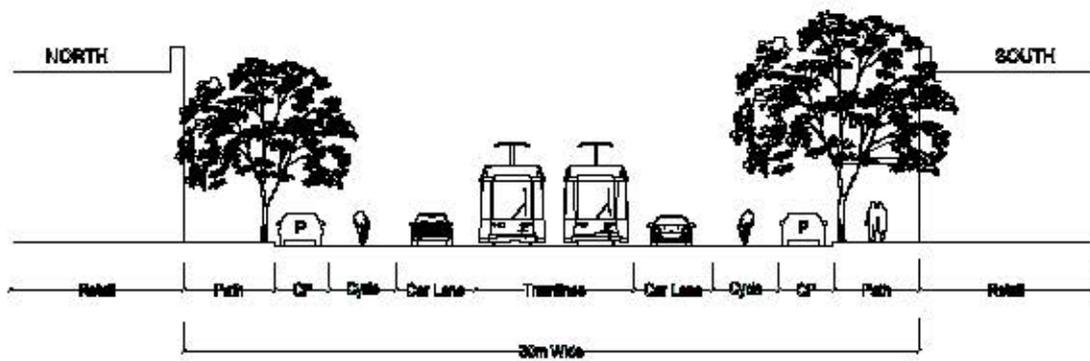


Figure 11.4: Indicative Victoria Street section looking east.

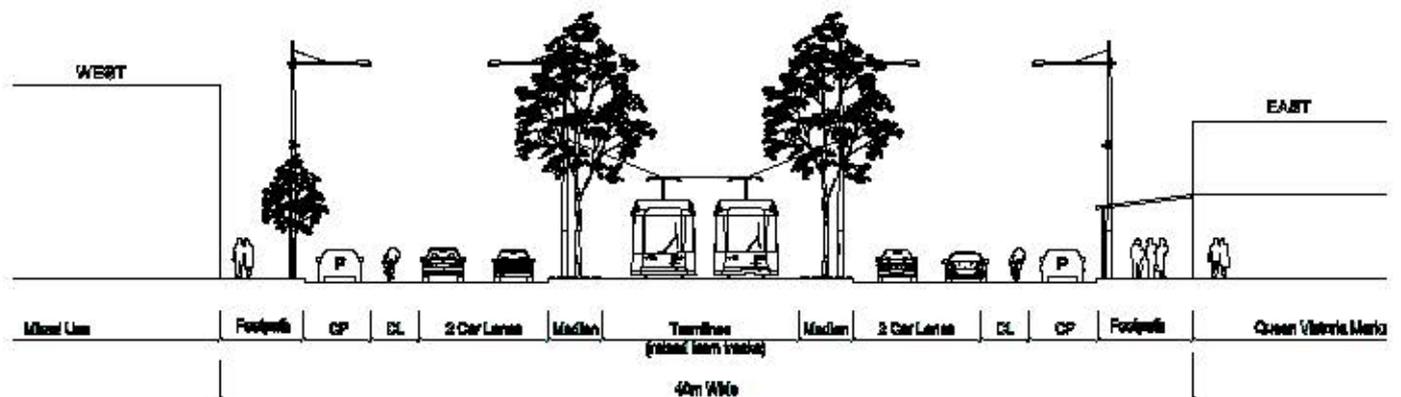


Figure 11.5: Indicative Peel Street section between Dudley Street and Victoria Street looking north.

#### Jeffcott Street

Jeffcott Street is a local street that runs between Adderley and King Streets. It is not as wide as most streets in West Melbourne.

- East-west orientation
- 20 m wide
- Mixed use residential street
- Two traffic lanes
- Kerside parking bays including parallel parking bays
- Trees planted on footpaths and in central median

#### King Street

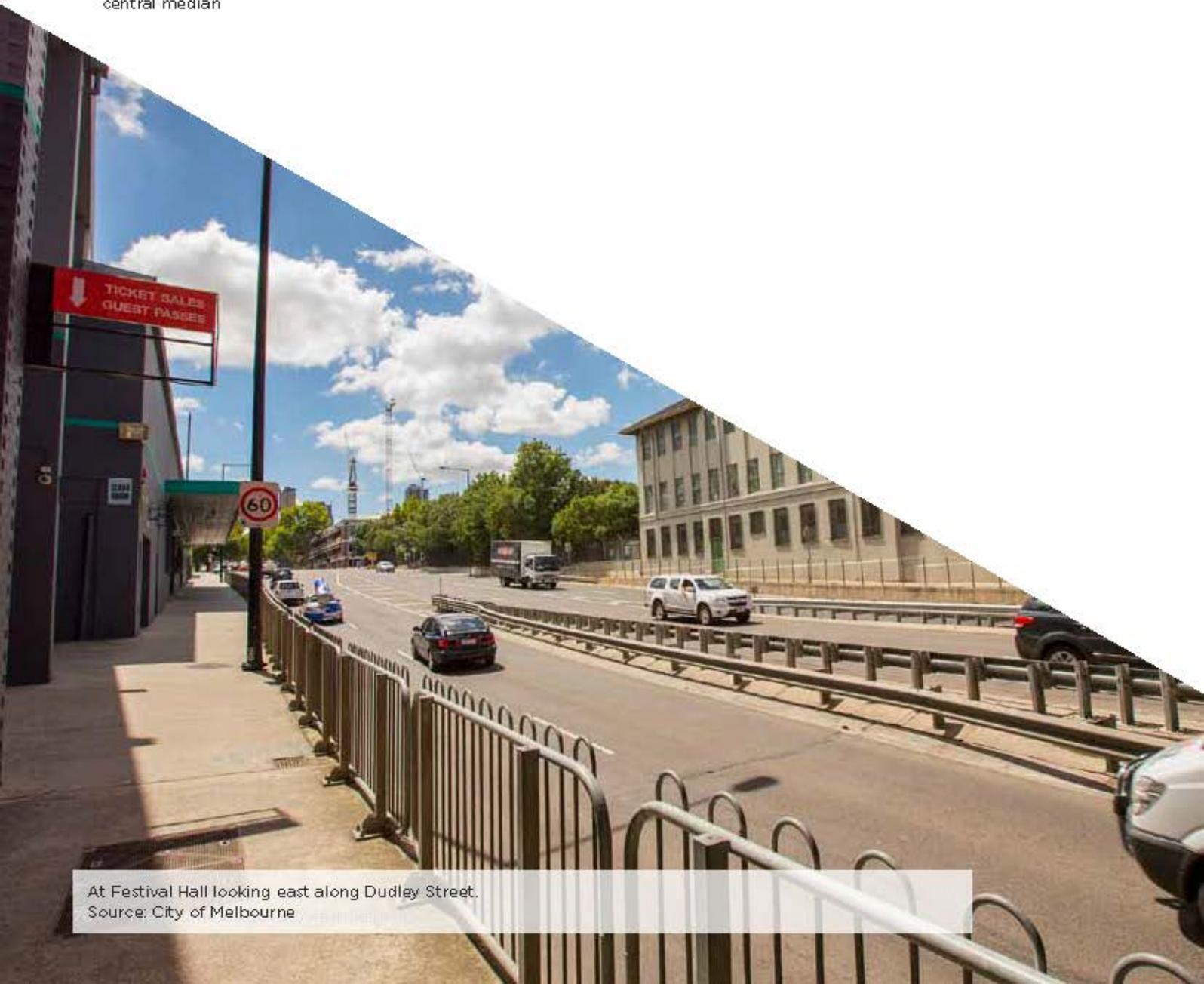
King Street is an arterial route through the central city which connects through the centre of West Melbourne to Curzon Street and Victoria Street.

- North-south orientation
- 30 m wide
- Predominantly nonresidential
- Four traffic lanes
- Kerside parking bays
- Trees planted on footpaths and in central median

#### Spencer Street

Spencer Street is an arterial route that runs through the central city and connects in the north to Dryburgh Street.

- North-south orientation
- 30 m wide
- Predominantly nonresidential
- Four traffic lanes
- Kerside parking bays
- Trees planted on footpaths and in central median



At Festival Hall looking east along Dudley Street.  
Source: City of Melbourne

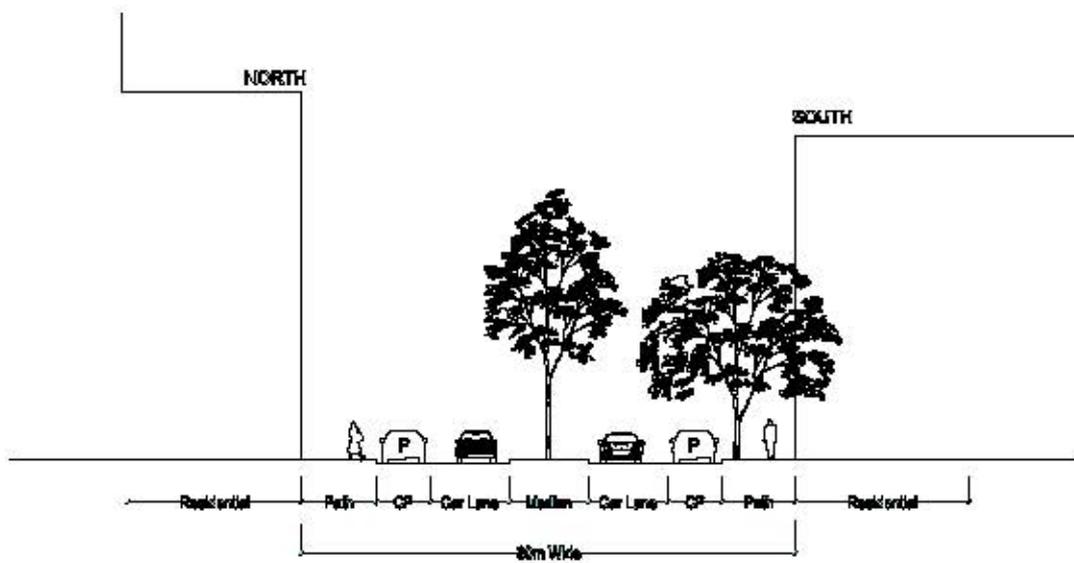


Figure 11.6: Indicative Jeffcott Street section between Spencer Street and King Street looking east.

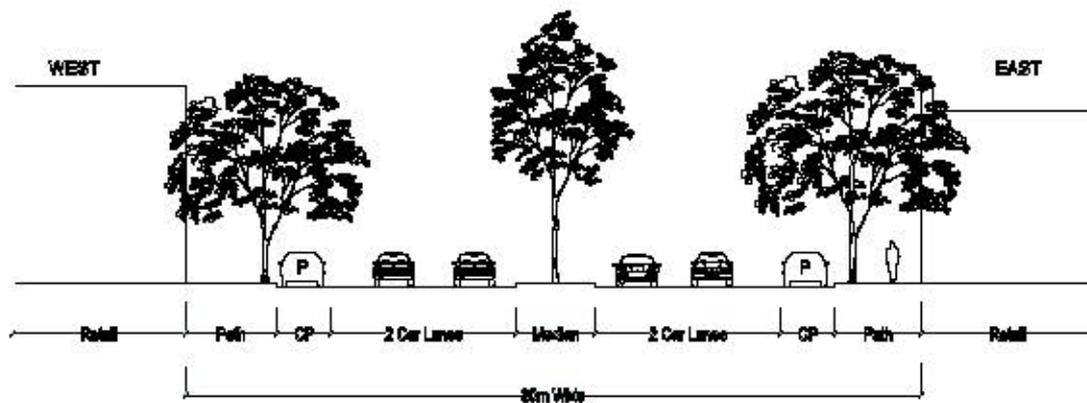


Figure 11.7: Indicative Spencer/King Street section looking north.

# RELATED CITY OF MELBOURNE POLICIES

It is an objective of the West Melbourne Structure Plan to translate City of Melbourne strategies and policies into the West Melbourne context where possible. These policies include:

- Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015-18
- Active Melbourne Strategy 2016-2021
- Arts Strategy 2014-17
- Beyond the Safe City Strategy 2014-17
- Bicycle Plan 2016-2020
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- Community Infrastructure Development Framework 2014
- Food City: The City of Melbourne Food Policy 2012
- Heritage Strategy 2013
- Homes for People Housing Strategy 2014-18
- Inner Melbourne Action Plan
- International Student Strategy 2013-17
- Knowledge City Strategy 2014-2018
- Melbourne Planning Scheme
- Melbourne for All People 2014-17
- Melbourne Library Services Strategic Plan
- Melbourne Retail and Hospitality Strategy
- Music Strategy 2014-17
- Open Space Strategy
- Pathways- City of Melbourne Homelessness Strategy
- Places for People 2015
- Public Art Framework 2014-17
- Public Lighting Strategy 2013
- Queen Victoria Market Renewal
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-18
- Resilience Strategy (Resilient Melbourne)
- Road Safety Plan 2013-17
- Total Watermark- City as a catchment (update 2014)
- Transport Strategy 2012
- Urban Ecology and Biodiversity Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategy and Precinct Plans
- Walking Plan 2014-17
- Waste Management Strategy
- Zero Net Emissions by 2020 and 2014 update

# PLANNING CONTROL PRECEDENTS

Across the City of Melbourne there are several different types of planning controls that guide built form outcomes. The following section summarises planning controls that are proposed to apply to the central city and Arden-Macaulay. The analysis of these built form controls is a good starting point to understand recent approaches to built form control in other parts of the municipality.

## Built form in the central city

The Victorian Government has recently undergone a review of built form in the central city. This review is informing an amendment that proposes new built form controls for the area. Although there are higher levels of development in the central city, West Melbourne faces some similar challenges to the central city.

The proposed changes to the planning controls include:

- Existing plot ratios controls for entire blocks to be replaced with floor area ratios for individual sites, with added development bonuses for providing ‘public benefits’.
- Discretionary tower setback to be changed to fixed tower setbacks with defined flexibility.
- Limited or negligible existing shadow and wind controls to be replaced with reinforced (strengthened) shadowing and wind controls.
- Height controls will continue to apply only in special areas.

The proposed limit for floor area ratios is 1:18, with discretion to agree to a floor area uplift bonus if all relevant built form parameters are met and an appropriate public benefit is provided.

The Central City Built Form Synthesis Report (2016) recommends the introduction of the value sharing mechanism Floor Area Uplift. This is a common practice internationally to fund the delivery of infrastructure.

It is challenging for the City of Melbourne to negotiate development contributions with no standardised value sharing mechanism in place. Currently, there are a multiplicity of approaches that are negotiated on a site by site basis, the following example was used in the synthesis report:

The proponent of 70 Southbank Boulevard (Australia 108 development) agreed/was required, through a planning consent condition, to contribute \$3500 per apartment towards improvements to City Road in the immediate vicinity of the development site.

While this contribution will be beneficial to Southbank, there is no justification for the amount specified and there is little guidance on determining what type of contribution is appropriate. A site by site approach creates uncertainty and reduces the transparency of the planning scheme.

A Floor Area Uplift scheme allows developers to increase their floorspace in return for a defined public benefit. This public benefit would need to have particular attributes, examples given in the report include a library or affordable housing.

There is currently no mechanism in place that allows the community to benefit from developments that exceed planning controls. A Floor Area Uplift scheme would provide clear guidance on the public benefit expected when controls are exceeded.

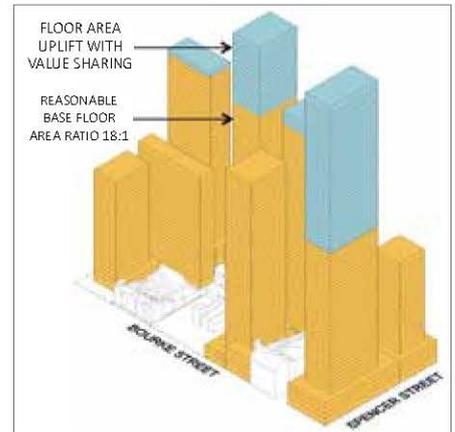


Figure 11.8: Diagram of proposed floor ratio area 1:18 from Amendment C270

## Arden-Macaulay

The Arden-Macaulay Structure Plan (2012) sets out a built form vision for Arden-Macaulay as a mid-rise urban renewal precinct that relates to existing residential areas and celebrates its industrial past. The Structure Plan recommends changes to land use and development controls for the area, which will be implemented through planning scheme amendment C190.

The review of built form in West Melbourne will be informed by the planning panel report that critiqued built form controls proposed for Arden-Macaulay. Key points made by the planning panel include:

- Mandatory controls are justified for overall building height and street wall heights.
- Mandatory controls are not justified for active street frontages, open space overshadowing or impervious areas.

- Proposed mandatory controls require explicit justification and must be supported by analysis in structure plans.
- Most development proposals should be tested against performance outcomes rather than prescriptive controls. Mandatory provisions should be considered an exception.
- It was noted that in certain parts of the municipality mandatory heights might be required if height controls were to mean anything in the longer term.

Many participants in the West Melbourne community engagement expressed a desire to greater certainty through the implementation of mandatory built form controls. The recommendations made by panel emphasise the importance of structure plans in providing the strategic evidence to support built form controls.



Figure 11.9: Indicative illustration of proposed built form controls for Arden-Macaulay

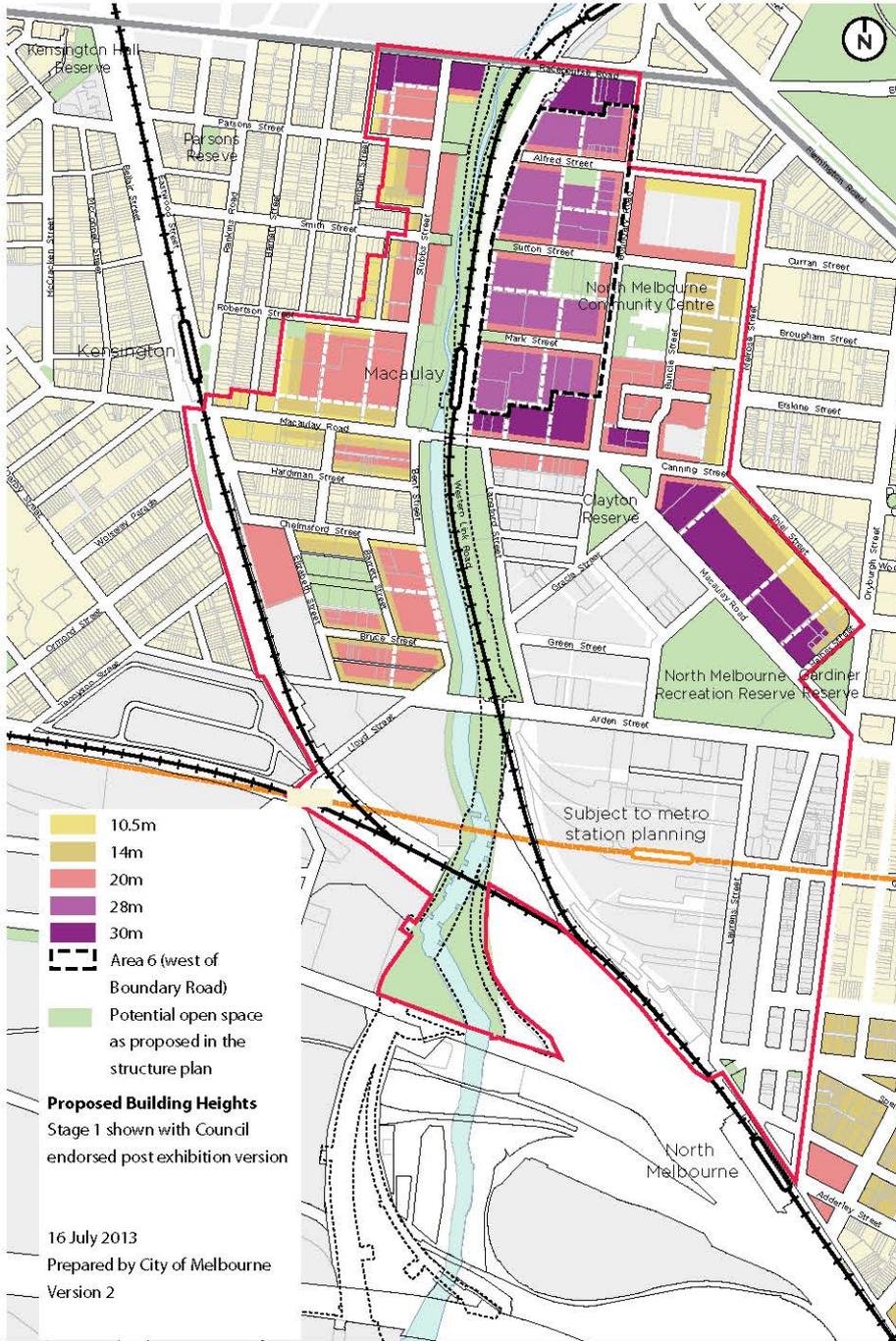


Figure 11.10: Proposed maximum building heights in Arden-Macaulay as contained within the Design and Development Overlay as part of Amendment C190.

## How to contact us

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