

Croydon Major Activity Centre

Discussion Paper on issues and opportunities

Working towards an attractive, thriving and well built community



THE LOWER DECK CAFE





Working towards an attractive, thriving and well built community

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Acknowledgment of Country

We, in the spirit of Reconciliation, acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land now known as the City of Maroondah, where Indigenous Australians have performed age old ceremonies. We acknowledge and respect their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection to it. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.



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Abbreviations and legislation

ARI	Average Recurrence Interval
C1Z	Commercial 1 Zone
C2Z	Commercial 2 Zone
Croydon MAC	Croydon Major Activity Centre
DELWP	Department of Land, Environment, Water and Planning
DDO	Design and Development Overlay
DoT	Department of Transport
GRZ	General Residential Zone
ESD	Environmentally Sustainable Development
IN1Z	Industrial 1 Zone
IN3Z	Industrial 3 Zone
IWCM	Integrated Water Cycle Management
LGA	Local Government Area
MCC	Maroondah City Council
Melbourne CBD	Melbourne Central Business District
MUZ	Mixed Use Zone
MWC	Melbourne Water Corporation
NRZ	Neighbourhood Residential Zone
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PPRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
UHI	Urban Heat Island
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design
YVW	Yarra Valley Water

Numeric Abbreviations

°C	degrees celsius
ha	hectares
kph	kilometres per hour
m	metres
m²	metres square
sqm	square metres
%	percent

Related Legislation and Regulations

Planning and Environment Act 1987 (P&E Act)



Introduction

This discussion paper has been prepared to engage with the community and stakeholders on the development of a new structure plan for the Croydon Major Activity Centre (MAC).

A series of possible opportunities are provided which seek community feedback to guide the development of the structure plan following this discussion paper. This paper is informed by a series of background reports.

What is a Structure Plan?

A structure plan is a long-term plan developed with the community and stakeholders to manage the future of a specific area through a development framework. Structure plans guide the future of an activity centre's land uses and activities, infrastructure, transport, development, physical environment and amenity. In this case, the structure plan guides the Croydon MAC (referred to as the 'Centre' in this paper).

A vision helps to guide the structure plan, concisely articulating an aspirational long-term desired future for the activity centre. The vision will be developed with the community and key stakeholders as part of the draft structure plan.

The vision developed for Croydon will contribute to Council's 2040 vision for the municipality:

"In 2040, Maroondah will be a vibrant and diverse city with a healthy and active community, living in green leafy neighbourhoods which are connected to thriving and accessible activity centres contributing to a prosperous economy within a safe, inclusive and sustainable environment."



Various elements that form the vision of the structure plan:



The vision for the Croydon MAC is an aspirational target for the Centre within the next 20 years. It could be based on a number of different scenarios where settings could be adjusted to align with an agreed vision such as:

- the economy's high growth, low growth or medium growth
- a centre for leading environmentally sustainable development and new technology that adapts to a changing climate
- diverse housing that caters to a wide variety of household needs
- innovative and best practice development and design
- vibrant retail and service sectors that support existing and new businesses
- an inclusive centre for all that fosters community health and wellbeing
- a centre which provides for the needs of all including children, students, single people, families, retirees and other groups
- a desired destination for people to age in place.

Feedback from the community and stakeholders on this discussion paper seeks to test those scenarios and include those which will complement the agreed vision for the Centre when it is prepared at a later date.



Why are we preparing a new structure plan?

The *Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan* was adopted by Maroondah City Council in 2006 as a 30-year vision for the Croydon MAC. Since 2006 there have been many achievements outlined in the structure plan, changes to policy and evolving community aspirations.

It is appropriate that 15 years later, the plan is reviewed and updated to enable Council to check back in with the community and stakeholders and ensure the plan reflects their vision and aspirations and is informed by up to date evidence, monitoring, trends and desires.

A new structure plan will ensure that Croydon continues to grow as a centre that meets the economic, social and environmental needs of the community. It will enable the identification of new actions and initiatives required to deliver the vision and objectives of the plan, some resulting from events which are detailed in Figure 1. These could include changes to the land use planning framework, capital works initiatives and partnerships with key stakeholders.

Structure plans help to implement state and local planning policy. Since 2006, Councils have been provided with greater guidance on requirements for a structure plan by the Victorian Government. This will assist in identifying the boundary of the centre and the components and methodology for structure planning.

Croydon today

Croydon is located on the lands of First Nations people who lived along the Yarra River and local creeks, including Brushy Creek. They cared for the country moving to low areas like Croydon during the Summer months.

White settlers used the lands as a source of timber and cattle runs with a bush village being located in the area. When the railway line was constructed through the area in 1882, the area was named Croydon and the centre grew from there.

Today the Croydon MAC covers an area of around 140 hectares and lies approximately 30 kilometres (km) east of Melbourne's Central Business District. The existing boundary of the activity centre is shown in Figure 2 and the regional context is shown in Figure 3. It contains commercial, retail, light industrial, community, public and residential land uses.

Figure 1. Croydon MAC: Recent chronology of relevant events





Figure 2. Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan 2006 boundary

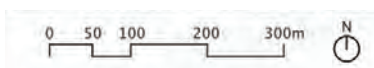
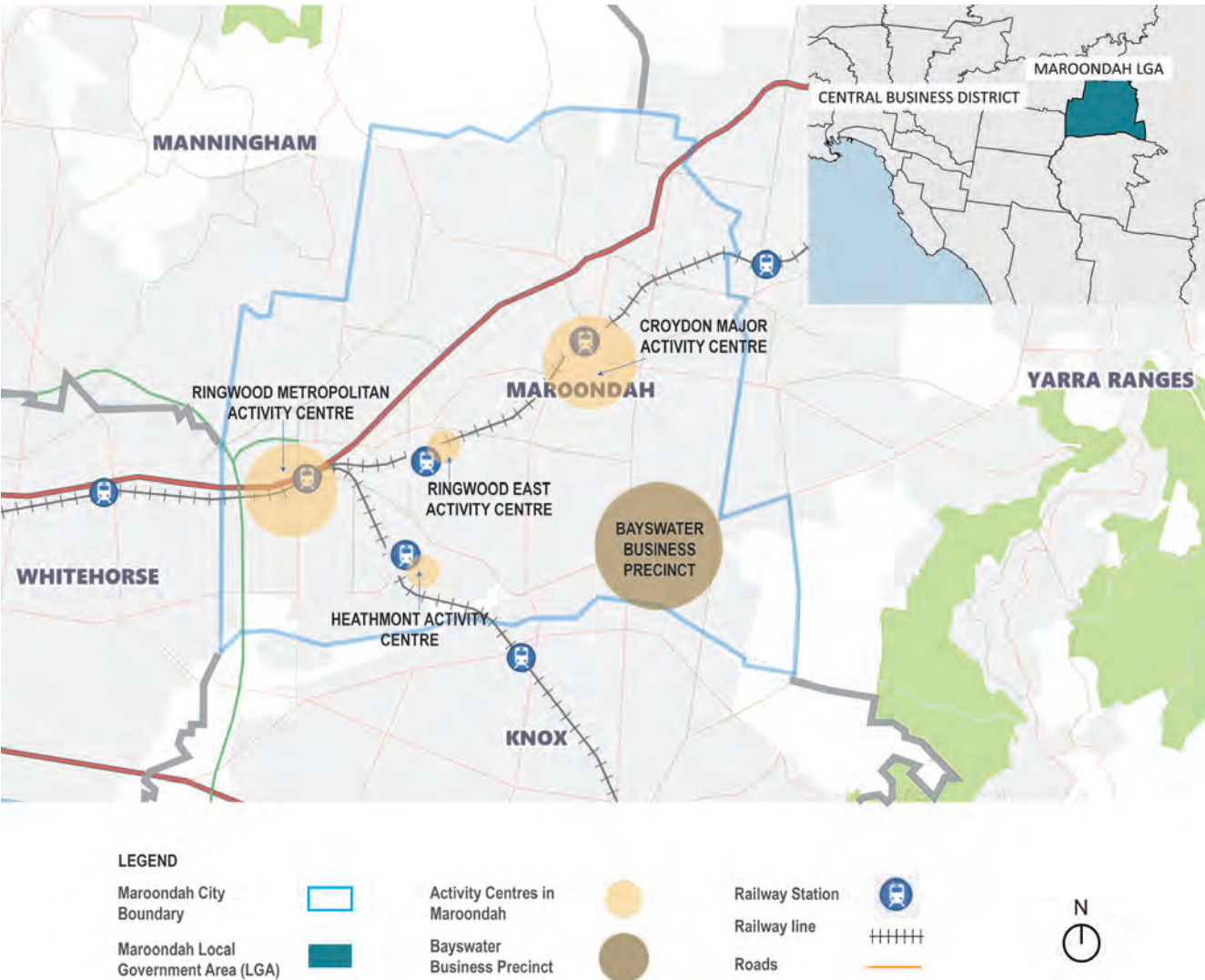


Figure 3. Croydon MAC – Regional context





The Centre is bound by:

- Croydon Road, Kitchener Road and Plumer Street in the north.
- Dorset Road in the east.
- The Melbourne Water pipe track/Carrum to Warburton Trail, Lusher Road and Mt Dandenong Road in the south.
- Wicklow Avenue, Toorak Avenue, Kylie Court and Tallent Street in the west.

The Croydon MAC includes:

- the Main Street Shopping Centre
- Croydon Central Shopping Centre
- Civic Square Shopping Centre (formerly Arndale Shopping Centre)
- surrounding light industrial areas
- the community and civic precinct
- Swinburne University campus
- residential areas.

Croydon MAC is located at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges in a south facing valley that drains to the Tarralla Creek, then into Dandenong Creek and onwards to Port Phillip Bay. The activity centre is nestled in a bowl between the Dandenong Ranges foothills to the east, the Wicklow Range to the west and around a substantial area of active and passive recreational space (approximately 35 ha) on the central spine of lower lying land.

Existing heritage places contribute to the existing Built form character of the centre. Attractive views to surrounding tree covered hills are gained from many vantage points in streets and other public spaces within the centre. The centre's sense of enclosure mixed with views to distant hills are significant factors in Croydon's distinctive and valued character.

Unlike other major activity centres in Melbourne, Croydon MAC has an unusual urban structure in that the main retail and commercial areas are separate from major or arterial roads. Being shielded from these roads has been a key determinant for the look, feel and function of the centre and of its individual character. The associated low traffic volumes and speed on Main Street are significant contributors to the valued "village feel" of Croydon and, potentially, a factor in the prevalence and endurance of narrow frontage, fine-grained, locally owned shops and businesses.

Residential areas comprise mainly single and double storey single dwelling and multi-unit forms from the mid-20th Century to the present day. Several 3-4 storey apartment buildings have been constructed over the past decade.

The centre is served by the Melbourne to Lilydale railway and 11 bus services. The arterial road network consists of Mt. Dandenong Road, Dorset Road, Wicklow Avenue and Kent Avenue. While providing regional connections to and from the centre, these roads also bring a significant volume of through traffic that can generate increased traffic volumes on the local road network and create congestion.

The centre is walkable with a well-developed and comprehensive pedestrian network complemented by several laneways providing direct access through larger blocks for greater route choice. There are a number of on-road bicycle routes within the centre and a Copenhagen bicycle lane on Kent Avenue. The centre is also in close proximity to regional connections such as the Tarralla Creek Trail (part of the Carrum to Warburton Trail).

Achievements of the 2006 Structure Plan

A range of projects and initiatives were achieved as a result of the 2006 Structure Plan. Highlights included:

- A town square with an enlarged plaza space as a community focal point at the intersection of Hewish Road and Main Street.
- Upgraded pedestrian paths in Croydon Park Reserve and new pedestrian and cycle paths.
- Improved signage to public facilities, seating and wayfinding.
- Traffic calming initiatives which include a 40 kilometre per hour speed limit in areas of high pedestrian and cyclist activity, increased pedestrian priority in Main Street and around the railway station, new wombat pedestrian crossings and on and off road bicycle lanes.
- Improved pedestrian access between car parks and the station and in access ways off Main Street.
- Working with the traders and business association to promote new shops and offices and active frontages onto open space and pedestrian areas.
- A car parking study to determine existing and likely future car parking needs.
- A Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 10 (DDO10) in the Maroondah Planning Scheme with better guidance on built form outcomes for maximum building height, setbacks, scale and design in the centre. Images of some of these achievements are shown below:



Croydon Town Square



Wayfinding and pathways



Wombat crossing

Progress on actions

The 2006 structure plan included a total of 227 actions with 56% of them completed, ongoing or in progress. The 227 actions have been monitored and evaluated in a status table detailed in Table 2 of Appendix A. The preparation of a new structure plan provides the opportunity to determine which actions are still relevant and where new actions are required.

These 227 actions are a large number of actions for a structure plan. Greater success in implementation could be achieved if there were less actions which were more targeted and subject to regular review. Refocusing the structure plan to include a five to 10-year implementation plan would enable a more targeted, realistic and achievable plan. Regular review will also ensure that the structure plan better responds to current and emerging circumstances.

The Croydon Structure Plan (2006) included a total of 227 actions with 56% of them completed, ongoing or in progress.



Key projects underway in the Centre

There are a range of projects underway, or in the planning or advocacy phase, that are relevant to the development of a new structure plan for the Croydon MAC shown in Figure 4. Ensuring that these key projects contribute to a coherent and consistent agreed vision is important.

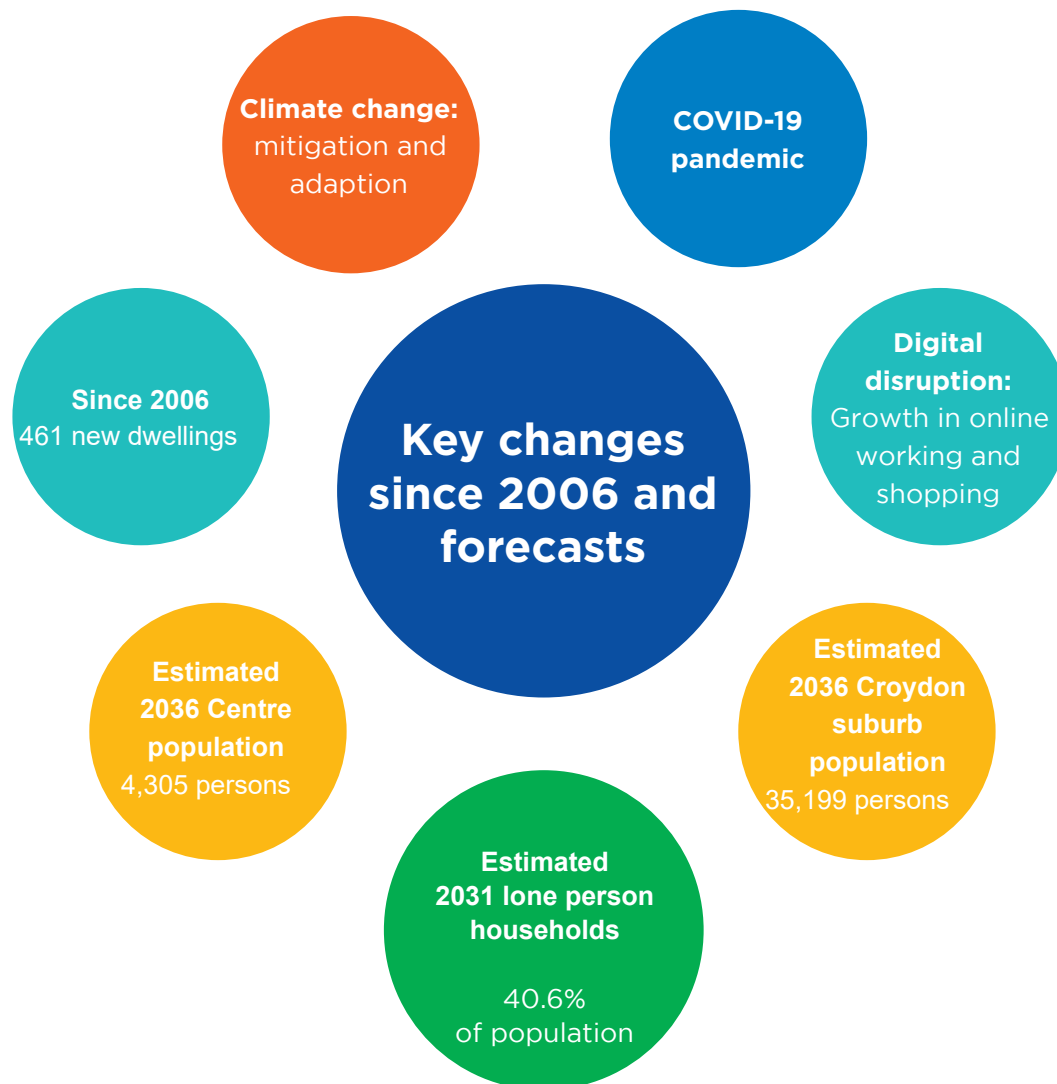
Figure 4. Croydon MAC - key projects



What's changed since 2006?

In 2019, the Croydon MAC estimated population was 2,523 and the Croydon suburb population was 29,931 (Source: *.id Consult 2021*). There have been a large number of changes in the Croydon MAC in the last 15 years and more changes are anticipated in future as listed below.

These changes point to the need to review the structure plan to ensure it is responding to the challenges and opportunities identified in this discussion paper.





How we will prepare the new structure plan?

A structure plan draws on evidence, research and community input.

Figure 5 outlines the various steps and how the new structure plan will be prepared. This utilises a place making approach centred around Croydon as a unique place with its own intrinsic characteristics and strengths.

The discussion paper has been informed by numerous background reports that have been prepared to inform the development of the new Croydon MAC structure plan. Background reports can be found on Council's website.

Background reports considered areas adjacent to the existing activity centre boundary to enable a review of the centre's boundaries to be undertaken. At the conclusion of this discussion paper suggestions about a new boundary for the centre are provided for consideration.

Placemaking approach

The development of the structure plan will be driven by a place-based approach. This approach is collaborative and long-term, aiming to build a thriving community in a specific location. In an activity centre such as Croydon, this will include identification of land use and planning decisions as well as capital projects and other place-based initiatives for the centre. Applying a place-based approach is especially useful in activity centres where there are multiple stakeholders, an active community and a rolling capital works program.

Figure 5. How the new Structure Plan will be prepared



What we have heard previously

This discussion paper has considered previous community engagement relating to Croydon. The project team has considered findings from engagement undertaken as part of the development of the:

- *Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan (2006)*.
- Consultation for the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct in 2019.
- *Maroondah 2040: Our future together (2020)* community vision.
- 2020 draft consultant report on children and youth engagement.

Discussions with landowners to date have identified the following:

- A desire to have clear requirements for developments in the Centre.
- Croydon has many desirable assets making it attractive for investment.
- A strong desire for townhouses and a growing demand for apartments with three or more bedrooms.
- Current controls are limiting outcomes on sites and creating suburban responses rather than those suitable for an activity centre.

Discussions with traders to date have identified the following:

- A loyal customer base with many traders who have been in the area for long time.
- Recognition of the need to attract new customer markets.
- Main Street needs to provide a high-amenity value and be very accessible.
- A need to accommodate for more people to live and work in the Centre, including shop top housing (one or more dwellings located above the ground floor of a building).
- The COVID-19 global pandemic revealed the need for businesses to be adaptive and respond to outdoor dining and enhanced footpath space.
- The quality of the links to car parks, parks and station are critical.
- Parks are a huge asset and should be capitalised on.
- Traders are keen to trial some temporary changes to road space for dining and cultural activities.

Table 1 summarises some of the key issues identified from past engagement.

Table 1. Summary of key issues from past engagement

Issues	Community aspirations
Local character and social harmony	• Manage growth and retain Croydon's distinct "village feel" • Preserve vibrancy of Croydon Town Centre where people shop, eat, relax and conduct business • Improve street and public space safety • Promote cultural and gender diversity • Promote social equity • Reflect a strong sense of belonging • Promote Croydon's cultural heritage and history.
Transport	• Encourage slow and safe traffic • Promote public transport by improving bus services and transport interchange • Promote active transport by improving walking and cycling connections.
Businesses	• Encourage and identify new economic and employment opportunities.
Housing	• Provide a range of different housing types to cater to different age groups and needs.
Health	• Promote health and mental wellbeing through accessible, inclusive and integrated community hubs, and improved infrastructure. • Provide a range of community services, programs, spaces and activities for people of all ages. • Increase opportunities for access to nature play.
Environment	• Mitigate climate change and promote a sustainable lifestyle • Maintain a green and leafy environment • Improve waste management • Create spaces for just 'being' - not active spaces



Negotiables and non-negotiables for the structure plan

There are a range of negotiables and non-negotiables that underpin the preparation of the structure plan. Negotiables refer to things that are under the direct control of, or can be influenced by, Council and the community. Non-negotiables refer to things that are not under the control of, or cannot be influenced by, Council and the community through this structure planning process. Negotiables and non-negotiables are listed below.

Negotiables: can be influenced	Non-negotiables: cannot be influenced or changed in this process
The vision and strategic directions for the activity centre.	The designation of Croydon as a Major Activity Centre.
The locations of growth and change areas.	State planning policy objectives and strategies for activity centres.
Built form controls including building heights, setbacks and character types.	The need for a contemporary, updated structure plan to guide the Centre.
How public and private areas connect.	Population projections, demographic changes and other factual information.
Responses to environment, landscape, housing, transport, climate change and water issues for the activity centre.	That there will be change in Croydon to support its growth as a centre that meets that needs of the community.
The activity centre's zones and overlays.	Changes to legislation, Victorian Government guidelines and planning practice notes.
Capital works such as street reconstruction and their delivery/priority.	
Final design and delivery of Council's Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct.	

Why it is important that we discuss a future for Croydon?

It is important that the community be involved in the discussion about the future of the Croydon MAC. While the structure plan has served the centre well, the following section outlines in more detail some of the important facts and influences that need to be considered further for various key themes.

It is unlikely that the current settings will meet the needs of the centre going forward. Delivering the same or “business as usual” responses are not likely to deliver the outcomes that meet future community needs and aspirations or the outcomes envisaged by State and local planning policies.

There are many ways that the Croydon MAC can develop over the coming decades to fulfil its role as an activity centre, designated as a regional location for greater housing and jobs around good transport. This paper proposes some potential responses for discussion and feedback into the development of the Croydon MAC Structure Plan.



**Have
your say!**

- What are the community’s aspirations for Croydon?
- How do we respond to the opportunities highlighted in this discussion paper?
- What other ideas and concerns does the community have about Croydon’s future?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac





Current planning context

Current planning framework

The Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan was adopted by Council in 2006 providing a plan to guide land use and development over a 30-year period.

An activity centre boundary was established incorporating the three sub-centres of Main Street Shopping Centre, Croydon Central Shopping Centre and Civic Square Shopping Centre (formerly Arndale Shopping Centre). This included the surrounding community and civic precinct, light industrial precincts and residential areas as shown in Figure 2.

Key themes and objectives of the 2006 structure plan included:

- **Activities.** Objective: Strengthen the retail, business and community roles of Croydon.
- **Built Form.** Objective: Maintain the “village feel” of Croydon, while introducing new buildings and activity in the Town Centre.
- **Spaces.** Objective: Create streets and spaces for people to enjoy.
- **Access.** Objective: Ensure ease of movement and access for all forms of transport.

Plan Melbourne 2017 - 2050 provides a strategic plan for metropolitan Melbourne through a long-term plan to accommodate Melbourne’s future growth in population and employment between 2017 and 2051. The Croydon MAC is categorised as a Major Activity Centre in this strategy.

State planning policy in the Maroondah Planning Scheme supports the continued planning and growth of the Croydon MAC through the following:

- 11.01-1S Settlement networks, 11.02-1S Supply of urban land, 11.02-2S Structure planning, 11.03-1S Activity centre network and 11.03-2S Activity centre planning.

These clauses promote the sustainable growth and development of Victoria through a network of major and neighbourhood activity centres of varying size, role and function and adjoining areas including residential land that supports their function.

- 15.01-1S Urban design and 15.01-2S Urban design principles.

These clauses aim to create urban environments that are safe, functional and provide good quality environments with a sense of place and cultural identity through considering a series of 11 principles and associated guidelines.

- 16.01-1S Integrated housing, 16.01-2S Location of residential development, 16.01-3S Housing opportunity areas, 16.01-4S Housing diversity and 16.01-5S Housing affordability.

These clauses provide policy for housing diversity and affordable housing, ensuring the sustainability and efficient provision of infrastructure with access to services, including walkability to activity centres, public transport, schools and open space.

- 18.01S Integrated transport, 18.01-1S Land use and transport planning, 18.02S Movement networks and 18.02-4S Management of the road system

Transport planning policy aims to create a safe and sustainable transport system by integrating land use/development and transport and encouraging walking and cycling by creating environments that are safe and attractive.

Local planning policy and strategy included in the Maroondah Planning Scheme supports well designed medium and high density housing development and commercial development in close proximity to the Croydon MAC, major transport nodes and other commercial centres. This is included at Clauses 21.02, 21.03, 21.06, 21.07, 21.08, 22.05 and 22.09 of the Maroondah Planning Scheme.

Council’s Housing Strategy 2016 identifies substantial, natural and limited growth areas to cater for an additional 12,500 dwellings or 1% average growth in the municipality to 2041.

This strategic approach to residential development focuses urban change into a spectrum of development types and scenarios which are in order of priority:

- Metropolitan and Major Activity Centres.
- Neighbourhood Activity Centres, transport nodes and other commercial centres.
- Substantial growth areas and other identified precincts.

Limited growth areas, including ridgelines and similar types of areas, form the “minimal change bookend” of the urban change spectrum. In these areas, residential growth and development is least desirable and discouraged or prohibited by planning policy or provisions. The planning framework needs to be right to help achieve the best implementation of the structure plan – this might require changes to the existing planning framework.

Analysis of VCAT determinations and panel reports

A review of selected Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decisions and Panel Reports shows that there is significant support for residential and commercial development in the activity centre. The 'treed character' of Maroondah is also considered of importance along with the need to balance increased intensity of built form with landscaping and replacement canopy trees. Overall, Maroondah City Council has a very high proportion of its decisions upheld at VCAT at approximately 90%.

Although VCAT decisions mostly support residential and commercial development in the activity centre, some developments which have failed to adequately respond to the key strategic directions in the centre have been substantially modified or refused. In some cases there has been an inability of proposals to appropriately respond to neighbourhood character, landscape character, adjoining trees and provide good design outcomes particularly on more constrained, smaller lots and where existing vegetation is to be removed.

Local planning policy for the Croydon MAC encourages mixed use and residential proposals to locate on consolidated lots, providing better economies of scale and improved amenity and built form outcomes.

VCAT has mostly not supported Council's view that consolidation is required for apartment or multi-unit developments and that the failure to consolidate sites is contrary to the intent of planning policy and should lead to the refusal of proposals.

At times, community expectations about built form outcomes for some proposals has not been aligned to the existing development settings for the activity centre. There has also been some inconsistency between the structure plan's strategic directions, policy and planning provisions in the activity centre which could be improved.

Various VCAT decisions and Panel reports have highlighted some gaps, issues and mapping inconsistencies in the drafting of strategies and policies including Clauses 21.07, 21.08, 22.02 and 22.09 which need to be remedied.

Many of these inconsistencies are caused by changes from the State Government to the residential zones and the maximum building height requirements in 2013 and 2017 and from various successive planning scheme amendments over time that have not been well aligned. The development of a new structure plan and revised strategy, policy and planning provisions can help to resolve these issues for the activity centre.

The most recent planning panel reports associated with the activity centre were for Amendments C56, C85 and C90. The reports offer valuable insights into, strategic, drafting, scoping and procedural issues as well as to the background studies and technical work required for the necessary evidence base to support a contemporary structure plan and changes to the Maroondah Planning Scheme.

Various Panels have noted strong planning policy support for redevelopment of the activity centre to broaden the mix of commercial and retail uses available in the centre but have highlighted issues with how various strategy, policy and zone and overlay provisions are interpreted and then implemented.



Key themes

Overview

The following section is organised around the key themes of:

- **Housing and residential development**
- **Business and economic development**
- **Environment, sustainability and climate change**
- **Urban design and built form**
- **Transport and movement**
- **Community infrastructure**

Each theme includes a snapshot of what the 2006 structure plan identified and key information on what has changed since that time. Key facts and influences provides a summary of new information to be considered to inform the new structure plan and is drawn from the background reports. A series of opportunities are then provided for consideration in developing the new structure plan. The consultation on the discussion paper will centre around the level of support for these opportunities and community and stakeholder input on whether these opportunities are supported.



Mount View Street, Croydon





Housing and residential development

Since 2006

The 2006 structure plan identified the need for additional housing and population in the activity centre with new housing that increased the range of housing choices.

Since 2006, 461 dwellings have been constructed (to mid-2020) with an average of 35 dwellings per annum since 2010. Housing types have included townhouses, multi-dwellings (units) and 3 to 4 storey apartments, with 335 of the houses constructed having been apartments.

Key facts and influences

Over the past two decades, the Croydon region has been a major source of dwelling supply in Melbourne's outer east from numerous small scale subdivisions, medium density projects and higher density developments. Over the past five years the centre has recorded an average of 44 new dwellings per annum (an increase on the 10 year average) primarily from medium rise (3 to 4 storey) apartment projects.

There has been significant infill housing development within the centre's boundaries through new townhouses, units and apartments. The centre is attractive to young first home-owner, couple-only households with a loyal resident customer base. The size of the Centre's local retail catchment is projected to grow. This will help to sustain the Centre's cluster of existing retail and service uses and expand its entertainment and hospitality uses, but significant expansion of merchandise-based retail trade is not expected.

New residents to the Centre have come from households within the surrounding Croydon market housing area and the broader Maroondah Local Government Area (LGA) and areas to the east and south. Younger residents are making the Centre their home before moving further east when couples and families are formed.

In 2019, the median house and unit price in the suburb of Croydon was approximately \$695,000 and \$550,000 respectively which represents one of the most affordable housing markets in the eastern region.

The Centre's rental price points are higher than regional averages which suggests that renters are willing to pay a premium to access its amenity. However, overall the Centre supports more affordable rental dwellings than locations closer to the Melbourne Central Business District. Couples without children and family households with

children on moderate incomes have greater rental choice within the Centre. Low and very low income households are more likely to seek rental accommodation outside of the Centre.

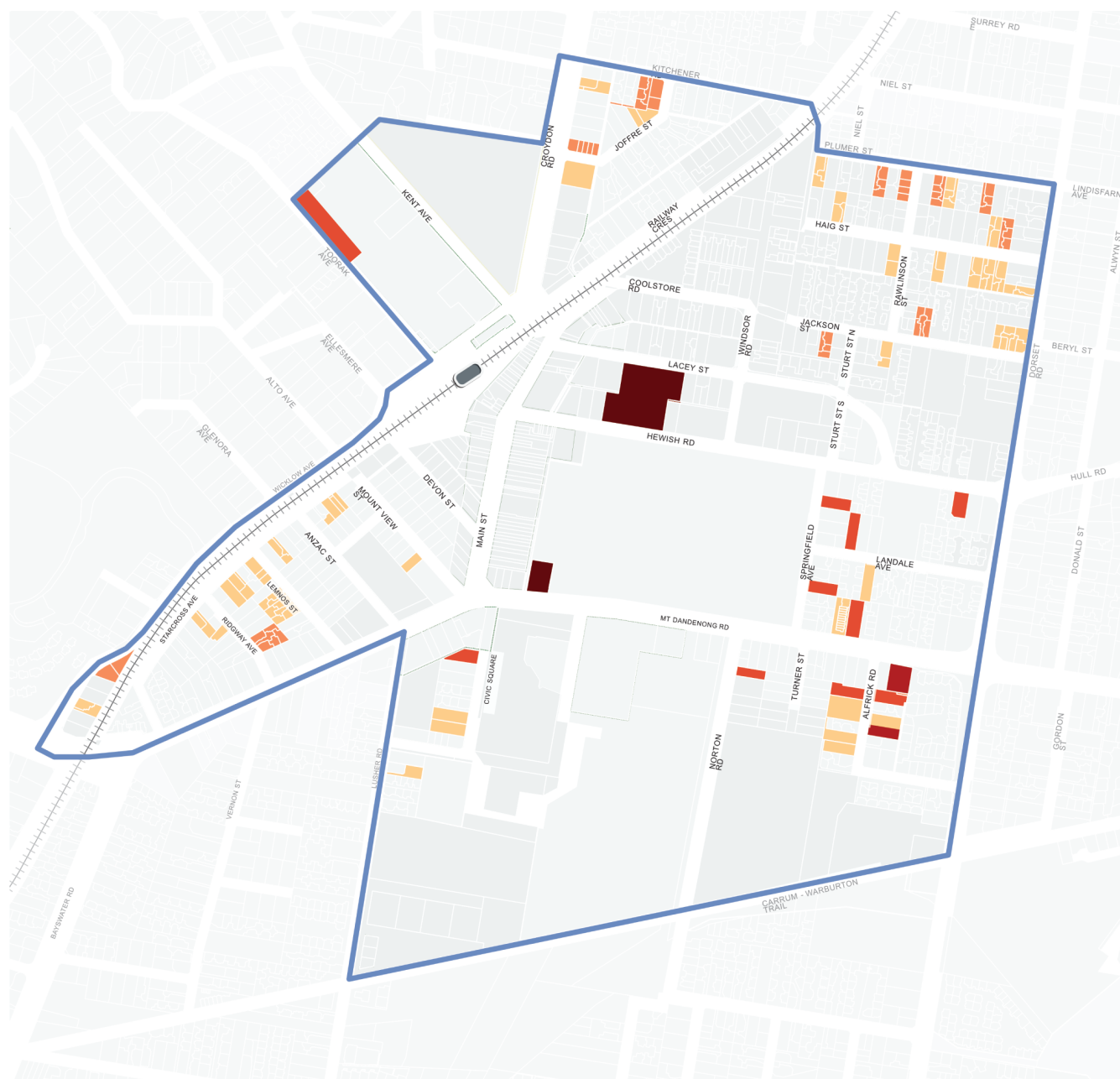
There are significant numbers of ageing households within the Croydon housing region that are not currently being retained in the region when households seek to downsize. Greater choice in housing types that cater for downsizing households are needed so that people wishing to downsize are able to age in place in the communities that they know and like.

The Maroondah community identified the need for safe and affordable housing options in accessible locations to suit a range of lifestyle and life-stage requirements in the *Maroondah 2040: Our future together (2020)* community vision. The Maroondah Housing Strategy identified Croydon as a location for additional housing and suitable for apartment development. Improving affordability, accessibility and social housing opportunities were also identified.

The Centre's housing supply is predominantly driven by major projects of more than 10 dwellings which are mostly directed to higher density development. In the short-term, as many as 80 dwellings are likely to be added to the Centre's dwelling stock to 2021. There are at least 114 potentially available sites of between 200 and 1500+ sqm that provide realistic housing opportunities to add to short-term future supply.

The current zoning and built form controls of the Centre provide capacity for approximately 1,600 dwellings to be constructed by 2036. This equates to enough housing for 35 to 45 years of supply. The addition of major redevelopment sites to the overall quantum of housing capacity could boost the Centre's capacity to 2,200 dwellings, with the potential to double the Centre's population to 4,800 people by 2036.

Figure 6. Additional Housing Supply in Croydon MAC 2003 - 2021



LEGEND

Number of Dwellings Constructed

0-2

2-7

7-20

20-42

42-104

Existing Activity Centre Boundary



Source: Charter Keck Cramer, 2020, DELWP: Housing Development Data 2016

Croydon is well placed as a location for affordable and social housing as it has good public transport access and there are a range of community, retail and social services available within the Centre.

Figure 6 shows where new houses have been delivered since 2003. It shows there has been limited housing development in the core of the activity centre around Main Street, while areas along Mount Dandenong Road and Hewish Road have seen substantial change.



What is social and affordable housing?

The terms 'social housing' and 'affordable housing' are often used but have very different and distinct meanings. The following definitions come from Homes for Victorians; Affordability, Access and Choice, 2017.

Social housing is an umbrella term that includes both public housing and community housing. Its provision usually involves some degree of subsidy.

Affordable housing is housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of very low to moderate income households, and priced (whether mortgage repayments or rent) so these households are able to meet their other essential basic living costs.

In the Croydon context, delivering affordable housing is about ensuring there is housing stock available that meets the needs of low to moderate households largely through the private market. Social housing is about identifying sites and developers (both public or private) who may be willing to gift land or provide a long-term lease and partner with a housing provider to deliver, and often manage, housing at a subsidised rate.

Opportunities to consider in the new structure plan

Along with many of the directions of the existing 2006 structure plan, the new structure plan could incorporate some or all of the opportunities identified below.

Continue to promote the Centre as a housing destination

Population growth pressures will continue and this growth could be channelled into residential, mixed use and some commercial and repurposed industrial precincts with the centre. Figure 7 outlines potential sites for housing within the Centre.

Housing opportunities facilitated

In planning for the future form of the activity centre, the development of medium and high density dwellings/apartments could continue so that there is an adequate supply of housing for the community's future needs.

Residential opportunities could continue to be provided through major redevelopment sites within the centre, where development is facilitated to cater for much of the housing demands in the centre with different housing typologies in mixed use, residential, main road, shop top and some commercial precincts.

Diverse and affordable housing for all

The structure plan could encourage housing to support a diversity of households in the activity centre to ensure families, couples, and lone persons on a range of incomes and abilities can live in the Centre.

The structure plan could set an affordable housing target for a percentage of dwellings for low to middle income households on developments over 20 dwellings and require developers to enter into voluntary affordable housing agreements. Council could also consider using its own land and redevelopment within the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct as well as surplus government land to deliver affordable or social housing. This could involve partnering with a Social Housing Provider. Several other municipalities have set between 20% and 25% affordable housing targets for land in Council ownership.

These potential housing opportunity areas for the Croydon MAC are shown in Figure 7.

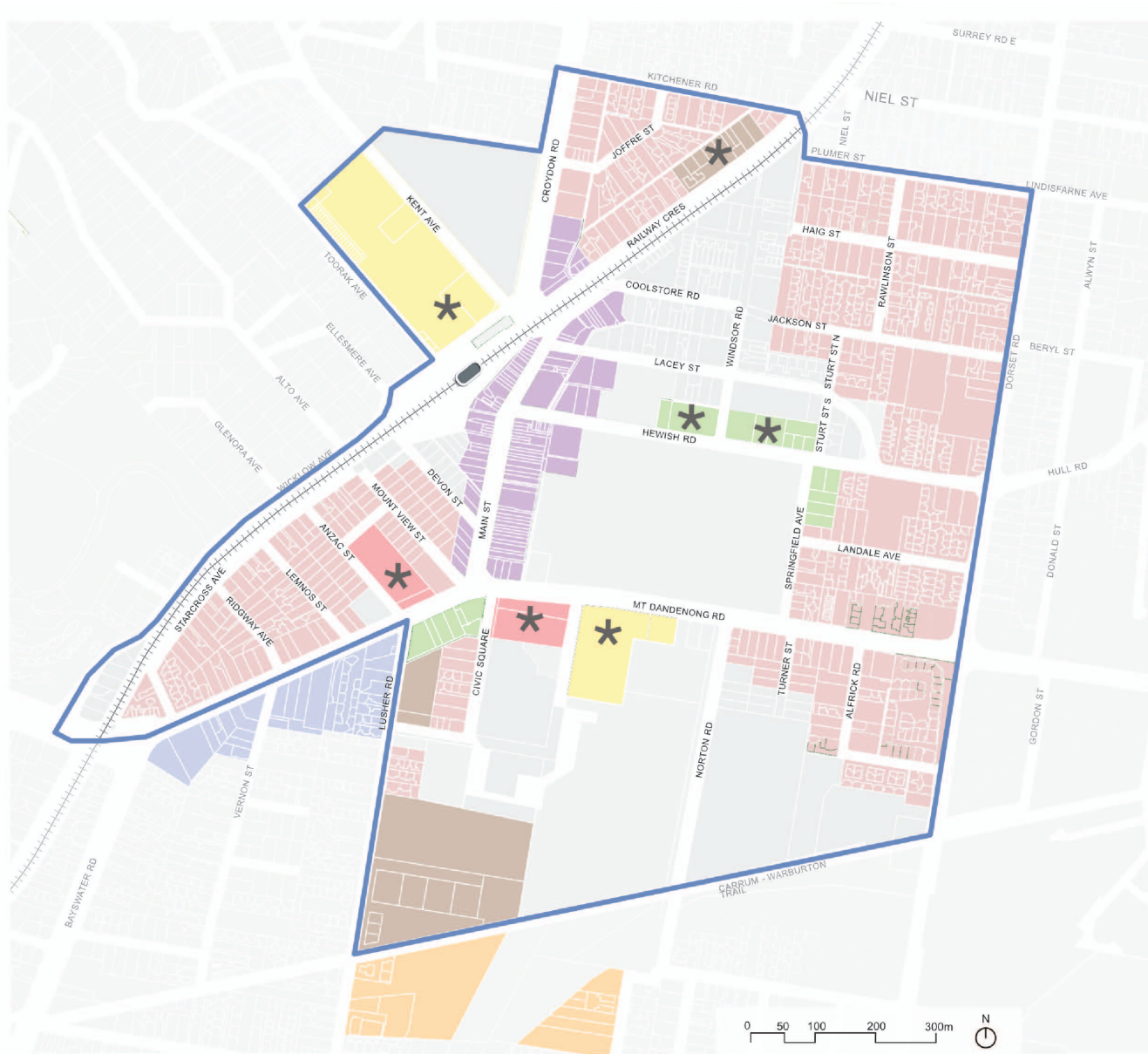


**Have
your say!**

- What should Council be considering when deciding on the location of future housing in Croydon MAC?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac

Figure 7. Potential housing opportunity areas



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Existing Activity Centre Boundary |  | Industrial Areas Suitable to Transition to Mixed Use Including Housing |  |
| Existing Residential Areas |  | Potential Industrial Area Suitable for Transition to Mixed Use |  |
| Mixed Use Housing (apartments) area |  | Housing Opportunities Above Community Uses |  |
| Areas Suitable for Mixed Use Housing (Apartment Style) |  | Areas Generally Not Suitable for Housing |  |
| Housing (apartments) Above Retail/ Office |  | Affordable Housing Opportunity Areas |  |
| Housing Opportunities Above Ground Floor Retail/ Commercial Uses |  | | |



Business and economic development

Since 2006

The structure plan aimed to strengthen the retail, business, industrial and employment role of the activity centre with new housing, entertainment and night time activities. Three distinct retail and commercial areas were identified that were complemented by light industrial land uses all requiring improved integration. Activity, a night time economy, and housing were seen as lacking in the centre along with a need to better integrate the range of land areas.

A number of sites were identified as suitable to rezone from industrial land to mixed use - with most yet to be realised. While the number of cafes has grown, there is still a limited night time economy. Redevelopment of the Croydon Central and Civic Square shopping centres has occurred recently raising the quality of the retail offer in the Centre.

Key facts and influences

The Croydon MAC functions as a leading subregional centre incorporating local retail, service, civic and recreational uses. The Centre is the main service and retail centre for a residential catchment of approximately 74,000 people (2016) and is expected to grow to serve 91,000 people in 2036. It complements the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre which is a higher order retail, commercial and experiential shopping destination centre.

The Centre includes numerous health, fitness and food and beverage enterprises as well as retailing, industrial, automotive, commercial, office, civic and community functions. Swinburne University's Croydon campus is located within it and the Centre has a growing role as a major public and professional services node. Other than some supermarket and fast food chains, it has not been a major attractor of national retailers and major enterprises. Figure 8 shows the employment precincts in the Centre.

There is an estimated 35,500 square metres of commercial floor space within the Centre. At 2016, there were approximately 3,300 jobs within the Centre with a growth rate of 1.1% per annum. Growth occurred in the health, social services, food and beverage sectors with declines in retailing, warehousing and manufacturing. In 2016, its major employment components included approximately 60% of jobs that provided services and 20% of jobs in the retail sector.

The map displays the City of Greater Geelong with various colored zones and labeled streets. The central area is highlighted in orange, surrounded by a blue outline. Other zones include green (Croydon Park), yellow (Civic Square), and blue (coastal areas). Streets labeled include Kent Ave, Croydon Rd, Main St, Devon St, Mount View St, Anzac St, Lemnos St, Ridgway Ave, Starcross Ave, Glenora Ave, Wicklow Ave, Alto Ave, Ellesmere Ave, Joffre St, Kitchen Rd, Plumer St, Rawlinson St, Haig St, Jackson St, Lacey St, Coolstore Rd, Windsor Rd, Hewish Rd, Springfield Ave, Landale Ave, Mt Dandenong Rd, Alrick Rd, Carrum-Warburton Trail, Norton Rd, Fred Geale Oval, Tarralla Creek, Lusher Rd, Vernon St, Bay Swater Rd, and Bayswater Rd. A small brown icon representing a train is located on Main St near the center of the orange zone.





Employment density in the Croydon MAC ranges from 22 to 57 jobs per hectare for industrial land, with 74 jobs per hectare for retailing. Nearby employment clusters such as the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre and the Bayswater Business Precinct have experienced stronger recent jobs growth.

Forecast floorspace demand for different uses to 2036 are provided below:



+3,200 sqm

Retail, food and beverage



+2,000 sqm

Education



+5,500 sqm

Health social and professional services



+2,000 sqm

Urban services

The Centre incorporates two industrial precincts of local significance and comprised 1,100 jobs in 2016. Over the past two decades, these areas have transitioned into local urban service centres. Major manufacturing and logistical uses have now largely left Croydon with remaining sites in the Centre's west (+5,000sqm sites) being repurposed for storage, places of worship and wholesaling uses. Within the region, the nearby Bayswater Business Precinct is emerging as a major commercial and industrial cluster of regional significance.

For smaller enterprises and sole traders, there are a variety of affordable, small office spaces including shop top offices. These spaces will continue to be attractive to small scale professional service providers as well as health and social service providers. There is demand for office space from small firms and individuals who have been priced out of more accessible locations and there will be declines in manufacturing and wholesaling activity which will create additional floorspace for urban services.

The COVID-19 pandemic provides challenges to the centre with some businesses likely to struggle to survive. Traditionally, vacancy within Main Street has been very low. This could lead to commercial and industrial vacancies and a difficult trading environment over the coming few years until the economy recovers. However, there may also be additional opportunities for office space with firms attracted to locations in the suburbs with parking.

Opportunities to consider in the new structure plan

Along with many of the directions of the existing 2006 Structure Plan, the new structure plan could incorporate some or all of the opportunities identified below.

Promote the night time economy

Developing a night time economy would help to provide a more vibrant activity centre. There are a number of shops within the Centre that could become restaurants and cafes without requiring a permit in the Commercial 1 Zone. A cinema is a great asset in the centre and there have been several cinema led revivals of centres across Melbourne including the Rivoli Village Cinemas in Camberwell and The Sun Theatre in Yarraville. Encouraging more housing within the centre including shop top housing would assist with the night time economy.

Rezone land to support the transitioning of industry to urban services

The structure plan could rezone the existing Industrial 1 zoned land to a zone that facilitates the continued growth of these areas as urban service locations. The Centre's traditional manufacturing and logistics uses have mostly relocated to other industrial precincts in the region and are unlikely to return which provides opportunities for new types of employment and other uses. This would support the opportunity for these areas to incorporate artisan activities, creative industries and lower impact industries and services that may support businesses operating in Main Street.

**Have
your say!**

- What are your reactions to the opportunities proposed to help grow the local economy? Have we missed anything?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac

Unrealised actions from the 2006 structure plan about land use should be actively pursued including rezoning of some industrial land to mixed use/residential growth for housing and employment uses.

Foster a localised office market

An increased office market and a business attraction strategy is critical for the Centre to provide more employment options for the local catchment and facilitated on commercial and industrial land. Demand from smaller firms is likely to drive the Centre's future office growth with dedicated office developments and shop top tenancies. Council could undertake work with existing land owners to identify underutilised floorspace and with developers/estate agents to find potential tenants for ground and upper level office space such as for health care providers and coworking spaces. Council can play a key role in identifying opportunities within its Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct for office and coworking spaces.



Source: Plan2Place Consulting



Source: Plan2Place Consulting

Create an “eat street”

To support the centre's response to the challenges of COVID-19, Council could increase the amount of outdoor eating and pedestrian space available in and adjacent to Main Street. This would assist businesses seeking to address COVID-19 risks and enable local residents to support local businesses. The temporary removal of car parking in front of eating venues through the use of bollards and greening offers a relatively inexpensive conversion of spaces.

This “eat-street” concept can evolve based on increasing the amount of space available for outdoor dining around existing restaurants and facilitate an easy process to convert vacant commercial buildings into cafes and restaurants. This should be supported by working with traders and marketing the attractions of the Centre.



Source: City of Melbourne artists impression of an ‘eat street’



Environment, sustainability and climate change

Since 2006

The 2006 structure plan did not include a specific environment, sustainability and climate change theme but incorporated some of these issues in the sections which discussed Croydon's local identity and streets, physical infrastructure and pedestrian spaces.

There has been growing community concern over the environment and climate change since the development of the original plan. Council has committed to a range of targets for carbon, water and managing climate change risks. Many of these strategies deal with Council assets with both the buildings and environment. The new Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) Local Policy in the Maroondah Planning Scheme (if approved) and work on the Greening the Greyfields project has begun the process of translating community concerns about climate change into higher expectations for private developments.

Since the original Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan was developed, a greater knowledge and understanding of stormwater, in particular flooding behaviour, within the area has been gained as a result of severe storm events and flood modelling studies. This knowledge and understanding differs notably to that which was summarised in the 2006 structure plan.

Key facts and influences

Climate change and intensification of development due to a growing population create environmental challenges. In the coming decades, Croydon (like all of Melbourne's eastern region) can expect increasingly hotter and drier conditions with predicted impacts such as:

- Heat with increased frequency, duration and severity of heatwaves.
- Drought with decreased average rainfall and more severe, prolonged drought conditions.
- Floods and storms with less regular but more intense rainfall and storm events.

Urban heat

There are a number of threats to community wellbeing and liveability including a disconnection from nature in urban areas and loss of local amenity with flow on effects to health and active lifestyles. These community wellbeing impacts are further exacerbated by the increasing Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect and vulnerability of particular groups (i.e. lower socio-economic and elderly groups) to such heat events.

Vegetation mapping data from Council's Tree Ledger indicates that between 2011-2019 the precinct experienced a reduction in total vegetation cover as shown in Figure 9 (with losses shown in red).

The benefits of greening and retaining water in the urban environment to mitigate the effects of the UHI effect are increasingly understood. Vegetation and water retention make an important contribution to regulating the local climate through both the provision of shade and evapotranspiration which reduces the surrounding air temperature.

The replacement of trees and vegetation for more impermeable surfaces associated with the intensification of urban development exacerbates UHI. More hard surfaces such as roofs, driveways, carparks and roads also reduces the area of permeable surfaces and prevents water being absorbed into the landscape. This exacerbates issues of flooding, UHI and drying of soils leading to loss of tree canopy, biodiversity and flora and fauna habitat, impacts green space quality and has health impacts due to heat exposure and impacts.

Figure 9. Vegetation Change in the Croydon MAC (2011-2019)



Legend

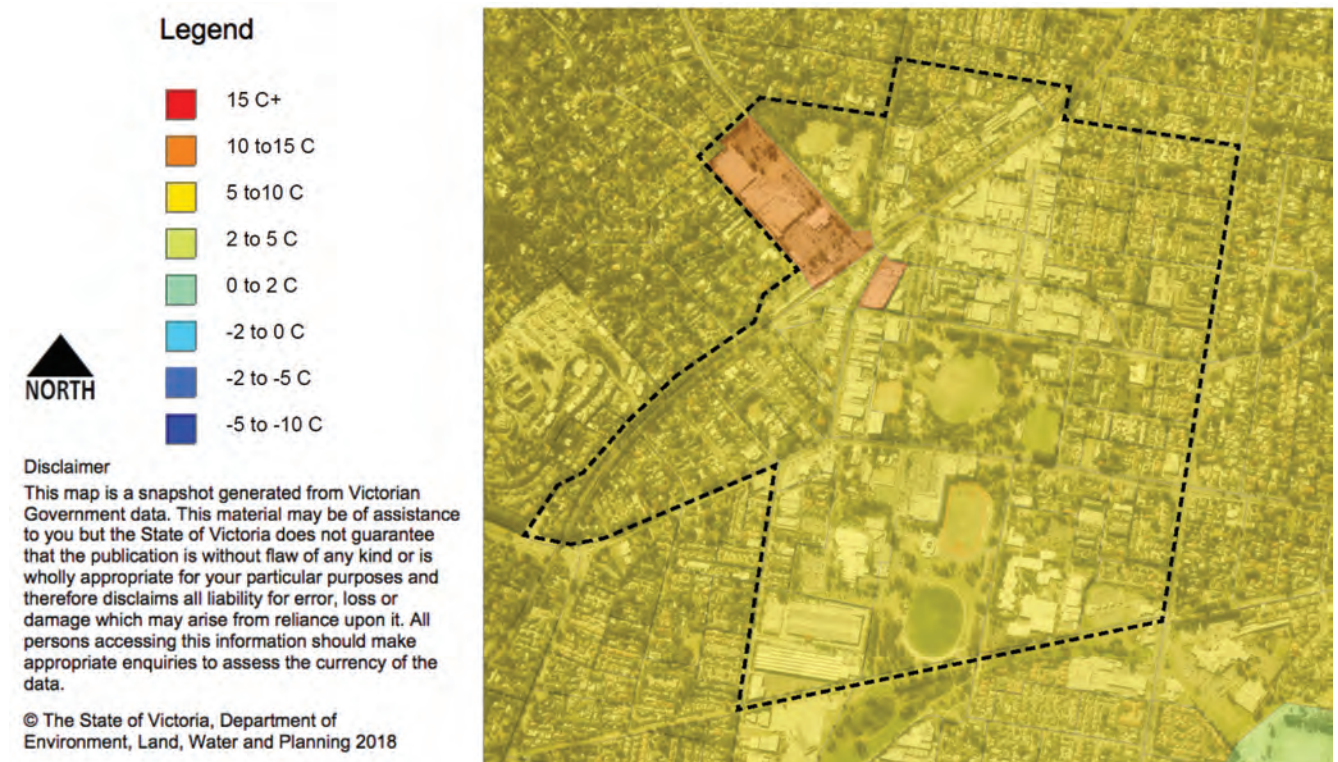
Foliage Cover Change, 2011-19

- Maroondah Tree Ledger, 2019
- Maroondah Tree Ledger, 2011

Despite large open space areas, the Centre's lack of canopy cover outside of these areas directly contributes to urban heat within the precinct. The majority of the precinct experiences temperatures between 5°C and 10°C above those expected in rural settings. Urban heat spikes (at 10°C to 15°C) around Croydon Central Shopping Centre. This is due to the significant mass of buildings and the large asphalt car park which is not protected by vegetation cover as shown in Figures 10 and 11.

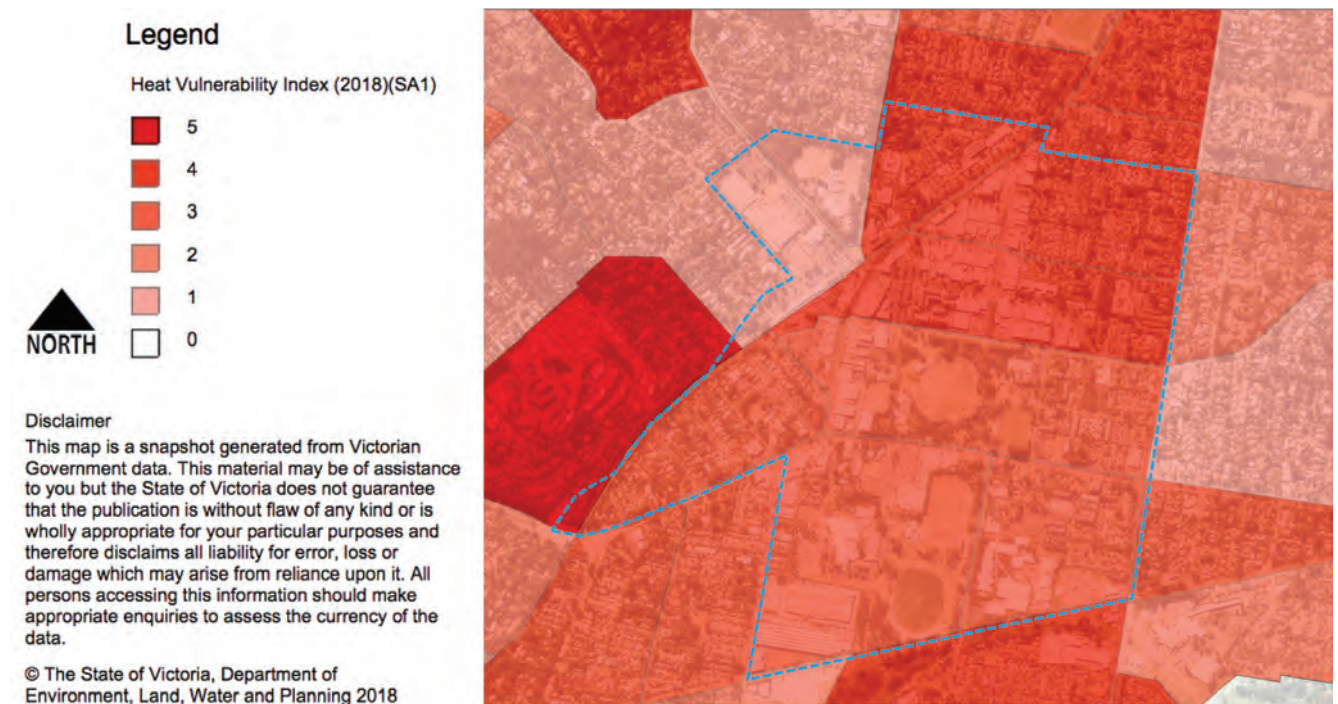


Figure 10. Urban heat within the Croydon MAC.



Source: DELWP

Figure 11. Urban health vulnerability within the Croydon MAC.



Source: DELWP



Y Space skate park, Croydon



Flood and storm intensity

Much of the Croydon MAC is flat and experiences significant flood risk during heavy rainfall events. This has focused the spotlight on the management of the Upper Croydon Main Drain drainage sub-catchment. The catchment is managed by Council. The major flow runs north to south along Sturt Street and Windsor Road, through Croydon Oval and Norton Road and finally re-joins the Tarralla Creek south of Fred Geale Oval.

The centre has experienced a number of significant flood events which have damaged public and private assets in the centre. Currently there is no recognition in the Maroondah Planning Scheme of this significant risk. Council has recently undertaken investigation and modelling to understand the flooding extent and consider a flooding overlay through the centre to respond to recent flooding events. Examples of a flooding event in 2010 to 2016 are shown below:



To date, the drainage strategy for the centre has relied on traditional 'grey infrastructure' drainage solutions and a flooding overlay is the most effective approach to managing flooding where it impacts the centre. A possible flooding overlay is shown in Figure 12.

However, there are identified capacity issues with the drainage network which can be partly addressed through a combination of measures targeted at reducing reliance on the underground drainage network, increased retention on private land and stormwater retention on public land which also can provide significant landscape amenity.

As a receiving waterway for stormwater runoff within the centre and a corridor between Croydon MAC and surrounding suburbs, the environmental quality of Tarralla Creek (and waterway environments it connects to) has been degraded.

The Re-Imagining Tarralla Creek Project aims to revitalise the waterway from Bayswater to Dorset Road, including the wetlands immediately south of Fred Geale Oval. The project aims to improve the health of the waterway, while creating new pathways, pedestrian links and activating spaces for education and passive recreation.

The project has significant potential to increase native vegetation, provide urban cooling and high-quality passive open space. However ongoing development issues in the catchment (such as a lack of stormwater retention on private land) could undermine these improvements.



Flood storage basin at HLT Oulton Reserve, Preston where the playing area is inundated in a 20-year flood event but no water enters the basin in any event less than a five-year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI).

Source: Cardno



Rainfall decline and drought

The retention of water in the soil is very important for vegetation health and urban cooling. Greener, irrigated spaces naturally stay cooler as they do not store heat like concrete and buildings but instead transfer water to the atmosphere and cool the local air temperature through evapotranspiration. However, existing vegetation and public open spaces are largely serviced by potable water, demand for which will increase alongside an increased provision for vegetation.

Opportunities for harvesting alternative water sources such as rainwater, stormwater and recycled water and storing them for use in hotter periods could be prioritised over the medium to long term. The significant active and passive open space within and in proximity to the Centre (including the Dorset Public Golf Course) are significant water users.

As rainfall becomes more variable along with more extreme rainfall events, reduced reliance on mains water will be an advantage.

Carbon reduction

In addition to adapting to a changing climate, the development of the Centre could prioritise a development pathway which addresses carbon emissions from the outset. One of the most effective methods of reducing carbon for development (stationary energy, waste and transport related emissions) is through the statutory planning process to ensure the built environment embeds energy and water efficiency within the design and operation of buildings, improves surrounding ecological value and manages stormwater appropriately.

Environmental services opportunities

- Street trees can reduce day temperatures by between 5°C and 20°C, making everyday activities more pleasurable and healthier¹.
- Up to 80% of the cooling effect of trees results directly from shading².
- Parks can be several degrees cooler than surrounding urban areas. The temperature difference is often largest at night and increases with park size³.
- Green roofs can reduce air-space cooling requirements inside those buildings.
- Restoring a more natural water balance (through widespread implementation of water sensitive urban design and flow regime management through the catchment) can support higher base flows in urban streams which in turn supports cooling when needed⁴.

¹ Mullaney J, Lucke T, Trueman SJ (2015) A review of benefits and challenges in growing street trees in paved urban environments. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 134 157-166

² Shashua-Bar L and Hoffman ME (2000) Vegetation as a climatic component in the design of an urban street: An empirical model for predicting the cooling effect of urban green areas with trees. *Energy and Buildings* 31(3): 221-235

³ Bowler D, Buyung-Ali L, Knight TM, Pullin AS (2010) Urban greening to cool towns and cities: A systematic review of the empirical evidence. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 97 147-155

⁴ Burns MJ, Fletcher TD, Walsh CJ, et al. (2012) Hydrologic shortcomings of conventional urban stormwater management and opportunities for reform. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 105(3): 230-240

Figure 12. Potential extent of flooding overlay based on modelling





Opportunities to consider in the new structure plan

Along with many of the directions of the existing 2006 structure plan, the new structure plan could incorporate some or all of the opportunities identified below.

Council as leader in environmentally sustainable development

Council has the opportunity to showcase the beneficial outcomes of environmentally sustainable development (ESD) and contribute to a precinct scale approach to water management as part of the enhancement of the community's facilities and public open spaces. Council could continue to show leadership to the private sector by continuing to incorporate the desired outcomes (carbon reduction, urban heat, climate resilience, thermal comfort and flood mitigation) within community asset enhancement projects and initiatives.

The proposed Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct could be delivered through this lens, to ensure that there is a visible, tangible example for private development to follow. The redevelopment of this Precinct is a key opportunity to incorporate flood mitigation which could also contribute to landscape amenity and urban cooling within the Centre and increase climate resilience of important community assets.

Council's redevelopment of the precinct provides an opportunity over the coming decade to incorporate a range of environmental initiatives and showcase elements such as green roofs and walls, increased canopy cover, permeable solutions and other stormwater management approaches. With a few good examples in the centre, there is an opportunity to inspire local and potential ESD leading participants in the private domain.

A 'blue spine' through the Centre

There is an opportunity to celebrate water within the centre while dealing with its challenges by delivering a 'blue spine' of initiatives through the centre. This could provide a link to the wetlands and the role that the centre's natural 'bowl' once played. This could complement the Tarralla Creek revitalisation project which will deliver on key stormwater, vegetation and rainwater harvesting outcomes.

There is an opportunity to support Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) features within the streetscape to support quality vegetation provision. Key areas of focus include Windsor Rd (north of Hewish) and Norton Road where WSUD road redesign could assist with managing water flows through the centre.

Over the longer term, there is the opportunity to 'daylight' water movement through the landscape shown in Council's parkland and recreation projects. There is significant potential for stormwater harvesting and other integrated water cycle management (IWCM) opportunities to be included. This will need careful design to ensure that all of the elements work together to deal with the flooding impacts to significant parts of the centre.

The sporting and recreation areas provide a clear user for harvested stormwater to offset potable supply. Redevelopment areas could also include some form of IWCM. This 'blue spine' could celebrate water as an asset rather than a burden and provide an opportunity for habitat that attracts nature into the activity centre from places like Tarralla Creek. The use of indigenous plant species for tree cover, as well as patches of bird-friendly habitat, and a chain of wetlands along the blue spine could all support this.

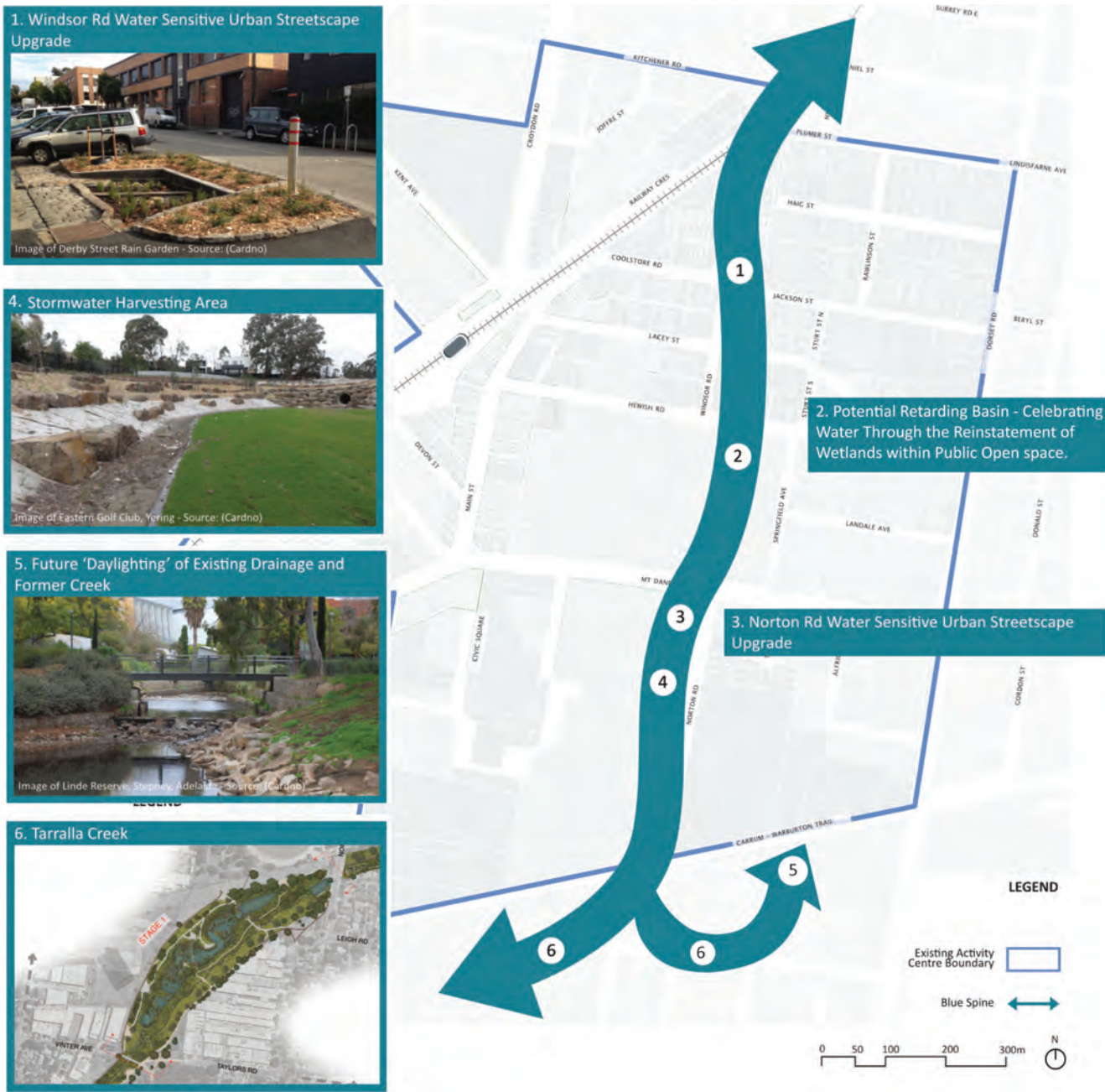
Figure 13 outlines potential initiatives along a 'blue spine' through the centre.

Case study: Parks Victoria

The recently constructed Parks Victoria head office in Albert Park is an excellent example of a government entity leading the way in ESD. In addition to exceptional thermal performance and on-site renewable generation – the building features rainwater harvesting and stormwater management through permeable surfaces and a strong integration of vegetation within the façade and setbacks.



Figure 13. Croydon MAC – potential ‘blue spine’





Increasing canopy cover

The new structure plan could set a target for the centre for increased canopy cover over the medium and long term. It could also identify areas where easy wins are possible such as on key streets and in Council's parks and gardens including:

- The industrial area between Windsor Road, Lacey Street and Coolstore Road.
- Between Keystone Hall and the Fred Geale Oval.
- Civic Square car parks.

Increasing vegetation on private land is usually slower and requires the development of specific planning controls (i.e. an ESD policy) to deliver this. Conflicts between canopy cover and other elements, such as plot ratio and development yield may arise. In such circumstances where the delivery of precinct scale flood and urban heat mitigation is desired, there may be opportunities to allow additional height for development in exchange for increased frontages to incorporate various canopy or water provisions.

Development of planning tools

Following and supporting the above, the structure plan could introduce new planning instruments and tools to effectively integrate and resource environmental requirements for urban development. As Maroondah is proposing to introduce an ESD policy consistent with surrounding municipalities, there is opportunity for increased performance to be targeted in areas of specific importance to the centre. This could also be achieved through Council's engineering and drainage requirements.

Elements to consider could include:

- Increased requirements for rainwater detention on private land as part of the development process.
- Setting green cover requirements for development as part of a strategy for increasing green cover which is in decline across the Centre.



**Have
your say!**

- Are there any other environmental improvements you would like Council to explore?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac



Aerial View of Norton Road and Fred Geale Oval



Urban design and built form

Since 2006

The 2006 structure plan identified the need to improve the Centre's public realm to ensure a high quality environment with passive surveillance of public spaces, improved laneways and enhanced amenity. Council has invested in a number of urban design improvements since 2006. The structure plan retained existing heritage controls for heritage places and established an appropriate building scale for the centre that retained its valued character.



Urban design improvements since 2006 - the new Croydon Town Square, wombat crossings on Main Street and wayfinding signage

Areas suited to higher built form were identified that promoted more efficient use of space, greater definition of key sites and spaces, increased street activity and better surveillance of public areas. Higher scale or landmark buildings were identified, establishing a maximum building height of two to four storeys with differing setbacks. There are a number of examples of buildings of three to four storeys that have been constructed since 2006.



Examples of recent apartment buildings in Maroondah built since 2006

The Maroondah Neighbourhood Character Study 2019 adopted by Council in August 2020 recommended changing the precinct between the railway line and Mt Dandenong Road to the Residential Growth Zone to allow for buildings of four storeys.

Key facts and influences

The Croydon MAC has an urban structure with the main retail and commercial areas separate from major or arterial roads. This gives the Centre its look, feel function and individual character. Main Street developed in proximity to the railway station and parallel to the railway line reflecting the primacy of rail to the early development of the township long before the prevalence of motor vehicles. The associated low traffic volumes and speed on Main Street are significant contributors to the valued character and attributes of Croydon.

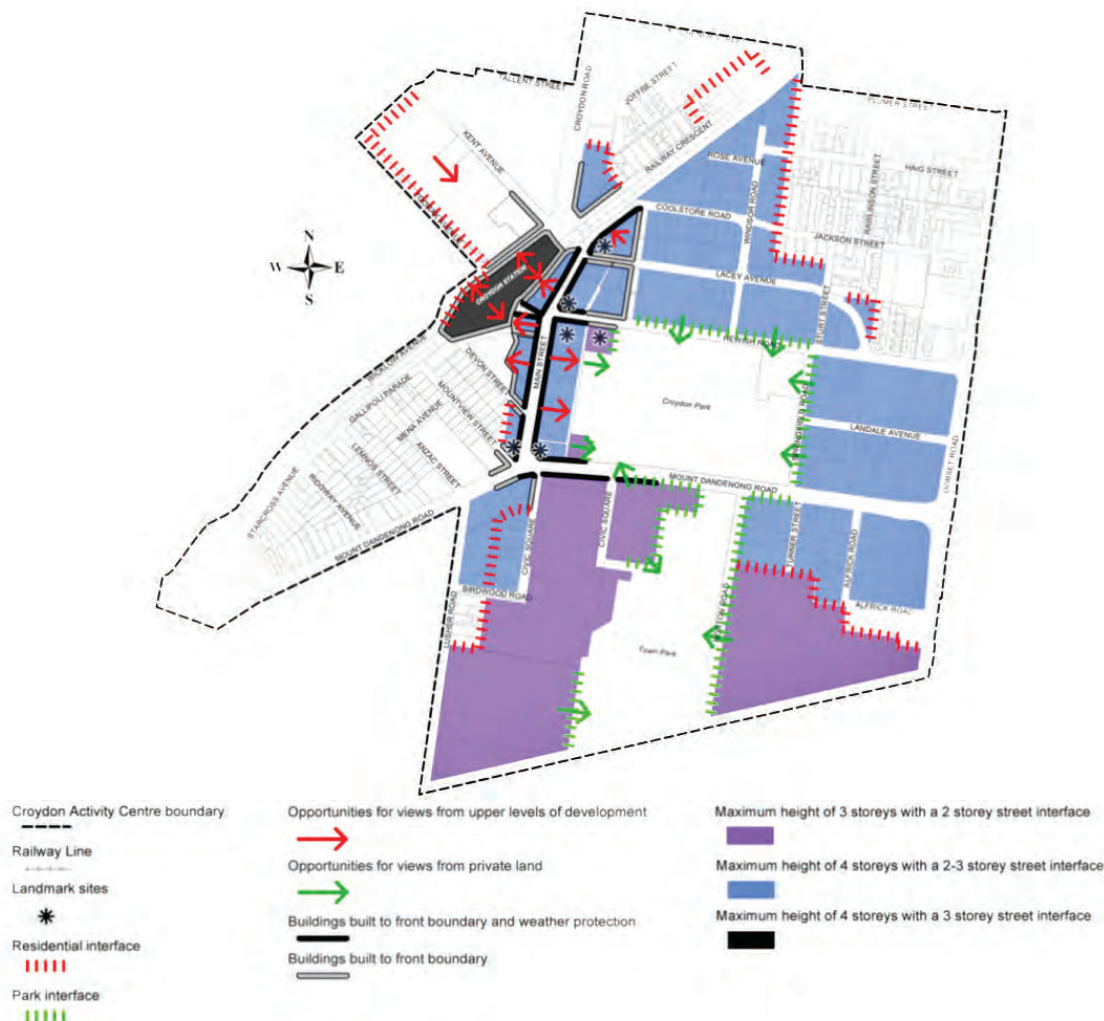
The spaces and places of Croydon's public realm support a variety of formal and informal activity. Council is continuing to invest in the quality of the public realm through streetscape, public space and parkland improvements. Projects such as the town square development have provided enhanced access, safety and facilities better linking the station precinct to structure plan could recognise the importance of this work for the Centre's health and vitality.

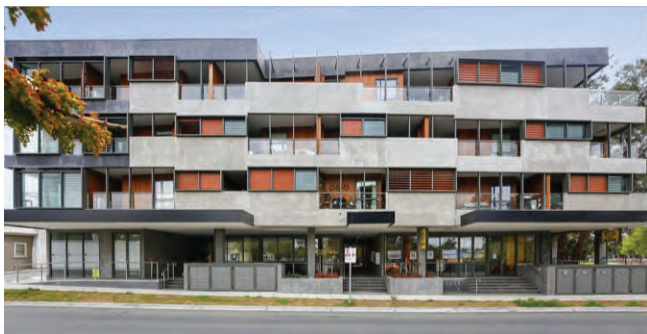
Parkland of approximately 35 ha is strategically located at the heart of the activity centre. The parkland supports diverse and inclusive activities for a broad cross-section of users and contains community and recreation facilities. The parklands play an important role in the community life of Croydon including public health and are a key environmental resource.

Tarralla Creek is an existing parkland corridor which connects the Croydon MAC with the surrounding suburbs. It performs an important role as a public open space and stormwater asset.

There are a number of views towards the Dandenong Ranges and Wicklow ridgeline that can be glimpsed above the treeline from the public environment. The existing built form controls in the Croydon MAC protect these shared views and are shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14. Croydon MAC - Existing built form planning controls





Address: 211 Mt Dandenong Road

Apartments: 65

Levels: 4 levels

Lot size: 1,850 sqm

Density: 351 dwellings per hectare



Address: 5-7 Alfrick Road

Apartments: 65

Levels: 4 levels

Lot size: 1,930 sqm

Density: 176 dwellings per hectare

Source: Charter Keck Cramer, 2020

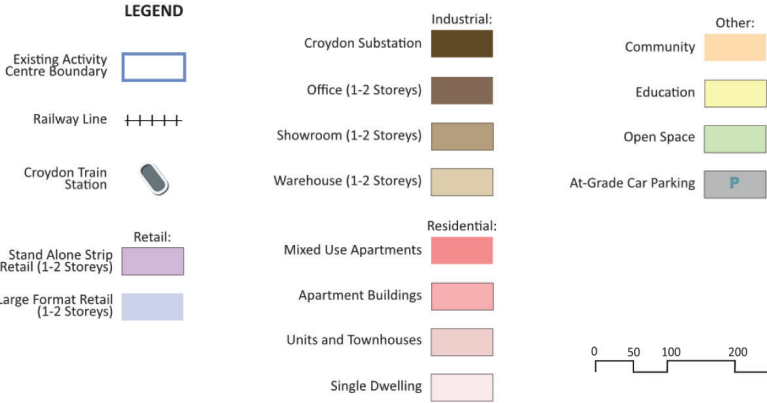
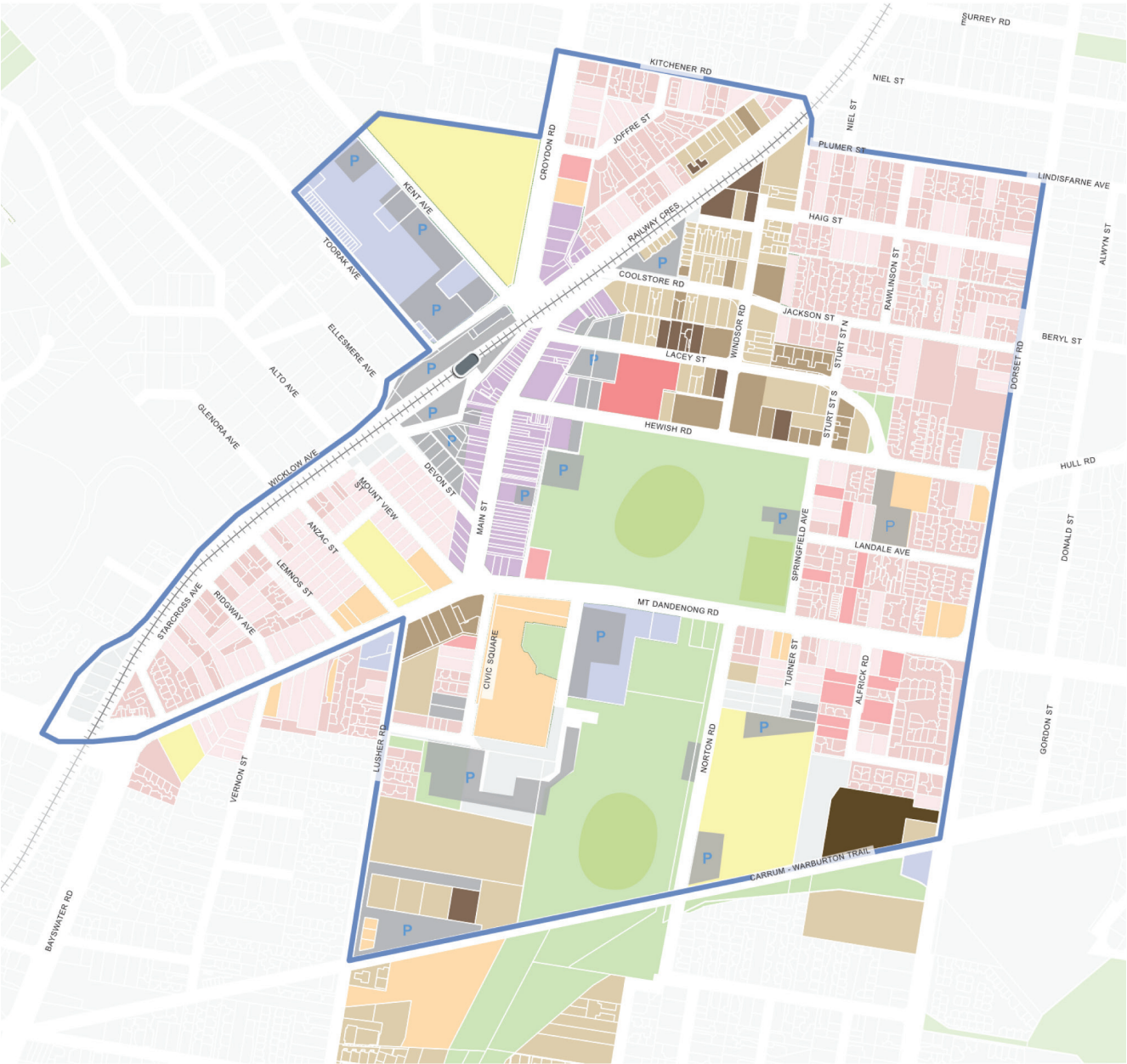
The centre is characterised by a range of existing single or double storey built form creating a generally open appearance due to the low scale buildings and wide road reserves. There are a number of higher scale buildings including the cinema, Croydon Central Shopping Centre and some more recently constructed apartment buildings of three to four storeys as shown in Figure 15. Examples and details of recent apartment developments are included above.

Safety improvements

A recent survey of women in Croydon (Croydon Women's Safety Walk Key Findings, September 2020) identified a number of potential urban design improvements for the centre that would improve their sense of safety within the centre. Womens' experiences and perceptions of public spaces differs to men and are critical when planning and designing spaces for the community.

Ideas included more people living and working in the centre, ensuring buildings are oriented to face parks, open spaces and trails, traffic calming on Mt Dandenong Road, enhanced pedestrian safety improvements, enhanced lighting in various locations, creating a safe waiting area for passenger pick up at Croydon Station, more visually appealing and beautification of spaces and ensuring spaces are disability compliant.

Figure 15. Croydon MAC – existing built form





Large landholdings within the Centre are detailed in Figure 16, showing the range of lot sizes within the centre and Council being a significant landowner. There are a number of large landholdings within the centre over 2000sqm including Swinburne University, the major supermarkets/shopping centres and a number of industrial sites .

Existing heritage places, although few, contribute to the existing built form character of the Centre and are identified by heritage overlays. Many other buildings not recognised with heritage protections, are reaching their end of life and require renewal and replacement which gives further opportunities for the growth and development of the Centre.

Examples of some key heritage buildings in the Centre are shown.



Example of heritage buildings in Croydon in Civic Square and Main Street

Opportunities to consider in the new structure plan

Along with many of the directions of the existing 2006 structure plan, the new structure plan could incorporate some or all of the opportunities identified below.

Facilitating responsive built form

Ensuring the continued facilitation of the residential and commercial growth of the Centre would require some changes to the existing built form controls. New development is critical to fulfil the community's desire for development to be concentrated in these areas. Built form controls need to be facilitative while protecting those elements of the public realm that are important and delivering high quality living and working environments for users. The structure plan could set out built form controls that address environmental considerations, promote high quality design, protect the public realm and public spaces, respond to abutting sites and interface issues, identify key locations for development and include building performance criteria. Opportunities for the nature of built form are outlined in Figure 17.

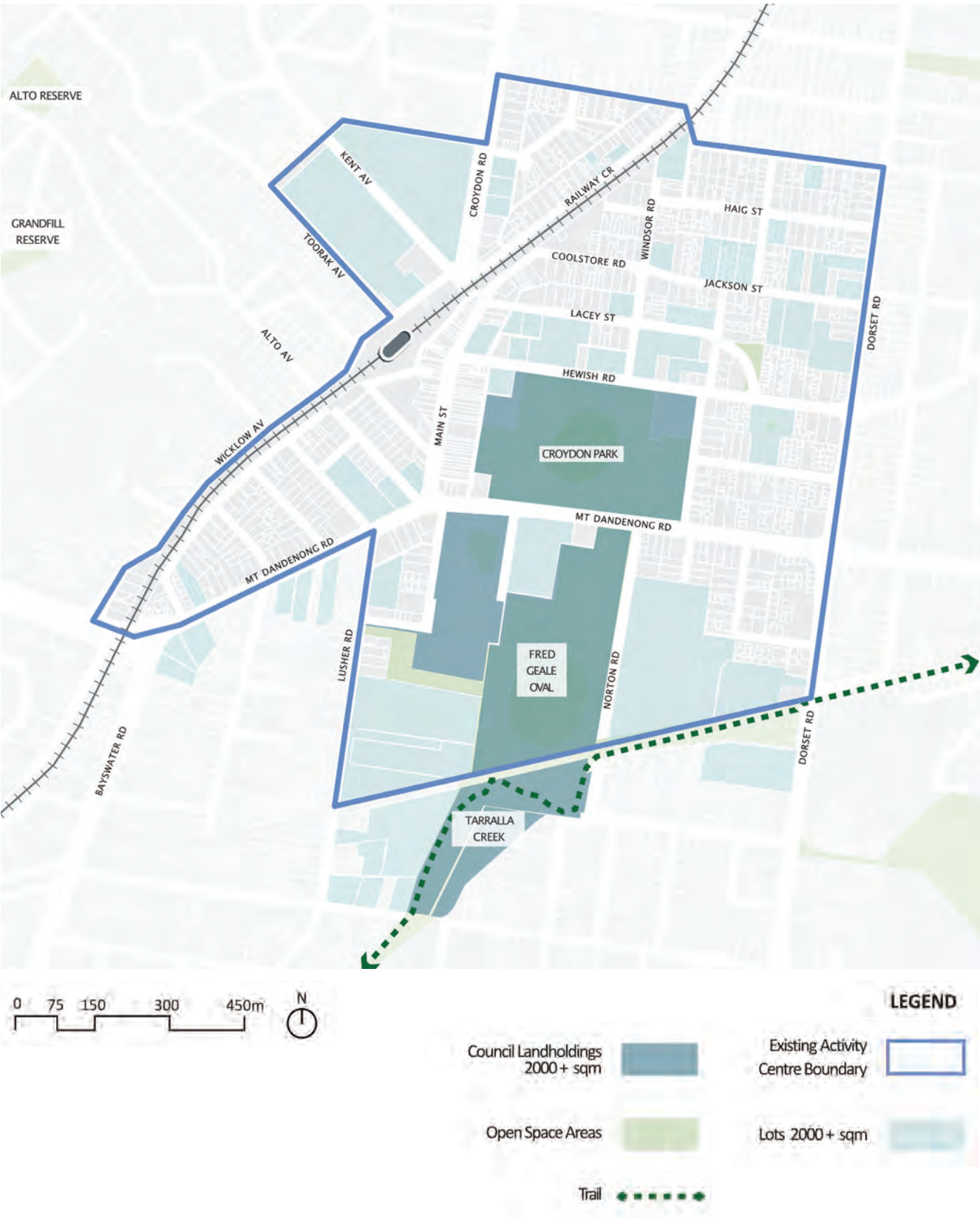
Opportunity sites

There are few opportunity sites identified that could facilitate community aspirations such as housing and employment over the longer term. The criteria considered to arrive at these opportunity sites includes:

- Land size is capable of absorbing increased development
- Strategic location within the MAC - close to services and access
- Site is located on a major road and/or in proximity to the Priority Pedestrian Transport Network (PPTN)
- Any off-site impacts on adjacent sensitive uses can be mitigated
- Will reinforce and support sustainable role of the centre.

These include areas of at-grade car parking that could be put to better use, particularly for uses that increase the amenity and economic activity within the centre and sites adjacent to parklands and main roads. There are also opportunities for improved integration between public spaces in the Centre and quality of these spaces.

Figure 16. Croydon MAC - Large land holdings





Key opportunity sites within the Centre will require careful integration with surrounding sensitive land uses and built form. Identified valued views and landscape features should be recognised in development proposals. The built form of more intensive development could be moderated through appropriate height and setbacks to protect the amenity of adjacent sensitive land uses and the structure plan could outline these for consideration.

Capitalise on the parklands

To capitalise on the significant parklands and green space within the activity centre, built form could be encouraged to improve physical and visual connectivity with the parklands through the creation of new development around the perimeter of parks and opportunities for activation of those edges adjacent to Main Street. This could offer a unique environment that focuses on wellbeing and the local connection with nature.

Tarralla Creek interface opportunities

The Reimagining Tarralla Creek project provides an opportunity to reconsider the land uses adjacent to the creek environment and enhance their interfaces with improved surveillance and overlooking of the open space.

Reinforcing the Main Street spine

The Main Street and its laneways and public spaces could be renewed to ensure that Main Street retains its role as the retail and activity spine of the Centre through place making initiatives that reinforce its economic and social role. Developing a new streetscape masterplan would renew the Centre over the coming decade through a consistent approach to materials, finishes and detailing that reinforce and celebrate Croydon's environmental and cultural identity.

To further enliven Main Street, the incorporation of cultural activities, including the addition of the arts experience in shops, laneways and Croydon Town Square could be pursued. Additional greening to support identity, local climate and amenity could be pursued such as the planting of large canopy trees in central medians or carparking areas. To support the Centre's response to the challenges of COVID-19, consideration could be made to increase the amount of outdoor eating space available. The temporary removal of car parking in front of eating venues through the use of bollards and greening offers a relatively inexpensive conversion of spaces for an appropriate health and economic response.

Density

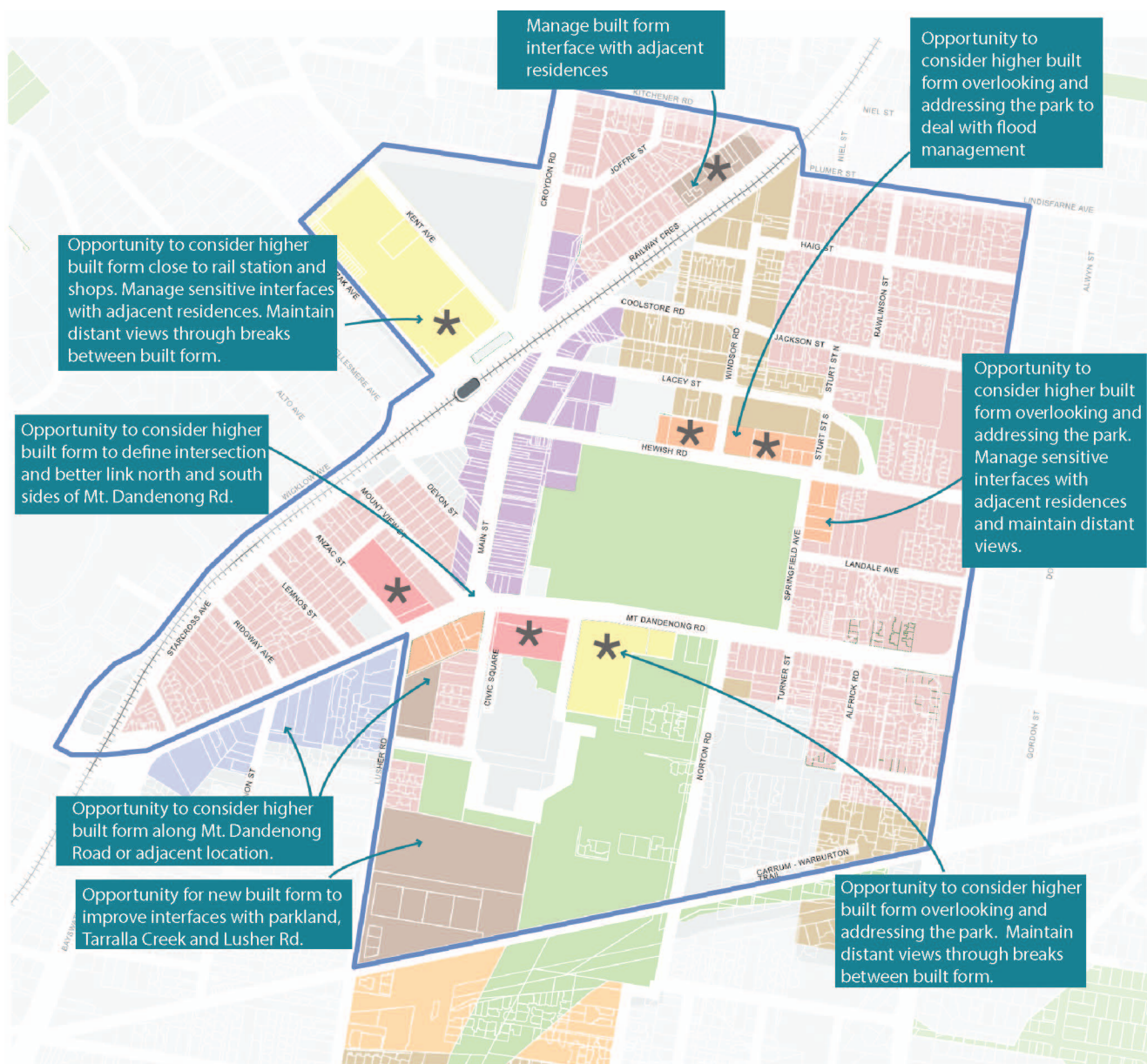
A key focus for the structure plan will be to continue to make Croydon active, vital and inclusive. It is important to provide for an evolving population in terms of household make up, household sizes, ages, and lifestyles. Part of this includes Croydon's buildings evolving to meet the needs of this changing population.

Different building types can make more efficient use of land by providing different numbers of dwellings. However, higher densities of dwellings do not automatically equate with higher buildings, depending on their floor area ratio. Increasing density can be subtle and incremental by encouraging new buildings that are designed in response to their context.

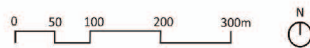
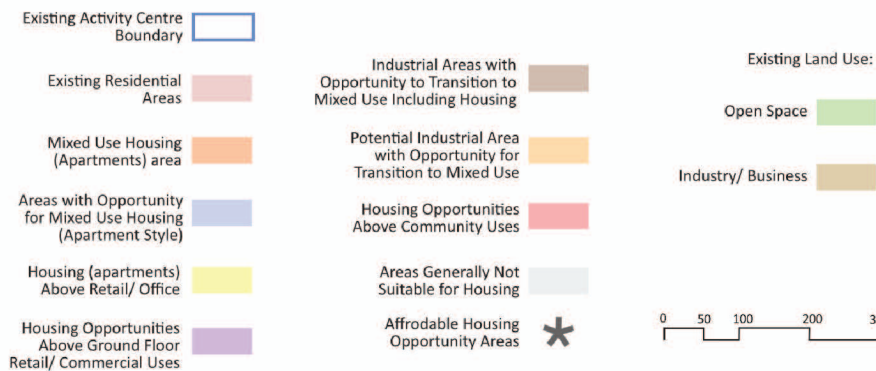
Providing for a range of building types is the key to good density. Croydon's existing large canopy of trees in open spaces can also contribute to softening the perceptions of new forms of buildings.



Figure 17. Croydon MAC – Built form opportunities



LEGEND





Next phase of links

Members of the community have identified that they felt unsafe in the carpark behind the Centre. A comprehensive review of vehicle and pedestrian movements and the layout of carparking could identify opportunities to improve safety and perceptions of safety. These improvements could include raised walkways, improved management of waste areas, improved interface treatments between carpark and the rear of shops, reconfiguration of carparking, lighting and activation of spaces through active uses (e.g. cafes).

Investment in enhanced pedestrian links to and through the Centre could significantly enhance access, activation, safety, health and sustainability of the community while also making a contribution to Croydon's cultural identity. The key links to be improved could include those between the Station precinct and car parks through to Main Street with examples shown below.



Examples of possible laneway enhancements

Recognising indigenous history

There are a range of areas where the treatment and management of public spaces could assist in recognising, interpreting and educating about the indigenous heritage of the first inhabitants of the centre. A discussion with local elders could begin a conversation about the most appropriate way to reflect this history. This could range from the naming of places/streets, through to references in the public realm, art and landscaping works, and the management of creeks, drainage and wetlands. References may not be physical, for example, singing which was common while moving from one place to another (particularly creation stories) could be referenced.

Flooding response for built form

The introduction of a new flooding planning control would result in buildings being constructed to respond to land identified as subject to inundation by flooding. This usually requires development to be raised above the flooding level as indicated for land subject to flooding in Figure 12. Any responses are likely to have an impact on built form in the Centre including building siting, treatments at ground level and basement designs.

WSUD treatments proposed may allow for a future change of use for Windsor Road to a more mixed use precinct – prompting water management improvements on private land at the same time.



An example of integrated storm water management - Fitzroy Gardens



Developing urban design guidelines

The incorporation of these elements could be expressed in an urban design strategy for the Centre as shown in Figure 18. This could be complemented by the development of urban design guidelines which could assist in clarifying expectations for the public realm of the Centre and deliver high quality places to support the social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of the community. These could provide guidance on issues such as the movement network, streets and public spaces and buildings and objects in the public realm and would ideally complement the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria.



- Where should we be focusing higher density development within the Centre? And why?
- When planning for future development in the Centre, what design principles should we be encouraging - types of materials, connectivity, promotion of street activity?
- When planning for future development in the Centre, how can we enhance the sense of place?
- What design qualities are most important to make the Centre an attractive destination?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac

Figure 18. Croydon MAC – potential urban design strategy



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Existing Activity Centre Boundary | | Potential Intersection Upgrades | |
| Protect and Celebrate Key Views | | Improve Pedestrian Links | |
| Activate Building Interfaces to Public Spaces | | Potential Street Tree Enhancement | |
| Public Parks and Spaces | | Major Project Areas | |
| Improve Function and Safety of At-grade Carparks | | Activate Ground Floor Frontages | |





Transport and movement

Since 2006

The 2006 structure plan identified that most trips to the activity centre were made by car. The 2006 structure plan sought to provide greater priority and amenity for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. The impacts of local and through traffic needed to be better managed with improved north-south links across the railway line for all modes and between the stand alone shopping centres and Main Street. Better use of car parking areas was identified as an aim, while maintaining existing car parking provision.

Council prepared the Croydon Pedestrian Priority Plan identified as an action in the structure plan. It has implemented many initiatives identified such as enhancements to Main Street (including wombat crossings), improved pedestrian priority across Coolstore Road and connections to some key destinations including through parkland areas.

Key facts and influences

Growth and change in Croydon will create challenges and opportunities for the transport network. Additional people living in the centre and their specific needs could be considered when designing improvements to the network.

The Centre is strongly split into three distinct precincts. The barriers to movement and street network layout present challenges for orientation, wayfinding, access and safety.

The Centre is well serviced by public transport facilities, with an underutilised bus network. The bus interchange at Croydon Station is one of the most important in the City of Maroondah. The bus network does not facilitate movement from Croydon North to any areas south of the railway line, while some areas such as the town centre area (both Main Street and Hewish Road) and the Civic Precinct south of Mt Dandenong Road are not currently serviced by bus at all.



Pedestrian rail crossing connecting Main Street to Wicklow Avenue, Croydon

Increased demand for improved pedestrian and cycling connections across Mt Dandenong Road, and throughout the Croydon MAC, will be generated by the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct development.

In order to accommodate growth in trips and the community's environmental desires, there could be significant improvement to, and promotion of, sustainable transport modes. This could focus on pedestrian and bicycle safety and the level of service on the network as shown below to make improvements within the 20 minute catchment of the centre.



Much of the local population could access day-to-day goods and services within a short walk or cycle. However, the abundance of at-grade car parking, safety concerns associated with the barriers to access, lack of consistent active transport priority across the study area and entrenched patterns of behaviour means that encouraging greater uptake of walking and cycling is difficult.

The existing street space management approach prioritises the provision of on-street parking over wider footpaths, cycle infrastructure provision and opportunities for public open space. This requires careful management to ensure the necessary level of vehicle access to support the needs and requirements of existing residents and businesses operating in the precinct.

There are approximately 4,500 on and off-street car parking spaces available in the Centre. The off-street supply is a combination of public transport parking and Council-managed facilities. A new multi-deck facility at Devon Street is being constructed to significantly increase parking availability at Croydon Station. Some areas of existing Council-managed off-street car parking supply further away from Main Street and the station are underutilised and may provide opportunities for repurposing.

Coolstore Road grade separation

Council has been advocating for the grade separation of the Lilydale railway line at Coolstore Road. This would represent a major step change for the Centre and deliver a range of benefits for local and regional traffic management and access; improved access to the public transport interchange; and improved cycling, walking and public realm environments as shown in Figure 19.

While the project has not been identified in the Victorian Government's current list of 75 grade separations, Council will continue to advocate for Coolstore Road to be added to government's future list. If an elevated rail design is used, the project would also facilitate land use change and potentially generate commercial value uplift. A major benefit would be the reduction in the barrier that the rail line currently creates leading to significant improvements to the way people can move around and the Centre's amenity.



Indicative concept only



Opportunities to consider in the new structure plan

Along with many of the directions of the existing 2006 Structure Plan, the new structure plan could incorporate some or all of the opportunities identified below.

Improving access by bicycle and walking

Opportunities exist to increase priority for bicycle and pedestrian movements and increase space for bicycle riders and pedestrians. Figure 20 identifies a range of pedestrian and bicycle improvement opportunities.

Improvements to the existing roundabout at Croydon Road, Wicklow Avenue, Coolstore Road and Kent Avenue through intersection signalisation could also be considered. This would improve safety and access for road users, including for pedestrians and cyclists to significant attractors in the centre such as the Croydon Station, Croydon Primary School and Croydon Central Shopping Centre.

These changes could ensure that local people feel safe using active modes to visit and stay longer in Croydon. It could reduce local transport costs and in turn increase local economic expenditure.

North-South Connector

The structure plan could propose a 'North-South Connector' providing a safe and prioritised shared path connection through the Centre. This could connect regional trail connections from the Carrum - Warburton Trail in the south, along Tarralla Creek, through the Centre and on to Silcock Reserve, Dorset Road, and ultimately connect along the rail line to Bushy Creek Trail and Mooroolbark.

Some priorities are shown in Figure 20 and could include:

- A 3 metre wide shared path in the railway reserve along Railway Crescent from Coolstore Road to Surrey Road West.
- A 3 metre wide shared path on the western side of Norton Road, linking the Carrum-Warburton Trail with Croydon Park via a potential new pedestrian crossing of Mt Dandenong Road at Norton Road.

Alterations to car parking arrangements would be required to facilitate the path through the Centre. This could be facilitated quickly through the use of temporary installations such as bollards initially to capitalise on existing behaviour change brought about by COVID-19 or with an alternative alignment.

Figure 19. Potential grade separation and the public realm



Source: Martyn Group & Impact, 2020, Croydon Major Activity Centre Transport and Movement Assessment



Planning for grade separation

Removal of the Coolstore Road level crossing could be expected to take a minimum of three years from the announcement of funding. In reality, this means that over the life of the new structure plan, the plan should be adaptable to both scenarios of being constructed and not constructed. The plan should not preclude the level crossing removal but also needs to achieve the best possible outcomes if the level crossing remains. Upon finalisation of an agreed design for grade separation, the structure plan could be further reviewed.

Consider if the Centre needs more parking

The impact that parking provisions within the Maroondah Planning Scheme have on future development could be considered further. Ample public parking around the Centre, and the parking provisions in their current form can create a disincentive for future development and changes of use. This can have an unintended impact of encouraging out of centre development, which can entrench economic losses and reduced economic productivity caused by dispersed activity and high reliance on car access. Improving bus services to and through Croydon could free up parking for those who need it as discussed below. Changes to the way people move around such as ride share services, and in the future, autonomous vehicles may also lessen the need for parking as could improved car parking management around high and low demand parking areas.

Public transport

There are opportunities to work with the Department of Transport to restructure bus routes through the Centre and rationalise bus stops to improve existing services consistent with the Maroondah bus service review. These changes could better service the town centre and Civic Centre Shopping Centre, as well as reconsider route configuration and improving service catchment and mode share.

Minimise the barrier of Mt Dandenong Road

The structure plan could consider narrowing Mt Dandenong Road in a similar way to Maroondah Highway in Ringwood. This could focus on minimising traffic speeds and the distance required for pedestrians to cross the road. Traffic flow and safety could be improved for all road users, ensuring that the corridor functions as a place that binds the whole activity centre together, rather than separating it. As the Victorian Government manages this road, negotiation to realise this initiative is required.

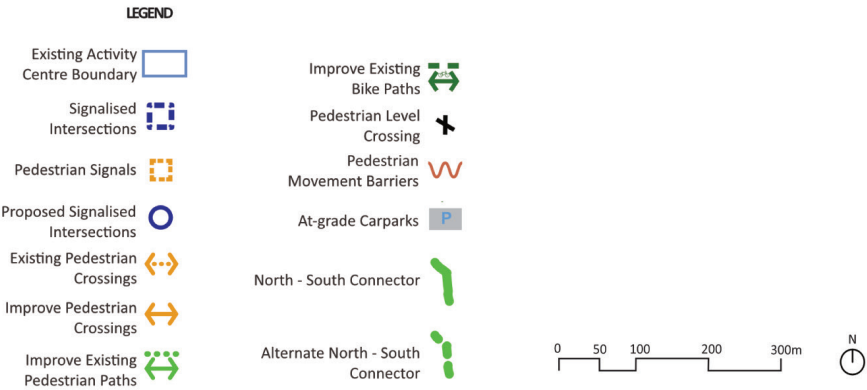
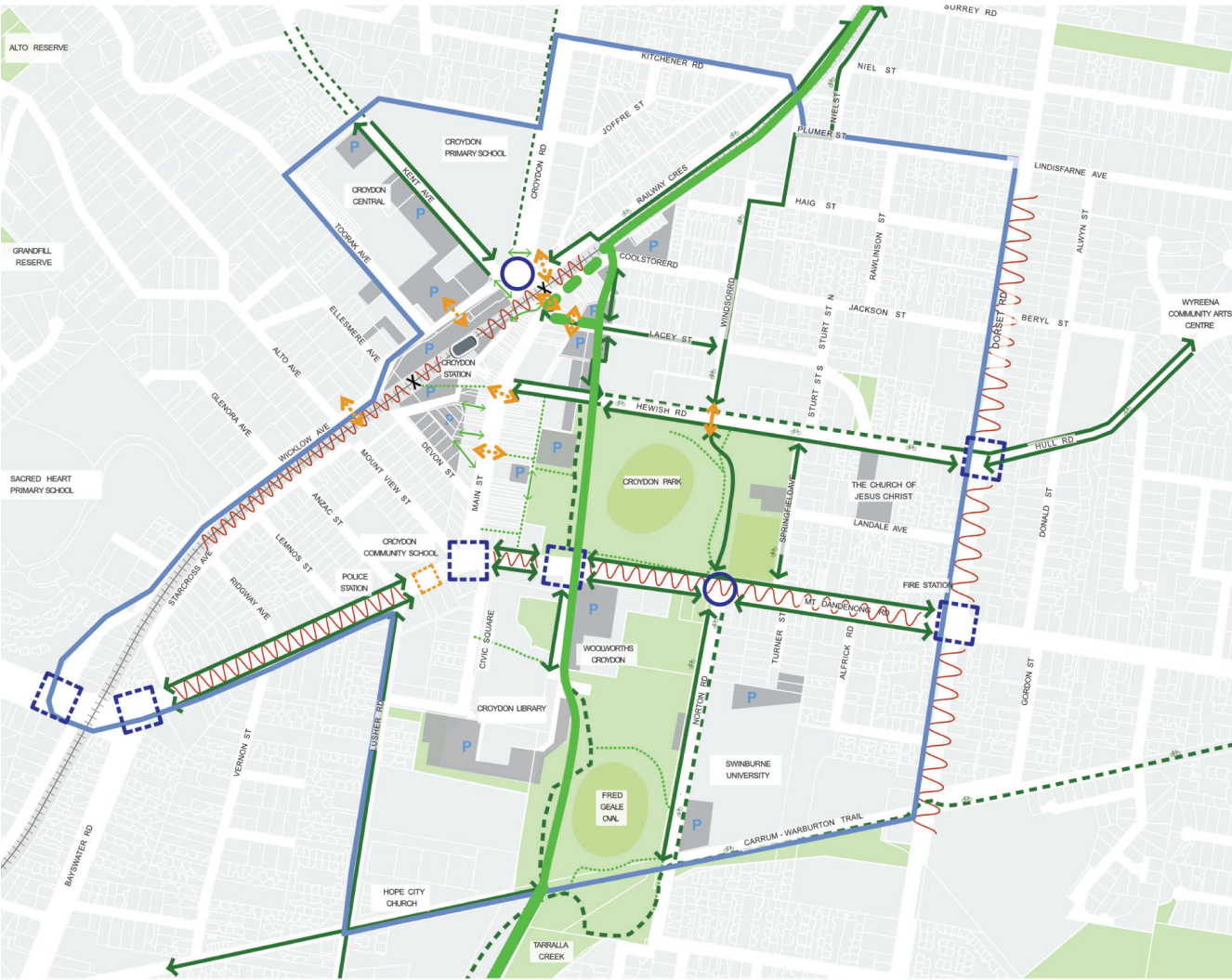


**Have
your say!**

- What should Council consider when restructuring the transport network for the Centre? Are there any dangerous intersections or situations that need to be prioritised?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac

Figure 20. Potential Pedestrian and Bicycle Links and Movement Network Priorities





Community infrastructure

Since 2006

The structure plan recognised the strong cluster of existing community and civic facilities including the Returned Services League (RSL), EV's Youth Centre, Maternal and Child Health centre, Croydon Central Kindergarten, Occasional Care, Bowls Club, Library, two primary schools, Croydon Leisure and Aquatic Centre, and the Council service centre. A new aquatic centre was proposed adjacent to the existing leisure centre and Swinburne TAFE campus was a big driver of activity.

The structure plan aimed to further develop the community, civic and educational roles of the activity centre in responding to new, changing and expanded needs created by additional population. Since 2006, Council has been consolidating its offices in Ringwood, and Aquahub was developed in 2008. Council has commenced work on the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct masterplan shown in Figure 21 which will deliver the comprehensive renewal of community infrastructure in the centre over coming years.

Key facts and influences

The Croydon MAC continues to provide a range of community infrastructure servicing a local and regional catchment. There are many facilities and services provided by Council and other providers within and in the surrounding area including schools, libraries, sports facilities, pools, churches, kindergartens, health and cultural services. The Centre's good access to public transport makes it a popular location for locating these facilities.

Changes to the Croydon population and its demography will continue to impact the community's future infrastructure requirements. There are a growing number of people who speak a language other than English at home as the population of people born overseas increases. There are increasing numbers of lone person households and those experiencing disadvantage with 18% of residents experiencing housing stress.

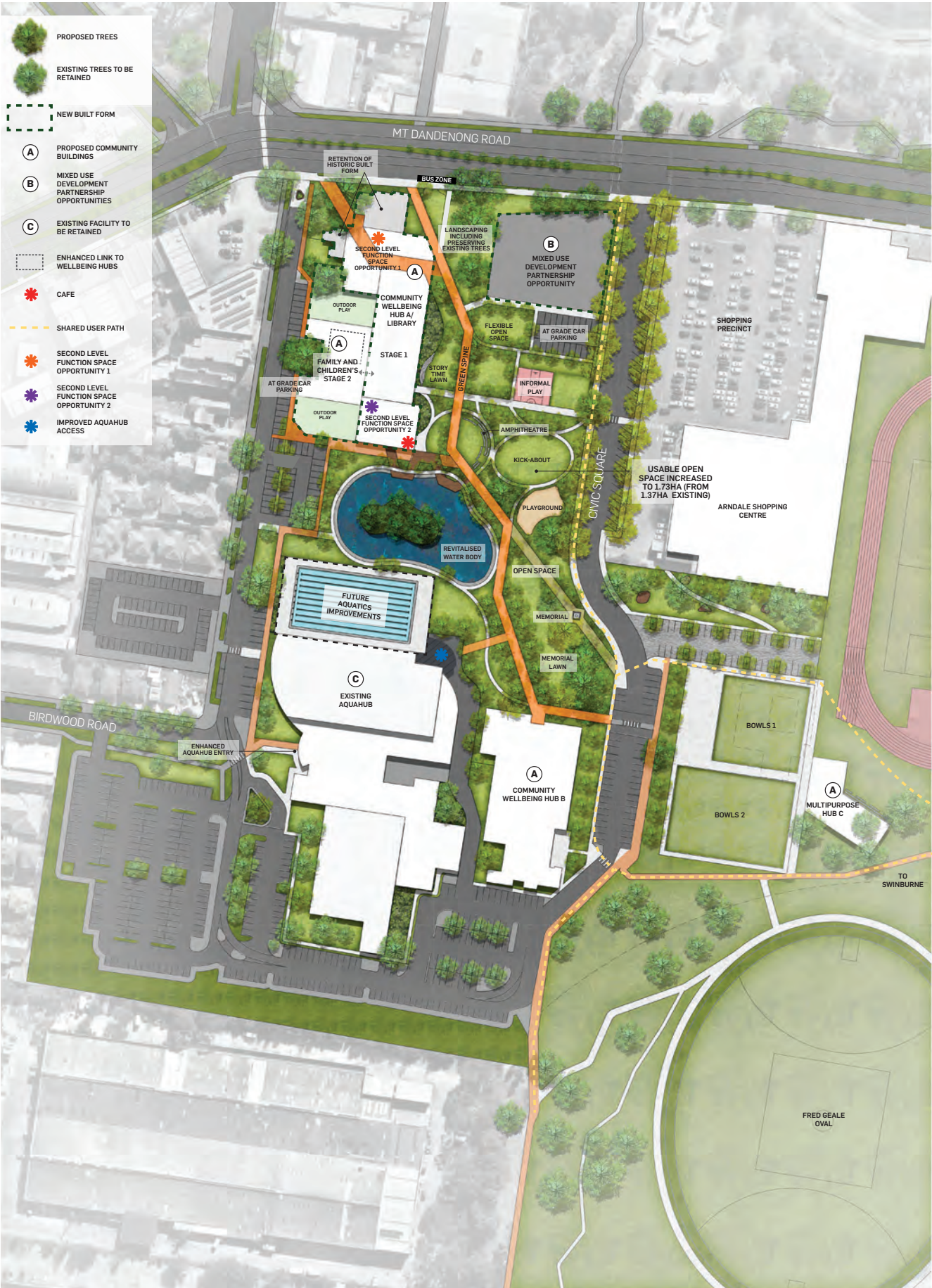
The Infrastructure Study for Croydon Major Activity Centre, 2020 assessed the capacity of infrastructure within the Centre to meet future community needs.

There is a good diversity of pools, sport and recreation options within and nearby the Centre. The demand on open space for organised and passive recreation space will increase as the population grows and as more people live in new housing forms. Sporting fields, pavilions, playgrounds and recreation facilities have been identified as in need of upgrade and renewal over the coming decade.

Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan

Council endorsed a masterplan to guide the short, medium and long-term direction for Council's facilities in the Croydon Civic Precinct. The current precinct contains a significant number of separate community facilities that are occupied by various community groups and sporting clubs. These facilities have reached the end of their useful life, and do not meet the future needs of the community groups, sporting clubs, and broader community. The redevelopment of the Croydon Civic Precinct through the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan will facilitate the creation of a new Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct. It will include a number of elements such as community hubs, enhanced open space, enhanced accessibility and connectivity, improved recreation facilities and potential development sites.

Figure 21. Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan





The limitations of the existing Croydon Library, EV's Youth Centre, Senior Citizen Centre and community halls will be addressed by the redevelopment of Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct where the development of community hubs will deliver flexible multipurpose facilities. A diversity of local early years services can be accessed within the precinct, though the introduction of three-year-old kindergarten presents capacity issues.

The centre and wider suburb contains both a primary and secondary school (Croydon Primary School and Melba Secondary College) along with Croydon Community School. The Croydon Community School, currently on Mount Dandenong Road, will relocate from the Centre in 2021 to the former Croydon Secondary College site on Croydon Road. With the exception of three-year-old kindergarten, early years services have the capacity to accommodate anticipated enrolment growth.

Swinburne University is revitalising the TAFE site and expanding available courses which focus primarily on the construction sector and English as a second language. There are opportunities to encourage further tertiary education facilities and services within the precinct. Medical and allied health facilities and services are incrementally augmenting to meet future growth in demand.

Arts and cultural facilities are underdeveloped in the Centre with opportunities to increase suitable and affordable rehearsal, presentation and cultural production and storage space for groups, artists and creative industries. Other gaps identified include flexible spaces for significant community and cultural events.

There are also further opportunities to activate spaces with art and culture to support initiatives by the Traders Association and the Maroondah Festival. These events and offers provide the opportunity to improve local identity and connectedness.

Opportunities to consider in the new structure plan

Along with many of the directions of the existing 2006 Structure Plan, the new structure plan could incorporate some or all of the opportunities identified below.

Maximising the benefits of Council's Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct investment

The implementation of the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct Masterplan over the coming decade could address a number of community needs and gaps in service delivery and facility upgrades identified through the project's planning to date. It is essential to ensure that the benefits of this significant investment achieves a number of objectives in addition to providing new community facilities.

The structure plan could identify a range of complementary actions to support the delivery of the masterplan. A key action could be to ensure an efficient and effective movement network to access the precinct particularly from Main Street, ensuring that the precinct is 'stitched into the centre' and not seen as remote and isolated.

The structure plan's built form and environmental requirements could underpin the foundation of the precinct and its design response as an exemplar of urban design and architecture. This could help to set the development tone and expectations for the centre and contribute to Croydon's improved image.

A Centre for everyone

Ensuring that the Centre can be accessed by all of the community could be an important direction for the structure plan. Areas like Croydon Station have been identified as having poor access and amenities, particularly for community members with disabilities. There are opportunities to improve the connectivity and accessibility between major landmarks and places in the centre.

**Have
your say!**

- What sites should Council consider for arts and cultural activities within the Centre?
- How can open spaces and the Centre be designed to be more accessible to all of the community?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac

The importance of natural spaces

There is a growing understanding that access to nature and interaction with nature is good for community health and wellbeing, making us happier and healthier. A range of health benefits have been identified including to both physical and mental health.



Open space

The structure plan could increase the diversity of open space available within the Centre to service the needs of the community and the growing population living who may have different open space requirements.

This could include a greater range of naturalised spaces shown to contribute to community mental health and wellbeing. Increased surveillance of open space through development and activity at the interface would assist with safety and perceptions of safety in these spaces.

Determine arts and cultural requirements

Future sites for arts and cultural activities could be explored within the Centre. One of the sites that could be considered is the Croydon Community School, close to the Main Street as a potential opportunity for a cultural site to include activities such as rehearsals, studio and visual arts. Other opportunities could include spaces within the Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct. These spaces should address issues identified such as the need for an indoor/outdoor performance area and a music hub. Shorter term strategies could involve improving links to existing facilities outside the precinct such as the Wyreena Community Arts Centre.



Croydon MAC boundary assessment

The future role and function of the centre will be as a growing sub-regional Major Activity Centre in the eastern region. The Croydon MAC will provide for a range of retailing, commercial, industrial, residential, civic, educational and recreational uses and activities around a major transport interchange.

Determining the boundary of the activity centre and preparing a structure plan to guide the centre's future use and development aims to meet its existing and future needs. Based on the current projections and policy settings, the commercial, industrial and residential areas of the study area are well placed to meet current and future community needs forming a designated activity centre boundary.

Figure 22 shows the proposed activity centre boundary with areas for review arising from the background reports, research, analysis, investigations and findings undertaken.

Areas to consider further for excluding from the activity centre boundary include:

- NRZ3 land between Mt Dandenong Road, Wicklow Avenue and the railway line.
- GRZ1 land between Hewish Road/Lacey Street, industrial land/Sturt Street North, Dorset Road and Plumer Street.

Areas to consider further for including to the activity centre boundary include:

- IN1Z and PUZ1 land between Lusher, Taylors and Norton Road, Vinter Avenue and the Carrum - Warburton trail.
- PPRZ and IN3Z land along the Tarralla Creek and to its immediate south and Dorset Road.
- Residential areas on the south side of Mt Dandenong Road, west of Lusher Road.



**Have
your say!**

- What are your reactions to the activity centre boundary? Are there any areas you think should be excluded or additional areas considered for future growth?

Go to www.yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/croydonmac

Figure 22. Croydon Activity Centre boundary - potential areas for review





Next steps

Feedback on the discussion paper

We look forward to receiving your feedback on the ideas proposed in this discussion paper.

Feedback on the discussion paper will be used to inform the development of a new structure plan and identify any further work required. Results of a community engagement survey will be published in April 2021.

In July 2021, we expect to release a draft of the new structure plan. There will be an opportunity for the community and other stakeholders to engage on the draft plan.

The Croydon MAC Structure Plan will be presented for Council adoption in late 2021. Council will then start implementing the plan, including the preparation of a Planning Scheme Amendment and other actions to implement the plan and place activation activities guided by the plan's vision.

How the structure plan can influence the Maroondah Planning Scheme

The Maroondah Planning Scheme can be used to implement those elements of the new structure plan that influence land use and development. This could include changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy and local planning policy that provide local policy directions.

New zones could be applied that allow different uses to occur on land. These can be supported by overlays that set requirements for development such as the built form and responses to flooding impacts. These options would be outlined in the draft Structure Plan to enable community input. Any changes to the Maroondah Planning Scheme require a formal exhibition period where submissions are considered and assessed by Council and an independent panel before a final decision is made.





Appendix A

Status of actions from the Croydon Major Activity Centre Structure Plan

Actions from the Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan 2006 have been monitored and evaluated with a status table of actions included in Table 2.

Table 2: Status of actions from 2006 structure plan

Structure plan action status	Completed	Partially completed	In progress	Ongoing	Not completed	Not required	Total
Actions: The retail, business, industrial and residential roles of Croydon	9	0	11	3	20	3	46
Actions: Supporting town centre activities	15	0	2	6	11	0	34
Actions: Streets and pedestrian spaces	26	2	19	1	42	4	94
Actions: Pedestrian and shared pathway accessibility	27	1	0	5	19	1	53
Total (#)	77	3	32	15	92	8	227
Percentage (%)	33.9	1.3	14.1	6.6	40.5	3.5	100.0

Croydon Major Activity Centre study area and activity centre boundary analysis

Defining the extent of the activity centre is a key task in the development of a structure plan and should be guided by an assessment undertaken against the criteria set out by the Victorian Government. The *Croydon Town Centre Structure Plan, Volume 1: Main Report June 2006* includes an existing activity centre boundary with a large study area for examination to enable the extent of activity centre boundaries to be sufficiently determined.

The Planning Practice Note 58 - Structure Planning for Activity centres sets out the criteria to be used to determine the boundaries of activity centres for a structure plan.

Table 3 provides an analysis of the current boundary assessed against the DELWP guidelines.

Table 3: Activity centre boundary assessment - Planning Practice Note 58

Boundary criteria:	Assessment/response:
Consider the following issues in determining the potential location of an activity centre boundary:	
The location of residential areas, including whether they provide significant redevelopment opportunities or constraints for the centre	There are a range of different residential areas provided within the activity centre. Housing stock in the centre is mixed and there are some infill development opportunities to increase housing supply and form with greater diversity and density of development. Residential land between both sides of Mt Dandenong Road and east of Croydon Road continues to have residential opportunities to contribute to greater housing diversity and provision within the activity centre. Some of this land as well as residential land along some main road locations could be considered for greater transformational opportunities through 3 to 4 storey apartment and townhouse development to meet future community needs. There are some significant sites where higher development of 5 to 6 storeys may be possible, where off site impacts are minimal. Including additional residential land on the south side of Mt Dandenong Road west of Lusher Road could be considered. Residential land north of Coolstore Road, east of Windsor Road and west of Dorset Road is predominantly developed with multi-dwelling units and townhouses. This land could be removed from the activity centre and development regulated through the General Residential Zone and supporting residential development provisions.
Consideration of physical barriers and opportunities for their improvement	There are several significant barriers within the Centre such as Main Street, Mt Dandenong Road and the Lilydale railway line which traverses the centre parallel to Wicklow Road from south-west to north-east. There are opportunities to improve the cohesion and links between residential and commercial precincts with an expanded active transport network and improved laneway connections off Main Street and into new development, open space areas and car parking areas. There is an adequate north-south street network with decent legibility but it could be improved with more direct connections and a focus on the active transport network.



Boundary criteria:	Assessment/response:
Consider the following issues in determining the potential location of an activity centre boundary:	
Proximity to public transport, especially fixed rail (train or tram)	The centre is well serviced by the suburban rail network with Croydon Station located in the activity centre. There are nine bus routes serving the centre and a bus interchange next to the railway station.
The location of existing and potential transport infrastructure including fixed rail, buses, bicycle paths, car parking areas and modal interchanges	The Lilydale railway line, Croydon Station and other transport infrastructure such as bus routes within the centre are well established. The centre is served by nine bus routes and a large number of car parking areas east and west of Main Street. The bus interchange is located next to the Croydon Station and bicycle routes traverse the centre, although north-south could be improved with more direct connections and a focus on the active transport network.
Walkability – opportunities to provide for and improve walkability within 400 to 800 metres from the core of the centre (depending on topography and connectivity)	The pedestrian environment within 400 to 800 metres of the core of the centre has good foundations but could be significantly improved with priority placed on the active transport network. Major roads and the railway line traversing the centre are currently designed to facilitate car movements, not walking or cycling movements. There could be a more direct movement network put in place. The use of a roundabout at the intersection with Croydon and Wicklow Roads also impacts on pedestrian safety, particularly around the railway station and bus interchange.
Consistency with State policy	The activity centre and its designation as a Major Activity Centre is consistent with Plan Melbourne and the Planning Policy Framework. Strategic directions for the activity centre are consistent with state planning policy for activity centres.
Consistency with local policy and Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) or a Municipal Planning Strategy where relevant	The activity centre as a Major Activity Centre is consistent with Council's local planning policy framework including the Municipal Strategic Statement.
Impacts of the boundary on other activity centre boundaries.	There is sufficient separation between other activity centres in the region such the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre and Bayswater, Chirnside Park and Lilydale Major Activity Centres.

Boundary Criteria:	Assessment/Response:
In setting a boundary for an activity centre, include:	
Sufficient land to provide for the commercial (retailing, office, fringe retailing and support activities such as entertainment) activities needed over a 15 to 20 year time frame and then into the 30-year horizon	There is sufficient commercial land to provide for the centre's needs and that of the surrounding community. There is significant commercially zoned land which should be sufficient in the medium to longer term for the Centre and the catchment's population's needs with local employment and economic benefits from urban services and niche industrial uses. Industrial land is of local significance and nearby regionally significant industrial land is displacing freight, logistics and heavier industry from Croydon, removing this demand from the centre.
Residential areas that are integrated into the activity centre or surrounded by other uses that have a strong functional inter-relationship with the activity centre even where limited development opportunities exist	Residential land within the activity centre is located appropriately within the boundary. Some residential land north of Hewish Road and east of Windsor Road is predominantly developed with multi-dwelling units and townhouses. This land could be removed from the activity centre and development regulated through the General Residential Zone and residential development provisions. Much of this recently developed land is unlikely to be redeveloped in the next 20 to 30 years for more intensive residential developments such as apartments.
Key public land uses that have or are intended to have a strong functional inter-relationship with the activity centre even where there are no or limited redevelopment opportunities	The Croydon Primary School, Croydon Railway Station, Croydon Library and other social and recreational facilities are located within the activity centre boundary.
Public open space areas that have or are intended to have a strong functional inter-relationship with the activity centre.	There is significant existing public open space within centre providing an important function for the activity centre and its activities and this should continue to form part of the activity centre boundary.

Boundary Criteria:	Assessment/Response:
In setting a boundary for an activity centre, generally exclude:	
Residential land encumbered by significant constraints (such as a Heritage Overlay) located at the edge of the activity centre.	There are some heritage overlays that apply within the centre and they are mapped, known and interspersed through the centre. Other existing constraints or barriers, such as areas of land subject to overland water flow through the middle of the centre and the railway provide challenges for linking the eastern and western sides of the township. Residential land north of Coolstore Road, east of Windsor Road and west of Dorset Road is predominantly developed with multi-dwelling units and townhouses. This land could be removed from the activity centre and development regulated through the General Residential Zone as discussed above.



Glossary

The following technical terms included in the glossary below have been used in this discussion paper.

Activity centres: Areas that provide a focus for services, employment, housing, transport and social interaction. They range in size and intensity of use from smaller neighbourhood centres to major suburban centres and larger metropolitan centres.

Affordable housing: Housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of very low to moderate income households, and priced (whether mortgage repayments or rent) so these households are able to meet their other essential basic living costs.

Business service industries: Includes the following ANZSIC industry classifications: administrative and support services; financial and insurance services; information media and telecommunications; professional, scientific and technical services; public administration and safety; rental, hiring and real estate services.

Central City: The area within the inner region of Melbourne that contains key capital city functions and civic facilities, as well as several precincts identified for major and strategic change. It is a larger area than the Melbourne CBD.

Climate change: A long-term change of the earth's temperature and weather patterns, generally attributed directly or indirectly to human activities such as fossil fuel combustion and vegetation clearing and burning.

Commercial floorspace: Floorspace used by retail, accommodation, food and other industries, and business service industries.

Commercial land: Land used for commercial purposes including land used for business service; retail, accommodation, food and other industries.

Community housing: Refers to a type of not-for-profit social housing. Community housing offers secure, affordable, rental housing for people on very low to moderate income households with a housing need.

Community service industries: Includes the following ANZSIC industry classifications: arts and recreation services; education and training; health care and social assistance.

Creative industry: Media, digital screen, design, writing and publishing, literature, fashion, performing arts, digital games development, broadcasting, music, cultural heritage, arts, education and craft industries.

Community housing: Refers to a type of not-for-profit social housing. Community housing offers secure, affordable, rental housing for people on very low to moderate income households with a housing need.

Copenhagen bicycle lane: Roadside cycle paths with a design emanating from Copenhagen and usually one-directional with one cycle track on each side of street, flowing the same direction as vehicular traffic. It has a minimum width of 1.7 metres separated from car lanes, parked cars and the footpath by a 7–9-centimetre high stone curb.

Daylighting: The process of replacing a piped waterway, with an open, flowing channel that more closely resembles the original shape and form of the creek.

Eastern Region: Includes the municipalities of Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

Employment land: Land that is generally zoned or otherwise identified for either industrial or commercial purposes. It generally allows for a range of manufacturing industries, the storage and distribution of goods, retail, office, business, entertainment and other associated uses.

Environmentally sustainable development: An approach to development that seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It has economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Established urban areas: Areas of Melbourne that have been urbanised for at least several decades.

Health and education precincts: Locations to cluster synergistic health and/or education services to improve access to integrated service provision, improve outcomes, develop the health and education workforce and deliver economic benefits (such as innovation and job creation). These precincts may provide solely health, solely education, or a combination of health and education services.

Housing density: The number of dwellings in an urban area divided by the area of the residential land they occupy, expressed as dwellings per hectare. It is based on the following sub-categories:

- Low density: 8-20 dwellings per hectare.
- Medium density: 21-80 dwellings per hectare.
- High density: 80+ dwellings per hectare.

Industrial land: Areas that are zoned for industrial purposes in the Maroondah Planning Scheme including the Industrial 1 and 3 Zones and Commercial 2 Zone.

Integrated water management: An approach to planning that brings together all facets of the water cycle including sewage management, water supply, stormwater management and water treatment, ensuring environmental, economic and social benefits.

Knowledge-based industries and jobs: Production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advancement. Their key characteristic is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources.

Local industrial precincts: Industrial areas that are not identified as being of state or regional significance.

Major activity centres: Suburban centres that provide access to a wide range of goods and services. They have different attributes and provide different functions, with some serving larger sub-regional catchments. Plan Melbourne identifies 121 major activity centres.

Manufacturing and industrial industries: Includes the following ANZSIC industry classifications: electricity, gas, water and waste services; manufacturing; transport, postal and warehousing; wholesale trade.

Melbourne Central Business District (CBD): Melbourne's original 'Hoddle Grid' street layout bounded by the Yarra River, Spring Street, La Trobe Street and Spencer Street, as well as the triangular area to the north bounded by Victoria, Peel and La Trobe streets.

Metropolitan activity centres: Higher-order centres with diverse employment options, services and housing stock, supported by good transport connections. Existing centres include Box Hill, Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Epping, Footscray, Fountain Gate-Narre Warren, Frankston, Ringwood and Sunshine. Future centres will include Lockersburg and Toolern.

Metropolitan Melbourne: The 31 municipalities that make up metropolitan Melbourne, plus part of Mitchell Shire within the urban growth boundary.

National employment and innovation clusters (NEICs): Designated concentrations of employment distinguished by a strong core of nationally significant knowledge sector businesses and institutions that make a major contribution to the national economy and Melbourne's positioning in the global economy.

Neighbourhood activity centres: Local centres that provide access to local goods, services and employment opportunities and serve the needs of the surrounding community.

Population serving industries: Includes the following industries: health care and social assistance, education and training and accommodation and food services.

Plan Melbourne: A long-term plan to accommodate Melbourne's future growth in population and employment between 2017 and 2051.

Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN): A statutory land-use planning tool that supports integrated land-use and transport planning by providing certainty to land-use planners and developers around locations that are and will be served by high-quality public transport.

Public housing: Long-term rental housing that is owned by the government. Its purpose is to accommodate very low to moderate income households that are most in need.

Public realm: Comprises spaces and places that are open and freely accessible to everyone, regardless of their economic or social conditions. These spaces can include streets, laneways and roads, parks, public plazas, waterways and foreshores.



Regionally-significant industrial precincts: Key industrial areas that contribute significantly to local and regional economies. Some of these areas are well established and support a range of industrial uses while others are transitioning and supporting new uses. They include future employment areas have been identified through Growth Corridor Plans to support not just employment growth in outer areas, but to also meet Melbourne's longer term industrial and logistics needs. They are to be retained and planned for to allow a range of industrial uses or where appropriate new and emerging businesses that require access to affordable and well-located employment land.

Retail, accommodation, food and other industries: Includes the following ANZSIC industry classifications: Accommodation and food services; Other services; Retail trade.

Social housing: A type of rental housing that is provided and/or managed by the government or by a not-for-profit organisation. Social housing is an overarching term that covers both public housing and community housing.

State-significant industrial precincts: Strategically located land available for major industrial development linked to the Principal Freight Network and transport gateways.

Structure Plan: A plan developed for an activity centre based on a shared vision which identifies the type and scope of change projected within the activity centre over time and manages, influences and facilitates change within the activity centre.

Transit-oriented development: Compact, walkable, mixed-use communities centred around high-quality train systems. Transit-oriented development assists in addressing the growing problems of climate change and global energy security by creating dense, walkable communities that greatly reduce the need for driving and energy consumption.

Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria: Guidelines which support state agencies, local government and the urban development sector to deliver, functional and enjoyable places for people to live, work, and spend leisure time. The guidelines aim to create neighbourhoods that foster community interaction and make it easy for people of all ages and abilities to live healthy lifestyles and engage in regular physical activity. These places may be urban areas in metropolitan Melbourne and in regional cities and towns.

Urban heat-island effect: When the built environment absorbs, traps, and in some cases directly emits heat, causing urban areas to be significantly warmer than surrounding non-urban areas.

Urban Services: Diverse areas that support an increasing variety of specialised activities for household service needs.



To contact Council

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Translating and Interpreter Service

13 14 50

National Relay Service (NRS)

13 36 77

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