

# Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan



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Prepared by

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**Appendix 1- Glossary of Terms**

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# 1 Introduction

The Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan has been prepared to guide the future development of the Northcote Activity Centre as a designated Major Activity Centre under the State Government's metropolitan Melbourne planning policy, Melbourne 2030. It also reviews and builds upon previous strategic studies of Council, notably the 1993 Northcote City Centre Plan, prepared by Northcote City Council, and the High Street Urban Design Framework prepared in 2002.

## 1.1 Location and attributes of Northcote Activity Centre

### 1.1.1 Location and regional context

Northcote Activity Centre sits approximately 5 kilometres north of the Melbourne central business district. The centre has a wide variety of retail services and businesses servicing the southern part of the municipality of Darebin with a catchment including the surrounding areas of Clifton Hill, North Fitzroy, Brunswick and to a lesser extent Ivanhoe. (Refer **Figure 1.1** - Regional Context Plan)

The centre is identified as a Major Activity Centre within the context of Melbourne 2030. This planning policy provides for a network of activity centres which includes:

- Melbourne Central Activity District,
- Defined Principal Activity Centres (including Preston Central, Northland Shopping Centre, Coburg and Box Hill),
- Defined Major Activity Centres (including Northcote, Ivanhoe, Kew Junction, Sydney Road - Brunswick, Smith Street and Brunswick Street Fitzroy)
- Neighbourhood Centres (e.g. Station Street Fairfield, High Street Thornbury, and Broadway Reservoir)
- Local Centres (e.g. small local clusters of shops such as Victoria Road, Northcote)
- Defined Specialised Activity Centres (including Latrobe University Technology Park, Janefield Technology Precinct Bundoora)

As a Major Activity Centre, Northcote is characterised by a mix of activities that generate a high number of trips for business, retail, cultural, educational and leisure services. The centre is well provided with public transport options (e.g. rail, tram and bus routes) and has a catchment area that services more than the local population, but is not of the same regional significance as Principal Activity Centres.



REGIONAL CONTEXT PLAN

- CBD Central Business District
- PAC Principal Activity Centre
- MAC Major Activity Centre
- NAC Neighbourhood Activity Centre

Figure 1.1 – Regional Context Plan

The proximity of the Northcote Activity Centre to the city, good provision of public transport infrastructure (Epping train line, High Street tram and bus services), open space (All Nations Park) and cultural services (Northcote Town Hall, community services and library) provides opportunity for the centre to capitalise on the policy directions of Melbourne 2030 to increase development around the focal point of the Northcote retail and public transport core. (Refer Figure 1.2 High Street, Northcote)

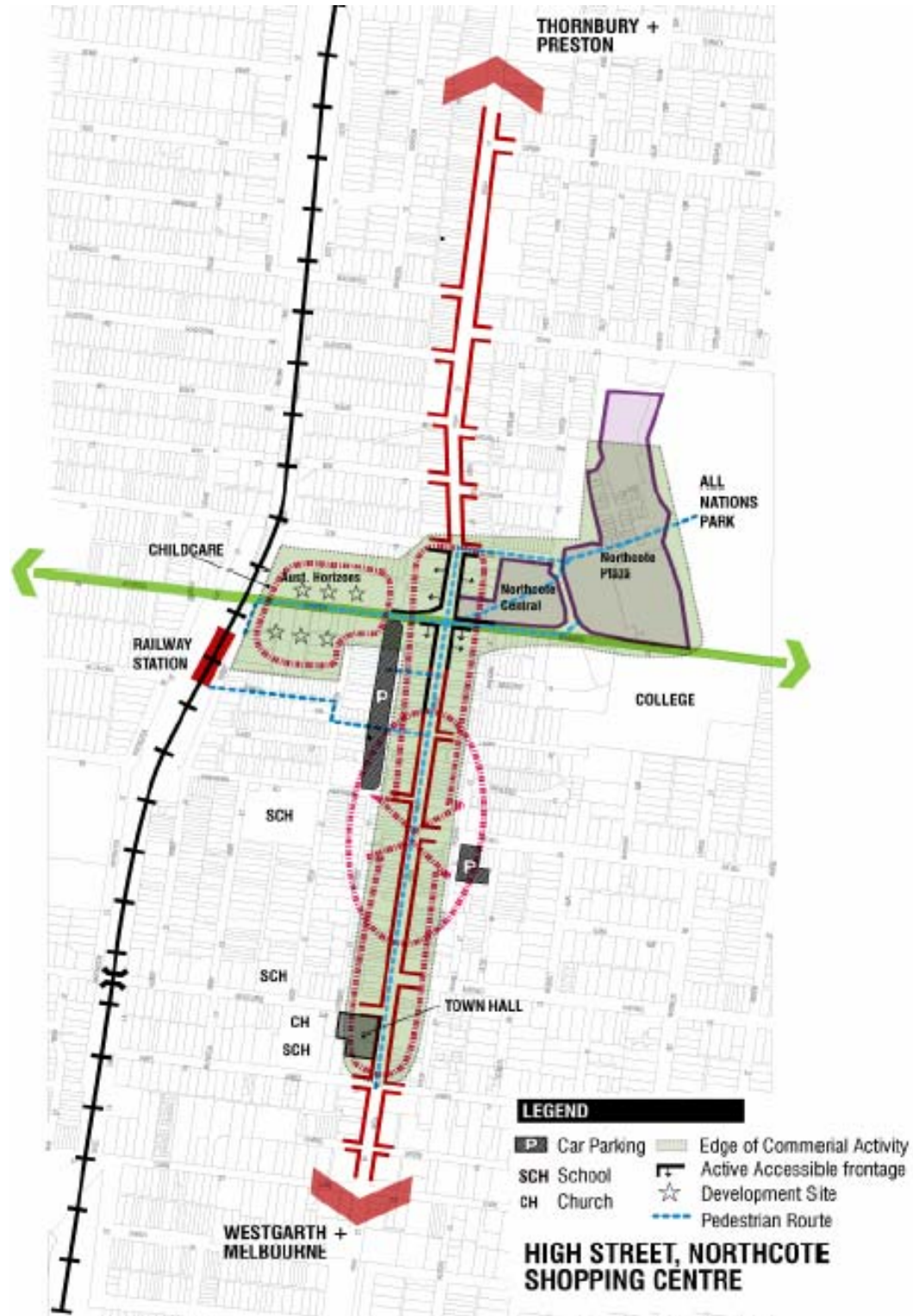


Figure 1.2 High Street Northcote (extract from High Street Northcote Future Opportunities for Business and Employment, Planning by Design, 2005, p.17)

## 1.1.2 Demographic and housing trends

Population projections prepared by the Department of Sustainability and Environment estimate that the population of the Northcote Statistical Local Area (SLA) may grow from its 2001 resident population of 46 377 to 50 205 by 2031. This is an increase of 3 828 people.

Population projections also indicate that the dominate age group in Northcote will be middle age residents, between 25 and 49 years, reflecting an influx of young professional people to the area. A decline in the younger population over time is also projected to occur. These projected population changes will impact on household sizes. The average household size fell from 2.74 to 2.30 persons per dwelling between 1981 and 2001 and it is estimated that the number of persons per household will continue to fall, with around 2.10 persons per household by 2031.

Provision of appropriate housing types to provide for the projected increase in population for the area is a key requirement to support the future needs of the activity centre.

### *Affordable housing*

One of the pressing problems for housing in Northcote is affordability. The social and cultural diversity valued by the Northcote community is dependent upon the provision of housing for a wide variety of housing forms and socio-economic groups. However, over the last 10 years there has been a significant decrease in affordable housing (housing which is available at less than 30% percent of household income – particularly for those on lower incomes) within Northcote. Therefore opportunities to provide a range of housing forms that can include smaller, more affordable options will be important to maintaining affordability. Housing affordability can also be supported by providing housing which is affordable to live in – for example it should be well designed using environmentally sustainable design options to reduce energy and running costs, and be well located, close to shops, services, facilities and employment opportunities to reduce costs associated with access.

## 1.1.3 Economic profile

There have been significant changes in the resident population workforce of Northcote. The strong manufacturing base of the post war era with employment mainly in local unskilled labouring associated with the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industries has shifted, with the local population now more likely to be employed in finance, property and business services.

It is generally acknowledged that there has been a decline in industrial land use and the provision of employment opportunities in Northcote. This is supported by the 2001 Census data which indicates that whilst Northcote residents worked nearby, they generally did not work in Northcote itself. It is also recognised that whilst there has been an increase in development activity in Northcote in recent years, this has been in the form of apartments and residential uses and there has been limited development in employment generating activities such as office or commercial activities. Supporting employment opportunities within the activity centre will be key to the sustainability of the centre.

It is also important to recognise that the emerging Arts precinct surrounding Rucker's Hill is providing significant multiplier effects through associated business, culture and living needs of the Arts community. Recognition and support of the developing Arts community will need to be balanced with the needs and amenity requirements of the traditional traders and residents, particularly with respect to marketing and streetscape issues, and impacts from late night music venues.



## **1.2 What is a structure plan?**

A structure plan is a set of policy directions and implementation actions for an activity centre to assist Council and the community in fulfilling the potential role of Northcote as a Major Activity Centre within metropolitan Melbourne. This sits within the context of the current metropolitan planning strategy: Melbourne 2030.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment directs that Structure Planning should:

- *Set out the strategic framework for the use and development of land in and around the centre, and give clear direction to investors about preferred location for investment.*
- *Support the roles and functions for the centre that will result from its classification, housing intensification and the development of the public transport network.*
- *Outline the scale and direction of development that will meet the future needs of the community. This will need to be outlined in three dimensions for key precincts within the centre, and, depending on the extent of change anticipated, may need to occur for the whole centre.*
- *Support greater transport choice and provide for adequate transport and traffic management.*
- *Identify the need for new street and pedestrian connections.*
- *Encourage the enhancement of the public environment.*
- *Promote development which is environmentally sustainable.*
- *Reflect Melbourne 2030's performance criteria, policies and objectives for activity centres.*
- *Provide greater certainty for developments that are consistent with the structure plan.*

## **1.3 Report Outline**

This report is set out in 5 Parts:

### Section 1 – Background and Context

- Provides background context to the structure plan, outlining project scope, consultation processes and regional context to the study.

### Section 2 – Northcote Activity Centre Vision and Objectives

- Provides a vision for the centre and collates the objectives for the centre, identified through consultation processes.
- Establishes this within a set of values of the community identified through the consultation processes and the context of sustainable design and development.

### Section 3 – Objectives and Policies

- Details the overall policies for the centre, based on the values and objectives identified in Section 2.

### Section 4 – Precinct Plans

- provides directions for precincts where specific urban design outcomes are sought and identifies opportunities for housing change.

### Section 5 – Implementation

- Collates the implementation measures identified in Sections 2 – 4 into a prioritised list according to need and resource availability.

## 1.4 Project Scope

The Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan has been prepared on behalf of the City of Darebin by Ecologically Sustainable Design Pty. Ltd., in conjunction with alphaPlan and Grogan Richards. Project objectives as provided by the study brief and detailed in the background report are summarised below:

*The Northcote Structure Plan has two overarching objectives:*

- *To develop an integrated Structure Plan for the Northcote Activity Centre that assists Council in managing the drivers of change within the centre to ensure that community, cultural and environmental values are balanced against economic development.*
- *To develop a high level of community ownership for the future for the Northcote Activity Centre through a participative design process.*

A summary of specific objectives are:

1. Centre roles, boundaries and precincts  
To identify the boundaries of the Northcote Activity Centre and the roles of the various precincts within the centre.
2. Land Use  
To identify an appropriate future for the increasingly redundant industrially zoned land located between the High Street shopping strip and the train line, around Arthurton Road.
3. Housing  
To identify opportunities to contribute to the Melbourne 2030 goal of creating a more compact city through the location of a substantial proportion of new housing in or close to the activity centre that offers good access to services and transport.
4. Transport & Access  
To develop an integrated transport, access and parking strategy for the activity centre.
5. Economic Development and the Arts  
To identify economic opportunities within the activity centre, particularly related to retail and the area of the Arts, and to accommodate additional jobs in the Northcote Activity Centre.
6. Design  
To realise the potential of the Northcote Activity Centre through the appropriate use of land within the centre and by encouraging sustainable forms of development whilst recognising heritage values and the scale of both the High Street shopping strip and surrounding residential communities.
7. Sense of Place  
To maintain and enhance the existing vibrancy and diversity of the Northcote Activity Centre through a balanced activity mix which supports the community's values.
8. Implementation Strategies  
To identify the actions that need to be taken to implement the Northcote Structure Plan, identify their priority and make recommendations for an amendment to the existing Planning Scheme and identify funding mechanisms to deliver the Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan.

The Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan forms part of a broader "Northcote Place Making Project" being undertaken by Darebin City Council. Darebin Place Making is part of Council's ongoing commitment to ensure that activity centres within the City of Darebin develop in accordance with the principles of the State government's planning policy: Melbourne 2030 and also meet the expectations of residents, business and other stakeholders.

This broader place making project is being managed through both an internal project management group of Council with project outputs being reviewed by a Community Working Group. The Community Working Group is an Advisory Committee of Council which means that agreed positions of the group will be conveyed to Council in the form of recommendations for action. Further information about the Community Working Group is detailed in the Background Report.

### **1.4.1 Study Process and Consultation**

The Structure Plan has been informed by strategic research and community consultation. This includes a background document prepared in draft form in August 2005, and updated to form a resource document to this Structure Plan. The background report compiles various information, in both quantitative and qualitative form, about the Northcote Activity Centre. The background report also sets out the regional and local policy context to the Structure Plan process and identifies key issues and areas of particular opportunity for enhancement or renewal.

Other reports that have been prepared in parallel to this study include the report of the Community Working Group on the Northcote Place Making Project: May 2006, High Street Northcote /Westgarth Arts Precinct Report: 2006, Economic Assessment of Commercial and Mixed Use Opportunities - Northcote 2006 and the High Street Northcote Activity Centre: Future Opportunities for Business and Employment – Final Report September 2005. These documents underpin the strategic statements of this Structure Plan.

The preparation of the Structure Plan has been developed through a range of consultation techniques and regularly reviewed by a Community Working Group (CWG) which has been managed by an independent chair, Mary Crooks. The CWG has established its own written framework against which it has assessed the Structure Plan based on its representation of the local community.

Consultation undertaken in the preparation of the Structure Plan includes:

- A one day scoping workshop with Council officers, representatives of the Community Working group and relevant government stakeholders at which existing information was identified and disseminated to participants, held on 17 June 2005.
- A review of relevant previous studies, local knowledge and background documents made available to the consultants. A full list of documents reviewed was detailed in the background report.
- Comments and feedback on issues identified through discussions with the Community Working Group (CWG). This has included specific feedback from the CWG in issues facing Northcote as compiled at a meeting on 30 June 2005 and subsequent written comments from the CWG members.

- Preparation by the CWG of a separate framework upon which they seek the Structure Plan to be tested against. This framework sits as a stand alone document of the CWG to guide the consultants and Council in the preparation of the Structure Plan and place making project.
- Verbal and written comment made by individual community members through on site consultation exercises undertaken by Council officers as compiled in a consultation report contained within the background report. This consultation exercise included circulation of information about the study with invitation to identify issues to all residents in the immediate area and community "listening posts" undertaken at various times at High Street (Thursday evening 14/7/05), Northcote Library (Friday lunchtime 15/7/05) and Northcote Plaza (Saturday morning 16/7/05).
- Comments and feedback from a public meeting held on 21 July 2005 at which 42 members of the general community attended as well as members of the Community Working Group, Council and the consultant team. (Refer to background document for further details).
- Comments and feedback from targeted discussions with landowners, government agencies, trader representatives, local residents and users of the centre undertaken through the four and a half day "Charrette" undertaken from 25 August 2005 to 29 August 2005 as well as a follow up public presentation of draft design outcomes held on 1 September 2005.

The draft Structure Plan is to be released for community comment over a four week period.

Following consultation and review of any changes resulting from this process it is anticipated that the policy directions of the Structure Plan will be incorporated into the Planning Scheme through a formal Planning Scheme Amendment Process.

## **1.5 Policy Context**

### **1.5.1 Melbourne 2030**

Planning for the Northcote Activity Centre sits within the metropolitan Melbourne strategy plan, released by the Department of Sustainability and Environment in 2002, known as Melbourne 2030. This Metropolitan Strategy envisages that over the next 25 years Melbourne will need to accommodate an extra 620,000 households comprising an additional 1 million residents in the metropolitan area. It is also noted that current Victoria in Future projections (DSE, 2004) indicate that the population of Darebin is estimated to grow by 8,253 persons and 8,644 households between 2001 and 2031.

The main thrust of the strategy "is to continue to protect the liveability of the established areas and to increasingly concentrate major change in strategic redevelopment sites such as activity centres and underdeveloped land. While a good supply of land for development will be maintained in growth areas, over time there will be a shift away from growth on the fringe of the city.

"This will help prevent urban expansion into surrounding rural land. The trend towards fewer people in each household will continue to support demand for well-located apartment lifestyles around activity centres. This will be supported by an expanded and more attractive public transport system." (Pg 1: M2030 – 2002)

Consolidated urban form is key to the planning of Melbourne 2030, capitalising on existing urban infrastructure and promoting alternative means of transport to private motor vehicles. These broader environmental objectives are relevant to all areas of metropolitan development.

Melbourne 2030 sets out a network of activity centres of which Northcote is a designated "Major Activity Centre". It is part of a network of 26 Principal Activity Centres and 82 Major Activity Centres identified in the Strategy.

The Activity Centres Implementation Plan (No. 4) of Melbourne 2030 identifies the role of Activity Centres as follows:

*Activity centres provide the focus for services, employment and social interaction in cities and towns. They are where people shop, work, meet, relax and live. Usually well-served by public transport, they range in size and intensity of use from local neighbourhood strip centres to traditional universities and major regional malls. They are not just shopping centres, they are multifunctional.*

Melbourne 2030 provides key objectives for the future development of activity centres. These are:

- reducing the number of private motorised vehicle trips to and from activity centres by concentrating activities that generate high numbers of (non-freight) trips in highly accessible locations
- encouraging economic activity and business synergies
- broadening the mix of uses appropriate to the type of centre and needs of the population served
- providing focal points for the community at different geographic scales

- improving access by walking, cycling and public transport to services and facilities for local and regional populations
- supporting the development of the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN).

Northcote currently demonstrates a number of these key aspects including:

- Providing opportunities for increased use and support of public transport (Northcote is serviced by train, tram and bus routes)
- Providing a wide range of retail and business opportunities including the provision of two supermarkets and a discount department store, as well as a wide range of speciality retailing and entertainment facilities.
- Supporting the growing arts and creative sector, which provides further opportunities for entertainment and leisure and helps to broaden the range of uses that occur within the centre.
- Provides opportunities for community focal points and activities – such as All Nations Park, the recently redeveloped Northcote Town Hall and the Northcote Library

Further support and development of these existing aspects of Northcote in addition the objectives identified under Melbourne 2030 will enhance the future development of the activity centre.

### **1.5.2 Other State and Regional Policies**

There are a number of state and regional policy directions that provide part of the planning framework of Melbourne 2030 and have an impact on the Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan. These documents have been referred to and considered in the development of the Structure Plan where relevant.

These are discussed further in the background report and include:

- Linking Melbourne - Metropolitan Transport Plan: December 2004
- Meeting Our Transport Challenges, Department of Infrastructure, May 2006
- Our Environment Our Future – Victoria's Environmental Sustainability Framework: April 2005
- Department of Sustainability and Environment: Activity Centre Design Guidelines: May 2005
- Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment: Design Guidelines for Activity Centres: May 2005
- Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment: Design Guidelines for Higher Density Development: October 2004
- Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment: Safer Design Guidelines for Victoria: 2004.
- ResCode: Design and Assessment criteria for houses on single lots and medium density housing up to 3 storeys.
- Sustainable Design and Construction: Principles and Guidelines for Capital Works Projects
- Northern Regional Housing Statement: Sept 2006 – Northern Regional Housing Working Group.

### 1.5.3 Existing Local Planning Provisions

Current planning and development direction for the Northcote Activity Centre is guided by the existing Darebin Planning Scheme. This includes both policy direction through the Local Planning Policy Framework and statutory controls through use of various zone and overlay provisions that affect the area.

The Darebin Planning Scheme is directed by the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) located in Clause 21 and supporting policy documents of Council. The MSS includes direction to:

- Provide emphasis on a number of core local retail centres located primarily along the High Street activity spine.
- Acknowledge 'Internodal' activity areas, located between core retail centres along High Street. These areas include a mixture of non-core commercial, industrial and restricted retail uses. These areas will require significant review given the demand for land use change (residential) and recognition of the decline in economic viability of these activities.

The MSS, Local Planning Policy Framework and supporting policies of Council provide directions for a number of land uses in the municipality. These are articulated in more detail in relevant issue based topics of the background report.

Several local policies contained at Clause 22 of the Darebin Planning Scheme have relevance to land use and built form within the Northcote Activity Centre. These are:

#### 22.03 Activity Centres Policy

This policy seeks to encourage integrated development within activity centres. This includes policy for Major Activity Centres to:

- *Provide for a wide mix of economic, social and community facilities including major grocery shops, specialty retailing and entertainment, office (where appropriate) and leisure activities, including cafes and restaurants.*
- *Encourage high-order retailing (where supported in terms of market demand), office development, entertainment venues and other economic, social and community roles.*
- *Encourage high density housing within or adjoining the centre to add to the centre's vibrancy and to achieve sustainability objectives.*
- *Ensure that the centre integrates with the public transport system and will provide for the improvement of transport interchanges between multiple public transport modes.*

#### 22.08 High Street Corridor Land Use and Urban Design

This policy implements the High Street land use and urban design objectives and strategies set out in the Municipal Strategic Statement and the recommendations of the High Street Urban Design Framework and Precinct Guidelines. These guidelines have underpinned a number of the policy recommendations of the Structure Plan. Key objectives of the policy are to:

- *Protect key public views and vistas (1) from All Nations Park, (2) to the Northcote Town Hall from 'Y on High' and (3) from Ruckers Hill to the central city skyline.*

- *Strengthen the core retail function of the designated activity centres along High Street.*
- *Promote redevelopment of the internodal areas in High Street. (notably between the Northcote Activity Centre and Westgarth to the south and Thornbury / Croxton to the north.)*
- *Protect the amenity of residential land adjacent to commercial land.*
- *Improve the accessibility and amenity of High Street properties by progressively widening rear laneways.*
- *Improve pedestrian access between High Street and (1) All Nations Park and (2) the Northcote railway station.*

Local policies 22.09 – (Residential and Mixed Use Development of less than 4 storeys in Business 1 and 2 zones) and 22.10 – (Residential and Mixed Use Development of more than 4 storeys) provide further detailed policy direction to complement the provisions of the state planning policy 19.03 – Urban design and built form in a local context. These policies were also established through the High Street Urban Design Framework and were relied upon in the development of the Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan.

#### **1.5.4 Additional Background Documents**

The following background documents have been used to inform and support development of the Structure Plan:

- Economic Assessment of Commercial and Mixed Use Opportunities – SGS Economics and Planning, May 2006
- High Street Northcote Future Opportunities for Business and Employment, Planning by Design Pty Ltd, September 2005
- High Street Northcote/Westgarth Arts Precinct, Positive Solutions, May 2006

These documents highlight a number of key issues and opportunities occurring within the centre:

- The role of creative business and arts activities and opportunities to utilise the former Northcote Police Station building as a viable arts based business incubator.
- Potential to rezone the Arthurton Road Industrial 3 zoned area (centred around the Australian Horizons site) to a Business 2 zone which would allow for office/commercial and residential uses and provide a key opportunity to rationalise industrial development and demand for office and retail development.
- The importance of providing effective street lighting, signage, and interesting window displays to support the evening/weekend leisure economy.
- Nurturing and supporting the Arts business sector by promoting the display of local art and allowing mixed use employment and living opportunities in Eastment Street and Oldis / Frederick Streets.
- The need to link and integrate activities “off High Street,” with High Street through promoting active frontages, improving the pedestrian environment, and improving access and awareness to All Nations Park, the Library and community health facilities.



- Pursuing an environmentally sustainable approach to all facets of the centre by improving linkages and promoting awareness of the railway station, maximizing public transport opportunities and promoting shared use of space – such as carparking for daytime and night time uses and carparks for markets or community events.
- Establishing and maintaining a quality physical environment that reflects the desired character and image of the centre. This could be undertaken by incorporating artwork into the streetscape, and promoting public seating, improving street signage and way finding through the centre. Reinforcing a consistent theme or “branding” street furniture would also enhance the centre.

### **1.5.5 Statutory Planning Controls**

Development of land within Northcote is directed by zone and overlay provisions of the Darebin Planning Scheme. Zone provisions primarily direct the type and form of use that is permitted on land, whilst overlays provide direction relating to specific buildings and works requirements to be met. (e.g. heritage protection).

Figure 1.3 below details the current zoning of the core study area. This includes:

- Residential 1 zoning of residential areas,
- Business 1 and 2 zoning of commercial areas, including all land along High Street and Northcote Plaza.
- Mixed Use zoning of land on the west side of Eastment Street, acknowledging its conversion to live / work apartments.
- Industrial 3 zoning of areas, particularly in Arthurton Road, where sections of manufacturing and warehousing exist.
- Public Park and Recreation zoning of All Nations Park
- Public Use zoning of various Council facilities including the Town Hall and sections around All Nations Park
- Railway reserve along the Epping Train Line.
- Category 1 Road zone along St Georges Road and Darebin Road, with Category 2 Road zone along High Street and Separation Street / Arthurton Road.

Overlay provisions provide greater direction to the built form sought in an area as a result of physical constraint (e.g. erosion, flooding or remnant vegetation) or a preferred design outcome (e.g. preferred residential character, heritage conservation, protection of significant landscapes).

Three overlays affect different parts of the study area including a Heritage Overlay, Environmental Audit Overlay and Special Building Overlay (affecting areas of overland stormwater flow).

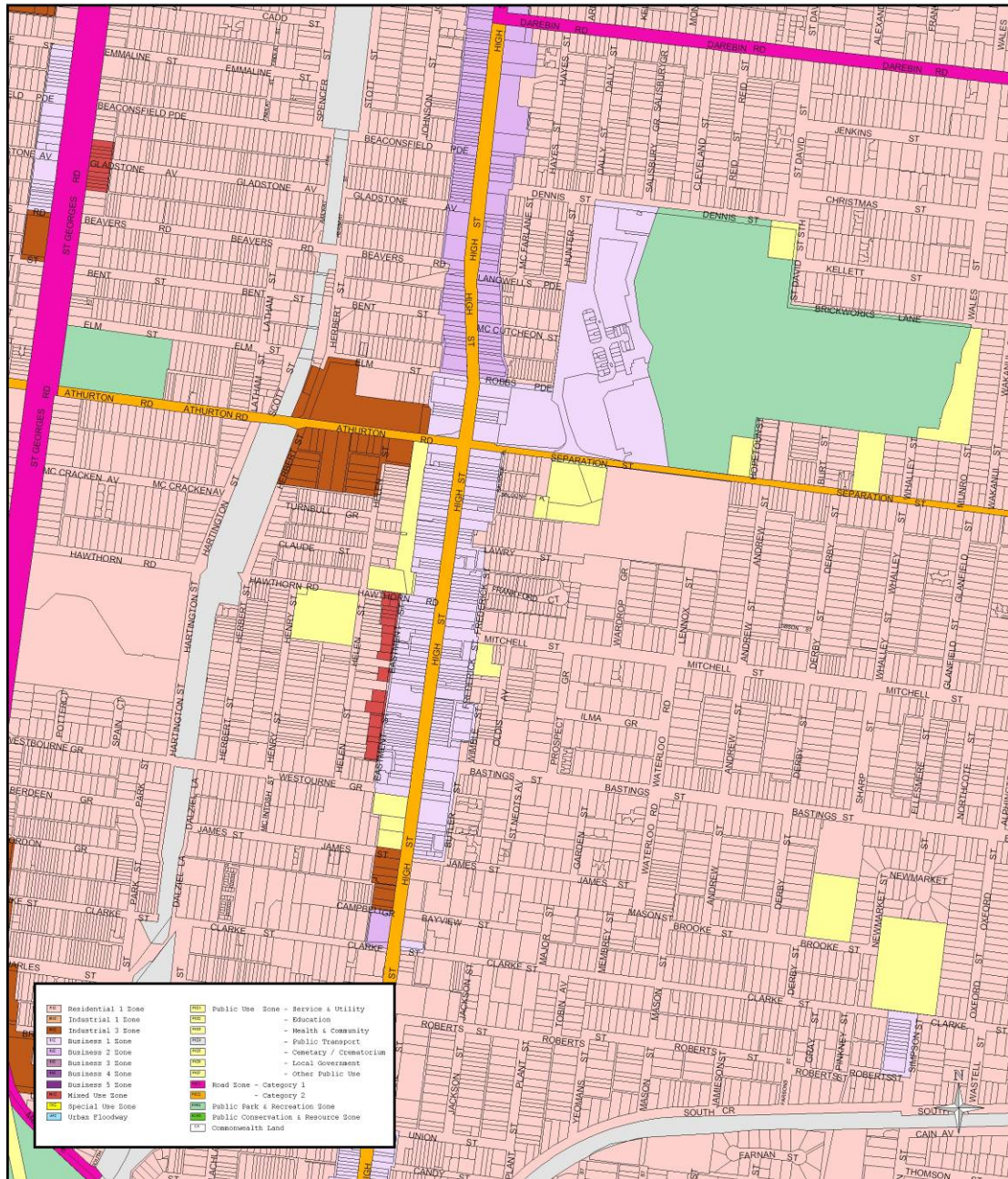


Figure 1.3 - Existing Zoning Plan (Extracted from the Darebin Planning Scheme)

Part of the implementation of the Structure Plan will require a review of specific statutory provisions as detailed in Sections 3 - 5 of this report.

It should also be noted that Council has an existing Development Contributions Overlay (Clause 45.06) that requires contribution by developers in new works for the provision of works services and facilities. Opportunity exists to review this provision as it relates to Northcote Activity Centre as a result of the recommendations of this strategy (e.g. Provision of public open space and art work).

## **1.6 Key Issues and Challenges**

From background research, design formulation and community consultation (most notably the Charrette process), key challenges and issues were identified. These are detailed in the background report and summarised below:

- Both local and State policy promotes a need to consolidate population into the activity centre. The local community also desires a greater number of people in the centre as a means of creating a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable community. How can this potential population be accommodated in an affordable manner and meet community expectations regarding character and amenity?
- There is a strong desire by the community to promote sustainable and accessible design; however this needs to be addressed in context of heritage conservation and the existing State policies in relation to sustainability and design.
- There is a lack of consistent heritage conservation controls affecting the centre.
- There is a desire to strengthen the community, cultural, social and economic life of the centre as a community village or hub with access for all. What opportunities exist to better integrate the centre as a pedestrian focussed village, capitalising on the existing building and transport form?
- Recent population trends have seen a shift in the demographic profile of Northcote. How can the physical and community elements that make Northcote attractive be maintained through social and economic change?

## 2 Northcote Activity Centre Vision and Values

### 2.1 Values of the community of Northcote

The following values about the Northcote Activity Centre have been derived through research and consultation - particularly debate regarding the core challenges facing the Northcote Activity Centre as identified by the Community Working Group and through the Charrette process.

Key elements that are valued by the community, as derived from consultation, and drive the vision and objectives for the structure plan include:

- Promotion of **ecologically sustainable design** as a means of achieving social, cultural, economic and environmental integration. This includes higher density in commercial and mixed use areas that support more intensive land use, whilst protecting the smaller scale, "cottage" form of surrounding residential areas.
- Provision of **equitable access** to facilities and services to all people, particularly focused around improved pedestrian, cycle and publicly accessible transport.
- Environments which support **community cohesion and neighbourhood interaction**, including opportunities for incidental social interaction in daily life.
- Physical form and scale that promotes **pedestrian use** and shared vehicle / pedestrian environments.
- Enhancement of Northcote as a **self sustaining community** through the promotion of an increased local employment and housing base.
- **Conservation of heritage** and cultural buildings and landscapes through interpretation and design, of new development into heritage buildings and spaces, whilst acknowledging potentially competing values of sustainability and accessibility.
- Enabling **creative, social and cultural diversity** of Northcote to thrive through the provision of affordable housing, business and recreation spaces.
- Strong **community engagement** with a range of social and cultural sectors that supports and enhances the creative and cultural diversity of Northcote
- **Building form and urban design** that respects the heritage of Northcote whilst setting a new benchmark in quality and sustainability

## **2.2 Vision Northcote Activity Centre**

The Vision for the Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan is to provide the foundation for the existing and continued vibrant community of Northcote through a regional focus for arts and cultural development of northern metropolitan Melbourne focused around sustainable transport modes and built form.

This is focused around development at the intersection of High Street with Separation Street / Arthurton Road as a village hub, providing good pedestrian links to key destinations, including the Town Hall, Northcote Plaza, Northcote library, community health centre, railway station and a range of uses along High Street.

This Vision is further articulated as including:

- The development of Northcote Activity Centre as a regional arts and culture node through a range of visual arts and live music venue as well as support services to the arts and design community.
- A diversity of use and development, focused around sustainable transport modes and built form. This includes public and community based transport systems that support the vast majority of resident and workforce travel needs with a service and infrastructure that is coordinated, reliable and safe to use.
- The incorporation of innovative solutions to enable an ongoing diversity of living and working opportunities within the centre with a focus on maintaining affordable housing and employment spaces.
- Community pride and embellishment of the sense of its neighbourliness and friendliness to all, expressed through active building form that encourages human interaction through formal and informal meeting spaces. This may be a formal public plaza or building, or casual interaction moving between houses, shops, transport and workplaces.
- Strong historic links to social and cultural diversity, including recognition of indigenous cultures, migration and cultural diversity have been maintained through provision of affordable housing and business spaces and a range of living and working opportunities in the centre.
- Minimising the environmental impact of development as part of everyday living, with development incorporating on site systems which minimise energy and water use, and utilise opportunities to incorporate indigenous planting where possible.

## **2.3 A Sustainable Future**

A sustainable future was identified by the community through the structure plan development process as the core principle upon which the Northcote Activity Centre should be established.

The principles of ecologically sustainable design and development have been developed on the following questions:

- How can the centre contribute to accommodating additional population, to create a more compact Melbourne and reduce urban sprawl?
- How can land be best used in the centre, to provide a comprehensive range of activities, employment opportunities and services and therefore minimise the need for car based trips?
- How the centre can be restructured to make it more attractive for people of all abilities including better pedestrian, cycle and public transport access in preference to car based visitors?
- What needs to occur to make the centre easier and more convenient to access for those using sustainable means of travel?
- How can the layout of sites and buildings maximise the potential for energy efficient design of buildings?

Five key themes have been identified as priorities for incorporating the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Design and Development into the Northcote Activity Centre.

- Energy efficient design.
- Water sensitive urban design.
- Sustainable transportation.
- Waste reduction.
- Biodiversity.

During the detailed design phase of new development and redevelopment within the Northcote Activity Centre there are opportunities to factor in sustainable design and development techniques, particularly in relation to the design of buildings, the types of materials used, and minimising the ongoing impact that the development will have on the environment.

Objectives and policies of this structure plan have been developed within this overarching principle of achieving ecologically sustainable development and design. Specific recommendations in these sections include recommendations to incorporate sustainable design and built form measures.

## **2.4 Objectives**

The following objectives are sought for Northcote Activity Centre. These are set within the context of a sustainable Northcote as further articulated in Section 2.3 above. The objectives are translated into policy and implementation actions in Section 3 of this report.

### **Centre roles, boundaries and precincts**

- To consolidate urban intensity within a defined Northcote Activity Centre to promote a walking catchment to economic, transport and community facilities.
- To establish a focus for business and social activity through a range of day and night time activities within a central core of the activity centre.
- To provide physical form and services that seeks to create a more ecologically sustainable activity centre.

### **Providing a range of affordable accommodation**

- To promote increased density in housing in areas of moderate and high change.
- To ensure new development advances the social and community values of Northcote by providing a range of housing opportunities to maintain housing affordability and accessibility to all members of the community.
- To ensure that new development has regard to heritage, surrounding residential character and the need to create human scale spaces that promote casual interaction and neighbourliness.
- To ensure that housing is located in places that can support employment and entertainment activity in the activity centre.

### **Economic Development**

- To increase and improve the provision of locally based jobs and business growth.
- To reinforce High Street as the core retail and commercial activity spine.
- To nurture further development of the emerging Arts sector.
- Provide opportunities for growing the evening economy.

### Transport and Access

- To maintain an attractive living environment.
- To minimise the impact of travel on the local character.
- To maintain the economic viability for businesses.
- To minimise the impact of travel on people's health and the environment.
- To make the most effective use of existing on street and off street carparking for use by a range of services, both day and night.
- To ensure new development is based on a sustainable approach to transport demands including promotion of a range of transport options in all new development.

### Urban Design and Heritage

- To improve civic and streetscape spaces to promote social and economic vibrancy within the centre.
- To focus High Street as a pedestrian promenade for convenience and niche retailing and entertainment.
- To provide a series of destination points within the centre as a focus for formal and informal community interaction.
- To acknowledge and conserve the significant heritage and preferred urban design elements of the activity centre on both public and private land.

### Community Identity

- To make appropriate provision of community services to meet the needs of Northcote and the broader region's existing and changing communities.
- To celebrate Northcote's local cultural and social diversity.
- To provide a range of green spaces for community gathering and enjoyment of views (both distant and near).



### **3 Activity Centre Objectives, Policies and Strategies**

In this section, a series of policies and strategies are identified which will implement the objectives identified in Section 2.4

This Section outlines future directions for the entire activity centre. Issues are summarised, objectives and policies set and implementation projects recommended to achieve the objectives are identified. Specific directions for individual precincts are detailed in the following Section (Section 4).

The six key result areas which have been derived from the Vision, values and objectives identified in Section 2 are:

- Centre roles, boundaries and precincts
- Providing a range of affordable accommodation
- Transport and Access
- Economic Development
- Urban Design and Heritage
- Community Identity

The issues summarised in each key area form the basis upon which the activity centre Structure Plan is built (for more specific detail on each issue refer to Background Report). Issues were identified through a series of stakeholder and community workshops, including a 4 day enquiry by design process known as a Charrette. All objectives and strategies should be read in conjunction with the sustainability objectives outlined in Section 2 of this report.

Recommendations to implement the strategies identified are detailed in Section 5. These recommendations have been given a priority according to the likely timeframe in which they will be undertaken. This relates to both the urgency of the recommended project and the lead-time required to undertake the project. For example, the construction of streetscape works may have a high priority in terms of need, but requires several years to undergo detailed planning, design and staged construction.

## 3.1 Centre roles, boundaries and precincts

### 3.1.1 Context

The Northcote Activity Centre has a diverse history as well as strong geographic features that make up the mix of physical and social form of Northcote.

The dominant hill forming the southern edge of the activity centre has been a key landmark for both indigenous inhabitants and European settlers of Melbourne. Commonly known as Ruckers Hill, it provides views to the Melbourne CBD across the Merri Creek and Yarra River plains.

Much of the current built form of the activity centre was established in the late 19th Century with the establishment of numerous businesses and landmark buildings along High Street. The post war boom of the 1950s and 60s saw Italian and Greek migrants settle in Northcote, bringing with them a new cultural diversity to the centre. This combined with the strong local employment with clothing manufacturers and brick production, saw the population of Northcote\* peak in 1971 at approximately 57,000 people. Economic changes, including the closure of the brickworks, restructuring in global manufacturing along with population trends toward smaller households and outer suburban living saw a decline in both population and local employment base during the 1970s and 1980s.

In recent years, a new era of growth to the centre has emerged with younger, more affluent people populating Northcote as an area of affordable housing close to urban services and cultural facilities. In turn, a new arts based precinct is emerging with a higher than average proportion of Northcote residents working in Arts, culture and design based professions.

The challenge of the activity centre is to now enhance this new found identity and growth whilst conserving the key elements that have attracted people back into Northcote. Much of this lies in the values identified in Section 2 of this report, including social and cultural tolerance, affordable housing and business rentals, diversity in people and spaces and a “down to earth” sense of place and being.

The following objectives and policies define what is believed to be the activity centre boundaries and the definition of use precincts within the centre boundaries, based upon this context and the values and vision for Northcote outlined in Section 2 of this report.

*\* Note: The population of Northcote at this time is based on the former Local Government area of Northcote which includes Northcote, Thornbury, Fairfield, Alphington and Westgarth.*

### 3.1.2 Centre role, boundaries and precincts: Objectives and Policies / Strategies

Precinct boundaries are identified in Figure 3.1 - Precinct Plan – which details defined boundaries so as to establish design frameworks and guidelines for areas of specific need. For definition purposes, precincts have arbitrary boundaries. In reality all precincts overlap in form, function and connection, to form the Northcote Activity Centre.

#### Objective 1:

**To consolidate urban intensity within a defined Northcote Activity Centre to promote a walking catchment to economic, transport and community facilities.**

#### Policies/ strategy:

- Encourage intensified activity and development within the boundary of the activity centre as identified in the Precinct Plan detailed in Figure 3.1
- Promote a range of uses providing a mix of living and working opportunities. This is to be encouraged throughout the centre, notably in areas of mixed use and redevelopment opportunity as identified on the Precinct Plan.
- Encourage a focus of specific activities around identified precincts of use on the Precinct Plan, noting that a mix of day and night time activity is to be promoted throughout the commercial precincts of the centre.

#### Objective 2:

**To establish a focus for business and social activity through a range of day and night time activities within a central core of the Activity Centre.**

#### Policies/ Strategies:

- Create a focus to convenience retailing, supporting business and community activities around the intersection of High Street and Separation Street / Arthurton Road.
- Support development and redevelopment of sites that focuses on pedestrian based activity in and around the High Street and Separation Street / Arthurton Road pedestrian spines.
- Incorporate formal and informal seating and resting spaces through streetscape improvements and civic spaces as part of developments and redevelopments of key sites along High Street, Separation Street, Arthurton Road as well as other key destination points highlighted on the Precinct Plan.
- Incorporate housing and business uses at upper levels to intensify use of sites and the range of uses in the centre.
- Ensure proposals for new or extensions to late night uses within the activity centre have regard to amenity impacts to residential uses, particularly those located within residential zones.

**Objective 3:**

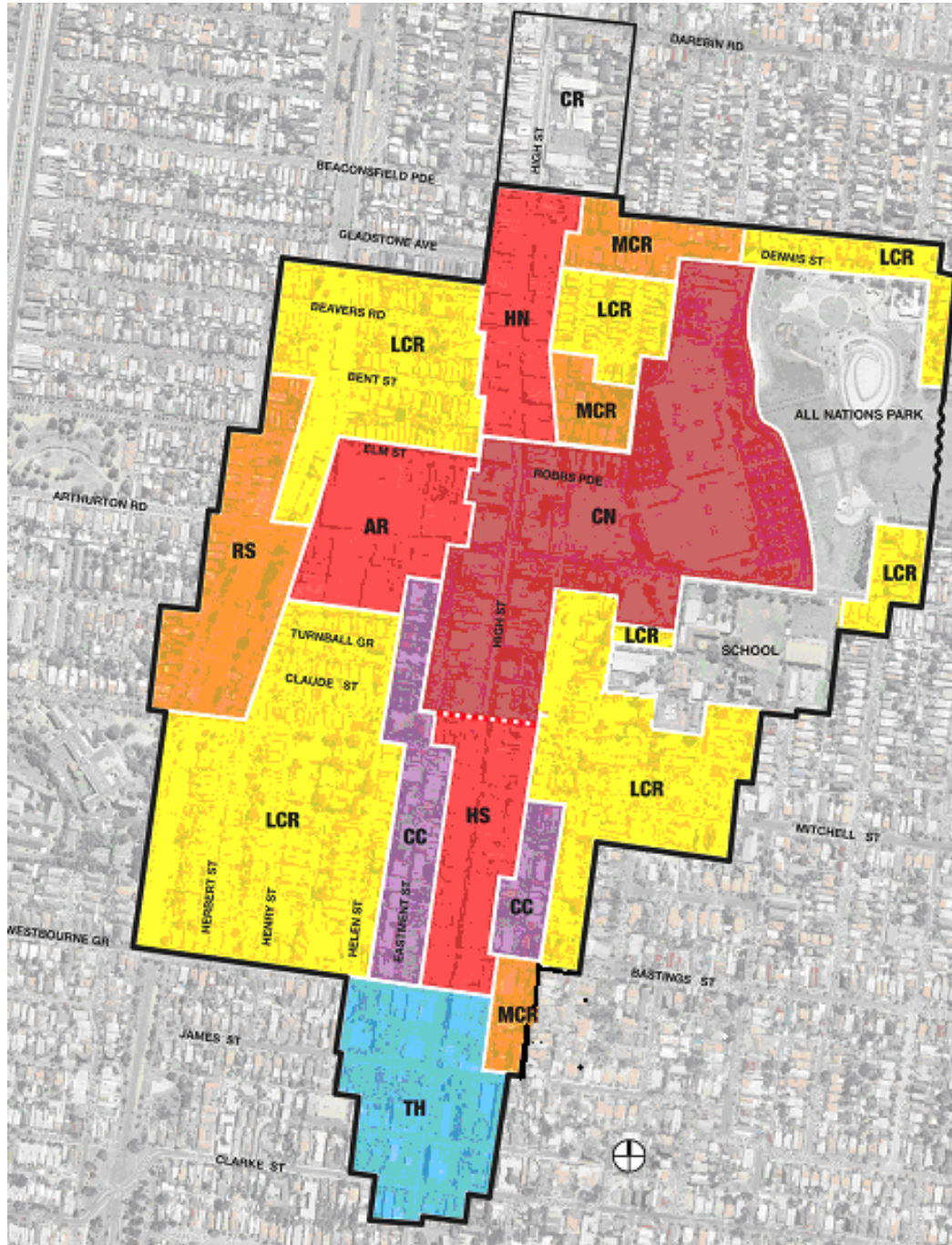
- To provide physical form and services that seeks to create a more sustainable activity centre

**Policies Strategies:**

- Design of new buildings and public spaces should minimise water use and the quantity and velocity of stormwater. Larger redevelopment sites (including Arthurton Road, Central Northcote and Town Hall precinct developments) provide greatest opportunity to achieve substantial gain in water reuse and recycling.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to recycle or reuse water to properties nearby.
- Design should utilise passive solar energy; reduce mechanical heating and cooling requirements; and provide maximum natural ventilation.
- Design of new development should allow for multi-tiered waste and recycling systems, including composting.
- Assessment of new development within the centre should be based on a premise of creating a more sustainable community through the incorporation of the five key themes of energy efficient design, water sensitive urban design, sustainable transportation, waste reduction and biodiversity.

### 3.1.3 Centre role, boundaries and precincts: Implementation Projects

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
1.1	Review relevant policy of the Darebin Planning Scheme as located in the Local Planning Policy Framework to correctly identify objectives and policies of this structure plan.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>
1.2	Investigate programs to encourage the use of Ecologically Sustainable Design in new development within the Northcote Activity Centre. This may include adoption of the STEPS (Sustainable Tools for Environmental Performance Strategy) and SDS (Sustainable Design Scorecard) programs, currently being trialled, as tools to assess and reward developments (including assessment of Council owned sites) that achieve high levels of sustainability in design and development.	High (on-going)	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
1.3	Investigate programs to share recycling and reuse of materials, energy and resources (e.g. solid waste, water and energy) across sites where individual "on site" reuse and recycling is not viable. (e.g. utilising parks for retention of water and recycling of green waste)	Ongoing	<b>Darebin City Council</b>



FRAMEWORK PLAN

- Activity Centre Boundary (Please note CR is considered to be outside the structure plan area.)
- Precinct Boundary
- CN Central Northcote Core Convenience Retail
- HN High St North
- HS High Street South
- TH Town Hall
- CC Creative Communities
- CR Croxton Precinct
- AR Arthurton Rd
- LCR Low Change Residential
- MCR Medium Change Residential
- RS Railway Station Area

Figure 3.1 – Precinct Plan

## ***3.2 Providing a range of affordable accommodation***

### **3.2.1 Context**

In 2001, it was estimated that there were 20,366 occupied private dwellings in the Northcote SLA, accommodating a population of 46,377. This is projected to increase to 23,957 dwellings accommodating 50,205 people in 2031, an addition of 3591 households. This equates to an additional 120 dwellings being constructed across the broader Northcote SLA each year between now and 2031.

These projections are from the Department of Sustainability and Environment and utilised in the Northern Regional Housing Statement Sept 2006. The projections are not policy driven but trend analysis. Principles of sustainable design as detailed in Melbourne 2030, directs that additional dwellings should be developed in and around activity centres, close to public transport and a range of social and economic resources. This also protects more sensitive areas such as interfaces to the Merri Creek from intensive development. The potential yield of 120 additional dwellings per year is therefore viewed as a minimum target.

A higher population target, closer to the 1971 peak of 57,000 people, could enable the activity centre to better utilise the existing social and physical infrastructure that exists in the centre in a walkable catchment, thereby supporting sustainability principles.

Council advocates that a percentage of new or redeveloped housing is dedicated to "affordable" housing, either as social housing to be provided by the State Government or non profit agencies, or low cost rental accommodation to maintain the cultural diversity that is valued by the community.

Additional housing will need to accommodate a range of population types, predominantly smaller households, with a generally aging population. It is noted that Northcote has attracted a younger population in recent years, which is expected to age in place.

Consultation for developing the Structure Plan highlighted the importance to the community of promoting:

- Affordable and accessible housing opportunities for a range of cultural and social groups. The social and cultural diversity valued by the community is dependant upon the provision of housing for a wide variety of housing forms and socio economic groups, providing affordable and accessible housing can support these groups.
- Sustainable design and development outcomes as discussed in Section 2.
- Development and redevelopment that is compatible with the character and heritage of an area. In particular, areas of smaller terraces and cottages include private backyards and green spaces that provide "borrowed" landscapes that are important to the broader community.

### 3.2.2 Accommodation Objectives and Policies /Strategies

#### Objective 1:

To promote increased density in housing in areas of moderate and high change as detailed on the Northcote Activity Centre Precinct Plan.

#### Policies / Strategies

- Building height and density in areas denoted as high change or moderate change can extend up to heights indicated in precinct plans and urban character guidelines detailed further in Section 4.
- On land zoned Residential 1 or land that directly interfaces land zoned Residential 1, the setback and height to boundaries should also comply with the provisions of ResCode.
- Within the retail core, new residential development above ground floor level is to be encouraged where it does not conflict with late night uses and can support local catchment to the centre.

#### Objective 2:

To ensure new development advances the social and community values of Northcote by providing a range of housing opportunities to maintain housing affordability and accessibility to all members of the community.

#### Policies / Strategies

- Provision of new accommodation for smaller household sizes within the core activity area is to be supported so as to maintain a stock of traditional housing in areas of low change. This is to facilitate a range of housing types and encourage affordability in both existing areas and new development.
- Provision of social and community based housing is to be supported to provide affordable housing for a range of social and cultural groups. It is noted that this can be assisted by the provision of land at a potentially reduced cost through redevelopment of redundant government land and through reduced requirements for carparking etc.
- All new development and redevelopment should utilise sustainable design and development techniques to reduce living expenses as a result of providing heating, cooling and private transport.

### Objective 3

To ensure that new development has regard to heritage, surrounding residential character and the need to create human scale spaces that promote casual interaction and neighbourliness.

#### Policies / Strategies

- New development should blend in with existing buildings through use of Urban Character Guidelines in areas of high change and Design Guidelines as detailed in precinct plans, (Refer Section 4).
- Areas of heritage significance will be appropriately defined, documented and conserved through a revised heritage study of Northcote. (Refer Section 3.5 – Urban Design and Heritage)

### Objective 4

To ensure that housing is located in places that can support employment and entertainment activity in the Activity Centre.

#### Policies / Strategies

- Housing developments within and adjoining retail and employment areas are supported and should be designed to minimise the potential for conflict with legitimate activities within these areas (e.g. Late night music venues) through use of insulation and noise protection.
- Residential amenity values of land zoned Residential 1 should be protected from unnecessary parking, access or noise emanating from entertainment or business uses.
- New late night activities will be encouraged to locate in areas separated from residentially zoned land so as to protect residential amenity and to ensure that late night operations can thrive without conflicts with local residents.
- New residential development within business zones will have regard to attenuation from noise from existing nearby commercial uses, particularly late night entertainment venues, recognising the amenity limitations of living within a mixed use activity area.

### 3.2.3 Accommodation Implementation Projects

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
2.1	Identify potential sites for social and/ or community housing projects.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Dept. Human Services
2.2	Update the Urban Character Study 2001	High (in Progress)	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
2.3	Introduce a new local policy into the Darebin Planning Scheme to apply to the consideration of new or expanded license premises where a permit is required pursuant to Clause 52.27 of the Planning Scheme, similar to that in place in other municipalities in metropolitan Melbourne.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Local Traders



### **3.3 Economic Development**

#### **3.3.1 Context**

Northcote Activity Centre has traditionally centred around local work places, historically including the Northcote Brickworks, administrative offices and a variety of small clothing and footwear industries.

Many of these traditional businesses have closed in the past 30 years. Lifestyle changes, including the transformation of the former brickworks to All Nations Park has led to a change in image for Northcote. This image is still emerging, deriving itself from its working class and indigenous roots, whilst taking on the multi cultural history of Northcote as well as its emerging role as an artist colony of metropolitan Melbourne.

Issues and trends identified in the Structure Plan process highlighted a need to increase local employment and to strengthen the role of High Street for local and sub regional shopping and entertainment as part of its role as a major activity centre. Importantly, economic assessment of the centre, undertaken by Planning By Design (2005) as part of the structure plan development clearly defined the need to focus any new retail development to High Street so as to reinforce the role of High Street as the core of the activity centre.

One issue identified by the community was the cost imposition of increased rents as property values of commercial sites increased. This limits the ability of low profit artist studios to continue to operate. The continued provision of low rental studio accommodation will be important to the ongoing cultural development of the Northcote Activity Centre.

Detailed discussion of changes in employment structure and the need to identify new employment and a lifestyle focus to Northcote is documented in the background report to this Structure Plan and the report of SGS Economics and Planning: Economic Assessment of Commercial and Mixed use Opportunities: May 2006.

#### **3.3.2 Economic Development Objectives and Policies / Strategies**

##### **Objective 1:**

**To increase and improve the provision of locally based jobs and business growth**

##### **Policies / Strategies**

- Provide opportunities that encourage the development of office accommodation within the precinct particularly on large development sites on Arthurton Road and High Street to complement the core retail area of High Street.
- Maximise opportunities provided by the public transport in the area to attract new business opportunities in proximity to the key public transport interchanges.
- Encourage a range of service employment activities particularly those that can support and encourage the arts community.

**Objective 2:**

**To reinforce High Street as the core retail and commercial activity spine**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Improve pedestrian links between Northcote Plaza along publicly accessible streets including Robbs Parade and Separation Street, to High Street through a streetscape and traffic improvement program (refer Sections 3.3 and 3.5). Continued access through Northcote Central is accepted, however, public access along public streets is the priority.
- Support the Retail Traders Association in their marketing, business development and management through targeted implementation projects.
- A variety of businesses on High Street should be provided, particularly those that offer quality fresh food, and other convenience household items.
- Convenience retailing along High Street from Robbs Parade to the Town Hall, with primary convenience shopping promoted between Robbs Parade and Hawthorn Road is supported, noting that a range of day and night time activities are to be promoted throughout the length of High Street.
- Support the addition of a fresh food based supermarket within the centre, provided such a supermarket can reinforce and provide active frontage to the High Street retail spine.
- Promote a range of niche retail and entertainment facilities throughout the High Street strip, noting an emerging focus of activity between James Street and Lawry Street.
- Gateways of the centre, as defined on the Precinct Plan should be appropriately signed or "branded" to identify the centre. This should be undertaken as part of a comprehensive program of streetscape improvements (refer Section 3.5)

**Objective 3:**

**To nurture further development of the emerging Arts sector**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Support for the arts precinct through establishment of an arts incubator.
- Streetscape improvements should reflect the vital arts sector in the area, i.e. public art in street furniture and treatments.
- Arts, design and related businesses in Eastment Street and in the area of Frederick and Wimble Streets will continue to be supported through precinct plans for these areas, promoting mixed use live / work environments.
- Support small and home based businesses, particularly in identified creative cluster areas (i.e. Eastment Street, Helen Street – south of Hawthorn Road, Wimble, Frederick, Separation and High Streets and Arthurton Road) through business network programs and enabling adaptive reuse of older buildings and creation of new buildings for live / work environments.

**Objective 4:**

**Provide opportunities for growing the evening economy**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Provide opportunities and incentives for the growing evening economy such as reduced carparking rates and identification of preferred sites with minimal amenity impacts to nearby residential areas. (Refer implementation project 2.3 – Accommodation: establishment of Licensed Premises Policy).
- Improve integration between day and evening businesses through utilisation of the Retail Traders Association.
- Manage the potential conflicts between business and residential uses in a mixed use precinct to ensure long term economic viability (refer policies in section 3.1 and 3.2)

**3.3.3 Economic Development Implementation Projects**

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
3.1	Establish local policies regarding the location of new entertainment use in and near residential uses. (Refer implementation Project 2.3).	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> High Street Traders Association.
3.2	Undertake a project in consultation with traders to establish marketing strategies for Northcote that can combine with “branding” of the centre and streetscape improvements.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> High Street Traders Association.
3.3	Undertake streetscape improvement ideally utilising a community arts program to utilise local talent to translate identifying themes and features (e.g. Ruckers Hill landform, indigenous heritage, multicultural development and creative clusters of Northcote) into the physical features of the core retail centre.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
3.4	As part of a streetscape program improve street signage and way-finding to and through the centre for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle users.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
3.5	Support the transformation of the former Northcote Police Station in James Street to an art/business incubator or similar community arts space for a variety of uses to activate the Town Hall civic square, reinforce the south end of High Street as a creative and entertainment precinct and provide opportunity for continued low rental artist space.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> State Government
3.6	Promote the redevelopment of properties along Helen Street, adjoining the Arthurton Road carpark to better interface with the carpark, with a range of live / work developments.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

3.7	Target medium to large scale office tenants to the Artherton Road redevelopment area as an employment anchor to Northcote.	On going	Darebin City Council
3.8	Support projects that can assist service business development in the area including local housing, recreation and entertainment activities that draw people to the centre.	On going	Darebin City Council

## 3.4 *Transport and Access*

### 3.4.1 Context

Northcote is serviced via a grid based road network with key North South Roads being St Georges Road and High Street Northcote. East West connections are via Darebin Road, Clarendon Street and Separation Street / Arthurton Road.

The majority of trips using High Street tend to be local in nature either in terms of their origin or destination. This is supported by the fact that there are negligible amounts of through trips that rarely use High Street although a significant number of trips do use sections of High Street for part of their trip.

The use of High Street for pedestrians cyclists and particularly disabled users is also constrained by the use of trams along this road which require priority access to meet state and local public transport policy. This currently limits the ability to remove the clearways which was advocated as part of the High Street Transport Management Plan.

Darebin's Integrated Travel Plan and the subsequent High Street Management Plan is an important aspect of the facilitation of measures to improve accessibility for all, encourage sustainable modes of transport and to improve opportunities for commercial activity. Supporting the use of public transport including trams through priority measures is a key function of the Integrated Travel Plan whereby maintaining, in particular, tram movements along High Street.

The structure plan process identified a number of poor linkages through the centre. Key to the centre development was a preference by the community to promote pedestrian, cycling and public transport as the preferred forms of access. The provision of better access through the centre for people of limited mobility was also highlighted through the consultation process.

Improvements to the transport network, focused upon a proposal to link Robbs Parade to Northcote Plaza, thereby easing traffic issues at the signalised lights with Arthurton Road and Separation Street and creating a potential pedestrian, cycling and public transport loop between Northcote Plaza, High Street and Northcote Station. This also improves safety and disabled access along Separation Street including the Northcote Library and increases desirability for Northcote Central Shopping centre to provide an active frontage to Separation Street, thereby improving pedestrian amenity along this street. A number of benefits and impacts for instigating this change in traffic management were identified as detailed below.

#### Benefits.

- Creates a potential bus loop – between Separation Street / Arthurton Road and the Plaza, using Robbs Parade and potentially Elm Street and Herbert Street.
- Provides an additional east west pedestrian and cycle link between the Northcote Plaza shopping centre, Arthurton Road Precinct and the Core retail of High Street which creates better access linkages
- Opens the buildings frontages along Robbs Parade, Separation Street and High Street as clearer and safer pedestrian connection between Northcote Plaza, All Nations Park, High Street and Northcote Station.

- Creates opportunity for the long term establishment of traffic lights at the intersection of Robbs Parade and High Street so as to create an additional pedestrian crossing point and to split traffic movements between Robbs Parade and Separation Street, thereby spreading vehicle movements and providing better through access for trams in High Street (as right hand turns are split between the two sets of lights).
- Provides clearer entry to the northern core retail centre with two clear access points between High Street and Northcote Plaza.

Impacts:

- Introduces additional traffic into Robbs Parade which will have some local amenity impacts to residents in the area.
- A longer term plan may be to signalise the Robbs Parade intersection as part of redevelopment of land west of High Street, between Elm Street and Arthurton Road. This would have significant impact on Elm Street.
- It may require widening of Herbert Street to accommodate buses.
- Opening Robbs Parade will require a reconfiguration of the Northcote Plaza car park to maintain or improve functionality. Some loss in parking may result, however, the increased use of on street parking in Robbs Parade would more than accommodate this loss. Car parking analysis suggests there is adequate alternative parking in the vicinity of the Northcote Plaza to accommodate any minor loss of parking in this area.

It is recommended that Robbs Parade be opened to High Street. A longer term option to address connection to Elm Street may be considered in the future with the redevelopment of the Australian Horizons site between Arthurton Road and Elm Street. This would be based on a detailed traffic impact assessment as part of the Australian Horizons redevelopment.

### **3.4.2 Access Objectives and Policies / Strategies**

**Objective 1:**

**To maintain an attractive living environment**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Give priority to pedestrian movement as the primary form of access in the activity centre.
- Ensure infrastructure improvements (including street widening, pavement improvements, building developments) in the activity centre have a primary focus of improving pedestrian amenity and access to and through the centre, linking key destination points.
- Require that improvements to the road network are based on a need to give better access through the centre for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. This includes creating better pedestrian, cycle and public transport links between Northcote Plaza, High Street and Northcote Station. Improvements to Robbs Parade, Separation Street and Arthurton Road are to be made ensuring that pedestrian, cycle and public transport access are the key priority.

- Promote activities that provide active frontage to pedestrian links so as to increase the perceptions of personal safety and provide vibrancy to pedestrian routes.

**Objective 2:**

**To minimise the impact of travel on the local character**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Give priority to public transport and community based transport as the secondary form of access in and through the activity centre
- Ensure that new development within the centre, gives focus to improving the linkages between public transport and key destinations and to incorporate better transport interchanges and waiting areas (i.e. bus, tram, taxi and train waiting areas) into developments.
- Incorporate community based transport as part of the public transport network to provide a range of transport alternatives for members of the community with limited mobility.
- Working in partnership with other statutory authorities to improve transport infrastructure along High Street to enhance existing transport provision e.g. areas north of Separation Street where the road reservation is wider and clearways do not restrict the capacity of the road to accommodate curb outstands or a central median.
- Improvements to streetscapes, particularly in High Street, Separation Street and Arthurton Road should include the provision of attractive, safe public transport stops and waiting areas.
- Provide signage and street furniture to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling.

**Objective 3:**

**To maintain the economic viability for businesses**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Ensure that the provision of vehicular access is the third and subsidiary form of access to service the centre.
- Vehicular access through the centre should be recognised as needed, particularly on major roads including High Street and Separation Street and Arthurton Road.
- Vehicular access in local streets should be provided with a priority to local, not through access, noting the new designation of Robbs Parade as a through route and not a local street.
- In any development or redevelopment to occur in the centre (both on public and private land), provision is to be made for private vehicle use and associated car parking as an additional, but not preferred form of access.
- Develop additional pedestrian and cycle linkages between key destination points, including public transport nodes and key community and commercial facilities.
- Maintain and upgrade the current network of pedestrian and cycle paths to provide safe access between key destinations.

**Objective 4:**

**Minimise the impact of travel on people's health and the environment**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Ensure that access for people with disabilities is provided, particularly in new development of buildings and civic / pedestrian spaces.
- Ensure that Disability Discrimination Act 1992 requirements are met as a minimum in the development of new buildings, roadworks and urban design improvements throughout the Northcote Activity Centre and encourage best practice measures where possible.
- Incorporate, where possible, facilities for disabled access into existing buildings, noting the need to reconcile these needs with heritage restrictions on properties.

### **3.4.3 Car Parking Objectives and Policies / Strategies**

**Residential parking**

Household survey data for 2005 indicates that car ownership levels have increased since 1999. Residents of medium density housing have lower rates of car ownership, with the average household living in a flat, unit or apartment having just over 1 car per household, compared to 1.69 cars per household for those living in a house. Moreover, people living in houses contribute the highest proportion of cars parked on the street, with the average household parking 0.33 cars on the street compared to just 0.10 cars for those living in flats, unit or apartments. In line with ResCode parking requirements Council introduced a policy of not issuing residential parking permits for new developments and insisting on 1 car space per unit with up to two bedrooms and for two spaces for units with three or more bedrooms. Residents in zoned residential streets can purchase on street parking permits where parking restrictions are in place.

**On and Off Street car parking**

Recent car parking survey data prepared by Grogan Richards as part of the Northcote Activity Centre Structure Plan development indicates that whilst there is an increasing concern by the community about the provision of car parking, there remains an adequate supply of parking.

Figures prepared by Grogan Richards as part of the structure plan development indicate that on average car parking areas in the Northcote Activity Centre are only 44% full. This varies across areas and times of day, however, at no time during the survey was parking demand outstripping supply. Although some areas of parking are better utilised than others, depending upon time restrictions and proximity to core services at different times of the day and night.

Sustainable design dictates that car parking must be viewed as one element of an integrated assessment of access.



**Objective 1:**

**To make most effective use of existing on street and off street car parking for use by a range of services, both day and night.**

**Policies / Strategies**

- On and off street parking will be provided in a range of locations across the centre, with a range of short term parking spaces provided within the core retail area with longer, unrestricted parking being directed to the periphery or outside the activity centre boundaries.
- Off street car parking associated with new development should be preferably located in a manner that can be accessed by a variety of users so as to share and optimise the use of car parking as a valuable resource.

**Objective 2:**

**To ensure new development is based on a sustainable approach to transport demands including promotion of a range of transport options in all new development.**

**Policies / Strategies**

- Parking provision, particularly in relation to new development should take into account the accessibility to alternative forms of transport.
- Parking standards for new development should establish rates within the context of:
  - o proximity of the site to public transport,
  - o key destination points within the activity centre,
  - o economic viability and vitality of the activity centre.

Preferred parking rates for the centre are detailed below. This is based on a detailed assessment of parking requirements undertaken by Grogan Richards. It is the view of Council that these parking rates should be considered as a guide by developers as to the expectation of likely parking requirements. Reduction or waiver of car parking spaces is considered by Council based on the merits of each planning permit application. However in order to assess if a reduction or waiver would be warranted some basic principles as well as current applicable standards have been provided for guidance.

Typical rates currently applied to planning applications are detailed below

Type of development	Clause 52.06/ResCode requirements	Council's application rates (as a guide – December 2005)
Residential	Resident parking as detailed below plus 1 space per 5 dwellings for visitor parking.	
Up to 2 bedrooms ----	2 under CI 52.06 & 1 under Rescode	1
3 bedrooms or over ----	2 under CI 52.06 & Rescode	2
Café/ Restaurant	0.6 each seat	0.15 (day) 0.3 (evening) per seat
Office	3.5 per 100 sqm	3.5 per 100 sqm
Retail	8 per 100 sqm	4 per 100 sqm
Hotels & Bars/Taverns	30 to 60 spaces per 100 sqm	Dealt with on case by case basis
Industry	2.9 per 100 sqm	2.9 per 100 sqm

In conjunction with the above applied parking standards, general principles are used to assess requested reductions or waivers in parking for non residential development. In residential development consideration for a reduction in visitor parking is given but not for resident parking, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. special needs accommodation).

### **Principle 1 Proximity to Sustainable Modes of Transport**

Consideration is given to the proximity of public transport and good walking and cycling links. Assessment is made on a radial basis if the development is within 400 m, 1km or further than 1km from the proposed development dispensation will be given to non residential parking based on these proximity levels to train, bus and tram stops.

Cycling links and pedestrian links that are on desire lines will also warrant consideration for dispensation of parking requirements. These may be on and off road facilities.

### **Principle 2 Existing Parking Provision**

The availability of parking within and in the immediate vicinity of the development area will also be considered. Where site constraints restrict on site car parking, car parking should be provided in centralised locations between sites, or ideally into publicly held car parks that can be utilised by a range of users, both day and night.

### **Principle 3 Improving or Enhancing Economic Vibrancy and Vitality**

If the development is identified as having a community benefit or will assist in improving or retaining the economic vibrancy of an area (through the eradication of empty shops for example) a reduction or waiver of parking will be considered.

"Northcote is classed as a major activity centre (sub-regional shopping). It is a location for shopping facilities that serve a sub regional market (and include discount department shopping stores). Northcote

also has potential to develop into a significant multi-function location including high density housing. These areas include the Plaza, Central and High Street shops”.

*(Source: City of Darebin Retail Activity Centres Strategy, March 2005)*

To this degree it is important to retain and enhance the economic activity within this centre and traffic and transport issues have a role to play.

In the case of housing, where broader social and environmental benefits to a development can be identified (e.g. Social Housing, where parking demand is low), consideration will be given to waiving or reducing on site parking requirements as a tool to promoting affordability. Such proposals need to demonstrate how alternative forms of transport are to be accessed, along with support provided on site (e.g. Bicycle racks, showers). Generally, residential parking requirements will not be reduced.

#### Principle 4 Traffic and Transport Impacts

Development does have an impact on the existing traffic and transport facilities; however the degree to which it affects the existing provision needs to be ascertained. In order to assess this, development that results in significant transport impacts will be required to carry out an Integrated Transport Plan as part of its planning permit approval process.

Council adopted, in November 2005, Travel Plan guidelines to provide information to developers on what a Travel Plan is and how it can be used to mitigate, in some circumstances, the impacts on traffic and transport that arise due to development. A Travel Plan is often a component of an Integrated Transport Plan and should not be used to justify development that will result in a significant negative impact in relation to transport and traffic.

### 3.4.4 Transport and Access Implementation Projects

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
4.1	Review all public and community transport linkages as part of a broader program to provide better serviced and integrated transport in non peak hour traffic (including nights and weekends), throughout the Northcote area to key destination points.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>  Department of Infrastructure Private Bus operators.
4.2	Undertake a review of pedestrian, cycle and road access through Helen Street / Hawthorn Street / Westbourne Grove area so as to review better local access through the centre. This should include identifying opportunities for better pedestrian and cycle access as well as reassessing the one way road network.	Low	<b>Darebin City Council</b>  Relevant land owners
4.3	Instigate a 40 km variable speed limit within the High Street retail core through core trading hours.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> – noting dependence of Vic Roads approval.
4.4	Investigate the removal of the left hand slip lane at the north west corner of High Street and Arthurton Road and convert this space to civic landscaping and meeting space either on its own or as part of a redevelopment of the adjoining private land holding.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> abutting landowners.
4.5	Investigate relevant traffic works and streetscape works to open Robbs Parade to Northcote Plaza.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> <b>Northcote Plaza</b> Landowners of Robbs Parade

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
4.6	Review the existing on street and off street car parking provision in relation to layout, location, time restrictions, costing of spaces so as to concentrate a range of short term parking needs within the core retail area with longer, unrestricted parking being directed to the periphery or outside the activity centre boundaries.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.7	Identify potential locations and funding mechanisms for future public car parking should it be required to facilitate new development. Such sites should be central to use and provided clearly on an at needs basis, which currently is not demonstrated by parking usage figures and principles of sustainable transport.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association
4.8	Lobby State Government to review current car parking rates within the Darebin Planning Scheme to encompass both maximum and minimum rates as part of a broader approach to sustainable transport.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> <b>DSE</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.9	Lobby State Government to improve public transport service quality, frequency and network connections.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.10	Lobby State Government to integrate better disabled and pedestrian access along High Street and public transport stops through removal of High Street clearways acknowledging that tram running times can be maintained with removal of the clearways through alternative traffic management measures.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.11	Seek to improve pedestrian access behind the east side of High Street through increased width of rear lanes and accessways to connect Frederick Street to Separation (refer further comment in Precinct – Central Northcote). This includes capitalising on opportunities to create additional links both east west and north south between Separation Street / Mitchell Street and through redevelopment of individual sites.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
4.12	Seek to improve pedestrian access behind the west side of High Street through increased width of rear lanes and accessways to connect High Street to the Northcote railway station, by incorporating improvements through individual site redevelopments (refer further discussions in the Arthurton Road, High Street and Creative Communities precincts).	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

## **3.5 Urban Design and Heritage**

### **3.5.1 Context**

Recent growth in Northcote's population and business development, has, in part, been attracted to the "unpretentious" and "quirky" nature of Northcote. This relatively rapid change has both positive and negative impacts. The challenge of urban design improvements to Northcote is to capitalise on the eclectic, down to earth community and artistic spirit that is valued by the community without homogenising or sterilising the centre so that the very features that are valued by the community are lost.

There is a need to define the role and function of particular sections of the activity centre, particularly to the north, where historical development has led to a range of uses and building form, without a clear sense of character or urban form. Recently approved guidelines for High Street (High Street – Urban Design Framework) provide a basis upon which more detailed precincts plans have been prepared as detailed in Section 4.

All urban spaces need to be safe and accessible to members of the community. This is supported by state policies and guidelines for safer design and community desires to provide safe access for all.

### **3.5.2 Urban Design Objectives and Policies / Strategies**

#### **Objective 1:**

**To improve civic and streetscape spaces to promote social and economic vibrancy within the centre**

#### **Policies / Strategies**

- New development should incorporate elements to create active frontage to all streets. An active frontage is a building frontage that encourages visual interest, safety and activity on adjoining streets or pedestrian areas by providing uses and entrances, windows and other details that maximise movement, outlook and surveillance between occupants of the buildings and its surrounds.
- New development will provide active frontage through use of design elements at the ground floor level that provide interest and activity to passers by.
- Upper levels of new and redeveloped buildings will, where possible, provide casual surveillance of adjoining public areas through windows and balconies that overlook public thoroughfares.
- New development should incorporate the design and provision of civic spaces where possible.

## Objective 2

To focus High Street as a pedestrian promenade for convenience and niche retailing and entertainment.

### Policies / Strategies

- Public spaces along High Street and pedestrian paths that link to High Street will provide a high level of public amenity and safety, including places for people to sit, walk, cycle and access community and retail facilities of the activity centre.
- Public and private spaces will incorporate public and community art works where possible to acknowledge and develop the local arts community of Northcote.
- Council will continue to support the removal of vehicular clearways along High Street so that the focus of High Street, Northcote is as a designated destination point, not a vehicle thoroughfare.
- A systematic program of streetscape improvements will be undertaken to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the centre as a destination. Where possible, improved tram stops will also be provided within the physical limitations of the street due to clearway provisions. Should clearways be removed, significant improvements to tram stops and pedestrian meeting spaces along the street can be accommodated.
- An ongoing program of public infrastructure improvements should be undertaken to reduce visual clutter from the street including the removal of overhead powerlines and unnecessary advertising signs.

## Objective 3

To provide a series of safe destination points within the centre as a focus for formal and informal community interaction.

### Policies / Strategies

- Public destination points are to be created, maintained and/or improved at key destination points including the Town Hall civic square, All Nations Park, Uniting Church forecourt – High Street, public forecourts at the intersection of High Street and Separation Street, Library forecourt – Separation Street, Arthurton Road carpark entry (or nearby location in redevelopment of this precinct), Helen Street School reserve and the seating area on the south west corner of High Street and Bayview Street.
- The use of public seating and forecourts is to be promoted in new building development and design throughout the centre.
- Public art should form part of the establishment of major new developments as well as public seating and forecourt areas.
- Safe and legible accessways for pedestrians and cyclists should be provided to key destination points. (Refer detailed discussion of key destinations in precincts Section 4)
- Key destination points will be “framed” by development of a scale and form that provides for casual surveillance of public space and of a suitable height and scale to promote human interaction at street level. (Refer detailed design direction in precinct chapters Section 4 and State Guidelines for Safer Communities.)

**Objective 4**

To acknowledge and conserve the significant heritage and preferred urban design elements of the activity centre on both public and private land.

**Policies / Strategies**

- Heritage elements, both grand and small are to be conserved and incorporated into new development where economically and structurally viable to acknowledge and enhance the social and cultural history of Northcote.

**3.5.3 Urban Design Implementation Projects**

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
5.1	Lobby VicRoads for the removal of clearways to ensure a safe environment for all road users and improve urban design outcomes as outlined in the High Street Transport Management Plan	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> High Street Traders Association.
5.2	Investigate feasibility and benefits of placing powerlines along High Street underground	Low	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association.
5.3	Establish and maintain a regular program of removing unauthorised and redundant advertising and signage throughout the centre.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
5.4	Establish and implement a Streetscape Master Plan to provide a consistent theme to public seating, street furniture (e.g. cycle racks, rubbish bins etc) and public signage as a "branding" of Northcote Activity Centre.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> High Street Traders Association.
5.5	As part of a streetscape program create additional public seating and resting places to encourage travellers to stop in Northcote.	medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
5.6	Streetscape improvements along High Street be undertaken through a public art and economic development program in consultation with local traders of High Street.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> High Street Traders Association.
5.7	Investigate the introduction of a 1% development contributions levy (in cash or artwork) to new development over \$500,000 in value as a means of funding public art in the activity centre.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
5.8	Finalise the use agreement between Council and the State Education Department of co-use and maintenance of public open space at the north east corner of Helen Street and Hawthorn Road.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> Helen Street Primary School. Department of Education.
5.9	Undertake specific streetscape and public realm improvements as detailed in precinct plans in this report (refer Section 4)	Various	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Affected land owners
5.10	Review the current heritage overlay provisions to ensure that areas of heritage significance are addressed consistently across the centre.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Heritage Victoria.

## **3.6 Community identity**

### **3.6.1 Context**

As detailed in the background report, Northcote has a rich history of providing a home to a range of people of different social and cultural backgrounds. This extends from its indigenous roots, through land booms of the 1800s and post World War II immigration. Cultural diversity and social tolerance are highly valued by the local community as was highlighted in consultation undertaken in the preparation of the Structure Plan.

A social needs assessment of the activity centre indicates that there is a generally good provision of many services (refer to details in the Background Report).

The community expressed a lack of free or affordable spaces for community groups to meet and the need to maintain a stock of affordable housing and businesses accommodation to retain a range of social and cultural groups in the centre and services that can meet the needs of these groups. This was supported by the needs assessment which identified a particular need for meeting spaces and activities for young people during the weekends and affordable community group space which is easy to book, can accommodate a variety of activities, and has storage space.

### **3.6.2 Community Identity Objectives and Policies / Strategies**

#### **Objective 1:**

**To make appropriate provision of community services to meet the needs of Northcote and the broader region's existing and changing communities.**

#### **Policies / Strategies**

- A range of community, local and state based services for different cultural and social groups of Northcote should be provided in Northcote Activity Centre.
- A range of meeting locations for local groups will be provided at affordable locations to support local interest and community groups.
- Cultural themes will be incorporated into detailed design of public art and street furniture in a culturally appropriate manner.

#### **Objective 2**

**To celebrate Northcote's local cultural and social diversity**

#### **Policies / Strategies**

- A range of housing and community facilities and services will be promoted and facilitated where possible to enable the continued provision of affordable accommodation and services for all members of the community.
- Reinforce the cultural identity of Northcote through use of public art in streetscape and building improvements.



**Objective 3**

To provide a range of green spaces for community gathering and enjoyment of views (both distant and near).

**Policies / Strategies**

- Landscape features, particularly All Nations Park, Helen Street Reserve and new civic spaces such as the Northcote Town Hall square should be enhanced along with key viewlines and accessways to these destination points. This is critical to their active use by the community as valued public spaces.
- Support should be given to maximising use of civic spaces, both formal and informal as community gathering spaces. This should include way finding strategies to key spaces such as All Nations Park and the Town Hall civic square.
- Programs to improve the number and quality of street trees throughout the centre should be encouraged for environmental benefits and community identity.
- New landscaping of public and private spaces should incorporate indigenous and water saving plants as part of sustainable design principles.

**3.6.3 Community Identity Implementation Projects**

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
6.1	Work with community groups to identify needs and deficiencies in spaces available for groups and individuals through ascertaining the needs of groups and what spaces are currently available.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
6.2	Monitor the availability and appropriateness of spaces available in the Northcote Town Hall to identify if community needs require additional or alternative local meeting spaces. In particular, monitor the availability of affordable meeting spaces at this and other potential locations for such spaces.	Medium – on going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
6.3	Review street tree planting programs to identify innovative ways of increasing tree coverage in public areas, without impeding heritage and pedestrian requirements.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
6.4	Undertake a combined education and planting program to increase the use of locally indigenous and/or low water use plants across both public spaces and in privately owned gardens and landscaping.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

## 4 Precinct Plans

This section details site based planning and design objectives and policies for precincts identified on the Precinct Plan. Each precinct plan has four sections as follows:

- Precinct Area and Context
- Precinct Vision
- Table of Precinct, Issues, Objectives, Policies and Implementation Actions
- Site Specific Policy Directions Plan (where relevant)

The **Precinct Area** is determined by factors including the location of its key functions, zoning and property boundaries, and logical boundaries with adjoining precincts. It should be noted that precinct boundaries are somewhat arbitrary and exist for the purposes of establishing the Structure Plan. Each precinct plan should be read in context of its surrounding precincts and the overall Structure Plan principles outlined in Section 3.

The **Precinct Vision** outlines the preferred future for the precinct including its role and built form character.

The **Precinct Objectives** identify how development within the precinct will contribute to achieving the vision through measurable outcomes.

The **Precinct Implementing Policies** provide the specific policies sought to satisfy the Precinct Objectives. Development applications within the precinct will need to comply with these site specific policies as well as with relevant Northcote Activity Centre objectives and policies, which are detailed in Section 2 and 3 of this report.

It should also be noted that except where the specific implementing built form policies apply, the provisions of Darebin Planning Scheme Clause 22.10 relating to residential and mixed use development of four or more storeys apply to development within the Structure Plan area.

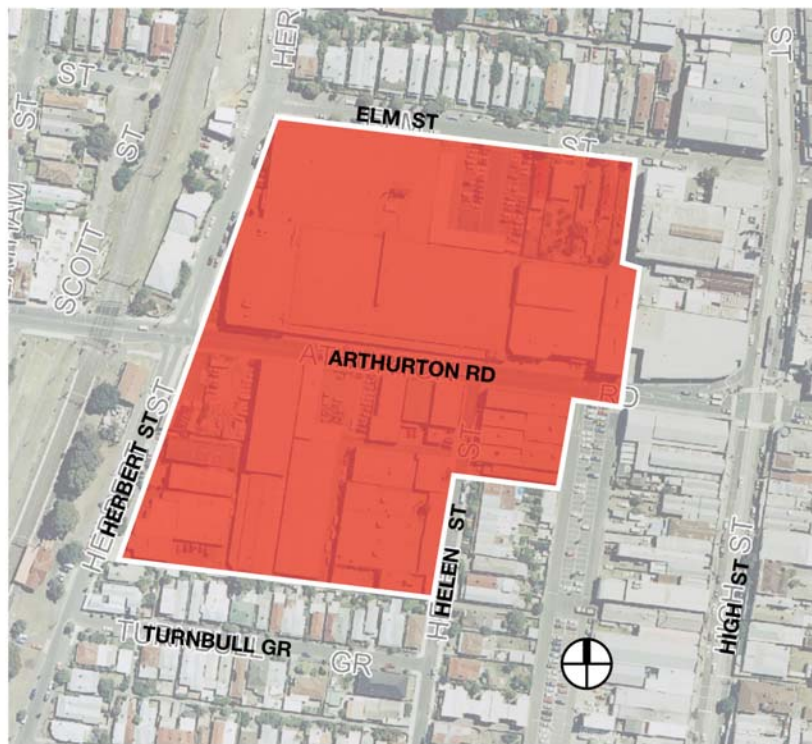
The **Implementation Actions** recommend specific works or programs that should be undertaken to achieve the objectives for the precinct. This includes aspects of the Planning Scheme, which may require amendment to implement the recommendations of the Structure Plan. It also includes public realm improvements or public realm initiatives that should be undertaken to support the precinct objectives.

Relevant **Policy Directions Plans** and **explanatory diagrams** are provided to illustrate site specific objectives, policies or implementation actions within the precinct and should be read in conjunction with all directions for the precinct.

## 4.1 Arthurton Road Precinct (AR)

### AR - Precinct Area and Context

The Precinct Area has been determined largely by the present Industrial 3 zoning of most of the land, plus a segment of land zoned Residential 1 in the north of the Precinct. It is bisected by Arthurton Road. Around 75% of the industrial land, and part of the Residential 1 land is owned by Australian Horizons Pty Ltd. The current owners of this land have indicated that on expiry of the present lease in 2007, they plan to redevelop the site to a more intensive use, suitable to its location in an activity centre. As such the future of this precinct will be strongly influenced by the development outcomes for the Australian Horizons sites.



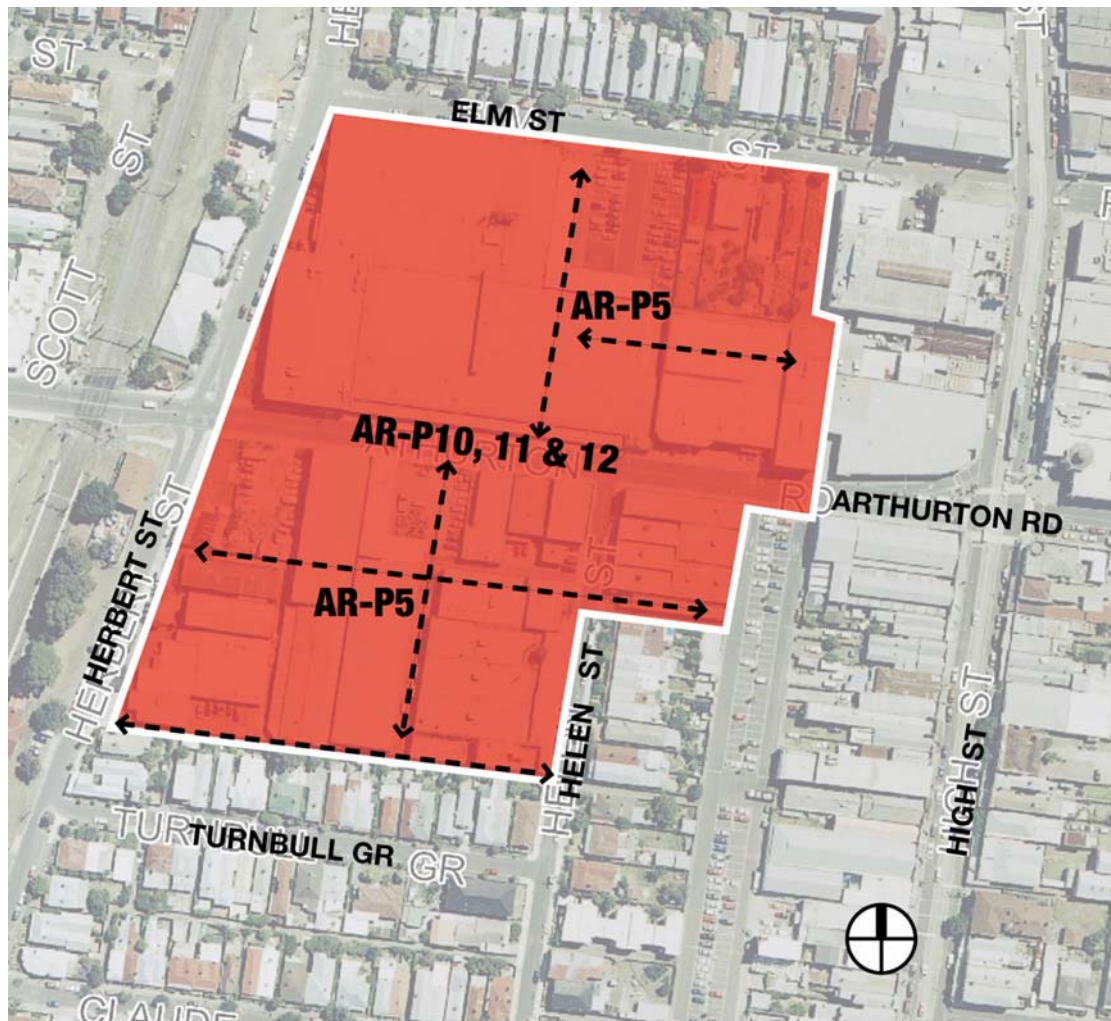
**AR PRECINCT AREA**

Figure 4.1: AR Precinct Area

### AR – Precinct Vision

The Arthurton Road Precinct will be a revitalised office and commercial-based mixed use hub supporting the Northcote Activity Centre's retail core of High Street. The precinct will provide opportunities for work/live accommodation and other intensive mixed use development including residential uses above. Offices and commercial uses will front Arthurton Road, activating the frontage and providing a backdrop of activity for the improved pedestrian environment of Arthurton Road, linking the High Street retail core to the Northcote railway station.

Relevant site specific objectives, policy and actions are detailed on the Policy Directions plans below. These should be read in conjunction with the following table of complete objectives, policies and actions for this precinct.



**AR – POLICY DIRECTIONS : ACCESS**

----- Potential new link

*Note: Only site specific actions and policies have been identified on the plan. Other policies and actions may apply to the whole precinct.*


Figure 4.2 - Arthurton Road Precinct – Policy Directions: Access





**AR – POLICY DIRECTIONS: BUILT FORM**

⑧ Maximum number of storeys (based on 3metre floor/ceiling height) desirable in building envelope. (eg ⑧ x 3m = 24m desirable maximum height from natural ground level)

 Building Envelope : Note the interface between building heights is conceptual only. The exact transition between heights will need to address detailed site analysis and design response in accordance with the provisions of the Darebin Planning Scheme at the time of permit consideration.

 Promote active building frontage.

*Note: Only site specific actions and policies have been identified on the plan. Other policies and actions may apply to the whole precinct.*

Figure 4.3 - Arthurton Road Precinct – Policy Directions: Built Form

### AR – Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Artherton Road precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan. The two Policy Directions Plans (access and building form) clarify site specific objectives, policies and actions.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Role and Function of Precinct</b></p> <p>As noted in Section 3.3 Council investigations indicate that the present zoning and low intensity industrial activities within the Precinct do not meet the Northcote Activity Centre Objectives.</p> <p>The strategic location and size of the land holdings between the station and High Street, combined with an active interest by the key landowner to redevelop, provides opportunity to significantly increase the number of workers and residents in the centre, as well as to enhance the public realm in this precinct.</p> <p>Through the structure plan consultation process, consideration was given to the location of a major retail component to locate on the northern Australian Horizons site. The economic objectives, as detailed in Section 3.3 and supported through community discussions, dictates that any retail component must have direct connection to High Street to support the High Street retail core.</p>	<p>AR – O1 To provide employment based activities that complement and support the core retail function of High Street.</p> <p>AR – O2 To encourage the provision of a wide variety of housing types including affordable housing and multi-level apartments.</p> <p>AR – O3 To encourage residential development that can incorporate live/work accommodation.</p> <p>AR – O4 To ensure that, where appropriate, development maximises the opportunities for intensive multi-storey development within the precinct and avoids underdevelopment of key sites.</p> <p>AR – O5 To limit the amount and location of retail in the precinct to that which can complement and directly link to the core convenience retail area of High Street.</p>	<p>AR – P1 Development proposals should include a range of uses with a focus on business, employment and mixed use activities to support the retail core of High Street.</p> <p>AR – P2 Retail activities may only locate within this precinct if they can complement rather than directly compete with retail facilities along High Street.</p> <p>AR – P3 Redevelopment in the precinct should provide for a range of housing types, including a proportion of affordable housing.</p> <p>AR – P4 Housing forms should include provision for live / work opportunities though provision of multi-purpose dwellings or flexible floor plans that can adapt over time.</p>	<p>AR – A1 Rezone land within the Industrial 3 Zone and the portion of Residential 1 zoned land within the Australian Horizons site, to facilitate business-dominant mixed use development, such as the Business 2 or a specific development zone. Business 1 zone is <u>not</u> considered appropriate to this precinct as the precinct objectives do not include the provision of core retail development. This rezoning will be accompanied by a development control tool such as a Development Plan Overlay and Development Contributions Overlay to ensure design parameters are defined prior to lodgement of development applications (refer AR - A4 below).</p> <p>AR – A2 Provide development incentives for the provision of affordable housing through reduced parking requirements etc.</p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Permeability and Access:</b></p> <p>Current pedestrian amenity and access through the precinct is poor. In particular, the street block north of Arthurton Road is too large for an ideally walkable and transit-friendly Melbourne 2030 activity centre.</p> <p>Opportunity exists to improve the amenity of the Arthurton Road car park and to support redevelopment of the rear of the Helen Street properties to increase casual surveillance to the car park.</p> <p>Current pedestrian access to the station is via Arthurton Road or several narrow lanes, and across the Arthurton Road car park, and through the rear of shops or the Stuzzi walkway. Better and safer access to the station is a key issue to the community.</p>	<p>AR – O6 To ensure the provision of adequate and appropriately located and designed pedestrian walkways or streets to improve access throughout the precinct.</p> <p>AR – O7 To ensure that the street network within the precinct is designed to provide for safety, efficiency and a high level of amenity for pedestrians and vehicles (including bicycles).</p> <p>AR – O8 To ensure that development is sited and designed to acknowledge and activate any new streets and walkways created as a result of adjoining development.</p>	<p>AR – P5 Development should provide additional walkways or streets including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved connections between the Northcote railway station and the retail core of High Street.</li> <li>▪ At least one north-south service road connection between Arthurton Road and Elm Street.</li> <li>▪ At least one new local road connection south of Arthurton Road, with highest priority being a link between Arthurton Road car park, across Helen Street to Herbert Street and the station.</li> </ul> <p>AR – P6 Development should provide active frontages to streets and public pedestrian walkways.</p> <p>AR – P7 Any new off-street car parking areas established as part of new development are to be located and designed to minimise visibility from adjoining streets and the number of vehicle cross-overs is to be minimised.</p> <p>AR – P8 Redevelopment within the precinct is to be designed to allow for passive surveillance of any adjoining pedestrian walkways.</p> <p>AR – P9 Redevelopment adjoining the Arthurton Road car park should be reorientated to address and provide surveillance of the car park and any adjoining pedestrian walkways.</p>	<p>AR – A3 Undertake landscape improvements to Arthurton Road car park, with particular emphasis on creating improved pedestrian amenity to Arthurton Road.</p> <p>This may be undertaken as part of a redevelopment of land directly east and west of the car park, abutting Arthurton Road.</p> <p>AR – A4 As part of a planning scheme amendment to facilitate development of land in this precinct establish a Development Contributions Plan and relevant overlay provision to provide for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) widening of the road reserve along both the north and south side of Arthurton Road. (1.5 metres to south and 3.0 metres to north), to provide for additional landscaping, safe pedestrian access and carparking provision to be associated with new development on sites abutting Arthurton Road.</li> <li>b) establishing a north south local link with a pedestrian focus from Elm Street to Arthurton Road, at a point approximately mid way between Herbert Street and High Street.</li> <li>c) establishing an improved east west link, through the widening of the rear laneway between Turnbull Grove and the existing industrial area south of Arthurton Road to improve safety of pedestrian access along this laneway and improve access to adjoining properties.</li> <li>d) provision of improved landscaping along Arthurton Road to a theme consistent with that developed for High Street.</li> </ol>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Arthurton Road</b></p> <p>Arthurton Road, from the Northcote railway station in the west to its intersection with High Street in the east, is unpleasant and unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. It has a poor sense of address for abutting development.</p> <p>The footpaths on both sides are too narrow for present and anticipated pedestrian usage and comfort.</p> <p>The streetscape appearance is poor with blank walls, no shelter or trees, overhead powerlines and redundant signage. In order for the entire precinct to improve its development potential and urban amenity, Arthurton Road needs to significantly improve the pedestrian environment between the railway station and High Street.</p>	<p>AR – O9 To reduce traffic speeds and improve pedestrian and bicycle access along Arthurton Road.</p> <p>AR – O10 To facilitate shared use pathways for pedestrians and cyclists.</p>	<p>AR – P10 Maintain the current width of the Arthurton Road carriageway for through traffic.</p> <p>AR – P11 Provide improved landscaping, safer pedestrian access and carparking adjacent to new development along Arthurton Road (refer AR – A4)</p> <p>AR - P12 Ensure the design of parking bays along Arthurton Road includes the provision of landscaping. Parking bays should contain no more than 3 car spaces between street trees, and be located in kerb extensions.</p>	
<p><b>Redevelopment fronting Arthurton Road</b></p> <p>Arthurton Road currently lacks active frontage to the street. It provides little opportunity for human engagement, interest and shelter.</p> <p>South of Arthurton Road, the land is held in several ownerships. As with north of Arthurton Road, the land south of Arthurton Road constitutes an important opportunity to strengthen the activity centre by means of</p>	<p>AR – O11 To ensure that development abutting Arthurton Road provides for active frontage with a predominantly continuous footpath shelter, and incorporates active non-residential uses at the ground level street front.</p>	<p>AR – P13 Building height in this area should be 3 storeys; the lower 2 storeys of development may provide zero lot alignment, with the third level being setback 1 metre from the building frontage. Staggered setbacks to the street should be provided to enable sunlight at midday of the winter solstice to reach the frontage of any new buildings to the south of Arthurton Road. <i>(Noting the use of widened road reservation as part of any redevelopment - refer AR – A4).</i></p>	<p>AR – A5 Council initiate a coordinated redevelopment of land to the south of Arthurton Road through facilitating a meeting of land owners to discuss the overall vision and objectives for the precinct to encourage a coordinated approach.</p>



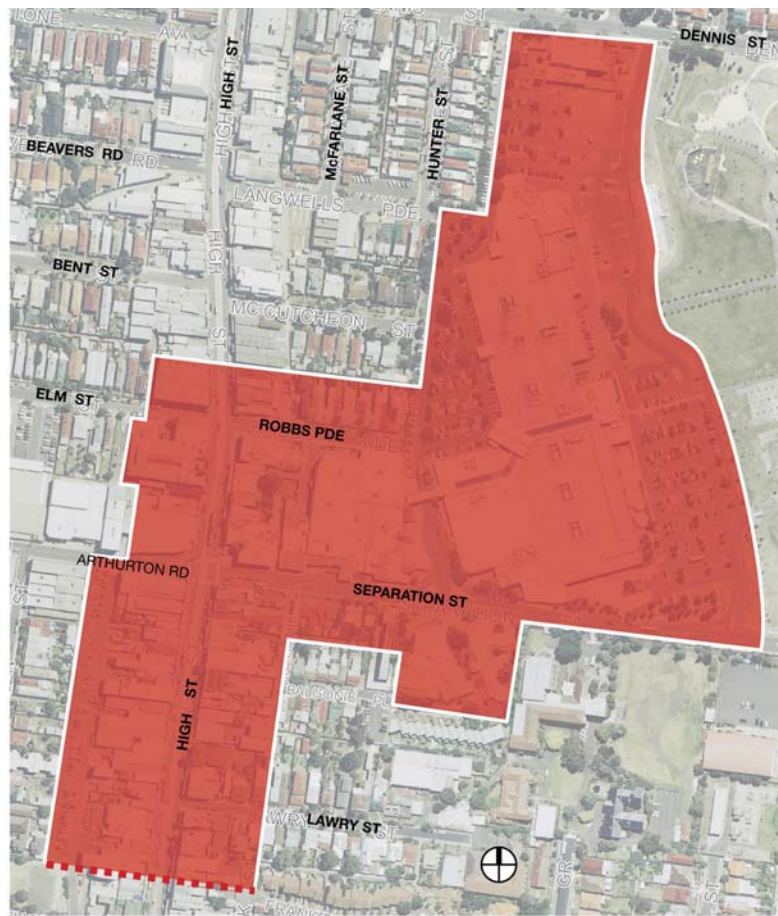
Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>redevelopment.</p> <p>Multiple owners and businesses in this area may result in more incremental redevelopment. Changes in zoning resulting from the structure plan may, however, provide suitable incentive for redevelopment.</p>		<p>AR – P14 Building height within this area should not exceed 5 storeys as detailed on Figure 4.3 Specific Policies - Built Form. Relatively continuous weather protection (e.g. verandahs) is to be provided over the Arthurton Road footpath.</p>	
<p><b>Interface along Elm Street</b></p> <p>Elm Street, the northern boundary of this precinct, has small single storey dwellings along its northern side and part of its southern side. Many dwellings on the north side face across to industrial uses and car parking. Redevelopment in the precinct needs to include an appropriate interface to these residential uses whilst allowing intensification of use appropriate to the precinct vision.</p> <p>Future redevelopment of the residential properties on the southern side of Elm Street to business or live/work uses as part of the AR precinct will be supported.</p>	<p>AR – O12 To ensure development opposite or adjacent to established residential areas provides for an appropriate built form transition at the interface with these areas.</p> <p>AR – O13 To ensure that development opposite to or adjacent to established residential areas is sited and designed to minimise adverse impacts upon the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties.</p> <p>AR-014 To allow dwellings, particularly on the south side of Elm Street to transform to live work uses.</p>	<p>AR – P15 Building height within this area should not exceed 3 storeys as detailed on Figure 4.3 Specific Policies - Built Form. Development should be set back a minimum of 3.5 metres from the frontage to Elm Street. Verandahs may encroach no more than 2 metres within this setback.</p>	
<p><b>Interface along Herbert Street and railway</b></p> <p>Existing development, including community services along the western side of Herbert Street, needs to be considered when designing the built form and land use interface along the eastern side of Herbert</p>	<p>AR – O15 To acknowledge the intersection of Herbert Street and Arthurton Road as a gateway site to Northcote Activity Centre with</p>	<p>AR – P16 Building height within this area should not exceed 8 storeys as indicated in Figure 4.3 Specific Policies - Built Form (being areas identified north and south of Arthurton Road, and east of Herbert Street for the location of</p>	

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>Street. However, these predominantly non-residential uses are able to tolerate a relatively large scale of development across the street from them.</p> <p>The two corners of Arthurton Road on the eastern side of Herbert Street provide opportunity for taller buildings as a 'gateway' to the activity centre.</p> <p>Taller buildings would overlook the Northcote Railway Station and train usage improving safety. As the land slopes 5 to 6m from High Street down to these corners, taller buildings here should have the least impact on views of anywhere in the activity centre, as seen from All Nations Park.</p>	<p>appropriate building form.</p>	<p>landmark buildings). This is to enable the incorporation of landmark features which are distinctive in height (up to 8 storeys).</p> <p>AR- P17 A minor feature building at the south east corner of Elm Street and Herbert Street could be established (up to 4 storeys).</p>	
<p><b>Interface to Turnbull Grove and Helen Street residential properties</b></p> <p>To the south of the precinct is the residential street of Turnbull Grove, which is listed as a heritage area and denoted on the framework plan as an area of low change. It is a narrow street, with constrained on-street parking, and the rear lane serving the houses on the north side is not wide enough to provide rear garage access. This places increased pressure on the use of on street parking in the area.</p>	<p>AR – O16 To ensure that development adjacent to established residential areas is sited and designed to minimise adverse impacts upon the amenity of adjoining residential properties.</p> <p>AR – O17 To facilitate safer access between the Northcote railway station and High Street.</p>	<p>AR – P18 Development immediately abutting the Helen Street residential properties and Turnbull Grove interface should be no greater than 2 storeys and comply with ResCode provisions adjacent to the north-facing rear yards of these properties. (Refer Figure 4.3 Specific Policies - Built Form)</p> <p>AR – P19 Redevelopment along the northern boundary of the lane should allow for widening of this lane as a more useable link and provide for safer pedestrian access between the Northcote railway station and High Street.</p>	

## 4.2 Central Northcote – Core Convenience Retail Precinct (CN)

### CN- Precinct Area and Context

This area is the existing core retail area with a mix of modern retail facilities, community buildings and small sections of historic brickworks cottages. Retail development includes Northcote Central and Northcote Plaza that sit to the east of High Street. The precinct includes development along both sides of Separation Street, including the Health Centre and Northcote Library, as well as Robbs Parade as a potential key link to High Street.



**CN – PRECINCT AREA**

..... The southern boundary of this Precinct is transitional with the core convenience retail edge being undefined in this area

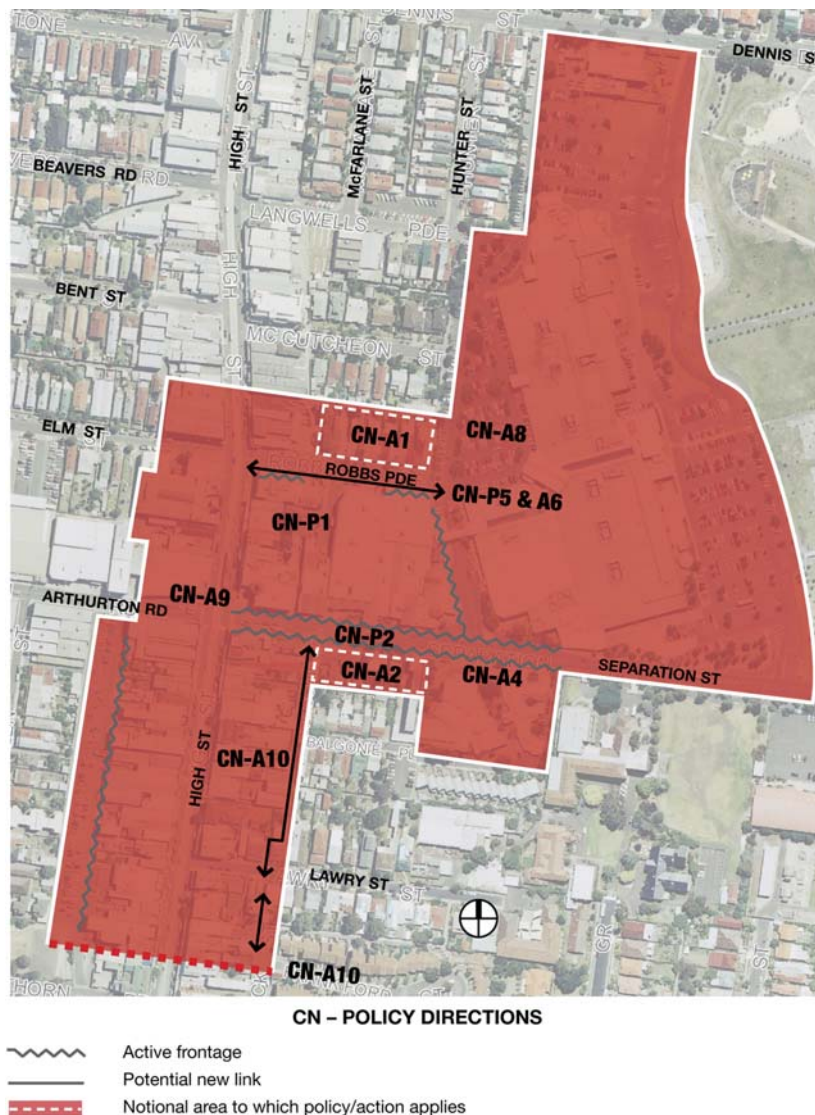
Figure 4.4 Central Northcote Core Retail Precinct (CN)

**CN – Precinct Vision**

The Central Northcote – Core Convenience Retail area is identified as an area of high change, where new development supports an integrated public, pedestrian, street-based continuous retail edge along High Street, and between High Street and Northcote Plaza.

This area is to continue to provide the core retail and community functions, through provision of an enhanced safe and publicly accessible street-based retail environment to complement the two enclosed shopping centres.

With the opening of Robbs Parade (refer details in Section 3.4) greater street connectivity has led to greater public interaction and safer pedestrianisation of this area, both along Separation Street and Robbs Parade.



**Figure 4.5 Central Northcote Core Retail Precinct (CN) – Policy Directions**

The relevant site specific objectives, policy and actions detailed on the Policy Directions plan should be read in conjunction with the following table of complete objectives, policies and actions for this precinct.

### CN – Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Central Northcote – Core Convenience Retail precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Role and Function</b></p> <p>The area provides the core of daily activity in the centre including a range of community and convenience retailing services including supermarkets, library, post office, Medicare office and banks as well as discount department stores.</p> <p>Opportunity exists to better integrate the internal centres of Northcote Plaza and Northcote Central with the public domain areas of Separation Street and High Street through improved frontage and public realm features between the two areas and broadening the use of the intervening area, particularly the connectivity and pedestrian environment of Robbs Parade.</p> <p>Opportunity exists to strengthen the western side of High Street with a new specialty supermarket or similar strong convenience retail anchor.</p>	<p>CN – O1 To better integrate the individual components of the precinct including Northcote Plaza, Northcote Central, community facilities and High Street retail areas as a network of pedestrian friendly streets with a range of day and night time activity.</p> <p>CN – O2 To promote increased surveillance and activity throughout the precinct in both day and night time activity.</p> <p>CN – O3 To facilitate a mix of business uses with opportunities for residential living at upper levels.</p> <p>CN – O4 To provide an intensified mix of buildings that can create a street based pedestrian grid to link High Street with Northcote Plaza, Robbs Parade and Separation Street.</p>	<p>CN – P1 Increased density of use of sites, particularly between Robbs Parade and Separation Street is to be encouraged. This should accord with the existing High Street Urban Design Framework March 2005.</p> <p>CN – P2 Retail and/or business frontage is encouraged along Separation Street between Northcote Plaza and High Street including re-fronting Northcote Central and Northcote Plaza, and re-development of the south side of Separation Street between the community health centre and High Street.</p> <p>CN – P3 Redevelopment of major sites in the precinct should provide for a range of housing types including consideration of affordable housing.</p> <p>CN – P4 Housing forms should include provision for live / work opportunities, including use of flexible floor plans that can adapt over time.</p>	<p>CN – A1 Rezone land on the northern side of Robbs Parade – as marked in Figure 4.5 to Business 5 to facilitate commercial use of heritage cottages and a more active use of this street as a safe connection between Northcote Plaza and High Street.</p> <p>CN – A2 Rezone land on the southern side of Separation Street between the library and High Street as Business 1 to enable a continuous retail streetscape and network between the library, Northcote Plaza and High Street as a street based core retail area, as detailed in Figure 4.5.</p>
<p><b>Streetscape and Access:</b></p> <p>Streetscapes vary across the precinct. Much of this is in poor condition and not of heritage</p>	<p>CN - O5 To improve pedestrian amenity along Separation Street and Robbs Parade</p>	<p>CN – P5 Pedestrian, bus and local vehicle movements through Robbs Parade to</p>	<p>CN – A3 Investigate whether the road pavement of Separation Street</p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>significance. Robbs Parade has little streetscape improvements and currently acts as a service entry to Northcote Central. The street has potential to provide a core pedestrian link as well as a car and bus link between High Street and Northcote Plaza.</p> <p>Northcote Plaza has an isolated carpark layout from the surrounding street network with road access only from Separation Street and Dennis Street. Separation Street has narrow footpaths on both sides due to a wider road pavement in Separation Street, between Andrew Street and High Street. There would seem to be some capacity within the road reserve to realign this section of road to wider footpaths, particularly on the northern side to accommodate safer pedestrian access</p> <p>The precinct provides poor east west connection and poor pedestrian movement throughout. On the east side of High Street there is poor north-south rear lane/minor street continuity and inefficient off-street car parking to the rear of existing properties facing High Street. This limits the development potential of premises on the east side of High Street.</p> <p>Pedestrian connections through to rear areas from High Street are limited on both sides of the street. Connections on the east side of the street are particularly poor with little continuous and usable public access and parking available to the rear of shops on this east side. This is particularly notable between Separation Street, Lawry Street and Frederick Street.</p>	<p>through improved streetscapes and active retail or business frontage to these streets.</p> <p>CN - O6 To provide a street based grid to the precinct as a means of providing better and safer public access through the area,</p> <p>CN - O7 To create better east-west pedestrian links into High Street on both sides, and connecting further west to Northcote railway station.</p> <p>CN - O8 To reinforce the role of the High Street/Separation Street node as the primary convenience retail core.</p> <p>CN - O9 To improve coordination between public transport routes and interchange / waiting areas.</p> <p>CN -O10 To integrate development with rear parking and local access ways through potential rearrangement of building and parking spaces to create active pedestrian links between High Street, the railway station and residential areas.</p>	<p>Northcote Plaza should be encouraged through changes to street network and development in Robbs Parade.</p> <p>CN - P6 Any redevelopment in the precinct should lead to an outwardly-focussed development that faces onto Separation Street and Robbs Parade rather than continued use of internal pedestrian malls.</p> <p>CN - P7 New and redevelopment within the precinct is to be designed to allow for passive surveillance of any adjoining pedestrian thoroughfares.</p> <p>CN - P8 Redevelopment of sites fronting High Street on the east, and south of Separation Street should include integrated and publicly-available off-street car parking, pedestrian links through to High Street, and better pedestrian and service vehicle access from Separation Street to Lawry and Frederick Streets.</p>	<p>can be re-aligned to provide additional street tree and pedestrian pavement areas between the Plaza and High Street.</p> <p>CN - A4 Create improved seating and casual meeting space in front of the Northcote Library.</p> <p>CN - A5 Integrate and realign the Northcote Plaza car park area to enable traffic movement through Robbs Parade from Northcote Plaza</p> <p>CN - A6 Create a road opening at the eastern end of Robbs Parade for this road to connect to Northcote Plaza.</p> <p>CN - A7 Increase street tree planting and pavement improvements along Robbs Parade.</p> <p>CN - A8 Investigate the establishment of a central bus interchange and better circulation of bus routes through the core area as part of a review of public transport routes in the centre.</p> <p>CN - A9 Remove the slip lane from Arthurton Road into High Street, and enhance the enlarged footpath as an attractive pedestrian node.</p> <p>CN - A10 Investigate options for</p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
			<p>providing a more contiguous north-south vehicle access and accessible off street parking to the rear of the east side of High Street, between Separation Street and Frederick Street.</p>
<p><b>Building forms:</b></p> <p>A range of building forms exist from old retail shops to residential cottages to large scale shopping centre buildings. With this there is a range of building height, style, front and side setbacks. No dominant or preferred character currently exists. The Australia Post building on the corner of High Street and Robbs Parade provides a very bland northern entry to the precinct.</p> <p>Opportunity exists to create an active frontage to Separation Street from Northcote Plaza through development at the corner with the road entry to Northcote Plaza.</p>	<p>CN – O11 To conserve the existing heritage elements of significance, particularly cottages on the north side of Robbs Parade through facilitating better use of existing or extended buildings.</p> <p>CN – O12 To develop more intensive building form and active frontage to High Street.</p> <p>CN – O13 To facilitate development within the guidelines of the High Street Urban Design Framework.</p>	<p>CN – P9 Building setbacks may include zero front and side setbacks where active frontage is to be gained. Redevelopment along the north side of Separation Street should be encouraged up to the street frontage to provide attractive, active and safe streetscapes.</p> <p>CN – P10 Development at ground floor should provide retail or business frontage that activates the Arthurton Road car park and supports safe pedestrian access through the area.</p> <p>CN - P11 Vertically articulated building forms, within the context of the High Street Urban Design Framework are to be supported for multi-storey developments. Finer grain smaller, frontages, particularly to Separation Street and Robbs Parade are to be supported. (refer elevation example in figure 4.6)</p>	



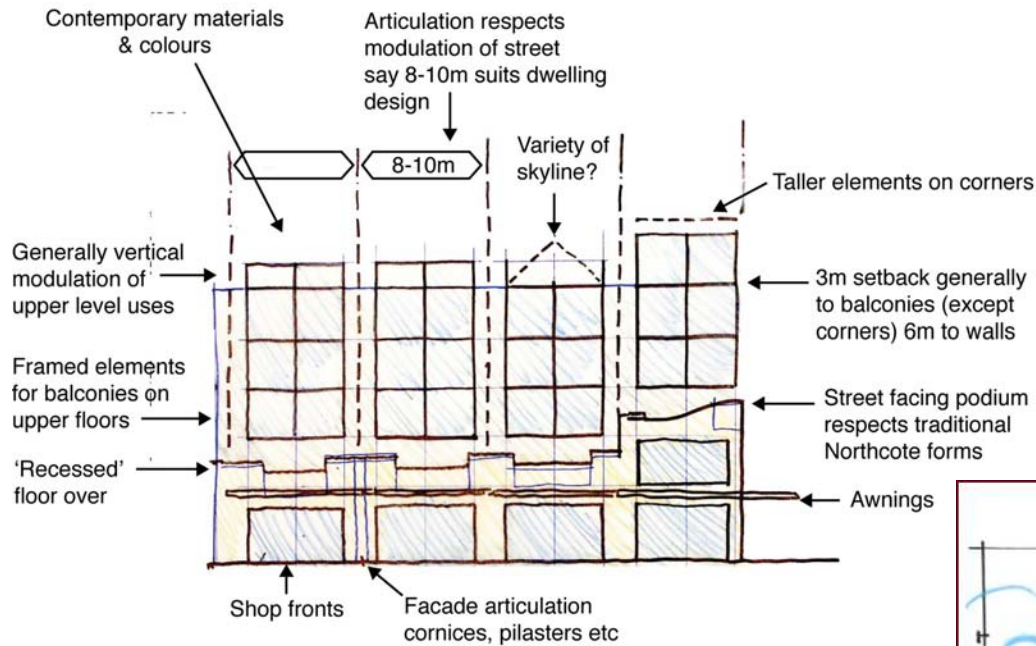


Figure 4.6 – Treatment of existing shopfront redevelopment – details vertical articulation into narrow / vertically aligned components

Figure 4.7 – Indicative redevelopment of former post office site, south east corner of Robbs Parade and High Street



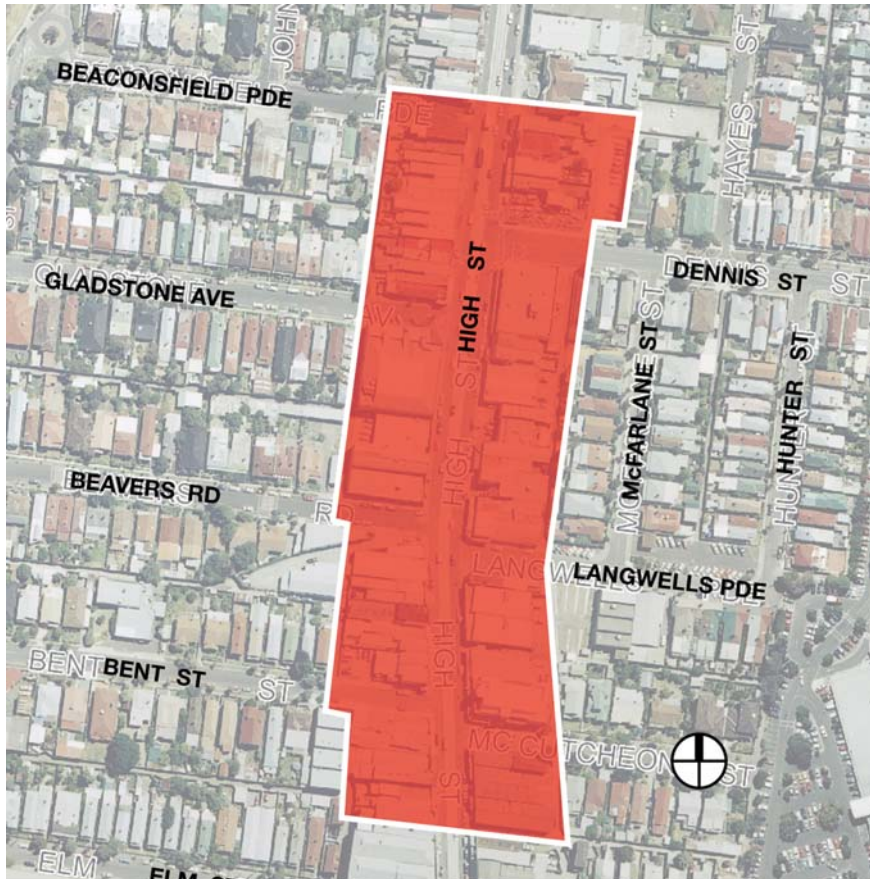


### 4.3 High Street North Precinct (HN)

#### HN – Precinct Area and Context

This precinct encompasses sites directly abutting High Street, north of the Robbs Parade / Elm Street intersection with High Street, and up to Dennis Street.

The precinct is influenced by the Arthurton Road and Central Northcote – Core Convenience Retail Precincts, and Croxton Precinct, as well as by housing precincts adjoining this northern area. The precinct includes land on both sides of High Street.



**HN – PRECINCT AREA**

Figure 4.8 High Street North Precinct Area

#### HN – Precinct Vision

The High Street North precinct is identified as an area of moderate change, where redevelopment is to be encouraged, subject to consideration of heritage and access issues. The emphasis on new development is to reinforce and intensify the mix of activities along High Street as a commercial and secondary retail area with intensified residential or office uses above, and to enhance it as a pedestrian, cycle and transport spine, where casual interaction between users is to be encouraged.

Building form guidelines have already been established through the High Street Urban Design Framework, 2005. The following design directions relate to uses and development that may be sought within this design context.

## HN – Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the High Street North precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

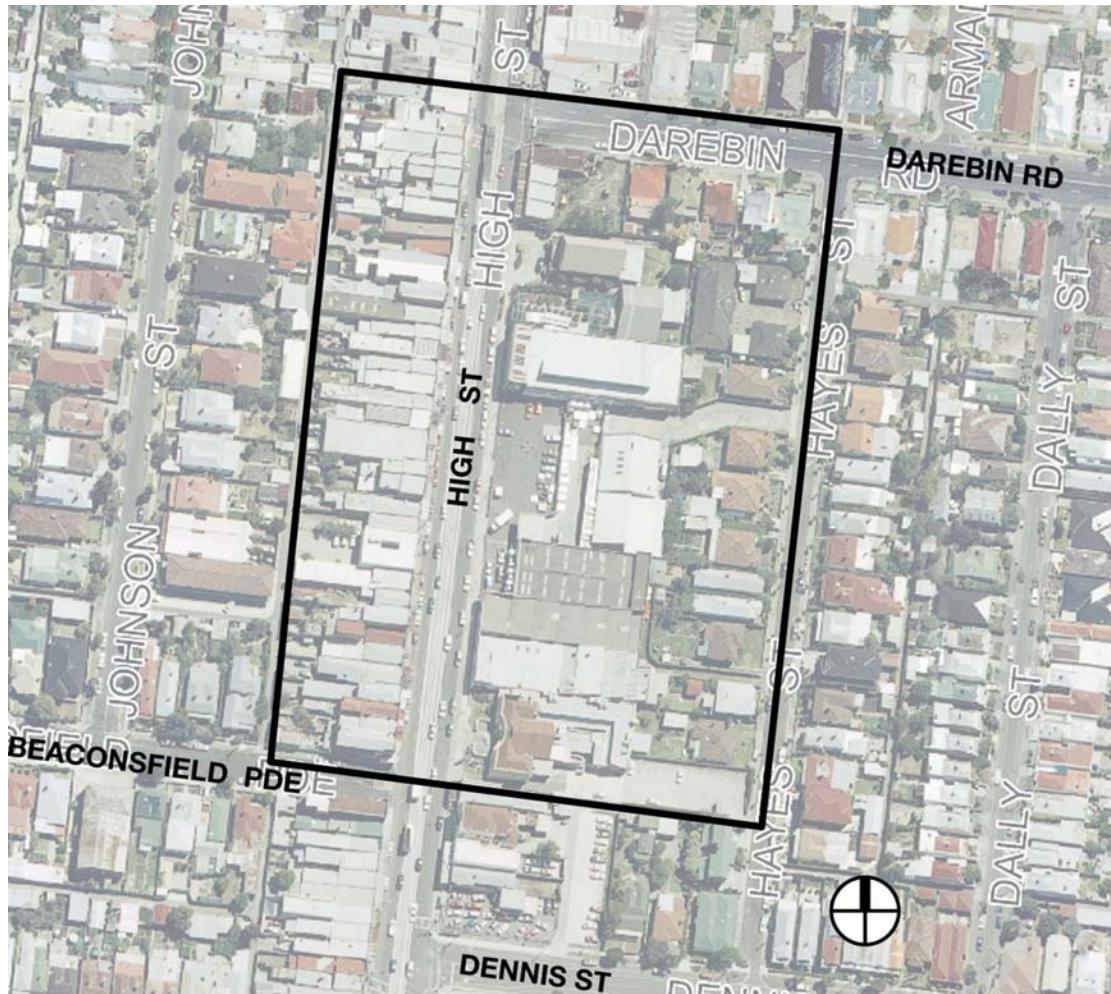
Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>The northern area of High Street has seen continual change over the life of the High Street commercial strip, having transformed from industry and housing associated with the brickworks, to entertainment uses in the 1960-70s to a current range of peripheral retailing, office and community uses.</p> <p>Over the past 5 years a number of multi unit accommodation approvals have been granted, with some either under construction or recently completed. Other approvals remain inactive. The strip has few buildings of heritage value and has a number of larger sites providing scope for redevelopment.</p> <p>The streetscape in this area needs consistent improvement to link to proposed improvements south of Elm Street / Robbs Parade. Generally speaking the road reserve is wider in this area than south of Separation Street, creating greater opportunity to undertake streetscape improvements and removal of clearways.</p>	<p>HN – O1 To provide a range of supporting commercial and residential developments north of Elm Street / Robbs Parade to support the core convenience retail area (refer precinct CN).</p> <p>HN – O2 To facilitate development within the guidelines of the High Street Urban Design Framework along High Street.</p> <p>HN– O3 To provide better pedestrian access and improved tram stop access through the widening and enhancement of the footpath along High Street, subject to the removal of road clearways.</p>	<p>HN - P1 Redevelopment along High Street for a range of commercial and residential uses that can support the core convenience retail area is supported.</p>	<p>HN – A1 Undertake a program of streetscape improvements to High Street and local street intersections as detailed in Section 3.3 and 3.5 of the Structure Plan report.</p>

No specific directions plan has been provided for this precinct as directions relate to the whole precinct

## 4.4 Croxton Precinct (CR)

### CR - Precinct Area and Context

Whilst this area is outside the defined boundary of the activity centre, it provides an important gateway to the activity centre and is an inter-nodal development area between Northcote and Thornbury shopping centres. This area includes large sites, providing opportunity for large scale redevelopment that can reinforce both the Thornbury and Northcote Activity Centres.



**CR – PRECINCT AREA**

**Note:** This Precinct forms part of the internodal area between the defined Northcote Activity Centre (refer Northcote Precinct Plan) and the Thornbury Neighbourhood Activity Centre.

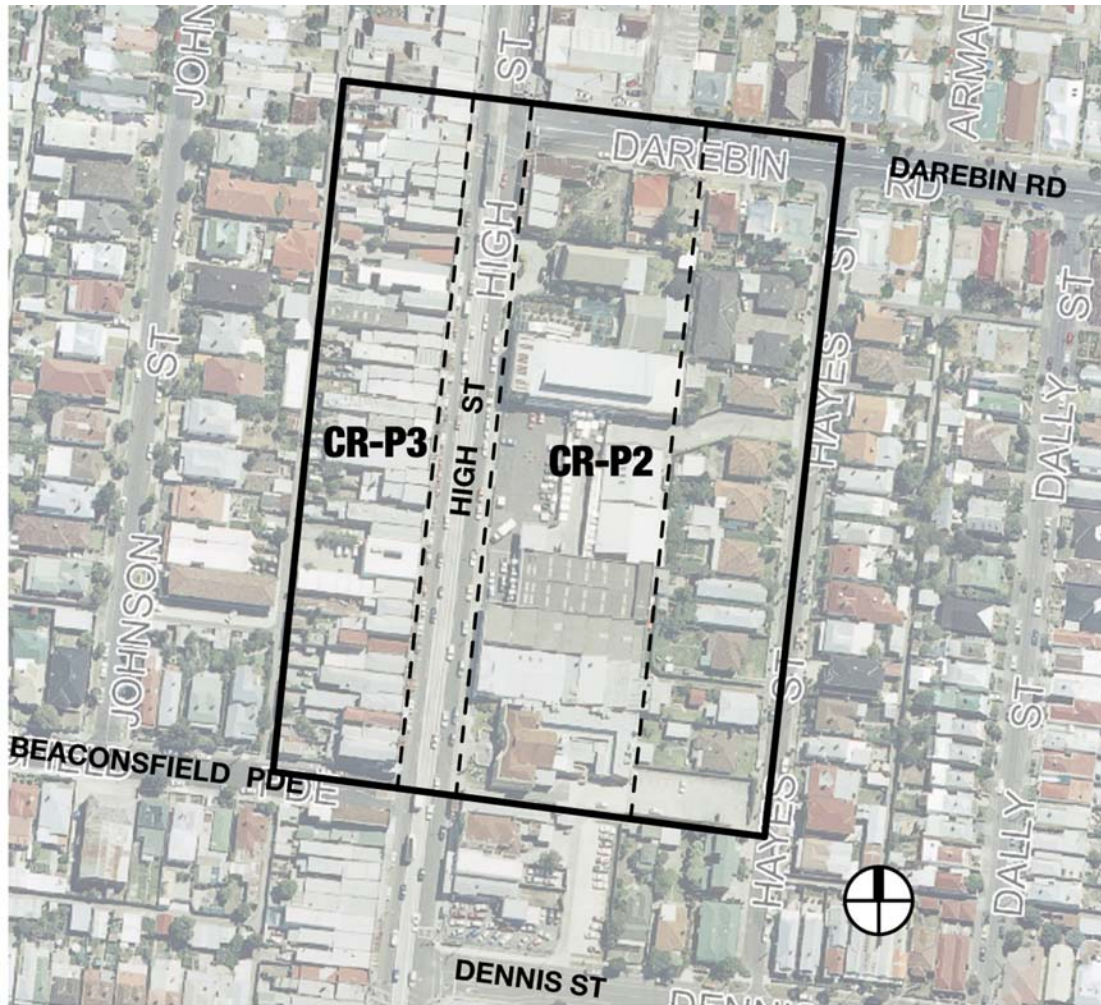
Figure 4.9 Croxton Precinct Plan



### CR – Precinct Vision

The High Street Urban Design Framework identifies this area as inter-nodal and supports the redevelopment of sites, particularly to the east of High Street, for a mix of ground floor commercial and upper multi-storey residential development. The framework requires buildings between the Northcote RSL and Baptist Church in this precinct to be set back from High Street to create a wider streetscape area and a distinct design change between Thornbury and Northcote.

The redevelopment of this area can provide significant new residential accommodation to support development in both Northcote and Thornbury, as well as the Croxton railway station.



### CR – POLICY DIRECTIONS

**Note: Only site specific actions and policies have been identified on the plan. Other policies and actions may apply to the whole precinct.**

Figure 4.10 Croxton Precinct – Policy Directions

Relevant site specific objectives, policy and actions are detailed on the Policy Directions plan and should be read in conjunction with the following table of complete objectives, policies and actions for this precinct. Building form guidelines have already been established through the High Street Urban Design Framework, 2005. The following design directions relate to uses and development that may be sought within this design context.

## CR – Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Croxton Precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>The Croxton area was previously designated a light industrial area, as a transitional area between Thornbury and Northcote retail core areas. Recent rezoning of the land will enable more flexible uses including residential development.</p> <p>The eastern side of High Street provides significant opportunity for redevelopment, with land held in larger, more developable parcels. Development that can support and complement the retail cores of Northcote and Thornbury will be important in this area.</p>	<p>CR – 01 To provide opportunity for significant new residential and commercial development that can support both the Northcote Major Activity Centre and the Thornbury Local Activity Centre.</p> <p>CR - 02 To create a greener streetscape on the east side of High Street, through wider setbacks in which significant landscaping can be created.</p> <p>CR – 03 To support existing ground floor commercial development west of High Street through improved rear access for service vehicles and staff car parking.</p>	<p>CR - P1 Development along High Street should provide inter-nodal activity as a clear distinction in built form and use between Northcote and Thornbury activity centres. This may include ground floor residential use on the east side of High Street, provided safe and active surveillance of the street can be maintained.</p> <p>CR - P2 Built form east of High Street should generally accord with the High Street Urban Design Framework to set back development a minimum of 7.5 metres on the east side of High Street so as to introduce additional landscaping to the street. In this area, ground floor residential development may be considered (refer CR - P1).</p> <p>CR - P3 Building form west of High Street should maintain the existing ground floor small commercial/retail scale to complement High Street character. Redevelopment of properties facing High Street needs to allow for widening of rear laneways in accordance with the High Street Urban Design Framework to facilitate better service access to the rear of premises in this area.</p>	<p>CR – A1 Undertake a program of streetscape improvements to High Street and local street intersections as detailed in Section 3.3 and 3.5 of this Structure Plan report.</p>

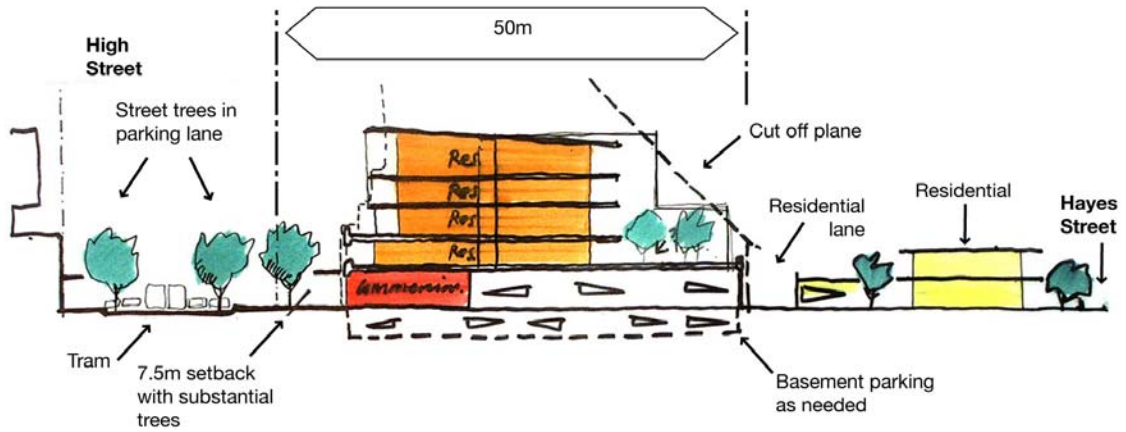


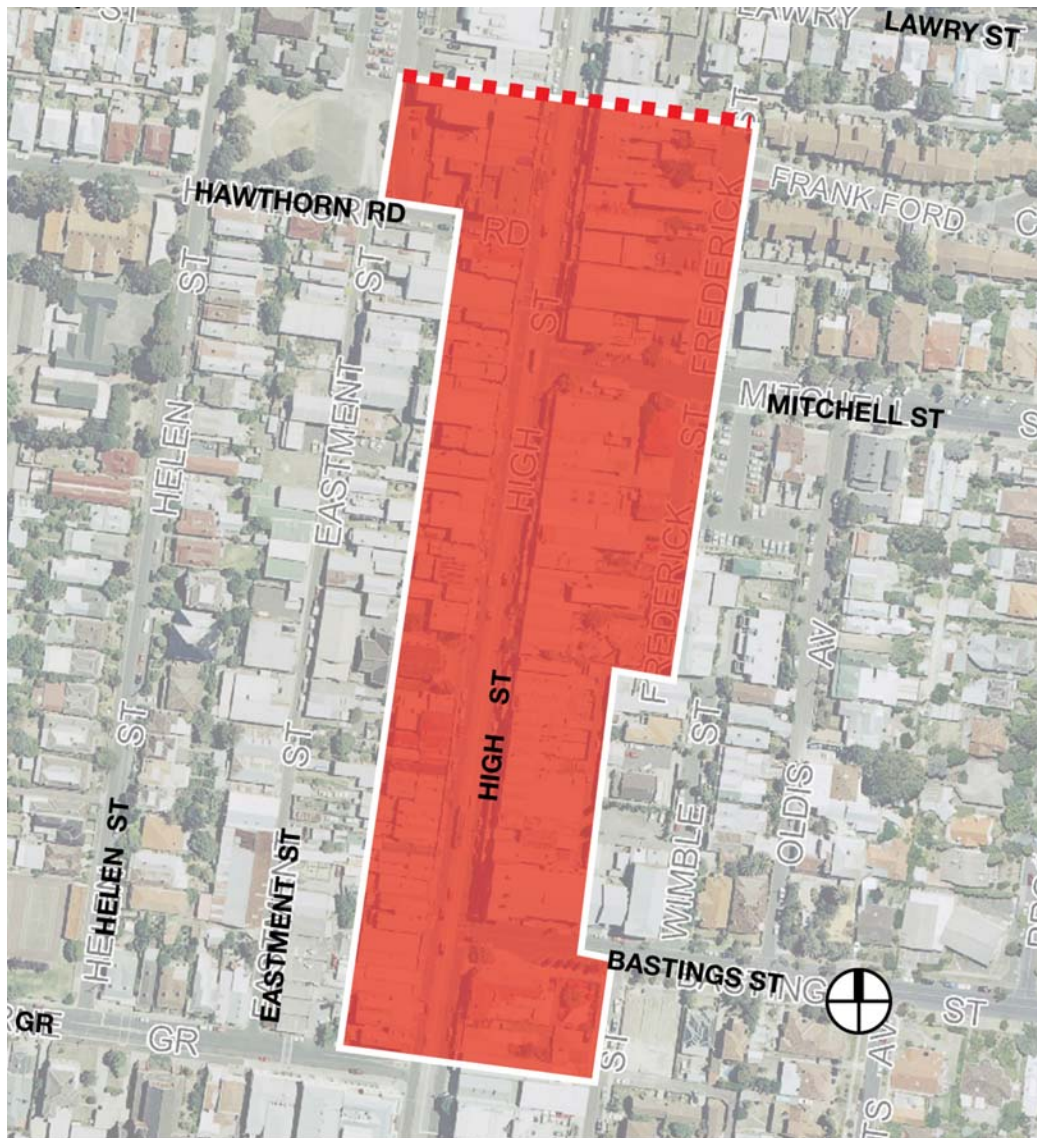
Figure 4.11 Concept sketches for redevelopment of the east side of High St between the RSL and the Baptist Church



## 4.5 High Street South Precinct (HS)

### HS - Precinct Area

This precinct encompasses High Street from the bottom of the convenience retail area (generally around Hawthorn Road) south to the Northcote Town Hall. It includes a range of 1, 2 and 3 storey development. Much of the strip, particularly on the west side, is affected by a heritage overlay with a number of buildings forming part of the early European settlement of the area. It is a relatively intact and continuous streetscape with a range of retail and service businesses at ground floor level, and limited use of upper levels.



**HS – PRECINCT AREA**

- ■ ■ ■ ■ The northern boundary of this Precinct is transitional with the core convenience retail area being undefined in this area.

Figure 4.12 - High Street South Precinct Plan

## HS – Precinct Vision

The High Street South Precinct is identified as an area of moderate change, where redevelopment is to be encouraged, subject to consideration of heritage, character and access issues. The emphasis on new development will be to reinforce and intensify the mix of activities along High Street as a core pedestrian, cycle and transport spine, where casual interaction between users is to be encouraged.

Building form guidelines have already been established through the High Street Urban Design Framework, 2005. The following design directions relate to uses and development that may be sought within this design context.



## HS – Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the High Street South precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Existing form and function:</b></p> <p>This strip has been the traditional “High Street” retail area of Northcote since its European beginnings in the 1800s.</p> <p>The retail core extending from Separation Street to Westbourne Grove was particularly prosperous during the 1960s and 70s when population in the area was high and employment buoyant. Subsequent industry, government and retail structural changes led to a decline in the retail strip during the 1980s to 90s. Current revival of the strip is occurring with a new generation of residents and businesses in the area. This includes an emerging arts culture.</p>	<p>HS – O1 To consolidate the retail and entertainment core of High Street, by supporting a range of complementary and niche retail businesses at ground floor level.</p> <p>HS – O2 To better utilise existing sites and heritage facades with appropriate upper level development for business and residential use, in accordance with agreed design and development parameters of the High Street Urban Design Framework.</p> <p>HS – O3 To support and enhance the emerging cultural economy of Northcote, whilst recognising and addressing potential subsequent amenity conflicts, particularly the emission of late night noise to residential areas.</p>	<p>HS – P1 Upper storey development for housing or business uses, so as to diversify and intensify the use of High Street, are supported.</p> <p>HS –P2 New residential above business uses should provide any necessary noise attenuation features (e.g. double glazing) to protect the residents from noisy activities at street level.</p> <p>HS –P3 Development that can add to the vibrancy of the centre through a range of day and night time uses is supported.</p>	<p>HS –A1 Enable a reduced car parking provision for upper level housing (refer section 3.4).</p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Physical Streetscape features:</b></p> <p>The High Street road reservation is relatively narrow for its form and function particularly the provision of pedestrian footpaths. It is currently dominated by its use for vehicular traffic, with the retention of clearways.</p> <p>No specific streetscape themes or features require protection, other than appropriate interface to significant heritage buildings. Few street trees exist. Strong community support is held for additional street planting. This needs to be considered in context of service and pavement constraints and commercial imperatives regarding location of trees.</p> <p>The gradual slope of the strip south to the town hall is the dominant feature of the strip. There is a need for seating provision and casual open spaces that allow people to rest along this hill.</p> <p>Key connections and viewlines through the precinct are dominated by the views up and down High Street itself. Looking north, a bend in the road creates a dominant view line to development at the north east corner of Robbs Parade, outside the precinct area.</p>	<p>HS -O4 To improve pedestrian, cycle and public transport amenity and safety along High Street through improved public access of the street and the improved streetscape features.</p> <p>HS- O5 To provide better pedestrian access and improved tram stop access through the widening of the footpath along High Street, subject to the removal of road clearways.</p> <p>HS – O6 To emphasis High Street as a pedestrian, cycle and tramway priority street.</p>	<p>HS – P4 Development and redevelopment of commercial properties fronting High Street should incorporate public access through shops to rear parking areas where possible, to improve pedestrian links and economic viability of premises.</p>	<p>HS- A1 Continue to lobby State Government for the removal of clearways along High Street. (refer section 3.4)</p> <p>HS - A2 Improve surveillance of the pedestrian link, south of the Wesley Ann Public House (250 High Street) through use of transparent “windows” through the side fence of this walkway to the rear of the Wesley Ann so as to improve the perception of safety of using this narrow, yet important walkway.</p> <p>HS – A3 Undertake a program of streetscape and public art improvements to High Street and local street intersections as detailed in Section 3.4 and 3.5.</p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Building interfaces and setbacks:</b></p> <p>Buildings have a generally consistent setback to High Street. Occasional larger setbacks such as the Uniting Church and Stuzzi's provide respite to the street and destination points as public and semi public meeting spaces.</p> <p>Building facades are dominated by narrow, heritage frontages, with strong vertical alignment of buildings. Some wider frontages exist closer to Separation Street, allowing more opportunity for redevelopment for higher, more intensive building form.</p> <p>Building form guidelines have already been established through the High Street Urban Design Framework, 2005. The following design directions relate to uses and development that may be sought within this design context.</p> <p>The strip has a range of historical buildings, dating back to the 1850s, through the boom of the 1880s and 1920s with more modest buildings of 1950s to 1970s. Some recent development is also scattered along the strip.</p>	<p>HS – O7 To encourage density of development that can capitalise on public transport access to the site, whilst addressing any adjoining sensitive interfaces such as residential zoned land to the rear of the strip.</p> <p>HS – O8 To conserve elements of heritage significance where relevant to the strip.</p>	<p>HS – P5 Consistent building setbacks along High Street should be retained, with occasional interruption through additional setbacks being allowed to provide interest to the street. This should be as a means of providing additional pedestrian and civic meeting spaces. Generally heritage provisions will dictate the retention of existing building setbacks to the street.</p> <p>HS – P6 Utilise a range of building heights and articulation in building form (including breaks between buildings) to create a fine grain of architectural form and interest that works its way up the hill of Northcote. This should include an emphasis on vertical articulation and alignment of windows, rather than horizontal, recognising the existing proportions of narrow shopfronts and terrace style development. Articulation of buildings and decorative features should follow the function of the building and not as clutter or "add ons" to mimic vertical articulation of building design. (refer Figure 4.13)</p>	

No specific Policy Directions plan has been provided for this precinct as directions relate to the whole precinct

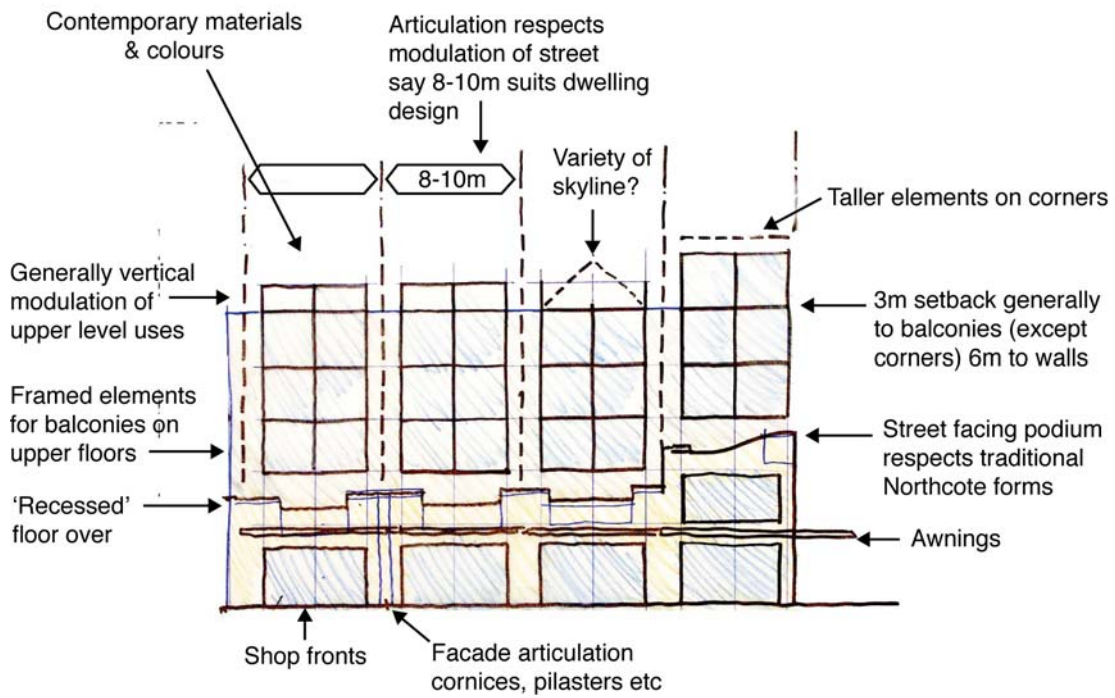


Figure 4.13 - Treatment of existing shopfront redevelopment – details vertical articulation into narrow / vertically aligned components.

## 4.6 Town Hall Precinct (TH)

### TH – Precinct Area and Context

This precinct primarily encompasses land held by Darebin City Council for the town hall and the adjoining civic square as well as properties that have direct interface and link to this town hall square. This includes land south of Westbourne Grove, west of the town hall (including the former police station in James Street), land directly east of High Street, which faces the civic square and land south of the town hall, with frontage to High Street, providing a gateway to the town hall civic square and buildings.



**TH – PRECINCT AREA**

Figure 4.14 – Town Hall Precinct

### TH – Precinct Vision

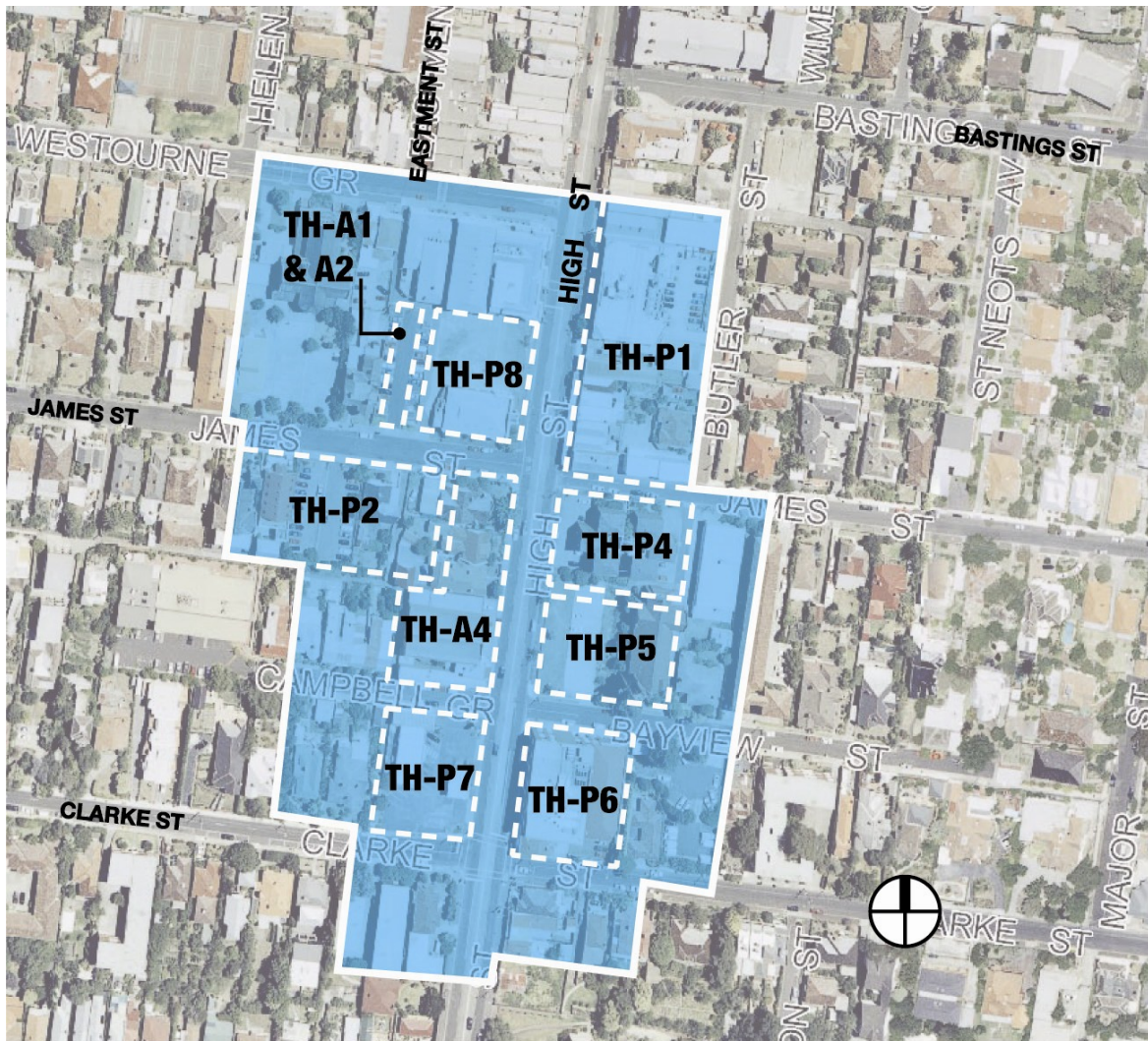
This precinct centres around the cultural and community hub of the town hall and civic square. To provide active and utilised space focussed around the civic square this precinct is to be enhanced with more intensive built form that can frame the civic square and create vibrancy to this area. Connections and active interface links need to direct people to the square as a central destination point.

There are several sites in proximity to the town hall that are under-developed or unattractive. This immediate context needs upgrading in order to fully capitalise on the town hall node as a key arts and community asset for the Northcote community.


View lines into and out of this hilltop precinct are significant and need to be considered in the form and location of any new development.



Building form guidelines have already been established through the High Street Urban Design Framework, 2005. The following design directions relate to uses and development that may be sought within this design context.



### TH – POLICY DIRECTIONS

 Notional Area to which policy/action applies

*Note: Only site specific actions and policies have been identified on the plan. Other policies and actions may apply to the whole precinct.*

Figure 4.14 Town Hall Precinct – Specific Policy Directions

Relevant site specific objectives, policy and actions are detailed on the Policy Directions plan and should be read in conjunction with the following table of complete objectives, policies and actions for this precinct.

### TH – Objectives, Policies and Actions

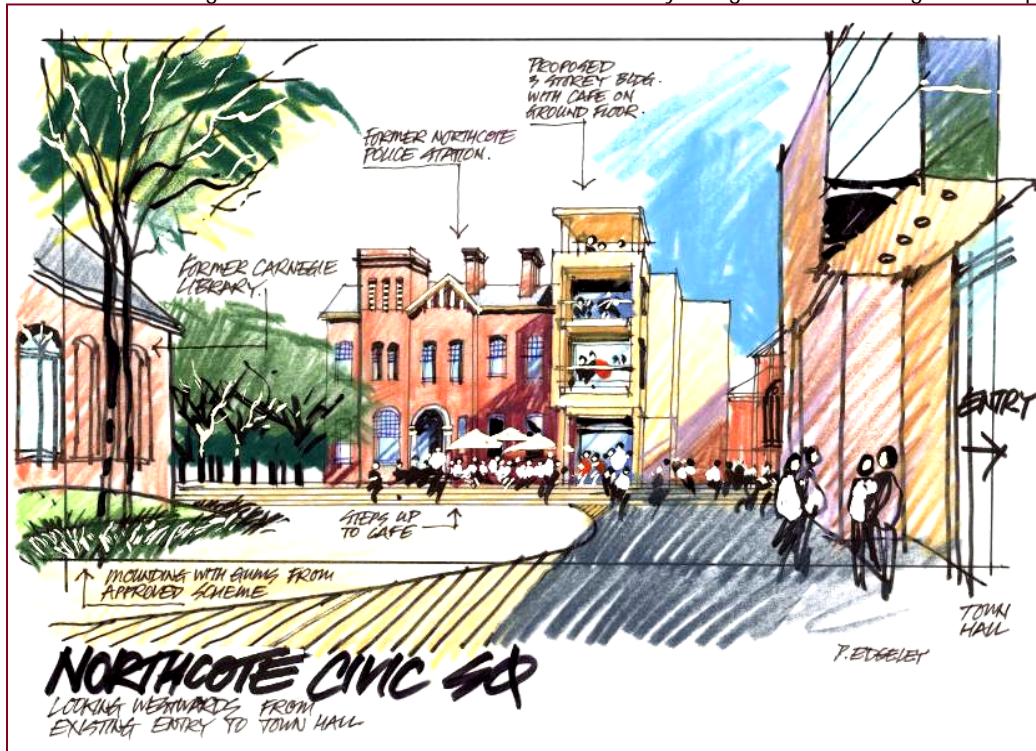
The following table for the Town Hall precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>The former Northcote Town Hall is in the final stages of a redevelopment, creating a variety of civic, meeting and entertainment spaces for the community of Northcote.</p> <p>The redevelopment includes a major new civic square south of the town hall, with an indoor / outdoor stage to the Northcote Town Hall. This square currently is bounded by a car park to the rear, the Carnegie Library to the south and the town hall to the north. On the east side of High Street the square interfaces with a series of modest single and two storey shops and offices.</p> <p>Land to the west of the civic square, adjoining the car park is the former Northcote Police Station. This site is currently being investigated for use as an Arts Business incubator, which could have links to the town hall venue spaces and the civic square. The site is currently zoned Residential, which is inappropriate to its location between the town hall, school and church facilities. A public use zone or similar special use zone would be more appropriate to its location.</p> <p>Potential exists to consolidate sites for re-development east of High Street, providing a framed and enclosed civic square. Use of a consolidated site in this location provides greater ability to increase height to the front</p>	<p>TH - O1 To promote the town hall and civic square as a key destination point in the Northcote Activity Centre.</p> <p>TH - O2 To frame the town hall and civic square with appropriate built form that enhances the precinct role as a key destination point.</p> <p>TH - O3 To ensure any development on the car park site west of the town hall civic square incorporates active interface to the former police station.</p> <p>TH - O4 To provide a variety of clear and safe access links to the town hall and civic square, to draw people to the precinct as a key destination point.</p> <p>TH - O5 To improve the southern entry to Northcote Activity Centre through redevelopment of currently underutilised or unattractive properties.</p> <p>TH - O6 To ensure that the former police station building is retained as an arts related use to complement the</p>	<p>TH - P1 Support the consolidation and redevelopment of buildings in High Street east of the town hall and Civic square, to a multi-storey mixed use building/s.</p> <p>TH - P2 Support the consolidation and redevelopment of single and double storey buildings west of High Street, south of James Street to create a greater sense of enclosure and "framing" of the civic square. Higher built form in accordance with the High Street Urban Design Framework should be supported on this western side of High Street.</p> <p>TH - P3 Consider the need for additional car parking in redevelopment of land in the precinct, should the town hall uses intensify to a point where additional parking is warranted, or as a means of removing the existing car park located between the former police station and civic square.</p> <p>TH - P4 Support redevelopment of the front of the units located at the south-east corner of James Street and High Street to create a more active and attractive façade to High Street.</p>	<p>TH - A1 Undertake a review of uses for the former Northcote Police Station with an aim of establishing a viable arts based business incubator in the building.</p> <p>TH - A2 Investigate the redevelopment of the existing car park between the police station and civic square to provide better amenity and active frontage to both the square and redeveloped police station. This should include consideration of moving the existing car parking to a nearby or underground location. The redevelopment should provide clear view lines and active frontage between the former police station and civic square</p> <p>TH - A3 Establish boulevard planting along High Street, south of the town hall to create an</p>

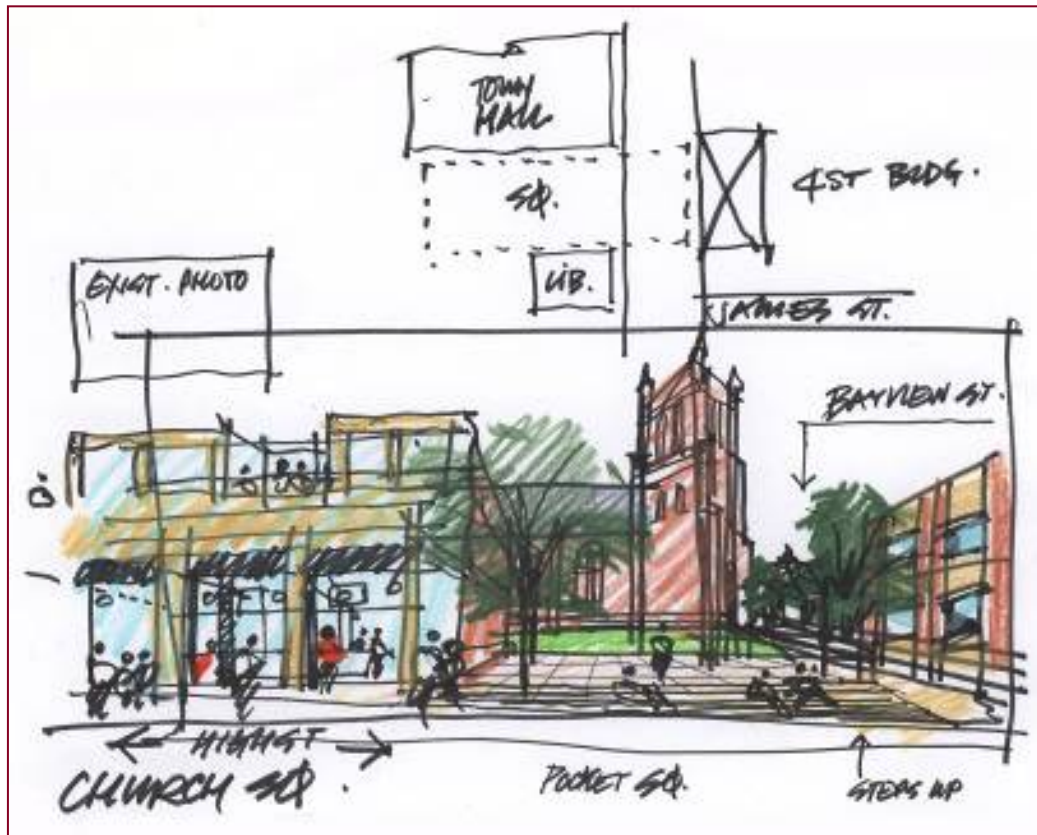
Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>of the site to High Street, utilising the combined rear of the site for car parking associated with the on-site uses and also for transfer of parking located between the former police station and the civic square.</p>	<p>Northcote Town Hall.</p>	<p>TH – P5 Support redevelopment of land forming part of the church site at the north east corner of Bayview and High Street. Development should include active frontage to the street, maintain view lines to the church spire, and incorporate a minimum of 5% land as open space at the Bayview Street / High Street corner for civic and landscape space.</p> <p>TH – P6 Support the redevelopment of the telephone exchange building between Bayview and Clarke Street, east of High Street for multi unit accommodation or office, subject to removal of restrictions on the building associated with the Telecommunications Act.</p> <p>TH – P7 Support the enhancement of the petrol station at the north-west corner of Clarke Street and High Street, noting that height and contamination restrictions apply to this site.</p> <p>TH - P8 Any new development surrounding the civic square should incorporate safe and attractive pedestrian links to draw people into the civic square (e.g. through existing laneways to the rear of the town hall and south of James Street).</p>	<p>avenue that establishes a clear sense of arrival to the civic square and town hall.</p> <p>This should include investigation into removal of fencing to properties between James Street and Campbell Grove and the establishment of trees, consistent with those currently adjoining the Carnegie Library to establish a boulevard effect.</p> <p>TH-A4 Investigate the rezoning of land south west of James Street and High Street from Industrial 3 to Business 2, in accordance with the recommendations of the “Economic Assessment of Commercial and Mixed Use Opportunities – SGS May 2006.</p>



The Charrette design detailed below illustrates some of the key design directions sought for the precinct.



Indicative sketch of Civic square with redeveloped police station to the rear.



Indicative sketch of church site, with open space at corner of Bayview and High Street.



*Indicative sketch of new façade to units at south east corner of James and High Street, illustrating how a new façade could be vertically incorporated into the existing units so as to improve amenity of site and surrounds.*

## **4.7 Creative Communities**

### **CC - Precinct Area and Context**

This precinct comprises three separate areas/streets where artists, musicians and other forms of live/work spaces are emerging. These include:

#### **Eastment Street**

- Eastment Street is a narrow street of semi-industrial buildings running parallel to High Street, on the west side. This part of the Creative Communities Precinct includes all land with direct frontage to Eastment Street and the rear of properties to High Street.
- The precinct is directly affected by development of land in Helen Street (minimal) and High Street. The precinct also has significant interface with the Helen Street Park at Hawthorn Road, and with the town hall environs at the south end of Eastment Street.
- The street itself is very narrow and presents a range of access challenges for intensification.

#### **Wimble and Frederick Street**

- This area comprises Wimble and Frederick Streets. Some buildings in this area, such as to the rear of the Wesley Ann in High Street, date back to the earliest European settlement of Northcote.
- In recent years the precinct has seen redevelopment of historic buildings as studios and living spaces, similar to Eastment Street, west of High Street. This area is a mix of zones including residential and business.
- There are very few links through to High Street, and north-south access within the precinct is constrained.

#### **Helen Street**

- This area encompasses the northern part of Helen Street, with rear access to the Arthurton Road car park. This area of Helen Street has particular opportunity to improve the amenity of the car park through redevelopment to the rear of residential sites facing Helen Street. This redevelopment should provide opportunities for live/work dwellings.



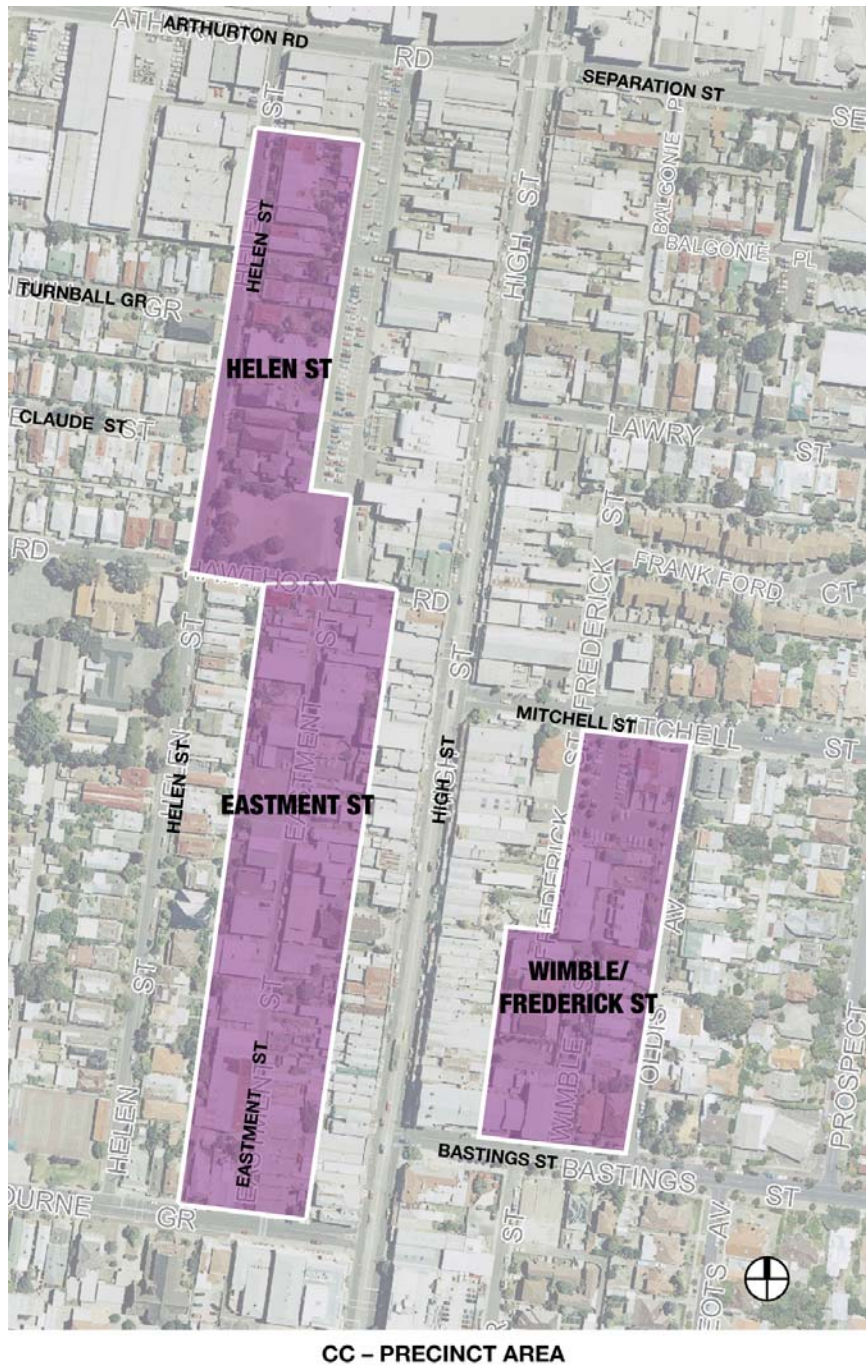


Figure 4.15 - Creative Communities Precinct Plan

#### CC - Precinct Vision

This precinct is identified as an area of moderate change, where new development that supports a live / work lifestyle is to be encouraged. Retention and conservation of existing building character is supported as part of this redevelopment. Building redevelopment abutting the rear of High Street is particularly encouraged. New development that can improve surveillance and visual appearance of the Arthurton Road car park and playground area is also encouraged.

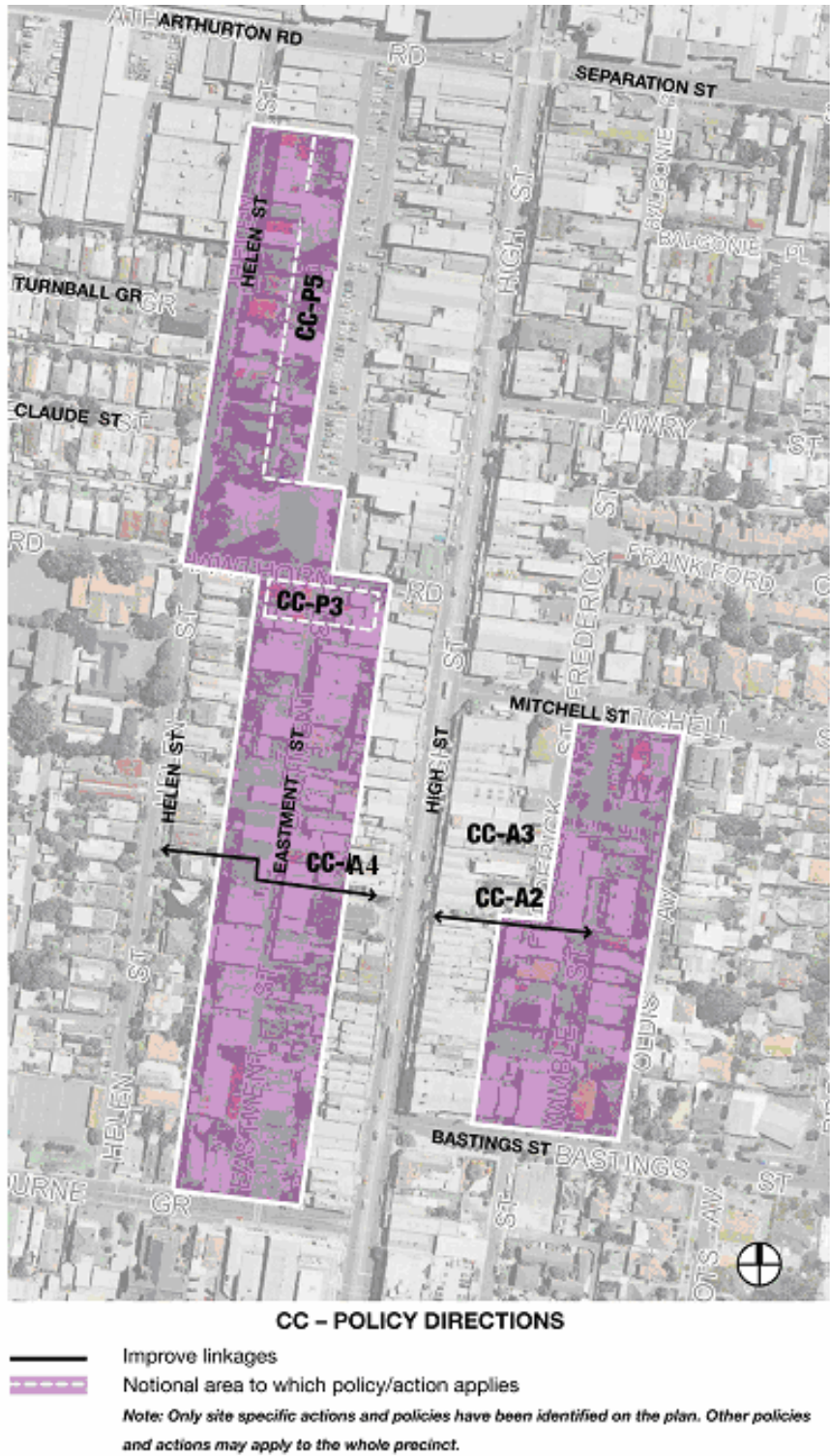


Fig 4.16 Creative Communities – Policy Directions Plan

Relevant site specific objectives, policy and actions are detailed on the Policy Directions Plan and should be read in conjunction with the following table of complete objectives, policies and actions for this precinct.

### CC– Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Creative Communities Precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Eastment Street</b></p> <p>Eastment Street is a former industrial area of Northcote, servicing the retail core of High Street. This included a number of service businesses, such as a bakery and workshops that provided goods and services that were then sold in shops on High Street. Many original, brick industrial buildings remain, with dominant buildings scattered along the street. The street remains an active 'working street' with some stand-alone mixed use activities within the street and much of the street still providing a rear service access to High Street.</p> <p>Recent residential development on the west of Eastment Street typifies the change in use and form of development in the area. Residents of the street are keen to enable further development of the street in a way that preserves the live/work and "working" character of the street.</p> <p><b>Wimble / Frederick</b></p> <p>Parts of Wimble and Frederick Street are distinctly residential, particularly east of Wimble Street, however their interface to the rear of High Street, with intervening converted warehouse buildings, combine to form this mixed use area.</p> <p>The mix of building form, small walkable laneways, terraces and rear access to High Street has evolved</p>	<p>CC – O1 To facilitate a mix of business and living throughout the precincts, particularly in Frederick Street Eastment Street and areas that directly abut the rear of High Street (including the Arthurton Road car park), while acknowledging the service role these areas maintain to businesses in High Street.</p> <p>CC – O2 To conserve the heritage and active function of Eastment Street as a working street.</p> <p>CC – O3 To conserve the heritage and active function of the Wimble and Frederick Street area as a mix of living and working.</p> <p>CC – O4 To conserve the heritage and active function of the frontage to Helen Street as a residential street.</p> <p>CC – O5 To provide opportunity for the rear of sites on Helen Street (east) to redevelop to face the carpark.</p>	<p>CC - P1 New uses in the precinct should support a mix of living and working environments with buildings designed to enable flexibility in use over time.</p> <p>CC – P2 Night time use proposals for or affecting the precinct need to recognise the partly residential use of the street. Likewise, new residential development should seek to incorporate sound-proofing measures recognising the use of the street as a mixed use precinct.</p> <p>CC – P3 Support the redevelopment of properties at the north end of Eastment Street to overlook the Helen Street Park and parking areas north of Hawthorn Road, thereby increasing amenity and surveillance of these areas.</p> <p>CC – P4 Development of sites on the eastern side of Eastment Street should integrate with former industrial areas west of the street through live / work developments.</p> <p>CC-P5 Development of the eastern half of Helen Street properties should promote surveillance of the car park. Development up to three-storeys may be appropriate.</p>	<p>CC – A1 Further investigate opportunities for co – housing or community based affordable housing.</p> <p>CC – A2 Improve pedestrian access between High Street and Frederick Street - (refer HS A2 implementation).</p> <p>CC – A3 Improve street tree planting in Frederick Street subject to service and access arrangements.</p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>into a pleasant mixed use precinct.</p> <p><b>Helen Street</b></p> <p>Helen Street has a range of single and double fronted housing. To the north end of the street, industrial development fronts the street, with an industrial laundry and commercial buildings facing onto Arthurton Road.</p> <p>The properties in this precinct have rear access to the Arthurton Road car park with all properties currently backing onto the car park providing no surveillance of the area.</p> <p>Opportunity exists in this street to improve use of the car park and to integrate with a redeveloped Arthurton Road area (refer Precinct 4.1 – AR).</p>		<p>CC – P6 Redevelopment abutting existing laneways should provide adequate surveillance and potential widening of laneways as part of redevelopment of adjoining sites to improve east - west pedestrian links.</p>	
<p><b>Physical Streetscape features:</b></p> <p><b>Eastment Street</b></p> <p>The road reserve is only 6 metres wide. Pavement width and building setback varies, particularly on the High Street side.</p> <p>The street is a one way street, travelling north, down hill. As such, speeding is a potential problem at night, when pedestrian use is low.</p> <p>The street provides a clear view line north from the street toward Macedon Ranges and Hawthorn Road Park, due to the topography and alignment of Eastment Street itself. There are also potential views and glimpses through the laneway south of Westbourne Grove to the new town hall development.</p> <p>Currently there is limited east / west connection to</p>	<p>CC – O6 To provide safer and more direct east west pedestrian links from High Street to the Northcote Railway Station and Helen Street on the west side of High Street, and between Frederick and Balgonie Street on the east side of High Street.</p> <p>CC – O7 To identify and develop opportunities for shared pedestrian and vehicle space to enhance the precinct as a pedestrian-orientated environment.</p>	<p>CC – P7 Access to car parking should not dominate the street frontage. In working streets (Eastment, Frederick, Wimble and the Arthurton Road car park), service access, however, remains important. Incorporation of pedestrian access and active frontage where possible is to be encouraged to increase safety in the street.</p>	<p>CC – A4 Investigate the establishment of a pedestrian link through from High Street to Eastment Street, and potentially to Helen Street, with landscaped spaces through this link. <i>(Note: the Uniting Church land makes the most logical location for this link</i></p>

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>High Street.</p> <p><b>Wimble and Frederick Streets</b></p> <p>Road reserves vary with a range of residential streets and laneways through the area. Vehicle access is restricted, which creates a “mews” style access arrangement with walking access through the area relatively good.</p> <p>Pedestrian links relate to historical development of the area, including laneway links between Frederick and Wimble Street, as well as laneway access to the rear of High Street and adjacent to the Wesley Ann buildings. Street tree planting exists in Wimble Street, but is limited in Frederick Street. Opportunity exists to strengthen tree planting in selected locations along these streets to improve the “mews” character.</p> <p>Views are of mews style with key heritage buildings in Frederick, Wimble and Bastings Street forming landmarks at the end of streets.</p> <p><b>Helen Street (North segment)</b></p> <p>A number of laneways provide pedestrian and limited vehicle access between the Arthurton Road car park and Helen Street. At the south end of the precinct is the park held by the Department of Education for use of the Northcote Primary School. A shared use arrangement for this site is currently being sought by Council to enable improved landscaping and fencing of this park as a public resource. (Refer to Section 3.5)</p> <p>Helen Street is an important local access road, providing connection to Northcote Primary School and direct access to Hawthorn Road and Arthurton Road.</p>			



Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p><b>Building forms:</b></p> <p>Some key existing heritage buildings have zero setbacks which dominate the streetscape. These are larger building forms (e.g. church and warehouses).</p> <p>The generally narrow road widths combine with the range of building forms and setbacks to create a particular form and character. This north / south, narrow alignment also creates limitations to establish landscaping and east/west pedestrian links.</p> <p>The street is dominated by commercial / warehouse buildings and garages and rear sheds from High Street - forming part of the back street character. There are some smaller houses - located between bulky buildings.</p> <p>The confined form of the street creates character, although limits the ability to establish "green" spaces in the street.</p> <p>The precinct varies in building form with an eclectic mix of rear commercial sites to High Street, warehouse buildings and cottage housing along Wimble Street and Oldis Avenue.</p> <p>Key heritage warehouse buildings between Wimble and Frederick Street have been converted to a mix of residential and studio spaces, creating a live / work environment. Likewise a number of the premises to the rear of High Street have been converted for a combination of living and working.</p>	<p>CC – O8 To provide new building forms that reinforce the eclectic / working nature of the precinct.</p> <p>CC – O9 To provide buildings that can support relatively low rental business and living uses to support flourishing arts-based businesses.</p>	<p>CC – P7 Building heights and setbacks should have regard to adjoining properties and architectural features. Articulation is to be encouraged, but should follow a building outcome, not applied as decorative detail alone.</p> <p>CC – P8 Zero setback to front and side boundaries is considered acceptable in Eastment Street, the rear of High Street (east and west and fronting the Arthurton Road car park area), provided some relief exists along the street for alternating setbacks and landscape spaces</p> <p>CC – P9 New building form should have particular regard to adjoining building structures and should integrate with the range of building forms that exist. This may include warehouse forms in similar random locations in Eastment Street, Frederick Street and to the rear lanes of High Street reflecting the commercial / back street form. Industrial forms, and residential forms should strengthen the dominance of vertical articulation, reflecting surrounding narrow property frontages, rather than horizontal window and doorway form.</p>	

## 4.8 Northcote Railway Station Area (RS)

### RS - Precinct Area

This precinct focuses on the Northcote Railway station and its integration with the Activity Centre.

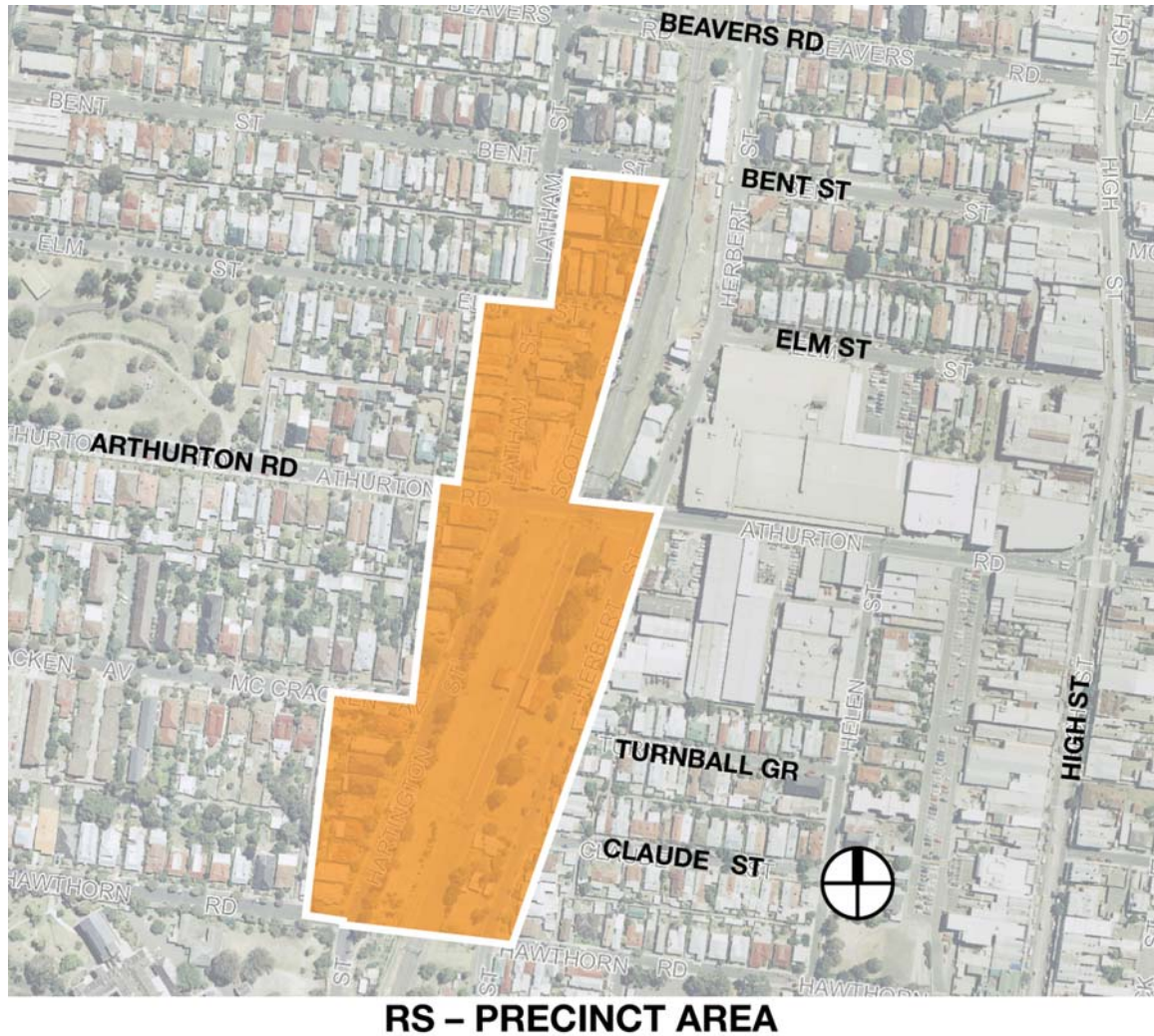


Figure 4.17 Railway Station Area Precinct Plan

### RS – Precinct Vision

This is an important area to create a visual message that the station is integrated into the activity centre, as well as to endeavour to increase the amount of patronage on the railway service and passive surveillance of the area.

The station precinct itself provides short-term opportunity for upgrading, particularly the frontage to Arthurton Road.

### RS-Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Railway Station precinct should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>Northcote Railway Station provides good, direct access to the Melbourne CBD and various central areas of Melbourne. However there is opportunity for improvement to maximise safety and to enhance the amenity of the surrounding area</p>	<p>RS – O1 To reinforce the role of the railway station as a community resource, through the provision of safe and amenable access to the station.</p>	<p>RS - P1 The existing station buildings are to be conserved as buildings of community value and significance (noting they are not currently registered as having historic significance).</p>	<p>RS – A1 Council work with VicTrack to enhance Northcote Station's address to Arthurton Road through measures including the removal of the old building abutting Arthurton Road and undertake tree planting and streetscape/footpath treatment to the south west corner of Herbert Street and Arthurton Road.</p>

No specific directions plan has been provided for this precinct as directions relate to the whole precinct

## 4.9 Medium Change Residential Areas (MCR)

### MCR - Area and Context

A number of residential areas within and adjoining the activity centre boundary were identified as being "medium change" areas. These areas generally provide housing stock of varying style and quality in locations that are key to the effective development of the activity centre through intensification of development use and form. These areas have been identified as being capable of absorbing more extensive change, however, they will remain as principally residential in use to support the activity centre. Some areas defined as medium change, will require verification of development potential through the heritage review.



Figure 4.18 Medium Change Residential Areas

### MCR - Precinct Vision

These areas might transform into 3-4 storey apartments and other relatively dense housing forms, including possibly some community and affordable housing subject to normal planning assessments including assessment against Clause 55 and Clause 52.35 and Clause 22.10 as relevant, ensuring that adjoining

properties are protected from negative amenity impacts such as overlooking, overshadowing and impacts of visual bulk. There will be a predominance of residential with some mixed use of these areas being supported. The retention of a Residential 1 zoning is proposed, recognising the generally residential nature of these areas and the transition the areas provide between core commercial and core residential uses.

### MCR-Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Medium Change Residential areas should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Actions
<p>Three areas of medium change are identified:</p> <p>1. Dennis Street, entry to Northcote Plaza. This provides opportunity for home office and mixed use development acknowledging the use of Dennis Street as the northern entry to Northcote Plaza.</p> <p>2. McCutcheon Street and the western end of Langwells Parade. These areas link the two commercial areas. Their central location and comparatively larger lot size makes them suitable for more intensive residential form than currently exists providing for greater living opportunities within the core of the centre.</p> <p>3. Butler Street, between James and Bastings Street.</p> <p>These three areas provide key links between commercial and civic precincts of the centre. All have mixed housing stock providing opportunity for redevelopment.</p> <p>Designation of these areas for medium change will be dependant upon the outcome of a heritage assessment of properties in the areas.</p>	<p>MCR – O1 To recognise the need to increase housing opportunities within the activity centre.</p> <p>MCR – O2 To acknowledge areas of medium change as areas where significant redevelopment may occur to intensify residential uses within the Northcote Activity Centre.</p> <p>MCR- O3 To acknowledge that some of the existing residential housing stock will have heritage value to the Northcote Activity Centre.</p>	<p>MCR –P1 Redevelopment within medium change residential areas will be supported, recognising the value of increasing housing within the Northcote Activity Centre and the proximity to facilities of the centre.</p> <p>MCR – P2 Redevelopment will need to address any issues of heritage consideration in the submission of planning permit applications.</p> <p>MCR – P3 Semi-business use of residential sites in Dennis Street will be supported within the confines of the existing Residential 1 zoning, recognising this interface between core commercial and core residential areas.</p>	<p>MCR – A1 Review heritage inconsistencies across residential areas (e.g. Langwells Parade) where a heritage overlay exists on non-heritage sites).</p> <p>MCR – A2 Apply the relevant provisions of Clause 22.10, 52.35 or 55 to assess redevelopment of residential sites in this precinct as well as relevant urban character guidelines.</p>

No specific directions plan has been provided for this precinct as directions relate to the whole precinct



## 4.10 Low Change Residential Areas (LCR)

### LCR - Area and Context

A number of residential areas within and adjoining the activity centre boundary were identified as being “low change” areas. These areas generally provide small cottage or terrace style housing that forms an important component to the heritage, character and affordability of the Northcote Activity Centre.

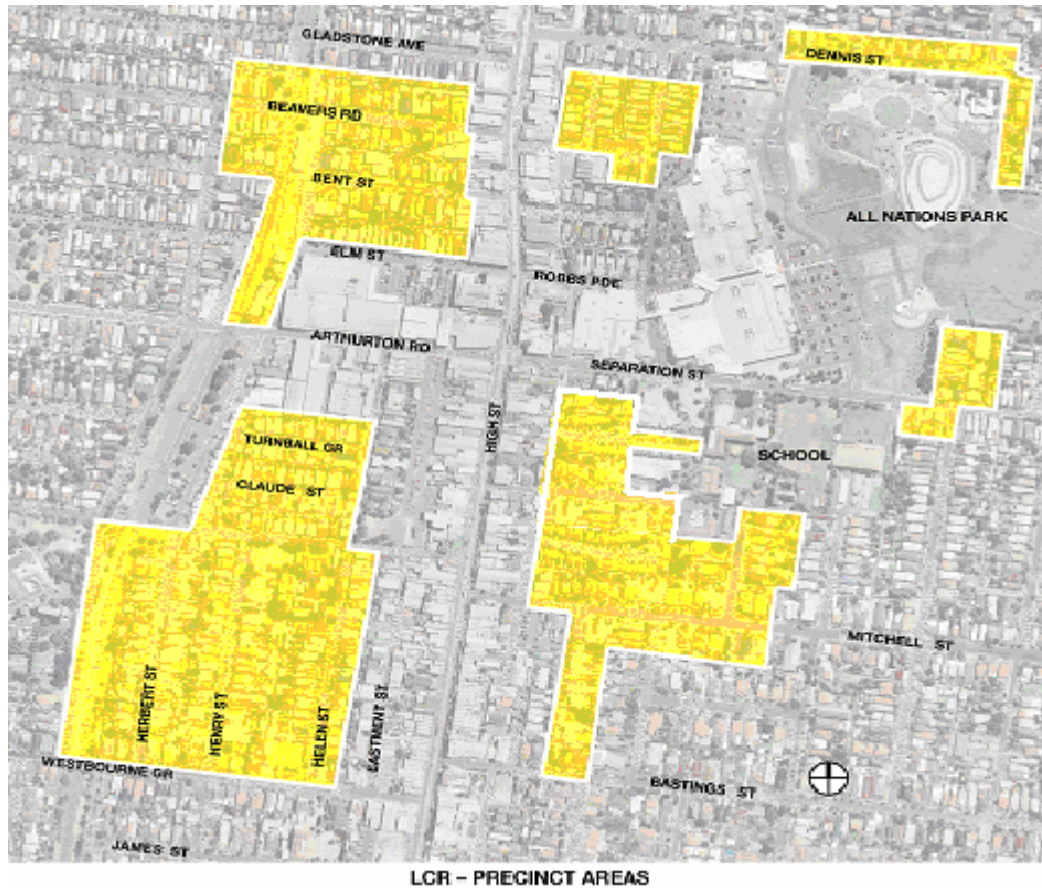


Figure 4.19 Low Change Residential Areas

### LCR - Precinct Vision

The continued use of Northcote’s signature small-scale relatively dense conventional residential housing with minor infill development is appropriate, particularly given the intactness of many of the ‘cottage’ streets and the heritage value of some of these areas. The retention of some of the larger dwellings in the eastern parts of the activity centre for larger family units and use of “borrowed” green spaces in the form of rear yards is recognised as an important part of Northcote’s character. The retention of a Residential 1 zoning is proposed, recognising the generally residential nature of this area and the transition the area provides between core commercial and core residential uses.

### LCR- Objectives, Policies and Actions

The following table for the Low Change Residential areas should be read in conjunction with the vision, objectives and policies for the broader Northcote Activity Centre detailed in Section 2 and 3 of the Northcote Structure Plan.

Context	Objectives	Policies / Strategies	Implementation Projects / Actions
<p>The area to the south west of the activity centre, including Helen Street, Herbert and Henry Street has been viewed as being outside the core of the activity centre but providing a supporting role to the centre. This area has a number of circulation issues (refer section 3.3) that require addressing as part of an overall review of access in this area.</p> <p>The area to the north and north west of Northcote Plaza provides a tightly-held area of terrace housing that likewise provides support to the centre. This area has been included in the activity centre boundary given its proximity and integration as part of the Northcote Central / Plaza area.</p> <p>A number of dwellings along Dennis Street have been converted to business uses, recognising the connection this street plays between All Nations Park, Northcote Plaza and High Street.</p>	<p>LCR – O1 To recognise the existing residential housing stock as having important heritage and urban character value to the Northcote Activity Centre.</p> <p>LCR – O2 To recognise the need to maintain rear yards and streetscape elements as part of the character as well as economic, social and environmental sustainability factors associated with maintaining areas of terrace housing stock.</p>	<p>LCR –P1 Infill development within low change residential areas will be supported, recognising the location of housing within the activity centre and proximity to facilities of the centre.</p> <p>LCR – P2 Semi-business use of residential sites along Dennis Street will be supported within the confines of the existing Residential 1 zoning, recognising this interface between core commercial and core residential areas.</p>	<p>LCR – A1 Review heritage inconsistencies across residential areas (e.g. Langwells Parade) where a heritage overlay exists on non-heritage sites).</p> <p>LCR – A2 Review heritage value of areas with consistent streetscape form such as Bent Street and Beaver Street to the north east area.</p> <p>LCR – A3 Apply the relevant provisions of Clause 55 to assess redevelopment of residential sites in this precinct as well as relevant urban character guidelines.</p>

No specific directions plan has been provided for this precinct as directions relate to the whole precinct



## 5 Implementation Plan

A number of projects have been identified from the structure plan process to implement the objectives and strategies of the centre. These are identified in Section 3 and summarised in the table below according to the key strategy driving the project. Many projects are supported by a range of strategic directions and objectives of the structure plan.

The implementation projects have been ranked according to priority for implementation and to the likely time frame in which they will be undertaken. This also relates to the urgency of the recommended action. For example, the establishment of new streetscape works along High Street is a high priority in terms of need, but requires several years to develop through design and construction phases.

The priorities detailed in the project tables therefore relate to projected times for implementation with notations regarding commencement and expected completion.

<b>Ongoing:</b>	<b>Now and for the foreseeable future</b>
<b>High:</b>	<b>0 - 3 years</b>
<b>Medium:</b>	<b>3 – 6 years</b>
<b>Low:</b>	<b>6 years+</b>

In determining the priority for actions a number of criteria have been considered including:

- Ability to make noticeable impact within the desired timeframe
- Whether the action will address a range of strategy objectives
- Whether other implementation actions are dependant upon a previous action being commenced or completed.
- Overall length of time for the action to be implemented (e.g. changes to planning scheme, land assembly and purchase etc).
- Existing knowledge, understanding and implementing resource base (e.g. staff availability) to easily implement the action
- Level of community interest in undertaking the action (based on community consultation undertaken through the plan preparation).
- Cost - noting primarily Council budget allocation processes often require projects to be prioritised into a multi year work program.

Recommendations that have been assigned a low priority rating are unlikely to be implemented before a review of the activity centre Strategy in 5 years time, but highlight an issue to be further investigated when the plan is reviewed.

It is noted that there are number of site specific actions that are detailed in the precinct plans of Section 4 that should be read in conjunction with the overall implementation projects detailed in the table below.

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
<b>Centre Definition Implementation Projects</b>			
1.1	Review relevant policy of the Darebin Planning Scheme as located in the Local Planning Policy Framework to correctly identify objectives and policies of this structure plan.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>
1.2	Investigate programs to encourage the use of Ecologically Sustainable Design in new development within the Northcote Activity Centre. This may include adoption of the STEPS (Sustainable Tools for Environmental Performance Strategy) and SDS (Sustainable Design Scorecard) programs, currently being trialled, as tools to assess and reward developments (including assessment of Council owned sites) that achieve high levels of sustainability in design and development.	High (on-going)	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
1.3	Investigate programs to share recycling and reuse of materials, energy and resources (e.g. solid waste, water and energy) across sites where individual "on site" reuse and recycling is not viable. (e.g. utilising parks for retention of water and recycling of green waste)	Ongoing	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
<b>Accommodation Implementation Projects</b>			
2.1	Identify potential sites for social and/ or community housing projects.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Dept. Human Services
2.2	Update the Urban Character Study 2001	High (in Progress)	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
2.3	Introduce a new local policy into the Darebin Planning Scheme to apply to the consideration of new or expanded license premises where a permit is required pursuant to Clause 52.27 of the Planning Scheme, similar to that in place in other municipalities in metropolitan Melbourne.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Local Traders
<b>Economic Development Implementation Projects</b>			
3.1	Establish local policies regarding the location of new entertainment use in and near residential uses. (Refer implementation Project 2.3).	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>  High Street Traders Association.
3.2	Undertake a project in consultation with traders to establish marketing strategies for Northcote that can combine with "branding" of the centre and streetscape improvements.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>  High Street Traders Association.

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
3.3	Undertake streetscape improvement ideally utilising a community arts program to utilise local talent to translate identifying themes and features (e.g. Ruckers Hill landform, indigenous heritage, multicultural development and creative clusters of Northcote) into the physical features of the core retail centre.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
3.4	As part of a streetscape program improve street signage and way-finding to and through the centre for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle users.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
3.5	Support the transformation of the former Northcote Police Station in James Street to an art/business incubator or similar community arts space for a variety of uses to activate the Town Hall civic square, reinforce the south end of High Street as a creative and entertainment precinct and provide opportunity for continued low rental artist space.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b> State Government
3.6	Promote the redevelopment of properties along Helen Street, adjoining the Artherton Road carpark to better interface with the carpark, with a range of live / work developments.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
3.7	Target medium to large scale office tenants to the Artherton Road redevelopment area as an employment anchor to Northcote.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
3.8	Support projects that can assist service business development in the area including local housing, recreation and entertainment activities that draw people to the centre.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
<b>Transport and Access Implementation Projects</b>			
4.1	Review all public and community transport linkages as part of a broader program to provide better serviced and integrated transport in non peak hour traffic (including nights and weekends), throughout the Northcote area to key destination points.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>  Department of Infrastructure Private Bus operators.
4.2	Undertake a review of pedestrian, cycle and road access through Helen Street / Hawthorn Street / Westbourne Grove area so as to review better local access through the centre. This should include identifying opportunities for better pedestrian and cycle access as well as reassessing the one way road network.	Low	<b>Darebin City Council</b>  Relevant land owners
4.3	Instigate a 40 km variable speed limit within the High Street retail core through core trading hours.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> – noting dependence of Vic Roads approval.
4.4	Investigate the removal of the left hand slip lane at the north west corner of High Street and Artherton Road and	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
	convert this space to civic landscaping and meeting space either on its own or as part of a redevelopment of the adjoining private land holding.		abutting landowners.
4.5	Investigate relevant traffic works and streetscape works to open Robbs Parade to Northcote Plaza.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> <b>Northcote Plaza</b> Landowners of Robbs Parade
4.6	Review the existing on street and off street car parking provision in relation to layout, location, time restrictions, costing of spaces so as to concentrate a range of short term parking needs within the core retail area with longer, unrestricted parking being directed to the periphery or outside the activity centre boundaries.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.7	Identify potential locations and funding mechanisms for future public car parking should it be required to facilitate new development. Such sites should be central to use and provided clearly on an at needs basis, which currently is not demonstrated by parking usage figures and principles of sustainable transport.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association
4.8	Lobby State Government to review current car parking rates within the Darebin Planning Scheme to encompass both maximum and minimum rates as part of a broader approach to sustainable transport.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> <b>DSE</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.9	Lobby State Government to improve public transport service quality, frequency and network connections.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.10	Lobby State Government to integrate better disabled and pedestrian access along High Street and public transport stops through removal of High Street clearways acknowledging that tram running times can be maintained with removal of the clearways through alternative traffic management measures.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b> High Street Traders Association Relevant Land owners.
4.11	Seek to improve pedestrian access behind the east side of High Street through increased width of rear lanes and accessways to connect Frederick Street to Separation (refer further comment in Precinct – Central Northcote). This includes capitalising on opportunities to create additional links both east west and north south between Separation Street / Mitchell Street and through redevelopment of individual sites.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
4.12	Seek to improve pedestrian access behind the west side of High Street through increased width of rear lanes and accessways to connect High Street to the Northcote railway station, by incorporating improvements through individual site redevelopments (refer further discussions in the Arthurton Road, High Street and Creative Communities precincts).	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
<b>Urban Design Implementation Projects</b>			
5.1	Lobby VicRoads for the removal of clearways to ensure a safe environment for all road users and improve urban design outcomes as outlined in the High Street Transport Management Plan	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>  High Street Traders Association.
5.2	Investigate feasibility and benefits of placing powerlines along High Street underground	Low	<b>Darebin City Council</b>  High Street Traders Association.
5.3	Establish and maintain a regular program of removing unauthorised and redundant advertising and signage throughout the centre.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
5.4	Establish and implement a Streetscape Master Plan to provide a consistent theme to public seating, street furniture (e.g. cycle racks, rubbish bins etc) and public signage as a "branding" of Northcote Activity Centre.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>  High Street Traders Association.
5.5	As part of a streetscape program create additional public seating and resting places to encourage travellers to stop in Northcote.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
5.6	Streetscape improvements along High Street be undertaken through a public art and economic development program in consultation with local traders of High Street.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>  High Street Traders Association.
5.7	Investigate the introduction of a 1% development contributions levy (in cash or artwork) to new development over \$500,000 in value as a means of funding public art in the activity centre.	On going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
5.8	Finalise the use agreement between Council and the State Education Department of co-use and maintenance of public open space at the north east corner of Helen Street and Hawthorn Road.	High	<b>Darebin City Council.</b>  Helen Street Primary School. Department of Education.
5.9	Undertake specific streetscape and public realm improvements as detailed in precinct plans in this report	Various	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

No.	Project	Priority	Implementing Bodies (Lead marked in Bold)
	(refer Section 4)		Affected land owners
<b>Community Identity Implementation Projects</b>			
5.10	Review the current heritage overlay provisions to ensure that areas of heritage significance are addressed consistently across the centre.	High (in progress)	<b>Darebin City Council</b> Heritage Victoria.
6.1	Work with community groups to identify needs and deficiencies in spaces available for groups and individuals through ascertaining the needs of groups and what spaces are currently available.	High	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
6.2	Monitor the availability and appropriateness of spaces available in the Northcote Town Hall to identify if community needs require additional or alternative local meeting spaces. In particular, monitor the availability of affordable meeting spaces at this and other potential locations for such spaces.	Medium – on going	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
6.3	Review street tree planting programs to identify innovative ways of increasing tree coverage in public areas, without impeding heritage and pedestrian requirements.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>
6.4	Undertake a combined education and planting program to increase the use of locally indigenous and/or low water use plants across both public spaces and in privately owned gardens and landscaping.	Medium	<b>Darebin City Council</b>

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms



The following table provides explanation of terms used in the structure plan. Most terms correlate with defined terms used in Melbourne 2030, as the glossary has been adapted from the terms provided within the Melbourne 2030 – Metropolitan Strategy: Dept Infrastructure October 2002.

Activity centres	Provide the focus for services, employment and social interaction in cities and towns. They are where people shop, work, meet, relax and often live. Usually well-served by public transport, they range in size and intensity of use from local neighbourhood strip shopping centres to traditional universities and major regional malls.
Affordable housing	Well-located housing, appropriate to the needs of a given household, where the cost (whether mortgage repayment or rent) is no more than 30 per cent of that household's income. Exceeding the mark places one under 'housing stress', particularly in the lower 40 per cent of the income distribution scale.
Biodiversity	The variety of all living life-forms including plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they all contain and the ecosystems of which they form a part
Central Activities District	Metropolitan Melbourne's largest activity centre with the greatest variety of uses and functions, and the most intense concentration of development. It includes the Central Business District, Docklands, the Sport and Entertainment Precinct, the Knowledge Precinct, the Arts Precinct, and Southbank.
Central Melbourne	Those parts of the cities of Melbourne, Yarra and Port Phillip with a capital city function.
Ecologically Sustainable Development and design	Development that improves the total quality of life, now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.
Grey water (or sullage)	Waste water from showers, baths, handbasins, laundries and kitchens.
Heritage	Aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.
Higher-density housing	Housing units on a given area of land that are more numerous than the average in the surrounding locality.
Incompatible land uses	Land uses that have negative effects on adjacent land uses.
Metropolitan Melbourne	The 31 metropolitan municipalities that make up the metropolitan region: Banyule, Bayside, Boroondara, Brimbank, Cardinia, Casey, Darebin, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Hobsons Bay, Hume, Kingston, Knox, Manningham, Maribyrnong, Maroondah, Melbourne, Melton, Monash, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Mornington Peninsula, Nillumbik, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Whitehorse, Whittlesea, Wyndham, Yarra and Yarra Ranges.
Municipal Strategic Statements	Part of the Local Planning Policy Framework, these contain the strategic planning land-use and development objectives of the relevant planning authority, the strategies for achieving these objectives, and the relationship to controls over the use and development of land in the planning scheme.
Principal Public Transport Network	A high-quality public transport network that connects Principal and Major Activity Centres, and comprises the existing radial fixed-rail network, extensions to this radial network and new cross-town bus routes.
Renewable energy	Electricity generated from clean, renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, biomass and hydro power.
ResCode	A package of provisions for residential development that was introduced in Victoria in August 2001, and incorporated into planning schemes and the Building Regulations.
SDS (Sustainable Design Scorecard)	The Sustainable Design Scorecard, developed by the City of Port Phillip and Moreland City Council, uses a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to provide an assessment of the environmental impact of commercial, industrial

and retail buildings. The aim of the program is to enable designers and Councils to assess these building types with the view to reducing environmental impacts.

Social housing	Non-profit housing owned and managed for the primary purpose of meeting social objectives such as affordable rents, responsible management, security of tenure and good location in relation to employment services. The term encompasses public housing and includes housing owned or managed by the community.
Social/cultural infrastructure	Infrastructure that contributes to or supports social and cultural purposes, such as community meeting places.
STEPS (Sustainable Tools for Environmental Performance Strategy)	STEPS is a web based computer program developed by Moreland City Council and used to assess and score the environmental performance of new dwellings. Designers can use STEPS to see if their development will meet the environmental performance targets set by Council.
Stormwater	Rainwater that runs off streets and gutters, enters drains and waterways and is eventually discharged to the sea; in Victoria, stormwater is untreated but may be filtered by traps or wetlands.
Structure plans	Planning tools that set out an integrated vision for the desired future development of a place, and establish a planning and management framework to guide development and land-use change in order to achieve stated environmental, social and economic objectives.
Sustainable development	Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Transport interchanges	Places where people change modes of transport, for example, from train to bus.
Urban infrastructure	Infrastructure, such as water supply, sewage disposal plants, and other improvements that are essential for urban development.
Victoria Planning Provisions	Policies and requirements for the use, development and protection of land in Victoria.
Walkable	Walkable communities, or locations, make footpath-based travel as easy as possible for all members of the community including children, people with prams/shopping carts and people using mobility aids. Walkability encompasses issues of safety (traffic and personal), attractive surroundings, distance between destinations, gradients, appropriate surfaces and physical barriers to access such as steps and gutters.
Waste water (or effluent)	Water that has been used for various purposes by households, businesses and industry; includes domestic sewage (grey water and black water) and trade wastes. Effluent is treated waste water.
Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)	The integration of water cycle management into urban planning and design.