Plenty Road Integrated Land Use and Transport Study

Final 2013

City of DAREBIN

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Strategic Context

Introduction

The Plenty Road Integrated Land Use and Transport Study provides a rationale for preferred future development and land use in the Plenty Road corridor, based on analysis of land use, economic and transport conditions along Plenty Road, and the varying characteristics of sections of Plenty Road that warrant different solutions. This Study has evolved over time as a result of a growing awareness of issues and a dynamic development context. First completed in 2009, the Study was designed to inform the Tram Route 86 Improvement project. At the direction of Council at its meeting on 02 April 2012, the Study was updated, with the intent that it provide strategic justification for the implementation of a Design and Development Overlay (DDO) along the Plenty Road corridor from the Dundas/High Street Junction through to Grimshaw street.

SGS Economics and Planning (SGS) and Design Urban Pty Ltd were engaged in February 2009 by Darebin City Council and the Department of Planning and Community Development to undertake an Integrated Land Use and Transport Study for Plenty Road. The aim of the study was to:

> *establish a vision for the Plenty Road corridor which reinforces its importance as a high priority location for residential and mixed use development, and build on its strategic location as a priority tram corridor (Route 86) in Melbourne.*

The City of Darebin sees opportunities to support more efficient, accessible and reliable public transport, and provide opportunities for housing and supporting commercial activities along Plenty Road. At present, Plenty Road has a number of distinct areas that require tailored responses. The recommendations in this report identify a preferred future for each Precinct along the Plenty Road corridor.

Study Objectives

The objectives of the study, as outlined in the project brief, are to:

1. understand the existing role of land along Plenty Road and the pressures for change in the context of the Tram Route 86 Improvement Project;
2. explore opportunities for urban consolidation, intensification of land uses and commercial revitalisation strategically along the Plenty Road corridor;
3. produce a strategic land use and urban design framework for the Plenty Road corridor which recognises and supports transport priorities and encourages the integration of land use and transport; and
4. provide a clear framework for decision making by the City, community, businesses and investors.

This project supports efficient use of existing and future investments in public transport infrastructure and services by promoting and facilitating intensive urban development. The project sets a direction for the Plenty Road corridor to guide future development preferences to create certainty for owners, investors and land users.

Study Method

This study was completed as an integrated package as required in the project brief and has been refined over time in response to the changing context.

Phase 1
Analysis of existing conditions for land use, transport, and economic performance to inform potential future residential and mixed use development in the study area;

Phase 2
Develop a policy approach to manage change and integration with surrounding areas and public transport infrastructure through Urban design principles and initiatives to provide high quality environments;

Phase 3
Develop an Implementation approach based on precinct plans for land use, identifying the barriers and opportunities for increasing density and actions to facilitate the desired vision; and

Phase 4
Integration of feedback received and refining precinct information following community consultation process.

Changing Context

Over the past few years there has been an increased interest on development along this corridor. Permit applications for residential development have been received by Council that are a stepped change from the existing context and reflect a market response to the locational advantage offered along this corridor. This is illustrated in the selection of sites listed below:

- 33 -35 Plenty Road, Preston - 10 storeys, 136 units, shops and basement car parking
- 340 Plentyr Road, Preston - 5 storeys, 25 units
- 277 - 279 Plenty Road, Preston - 6 storeys, 24 units and mixed sue
- 1056 - 1140 Plenty Road, Bundoora - 2-4 storeys, 80 dwellings, shops and mixed use
- 845 Plenty Road, Reservoir - 3 storeys, 7 units

Outline of this Study

This report is set out as follows:
Section 1 Strategic Context
Section 2 Existing Conditions, sets the scene with an overview of the existing conditions along Plenty Road, including a review of current policy, a profile of the local community, existing land characteristics, urban design analysis, economic structure, land supply and demand analysis, and insights from key stakeholders;
Section 3 Future Projections and Analysis, looks out to 2030 and identifies the expected demand and supply of land for housing, employment and proposed transport investments.
Section 4 Future Directions, identifies the future vision for Plenty Road and its proposed role as a high amenity location for housing, employment and services integrated with quality public transport; and
Section 5 Implementation outlines the principles for urban design and a series of Precinct Plans along with other actions to support the long term vision.

Preliminary Vision for Plenty Road Corridor

The Plenty Road Corridor vision can be described is:

The Plenty Road Corridor supports more efficient, accessible and reliable public transport and provides opportunities for housing intensification.

The Corridor connects revitalised activity centres at Lancaster Gate, Summerhill, Tyler Street and
The Junction. Retail and commercial uses serve the immediate hinterland to provide local convenience opportunities and support Preston Activity Centre as the regional focus of community activity, services and investment. Plenty Road continues to support the growth of La Trobe University, one of Victoria's largest tertiary institutions and a significant employer within the municipality.

A growing and diverse community is found here and enjoys a variety of lifestyle benefits and services and facilities that meet their daily needs.

Figure 1 Aerial view along Plenty Road Corridor

Study Area - The Plenty Road Corridor

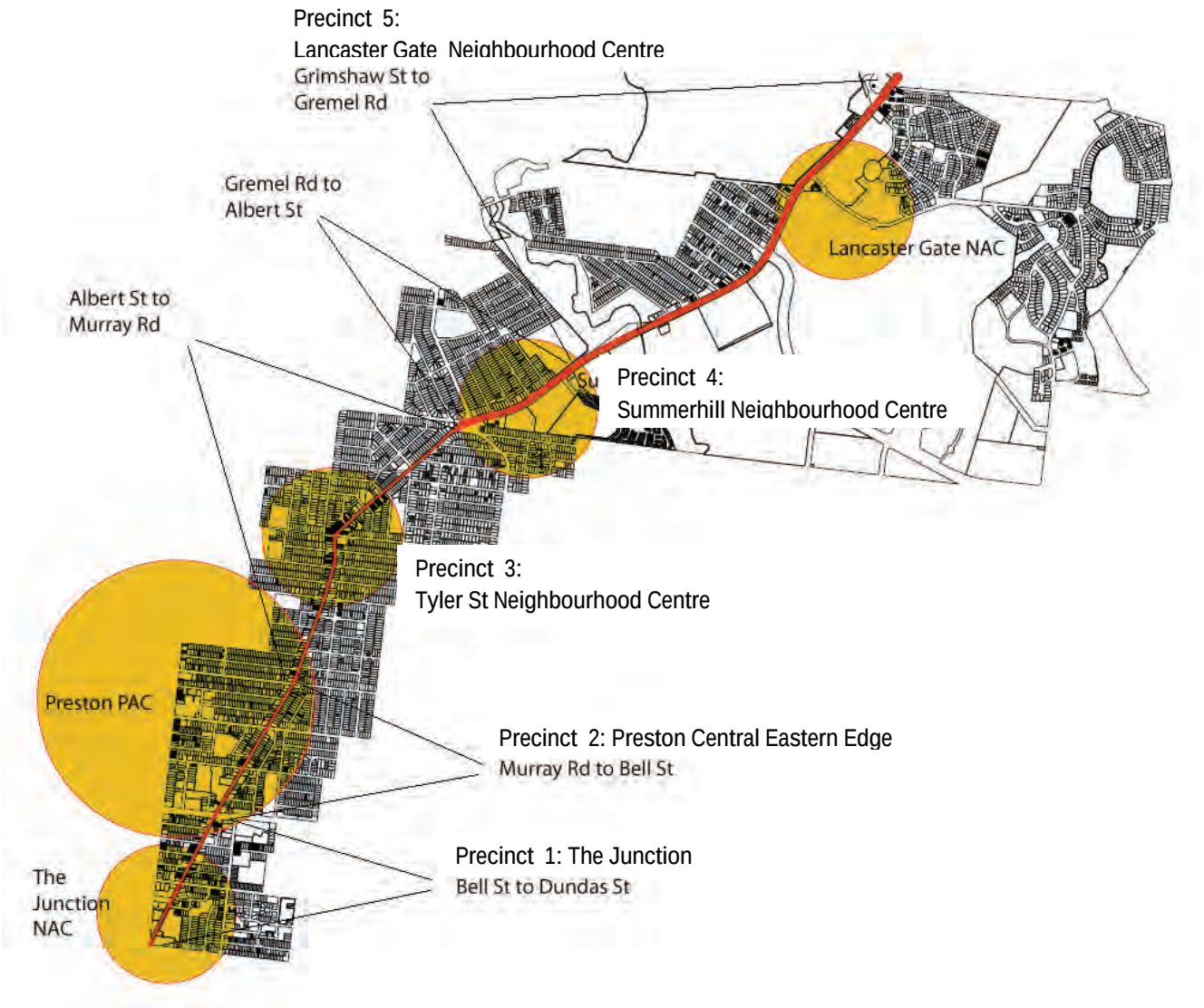
Plenty Road is an eight kilometre corridor, which begins nine kilometres from the Melbourne CBD and connects to the growth corridor via South Morang. The section from Dundas Street to Albert Street which covers Precincts 1 - 3 is identified as a primary multi-modal street in the Darebin Transport Strategy. The section from Albert Street to Bundoora is identified as a strategic corridor. The study area is defined as both the properties fronting Plenty Road and the areas within a 5 minute (400 metre) and 10 minute (800 metre) walk of the road.

Plenty Road is distinguished within its urban context by its varied conditions along the length of the corridor. To clarify its role, it is necessary to identify the urban structure through which it passes.

The older established areas in the south are characterised by their "inner city" style dense subdivisions, and the highly "suburban" areas in the north are defined by the dedicated tram easement, separated road way and higher traffic volumes accommodated in a more generous street width.

This Study addresses the transitions and managing the evolution of this strategically important corridor.

Figure 2 Study area



The strategic importance of this study in addressing Melbourne's future growth can be framed in terms of the future global context of peak oil and a carbon constrained economy, the unique and special role of Melbourne's tram corridors, public transport and liveability and opportunities for transit oriented development. The external drivers for change, together with the existing character provide unique opportunities for investment in transport infrastructure and services to shape future locations for housing, jobs and other activities.

Global Context of Peak Oil and a Carbon Constrained Economy

Cities, due to their scale, are large consumers of scarce resources. As a result, they are at risk from peak oil and climate change, but they also provide many potential solutions for reducing emissions and mitigating impacts. The introduction of the carbon pricing scheme on 1 July 2012, created the need to plan for land use and development focussed around the shift to sustainable transport.

Peak oil refers to the situation when the production of oil reaches a maximum with production beginning to decline from that point onwards. There is much debate as to the existence of peak oil. Many view it as a way of inflating oil prices, some actively campaign for mitigating actions while others adopt an 'out of sight out of mind' approach. The first impact of peak oil will be increasingly higher oil prices, with the future price of oil dependant on the forces driving both oil prices and general economic conditions. Despite the prospect of an economic downturn, oil consumption in Australia continues to increase.

While oil prices may rise significantly enough to dispel demand, the captivity of many Australians to oil, will result in severe hardship without alternative transportation implementation. Those people most reliant on cars as their primary form of transport, located in outer and regional areas, are the most vulnerable to resulting increases in fuel prices and the flow on costs of goods and services. These are also typically those households with high debts and lower socio-economic status (Dodson and Sipe, 2005).
An inquiry into the impacts of peak oil in the United States by Hirsch et al (2005, p 59) found that mitigation must be undertaken at least two decades prior to oil peaking. However, predicting the peak is extremely difficult. Current estimates from a range of sources predict peak oil at any time from 2010 to 2060 with the majority estimating it occurring around 2020 or 2030.

The Australian Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport argued that the concept of peak oil cannot be disregarded. They also accept that without early mitigating actions, a decline in oil production will cause serious hardship (Australian Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport 2007, p 19). Given the potential economic issues that may arise, early mitigation is favourable.

Market forces will demand individuals, governments and organisations minimise greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in response to global climate change. In cities, this will mean the need to reduce private vehicle travel in preference for public transport and prioritise more sustainable travel modes. It will also mean ensuring the built form minimises the use of energy and water consumption to enhance the realisation of affordable living.

The potential advent of peak oil reinforces the importance of integrated land use and transport to maximise development opportunities in locations accessible by public transport, such as tram corridors. There is also a significant contribution that integrated transport and land use can make towards reducing emissions and living within our means. The price on carbon emissions reinforces this response. Cities have a responsibility to act early in providing solutions to addressing a future of peak oil and a carbon constrained economy.

Special Role of Melbourne's Tram Corridors

Melbourne could be described as a relatively centralised city with a radial transport infrastructure servicing the CBD. Tram technology of the late 19th and early 20th century supported the creation of Melbourne's distinctly linear urban form. Tram corridors play a special role in Melbourne's urban fabric. The form of most of these localities has survived; some as icons of Melbourne street life. It is not only the tram network that contributes to this special role, but also the urban form surrounding the tram network. However, the links between the tram network and the urban form varies according to the era of development, the dominant form of travel, topography, culture, political environment, street patterns, block sizes, housing and employment densities. Figure 1 shows the eras of Melbourne's development in relation to the tram network.

The figure shows that in its early years, Melbourne developed along its public transport network, particularly heavy rail, prior to the ease of availability and affordability of private motor vehicles. During this time, urban areas were often planned with a grid of interconnecting arterial roads. Each of these major blocks were then subdivided, usually according to a grid with the result being a very permeable street structure. This urban form is of a different scale from those developments built around the motor car and where tram services were extended after the majority of urban development was already in place.

The introduction of motor vehicles meant that suburbs could develop beyond the fixed tram and train networks. In these later developments, subdivisions between existing arterial roads did not provide major subdividing roads (although in some cases provision has been left for these in the future); the outcome being much larger urban blocks. Development patterns have also changed with many of these later subdivisions being developed as individual parcels and designed for private vehicle access. These are shown as the green areas which are mostly suburban developments that were planned for private vehicle ownership. The orange regions on the map show the most recent outer-fringe developments.

These outer and fringe locations present particular challenges for improving public transport services and encouraging walking and cycling as modes of choice.

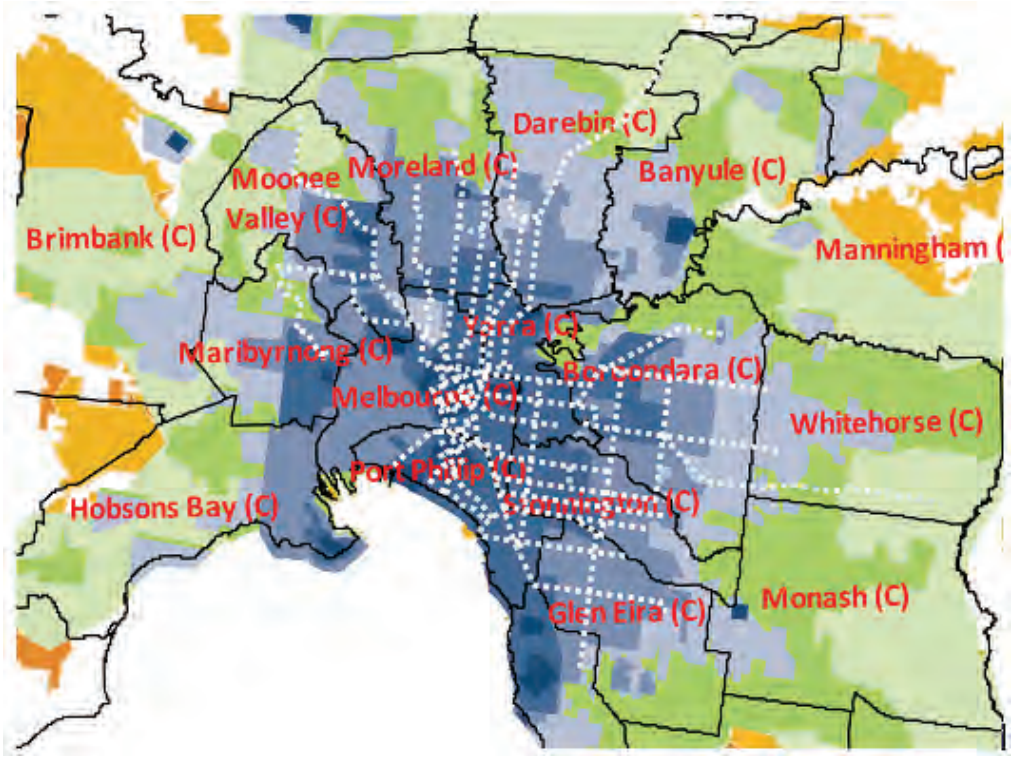
While all transport modes and technologies (including cars) have a tendency to create linear urban forms, the potential for creating development opportunities and encouraging public transport use in line with the objectives of Melbourne 2030 varies considerably. Major road corridors support car-orientated retail strips. However, these wide roads that carry high traffic volumes become increasing divisive. They can be seen by pedestrians as threatening to cross and as a result activities on either side increasingly turn away from the road. In the cases where these major road corridors also contain tram routes, there are opportunities to focus new land use activities off the main roads and improve the safety and amenity of pedestrian connections.

In summary, a number of factors meant that Melbourne retained its tram network, at a time when many other cities were removing trams to make spaces for private motor vehicles. This has left a lasting legacy for the city. The varying urban form around Melbourne's tram networks has resulted in unique and special opportunities to maintain and build on the public transport accessibility and with locations for housing intensification and supporting retail and commercial activities.

Transport investment has a role to play a city shaping. It is important that transport investment decisions, in infrastructure and services, are focussed around those locations that present the most opportunities to support change in line with the objectives of Melbourne 2030. The Plenty Road corridors offers many opportunities to realise these benefits.

Figure 3
Urban Structure and the Plenty Road Corridor
The urban structure along Plenty Road can be determined by illustrating the walkable catchments around activity centres. Neighbourhoods are shown by 400m radius circles, while rail-based centres and Principal Activity Centres are depicted as 800m radius circles, as represented in the figure below. Urban structure and the nature of development along Plenty Road is determined by the Preston PAC, and Neighbourhood Centres at Lancaster Gate, Summerhill, Tyler Street, and The Junction.

Figure 4 Historical Urban Growth Patterns of Melbourne and Tram Corridors



Public Transport and Liveability

A location's liveability is increasingly associated with quality public transport access and the availability and mix of services on offer. In Melbourne's inner suburbs, streets along a tram service are often lined with shops, cafes, restaurants and other services. These activity strips are driven by the large numbers of passing pedestrians generated by the tram routes that offer frequent services and regular stopping patterns. These linear strips, with a focus on pedestrian space, on-street car parking, bike priority and landscaping are popular with residents and visitors alike for the high amenity of offer.

Liveability is much more than pleasant streetscapes. Liveability is about ensuring long term wellbeing for all residents. This requires all aspects of a location's sustainability (environmental, economic and social) to be improved.

The environmental benefits of public transport such as reduced greenhouse gas emissions and air quality, are well recognised. These benefits are increasingly important as we reconcile the need to plan for a carbon constrained future. The cost and time savings associated with ease of access to employment, services and other opportunities provides for economic and social benefits by allowing more time for other pursuits (among other things). Greater public transport use also encourages walking and a less sedentary lifestyle with associated health improvements.

These benefits can be maximised through land use and transport integration, including transit oriented development. Tram corridors provide an ideal opportunity for tailored responses to capture these benefits.

Transit Oriented Development

One approach to improving the sustainability of places is to encourage transit oriented development. Transit oriented development encourages activities in close proximity to transport hubs. While the concept can be defined quite broadly, it generally incorporates a number of ideas including:

- A clustering of mixed land uses around a high quality public transport service[1];
- Promotion of increased public transport mode share;
- Development that is considered to be of medium to higher density;
- A resultant reduction in car use;
- Enhancement of economic competitiveness; and
- Increased accessibility to liveable environments and services[2].

While these are the key ideas behind transit oriented developments, other outcomes include a greater sense of place and housing affordability. A greater sense of place can eventuate through enhancement of key nodes as focal point for community life. Housing affordability can be improved by reduced car parking provision which can lead to lower construction and therefore housing costs. In addition, a reduction in car use can lead to lower vehicle operating costs and may lower overall household transport costs with added health benefits of more active transport modes.

The liveability of strategic locations along tramway corridors can be greatly improved through the greater integration of land use activities with the public transport services on offer.

1 Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), 2007, 'Transit Oriented Development'.

2 Muley, D, Bunker, J and Ferreira, L, 2007, Evaluating Transit Quality of Service for Transit Oriented Development (TOD), p 1.

The Plenty Road Corridor Study Area

Plenty Road is an eight kilometre corridor, which begins nine kilometres from the Melbourne CBD and extends northward to South Morang and the Whittlesea growth corridor. From a transport perspective, the section from Dundas Street to Albert Street is identified as a primary multi-modal street in the Darebin Transport Strategy. The section from Albert Street to Bundoora is classified as a strategic corridor. It is also recognised in State policy as part of the Principal Public Transport Network.

The primary study area is defined as both the properties fronting Plenty Road and the secondary areas as those within a 5 minute (400 metre) walk of the main road.

Plenty Road is located within an urban context with distinct areas along the length of the corridor. It therefore has a role to play in a number of urban conditions. To clarify that role, it is necessary to identify the urban structure through which it passes.

The older established areas in the south are characterised by their "inner city" style subdivisions, and the highly "suburban" areas in the north are defined by the dedicated tram easement, separated road providing 2 - 3 vehicle lanes in each direction. Interfacing land is a mix of zones including residential, businesses, fragmented industrial and public purposes.

The study area is surrounded by major land use activities and residential areas. Major activities in the vicinity of Plenty Road include:

- Preston Principal Activity Centre to the south-west;
- Northland Principal Activity Centre to the south-east;
- La Trobe University to the north-east; and
- Reservoir Major Activity Centre to the north-west.

Other major activities further away include:

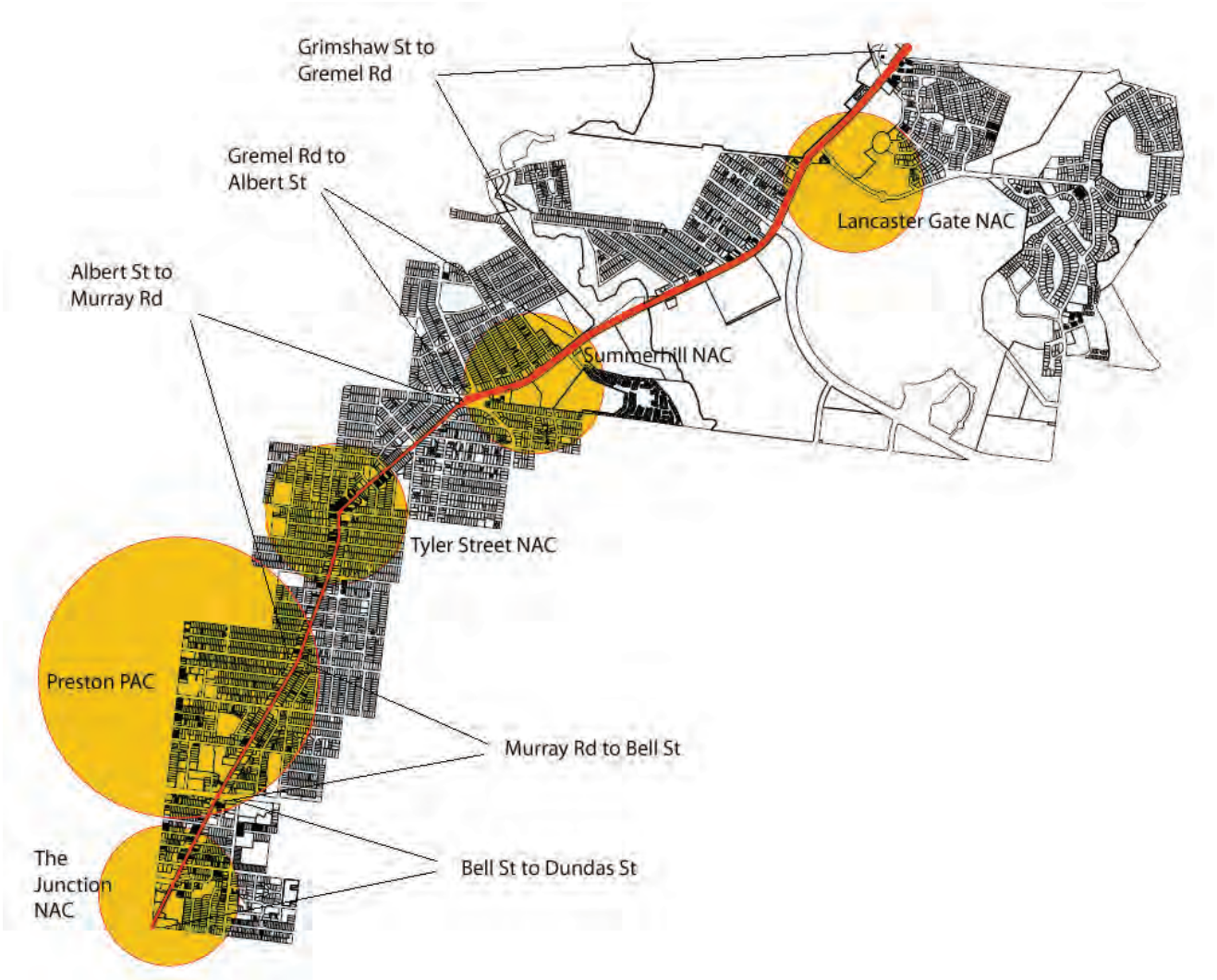
- Northcote Major Activity Centre to the south;
- University Hill mixed use development to the north;
- RMIT campus in Bundoora to the north;
- East Preston industrial area to the south-east;
- Fairfield / Alphington industrial area to the south-east; and
- Reservoir industrial area to the north-west.

Melbourne 2030 planning strategy refers to "walkable catchments" around activity centres as defining the extent of the area which relates to, and is served by, an activity centre. Rail based activity centres such as Preston, Northcote and Reservoir are defined by a 10 minute walking distance or approximately 800m distance from the railway station, while neighbourhood activity centres are defined by a five minute walking distance or approximately 400m distance from the centre.

Study Area Precincts

The corridor has five distinct areas requiring tailored responses in terms of land use, urban design guidance and public transport priority and treatment. These distinct areas referred to in the report as:

Precinct 1	The Junction Dundas Street to Bell Street
Precinct 2	Preston Central Eastern Edge Bell Street to Murray Road
Precinct 3	Tyler Street Neighbourhood Centre Murray Road to Albert Street
Precinct 4	Summerhill Neighbourhood Centre Albert Street to Gremel Road
Precinct 5	Lancaster Gate Neighbourhood Centre Gremel Road to Grimshaw Street



The Policy Setting

Relevant policy statements for the Plenty Road study area were reviewed to identify key issues for the future of the Corridor. A summary of these issues is provided below.

State Policy

Melbourne 2030

Melbourne 2030, the Victorian State Government's plan for the sustainable growth of metropolitan Melbourne, identifies Preston as a Principal Activity Centre (PAC), Northcote and Reservoir as Major Activity Centres (MAC's), and a number of Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NAC's) along the Plenty Road corridor. A nearby Principal Activity Centres is found at the Specialised Activity Centre Northland and at La Trobe Technical Park and Northland. Each of these activity centres has a different role according to its classification in the activity centres hierarchy and location in relation to other activity centres. The relative role of each activity centre in the hierarchy and spatial distribution is an important consideration in planning for future growth and change that provide housing, employment and facilities tomatch needs. The definitions of the activity centre hierarchy are provided in Section 7.

Since the release of Melbourne 2030 the growth in the number of households in Melbourne has been more rapid than population growth, reflecting smaller household sizes driven by social change and an ageing population. More recently, Victoria in Future (VIF 12) projections indentify that over the 40 years to 2051, Victoria's population is projected to increase by 3.2 million to 8.7 million. Over the same period, Melbourne's population is expected to grow to 6.5 million, while regional Victoria is projected to grow to 2.3 million.

The rate of change of the number of households in Victoria is projected to exceed the rate of change in the population as the average household size gradually decreases over the projection period. As the population ages, there is projected to be a lower proportion of families with children and a higher proportion of lone person and couple-only households.

Clause 16

Clause 16 of the State Planning Policy Framework is an important state level housing related Strategy and provides policy guidance and direction particularly to Local Governments for the provision of:

- Housing Diversity
- Housing Affordability
- Urban consolidation
- Residential Aged Care
- Design and location of Residential Aged Care
- Crisis Accommodation and Community Care

State policy recognises that greenfield fringe development cannot continue to sustain the majority of new housing opportunities in Melbourne and that greater emphasis is required on new housing within established urban areas. Clause 16 encourages new housing to be provided in established urban areas via urban consolidation and redevelopment of strategic sites, with particular focus given to locations:

- in and around activity centres,
- along employment corridors, and;
- areas serviced by infrastructure and services.

Investment in public transport and a greater role for activity centres will be required to meet future housing needs in established urban areas. The Plenty Road transport corridor, an important route on the Principal Public Transport Network which provides high capacity public transport services, is considered a strategic location for intensification of housing.

Local Policy

Darebin promotes diverse, affordable, and accessible housing, in and around key transport and activity nodes to support more sustainable transport outcomes. In particular, City of Darebin policy settings promote:

- Supporting retail and commercial activities in major nodes such as Preston, Northcote and Northland;
- Reviewing the retail and commercial centres that are not performing well, including those on Plenty Road and Tyler Street, and Plenty Road and Wood Street;
- Encouraging mixed use and medium density housing in the north east corridor; and
- Consolidating industrial land uses into three core industrial areas at Reservoir, East Preston and Fairfield/ Alphington.

These policy settings are informed by declining levels of industrial activity across Melbourne, and the preference by industry for larger sites on accessible locations along major roads further from inner and middle ring suburbs.

Future development along the Plenty Road corridor will be influenced by the adopted structure plans and completed neighbourhood character studies . Development along Plenty Road should be consistent with or complement the plans for these strategic locations.

Introduction

A review of the existing conditions along Plenty Road is important to understand its potential future. This section analyses the existing role of Plenty Road in terms of the:

- demographic characteristics of the local community;
- transport profile;
- land use characteristics including zoning and lot size;
- economic conditions and structure; and
- stakeholder insights.

Local Community Profile

The local community within the catchment is very diverse. The total population of the study area corridor (which includes surrounding residential areas on a Census Collection District basis) in 2006 was 17,120 people. Of these, 8,880 reside in the southern section between Dundas and Albert Streets, and 8,240 between Albert Street and the municipal boundary in the north.

The study corridor as a whole comprises approximately 21% of Preston SLA's population, which is home to 82,160 people. Of Darebin's total population of 128,070, the study corridor comprises approximately 13% of the population.

In the corridor, there are a higher proportion of young adults and older persons compared to Darebin as a whole. A third of residents were born overseas with some 50% of residents speaking a language other than English at home. The mix of nationalities includes strong representation of people from China and India. Some 5% of all residents are identified as having a disability requiring assistance. In addition, the income profile of the areas is lower than the LGA.

This profile supports the need for universally accessible transport to facilitate mobility and engagement in life activities. The lower income profile along the Plenty Road corridor also illustrates the need for affordable and accessible transport, particularly as many residents do not own a car.

Transport Profile

This section analyses existing transport conditions along Plenty Road, particularly public transport, cycling, traffic volumes and parking.

Darebin's Transport Strategy identifies the section of Plenty Road from Dundas Street to Albert Street as a primary multi modal street. The objective of 'primary multi modal streets' is to provide priority for public transport (except in Activity Centres with high pedestrian volumes) and not for significant regional traffic. From Albert Street north, Plenty Rd is identified as a strategic corridor (or preferred traffic corridor) intended in the future to provide for significant regional and local movements.

Public Transport

The Tram 86 is the key public transport connection along Plenty Road and provides services from Bundoora RMIT to Waterfront City Docklands. Until 1983, the northern terminus of the service was at Tyler Street. Since that time, various extensions were made until the current destination in 1995.

In the northern section, the Tram has an important role in providing access to RMIT for students in particular. From Bundoora, the travel time to/from the City can be from 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on traffic. Services operate from 5am until 1am (even later on Fridays and Saturdays) during peak periods, there are trams at least every five to 10 minutes in both directions.

The section of Plenty Road from Murray Road to Dundas Street is also within walking distance of Bell, Preston and Thornbury rail stations along the South Morang Rail Line. These stations provide access to rail services to the City Centre within 20 minutes during the morning peak.

There are also a number of bus services that operate along and across Plenty Road. These services provide valuable secondary public transport services offering local and cross regional linkages. The major interchange points are at La Trobe University,

Tyler Street, Miller Street, Murray Road and Dundas Street. The routes and their major destinations include:

- 566 - Lalor - Northland via Plenty Road, Childs Road, Grimshaw Road;
- 556 - Epping - Northland via Keon Park;
- 567 - Northcote - Regent via Northland;
- 555 - Epping - Northland via Lalor, Thomastown, Reservoir;
- 527 - Gowrie - Northland via Murray Road;
- 513 - Eltham - Glenroy via Greensborough, Lower Plenty;
- 552 - North East Reservoir - Northcote Plaza via High Street; and
- 903 - Altona to Mordialloc (SMARTBUS Service).

The access to public transport services is reflected in the high rates of public transport use in the corridor relative to other locations across Darebin. Approximately 54% of residents in the corridor drive to work, a lower rate than Preston SLA. Residents of Plenty Road are more likely to use the tram than Preston or Darebin residents. Some 6 percent of residents in the southern part of the study area use the tram, a higher rate of use than those in the north (4.7%).

It also illustrates that when people reside near quality public transport, they are more likely to utilise it. Residents of the corridor are also less likely to own a car than residents in Preston and Darebin. These figures are consistent with lower rates of travel to work using cars. However, it could also be due to income, with car ownership out of reach due to cost.

Cycling

The Darebin Cycling Strategy aims to increase cycle trips within Darebin by residents and visitors. The strategy objectives include advocating for improved cycling facilities and tracks, ensure information is available to the local community to support cycling at all levels, promotion of cycling as a legitimate form of transport, make cycling in Darebin as safe as possible and change government structures and processes to support cycling. Plenty Road is designated as a cycling corridor, with no existing on road bike path.

Traffic

The traffic volumes along Plenty Road increase with distance from the City (Appendix 3). Areas in the southern section of Plenty Road experiencing traffic volumes of around 6 - 10,000 vehicles per day each way, compared to around 30,000 at the northern end. This is consistent with the type of road, with areas north of Albert Street separated from the tram. It also indicates that the southern sections have greater potential for street based pedestrian activity. The corridor road widths are shown in Table 1. This shows the variation along the length of the corridor. This width has implications for the management of road space and building heights.

Corridor Section and Road Reserve width

Grimshaw Street to Gremel Road	40m
Gremel Road to Albert Street	30 – 40m
Albert Street to Murray Road	20m
Murray Road to Bell Street	20m
Bell Street to Dundas Street	20m

Car Parking

Car parking is provided at various locations along Plenty Road, in side streets off Plenty Road and on properties that front Plenty Road. There are approximately 355 on-street car parking spaces along Plenty Road between Dundas and Albert Streets. It can be seen that parking is available along the corridor with the exception of areas near Albert, Tyler and Bell Streets. The majority of these spaces are offered during the off peak as during peak periods clearway conditions operate.

Table 5 Example of built form on Plenty Road

Land Use Profile

There is a diverse range of land uses along the Plenty Road Corridor. While the majority of the corridor catchment is residential, commercial uses are dispersed along the corridor frontage. There are two considerably sized medical precincts at Bundoora and Bell Street. The main education uses are at La Trobe University in Bundoora however there are also local schools along the corridor. The main open space assets are to the north of the corridor.

The land use categories by the ABS generally correlate with the land use zoning for the area. About half of the total properties along the study area are zoned Residential 1 (52%), with the balance of zones being various businesses, industrial and public land zones. Of particular relevance is the gradual decrease of business land uses as a percentage of each section as one travels north. In the southern part of the study area, business zones dominate the land use structure. Consultation with Council officers identified that the zoning of a number of sites is inconsistent with historical uses.

Planning overlays for the study area also identify heritage areas at Preston-Oakhill Ave and adjacent to La Trobe University. The Preston-Oakhill area is distinguished by its Garden Suburb character and the diversity of housing styles characteristic of the late 1920s and 1930s. The development of these suburbs was closely linked to the expansion of tram services. In addition, the house at 339 Plenty Road is a listed heritage item. The house is a local architectural and historical significance as an early bluestone farmhouse

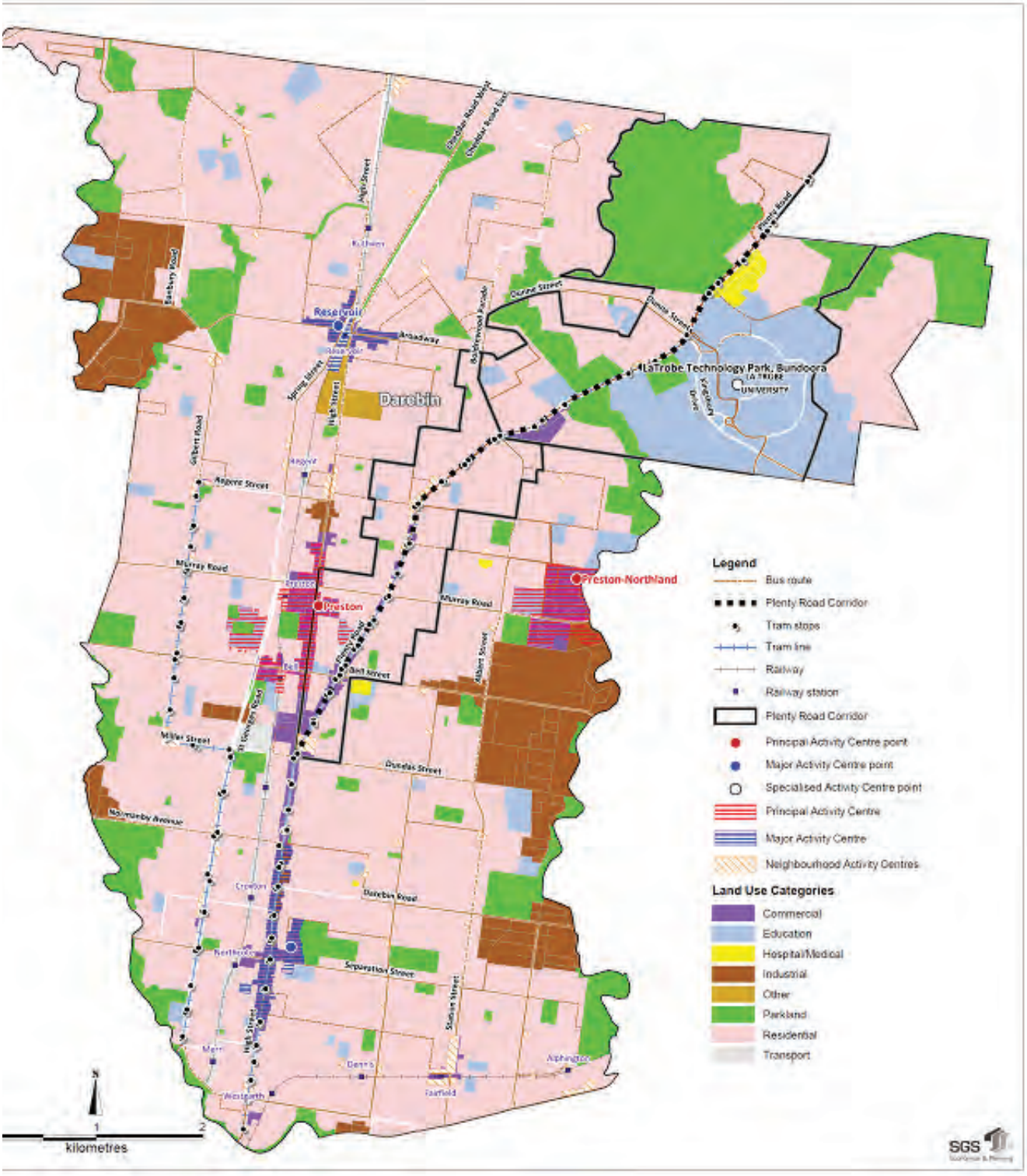
There are clear signs in the existing built fabric along Plenty Road that there is a loss of amenity owing to traffic characteristics along Plenty Road (Figure 6). Many property owners have constructed high walls or installed shutters to screen their properties from noise and pollution emanating from traffic. The effect of this is to reduce surveillance in the street and reduce the perception of safety. This further reduces pedestrian activity. In many places there is now a disconnection between private development and public realm or street.

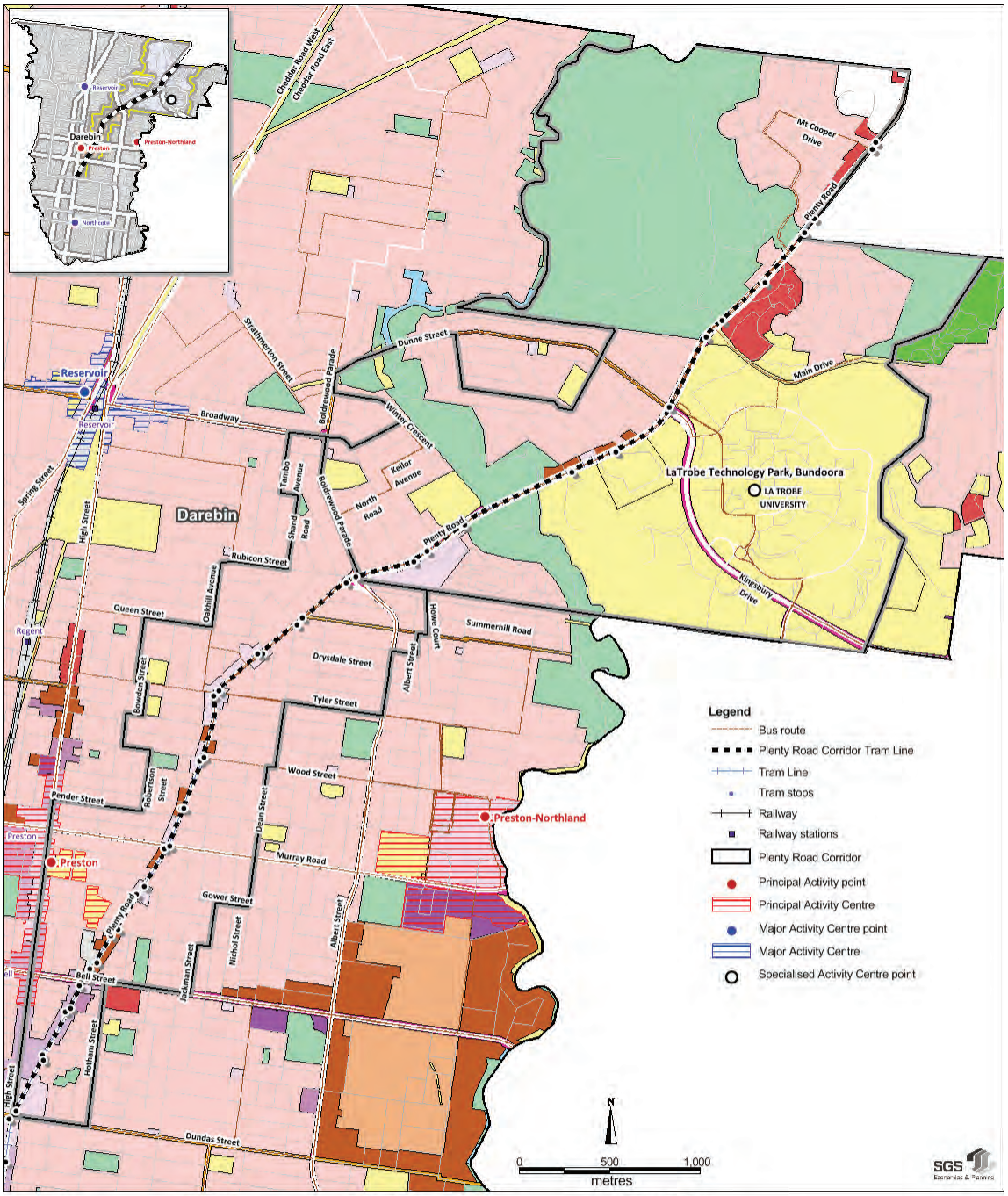
Table 5 Example of built form on Plenty Road

Lot size is reasonably fragmented along the corridor with small lots along the bulk of the southern section of the corridor. Larger lots are located in the northern section including the grounds of La Trobe University and municipal parklands. However, there are some large sites around Preston Central and The Junction. An analysis of lot size per dwelling shows the locations with higher density dwellings. Higher densities are located near to Preston, The Junction and in the north to the west of Bell Street. The lower density housing is generally located in the northern part of the corridor.

There are also a large number of strata properties within the catchment of the corridor. These properties generally represent higher density housing and are unlikely to become available as redevelopment sites over the next 20 years. Land values for properties fronting Plenty Road decrease as distance from the city increases. This is not surprising given higher accessibility and proximity to the city in the southern parts of Plenty Road. The highest median weekly rents are around La Trobe University and the southern part of the study area, particularly around Preston Central and The Junction. This could be attributed to the high quality transport infrastructure in the southern section. In the northern section, higher rents could be attributed to larger dwellings.

Table 6 Land Use Categories





Business

B1Z	Business 1 Zone
B2Z	Business 2 Zone
B3Z	Business 3 Zone
B4Z	Business 4 Zone
B5Z	Business 5 Zone

Industrial

IN1Z	Industrial 1 Zone
IN3Z	Industrial 3 Zone

Public Land

PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone
PPRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
PUZ1	Public Use Zone Service and Utility
PUZ2	Public Use Zone Education
PUZ3	Public Use Zone Health and Community
PUZ4	Public Use Zone Transport
PUZ5	Public Use Zone Cemetery/crematorium
PUZ6	Public Use Zone Local Government
PUZ7	Public Use Zone Other Public Use
RDZ1	Road Zone Category 1
RDZ2	Road Zone Category 2

Residential

MUZ	Mixed Use Zone
R1Z	Residential 1 Zone

Special Purpose

UFZ	Urban Floodway Zone
PDZ	Priority Development Zone

Commonwealth Land

CA	Commonwealth Land Not Controlled By Planning Scheme

Table 7 Land Use Zones

Economic Profile

This section reports on the economic profile of properties facing Plenty Road. The analysis is based on a Census of Land Use and Employment (CLUE) which was completed for properties fronting Plenty Road between Dundas Street and the municipal boundary during March-April 2009. The data collected includes information on industry, floorspace type and use and employment. Firstly, the analysis presents the data for the corridor as a whole; it then profiles the activities within three sections of the corridor.

Economic Activities in the Corridor

The Plenty Road corridor contains 209 establishments with 849 jobs in 99,360 square metres of floorspace. The largest percentage of floorspace is in retail (28,650 sqm), followed by vacant space (21,180 sqm), other services (9,500 sqm) then manufacturing (6,590 sqm), and food and beverage (6,470 sqm) and arts and recreation (5,660 sqm). These categories alone make up nearly 80% of the total floorspace. Analysis of the business mix illustrated that more traditional industrial uses such as manufacturing and wholesaling are located in higher proportions in the southern sections of the Plenty Road study corridor. This is in comparison to the northern section which comprises population-needs based businesses such as health services and retailing. Automotive related industries feature prominently in the southern section, comprising 23%, followed by wholesaling. The economic future of these evident clusters will have implications for future land use in the corridor.

Of the total jobs , 65% are full time (530 jobs), with the remainder part time, casual, contractors or volunteers. Of these jobs, there are 55 in manufacturing and 11 construction and 62 in wholesale (in total 15%). The majority of jobs are in retail, personal services, food and beverage, business services, education and health care.

Almost half of these jobs are in the section from Dundas to Bell Streets. In this section, 40% of jobs are in supermarket retail and pubs. As an example, of the breakdown, in the section from Bell to Murray there are 194 jobs, 35 in education, 24 floor coverings, 27 auto repair, 14 pubs, 14 surveying and mapping, 13 beauty and 6 fuel retail. The other employment categories all have 5 or less employees.

Of particular relevance are those industries which have high employment for a relatively low percentage of floor space and/ or establishments. These industries include wholesale trade (7% of employment for 4% of floor space and establishments), education and training (5% of employment for 3% of floor space), health care and social assistance (8% of employment for 5% of floor space and establishments) and food and beverage services (13% employment for 7% of floor space and establishments). These industries will be important for employment in an increasingly high land value area.

Retail premises with less than five or more than 100 employees comprise the largest amount of floor space, with vacant floor space featuring prominently. Similar to floor space, retail firms with less than five or more than 100 employees have the largest number of staff. This is followed by other services and food and beverage services, in predominantly firms of less than 50 employees.

At the time of the CLUE data collection, some 9% of lettable floor space was vacant. Of this, the highest vacancies were in equipment installation (38%), accommodation (15%) and retail (13%). In terms of floor space, retail and manufacturing had the highest vacancies. This could imply a mismatch between demand for floor space types and what is presently available.

Employment Activities by Precinct

Employment between sections of Plenty Road is as diverse as its land use. This section compares employment in the southern, central (south) and central (north) areas of Plenty Road. These are defined as:

- South: Dundas St to Bell St;
- Central (south): Bell St to Murray Rd;
- Central (north): Murray Rd to Albert St; and
- North: Albert St to the study area boundary.

Houses comprise over 30% of properties on Plenty Road, followed by shops (14%). However, it is noted that many other classifications in the top ten, including strata dwellings, shop and dwelling, dwelling with shop/ office, and half pair or duplex, also fall into the category of dwellings or shops, making these land uses, particularly dwellings, the most prominent on Plenty Road.

In terms of total employment, businesses between Dundas and Bell Streets employ the most people (370 jobs), followed by Murray Road to Albert Street (250 jobs) and Bell Street to Murray Road (less than 200 jobs). Overall, almost half of all employment along Plenty Road is located between Dundas and Bell Streets.

Table 1 Top Ten Land Uses on Plenty Road

	South: Dundas to Bell	Central: Bell to Summerhill	North: Summerhill to LGA Boundary	Total Plenty Road	Percent of Total Properties
Land Use	**Number of Properties**				
House	5	129	36	170	32%
Shop	7	57	8	72	14%
Strata Dwellings	2	20	41	63	12%
Shop and Dwelling	17	40		57	11%
Factory/ Factory Unit	12	21	2	35	7%
Office / Office & Factory / Office & Warehouse	7	9		16	3%
Garage / Motor Vehicle Repairs	5	6	2	13	2%
Showroom	4	6	2	12	2%
Dwelling with Shop/Office	2	9		11	2%
Half Pair or Duplex (Owner Occupier)		8		8	2%
Total non-top ten	10	26	33	69	13%
Total properties	**71**	**331**	**124**	**526**	100%

Key findings

Key findings from the economic activity data can be summarised as:

- There are a significant number of "other automotive repair" businesses in the south and central (south) areas and a number of hairdressing and beauty services and "other store based retailing" in the south and central (north) areas;
- Between Dundas and Bell Streets, supermarket and grocery stores provide almost 30% of all jobs;
- Between Bell Street and Murray Road 18% of jobs are in technical and vocational education and training, followed by floor coverings retailing and other automotive repair and maintenance;
- Between Murray Road and Albert Street, the largest percentage of employment is in pubs, taverns and bars, followed by other social assistance services and take away food;
- Between Dundas and Bell Streets, vacant space comprises almost 25% of land use in terms of total area, followed by hairdressing and beauty and supermarket and grocery;
- Between Bell Street and Murray Road, vacant space comprises 22% of land area in the section, followed by other automotive repair and maintenance with 14% of land area in the section; and
- Vacant space comprises 22% of land area between Murray to Albert, followed by religious services and other store based retailing (not elsewhere classified) with 11% and 7% respectively of land uses in the section.

Summary of Existing Situation

Community Profile

The Plenty Road corridor is home to approximately 18,000 residents. The existing community has high representation of young adults, older people, lower income, low car ownership, people with a disability and people from non-English speaking backgrounds. The profile of this community is diverse and supports the need for universally accessible transport to facilitate mobility and engagement in life activities.

Transport Profile

Tram Route 86 is the key public transport connection for the corridor. In the northern section, the Tram has an important role in providing access to RMIT for students and staff. Towards the southern section residents are also within walking distance of the Epping Rail Line. The corridor also has a number of bus services that provide valuable cross regional linkages. The northern section of Plenty Road is a highway that has in the order of 30,000 vehicle movements each way. The southern sections have significantly fewer vehicle movements and therefore have greater potential for street based pedestrian activity and tram priority. By providing a quality public transport service, with high levels of accessibility, more residents may be encouraged to use public transport instead of private vehicles.

Land Use Profile

Overall, development along the corridor is fragmented with a range of activities including residential, urban services, convenience retailing and commercial activities. Car related activities, such as car yards, sales and servicing are significant.

Marginally over half of the total land along the study area is zoned Residential 1, with the balance of zones being various business, commercial and public use zones. In the southern part of the study area, business zones dominate the land use structure.

Some of the employment land use precincts along Plenty Road are residual employment spaces. The retail, commercial and industrial uses established in an era where main road 'shopfront' and industrial functions were the norm. In the decades since new retail, office and industrial formats have been established in other areas, such as:

- Corporatised shopping centres (eg. Northland);
- Gentrified retail and commercial strips (eg. Northcote);
- Modern main road based industrial estates (eg. as found along the Ring Road); and
- Office clusters in inner city areas and office parks in some suburbs.

Along the southern section of the corridor the lots are reasonably fragmented and small in nature. Larger lots are located in the northern section, including the grounds of La Trobe University and municipal parklands. As a result, there are few major development sites active on Plenty Road apart from the Mont Park development site (called Springthorpe) near La Trobe University.

There are a number of existing centres on and around Plenty Road. These include Northcote, Preston, Reservoir, Summerhill and Northland. These larger centres are likely to infringe upon the catchments of centres along Plenty Road.

Economic Activities

The Plenty Road corridor contains 209 establishments with 849 jobs in 98,959 square metres of floorspace. The main activities along Plenty Road are dwellings of various types, shops, industrial premises, commercial and office premises and showrooms. Car related activities, such as car yards and sales, are significant in the area. The largest percentage of floorspace is in retail, followed by vacant space, other services then manufacturing.

Of particular relevance are those industries which have high employment for a relatively low percentage of floorspace and/or establishments. These industries include wholesale trade (7% of employment for 4% of floorspace and establishments), education and training (5% of employment for 3%

of floorspace), health care and social assistance (8% of employment for 5% of floorspace and establishments) and food and beverage services (13% employment for 7% of floorspace and establishments). These industries will be important for employment in an increasingly high land value area.

Analysis of the business mix illustrated that more traditional industrial uses such as manufacturing and wholesaling are located in higher proportions in the southern sections of the Plenty Road study corridor. This is in comparison to the northern section which comprises population-needs based businesses such as health services and retailing. Automotive related industries feature prominently in the southern section, comprising 23%, followed by wholesaling. The economic future of these evident clusters is likely to have implications for future land use in the corridor.

Summary of Existing Conditions

This diversity of land uses presents both opportunities and constraints for the corridor for further intensification. The main land use and transport characteristics of each section of the corridor are summarised in the table below, along with the opportunities and constraints identified.

Summary of Existing Situation

Corridor Section	Existing Situation	Opportunities	Constraints
Precinct 5 Lancaster Gate Neighbourhood Activity Centre Grimshaw Street to Gremel Road	• Dedicated tram easement. • Priority traffic route with heavy volumes. • University and health precinct. • Lancaster Gate shopping centre. • Suburban nature of surrounding catchment. • High levels of employment in household and personal services.	• Dedicated tram priority in separated easement provides for faster tram travel times. • Improved pedestrian access to key tram stop locations. • Consolidated health and higher education activities. • Supporting residential densities.	• Heavy traffic volumes act as a barrier to pedestrian activity across Plenty Road. • Traffic volumes and urban structure impact on residential amenity.
Precinct 4 Gremel Road to Albert Street	• Priority traffic route with heavy volumes. • Dedicated tram easement. • Summerhill shopping centre. • Retail employment. • Retirement housing.	• Improved pedestrian access to key tram stop locations, particularly from retirement housing. • Potential redevelopment of underperforming Summerhill Shopping Centre including residential intensification.	• Heavy traffic volumes act as a barrier to pedestrian activity across Plenty Road. • Traffic volumes and urban structure impact on residential amenity.
Precinct 3 Albert Street to Murray Road	• Public transport priority corridor. • Constrained road reserve width. • Middle suburbs style subdivision. • Larger lots and lower densities. • Commercial and office premises and showrooms. • Lacking a distinct core. • Large number of commercial and retail vacancies. • Tyler Street centre in decline with many vacancies.	• Consolidate retail and commercial uses in Tyler Street neighbourhood centre. • Improve connections to cross regional bus routes.	• Lack of a distinct core. • High vacancy rates present concerns for longevity of corridor's existing uses and amenity. • Bus movements impact on amenity. • Car parking access for local convenience retailing.
Precinct 2 Murray Road to Bell Street	• Bell Street to Murray Road has an "edge of centre" role to Preston. • Notable amount of automotive, wholesaling, manufacturing and retail activities. • Constrained road reserve width.	• Higher density housing along Plenty Road frontage and major cross streets, incremental changes in surrounding walk catchments. • Create an entry to Preston Activity Centre. • Low land values provide opportunities for small business start up.	• Traffic volumes impact on amenity and safety. • Decline of manufacturing and movement of firms to more attractive locations. • Poor pedestrian environment.
Precinct 1 Bell Street to Dundas Street	• Public transport priority corridor. • Mixed uses, that is, a combination of office, residential and retail uses within a building and/or along the street frontage. • Inner city style subdivision. • The Junction shopping centre • Constrained road reserve width.	• Increase residential and business intensity. • Higher density housing along Plenty Road frontage and major cross streets, incremental changes in surrounding walk catchments. • Support walking and public transport with quality streetscapes.	• Increasing land values impacting on business profitability. • Poor pedestrian environment.

Stakeholder Insights

Consultation with key stakeholders and the community was undertaken concurrently with the Tram 86 improvement project consultation in 2009. This was due to the synergies between the two projects. Consultation for the land use study included an initial scoping workshop with targeted stakeholders, followed by a meeting with the community. However, many issues raised related more to the impacts of the Tram 86 project on Plenty Road than on the future land use of the study area.

Details of the consultation approach and key outcomes varied between stakeholders, the key issues discussed can be summarised as:

- Access to tram stops;
- Safe routes for cyclist;
- Tram travel times;
- Access to properties;
- Using road space for car parking and deliveries for businesses and residents;
- Vehicle traffic flow and wider network issues;
- Impacts of traffic in side streets;
- Diversity of uses and not applying a one size fits all response; and
- Transparency in decision making and planning.

In summary, stakeholders discussed the following considerations as being important when planning the future role of Plenty Road:

- Encouraging quality residential development;
- Considering the impacts of changes to road management on businesses and residents;
- Improving public transport, including access to tram stops and tram travel times; and
- Improving local centres and nodes along Plenty Road.

Further Consultation

A further round of consultation was conducted over 2012 to confirm the vision outlined in the May 2012 edition of this Study. A detailed report on the feedback received was presented to Council in September 2012.

The consultation process enabled the project to transition from a theoretical exercise by providing guidance on the expectations for on-the-ground change and by allowing for meaningful discussions with stakeholders about this. The Study has succeeded in getting people to think about the future and how they would prefer their local areas to be planned to accommodate the pressures of change and development.

The consultation process has shown that the complexity and diversity of existing conditions along Plenty Road and the differing capacity for change and intensification along the corridor needs to be recognised in the Strategy and Urban Design Framwork.

Another underlying theme that was apparent from the feedback received was the management of issues created as a natural consequence of residential intensification along major corridors. More people living in particular locations (activity centres) triggers certain changes that need to be managed. These impacts related to the secondary areas adjoining the Plenty Road corridors.

This related strongly to improvements in the public realm and the management of matters such as localised car parking, especially in and around activity centres.

While a whole of corridor approach has been taken in the consideration of intensification linked to access to public transport, a refinement of how this plays out in each Precinct has been included. In recognition that one size does not fit all and that there are unique characteristics and circumstances in each Precinct, a different interpretation of what scale of change is warranted per precinct.

An overview of these distinctions is provided in the Study 2013 and these will be further articulated in the Strategy and Urban Design Framework .

The recommendations for the Corridor Strategy and Urban Design Framework are to appropriately capture the variations between and within precincts because of the diversity of land use and built form, leading to a finer grain response than a one size fits all approach.

An understanding of the future outlook for housing, employment and transport investments in the Plenty Road corridor is provided in this section to identify further opportunities for urban consolidation, intensification of land uses and commercial revitalisation.

Housing Demand

Future housing needs will be directly informed by population growth and change. The population of Darebin as a whole is expected to increase by about 30,800 in the 20 years to 2031 (VIF, 2012). Dwelling numbers are expected to increase by about 14,700 in the same period (VIF, 2012). This suggests significant and constant inward growth demand for households.

Due to the uncertain nature of future household types and the propensity of these types to demand particular dwellings, SGS has developed dwelling forecasts based on several scenarios. Each scenario is based on different assumptions of future propensities of household and dwelling types, ranging from extrapolation of trends evident from 1996 to 2006, to using 2006 as a basis for continuing trends.

Housing demand will be affected by the deconstruction of the nuclear family as the typical household type, as well as focus on lifestyle, amenity and environmental concerns. This is reflected in increasing demand for smaller dwellings by the growing number of smaller and lone person household units. Smaller household units are influenced by social trends such as delays in marriage and co-inhabiting, older first-time parents, growing life expectancies and an overall lowered birth rate.

Inner urban areas, particularly those around activity centres and transport nodes and corridors, are becoming increasingly attractive as residential locations due to their high levels of amenity along with employment and services on offer. This is in part driven by the desire to locate closer to jobs, services and public transport to reduce personal motor vehicle travel. Whether demand is driven by changing household types or location preferences, the proportion of smaller dwellings is likely to increase proportionally.

In Darebin, modelling results show demand for an additional 14,700 dwellings (VIF 2012) by 2031; it is unlikely that the mix of dwelling types supporting this demand will change significantly over the period. Of the various scenarios tested, each (other than stable propensities holding at 2006 levels) predicts the proportion of separate houses to fall, with the number of semi-detached, row, terrace and townhouses to increase.

Plenty Road's high quality public transport access and the proximity to the city of its southern precincts is likely to generate demand for more and smaller dwellings. The large number of students and older adults in the corridor will also influence the type of housing development demanded. These groups typically seek smaller dwellings which are well located and serviced.

It can be anticipated that much of the new household growth along Plenty Road will be driven by four market segments as follows:

- **Gentrification** is likely to trickle north from Northcote and similar areas over time. Young adult professionals living in single or two person households are likely to drive new apartment and townhouse developments and renovation of older housing stock with historic appeal. The southern and central portions of Plenty Road are prime gentrification candidates over the next decade or two. These areas have access to public transport and can accommodate higher density mixed use development.
- **Tertiary students** are a key part of the housing market and have potential to drive new apartment and townhouse developments along the Plenty Road corridor, in tandem with gentrification.

- **Families** seeking housing close to services and schools are likely to drive townhouse developments and replacement and renovation of older housing stock in the wider area. The area in the vicinity of Plenty Road will be a candidate for the family market but the actual road frontage may not be appealing to the bulk of this market given the challenging amenity of the corridor presented by traffic volumes and mixed land uses.
- **Older people** that seek to downsize from a large and older house (perhaps on a relatively large block) can be expected to drive townhouse and retirement village development in the future. Like the family segment, the older persons housing market is unlikely to be the key driver of Plenty Road frontage housing due to amenity considerations, although some larger land holdings located in the north of the study area has potential to accommodate housing clusters or villages near, but not necessarily oriented on, Plenty Road.

Housing Supply

The future supply of housing in the corridor is likely to be from the redevelopment of major sites, changes in use from ex-industrial sites and the redevelopment of existing residential areas. The Urban Development Program identifies only a few major development sites on Plenty Road apart from the Mont Park development site (called Springthorpe) near La Trobe University. While an estimate of future supply is provided below, this should be reviewed in line with the vision outlined in this study to maximise housing opportunities close to public transport and to ensure a high quality local environment.

In 2007, there were a total of 5,221 dwellings in the five minute walk catchment of Plenty Road. Over the three years from 2004, redevelopment led to an additional 388 dwellings or an 8% increase in the total dwelling stock. Assuming that the redevelopment trends continue into the future at similar densities and at a similar rate of change, an additional 2,800 dwellings could be anticipated within the five minute walk of the Plenty Road corridor out to 2031[1]. The majority of this change would be in the Dundas to Bell Street precinct. The smallest amount of change is expected in the area between Murray Road to Albert Street.

Over the longer term, the corridor has the potential for some 6,205 additional dwellings. It could be anticipated that improvements to the accessibility and amenity of the Plenty Road corridor could lead to some of this longer term potential being brought forward to within the 2031 timeframe.

Table 2 Dwellings within a five minute catchment of Plenty Road

		Dwellings							
		2004	2007	2004-2007	2031 Baseline	2031-2007 Net Change	% change	Ultimate	Ultimate - 2007 Net Change
Dundas St to Bell St	Zone 1	650	842	192	2,139	1,297	154%	2,648	1,806
Bell St to Murray Rd	Zone 2	1,214	1,234	20	1,765	531	43%	2,780	1,546
Murray Rd to Albert St	Zone 3	1,555	1,610	55	1,751	141	9%	2,968	1,358
Albert St and above	Zone 4	1,414	1,535	121	2,436	901	59%	3,029	1,494
Plenty Road Total		*4,833*	*5,221*	*388*	*8,092*	*2,871*	55%	*11,426*	*6,205*

Dwelling density is anticipated to increase to an average of 35 dwellings per hectare for areas within a five minute walk of Plenty Road. Within these areas, the densities would vary with the higher densities located on Plenty Road itself. The highest density is likely to be in the section between Dundas and Bell Streets.

Table 3 Density within a five minute catchment of Plenty Road

		Density (dwellings/ha)			
		2004	2007	2031 Baseline	Ultimate
Dundas St to Bell St	Zone 1	26	34	80	99
Bell St to Murray Rd	Zone 2	25	26	35	56
Murray Rd to Albert St	Zone 3	20	20	22	37
Albert St and above	Zone 4	21	23	31	39
Plenty Road Total		*22*	*24*	*35*	*49*

Source: SGS Note: "Ultimate" figures refers to the longer term capacity based on all lots being redeveloped according to recent trends, this is unlikely, but provides an estimate of the maximum potential yield.

The City of Darebin has traditionally been a location for manufacturing activity. The employment profile of Darebin is anticipated to change in line with broader economic change across Metropolitan Melbourne. Demand side projections for Darebin, using SGS's Employment Forecasting Model, calculates expected jobs by industry sector based on Melbourne's changing economic and various economic and industry drivers and are shown in Table 6. In total, Darebin is expected to grow its stock of jobs by about 4,400 in the two decades to 2026. Various service services are expected to lead the new investment in employment activities.

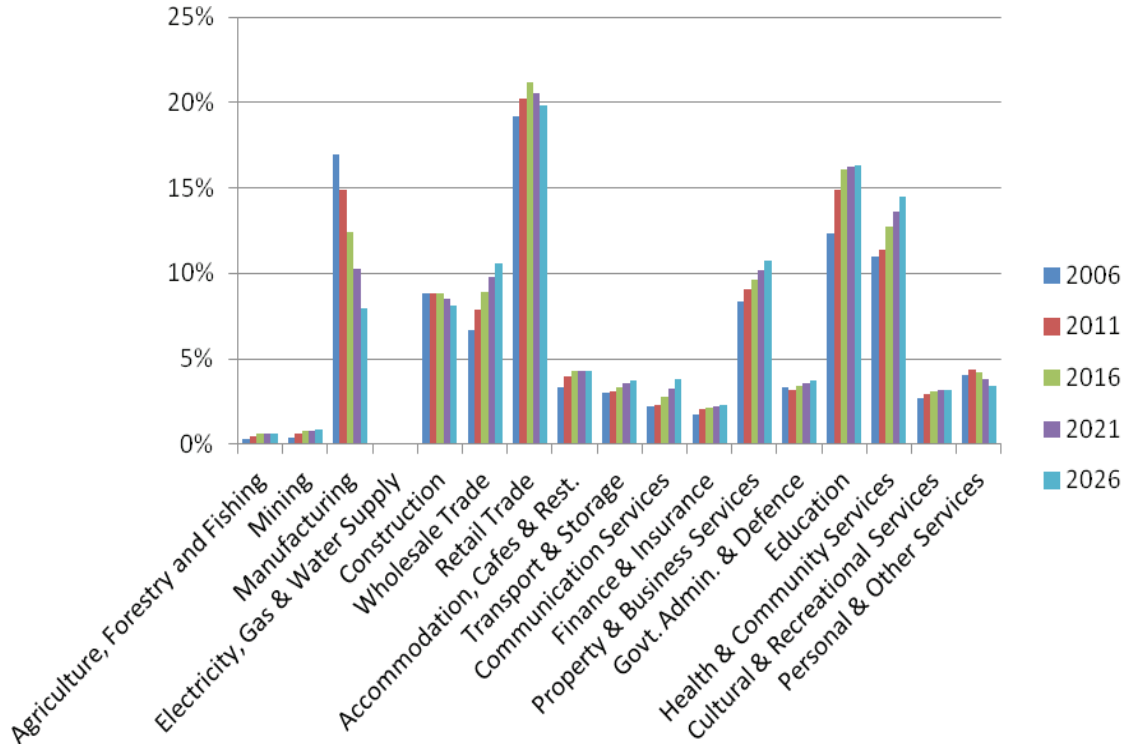
The trend indicates a decline in manufacturing employment (-4,120 jobs) with growth in education, wholesale trade, health and community services, and property and business services. This may have implications for the amount of land required for these activities within Darebin, particularly as land values increase in the municipality. The projections translate into office and related commercial and institutional spaces (refer to Table 7). The defined activity centres in Darebin will be the focus for the location of this growth in office and commercial spaces. It is likely that health and community services employment will be attracted to existing health clusters. The capacity of the Plenty Road corridor to absorb various employment needs of Darebin, relates to:

- Changing economic conditions in the area, related to the size and structure of the local economy; and
- Supply opportunities to provide business spaces to meet the demand in the vicinity. This includes offices, showrooms, warehouses and factories.

	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	Change 2006-2026
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	155	225	295	285	270	115
Mining	170	275	345	375	400	230
Manufacturing	7,730	6,780	5,660	4,690	3,610	-4,120
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	30	20	15	10	10	-20
Construction	4,010	4,020	4,010	3,860	3,710	-300
Wholesale Trade	3,030	3,580	4,070	4,460	4,830	1,800
Retail Trade	8,740	9,220	9,630	9,360	9,030	290
Accommodation, Cafes & Rest.	1,520	1,810	1,960	1,970	1,970	450
Transport & Storage	1,390	1,410	1,530	1,620	1,710	320
Communication Services	1,000	1,060	1,270	1,490	1,730	730
Finance & Insurance	810	920	980	1,020	1,060	250
Property & Business Services	3,790	4,130	4,390	4,650	4,890	1,100
Govt. Admin. & Defence	1,500	1,460	1,550	1,640	1,710	210
Education	5,610	6,770	7,310	7,390	7,430	1,820
Health & Community Services	5,000	5,190	5,790	6,190	6,600	1,600
Cultural & Recreational Services	1,230	1,320	1,410	1,440	1,460	230
Personal & Other Services	1,830	1,980	1,930	1,730	1,550	-280
Total	47,545	50,170	52,145	52,180	51,970	4,425

Table 4 Darebin Employment Projections by Industry Sector

Figure 8 **Projected Structural Economic Change Patterns in Darebin**



	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	Change 2006-2026
Industry	**16,515**	**16,310**	**15,925**	**15,300**	**14,540**	**-1,975**
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing						
Mining						
Manufacturing						
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply						
Wholesale Trade						
Transport & Storage						
Construction						
Office	**8,930**	**9,550**	**10,120**	**10,530**	**10,940**	**2,010**
Communication Services						
Finance & Insurance						
Property & Business Services						
Govt. Admin. & Defence						
Personal & Other Services						
Retail	**8,740**	**9,220**	**9,630**	**9,360**	**9,030**	**290**
Retail Trade						
Hospitality	**1,520**	**1,810**	**1,960**	**1,970**	**1,970**	**450**
Accommodation, Cafes & Rest.						
Institutions	**11,840**	**13,280**	**14,510**	**15,020**	**15,490**	**3,650**
Education						
Health & Community Services						
Cultural & Recreational Services						
Total	**47,545**	**50,170**	**52,145**	**52,180**	**51,970**	**4,425**

Table 5 **Darebin Employment Projections by Employment Type**

Retail Development Projections

Retail trade is anticipated to increase in Darebin by some 290 jobs over the next 30 years. The capacity of the corridor to absorb retail development will depend on:

- Changing demand conditions in the area, mainly related to population growth and retail expenditure patterns of the population (i.e. expenditure profile); and
- Supply opportunities to provide shops and meet the demand in the vicinity.

There are three neighbourhood retail centres located directly along the study area corridor:

- South Preston;
- Summerhill Village Shopping Centre; and
- Lancaster Gate (in development).

In addition to these, Tyler Street shops are a smaller local node.

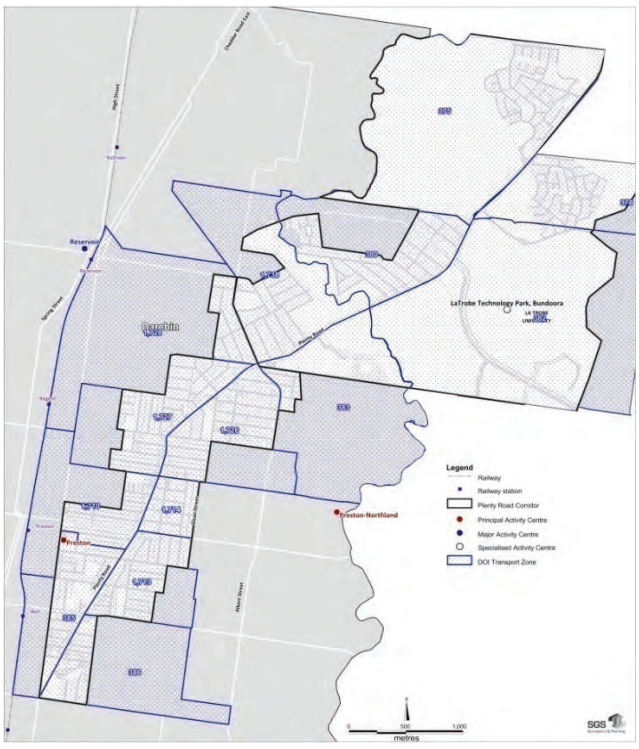


Figure 9
Retail Demand Analysis Area

Demand side projections for the Plenty Road corridor and surrounding areas were estimated using SGS's Retail Model. This calculates supportable retail space by commodity group based on changes to population, income, expenditure patterns and changing retail supply. The Model works on a Travel Zone basis and has provided forward estimates for area.

This analysis suggests that the Plenty Road corridor, based on existing market share patterns , will be in the market for an additional 20,500 sqm of retail development in the period 2007 to 2016 and a total 40,100 sqm of retail development in the period 2007 and 2026. The major driver of this demand is anticipated population growth and changes to retail expenditure patterns. This model assumes population growth in Darebin of 9,800 additional residents over 20 years. Of course, if the population projections in this corridor were higher with greater levels of intensification along the tram corridor catchment, additional retail demand would be generated.

This demand assessment provides an order of magnitude assessment of the demand generated from the growth in population within the catchment; it does not suggest the retail space will be absorbed along Plenty Road corridor itself. It is likely that the demand will be accommodated in the activity centres in the vicinity of Plenty Road such as Preston Principal Activity Centre. Also, many of the retail activities considered in the analysis are regional in scale, such as department stores and household goods. It is likely that demand for such uses will flow to major centres like Northland and others in the region.

The actual future demand for space along Plenty Road will depend on the characteristics of the supply side offer within its sites in comparison to competing location, such as Preston, Northland and other competing sites. The large number of vacant spaces along Plenty Road provides opportunities for local convenience retailing, hospitality services and other food that would serve the direct walkable catchments.

Table 6 Change in Supportable Floorspace in Defined Corridor Area

	2007-2016			2007-2026		
	Lower Plenty Road	Upper Plenty Road	Total Corridor	Lower Plenty Road	Upper Plenty Road	Total Corridor
Supermarkets	2,715	656	3,371	6,653	1,457	8,110
Department Stores	3,052	115	3,167	6,198	190	6,388
Other Food	1,385	152	1,536	3,148	333	3,482
Clothing and Soft Goods	1,798	197	1,995	3,064	302	3,365
Household Goods	4,221	575	4,796	7,270	874	8,144
Other Retail	1,944	796	2,741	4,672	1,698	6,371
Hospitality and Services	1,649	1,210	2,859	2,555	1,685	4,240
Total	**16,763**	**3,701**	**20,465**	**33,560**	**6,540**	**40,100**

Future Transport

Road congestion is anticipated to double by 2026. This increase in traffic levels and resulting congestion poses many challenges for transport planning. It is well acknowledged that providing additional road capacity is not the solution for improving accessibility across Melbourne. A response to future demand will need to include a range of solutions such as reducing the need to travel, improving public transport, reducing car use and improving network efficiency. There are a number of initiatives along the Plenty Road corridor that will improve future transport.

High Street and Plenty Road have been identified as a primary multi-modal street where public transport should have priority over general traffic.

The City of Darebin has been in partnership with the Victorian Government on the Tram Route 86 Corridor Improvement project. This project covers a 6.8km corridor along High Street and Plenty Road, from Westgarth Street in Westgarth to Albert Street in Reservoir. The project is important as more efficient, accessible and reliable public transport must be part of all short, medium and long term solutions to the problems of traffic congestion, the impact of climate change and rising fuel prices. The Tram Route 86 project has already been implemented in Northcote with future rollout being planned for High Street Thornbury and Plenty Road.

The Tram Route 86 project impacts Plenty Road as it proposes implementation of a number of tramway improvements along Plenty Road. These transport initiatives along Plenty Road may have an impact on how future developments are able to access their properties in the future and are as follows:

Stop design and location:

- Central island platform tram stops the preferred tram stop design at all stop locations
- Removal of stops 44, 46, 47 and 50 to ensure a standard of approximately 400m between tram stops. The proposed configuration of stops will result in the following distances between stops:
  - 42 (Dundas Street) to 43 (Raglan Street) = 320 m
  - 43 (Raglan Street) to 45 (Bell Street) = 420 m
  - 45 (Bell Street) to 48 (Gower Street) = 580 m
  - 48 (Gower Street) to 49 (Murray Road) = 320 m
  - 49 (Murray Road) to 51 (Wood Street) = 480 m
  - 51 (Wood Street) to 52 (Tyler Street) = 350 m
  - 52 (Tyler Street) to 53 (Ethel Grove) = 340 m
  - 53 (Ethel Grove) to 54 (Wilkinson Street) = 300 m
  - 54 (Wilkinson St) to 55 (Albert Street) = 350 m
- Central island platform tram stops along Plenty Road, while being the preferred option by the Community Reference Groups, will only fit with some removal of nature strip.

Other

- The signals at Albert Street/Plenty Road will be altered to encourage southbound through traffic to utilise Albert Street as the preferred traffic route.
- A part time tram lane and Keeping Melbourne Moving clearway times during peak times in peak directions (6.30-10am on the east side and 4-7pm on the west side except 100m around intersections when 3-7pm is enforced).
- A right hand turn ban for traffic travelling north on Plenty Rd wanting to turn east onto Bell St
- Car park losses: Approximately ten car parks will be lost around the new pedestrian signals located at each of the nine central island platform stops.

- A number of side streets will be affected by a central island platform stop being placed in front of the street, thus limiting turns into and out of the street to left turns only:

  - Garnet Street (stop 45)
  - Beauchamp Street (stop 49)
  - Thomas Street (stop 51)
  - Hawker Avenue (stop 52)
  - Rene Street (stop 52)
  - Chaleyer Street (stop 54)

- Developments on land abutting the corridor need to consider the location of platform tram stops in future stages as well as the vision for the corridor to provide tram priority with separation from vehicles into the future. New vehicle access off Plenty Road will be discouraged.

- The Victorian Government has a vision for making Melbourne's tram network "a modern light rail service, with higher priority on shared roads so it becomes the best way to move around the inner suburbs". The City of Darebin is working with the Victorian Government to help meet this vision.

The directions for the corridor may be reviewed as part of the ongoing Tram Route 86 Improvement Project.

In addition to the improved tram services, the "red" orbital SmartBus (route 903), introduced in 2009, has seen improvements with priority infrastructure and increases in the frequency of services. This bus service operates along Murray Road, crossing over Plenty Road, on its journey between Mordialloc and Altona. This service will improve the accessibility of the area to a range of destinations across Melbourne. There are also improvements to the cycle and pedestrian network well underway.

Providing a quality public transport service integrated with land use and supporting policies such as managing car parking, improving infrastructure for walking and cycling, will work to encourage more residents to reduce their use of private cars for more trips.

Any proposed increases in housing and resulting population growth in the corridor will require further analysis to understand the implications for public transport and the road network, the likely impacts. This analysis will need to include the consideration of policy measures, infrastructure and services investment to support future housing needs.

Recent land development in the region provides an indication of the levels of potential future investment in the corridor. The current economic climate presents various challenges with respect to property and rental values. This section provides a general account of recent data, with estimates of property and rental values mainly provided on a regional approach.

Industrial

Lower land take up in the northern region implies that industrial land take up is likely to be slower than the Melbourne metropolitan average in Darebin, and that Darebin itself is competing with new, larger and more affordable locations to its north. Darebin's competitive advantages of access to inner city and ring-road have seen industrial areas move to localised servicing and warehousing and some manufacturing activity (mostly food) related activities remaining in larger estates.
Based on these circumstances, the future of industrial activity along Plenty Road is likely to evolve away from traditional activity and reflect more contemporary commercial activity.

Commercial/ Office

Suburban office developments tend to occur in clusters to maximise the benefits of agglomeration. As such, any extensive commercial and office development along Plenty Road is unlikely and would have to be carefully considered in light of other structure plans and commercial locations.
The priority for office development in Darebin is in activity centres such as Preston. Given the proximity of Plenty Road to Preston, future large scale office development is unlikely along Plenty Road. However, with a strong small business sector and affordable rents, the corridor offers a main road profile for businesses that might seek this.

Retail

Retail property has strongest prospects on street-based centres with high foot traffic. This means that the prosperity of retail along Plenty Rd depends on foot traffic, which results from a quality pedestrian environment. However, this varies by type of retail activity. Based on this, quality retail environments should be focused around designated nodes.

Investment along Plenty Road

Several higher density mixed use developments have been constructed or recently approved along Plenty Road, notably in and around the 'Junction' precinct, at Summerhill Village and up to the Lancaster Gate precinct. These developments demonstrate the development potential and level of investment interest in the area.

Most investment examples are for residential and mixed use development. There are relatively few non-residential recent investment examples along the Plenty Rd study area, primarily due to such investment being focused in the major nodes of Darebin.

In the Junction area, recent developments include:

- Highview Apartments at 50-56 High St, Preston (with the rear to Plenty Rd), completed in 2009. The Highview development consists of 114 apartments, including nine one bedroom, 94 two bedroom and ten three bedroom dwellings.
- 2-10 Plenty Rd Preston (in the Junction itself of Plenty Rd, Dundas St and High St), completed in 2012, comprising an 8 storey complex with 112 dwellings, offices, specialty retail and an Aldi supermarket.
- 76-78 Plenty Rd, completed in 2011, comprising a four storey building with 13 dwellings and one home office.
- 86-106 Plenty Rd, completed in 2011, comprising a 4-6 storey complex with 111 dwellings.
- 108 Plenty Rd, completed in 2009, comprising a 3 storey townhouse style development.

In the section north of Bell St up to Albert St, there have not been any recent significant residential developments completed, however several permit approvals have been issued, including:

- 340 Plenty Rd Preston, approved in 2011. The development comprises 25 dwellings over five storeys and demonstrates a significant residential investment along Plenty Rd Preston.

- 600 Plenty Road Preston, approved in 2012. The development comprises the construction of a five storey extension above and behind an existing heritage building (plus basement), comprising 48 apartments and 51 car parking spaces. The development comprises 14 one-bedroom apartments, 30 two-bedroom apartments and four residential shells located within the existing building.

Further north towards the Lancaster Gate and La Trobe University precinct, the Lancaster Gate development is a significant residential, retail and community hub, virtually a new neighbourhood centre. This new activity node on Plenty Rd is currently under construction.

Overall, there is investment interest in Plenty Road, but to date it has been focussed on the Junction Area and north of this, on larger development opportunity sites offered at Summerhill Village and Lancaster Gate.

It could be argued that with the exception of these development hot spots, land along Plenty Road is relatively underdeveloped considering the potential of being located on a public transport.

Figure 17
Examples of Residential and Mixed Use redevelopment and investment along Plenty Road

Highview Apartments, 50-56 High Street (Plenty Road frontage)

Address	Description	Image
1/140 Plenty Road , Preston	This property features a 50sqm (approximately) shop front with a one bedroom dwelling upstairs.	
613 Plenty Road, Preston	This property includes a shop front of approximately 50sqm and a one bedroom dwelling of approximately 50sqm on a land area of 295 sqm.	
22 Eton Street, Preston	This new warehouse with office space is located just off Albert Street, and comprises a building area of 596sqm	
Albert and Raglan Streets, Preston	These new offices have a building area of 755sqm The total area includes a ground showroom and offices.	
518-528 High Street, Preston	This site has a land area of 2,900sqm and existing building area of 480sqm.	

Summary of Future Projections and Analysis

The City of Darebin is under increasing pressure for change due to population growth and demand for medium and high density housing near activity centres and public transport. For Plenty Road, this demand is generated by students, older adults and young professionals seeking accommodation in the area. The potential for future housing supply in this catchment has been identified. However, it is also noted that additional supply could be brought forward with the increased attractiveness of the corridor via greater accessibility and improved amenity.

Greater demand for housing has led to increasing land values which has impacts on profitability for businesses located on Plenty Road.

Some of the employment land use precincts along Plenty Road are residual employment spaces. The retail, commercial and industrial uses established in an era where main road 'shopfront' and industrial functions were the norm. In the decades since, new retail, office and industrial formats have been established in other areas such as:

- Corporatised shopping centres (e.g. Northland);
- Gentrified retail and commercial strips (e.g. Northcote);
- Modern main road based industrial estates (eg. as found along the Ring Road); and
- Office clusters in inner city areas and office parks in some suburbs.

Many of the commercial and industrial premises in the study area are obsolete in terms of building format and location for most modern retailers and industrial operations. In that way, the area's economic role can be described as being lower order or residual (as opposed to prime) business space.

Nevertheless, whilst some of the buildings and sites in the area are in clear need of renewal, so-called residual business space can play an important business incubator role for the area. Such spaces can offer low rent business space for start-up and/ or small businesses, some of which may grow and move into higher profile premises in the area or in other activity centres as they develop. Alternatively, successful business may remain in the location and reinvest locally over time.

The long term decline of manufacturing is likely to reduce the quantum of floor space required by these industry types along Plenty Road. In addition, movement of firms to more attractive locations (for example, outer areas with better transport links and/ or larger lots) is in line with policy guidelines for non-residential land uses. Industry decline and relocation trends are likely to be key challenges for businesses along Plenty Road. This means that there will be limited demand for such uses along Plenty Road. This will be exacerbated by increasing land values impacting on profitability in this location.

The future directions for Plenty Road are based on the analysis of the existing situation, opportunities and constraints and the analysis of future projections and trends described in the previous sections.

The vision for Plenty Road can be described as:

> *The Plenty Road Corridor supports more efficient, accessible and reliable public transport and provides opportunities for housing intensification.*
>
> *The Corridor connects revitalised activity centres at Lancaster Gate, Summerhill, Tyler Street and The Junction. Retail and commercial uses serve the immediate hinterland to provide local convenience opportunities and support Preston Activity Centre as the regional focus of community activity, services and investment. Plenty Road continues to support the growth of La Trobe University, one of Victoria's largest tertiary institutions and a significant employer within the municipality.*
>
> *A growing and diverse community is found here and enjoys a variety of lifestyle benefits and services and facilities that meet their daily needs.*

Economic and Land Use Futures

The environment along Plenty Road is conducive to intensification and revitalisation. There are a number of factors behind this.

Residential development along Plenty Road is supported by state and local policy which encourages housing development in and around activity centres and public transport. The policy focus on consolidation of industrial employment activities to strategic nodes, such as Darebin's three industrial areas, and on commercial employment in activity centres, means that major non-residential development along the corridor is unlikely. Where significant intensification is foreshadowed further consideration needs to be given to additional non-residential uses that will support the expected population increase.

Areas south of Albert Street, particularly towards Dundas Street, are ideal candidates for residential redevelopment given their strategic location and public transport access. It is likely that redevelopment opportunities will be taken up earlier in areas closer to the city in line with pressures on non-residential land uses to relocate into centres or designated nodes.

Plenty Road also plays a pivotal role in the linkage to Latrobe University, providing public transport access to this significant tertiary education institution. This will influence the take up of redevelopment opportunities further north along the Plenty Road corridor which can offer greater housing choice for students and staff who wish to reside in proximity to the University. Development at the University may also catalyse change in the surrounding area.

Plenty Road is in close proximity to Preston and Northland which cater for retail and commercial activities. Therefore, large scale retail and commercial development will be directed to these centres. Plenty Road is seen as playing a peripheral support role to these centres, particularly by increasing their population catchments and catering for local needs. There is a future role for limited retail and office development along Plenty Road. This will serve its immediate hinterland and to provide local convenience opportunities in distinct nodes.

The current high vacancy rates of non-residential properties, the low rents and low quality built form along Plenty Road makes it an attractive location for start up businesses over the short to medium term. These businesses are generally opportunistic seeking out low cost, low risk environments. These uses are generally transitional. Over time, as land values increase with the improved transport and local amenity, the location will become less attractive for start up businesses and these activities will seek out other low cost locations. In the interim, there are

opportunities to support Plenty Road as a business incubator location to take advantage of the large number of vacant shop fronts. In this instance, Council should act in a network capacity to connect potential businesses to (vacant) properties on Plenty Road.

Of course, there are many existing activities along Plenty Road. Many of these homes and businesses have been in the corridor for a long time with no plans for immediate changes. Any existing activities along the corridor are able to remain under this vision. This longer term vision and recommendations are intended to provide clearer directions to landowners on the future role of the corridor and provide incentives for development in line with the vision.

Transport Futures

Plenty Road will support more efficient, accessible and reliable public transport. Plenty Road north of Albert Street will consolidate its role as a strategic transport and land use corridor. The high quality separated tram corridor will be enhanced through improved pedestrian access to tram stops. Plenty Road south of Albert Street will be improved as a priority public transport corridor. The consolidation of retail and commercial activities in key activity centres will support tram priority measures between activity nodes.

Plenty Road offers high levels of public transport accessibility. On this basis, maximum rather than minimum rates of onsite car parking provision will be supported. Opportunities to support car sharing and manage any potential on-street car parking conflicts in the broader corridor are encouraged. Parking along Plenty Road requires balancing provision of on street parking, particularly in key nodes to support businesses, with restricted parking and tram priority along some sections at some times of day.

Key urban design principles which apply to all areas along Plenty Road area described in Table 10. These principles aim to maintain and achieve a high quality urban environment while increasing the residential density along Plenty Road and associated precincts. These principles support walkability and improved conditions for public transport patronage.

These principles support the development of active frontages with good physical and visual connections between buildings and the street. Active frontages are generally where continuous development is built to the site boundary with regular pedestrian entries to individual sites and buildings. Active frontages may include residential entry points, office or retail uses that enliven public streets and spaces and provide passive surveillance and a greater sense of safety. The principles provide an appropriate level of vehicle parking and access, and optimise employment and residential densities while maintaining desirable neighbourhood character.

Sensitive Interfaces

A lot of the concerns raised during the consultation about the development of higher residential density building comes from the neigbours in the often lower-scale surrounding areas. These concerns relate to the flow-on impacts from an increase of local population e.g. more cars and local on-street parking demand and the change in bulk and mass of built form leading to perceptions of overlooking, loss of solar access and intimidating visual scale

Figure 11 Indicative Control to Determine Maximum Envelope Bulk and Height

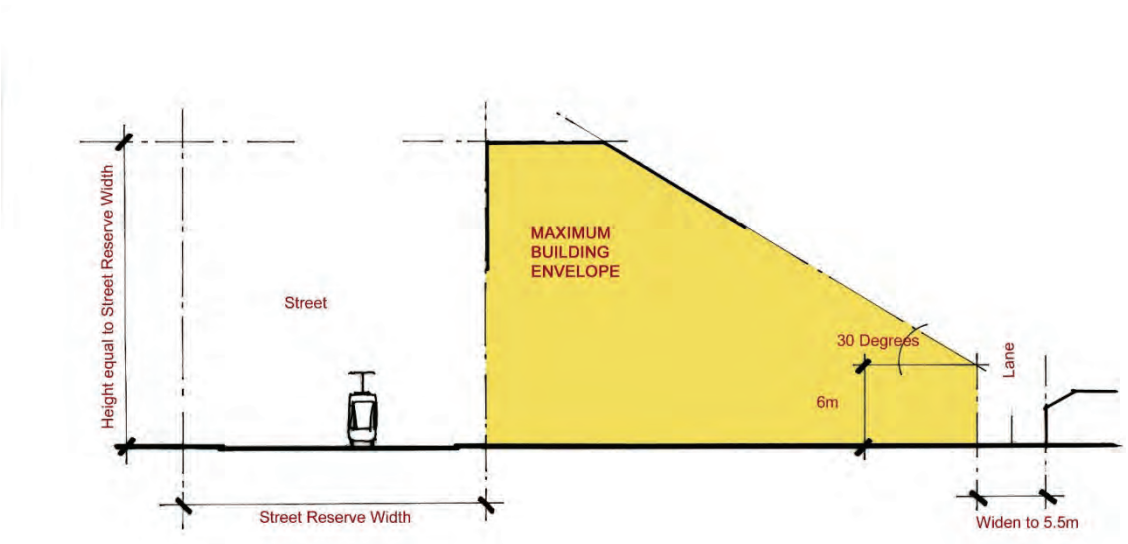


Table 10 Urban Design Principles

Principle	Rationale
1. Residential density should be increased along Plenty Road, and within a 400m radius of neighbourhood activity centres and tram or bus stops.	Current residential densities along Plenty Road and within walking distance are relatively low and do not optimise public transport use and viability. Those locations within a short walk of tram or bus stops or activity centres are those most suitable for intensification. A five minute or 400m walking distance is proposed to define the extent of the area to be intensified over time.
2. Residential density should be increased within an 800m radius of railway stations.	People generally are prepared to walk further to rail stations given the greater reliability and speed of services to major destinations. For this reason the "walkable catchment" around rail stations is defined by a 10-minute or 800m walking distance.
3. New residential development should be prioritised in areas where there are existing rear lanes to provide rear vehicle access.	This approach minimises multiple crossovers, and frequent turning on Plenty Road which impacts on the reliability of tram services and safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Many properties along Plenty Road are served by rear lanes, enabling rear access for vehicles to these lots.
4. Rear lanes should be widened over time through appropriate mechanisms.	It is desirable for rear lanes to be wide enough to minimise vehicle conflicts and facilitate vehicle access to the rear of lots which front Plenty Road. In particular lanes should be sufficiently wide to allow turning movements to and from lots. Mechanisms such as *a Design and Development or Public Acquisition Overlay,* could be considered to ensure that lanes comply with minimum Victorian Planning Provision widths of 5.5m *(Table C1, Clause 56-06-7 Neighbourhood Street Network Detail, Standard C20).* A Design and Development Overlay control could also be used, by encouraging ground level setbacks (effectively widening a laneway) where required to enable sufficient vehicle access into a new development. Rear lanes are an importnat feature to address constrained by inadequate access from Plenty Road.
5. Ground floors of new development should be entered from the street as a priority, and provide "active frontages" to streets.	In order to support walking along Plenty Road, it is essential that buildings front the road, and have frequent doors and windows opening directly onto Plenty Road. Walking should be supported by a high quality walking environment supported by adjacent buildings which have active frontages, especially at ground floor level. This includes residential, commercial and retail activities. All individual properties facing Plenty Road should have a street address.
6. Ground floors of buildings in activity centres should be developed to be "retail or commercial capable" even when developed for residential use.	Buildings in close proximity to activity centres (within 400m of neighbourhood centres and 800m of principal activity centres) should be able to change use over time. As population increases around activity centres, the demand for retail and office space is likely to increase. To facilitate this change without having to fundamentally change the structure of buildings, ground floor slab to slab heights should be at least 4.5m in height and plumbing and "wet" areas should be located to the rear.

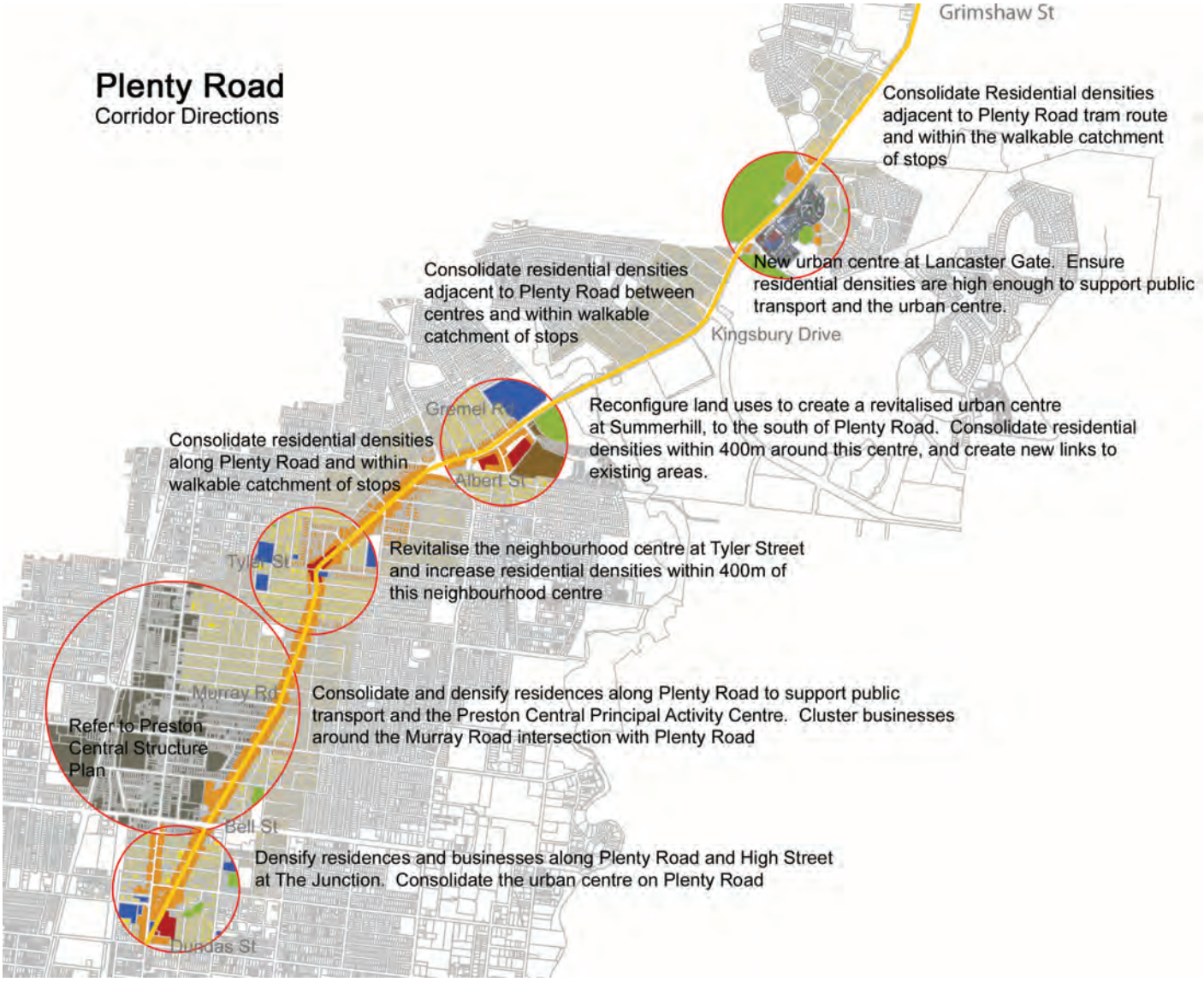
Principle	Rationale
1. Surveillance in rear lanes should be achieved through the development of "studio units" above garages. These should front the lane and be accessed from the lane as a priority.	Rear lanes should not become areas of poor surveillance and potentially low safety areas. For this reason development above garages should provide active frontages to the lanes. This will go a long way to improving safety and the perception of safety in rear lanes. It will also create greater diversity in housing choice.
2. Garages and Studio units to have zero setbacks from widened lane boundary.	To create a clear and distinct built form edge to lanes and avoid staggered edges and possible entrapment areas, garages and studio units should not be setback from the lane boundary.
3. Buildings to be built to achieve "through ventilation" to maximise passive heating and cooling.	New development should seek to achieve high environmental standards. Design should facilitate cross ventilation to reduce the need to heat and cool buildings. This requires individual apartments or units to have windows and doors to the front and rear, and for apartment or units to extend the width of the building. This will reduce the ongoing operational costs of dwellings.
4. Street trees to be selected to facilitate deep shade in summer and solar access to dwellings in winter.	Street trees which drop their leaves to facilitate solar access to the street and adjacent buildings can contribute to reducing the need for heating in winter, while deep shade from trees in summer can reduce the need for mechanical cooling of buildings.
5. Taller building elements should be built towards the street to minimise over-looking and overshadowing properties to the rear.	For new taller buildings to be integrated into existing low rise residential areas, the taller elements should be located as close to Plenty Road as possible. This will not only reduce the possibility of overlooking and overshadowing, but is important to reduce the perception of overshadowing and overlooking.
6. The maximum allowable height of development shall be determined from the rear boundary of the property and the street width	Measured from the rear boundary (determined after potential lane widening) new building height should be determined by the control shown in figure 19. This allows studio units to be constructed at the rear of the lot, while the 30 degree height control line minimises new buildings being over-bearing for adjacent residential areas. In addition this will facilitate sunlight into rear gardens and private open spaces on adjacent lots. Limiting development height to the width of the street will prevent creating a tunnel effect in the street and maintain good street proportions.
7. City of Darebin and ResCode setback controls generally apply, except within walking distance of activity centres.	In areas which are within 400m of the Plenty Road tram stops, current controls will apply, however it is recommended that along Plenty Road building heights and setbacks be adjusted to those depicted in these guidelines to facilitate increased residential densities to support public transport and walking access to public transport.

Plenty Road has a range of urban conditions along its length. The characteristics of the urban corridor change in relation to the road reserve width, the transport role, and urban context relating to activity centres. The future roles and directions summarised in Table 12 and Figure 20 are based on the Urban Design Principles outlined and the regional context. The corridor has five distinct areas requiring tailored responses in terms of land use, urban design guidance and public transport priority and treatment. Above all the focus is on improved local amenity and increasing housing provision near quality public transport. The ongoing viability of Plenty Road is reliant on high amenity with increased densities.

Table 7 Future Land Use and Transport Roles

Corridor Section	Transport Role	Land Use Role
Grimshaw Street to Gremel Road	• Strategic public transport corridor with dedicated tram operations. • Dedicated public transport easement. • Fast and reliable tram services. • Access points to Latrobe University.	• University as a major destination. • Consolidate health and education employment at University precinct. • Intensification of development off busy road front.
Gremel Road to Albert Street	• Strategic public transport corridor with dedicated tram operations. • Improved connections to Summerhill Centre. • Fast and reliable tram services.	• Revitalisation of Summerhill Centre. • Intensification of development off busy road front integrated with retail centre.
Albert Street to Murray Road	• Constrained public transport corridor with shared transport zones with pedestrian priority in activity nodes at Tyler Street. • Public transport corridor generally within dedicated lanes between activity nodes.	• Convenience retail and local commercial activities focussed around Tyler Street with improved local amenity. • Residential intensification along Plenty Road frontage with opportunities for affordable housing. • Incremental increases in housing density within walking catchment to tram stops. This means longer term gradual change as opportunities for redevelopment arise.
Murray Road to Bell Street	• Constrained public transport corridor with shared transport zones with pedestrian priority in activity nodes at Murray Road and Bell Street. • Public transport corridor generally within dedicated lanes between nodes.	• Cluster business opportunities around Murray Road as gateway to Preston Activity Centre. • Consolidated residential along Plenty Road and within walk of tram stops. • Spaces for small business start ups.
Bell Street to Dundas Street	• Shared transport zones with tram operations shared with traffic. • Pedestrian priority.	• Residential intensification along Plenty Road frontage. • Edge of centre strip retail, office and commercial activities at ground level.

Figure 12 Summary of Corridor Directions



Public Transport

The public transport zones are shown in the figure below. The section of Plenty Road from Grimshaw Street to Gremel Road is described as a strategic public transport corridor. This is a road section where public transport operates in a dedicated lanes separated from other traffic. The section between Gremel Road to Bell Street is identified as a constrained public transport where trams are given priority in dedicated lanes during periods of the day but at other times are required to share lanes with other motor vehicles. The urban shared zone is defined as the section between Dundas Street and Bell Street. In this section, both trams and private motor vehicles share the same road space.

Figure 13
Public Transport Zones along Plenty Road

Precinct Plans for Corridor Sections

The plans for the five sections include a discussion on existing character, future economic and land use role, future transport role, recommendations for land use, transport and design. The five precincts discussed are:

- Precinct 1 - The Junction
  Bell Street to Dundas Street;
- Precinct 2 - Preston Central Eastern Edge
  Murray Road to Bell Street;
- Precinct 3 - Tyler Street Neighbourhood Centre
  Albert Street to Murray Road;
- Precinct 4 - Summerhill Neighbourhood Centre
  Gremel Road to Albert Street;
- Precinct 5 - Lancaster Gate Neighbourhood Centre
  Grimshaw Street to Gremel Road.

Figure 14
Precincts and nodes along Plenty Road

Existing Character

The area around the confluence of Plenty Road and High Street, known as the Junction continues to be transformed from an industrial area in decline into an intensive urban activity centre. As a result of the Darebin Junction Integrated Development Plan (2001) and zone changes and the introduction of Design and Development Overlay 3 (DDO3 between Dundas Street and Raglan Street) the area has seen the construction of over 1000 apartments during the last 10 years.

This new development is characterised by multi-storey development of between 6 to 12 storeys. The Development Plan encourages a mix of uses at ground level, active street frontages included in a podium and set back tower style built form. This redevelopment is now extending north from Raglan Street towards Bell Street. This is to be encouraged to support public transport along Plenty Road.

Figure 15
Redevelopment typologies in The Junction

The residential wedge area behind these main road frontages is coming under increasing redevelopment pressure and is feeling the effects of the surrounding intensive redevelopment. This area contains mostly small lot attached and detached dwellings. It is becoming more difficult to protect this small pocket from these impacts as intensification occurs along Plenty Road and High Street.

It contains Heritage Overlays over small fragments of this wedge. Of particular note is the Greek Orthodox Church at 2 Yann Street which is affected by HO94. The Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study suggests the retention of remaining Victorian, Edwardian and Interwar dwellings as these contribute to the valued character of the area.

Public Realm

It will however be important to ensure that high quality streetscapes are delivered with new development. Active frontages to buildings, a high standard of architecture, locally responsive material choices, improved environmental performance in buildings, and high quality landscape treatment in streets are essential to achieving a high quality urban environment.

Future Land Use

Former industrial sites will continue to be redeveloped as The Junction becomes more of an urban area, mixed with local residential, retail and commercial uses. Land fronting Plenty Road has the capacity to support increased residential development.

There are also large retail sites which could be redeveloped and modernised. This includes the South Preston Shopping Centre site where there is a supermarket. Retail development on this site is suburban in character, and will come under pressure to modernise as the area grows. There is still a strong preference for a car-based development pattern and this will need to shift towards more pedestrian and street-oriented development pattern to provide a high quality streetscape and pedestrian amenity. Revitalisation of retail land has already occurred on the adjacent Otto Worth site at the corner of Plenty Road and Dundas Street. The site now accommodates a mixed use development, including a new Aldi supermarket, a gym and over 112 dwellings.

The adjoining Precinct Plan shows larger format retail "sleeved" by street oriented retail and residential use to ensure that development is located along the street and that it is supportive of pedestrians, not just cars.

Car Parking

On street parking is necessary to support pedestrians. On street parking has a role in buffering pedestrians and provider a safer higher quality environment. While parking is an important component of retail, currently parking dominates the presentation to Plenty Road. Parking structures and/or basements should be considered if these large sites are to be redeveloped.

Future Transport Role

Plenty Road in this precinct is an urban "shared zone" where no single transport function dominates. This existing condition will continue into the future with trams sharing space with cars and other vehicles. On street parking will occur throughout this precinct. A high quality pedestrian environment is highly desirable as is the clear demarcation of

Figure 16 The Junction Precinct Aerial View

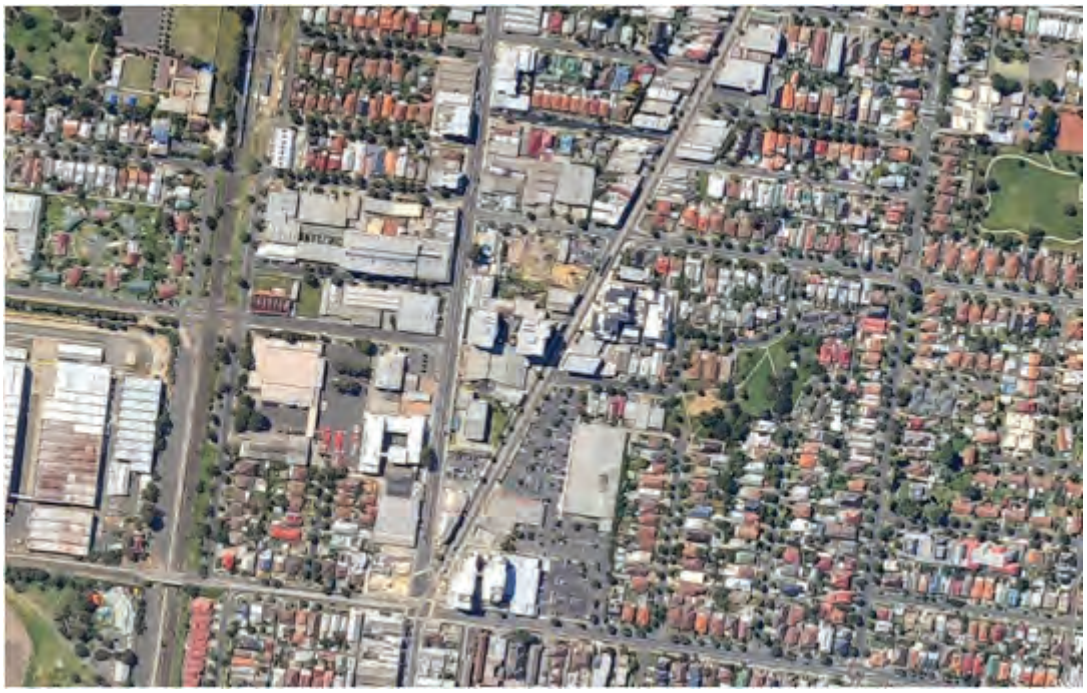
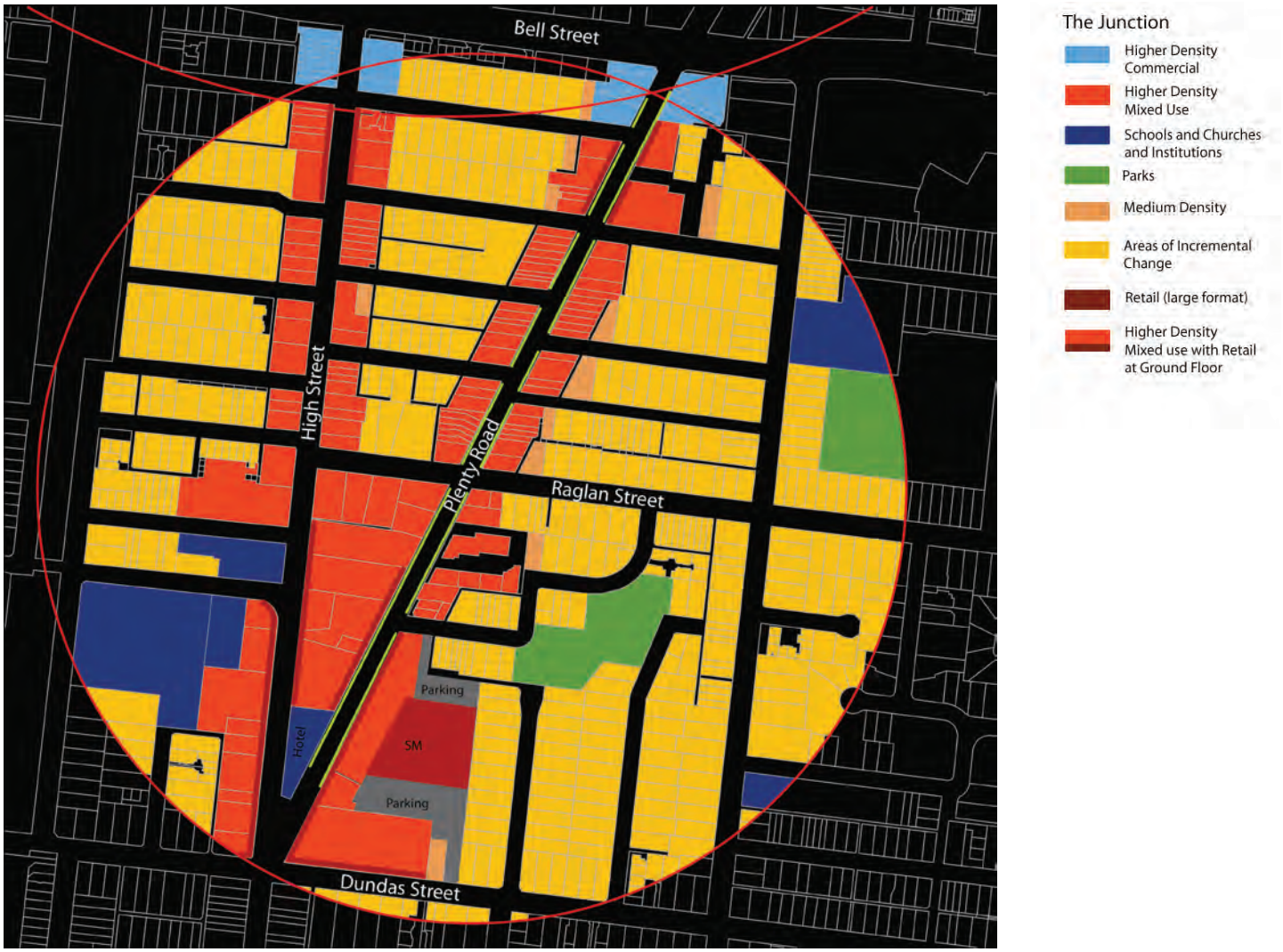


Figure 17 The Junction Precinct Plan



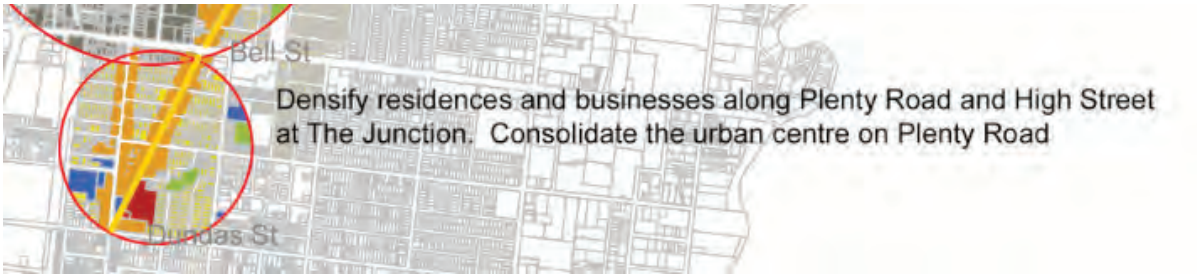
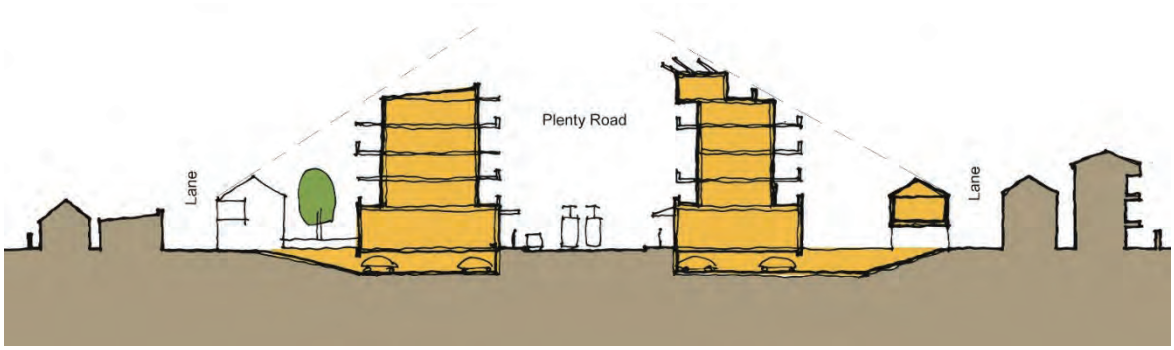


Figure 17 The Junction Precinct Plan

Figure 18 Indicative Cross Section Looking North: The Junction

An indicative cross section of Plenty Road within The Junction Precinct north of Raglan Street is shown in the figure below. It demonstrates an example of heights proposed and relationship to adjoining residential streets and sensitive interfaces with properties. These cross sections will be further refined to respond to the variety of building typologies



Recommendations

In the section from Dundas Street to Bell Street it is recommended that:

- Retail redevelopment change from more suburban typologies to a more urban and street-based development pattern;
- A high quality streetscape be defined and implemented over time, including direction for paving, landscape, signage, street furniture and the nature and relationship of development adjacent to streets;
- Cycle paths, car parking facilities be demarcated and integrated into the street changes in response to new development;
- Increased residential development in this precinct be encouraged to support public transport, local retail and create a more vibrant urban environment; and
- Plenty Road Corridor Urban Design Principles are applied.

Existing Character

The Bell Street to Murray Road Precinct forms an important part of the catchment of the Preston Central Principal Activity Centre (PAC). This section of Plenty Road and its immediate environs was not considered in any detail in 2005 as the Preston Structure Plan was being developed. It is now an opportune time it provide growth direction as the Plans for the PAC are embedded in the Planning Scheme and signs of redevelopment with several mixed use sites currently seeking planning approval are underway. Activity along this stretch should contribute to the function, strengthen its catchment and not compete with the centre.

Creating the eastern edge, land uses and lot sizes vary significantly along this section of Plenty Road. This mixed character highlights that this area is in transition from a quieter set of uses to a more active and intensive precinct. The road corridor also acts as a buffer to the established residential areas to the east. There are stretches of existing residential development which is low density detached dwellings constructed immediately post war. There are many California bungalow style dwellings in this section.

PANCH

At the Bell Street intersection there are a number of health related business uses associated with PANCH. While not forming a traditional retail-based activity centre, a health and wellbeing cluster is growing utilising PANCH as an anchor. Apart from froming an edge, this road is an important north -south link connecting key destinations such as PANCH to other regional destinations to the north of the municipality such as La Trobe University.

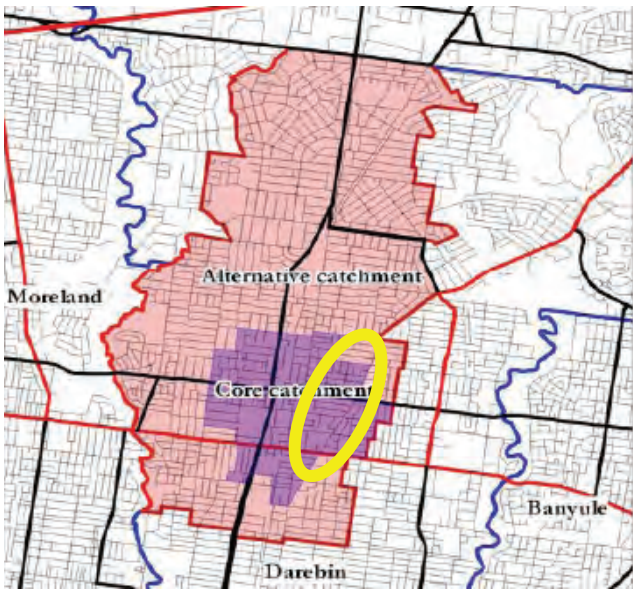


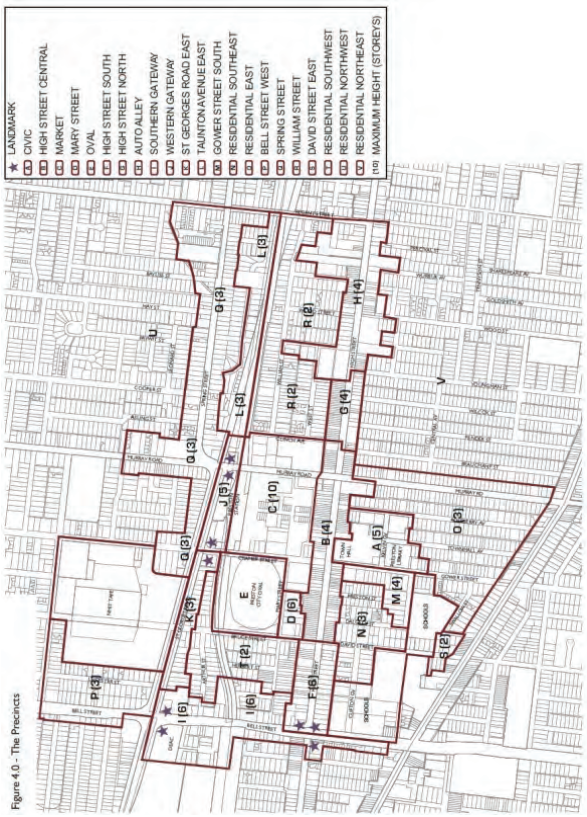
Figure 19 Preston Activity Centre Catchment and Planty Road

Figure 1.2 Structure Plan Area

Preston Central also boasts a post office, all of the major banks (Commonwealth, ANZ, Westpac, NAB, Bank of Queensland, Bank of Cyprus, and the Plenty Valley Co-op.) and over 200 specialty shops. The Department of Human Services, Preston Police Station and Preston Courthouse are in Preston Central, along with Preston City Oval, the home ground of VFL team the Northern Bullants.

Figure 20 Preston Central Structure Plan

Figure 21
Preston Central Structure Plan Precincts



Preston Central

The Preston Central Structure Plan indicates that the residential areas immediately to the west of Plenty Road are suitable for "*incremental redevelopment*" with new dwellings on Murray Road and Gower Street permitted to develop to between 3 - 4 storeys.

The Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study identifies the character of areas immediately to the east of Plenty Road within the catchment of the Preston PAC, as predominantly Californian bungalows and immediate Post-war style dwellings. New development in this area is encouraged to respect existing character with respect to form, scale, siting and materials.

Preston Central Strategic Objectives

The Preston Central Structure Plan developed a number of objectives to direct future growth and development. These objectives would extend to include future development along Plenty Road within the centre's catchment.

An expanded role and activity mix
To support and promote Preston Central as a major integrated sustainable centre of economic, social, community, civic and residential activity for Darebin and the northern region of Melbourne.

A unique cultural identity
To recognise and include Darebin's indigenous, diverse and multicultural community.

An accessible place
To provide integrated, safe and convenient access to and circulation within Preston Central, with priority for walking, cycling and public transport.

A high quality environment
To ensure an attractive physical form, scale and character that expresses the role and function of Preston Central and strongly encourages positive outcomes for the natural environment.

A people place
To provide additional social infrastructure including passive and active open space that is accessible and reflects community needs.

An integrated place
To encourage and improve the integration and appropriate positioning of activities, services and facilities in Preston Central.

Figure 22 Images of Activities along Plenty Road

Economic

A variety of businesses are located along Plenty Road in a dispersed pattern. Previously there have been times when a high proportion of properties along Plenty Road were vacant with approximately 14% used for automotive repairs and maintenance. Commercial developments along Plenty Road are mixed in character and style, ranging from small single shops, many now used as professional suites or as food outlets, to larger open lots used for automotive sales, repair and maintenance activities.

Plenty Road from Bell Street to Murray Road has a role as a business area within the PAC and a source of local employment. A locational advantage on Plenty Road is being realised by businesses who benefit from the "movement economy", leveraging high exposure to passing traffic and public transport. From consultation it is clear that many of these businesses draw patronage from the wider metropolitan region rather than just from a local market.

In future some of these businesses could locate within the Preston activity centre. This will depend on the nature of the businesses as some require them to be "out of centre" and located on key arterials such as Plenty Road. This applies to motor repair shops, swimming pool suppliers, wholesale suppliers, etc. There is a risk that some businesses may relocate to larger lots on major corridors beyond Darebin, in line with recent trends, where there are less constraints on car parking and greater regional passing trade.

Parking is an important component of the viability of many of these businesses. Many have provided off-street parking by setting buildings back from the front boundary. In other locations clearways are in operation to assist in traffic management during peak traffic periods.

Figure 23
Parallel kerbside parking arrangements on Plenty

Future Economic

In the short to medium term Plenty Road will continue to have an employment and business incubator function as part of the Preston Central Principal Activity Centre. Relatively low rents and appropriate premises make this an attractive location. In the future however, businesses will be encouraged to consolidate in Preston, or focus around the intersection of Murray and Plenty Roads. As the residential density increases there will be an accompanying demand for local convenience retail and access to services and facilities. A small proportion of these can be provided along PRC but this should be accompanied by improved access, pedestrian links to the Preston Central core area to avoid duplicating cluster of uses.

Bell Street Strategy

Further south toward Bell Street studies have identified redevelopment opportunities. These are indicated on the figure below and include proposals for redevelopment at the corner of Bell Street and Plenty Road of some four storeys. This is a missed opportunity and this is a key gateway to the Preston PAC on both Bell Street and Plenty Road. These building height levels should be lifted to at least six storeys to ensure support of the public transport system on Plenty Road, and ensure that local jobs are delivered within the Preston PAC. Both Bell Street and Plenty Road enjoy a high level of visibility, making this intersection highly desirable as a business address.

Future Land Use

Properties served by rear lanes and at corners have an advantage as parking will be able to be provided via the second public frontage. Properties without rear lanes will either have to utilise side streets for parking or redevelop to provide on-site parking subject to managing the quantum of crossings. This has already occurred in many instances. Limited parking with clearways remains provided in the precinct between Gower Street and Murray Road as this is the main employment area in relation to the Preston PAC.

Residential built form along Plenty Road has the potential to increase to take advantage of the locational benefits such as access to public transport and the activity centre. Ranging between a possible 3 - 6 storeys, the actual heights should be determined by lot configuration, context and the urban design guidelines.

Transition in built form scale and bulk will need to be considered. Lot depths in this area already indicate that a greater height than that existing is possible within the parameters of the suggested urban design principles. The lots that front Plenty Road and have rear lanes, and have constrained site dimensions, could be set towards the front of the lot to minimise

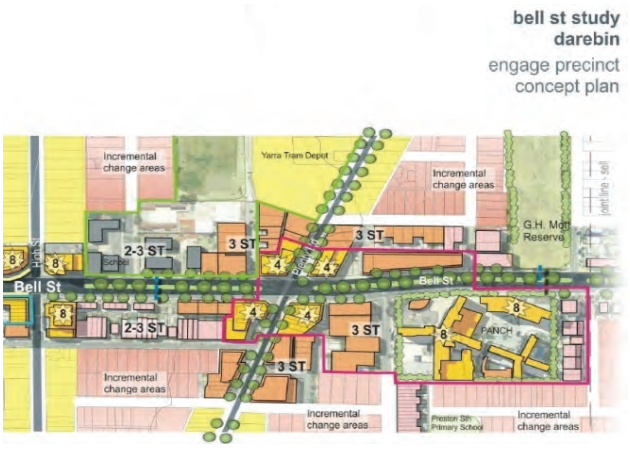


Figure 24
Bell Street Concept Plan (Bell Street Study)

the possible negative impacts on properties to the rear. Major redevelopments that utilise lot consolidation to gain a more efficient development parcel, provide a high quality site responsive design could be considered above those recommended by the urban design principles.

It is however clear that many owners have responded to the negative impact of traffic on Plenty Road by installing shutters, building high walls and generally "*disconnecting*" or turning away from the street. This is a poor outcome. Redevelopment of these lots should ensure that development fronts the street and provides a high level of "*passive surveillance*" to encourage walking and support public transport use.

Figure 25
Housing on Plenty Road in the Preston PAC

Figure 26
Recent residential intensification in the Preston PAC along Plenty Road

Future Transport

The Tram Route 86 improvement project proposes a dedicated public transport corridor through this precinct. Consultation activities with the community in late 2009, provided detailed feedback on the future transport role along Plenty Road as part of the Tram Route 86 project.

Car Parking

Parking for new residential development along Plenty Road will be on-site and generally concealed within secure basements entered from side streets or from rear lanes. Visitor parking will generally be in side streets, in designated spaces on-site or on Plenty Road if available. The proximity of residential development to a high quality public transport corridor provides a strong case for reviewing car parking requirements for new residential development.

Preston Central Eastern Edge

The Precinct Plan shows clustering of businesses near key intersections at Bell Street, Gower Street and at Murray Road. Residential intensification is encouraged along Plenty Road, especially where rear access is facilitated through lanes or where there are large consolidated blocks, or blocks on corners with side street vehicular access. Note where there are no rear lanes and lots are unconsolidated increased residential development is not encouraged because of the increase in vehicle cross-overs and the resultant congestion this would bring to a significant public transport route. Vic Roads are a referral authority in relation to adding or altering vehicle crossovers

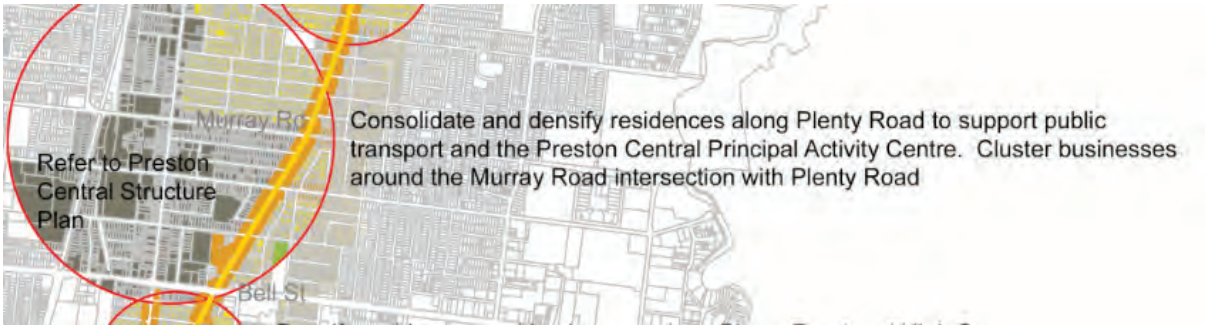
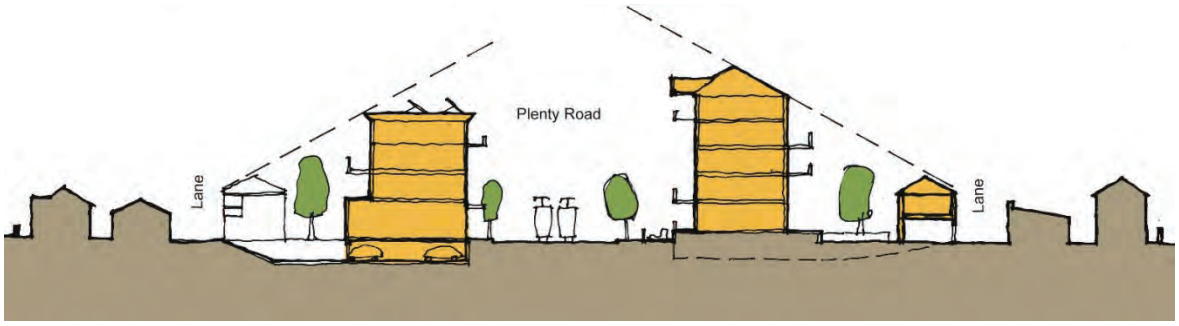


Figure 27 **Future Directions for Murray Road - Bell Street Precinct**

Figure 28
Preston Central Eastern Edge Precinct Plan

Figure 29 Indicative Cross Section Looking North: Plenty Road at Murray Road

An indicative cross section of Plenty Road at Murray Road is shown in the figure below. It demonstrates an increase in height in relationship to adjoining streets and properties. These cross sections are based on the design principles.



Recommendations

In the section from Murray Road to Bell Street it is recommended that:

- Residential development of increased height and density be encouraged along Plenty Road between Murray Road and Bell Street;
- The building heights indicated in the Bell Street Study be increased to a minimum of six storeys at the intersection of Bell Street and Plenty Road;
- Businesses should be clustered near key intersections at Bell Street, Gower Street and at Murray Road as a gateways to Preston Activity Centre;
- A dedicated public transport corridor be supported in the section between Murray Road to Bell Street while maintaining car parking within an appropriate separation distance to major intersections;
- Plenty Road Corridor Urban Design Principles are applied.

Existing Character

There are a wide range of land uses and zones along this stretch of Plenty Road. This section of the corridor is typified by Californian bungalows and interwar residential developments. Streetscapes in the neighbourhood beyond Plenty Road are characterised by garden settings. This is derived from good street tree planting and generally planted front gardens in residential properties. In the secondary area on the north side of Plenty Road is an established residential area covered by HO172.

Business zoned land in the Neighbourhood Centre were initially small (250m2) accommodating a diversity of shops and businesses. Over time these sites have been consolidated into larger parcels to facilitate more efficient sites by businesses and residential uses. The majority of these sites still utilise access off the remaining rear lanes. North of Ethel Grove both sides of the Road are zoned for residential uses with lots ranging between 450m^2 - 850m^2.

South of the Centre are pockets of industrial zoned land, although it is unclear what proportion of these lots are still used for genuine industrial purposes.

Figure 30
Tyler Street Nieghbourhood Centre

Tyler Street Neighbourhood Centre

This centre is split in half by Plenty Road, constrained by the existing urban fabric and is in decline as is evident by the numerous vacancies. Once a small local centre with some light industrial uses and retail, the vibrancy of the centre has been affected as the traffic volumes have increased along Plenty Road. This has been exacerbated by the removal of on-street parking in this precinct. Shops generally are regional in terms of their catchment, with little local shopping available at this time. The shops are limited in size and configuration.

Car Parking

Car parking has been identified as a significance issue for residents and businesses alike in the side streets and surrounding area. Changes to the times and removal of some parking spaces altogether on Plenty road has magnified this problem.

Currently traffic volumes are having a negative impact on the walking environment and on the amenity of the existing residences and shops. There is a need to shift priority to public transport to reduce traffic and improve the environment for walking and living. Residences show responses to the negative impact of traffic with many properties with solid roller shutters installed, or they have high walls to deflect traffic-generated noise. This is reducing the level of surveillance of the street and reducing the attraction of Plenty Road as a street for pedestrians.

Future Land Use

This area is well suited to substantial residential intensification, especially along the tram corridor. As land values increase, larger residential lots abutting Plenty Road are likely to be redeveloped for more intensive forms of housing. Within 400m of the activity centre, residential development should be increased in density through incremental infill, except where there are intact areas covered by a Heritage Overlay. Site dimensions indicate that higher density development is possible if the Urban Design Principles contained in this document are applied. A high proportion of lots adjacent to Plenty Road have rear lanes, making these lots ideal for further residential development and densification. This would have a significant impact on the patronage of public transport and on improving the viability of the neighbourhood centre at Tyler Street.

Public Realm

A detailed urban design framework should be prepared to address these local opportunities and prepare an implementation strategy to raise the quality of the public realm. The improvement to this precinct will be Public Realm focussed as redevelopment opportunities are limited owing to lot configuration and heritage overlay limitations.

Medium density infill should be promoted along Tyler Street as this is an important bus route. Increasing street tree planting is necessary to retain the garden character of the neighbourhood.

The leafy green character of the surrounding suburbs presents a challenge for the integration of future higher density residential development along Plenty Road. Consideration should be given to design solutions that incorporate greenery and landscape in the frontage of these properties as this has been clearly identified as a valued characteristic of the neighbourhood.

It will be increasingly important for new development to include suitable on-site car parking solutions. Further investigation shoud be given to localised on-street parking schemes

Residential redevelopment in the secondary areas should be developed in terms of the Preferred Character Statement contained in the 2007 Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study and Precinct Guidelines. In particular, gardens should be provided to the front of properties to maintain the garden setting of the neighbourhood.

Future Transport

The width of Plenty Road is restricted through this precinct. For that reason it is difficult to create a dedicated public transport corridor. The Tyler Street neighbourhood centre requires access to parking to function efficiently and therefore it is proposed that on-street parking be provided within 200m of the Tyler Street intersection to support retail activity. This parking is necessary given the particular character of retail in this precinct. Parking may be restricted during peak traffic periods through the use of clearways.

There is a program to progressively upgrade and improve the Route 86 Tram and amenity of the tram stops. At this stage it is unclear when and to what extent Tram rute 86 improvements will occur in this Precinct. It is desireble that these changes are timed to occur in parallel with new residential growth make the use of public transport attractive and trigger modal shift from private car use.

To promote public transport it is important that a dedicated public transport corridor for the trams be established to the north and south of the centre. This should ideally start at Robb Street and extend northwards, and begin at Shakespeare Avenue and extend southwards.

Walking access to the centre and to trams stops will need to be improved through streetscape improvements and better crossing opportunities for pedestrians. Clearly demarcated cycle paths will assist cyclists and induce further cycling in this area.

Future Economic

There is strong support from the local community for the revitalisation of this neighbourhood centre. The centre also has the potential to accommodate a range of small local businesses and generate a number of local jobs. It will be important for the centre to renew in parallel with the anticipated growth in population to ensure they remain in this catchment.

Concentration of retail, widening of the retail offer to include supplying local daily needs, improvements to streetscapes, signage and landscape treatment and the retention and enhancement of parking near the core retail precinct will assist in improving the retail environment.

Along Plenty Road residential development should be significantly increased to improve the performance of the retail centre and improve public transport viability. Existing rear lanes provide opportunities for vehicle access without detrimental impact on the performance of Plenty Road as a public transport route.

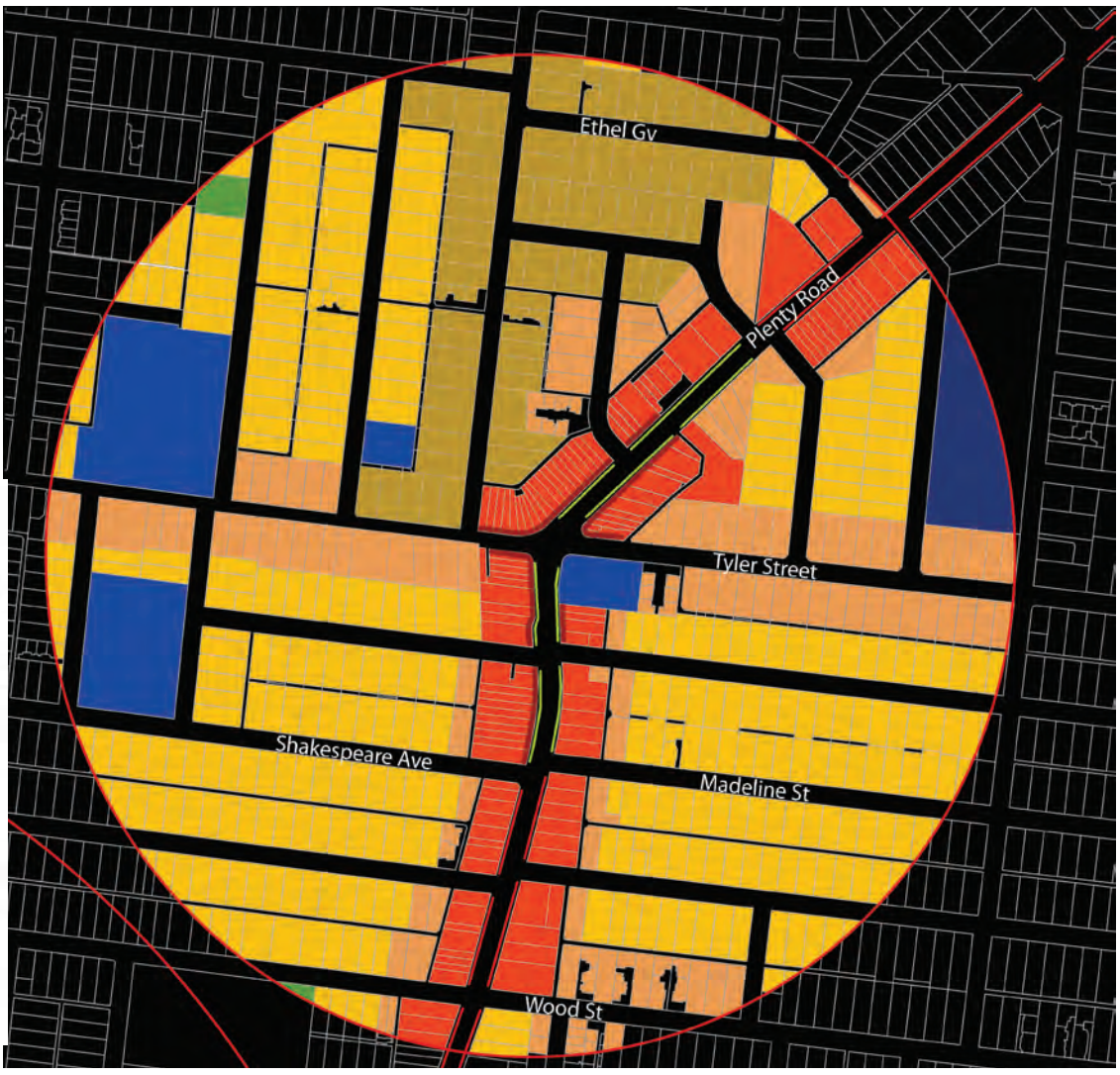
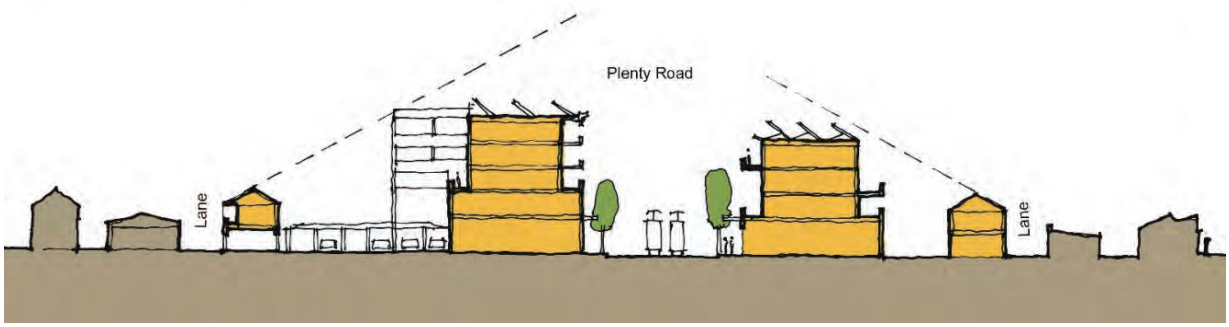


Figure 31
Tyler Street Neighbourhood Activity Centre Precinct Plan

Figure 32 Indicative Cross Section looking north: Plenty Road at Tyler Street



An indicative cross section of Plenty Road at Tyler Street is shown in the figure below. It demonstrates various potential heights and the relationship to adjoining streets and properties. These cross sections are based on the design principles.

Recommendations

In this Precinct it is recommended that:

- Consideration be given to the tram corridor being created either side of the Tyler Street activity centre to facilitate improved public transport performance;
- Retail activities are consolidated at the Tyler Street Activity Centre and limited to locations on Plenty Road from Shakespeare Avenue to Robb street;
- Public parking facilities to be provided at Tyler Street Activity Centre to support retail functions;
- Walking access and cycle paths are improved;
- Residential development increased along Plenty Road, particularly where rear lanes are present, to support the neighbourhood centre and public transport, and greater building heights supported within the Tyler Street Activity Centre;
- Areas within 400m from the Tyler Street activity centre be encouraged to increase residential density

Precinct 4 - Summerhill Village Neighbourhood Centre

Albert Street to Gremel Road

Existing Character

This section contains Summerhill Village neighbourhood activity centre which is dominated by "*big box*" retail outlets, large parking lots and isolated pockets of retirement development and standard detached dwellings. To the east and north-east of the centre there are large retirement developments, while development to the south, west and north-west is low density Post war residential development.

Generally the precinct suffers from poor integration between land uses. In this precinct, Plenty Road has a dedicated corridor for the tram and the road is characterised by heavy traffic volumes. A challenge is to integrate the eastern and western sides of Plenty Road and provide ease and comfort for pedestrians accessing public transport stops.

Many of the retail outlets at Summerhill Village are at the end of their commercial life and in need of revitalisation. This is an opportunity to achieve a higher level of integration and mixture of uses to ensure that the future neighbourhood is more sustainable and mixed in its land use and residential diversity. Currently there is no residential land use at Summerhill Village. Lots to the west of the village centre have rear lanes and are therefore suitable for residential densification.

Future Economic and Land Use

The buildings at Summerhill Village and other retail outlets along Plenty Road in this precinct are nearing the end of their economic life. In addition the form and quality of the retail is outdated and in need of revitalisation. Access to retail is dominated by cars with large parking areas along Plenty Road. This provides a poor walking environment for local residents, public transport users and visitors.

A significant opportunity exists to create a new linking street or pedestrian path by linking Loddon Avenue to Oulton Crescent. This would create a new street or path which would connect and integrate existing neighbourhoods with the centre. There are opportunities to develop new residential and commercial development along this new street network. As well as potentially improving the range of retail facilities, there are opportunities to mix uses on these sites through the development of commercial, residential and mixed use developments from Gremel Road to Albert Street. This would create a new presentation to Plenty Road, and deliver an improved pedestrian environment which in turn will assist in promoting and supporting public transport use in this precinct.

Figure 33
Summerhill Village Neighbourhood Centre

Careful design to create active frontages to new and existing streets could improve walking conditions for existing residents, especially those living in adjacent retirement villages. This will provide safe and pleasant means of access to the retail centre as well as to public transport stops.

While surface parking areas are shown on the Precinct Plan, it is desirable to create parking basements which make use of the significant slopes across these sites. This will further reduce the negative visual impact of parked cars, and improve amenity and walking conditions. Large format retail outlets such as supermarkets and discount department stores are intentionally located behind mixed use and specialty shops to reduce their visual impact. Edges of the "*big boxes*" are "*sleeved*" with mixed use development.

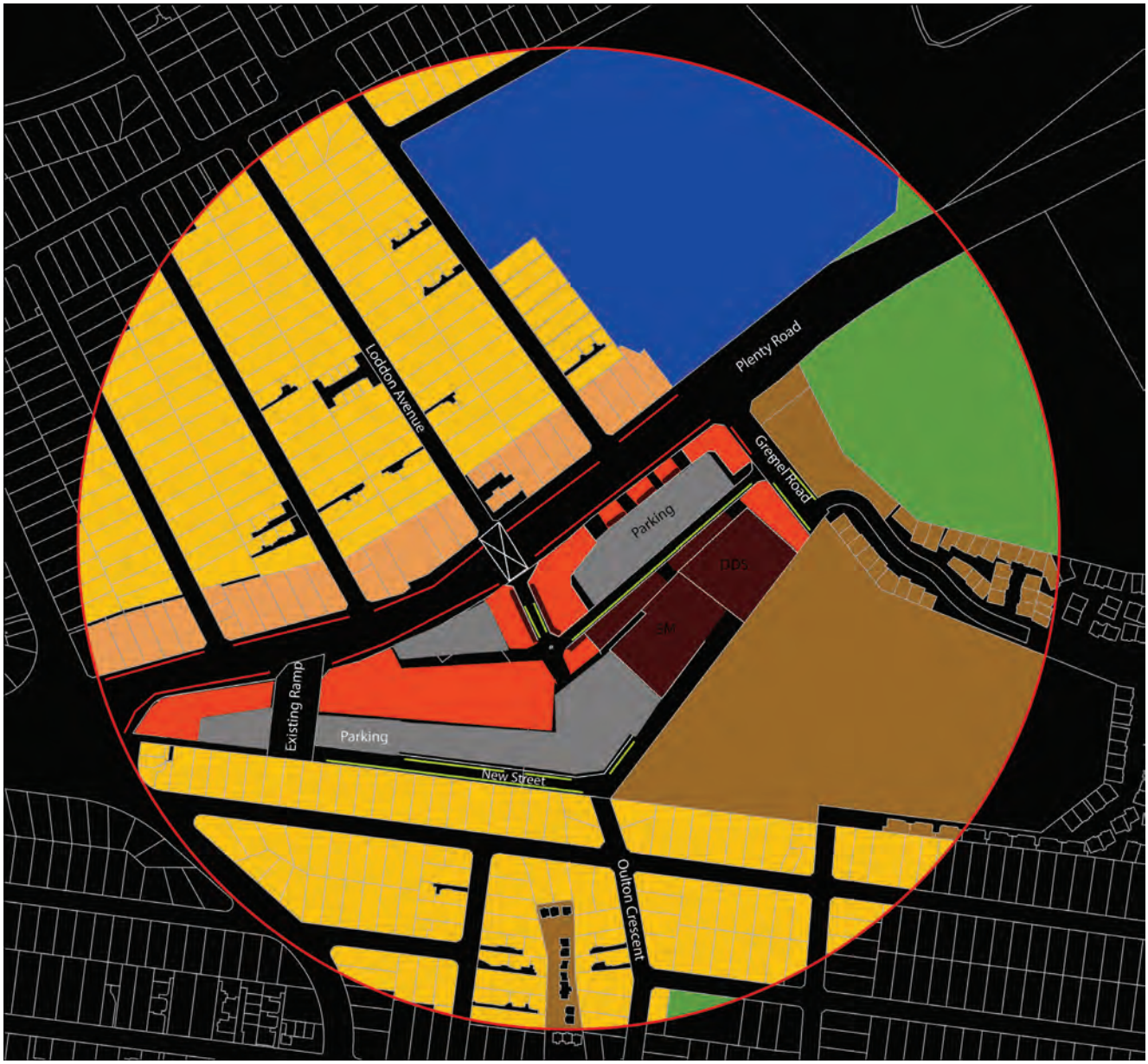


Figure 34
Summerhill Village Neighbourhood Centre - Precinct Plan

Future Transport

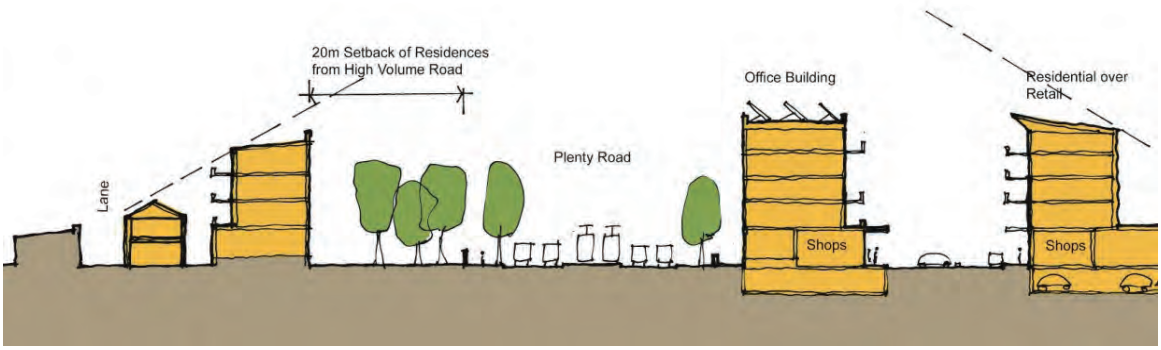
Plenty Road from Gremel Road to Albert Street currently carries a high volume of traffic and also contains a dedicated public transport corridor for the tram. This condition will continue into the future. The position of tram stops needs careful integration with the redevelopment of Summerhill Village to improve access to the major destinations giving consideration to the topography of the local area and ensure that stops are easy to access for pedestrians, especially elderly pedestrians.

Recommendations

In the section from Gremel Road to Albert Street it is recommended that:

- The range of retail at Summerhill be expanded to include street-based retail outlets;
- A new street or pedestrian path to be tested from an engineering and development perspective to ensure footpath slopes are physically viable and meet DDA requirements and standards;
- Higher density residential development which provides an appropriate response to the site and context be supported at Summerhill Centre;
- The design of residential development along Plenty Road consider environmental amenity of being located along a busy road;
- Retain the rear lanes and accessways to the south and east interfaces of the retail buildings;
- Reinforce the role of the centre with retail, services and employment opportunities to match the needs of the local population;
- The Plenty Road Corridor Urban Design Principles are applied.

Figure 35
Summerhill Village Neighbourhood Centre, Indicative Cross Section looking north.
Note Cross Section does not reflect actual slope of the land



Existing Character

This Precinct has new development areas mixed with existing older areas first developed during the late 1950s through to the 1970s, major institutional use and pockets of open space abutting the road. This mix makes it difficult to define a dominant character for this area.

Lancaster Gate Neighbourhood Centre

In response to the new suburbs of Gresswell Grange and Springthorpe a new neighbourhood centre is being established called Lancaster Gate. Currently under development on the former Larundel Hospital site, this centre is nestled on the south side of Plenty Road and Main Drive.

A Development Plan prepared in 2001, identifies the development and use of the land for a number of commercial, community and residential purposes (including conventional housing, medium density housing, apartments, student housing, offices, retail, recreational and community facilities). The Development Plan divides the land into three (3) distinct areas – a residential precinct, a Village precinct and a Mixed Use precinct. The Development Plan states the future use and development of the Village Precinct and the Mixed Use Precinct was subject to Council's approval of an amendment to the Development Plan. This amended Development Plan was approved by Council in September 2009 and the village/mixed use area is known as 'Polaris'.

Public Open Space

There are substantial stretches of Plenty Road abutted by open space. These spaces include:

- Bundoora Public Golf Course
- Bundoora regional park
- Preston Cemetery
- Darebin Community Sports Stadium; and
- La Trobe University.

Apart from the future development along the La Trobe edge, these public spaces will remain and contribute to the sense of greenery and open views from Plenty Road.

La Trobe University

Laid out over the 137ha estate, the core area of activity is currently set back from the Plenty Road, La Trobe University acts as a dominant land use for this Precinct and is a regional destination. This institution is making connections to Plenty Road via the medical centre and health sciences clinic on the corner of Kingsbury Drive.

Figure 36
Lancaster Gate and La Trobe University surrounds

Kingsbury

The older suburb of Kingsbury is characterised by single detached houses on lots ranging between 650m^2 and 850m^2, with larger lots abutting Plenty Road. Areas to the south of this new neighbourhood in Kingsbury are generally intact postwar style dwellings on large sites. There is some evidence of infill medium density redevelopment in Kingsbury on the larger lots. This is mostly in the form of 2 - 5 single or double storey units in a row along the length of the lot with mixed results.

Future Land Use

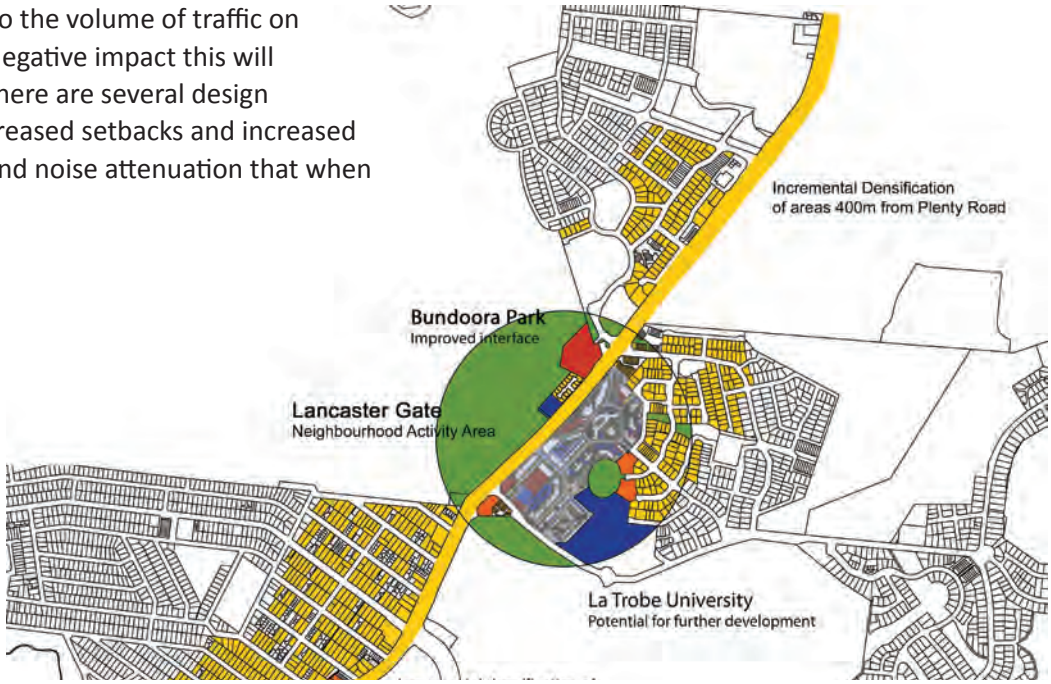
The future role of this Precinct from Grimshaw Street to Gremel Road is predominantly residential. It is suggested that development along this section will predominantly be in the form of mixed use at ground level with residential above, representing a high level of change. This is likely to continue into the future; however, because of the existing low density of residential development, there are opportunities to increase residential density within 400m of tram stops.

Medium density (2 - 4 storeys) development is suitable for larger lots where any sensitive interface issues can be managed. Low density residential uses and residential dwellings at ground level are discouraged due to the volume of traffic on Plenty Road and the negative impact this will generate. However, there are several design responses such as increased setbacks and increased standards of glazing and noise attenuation that when applied in a ground floor situation would facilitate a sufficient level of amenity for residential uses. Solid fencing along this section of Plenty Road is strongly discouraged.

Higher density or multi-storey development above four storeys has been sought by the market place on strategic redevelopment sites. Higher density residential development should be prioritised in those areas where there is the ability to better manage the off-site effects.

Redevelopment of the larger lots abutting Plenty Road must provide for a transition, within the site, to low-scale surrounding built form. Further consideration should be given to the potential negative impacts on the surrounding areas and prepare a design response that seeks to minimise these impacts. Careful consideration is required to ensure the scale, bulk and mass of new development responds to the local topography and context and takes its cues from the established/local character of the area.

Figure 37
Future Directions for Precinct 5



Public Realm

There are numerous opportunities to upgrade and improve the footpaths along this major arterial given the stretches of adjoining public open spaces. The quality of experience can be greatly improved for pedestrians by changes to the streetscape such as extensive tree planting, widening footpaths and inclusion of street furniture (some lighting focussed at pedestrian levels at crossing points and entry points).

Integration of signage and wayfinding information to key destination will also make the environment less hostile to pedestrians.

Shelter at public transport stops will encourage more uses and improve the waiting experience for users.

Preston Cemetery is an iconic part of this precinct which draw a unique catchment and necessitates good access and pedestrian amenity.

Lancaster Gate

The Lancaster Gate Neighbourhood Activity Centre provides for local retail needs to a growing residential catchment. It is a growing neighbourhood centre with a range of services that provide for local retail needs including a supermarket 3000m^2 currently under construction. Future development will integrate a number of existing, heritage protected, hospital buildings within Polaris site.

La Trobe University

The future Vision for La Trobe University suggests that the Bundoora campus will grow to become a multicultural centre in the northern part of metropolitan Melbourne. As a hub of education, research, cultural, academic and recreational life its importance as a regional destination will increase. Future plans for the Bundoora Campus indicate a desire to have a stronger presence along Plenty Road which will start with an intensification of the health precinct on the corner of Plenty Road.

Strategic Redevelopment site
1091 Plenty Road - Smorgy's

To the north of Lancaster Gate is the former Smorgy's Restaurant site (approximately 1.3ha) at 1091 Plenty Road. This site offers a sizeable opportunity for an integrated redevelopment (mixed use and upper level residential) and should be considered in greater depth, warranting its own sub-precinct plan and specific design guidelines given its sensitive interface with Bundoora Park and surrounds.

The relationship of existing development to Bundoora Park is relatively poor with development "backing onto" the park. This is a poor relationship as safety is compromised for both residents and park users. (this is recognised in the Bundoora Park Master Plan adopted by Council). This interface offers an opportunity to develop an active frontage to the park that respects the interface with an appropriate scale and transition as well as the amenity the park affords and would also improve perceptions of safety from the introduction of casual surveillance.

This will require careful management to generate a discernable frontage to the park which positively engages the users of the public and private spaces and to avoid the public space being diminished as a result of the dominant adjoining private use. If practical a public interface to the park should be created with development separated from the park edge by a publicly accessible street or pathway, clearly defining the public realm from the private realm as is the case with recent development of Mt Cooper estate where the new Oakden Drive and Parkview Cresent were constructed as a defined separation between the residential area and the park.

Future Economic

There has been no clear direction for the location of commercial and non-residential uses along this section of Plenty Road. As a preference these types of uses are being directed into Activity Centres to harness the benefits from clustering uses and increased accessibility. The primary role of this section of Plenty Road is seen to be residential but there is room to further consolidate mixed use development around the existing small commercial components which are scattered along the corridor.

An additional benefit derived from mixed use at ground level of new development is the opportunity this creates for small scale local businesses to occupy these spaces and role of commercial tenancies serving the new population in medium to higher density developments. This approach should be subject to economic analysis and meeting the employment and servicing needs of the locality.

Design consideration is also require to manage the impact of car parking spaces when located at the front of development, although there is a clear preferance for parking to be sleeved behind development where possible. Access on and off Plenty Road is constrained and multiple driveway access points are to be discouraged.

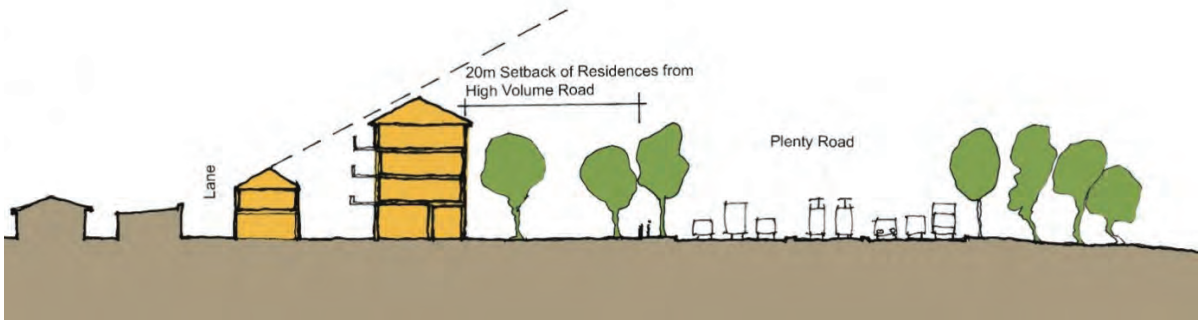
La Trobe University

The University is Darebin's largest single employer with over 2000 direct employees at its Bundoora campus. There is scope to grow employment and to support the "University Town" concept and build synergies with nearby research, health and employment hubs.

Lancaster Gate

Activity associated with the centre at Lancaster Gate is focussed on the south side of Plenty Road. Located in a historic building near the corner of Plenty Road and Main Drive is the new Bundoora Community Centre. From her there will be a range of community services available including maternal and child health, family services and a toy library. There are also a number of flexible meeting spaces for community groups.

Figure 38
Indicative Cross Section - Lancaster Gate



An indicative cross section of Plenty Road at Lancaster Gate is shown in the figure above. It demonstrates a proposed building height in relationship to the lot size, the width of the street and the impact on adjoining existing properties. These cross sections are based on the design principles set out in Section 4.3 of this report and provide an indicative example of development for the Lancaster Gate site.

Future Transport

Throughout this Precinct the tram corridor is identified as a "Principal Public Transport Network" with a dedicated public transport zone for tram travel. This status and condition will remain. The corridor is also expected to carry additional road traffic as a major north south route. The tram priority and distances between tram stops supports reliable tram services to the Latrobe University and health clinic. This road has been identified as needing improvements for cycling in the Darebin Cycling Strategy 2013, given the key destinations of La Trobe University, Lancaster Gate and Bundoora Park.

La Trobe University

Reservoir Station will become the principal heavy rail access point for the Bundoora campus and will be connnected via a safe and efficient bicycle link and shuttle services. La Trobe University will partner with Council, transport providers and government to improve existing links and create new links where there is demonstrated need.

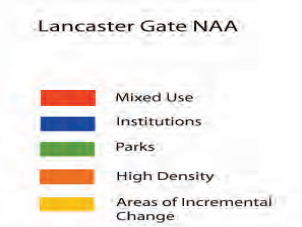
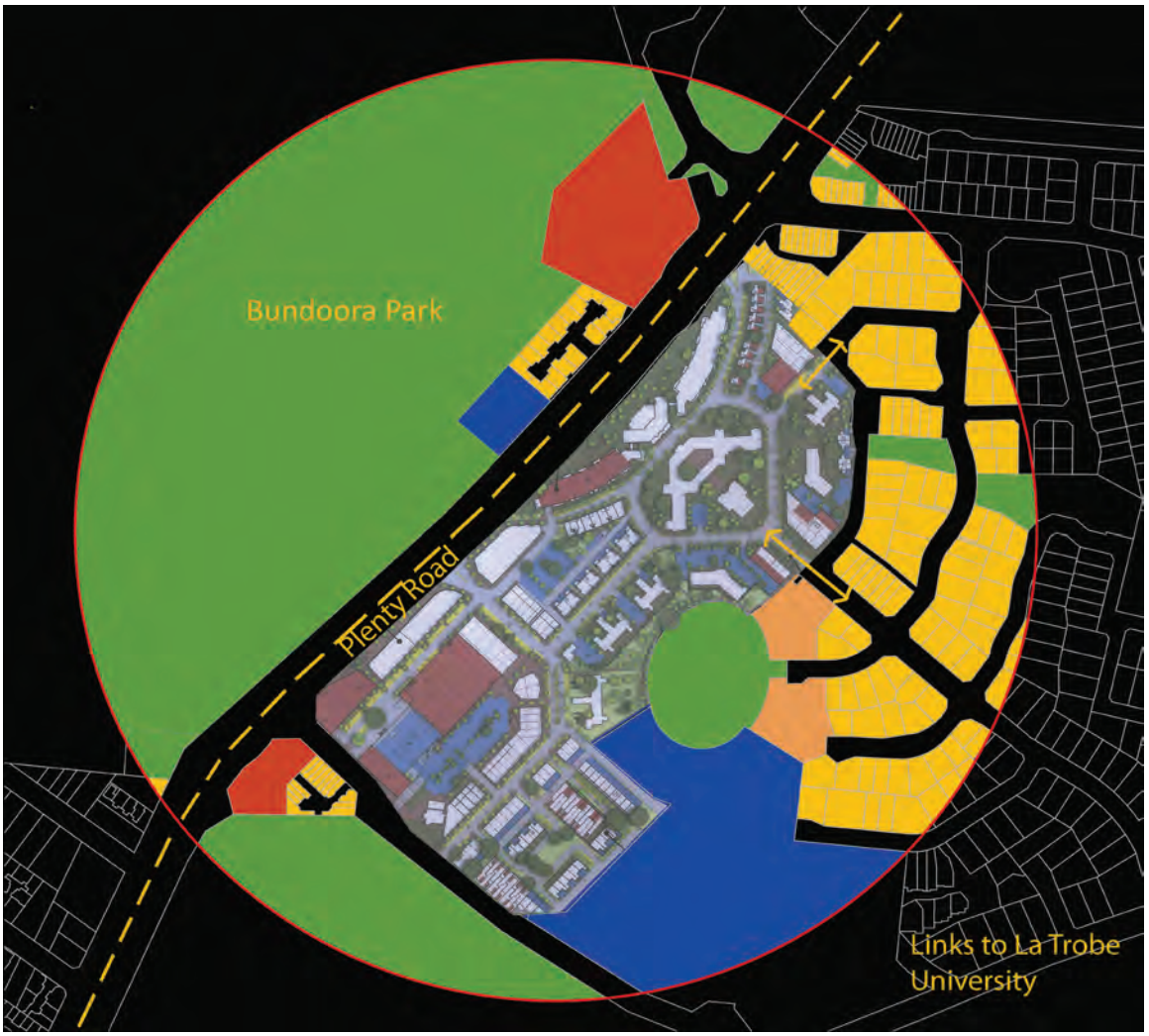


Figure 39
ILancaster Gate Precinct Plan



Recommendations

In Precinct 5 - Lancaster Gate Neighbourhood Centre it is recommended that:

- New non-residential development be directed into the Neighbourhood Centre and existing mixed use clusters rather than scattered along the full length of this section of Plenty Road to support access to the public transport stops;
- Medium density residential development is encouraged within a walking catchment of tram stops, with higher density prioritised in locations;
- Pedestrian access across Plenty Road near to tram stops be improved;
- The design of residential development along Plenty Road consider environmental amenity of being located along a busy road;
- The design of development with direct interfaces to Bundoora Park consider the visual and environmental impacts on these interfaces;
- Development with direct interfaces to Bundoora Park be designed with frontage to the park, ideally with public access via a pathway or street at the interface, thereby increasing passive surveillance and safety for park users;
- The Plenty Road Corridor Urban Design Principles are applied.

Next Steps Precinct 1 - The Junction

The following steps are recommended to move towards implementing the strategy outlined:

- Revisit and update the 2001 Junction Urban Design Framework.
- Review existing land use zonings to ensure provisions are consistent with the strategic directions.

Next Steps - Precinct 2 Preston Central Eastern Edge

The following steps are recommended to move towards implementing the strategy outlined:

- Prepare planning scheme controls to facilitate increased residential densities along Plenty Road and to raise the quality of the public realm.
- Prepare planning scheme controls that require major development applications provide:
- a suitable urban design context analysis which provides justification for building height, setbacks, design treatments, and materials used; and
- a pedestrian access and mobility plan and green travel plan to improve access to tram services from the proposed development
- Update the Preston Central Structure Plan to include Plenty Road and lots to the east of Plenty Road in line with the catchment.
- Prepare landscaping controls to ensure that when buildings are set back, parking is screened by low level planting and street trees.
- Review existing land use zonings to ensure provisions are consistent with the strategic directions.

Next Steps - Precinct 3 Tyler Street Neighbourhood Centre

The following steps are recommended to move towards implementing the strategy outlined:

- Prepare an urban design framework and accompanying planning scheme controls for Tyler Street Neighbourhood Activity Centre to facilitate opportunities for economic revitalisation, increased residential densities and improvements to the public realm.

- Prepare planning scheme controls incorporating urban design guidelines to facilitate increased residential densities along Plenty Road and infill medium density residential development in areas within the walkable catchment of Plenty Road;

- Prepare planning scheme controls that require major development applications provide:

    - a suitable urban design context analysis which provides justification for building height, setbacks, design treatments, and materials used; and

    - a pedestrian access and mobility plan and green travel plan to improve access to tram services from the proposed development

- Review existing land use zonings to ensure provisions are consistent with the strategic directions.

Next Steps - Precinct 4 Summerhill Village

The following steps are recommended to move towards implementing the strategy outlined:

- Prepare an urban design framework for the Summerhill Village, including detailed design and feasibility of a new linking street or pedestrian path.

- Prepare planning scheme controls to facilitate higher density development opportunities which support economic revitalisation and improvements to the public realm at Summerhill Activity Centre;

- Prepare planning scheme controls incorporating urban design guidelines to facilitate increased residential development densities along Plenty Road and infill medium density residential development in areas within the walkable catchment of Plenty Road;

- Prepare planning scheme controls that require major development applications provide:

    - a suitable urban design context analysis which provides justification for building height, setbacks, design treatments, and materials used; and

    - a pedestrian access and mobility plan and green travel plan to improve access to tram services from the proposed development

- Review the position of tram stops to improve pedestrian access to these stops.

Next Steps - Precinct 5 Lancaster Gate Neighourhood Centre

- Prepare planning scheme controls, incorporating urban design guidelines to address interfaces and amenity, to facilitate increased development along Plenty Road and medium density development in areas within the walkable catchment of Plenty Road.

- Prepare planning scheme controls that require major development applications provide:

    - a suitable urban design context analysis which provides justification for building height, setbacks, design treatments, and materials used; and

    - a pedestrian access and mobility plan and green travel plan, in conjunction with the major destinations at Bundoora and Latrobe University, to improve access to tram services from the proposed development.

- Review existing land use zonings to ensure provisions are consistent with the strategic directions.

The next steps are recommended to move the vision and strategic directions for the Plenty Road corridor towards implementation. These next steps are based on those identified from each of the Precinct Plans and other general actions required in support of the overall vision:

- Prepare planning scheme controls, incorporating urban design guidelines to address interfaces and amenity, to facilitate increased development along Plenty Road.

- Prepare guidelines and potentially planning scheme controls to better regulate infill medium density residential development in residential areas within the walkable catchment

- Prepare an urban design framework and accompanying planning scheme controls to facilitate higher density development opportunities which support economic revitalisation and improvements to the public realm for Summerhill Village.

- Prepare an urban design framework and accompanying planning scheme controls for Tyler Street Neighbourhood Activity Centre to facilitate opportunities for economic revitalisation, increased residential densities and improvements to the public realm.

- Prepare landscaping controls to ensure that when buildings are set back, parking is screened by low level planting and street trees.

- Complete a pedestrian access and mobility plan and green travel plan, in conjunction with the major destinations at Bundoora, to improve access to tram services.

- Update the Preston Central Structure Plan to include Plenty Road and lots to the east of Plenty Road in line with the catchment.

- Revisit and update the 2001 Junction Urban Design Framework.

- Review existing land use zonings to ensure provisions are consistent with the strategic directions.

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