Theme 1: Activities and Uses

A place for living, experiencing, creating and innovating

Introduction

South Melbourne has emerged in the last 20 years as a centre for Melbourne's creative industries. This, coupled with the strong presence of professional and financial services, along with retail, hospitality and personal services, highlight the significance of South Melbourne's contribution to the local and regional economy.

Between 2020 and 2040, South Melbourne is expected to see a significant growth in job opportunities, with the number of jobs set to rise from 23,100 to a range of 30,700 to 36,700. This represents an increase of approximately 7,600 to 13,600 jobs, equating to a growth rate of about 33% to 59%. This growth is underpinned by robust state planning policies that support the retention of commercial and industrial land in South Melbourne, designating it as both a Major Activity Centre and regionally significant Enterprise Precinct.

The *South Melbourne Employment, Economic and Land Use Study* (Urban Enterprise, November 2023) highlights that South Melbourne's economic success has been partly driven by:

- Favourable land use zoning and development opportunities, especially land in the Commercial 2 Zone
- Its strategic location proximate to the Central City, south-eastern suburbs, western suburbs and beyond
- Transport connectivity including:
  - Key roads such as Kings Way and the West Gate Freeway
  - Public transport
  - Cycling infrastructure
- Recognition for creative and technology businesses
- An established activity centre with a vibrant retail and hospitality scene
- Sought-after residential opportunities within South Melbourne itself and the neighbouring precincts of Southbank, Domain and Montague.

Further, as businesses increasingly compete for talented workers, with those workers equally seeking high levels of local amenity, South Melbourne offers distinct advantages over traditional working environments. Unlike other commercial precincts of Melbourne, South Melbourne combines this economic edge with a range of housing options. However, the affordability of housing and workspaces is increasingly diminishing, requiring a nuanced land use planning framework.

The ongoing development of the Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area to the west of South Melbourne, particularly the Montague Precinct adjacent to the Structure Plan Area, will reshape the land use mix and economic landscape of the area. South Melbourne is well placed to respond to this challenge by leveraging its many advantages and the aspects that differentiate it from surrounding areas.

South Melbourne's land use context

As shown on Figure 5 on page 14, the population of South Melbourne and its neighbours will grow by 145,912, from 134,355 in 2021 to 280,287 in 2041.

The *Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework* (March 2024) highlights that the substantial population increase expected in major urban renewal precincts within and adjacent to the municipality will increase demand for retail and services in Port Phillip, as well as create a larger labour force.

Within this context South Melbourne has an important role to play in accommodating businesses seeking proximity to the Fishermans Bend National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC) and will have an important role to play in productivity growth for the regional economy.

Therefore, accommodating business and employment growth in the northern part of the municipality, including within South Melbourne, is an economic priority of this Structure Plan.

Further, the northern part of the City is the subject of major public transport investment and land use change which presents opportunities for business attraction and employment growth (Figure 7). The attraction of South Melbourne to business is demonstrated by more than half of all commercial development within the City of the past



five years being in South Melbourne. Importantly, South Melbourne is one of the few areas in the City with a dedicated employment only zone.

Given its vibrant inner-city context, noise and air pollution sources require ongoing management. Potential noise sources include the West Gate Freeway, City Road and Ferrars Street, the Route 1 Light Rail corridor, and noise generating uses, for example motor repairs and panel beaters. Similarly, potential air pollution sources include Gate Freeway, City Road and Ferrars Street, and uses that create dust and odour emissions, for example for example motor repairs and panel beaters.

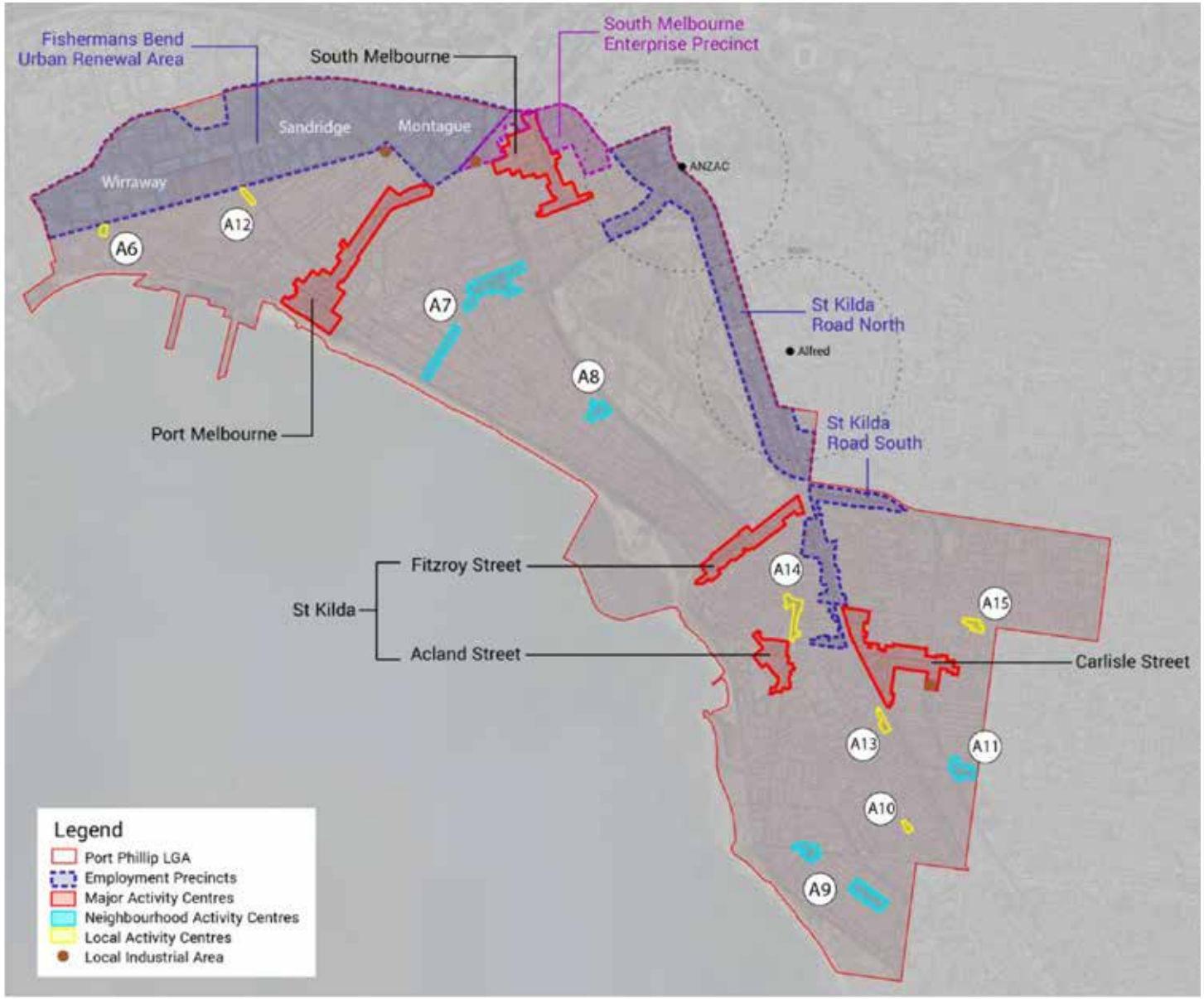

Figure 7 - South Melbourne's spatial context within the City of Port Phillip (*Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework 2024*).

How will the South Melbourne Structure Plan support this theme?

The following objectives and actions under this theme will help deliver the vision for South Melbourne:

- Facilitate the future growth of South Melbourne as an integrated Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Mixed Use Precinct (Activities and Uses Objective 1)
- Support ongoing business growth and economic specialisation in South Melbourne (Activities and Uses Objective 2)
- Support diversification of retail, services and amenities in South Melbourne (Activities and Uses Objective 3)
- Provide opportunities for ongoing reinvestment, mixed use development and new employment floorspace within walking distance to Anzac Station and Park Street tram upgrade (Activities and Uses Objective 4)
- Capitalise on the popularity of the South Melbourne Market to create a thriving street-based retail precinct (Activities and Uses Objective 5)
- Accommodate the housing needs of a welcoming, resilient and future-focused community (Activities and Uses Objective 6)
- Community infrastructure to enhance social connection (Activities and Uses Objective 7).

The key technical reports and strategies underpinning the objectives and actions under this theme are:

- For Activities and Uses Objectives 1 to 5, the *South Melbourne Employment, Economic and Land Use Study* (Urban Enterprise, November 2023 and *Port Phillip Spatial Employment and Economic Framework* (March 2024).
- For Activities and Uses Objective 6, the *City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039*.
- For Activities and Uses Objective 7, the *Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2023-26* and *Library Action Plan 2021 to 2026*.



Figure 8 - South Melbourne's Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct, Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor and key civic hubs.





An integrated approach to planning for South Melbourne

South Melbourne's land use context is unique and represents a complex settlement framework given it comprises a Major Activity Centre, an Enterprise Precinct and the Kings Way Mixed Use Precinct within walking distance from one another. Figure 8, provides a conceptual representation of the relationship between these three places.

Figure 9 summarises the approach taken to planning for South Melbourne to integrate these three elements around the vision for South Melbourne. These include the following considerations, underpinned by extensive technical background analysis:

- Forecast demand for housing, commercial and retail floorspace to 2041
- Land use, namely catering for growth in retail and services, businesses, creative industries, housing, in addition to prioritising a full range of uses in the Major Activity Centre, while prioritising businesses, services and creative industries in the Enterprise Precinct and maintaining the Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor's supplementary role.
- Built form and public realm, including heritage and civic uses
- Undertaking an assessment to verify that the capacity of the recommended zoning and built form framework can cater forecast demand.

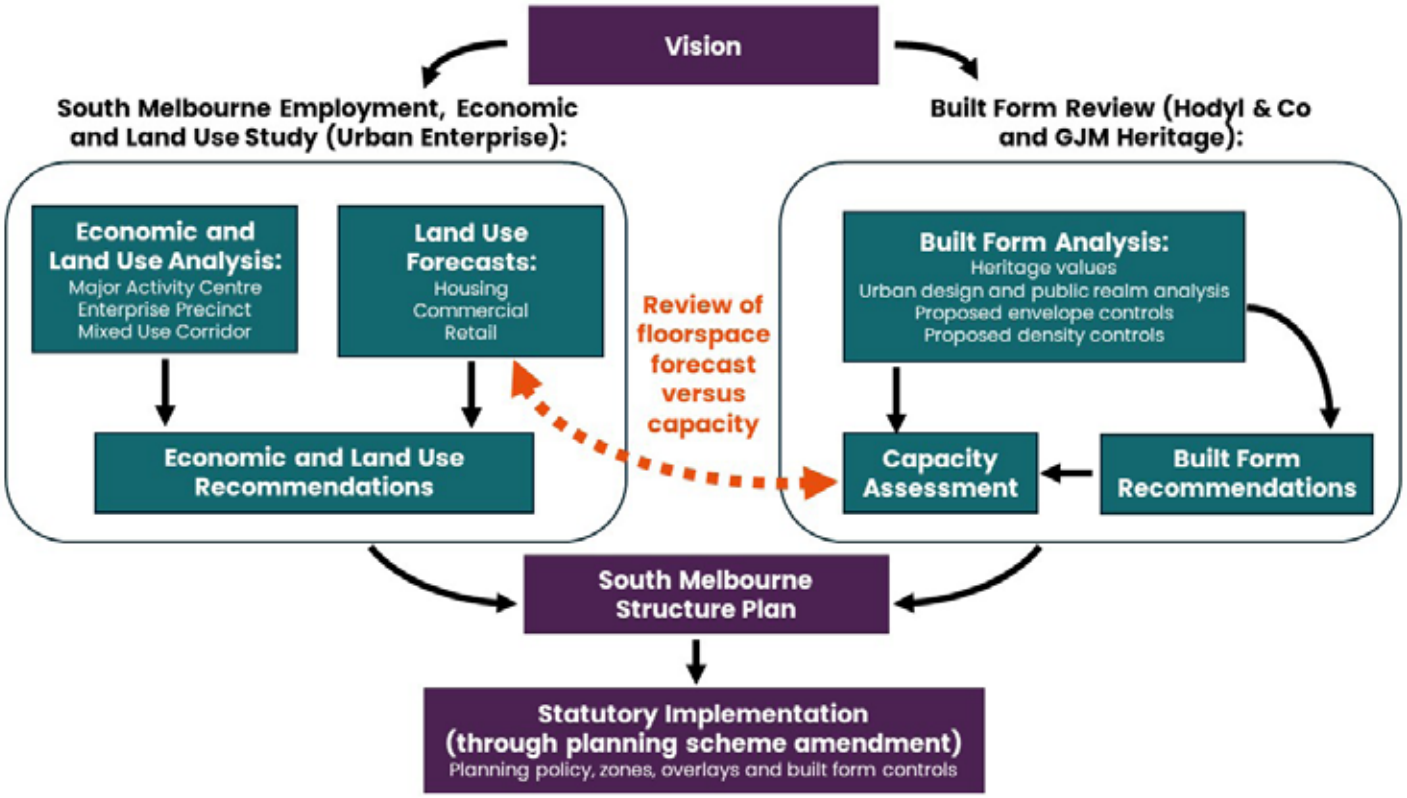

Figure 9: Approach to land use and built form in South Melbourne.

Activities and Uses Objective 1:

Facilitate the future growth of South Melbourne as an integrated Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Mixed Use Precinct

Ensuring that future use and development of land within the Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor maintain their distinctive but complementary role is crucial in supporting South Melbourne's future growth.

South Melbourne is distinctive from both an economic and land use perspective due to the proximity and integration of its Major Activity Centre, its Enterprise Precinct and the Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor within walking distance of each other. The relationship between them is shown in Figure 8 and is described below:

- Land along Clarendon Street, Coventry Street and the South Melbourne Market collectively comprise the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre (MAC), with a focus for business, employment, shopping, working, leisure, community facilities and higher density housing[1].
- Land on either side of the South Melbourne MAC forms part of the Enterprise Precinct, which supports a diverse array of employment generating uses, including offices, innovation and creative industries. This precinct is recognised within State Planning policy as being of regional significance which should be protected for employment and creative industries via appropriate land use zoning[2].
- Land along Kings Way forms part of a mixed use corridor which supports a mix of residential, commercial and large-format retail uses.

The proximity and complimentary nature of activities within each precinct ensures that South Melbourne Centre can continue to deliver a wide range of outcomes, including:

- Retaining a unique urban village character and street life, providing a high amenity setting for the future growth in residents, workers and visitors
- Retaining growth of existing industry clusters, so that the area can continue to develop its already strong reputation as a location for employment and creative industries
- Providing a wide mix of activities in proximity to each other, in turn enabling a wide range of social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes
- Providing a mix of housing types and affordability
- Strengthening the physical and economic links between the Activity Centre, creative clusters in South Melbourne and Montague, and the Southbank Arts Precinct.

The future success of South Melbourne as an attractive place for residents, workers and visitors relies upon a considered and curated delineation between the separate roles and functions of the MAC, Enterprise Precinct and Kings Way Mixed Use corridor.

This Structure Plan will inform new policies in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme that recognise the distinctive but complementary roles that the MAC, Enterprise and Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor each play in supporting the future growth of South Melbourne.



1 Consistent with State Planning Policy for activity centres (Clause 11.03-1S).
2 Consistent with State Planning Policy for a diversified economy (Clause 17.01-1R & 17.01-2S).

Spatial definition of the Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct, Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor and residential precincts.

This Structure Plan spatially defines the MAC, Enterprise Precinct and Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor based on consideration of present day land uses, together with relevant state and local land use policy directions for all land within the South Melbourne Structure Plan Area.

The South Melbourne Major Activity Centre boundary

State planning policy identifies that the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre (MAC) is ideally placed to provide for growth in a wide range of uses, including housing, commercial, retailing, community, employment, transport, leisure, open space, entertainment and other services[3].

Planning Practice Note 58: Structure Planning for Activity Centres (PPN58) provides criteria for determining the spatial extent of activity centres, namely their boundaries.

The current MAC boundary contained within the Port Phillip Planning Scheme has been assessed against these criteria. This assessment has identified a number of proposed additions to the current MAC boundary, as shown in Figure 10.

The South Melbourne Activity Centre Boundary Report (City of Port Phillip, June

3 *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050: Metropolitan Planning Strategy.*

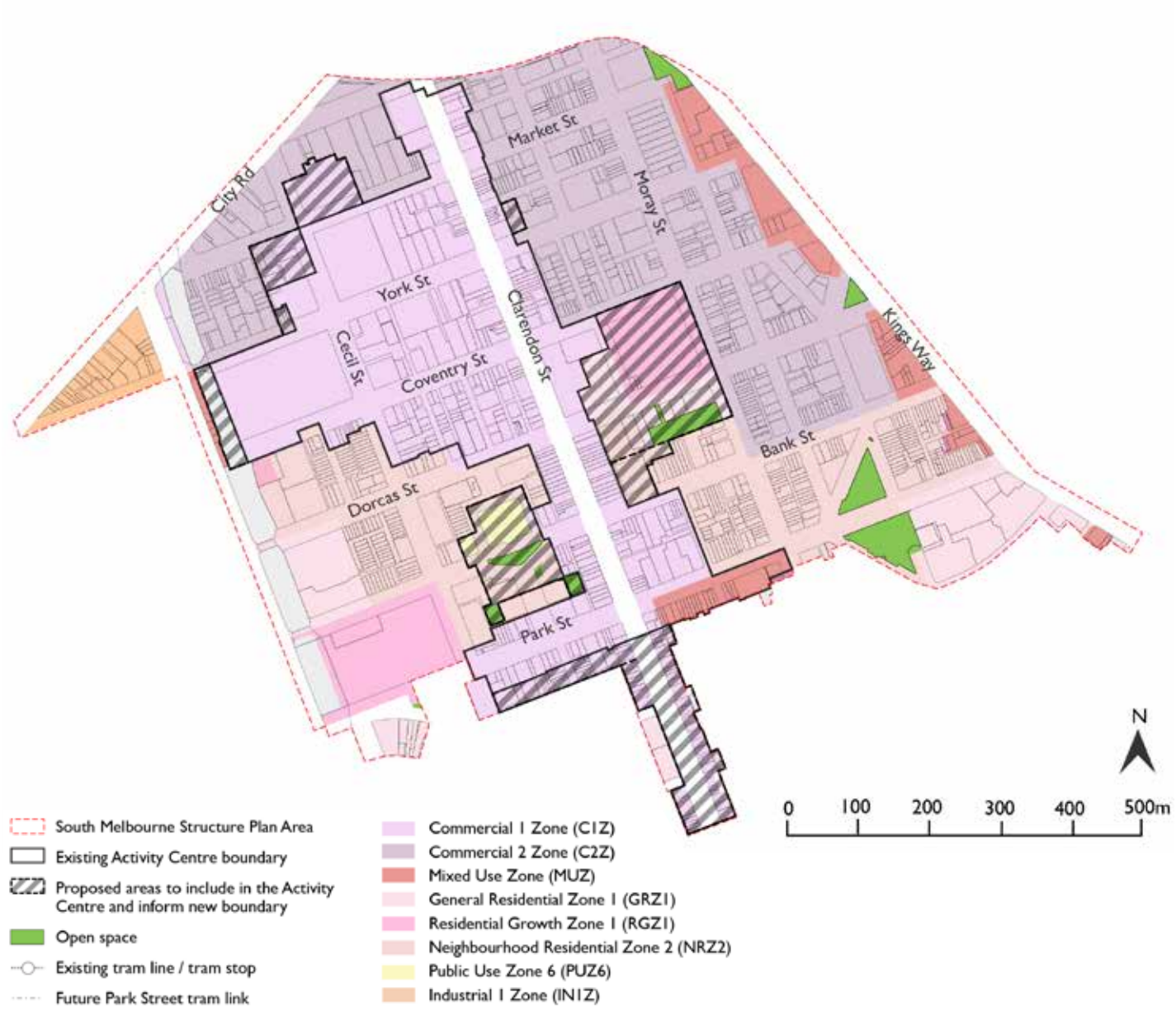

Figure 10 - Proposed South Melbourne Activity Centre Boundary.

2024) contains a detailed assessment of the MAC boundary against PPN58.

These proposed changes will include additional land within the MAC boundary, based on either the existing land use being functionally related to the activity centre, or the potential for the area to play such a role in the future.

These additions to the MAC boundary will also contribute towards achievement of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept, as defined in Plan Melbourne.

Reconciling the role of land within the MAC in catering for forecast retail, commercial and residential needs has been a major factor in determining the revised MAC boundary[4].

The role of the MAC in catering for forecast growth in different land uses has been considered in the wider context of the activity centre.

This Structure Plan seeks to cater for growth in retail, commercial and residential needs within the MAC boundary, but it does not propose any substantial land areas within the adjacent Enterprise Precinct be included within the MAC boundary, for the following reasons:

- Land within the Enterprise Precinct is of strategic economic important to the region, and it will be required to support future growth in employment and commercial floorspace
- The zoning of land within the Enterprise Precinct (Commercial 2 Zone) provides flexibility to accommodate a range of retail uses which are complementary to both the MAC and the Enterprise Precinct.
- While land within the MAC boundary will contribute towards accommodating future housing growth, there are also a number of areas identified for substantial housing growth in nearby locations that are well connected to the MAC by public transport, walking and cycling routes.

The Enterprise Precinct boundary

The Enterprise Precinct boundary includes all land within the Commercial 2 Zone and Industrial 1 Zone across South Melbourne, as shown in Figure 13 (other than a small number of instances where some zoning anomalies exist).

Both State and local policy identify land within these zones as being of regional significance and that they should be protected for such purposes.

The Mixed Use Corridor boundary

The Mixed Use Corridor boundary includes all land within the Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) along Kings Way, as shown in Figure 13. Land within this precinct is currently used for a mix of commercial, residential and large-format retail purposes.

The precinct is located close to Anzac Station and the economic analysis that has informed this Structure Plan identifies that this facility is expected to result in increased attractiveness for including residential, commercial and institutional uses[5].

4 The anticipated land use forecasts and capacity within South Melbourne Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor is described on page 35.

5 Urban Enterprise (2023).



Residential precincts

South Melbourne comprises two residential areas east and west of Clarendon Street comprising low rise houses often interspersed by mid-rise apartment and townhouse developments. Most of these areas are in the Heritage Overlay. These residential areas are mostly in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone, which has a height limit of 9 metres or two storeys, however some sites are in the General Residential Zone, which has a height limit of 11 metres or three storeys. Park Towers is in the Residential Growth Zone.

Detailed planning and building requirements for these areas are already in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme. Including these areas in the Structure Plan Area seeks to protect their established streetscape character, an attribute highly valued by the community. Importantly, the South Melbourne Structure Plan seeks to ensure that the fine grain character and heritage values of the residential areas are respected by building scale and design in larger adjoining commercial development.

Addressing zoning anomalies

The zoning of all land within the proposed MAC boundary has been reviewed in the context of its activity centre function.

There are five locations within the recommended MAC boundary where changes to zoning is proposed (refer Figures 11 and 12).

In three instances, multiple zones apply to a single site, and it is proposed to rezone the entirety of these sites to Commercial 1 Zone to provide clear alignment between the designation of these sites as part of the MAC.

In the third instance (176-188 Bank Street), land is currently in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone but the land is currently used for commercial purposes. It is proposed to rezone this site to Commercial 1 Zone to reflect its current use and to provided clear alignment between the designation of the site as part of the MAC.

A further two anomalies have been identified near the corner of Park Street and Kings Way. In the first instance (number 6 in Figure 11), two zones apply to the site, and it is proposed to rezone the entirety of these sites to Mixed Use Zone to clearly designate these sites as part of the Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor. In the second instance (number 7 in Figure 11), it is proposed to rezone this site to Mixed Use Zone, to better recognise its existing function and facilitate an integrated mixed use development outcome. Both sites accommodate small-scale commercial uses.

Other than these proposed rezonings, no other sites have been identified as warranting a change in zoning within the South Melbourne Structure Plan Area.

The proposed zoning framework for South Melbourne is shown in Figure 13. Further justification about each rezoning is in *South Melbourne Structure Plan: Zoning Anomalies Report* (City of Port Phillip, June 2024).







Address	Current Zone	Recommended Zone
① The block of land bound by York, Cecil, Market and Northumberland streets, South Melbourne	Part Commercial 1 Zone, part Commercial 2 Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
② 176-188 Bank Street, South Melbourne (former South Melbourne Butter Factory)	Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 2	Commercial 1 Zone
③ 383-385 Clarendon Street, South Melbourne	Part Commercial 1 Zone, part Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 2	Commercial 1 Zone
④ 68-72 York Street, 191-199 Clarendon Street and 31 Ross Street, South Melbourne	Part Commercial 1 Zone, part Commercial 2 Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
⑤ 120-142 Clarendon Street, Southbank	Part Commercial 1 Zone, part Commercial 2 Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
⑥ 102-106 Park Street, South Melbourne	Part Mixed Use Zone, part Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 1	Mixed Use Zone
⑦ 77 Park Street and 286-294 Kings Way, South Melbourne	General Residential Zone Schedule 1	Mixed Use Zone

Figure 11 - Sites identified as zoning anomalies and recommended new zone.



Figure 12 - Location of sites identified as zoning anomalies and recommended new zone.

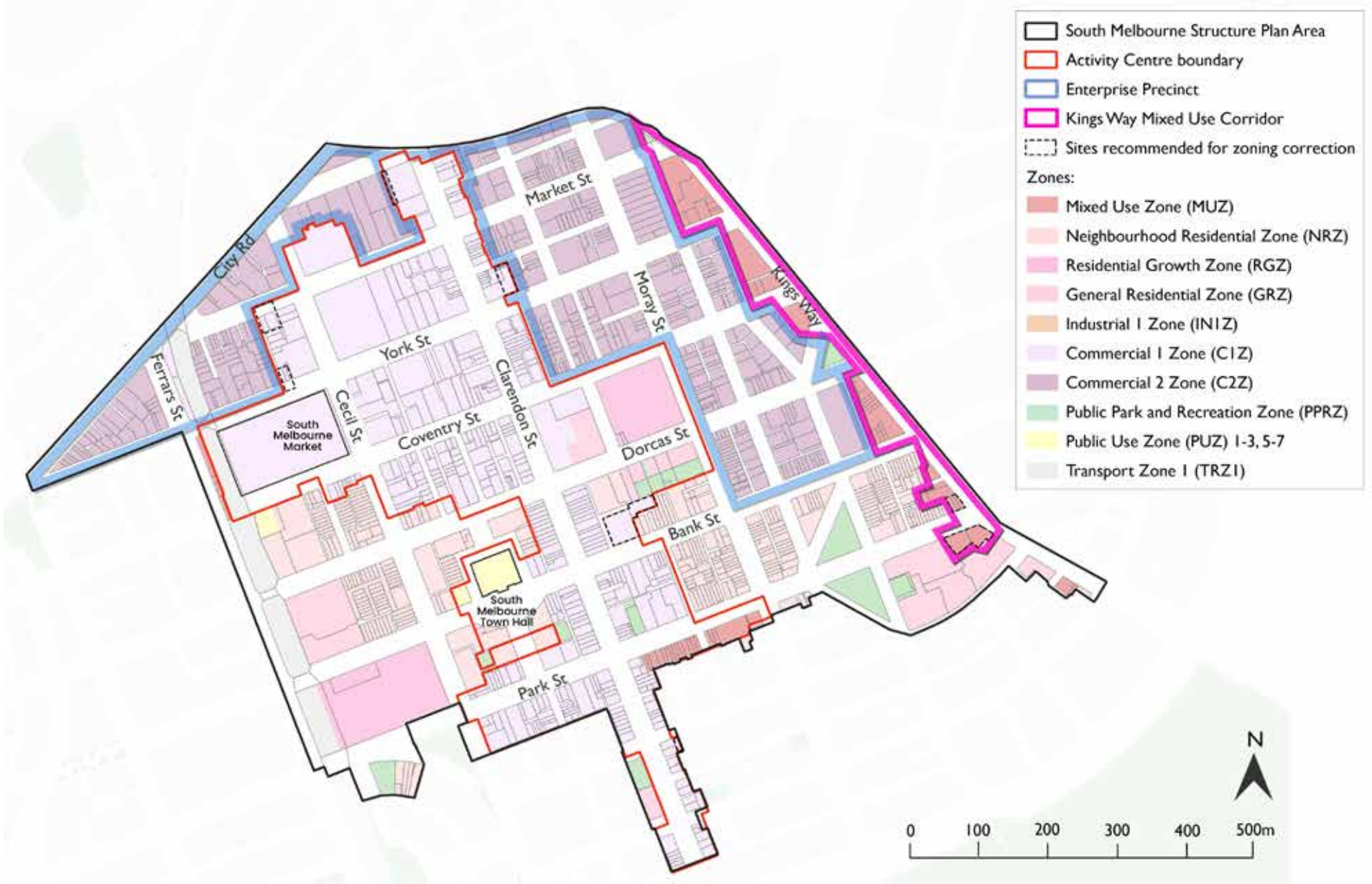

Figure 13 - Proposed zoning framework for South Melbourne.

Retaining the Commercial 2 Zone in South Melbourne's Enterprise Precinct

State planning policy directs that land within the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct should be protected for such purposes via appropriate land use zoning.

The economic analysis that has informed this Structure Plan included an assessment of which land use zoning would best support the economic diversity and vitality of land uses within the Enterprise Precinct.

The assessment considered the advantages and disadvantages of a range of zones for the Enterprise Precinct (Commercial 2, Commercial 3, Industrial 1 and Mixed Use zones) and it concluded the following:

- The Commercial 2 Zone (C2Z) is an appropriate zone to support a wider range of 'enterprise' and amenity-related land uses within the precinct, and this zone should be retained over land within the Enterprise Precinct.
- The C2Z (combined with the precinct's adjacency to the core part of the South Melbourne MAC) provides sufficient capacity for an appropriate range of land uses to establish within and adjacent to the precinct to support its intended 'enterprise' function.
- The land currently in the Industrial 1 Zone (the 'City Road Industrial Triangle' bound by City Road, Ferrars Street and York Street) should be rezoned to C2Z[6].

South Melbourne's C2Z has supported South Melbourne's success as an Enterprise Precinct, anchored by its specialisations in creative industries and professionals services for many years now. Retaining the C2Z over land within this precinct will continue to protect the Enterprise Precinct's future employment growth. In turn, this will strengthen South Melbourne's specialisations, while also providing opportunities for new industries to establish in South Melbourne and contribute to its vitality.

Rezoning the 'City Road Industrial Triangle' to the C2Z will accurately reflect the land uses already established in this area (Figure 14). The nature of these land uses aligns with those within the broader Enterprise Precinct, and applying the C2Z to this area will provide greater certainty around the desired development outcomes for this area.

The C2Z would allow for various new sensitive uses to establish on this land, and it is therefore proposed to apply an Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) to the land to ensure land is suitable for any future sensitive uses such as child care centres.

Applying the EAO to the entire area reflects the approach taken in the abutting Fishermans Bend, where the EAO has been applied to all precincts where residential development and other sensitive uses are envisaged. Studies undertaken to inform the Fishermans Bend Framework (Victorian Government, 2018) suggest that heavy metals and solvents may be widespread across Fishermans Bend and confirm issues with ground water contamination due to past land use activities. Further, a portion

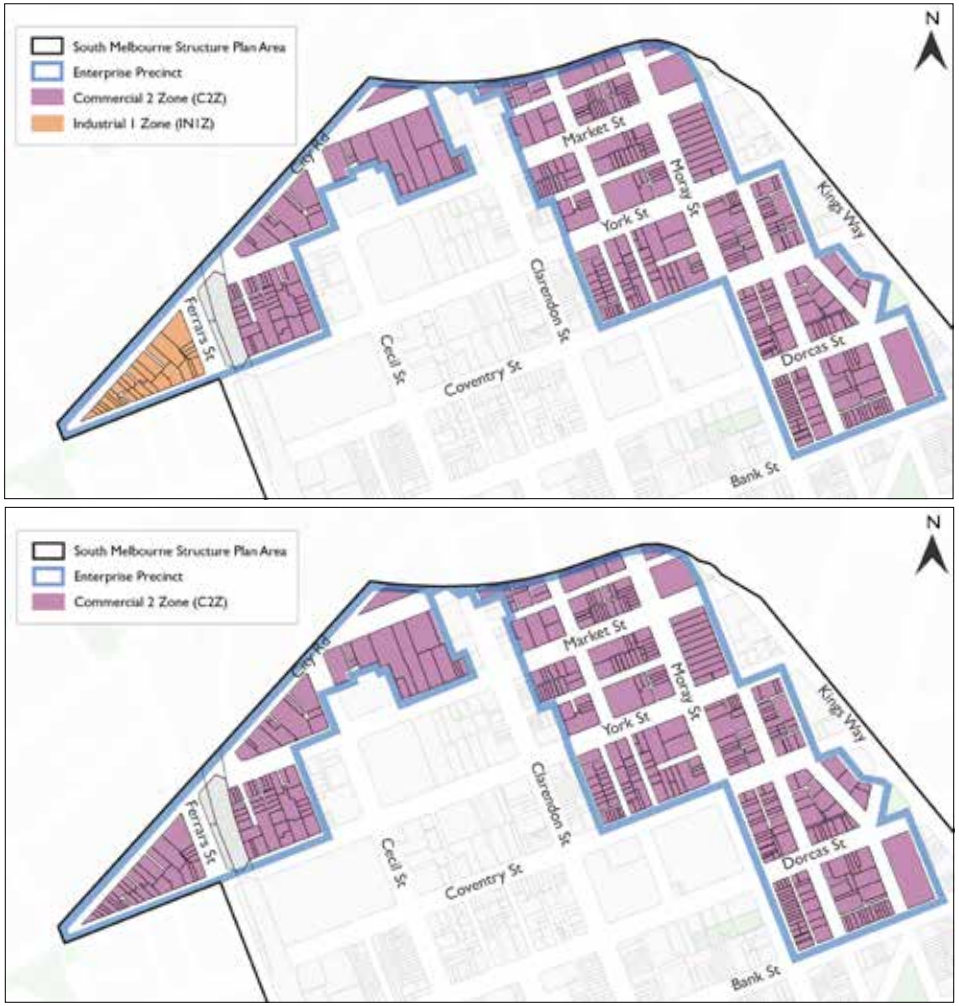

Figure 14 - South Melbourne's Enterprise Precinct with City Road triangle rezoned to Commercial 2 Zone.

6 SMEELUS, Chapter 8 (Urban Enterprise, 2023).

of Ferrars Street abutting the area is identified as a Groundwater Restricted Use.

Catering for forecast floorspace growth within South Melbourne

Planning Practice Note 58: Structure planning for activity centres (PPN58) notes that Structure Plans should demonstrate that an activity centre can accommodate projected future requirements for a wide range of uses such as housing, office, social and community infrastructure, business mix, retail, entertainment and employment uses.

PPN58 does not set any specific benchmark for the provision of housing in activity centres (other than stating that Structure Plans should provide for housing choice and diversity taking into account housing development data and housing capacity).

However, PPN58 states notes that the boundary for an activity centre should include sufficient land to provide for the commercial (retailing, office, fringe retailing and support activities such as entertainment) activities needed over a 15 to 20 year time frame and then *'into the 30-year horizon'.*

The Structure Plan has been informed by the supply and capacity assessment contained within the economic analysis that has informed this Structure Plan[7], together with the calculation of the total floorspace capacity within the proposed built form framework set out within the South Melbourne Built Form Review[8].

The economic analysis forecasts the following floorspace growth in South Melbourne over the period 2023-2040:

- Between 145,000 and 187,000 square metres of office space
- Between 16,000 square metres and 21,000 square metres of retail floorspace
- Up to 968 dwellings (equivalent to 96,800 square metres gross floorspace (@80sqm/apartment net).

The combined total floorspace (at the upper end of the forecast range) equates to approximately 304,000 square metres (net) over the period to 2040[9].

These projections need to be monitored and may vary over time. However, the have been used as a guide to assessing whether or not the land use and built form framework proposed for South Melbourne is likely to have sufficient capacity to cater for the above mentioned demand forecasts.

The economic analysis identified a potential development capacity under the existing planning framework of approximately 360,000 square metres (net)[10].

The built form review has identified that the total floorspace capacity associated with the proposed revised planning framework is approximately 525,000 square metres (net).

The combined total floorspace (at the upper end of the forecast range) of 304,000 square metres (net) would require approximately 57% of the development capacity available under the proposed revised built form framework to be realised over the period to 2040.

The economic analysis has also identified that:

- There will be strong competition between retail, commercial and residential uses within the MAC boundary (namely between land in the C1Z and MUZ) for development sites within these zones over the period to 2040.
- Land within the existing C2Z and IN1Z will play a critical role in catering for future commercial floorspace needs in South Melbourne over this time horizon.
- There is no need to rezone land within the C2Z or IN1Z to the C1Z in order to create a 'contingent' floorspace capacity for residential or retail uses within the study area over the forecast period, as there are other options available to achieve this which should be considered.

Implementing the outcomes of the built form review would substantially increase the floorspace capacity across South Melbourne, albeit that a substantial proportion of this increase would be available on land within the Enterprise Precinct rather than the MAC.

This overall increase in floorspace capacity will ensure that South Melbourne can accommodate forecast commercial floorspace demand over the period to 2040, even in the context of land fragmentation. While a substantial proportion of this growth is expected to occur within the Enterprise Precinct (C2Z), this is appropriate given its adjacency the South Melbourne MAC and the land use, economic and spatial synergies between each area.

In relation to retail uses, specific forms of complementary retail uses (for example, food and beverage) will be encouraged within the Enterprise Precinct (C2Z), and new policies will be introduced into the planning scheme to provide flexibility for certain types of 'core retail' (shop) uses in locations within the Enterprise Precinct that are adjacent to the MAC boundary.

In relation to residential uses, the Structure Plan provides for housing growth within the MAC boundary, and broader housing policies, as set out in the City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy (August 2024) and Port Phillip Planning Scheme, identify a number of other locations close to South Melbourne that have the potential to cater for significant housing growth. These areas have the potential to absorb any potential future unmet residential demand in the study area, should this need arise.

7 Urban Enterprise (2023).

8 Hodyl & Co (2024), pp.122-123.
9 Hodyl & Co (2024), pp.122-123.
10 Urban Enterprise (2023), page 90.

Actions

Planning Scheme Amendment - Policy

1.1 Prepare a planning scheme amendment based on the content in this South Melbourne Structure Plan to:

- Introduce a new place-based policy and replace the existing Design and Development Overlay Schedule 8 in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme that supports South Melbourne as a vibrant, diverse, accessible and high amenity place comprising a Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Mixed Use Corridor.
- Includes specific policy directions for each precinct within South Melbourne that recognises their distinctive but complementary role in supporting the future growth of South Melbourne and provides direction on economic development, land use, built form and heritage, access and movement and the public realm.
- Ensure planning policy and controls encourage a wide range of land uses in the Major Activity Centre and position the Enterprise Precinct as the last remaining 'business only' land area in the southern city fringe, where residential uses are prohibited and range of building types are retained and/or created to cater for diverse businesses.

1.2 Ensure built form controls for South Melbourne differentiate the area from neighbouring areas so that different business settings are available to a range of business types over the medium to long term.

1.3 Ensure local policy in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme continues to recognise South Melbourne as a Major Activity Centre that encourages a range of commercial, retail, residential, community and public uses.

1.4 Use the *South Melbourne Structure Plan: Activity Centre Boundary Report* (City of Port Phillip, June 2024) to define the spatial extent of the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre as shown in Figure 10, extending its spatial extent to include:

- Site 1: 100 Market Street (existing Aldi centre site)
- Site 2: 80-94 Cecil Street, 166-180 York and 80-94 Market Streets
- Site 3: South Melbourne Station Route 96 light rail tram stop
- Site 4: Area comprising Homes Victoria public housing site at 166 Moray Street and 209 Dorcas Street, Skinners Adventure Playground at 179 Dorcas Street, St Lukes Anglican Church at 210 Dorcas Street, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia at 221-229 Dorcas Street and Apple Blossoms Early Learning Centre at 219 Dorcas Street South Melbourne
- Site 5: 176-188 Bank Street South Melbourne (Former South Melbourne Butter factory
- Site 6: Emerald Hill 'civic heart': Area comprising South Melbourne Town Hall, Emerald Hill Library and Heritage Centre, 222 Bank Street (currently occupied by Access Arts Victoria), Foundry Site Park and Edythe McCallum Reserve and the current South Melbourne Police Station at 211 Bank Street
- Site 7: Land already in the Commercial 1 Zone bound by Park, Clarendon, Dow and Cecil streets
- Site 8: Land along Clarendon Street between Park and Thomson Streets already in the Commercial 1 Zone
- Site 9: 31 Ross Street and rear of 68-72 York Street.

Planning Scheme Amendment - Rezoning

1.5 Correct zoning anomalies shown in Figures 11 and 12 at the following addresses:

- The block of land bound by York, Cecil, Market and Northumberland streets, South Melbourne
- 176-188 Bank Street, South Melbourne (former South Melbourne Butter Factory)
- 383-385 Clarendon Street, South Melbourne
- 68-72 York Street, 191-199 Clarendon Street and 31 Ross Street, South Melbourne
- 120-142 Clarendon Street, Southbank
- 102-106 Park Street, South Melbourne
- 77 Park Street and 286-294 Kings Way, South Melbourne

1.6 Rezone land currently in the Industrial 1 Zone to the Commercial 2 Zone and apply the Environmental Audit Overlay to support this area's future growth and evolution as part of the broader South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct.

1.7 Retain the Commercial 2 Zone in the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct.

Activities and Uses Objective 2:

Support ongoing business growth and economic specialisation in South Melbourne

City fringe locations such as South Melbourne offer important alternatives to Melbourne's CBD, providing a wide range of commercial floorspace options, and a different type of amenity and vibrancy to that found in the central city. South Melbourne is an attractive location for business as it offers a distinct suite of characteristics that can continue to support economic growth and development.

The proximity of employment land to the Clarendon Street shopping strip, South Melbourne Market and the Southbank Arts precinct provides it with a 'quality of place' proposition that also differentiates it from any number of other older industrial areas across inner Melbourne.

These characteristics collectively support the function of South Melbourne as an Enterprise Precinct.

The economic analysis that has informed this Structure Plan assessed the commercial land within South Melbourne against a set of factors driving the success of enterprise precincts (set out with the Victorian Government policy paper *'Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy'*, 2018).

This assessment identified that South Melbourne rates strongly for its quality of place, critical mass, infrastructure and accessibility, but not so strongly against factors such as affordability and the presence of anchor institutions[11].

This Structure Plan seeks to capitalise on South Melbourne's existing economic strengths and address areas of weakness in order to optimise the value of the place as a vibrant Enterprise Precinct.

Recognising the 'enterprise precinct' function of South Melbourne in local planning policy

State planning policy has recently been updated to formally recognise and support the development of enterprise precincts that build the critical mass of employment in an area, leverage the area's public and private sector economic competitive strengths and assets, and cater to a diversity of employment types and scales[12]. The need to retain and encourage the development of land in South Melbourne for creative industries is now also formally recognised within the Port Phillip Planning Scheme[13].

Economic analysis informing this Structure Plan has confirmed the need to protect and support the unique pre-conditions that enable the ongoing growth of business and creative industries within the South Melbourne's Enterprise Precinct.

Therefore, the South Melbourne Structure Plan provides the opportunity to provide better local policy directions for the South Melbourne's Enterprise Precinct.

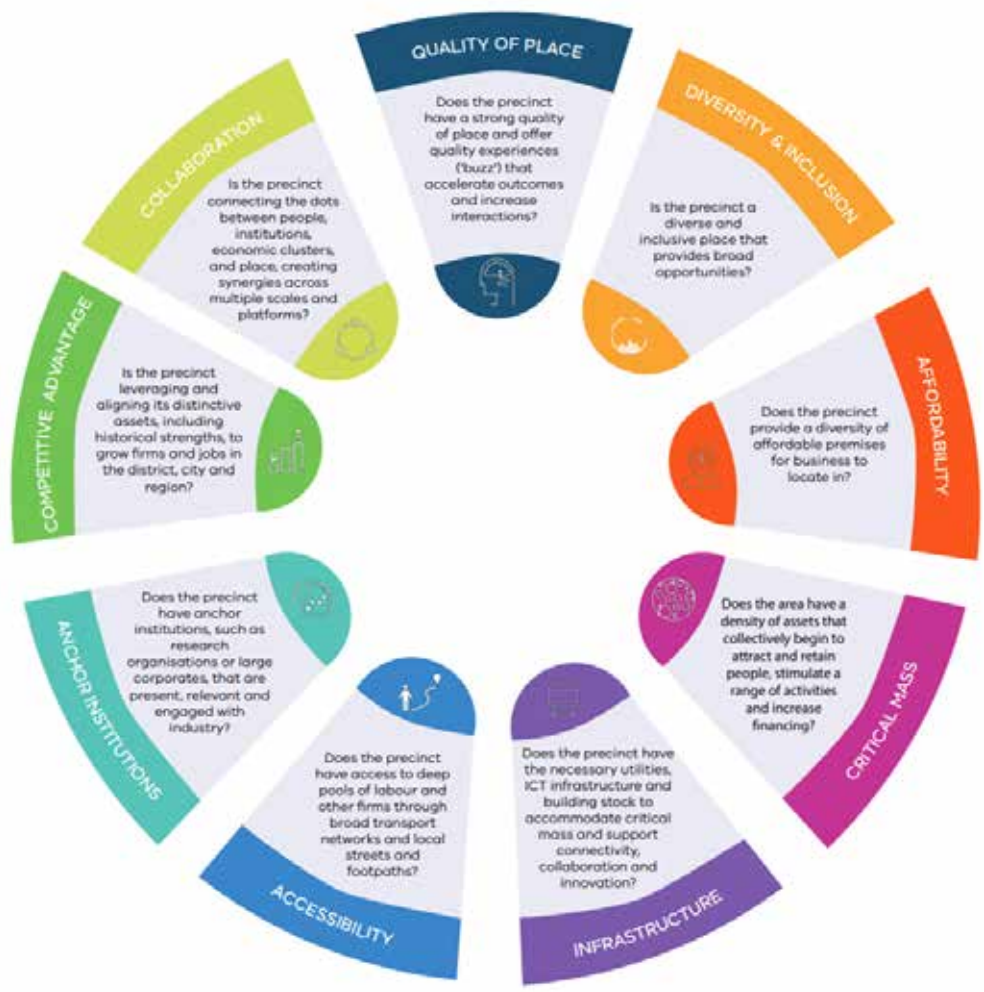

Figure 15 - Factors driving the success of enterprise precincts (Victorian Government 2018, p.11)

11 SMEELUS, Chapter 7 (Urban Enterprise, 2023).

12 PPF Clause 17.01-2S.
13 PPF Clause 17.01-01R.

Preserving and enhancing the unique place qualities of South Melbourne

Quality of place is an important attractor for talent, particularly for creative workers. It includes both the quality of the physical amenity of an area as well as the availability of a diversity of uses that allow for social interaction and collaboration.

This Structure Plan seeks to preserve and enhance South Melbourne's heritage, low to mid rise and fine grain built form, quality public realm and genuine mix of land uses. These are all important features that make South Melbourne an attractive place for business, including creative industries.

New planning controls and policy will help continue to guide urban design and development outcomes that ensure South Melbourne remains attractive to these businesses. Such outcomes include:

- Preserving valued aspects of South Melbourne's heritage and physical character
- Preserving and enhancing the amenity of streets (for example, sunlight access on key pedestrian routes, street activation, openness and sky visibility, street activation)
- Maintaining a distinction between the low to medium rise character of South Melbourne and high rise buildings in the CBD, Southbank and along Kings Way.

Retain and grow South Melbourne's economic specialisations

South Melbourne has established concentrations of firms within related industry sectors, and this critical mass is an important factor in its success as an Enterprise Precinct.

The following economic specialisations already existing within South Melbourne and having strong potential for future growth:

- Creative industries - an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts, culture, screen, music, design, games development, fashion, publishing and more. Victoria's creative industries largely comprise small organisations, micro businesses and sole practitioners. They operate within a creative ecosystem that extends from iconic cultural attractions and global businesses to educational institutions, government bodies and community groups.
- Professional and financial services - activities that relate to real estate and property services, engineering, management advice and consulting, insurance, legal, investment and accounting services, and administrative related services.
- Retail, hospitality and personal services - activities that relate to the retailing of goods and services, hospitality and personal services such as fitness, recreation, health, wellbeing and beauty[14].

These specialisations add an estimated $1.1 billion to Port Phillip's economy, demonstrating the overall importance of these industries in terms of productivity and value-add to the local economy.

This Structure Plan seeks to retain and support the growth of these economic specialisations by preserving employment land within an appropriate zone, namely the C2Z, and by supporting the creation of a diversity of commercial development typologies that are suitable for creative industries, professional services, retail, hospitality and personal service firms.

Provide the digital infrastructure to retain, support and grow South Melbourne's economic specialisations

The provision of world-class digital infrastructure is a particularly important factor ensuring the ongoing success of South Melbourne as an Enterprise Precinct. Providing the necessary utilities and infrastructure is central to supporting connectivity, collaboration, and innovation, for example supplying high-capacity broadband networks.



14 SMEELUS (Urban Enterprise, 2023)

Opportunities may also exist to embed smart technologies that enable real-time data to be collated and used to inform planning and guide investment across South Melbourne.

Retaining and creating affordable workspaces

As land values and rents increase, affordable spaces for business such as offices, studios, shopfronts and industrial premises reduce. For some creative and emerging businesses, this challenge leads to relocation elsewhere. Similarly, increasing rents and redevelopment of existing rented premises presents a threat to the retention of micro and small businesses, especially those using former industrial premises. The loss of smaller businesses at the 'emerging' end of the business cycle could limit local ideas creation and business and productivity growth.

Therefore, there are opportunities for state and local government to explore how to ensure that South Melbourne remains accessible and affordable for startups and creative industries. One way to do this is by retaining the Commercial 2 Zone in South Melbourne's Enterprise Precinct, which contains a variety of building types suitable for micro, small and medium businesses.

However, broader State-led planning policies seeking to provide more affordable workspaces are also required to support local initiatives such as the City's partnership with the Fitzroy Street Business Association and Renew Australia to deliver Renew Fitzroy Street, which provides low cost retail spaces. State policy can help retain affordable workspaces in strategic locations.

Supporting coworking spaces

Leasing a space can be prohibitive for many small and start-up businesses. Hence, coworking spaces have emerged across high rent locations such as South Melbourne to minimise rent costs. Coworking spaces are open plan offices where spaces can be leased. Often these spaces feature shared facilities such as meeting rooms and kitchens. By bringing freelancers, early-stage entrepreneurs and other small business owners together, this can provide a supportive environment, along opportunities for social interaction that can drive innovation.

Supporting business establishment and growth, linking local workers with local jobs and exploring opportunities

The City is committed to actively supporting business establishment and growth in South Melbourne and throughout the municipality. Examples include the City of Port Phillip's Business Concierge service, as well as working with traders' associations, the Prosperous Port Phillip Business Advisory Group and other stakeholder groups. Continuing these initiatives will support South Melbourne's growth. Delivering placemaking initiatives guided by public realm actions in the South Melbourne Structure Plan and building on the directions in the *Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2023-2026* to develop an investment attraction strategy are also important initiatives that will support South Melbourne's attractiveness to businesses.

The most common occupations held by South Melbourne residents are professionals (40%) and managers (23%) in the professional, financial, technical and insurance service sectors, generally reflecting South Melbourne's economic specialisations.

Hence, exploring how to link the expertise of the local workforce with local businesses will not only support South Melbourne's economic development, but also its vibrancy as more people live and work within their neighbourhood. Connecting local secondary school and tertiary students to businesses will help develop the expertise of the emerging workforce of the future, including connecting students from the new University of Melbourne Fishermans Bend campus to be delivered in the City of Melbourne.

Within this work are opportunities to collaborate with and advocate to the State Government for investment attraction, infrastructure delivery, workforce and destination development.

Data collection and monitoring to drive ongoing investment in South Melbourne

As South Melbourne's popularity as a business destination increases, it will be crucial to collect accurate and detailed data to effectively monitor and review business activity in South Melbourne and encourage ongoing investment.

Using South Melbourne as a pilot to establish a municipal Census of Land Use and Employment similar to that undertaken by the City of Melbourne to collect data and build a database containing key information will expand and enhance the City of Port Phillip's business planning, policy development and strategic decision making capacity.

Providing more comprehensive information about land use, employment and economic activity in South Melbourne, will assist investors, consultants, students, urban researchers, property analysts and businesses gain key insights and make investment decisions.

Actions

Planning Scheme Amendment - Policy

1.8 As part of preparing a planning scheme amendment to implement the South Melbourne Structure Plan in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, ensure the planning policy framework in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme for South Melbourne:

- Prioritises delivery of commercial floorspace to accommodate projected employment growth, especially in small and medium premises within the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct
- Supports the growth of media, and creative industries, professional services, hospitality and personal service firms by preserving employment land within an appropriate zone (Commercial 2 Zone), and preserving and/or creation of a diversity of commercial development typologies
- Promotes the preservation and enhancement South Melbourne's heritage, low-mid rise and fine-grain built form, quality public realm and genuine mix of land uses
- Supports the growing role and utilisation of coworking spaces in South Melbourne.

Digital infrastructure

1.9 Support the provision of high-capacity digital infrastructure throughout South Melbourne.

1.10 Investigate opportunities to provide 'smart' infrastructure within South Melbourne to facilitate innovation, investment and data activation.

Support business establishment and growth

1.11 Encourage businesses to establish in South Melbourne and support their prosperity by:

- Building on the directions in the *Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2023-2026* to develop an investment attraction strategy for South Melbourne
- Continue using the City of Port Phillip's Business Concierge service to support businesses establish and grow their business in South Melbourne
- Continue working with and supporting the Clarendon and Coventry Streets Business Association and other stakeholder groups to support businesses and drive investment in South Melbourne
- Continue working with the Prosperous Port Phillip Business Advisory Group to:
  - Identify and facilitate the co-creation and co-contribution of short, medium and longer-term actions the City can make to achieve a vibrant and thriving City
  - Support recovery efforts for local traders hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic
  - Create and attract new jobs to Port Phillip
- Delivering placemaking initiatives guided by public realm actions in this South Melbourne Structure Plan.

1.12 Work with State Government departments and agencies to advocate for State Government investment attraction, infrastructure delivery, workforce and destination development.

Linking local workers with local jobs

1.13 Provide South Melbourne's educated labour force with opportunities to work closer to their homes by:

- Exploring how to connect South Melbourne's educated labour force with local businesses
- Exploring how to connect local educational institutions and local students with local businesses
- Retaining employment land, especially land in the Enterprise Precinct that is in the Commercial 2 Zone.

Actions

Collect accurate and detailed data to effectively monitor and review business activity in South Melbourne and encourage ongoing investment

1.14 Investigate the feasibility of using South Melbourne as a pilot to establish a municipal Census of Land Use and Employment similar to that undertaken by the City of Melbourne to collect data and build a database containing information such as:

- Industry structure and type (ANZSIC code and number of establishments or business locations)
- Floor space type and use (office, retail, industrial, accommodation or entertainment and office vacancy rates)
- Employment type (full-time, part-time, casual or contractor)
- Building information (number of floors, year of construction, gross floor area and lettable area)
- Venue and capacity measures (cafe or restaurant seats, child care centre spaces, off-street car parking spaces, bicycle and shower facilities, residential dwellings, student dwellings, student beds, theatre and stadium seats, conference and meeting seats and gaming machines)
- Spatial distribution (maps, CLUE small areas, blocks and customised regions).

1.15 Monitor the growth and change in South Melbourne by reviewing changes in commercial office floorspace, employment growth, planning permit activity and rents.

Advocacy to support affordability

1.16 Advocate to the State Government to provide further planning guidance and best practice models for the delivery of affordable workspaces for creative and innovation industries necessary for the desired economic activity.

1.17 Advocate to the State Government to adopt a state-wide definition of affordable workspace and creative neighbourhoods.



Activities and Uses Objective 3:

Support diversification of retail, services and amenities in South Melbourne

The role of the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre in supporting the needs of a growing population

The South Melbourne Major Activity Centre (MAC) plays an important role in delivering a range of retail, hospitality and other services to residents living nearby and further afield, as well as to the many workers and businesses that are located nearby, and people visiting South Melbourne.

The South Melbourne MAC will continue to provide for a wide range of retail, hospitality and other uses, with such activities complementing the regionally significant South Melbourne Market.

New planning policy will encourage the creation of spaces for retail, hospitality and other non-residential uses on the ground floor of sites within the South Melbourne MAC that are in the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z).

The role of the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct in providing for complementary retail, services and amenities

There are a range of retail uses, services and amenities that are complementary to the employment function of the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct. Examples of these include cafes, bars, takeaway premises, convenience shops, child care and gyms.

New planning policy will encourage the establishment of such uses at on sites across the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct.

Any future supermarket uses proposed within the Enterprise Precinct are encouraged to be located immediately adjacent to the South Melbourne MAC and be well connected to the South Melbourne Market or Clarendon Street, Coventry Street and York Street retail shopping strips, to concentrate such activities centrally within South Melbourne, and strengthen the economic function of the MAC.

Other types of shop uses (excluding convenience shops) are generally discouraged from locating within the Enterprise Precinct.

Providing community, social and recreational facilities to support residents and workers

A wide range of public and private community, social and recreational facilities are supported across South Melbourne Central Such uses will add to the diversity and vitality of the place for residents, workers and visitors alike.

Expand the night time economy

South Melbourne provides a vibrant retail, hospitality, and personal services sector, coming second only to St Kilda in the density of live music venues. However, there is a notable lack of vibrancy in the Enterprise Precinct. These areas can be dark and unsafe at night due to the absence of a thriving nighttime economy, given workers tend to head straight home after work without lingering.

Therefore, opportunities exist to investigate how to leverage this specialisation to expand South Melbourne's night time economy, including designating South Melbourne as a live music precinct similar to St Kilda.





Actions

Planning Scheme Amendment - Policy

1.18 As part of preparing a planning scheme amendment to implement the South Melbourne Structure Plan in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, ensure the planning policy framework in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme for South Melbourne:

- Supports diversification of retail, services and amenities in South Melbourne MAC and Enterprise Precinct
- Encourage the creation of spaces for retail, hospitality and other non-residential uses on the ground floor of sites within the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre that are zoned Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)
- Encourages a range of uses such as cafés, bars, takeaway premises, convenience shops, child care, gymnasiums, etc. to locate across the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct
- Encourages any future supermarket uses proposed within the Enterprise Precinct to be located immediately adjacent to the South Melbourne MAC and well connected to the South Melbourne Market or Clarendon Street, Coventry Street and York Street retail shopping strips, to concentrate such activities centrally within South Melbourne, and strengthen the economic function of the MAC
- Discourages other types of shop uses (excluding convenience shops)) from locating within the Enterprise Precinct
- Supports leveraging South Melbourne's specialisation in hospitality and speciality food related manufacturing and distribution services to grow its offering in the Enterprise Precinct
- Encourages a wide range of public and private community, social and recreational facilities are supported across South Melbourne.

Night-time economy and live music

1.19 Investigate opportunities to expand South Melbourne's night-time economy, particularly within the C2Z area through a strategic review.

1.20 Seek opportunities to support live music in South Melbourne, including exploring the possibility of designating South Melbourne as a dedicated live music precinct.



Activities and Uses Objective 4:

Provide opportunities for ongoing reinvestment, mixed use development and new employment floorspace within walking distance to Anzac Station and Park Street tram upgrade

Encouraging and supporting investment in South Melbourne's economy

One of South Melbourne's strategic advantages is its excellent access to public transport. The new Anzac Station, expected to open in 2025, will strengthen this advantage. Anzac Station will provide heavy rail public transport to the South Melbourne and St Kilda Road areas for the first time. Anzac Station will improve access to South Melbourne from Melbourne's north-western and the south-eastern suburbs. Associated with the new Anzac Station will be the construction of the Park Street link, which will redirect trams from St Kilda Road along Park Street and Clarendon Street into the CBD. This will significantly increase trams and commuters traveling through South Melbourne, potentially encouraging greater visitation into South Melbourne.

Figure 16 shows that the south-eastern section of the Enterprise Precinct and Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor will be within 800m (a standard measure of 'walking distance') from the station entrance. In turn, improving accessibility and walkability from Anzac Station to South Melbourne's Activity Centre and Enterprise Precinct will be crucial.

Given Anzac Station will significantly improve public transport access to the South Melbourne and St Kilda Road areas, it is expected that demand will increase for employment uses. According to the *South Melbourne Employment, Economic and Land Use Study* (Urban Enterprise 2023), commercial floorspace requirements are projected to be between 145,000 to 187,000 square metres by 2040 .

New planning policy and controls presented in the South Melbourne Structure Plan and implemented in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme will encourage ongoing reinvestment, mixed use development and new employment floorspace in areas close to public transport. Doing so will ensure that South Melbourne remains a premiere location for a variety of businesses within its Enterprise Precinct and activity centre.

The South Melbourne Structure Plan area shares a direct interface with the Domain precinct. Adopted by Council on 18 September 2019, the *Domain Precinct Public Realm Masterplan* will continue to guide public realm improvements in the Domain precinct.

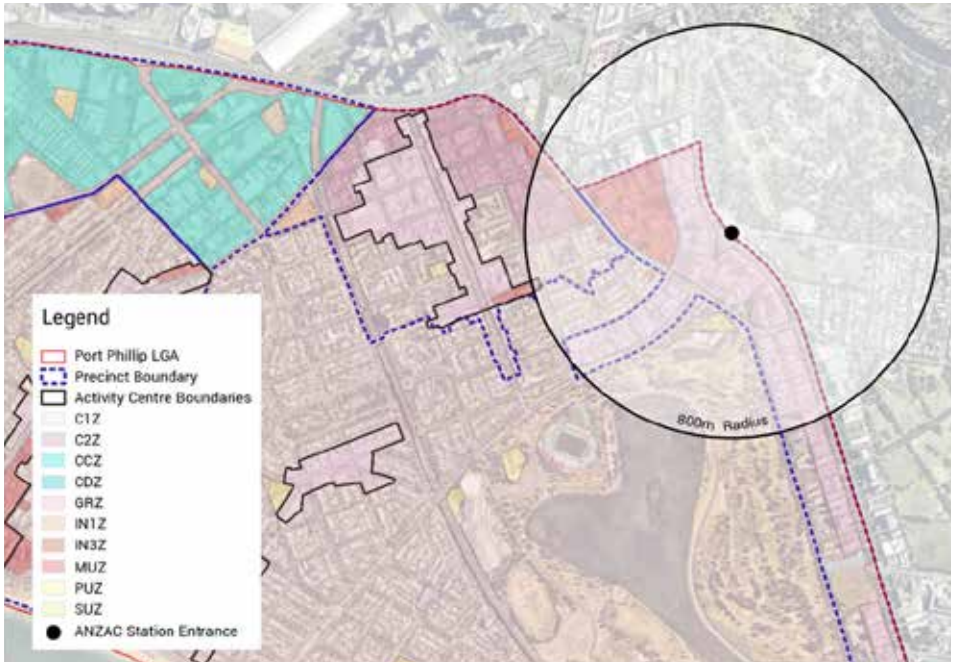

Figure 16 - Anzac Station location and proximity to Structure Plan area (Urban Enterprise 2023).





Actions

Planning Scheme Amendment - Policy

1.21 As part of preparing a planning scheme amendment to implement the South Melbourne Structure Plan in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, ensure the planning policy framework in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme for South Melbourne provides opportunities for ongoing reinvestment, mixed use development and new employment floorspace in areas close to public transport.

1.22 Use the actions in this South Melbourne Structure Plan to drive ongoing investment in South Melbourne and support its evolution as a vibrant, diverse, accessible and high amenity place comprising a Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Mixed Use Corridor.

Domain Precinct Public Realm Masterplan

1.23 Continue using the *Domain Precinct Public Realm Masterplan* (adopted by Council on 18 September 2019) to guide public realm improvements in the Domain Precinct.

Activities and Uses Objective 5:

Capitalise on the popularity of the South Melbourne Market to create a thriving street-based retail precinct

South Melbourne Market – a treasured landmark now and into the future

South Melbourne Market is one of the major drawcards to the area. Since 1867, South Melbourne Market has been a treasured inner-city landmark and a favourite amongst locals and visitors. It is the quintessential village market, a place where people come not only to purchase fresh food, but to meet, eat, drink, shop, discover, share and connect. With annual visitation of at least 4 million people the South Melbourne Market is a major retail destination which directly contributes to the amenity and vibrancy of the Structure Plan Area. Several office and residential developments have been constructed or are underway near the market, with this intensification of activity indicating the desirability of businesses, workers, and residents to be located near the Market.

South Melbourne Market Project Connect is currently being undertaken to futureproof this thriving village market. Project Connect is currently in the preliminary stage, with designs being developed that address the best use of the Market footprint to achieve the desired outcomes which include reviewing current structural issues, integration with surrounding roads, footpaths and car parking, and assessing safety and amenity requirements.

While the South Melbourne Market Project Connect is currently in development, this Structure Plan can support the Market by aiming to increase activity along and integration with York Street. Part of this initiative involves implementing planning policies to preserve solar access to the area, with a particular focus on ensuring that key locations like the Market receive ample sunlight, especially during the winter months.

Moreover, there are also opportunities to explore how to leverage the strength of the South Melbourne Market to provide greater benefit for the whole area. Leveraging the Market's strength as an anchor that draws people from a broad catchment will encourage people to spend more time within the broader South Melbourne Major Activity Centre. This, in turn, boosts foot traffic, benefiting local businesses and contributing to the Market's overall success and vibrancy.

Actions

Planning Scheme Amendment - Policy

1.24 As part of preparing a planning scheme amendment to implement the South Melbourne Structure Plan in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, ensure the planning policy framework in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme supports the South Melbourne Market's renewal, particularly with its interface to the public realm.

South Melbourne Market – other actions

1.25 Continue implementing the *South Melbourne Market Strategic Plan 2021-25*, which includes moving towards financial sustainability, improved customer experience and an enhanced and safer public asset for the City and its visitors, as well as implementing future strategic plans.

1.26 Continue progressing South Melbourne Market Project Connect.

1.27 Identify opportunities to leverage the South Melbourne Market's strength as an anchor that draws people from a broad catchment will encourage people to spend more time within the broader South Melbourne Major Activity Centre.

1.28 Consistent with Council's advocacy position prior to the 2022 State and Federal elections, seek opportunities for a partnership with the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to co-fund a renewed and reinvigorated South Melbourne Market to ensure it can continue to thrive in the local community.







Activities and Uses Objective 6:

Accommodate the housing needs of a welcoming, resilient and future-focused community

Supporting sustainable housing growth and change

By 2036, an extra 38,290 people are expected to move to the City of Port Phillip and live in an additional 21,480 homes . The *City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039* is one of the main ways the City will plans for our residents' current and future housing needs. It considers population growth, housing demand and supply, housing quality and diversity, affordability, and sustainability.

The Strategy determines how housing growth can be best accommodated in South Melbourne and Port Phillip, including where and what type of housing is required. Ultimately, *City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039*will be implemented through the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The Strategy's key draft housing Principles include:

- ***Resilient Housing:*** *Facilitating housing development that adapts and mitigates the impacts of climate change.*
- ***Diverse Housing:*** *Facilitating housing of diverse size, tenure, type and cost/ affordability that accommodate existing and future communities of all ages, genders, abilities and needs.*
- ***Inspiring Housing:*** *Facilitating innovative, site-responsive, design that contributes positively to the street and make our neighbourhoods safe, welcoming, distinct, and inspiring.*
- ***Evolving Housing:*** *Facilitating housing change to meet contemporary housing needs that are aspired by current and future communities.*

The South Melbourne Structure Plan supports the development of *City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039* by identifying the scale and form anticipated for the centre, including building height limits. Future scale and built form is informed by the urban design and heritage analysis presented in Theme 2: Built Form. This information is a key factor, amongst other base assumptions, used by the Housing Strategy to determine the total housing capacity within the centre.

Furthermore, the plan establishes a preferred land use framework. By retaining the Commercial 1 Zone in the Major Activity Centre, this will ensure that South Melbourne continues to provide housing in locations well-served by public transport, jobs and amenities. Doing so will contribute to South Melbourne's vibrancy. Retaining the Mixed Use Zone along the Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor seeks to achieve a similar aim.

However, rezoning land in the Commercial 2 Zone for housing growth is not recommended. This land, designated as an Enterprise Precinct, is recognised in State policy for its significant contribution to Victoria's economy and opportunities to provides for employment and innovation. Retaining the Commercial 2 Zone is crucial for South Melbourne to support employment growth, which is projected to increase from 23,100 in 2020 to between 30,700 and 36,700 in 2040. This too will support South Melbourne's vibrancy.

Housing to support an evolving neighbourhood

Ongoing demographic trends towards the increase of one person households, along with changing work patterns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, highlight the importance of providing diverse dwelling types. Similarly, increasing purchase and rent prices highlight the need for affordable housing options, including social housing, which makes an important contribution to South Melbourne. Affordable housing is housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the needs of very low and moderate-income households.

Social housing is short and long-term rental housing that is owned and run by the government or not-for-profit agencies. New housing should be sustainable, durable and demonstrate high quality design and amenity.

Housing growth in South Melbourne will be relatively steady. However, neighbouring areas particularly Montague (Fishermans Bend), Southbank and Domain will experience population growth that will expand South Melbourne's worker and visitor catchment, as shown earlier in Figure 5. Already, Southbank is one of Australia's most dense neighbourhoods, as is Melbourne CBD. In this way, South Melbourne will benefit from this change, by serving these future populations, while retaining its valued character and unique identity for generations to come.



Emerald Hill Court and Housing precinct

Homes Victoria is preparing a master plan to revitalise the Emerald Hill Court public housing estate bound by Dorcas, Moray, Coventry and St Luke streets.

The master plan will focus on improvements including new housing, ground-floor uses which respond to local needs, improved connections around the site, and better green and shared spaces.

The master plan aims to improve outcomes for Emerald Hill residents and the broader South Melbourne community by planning for:

- Future development of social and affordable homes for more Victorians
- New community facilities and ground-floor uses
- New movement pathways and improved open and green spaces.

The master plan boundary includes Skinners Adventure Playground, which is owned by the City of Port Phillip. Opportunities to improve the layout and interface to meet future community needs will be explored. The City of Port Phillip is not disposing of Skinners Adventure playground. It will remain accessible to the community. The City's 10-year financial plan allocates funds towards upgrading Skinners Adventure Playground. In this way, there are opportunities for the City to collaborate with Homes Victoria to seek the best possible outcome for the community.

Homes Victoria will also deliver Stage 1 of the Emerald Hill Big Housing Build which will integrate new social and affordable housing with a community hospital.

As part of Stage 1, Homes Victoria will build at least 70 new homes and include ground floor uses and better open spaces. The site will also accommodate a new Emerald Hill Community Hospital that will be operated by Alfred Health in partnership with Star Health and will provide tailored health services to meet the community's needs.

The Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct is being delivered by Homes Victoria and the Victorian Health Building Authority. Construction will start in 2023.

This Structure Plan confirms the City's support for retaining, upgrading and increasing the provision of social and public housing.







Park Towers

Homes Victoria has commenced taking steps towards retiring Melbourne's older public housing towers, including Park Towers.

Homes Victoria proposes to retire and transform 44 older-style towers across Melbourne over the coming years and decades, seeking to deliver modern, accessible homes, and better community facilities to enrich communities.

The *South Melbourne Built Form Review* (Hodyl & Co, August 2024 p.116) identifies high level built form principles to guide future development outcomes on Park Towers should the Victorian Government progress with their proposal.

Opportunities

In light of other Victorian Government public housing projects, Council endorsed a series of guiding principles in October 2022 to provide parameters for Council officer input into Victorian Government public housing projects. These broad principles have informed principles to guide future built form outcomes for Park Towers, which covers an area of approximately 1.48 hectares (14,780 square metres).

Urban structure

There is an opportunity to provide a more formal street arrangement at the existing north-south accessway to the east of the tower. This would assist in improving the permeability of the block and improve integration into the surrounding street network and public realm. An additional vehicle entrance or pedestrian link could also be provided to the west of the tower to integrate with a proposed location for new development.

Public open space

There is an opportunity to improve the reserve at the east of the estate including increased public access. The *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32* includes the following action:

> *Action 68. Park Towers Reserve: Advocate to, and partner with the Victorian Government to improve access into Park Towers Reserve.*

The accompanying technical report to *Places for People* notes that a larger open space would have potential to provide a greater diversity of unstructured recreational facilities for everyone including residents of Park Towers. Applying the open space hierarchies in the technical report, a large open space would require 18-67% of the total site area. The existing 0.6 hectare open space occupies approximately 40% of the site area.



Built form

On the basis that the existing tower remains on site, the area of surface car parking to the west of the tower provides the greatest opportunity for redevelopment. An initial assessment indicates that:

- There are no sensitive interfaces within the surrounding context to this portion of the site
- As the western site boundary is approximately 100 metres in length, multiple buildings should be delivered to provide an appropriate grain and scale of development
- The buildings would be orientated north-south presenting a slender elevation to both Bank Street and Park Street
- Building separation of approximately 15 to 18 metres could be achieved between the new development and the existing tower
- Development up to 8 storeys (26.4 m) at the southern end would not overshadow the southern footpath of Park Street at the spring equinox (22 September)
- The northern end could support a taller tower form
- Separation between buildings along the western boundary as well as the built form articulation of each building will be crucial in maintaining outlook for dwellings on the western side of the existing tower
- Current vehicle access to the existing surface car parking could continue to be utilised or an alternative entrance could be provided from Park Street.

Additional development would likely require encroachment into the Park Towers Reserve resulting in a reduction in open space. This should be reallocated to other areas of the site to ensure there is no net loss of open space. If the Victorian Government was to consider development in this area, an initial assessment indicates that:

- Any built form should be located to the south of the site to protect sunlight to the northern portion of the open space
- A development along the southern boundary up to five storeys (16.8 m) comprising one storey of non-residential and four storeys of residential that is setback 6 metres from the property boundary to Park Street would not overshadow Howe Crescent Reserve between 10 am and 2 pm on the winter solstice (22 June)
- Any development should provide active frontages and passive surveillance to the open space
- Opportunities to increase activation to the ground floor of the tower should be explored, either by retrofitting existing spaces or through additions which 'sleeve' the base of the tower.



Actions

Planning Scheme Amendment - Policy

1.29 As part of preparing a planning scheme amendment to implement the South Melbourne Structure Plan in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, ensure the planning policy framework in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme:

- Encourages housing that provides diverse dwelling typologies and tenures, accommodates changing work patterns, is sustainable and durable, and demonstrates high quality design and amenity.
- Recognise in planning policy that while housing growth in South Melbourne will be relatively modest, neighbouring areas particularly Montague (Fishermans Bend), Southbank and Domain will experience population growth that will expand South Melbourne's worker and visitor catchment.

City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039

1.30 Support the development, objectives and implementation of the *City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039.*

Social and affordable housing

1.31 Support retaining, upgrading and increasing the provision of social and public housing, along with increasing opportunities to provide affordable housing for rent and purchase by:

- Supporting the Victorian Government's upgrade of existing public housing supply and advocate for increases in public housing supply.
- Facilitating and strengthening the partnership between community housing providers and the development industry.
- Advocating to the Victorian Government to provide social and public housing when developing government land or require the provision of social housing when selling surplus government land.
- Requiring new developments to contribute to achieving The City's affordable housing objectives, articulated in the *City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy 2024-2039.*



Activities and Uses Objective 7:

Community infrastructure to enhance social connection

Community infrastructure supporting South Melbourne

Community infrastructure refers to spaces, facilities and services that support the health and wellbeing of people and the community. It includes facilities for residents as well as those who work or study in the area, provided by the City of Port Phillip, other government agencies, non-government not-for-profit organisations and private enterprise. Benefiting from both a legacy of social and community housing and ongoing investment, South Melbourne has an extensive network of community infrastructure servicing residents, students, workers and visitors, meaning that they do not have to travel too far to access services or facilities.

The City of Port Phillip provides a variety of community infrastructure in South Melbourne, including civic and community spaces, services for families and children, services for young people and spaces for learning. Key sites include the South Melbourne Town Hall on Bank Street, the Emerald Hill Library and Heritage Centre also on Bank Street, Skinners Adventure Playground on Dorcas Street and the South Melbourne Market on Cecil Street. Many facilities contain spaces that can be reserved for community use.

While South Melbourne has a good range of community facilities, there are opportunities to explore how to address a lack of places for young people aged between 12 and 18 years to spend time in South Melbourne, as highlighted in community engagement. Identifying how to activate public spaces can contribute to South Melbourne's arts and cultural scene, connecting the community with local creatives. Theme 4: Public Spaces and Places outlines how a refresh of the *Emerald Hill Master Plan 2012* prepared by the City of Port Phillip (not to be confused with the master planning process led by Homes Victoria for the Emerald Hill Court Estate) could do this, building on community feedback seeking to activate this area.

Importantly, in terms of community infrastructure, a refresh of the *Emerald Hill Master Plan 2012* will investigate opportunities for the adaptive reuse of the existing South Melbourne Police Station should the construction of a new police station in Dorcas Street proceed. It will also investigate how the Emerald Hill Library and Heritage Centre can more prominently contribute to cultural and public life, including investigating the delivery of an outdoor community events space.

The delivery of the Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct at the Emerald Hill Court public housing estate will see a community hospital and other new community facilities and ground-floor uses.

It will be vital for the City to continue planning for the provision of community infrastructure and services required for the increased population and projected demographic change for South Melbourne. This includes consideration of where community infrastructure is located to minimise travel times between locations. Private and non-profit providers can also consider the location of facilities such as child care centres to ensure they are close to workplaces.

It will also be vital to work with all organisations that influence the provision and delivery of community infrastructure in South Melbourne, especially within the context of change anticipated for Fishermans Bend. Strategies such as the *Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2023-26*, the *Library Action Plan 2021 -26* and future versions of these strategies will support the provision of community infrastructure and services and how this contributes to South Melbourne's flourishing arts and cultural scene.

Actions

Community infrastructure supporting South Melbourne

1.32 Continue to plan for the community infrastructure and services required for the increased population and projected demographic change for South Melbourne and surrounding areas that rely on South Melbourne's rich provision of community infrastructure.

1.33 Work with all organisations that influence the provision and delivery of community infrastructure and services in South Melbourne to strengthen service offering and ensure it meets local needs and is in convenient locations that minimise travel time.

1.34 Use the actions in this South Melbourne Structure Plan to guide how the public realm can support the provision of and access to community infrastructure, arts, culture and libraries.

1.35 Use the *City of Port Phillip Guiding Principles for Victorian Government public housing projects*, adopted by Council on 19 October 2022, to support The City's collaboration with Homes Victoria the Victorian Health Building Authority to deliver the Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct master plan, including the integration and improvement of Skinners Adventure Playground and provision of new community infrastructure.

1.36 Advocate to the State Government on behalf of the community for the best service delivery as part of the Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct.