GREENING PORT MELBOURNE

URBAN FOREST PRECINCT PLAN

(Draft for Community Engagement)

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Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their legacy and spiritual connection to the land and waterways across the City of Port Phillip and pay our heartfelt respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.



Eucalyptus leucoxylon

Endemic Species of Bunurong and Wurundjeri Country.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greening Port Melbourne Urban Forest Precinct Plan (UFPP) will guide tree planting and biodiversity projects and deliver the targets and outcomes of the City of Port Phillip *Urban Forest Strategy 2024-2040* (referred to as the Urban Forest Strategy), creating a healthy, biodiverse and connected urban forest. This UFPP focuses on the Port Melbourne neighbourhood (one of nine neighbourhoods in the City of Port Phillip).

The Greening Port Melbourne UFPP was developed by Mosaic Insights, Ian Shears and the City of Port Phillip (CoPP). The UFPP responds to the existing character of the neighbourhood and the community who live there. It draws on a range of sources of data and information to support the five objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy:

1. Increased canopy cover on public and private land for a liveable, sustainable, equitable and vibrant city
2. Cooler and greener city that is resilient to more extreme weather and changes in rainfall
3. Our community is engaged, trees and plants are valued and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types
4. A well-managed forest, including tree health and quality, pest and disease management and succession planning for iconic species and locations
5. A biodiverse urban forest with diverse species, healthy ecosystems and habitat

The Greening Port Melbourne UFPP:

- Responds to constraints on planting opportunities and multiple agency road ownership
- Identifies tree planting opportunities to improve equity, including shade in areas with higher heat vulnerability along key walking and cycling routes and public transport stops
- Identifies opportunities for biodiverse planting in streets and parks
- Identifies where minor uplifts can occur to existing streetscapes through infill planting or gradually transitioning trees to a different species to improve canopy cover and biodiversity
- Addresses planting in areas with informally protected views
- Acknowledges the role of the Foreshore and Hinterland Management Plan
- Makes connections with biodiversity and habitat corridors
- Provides a summary of how Council can work with other land holders for a greener neighbourhood
- Provides a priority implementation plan for the next 10 years

Through the development of the Greening Port Melbourne UFPP, we have identified five streets as being a primary focus for this neighbourhood. Over the next 10 years, we will prioritise these streets for urban greening and biodiversity initiatives:

- Dow Street
- Howe Parade
- Pickles Street
- The Boulevard
- Webb Road

In addition to the primary focus streets, trees will be planted to increase canopy cover and improve pedestrian amenity in the area bound by Williamstown Road, Ingles Street, Bridge Street and Bay Street and the area bound by Normanby Road, Boundary Street, Ingles Street and Crockford Street.

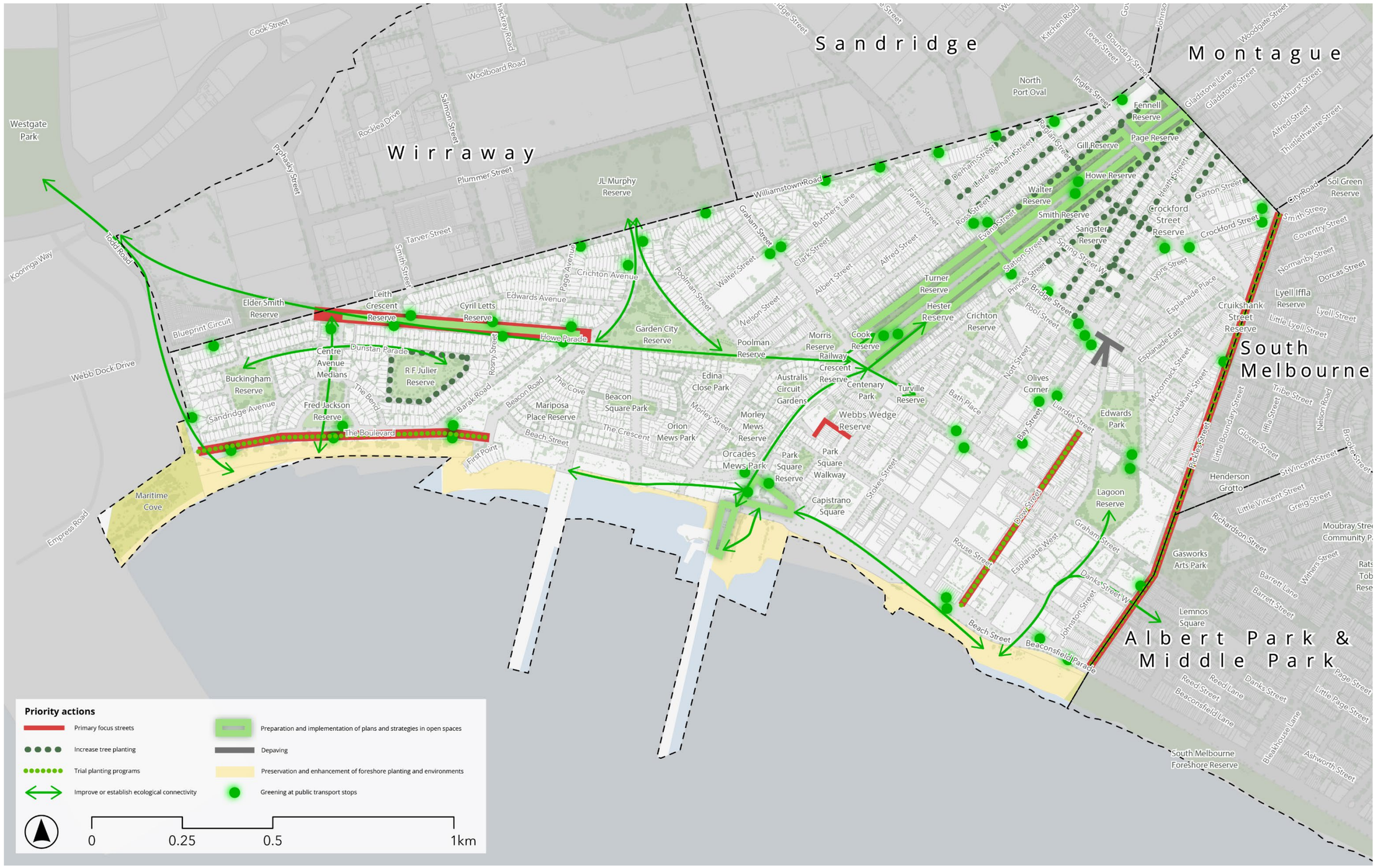


Figure 1 Pickles Street

We have developed a coordinated program of actions across the Port Melbourne neighbourhood to increase tree canopy, address urban heat, strengthen biodiversity corridors and enhance neighbourhood liveability. Collectively, the actions will contribute to the creation of a connected network of urban greening and help achieve canopy targets set by the Urban Forest Strategy.

This series of location-based, neighbourhood-wide and municipal-wide interventions have a focus on streetscapes, open spaces and the areas of greatest need and opportunity. We will deliver actions in the 10-year life of the Greening Port Melbourne UFPP, ensuring both immediate and long-term benefits.

A complete list of proposed interventions, programs and actions is provided in Section 07 Action Plan.



01

INTRODUCTION

01.1

NEIGHBOURHOODS

The CoPP has nine neighbourhoods (as shown in Figure 2). The neighbourhoods (also referred to as precincts in the context of urban forest planning) each have a distinct character and attributes. **We are delivering Urban Forest Precinct Plans for each neighbourhood to guide tree planting in streets and open space over a ten-year period.**

Encompassing most of the suburb of Port Melbourne, the Port Melbourne neighbourhood is a gateway to Melbourne via Station Pier. The Waterfront precinct attracts many visitors to the Bay Street commercial strip and the foreshore. The Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area is directly to the north of the neighbourhood. Williamstown Road and Boundary Road are included in the UFPPs we are developing for the precincts in Fishermans Bend.

In 2023, we assessed tree canopy cover on both public and private land between 2012 and 2022. In 2022, canopy cover across the municipality was 17.17%, down by 0.69 percentage points from 17.86% in 2012. Canopy cover on roads was 25.53% in 2022, an increase of 0.38 percentage points from 2012 and significantly higher than the average for inner Melbourne. Most of this gain came from the growth of existing street trees, which offset losses from removal, natural attrition and pruning. Canopy cover on public land (parks and reserves, excluding Albert Park) did not significantly change over the period. On private land, however, canopy cover declined by 1.09 percentage points, driven predominantly by tree removals, although more than half of the canopy gained on private land during the period came from new plantings.

The analysis showed the Port Melbourne neighbourhood has an overall canopy cover of 16% - the fourth lowest in the municipality, equal with the St Kilda Road neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood	Current Canopy Cover (2022)*
① Elwood & Ripponlea	25%
② Balaclava & St Kilda East	20%
③ St Kilda & St Kilda West	19%
④ St Kilda Road	16%
⑤ Albert Park & Middle Park	14%
⑥ South Melbourne	18%
⑦ Port Melbourne	16%
⑧ Montague	8%
⑨ Sandridge & Wirraway	8%

*Canopy cover excludes canopy within the Albert Park open space.

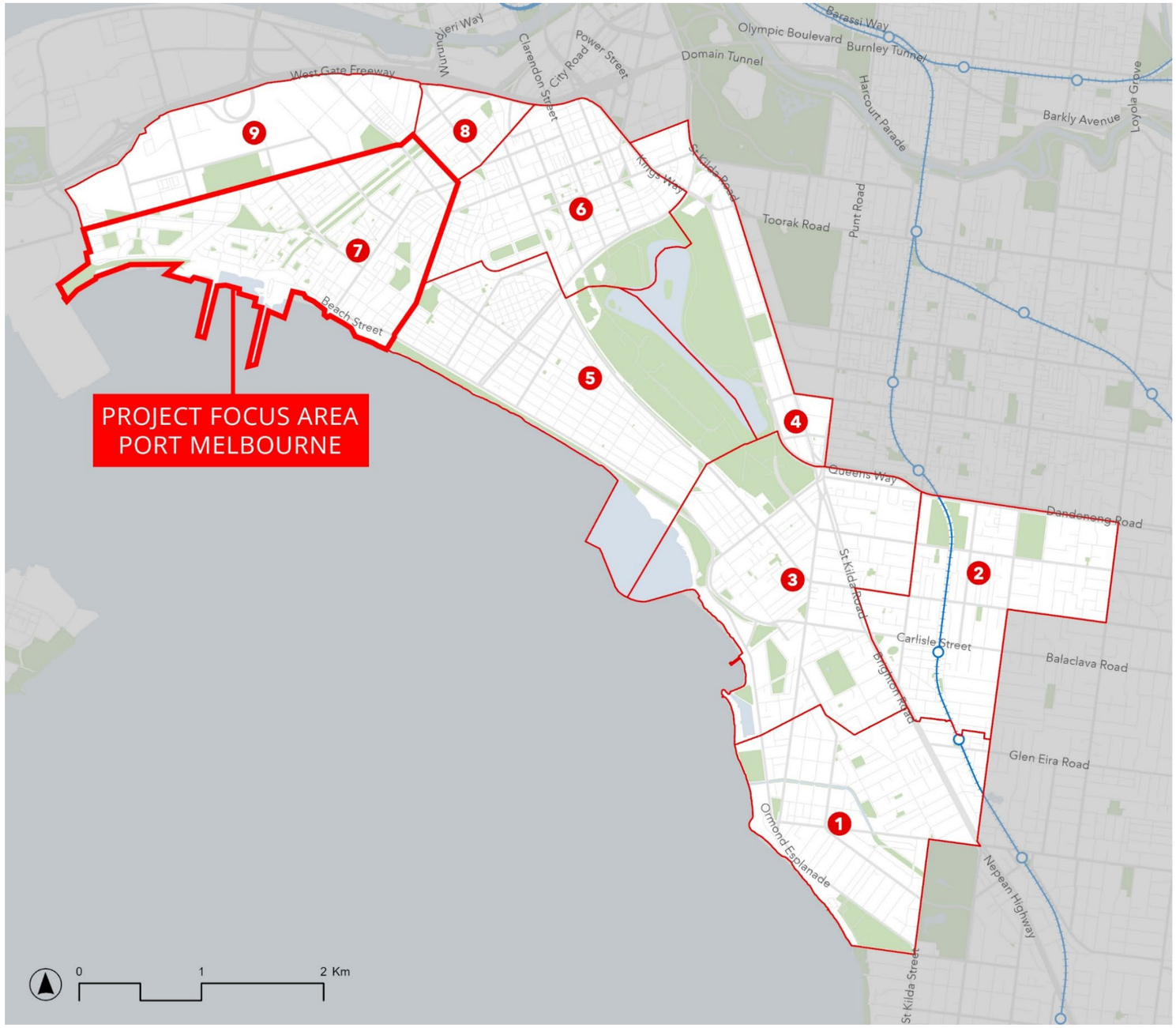


Figure 2 The City of Port Phillip Neighbourhoods

01.2

PROJECT PURPOSE

URBAN FOREST STRATEGY (2024-2040)

In 2019, the hottest and driest year in Australia's recorded history, we declared a climate emergency. Planting trees and other vegetation to increase urban greening is the most effective way to mitigate urban heat islands. It also delivers a range of additional benefits, including improved community health and well-being, reduced air and noise pollution, improved biodiversity and enhanced amenity in commercial areas. Together these contribute to liveable, sustainable, equitable and vibrant neighbourhoods.

The CoPP Urban Forest Strategy 2024-2040 (the Urban Forest Strategy) sets the vision that: *In the City of Port Phillip, urban greening is healthy and abundant, biodiversity is valued and supported, and nature connects the community.*

The Urban Forest Strategy has five objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Increased canopy cover on public and private land for a liveable, sustainable, equitable and vibrant city
- **Objective 2:** Cooler and greener city that is resilient to more extreme weather and changes in rainfall
- **Objective 3:** Our community is engaged, trees and plants are valued and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types
- **Objective 4:** A well-managed forest, including tree health and quality, pest and disease management and succession planning for iconic species and locations
- **Objective 5:** A biodiverse urban forest with diverse species, healthy ecosystems and habitat

As part of the Urban Forest Strategy, we set a target to achieve 30% canopy cover on streets and a minimum of 40% canopy cover in public spaces (excluding sports field areas) by 2040, along with an increase in biodiverse planting and permeable surfaces.

URBAN FOREST PRECINCT PLANS

The UFPPs focus on land that is either owned or managed by Council in each neighbourhood, and do not address the delivery of Urban Forest Strategy actions for privately-owned land or public land managed by other agencies.

Informed by the local community, UFPPs provide the background, context and prioritisation for delivery of specific urban greening actions in each neighbourhood over the next 10 years.

Within the UFPPs each street is classified as one of:

- **Primary focus:** high and medium priority streets that will be prioritised for the delivery of urban greening initiatives over the next 10 years. Many of these actions will support the delivery of existing plans, policies and strategies.
- **Secondary focus:** streets that will be assessed according to the capacity for future delivery.
- **Future focus:** high and medium priority streets where interventions would cost significantly more (and delivery is subject to future funding) and/or be comparatively more complex.
- **Operational focus:** no specific interventions beyond infill planting of vacant tree plots. Additional urban forest canopy may be achieved as part of Council's footpath and road renewal programs. Streets with an operational focus include those streets that do not (yet) provide sufficient canopy cover to meet the 30% target, and where more recently planted street trees are maturing.

01.3

KEY ACTIONS

KEY ACTIONS FOR THE GREENING PORT MELBOURNE UFPP

The background research and analysis have found six key actions relevant to the Port Melbourne neighbourhood:

①	**Designing new streets for greening and shade**
②	**Enhancing and maintaining existing streetscapes**
③	**Increasing canopy and biodiversity in parks and open space**
④	**Greening beyond Council land through partnerships and advocacy**
⑤	**Replacing species and implementing staged transformations to address issues of disease and site-specific challenges**
⑥	**Canopy that can withstand foreshore conditions**

More detail on these key actions is provided in the following Section.

Following the adoption of the Greening Port Melbourne UFPP, the next phase will involve detailed designs, applying appropriate greening interventions, for primary focus streets. This will involve further community engagement, partnerships with other agencies and negotiation with developers to coordinate delivery.

01.4

KEY ACTIONS - EXPLAINED

❶ **Designing new streets for greening and shade**

Integrate tree planting and other vegetation into new or redesigned streetscapes to maximise canopy cover, enhance biodiversity, improve pedestrian comfort and climate resilience. Prioritise key pedestrian routes and areas with high heat vulnerability.

❷ **Enhancing and maintaining existing streetscapes**

Increase canopy cover and improve the health and diversity of existing street trees through infill planting, proactive maintenance and the strategic transition to more appropriate vegetation species.

❸ **Increasing canopy and biodiversity in parks and open space**

Achieve 40% canopy cover in public open spaces (excluding sports field areas) and enhance biodiversity through targeted planting and community partnerships.

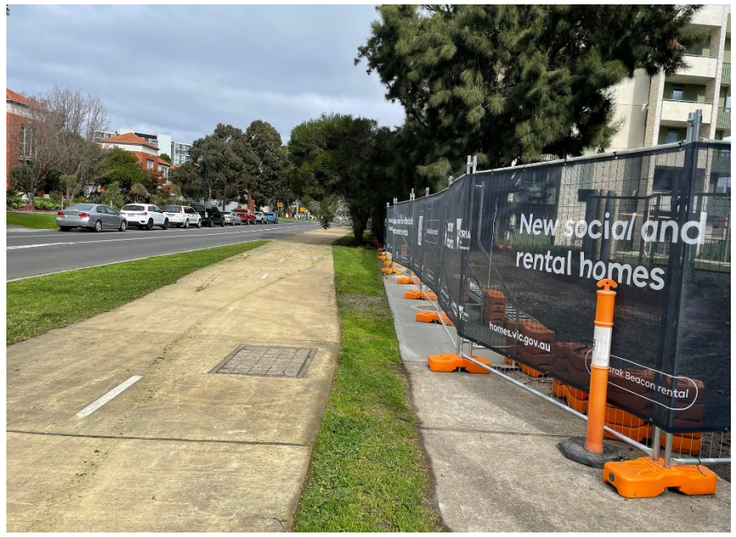


Figure 3 Beacon Road will benefit from increased canopy cover to improve pedestrian and cycling amenity along the shared path



Figure 4 Pickles Street and Ingles Street intersection will benefit from in-fill planting in the surrounding streets



Figure 5 Cyril Letts Reserve is one of a small number of open spaces in Port Melbourne with less than 40% canopy cover

- New streetscape projects will create above- and below-ground space for trees by converting selected parking bays, widening footpaths and introducing central medians and kerb outstands.
- New streetscape projects will improve the growing conditions for new trees by improving soil quality, providing passive irrigation and in some locations structural soil systems. Improved growing conditions support trees that reach their maximum size and remain in good health.
- Where appropriate ground-level vegetation will be increased through biodiverse understorey plantings and water sensitive urban design (WSUD) features. These measures improve stormwater quality and cooling, and provide a greening outcome in streets where large trees cannot be accommodated.

- Infill planting of vacant tree plots is the most readily available means of increasing canopy cover and will continue as an ongoing program, alongside the identification and replacement of trees that have failed to establish, informed by ongoing tree audits and improved early establishment care.
- Some existing species provide insufficient shade or are poorly suited to future climate conditions. These will be progressively replaced with more resilient species as they reach the end of their useful life, maintaining canopy cover through the transition.
- Tree planting will be integrated into streetscape construction, renewal and maintenance projects wherever practical. Coordinating with drainage upgrades, WSUD works and walking and cycling path upgrades reduces cost and disruption while delivering multiple benefits.

- Council will continue to support and expand community greening initiatives that increase canopy cover and biodiversity in open space.
- Succession planting and biodiversity improvements will be delivered in park and streetscape garden beds, maintaining canopy cover as mature trees decline.
- Canopy and biodiversity planting responsive to local character will be incorporated into open space renewal projects.

4 Greening beyond Council land through partnerships and advocacy

Expand the urban forest by working with other landholders and agencies to improve shade at public transport stops.



Figure 6 The Walter St/Graham St bus stop would benefit from increased shade

- Comfortable public transport stops sheltered from sun and wind improve access for everyone. Targeted planting near stops will increase shade. Where trees cannot be planted, Council will explore opportunities to trial alternative solutions such as Yarra Trams' urban arbours.
- Canopy and biodiversity improvements across the neighbourhood will require collaboration with the State Government and neighbouring councils.
- Council will continue to seek partnerships with private and institutional landholders to improve greening outcomes across the neighbourhood.

5 Replacing species and implementing staged transformations to address issues of disease and site-specific challenges

Investigate options to diversify the range of tree species, families and genera. Species diversity is essential for creating a resilient urban forest that can withstand pests, diseases and climate change.



Figure 7 Species selection should prioritise trees along prominent road corridors

- Tree species selection must consider the threats from pests, disease, climate change and any site-specific soil conditions (e.g. contaminated and/or acid sulphate soils, saline groundwater and high-water table).
- Staged transformation of species can provide an opportunity to plant large trees that will provide amenity and shade for many generations.
- Along prominent road corridors species selection should prioritise large trees supported by in-ground conditions that can sustain them for 100+ years.
- Preserve and enhance native dune vegetation and biodiversity along the foreshore.
- Increase shade and canopy cover along the foreshore by prioritising plantings in high-use areas such as footpaths, playgrounds, BBQ zones, seating and picnic spaces.

6 Canopy that can withstand foreshore conditions

Provide strategic species choices and planting programs to foreshore areas that enable trees to thrive in challenging coastal environments.



Figure 8 Greening along The Boulevard is comprised of species that are tolerant to foreshore conditions

- The Port Melbourne foreshore and its beaches are iconic, and planning for forward tree planting and succession is critical to maintain shade and neighbourhood character. Coastal environments are challenging for urban trees with exposure to strong winds, salt spray, high temperatures and sandy, low-nutrient soils.
- Council will continue to trial a range of tree species to identify those best suited to the challenging conditions along the residential edges of The Boulevard and Beach Street, ensuring long-term canopy health and resilience.

02

METHOD

02.1

METHOD OVERVIEW

This section describes the method used to develop the Greening Port Melbourne UFPP. It documents the evidence used, how that evidence was assessed and how the assessment informs the priorities for the delivery of urban greening initiatives in streets and open spaces in the neighbourhood over the next 10 years.

STREET TYPOLOGIES

Each street is allocated to a streetscape typology (described in Section 05.1), based on its physical attributes and movement function. These include overall width, footpath width, carriageway width, the number of vehicle lanes, verges and verge plantings, bicycle infrastructure and car parking. Each typology has a different range of interventions to which it is suited. Tree selection considerations and opportunities to increase canopy cover have been set for each typology and are documented in Appendix B.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS (PRIORITY RANKING)

Based on available data (and the prioritisation method used in the development of the previously adopted UFPPs for Balaclava & St Kilda East, St Kilda & St Kilda West and Albert Park & Middle Park) every street has been scored against the factors listed in the adjacent table.

The analysis draws on current canopy cover, heat vulnerability, biodiversity connections, road ownership, movement networks, Council strategies and plans, and Walk Quality research from Swinburne University of Technology (described in more detail in Section 04.13). Section 02.2 describes how the spatial datasets are grouped and analysed. Appendix A includes the complete assessment of each street in the neighbourhood.

Based on this analysis, each street is ranked as high priority (14 to 21), medium priority (9 to 13) and low priority (0 to 8).

Factor	Scoring	Max
Walk Quality	High priority for shade increase: 3 points Medium priority for shade increase: 2 points Low priority for shade increase: 1 point	3
Canopy cover	Under 15% canopy cover: 3 points 15-30% canopy cover: 2 points Above 30% canopy cover: 1 point	3
Cycling infrastructure	Protected bike lane (on road): 3 points Buffered painted lane or basic painted lane: 2 points Intermittent bike lane or shared street: 1 point None: 0 points	3
Public transport	Tram or bus stop: 2 points Neither: 0 points	2
Heat vulnerability	Level 4 or 5: 3 points Level 3: 2 points Level 2: 1 point Level 0 or 1: 0 points	3
Biodiversity connections	Within 100m of the foreshore or a habitat corridor: 3 points Abuts two or more open spaces: 2 points Abuts one open space: 1 point Does not abut an open space: 0 points	3
Road ownership	Council owned road: 2 points Not a Council owned road: 0 points	2
Council strategy, plan or project	Named in a Council strategy or masterplan, or has a programmed infrastructure upgrade: 2 points Not named: 0 points	2
Total		21

POLICY AND STRATEGY REVIEW

A detailed review of Council plans, policies and strategies, and capital works programs was completed to assist in the identification of urban greening initiatives within this neighbourhood. The review also included the identification of projects that have been recently completed, and projects that are currently planned or funded. Appendix C lists the policies and strategies that were reviewed. This review, along with consideration of capital works programs, provides the basis for identification of actions that could be reasonably delivered within the 10 year timeframe of this UFPP (and within available budgets).

SITE INSPECTIONS

Site inspections were undertaken to validate the desktop findings, identify and fill gaps in the spatial data, and assist with the identification of specific projects and their feasibility.

PROJECT FEASIBILITY AND BUDGET ANALYSIS

Streets and open spaces were assessed against project feasibility and available funding within the 10 year life of the UFPP. This analysis shaped the street implementation focus categories (see below) and informed the opportunities selected for the action plan. Due to the high cost or complexity of increasing greening, some streets have been classed as future focus. These streets have an identified need for greening that cannot be met within the available budget, and alternative funding sources will be required.

IMPLEMENTATION FOCUS CATEGORIES

The results of the spatial analysis were considered alongside the policy and strategy review and budget analysis to determine the implementation focus of each street in this neighbourhood. The four focus areas are:

- **Primary focus:** high and medium priority streets that will be prioritised for the delivery of urban greening initiatives over the next 10 years. Many of these actions will support the delivery of existing plans, policies and strategies.
- **Secondary focus:** streets that will be assessed according to the capacity for future delivery.
- **Future focus:** high and medium priority streets where interventions would cost significantly more (and delivery is subject to future funding) and/or be comparatively more complex – such as Bridge Street.
- **Operational focus:** no specific interventions beyond infill planting of vacant tree plots. Additional urban forest canopy may be achieved as part of Council's footpath and road renewal programs. Streets with an operational focus include those streets that do not (yet) provide sufficient canopy cover to meet the 30% target, and where more recently planted street trees are maturing – such as Liardet Street.

HOW THE OUTPUTS ARE USED

Prioritisation through spatial analysis establishes which streets matter most, and the policy and strategy review captures broader Council priorities. These are combined into the implementation focus categories that identify when and where Council will act. While the street typologies assist with determining possible intervention(s), they do not impact the implementation focus classification. The action plan then sets out the deliverables within the 10 year timeframe of this UFPP.

02.2

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

A matrix was developed that categorised data into four groups (Figure 9).

Alignment with objectives combines the datasets that prioritise streets for increased canopy in line with the objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy.

Achievability combines the datasets that highlight streets with more favourable conditions for planting, such as wider verges, unrestricted parking controls and existing canopy percentages.

Ongoing review lists the attributes that help improve ongoing maintenance, biodiversity and planning strategy. On the ground inspections identified streets with vacant tree plots and where species change could occur.

Unknowns lists the attributes that are unknown, beyond the current project scope, or that require further investigation in detailed design, such as soil quality and long-term maintenance feasibility.

Alignment with Objectives	Achievability	Ongoing Review	Unknowns
Some data is used to determine which streets would be prioritised to meet Urban Forest Strategy objectives.	Some data is used to determine which streets may have more favourable conditions for planting trees.	Some data can be used to help improve ongoing maintenance, biodiversity and planning strategy.	Some data is unknown at this stage, or unfeasible to be considered within the scope of this project.
INFORMS	*INFORMS*	*INFORMS*	*TO BE CONFIRMED*
Walk Quality research from Swinburne University identifies where a lack of shade limits walking across sections of the pedestrian network.	Larger area of road reserve (width x length) which provides a general indication of impact potential.	Age and health – trees that aren't thriving and are at the end of their useful life expectancy could be proactively replaced to increase canopy quicker.	On-the-ground knowledge of existing trees (GIS data is a few years out of data and needs review).
Existing canopy cover over the street, measured against the 30% street canopy target. Streets with the largest shortfall have the greatest need.	Whether the street has powerlines, which may constrain tree planting.	Abutting building heights and setbacks from road reserve may reduce available canopy spreading space.	Underground utilities locations.
The type of cycling infrastructure present, grouped by how well riders are separated from traffic, since separation predicts rider numbers.	Whether the street has existing street driveway crossovers, which may reduce areas for planting.	Consider future redevelopment sites, and potential to contribute towards urban forest.	Detailed costing of chosen interventions for each street.
Whether the street carries a tram or bus stop, where passengers wait in the open and shade delivers a direct benefit.	Potential surplus trafficable width within carriageways.	Whether street is prone to flooding or high water table. This can impact species selection and intervention choices.	Community and stakeholder support.
The heat vulnerability index level of the surrounding area, which combines exposure to extreme heat with community sensitivity and adaptive capacity.	If there are wider existing verges that provide more flexibility in choosing interventions.	Consider existing street species diversity, and whether succession planting is recommended to improve resilience and fauna habitats.	Cultural sensitivity and potential for heritage significance in underground locations.
Proximity to open spaces that determines whether new trees can extend habitat rather than sit in isolation.	Appetite for altering existing street parking allowances.	Whether a tree species contributes to heritage places and/or the character of the area.	Geotechnical information and soil conditions.
Whether the road is managed by Council or another authority, which sets whether Council can commit its own capital or must advocate.			
Whether the street is named in a Council strategy or master plan, or has a programmed upgrade that greening can be delivered alongside.	NOTE: The achievability criteria are considered on a site specific basis in the design process.		

Figure 9 Spatial data inputs and categories (amended from LatStudios, 2026)

03

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

03.1

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLE OF STREETS & PUBLIC SPACES

Increased or enhanced urban greening (including tree canopy) in streets and parks can help to:

- Reduce stormwater run-off and improve water quality.
- Contribute to cooler urban environments by reducing surface temperatures.
- Improve local air and soil quality.
- Reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide.
- Provide wildlife habitats and pollination opportunities.
- Increase property values.
- Extend the life of street surfaces.
- Enhance or define the character of an area.
- Promote human well-being by strengthening the community's connection with nature.

Streets and public spaces serve a variety of interconnected roles that extend beyond facilitating movement. They contribute to the overall character and sense of place, hosting a wide range of activities from commerce to leisure.

Streets are essential for providing infrastructure such as powerlines, stormwater conveyance and waste removal. In addition to human-centric infrastructure, streets play a crucial role in supporting biodiversity, green infrastructure and sustainable water management.

Public spaces are publicly owned lands that are primarily set aside for the purposes of outdoor recreation, nature conservation, passive outdoor enjoyment and public gatherings. Public spaces contribute to quality of life and are essential to the urban environment. Alongside greening and urban cooling, open spaces are valued as places to socialise, relax and unwind, to be outdoors and connect with nature, to play sport and exercise. They are spaces for hosting festivals and events and are spaces that protect and interpret contemporary and historical cultural values, diversity and identity and give a sense of place. Open spaces are places to enjoy the natural environment and be in contact with nature, and they offer opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity and habitat values.

Delivering more trees and vegetation requires a careful balance between the competing demands of streets and public spaces, including on-street parking, and the benefits of urban greening and biodiverse landscapes.

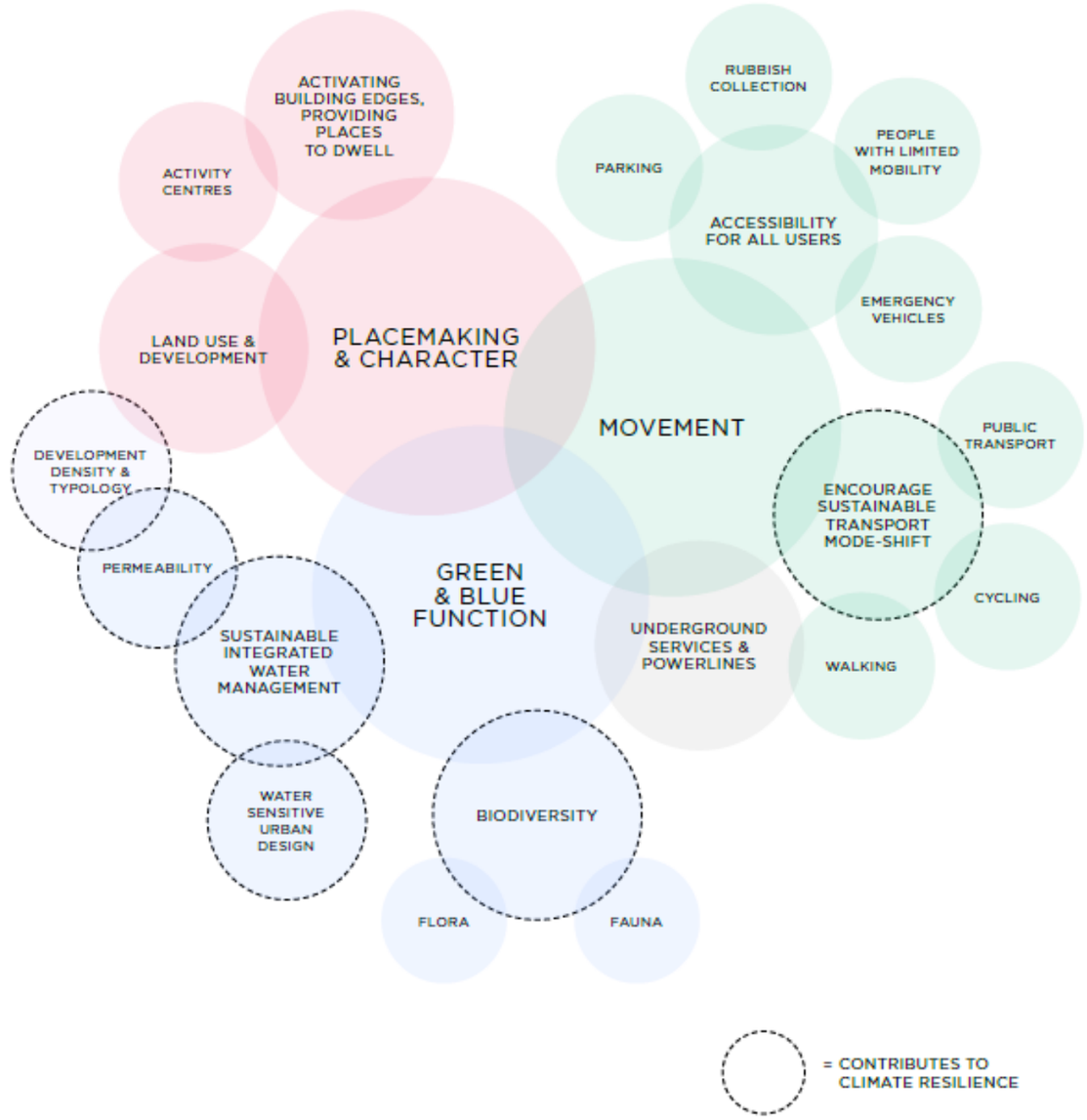


Figure 10 Streets & Public Space Venn Diagram (LatStudios, 2026)

04

THE PORT MELBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD

04.1

NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW

A medium to high-density, waterfront precinct home to the foreshore boulevard, beaches, Bay Street retail strip and historic housing estates.

The Port Melbourne neighbourhood will accommodate around 18,600 residents by 2041, with a higher proportion of families with young children and older people than the CoPP average. The built form varies from traditional residential heritage, distinctive Garden City and Beacon Cove styles, and contemporary apartment development. Significant levels of development and renewal are expected.

The increasing population in the neighbourhood and the significant urban renewal in Fishermans Bend immediately to the north, will result in an increased demand and use of public spaces in Port Melbourne.

At present the Port Melbourne neighbourhood has 56 open spaces, the highest number of all the neighbourhoods in the CoPP. Port Melbourne residents and workers are well served with accessible open spaces.

The neighbourhood is known for its parks, tree-lined foreshore and beaches, and Linear Light Rail Corridor and Reserves, creating strong foundations for urban forest outcomes.

To further enhance the existing open spaces of the neighbourhood, the CoPP Public Space Strategy has proposed upgrades to Station Pier Linear Park with additional tree plantings, and the preparation of Port Melbourne Light Rail Linear Park landscape masterplans and Waterfront Place framework plan.

Key challenges and constraints for the urban forest in the Port Melbourne neighbourhood include:

- On-going large-scale redevelopment and Bay Street Activity Centre impacting on existing street trees
- Areas of high heat vulnerability in the south-west and north-east of the neighbourhood – two of the nine high heat vulnerability areas in the CoPP
- The need to collaborate with the Department of Transport and Planning which own and manage major roads in the neighbourhood
- Overconcentration of Norfolk Island hibiscus and palm trees in the urban forest, with an increased risk from pests and diseases



Figure 11 Howe Parade centre median

Neighbourhood canopy cover
Overall canopy cover: 16%
Street canopy cover: 23%
Public space canopy cover: 28%

04.2

URBAN FOREST STATISTICS IN PORT MELBOURNE

To inform its urban forest planning, tree planting and tree maintenance activities, Council surveys trees in streets, open spaces and other Council-managed land. Trees on private land are not assessed, although they make a substantial contribution to canopy cover across the neighbourhood. We record a range of attributes, including species, genus and family, age class, useful life expectancy, health, structural condition, height and canopy spread. Not all trees have comprehensive, current information because assessment is progressive and follows the inspection and maintenance cycle. The statistics in this section are reported as percentages of assessed trees – in other words, the percentage of trees with a record for the attribute being described.

TREE DIVERSITY

Maintaining a diverse range of trees across the city and within neighbourhoods to create a resilient urban forest that can withstand pests, diseases and climate change is a priority. To achieve this, we aim to maintain a healthy mix of tree species, genera and families, ensuring that no single species exceeds 10% of all trees, no genus exceeds 20% and no family exceeds 30%.

The tree population in Port Melbourne is generally well balanced, with no species or genus of tree exceeding the guideline. However, around 40% of the tree population is in the Myrtaceae family, above the guideline for 30%. The Myrtaceae family includes over 70 genera and more than 1,500 species, encompassing iconic trees such as all gums, bottlebrushes, paperbarks and lillypillies. A concentration of trees in the Myrtaceae family is a common challenge in Australian cities due to the large number of native species in this family and the community's preference for planting native trees. Future planting should consider trees from families other than the Myrtaceae family to further improve the diversity of the tree population.

An important challenge in the neighbourhood is preserving the general character of the neighbourhood, and the foreshore in particular, while increasing the diversity of trees where appropriate and managing the removal of less desirable trees, in particular the Norfolk Island hibiscus (*Lagunaria patersonia*).

In consultation with community, streets can be slowly transitioned to a mix of more climate ready species. Trees that are not performing well or trees at the end of their lifecycle provide an opportunity to introduce different species.

TREE AGE AND USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY

Maintaining a balanced range of tree ages and useful life expectancy is central to urban forest management, supporting the health, resilience and long-term sustainability of the forest. A diverse age range ensures that we can effectively manage both young and old trees, which are often the most costly periods of the tree life cycle (site preparation, planting and formative pruning for young trees and removal for older trees). A balanced distribution of useful life expectancy across the tree population means we can avoid the widespread loss of trees that reach the end of their lifecycle around the same time.

Port Melbourne has a young urban forest. Around two thirds of trees were planted within the last 30 years and just over 40% within the last 20. Fewer than 8% are 60 years or older, compared with 14% across the municipality.

A mix of young, mature and old trees provides several benefits:

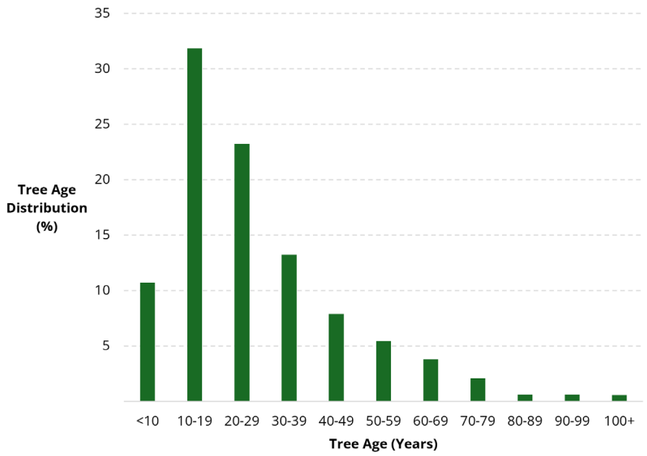
- Continuous canopy cover: helps mitigate sun and heat exposure across the city.
- Reduced risk of widespread tree loss: ensures that tree losses occur gradually over time rather than all at once.
- Enhanced carbon sequestration: older trees store more carbon and provide more shade, contributing to the environment and habitat.
- Urban forest succession: young trees play a key role in regenerating the urban forest over the long term.
- Cost-effective management: a balanced tree age profile spreads out maintenance costs and helps prevent large expenses in short timeframes.

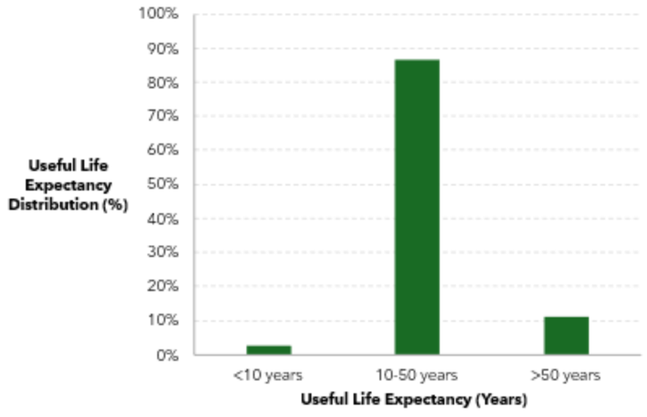
When an urban forest is dominated by trees of similar ages, it becomes more vulnerable to disease and pest outbreaks, particularly if there is an over representation of mature or old trees. By staggering tree ages, we can ensure more manageable maintenance schedules and reduce the risk of rapid, widespread tree loss.

Older trees tend to be more resilient to climate extremes, but younger trees are vital for adapting to future environmental conditions. By planning for a range of tree ages we can foster a stable, sustainable urban forest that will thrive for future generations.

86% of assessed trees in the neighbourhood have a useful life expectancy between 10 and 50 years, which illustrates the importance of well-planned succession planting to ensure we retain canopy cover as most trees reach the end of their lifecycle over the coming decades.

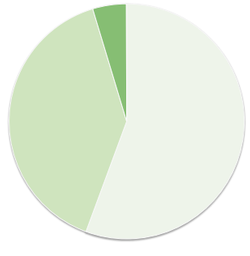
The infographics on this page break down some of the key urban forest metrics in the Port Melbourne neighbourhood.

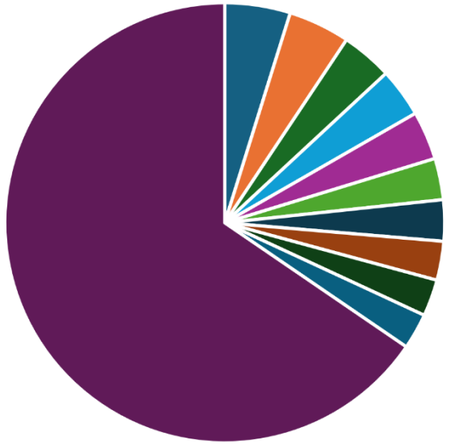




TREE SIZE DIVERSITY

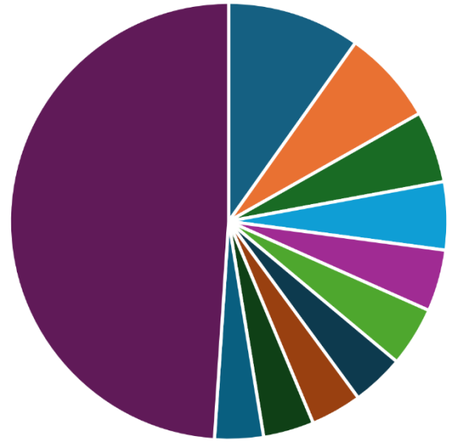
Graph ID	Tree Size in Ideal Conditions	Tree Size Distribution (%)
	Small	56.6%
	Medium	39.7%
	Large	4.6%
	Very Large	0.1





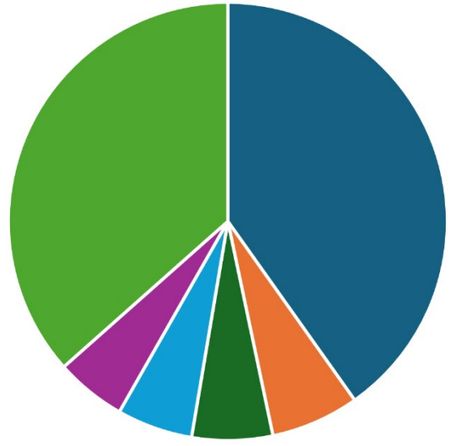
TREE SPECIES DIVERSITY IN PORT MELBOURNE

Graph ID	Tree Species Botanical Name	Tree Species Common Name	Tree Species Distribution (%)
	Banksia integrifolia	Coastal Banksia	4.86
	Angophora costata	Smooth-barked Apple Myrtle	4.46
	Tristaniopsis laurina	Kanooka	3.67
	Allocasuarina verticillata	Drooping She-Oak	3.57
	Lophostemon confertus	Brush Box	3.53
	Cupaniopsis anacardioides	Tuckeroo	3.02
	Corymbia maculata	Spotted Gum	2.99
	Ulmus parvifolia	Chinese Elm	2.89
	Corymbia ficifolia	Flowering Gum	2.61
	Olea europaea subsp europaea	Olive	2.55
	Other		65.84



TREE GENUS DIVERSITY IN PORT MELBOURNE

Graph ID	Tree Genus	Tree Genus Distribution (%)
	Eucalyptus	10.08
	Corymbia	6.90
	Banksia	5.47
	Angophora	5.01
	Pyrus	4.43
	Allocasuarina	4.39
	Fraxinus	3.87
	Tristaniopsis	3.70
	Callistemon	3.64
	Lophostemon	3.54
	Other	48.99



TREE FAMILY DIVERSITY IN PORT MELBOURNE

Graph ID	Tree Family	Tree Family Distribution (%)
	Myrtaceae	40.00
	Oleaceae	6.47
	Proteaceae	6.14
	Rosaceae	5.43
	Arecaceae	5.03
	Other	36.93

04.3

URBAN HEAT ISLAND

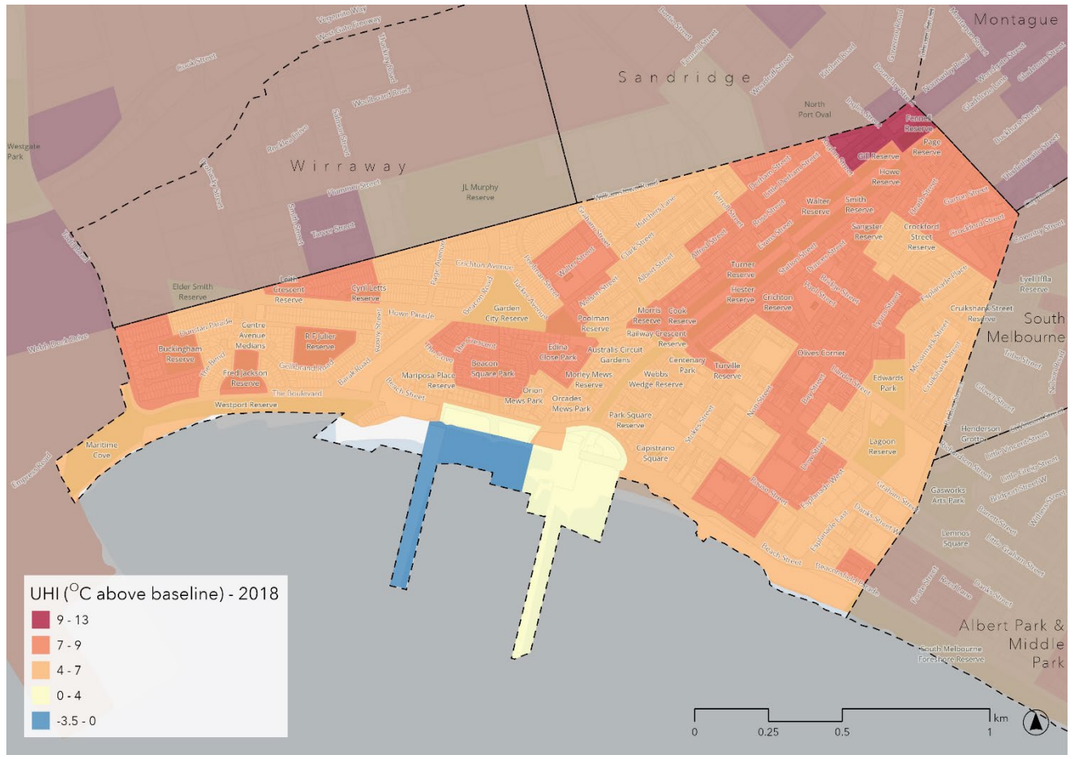
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

The urban heat island (UHI) effect occurs when built-up areas become significantly warmer than surrounding non-urban land. Hard surfaces absorb and retain heat, while limited vegetation reduces cooling from shade and evapotranspiration. UHI is measured by comparing land surface temperatures against a non-urban baseline, with surface materials, building density and vegetation cover analysed to explain the pattern. The UHI effect varies across Port Melbourne, and is strongest in the most northern area of the neighbourhood, around Ingles / Ross Street.

Source: Victorian Government (2018), *Metropolitan Melbourne Urban Heat Islands and Urban Vegetation 2018*
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



04.4

HEAT VULNERABILITY

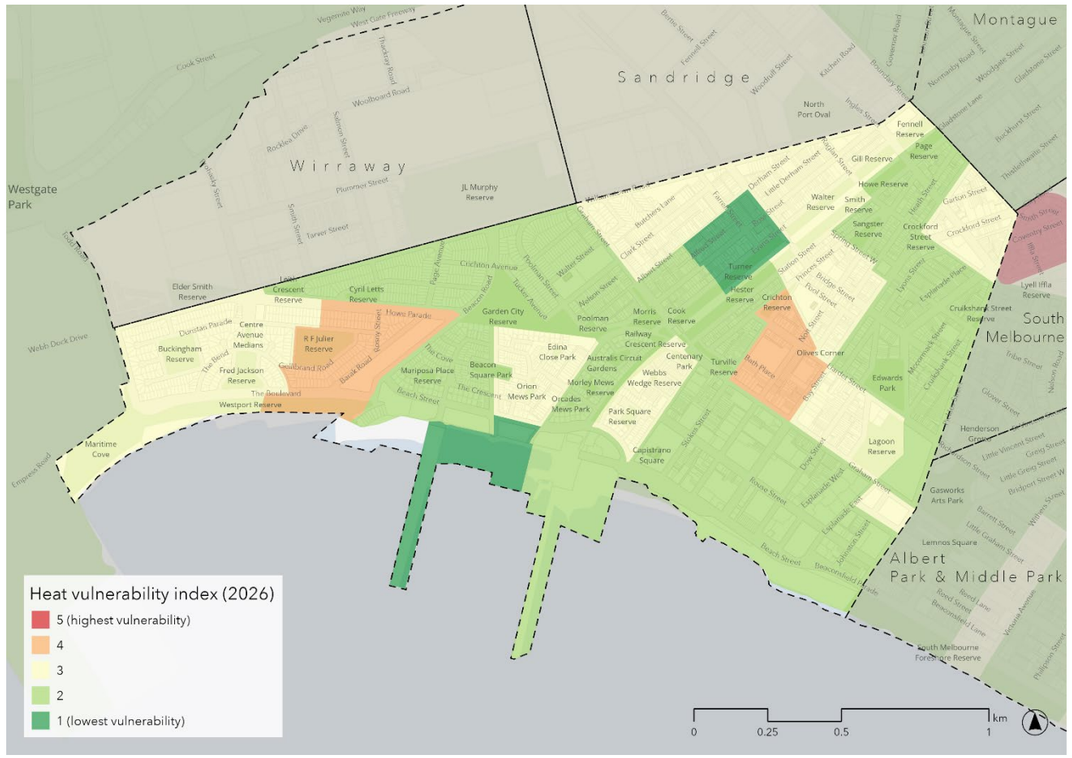
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

Heat vulnerability reflects the risk of heat health impacts to individuals during extreme heat. The Victorian Government's Heat Vulnerability Index (HVI) is calculated using three factors: heat exposure (land surface temperature), heat sensitivity (vegetation, impervious area, age and need for health care) and adaptive capacity (income and education level). It rates the heat vulnerability of areas from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Most of Port Melbourne is in the lower range, with three areas in the second highest category.

Source: Victorian Government (2018), *Metropolitan Melbourne Heat Vulnerability Index 2018*
Note: Although dated, the 2018 HVI data is the most current available dataset. It forms the basis of the short-term (2029) target in the Urban Forest Strategy to deliver a cooling and greening intervention in each of the nine high heat vulnerability areas.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓	✓		✓	✓



04.5

HISTORICAL ECOLOGIES

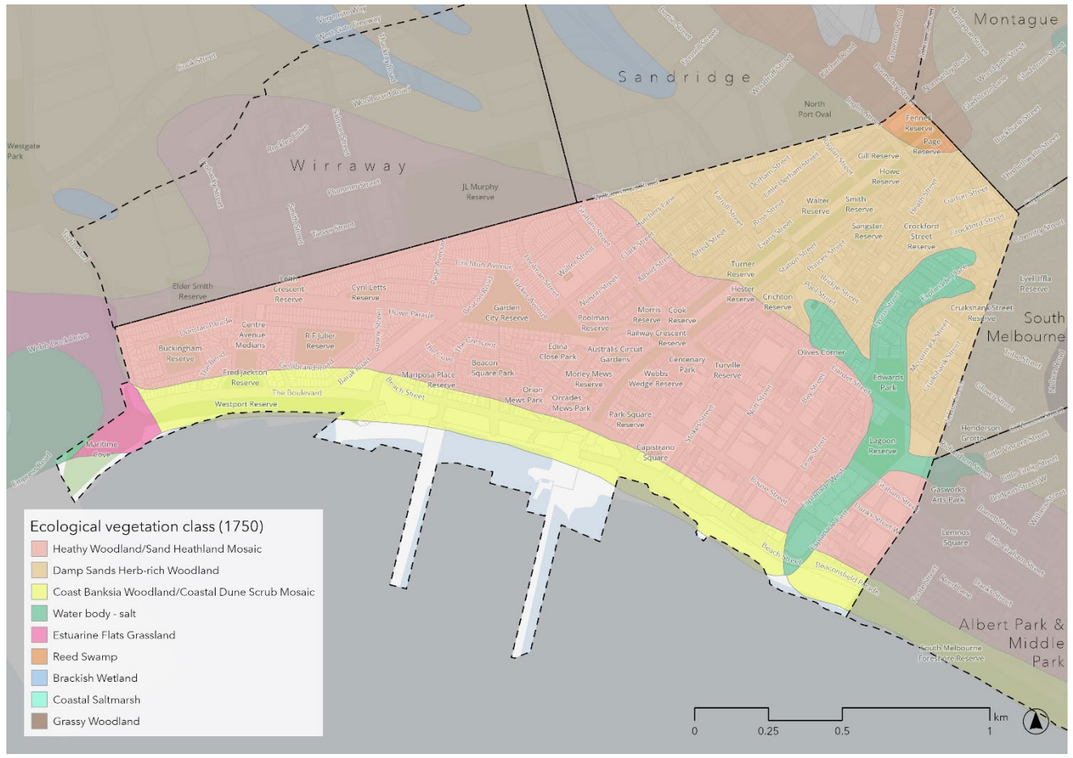
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

Historical ecologies are mapped using the Pre-1750 Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs), which describe the native vegetation communities that existed prior to widespread settlement, classified according to climate, soil, hydrology and landscape context. The neighbourhood contains seven different EVCs, which provide an ecological baseline for understanding which tree and understorey species are endemic to the area and support species selections that enhance resilience, biodiversity and habitat connectivity across the neighbourhood.

Source: Victorian Government, *Native Vegetation - Modelled 1750 Ecological Vegetation Classes*
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓		✓	✓	✓



04.6

REMNANT ECOLOGIES

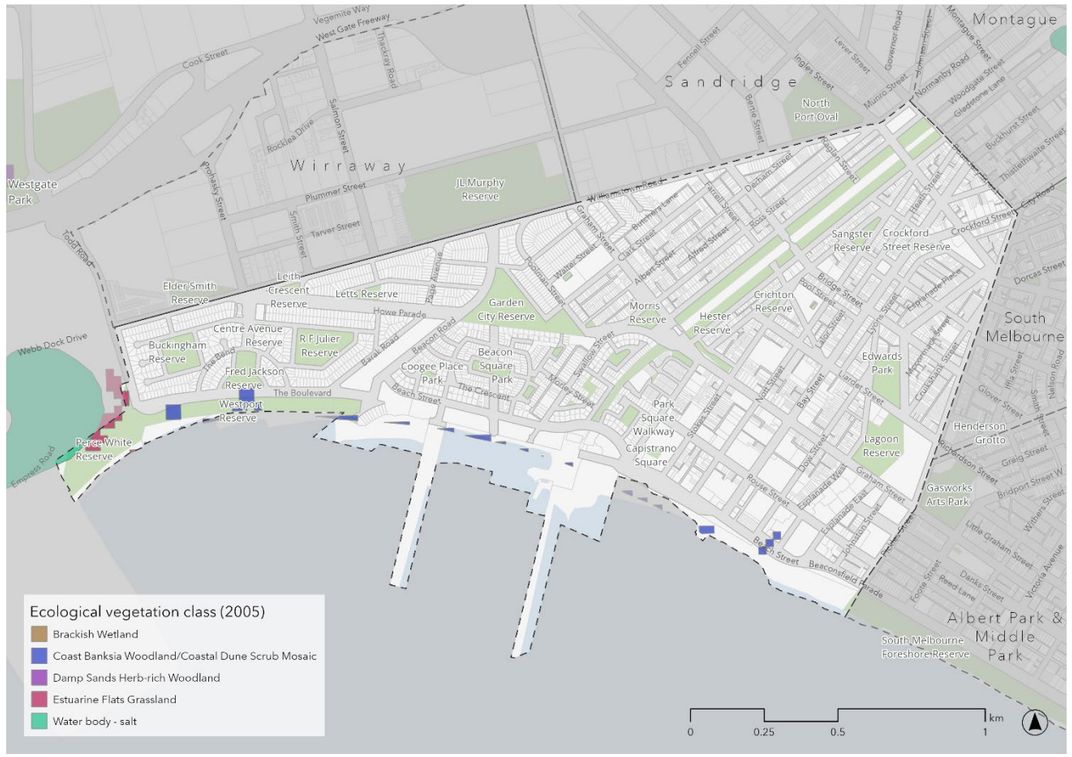
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

Remnant ecologies are mapped using the 2005 EVCs, which describe the native vegetation communities that have persisted since settlement, classified according to climate, soil, hydrology and landscape context. Within the neighbourhood, scattered patches of remnant vegetation remain around the foreshore. This information can inform species selection, guide targeted ecological initiatives and help prioritise actions to strengthen resilience, biodiversity and habitat connectivity in key areas.

Source: Victorian Government, *Native Vegetation - Modelled 2005 Ecological Vegetation Classes*
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓		✓	✓	✓



04.7

GEOLOGY

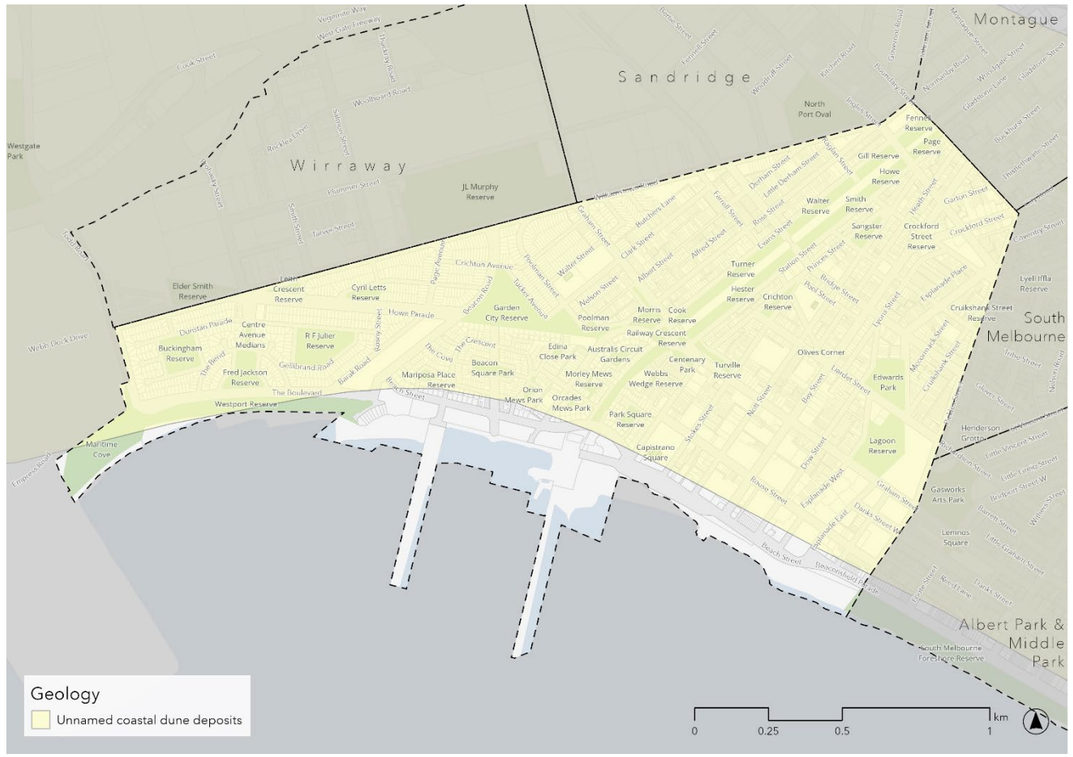
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

These broad scale geological maps show the soil and rock types that can be found near the surface, reflecting soil conditions across the neighbourhood. The whole of Port Melbourne is dominated by unnamed coastal dune deposits. The soil characteristics influence the suitability of different tree species and control the rates of infiltration of water into the ground. Soil types can guide species selection, water sensitive design responses and support targeted habitat restoration. It also assists in prioritising areas where soil constraints or opportunities may influence long-term resilience, ecological outcomes and the feasibility of future landscape interventions.

Source: Victorian Government, *Geological polygons (1:250,000)*
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓		✓		



04.8

INUNDATION

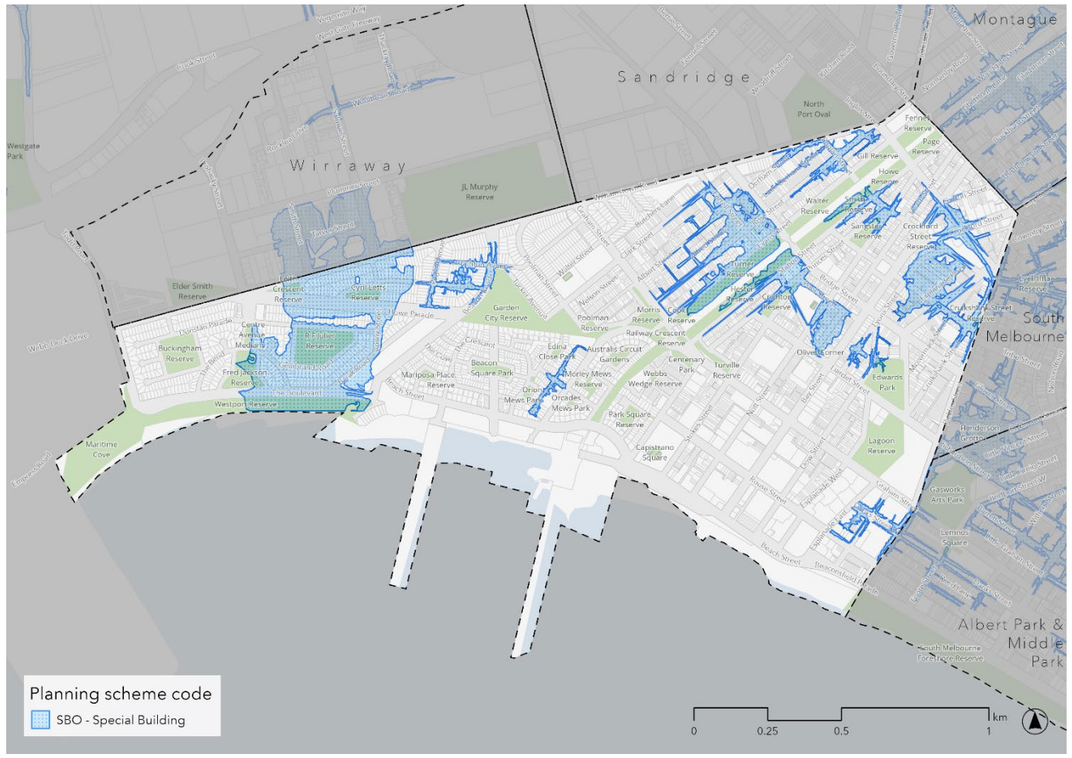
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

This map shows flood-prone areas where streets may experience stormwater accumulation or flows. Tree species that are more tolerant of frequent inundation should be considered in flood-prone areas. Increased canopy cover and WSUD interventions (such as permeable pavements and bioretention systems) in flood-prone streets can reduce nuisance flooding.

Source: Victorian Government, *Planning Scheme Overlay Polygon*
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓		✓		



04.9

EXISTING TREE CANOPY

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

This map shows tree canopy in streets and open spaces across the neighbourhood. The tree canopy data in these maps was collected in 2022 and shows the locations and 'crown extent' of trees at that time. It provides important insights into the distribution of canopy cover across the streets and parks of the neighbourhood.

Source: City of Port Phillip (2023), *City of Port Phillip Tree Ledger*
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication. Canopy data only covers the CoPP.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓	✓	✓		



04.10

ZONING

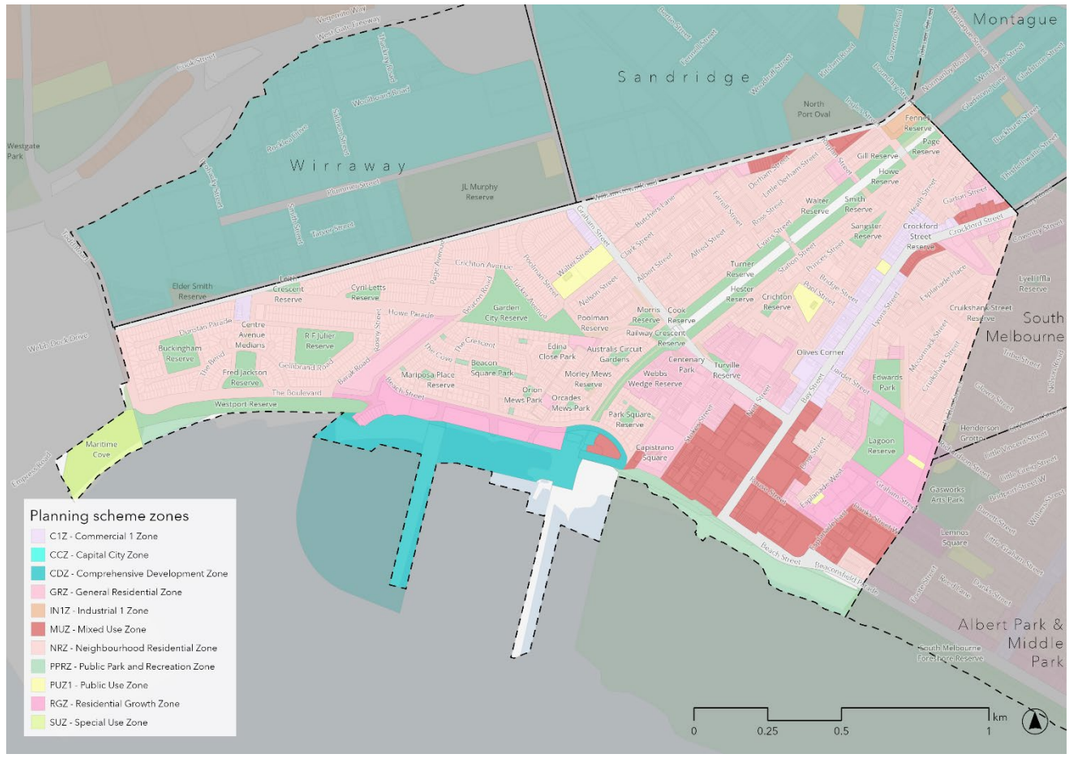
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

This map shows land use zoning in the Port Melbourne neighbourhood. Zoning has contributed to the development of the street typologies intervention recommendations outlined in Appendix B. Different land uses in specific areas affect the type of street tree planting that is appropriate.

Source: Victorian Government (2026), Planning Scheme Zone Polygon
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓	✓			✓



04.11

MOVEMENT

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

These maps show the public transport and bicycle infrastructure in the neighbourhood, which were considered in the street typology classification and the process to identify priority streets for intervention.

Source: Victorian Government (2026), Public Transport Lines and Stops & Bicycle Infrastructure Network
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓	✓		✓	



04.12

ROAD OWNERSHIP

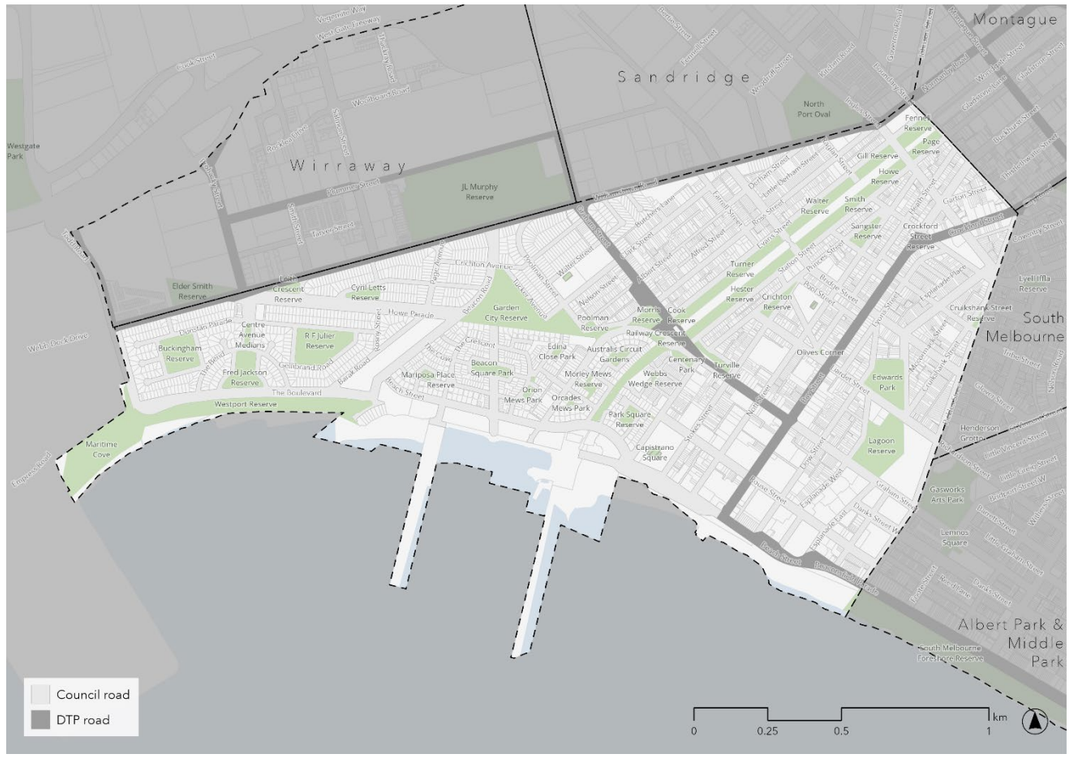
KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

This map shows the roads in the neighbourhood that are managed by the Department of Transport and Planning and highlight road reserves that Council has less influence over. This information contributed to the street prioritisation scoring.

Source: Victorian Government (2026), DTP Managed Roads
Note: The data in this map is the most current available at the time of publication.

WHAT THE DATA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO:

KEY ACTIONS	STREET TYPES	SPECIES SELECTION	STREET PRIORITY	OPEN SPACE
✓	✓	✓	✓	



04.13

STREET CANOPY COVER

This map shows the existing canopy cover of streets across the neighbourhood, with each street segment classified according to the percentage of canopy cover within the road reserve. Canopy cover has been calculated by comparing the area of tree canopy (m2) to the total road casement area (m2), providing a consistent measure of how well streets are shaded by trees.

The Urban Forest Strategy sets a target of 30% canopy cover for streets. This analysis helps identify which streets already meet this target, and which streets are below the guideline. It also identifies how close streets are to reaching the 30% target, informing future greening priorities and investment.

While streets with lower canopy cover many be considered for additional planting, canopy cover percentages alone do not indicate planting opportunity, as factors such as verge width, under- and above-ground services, traffic requirements and other site constraints can limit the feasibility of increasing tree canopy.



04.14

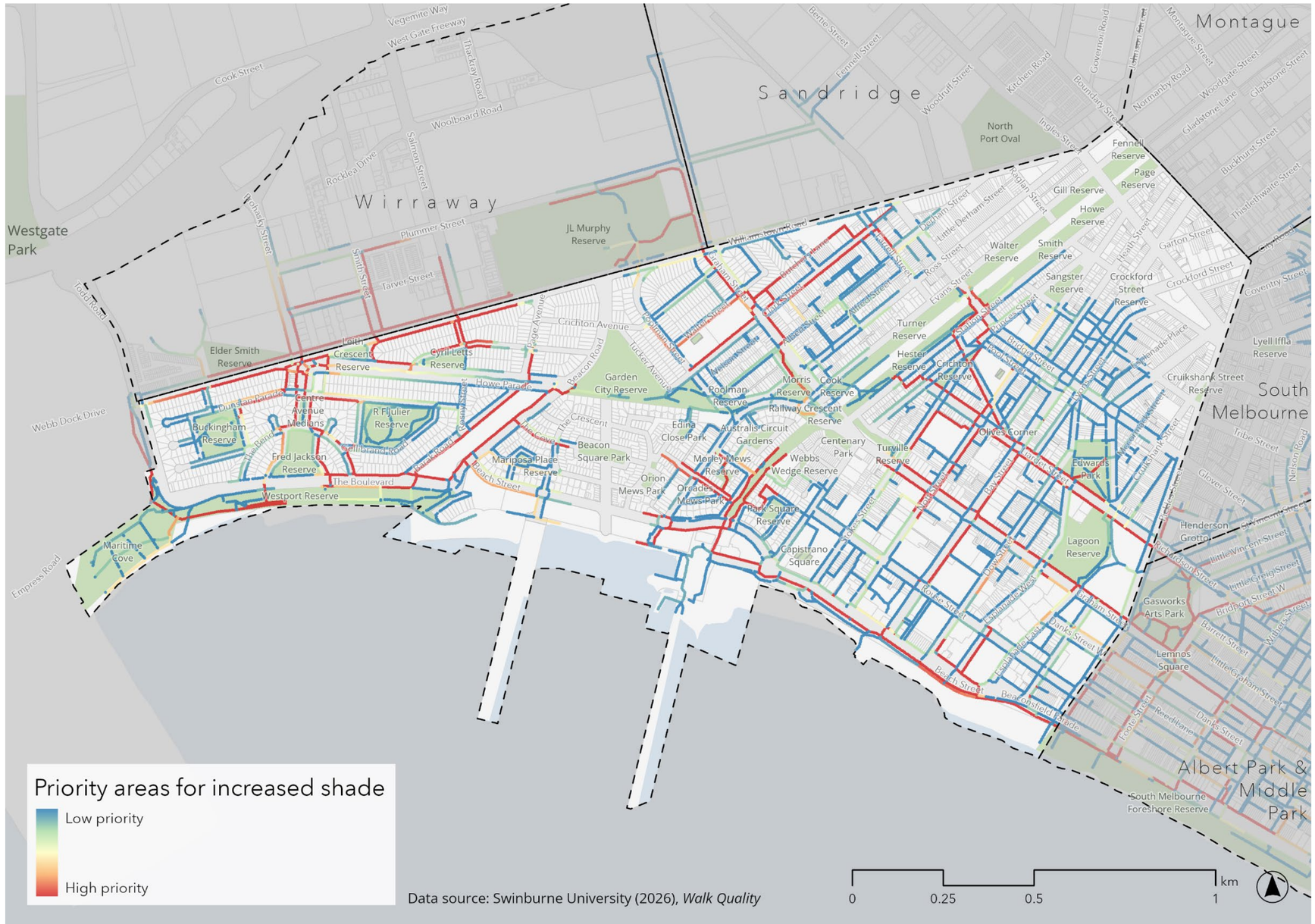
WALK QUALITY – PRIORITY STREETS FOR SHADE INCREASE

We partnered with the Walk Quality research project, a collaboration between Swinburne University of Technology and the University of Melbourne. The project aims to enhance urban walkability using a design platform that evaluates and tests improvements to pedestrian experiences.

Funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant and industry partners, the project focuses on key urban design elements that affect pedestrian comfort, such as accessibility, slope, thermal comfort, conflicts with motor vehicles and cyclists, and pollution. A significant component of the research – and one that aligns closely with the UFPPs – is the impact of shade on walkability.

Using advanced 3D modelling techniques, the project team has developed detailed representations of municipal areas to assess where pedestrian paths are and are not shaded. Walking catchments have been generated for key destinations across the neighbourhood.

These walking catchments simulate the distance a pedestrian could walk under defined sun exposure time limits (2-, 3-, 6-, 8- and 10-minute catchments). From this, street segments consistently affected by insufficient shading across multiple pedestrian catchments are identified as high priority for increased canopy cover, as shown in the adjacent map. This approach quantifies existing shade coverage and visualises its impact on pedestrian behaviour, supporting targeted interventions to enhance urban walkability.



04.15

HIGH PRIORITY STREETS

Streets across the neighbourhood are allocated a priority level based on eight factors that directly link to the objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy: canopy cover, cycling infrastructure, public transport, heat vulnerability, biodiversity connections, road ownership, Council strategy and the Walk Quality assessment score.

The priority scoring process is described in Section 02.1 and Appendix A. The results of the prioritisation are mapped on this page and detailed in Appendix A.

Note: Street trees have been recently planted on some high-priority streets in this neighbourhood (e.g. Liardet Street) and are yet to mature and provide canopy coverage.



05

STREETSCAPE TYPOLOGIES

05.1

STREETSCAPE TYPOLOGIES – PORT MELBOURNE

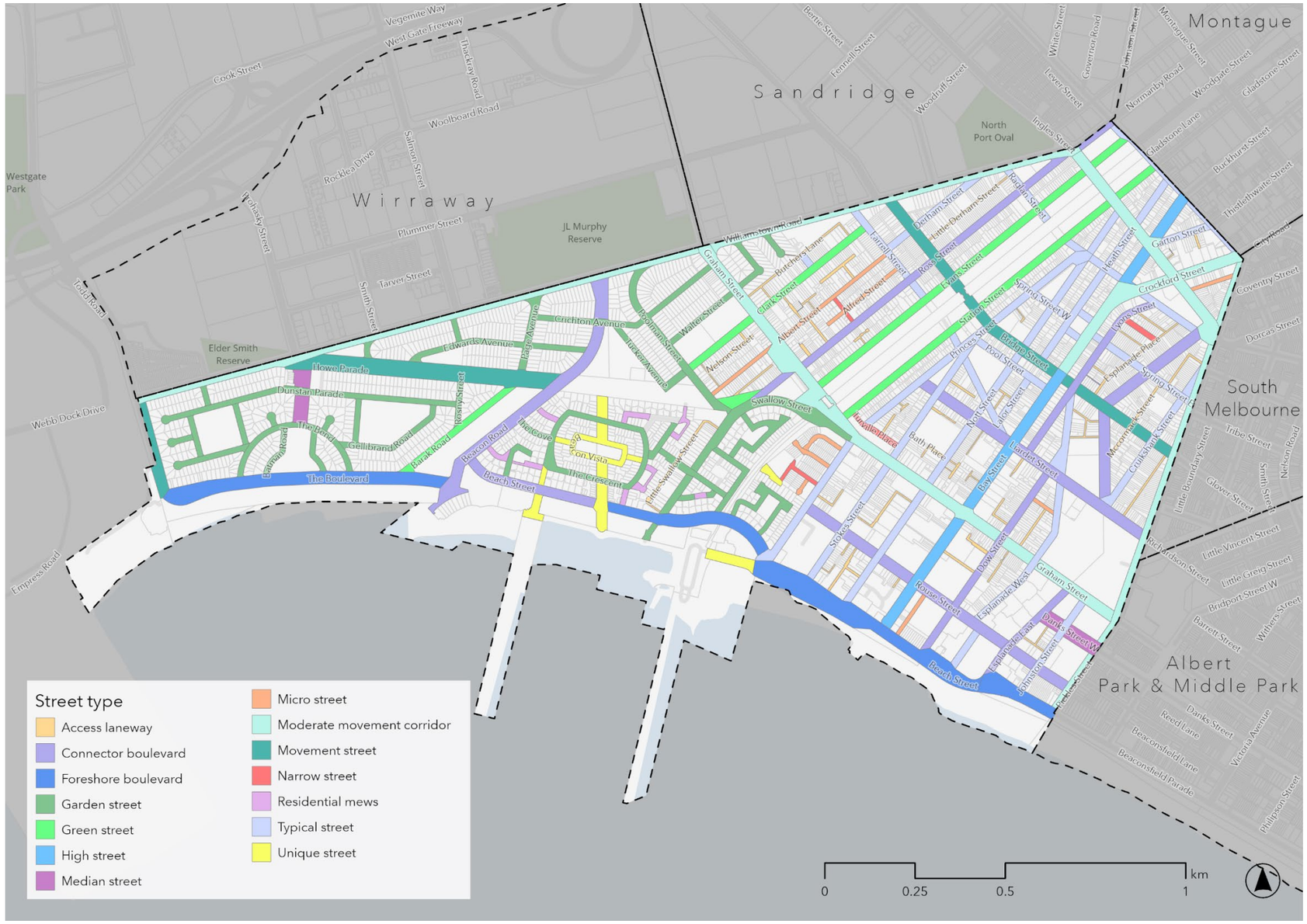
Port Melbourne's street network falls into four broad areas. The Garden City heritage area in the south-west has a fine grain of residential streets. Beacon Cove, the more recent development opposite Station Pier, arranges its residential streets around small open spaces. Along the foreshore, former industrial land and port infrastructure have produced irregular street connections. The north and west of the suburb keep the original 19th century grid, with more regular streets. Bay Street, Bridge Street, Graham Street and the Port Melbourne light rail corridor anchor this grid.

The streets in the Port Melbourne neighbourhood have been grouped into typologies based on their physical attributes and movement functions. These include some of the typologies identified in previous UFPPs, with changes to their attributes to accommodate the different urban context of the Port Melbourne neighbourhood. Details of the streetscape typologies are provided in Appendix B.

The streetscape attributes used to assign typologies include:

- Overall width (property boundary to property boundary)
- Footpath width
- Number of vehicle lanes and carriageway width
- Verges and verge planting
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Car parking
- Infrastructure (powerlines, public transport modes)
- Existing canopy cover
- Built form and land use interfaces
- Street function (through street, one-way)

The typologies assigned to each street in the neighbourhood are shown in the map on this page and listed in Appendix A.



06

OPEN SPACE AND PRIVATE LAND

06.1

OPEN SPACE – EXISTING & PLANNED

There are 56 open spaces in the Port Melbourne neighbourhood that make up 17% of the total neighbourhood area (equal to the CoPP average). The network also includes contributory spaces such as Port Melbourne Primary School, Port Phillip Specialist School and three publicly accessible private church grounds.

Canopy cover on public spaces in the neighbourhood is 28% (including sports field areas), the second highest public space canopy cover of the nine neighbourhoods in the CoPP. Most open spaces in the CoPP have canopy cover above 17%, even where parts of the site cannot be planted.

Five open spaces are immediately adjacent to the neighbourhood: Elder Smith Reserve, J L Murphy Reserve, North Port Oval, Gasworks Arts Park and the South Melbourne Foreshore Reserve – all within the CoPP.

Five open space projects in the neighbourhood are identified in the CoPP Public Space Strategy:

- Investigate the installation of a flying fox at Buckingham Reserve as part of the play space
- Upgrade the existing skate facility and surrounding open space, and installation of recreation infrastructure at the Graham Street Underpass
- Prepare the Port Melbourne Light Rail Linear Parks landscape masterplans
- Prepare the Waterfront Place overall framework plan
- Minor upgrades to Station Pier Linear Park

Some of these initiatives directly involve new tree planting and increased canopy.



Open Space	Open Space Name	Open Space Type	Existing or Planned	Access	Management	Total Area
1	ORCADES MEWS PARK	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Restricted	CoPP	309m^2
2	COOK RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	2400m^2
3	RAILWAY CRESCENT RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	1032m^2
4	LAGOON RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	22862m^2
5	HOWE RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	4523m^2
6	PORT PHILLIP SPECIALIST SCHOOL OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT	Sports ground	Existing	Restricted	Port Phillip Specialist School	385m^2
7	ORION MEWS PARK	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Restricted	CoPP	930m^2
8	POOLMAN RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	564m^2
9	PAGE RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	3764m^2
10	EDINA CLOSE PARK	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	693m^2
11	CRUIKSHANK STREET RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	623m^2
12	CYRIL LETTS RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	3919m^2
13	WESTPORT RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	38437m^2
14	CENTRE AVENUE MEDIANS	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	1494m^2
15	BUCKINGHAM RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	13249m^2
16	BEACON SQUARE PARK	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	4129m^2
17	CENTENARY PARK	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	1788m^2
18	EDWARDS PARK	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	15665m^2
19	GARDEN CITY RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	38499m^2
20	GILL RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	4609m^2
21	OLIVES CORNER	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	234m^2
22	WEBBS WEDGE RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	411m^2
23	PARK SQUARE WALKWAY	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	157m^2
24	SANGSTER RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	3609m^2
25	GRAHAM STREET SKATE SPACE	Skate park	Existing	Public	CoPP	662m^2
26	FENNELL RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	5222m^2
27	LEITH CRESCENT RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	2313m^2
28	WALTER RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	8399m^2
29	PORT MELBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT	Sports ground	Existing	Restricted	Port Melbourne Primary School	511m^2
30	CROCKFORD STREET RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	464m^2
31	SMITH RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	9248m^2
32	ORION MEWS RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Restricted	CoPP	226m^2
33	MARIPOSA PLACE RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	1205m^2
34	CAPISTRANO SQUARE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Restricted	Privately-owned	1281m^2
35	CRICHTON RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	2616m^2
36	MORRIS RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	5617m^2
37	AUSTRALIS CIRCUIT GARDENS	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	2253m^2
38	PARK SQUARE RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	2525m^2
39	MORLEY MEWS RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Restricted	CoPP	1761m^2
40	TURNER RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	12069m^2
41	MARITIME COVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	35885m^2
42	BEACON COVE LINEAR LIGHT RAIL	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	9396m^2
43	R F JULIER RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	18628m^2
44	FRED JACKSON RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	10566m^2
45	TURVILLE RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	CoPP	2684m^2
46	HESTER RESERVE	Parks and Reserves	Existing	Public	DEECA	13874m^2

Open Space	Open Space Name	Open Space Type	Existing or Planned	Access	Management	Total Area
47	BEACON COVE CIVIC PARK	Parks and Reserves	Planned	Public	Developer	TBC
48	BEACON COVE PODIUM LANDSCAPE BUILDING 4	Green space	Planned	Restricted	Developer	TBC
49	BEACON COVE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK	Parks and Reserves	Planned	Public	Developer	TBC
50	BEACON COVE PODIUM LANDSCAPE BUILDING 2	Green space	Planned	Restricted	Developer	TBC
51	BEACON COVE PROMENADE 1	Green corridor	Planned	Public	Developer	TBC
52	BEACON COVE PODIUM LANDSCAPE BUILDING 3	Green space	Planned	Restricted	Developer	TBC
53	BEACON COVE PROMENADE 2	Green corridor	Planned	Public	Developer	TBC
54	BEACON COVE BEACHFRONT	Green space	Planned	Public	Developer	TBC
55	BEACON COVE PODIUM LANDSCAPE BUILDING 1	Green space	Planned	Restricted	Developer	TBC
56	GRAHAM STREET UNDERPASS RECREATION SPACE	Parks and Reserves	Planned	Public	CoPP	TBC
57	WATERFRONT PLACE PARKLET	Parks and Reserves	Planned	Public	Developer	TBC

06.2

FORESHORE OPEN SPACES

Running through multiple precincts, the foreshore includes the most iconic public open spaces on offer in the CoPP. Foreshore open spaces include beaches and adjacent parklands. They shape the city's character and are managed to balance sea views, recreation, biodiversity and climate resilience. The foreshore is a place for both everyday use and major events. However, coastal erosion, stormwater and public safety must be managed to protect its environmental values.

The urban forest within foreshore open spaces features historic, coastal-tolerant trees, such as the Norfolk Island Hibiscus and other exotic species, alongside small pockets of native vegetation rather than a continuous canopy. Trees are concentrated in clusters like those at Maritime Cove and Westport Reserve, along promenades, and in boulevard plantings. Large open lawns remain mostly treeless to preserve sea vies and support major events. This pattern reflects the challenges of managing a coastal environment where salt, wind, sandy soils and the need to maintain sight lines limit tree density and species selection. As a result, planting focuses on resilient coastal species, specimen trees and targeted renewal. Overall, the foreshore tree scape combines heritage character and environmental resilience, balancing shade, biodiversity and recreation in one of the city's most visited landscapes.

The Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan 2023 covers 19 sites across the municipality and serves as a roadmap for managing these areas from 2023-2028. The management plan aims to improve the ecological integrity of these sites and mitigate various management issues that pose a threat to local biodiversity (such as invasive species and climate change). In response, the Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan includes a management plan for each reserve, that identifies management issues and recommended actions. The Greening Port Melbourne UFPP defers to the management plan for urban forest actions and opportunities for the following six sites which are in Port Melbourne:

- Sandridge Beach
- First Point
- Princess Street Dunes
- Lagoon Reserve
- Port Melbourne Light Rail
- Pickle Street Dunes

Tree selection considerations	• Have strong visual character and enhance the aesthetic identity of the foreshore and its existing tree species (i.e. Norfolk Island Hibiscus). • Species that are tolerant of formative pruning to retain sight lines. • Minimise dropping of large seed pods or branches onto busy footpaths. • Species that are tolerant of coastal conditions including: salt spray, wind, sandy soils. • Endemic species where appropriate to promote biodiversity and coastal character.
Opportunities to increase canopy	• Opportunities for succession planting of aging heritage trees to replace with endemic tree species in more naturalistic, mixed species arrangements. • Many good examples of open spaces with endemic coastal tree plantings that can be emulated in open space upgrades throughout the precinct. • There are many large foreshore open spaces with room to accommodate more/larger trees.



Figure 12 Westport Reserve is an example of a foreshore open space



Figure 13 Pickle Street Dunes are one of 19 sites (six of which are in Port Melbourne) that are managed by the Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan

06.3

GREENING ON PRIVATE LAND AND LAND MANAGED BY OTHERS

The Urban Forest Strategy recognises that everyone has a part to play in urban greening, including the objective that: *Our community is engaged, trees and plants are valued, and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types.*

The Urban Forest Strategy actions for land managed by others include:

- For Victorian Government-managed land:
  - Action 6: Advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure appropriate consideration of canopy cover in Electrical Line Clearance Regulations and for funding to support engineered solutions that address safety while reducing negative impacts on canopy cover.
  - Action 8: Advocate to Victorian Government, including the Department of Transport, Parks Victoria, VicTrack, Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, and other agencies to increase maintenance, canopy cover and biodiversity on state-managed land in the municipality.
- For new developments:
  - Action 14: Facilitate increase of canopy trees, and other types of innovative and resilient urban greenery in private developments via planning tools.
  - Action 15: Protect significant trees and vegetation in private realm that are valued by communities, including large canopy trees and indigenous vegetation via suitable planning tools and develop clear guidelines for Significant Tree Removal applications under the Local Law.
  - Action 25: Partner with developers to support greening, permeability, biodiversity and stormwater detention in public and private spaces in line with Act and Adapt and the Public Space Strategy.
- For supporting home gardeners:
  - Action 22: Support the community to implement the Nature Strip Guidelines (2022) and continue to provide community gardening support to promote sustainable gardening and biodiversity in public spaces.
  - Action 23: Deliver annual community activities to educate, incentivise and build greening capacity to improve the urban forest including resources for home gardeners and investigate ways to support home and community gardening.
  - Action 24: Provide resources to educate residents and provide guidance to developers on planting, biodiversity, and sustainable gardens to enhance the urban forest on private property.

Private land accounts for 49% of the total land area in the CoPP and forms a substantial part of the City's urban green space network. Residents and private landholders plant, maintain and care for much of that vegetation. Whether in private gardens and balconies or through community gardening projects, greening on private land is a fundamental component of the urban forest.

Within the CoPP Planning Scheme, several Design and Development Overlays apply across the Port Melbourne neighbourhood. Together they control building heights, street wall and podium levels, setbacks, landscaping and vehicle crossovers, and several protect solar access to the foreshore and the public realm. A Neighbourhood Character Overlay also applies to the Beacon Cove residential precinct.

There is opportunity for private development to contribute to greening of the adjoining public realm. When connected with the broader network of public parks and reserves, green private areas can assist in the creation of a more resilient and liveable urban environment.

Land managed by Victorian Government agencies includes many key transport routes, where high-quality canopy cover is essential for promoting active travel. Locations such as DTP road reserves, the Port Melbourne Light Rail Corridor, bus stops, light rail stops and local schools provide opportunities to improve biodiversity and canopy cover by advocating to and collaborating with the relevant land managers.

As part of the delivery of the Urban Forest Strategy, Council will continue to work with developers and other stakeholders to embed greening, habitat connectivity and permeability into the urban form, ensuring a healthy future urban forest.



Figure 14 Example of pocket greening on private property contributing to the urban forest on The Bend



Figure 15 Absence of trees or other greening in Alfred Street.

07

ACTION PLAN

07.1

ACTION PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITISATION

KEY ACTIONS

The six Key Actions in this neighbourhood are:

①	Designing new streets for greening and shade
②	Enhancing and maintaining existing streetscapes
③	Increasing canopy and biodiversity in parks and open space
④	Greening beyond Council land through partnerships and advocacy
⑤	Replacing species and implementing staged transformations to address issues of disease and site-specific challenges
⑥	Canopy that can withstand foreshore conditions

The Action Plan identifies specific projects and opportunities for each of the key actions in this neighbourhood.

MUNICIPAL-WIDE ACTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section describes municipal-wide actions and opportunities (Key Actions 1 to 5). Many of these reflect existing and/or ongoing programs that support the delivery of the Urban Forest Strategy.

Key Action 1: Designing new streets for greening and shade

Leverage opportunities to increase planting as part of the delivery of the renewal program for roads and footpaths.

This supports the delivery of the Urban Forest Strategy Action 16: *Investigate locations where roads can be repurposed to increase greening, particularly in areas with lower canopy cover and where there are gaps in the public space network in line with the Public Space Strategy.*

And its Action 19: *Work towards improving permeability through capital projects; leveraging footpath renewal program to develop new nature strips where appropriate, increasing nature strip planting (including developing standard designs and processes) and enlarge street tree plots; and developing permeable targets in line with Act and Adapt.*

Key Action 2: Enhancing and maintaining existing streetscapes

Infill Tree Planting:

- Plant trees in the vacant spaces (tree plots) where there are gaps in street tree provision (ongoing)
- Identify poorly performing trees and develop replacement program (ongoing)

Infill tree planting supports the Urban Forest Strategy target to decrease the number of vacant street tree plots by 2029.

Poorly performing trees are those trees that show signs of reduced vitality, health or structural integrity when compared to what is expected for that species, as assessed by a Council Arborist. Replacement of these trees with a suitable species will increase urban canopy cover, without the need for additional funding to create new tree plots.

Tree Replacement Program:

- Develop tree replacement programs, where trees are failing to thrive, to improve canopy cover (ongoing)

Supports delivery of Action 30: *Future proof the urban forest through forward planning for when trees come to the end of their lifespans in parks, reserves, and streets. Consider heritage trees and biodiversity or habitat requirements and aligning with conservation management plans where they exist.*

Garden beds:

- Planting uplift of garden beds in Council managed streetscapes (ongoing)

Key Action 3: Increasing canopy and biodiversity in parks and open space

Water Sensitive Urban Design (new and renewal):

- Identify WSUD opportunities, including uplift of current WSUD garden beds and identification of new sites (ongoing)

Planting Uplift Program – Parks:

- Planting uplift of garden beds in public open space (ongoing)

Key Action 4: Greening beyond Council land through partnerships and advocacy

Advocacy with other land holders:

- Continue to advocate for, and seek partnerships with other land holders to improve greening and biodiversity outcomes

Supports delivery of Action 8: *Advocate to Victorian Government, including the Department of Transport, Parks Victoria, VicTrack, Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, and other agencies to increase maintenance, canopy cover and biodiversity on state-managed land in the municipality.*

Greener Public Transport Stops:

- Increase tree planting and other greening solutions at public transport stops where summer shade provision is low, partnering with other agencies.
- Plant trees adjacent to public transport stops where possible.
- Engage with public transport companies and Department of Transport and Planning to initiate alternative vegetated shade opportunities where tree planting is not feasible.

Key Action 5: Replacing species and implementing staged transformations to address issues of disease and site-specific challenges

This includes implementation of the following two actions within the Urban Forest Strategy:

Action 31: *Develop and implement a Plane Tree Management Plan with our community including issues of species dominance, succession planning, and disease management.*

Action 32: *Refine and implement our Palm Tree Management Plan to respond to the presence and spread of disease focusing first on key boulevards and foreshore reserves*.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities have been identified for all primary focus streets in the neighbourhood. These will be the focus for delivery of urban greening initiatives over the next 10 years.

Streets identified as a secondary focus or for future focus will be assessed according to the capacity for future delivery. Project delivery will be balanced according to need to ensure projects address equity where required across the nine neighbourhoods in the CoPP.

There are four open space opportunities identified in the neighbourhood that are aligned with existing Council plans and priorities.

FUNDING

The Greening Port Melbourne UFPP has a dedicated implementation budget (as part of the Greening Port Phillip program) of approximately $750,000 over 10 years, with further funding allocated from various other projects and budget streams.

To ensure fair delivery across the neighbourhoods, the Action Plan targets primary focus streets, with the highest need and potential impact.

Once all UFPPs are delivered, a municipality-wide approach will be applied to identify opportunities for streets classified as secondary or future focus, subject to available funding. This approach has been adopted to ensure all UFPPs are deliverable within current resources and funding envelopes, with all projects focusing on meeting the goals of the Urban Forest Strategy: enhancing canopy cover, biodiversity and urban cooling.

Available funding sources will be assessed annually, and options for alternative funding from State and Federal Governments will be actively sought, along with ways to improve planting practices for greater impact and value.

IMPLEMENTATION

Urban greening opportunities, identified in the Action Plan on the following page, have been developed to be both fundable and deliverable within available resources over the next 10 years, subject to Council planning and budgeting. The Implementation Plan, Section 07.3, outlines the proposed timeframe for these opportunities. The targets of 30% canopy cover for streets and a minimum of 40% for open spaces have been incorporated into the assessment and costing process.

Delivery of the opportunities will be led by teams across Council, aiming to maximise co-benefits by aligning urban greening with transport safety, water sensitive urban design, and civic amenity programs. These efforts will complement dedicated initiatives focused on enhancing tree canopy and increasing biodiversity through strategic planting.



Figure 16 Advocating for urban greening at stops along the Port Melbourne Linear Light Rail Corridor would help achieve key action 4



Figure 17 Increasing tree canopy cover at Turner Reserve would respond to key action 3

07.2

ACTION PLAN

Key Actions		Neighbourhood Opportunities	Map ID
1	**Designing New Streets for Greening and Shade**	For streets in the area bound by **Williamstown Road, Ingles Street, Bridge Street** and **Bay Street**: Plant additional street trees to increase canopy cover and improve pedestrian amenity.	
		For streets in the area bound by **Normanby Road, Boundary Street, Ingles Street,** and **Crockford Street**: Plant additional street trees to increase canopy cover and improve pedestrian amenity.	
2	**Enhancing and Maintaining Existing Streetscapes**	Develop and implement guidance for developers on Council's requirements for new street trees as part of the reinstatement works.	Neighbourhood-wide
		As part of intersection improvements being considered at **Esplanade West / Lyons Street / Bridge Street** introduce additional green space and increase planting opportunities and canopy coverage.	
3	**Increasing Canopy and Biodiversity in Parks and Open Space**	Plant additional street trees to increase canopy cover and improve biodiversity connectivity from **Graham Street Underpass** to **Hester Reserve**, **Turville Reserve** and **Cook Reserve**.	
		Implement the Port Melbourne Light Rail Park Masterplan (for **Cook, Fennell, Gill, Hester, Howe, Page, Smith, Turner** and **Walter Reserves)** to protect trees and enhance biodiversity.	
		As part of any upgrades to **Station Pier Linear Park** plant additional trees to provide shade and improve pedestrian amenity.	
		Plant additional trees along the edges of RF Julier Reserve to increase shade and improve pedestrian amenity for both the reserve and adjacent streets – **Edina Avenue**, **Gellibrand Road** and **Dunstan Parade**.	
		Within the **Howe Parade** centre median enhance biodiversity connectivity by increasing understorey planting.	
4	**Greening Beyond Council Land through Partnerships and Advocacy**	Partner with other agencies to increase tree planting and other greening solutions at public transport stops where shade provision is low.	
		Leverage opportunities and advocate for high-quality public space outcomes associated with key infrastructure projects on the foreshore (such as Waterfront Place / Station Pier) and connecting to the foreshore.	Neighbourhood-wide
5	**Replacing species and implementing staged transformations to address issues of disease and site-specific challenges**	Investigate options to diversify the tree population within the neighbourhood.	Neighbourhood-wide
		Trial replacement species for Norfolk Island hibiscus on **The Boulevard, Pickles Street** and **Dow Street.**	
		Foreshore species replacement and staged planting trials along **The Boulevard** (within the centre median and along the northern side). Consider the provision of summer shade and improve pedestrian amenity at pedestrian crossings.	
6	**Canopy that can withstand foreshore conditions**	Align future tree planting with broader coastal adaptation initiatives to stabilise sandy soils, strengthen habitat continuity, and improve microclimate resilience in exposed coastal environments.	
		Preserve and enhance native dune vegetation and biodiversity along the foreshore through planting structurally diverse native vegetation species.	
		Increase shade and canopy cover along the foreshore by prioritising plantings in high-use areas such as footpaths, playgrounds, BBQ zones, seating and picnic spaces. Ensure all plantings complement local masterplans and urban design frameworks, and are consistent with the Urban Forest Strategy and the Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan.	
		Establish, maintain and enhance ecological connections between the Sandridge, Port Melbourne and South Melbourne foreshore to Westgate Park and Danks Street Biolink.	
		Leverage existing research partnerships and South-East Council knowledge to identify and trial new species for foreshore conditions, including sandy soils, high-water tables, saline environments and high winds.	
		Initiative banksia rehabilitation along foreshore according to best tree management, biodiversity and climate ready practices to address poor health, growth and loss of trees.	


Sandridge
Wirraway
Montague
South Melbourne
Albert Park & Middle Park
Westgate Park
Maritime Cove
Priority actions
Primary focus streets
Increase tree planting
Trial planting programs
Improve or establish ecological connectivity
Preparation and implementation of plans and strategies in open spaces
Depaving
Preservation and enhancement of foreshore planting and environments
Greening at public transport stops
0
0.25
0.5
1km

07.3

IMPLEMENTATION

Category	Project	Description	Implementation Phase		
			1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years
❶	**DESIGNING NEW STREETS FOR GREENING AND SHADE**				
Street Trees	Public Space Strategy (streetscapes)	1.1 For streets in the area bound by **Williamstown Road, Ingles Street, Bridge Street** and **Bay Street**: Plant additional street trees to increase canopy cover and improve pedestrian amenity.			
Street Trees	Public Space Strategy (streetscapes)	1.2 For streets in the area bound by **Normanby Road, Boundary Street, Ingles Street** and **Crockford Street**: Plant additional street trees to increase canopy cover and improve pedestrian amenity.			
❷	**ENHANCING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING STREETSCAPES**				
Street Trees	Guidance (reinstatement)	2.1 Develop and implement guidance for developers on Council's requirements for new street trees as part of the reinstatement works.			
Street Trees	Depaving	2.2 As part of intersection improvements being considered at **Esplanade West / Lyons Street / Bridge Street** introduce additional green space and increase planting opportunities and canopy coverage.			
❸	**INCREASING CANOPY AND BIODIVERSITY IN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**				
Open Space	Public Space Strategy (existing public open space)	3.1 Plant additional street trees to increase canopy cover and improve biodiversity connectivity from **Graham Street Underpass** to **Hester Reserve**, **Turville Reserve** and **Cook Reserve**.			
Open Space	Public Space Strategy (existing public open space)	3.2 Implement the Port Melbourne Light Rail Park masterplan (for **Cook, Fennell, Gill, Hester, Howe, Page, Smith, Turner** and **Walter Reserves)** to protect trees and enhance biodiversity.			
Open Space	Public Space Strategy (existing public open space)	3.3 As part of any upgrades to **Station Pier Linear Park** plant additional trees to provide shade and improve pedestrian amenity.			
Open Space	Urban Heat Vulnerability	3.4 Plant additional trees along the edges of RF Julier Reserve to improve canopy cover, reduce the impact of urban heat and improve pedestrian amenity for both the reserve and adjacent streets – **Edina Avenue**, **Gellibrand Road** and **Dunstan Parade**.			
Open Space	Biodiversity connectivity	3.5 Within the **Howe Parade** centre median enhance biodiversity connectivity by increasing understorey planting.			
❹	**GREENING BEYOND COUNCIL LAND THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVOCACY**				
Partnership	Greener Public Transport Stops	4.1 Partner with other agencies to increase tree planting and other greening solutions at public transport stops where shade provision is low.			

Category	Project	Description	Implementation Phase		
			1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years
Street Trees	Public Space Strategy (Advocacy and partnerships)	4.2 Leverage opportunities and advocate for high-quality public space outcomes associated with key infrastructure projects on the foreshore (such as Waterfront Place / Station Pier) and connecting to the foreshore.			
5	**REPLACING SPECIES AND IMPLEMENTING STAGED TRANSFORMATIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF DISEASE AND SITE-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES**				
Street Trees	Succession planting	5.1 Investigate options to diversify the tree population within this neighbourhood.			
Street Trees	Species replacement	5.2 Trial replacement of Norfolk Island hibiscus on **The Boulevard, Pickles Street** and **Dow Street.**			
Street Trees	Trial program	5.3 Foreshore species replacement and staged planting trials along **The Boulevard** (within the centre median and along the northern side). Consider the provision of summer shade and improve pedestrian amenity at pedestrian crossings.			
6	**CANOPY THAT CAN WITHSTAND FORESHORE CONDITIONS**				
Foreshore	Coastal greening	6.1 Align future tree planting with broader coastal adaptation initiatives to stabilise sandy soils, strengthen habitat continuity and improve microclimate resilience in exposed coastal environments.			
Foreshore	Foreshore and Hinterland Management Plan	6.2 Preserve and enhance native dune vegetation and biodiversity along the foreshore through planting structurally diverse native vegetation species.			
Foreshore	Foreshore and Hinterland Management Plan	6.3 Increase shade and canopy cover along the foreshore by prioritising plantings in high-use areas such as footpaths, playgrounds, BBQ zones, seating and picnic spaces. Ensure all plantings complement local masterplans and urban design frameworks, and are consistent with the Urban Forest Strategy and the Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan.			
Foreshore	Foreshore and Hinterland Management Plan	6.4 Establish, maintain and enhance ecological connections between the Sandridge, Port Melbourne and South Melbourne foreshore to Westgate Park and Danks Street Biolink.			
Foreshore	Tree replacement	6.5 Leverage existing research partnerships and South-East Council knowledge to identify and trial new species for foreshore conditions, including sandy soils, high water tables, saline environments and high winds.			
Foreshore	Green Parks Program	6.6 Initiate banksia rehabilitation along foreshore according to best tree management, biodiversity and climate ready practices to address poor health, growth and loss of trees.			

07.4

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

The Urban Forest Strategy set baseline measures and targets to track progress of improving urban forest outcomes in the CoPP. Some of these measures will be tracked at a neighbourhood scale. The table below shows the current baseline for the Port Melbourne neighbourhood, the overall municipality-wide baseline, the short-term target to be achieved by 2029 and the longer-term target to be achieved by 2038.

For each of these measures, the table indicates which of the six Key Actions will directly address them and help to achieve both the short- and long-term targets.

Measure	Port Melbourne baseline (2024)	Municipality-wide baseline (2024)	Short-term target (2029)	Long-term target (2038)	Which Key Actions will help to achieve the short- and long-term targets?					
					Key Action ❶	Key Action ❷	Key Action ❸	Key Action ❹	Key Action ❺	Key Action ❻
Percentage canopy cover - overall	16%	17.17%	18.00%	TBC						
Percentage canopy cover - streets	23%	25.53%	26.00%	30%						
Percentage canopy cover - public space	28%	29%	30%	40% canopy cover, no net loss of canopy at any individual park or reserve						
Percentage of street tree plots that are vacant (annual measure)	TBC	Less than 5% Vacancy	Decreased from baseline	Decreased from 2033						
Number of high heat vulnerability SA1 areas with cooling and greening interventions	2 areas (interventions shown in UFPP)	CoPP has 9 high heat vulnerability (level 4 and 5) SA1 areas	100% of high heat vulnerability areas have an intervention	Re-baseline in 2029						
Deliver permeable surfaces through Council's capital/ footpath program (report annually)	TBC	Record m^2 for future target development	De-pave 19,000 m^2 of impermeable surfaces	To be set in line with Act & Adapt Strategy						
Public tree species diversity rating	TBC	Good to Fair	Good to Fair	Good						
Percentage of Council trees assessed as healthy	86.9% (in 2026)	84.6% (in 2026)	Minimum 85%	90% healthy						
Percentage survival rate of new Council tree plantings at two years old	TBC	85%	Minimum 85% survival rate	90% survival rate						
Average number of plantings per annum that support biodiversity	TBC	32,000	50,000	TBC						

07.5

FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

We can enhance the CoPP urban forest through a coordinated approach across departments, ensuring alignment towards the shared goal of increasing tree canopy. The process map (shown to the right) outlines how we can leverage internal synergies and external partnerships to achieve this objective.

There are three primary processes for implementation:

- Direct action by Council – we can actively increase tree canopy within streets, parks and open spaces under our jurisdiction. This may involve planting new trees, maintaining existing vegetation and integrating urban greening initiatives into infrastructure projects.
- Advocacy to the State Government – many key roads and public spaces are owned or managed by the State Government. The CoPP can advocate for increased tree planting and improved greenery in these areas by collaborating with state agencies and influencing urban planning policies at a higher level.
- Advocacy and enforcement through permit applications – we can encourage and mandate tree planting and other greening (i.e. green roofs and walls) in private developments and public realm projects through our planning and permit approval processes. By setting clear canopy targets, enforcing urban greening requirements and working with developers, we can drive increased tree cover across the municipality.

This integrated approach will help the CoPP create a more resilient, green and sustainable urban environment.

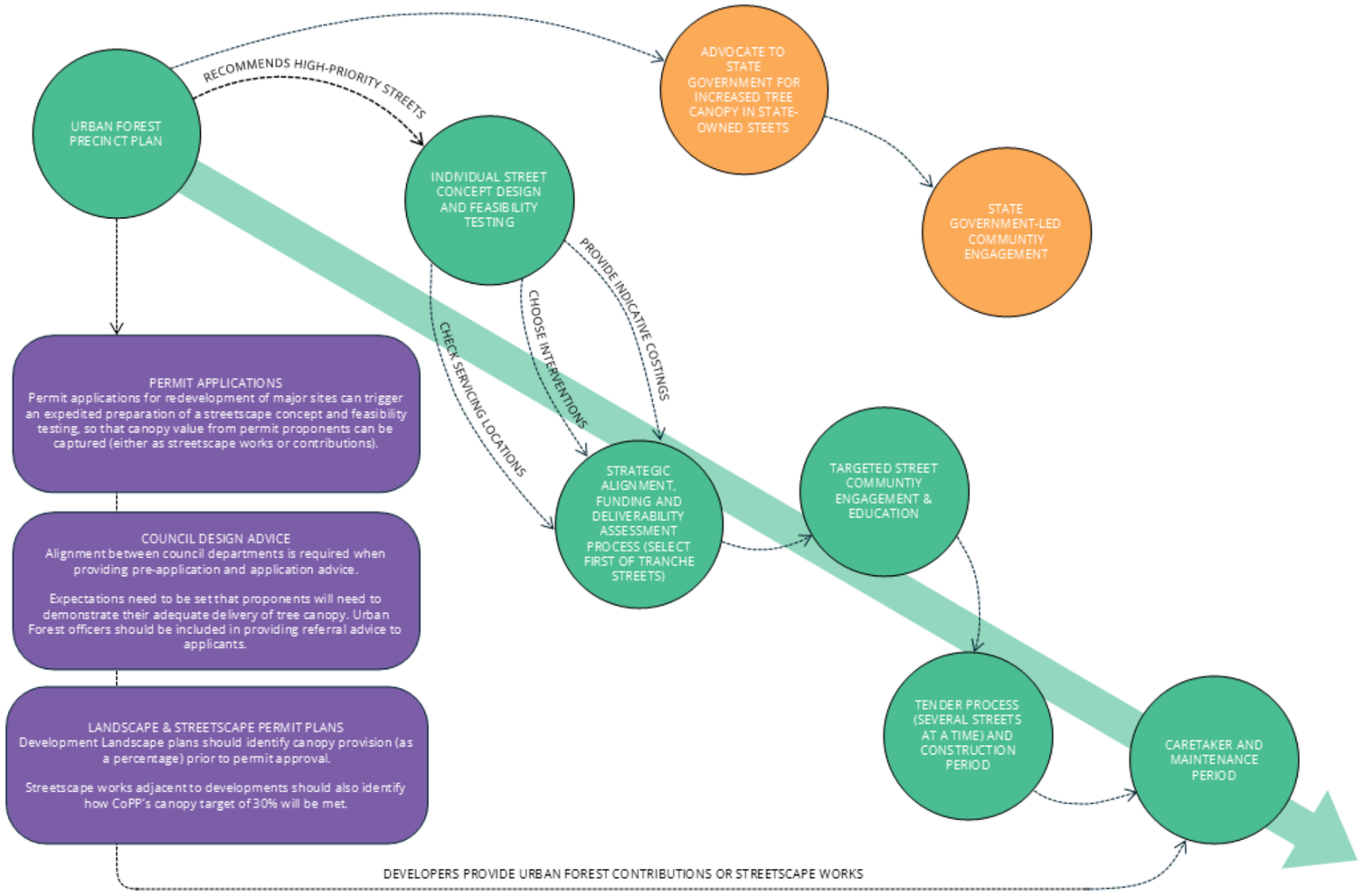


Figure 18 Implementation process diagram (amended from: LatStudios, 2026).

07.6

FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

BEST-PRACTICE SPECIES MIXES

Selecting an appropriate mix of tree species is essential to building a resilient urban forest that provides lasting canopy cover, while adapting to climate change, pests and diseases (such as Dutch Elm Disease and Myrtle Rust).

A commonly used guideline is the 10-20-30 rule (Santamour, 1990), which recommends that no more than 10% of trees belong to a single species, 20% to a single genus and 30% to a single family.

However, this rule is often criticised for oversimplifying urban forestry needs. It may not suit all climates, especially where fewer species can tolerate urban conditions. Emphasising diversity can limit the use of native species that support local biodiversity. Other challenges include nursery supply, increased maintenance complexity and inconsistent streetscapes. Moreover, the rule lacks strong scientific evidence. A more functional approach, which selects species based on resilience, ecological services and site-specific factors, may offer better long-term outcomes.

The Tree Species Selection Guidelines for the City of Melbourne (CoM) acknowledge these limitations and proposes an adapted benchmark to reduce vulnerability. Given the proximity between the CoM and the CoPP, the species recommendations in these guidelines are considered transferable.

Best practice guidance includes:

- Diversity ratios and climate resilience: selecting species that tolerate increasing urban heat, drought and extreme weather. This includes species from similar climate zones globally (e.g. Mediterranean and arid-climate trees) and native species adapted to local conditions.
- Site-specific selection: accounting for soil type, available root space, moisture levels and potential conflicts with infrastructure. Use of structured soils, root barriers and engineered planting pits ensures species thrive in urban settings.
- Ecological functionality: selecting species that support biodiversity by providing habitat and food for birds, pollinators and urban wildlife.
- Human amenity and cooling: prioritising broad-canopied trees that provide shade, reduce the urban heat island effect and enhance public space usability. Fast-growing but structurally stable species are preferred for quicker benefits.

CONSTRAINED URBAN SPACES

Existing streetscapes are challenging to retrofit. Trees, nature strips, accessible footpaths, adequate road space, car parking and bike lanes cannot always be accommodated. Smart streetscape design and prioritisation will be required. Planting trees in streets presents a variety of challenges. Given the varied development patterns, a site-specific approach is needed to ensure successful planting. Specific infrastructure restrictions include:

- Powerlines and tram lines: more than half of the CoPP street trees are pruned around above-ground power and communication cables. Council must meet legislative clearance requirements for trees near powerlines, in accordance with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2005 (Energy Safe Victoria). This requires regular clearance pruning to maintain the required distances.
- Underground utilities: services located beneath roads, footpaths and parks include electricity, water and gas lines, communications cabling, drains and electric vehicle charging stations. Trees can interfere with these services, and regulations require offset distances between new tree plantings and infrastructure such as lines and service pits.

We can continue to advocate for regulation and funding to support engineered solutions that improve safety while reducing negative impacts on canopy cover and planting areas.

GREENING LANEWAYS AND SMALL STREETS

The CoPP Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32 includes an action to: Prepare guidelines to assist Council decision-making on supporting the use of laneways for gardening by the community.

Based on learnings from the CoM Green Your Laneway Project Evaluation 2023 Summary Report, projects to green laneways and small streets will need:

- A robust community engagement framework. Finding champions in the community is important. In the CoM, community participation is a key contributor to the success of greening projects in laneways and small streets.
- To prioritise community-driven support for projects (in some cases, co-funding partnerships with businesses and building owners).
- To be incorporated into capital works projects (when delivered by the CoPP) and could be linked into larger (re)developments to contribute to the outcomes across the development/neighbourhood.

Projects that include greening laneways or small streets could provide an opportunity for a trial or pilot program which could be scaled up across the neighbourhood. Greening components could include window planters, street trees, pot plants, large planters, artworks, façade greening, green living walls, green roofs or community gardens.

TREE PLANTING CONDITIONS

- Compacted, contaminated and poor soils: urban soil conditions in the CoPP are often compacted and of poor quality, largely due to historic use of imported fill. This severely restricts tree growth. A range of treatments can improve soil quality, manage contamination and protect against future compaction.
- Treating root zones like a utility: tree roots often conflict with underground services and building foundations in urban settings. A suite of strategies is needed, including appropriate species selection and site-specific assessment, to ensure adequate growing space and soil volume.

WATER SENSITIVE URBAN DESIGN

Integrating tree planting with WSUD improves tree health, reduces stormwater runoff and enhances urban cooling. Best practice includes:

- Passive irrigation: directing stormwater runoff into tree pits or bioretention areas increases soil moisture availability, reducing reliance on potable water.
- Permeable pavements: allowing water infiltration into subsoil layers provides sustained moisture for tree roots while reducing urban flooding.
- Raingardens and bioswales: integrating tree plantings with bioswales improves stormwater quality while supporting tree growth.
- Subsurface irrigation: systems such as deep pipe irrigation ensure trees receive adequate water at root level, reducing evaporation losses.

These approaches contribute to a healthy and resilient urban forest, maximising the environmental, social and economic benefits despite the challenges provided to trees by the urban environment.

ALIGNING WITH PROGRAMS ACROSS COUNCIL

Council has ‘business as usual’ programs for road pavement and footpath asset renewal, traffic safety improvements, water sensitive urban design and parks improvements. Integration of urban greening initiatives with these works can result in multiple benefits and savings. In areas programmed for renewal, greening interventions may be scheduled to enable shared delivery of works.

Mosaic Insights

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