Hodyl & Co

South Melbourne Built Form Review

Prepared for the City of Port Phillip
August 2024

Front and back image of a visualisation along York Street looking east towards Clarendon Street from the intersection of Cecil Street. Image credit: Hodyl & Co

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Executive summary

The purpose of the Review is to prepare built form design objectives and requirements that will best position South Melbourne for a sustainable future.

The City of Port Phillip is preparing a new South Melbourne Structure Plan (the Structure Plan) to build on the valued attributes of South Melbourne, respond to challenges, accommodate future growth, and ensure that future planning for the area is aligned with Victorian Government strategy as well as contemporary best practice. The preparation of the Structure Plan will be informed by several key background technical reports including this Built Form Review (the Review).

Methodology

The Review focused on a study area within the wider Structure Plan boundary shown in Figure 1. The project was developed across four stages and comprised a review of existing documents including written submissions, site visits, mapping of the study area and analysis of case studies. 3D modelling and drawing was utilised to test and refine the built form propositions. Engagement with Councillors, residents, business owners, landowners, developers and planning consultants, as well as Council Officers, was undertaken throughout the development of the Review.

This process allowed us to test emerging ideas and hear a range of views from Council and stakeholders. The methodology also included the integration of independent heritage advice by heritage architecture specialists GJM Heritage. The methodology is focused on ensuring that the Review can strategically underpin a future planning scheme amendment which delivers good urban design outcomes that accommodate future growth.

Why do the current built form controls need updating?

The analysis of existing development trends identified a range of issues. These derive from the inadequacy of the existing built form controls (Design and Development Overlay 8) to deliver well-designed buildings. Primarily, the controls are resulting in undesirable 'wedding cake' developments. This is an outcome of the current controls which establish low street wall heights and multiple upper-level setbacks to limit the visual impact of upper floors when viewed from the opposite side of the street as well as protecting sunlight access to footpaths at the winter solstice. This type of development results in several issues, including:

- awkward and inefficient floor plate layouts
- poor internal amenity
- environmentally unsustainable building designs
- increased construction costs
- poor architectural design outcomes
- designs that are not responsive to neighbourhood character.

Several sub-precincts in the current DDO8 overlap with the Heritage Overlay and refer back to the Heritage Policy at Clause 22.04 in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme for guidance on building height, setback and siting. Beyond the street wall height, DDO8 does not provide guidance on height and setback controls. This lack of guidance has been interpreted as meaning that there is no urban design rationale to limit heights within these sub-precincts, rather than the intent, which was to prioritise heritage policy requirements. This Review is an opportunity to provide urban design guidance on heights and setbacks for these areas.

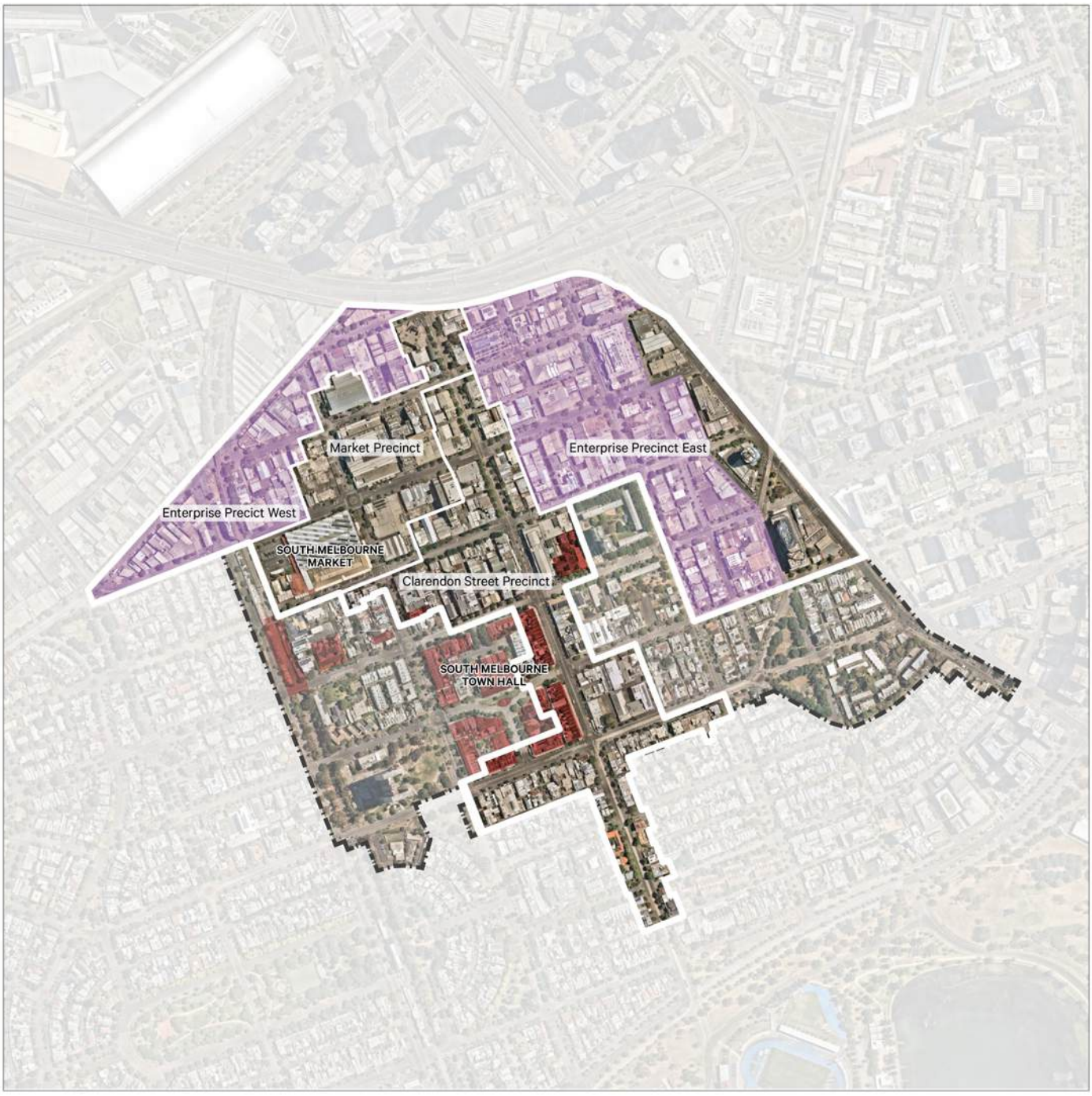
There are also technical anomalies and unworkable or inconsistent requirements within DDO8 that are contributing to uncertainty regarding development objectives and outcomes.

Establishing new design objectives

Four design objectives were established for South Melbourne through the Review with each underpinned by an analysis of the existing context and contemporary best practice:

1. Ensure development is responsive to the local context and builds on its character
2. Contribute to engaging and walkable precincts
3. Provide high-amenity housing and workplaces
4. Integrate climate responsive design

Design recommendations are included under each design objective to provide guidance on how the objective can be achieved.



STUDY AREA

South Melbourne Structure Plan (SMSP) Study Area

Precincts that form the study area of the South Melbourne Built Form Review

VHR listed properties

Non-residential area

0 50 100 200

Figure 1. Map showing the proposed precincts that are the focus of the Built Form Review.

Future places

Within the wider Structure Plan Study area, four precincts (refer to Figure 1) were identified through an analysis of the urban structure and key features of South Melbourne:

1. Clarendon Street Precinct - a vibrant shopping strip and mixed-use precinct with significant and highly intact heritage buildings.
2. Market Precinct - the market continues to operate as a thriving destination for the local community and a regionally significant attraction as a more varied built form character emerges in the precinct.
3. Enterprise Precinct East - continues to support employment activity through the development of well-designed contemporary workplaces.
4. Enterprise Precinct West - heritage factory and warehouse buildings contribute to the varied character of the area which supports diverse employment activity.

The precincts include places that have specific strategic roles within the wider metropolitan context including the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre, along with employment areas of regional significance and one of three enterprise precincts outside the Melbourne CBD. Existing land use zoning comprises areas which support a mix of uses as well as areas that are specifically for employment uses. The future built form recommendations carefully consider the influence of different land uses on building typologies.

Built form recommendations

South Melbourne has highly diverse conditions including street widths, development patterns, architectural styles, lot sizes, land uses and interface conditions. Ensuring that future development makes a positive contribution to the area therefore requires tailored controls that are responsive to this diversity. Robust testing has been undertaken to inform the built form recommendations with proposed building scales and typologies aligned to the existing and future character of each precinct. The Review recommends introducing two overarching and complementary approaches for managing built form:

- envelope controls that guide the overall building scale
- density controls through a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) that guides overall development yield.

To deliver good design outcomes, the use of these controls is tailored to the context within each precinct through adoption of a combination of a mandatory FAR control and/or a mix of mandatory and discretionary controls for building heights, street wall heights and setbacks. The areas covered by these controls are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Map showing the areas covered by an envelope control and Floor Area Ratio.

Image 1. BEFORE - York Street looking east towards Clarendon Street from the intersection of Cecil Street.

Image 2. AFTER - Visualisation demonstrating the same view along York Street representing indicative built form.

Introduction

South Melbourne is a vibrant inner urban location with an engaged community, a diverse mix of housing and businesses, and a rich cultural and architectural heritage. These attributes, as well as its location between Melbourne's CBD and Port Phillip Bay, mean that South Melbourne will continue to be an attractive location to live, work and play.

— Discussion Paper, South Melbourne Structure Plan

Background

The current South Melbourne Central Structure Plan and South Melbourne Central Urban Design Framework were adopted by Council in 2005. Planning controls based on these documents were implemented in 2008. Since that time demographic changes have occurred and development pressure has increased. There is also a greater need to address challenges such as climate change and the economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To build on the valued attributes of South Melbourne, its location within the inner city (refer to Figure 3), respond to challenges, accommodate future growth, and ensure that future planning for the area is aligned with Victorian Government strategy as well as contemporary best practice, the City of Port Phillip is preparing a new South Melbourne Structure Plan (the Structure Plan).

Purpose of this report

The preparation of the Structure Plan will be informed by several key background technical reports including this Built Form Review (the Review). The purpose of the Review is to prepare built form design objectives and requirements that will strategically underpin a future planning scheme amendment. The recommendations within this report have been written and presented to ensure direct, easy and effective translation into the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

The Review addresses the following project objectives identified by the City of Port Phillip:

- Support South Melbourne's economic post-pandemic recovery.
- Unlock barriers to development and improve development outcomes.
- Facilitate more efficient decision-making processes.
- Facilitate growth of the enterprise precinct, with building outcomes that support and align with the requirements of target businesses and recognise the importance of creative industries to the South Melbourne economy.
- Deliver quality, site responsive architectural design.
- Facilitate Innovative buildings which are efficient, sustainable, resilient and reflect 'best practice'.
- Strengthen and protect the special qualities and attributes of South Melbourne and capture the community and stakeholder values and aspirations.

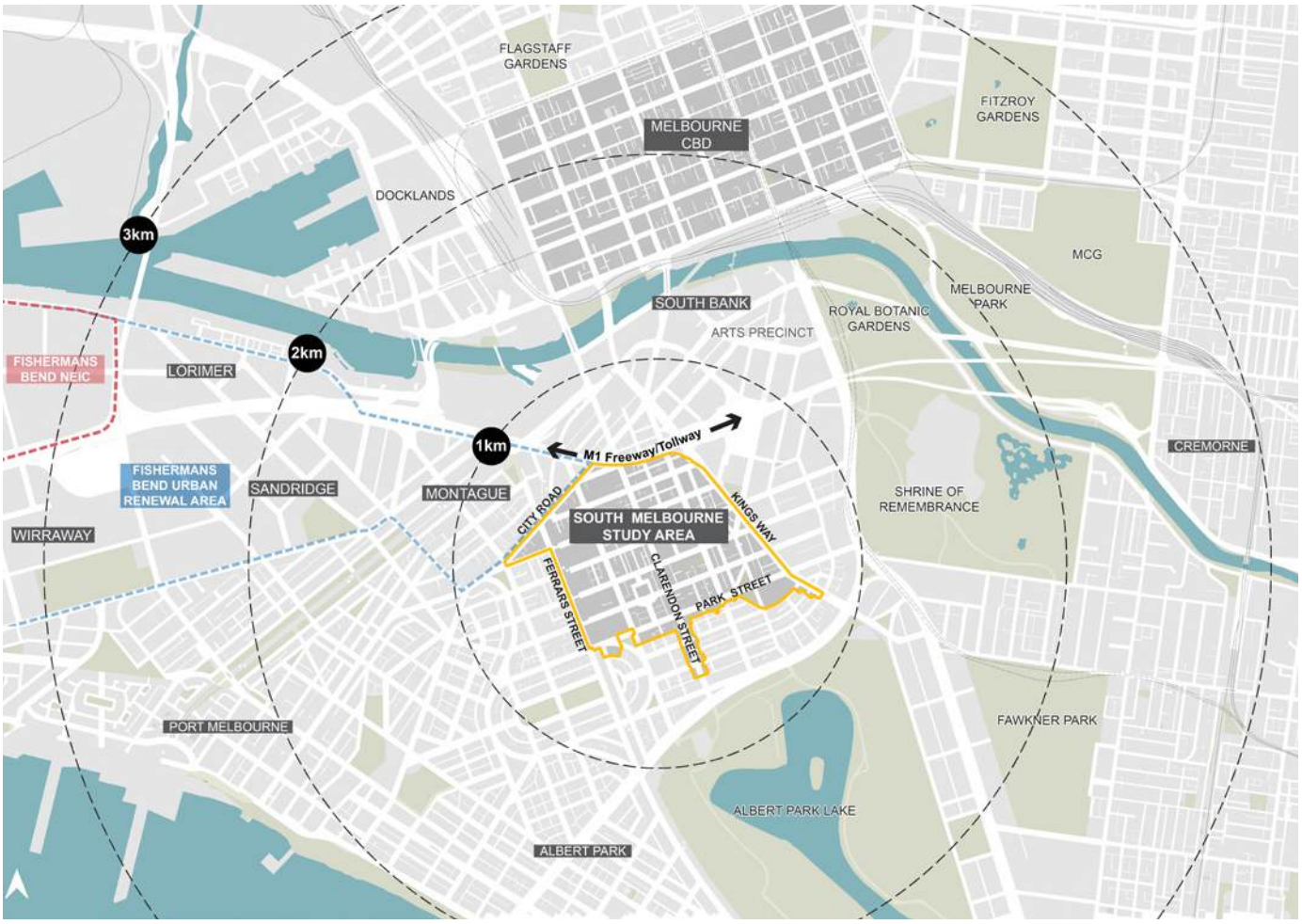


Figure 3. Map of the South Melbourne Structure Plan study area and wider context.

Figure 4. Map of the wider South Melbourne Structure Plan study area and the Built Form Review study area.

- Explore opportunities to improve affordability and leverage public benefit.
- Provide for future development and land use in South Melbourne that is sustainable and is resilient to climate change, including increased heat, flooding and sea level rise and achieves a high level of environmental performance in line with the Victorian Government's target of net zero emissions by 2050.

Study area

South Melbourne is located close to the Central City, Port Phillip Bay, the Birrarung (Yarra River), major recreational areas such as Albert Park Lake, and other significant attractions including the Arts Precinct as shown in Figure 3.

The wider Structure Plan study area covers approximately 81 hectares with the Review focused on area of approximately 51.5 hectares as shown in Figure 4. The Review area generally aligns with the existing Design and Development Overlay 8 (DDO8) and includes properties within the Commercial 1 and 2 Zone, the Mixed Use Zone and the Industrial 1 Zone.

While the wider Structure Plan study area includes low-rise residential areas, they are not within the scope of this Review and we are not proposing any changes to the existing built form provisions for these areas.

The Review also includes high level principles to guide future built form outcomes for the Park Towers Estate and land within the General Residential Zone (GRZ) to the south of Park Street on the corner of Kings Way.

While the South Melbourne Market is located within the study area, it has been excluded from this Review as separate masterplanning for the market is being undertaken as part of the South Melbourne Market Project Connect.

Methodology

The Review was developed across four stages:

1. Background Analysis
2. Built form objectives and precinct character statements
3. Built form propositions
4. Final built form recommendations

Our methodology initially comprised a review of existing documents (refer to Appendix B), site visits, mapping of the study area and analysis of case studies. 3D modelling and drawing was utilised to test and refine the built form propositions. Engagement with Councillors, residents, business owners, landowners, developers and planning consultants, as well as Council Officers, was undertaken throughout the development of the Review. This allowed us to test emerging ideas and hear a range of views from Council and stakeholders. The methodology also included the integration of independent heritage advice by heritage architecture specialists GJM Heritage. The final recommendations in the Review are the outcome of this rigorous and evidence-based process.

3D MODELLING ASSUMPTIONS

The built form testing was based on the following assumptions:

- 3.2 m residential floor to floor height
- 4 m non-residential floor to floor height
- 15 - 18 m residential floor plate depths to comply with the Better Apartment Design Standards
- 600 - 800 sqm residential floor plate area
- 25 - 30 m commercial floor plate depth to maximise daylight
- 1000 - 2000 sqm commercial floor plate area

The building heights described in Part 3 of this report are based on the residential and non-residential floor to floor heights described above as well as an allowance of 1.2 m for the parapet height.

Document structure

The Review comprises the following parts:

- Part 1. Understanding the context
- Part 2. Delivering good design
- Part 3. Future built form direction

To assist with reading of the report, a glossary of terms is provided in Appendix A.

Part 1. Understanding the context

244
240
UNIQUE
DIAMONDS

Future South Melbourne

To inform the new Structure Plan, the City of Port Phillip prepared a Discussion Paper that sets out:

- The need for a new structure plan
- Key information about South Melbourne
- A vision for South Melbourne
- Key directions for South Melbourne
- Ideas to achieve the vision and key directions that could be included in a new South Melbourne Structure Plan.

Consultation on the Discussion Paper was undertaken in September-October 2022. Areas within this document that are particularly relevant to this Review are described below.

Discussion Paper vision

A robust strategic vision is crucial in underpinning future planning for South Melbourne. The Discussion Paper contained the following vision with the text in bold relevant to this Review:

> Recognised as a traditional gathering place for First Nations, South Melbourne continues to be one of Melbourne's great social hubs and dynamic economies. People from all backgrounds are welcome to live, work and visit this vibrant, liveable and diverse community.
>
> **The network of walkable, green streets and comfortable public spaces, combined with valued heritage places and attractive buildings**, provide a variety of memorable destinations, productive businesses, creative industries and local services.
>
> South Melbourne is a unique blend of the past and present – and is always looking to the future.

The updated built form recommendations will need to ensure that the height and design of new buildings accommodates future growth (see Future Growth) while also contributing to an attractive and comfortable public realm.

Discussion Paper ideas

The Discussion Paper contains three key directions: quality places, quality buildings and quality experiences. They describe the priorities for delivering the Structure Plan vision and the key matters the structure plan will address.

A series of ideas or potential initiatives the Structure Plan could investigate to deliver on the key initiatives are then presented. Three of the sixteen ideas are linked to the key direction 'quality buildings':

- Idea 11: Approach to new buildings
- Idea 12: Flood-responsive development
- Idea 13: Sunlight to public spaces

While the built form recommendations have a direct connection to these three ideas, they will also influence outcomes for other ideas that are linked to 'quality places' and 'quality experiences', including protecting South Melbourne's character, creating streets for people or responding to the Kings Way interface.

Demographics

South Melbourne has a diverse community. There is a higher proportion of lower income households compared with the municipal average, while the proportion of higher income households is just below the municipal average. South Melbourne has the highest proportion of social housing in the municipality, highlighting the important role South Melbourne has in providing a range of housing to meet the needs of different people and households.

Future growth

As noted in the Discussion Paper, South Melbourne's location and place attributes will continue to attract people to the area:

> Given South Melbourne's strategic location near the Melbourne CBD, Docklands, ANZAC Station (under construction), St Kilda Road and Fishermans Bend; its strong heritage appeal; and commercially zoned land, it is expected there will be strong development demand in the area, which could lead to local population and job growth. This requires careful management of the role, function and operation of South Melbourne.

Growth forecasts for the suburb of South Melbourne indicate that:

- The number of dwellings in South Melbourne is forecast to grow from 5,440 in 2021 to 6,590 in 2041.[1]
- The average household size is forecast to fall from 1.96 to 1.87 by 2041.[2]

1 Population and household forecasts, 2021 to 2041, .id, 2022

2 Population and household forecasts, 2021 to 2041, .id, 2022

- It is estimated that there will be demand for an additional 145,000 to 187,000 square metres of gross office floorspace and 16,000 to 21,000 square metres of retail floorspace by 2040.[3]
- The number of jobs in South Melbourne is projected to increase from 23,100 in 2020 to between 30,700 and 36,700 by 2040.[4]

Approach to new buildings

Idea 11 in the Discussion Paper outlines a proposed approach to new buildings. It notes that the new structure plan is not proposing large-scale changes to the scale of development that is allowed in current planning controls and that has emerged over the last 15 years. The scale of development will continue to be influenced by factors such as existing lot sizes and heritage protection.

The Discussion Paper recognises that a new approach is important as the current built form requirements (mostly in Design DO8) were prepared in 2007. Assessment of development over the last 15 years has provided lessons on how the outcomes these requirements have delivered and there are also new approaches to how buildings should be designed.

Proposed general principles for new buildings include:

Protect/enhance **key views** to the major civic landmarks to assists way finding and strengthen place identity.

Protect and enhance **heritage and character buildings**.

Facilitate more **human centred, sustainable, adaptable, high quality and efficient buildings**.

Provide flexibility for **contextually responsive high-quality architecture** that contributes positively to the area's character.

Continue to maintain South Melbourne's **human scale** with a 2-3-storey **street wall**: This characteristic helps shape the urban character people think of when they visit South Melbourne.

Emphasise **street corners** by ensuring new buildings address all street frontages and emphasise their corner location with activated lower floors, chamfered corners and/or increased ornamentation.

Figure 5. Proposed general principles for new buildings identified in the South Melbourne Structure Plan Discussion Paper.

3 South Melbourne Economic & Employment Land Use Study, Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd., 2022.

4 South Melbourne Economic & Employment Land Use Study, Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd., 2022.

Strategic Policy

The role for much of the South Melbourne study area is clearly established in key Victorian Government metropolitan planning strategies. It is important that the new South Melbourne Structure Plan, including the updated built form controls, give effect to State planning policy by responding to the directions and outcomes set out within these documents. The role of these areas as identified by the Victorian Government is described below and shown spatially in Figure 6.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Plan Melbourne is the Victorian Government's long term strategic planning document to guide the future growth of Melbourne. It establishes a clear vision for Melbourne by integrating land use, infrastructure and transport planning to meet the greater Melbourne's future environmental, population, housing and employment needs. The Plan includes nine principles supported by seven outcomes, together with policy directions to be taken to reach those outcomes.

It identifies South Melbourne as a Major Activity Centre (MAC). MACs are locations supporting investment and job creation to ensure that employment grows outside the central city and improves access to jobs. They are also locations supporting more housing closer to jobs and public transport.

Plan Melbourne includes the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods where services, jobs, community services and transport are within a 20-minute walk of residents. The 20-minute neighbourhood concept is central to how planning policy is shaping the next phase of growth and change in established and growth areas of Melbourne.

Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan 2020

The Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (MICLUP) provides an overview of current and future industrial and commercial land use needs across metropolitan Melbourne and includes a framework to better plan for these future needs and to better inform strategic directions.

Within the South Melbourne study area, MICLUP identifies:

- land within the Commercial 2 Zone (C2Z) as Regionally Significant Industrial Land
- land within the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) as a Regionally Significant Commercial Area.

Planning Scheme Amendment VC215, gazetted in March 2023, gives stronger effect to MICLUP in the Victoria Planning Provisions, providing additional clarity and certainty around how state-significant and regionally-significant industrial and commercial precincts are planned and ensuring that they can operate efficiently and remain viable. The amendment:

- Introduces MICLUP as a state policy document.
- Inserts new state planning policy that aims to preserve locally significant industrial land for industrial or employment generating uses.
- Inserts new regional planning policy for metropolitan Melbourne to protect industrial land of regional significance, facilitate continual growth in freight, logistics and manufacturing investment and support the transition from manufacturing land uses to other employment uses in strategically identified areas.
- Introduces subregional-level planning policy that identifies strategies to protect employment land supply and jobs across metro Melbourne – reflecting the policies and strategies outlined in MICLUP.

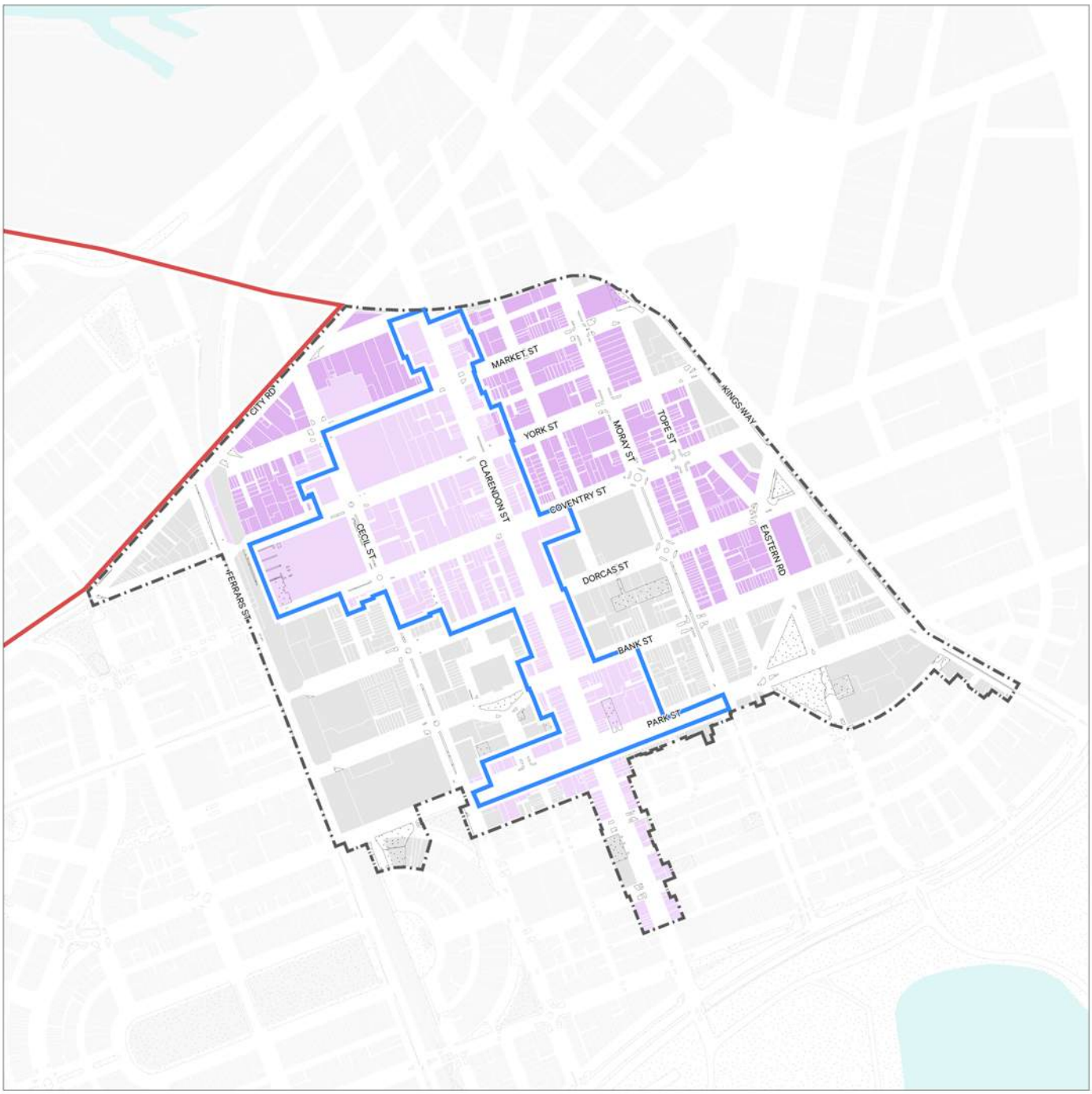
Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy Strategy 2018

The Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy Strategy identifies South Melbourne as an enterprise precinct, one of three key areas outside Melbourne's CBD to attract new businesses and investment. As noted in the strategy, enterprise precincts:

> allow for critical mass to be attained, reinforcing competitive advantage and brand, and promoting agglomeration benefits and the sharing of knowledge and services.

The strategy identifies nine factors that drive the success of precincts. The design quality of buildings and the public realm have a direct influence on several of the success factors including:

- whether the precinct has a strong quality of place that increases interaction
- a diversity of affordable premises for businesses to locate in
- building stock that supports connectivity, collaboration and innovation
- local streets and footpaths that contribute to the precinct's accessibility.



STUDY AREA

- SMSP Study Area
- Parcels
- Open space
- Water body

STRATEGIC POLICY

- Fisherman's Bend Urban Renewal Precinct
- South Melbourne Major Activity Centre *(Port Phillip Planning Scheme (DDO8))*
- Regionally significant commercial area C1Z *(MICLUP 2020)*
- Regionally significant industrial land C2Z *(MICLUP 2020)*

0 50 100 200

Figure 6. Map of strategic areas in South Melbourne identified in Victorian Government metropolitan planning strategies and the Port Phillip Planning Scheme.

Key urban design and built form features of South Melbourne

The South Melbourne Activity Centre is focused on Clarendon Street which connects through to the Central City and Albert Park Lake.

Image 3. Aerial view of the study area looking towards the central city.

An assessment of the key urban design and built form features of the Structure Plan study area was undertaken to inform the built form propositions in this Review.

Urban structure

Block lengths in South Melbourne are generally 200 m (east-west) and 100 m (north-south). There is an increase in mid-block breaks to the east of Clarendon Street. Block orientation changes to the east of Moray Street where smaller blocks are generally 100 m (north-south) and 50 m (east-west).

This block structure, which has the same dimensions and orientation as central Melbourne's Hoddle Grid, provides a highly permeable and walkable network of streets as shown in Figure 7, comprising four categories of street types:

- Main streets (30 m wide)
- Regular streets (12 to 28 m wide)
- Narrow streets (less than 12 m)
- Laneway / right of way (approximately 3 m wide)

The block sizes and orientation result in many land parcels having a frontage to the 30 m main streets. The further sub-division of blocks by smaller streets and laneways also results in land parcels with two or three frontages to the public realm.

Public realm

There is limited public open space within the study area with the majority of these spaces concentrated to the south of Dorcas Street. The nine public open spaces are small in scale (small local, local and neighbourhood) with a total area of 1.16 hectares or 11,550 m^2. There is 1,300 m^2 of public open space north of Dorcas Street which has poor amenity due to the frontage to Kings Way. While the study area is surrounded by larger public open spaces, future population growth will result in an increased demand for quality open space that is easily accessible. Given the extent of private land ownership, South Melbourne's wide streets will play an important role in delivering pedestrian amenity, tree canopy and social spaces.

Landmarks and view lines

Clarendon Street provides views north to the high-rise buildings of Southbank and central Melbourne with views south to Albert Park. Bank Street provides views east to the Shrine of Remembrance and South Melbourne Town Hall.

South Melbourne Market is a destination for locals and visitors. Established in 1867, it is the oldest continually running market in Melbourne.

Image 4. View of South Melbourne Market.

Figure 7. Map of street widths in the Structure Plan study area.

Image 5. Shop residences on the Victorian Heritage Register along Clarendon Street, between Dorcas Street and Bank Street.

South Melbourne's wide streets and short blocks create a highly walkable environment. A lack of open space in the area highlights the importance of streets as public places.

Image 6. Bells Hotel, one of several heritage pubs located on corner sites.

Image 7. View east along Dorcas Street (30 m wide) between Cecil Street and Clarendon Street.

Image 8. Wide footpaths on Clarendon Street.

Image 9. View south along Craine Street.

Building diversity

Buildings in South Melbourne are characteristic of the architectural styles and development patterns of an inner-city, mixed-use neighbourhood developed from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Building styles and types found within the study area include:

- Victorian and Edwardian era shop residences, larger retail stores, banks and pubs
- Early 20th century factories and warehouses in the northern section
- Mid-20th century walk-up and high-rise public housing at Park Towers and Emerald Hill Court
- Mid-rise commercial development since the 1970s in the northern section
- Residential and mixed-use development since the 1970s with growing demand for living in the inner-city
- Office development since the 1980s along the Kings Way corridor

The different uses across the study area further contributes to South Melbourne's diversity. The study area includes land within the Commercial 1 Zone, Commercial 2 Zone, Industrial 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone as shown in Figure 8. These zones allow for residential and/or non-residential development.

Heritage

The study area includes heritage precincts and places, with many buildings of state significance as shown in Figure 9. Heritage overlays apply to the Emerald Hill Residential Precinct (H)440) and the City Road Industrial Heritage Precinct. Individual heritage overlays apply to several buildings within the study area. Buildings on the Victorian Heritage Register and predominantly located in the south-west of the study area.

Image 10. Aerial view of Emerald Hill public housing looking north west.

Image 11. Former ANZ Bank building with a new commercial development under construction at the corner of Clarendon Street and Bank Street.

Image 12. Contemporary multi-storey development along Dorcas Street.

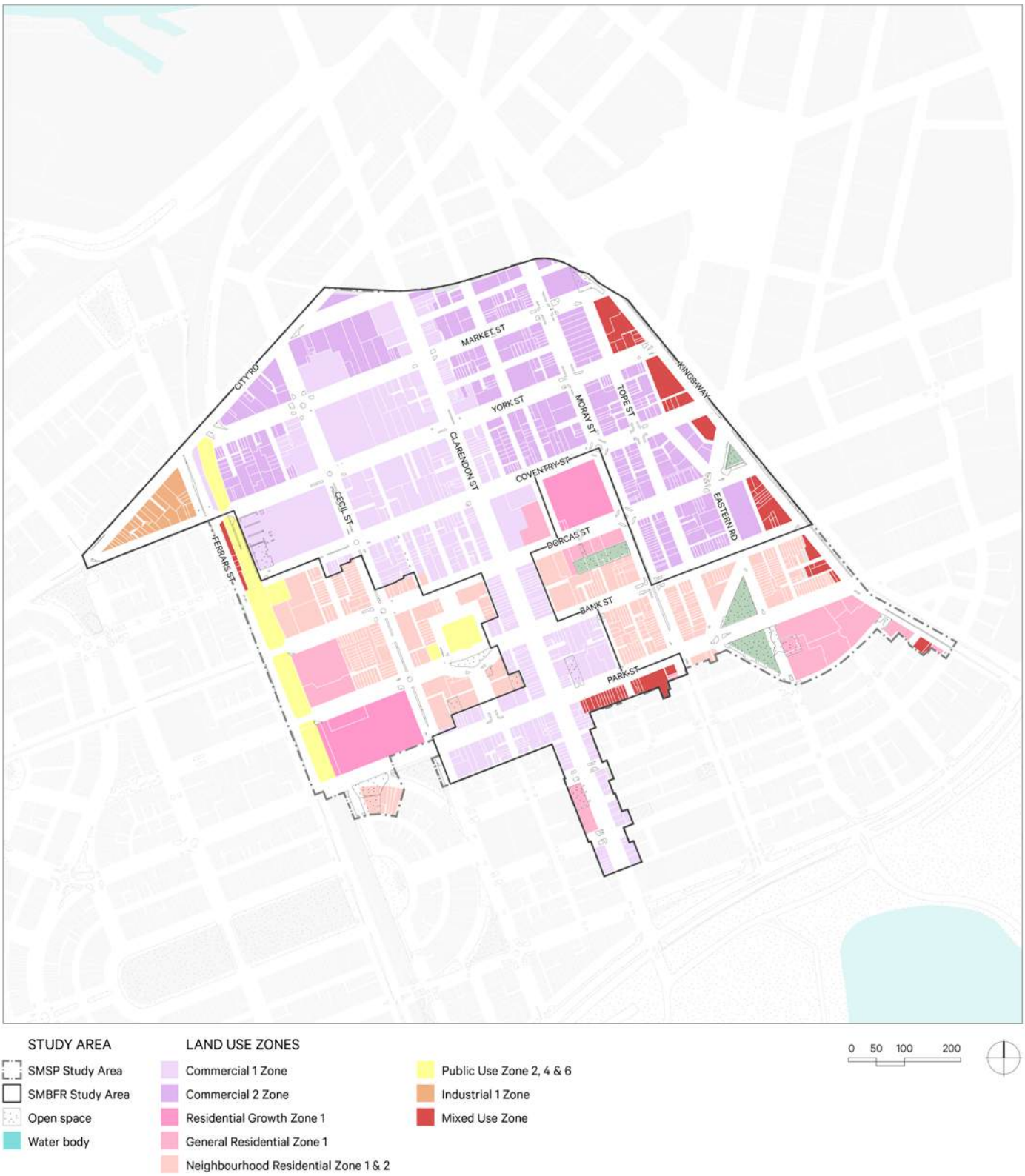


Figure 8. Map of land use zones in the Structure Plan study area.

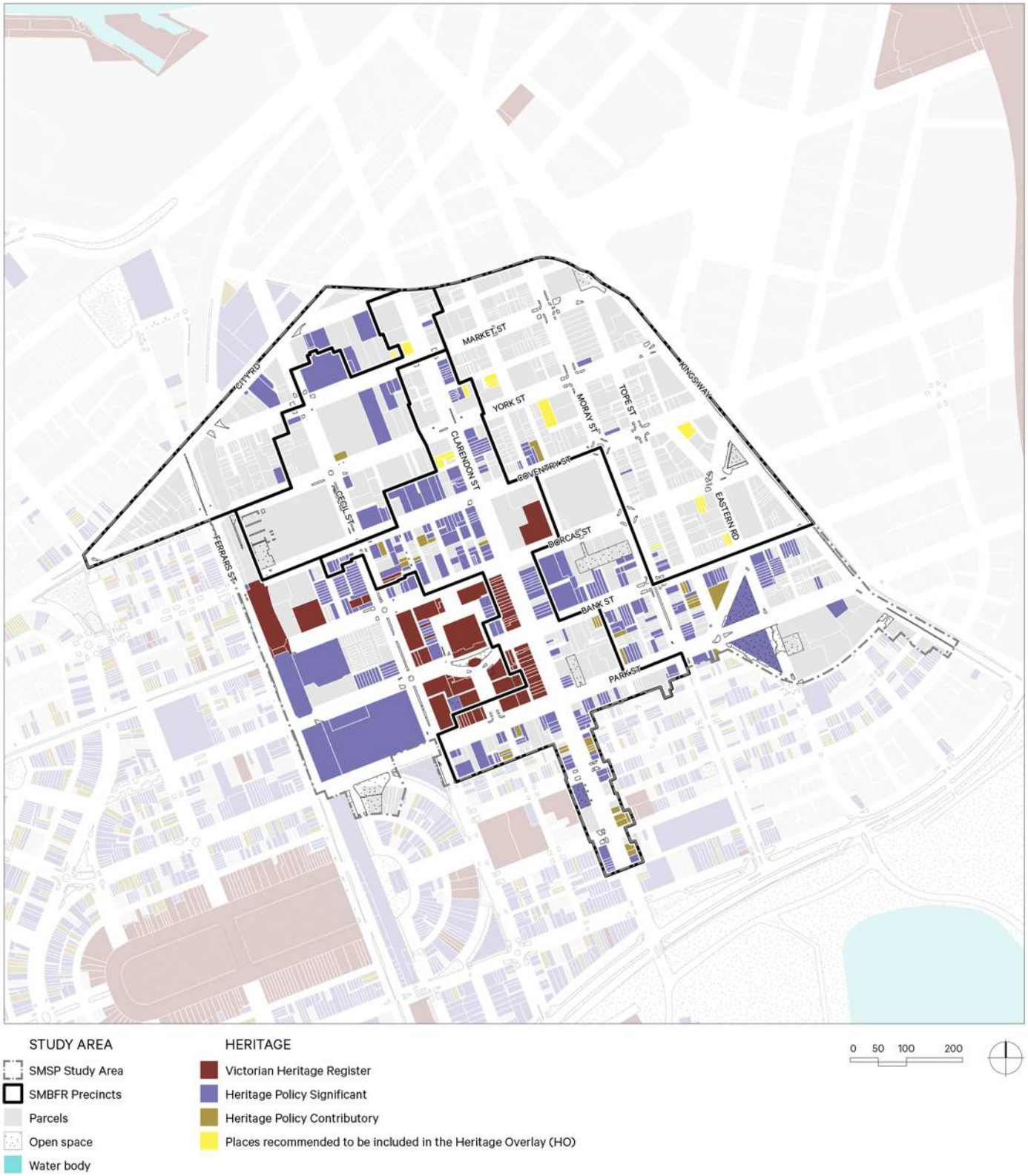


Figure 9. Map of heritage precinct and property gradings in the Structure Plan study area.

South Melbourne has a rich architectural heritage which contributes to the character of the area. Many buildings are of heritage significance, with several of State importance.

Image 13. Shop residences on the Victorian Heritage Register at the corner of Clarendon Street and Bank Street.

Image 14. The Māori Chief Hotel on the corner of Moray Street and York Street.

Image 15. Heritage shopfronts at the corner of Coventry Street and Cecil Street, opposite South Melbourne Market.

Street wall heights

Street wall heights in the study area are generally one to two storeys. Areas such as the southern end of Clarendon Street, particularly on the western side between Dorcas Street and Park Street, have a highly consistent street wall reflecting the 19th century development patterns. Other parts of the study area have a less consistent street wall height. A number of heritage hotels, banks and larger retail stores located on corners or mid-block have increased street wall heights.

There are examples of recently completed developments and current planning applications with taller street walls to the 30 m wide main streets, but also to more narrow streets.

The ratio between the height of street walls and the width of streets is generally low across the majority of the study area. On the 30 m wide main streets the ratio is generally 1:3 (street wall height to street width) and can be as low as 1:10. The 12 to 28 m wide regular streets generally have a ratio of 1:2 while the narrow streets and laneways can have ratios of 2:1 or higher.

Across the wider study area, these ratios result in a lack of building enclosure to the street. With upper levels of development setback from the street frontage, the connection between building occupants and street life is reduced. This can impact passive surveillance and the sense of activity within an urban environment. While it is important to respond to the street wall heights of heritage buildings, as well as providing appropriate sunlight access, sky views and clear site lines to landmarks, a low street wall height in combination with upper-level setbacks can result in more of the building mass being pushed deeper within the site with the potential for poor design and amenity outcomes.

Interfaces

The patterns of development, different land uses, diverse building types and surrounding context has resulted in a variety of interface conditions in the study area.

TRANSITION TO LOW RISE RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Streets and laneways generally form the interface between land uses that allow for higher density development and areas of low rise residentially zoned land. The 'buffer' provided by streets and laneways can assist in:

- achieving better building separation to ensure good access to daylight and outlook
- managing the transition between areas of higher and lower development to provide an appropriate change in the scale and height of buildings.

SURROUNDING STREETS AND ROADS

Kings Way, West Gate Freeway, City Road and Ferrars Street present challenging interfaces to the eastern, northern and western edges of the study area. Pedestrian amenity is diminished by traffic, noise and emissions. There is generally limited street tree planting although this increases on City Road and Ferrars Street. To the north of the West Gate Freeway, higher density development in Southbank can result in towers overshadowing parts of the study area.

Lot sizes

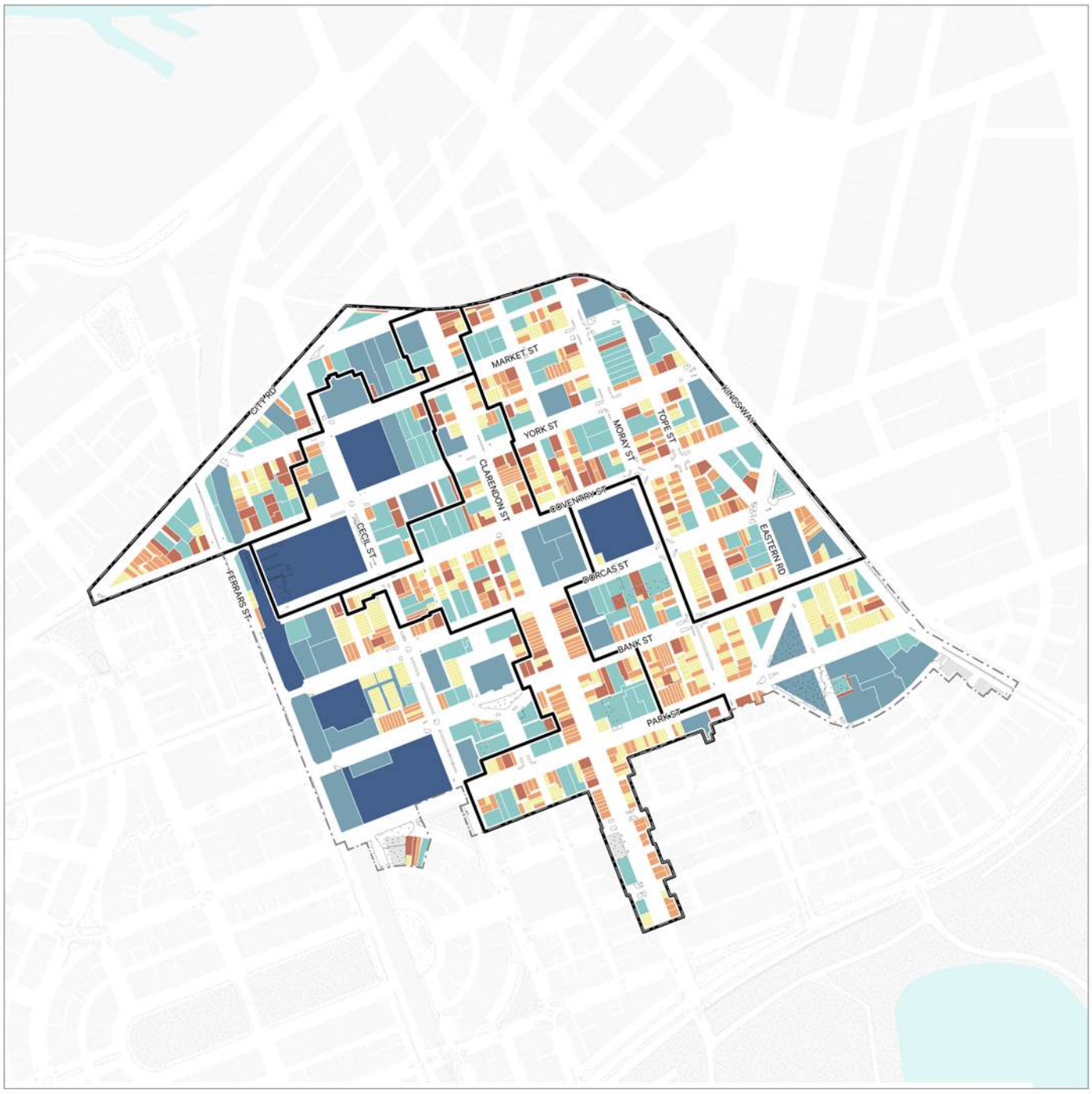
Reflecting the diverse character of the study area, lot sizes are highly varied as shown in Figure 10. A significant number of lots are under 500 m^2 with many of these being less than 150 m^2. Lots between 500 and 5,000 m^2 are dispersed across the study area with the majority found in the north-west. Lots greater than 5,000 m2 comprise the South Melbourne Market and public housing sites.

Site coverage

There are high levels of site coverage across the study area within the private realm. This results in a lack of canopy trees, deep soil zones, greening at ground level and permeable surfaces exacerbating impacts of the urban heat island effect, intense rainfall events and flooding. High site coverage also places more pressure on the public realm to provide streets and spaces that respond to the climate emergency.

Flooding

Low-lying areas of South Melbourne are prone to flooding. Parts of the study area are within Special Building Overlay 1 and 2 (SBO 1 and SBO 2) as shown in Figure 11. In these locations, development is subject to special conditions including ground floor levels being set about the flood level or limitations on the design of basement parking and access. This can result in adverse public realm outcomes including blank facades and reduced passive surveillance of the street.



STUDY AREA

- SMSP Study Area
- SMBFR Precincts
- Parcels
- Open space
- Water body

PARCEL SIZE

- 0 - 150m²
- 150 - 300m²
- 300 - 500m²
- 500 - 1500m²
- 1500 - 5000m²
- 5000m² +

0 50 100 200

Figure 10. Map showing the highly varied lot sizes within the Structure Plan study area.

Figure 11. Map showing areas impacted by flooding covered by the Special Building Overlay (SBO) in the Structure Plan study area.

Reviewing the existing built form controls

Design and Development Overlay 8 (DDO8) was gazetted through amendment C52 in 2008 and updated in 2012 through amendment C102. It covers the entire study area for South Melbourne Central.

DDO8 sets out the built form controls for the South Melbourne Central (SMC) study area and comprises 10 sub-precincts. Each sub-precinct details the preferred character, design objectives and built from controls. General requirements are also specified in respect to interfaces with the street and active frontages.

The approach to managing built form outcomes within the sub-precincts include maximum building heights ranging between three to ten storeys, upper-level setbacks, maximum street wall heights, recession planes in respect to sunlight access at the winter equinox, and reducing the visual impact of upper levels when viewed from the opposite side of the street.

Analysis of DDO8

Building on background work prepared by the City of Port Phillip, an analysis of DDO8 was undertaken to identify issues in the current controls to inform the development of the proposed built form controls. Several of the key issues with DDO8 are shown in Figures 12 and 13.

Wedding Cake typology

There has been a proliferation of development with multiple upper-level setbacks, referred to as a 'wedding cake', within the study area. This is the result of a combination of precinct wide design objectives and sub-precinct built-form controls which seek to protect sunlight access to footpaths and limit the visual impact of upper floors when viewed from the opposite side of the street.

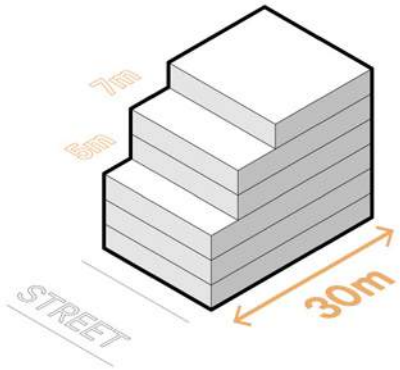
The DDO contains the following design objectives:

- To ensure that the sense of openness and sky visibility of SMC's wide main streets is maintained.
- To ensure that new built form does not unreasonably diminish sunlight access, particularly to key pedestrian routes.
- To maintain the distinction in building scale between SMC, which is characterised by low to medium rise buildings, and the high-rise buildings of Southbank, the CAD (Melbourne Central Activity District) and Kings Way.

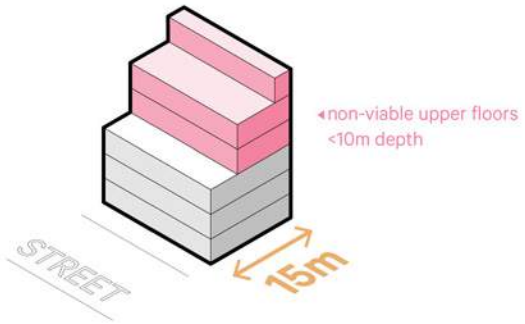
The built form controls (street wall height, sunlight access, upper-level setbacks and views from the opposite side of street) have created a wedding cake permitted envelope. Developers seeking to maximise yield within a site will build to the permitted planning envelope. The wedding cake typology is further exacerbated on larger sites which can accommodate additional height which results in additional upper-level setbacks. Where a proposal exceeds the preferred minimum height, complying with the requirements for sunlight access to footpaths and diminished views of upper floors also results in wedding cake developments.

Image 16. Deep sites exacerbate a 'wedding cake' outcome.

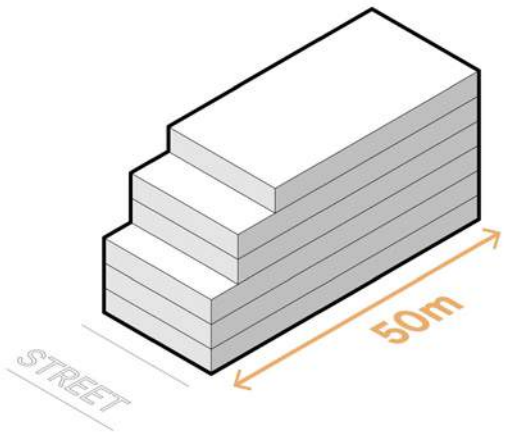
Image 17. Large sites exacerbate a 'wedding cake' outcome.



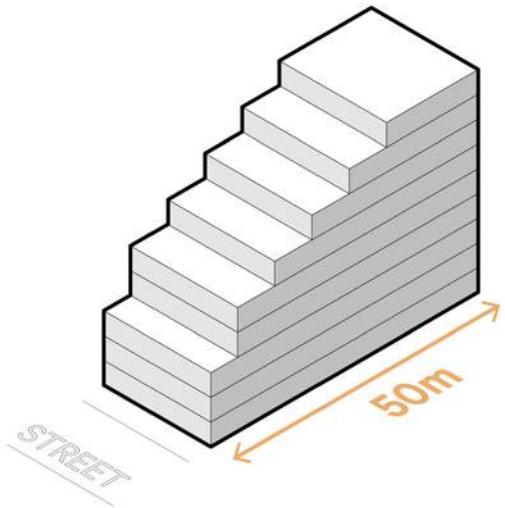
General example of a development under the current DDO8 built form controls, with a 3 storey street wall, levels 4 and 5 setback 5 m, and level 6 setback a further 7 m.



On sites with limited depth, the controls can result in upper level floor plates that are not viable for development.



On deeper sites, it is common to fill the available planning envelope which has resulted in buildings with significant bulk, limited outlook and poor internal amenity.



As development under DDO8 'should not exceed' the relevant building height (discretionary rather than mandatory), buildings on deeper sites can continue to stack additional upper levels with further setbacks. This results in massing that resembles a wedding cake, increased visual bulk and inefficient floorplates.

Figure 12. Diagrams showing a general example of how the planning envelope controls in DDO8 and the depth of sites impacts development outcomes.

Design issues associated with this typology include:

- awkward and inefficient floor plate layouts
- poor internal amenity
- environmentally unsustainable building designs
- increased construction costs
- poor architectural design outcomes
- designs that are not responsive to neighbourhood character.

The DDO8 built form controls will continue to deliver wedding cake outcomes and limit the provision of high quality, well designed new developments.

Ambiguity regarding the definition of a street

DDO8 provide a definition of 'street' and whether 'street' encompasses laneways, right of way or narrow street etc. As DDO8 does not have setback requirements along lanes, this has implications in creating buildings with minimal separation adjacent to laneways. As a result, this can lead to poor internal amenity and adverse public realm outcomes.

Lack of clarity around setback requirements for corner sites

DDO8 addresses corner sites as having multiple frontages in the General Requirements: "On corner sites, buildings must address both street frontages with either openings or street level windows". This differs to the interpretation of Victorian Planning Policy (VPP) of frontage as being singular, meaning a site can only have one frontage.

Clause 73.01, updated in March 2023 via Amendment VC229 defines "Frontage" as the road alignment at the front of a lot. If a lot abuts two or more roads, the one to which the building proposed building, faces.

This lack of clarity has implications in producing future developments which do not appropriately address multiple frontages to the street resulting in inconsistent street walls heights and streetscapes that do not achieve the preferred character.

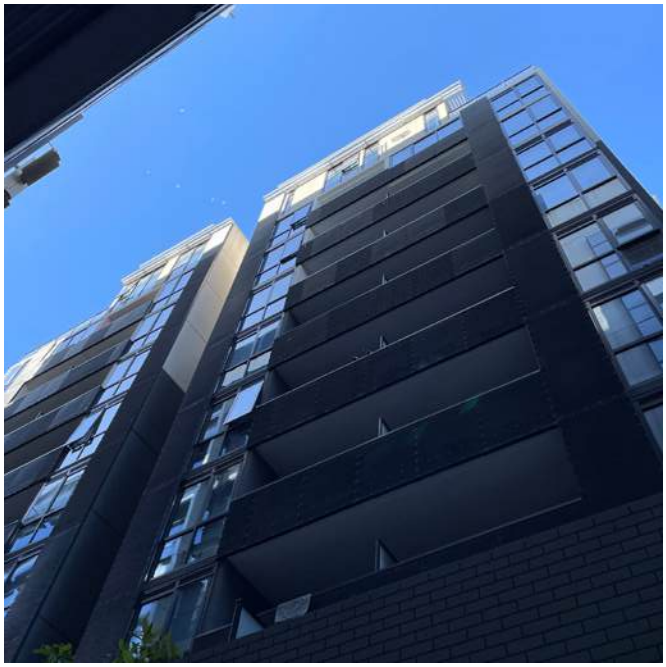


Image 18. View along Browns Lane showing apartments with poor internal amenity and outlook in the development at 85-87 Market Street.

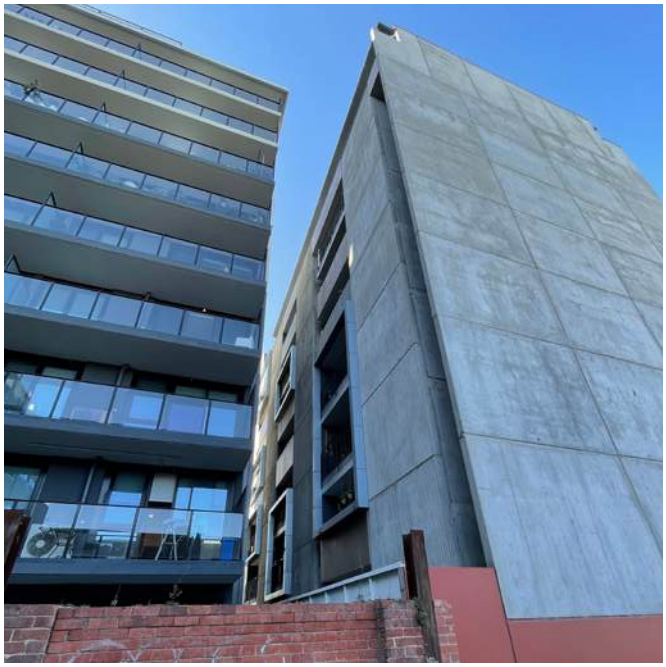
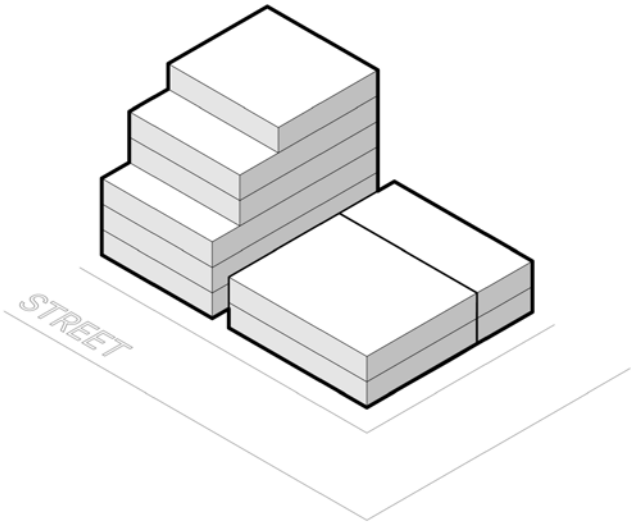
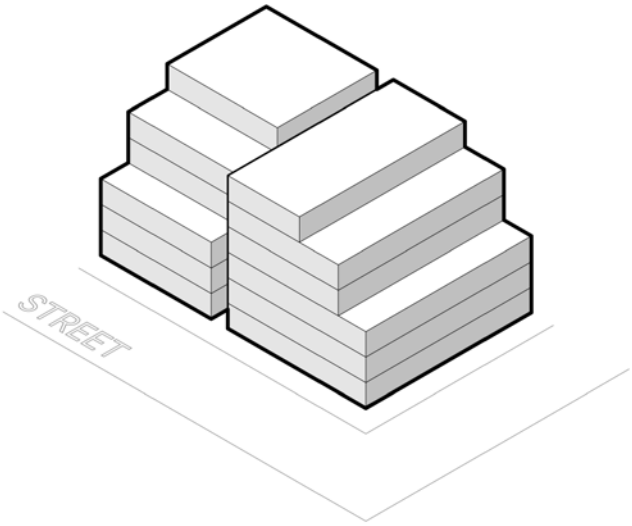


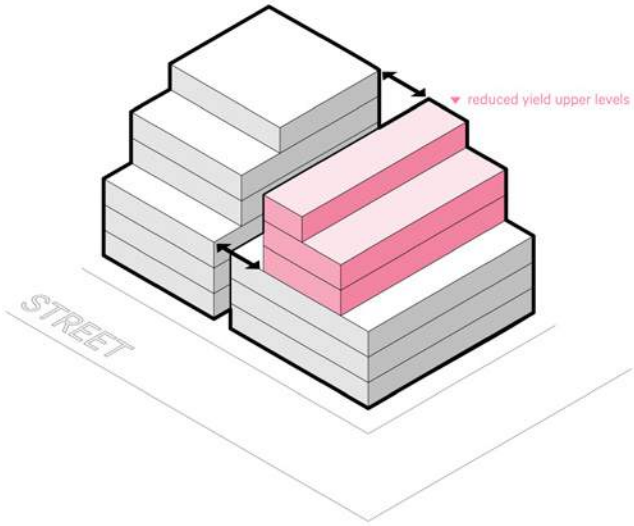
Image 19. View at the rear of developments fronting Market Street with poor internal amenity due to primary outlook to the side boundary and inadequate separation between buildings.



1. General example of a development under the current DDO8 built form controls, with a laneway separating the new development from two existing buildings.



2A. The two existing buildings are redeveloped in line with the DDO8 controls. The sheer wall at the rear of the newer development results in poor amenity outcomes for both developments.



2B. To improve amenity for both developments, the newer development provides upper level setbacks to the laneway. This reduces development yield and, depending on the site size, may result in upper level floor plates that are not viable for development.

Figure 13. Diagrams showing a general example of issues with equitable development under the current DDO8 built form controls.

Setback requirements makes building to the permitted height unfeasible

There are inconsistencies between the required built-form controls and their ability to deliver on the preferred character and design objectives of the sub-precinct. Sub-precinct 9 contains terminology which seeks to deliver tower typologies. However, the built form controls include a mandatory 12m setback-requirements which renders tower developments to the permitted height unlikely for the many sites, especially smaller sites. These impacts are attributable to most smaller sites within the SMC.

Different maximum height requirements across sites

There are instances within the DDO where the comprehensive built form controls create inconsistent height and setbacks across single sites when lot consolidation occurs. There is no guidance that clarifies which built form control takes precedence over the offer in these situations. This leads to confusion in respect to the design of the site and inconsistency in respect to the achievement of design objectives.

Detailed articulation and varied streetscape frontages

There a is a lack of policy guidance in respect to the delivery of fine grain development within SMC. For lower intensity developments on smaller sites, the provision of active frontages is usually provided for. However, with an increase in higher intensity and taller developments on smaller sites, their frontages are increasingly dedicated to services, resulting in a bland ground floor and public realm interface. The proliferation of developments of this kind can have a significant impact on the preferred character of the sub-precincts within the DDO and will not achieve a high quality public realm with particular emphasis on pedestrian friendliness and active street frontages.

Image 20. The design response to raised floor levels in combination with inactive frontages results in a poor quality outcome for the public realm and equitable access.

Recent development activity

Figure 14 provides a summary of the overarching trends in building heights based on the assessment of 56 development applications that were under consideration, approved constructions or recently completed.

Figure 15 shows the location and building height for developments that were recently completed, are under construction or with an approved planning permit. While the height of buildings is typically lower on smaller sites and higher on larger sites, there are several examples where buildings of 5 to 9 storeys are located on relatively small sites.

Following this analysis, the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for 23 of the development applications (refer to Appendix C) was calculated to understand the densities that are being delivered under the current DDO8 controls and any trends across the study area. The majority of buildings (14/29 or 61%) were in the Commercial 2 Zone.

Developments in the Commercial 1 Zone had an average FAR of 5:1, with the highest being 6.8:1 and the lowest 3.7:1. Developments are generally more intensive compared to Commercial 2 Zone. Developments within the C1Z tend to have taller building heights of generally 6-7 storeys which contributes to a higher FAR.

Developments in the Commercial 2 Zone had an average FAR of 4.6:1. There was a wider range of FARs in this category from 6.7:1 to 2.7:1. Average building heights were around 6 storeys with taller development up to 10 storeys.

We assessed 56 approved applications of three storeys or more covered by Design and Development Overlay 8 (DDO8) that are not within a Heritage Overlay

For applications on sites greater than 650 sqm (the top 30% by site area)	For applications on sites less than 390 sqm (the median site area)
11 out of 17 (65%) exceeded the height in storeys in DDO8	16 out of 29 (55%) were under the height in storeys in DDO8
2 applications were of an equivalent height in storeys to DDO8	4 applications were of an equivalent height in storeys to DDO8
The majority of applications that exceeded the height in storeys did so by 2-4 storeys	The majority of applications that were under the height in storeys ranged from 2-3 storeys
At 10 storeys, 108-120 York Street is double the 5 storey height in DDO8-2B	

Figure 14. Summary of overarching trends from an analysis of recent development activity within the Structure Plan study area.

Figure 15. Map showing the highly varied lot sizes within the Structure Plan study area.

Supporting future growth

This Review seeks to balance the need to accommodate future growth and ensure that buildings respect and respond to valued existing character.

Analysis was undertaken to identify the potential of sites across the study area to accommodate future growth. This informed the development of the proposed built form controls. The results of this analysis are shown if Figure 16. The categories of growth shown in the map are discussed below.

Sites with minimal potential for growth

Sites identified as having minimal potential to accommodate growth include properties listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR), sites that have been recently developed, under construction or with an approved planning permit. Buildings with a public or community function such as public housing, South Melbourne Market and places of worship are also included in this category.

Sites on the VHR constraints are generally located in the southern parts of the precinct. Many of the additional sites identified as having minimal potential to accommodate growth are subject to development activity and are generally located in the northern and eastern parts of the precinct, corresponding with medium to larger sized land parcels in the Commercial 1 and Commercial 2 Zone.

Sites with lower potential for growth

Sites identified as having lower potential to accommodate growth include smaller land parcels (up to 300 m2) and properties identified as significant or contributory heritage places within either HO440 (Emerald Hill Residential Precinct) or HO4 (City Road Industrial Precinct).

Sites are generally located throughout the south and south-eastern parts of the precinct, as well as along Clarendon Street. This reflects the heritage and lower-rise residential character of these areas.

Smaller land parcels identified within the study area have less capacity to accommodate setbacks that achieve viable upper level development or are located on narrower streets less than 12 m which constrains the height of street walls.

Sites with medium potential for growth

Sites identified as having medium potential to accommodate growth have less constraint and are located across the study area. Land parcel sizes are larger (300-1500 m2), however may still be constrained as significant or contributory heritage places within either HO440 (Emerald Hill Residential Precinct) or HO4 (City Road Industrial Precinct).

The larger parcel sizes often have wider street frontages (>20 m) and deeper lots resulting in greater capacity to accommodate taller buildings. While there are less sites in this category located within HO440 and HO4, sites that abut a significant or contributory heritage property may impact the approach to development to ensure that the design positively responds to the heritage context.

Sites with higher potential for growth

Sites identified as having higher potential to accommodate growth comprise larger land parcels (1500-5000m2) with no heritage constraints that are mainly located in the northern half of the study area. Larger parcel sizes typically have greater capacity and flexibility to accommodate taller built form.

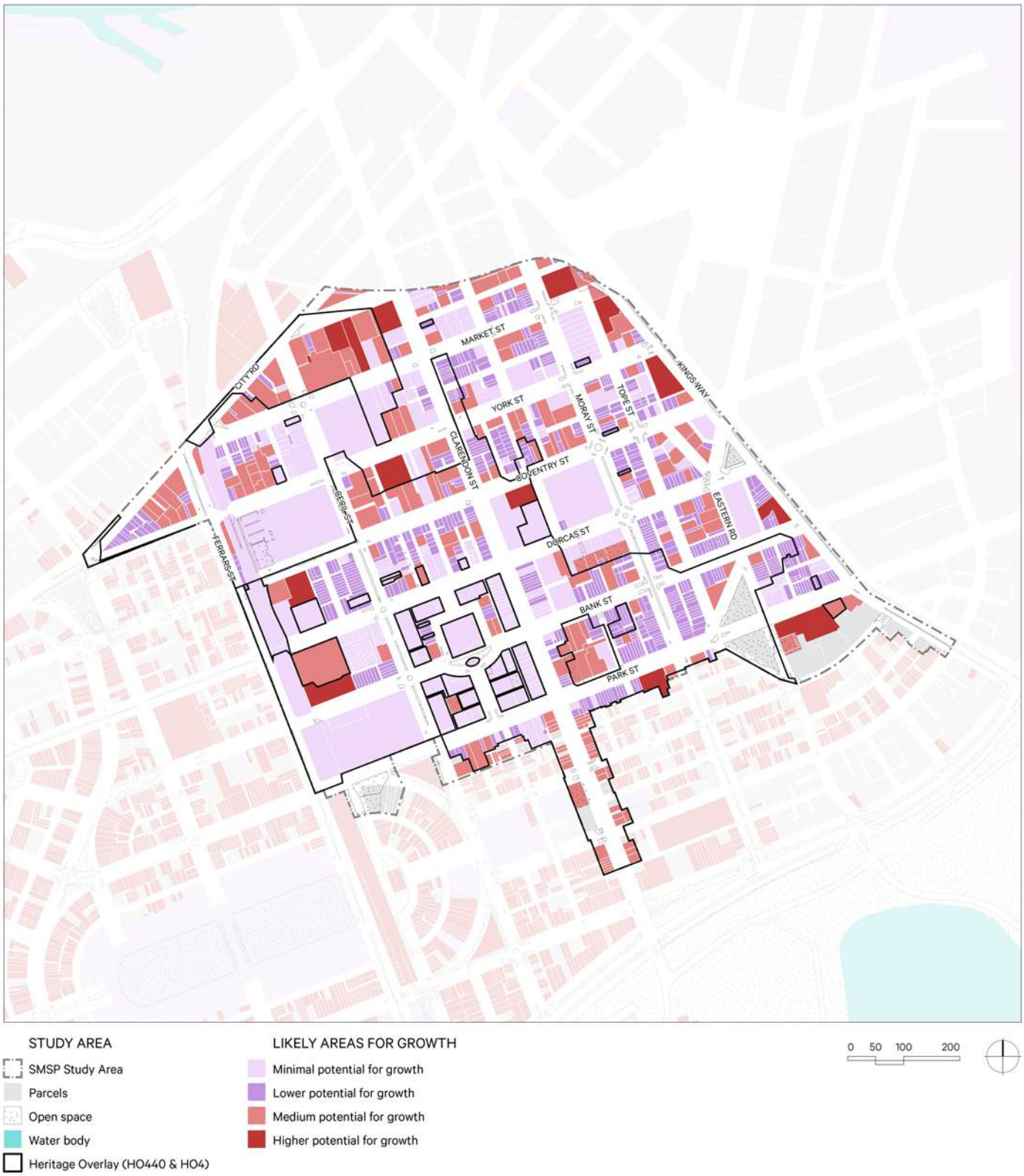


Figure 16. Map assessing likely areas for growth in the Structure Plan study area.

Part 2. Delivering good design

What is good design?

Good design responds to the local context, respecting site-specific environmental, social, and cultural conditions that shape each place.

Good design creates high-quality environments, for people to live, work and play. Good design is not just about aesthetics, but focuses on the performance of buildings and places to support a good quality of life. Good design results in sustainable and inspiring places, and provides lasting value for generations to come.

Delivering good design

This section sets describes how good design can be delivered in South Melbourne, including:

- How good design can be delivered in higher density neighbourhoods through the use of a density control or floor area ration (FAR).
- How to deliver sunlight to streets and parks, as well as a 'human-scaled' street experience by setting appropriate street wall heights, building heights and upper level setbacks.
- How to deliver good internal amenity through the orientation of primary outlook, appropriate building separation and floor to floor heights.

> The design quality of our housing is central to how we live and how well our neighbourhoods and communities work. A good home is essential in a society that is healthy, inclusive, equitable and economically productive.
>
> — OVGA, The Case for Good Design: Housing

> There is a growing appetite for smaller [building] footprints that minimise environmental and visual scale impacts. With a renewed focus on workplace culture, small footprint commercial towers are becoming not just viable but increasingly desirable.
>
> — Andrew Cortese (Grimshaw Architects), 2020

Image 21. Nightingale 1 by Breathe Architecture and Napier Street by Freadman White. A strong connection between the dwellings and the public realm is achieved through single setback behind the heritage building (left), by allowing a higher street wall (right) and by the facade designs of both buildings.

Image 22. Light Box office building by Claire Cousins Architects. Much of the study area is comprised of smaller properties located in South Melbourne's Enterprise Precinct. This office building demonstrates a high level of design quality that can help attract businesses to the precinct.

Design objectives for South Melbourne

A design objective describes the good design outcomes that new development should achieve to ensure that South Melbourne is a vibrant place.

This section describes four design objectives to deliver good design outcomes:

1. Ensure development is responsive to the local context and character
2. Contribute to engaging and walkable precincts
3. Provide high-amenity housing and workplaces
4. Integrate climate responsive design

Design recommendations are included under each design objective to provide guidance on how the objective can be achieved.

The design objectives and recommendations were developed through consideration of the character of South Melbourne, the key urban design and built form features of the area, the review of current built form controls (DDO8), and the need to enable more varied future built form. They reflect the testing of the design outcomes discussed in Part 2, as well as drawing on contemporary best practice approaches to built form for inner city areas and activity centres. The objectives and recommendations consider a range of scales from the neighbourhood through to the detailed design of a building.

Image 23. Terrace House apartments by Austin Maynard Architects.

Image 24. Wangaratta Street office development by MAA Architects.

Design objective 1:
Ensure development is responsive to the local context and character

South Melbourne has a diverse mix of architecture and building uses. It is important that new buildings are responsive to their context which will varies significantly across the study area. This ranges from sensitive responses to highly intact heritage properties through to locations where higher density and taller building heights can be accommodated.

Design recommendations

The following design recommendations provide guidance on how to achieve this objective:

- Ensure development responds to the valued attributes of South Melbourne and contributes positively to the existing and future character within each precinct.
- Enable precincts that are human scaled with a diversity of building types that are mainly mid-rise with some higher built form in specified areas.
- Ensure development respects the height, scale and proportions of adjoining heritage places and residential areas.
- Ensure development reinforces the fine grain, vertical rhythm and visual interest of streetscapes.
- Encourage reduced visual bulk and maintain sky views on larger sites through the development of individual buildings or through the separation of built form elements at upper levels.
- Carefully locate taller built form to minimise visual bulk and overshadowing.
- Ensure solar access controls are more targeted to maintain sunlight at certain times of the year to key streets and open spaces.
- Ensure street wall controls are more targeted by responding to the built form character and hierarchy of streets.
- Maintain the existing street wall height of heritage places and buildings while enabling taller street wall heights in non-heritage areas.
- Enable simple and legible building forms and efficient floor plates by avoiding multiple setbacks above the street wall.
- For heritage buildings, provide a sensitive distinction between the lower building levels and the new upper building levels through changes in form, details and materials.

Design objective 2: Contribute to engaging and walkable precincts

Each building must contribute to the creation of a comfortable and engaging public realm and encourage people to inhabit streets and public spaces.

Design recommendations

The following design recommendations provide guidance on how to achieve this objective:

- Provide high-quality frontages to streets and laneways.
- Encourage a mix of small and medium tenancies along key pedestrian streets and laneways in retail and commercial areas.
- Reduce the impact of servicing on the public realm by minimising the number of vehicle crossovers required and removing vehicle crossovers where appropriate.
- Ensure that the location of vehicle entries does not undermine the attractiveness, experience or safety of the public realm.
- Minimise the extent of servicing located on main street frontages and other key pedestrian routes, carefully integrating the design of servicing into the overall design of the ground floor.
- Provide depth and detail to all visible facades, with high quality and visually rich details in lower levels.
- Carefully integrate signage into the design of the ground floor and discourage signage treatments that reduce activation and passive surveillance of the public realm by obstructing windows and doors.
- Provide continuous weather protection along main street frontages and other key pedestrian routes that allows for exposure to winter sun and shelter from summer sun.
- Encourage new development to include splayed corners which are a prominent urban and architectural feature of the area.

Design objective 3: Provide high-amenity housing and workplaces

Providing a high level of amenity will contribute to the health, wellbeing and productivity of building occupants. It is important to ensure that good levels of daylight and sunlight enter buildings. High-amenity buildings provide equitable and dignified access for all and enable spaces to be reconfigured as building uses change over time.

Design recommendations

The following design recommendations provide guidance on how to achieve this objective:

- Provide internal amenity and equitable development between sites by ensuring adequate building separation.
- Support equitable development by ensuring that primary outlook is secured to the street or within the development site.
- Ensure that internal privacy is well-managed through building separation, landscape interventions and the careful location of windows.
- Avoid reliance on screening to manage privacy issues at the ground floor and at upper levels.
- Provide adequate floor-to-floor heights that support good internal amenity outcomes and are adaptable to changes in future land use over time, including the floor-to-floor heights of car parking.
- Ensure universal design principles are achieved to provide equitable and dignified access for all.

Design objective 4: Integrate climate responsive design

Delivering sustainable buildings is integral if South Melbourne is to contribute to addressing the Climate Emergency declared by Council in 2019. Sustainable, high-quality building design leads to reductions in energy costs and healthier building environments for residents, workers and visitors.

Design recommendations

The following design recommendations provide guidance on how to achieve this objective:

- Support increased urban greening through green walls and green roofs.
- On larger sites, consider opportunities to provide deep soil zones to support in ground planting and canopy trees in the private realm.
- Provide carefully considered design solutions for buildings in flood affected areas, particularly in the transition from the building to the public realm to ensure that building entries and frontages are accessible and active.
- Encourage on site flood mitigation and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD).
- Incorporate design detail and material choices that reduce urban heat.

The use of a density control or floor area ratio (FAR) contributes to higher quality buildings and greater certainty in planning outcomes.

The review of DDO8 noted that the current controls lack necessary clarity and consistency which contributes to uncertainty, disagreement between parties and poor quality built form outcomes. A density control or Floor Area Ratio (FAR) can provide greater certainty by specifying the amount of gross floor area that can be developed on a site. The use of FAR controls alongside building envelope controls is a standard planning mechanism that is used nationally and internationally in regulating development.

What is a Floor Area Ratio?

A FAR is a measure that represents the density of a building (or buildings) within a specified area of land. It is expressed as a ratio between the amount of Gross Floor Area (GFA) that can be developed and the area of a site. For example, with a FAR of 4:1, the GFA that could be developed on a site of 1000 m2 would be 4000 m2 which is four times the site area.

FARs are used with other building envelope controls such as street wall heights, upper level setbacks, building separation and building heights. The use of FARs with other controls can be tailored to specific areas to ensure buildings are responsive to the context as well as providing for greater flexibility or diversity of design outcomes. This is related to the use of mandatory and discretionary controls.

Figure 17 illustrates different outcomes that could be delivered with a FAR of 4:1. The examples illustrate why a FAR should also be paired with other built form controls, such as discretionary heights and setbacks to provide a level of design flexibility that is appropriate for the context.

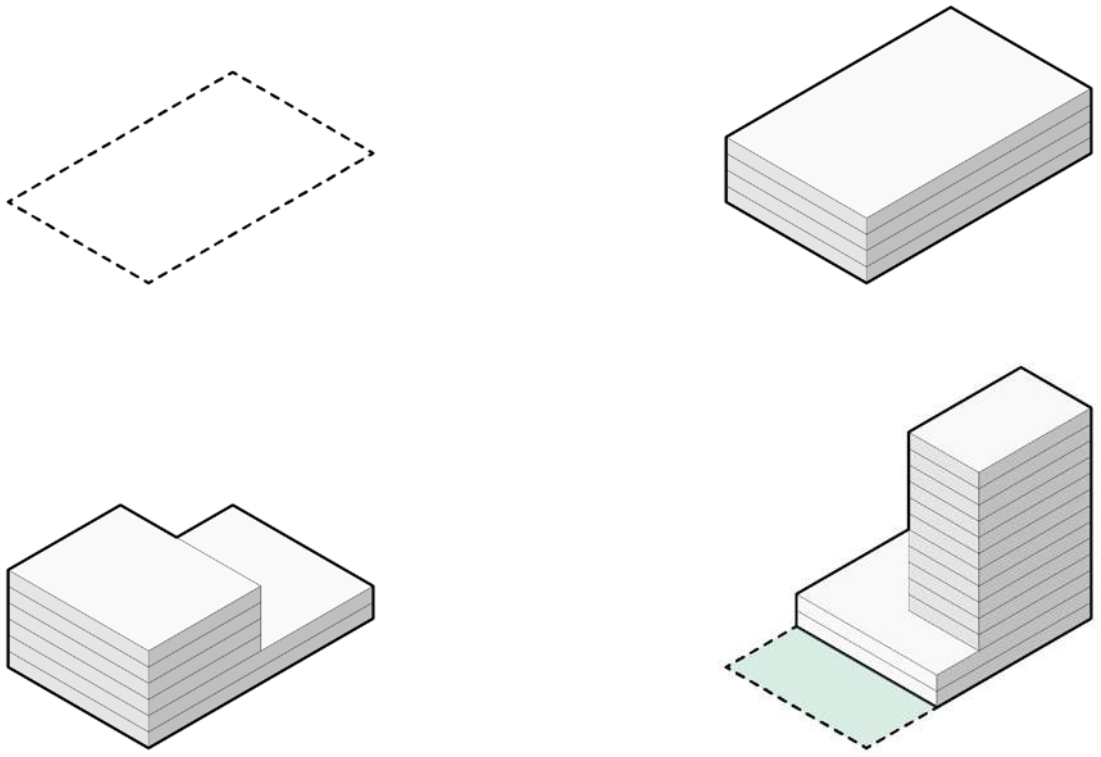


Figure 17. General example of how a FAR of 4:1 can result in different design outcomes based on relationship with other built form controls including building height, street wall heights and setbacks.

The relationship between FAR and site size

Delivering good design outcomes requires FARs to be carefully calibrated to site size. While infill sites can often rely on spaces outside of the site to deliver high amenity (e.g. outlook to surrounding streets), developments on larger sites must also deliver amenity within sites. This means that FARs on larger sites can often be lower than the FARs that apply to smaller sites. This recognises that as site size increases, more space within sites must be dedicated to creating sufficient separation between buildings, with some sites also accommodating additional communal open space or pedestrian connections. Figure 18 illustrates the different design outcomes sought on larger sites in comparison to smaller infill sites.

The relationship between FAR and residential / commercial building typologies.

Commercial buildings can typically support larger and deeper floorplates than residential buildings, resulting in a higher GFA per floor. However, this does not mean that differentiated FARs are required to apply to sites of the same size. Figure 19 illustrates how differences in floor-to-floor heights and overall building height for residential and commercial buildings mean that residential buildings are often able to deliver an extra storey within the height envelope, resulting in a similar FARs for sites of both residential and commercial uses.

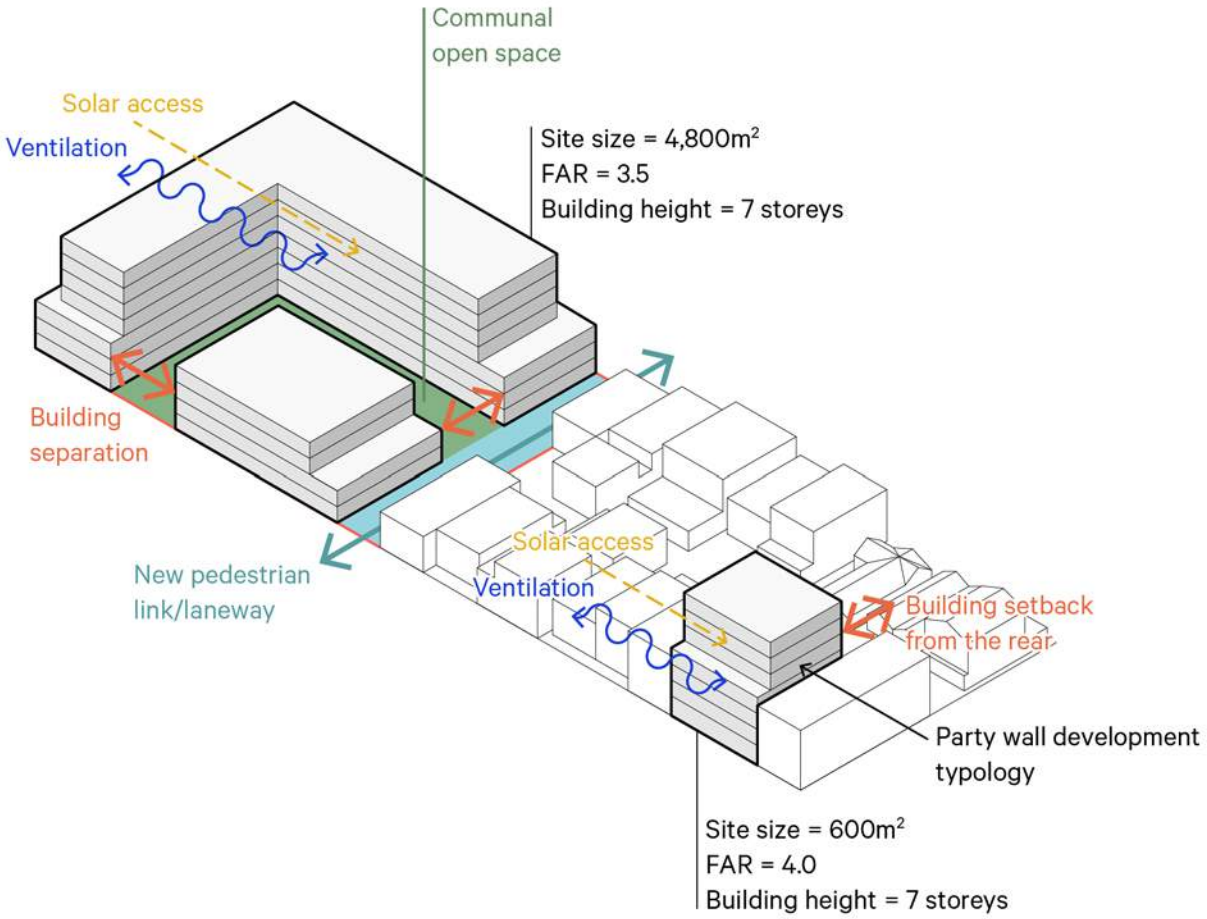


Figure 18. The relationship between FAR and site size, as illustrated by an infill site of 600 sqm. and an island site of 4,800 sqm.

The use of mandatory and discretionary controls

It is critical that FAR controls are mandatory if they are to be effective. This has been demonstrated through multiple panel processes locally, as well as internationally, where FAR and building envelope controls are widely used to assess and control density.

Building envelope controls are typically discretionary although certain mandatory controls may be justified, for example to protect sunlight to streets and parks or to ensure appropriate building heights and upper level setbacks above an existing heritage building.

Where are FAR controls in place

Mandatory FAR controls have been supported in the West Melbourne Structure Plan and the Moonee Ponds Activity Centre (MPAC) as a means by which to facilitate growth and development while providing for flexible design outcomes and maintaining public amenity.

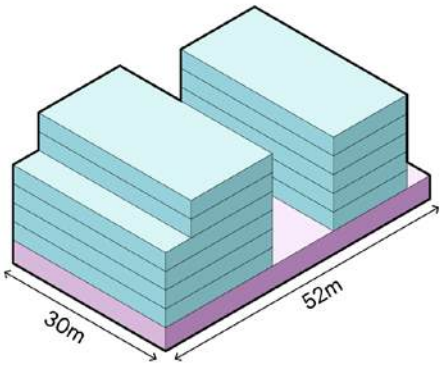
Additionally, Floor Space Ratios (FSR), calculated in a similar manner as FAR, are recognised as a valuable planning tool by the NSW Department of Planning. They are implemented and encouraged extensively across the state where increased densities are planned and it is deemed necessary to control the bulk and scale of development.

Benefits of density controls

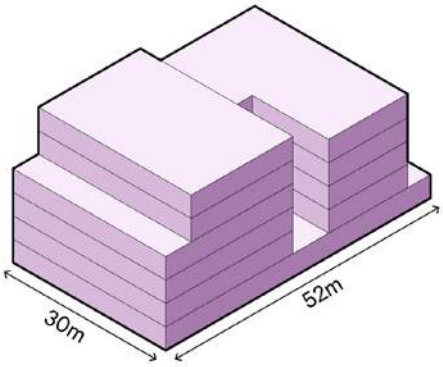
The key benefits of using FAR controls alongside building envelope controls include:

- Providing greater clarity and certainty of future development yield that can be delivered on the site whilst ensuring that amenity outcomes are appropriately managed.
- Provides design flexibility to respond to the specific conditions of a site and the surrounding context

Residential floor (3.2m floor-to-floor height)
Commercial floor (4m floor-to-floor height)



Land-use	Mixed-use development
Gross Floor Area	7,200m²
Site Area	1,560m²
FAR	4.6
Building height	7 Storeys (23.2m)



Land-use	Commercial development
Gross Floor Area	7,200m²
Site Area	1,560m²
FAR	4.6
Building height	6 Storeys (24m)

Figure 19. Relationship between FARs and residential/commercial building typologies.

The built form testing that informs the proposed controls demonstrates good design outcomes that reflect contemporary best practice and address issues identified in the review of existing controls.

In combination with the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) controls described above, additional built form controls are proposed to ensure future development delivers good design outcomes that are focused on delivering:

- more efficient built form
- sunlight to streets and parks
- comfortable and welcoming streets
- good internal amenity
- sensitive responses to South Melbourne's valued heritage
- accessible and vibrant buildings and public realm in flood prone areas.

This section draws on 'universal' design outcomes that are accepted good practice for Melbourne's high density activity centres and renewal areas.

Delivering more efficient built form

The built form controls in DDO8 result in building mass being pushed to the centre and rear of a site as upper levels are increasingly setback above the low street wall heights. Reorienting the building mass towards the street as shown in Figure 20 allows for higher internal amenity, increased connection between building occupants and activity in the public realm, as well as greater efficiency in the design of floor plates. This approach can be used in a targeted way as it is important to maintain lower street wall heights in particular contexts, for example in areas where there is a cohesive heritage streetscape, on narrow streets or laneways or where there is a transition to low rise residential areas.

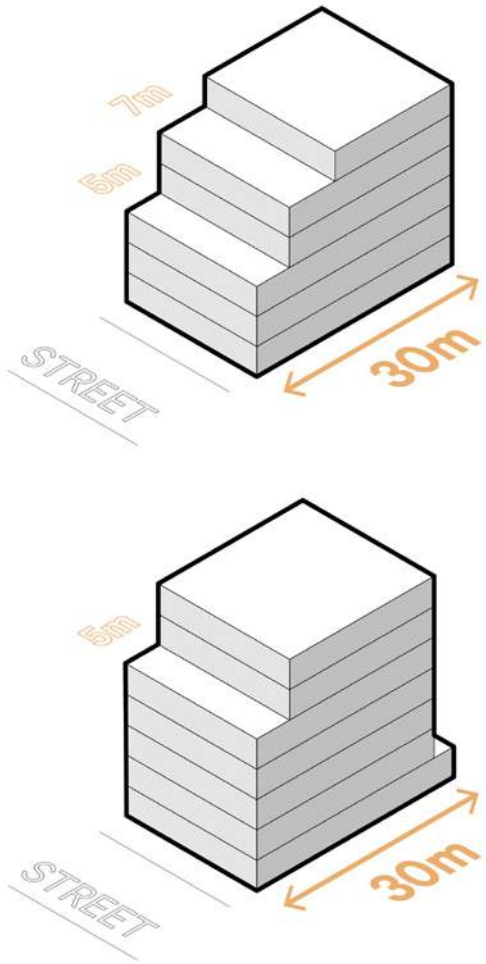


Figure 20. Diagrams showing a general comparison between the current DDO8 built form controls and built form that allows for more of the building mass to be reoriented towards the street frontage.

Delivering sunlight to streets and parks

Much of the activity in the study area occurs along, and is oriented towards, the 30 metre streets. With limited public open space in the study area, the street network will play a crucial role in delivering high quality amenity in the public realm. This includes providing good sunlight access to the wide footpaths located on the southern, eastern and western side of the main streets. There is a direct relationship between sunlight access, the orientation of streets and the proposed street wall heights, upper level setbacks and building heights.

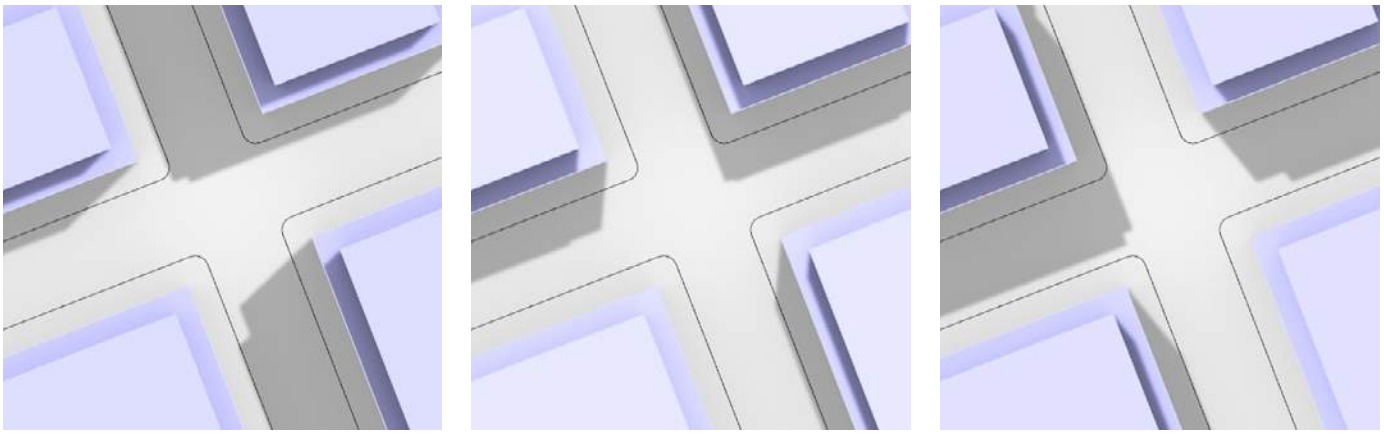
DDO8 includes mandatory winter sunlight controls for several streets:

- the western and eastern footpaths of Clarendon Street
- the southern footpaths of Market, York and Coventry Streets to the west of Clarendon Street
- streets surrounding the South Melbourne Market
- the southern footpath of Bank Street between Moray Street and Eastern Road.

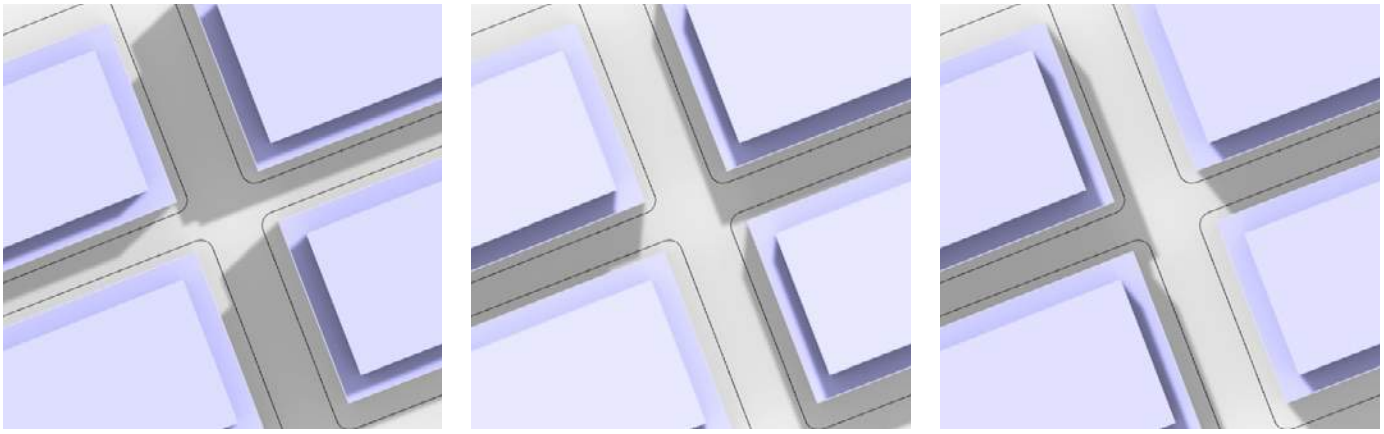
The restrictions placed on development due to these controls do not align with the role and function of South Melbourne as a Major Activity Centre. This Review proposes that sunlight controls for the spring equinox (22 September) are generally applied across the study area to better balance built form outcomes with winter controls targeted to more specific locations. Sunlight access is often measured at the spring equinox in Planning Schemes across Victoria. This date is at the mid-point between the winter solstice (22 June) where shadows are at their longest, and the summer solstice (22 December) where shadows are at their shortest. The renders in Figure 21 indicate the level of sunlight access that can be achieved at different times of the day at the spring equinox.

On narrower streets, a balance needs to be struck between enabling appropriate levels of development and providing sunlight access at the spring equinox. Buildings on narrower north-south streets can still provide a level of sunlight access through the middle of the day, while achieving this on east-west streets is challenging.

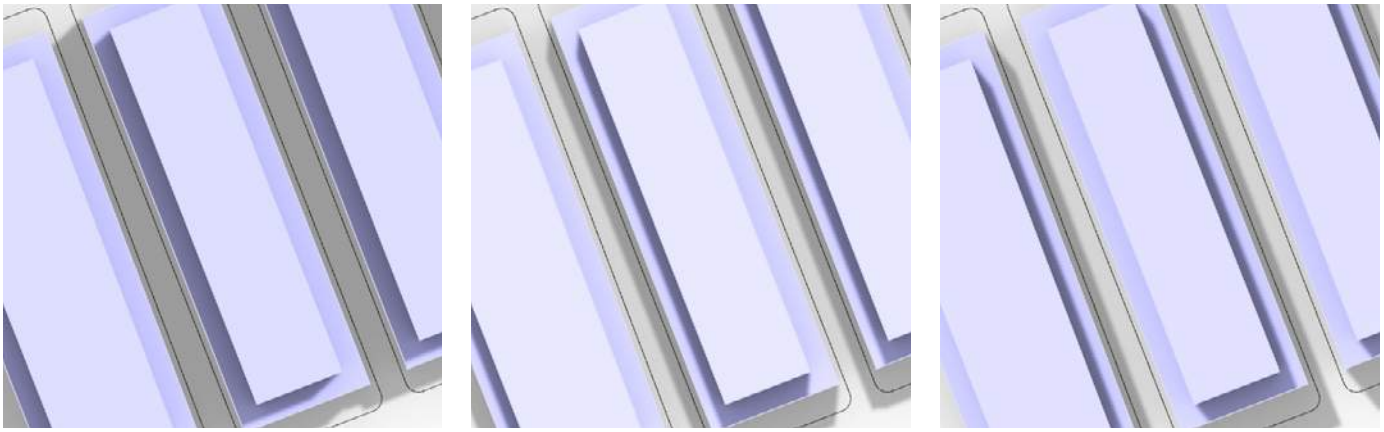
The built form propositions for each precinct in Part 3 include further detail on specific streets, footpaths and open space where development must not cast shadows at specific times for either the spring equinox or winter solstice.



Overshadowing of 30 m wide streets at 10.00 am, 12.00 pm and 2.00 pm based on a 5 storey street wall, 5 m upper level setback and 7 storey building height for non-residential development.



Overshadowing of a 20 m wide north-south street at 10.00 am, 12.00 pm and 2.00 pm based on a 4 storey street wall, 5 m upper level setback and 6 storey building height for non-residential development.



Overshadowing of a 9 m wide north-south street at 10.00 am, 12.00 pm and 2.00 pm based on a 3 storey street wall, 5 m upper level setback and 5 storey building for non-residential development.

Figure 21. Studies of overshadowing to common street types at the spring equinox (22 September). Based on the level of development indicated above, sunlight protection is maintained to southern footpaths on 30m wide streets with sunlight access provided to all north-south orientated streets. Due to the alignment of blocks in South Melbourne, the impact of overshadowing to north-south streets is greater in the morning and improves in the afternoon.

Delivering comfortable and welcoming streets

Building and street wall heights are key elements of building form that also contribute to a 'human-scaled' streetscape. Figure 22 demonstrates how these controls work together to deliver design outcomes that respond to the street widths in South Melbourne.

Building heights

Building height ranges reflect the highly varied character of the study area and have been determined through considering factors such as the role and width of streets, lot sizes, interfaces and land uses. There are opportunities for taller built form up to 12 storeys along Kings Way and on larger sites in the north of the study area. Mid-rise buildings generally up to 7 or 8 storeys can be located along the 30 metre streets with lower building heights up to 5 or 6 storeys on the narrower 9 and 12 metre streets. In general, properties on the Victorian Heritage Register, heritage precincts with cohesive shop residence streetscapes will have lower building heights of 3 to 5 storeys, as well as areas with more sensitive interfaces such as to the residential zoned land south of Park Street.

Street wall heights

Street wall heights have been determined through considering the role and width of streets. The relationship or ratio between the street wall height and width of the street therefore varies across the study area. The resulting ratios are generally between 0.67:1 to 1.33:1 which results in a comfortable 'human-scale' as experienced from the street. In heritage precincts or cohesive heritage streetscape, the ratio will also be lower in order to maintain a consistent street wall height with existing heritage buildings such as 2 storey shop residences. Street wall heights on narrower streets will often result in a greater level of enclosure in order to achieve reasonable development outcomes.

As a result of these factors, street wall heights across the precinct range from 3 storeys (equivalent to 2 storeys for a heritage shop residence) up to 5 storeys.

STREET WALL HEIGHTS AND CORNER SITES

For corner conditions with two different street wall heights, the higher street wall should return around the corner before stepping down to the lower street wall height. As South Melbourne has a highly varied character, the distance that the higher street wall returns should be determined through a design led response. Within the precinct, this could include reflecting spatial patterns such as finer grain lot sizes, the modules of neighbouring existing buildings, or the spatial plan of the proposed development such as the module of an apartment or structural bay of a commercial development. Figure 23 shows two approaches to turning a corner from a wider to narrower street, both of which have the same Floor Area Ratio. The street wall height maps for each precinct in Part 3 include the turning of corners.

Setbacks above the street wall

Setting back the upper levels of buildings above the street wall reinforces the 'human-scale' of the street and allows sunlight to reach the street. With taller street wall heights, the number of upper levels can be reduced and accommodate within a single setback. This results in the upper levels being read as a 'cap' to the building rather than a 'wedding cake' where there is a series of upper levels with multiple setbacks.

A discretionary setback of 3 to 5 metres is generally proposed above the street wall. This will help to reduce the visual bulk of the upper level building 'cap' or ensure that sunlight reaches the street as shown by the renders in Figure 22. All development should provide a single setback above the street wall to avoid 'wedding cake' outcomes. For areas with taller buildings heights resulting in more than 2 or 3 storeys above the street wall, or if the preferred maximum building height is exceeded, the setback is to be increased to meet any solar requirements and ensure the 'human scale' of the street experience is maintained. Setbacks above the street wall for heritage precincts and properties are more varied (refer to Heritage below and Part 3).

Active frontages

The design of all frontages, including active frontages should be carefully considered to enhance the passive surveillance and contribute to a public realm that is attractive, engaging and safe. The built form propositions for each precinct in Part 3 identify specific streets where the design of active frontages is a priority.

Interfaces

The proposed density and built form controls for the precinct will enable new development to respond positively to important interfaces in the study area. The built form propositions for in Part 3 identify particular interface conditions within each precinct that require specific built form responses.

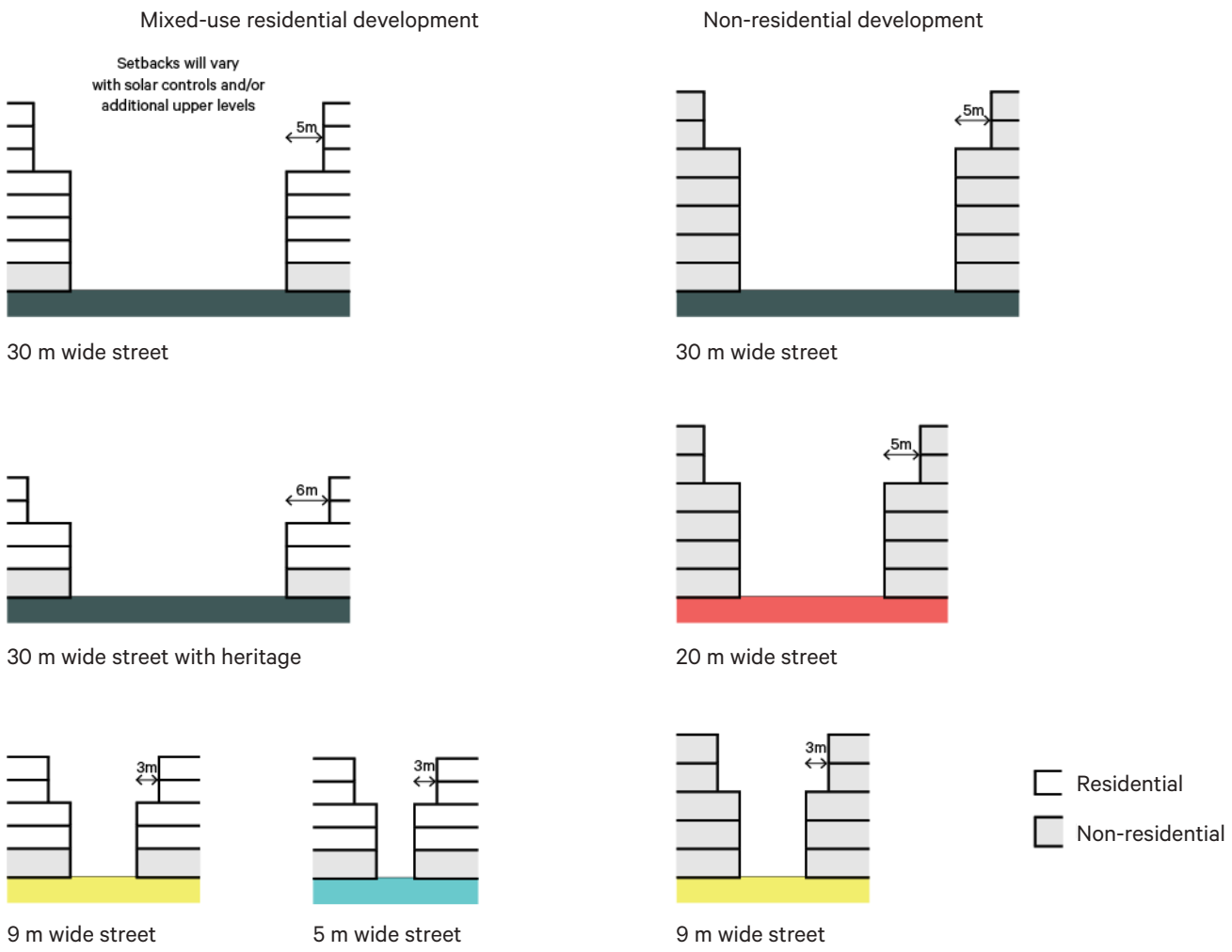


Figure 22. Diagrams demonstrating the relationship between street widths, street wall heights, upper level setbacks and building heights along typical streets in the study area for both mixed-use residential development and non-residential development.

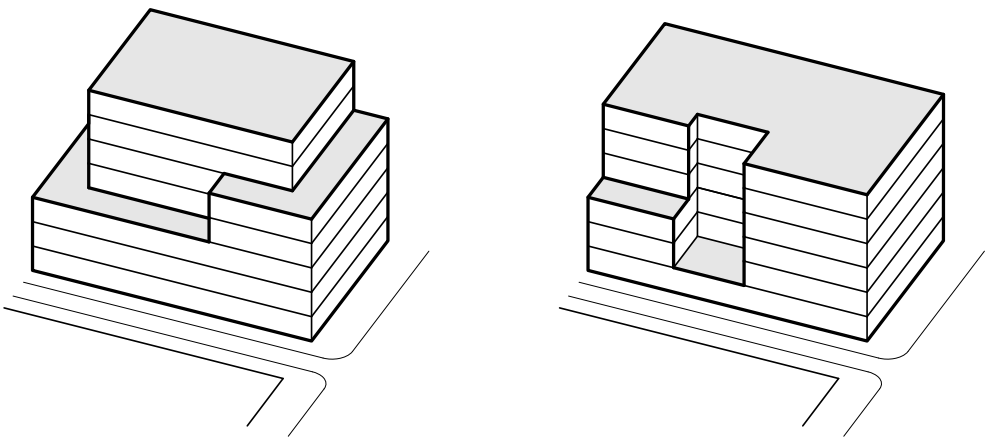


Figure 23. Two approaches to turning a corner from a wider to narrower street, both of which have the same Floor Area Ratio.

Delivering good internal amenity

Adequate building separation distances are required to ensure that good levels of daylight and sunlight enter into buildings, as well as cross ventilation. Building separation also ensures that outlook is provided from within buildings to connect occupants to the outside world and that privacy between neighbouring buildings is managed.

Building separation is also important to provide development equity, ensuring that the way one site is developed does not diminish the potential to deliver a well-designed building on an adjacent site. This is achieved by setting buildings back from side and rear boundaries and by separating buildings within sites.

To provide high levels of internal amenity, all development should be designed to secure amenity from:

1. streets
2. the rear of the property through appropriate setbacks and building separation
3. communal outdoor open space within the development that has a dimension that meets building separation requirements.

Building on a shared side boundary up to 27 m or the height limit (whichever is lesser) is encouraged. Proposed building separation requirements are set out in Tables 1 and Figure 24, as well as being described in further detail below.

For residential development, primary outlook refers to living spaces and balconies, while secondary outlook refers to bedrooms and bathrooms. For non-residential development, building separation should utilise the distances under primary outlook.

Shared rear property boundaries

Where two properties share a rear boundary, development abutting the boundary should be a maximum of 3 storeys subject to any daylighting and ventilation requirements. Above the ground floor, any floors should be setback from the rear boundary to provide amenity by meeting the requirements for building separation. For non-residential development, these requirements may not apply for properties with a depth of 16 m or less that share a rear boundary where appropriate amenity can be achieved through a single outlook to the street.

Narrow laneways

The study area includes narrow laneways that are generally 3 metres wide or less. To ensure that there is appropriate internal amenity and equitable development for properties on the opposite side of the laneway, the rear of developments should be setback above the ground floor to provide adequate building separation.

For properties with a side boundary to narrow laneways, development abutting the laneway may be up to 22 m or the height limit (whichever is lesser) if amenity is secured to streets or the rear of the property, and if the facade to the laneway is slender.

Light wells

The use of light wells for daylight should be avoided or minimised. Where light wells are provided, they should:

- provide daylight access to bedrooms only
- be painted in a light reflective colour
- provide an opportunity for useable space at ground level
- ensure bedroom windows in separate dwellings that face light wells are staggered to avoid direct overlooking
- provide ground level access to the light well via a door
- provide opportunities for landscaping
- avoid designs which rely on multiple small light wells by consolidating light wells into a larger courtyard space.

While factors other than building height, such as site orientation, will influence the level of daylight to light wells, the following preferred light well dimensions are recommended:

- buildings up to 22 m: 18 sqm (minimum width 3m)
- buildings above 22 m and up to 27 m: 36 sqm (minimum width 4.5m)
- buildings above 27 m: 54 sqm (minimum width 6m)

Floor to floor heights

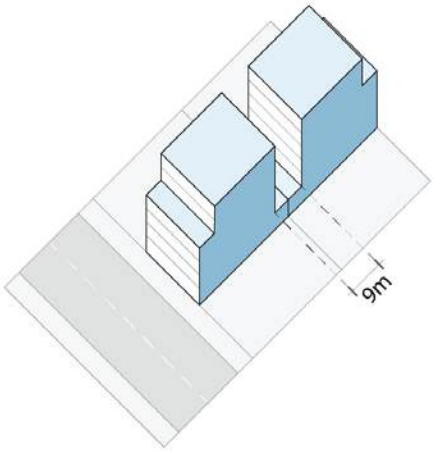
Floor to floor heights of 3.2 metres have been adopted for residential development with floor to floor heights of 4 metres for non-residential development. This aligns with best practice, provides a high level of internal amenity, and promotes sustainable building design.

BUILDING SEPARATION

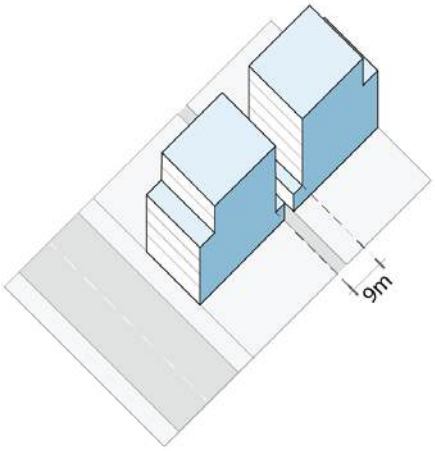
Building height	Minimum separation from site boundary		Separation between multiple buildings on an individual site
	Primary outlook	Secondary outlook	
Up to 22 m	4.5 m	3 m	9 m
Above 22 m and up to 27 m	6 m	3 m	12 m
Above 27 m	9 m	4.5 m	18 m

Table 1. Proposed building separation.

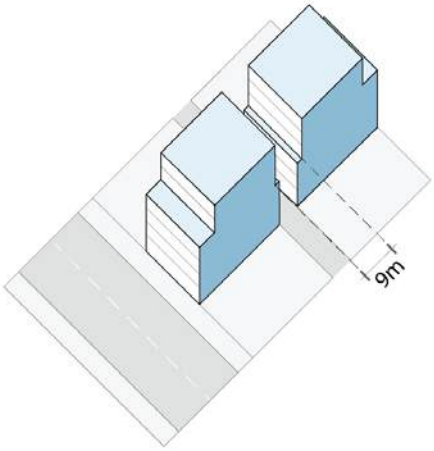
Building height up to 22 m with 9 m building separation



Shared rear property boundary

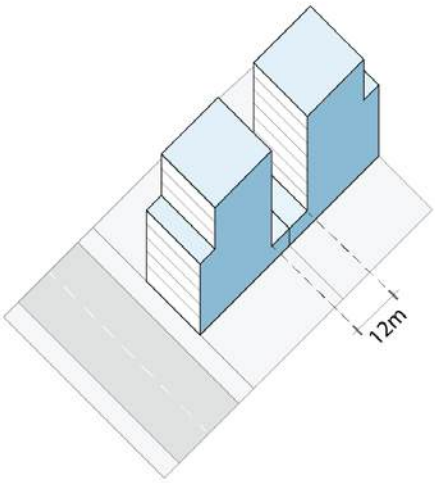


3 m wide laneway

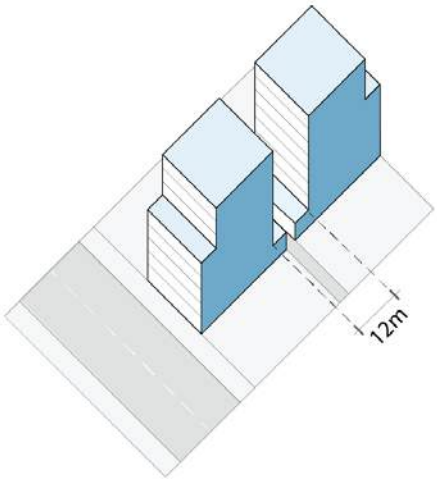


4-6 m wide laneway

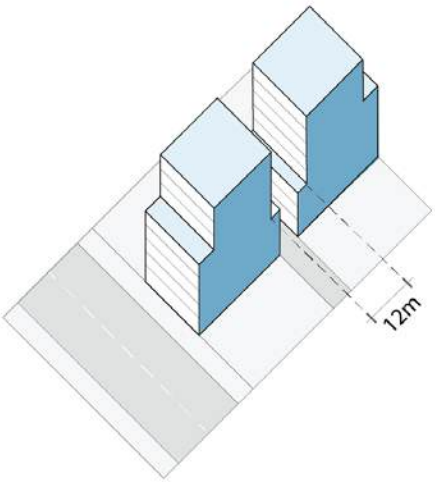
Building height above 22 m and up to 27 m with 12 m building separation



Shared rear property boundary



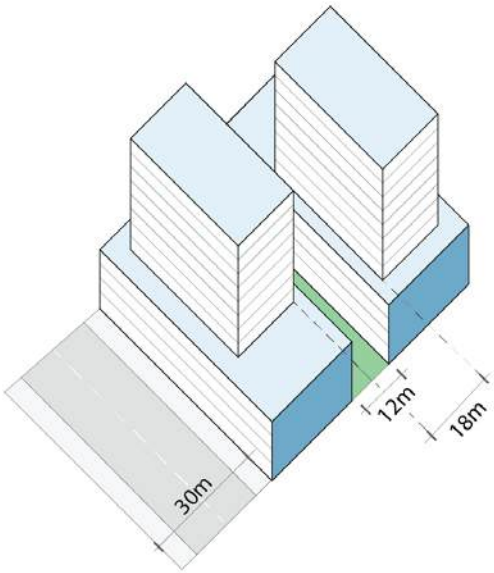
3 m wide laneway



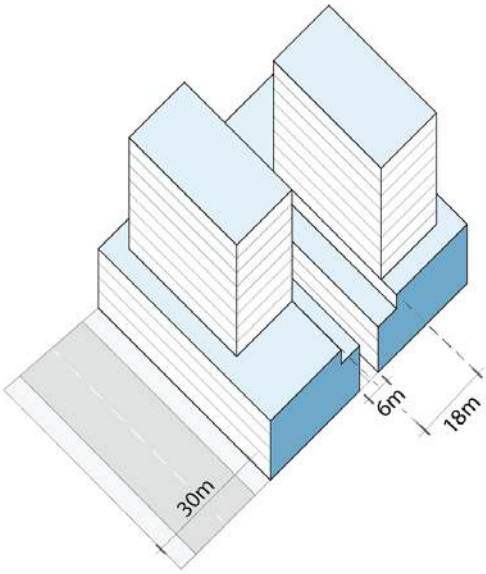
4-6 m wide laneway

Figure 24. Sections showing recommended minimum building separation for primary to primary outlook.

Building height above 27 m with 18 m building separation



Shared rear property boundary



6 m wide laneway

Responding sensitively to South Melbourne's valued heritage

South Melbourne has a rich mix of heritage architecture with buildings of varying sizes and character found in heritage precincts, along cohesive heritage streetscapes and on isolated sites. There is a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial heritage with several buildings of State importance. GJM Heritage have provided draft recommended built form parameters to inform this Review. The parameters are recommended to ensure appropriate consideration is given to the heritage values within South Melbourne.

Specific built form guidelines apply to heritage buildings and sites adjoining heritage buildings. These are included in the South Melbourne Central Heritage Built Form Analysis & Recommendations report prepared by GJM heritage. The appropriate built form response to heritage buildings will vary depending on the typology, size and status of heritage buildings. Figure 25 to Figure 27 show examples of varied responses to different types of heritage buildings.

For new infill development within cohesive heritage streetscapes, the guidelines include:

- Adopt a street wall height for infill development that reflects the established (Victorian and Edwardian-era) predominantly two-storey scale between 8m and 11m.
- Require an upper-level set back distance of 6 metres will allow retention of the 'front' room.
- Ensure that the height of new buildings does not visually dominate the heritage streetscape.

New development on individual Heritage Overlay places will retain the prominence of heritage buildings and the legibility of a building's three-dimensional form, as well as ensuring that new built form does not visually dominate the heritage place.

New development on land not subject to the Heritage Overlay abutting heritage buildings should provide a suitable transition to lower-scale heritage buildings. This includes matching the street wall height of the abutting heritage building for a distance equivalent to a typical structural or facade bay.

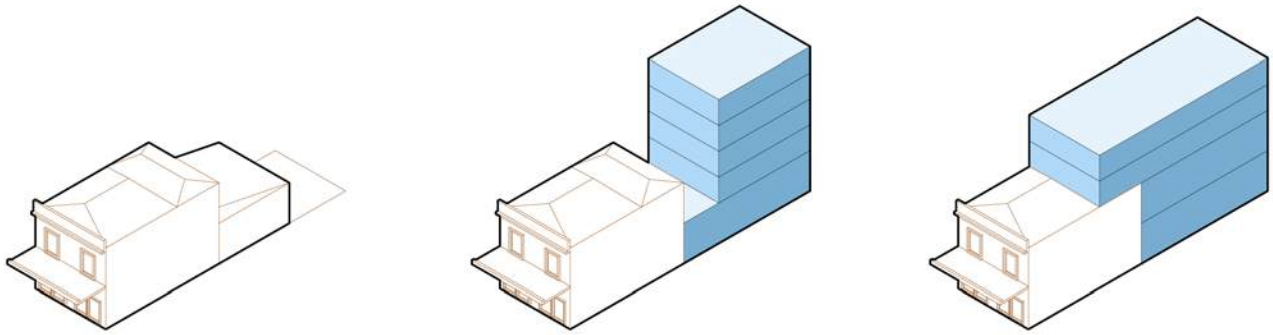


Figure 25. An example of an existing shop residence in South Melbourne with two different approaches to redevelopment. The middle image maintains the heritage fabric of the main building with a taller volume towards the rear of the site. The image to the right maintains the front rooms of the main building as well as the existing floor to floor levels, with the new addition being more directly integrated into the heritage fabric.

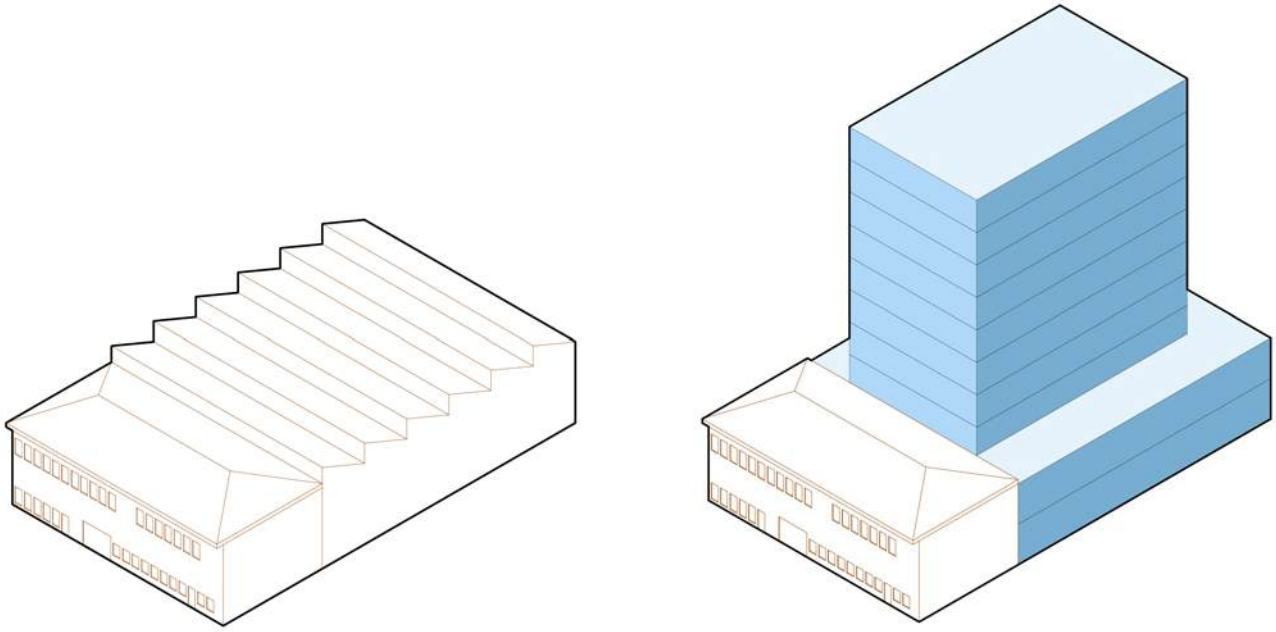


Figure 26. An example of an industrial heritage building with a distinct element to the street that fronts a sawtooth warehouse space. This approach avoids facadism by maintaining the front element which allows the facade and roof form to be read from the public realm. The new development can then occupy the remaining site area of the former sawtooth warehouse.

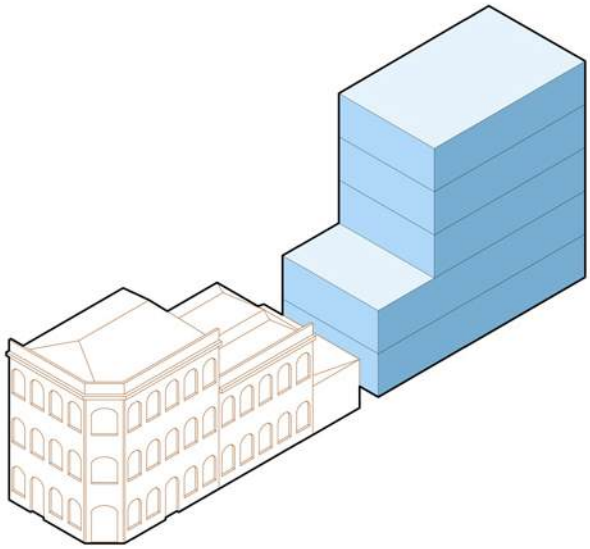


Figure 27. An example of how an adjacent site should respond to the form and scale of a heritage building. In this general example, an office building has a two storey rear interface which matches the height of the two storey pub. A significant upper level setback provides separation for the taller element of the commercial building.

Delivering accessible and vibrant design in flood prone areas

Low-lying areas in Enterprise Precinct East and West are prone to flooding and covered by a Special Building Overlay. Conditions that apply to development in these locations can include ground floor levels being set about the flood level or limitations on the design of basement parking and access. These conditions present design challenges, however carefully considered solutions will achieve accessible and vibrant buildings and public realm while also managing flood risk.

There are a range of factors that impact the level of flooding that an area may experience. While design solutions need to be rigorously tested and tailored to the context, the following provides an overview of potential design approaches.[1]

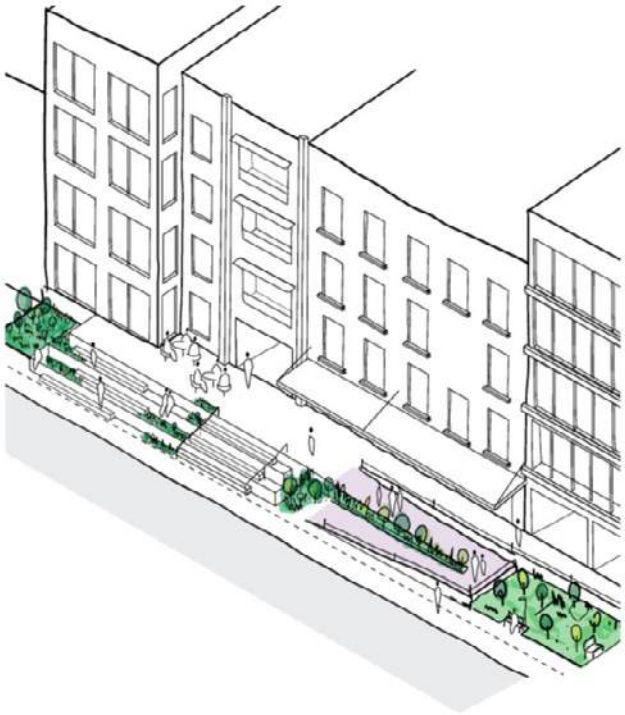


Image 25. Seating, landscaping and terraces can be used to contribute to an attractive and active streetscape while lessening the visual impact of transition. Source: Good Design Guide for Buildings in Flood Affected Areas in Fishermans Bend, Arden and Macaulay.

SITE PLANNING

- Locate building entries and vehicle access at high points of the site and/or above the Nominal Flood Protection Level (NFPL).
- The topography of the site should be used to make access easier for emergency services and users.
- Entries to underground car parking should be protected by a continuous apex of any entry or exit ramp that is at or above the NFPL.
- Land uses that require a high level of activation and access should be located so as to avoid significant changes in grade.

PUBLIC INTERFACE

- Whether located internally or externally, vertical transition zones should relate to the human scale and accommodate activity through elements such as seating and landscaping
- A maximum single step height should be considered so as to provide a gradual transition to the required height above flood level.
- Where transition areas are located externally, they should accommodate circulation space as usable space such as terraces, plazas, seating areas and landscaping that activate the streetscape.
- Where transition areas are located internally, the street wall should maximise visual and physical connections between the interior of the building and the street.
- Ground floor tenancies should be chosen that maximise ground floor activation.

1 Referenced from the Good Design Guide for Buildings in Flood Affected Areas in Fishermans Bend, Arden and Macaulay.

Image 26. Entrance to Casba in Waterloo, Sydney. A successful transition area is achieved by integrating ramps and stairs with the overall façade design and the use of high quality natural materials. The curve in the facade creates a cue for direct people to the entrance and enables increased light penetration.

Demonstrating good design

The recommendations in this report will directly inform the drafting of new built form controls as part of the planning scheme amendment that will ultimately result in an updated Design and Development Overlay (DDO) within the Port Phillip Planning Scheme. While some of the controls in the DDO may be mandatory, most will likely be discretionary and performance based. An inherent challenge in the drafting of DDOs is clearly and unambiguously describing design outcomes in text that are then translated into design processes that utilise a visual language such as drawing, 3D modelling, renders, etc.

Design guides can be an effective tool in communicating the design intent of policy as they use illustrations and photos to visually communicate the intent of policy. Design guides are highly effective and can raise expectations of design quality by:

- Providing a resource to aid pre-application and application discussions between applicants and development planners.
- Assisting urban designers in the preparation of clear and consistent design advice.
- Assisting planning professionals with the assessment of development proposals.

Recent examples of design guides (refer to Figure 28 and Figure 29) that are relevant to design issues and opportunities in the Structure Plan study area include:

- Central Melbourne Design Guide (City of Melbourne)
- Heritage Design Guide (City of Melbourne)

Similar guides could be prepared to communicate the design intent of the updated DDO for South Melbourne.

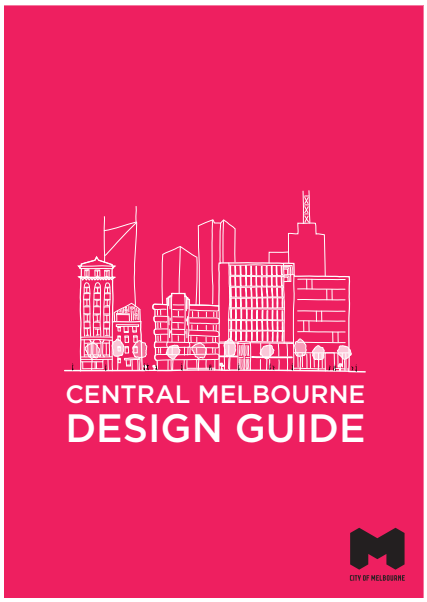


Figure 28. Three recent design guides that support the interpretation of policy by using illustrations and photos to visually communicate design outcomes.

BUILDING MASS STREETWALLS

Reinforce the fine grain and vertical rhythm of the streetscapes

Design Requirements

[BM-3] Street wall heights should be lower along laneways and streets less than 10 metres wide.

[BM-4] Buildings with a street frontage greater than 25 metres in length should be broken into smaller vertical sections, with a range of parapet heights and rebates of sufficient depth to provide modulation in the street façade.

Figure 22 The building mass is broken down into smaller parts to minimise the impact of a large building on the public realm, and contribute a human scaled building mass. A lower street wall is adopted along the laneway interface where the width of the laneway is less than 10m.

38 melbourne.vic.gov.au

In response to the height of adjoining heritage buildings, the streetwall is divided into vertically proportioned elements of different parapet heights.

161 Clarence Street

Figure 29. An extract from the Central Melbourne Design Guide illustrating how the design of buildings can reinforce a fine grain and vertical rhythm.

Design objectives and outcomes

A summary of the different built form design outcomes and relationship to the design objectives for South Melbourne is set out in the diagram below. The design flexibility of a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) control in combination with other built form controls will have a significant impact on achieving the design objectives. Further information on the process for testing the FARs and built form is included in Appendix D. The tailored application of the design outcomes to each precinct is described in the following part of the report.

	Floor Area Ratio	Building heights	Street wall heights	Upper level setbacks	Building separation
Design objective 1: Ensure development is responsive to the local context and character	●	●	●	●	●
Design objective 2: Contribute to engaging and walkable precincts	●		●	●	
Design objective 3: Provide high-amenity housing and workplaces	●				●
Design objective 4: Integrate climate responsive design	●				●

Figure 30. Summary of the different built form design outcomes and relationship to the design objectives.

Image 27. View of heritage shop residences along Clarendon Street.

Part 3. Future built form direction

THREE SIXTY°
5
7

Four precincts have been identified to deliver place-specific outcomes for South Melbourne.

This section contains character statements and proposed built form outcomes for the four precincts shown in Figure 31:

1. Clarendon Street Precinct
2. Market Precinct
3. Enterprise Precinct East
4. Enterprise Precinct West

Please note that the boundary to the Enterprise Precinct East has been extended to include some properties located along Kings Way to the south of Bank Street. The extended boundary is included on maps in Part 3 for Floor Area Ratios, building heights and street wall heights.

Character statements

A character statement is a short summary of the elements of an area that make it distinctive. It identifies valued existing characteristics and outlines the preferred future character by describing the desired appearance of the precinct in the future.

Precincts

Design and Development Overlay 8 (DDO 8) currently comprises ten precincts. This Review proposes consolidating the number of precincts from ten to four. The character statements and precinct boundaries were determined by considering the following:

- Role of South Melbourne
- Streets and public spaces
- Existing buildings and land use
- Heritage
- Sunlight
- Size of blocks and land parcels
- Access and movement
- Vistas and views
- Flooding

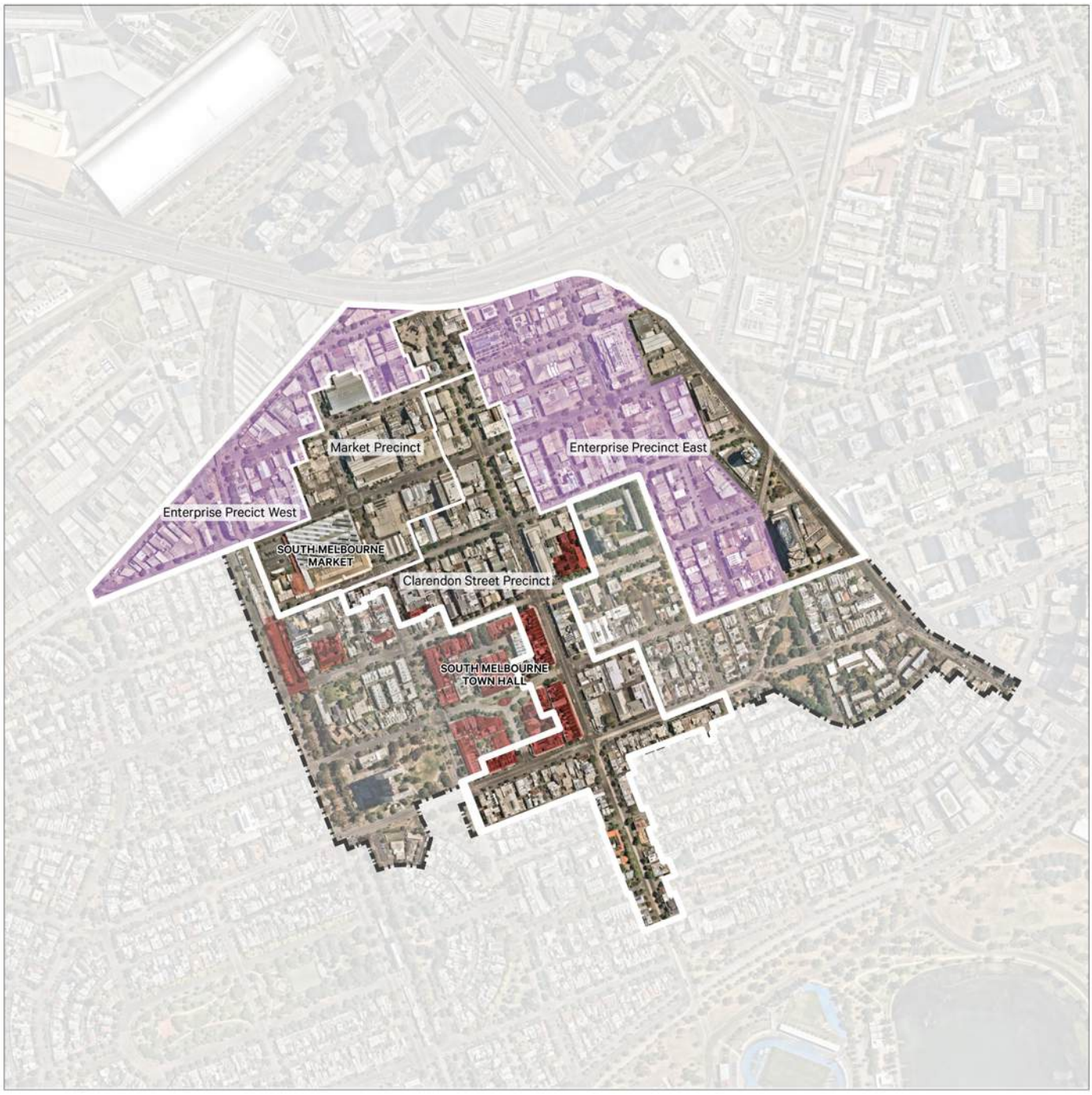
Proposed built form controls

The proposed built form controls provide guidance on key elements of building form, including density, building height, street wall height, upper level setbacks and building separation. The controls are tailored to the varied character identified within each of the four precincts.

Based on our analysis of the study area, two overarching approaches are recommended for the built form controls as shown in Figure 32. In the Clarendon Street Precinct, envelope controls are proposed for the majority of properties to best enable built form outcomes that are responsive to the significant low-rise heritage context. The recommended controls include mandatory building heights as well as mandatory street wall heights and upper level setbacks on main streets. Where these properties front other streets and laneways, discretionary street wall heights and upper level setbacks are proposed.

The remainder of the Clarendon Street Precinct, as well as the other three precincts, provides an opportunity to support more flexible design outcomes while also providing for appropriate densities across these areas. The recommended controls for these areas include mandatory Floor Area Ratios (FARs) with discretionary building heights, street wall heights and upper level setbacks. The extent of the study area covered by these two approaches is shown in Figure 33.

With highly varied lot sizes across the precinct, it is important to note that there may be challenges in developing smaller sites to achieve the maximum FAR or building height. In some instances, lot consolidation may be required for development to be feasible, or a small heritage lot in combination with setback requirements may limit development.



STUDY AREA

South Melbourne Structure Plan (SMSP) Study Area

Precincts that form the study area of the South Melbourne Built Form Review

VHR listed properties

Non-residential area

0 50 100 200

Figure 31. Map showing the proposed precincts that are the focus of the Built Form Review.

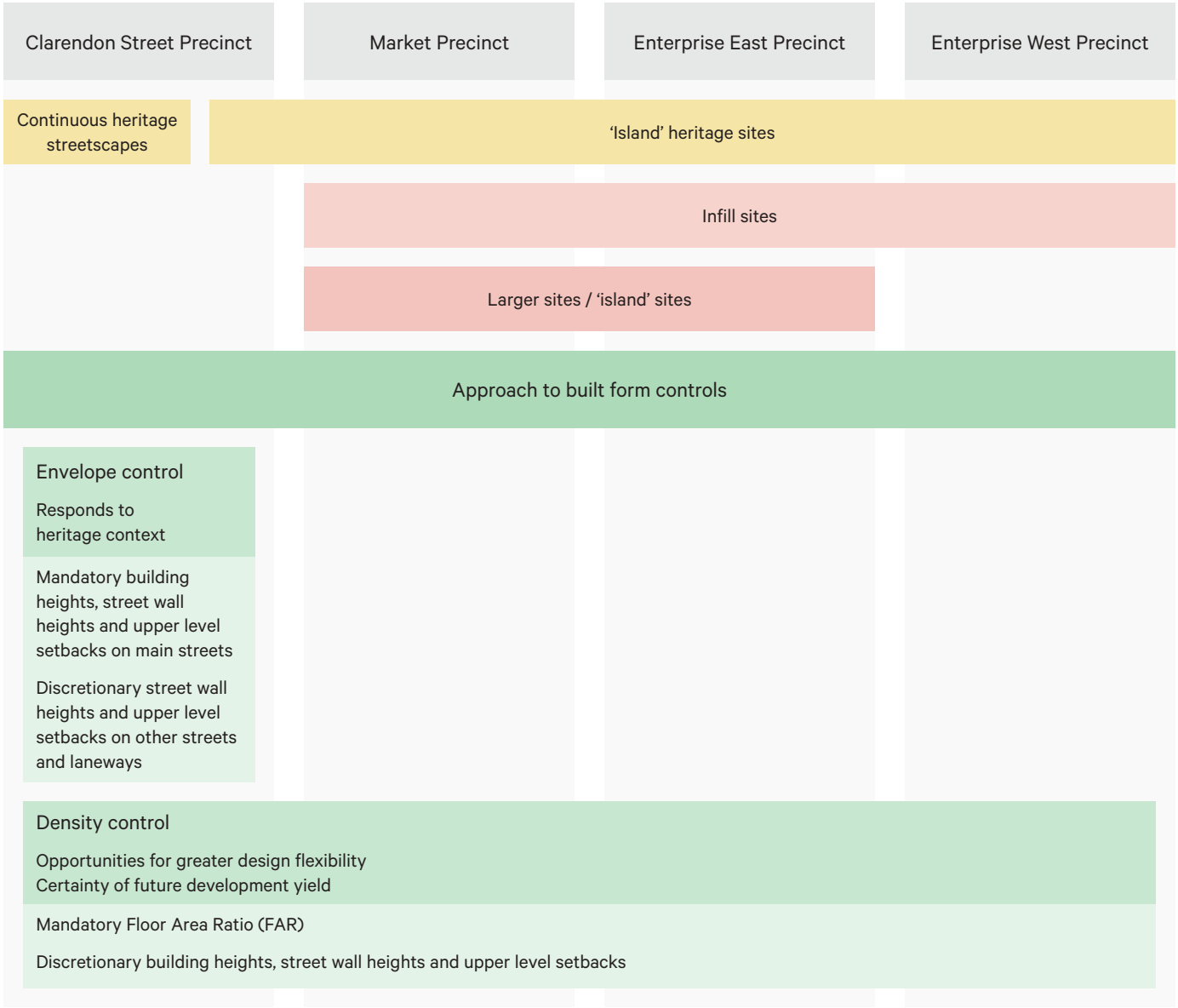


Figure 32. Diagram of the approach to built form controls for South Melbourne.

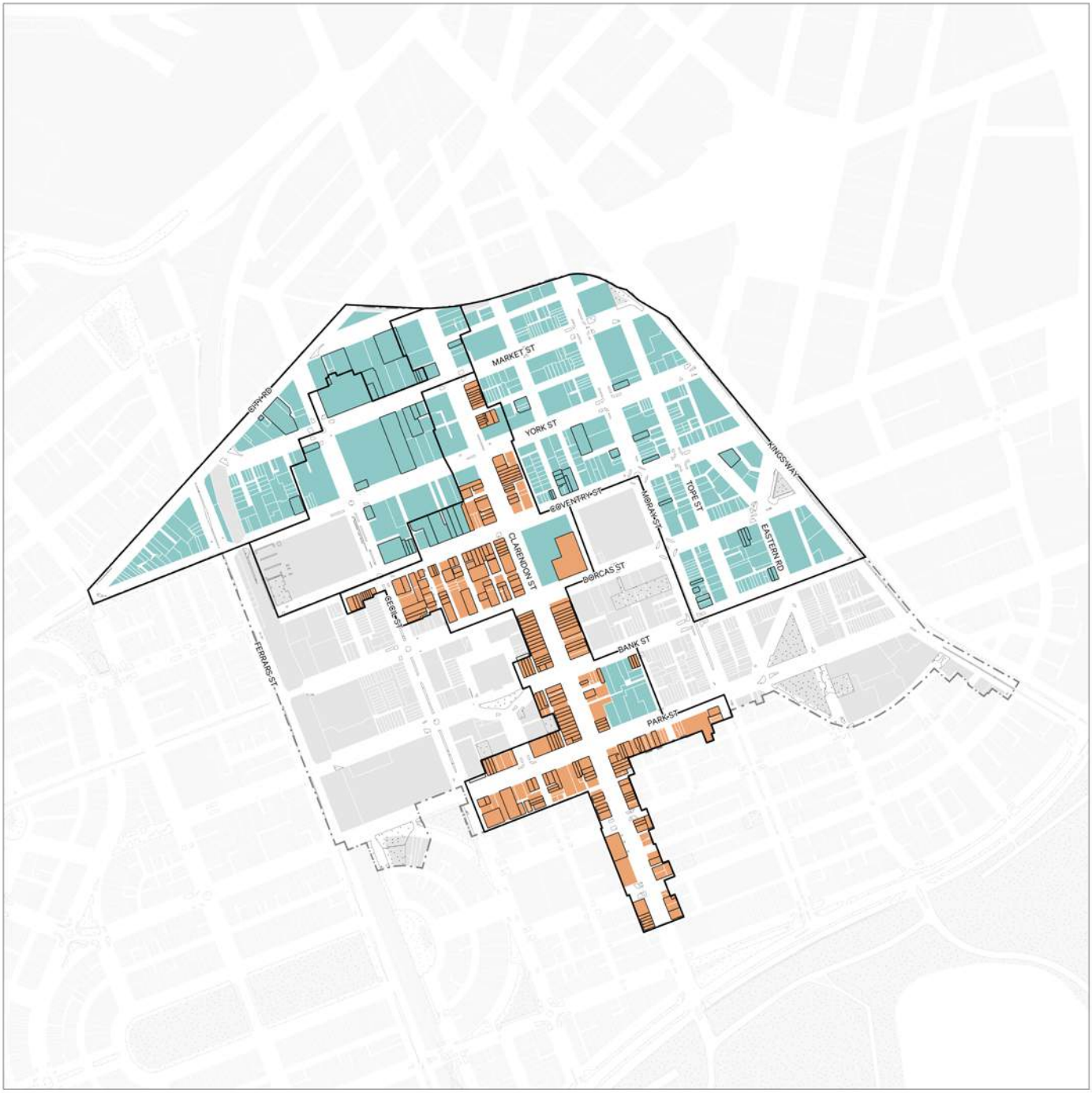


Figure 33. Map showing the areas covered by an envelope control and Floor Area Ratio.

Clarendon Street Precinct

The Clarendon Street Precinct covers an area of approximately 16.7 hectares and is shown in Figure 34. It includes properties fronting Clarendon Street from Market Street in the north to Thomson Street in the South. The precinct extends along sections of York Street, Coventry Street, Dorcas Street, Bank Street and Park Street which all run east-west and intersect Clarendon Street. There are several smaller streets and laneways within the area. The larger Clarendon Centre site forms part of the precinct.

Image 28. Shop residences on the Victorian Heritage Register along Clarendon Street between Bank Street and Park Street.

Image 29. Heritage shop residences on the corner of Clarendon Street and Dorcas Street with contemporary multi-storey development in the background.

Character statement

- The Clarendon Street Precinct will continue to be a vibrant shopping strip and mixed-use precinct with significant and highly intact heritage buildings.
- The Victorian era residential shops and larger hotels, banks and commercial buildings along Clarendon Street provide a visually cohesive streetscape within the central section of the precinct.
- The streetscape on the western side of Clarendon Street between Dorcas and Park Street is particularly significant with all properties listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR).
- There is greater diversity elsewhere in the precinct including Edwardian and Interwar buildings, as well as more recent development from the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.
- The limited scale of any future development respects the valued heritage character of the precinct. Existing street wall heights are maintained with setbacks to upper-level street frontages.
- New development uses materials that sensitively distinguish between contemporary built form and existing heritage buildings.
- New development reinforces the existing ground floor character of the precinct by providing small tenancies with active frontages that support and enhance the public realm and pedestrian experience.

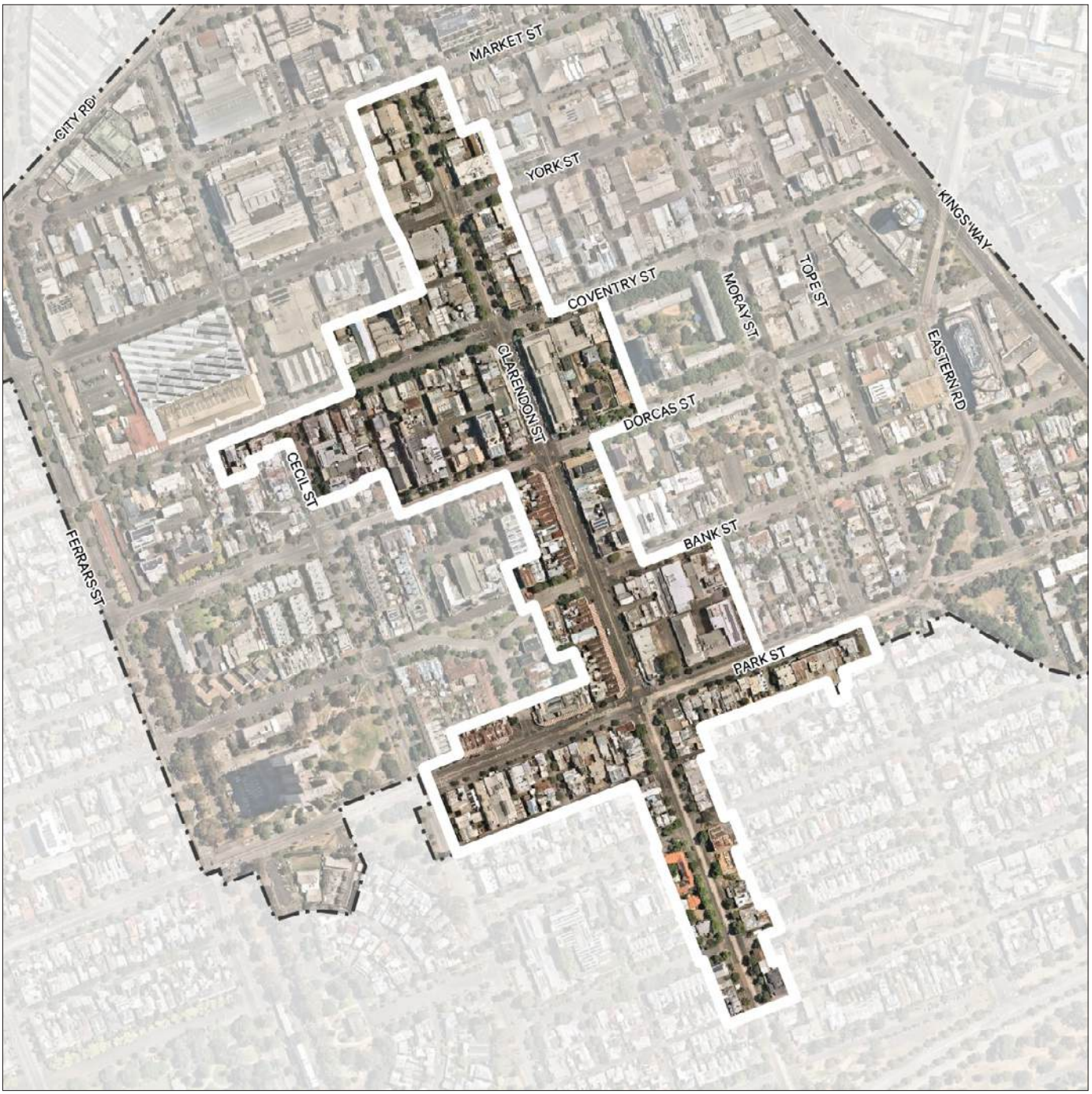


Figure 34. Map showing the Clarendon Street Precinct.

Image 30. BEFORE - Clarendon Street looking north towards York Street from Alfred Place.

Image 31. AFTER - Visualisation demonstrating the same view along Clarendon Street representing indicative built form.

Proposed built form controls

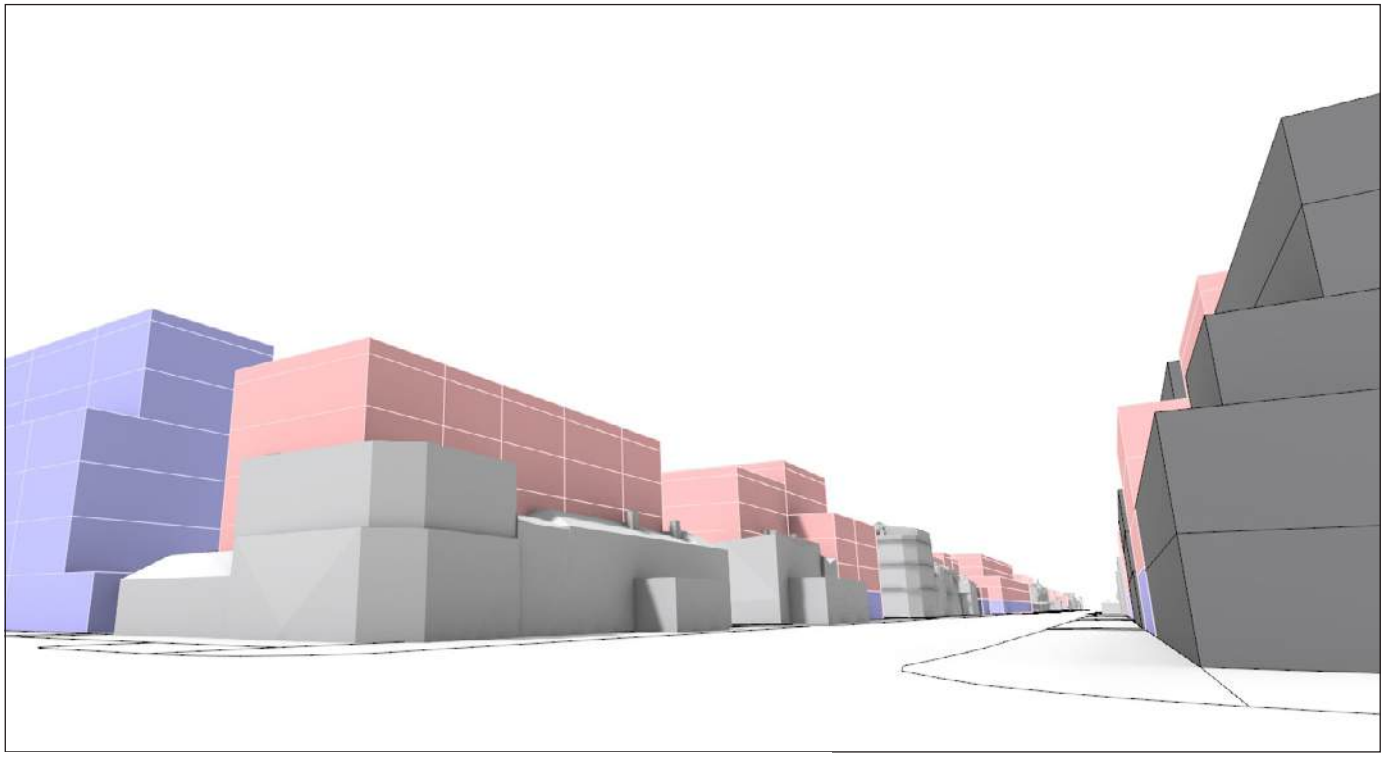
Envelope controls

Envelope controls are recommended for the majority of the precinct (refer to Figure 35). This is to ensure an appropriate design response on sites with heritage buildings, along with infill sites that directly adjoin or are in close proximity to heritage properties. In responding to the valued heritage of the area, as well as the smaller site sizes, the built form controls are seeking to establish a more consistent design outcome through building heights and setbacks in comparison to the increased design flexibility of a Floor Area Ratio control. The envelope controls include mandatory controls such as building heights, as well as a mix of mandatory and discretionary controls such as setbacks to upper levels.

Floor area ratio

A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) range of 3.5:1 up to 5.5:1 is recommended for the precinct (refer to Figure 35). FARs are proposed to be mandatory maximums and have been tailored to reflect the emerging and future precinct character. FAR controls have generally been targeted to larger sites within the precinct that:

- are located away from the central Clarendon Street corridor
- are located at the northern end of the corridor where there are less heritage properties
- comprise the Clarendon Centre.



Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 32. Looking south along the east side of Clarendon Street from the north-west corner of Market and Clarendon Streets.

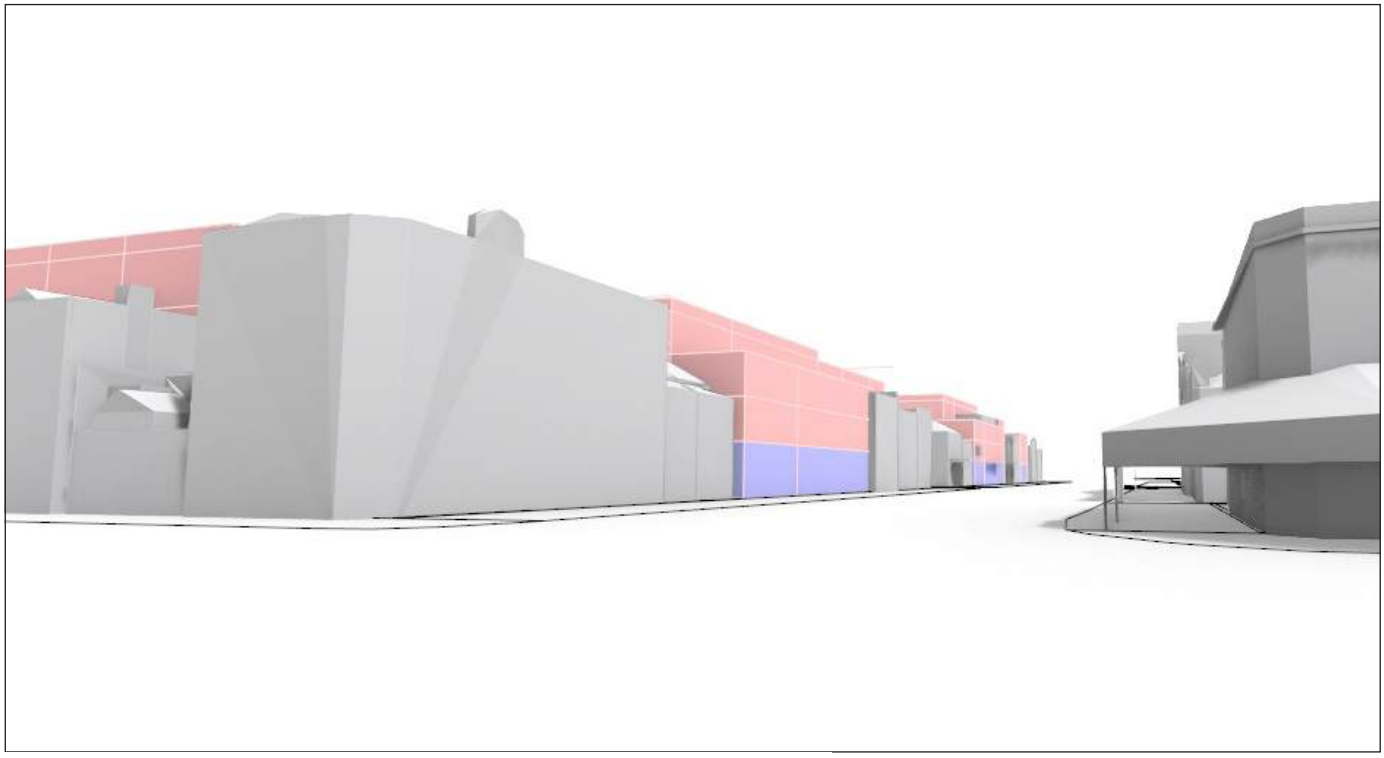
Floor Area Ratio (FAR):

Precinct boundary
Heritage
FAR 3.5:1 (mandatory)
FAR 4.0:1 (mandatory)
FAR 4.5:1 (mandatory)
FAR 5.0:1 (mandatory)
FAR 5.5:1 (mandatory)
Envelope control

Figure 35. Map of the areas in the Clarendon Street Precinct covered by envelope controls and Floor Area Ratios (FARs).

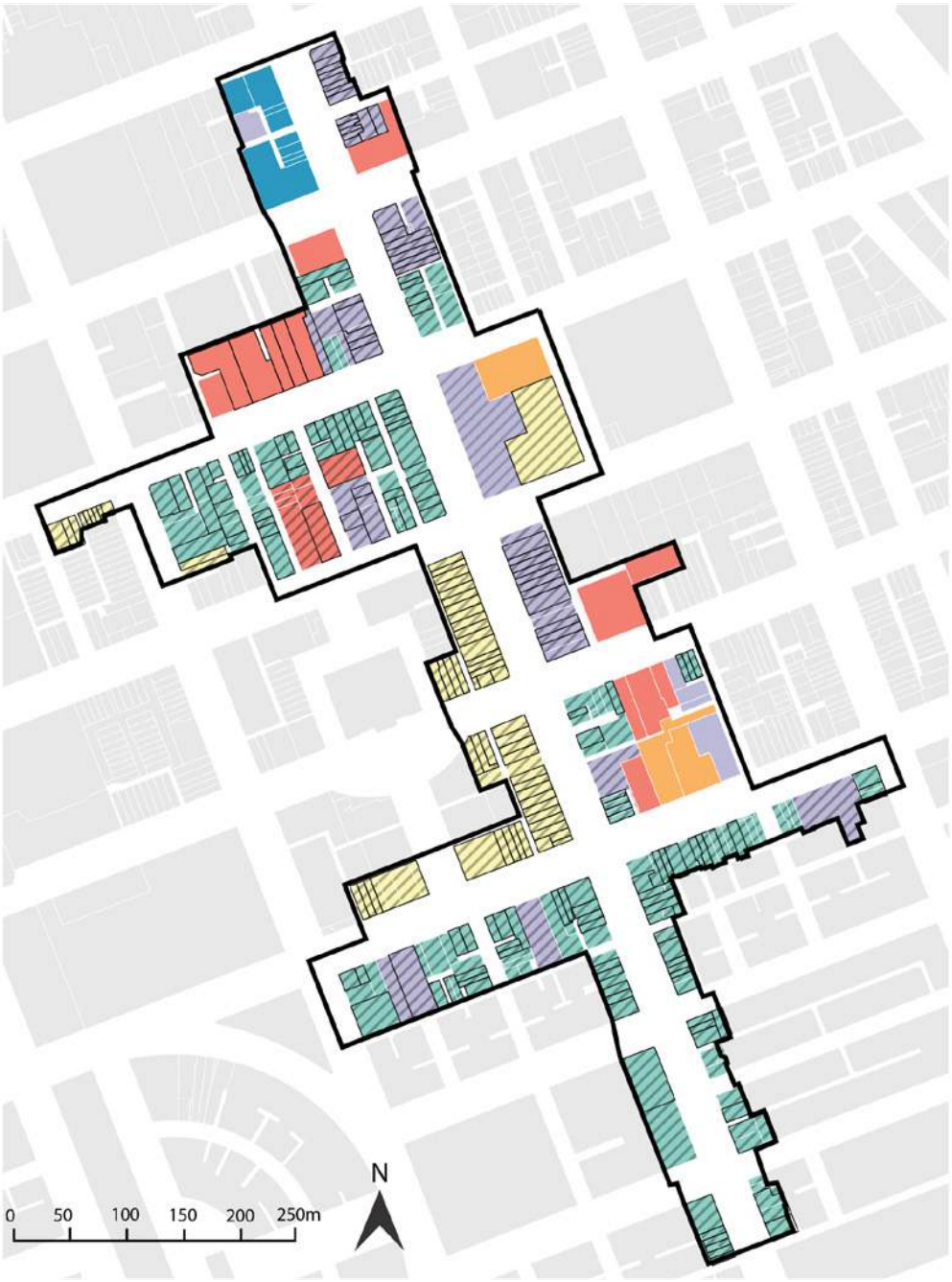
Building heights

Mandatory maximum building heights of 3 to 5 storeys are proposed for properties covered by an envelope control in response to the extent of heritage buildings and finer grain lot sizes within this area (refer to Figure 36). Preferred maximum building heights of 5 to 8 storeys are proposed for the remaining properties covered by a Floor Area Ratio control. There is a relatively higher proportion of sites in this precinct with lower building heights as the majority of properties are within a heritage overlay, on smaller lots or have an interface with low rise residential areas to the south of Park Street. Taller building heights are generally proposed for sites with larger lots sizes that primarily have frontages to the wider main streets or deeper lots that can provide appropriate upper level setbacks.



Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 33. Looking west along Park Street from the north-east corner of Park and Clarendon Streets



Precinct boundary

Heritage

Building Heights:

11.6m / 3 storeys (mandatory)

14.8m / 4 storeys (mandatory)

18m / 5 storeys (preferred)

18m / 5 storeys (mandatory)

21.2m / 6 storeys (preferred)

24.4m / 7 storeys (preferred)

27.6m / 8 storeys (preferred)

Figure 36. Map of building heights in the Clarendon Street Precinct.

Street wall heights

Mandatory street wall heights of 2 to 4 storeys are proposed for the majority of the precinct to maintain the street wall heights established by existing heritage buildings (refer to Figure 37). In the remainder of the precinct, preferred street wall heights of 3 to 4 storeys are proposed. Street wall heights have been established in response to the street hierarchy, existing heritage buildings, and to manage transitions at the interface with low rise residential areas to the south of Park Street.

Setbacks

For areas of the precinct covered by only an envelope control, a mandatory setback of 6 metres is proposed to all upper levels on 30 metre wide streets. Where these properties front other streets and laneways, a discretionary setback of 3 metres in proposed.

For areas of the precinct covered by a Floor Area Ratio control, a discretionary setback of 3-5 metres is proposed above the street wall to provide design flexibility in responding to street widths and protection of sunlight to footpaths.

The only exception to this is 205 Clarendon Street, which is covered by a Floor Area Ratio control but is proposed to have a mandatory setback of 6 metres to upper levels fronting Clarendon Street. This allows a continuation of the continuous heritage streetscape along the east side of Clarendon Street from Market Street to Coventry Street. A discretionary setback of 3-5 metres is proposed for other street frontages of this property.

Overshadowing

Development must not overshadow the southern footpath of the following streets between 10 am and 2 pm on the spring equinox (22 September):

- Market Street
- York Street
- Coventry Street
- Dorcas Street
- Bank Street
- Park Street

Interfaces

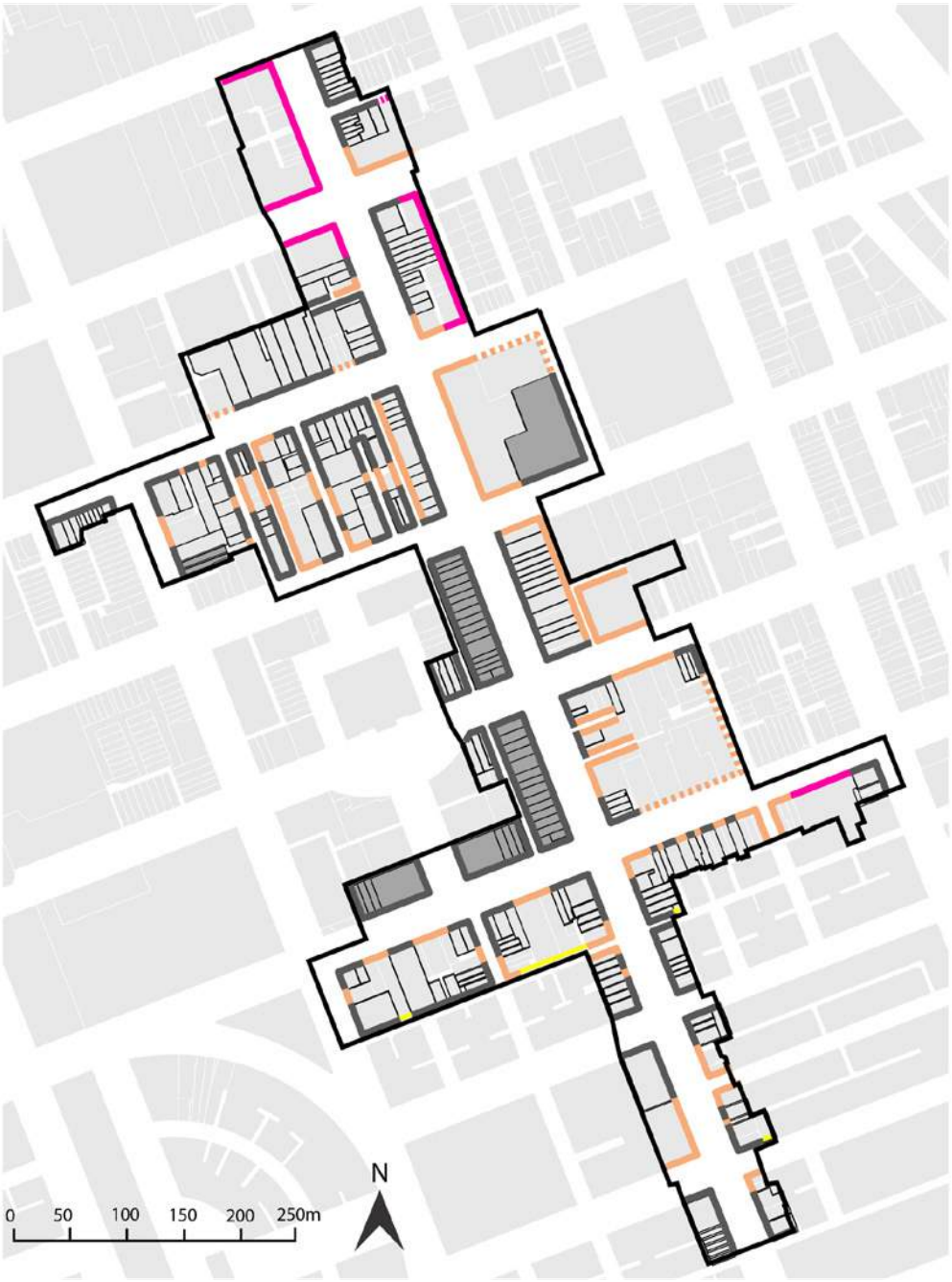
The proposed density and built form controls for the precinct will enable new development to respond positively to important interfaces in the area including:

- Ensuring that new development does not overwhelm the St Luke's Anglican Church complex on Dorcas Street.
- Providing an appropriate scale of development and transition to low-rise residential properties that interface with properties at the southern end of the precinct on Park Street, Dow Street and Clarendon Street.

Active frontages

The design of all frontages, including active frontages should be carefully considered with a focus on the following areas:

- York Street
- Coventry Street
- Clarendon Street



Street Wall Heights:

- Precinct boundary
- Heritage
- VHR properties
- 7.2m / 2 storeys (mandatory)
- 11.6m / 3 storeys (preferred)
- 11.6m / 3 storeys (mandatory)
- 14.8m / 4 storeys (preferred)
- 14.8m / 4 storeys (mandatory)
- Retain existing street wall (mandatory)

Figure 37. Map of street wall heights in the Clarendon Street Precinct.

Market Precinct

The Market Precinct covers an area of approximately 9.3 hectares and is shown in Figure 38. It includes the South Melbourne Market and many of the larger lots in the Commercial 1 Zone that front Market Street, York Street, Coventry Street and Cecil, as well as several smaller streets and laneways. The precinct also includes several properties at the northern end of Clarendon Street that provide a transition from the interface with the West Gate Freeway.

Image 34. Contemporary multi-storey commercial development on York Street.

Image 35. Rear view of contemporary mixed-use development on 85 Market Street.

Character statement

- The precinct contains a mix of heritage factory and warehouse buildings, many of which have been redeveloped, as well as corner hotels and terrace housing.
- With larger lot sizes and significant building development from the mid-1970s to today, the commercial character of this precinct is substantially different from the fine grain heritage character of the Clarendon Street Precinct.
- Following renewal and reinvigoration, the South Melbourne Market continues to operate as a thriving destination for the local community and a regionally significant attraction. The upgraded market will be a key driver for further development as the precinct evolves into a vibrant mixed-use area.
- A more varied built from character emerges as development responds to the different conditions in this precinct including the South Melbourne Market, isolated heritage buildings, irregular lot sizes and transition to the low-rise heritage character of Clarendon Street.
- New development will improve the existing ground floor character of the precinct, particularly along York Street, by providing small and medium tenancies with active frontages that support and enhance the public realm and pedestrian experience.
- The public realm supports an active pedestrian environment with York Street connecting the market with Clarendon Street in the east and the Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area to the west.

Figure 38. Map showing the Market Precinct.

Image 36. BEFORE - York Street looking east towards Clarendon Street from the intersection of Cecil Street.

Image 37. AFTER - Visualisation demonstrating the same view along York Street representing indicative built form.

Proposed built form controls

Floor area ratio

A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) range of 3.5:1 up to 6:1 is proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 39). FARs are proposed to be mandatory maximums and have been tailored to reflect the emerging and future precinct character. Mid to higher FARs are proposed for properties that have larger lot sizes and/or frontages to wide main streets. Lower FARs are proposed for properties with small lot sizes with several being heritage buildings.

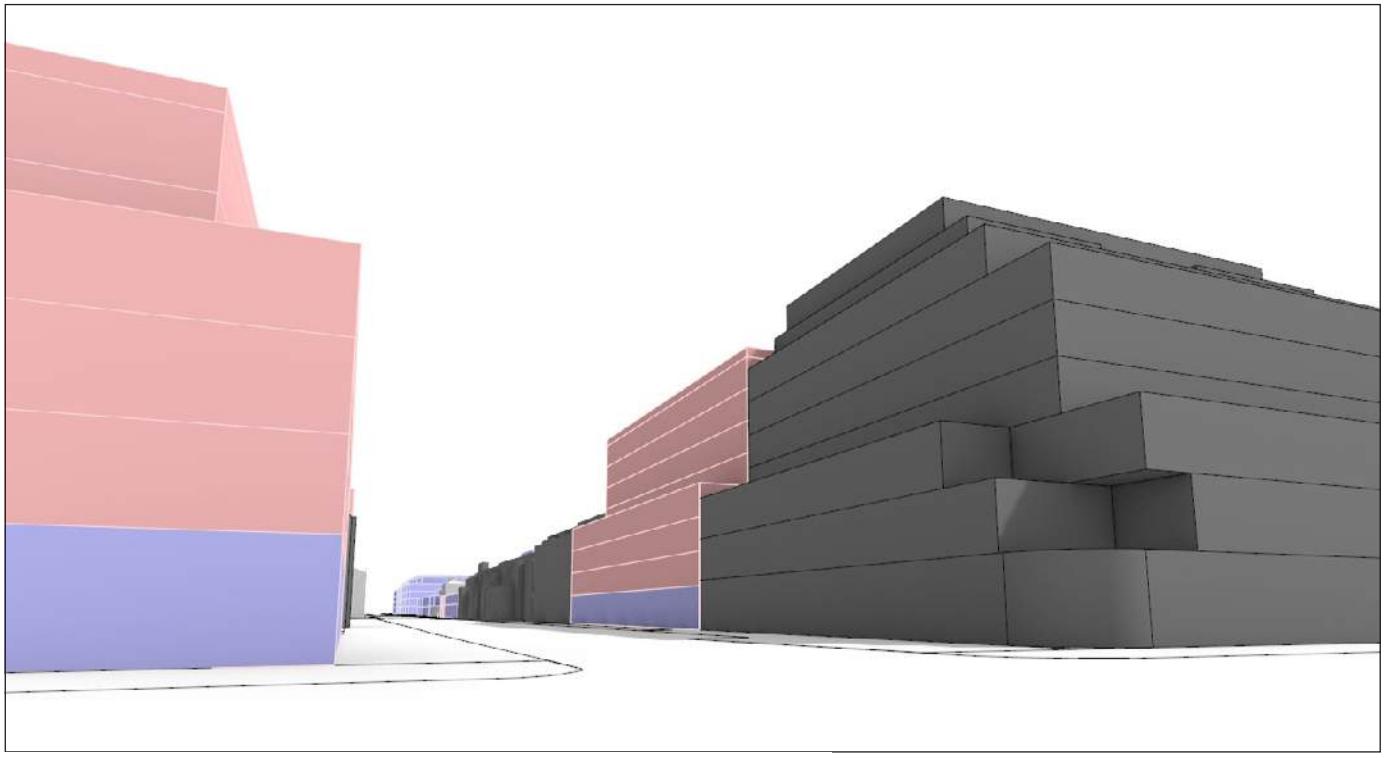
Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 38. Looking east along the south side of York Street from the north-west corner of York and Clarendon Streets.

Figure 39. Map of Floor Area Ratios (FARs) in the Market Precinct.

Building heights

Preferred maximum building heights of 4 to 8 storeys are proposed for the precinct with some opportunities for development up to 12 storeys on larger sites where there is the potential for multiple buildings of different scale (refer to Figure 40). There is a relatively higher proportion of sites in this precinct with taller building heights as the majority of properties have larger lot sizes and frontages to wide main streets. Properties with lower building heights reflect the small lot sizes with several being heritage buildings, as well as an island site located centrally within a block.



Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 39. Looking west along the north side of York Street from the south-east corner of York and Clarendon Streets.

Precinct boundary

Heritage

Building Heights:

- 14.8m / 4 storeys (preferred)
- 18m / 5 storey (preferred)
- 21.2m / 6 storeys (preferred)
- 27.6m / 8 storeys (preferred)
- 27.6m - 40.4m / 8-12 storeys (preferred)

Figure 40. Map of building heights in the Market Precinct.

Street wall heights

Preferred street wall heights of 3 to 5 storeys are proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 41). Street wall heights have been established in response to the street hierarchy and existing heritage buildings.

Setbacks

A discretionary setback of 3-5 metres is proposed above the street wall to provide design flexibility in responding to street widths and protection of sunlight to footpaths.

Overshadowing

Development must not overshadow the southern footpath of the following streets between 10 am and 2 pm on the spring equinox (22 September):

- Market Street
- York Street to the east of Cecil Street
- Coventry Street

Development must not overshadow the southern footpath of the following streets between 10 am and 2 pm on the winter solstice (22 June).

- York Street from the western boundary of South Melbourne Market to Cecil Street

Interfaces

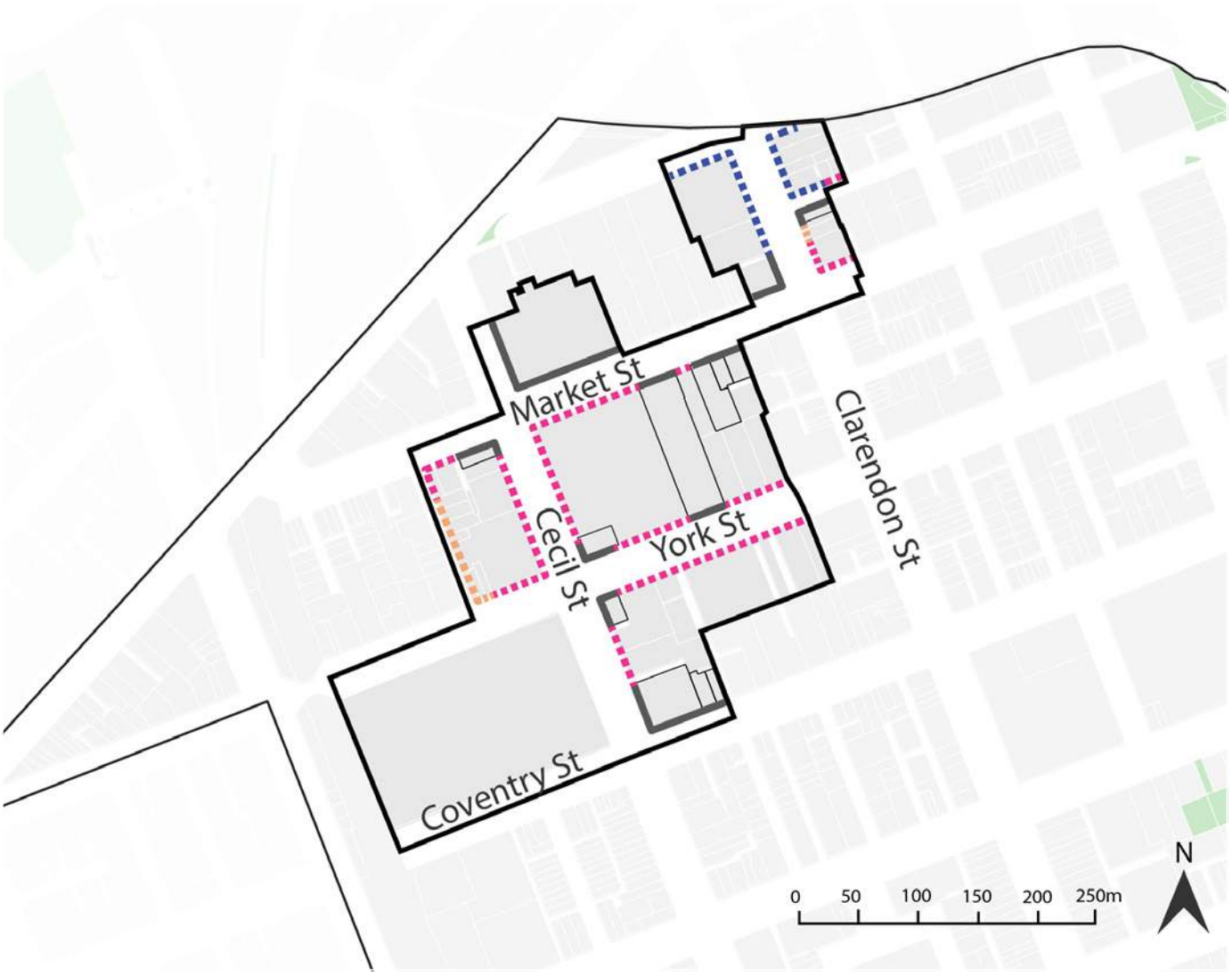
The proposed density and built form controls for the precinct will enable new development to respond positively to important interfaces in the area including:

- Providing an appropriate scale of development on the northern side of York Street to protect sunlight to the southern footpath along the northern boundary of the South Melbourne Market.

Active frontages

The design of all frontages, including active frontages should be carefully considered with a focus on the following areas:

- York Street
- Coventry Street
- Clarendon Street (north of Market Street)
- Cecil Street (between Market Street and Coventry Street)



Precinct boundary

Heritage

Street Wall Heights:

11.6m / 3 storeys (preferred)

14.8m / 4 storeys (preferred)

18m / 5 storeys (preferred)

Retain existing street wall (mandatory)

Figure 41. Map of street wall heights in the Market Precinct.

Enterprise Precinct East

The Enterprise Precinct East covers an area of approximately 18.2 hectares and is shown in Figure 42. It primarily supports employment uses located between the West Gate Freeway in the north and Bank Street in the south. The eastern edge of this area interfaces with a strip of properties in the Mixed Use Zone that with an interface to Kings Way. The western boundary follows Moray Street and Coventry Street, as well as having an interface to properties fronting Clarendon Street. There are several smaller streets and laneways across the precinct.

Image 40. Contemporary multi-storey commercial development on Clarke Street.

Image 41. Contemporary multi-storey commercial development on Eastern Road.

Character statement

- Part of South Melbourne's enterprise precinct and a regionally significant industrial area, Enterprise Precinct East continues to support employment activity with a focus on creative industries.
- With wide streets, few heritage buildings, and more recent development from the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, the precinct character will evolve through the development of well-designed contemporary workplaces.
- New development comprises simple and legible building forms. Efficient floor plates and higher street walls enable design outcomes that avoid multiple upper-level setbacks.
- Taller development along Kings Way is integrated into the precinct with frontages and building entries oriented towards the precinct or addressing key east-west streets that provide connections from South Melbourne to the eastern side of Kings Way.
- Maintaining the diversity of lot sizes provides variation in the commercial floor space offer, supporting start-ups, creative industries, and established businesses.
- With short block lengths and a highly permeable street network, the ground floor of new development comprises small to medium sized tenancies with active frontages that support and enhance the public realm and pedestrian experience.

Figure 42. Map showing the Enterprise Precinct East.

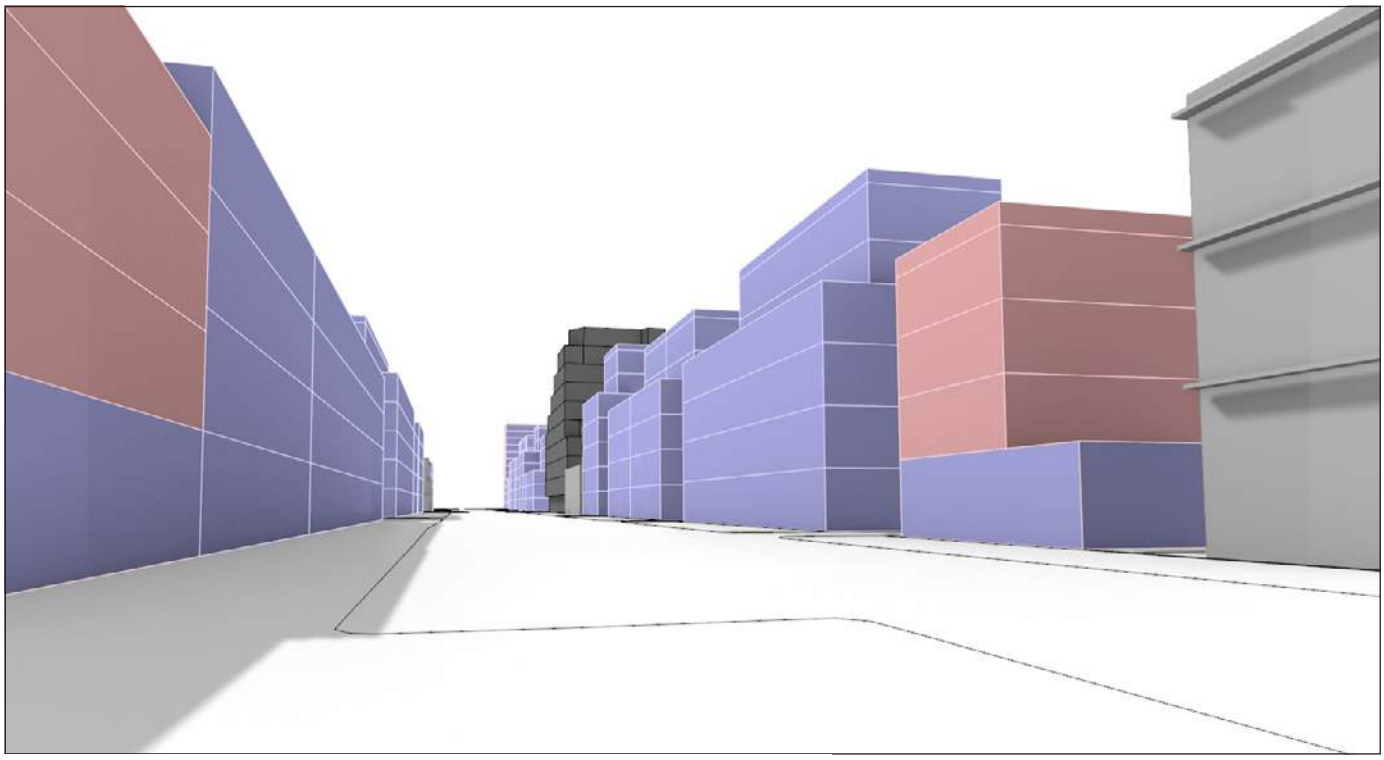
Image 42. BEFORE - Market Street looking east towards Moray Street at the intersection of Clarke Street.

Image 43. AFTER - Visualisation demonstrating the same view along Market Street representing indicative built form.

Proposed built form controls

Floor area ratio

A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) range of 4:1 up to 7:1 is proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 43). FARs are proposed to be mandatory maximums and have been tailored to reflect the emerging and future precinct character. The FARs recognise the diversity of streets, lot sizes and interfaces by providing for predominantly medium density development. Higher FARs are generally located on sites with an interface to Kings Way with lower FARs on sites to the west of Moray Street where there is a finer grain of smaller sites and narrower streets.



Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 44. Looking east along York Street from the north-east corner of York and Clarendon Streets.

Figure 43. Map of Floor Area Ratios (FARs) in the Enterprise Precinct East.

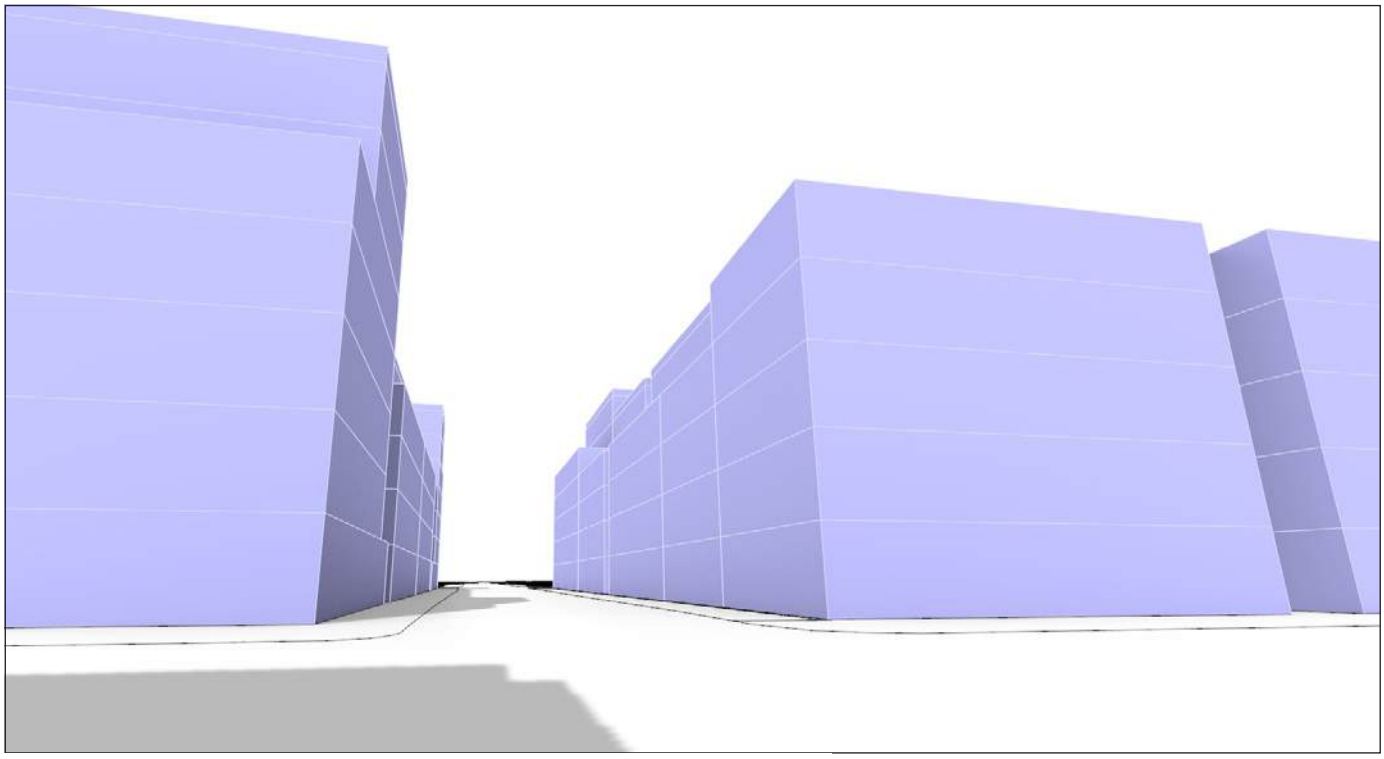
Building heights

Preferred maximum building heights of 5 to 12 storeys are proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 44). Taller building heights are located along the interface with Kings Way and on larger land parcels. The majority of sites have a preferred maximum building height of 6 or 7 storeys. Several properties to the north of Coventry Street have a preferred maximum building height of 5 storeys in response to smaller lot sizes, narrow streets, heritage properties and shared rear boundaries. Similar conditions are found in other properties with a preferred maximum building height of 5 storeys located on the northern side of Bank Street and at the southern end of Moray Street.

Several properties along Kings Way are in the Mixed Use Zone which allows for both residential and non-residential development. An entirely commercial development may result in taller building height compared to a residential development due to the difference in floor-to-floor heights for commercial and residential buildings.

FLOOD PRONE AREAS

For sites with the Special Building Overlay (SBO) the preferred maximum building height can be increased to allow for the minimum flood protection level nominated by the floodplain management authority.



Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 45. Looking south along Tope Street from the north-east corner of Tope and Coventry Streets.

Figure 44. Map of building heights in the Enterprise Precinct East.

Street wall heights

Street wall heights have been established in response to the street hierarchy and the limited number of heritage buildings within the precinct.

Discretionary street wall heights of 3 storeys (12 metres) to 5 storeys (20 metres) are proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 45). Variations in street wall height may be appropriate in order to respond to site specific conditions, for example:

- Reducing the street wall height to align with an adjoining heritage building.
- Increasing the street wall height to mark corners.

Setbacks

A discretionary setback of 3-5 metres is proposed above the street wall to provide design flexibility in responding to street widths and protection of sunlight to footpaths.

Overshadowing

Development must not overshadow the southern footpath of the following streets between 10 am and 2 pm on the spring equinox (22 September):

- Market Street
- York Street
- Coventry Street
- Dorcas Street
- Bank Street

Street wall heights and setbacks to development fronting Clarke Street could be tailored to provide sunlight access to either part or all of the street between 11 am and 3 pm on 21 June based on the opportunity for a potential new linear public open space.

Interfaces

The proposed density and built form controls for the precinct will enable new development to respond positively to important interfaces in the area including:

- Providing for taller development along Kings Way.
- Providing sunlight protection to all, or the majority of, Dorcas Street Reserve at the winter solstice (22 June) from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm.
- Providing lower street wall heights as a transition to the low-rise residential properties on the south side of Bank Street.

Active frontages

The design of all frontages, including active frontages should be carefully considered with a focus on the following areas:

- York Street to the west of Moray Street
- Coventry Street to the west of Moray Street
- Clarke Street from Chessell to York Street

Precinct boundary

Heritage

Street Wall Heights:

13.2m / 3 storeys (preferred)

17.2m / 4 storeys (preferred)

21.2m / 5 storeys (preferred)

Retain existing street wall (mandatory)

Figure 45. Map of street wall heights in the Enterprise Precinct East.

Enterprise Precinct West

The Enterprise Precinct West covers an area of approximately 7.4 hectares and is shown in Figure 48. It supports employment uses located along City Road and at the interface with the West Gate Freeway. Other sites in the precinct have frontages to Ballantyne Street, Market Street, York Street and Cecil Street, as well as several smaller streets and laneways. A small number of properties are directly opposite the South Melbourne Market on the north side of York Street.

Image 46. Hotel South Melbourne at the corner of Clarendon Street and Market Street with contemporary development in the background.

Image 47. Heritage factory building on Ballantyne Street.

Character statement

- Part of South Melbourne's enterprise precinct, a regionally significant industrial area, and comprising a small pocket of industrially zoned land, Enterprise Precinct West continues to support diverse employment activity.
- The precinct has a more industrial feel and contains a mix of heritage factory and warehouse buildings, and terrace housing, with more recent development from the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.
- A more varied built from character emerges as development responds to the different conditions in this precinct including the remaining heritage buildings, interfaces to City Road, West Gate Freeway and South Melbourne Market, or the triangular blocks and irregular lots.
- New development on non-heritage sites comprises simple and legible building forms.
- Efficient floor plates and higher street walls enable design outcomes that avoid multiple upper-level setbacks.
- Sensitive redevelopment of heritage buildings in the precinct ensures that buildings retain their three dimensional form and that key architectural elements remain clearly legible.
- New development will improve the existing ground floor character of the precinct, particularly along York Street, by providing small and medium tenancies with active frontages that support and enhance the public realm and pedestrian experience.
- The public realm supports an active pedestrian environment with improved and new connections to the Montague Precinct in Fishermans Bend and to South Melbourne Market.

Figure 46. Map showing the Enterprise Precinct West.

Proposed built form controls

Floor area ratio

A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) range of 3.5:1 up to 6.0:1 is proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 47). FARs are proposed to be mandatory maximums and have been tailored to reflect the emerging and future precinct character. While street widths within the precinct are generally consistent, the FARs recognise the diversity of lot sizes and interfaces while providing for predominantly medium density development. Higher FARs are generally located on sites with an interface to City Road, the West Gate Freeway, Ballantyne Street and Market Street. Lower FARs are generally located on sites with a frontage to the north side of York Street which enables a transition to low-rise residential properties and the South Melbourne Market on the southern side of the street.

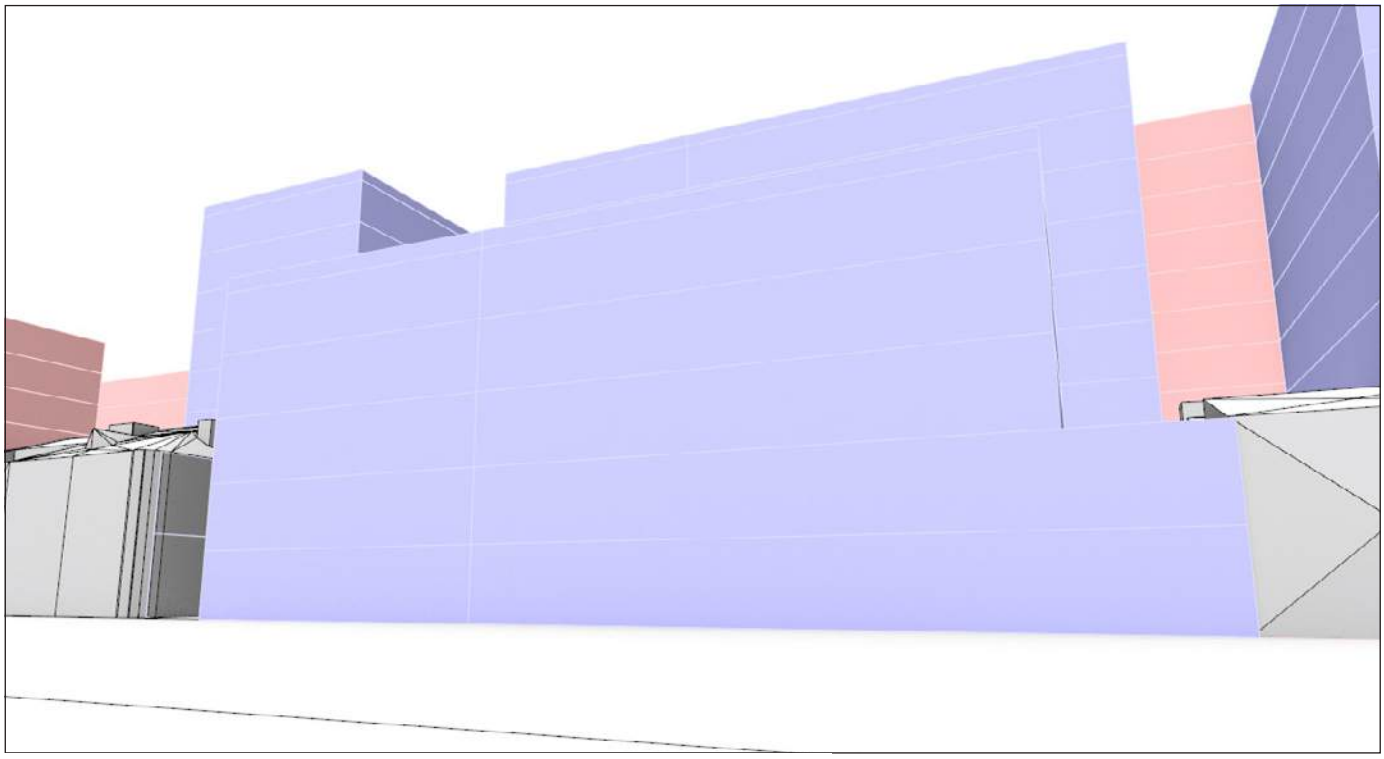
Figure 47. Map of Floor Area Ratios (FARs) in the Enterprise Precinct West.

Building heights

Preferred maximum building heights of 5 to 7 storeys are proposed for the precinct with some opportunities for development up to 10 storeys where a taller building with increased setbacks would enable greater retention of the front elements of industrial heritage buildings (refer to Figure 48). Taller building heights are located on Ballantyne Street, Market Street and City Road in response to the larger lot sizes and lack of sensitive interfaces. Several properties to the north of South Melbourne Market have a preferred maximum building height of 5 storeys in response to smaller lot sizes, narrow streets, and to manage overshadowing of York Street and potential future open space on the market site.

FLOOD PRONE AREAS

For sites with the Special Building Overlay (SBO) the preferred maximum building height can be increased to allow for the minimum flood protection level nominated by the floodplain management authority.



Residential development (proposed built form controls)
Non-residential development (proposed built form controls)
Existing heritage building
Recent development activity

Image 48. Looking east along the south side of Ballantyne Street from the north side of Ballantyne Street.

Figure 48. Map of building heights in the Enterprise Precinct West.

Street wall heights

Preferred street wall heights of 3 to 5 storeys are proposed for the precinct (refer to Figure 49). Street wall heights have been established in response to the street hierarchy and interfaces.

Setbacks

A discretionary setback of 3-5 metres is proposed above the street wall to provide design flexibility in responding to street widths and protection of sunlight to footpaths. Additional setbacks may be required for properties on the north side of York Street to provide sunlight protection to the southern footpath.

Overshadowing

Development must not overshadow the southern footpath of the following streets between 10 am and 2 pm on the spring equinox (22 September):

- Market Street
- York Street from City Road to the western boundary of South Melbourne Market

Development must not overshadow the southern footpath of the following streets between 10 am and 2 pm on the winter solstice (22 June).

- York Street from the western boundary of South Melbourne Market to Cecil Street

Interfaces

The proposed density and built form controls for the precinct will enable new development to respond positively to important interfaces in the area including:

- Providing for taller development along City Road and at the interface to the West Gate Freeway.
- Providing an appropriate scale of development on the northern side of York Street to protect sunlight to the southern footpath along the northern boundary of the South Melbourne Market.
- Providing an appropriate scale of development and transition on the northern side of York Street (west of Ferrars Street) to the low-rise residential properties on the south side of the street.

Active frontages

The design of all frontages, including active frontages should be carefully considered with a focus on the following areas:

- York Street to the east of Ferrars Street.

Precinct boundary

Heritage

Street Wall Heights:

13.2m / 3 storeys (preferred)

17.2m / 4 storeys (preferred)

21.2m / 5 storeys (preferred)

Retain existing street wall (mandatory)

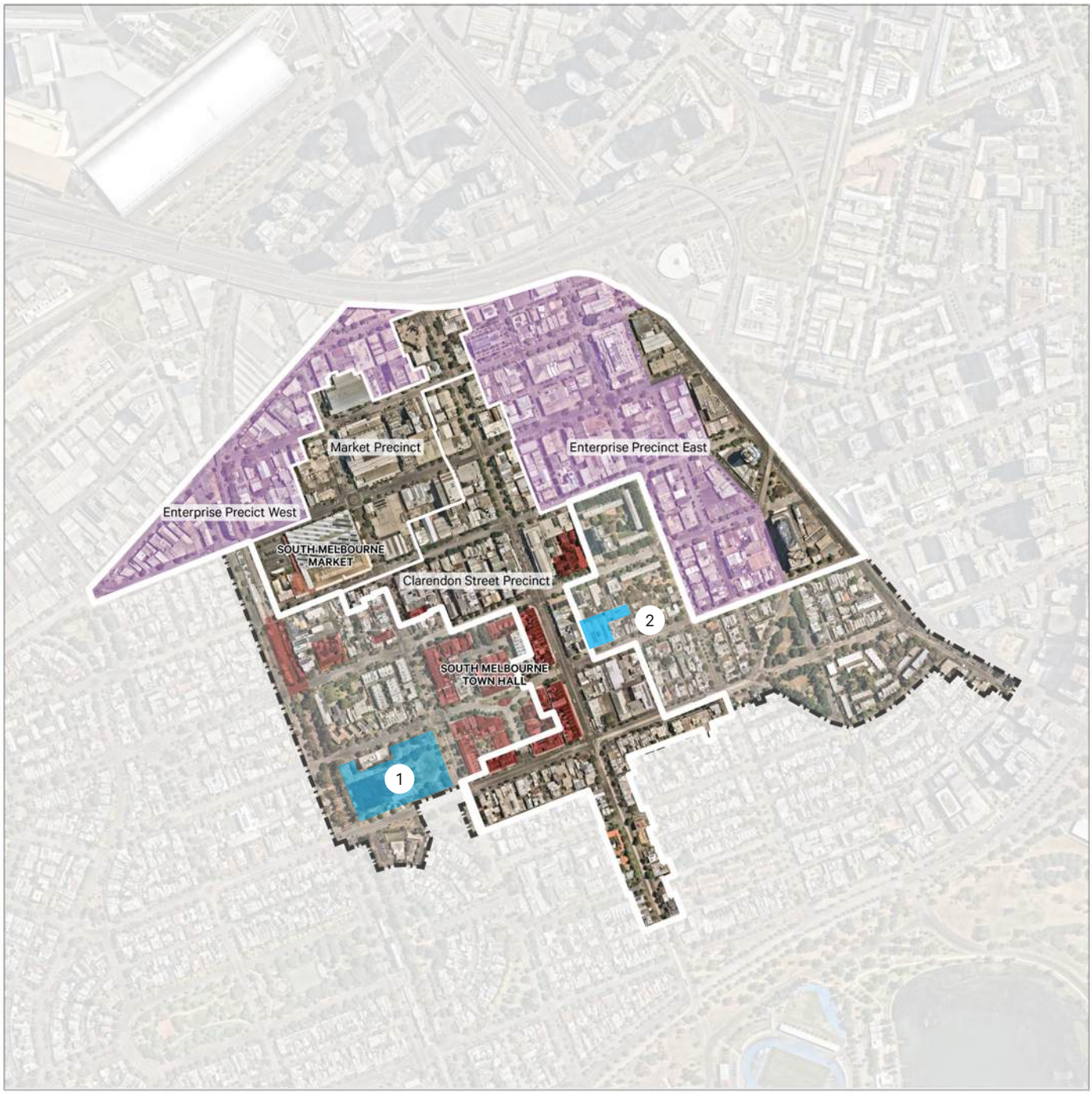
Figure 49. Map of street wall heights in the Enterprise Precinct West.

Place specific principles

The following section provides high level principles to guide future built form outcomes for the following places shown on the map opposite:

1. Park Towers Estate
2. Melbourne Butter Supply Factory

While these sites fall outside of the precincts, they have been identified as important places with the South Melbourne Structure Plan study area that warrant inclusion within this Review.



STUDY AREA

South Melbourne Structure Plan (SMSP) Study Area

Precincts that form the study area of the South Melbourne Built Form Review

VHR listed properties

Non-residential area

0 50 100 200

Figure 50. Map showing the location of the Park Towers Estate (1) and the Melbourne Butter Supply Factory (2).

Park Towers Estate

The Park Towers Estate was designed by Roy Prentice and opened in 1970, and is owned and managed by the Victorian Government. Council endorsed a series of guiding principles in October 2022 to provide parameters for Council officer input into Victorian Government public housing projects. These principles were reviewed to inform our high level principles to guide future built form outcomes for the Park Towers Estate.

Existing conditions

SITE AREA

Park Towers estate covers an area of approximately 1.48 hectares (14,780 sqm). The South Melbourne Exchange located on the northern boundary of the site covers an area of approximately 0.15 hectares (1,539 sqm).

OPEN SPACE

The existing Park Towers Reserve at the east of the estate, which includes the Bank Street Playground, occupies an area of approximately 0.6 hectares (6,000 sqm).

HOUSING TOWER

A typical floor plate of the existing tower is approximately 1,030 sqm. At 31 storeys, this equates to a Gross Floor Area of approximately 31,930 sqm. This is equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of 2.2:1. If the 6,000 sqm of open space area to the east of the site are excluded from the calculation, the Floor Area Ratio is 3.6:1.

HERITAGE

The Park Towers Estate is a significant heritage property that is within the Emerald Hill Residential Precinct Heritage Overlay (HO440). The Port Phillip Heritage Review citation notes that:

> Historically, Park Towers is of significance as the most celebrated block of high-rise flats built by the Housing Commission of Victoria during its 1960s slum clearance regime. As one of the last new tower estates to be built before the programme was abandoned in the early 1970s, Park Towers was not only their most ambitious and tallest tower, but also the most architecturally distinguished example, and the one that generated the most publicity. At the time of its completion, it was one of the tallest apartment blocks in Australia, and also one of the tallest buildings in Melbourne. It attracted considerable interest throughout the architectural and construction community in Australia and overseas.

Future opportunities

URBAN STRUCTURE

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

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

There is an opportunity to improve the reserve at the east of the estate including increased public access. The City of Port Phillip Public Space Strategy 2022 - 2023 includes the following action:

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

The accompanying technical report notes that a larger open space would have potential to provide a greater diversity of unstructured recreational facilities for everyone including residents of Park Towers.

Based on the open space hierarchies in the technical report, a local public open space is:

- 0.26 hectares (2,600 sqm) to 0.99 hectares (9,900 sqm) in size.
- Located within 300 metres safe and easy walking catchment of the community.
- Located within easy safe walking distance of the local community and large enough to provide comfortably for two to three activities in the public open space - for example, a medium play area and open grassed area and picnic facility.

Delivering a large open space would require 18-67% of the total site area. The existing 0.6 hectare open space occupies approximately 40% of the site area.

BUILT FORM

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

- There are no sensitive interfaces within the surrounding context to this portion of the site.

- As the western site boundary is approximately 100 m in length, multiple buildings should be delivered to provide an appropriate grain and scale of development.
- The buildings would be orientated north-south presenting a slender elevation to both Bank Street and Park Street.
- Building separation of approximately 15-18 m could be achieved between the new development and the existing tower.
- Development up to 8 storeys (26.4 m) at the southern end would not overshadow the southern footpath of Park Street at the spring equinox (22 September).
- The northern end could support a taller tower form.
- Separation between buildings along the western boundary as well as the built form articulation of each building will be crucial in maintaining outlook for dwellings on the western side of the existing tower.
- Current vehicle access to the existing surface car parking could continue to be utilised or an alternative entrance could be provided from Park Street.

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

- Any built form should be located to the south of the site to protect sunlight to the northern portion of the open space.
- A development along the southern boundary up to five storeys (16.8 m) comprising one storey of non-residential and four storeys of residential that is setback 6 metres from the property boundary to Park Street would not overshadow Howe Crescent Reserve between 10 am and 2 pm on the winter solstice (22 June).
- Any development should provide active frontages and passive surveillance to the open space.

Opportunities to increase activation to the ground floor of the tower should be explored, either by retrofitting existing spaces or through additions which 'sleeve' the base of the tower.

Melbourne Butter Supply Factory (176 - 188 Bank Street)

Existing conditions

HERITAGE

The Melbourne Butter Supply Factory is a significant heritage property within the Emerald Hill Residential Precinct Heritage Overlay (HO440). HO440 extends to cover significant heritage properties immediately north, east and west of the site.

SITE AREA

The Melbourne Butter Supply Factory site is roughly L-shaped and covers approximately 2,580 sqm. The portion of the site covered by a Heritage Overlay (HO440) is approximately 1,980 sqm.

BUILT FORM

The main section of the building that fronts Bank Street is 3-storeys while the section of the building that fronts Claremont Place is 2-storeys.

ZONING

The parcel is within the Neighbourhood Residential Zone 2.

INTERFACES

The site has varied interface conditions. To the west, the site interfaces with the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) separated by Bank Place. Buildings at this interface include three double-storey Victorian shop-fronts, two with contemporary rear additions of 6 - 7 storeys. The site also interfaces with a heritage building - the Former ANZ Bank Building, which features a contemporary 7-storey tower addition at the rear of the site, closest to the Melbourne Butter Supply Factory.

To the north and east, the site has interfaces with buildings in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ2). Located to the northern interface is a church and associated buildings of 1 - 2 storeys, and a single-storey early learning centre. The eastern boundary directly interfaces with 1 - 2 storey heritage terrace residences.

At the north-east corner of the site, there is a direct interface with a five-storey apartment building within the General Residential Zone 1 (GRZ1) and an open space adventure playground within the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).

Future opportunities

Noting that the site sits with the NRZ2, future redevelopment of the site would require changes to the zoning requirements.

BUILT FORM

An adaptive re-use of the existing heritage buildings is strongly supported. Built form testing of this site that assumes retention of the existing buildings covered by the HO440 overlay indicates that:

- The site could support redevelopment of up to 6-storeys for either residential or commercial use.
- The heritage fabric of the Melbourne Butter Supply Factory could be maintained, with only internal alterations taking place. A 6-metre upper-level setback to Bank Street would ensure the heritage facade retains prominence along the streetscape.
- Setbacks to all other interfaces would be in accordance with those outlined on p. 57 of this report.
- Development up to 6 storeys (20 - 24m) at the southern end would not overshadow the southern footpath of Bank Street at the spring equinox (22 September).
- Separation between buildings along the north boundary, the west boundary to Bank Place and the south boundary to Claremont Place will be crucial in securing outlook for dwellings in these parts of the site.
- Consideration should be given to ensure the scale of future development provides an appropriate transition to the existing terrace houses on the south of Claremont Place to ensure the amenity of these dwellings is not impacted. This could be achieved by ensuring additional built form above the existing warehouse buildings abutting the northern side of Claremont Place is generally limited and transitions to taller built form as part of the primary buildings on the site fronting Bank Street.
- Current vehicle access to the existing surface car parking could continue to be utilised or an alternative entrance could be provided from Park Street.

FAR	4.0
BUILDING HEIGHT	6 storeys
STREET WALL HEIGHT	3 storeys
UPPER-LEVEL STREET SETBACK	6m

Other building separation and setback controls - see pages 57 - 60.

Table 2. Recommended controls for the Melbourne Butter Supply Factory site (176 - 188 Bank Street)

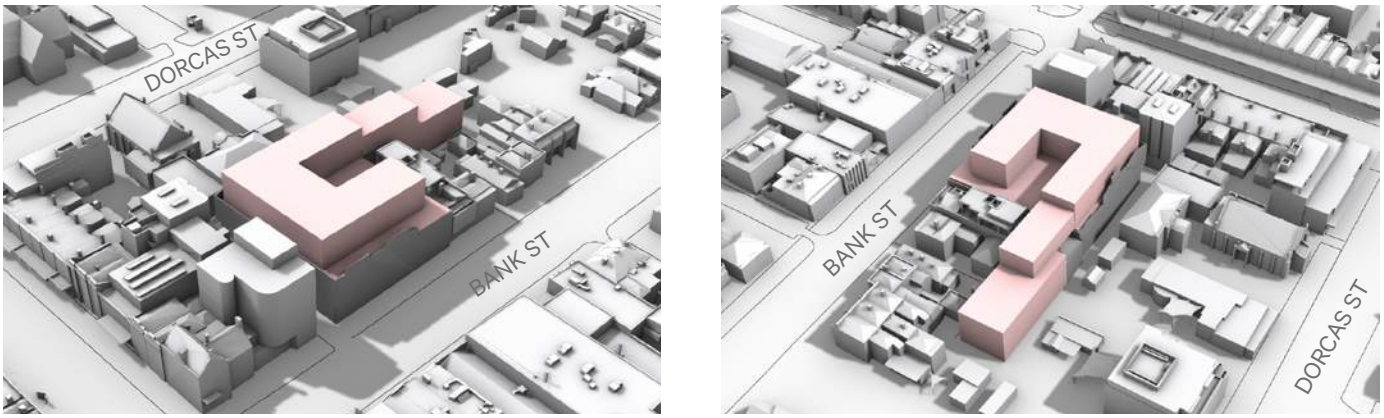


Figure 51. Indicative design modelling (pink) for a mixed-use development on the Melbourne Butter Supply Factory site that aligns with the recommended built form controls.

Figure 52. Melbourne Butter Supply Factory north-east view from the corner of Clarendon and Bank Streets. Existing context (left) and modelling demonstrating a building that aligns with the recommended built form controls.

Figure 53. Melbourne Butter Supply Factory north-west view from the corner of Bank and Palmer Streets. Existing context (left) and modelling demonstrating a building that aligns with the recommended built form controls.

Capacity testing

Based on the recommended built form outcomes, the study area can accommodate a significant amount of future residential and employment floor space.

To ensure that the new built form controls deliver good design outcomes while also accommodating future growth, it is important to test the development capacity that could be delivered by the proposed controls. This section provides a summary of the results, overview of the methodology, and the assumptions underpinning the method. Based on the results in the tables below, the study area has significant capacity to accommodate future growth, particularly for employment uses.

The figures shown below were generated in August 2023. Following consideration of submissions to the South Melbourne Structure Plan (Draft) January 2024, we identified the potential to increase the Floor Area Ratios (FARs) on sites within the study area that are proposed to have a FAR control. The majority of increases are between 0.5:1 and 1:1, with some sites being increased by 1.5:1. This calibration of the FARs will accommodate some additional floor space while continuing to deliver good design.

The figures listed under 'Summary of results: net additional floorspace' compare (or subtract) the existing built floorspace on sites that are likely to develop from the permissible floor area that would be possible under the proposed controls. This is to avoid double counting the floor area of an existing building as well as what would be allowed under the proposed controls.

Summary of results: sites likely to develop

PRECINCT	RESIDENTIAL		EMPLOYMENT	
	DWELLINGS	RESIDENTS	FLOOR AREA (SQM)	WORKERS
Clarendon Precinct	2,030	3,940	37,860	1,200
Market Precinct	550	1,070	12,820	400
Enterprise Precinct East	190	370	331,160	10,590
Enterprise Precinct West	20	50	153,450	4,910
TOTAL	2,790	5,430	535,290	17,100

Table 3. Summary of the capacity testing results by precinct for sites likely to develop.

Summary of results: net additional floorspace

PRECINCT	ADDITIONAL GFA (SQM)
Clarendon Precinct	132,530
Market Precinct	44,480
Enterprise Precinct East	233,670
Enterprise Precinct West	116,820
TOTAL	527,500

Table 4. Summary of the capacity testing results for net additional floorspace by precinct.

Methodology

The methodology to undertake the capacity testing comprises three main steps undertaken on a site-by-site basis.

Step 1. Identify sites that are likely to develop

Properties with any of the following attributes were removed from the capacity testing:

- Recent development activity (recently completed, under construction, approved permit)
- Public asset (e.g. community centre)
- Properties on the Victorian Heritage Register

All remaining sites were classified as likely to develop.

Step 2. Calculate the Gross Floor Area

For all sites classified as likely to develop, the Gross Floor Area (GFA) was calculated by applying the relevant Floor Area Ratio or envelope control to the site within each of the precincts.

Step 3. Calculate capacity

Using the set of assumptions described below, the number of dwellings and residents, as well as employment floorspace and number of workers was calculated based on the GFA for all sites classified as likely to develop (refer to Table 3).

The total net additional GFA for all sites classified as likely to develop was calculated by comparing the existing floorspace of these sties against the permissible floorspace under the proposed built form controls (refer to Table 4).

Assumptions

Capacity testing requires various assumptions to be made to inform the results. A summary of key assumptions is provided below.

Mixed-use residential development

GENERAL

Ratio of Net Floor Area (NFA) to Gross Floor Area (GFA) = 80%

MIX OF USES

Residential = 90/80/60% of floor area

Employment = 10/20/40% of floor area

DWELLINGS

Floor area = 80 sqm

Residents per dwelling = 1.9

EMPLOYMENT FLOORSPACE

Floorspace per worker = 25 sqm

Non-residential development

GENERAL

Ratio of Net Floor Area (NFA) to Gross Floor Area (GFA) = 80%

MIX OF USES

Employment = 100% of floor area

EMPLOYMENT FLOORSPACE

Floorspace per worker = 25 sqm

Summary of built form recommendations

The following maps provide an overview of the key built form recommendations across all four precincts. The maps show:

- Extent of envelope controls and Floor Area Ratios (FARs)
- Building heights
- Street wall heights

As these maps show the entire study area, heights are expressed in storeys as the height in metres will vary for an equivalent number of storeys depending on land uses within each precinct. Please refer to the individual precinct maps shown earlier for descriptions of heights in metres.

Figure 54. Map showing the areas covered by envelope controls and Floor Area Ratios (FARs) across the four precincts.

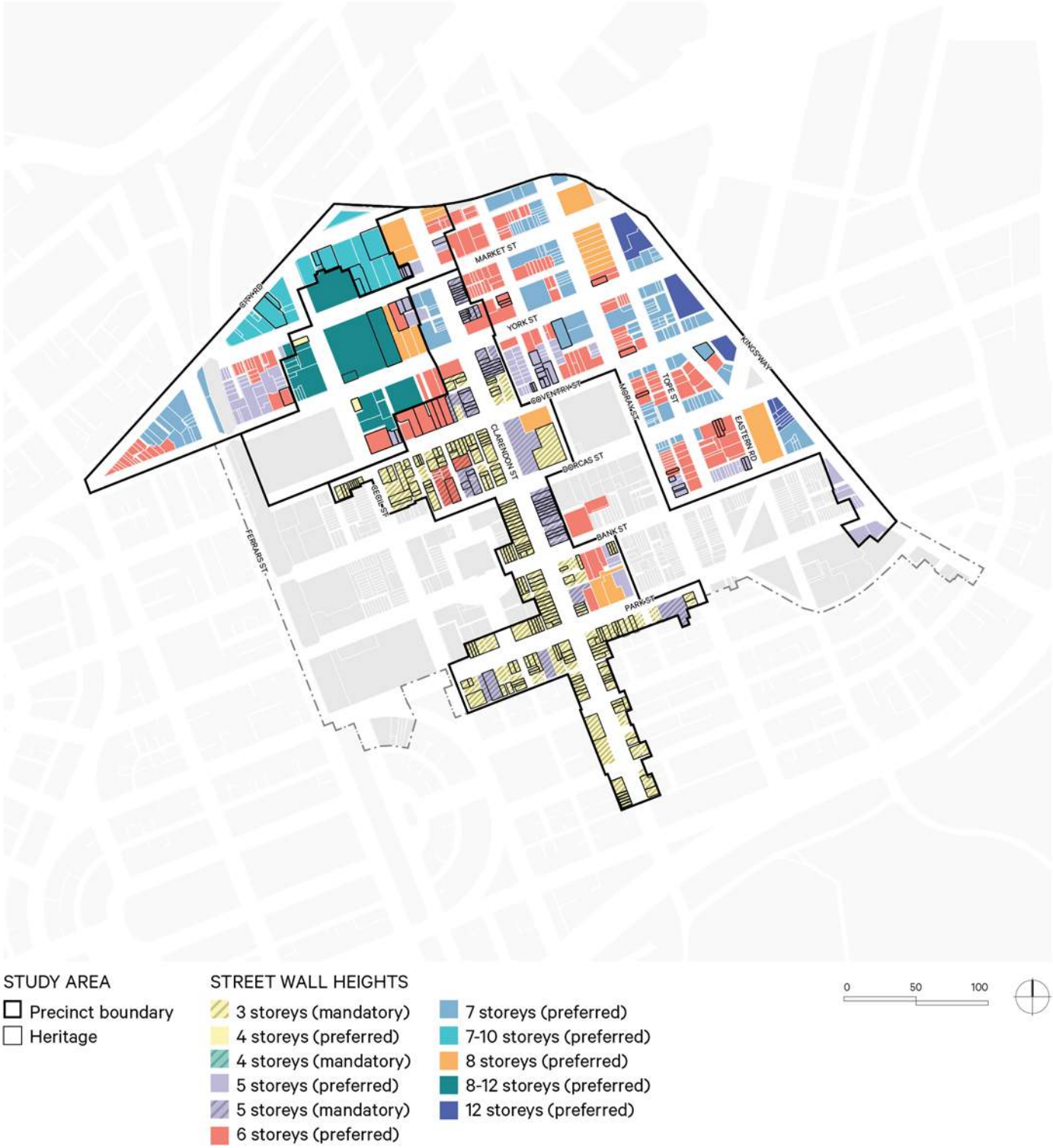
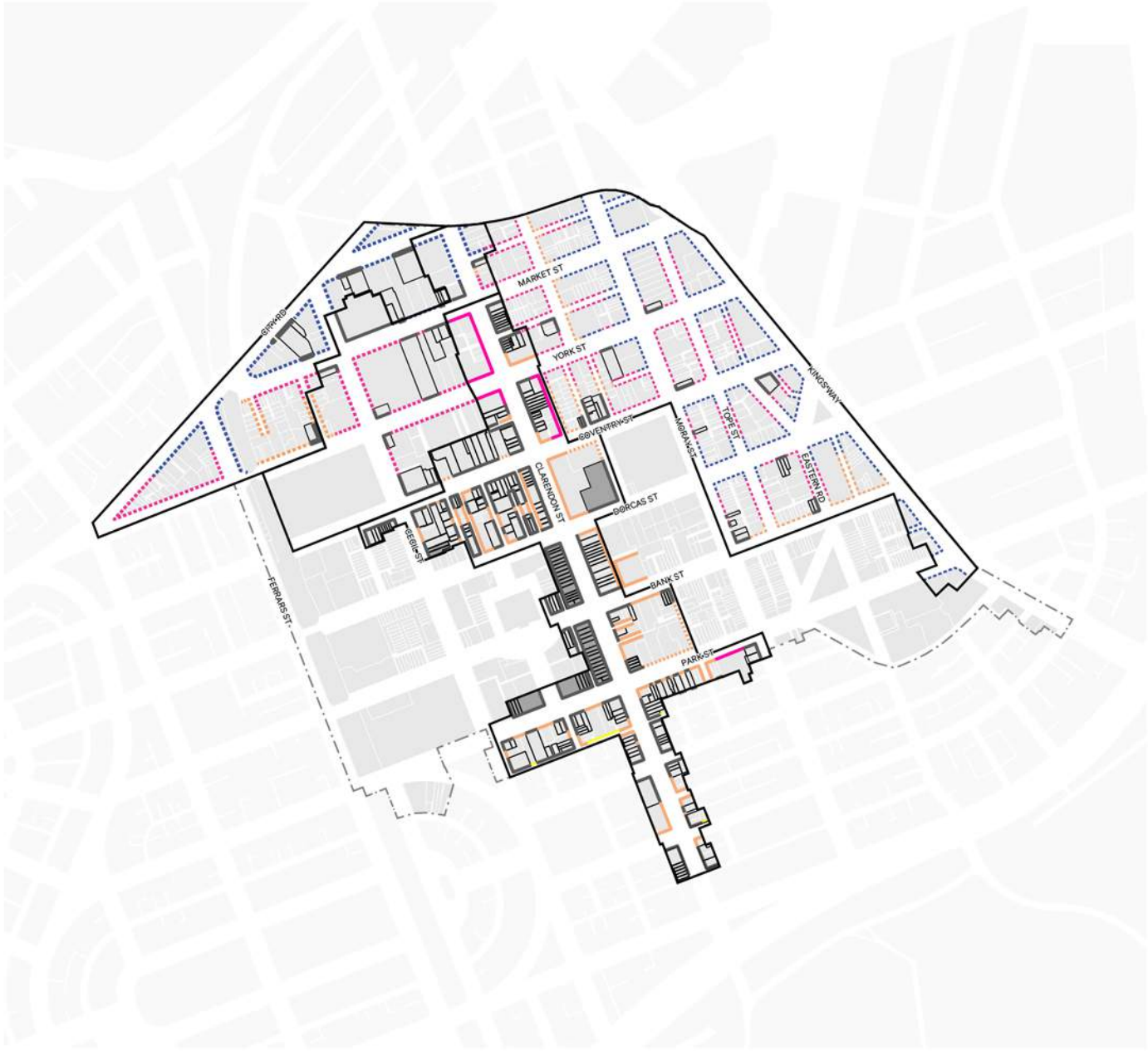


Figure 55. Map showing building heights across the four precincts.



STUDY AREA
- Precinct boundary
- Heritage
- VHR properties

STREET WALL HEIGHTS
- 2 storeys (mandatory)
- 3 storeys (preferred)
- 3 storeys (mandatory)
- 4 storeys (preferred)
- 4 storeys (mandatory)
- 5 storeys (preferred)

0 50 100

Figure 56. Map showing street wall heights across the four precincts.

Appendices

rokk
ebony
EMERALD HILL TERRACE EST. 1887
Rokk Man Barbers
ROKK MAN
645 8010
1P

Appendix A. Glossary of terms

Glossary of terms adapted from the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria unless otherwise noted.

ACTIVE FRONTAGE

Refers to street frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground and upper floors of buildings.

This quality is assisted where the front facade of buildings, including the main entrance, faces and opens towards the street. Ground floors may accommodate uses such as cafes, shops or restaurants. However, for a frontage to be active, it does not necessarily need to be a retail use, nor have continuous windows. A building's upper floor windows and balconies may also contribute to the level of active frontage. Active frontages can provide informal surveillance opportunities and often improve the vitality and safety of an area. The measures of active frontage may be graded from high to low activity.

ACTIVE USE

Active uses are uses that generate many visits, in particular pedestrian visits, over an extended period of the day. Active uses may be shops, cafes, and other social uses. Higher density residential and office uses also can be active uses for particular periods of the day.

BUILT FORM

The height, volume and overall shape of a building as well as its surface appearance.

ENCLOSURE (OR 'SENSE OF ENCLOSURE')

Where the building frontage height, street width and street tree canopy creates a feeling of a contained space within the street.

FACADE (OR 'BUILDING FACADE')

The principal wall of a building that is usually facing the street and visible from the public realm. It is the face of the building and helps inform passers-by about the building and the activities within.

FRONTAGE

The property boundary that abuts the street. If a property abuts two or more streets, it is the boundary the building or proposed building faces.

HUMAN SCALE

The proportional relationship of the physical environment (such as buildings, trees, roads) to human dimensions. Maintaining a human scale means that structures are not perceived as overwhelming at ground level and urban environments are highly walkable.

(Source: Victorian Planning Authority)

PERMEABILITY

The extent to which the urban structure permits, or restricts, movement of people or vehicles through an area, and the capacity of the area network to carry people or vehicles.

PUBLIC REALM

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

SETBACK

The distance of a building wall from any lot boundary. A building front setback can add to the perceived width of the street, provide additional public or private space, and allow space for landscaping. A building set on the front property boundary has zero street setback.

Appendix B. Documents reviewed

TITLE	YEAR	AUTHOR
South Melbourne Urban Design Framework STAGE ONE - Existing Conditions	2022	City of Port Phillip
South Melbourne Urban Design Framework Issues & Opportunities Discussion Paper	2022	City of Port Phillip
South Melbourne Structure Plan Discussion Paper	2022	City of Port Phillip
South Melbourne Structure Plan Analysis of Population, Demographics, Liveability and Economy	June 2022	City of Port Phillip
South Melbourne Movement and Transport Study Movement and Transport Study Report	July 2022	Ratio Consultants
South Melbourne Economic & Employment Land Use Study	June 2022	Urban Enterprise
Recommendations Report South Melbourne Stage 1 Heritage Review	April 2022	Trethowan Architecture
Cooling South Melbourne Study Impact Analysis of Cooling Interventions	November 2020	City of Port Phillip University of New South Wales
DRAFT South Melbourne Development Activity	2022	City of Port Phillip
DDO 8 Approved Permits August 2022	August 2022	City of Port Phillip
Approved Permits 2020 (folder containing application plans)	-	City of Port Phillip
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050	2017	Victorian Government
Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan 2020	2020	Victorian Government
Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy Strategy 2018	September 2018	Victorian Government
Built Form Review: South Melbourne Central Heritage Built Form Analysis & Recommendation	March 2023	GJM Heritage

Appendix C. Overview of recent development activity

134-138 Moray Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	1029
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	6918
FAR	6.7
No. Storeys	10
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7A (6 storeys)

183-197 Moray Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	956
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	5059
FAR	5.3
No. Storeys	8
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7A (6 storeys)

144-146 Clarendon Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	1013
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	4071
FAR	4
No. Storeys	8
Sub-precinct	DDO8-3 (6 storeys)

279-281 Clarendon Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	367
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	1397
FAR	3.8
No. Storeys	4
Sub-precinct	DDO8-1

68 Clarke Street

Application No.	312/2017B
Site Area (m^2)	2788
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	10326
FAR	3.7
No. Storeys	6
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7a (6 Storeys) + 8-7b (4 Storeys)

81-109 Moray Street

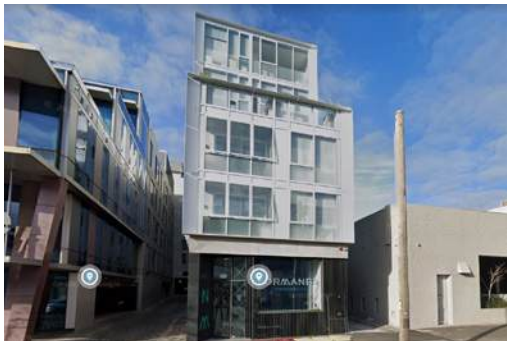
Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	4057
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	24748
FAR	6.1
No. Storeys	7
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7A (6 storeys)

172 Clarendon Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	1091.2
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	6706
FAR	6
No. Storeys	9
Sub-precinct	DDO8-3 (6 storeys)

200 Clarendon Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	2109.1
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	13075
FAR	6.2
No. Storeys	9
Sub-precinct	DDO8-3 (6 Storeys)



111 York Street

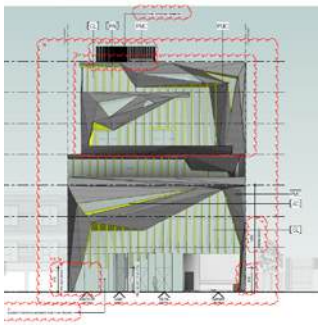
Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	393
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	2690.5
FAR	6.8
No. Storeys	7
Sub-precinct	DDO8-2a (6 storeys)

305 Clarendon Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	682
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	2717
FAR	3.9
No. Storeys	7
Sub-precinct	DDO8-1

190 Coventry Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	134
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	688
FAR	5.1
No. Storeys	6
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7a (6 Storeys)



34 Tope Street / 133 Moray Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	1009
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	4625
FAR	4.5
No. Storeys	7
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7b (4 Storeys)

240-242 Dorcas Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	658
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	3647
FAR	5.5
No. Storeys	7
Sub-precinct	DDO8-5a (6 Storeys)

182 Coventry Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	201
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	705
FAR	3.5
No. Storeys	4
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7a (6 Storeys)

145 Moray Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	147
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	406
FAR	2.7
No. Storeys	3
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7b (4 Storeys)

35 Market Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	396
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	1463
FAR	3.7
No. Storeys	5
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7a (6 Storeys)

14 Tichborne Place

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	697
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	3793
FAR	5.4
No. Storeys	6
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7a (6 Storeys)

45-53 Tope Street

Application No.	-
Site Area (m^2)	686
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	4597
FAR	5.2
No. Storeys	8
Sub-precinct	8-7b (4 Storeys)

16 Tichborne Place

Application No.	723/2016
Site Area (m^2)	107.6
Zone	Commercial 2 Zone
GFA (m^2)	547.1
FAR	5.1
No. Storeys	5
Sub-precinct	DDO8-7a (6 Storeys)

219-221 Park Street

Application No.	P59/2020
Site Area (m^2)	1011
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	
FAR	
No. Storeys	7
Sub-precinct	DDO8-4b

235 Park Street

Application No.	P59/2020
Site Area (m^2)	171
Zone	Commercial 1 Zone
GFA (m^2)	740.5
FAR	4.3
No. Storeys	4
Sub-precinct	DDO8-4b

Appendix D. Process for testing the Floor Area Ratios (FARs) and built form

The following provides an overview of the process undertaken to test Floor Area Ratios (FARs) and built form

Step 1
Responding to the vision

1.A What is the vision for South Melbourne?

...network of walkable, green streets and comfortable public spaces, combined with valued heritage places and attractive buildings...
(South Melbourne Structure Plan Draft, 2024)

We are not proposing large-scale changes to the scale of development that is allowed in current planning controls and that has emerged over the last 15 years. (Discussion Paper, 2022)

1. B What type of buildings align with the vision?

Predominantly mid-rise buildings with areas of lower and taller development in response to particular conditions (e.g. heritage places or less sensitive interfaces).

1.C What is our starting point for the FARs?

Based on previous work and benchmarking of other structure plans and urban renewal precincts we know that Floor Area Ratios of 3:1 to 6:1 generally correspond with a mid-rise neighbourhood.

Step 2
Establishing good design outcomes

2.A What are the good design objectives we are seeking?

1. Ensure development is responsive to the local context and character
2. Contribute to engaging and walkable precincts
3. Provide high-amenity housing and workplaces
4. Integrate climate responsive design

2.B What are some examples of the design recommendations that relate to these objectives?

- Enable precincts that are human scaled with a diversity of building types.
- Carefully locate taller built form to minimise visual bulk and overshadowing.
- Provide internal amenity and equitable development between sites by ensuring adequate building separation.
- Ensure solar access controls are more targeted to maintain sunlight at certain times of the year.
- Ensure street wall controls are more targeted by responding to the built form character and hierarchy of streets.

2.C How does this influence the FARs and built form testing?

Higher FARs and building heights are generally located on larger sites, sites with frontages to wide streets and locations with less sensitive interfaces (e.g. City Road).

Lower FARs and building heights are generally located on smaller sites, narrow streets and locations with sensitive interfaces (e.g. heritage properties).

FARs and building heights are adjusted to maintain sunlight to key streets and spaces.

Step 3
Selecting sites for testing

3.A What sites were selected for testing?

The built form testing did not model every site in the study area. A range of blocks and groups of sites that are indicative of different conditions within each of the four precincts were identified.

3.B What are the different site conditions we considered?

- The size and shape of different sites
- Frontage to different street widths
- Corner sites and mid-block sites
- Sites in heritage overlays
- Interfaces

3.C How does this influence the FARs and built form testing?

Selecting representative blocks or groups of sites in the study area enables the proposed FARs and design outcomes to be tested against a range of conditions.

Step 4
Test and evaluate FARs and built form

4.A Iterative design testing

3D models were developed based on the 'starting point' FARs of 3:1-6:1. The models were evaluated against the design recommendations. The final proposed FARs best met the design recommendations.

Testing the FARs and built form: 31 Market Street

The following table and images show testing and analysis of different FARs and built form against key design objectives for 31 Market Street which is located within the Enterprise East Precinct (Commercial 2 Zone).

DESIGN OBJECTIVES	FAR 4.5:1	FAR 5.5:1	FAR 6.5:1	COMMENTS
Enable precincts that are human scaled with a diversity of building types that are mainly mid-rise with some higher built form in specified areas.	🟠	🟢	🔴	Lower FAR does not achieve mid-rise outcome, FAR 5.5:1 is mid-rise, higher FAR would result in lack of human scale with this level of density across multiple sites.
Encourage reduced visual bulk and maintain sky views on larger sites through the development of individual buildings or through the separation of built form elements at upper levels.	🟢	🟢	🔴	FARs of 4.5:1 and 5.5:1 reduce visual bulk with increased upper level setbacks for sky views.
Carefully locate taller built form to minimise visual bulk and overshadowing.	🟠	🟢	🔴	FAR 5.5:1 results in bulk at upper levels or would require even taller built form to deliver a more slender building at upper levels.
Ensure solar access controls are more targeted to maintain sunlight at certain times of the year to key streets and open spaces.	🟢	🟢	🔴	FARs of 4.5:1 and 5.5:1 deliver better sunlight access to proposed linear park on Clarke Street.
Ensure street wall controls are more targeted by responding to the built form character and hierarchy of streets.	🟢	🟢	🔴	FARs of 4.5:1 and 5.5:1 deliver more appropriate street wall responses.
Enable simple and legible building forms and efficient floor plates by avoiding multiple setbacks above the street wall.	🟢	🟢	🟢	Floor plates are generally efficient for all options.
Provide internal amenity and equitable development between sites by ensuring adequate building separation.	🟢	🟢	🟠	With no lightwells to FAR 6.5:1, there is reduced internal amenity. Adding lightwells would result in an even taller development impacting on other design objectives.
Support equitable development by ensuring that primary outlook is secured to the street or within the development site.	🟢	🟢	🟢	All sites have primary outlook to Market and Clarke Street.
On larger sites, consider opportunities to provide deep soil zones to support in ground planting and canopy trees in the private realm.	🔴	🔴	🔴	Deep soil zones have not been provided, however FARs 4.5:1 and 5.5:1 would better accommodate this design outcome as yield could be redistributed with a lesser impact on other design objectives.

Table 5. Analysis of three different FARs for 31 Market Street. The 'traffic light' dots, along with the comments, indicate the extent to which the different FARs meet the design objectives.

Image 49. North-west (left) and south-east (right) view of 31 Market Street with 4.5:1 FAR.

Image 50. North-west (left) and south-east (right) view of 31 Market Street with 5.5:1 FAR.

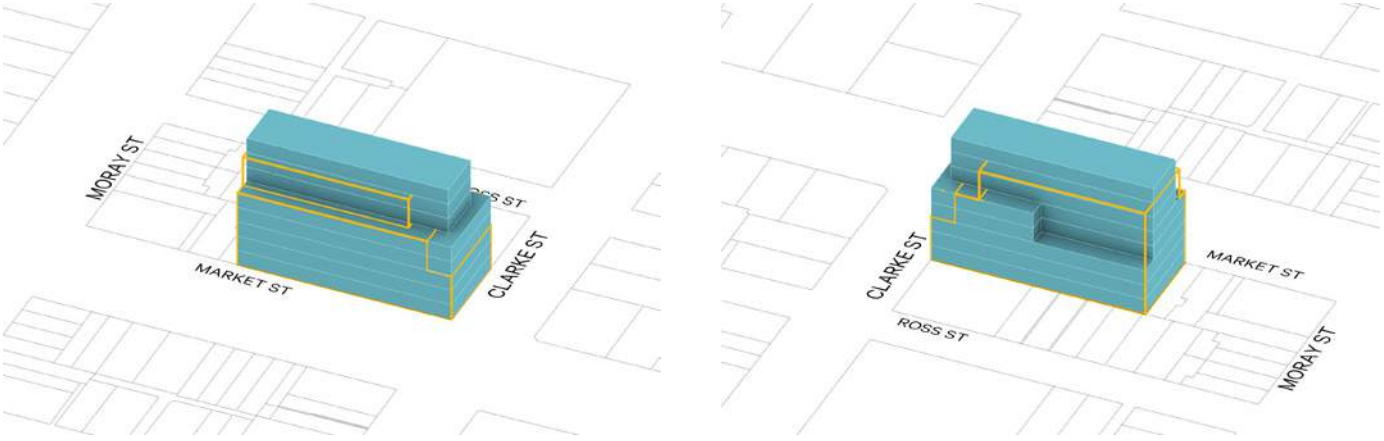


Image 51. North-west (left) and south-east (right) view of 31 Market Street with 6.5:1 FAR.

Testing the FARs and built form: 113 - 117 York Street

The following table and images show testing and analysis of different FARs and built form against key design objectives for 113 - 117 York Street which is located within the Market Precinct (Commercial 1 Zone).

DESIGN OBJECTIVES	FAR 3.5:1	FAR 4.5:1	FAR 5.5:1	COMMENTS
Enable precincts that are human scaled with a diversity of building types that are mainly mid-rise with some higher built form in specified areas.	🟡	🟢	🔴	Lower FAR does not achieve mid-rise outcome. FAR 4.5:1 achieves increased density, higher FAR would result in lack of human scale with this level of density across multiple sites.
Encourage reduced visual bulk and maintain sky views on larger sites through the development of individual buildings or through the separation of built form elements at upper levels.	🟢	🟢	🔴	FARs of 3.5:1 and 4.5:1 reduce visual bulk with increased upper level setbacks for sky views.
Carefully locate taller built form to minimise visual bulk and overshadowing.	🟡	🟢	🔴	FAR 5.5:1 results in bulk at upper levels or would require even taller built form to deliver a more slender building at upper levels.
Ensure solar access controls are more targeted to maintain sunlight at certain times of the year to key streets and open spaces.	🟢	🟢	🔴	FARs of 3.5:1 and 4.5:1 deliver better sunlight access to internal open space and potential through link at rear of site.
Ensure street wall controls are more targeted by responding to the built form character and hierarchy of streets.	🟢	🟢	🟢	All outcomes deliver appropriate street wall heights.
Enable simple and legible building forms and efficient floor plates by avoiding multiple setbacks above the street wall.	🟢	🟢	🟡	Floor plates are generally efficient for all FARs.
Provide internal amenity and equitable development between sites by ensuring adequate building separation.	🟢	🟢	🟡	FARs of 3.5:1 and 4.5:1 provide adequate building separation, however 5.5:1 has reduced internal amenity due to heights of building with greater potential to impact equitable development.
Support equitable development by ensuring that primary outlook is secured to the street or within the development site.	🟢	🟢	🟢	All outcomes have primary outlook to York street and other site boundaries with appropriate setbacks.
On larger sites, consider opportunities to provide deep soil zones to support in ground planting and canopy trees in the private realm.	🟢	🟢	🟡	All sites could provide deep soil zones, however FAR 5.5:1 would result in less sunlight access to canopy trees.

Table 6. Analysis of three different FARs for 113 - 117 York Street. The 'traffic light' dots, along with the comments, indicate the extent to which the different FARs meet the design objectives.

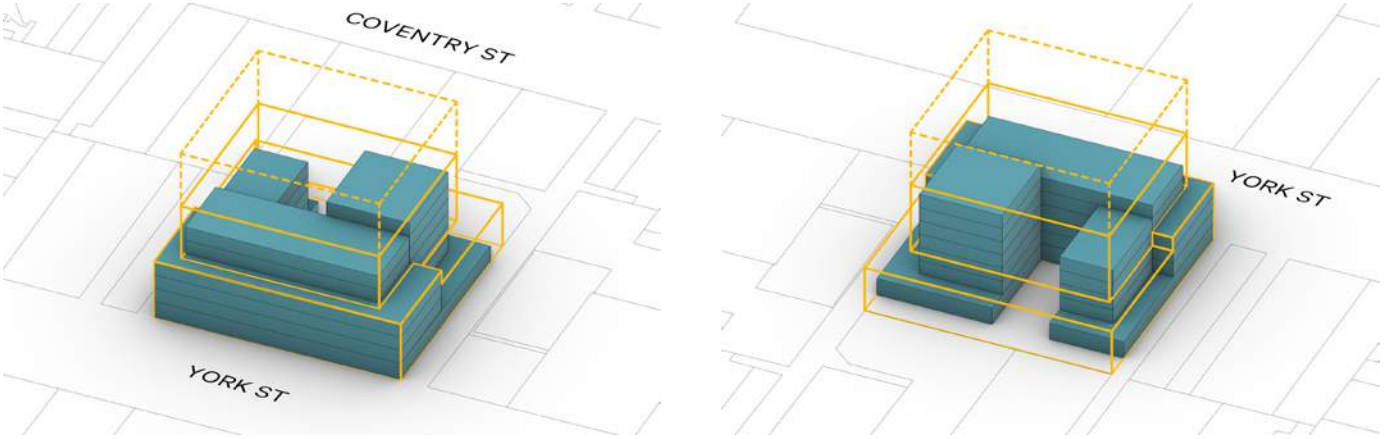


Image 52. North-west (left) and south-east (right) view of 113 - 117 York Street with 3.5:1 FAR.

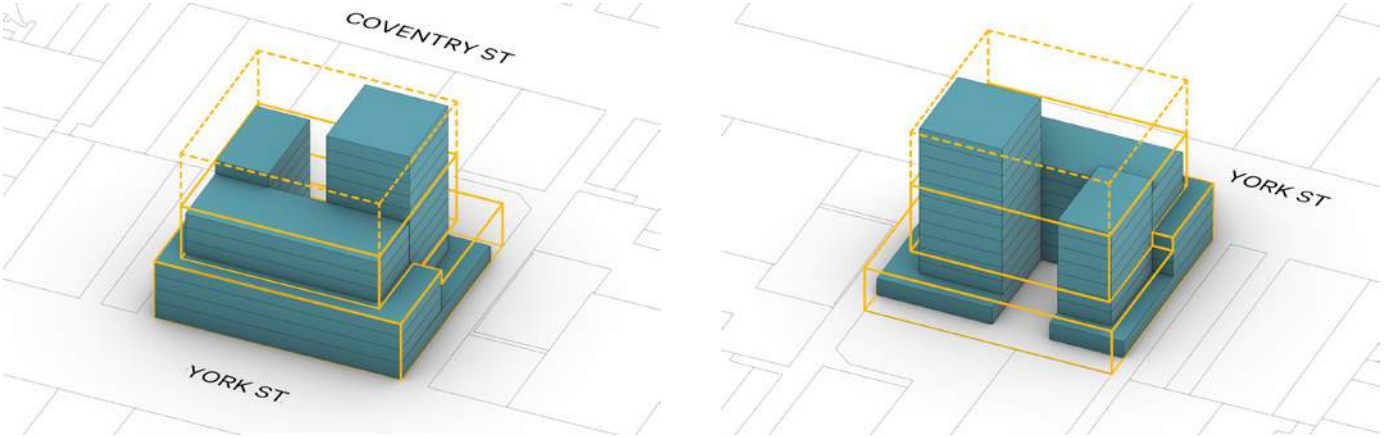


Image 53. North-west (left) and south-east (right) view of 113 - 117 York Street with 4.5:1 FAR.

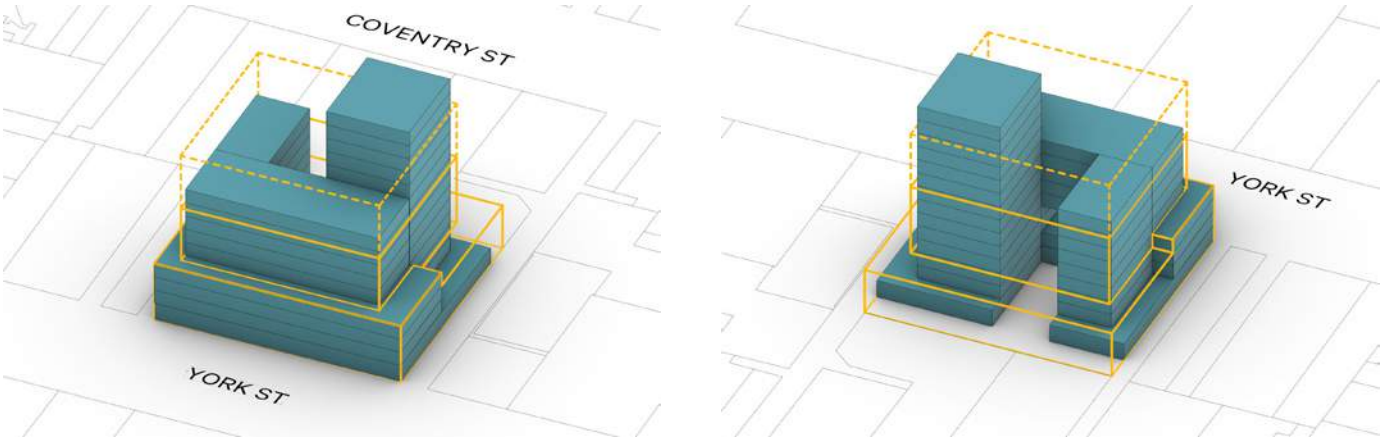
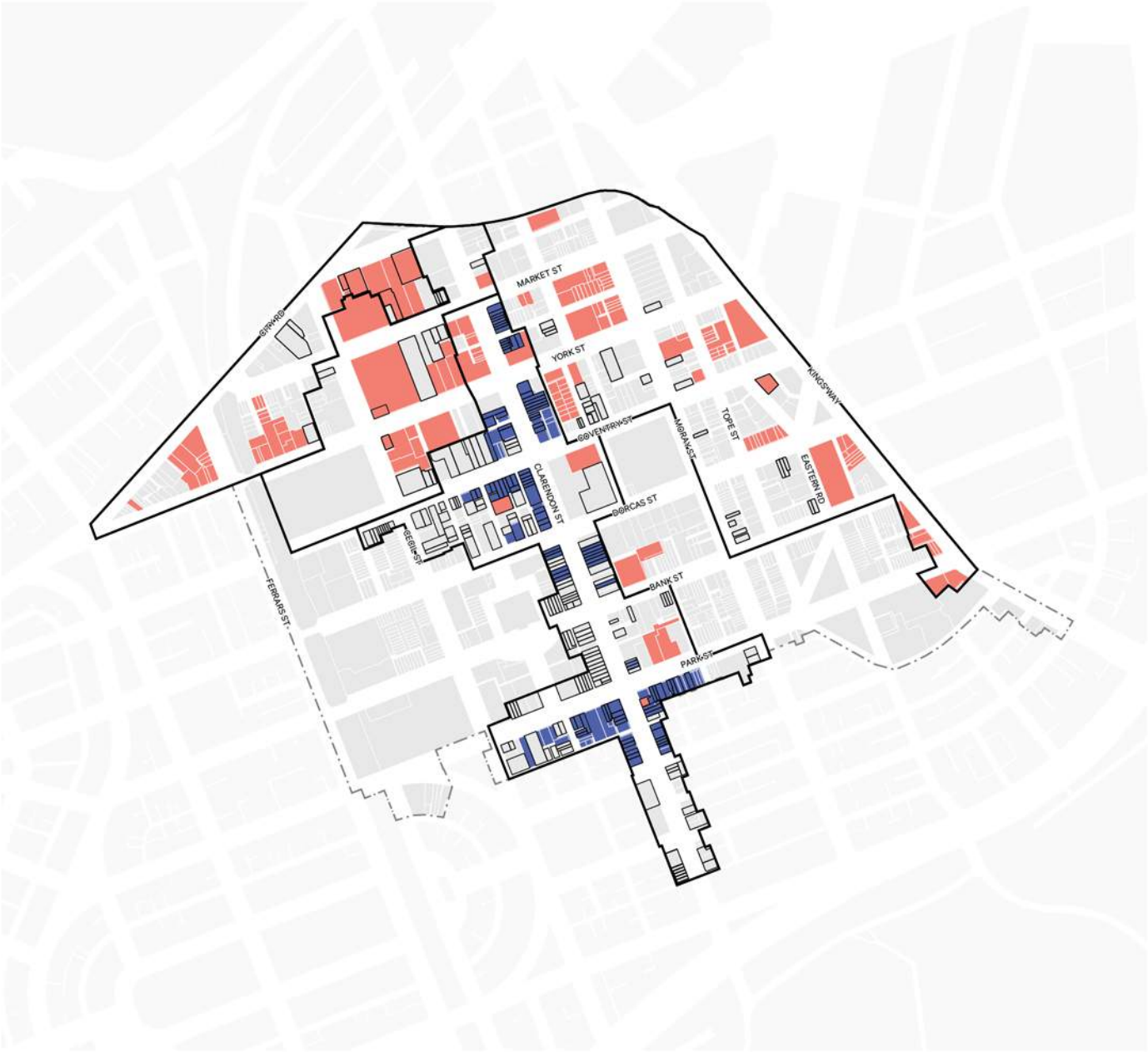


Image 54. North-west (left) and south-east (right) view of 113 - 117 York Street with 5.5:1 FAR.

Sites for built form testing

The figure opposite shows sites that were tested with an envelope control through the development of the Built Form Review. It also shows the sites where Floor Area Ratios (FARs) were further tested as part of the review of submissions to the South Melbourne Structure Plan (Draft) January 2024. Through the testing of these sites, proposed envelope controls and FARs were then applied to sites with similar characteristics (refer to page 75 for the extent of sites covered by envelope controls and FARs).



STUDY AREA

- Precinct boundary
- Heritage

BUILT FORM TESTING

- Sites tested with an envelope control through the development of the Built Form Review
- Sites tested as part of the SMSP Submissions Review 2024

0 50 100

Figure 57. Map showing sites that were tested for envelope controls and Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

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