Theme 4: Public Spaces and Places

South Melbourne will be a place with a welcoming and creative community that celebrates its diversity and shares its stories supported by attractive, vibrant, climate-resilient and people-friendly public spaces

Introduction

South Melbourne's public realm plays a vital role in connecting people to destinations and activities, providing spaces for individuals to pause, meet, and rest during their journey. The area's roads, footpaths, shared laneways and parks contribute to the distinctive streetscape character, enhancing the overall environment through incorporation of greenery, shade, and weather protection.

A well-used and well-maintained public realm not only feels safe but also encourages people to use it. In the context of South Melbourne, especially at the interface with the Central City, the quality of public spaces is crucial. Consultation on this project highlighted how much the community values South Melbourne's easy access to green and open spaces. Consultation also highlighted the community's desire to increase greenery and open space for current and future generations.

A key feature of South Melbourne is that its main street grid is 30 metres wide, which is the same width as streets in Melbourne's CBD. South Melbourne's wide streets account for 42% of the Structure Plan area which is significantly more than other inner Melbourne areas such as Cremorne at 22% and Fitzroy and Collingwood and 32%. The existing road network, presents an opportunity to maximise improvements to the public realm and open spaces in South Melbourne as the area grows and evolves.

A public realm that supports a thriving Major Activity Centre, Enterprise Precinct and Mixed Use Corridor

The public realm will have a vital role in supporting the success of the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre (MAC), Enterprise Precinct and Kings Way Mixed Use Corridor. Importantly, the public realm contributes to facilitating connections between workers across and within industries. Collaboration allows for the dots to be connected between people, institutions, economic clusters, and place, creating synergies across multiple scales and platforms. Similarly, improving quality of place will enable the expanded offering of quality experiences that accelerate outcomes and increase interactions. Improving collaboration and quality of place will see the public realm become a conduit of common ground between workers where meetings take place and connections are made.

In this way, an attractive and welcoming public realm will increase investment confidence, encouraging businesses of all sizes to locate in South Melbourne. This is particularly the case for South Melbourne's industry specialisations such as professional services and creative industries where the public realm will support the clustering of these industries. Clustering of industry specialisations will also encourage other businesses to locate in South Melbourne and leverage this specialisation to diversify employment opportunities.



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.

Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria, Victorian Government 2023

Strengthening climate resilience

Urban heat island

South Melbourne has been identified as a hot spot[1], which is an area specifically vulnerable to the impacts of the urban heat island effect. The urban heat island effect is created when large areas of hard surfaces such as concrete and asphalt absorb and retain heat, thereby increasing outdoor temperatures. This can impact public health, especially vulnerable community members who may experience health issues during extended heat waves. Figure 61 shows 2020 surface temperatures in South Melbourne, highlighting the extent of urban heat islands within the local area.

Modelling for *Cooling South Melbourne* highlights there are opportunities to reduce heat in the area and create a comfortable and liveable environment for residents, workers and visitors. Within public spaces and places, more trees need to be planted to provide a shaded canopy that cools South Melbourne's streets and provides a comfortable walking and cycling experience for all. Doing so will support the outcomes sought by *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy* 2023-28.

Flood risk

Much like many parts of Port Phillip, South Melbourne low-lying geography means that has a higher flood risk than other areas. This condition is compounded by almost 75% of the suburb of South Melbourne being covered by impervious surfaces.

As the impacts of climate change are more widely felt, there is a greater need for public spaces and places to incorporate water management technologies including permeable surfaces and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) features that can adapt, mitigate and manage this risk.

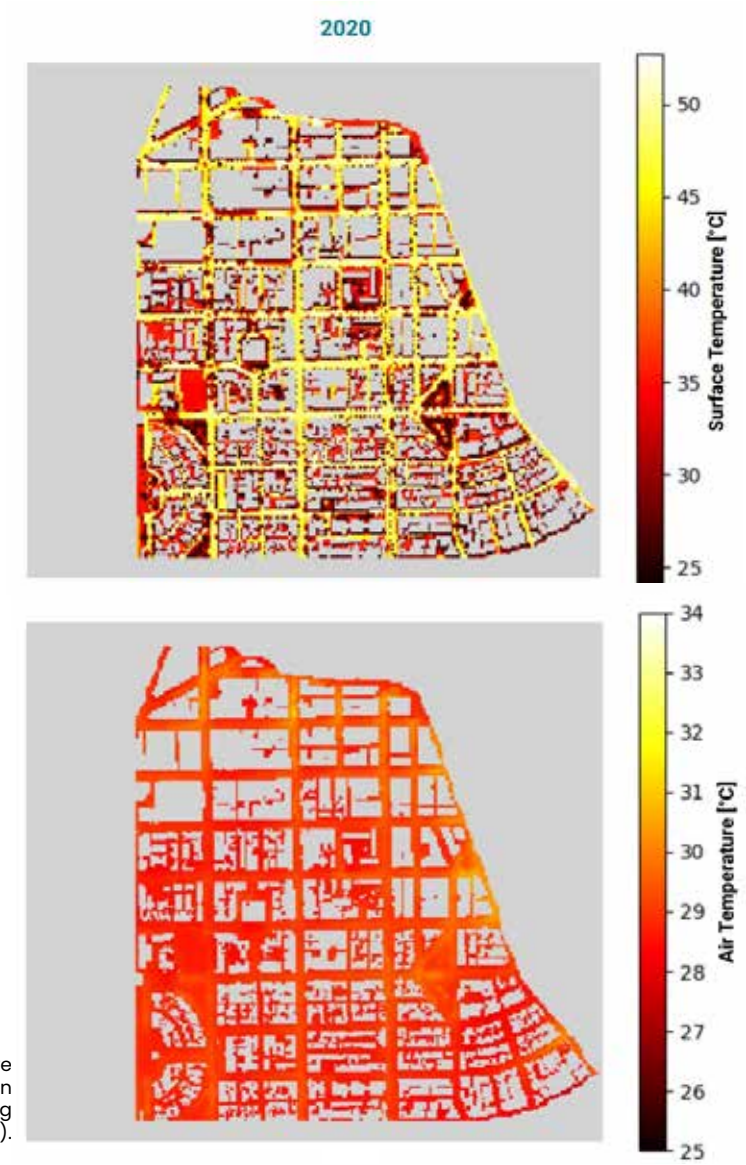

Figure 61 - Surface temperature and air temperature in South Melbourne, highlighting the extent of urban heat islands exacerbated by climate change (Cooling South Melbourne 2020, p.39).

1 *Cooling South Melbourne: Impact Analysis of Cooling Interventions,* 2020, the University of New South Wales in conjunction with the City of Port Phillip

Investigating opportunities for public open space

Despite South Melbourne's proximity to regional open spaces, such as Albert Park Lake, there is limited open space[2] within the Structure Plan Area. Most of these spaces are south of Dorcas Street, reflecting South Melbourne's industrial expansion in the early to mid-twentieth century where houses were replaced with factories and warehouses. There is only 1,300 square metres of public open space north of Dorcas Street which has poor amenity due to its frontage to Kings Way.

The City's *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32* provides the framework to manage and upgrade South Melbourne's much-loved open space network. It identifies the need for two new open spaces (one in the South Melbourne Major Activity Centre and one in the South Melbourne Enterprise Precinct). It also identifies the need to improve pedestrian amenity in local streets and recommends increased greening and upgrading local open spaces.

The high cost of the City acquiring freehold land for new open space and constraints and challenges with the existing, fixed road network, requires exploring alternative avenues. One approach includes collaborating with the Victorian Government on projects such as the Emerald Hill Housing and Health Precinct at the Emerald Hill Court Estate, to provide integrated public open spaces as part of this site's redevelopment.

To meet the community's needs and enhance the overall public space landscape in South Melbourne, the City will also need to actively seek and capitalise on various opportunities for collaboration. This includes exploring partnerships with the Victorian Government on multiple projects and engaging with developer-led initiatives.

Streets for people

South Melbourne's unique street network is a significant asset, laying a foundation for a vibrant and sustainable community. Its primary network of wide streets contrast with a smaller network of narrow streets and laneways. While South Melbourne's wider streets often accommodate relatively wide footpaths, its streets are dominated by cars, narrow streets have narrow footpaths and there are a lack of trees and places to sit.

In carefully considered locations within the Major Activity Centre and Enterprise Precinct, wide streets present an opportunity to improve the pedestrian amenity by accommodating more trees and new places to sit and rest. Wide streets may also afford opportunities to introduce traffic calming measures to reduce conflict between modes of transport.

Maintaining and growing a sense of community

Community consultation emphasises that many value South Melbourne's welcoming and diverse community. Placemaking and activating public spaces will strengthen connections between South Melbourne's resident, worker and visitor populations and the places they share. Placemaking and activation initiatives are vital in encouraging people into South Melbourne, will improve safety and support greater social connection in South Melbourne. The design of new public spaces should prioritise areas for gatherings and events, aiming to nurture community bonds, support existing businesses, and stimulate the growth of new ones. Ultimately, the objective is to create a more vibrant and connected South Melbourne, where residents feel a deep sense of belonging.



Holland Street, Thebarton by JPE Design Studio (Photographer: Sam Noonan)



Caloundra Main Street, Sunshine Coast Council (Photography: Andrew Maccoll)

2 Public open space includes parks, gardens, reserves, the foreshore and urban spaces such as plazas and squares.

How will the South Melbourne Structure Plan support this theme?

The following objectives and actions under this theme, and summarised in Figure 62, will help deliver the vision for South Melbourne:

- Create cool, green streets for people to improve amenity, comfort and public health (Public Spaces and Places Objective 1)
- Be water-wise to effectively respond to climate change, and protection of assets and property (Public Spaces and Places Objective 2)
- Shape public spaces to support a variety of uses and enterprises (Public Spaces and Places Objective 3)
- Reinforce civic pride and sense of place (Public Spaces and Places Objective 4).

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

- *South Melbourne Public Realm Framework 2024-2044* (City Port Phillip, July 2024)
- *Places for People: Public Space Strategy* 2022-32
- *South Melbourne Transport, Movement & Place Study* (Ratio Consultants, November 2023).

Importantly, the *South Melbourne Transport, Movement & Place Study* reviews the feasibility of the recommendations from the *South Melbourne Public Realm Framework 2024-2044*, finding that the recommendations are compatible with the local traffic network.



Figure 62 - Summary of recommended open space and public realm improvements detailed in this theme.

Public Spaces and Places Objective 1:

Create cool, green streets for people to improve amenity, comfort and public health

Protecting and increasing tree canopy coverage in South Melbourne is crucial for creating streets that are comfortable to walk and cycle along and support South Melbourne's climate response.

Implementing the strategy *Greening Port Phillip: An urban forest approach* 2010

The Structure Plan Area features over 2,500 trees located within road reserves and Council owned land, providing approximately 17% canopy coverage. South Melbourne's tree canopy is lower than other areas of the City, due to most buildings constructed to the property boundary and overhead powerlines compromising tree growth.

To successfully improve tree canopy coverage, it will be crucial for street tree planting to align with the strategy *Greening Port Phillip: An urban forest approach* 2010. A new *Urban Forest Strategy* provides an opportunity to ensure the most current information is available to protect existing trees, prioritise tree planting and identifying areas where excessive pavements can be reduced through depaving.

Protecting and increasing tree canopy, increasing urban greenery and enhancing and supporting biodiversity

The *Cooling South Melbourne* study shows that increasing urban greenery in the public realm and the addition of cool materials for all streets, footpaths and private hard surfaces would be highly effective at reducing street level air and surface temperatures, especially in business and retail precincts that have wider, unshaded streets. Increasing urban greenery and planting larger tree species in strategic locations that are not constrained by services and utilities will:

- Increase tree canopy
- Soften the interface between buildings and the public realm
- Support mitigating climate change impacts, including the urban heat island effect
- Ensure plantings promote pollination and biodiversity connections for flora and fauna
- Creating habitat and address gaps in canopy tree coverage
- Provide shaded places for people to enjoy, meet and relax under.

Recommended locations for infill tree planting and urban greening are presented in Figure 63.

Landscaping should maintain easy access from on-street parking to the footpath and integrate with adjoining streetscape, laneways, and buildings.

Reducing street level air and surface temperatures will be supported by identifying opportunities to:

- Protect existing trees in South Melbourne and retain healthy mature trees in streetscapes
- Improve tree canopy throughout the Structure Plan Area, prioritising key locations
- Install new medians, green verges and kerb outstands for understorey planting.

It will be important for significant projects such as the Emerald Hill Health and Housing Precinct by the Victorian Government to retain existing mature tree canopies and integrate them with new landscaping, given their contribution to reducing the urban heat island effect and increasing biodiversity. Maintaining existing awnings will also contribute to cooler streets and providing shade for pedestrians. Nature strip and street gardens equally contribute to increasing urban greenery and supporting biodiversity. It will therefore be crucial to continue using the *City of Port Phillip Nature Strip Guidelines* 2022 to support nature strip or street gardens.

Tree planting palette

To support a unified and cohesive approach to tree planting in South Melbourne, a tree planting palette will be established that sets out recommended tree species to use in the area. The tree planting palette will:

- Enhance the streetscape character and provide consistency throughout





South Melbourne

- Improve resilience to the effects of climate change and disease by including a suitable range of trees
- Identify suitable replacements for current tree species that may no longer be suitable due to climate change or disease threat
- Specify tree species that support increased tree canopy coverage in alignment with future targets in *Greening Port Phillip: An urban forest approach 2010*
- Support the planting of large canopy trees in appropriate locations.

Exploring cooler materials and new technologies to cool streets

The *Cooling South Melbourne* study undertaken by the University of New South Wales in conjunction with the City of Port Phillip analyses different interventions to reduce heat in the area.

Therefore, it will be vital to investigate how cooler materials and new technologies can complement increasing greenery to support South Melbourne's ability to mitigate and adapt to increasing heat. For example, treating streets with heat absorbent coatings has many benefits including:

- Reducing heat islands
- Improved local comfort
- Reduced stormwater runoff and improved water quality
- Lower tire noise
- Enhanced safety
- Better night time visibility.



Figure 63 - Recommended infill tree planting and urban greening locations shown with existing tree canopy coverage in South Melbourne (City of Port Phillip, using LEAF).

Actions

Greening Port Phillip

4.1 Ensure all street tree planting aligns with the broader street tree planting program as part of implementing the *Greening Port Phillip: An urban forest approach 2010* and new *Urban Forest Strategy* due for release in 2024.

Tree planting palette

4.2 Create a tree planting palette for South Melbourne to ensure a unified and cohesive approach to tree planting.

Urban greening and urban biodiversity

4.3 Explore opportunities for urban greening in South Melbourne, especially in the following locations:

- Tope Street
- Coventry Street (between Clarendon and Moray streets)
- Market Street (between Cecil and Clarendon streets)
- Cecil Street (south of Market and Cecil Street intersection)
- Dorcas Street (between Cecil and Moray streets)
- Marshall Street
- Perrins Street
- Park Street between Cecil and Clarendon streets).

4.4 Support opportunities to enhance biodiversity in South Melbourne, including using the *City of Port Phillip Nature Strip Guidelines* 2022 to support nature strip or street gardens.

Infill tree planting

4.5 Explore opportunities for infill tree planting in South Melbourne, especially at the following locations:

- Tope Street (north of Bank Street)
- Dorcas Street (east of Moray Street)
- Coventry Street (east of Moray Street)
- York Street (east of Moray Street)
- Market Street (east of Moray Street)
- Market Street between City Road and Clarendon Street
- Cecil Street between York and Market Streets
- York Street, west of Ferrars Street
- Clarendon Street, between Coventry and Park Streets
- Park Street between Howe Crescent and Ferrars Street
- Park Street between Cecil Street and Eastern Road
- Heather Street, north-west side.

Protecting healthy mature trees

4.6 Integrate existing healthy mature trees with future streetscape upgrades by minimising the loss of existing mature tree canopy in the design and construction of streetscape upgrades and new public space.

Increasing tree canopy

4.7 Plant larger tree species in areas that are not constrained by services and utilities such as overhead power line cables and underground infrastructure.

Emerald Hill Health and Housing Precinct

4.8 As part of the delivery of the Emerald Hill Health and Housing Precinct by Homes Victoria and the Victorian Health Building Authority, advocate to retain existing mature tree canopies and integrate them with new landscaping.

Cooling South Melbourne

4.9 Using the *Cooling South Melbourne: Impact Analysis of Cooling Interventions*, 2020 as a basis, identify and explore opportunities to incorporate cool pavements and heat absorbent coatings on streets, footpaths and other surfaces.

Public Spaces and Places Objective 2:

Be water-wise to effectively respond to climate change, and protection of assets and property

Given the increased risk of flood and sea level rise, there will be a greater need for and expectation on the public realm to manage climate change impacts in South Melbourne.

Continue to integrate water management into South Melbourne to support a resilient and liveable place

Integrated Water Management (IWM) considers the interactions of all elements of the water cycle including potable (drinking) water, rainwater, stormwater, recycled water and groundwater to ensure they are used to support and enhance social, ecological and economic outcomes.

The City of Port Phillip invests in its assets by:

- Increasing investment in maintenance, mapping, upgrades and modelling of our drainage network. Stormwater inspection teams use robotic technology to monitor and maintain 236 kilometres of stormwater channels
- Upgrading irrigation infrastructure and buildings to maximise water efficiency
- Constructing raingardens in streets and parks – to date more than 200 raingardens constructed have been constructed in streets across the City to clean water before it enters the Bay
- Increasing permeable surfaces that allow water to drain more easily in streets and public spaces
- Investigating new stormwater harvesting projects to clean water and reduce potable water use.

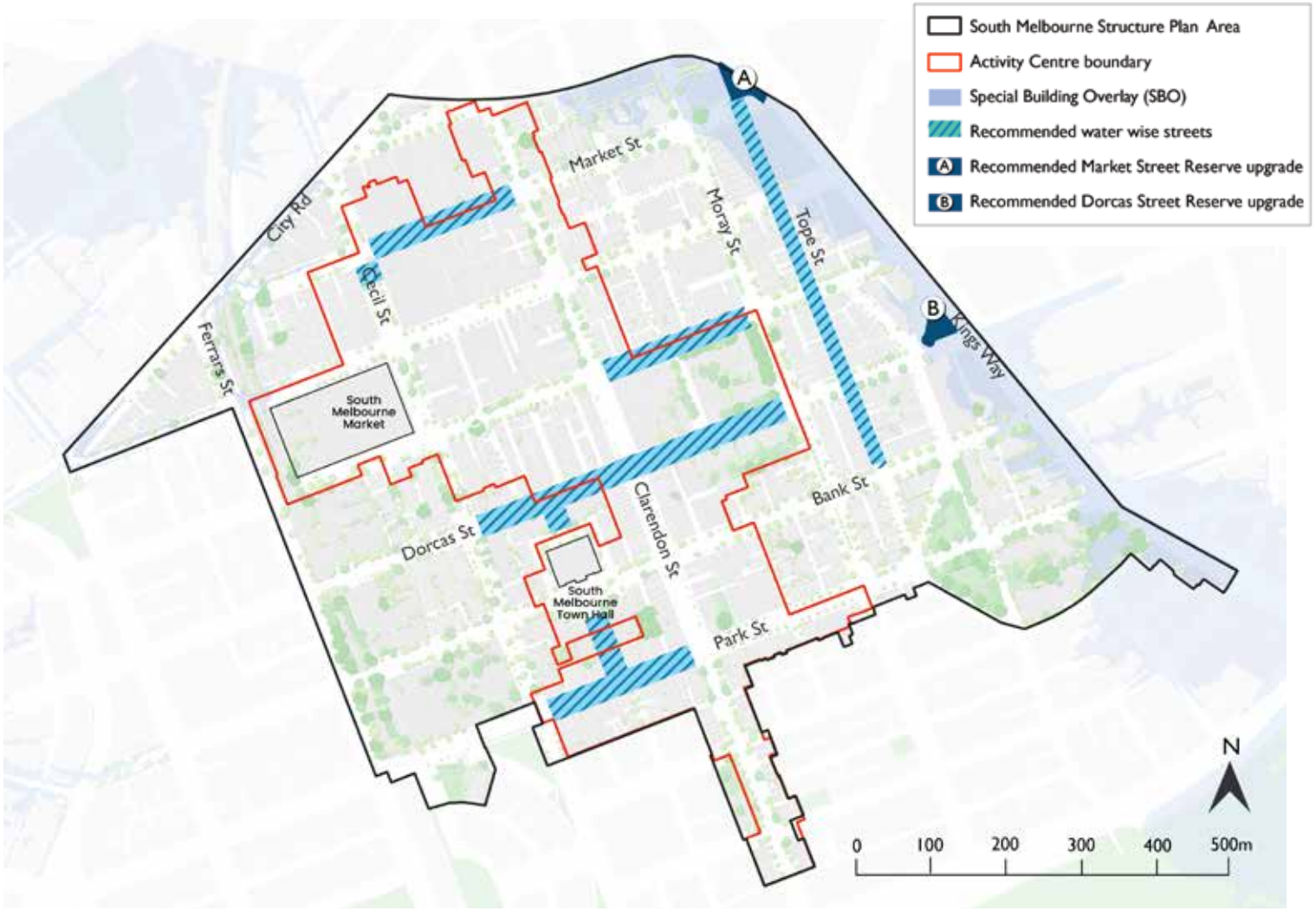

Figure 64 - Recommended areas of investigation for Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and flood

Increasing investment in these actions will support how public areas can contribute to managing water in ways that effectively respond to climate change, protect assets and protect property.

Mitigate flood risk by improving stormwater management using Water Sensitive Urban Design principles

South Melbourne has wide streets and excessive hard surfaces. As South Melbourne becomes greener, there is an opportunity to integrate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and permeable pavement treatments to mitigate flood risk in low-lying areas and beyond. Figure 64 includes suggested locations for investigation including:

a. Tope Street (north of Bank Street)
b. Coventry Street (between Clarendon and Moray streets)
c. Market Street (between Cecil and Clarendon streets)
d. Cecil Street (south of Market Street and Cecil Street)
e. Dorcas Street (between Cecil and Moray streets)
f. Marshall Street
g. Perrins Street
h. Park Street (between Cecil and Clarendon streets).

WSUD infrastructure should:

- Integrate with other landscape and streetscape improvements
- Reduce flooding inside and outside South Melbourne
- Use permeable pavement surface treatments to mitigate flooding
- Provide a source of irrigation for trees in streets and reserves
- Improve stormwater quality.

Upgrades to Dorcas Street Reserve and Market Street Reserve that improve water management, increase tree canopy cover to reduce UHI impacts and improve amenity and biodiversity

Dorcas Street Reserve is a 685 square metre local park located at the south-eastern corner of South Melbourne. It is triangular, bounded by Kings Way, Dorcas Street and Sturt Street. Its safety, amenity and attractiveness are compromised by the busy roads that surround the site – particularly Kings Way and Eastern Road. The reserve is also located at the base of a catchment and is prone to flooding.

Improving biodiversity and stormwater management for the precinct can reduce flood risk and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The reserve marks the eastern green gateway for visitors and commuters travelling from the arts precinct via Sturt Street.

Similarly, Market Street Reserve is a 565 square metre local park located at the north-eastern edge of South Melbourne, next to Kings Way and the West Gate Freeway on-ramp. The reserve has poor pedestrian amenity and lacks a sense of safety due to its location, which limits its potential for recreational use and community activation. Market Street Reserve also has great potential to support climate change adaptation.

Working with agencies to manage flood risk

Managing the impacts of climate change is a collective effort relying on sustained investment in infrastructure upgrades along with implementing policy that contributes to effectively managing flood risk. It is therefore vital that the City continues working with agencies such as Melbourne Water and South East Water to deliver infrastructure projects, such as the South Melbourne Sewerage Capacity Upgrade. It will also be vital to work with Melbourne Water to update the Special Building Overlay, which addresses overland flow, as new modelling is available from Melbourne Water.



Existing Dorcas Street Reserve aerial view (Nearmap)



Existing Market Street Reserve next to West Gate Freeway ramp



Actions

Integrated Water Management

4.10 Use the *South Melbourne Public Realm Framework 2024-2044* to support Integrated Water Management approaches in South Melbourne.

4.11 Enhance Integrated Water Management approaches in South Melbourne by:

- Identifying possible locations suitable for Water Sensitive Urban Design initiatives such as raingardens to irrigate street trees and improve stormwater quality, including at:
  - Tope Street (north of Bank Street)
  - Coventry Street (between Moray Street and Clarendon Street)
  - Market Street (between Clarendon Street and Cecil Street)
  - Cecil Street (south of intersection Market Street and Cecil Street)
  - Marshall Street
  - Perrins Street
  - Dorcas Street (between Moray Street and Cecil Street)
  - Park Street (between Moray Street and Clarendon Street).
- At Dorcas Street Reserve:
  - Exploring the feasibility of incorporating WSUD infrastructure for Dorcas Street Reserve
  - Exploring the use of public art or landscaping to create a gateway feature for Dorcas Street Reserve.
- At Market Street Reserve:
  - Exploring opportunities to increase tree canopy planting and install public art to manage the visual impacts of above-ground services at Market Street Reserve
  - Exploring the feasibility of stormwater detention and management at Market Street Reserve
- Identifying locations for urban greening opportunities
- Seeking opportunities for bioretention basins in the public realm
- Investigating opportunities for the use of permeable pavement.

Reducing flood risk

4.12 Contribute to reducing flood risk within and outside the Structure Plan Area by continuing to:

- Identify areas currently impacted by runoff
- Work with Melbourne Water to identify areas of flood risk and implement any updates to the Special Building Overlay, which addresses overland flow, where new modelling and information is available
- Work with Melbourne Water and South East Water to deliver infrastructure upgrades.

Public Spaces and Places Objective 3:

Shape public spaces to support a variety of uses and enterprises

Existing open space and new open space

Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32 is the key framework for managing and upgrading the municipality's open spaces. In the Structure Plan area, it recommends upgrades to open spaces at Eastern Reserve North, Park Street Reserve and Skinners Adventure Playground, shown in Figure 65. The *South Melbourne Public Realm Framework 2024-2044* (City Port Phillip, July 2024) outlines principles to guide existing open space upgrades.

Places for People highlights that the South Melbourne neighbourhood (a larger area than the Structure Plan Area) has 18 open spaces, making up 14 per cent of the total neighbourhood. This is lower than the City average of 17 per cent. Addressing gaps in South Melbourne's provision of open space is therefore a priority. Recommended improvements to existing open space and new open space are set out in Figure 66.

A proposed linear park on Market Street between Clarendon Street and Moray Street would address a historic gap in South Melbourne's open space network. Exploring the feasibility of converting parts of or all of Clarke Street between York Street and Chessell Street into a linear park would also contribute to addressing South Melbourne's open space gaps. Together these spaces would contribute to the amenity sought by workers in the Enterprise Precinct by providing a place outside to socialise and rest. Attractive outdoor spaces would also encourage businesses to locate and invest in South Melbourne, crucial to growing South Melbourne status as a premiere Enterprise Precinct on the edge of Melbourne's CBD.

Opportunities also exist to deliver additional open space as part of Victorian Government projects such as the Emerald Hill Housing and Health Precinct. Integrating a new public open space on the corner of Coventry Street and Moray Street would provide a complementary function to the future community hospital. There are also opportunities to advocate to the Victorian Government to improve access to Park Towers Reserve.

Activating laneways to create new destinations

South Melbourne's laneways and narrower streets traditionally provide 'back of house' access to commercial buildings for deliveries and parking for both commercial and residential buildings. However, an opportunity exists to explore how to activate key laneways and small streets to complement South Melbourne's major destinations and increase its appeal to visitors. In exploring outdoor dining, street trading and other opportunities in laneways, managing safe pedestrian and vehicular movement to avoid conflicts is paramount.

Art, music and culture

The City of Port Phillip is committed to a thriving social, cultural and economic future for the municipality and a continued focus on economic development and tourism, festivals,

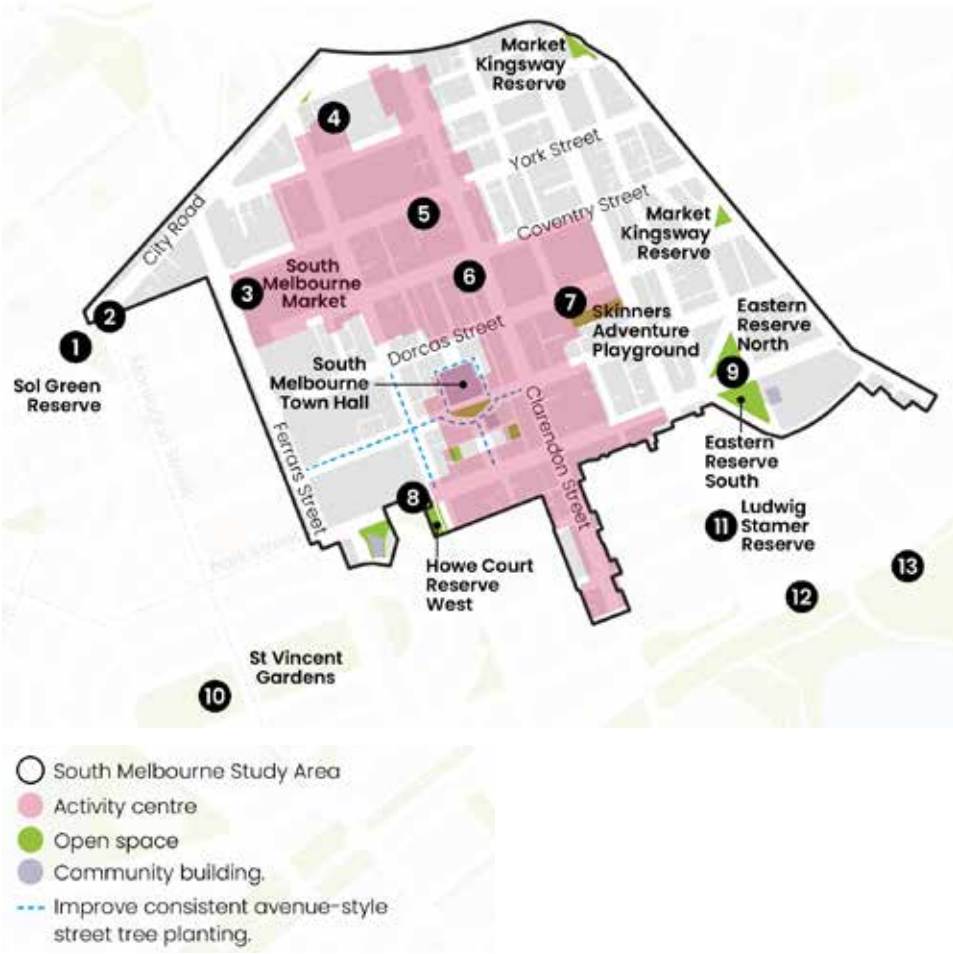

Figure 65 - The *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32* identifies open space and public realm opportunities.

events, live music, our screen industry (including film and gaming), and arts, culture and heritage. South Melbourne in particular has a specialisation in creative industries that is important to foster.

Guided by the *Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2023-2026* and *Events Strategy 2023-26*, exploring opportunities for art and cultural expression will reinforce the link between creative industries and communities, contributing to economic development. Working with Traditional Custodians to identify opportunities for cultural expression and knowledge sharing will enhance the community's understanding and appreciation indigenous heritage and culture.

In addition, there is an opportunity to build on Council's declaration of St Kilda as Victoria's first live music precinct, to identify areas and venues in South Melbourne that could form a South Melbourne live music precinct , as discussed on page 42.

Outdoor spaces encouraging people to spend time outside

South Melbourne has specialisations in hospitality, food and retail, reinforced by the popular South Melbourne Market and Clarendon Street and Coventry Street shopping strips. Continuing to support these businesses thrive by providing opportunities for outdoor dining and street trading is essential.

Continuing to use the *Business Parklet Guidelines May 2024*, *Outdoor Trading (Dining) Policy 2022* and *Footpath Trading Guidelines 2017* will ensure outdoor dining and footpath trading do not negatively impact pedestrian movements along footpaths and other public infrastructure.



Figure 66 - Recommended areas for improvements to existing open space and new open space.

Actions

Existing open space

4.13 Use *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32* and *South Melbourne Public Realm Framework 2024-2044* as the key frameworks for managing and upgrading South Melbourne's open spaces, including upgrading Eastern Reserve North and Skinners Adventure Playground.

New open space and parks

4.14 Deliver a new linear park on Market Street between Clarendon Street and Moray Street to enhance and increase business activity in the Enterprise Precinct.

4.15 Explore the feasibility of converting parts of or all of Clarke Street between York Street and Chessell Street into a linear park. Partner with the City of Melbourne to explore the feasibility of continuing this linear park north to City Road.

4.16 Advocate to the Victorian Government and State agencies the value and necessity for delivering new public spaces in South Melbourne as part of delivering new projects and infrastructure.

4.17 Explore the feasibility to increase public space near City Road on Market Street.

4.18 As part of delivering a new Master Plan for the Emerald Hill Court Estate, advocate to Homes Victoria for the creation of a new public open space on the corner of Coventry Street and Moray Street that is integrated with the broader future Emerald Hill Housing and Health Precinct.

Laneways

4.19 To increase visitation and economic opportunities, identify how the following laneways and small streets could be activated:

- Alfred Place (east of Clarendon Street)
- Yarra Place
- Albert Place
- St Lukes Street
- Wynyard Street
- Waterloo Place
- York Place
- Yarra Street
- Francis Street
- Union Street
- Hotham Street
- Northumberland Street
- Craine Street.

Art, music and culture

4.20 Identify opportunities in the public realm, Council-owned spaces and private spaces that are suitable for art, creative or cultural expression, consistent with the *Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2023-2026 and Events Strategy 2023-26.*

4.21 Work with Traditional Owners to identify opportunities for cultural expression and knowledge sharing within South Melbourne.

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

Outdoor dining / street trading

4.23 Continue using *Business Parklet Guidelines* May 2024, *Outdoor Trading (Dining) Policy* 2022 and *Footpath Trading Guidelines* 2017 to ensure outdoor dining and footpath trading do not negatively impact on pedestrian movements along footpaths and public infrastructure.

Public Spaces and Places Objective 4:

Reinforce civic pride and sense of place

South Melbourne's public spaces are crucial to reinforcing civic pride and its sense of place. Key projects will support broader initiatives to enhance South Melbourne as a destination.

Streetscape management plan for South Melbourne

A streetscape management plan will unify public space character in South Melbourne through the consistent use of materials, planting, lighting and street furniture. The *South Melbourne Public Realm Framework 2024-2044* identifies that a streetscape management plan should:

- Unify public space appearance through the consistent use of materials, planting, lighting and street furniture
- Encourage the use of materials and street furniture that are high quality, durable, practical to maintain and consistent with municipal standards
- Locate street furniture within the appropriate footpath zone to avoid obstructing pedestrian access and movement, retain car drivers' view lines and support their functional use
- Encourage decluttering by consolidating and removing redundant poles, furniture, signs and other disused structures on the streets
- Improve safety by using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles
- Provide accessibility for all users
- Avoid removing mature street trees.

Providing additional guidance beyond what can be contained in policy in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme will further clarify how public and developer-led projects should contribute to the public realm.

Streetscape upgrades

Clarendon Street is identified in *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28* as an Activity Street. Upgrades to Clarendon Street will support this designation strengthening Clarendon Street as the key spine of South Melbourne, displaying its rich layers of heritage character. Clarendon Street will continue to host vibrant shopping, dining and socialising opportunities in a walkable environment that is well-connected to surrounding destinations.

Upgrading streetscapes at Coventry Street between Ferrars Street and Kings Way and York Street between Ferrars Street and Moray Street will support this function, providing attractive east-west links. Recommended streetscape upgrades are presented in Figure 67.

Protect and interpret Aboriginal cultural values and heritage in the design of South Melbourne

The City of Port Phillip is on the traditional lands and waters of the people of the Kulin Nations. Their connection to country extends back more than 60,000 years.

While links to South Melbourne's traditional custodians have been diminished through post colonisation development, there is an opportunity to restore some of these links through recognition and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural values in South Melbourne.

Engagement with the development industry, community and other stakeholders and ongoing consultation and collaboration with Traditional Custodians will provide opportunities to embed Caring for Country principles in the design and management of open spaces. Opportunities for the Aboriginal naming of streets, parks and community infrastructure will be encouraged.



Figure 67 - Recommended streetscape upgrades.

Celebrating South Melbourne's civic heart

The *Emerald Hill Master Plan 2012* prepared by the City of Port Phillip (not to be confused with the master planning process led by Homes Victoria for the Emerald Hill Court Estate) seeks to revitalise the underutilised areas around the South Melbourne Town Hall. There is an opportunity to refresh the *Emerald Hill Master Plan 2012*, guiding the precinct's

reinvigoration and re-establishment as the cultural and civic heart of South Melbourne. The refresh will investigate:

- Opportunities to reimagine and expand the existing Town Hall Reserve to become a more attractive destination that facilitates social connection.
- Investigate how the area can support the establishment of a cultural and community hub that strengthens connections with South Melbourne's creative industries.
- How the lease of the South Melbourne Town Hall precinct to the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) can be leveraged to create a cultural hub around Emerald Hill.
- Should the construction of a new police station in Dorcas Street proceed and the Bank Street police station no longer be required, explore opportunities for the adaptive reuse of this heritage building.
- How the Emerald Hill Library and Heritage Centre can more prominently contribute to cultural and public life.
- Strengthen connections between the Town Hall and Clarendon Street that encourage greater visitation.
- Explore opportunities to create a Collingwood Yards Arts Precinct type model for the area.
- Opportunities for activation along abutting streets and nearby open spaces.

In turn, a refresh of the *Emerald Hill Master Plan 2012* will highlight how the public realm can support the provision of community infrastructure, in particular providing places where people can socialise and linger.

Supporting the South Melbourne Market's vibrancy

South Melbourne Market is one of the major drawcards to the area. Since 1867, South Melbourne Market has been a treasured inner city landmark and a favourite amongst locals and visitors. It is the quintessential village market, a place where people come not only to purchase fresh food, but to meet, eat, drink, shop, discover, share and connect.

A plan is currently being developed to futureproof this thriving village market - the South Melbourne Market Project Connect. It seeks to ensure the Market remains a safe and accessible venue for everyone to enjoy and provide a prosperous environment for trade for many years to come. There are opportunities to create a more welcoming environment by partnering with the Victorian Government to create an open space in between the South Melbourne Market and South Melbourne Station light rail stop.

To support activity along and improve integration with York Street, planning policy will protect solar access along York Street from the western boundary of South Melbourne Market to Cecil Street. Such policy will ensure there are places in South Melbourne have access to sunlight in winter and spring.







Collingwood Yards by SBLA Studio and Fieldwork
(Photographer: Colin Chen)

Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct

Homes Victoria is preparing a master plan to revitalise the Emerald Hill Court public housing estate bound by Dorcas, Moray, Coventry and St Luke streets (Figure 68)

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

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

Partnering with the Victorian Government will provide opportunities to advocate for a new open space at the corner of Coventry Street and Moray Street, integrated community spaces that accommodate flexible uses and support community needs, and provide parking and end-of-trip facilities for bicycles and other micro-mobility devices such as e-scooters.

The master plan boundary includes Skinners Adventure Playground, which is owned by the City of Port Phillip. Opportunities to improve the layout and interface to meet future community needs will be explored. The City of Port Phillip is not disposing of Skinners Adventure playground. It will remain accessible to the community. Council's 10-year financial plan allocates funds towards upgrading Skinners Adventure Playground.

West Gate Freeway undercroft spaces

The undercroft areas under the West Gate Freeway (Figure 69) present a significant barrier between South Melbourne in the City of Port Phillip and Southbank in the City of Melbourne, with their poor amenity diminishing perceptions of safety in the area. Given the undercroft areas are in the City of Melbourne, the City of Port Phillip cannot directly influence outcomes on these sites. However, there are opportunities to advocate to the City of Melbourne, Victorian Government and car park operators to improve the presentation and use of the undercroft.

Advocacy can focus on:

- upgrading lighting and new plantings to create a safer and more pleasant walking experience
- offering to collaborate with stakeholders and explore opportunities for workers in the Enterprise Precinct to park their cars at privately operated car parks
- exploring options for the City of Port Phillip to contribute to improving undercroft areas such as landscaping improvements along abutting streets.



Figure 68 - Emerald Hill housing precinct masterplan area (Source: Homes Victoria).



Figure 69 - Location of West Gate Freeway undercroft spaces.

Actions

Streetscape management plan

4.24 Develop a streetscape management plan for South Melbourne to unify public space character in South Melbourne through the consistent use of materials, planting, lighting and street furniture.

Protecting and interpreting Aboriginal cultural values

4.25 In consultation with Traditional Custodians, support opportunities to embed Aboriginal language, design and names in streets, parks and public buildings, possibly in a streetscape management plan for South Melbourne.

Emerald Hill Master Plan Refresh for South Melbourne Town Hall and surrounds

4.26 Review the existing *Emerald Hill Master Plan 2012* to:

- Identify the actions implemented from the 2012 master plan
- Investigate how the area can become a cultural and community hub that strengthens connections with South Melbourne's creative industries
- Explore options to expand the Town Hall Reserve to create an attractive and vibrant public space
- Seek opportunities to embed Aboriginal language, design and names
- Strengthen connections between Town Hall, the Library and the Police Station as public buildings
- Identify opportunities to activate public areas, namely the Town Hall Reserve, Marshall Street, Daly Street and the Foundry Park, along with identifying opportunities to improve connections between these spaces
- Strengthen landscape and open space connections between the Town Hall on Bank Street and Clarendon Street that encourage greater visitation.

4.27 Seek opportunities for short term activations at the Town Hall Reserve.

Pedestrian priority streetscape upgrades

4.28 Ensure streetscape upgrades for Clarendon Street reinforce its role as the key activity spine of South Melbourne.

4.29 Deliver streetscape upgrades that improve pedestrian priority at:

- Coventry Street between Ferrars Street and Kings Way
- York Street between Ferrars Street and Moray Street.

South Melbourne Market public realm

4.30 Support the delivery of public realm improvements to the interface between the South Melbourne Market and footpath.

4.31 In a planning scheme amendment, include policy to ensure there is no overshadowing on the winter solstice between 11am to 2pm along the northern interface of the South Melbourne Market from the property boundary to the first 6 metres along York Street.

4.32 Advocate to Victorian Government for improvements between South Melbourne Station light rail stop and the South Melbourne Market, improving integration and accessibility.

4.33 Advocate to the Victorian Government to partner with the City of Port Phillip to create a welcoming and integrated open space in between the South Melbourne Market and South Melbourne Station light rail stop.





Terry Spinks Place, Linkcity, London by Turkington Martin and Light Follows Behaviour

Actions

Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct (Emerald Hill Court Estate)

4.34 Work with Homes Victoria and the Victorian Health Building Authority to deliver the Emerald Hill Health and Housing precinct master plan and advocate to:

- Create a new public open space on the corner of Coventry Street and Moray Street that is integrated with the broader future Emerald Hill Housing and Health Precinct
- Deliver an integrated community spaces that accommodate flexible uses and support community needs
- Deliver parking and end-of-trip facilities for bicycles and other micro-mobility devices such as e-scooters
- Preserve existing mature tree canopies and integrate them with new landscaping, given their contribution to biodiversity and reducing the urban heat island effect.

4.35 Work with Homes Victoria and the Victorian Health Building Authority to improve the layout and interface of Skinners Adventure Playground to meet future community needs.

West Gate Freeway undercroft spaces:

4.36 Advocate to the State Government and City of Melbourne to upgrade the West Gate Freeway undercroft spaces, addressing the need to:

- Improve safety and accessibility
- Improve amenity and landscaping
- Identify opportunities for activation
- Ensuring car parking areas cater to worker needs.