



Merri-bek
City Council



Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework
(Brunswick Level Crossing Removals)

April 2023

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

This Urban Design Framework (UDF) showcases opportunities for improving public spaces surrounding the planned Brunswick Level Crossing Removal Project (the 'project'). It's about making sure that the benefits of the project reach beyond just the narrow rail corridor and positively impact the surrounding community and environment.

The UDF explores how Council-owned streets and spaces can make the area greener, cooler, and more water sensitive. It considers how people will move around new station precincts and access the new open spaces and new shared user paths delivered by the project.

By reviewing existing Council plans and policies, analysing the current situation, establishing urban design principles, and developing concept plans for important locations, the UDF identifies ways to extend the public benefits of the project.

The UDF serves as a tool for Council to push for better, expanded public spaces to be delivered by the project, and guides Council's future planning for public realm upgrades in the area. It will also help shape the project's design where it interacts with Council-owned land, ensuring everything fits together smoothly.



Figure 1: Photograph of the Upfield Corridor south of Anstey Station.

1.2. The Brunswick Level Crossing Removal Project

The State Government has announced that it will remove eight level crossings in Brunswick.

The level crossings to be removed are:

- Park Street, Parkville.
- Brunswick Road, Brunswick
- Union Street, Brunswick
- Dawson Street, Brunswick
- Albert Street, Brunswick
- Victoria Street, Brunswick
- Hope Street, Brunswick
- Albion Street, Brunswick

The project will be funded, designed and delivered by the State Government, through their agency – the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP). However, Council has an important role to play in influencing and shaping how the project will be designed.

What we know

Initial public announcements about the project confirm there will be an elevated train line on a new rail bridge, which will meet up with the recently completed elevated section from Coburg to Moreland Stations. A new bike and pedestrian path will be delivered as part of the project, as well as creating around 4 MCGs worth of open space between Parkville and Coburg.

What we don't know

At this stage, there is still much that we don't know about the project design. This includes:

- The number or location of stations, or how the platforms will be accessed.
- The design of the station precincts
- The design of open space areas
- The alignment of new pedestrian and bicycle paths

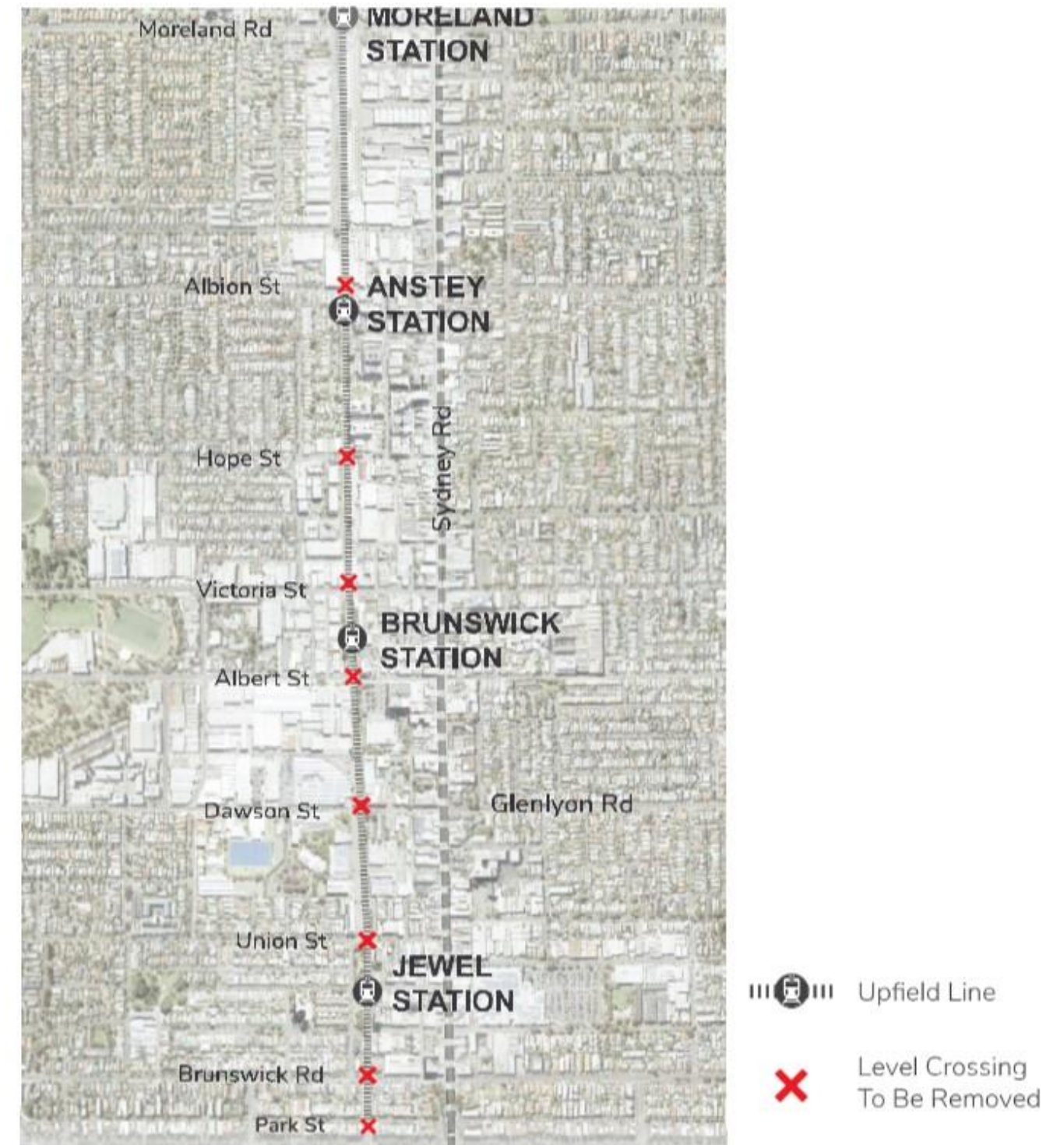
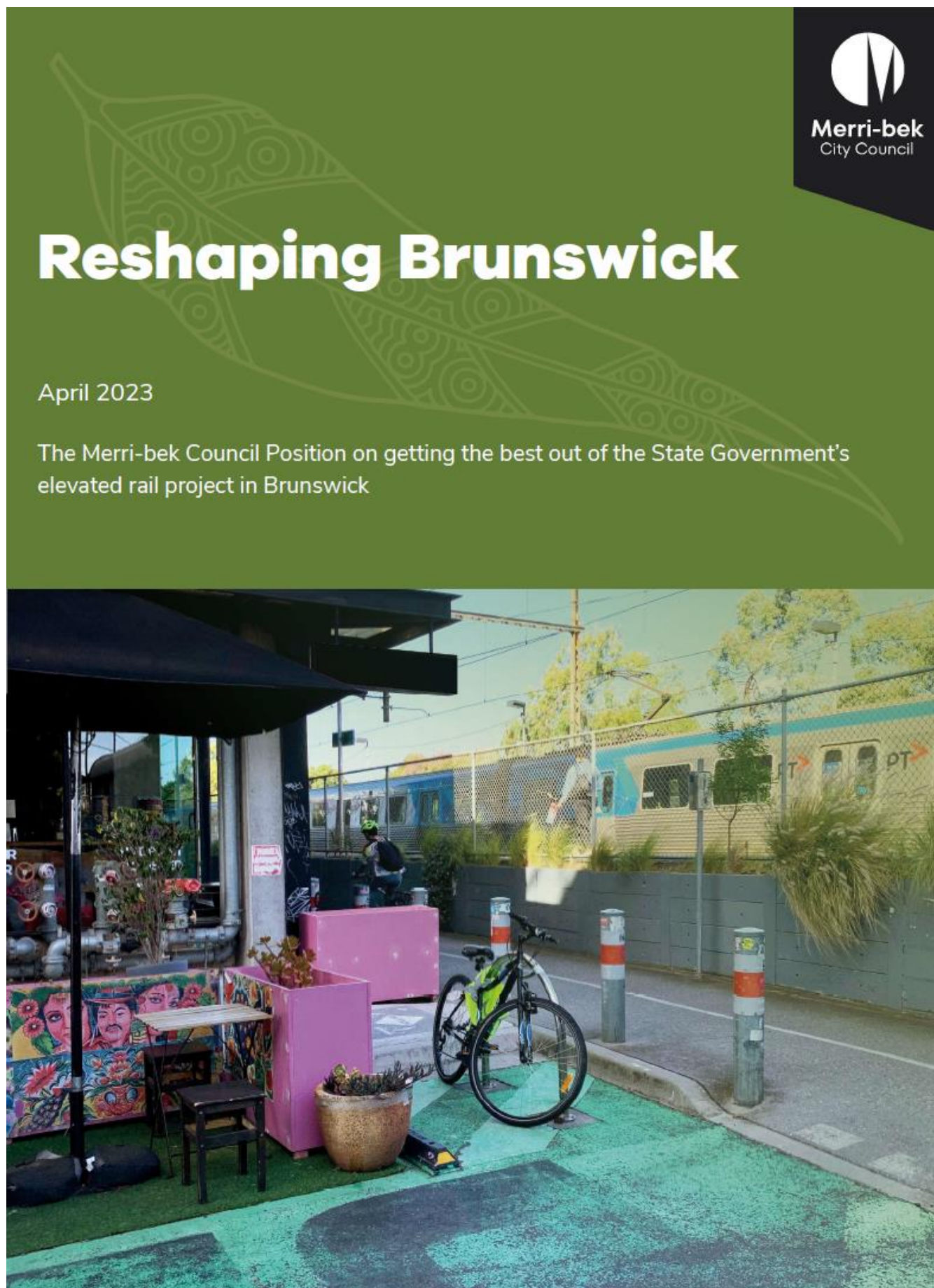


Figure 2: Map showing the location of level crossing to be removed



1.3. Reshaping Brunswick Vision

In early 2023, Council adopted Reshaping Brunswick, its position paper on the Brunswick Level Crossing Removal Project.

Reshaping Brunswick was the result of hundreds of conversations with the people of Brunswick.

They shared their thoughts about the project that will reshape their place, and they had a very high degree of common ground in what they described.

The Brunswick community described a corridor of leafy, cool, green, biodiverse, usable spaces, precincts and paths that work for people of all ages, stages, backgrounds, abilities and interests.

They want design that minimises concrete and built form and maximises trees and sunlight wherever possible.

They want to see people put first, and the needs of those who might be most disadvantaged or excluded prioritised. Especially where their homes, their livelihoods or their ability to safely access public transport are affected.

They want to see Brunswick's unique, rich character, its creative and progressive spirit, and its local history and stories, shine through in the design. They want the project to show leadership in environmental sustainability and an expression of shared responsibility for reconciliation.

They want to see the things they cherish, like existing mature trees, kept wherever possible, and see heritage elements like gatekeepers' cabins and stations protected, celebrated and imaginatively repurposed.

They also want the project to have a galvanising impact on broader revitalisation, to address longstanding local problems, and to create better connected, better managed and more equitable ways of moving around in the broader transport network.

The UDF is Council's plan for this broader urban revitalisation.

Figure 3: Reshaping Brunswick position paper

1.4. The Focus Area

The UDF focuses on Council-owned land and streets within approximately 50 to 100m of the rail corridor. In some cases, the focus area extends further east and west to connect key destinations like Sydney Road, parks, and cultural and educational institutions.

The UDF doesn't directly plan for land owned by the State Government. This area is being designed and delivered by the LXP. Instead, the UDF highlights opportunities for integration between the project area and potential public realm upgrades on surrounding Council-owned land and streets.

The UDF also does not include Sydney Road. Sydney Road is a complex environment with multiple owners and a variety of stakeholders. It requires a large-scale revitalisation, delivered in partnership with the State Government and the many stakeholders. This is outside the limited scope of the UDF.

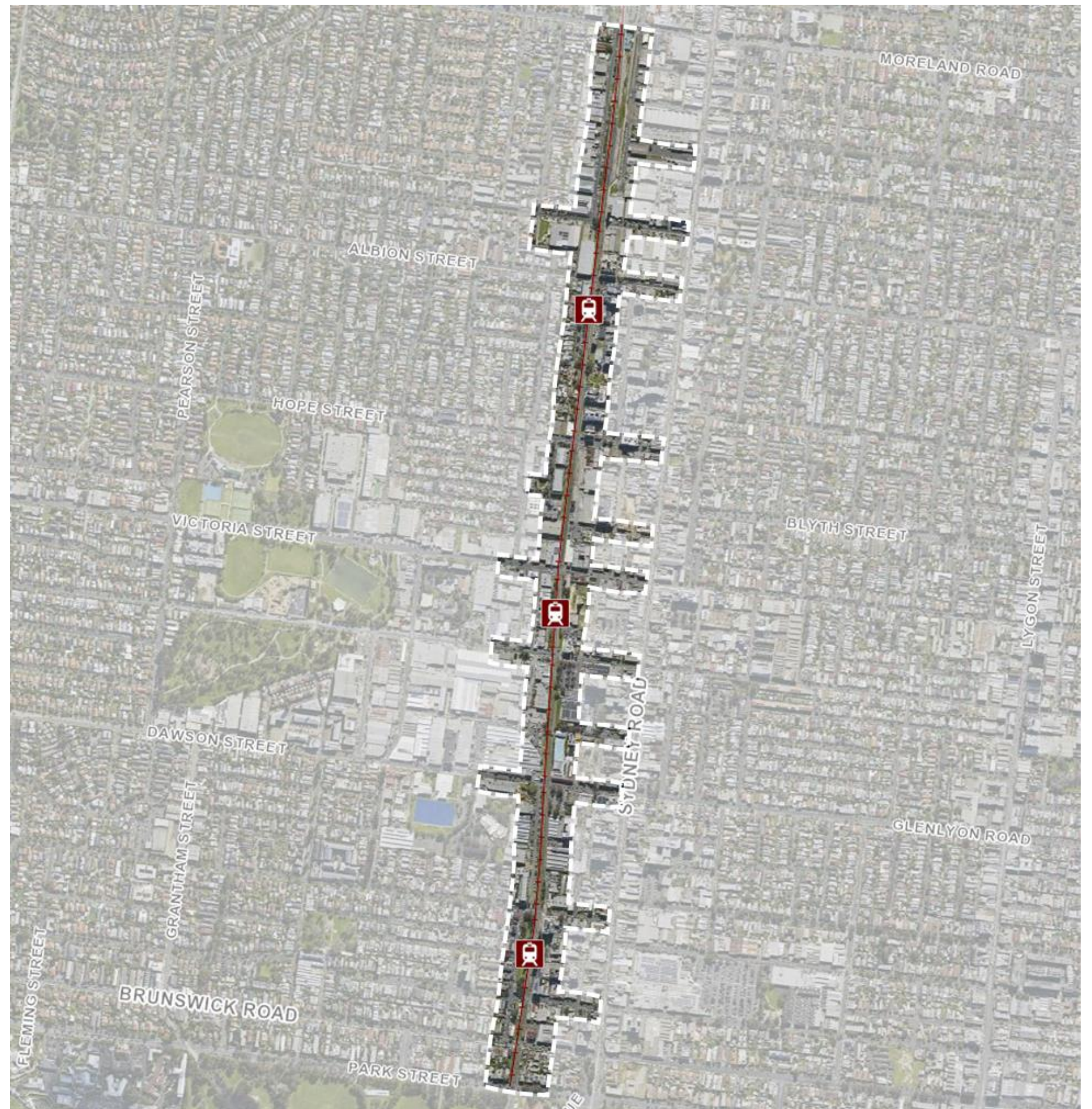


Figure 4: Aerial photo highlighting the focus area for the UDF

1.5. Methodology

The UDF has been prepared before key details about the project are known. This proactive approach will maximise the opportunity to influence the design of the project before designs are locked in. However, not everything can be included in the UDF right now because we don't know the location of the new stations.

To deal with this, the UDF has been divided in two stages:

Stage 1 - Before station locations are known (Current Stage)

The first stage of the UDF:

- Reviews existing Council plans and policies
- Analyses the existing urban context, identifying existing challenges and opportunities for public realm upgrades
- Develops a set of urban design principles for public realm improvements with objectives and strategies for achieving those objectives

Building upon the urban design principles and incorporating feedback from community engagement, concept plans have been prepared showing potential upgrades to streets that terminate at or run parallel with the rail corridor. Although some of these concept designs may be affected by the final location of stations, it is anticipated that many won't require significant revision.

Stage 2 – After station locations are known (Future Stage)

Once the new station locations are known, the UDF will be updated to include:

- Station precinct diagrams, mapping changes to movement and access around the new train stations delivered by the Level Crossing Removal Project
- Streetscape upgrade concept plans for key streets between the new stations and Sydney Road or other key locations. This process will be guided by the Streets for People Framework and community engagement
- Any necessary adjustments to the adjoining site concepts developed in Stage 1

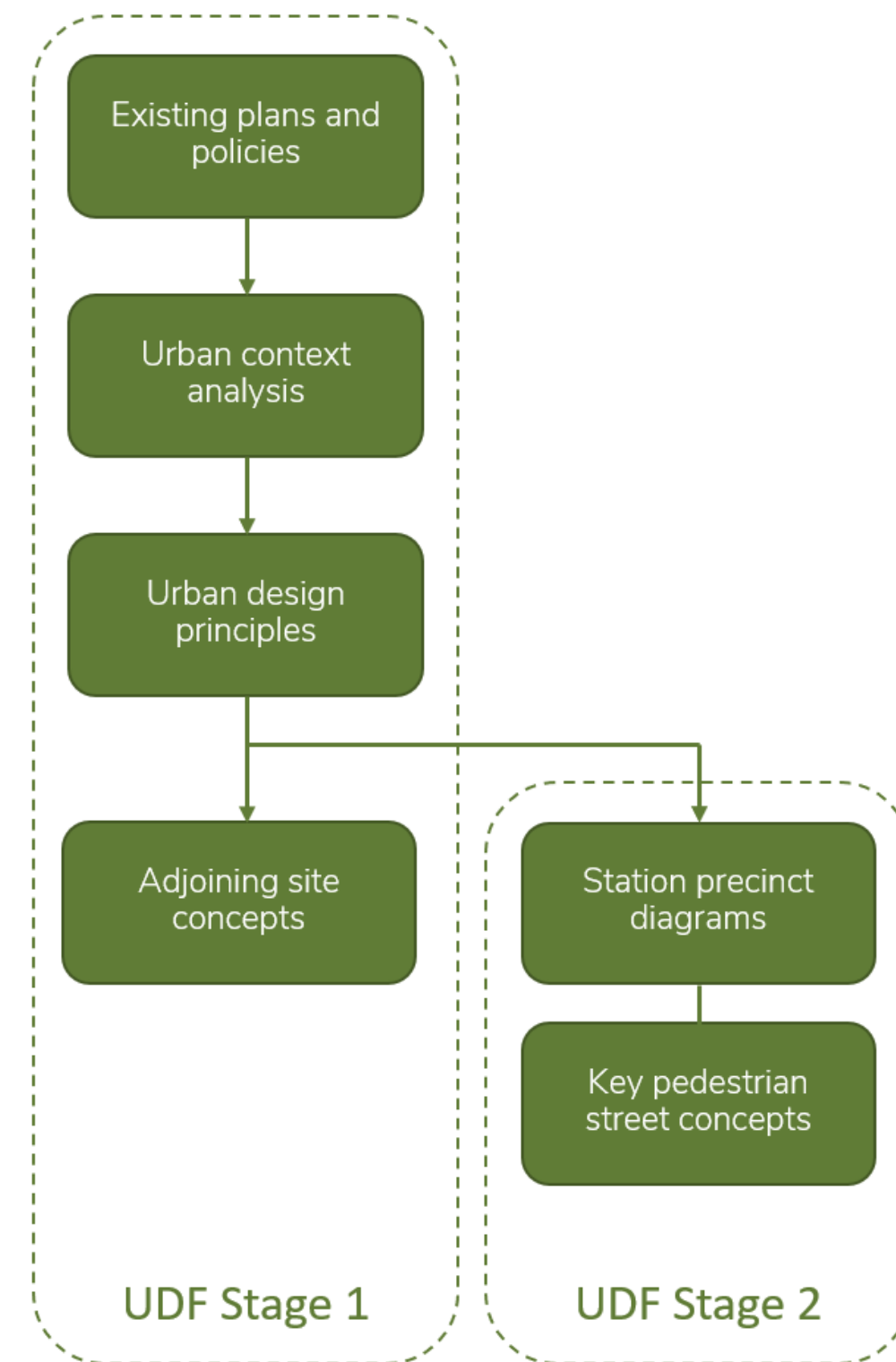


Figure 5: Diagram of UDF staging

1.6. Timing and Delivery

The UDF and associated concept plans are a long-term plan for improvements to public spaces within the focus area.

The improvements will not occur immediately. They are likely to be delivered over multiple years, either during or after the completion of the level crossing removal project.

While the method of delivery remains uncertain, with no funding allocated yet, the UDF will be used to explore several potential delivery options:

Advocate for delivery by the LXR

Council will use the UDF to ask LXR to extend the scope of the project outside the narrow corridor to make more things possible – larger areas of usable open space, improved integrated water management systems, more tree planting, and more space for public art and places with meaning to First Nations people.

Council will also ask the LXR to upgrade any Council land or road space that may be occupied for construction purposes, using the concept plans as a blueprint.

Coordinate private development public realm works

Public realm upgrades are often delivered by private developers when constructing major new developments.

Council will use the UDF to negotiate with private developers through the planning permit process to upgrade the public realm in front of major development sites in accordance with the principles and concept plans in the UDF.

Inform Council capital works program

Council could fund and execute the improvements independently. In this scenario, Council will use the UDF to inform its long-term capital works planning. This would be subject to future budget processes that consider funding priorities across the broader municipality.

Further community engagement is anticipated during future design phases where major upgrades are being delivered by Council.

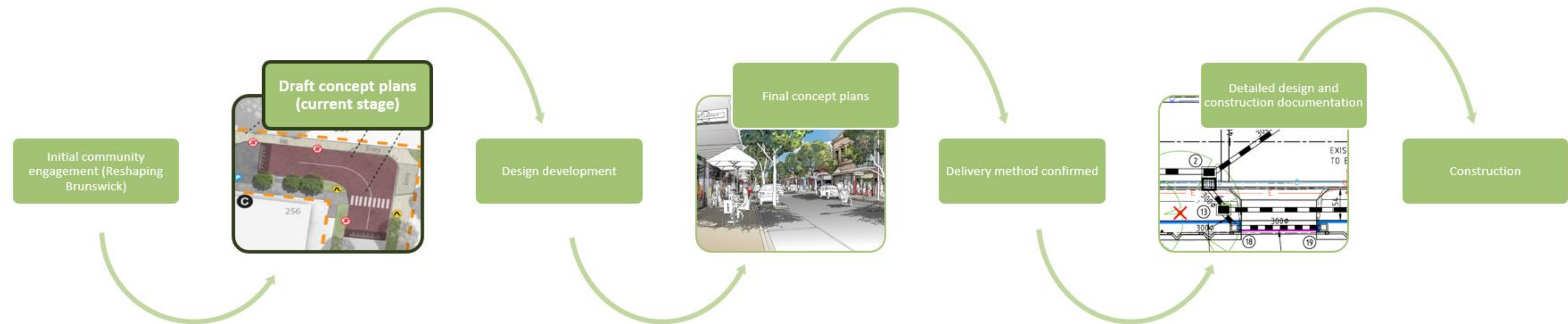


Figure 6: Diagram of potential steps from initial community engagement through to construction

2. Background Documents

The UDF is guided by a range of Council policies, including:

- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Reshaping Brunswick
- The Brunswick Structure Plan (2010) and Addendum (2012)
- Sydney Road and Upfield Corridor Strategic Framework Plan (2014)
- Brunswick Place Action Plan 2017
- Merri-bek Planning Scheme
- Moving Around Merri-bek
- Open Space Strategy and Action Plan (DRAFT)
- Vibrant Brunswick (DRAFT)
- Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2027
- Urban Heat Island Effect Action Plan 2016-2026
- Cooling the Upfield Corridor 2018-2029
- Climate Risk Strategy (2022)
- Zero Carbon Merri-bek Framework + Action Plan
- Integrated Water Management Strategy 2040 – Towards a Water Sensitive City (2020)
- Integrated Water Management Action Plan 2020-2025
- Merri-bek Nature Plan
- Human Rights Policy
- Parking Management Policy 2019
- Arts and Culture Strategy 2023-2030
- Public Lighting Policy
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-26
- Merri-bek Technotes October (2022)

Key background documents and their relevance to the UDF are summarised on the following pages.

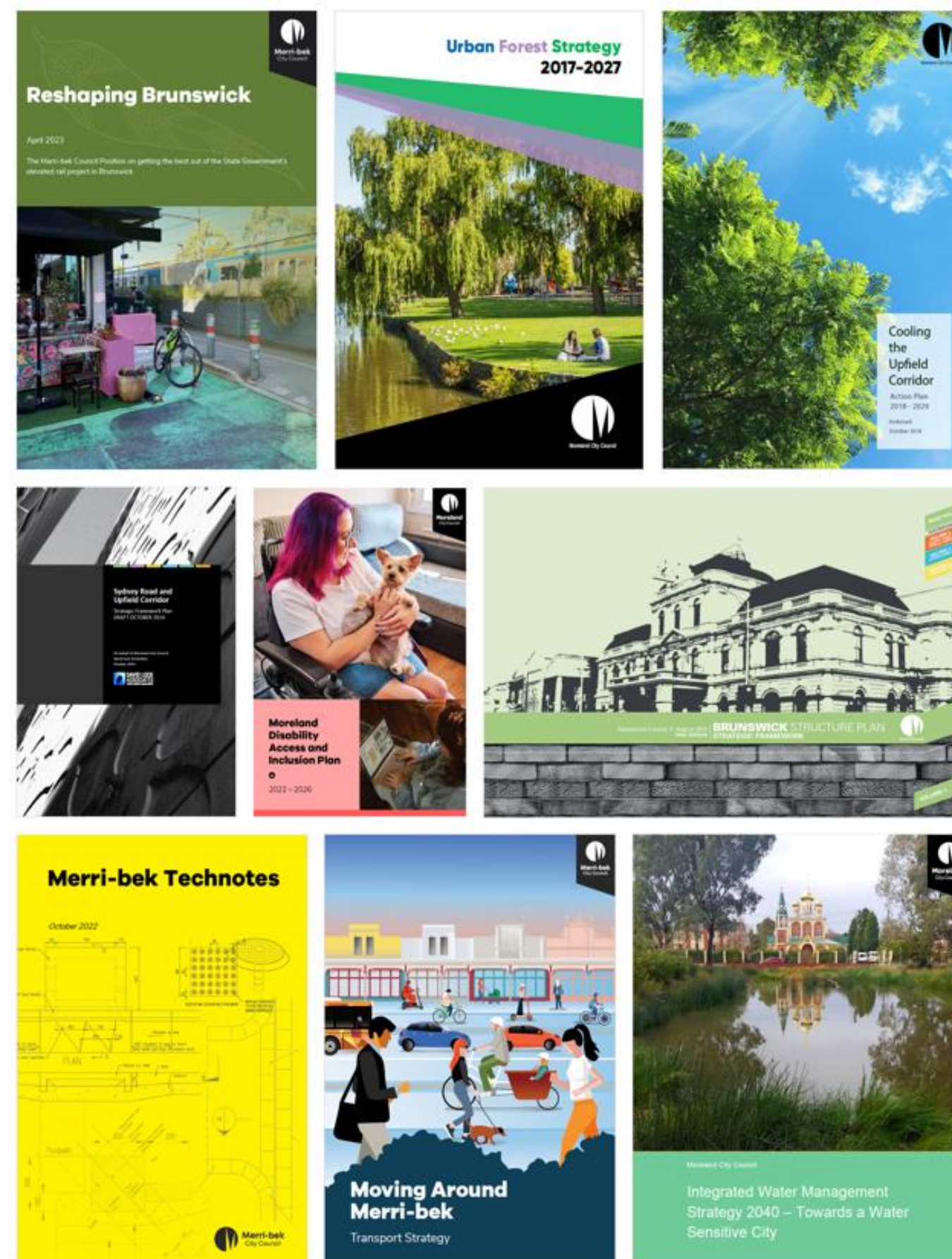


Figure 7: Various background documents

2.1. Brunswick Structure Plan & Sydney Road and Upfield Corridor Strategic Framework Plan

This UDF builds upon previous strategic planning work undertaken through the Brunswick Structure Plan (2010), Brunswick Structure Plan Addendum (2012) and Sydney Road and Upfield Corridor Strategic Framework Plan (2014).

Key themes

While the focus of these documents was to provide strategic support for the implementation of permanent planning controls, there are areas of relevance for the UDF, including the identification of key pedestrian streets, potential new linkages and landmark buildings.

What this means for the UDF

The previously identified Key Pedestrian Streets are:

- Albion Street
- Victoria Street
- Albert Street
- Union Street
- Barkly Street
- Florence Street
- Wilkinson Street
- Dawson Street
- Wilson Avenue
- Brunswick Road

Florence Street, Wilkinson Street and Wilson Avenue were nominated as Key Pedestrian Streets because they provide direct access to the three existing stations. These streets may not hold the same importance once the project is complete, with stations potentially in different locations. The UDF will provide an updated list of Key Pedestrian Streets once station locations are known.

The identified landmark buildings were:

- Brunswick Town Hall
- The spire of the Brunswick Uniting Church at 340 Sydney Road.
- The chimney of the old liquorice factory site at 342-348 Victoria Street
- Brunswick Markets
- The spire of the Christ Church Brunswick at 8 Glenlyon Road;

The UDF considers the role these buildings play in potential public realm upgrades, and whether there are other landmark buildings that should be included.

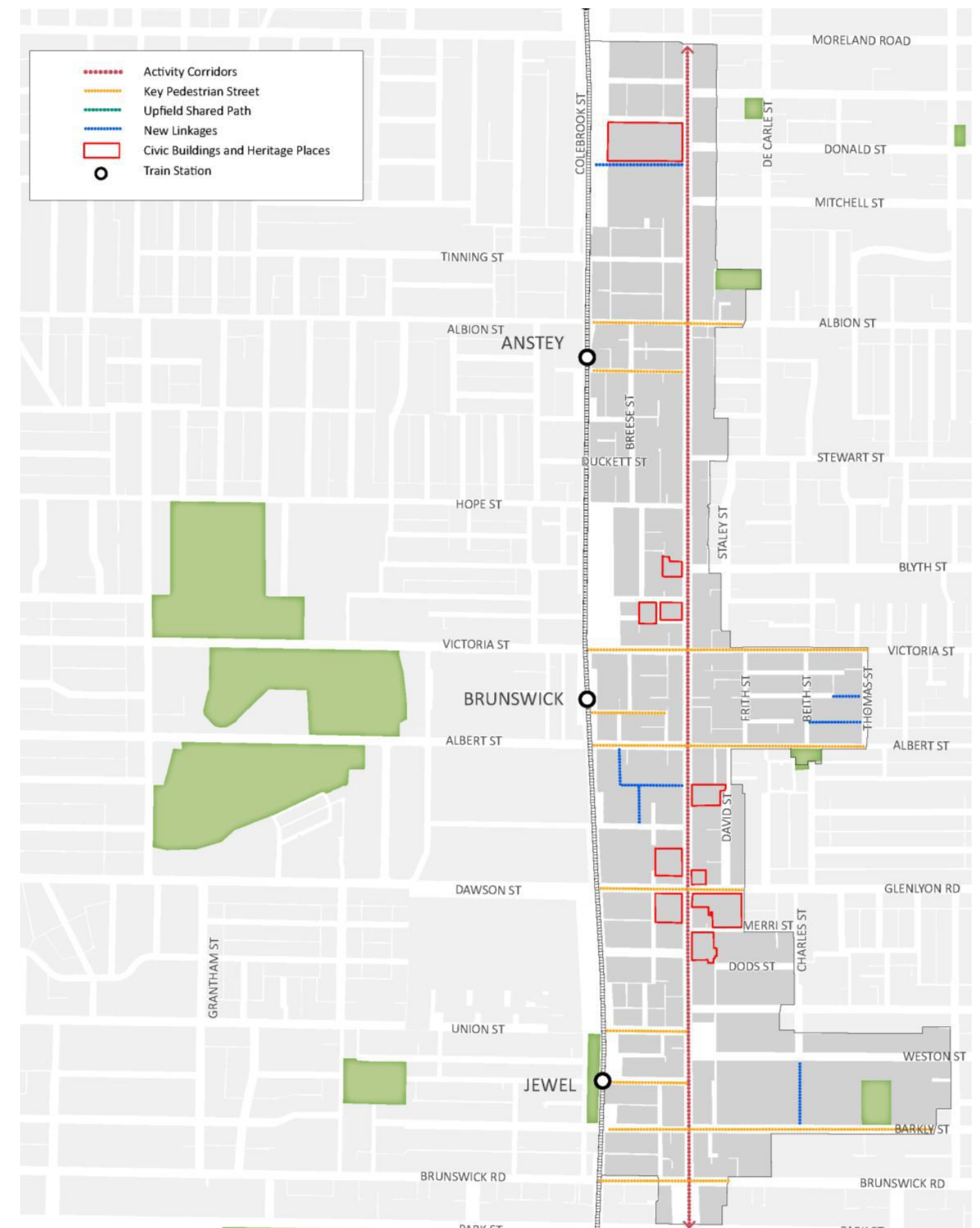


Figure 8: Key pedestrian streets and new linkages identified in the Upfield Corridor Strategic Framework Plan (2014)

2.2. Moving Around Merri-bek

Moving Around Merri-bek is a long-term strategic document that guides the way Council manages and makes changes to Merri-bek's transport system.

Key Themes

This document outlines a new approach to delivering transport and streetscape improvements, called "Streets for People".

Movement and Place is the first step in applying the Streets for People framework. We will classify streets based on the role each street plays in the wider network, for both its movement function and its place function. We do this because the approach we will take and the design options available depend on the role the street plays, and this may change depending on the location of new stations.

More information about the Movement and Place Framework can be found [here](#).

The second step is a Healthy Streets Assessment, which applies a people-centred approach to how a street functions. This assessment takes a holistic view of the different elements that make a street 'healthy' for the people who use it.

Using the Movement and Place classification and the Healthy Streets Assessment, we will identify opportunities to improve the street.

In addition to the elements outlined in the Healthy Streets Framework, we will also consider:

- Pedestrian improvements
- Cycling improvements
- Driving access
- Public transport stops
- Trees and greening
- Streetscape enhancements
- Parking (including accessible parking, loading zones, EV charging, etc)

More information about the Healthy Streets framework can be found [here](#).

What this means for the UDF

In the next stage of the UDF, once station locations are known, the Streets for People framework will be used to develop station precinct diagrams and streetscape upgrade concepts.



Figure 9: Movement and Place Framework diagram



Figure 10: Healthy Streets assessment diagram

2.3. Open Space Strategy

Note: this strategy is being considered for adoption at the April 2024 Council meeting.

If adopted, this strategy sets out a vision for open space in Merri-bek:

We envision our open spaces to be welcoming and accessible for everyone. We recognise that a resilient, biodiverse and safe open space network is integral to the environment and the health and wellbeing of our community.

We honour the deep spiritual connection, belonging and identity our First Nations people and Traditional Owners have with open space. We recognise the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the traditional owners of this land and waterways, today known as Merri-bek.

Key themes

The Strategy has five key directions:

- Providing parks close to home and enhancing existing open spaces
- Having a mix of open spaces and open space experiences
- Ensuring our open space network is adaptive, biodiverse, cooling, healthy and resilient
- Providing open space for everyone
- Improving access to our open space network through better links, corridors and collaborations.

It addresses and analyses the key influences, challenges, and emerging trends impacting Merri-bek’s open space network.

The Strategy is supported by a background technical report that analyses the quantity, quality and distribution of the existing open space network. It anticipates population growth and undertakes a gap analysis to identify areas of open space need for each suburb in Merri-bek.

One of the key themes for Brunswick is the already high population and worker density, which is expected to continue to grow, with a high proportion of that residential growth occurring in apartments. This will continue to place pressure on the existing open space, despite the construction of new spaces in recent years including Garrong Park, Bulleke-bek Park and new projects at 260 Sydney Road and 1 Frith Street.

What this means for the UDF

This Strategy offers strategic and evidence-based reasoning for establishing new open spaces and extending existing ones along the rail corridor. It creates opportunities for designing these spaces to address specific needs, such as providing additional play areas or off-leash dog parks conveniently located near residents' homes.



Figure 11: Bulleke-bek Park (credit: Simon Aubor)

The UDF will contribute to implementing the following actions from the Open Space Strategy 2024/25 Action Plan:

Action	Action and description
	Ongoing Actions
1.4	Create new open spaces, including pocket open spaces and neighbourhood open spaces, within existing Council owned land such as the streetscape / urban realm / repurposing streets and car parking.
	2025-2029 Actions
2.11	Prepare a Civic Spaces Action Plan for Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy Activity Centres which: • Develops key principles and criteria to guide the location of civic spaces in Merri-bek's key activity centres in a place-based way and complementary with the Streets for People approach in Council's Transport Strategy and Open Space Strategy include: • Identifies locations for new or improved civic spaces to inform future land acquisition and capital works plans • Builds on existing structure plans and streetscape master plans for Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy

Table 1: Relevant actions from the Open Space Strategy 2024/25 Action Plan

2.4. Urban Heat Island Effect Action Plan 2016-2026 & Cooling the Upfield Corridor 2018-2029

The Urban Heat Island Effect (UHIE) occurs in built up areas where concrete, asphalt and buildings have replaced the natural landscape such as grasses and trees. The surfaces in built up areas absorb heat from the sun and then slowly release this heat at night. This causes cities to become warmer than the surrounding country areas. These plans are Council's long-term commitment to responding to the UHIE.

Key Themes

The Upfield Corridor is an identified priority area for UHIE mitigation action. Brunswick is an important gathering place for residents and visitors alike, however the dense urban environment means it has some of the hottest surface temperatures within Merri-bek. This is expected to become more intense in future years due to climate change.

The Cooling the Upfield Corridor Action Plan identifies the following relevant themes, objectives, and strategies to address this issue:

Theme: Streets for people Objective: Re-allocate space within existing streetscapes to create new landscaped areas, whilst maintaining accessibility. Strategies: • Increase tree canopy cover to provide more shade along pedestrian and cycling routes. • Identify underutilised spaces for re-purposing into places for people.	Theme: Planting in side streets Objective: Increase tree maintenance and tree canopy cover within the side streets off Sydney Road. Strategies: • Improve pedestrian environments through considered landscape planting. • Connect community spaces and places for pedestrians and cyclists.
Theme: Utilising Council owned land Objective: Harness opportunities to add landscaping on Council owned land. Embed best practice to reduce UHIE into every project. Strategies: • Improve pedestrian environments through considered landscape planting. • Connect community spaces and places for pedestrians and cyclists	Theme: Additional interventions Objective: Harness future opportunities to cool the Upfield Corridor via additional intervention projects. Strategies: • Seek grant funding, external partnerships and prepare business cases to support additional intervention projects to be delivered.

What this means for the Urban Design Framework

The UDF represents a significant opportunity to mitigate the UHIE along the Upfield Corridor. Incorporating the above strategies into the concept plans public realm upgrades can create cooler and greener spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy, offering shelter, refuge, and relief on hot days. A review of key pedestrian priority streets can also ensure key destinations are connected by cool routes, supporting the use of active transport even on hot days.

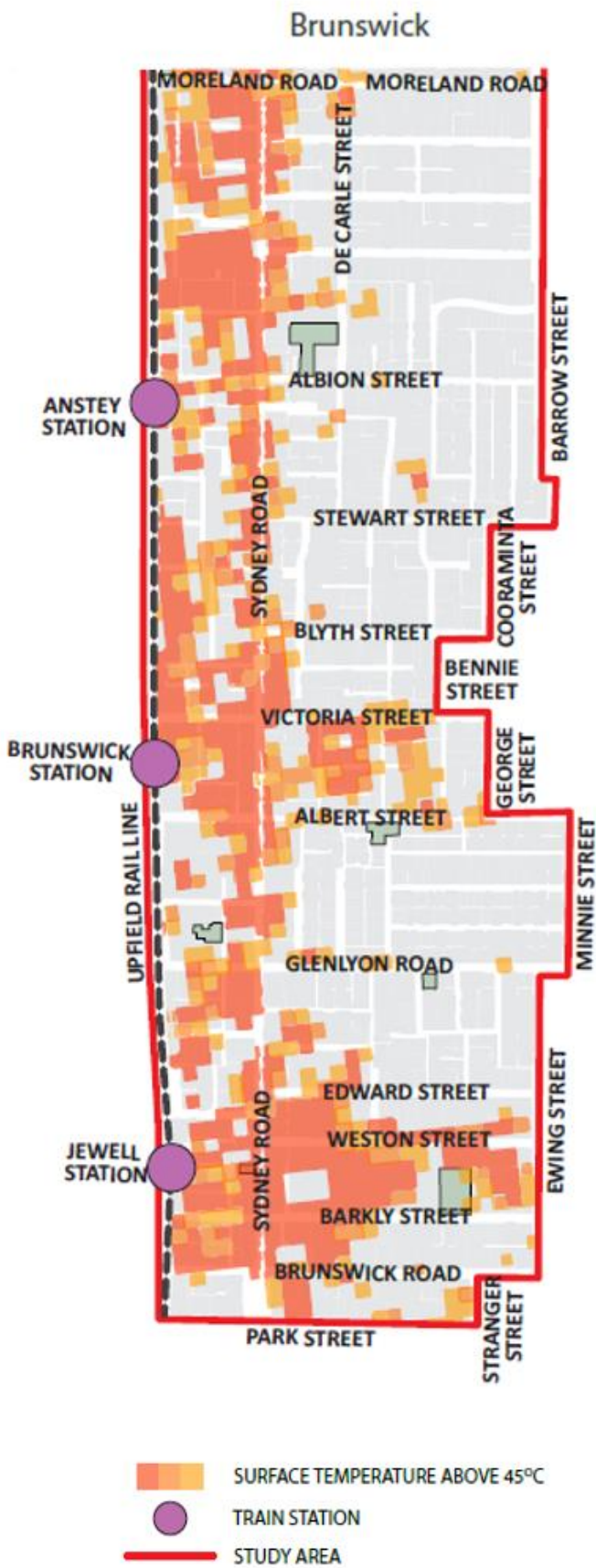


Figure 12: Heat mapping of the Upfield Corridor, recorded 10am, 14 January 2014

2.5. Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2027

This strategy was developed to deliver practical measures that guide the sustainable planning, planting, management, resourcing and protection of vegetation across Merri-bek.

The vision of this document is:

To promote and encourage the transformation of Merri-bek into a municipality where healthy trees and vegetation are a core part of the urban environment.

Key themes

Trees and vegetation in the urban landscapes provide many environmental, health and economic benefits (see Figure 9).

However, canopy cover on private land is declining due to urban consolidation, so an increase in park and street tree planting will be required to achieve Council's canopy cover objectives (see Figure 10).

What this means for the UDF

The Urban Forest Strategy includes the follow strategies that can be incorporated into the UDF:

- Integrate greening opportunities with all relevant Council capital works projects and initiatives to ensure the strategy complements other aligned organisational plans and strategies supporting community, environmental and economic wellbeing.
- Plant larger, longer lived canopy trees where appropriate.
- Adjust species selection and maintenance practices to ensure future climate resilience of the urban forest.

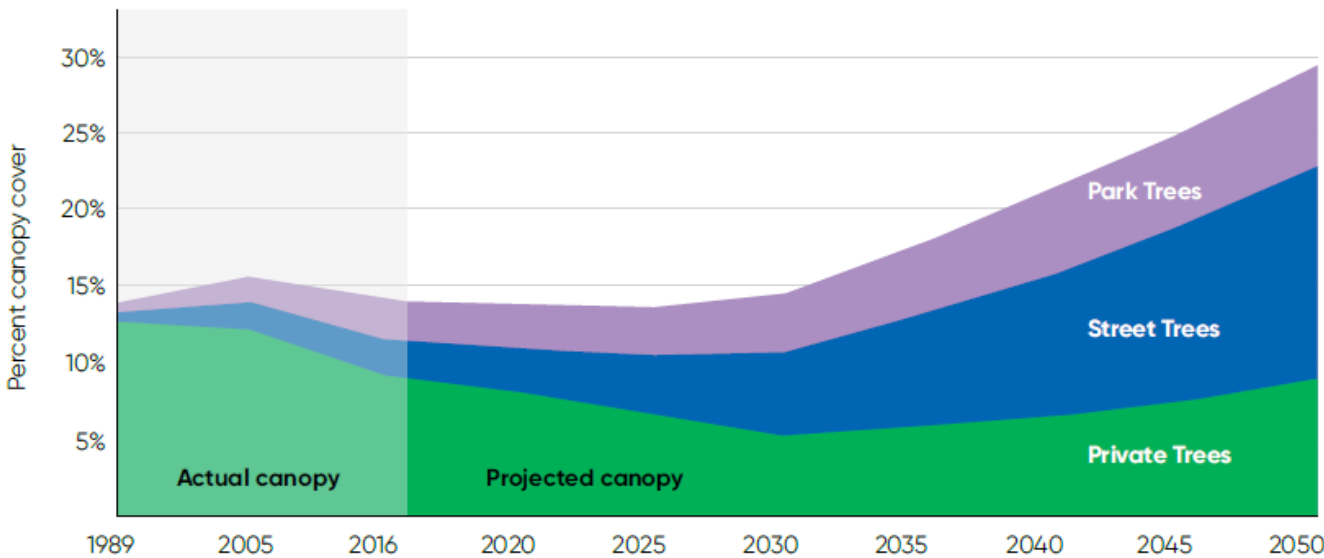


Figure 13: Historical and projected canopy cover in Merri-bek, Urban Forest Strategy 2017-2027

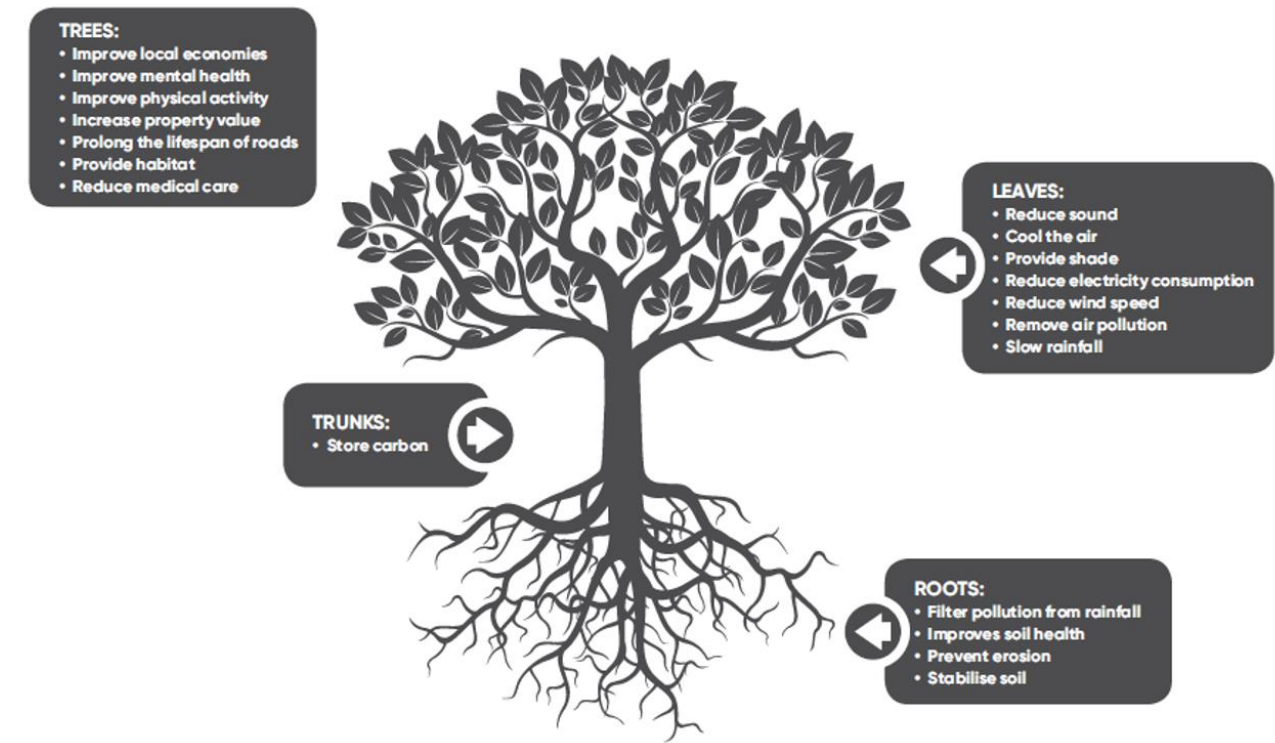


Figure 14: Benefits of trees



Figure 15: Street trees (green dots) within the focus area and surrounds

2.6. Intergrated Water Management Strategy 2040

Merri-bek is committed to becoming a water sensitive city. Our vision is:

A liveable city where we take good care of our waterways and make the most of our precious water resources. We keep our open spaces resilient to climate change impacts and, enhance urban and natural environments and support community health and wellbeing. Council leads by example and working together with our key partners, supports community actions to become a water sensitive city.

Key themes

There are many pressures on Merri-bek’s water resources and waterways, including population growth, drought, past and present development, pollution and climate change.

The changing climate patterns in Melbourne, characterised by longer and more extreme droughts, increased temperatures, intensified storm bursts, and flash flooding, pose significant challenges to the city's resilience and necessitate adaptations across the community, infrastructure, and natural environment.

Urban stormwater is a threat to the health and quality of our waterways. Runoff from hard surfaces not only carries pollutants but creates stormwater flow problems. Our stormwater network was designed at a time when these problems were not well understood, and we must now work to protect and enhance our waterways. This requires finding alternative ways to manage stormwater runoff from our public spaces, including permeable open space, vegetation cover, rainwater tanks, stormwater harvesting and intentionally keeping water in the landscape

Improving stormwater management not only protects our waterways but also presents an opportunity to bolster the local environment by offering passive irrigation to sustain our urban forest and minimising water usage during periods of scarcity.

What this means for the UDF

There is an opportunity to include Water Sensitive Urban Design in future public realm upgrades within the focus area.

Identifying underutilised road space alongside the rail corridor may assist in collaboration with LXP to implement water management solutions spanning both project area and Council land, creating additional usable open space elsewhere within the project area.

The Strategy includes an Action Plan for the years 2020-2025 and the UDF will contribute to achieving the following actions:

Action	Action and description
	2020-2025 Actions
2.1	Investigate the inclusion of passive irrigation systems for all newly planted council trees as part of capital works (e.g. tree planting program) to support tree health and canopy density to increase cooling.
2.8	Investigate the inclusion of WSUD/Passive irrigation in urban streets - particularly as part of road surface, drainage renewal and carpark renewal
4.3	Plan and deliver street scale WSUD through all relevant capital projects



Figure 16: Water Sensitive Urban Design at Montmorency station (Source: Banyule City Council)

3. Urban Context Analysis

The urban context for the Upfield Corridor has been described in various background documents. This section summarises previous analysis and provides updates where the urban context has continued to evolve, identifying challenges and opportunities.

The focus of this analysis is on the public realm and informs the urban design principles, precinct diagrams and potential public realm upgrade works outlined in the UDF.



Figure 17: Duckett Street, Brunswick

3.1. Land use

Land use in Brunswick is undergoing a significant shift. Many areas are transitioning from industrial to mixed-use, with multi-storey buildings that have ground floor commercial spaces and apartments above. These buildings are interspersed with remnant industrial sites poised for future redevelopment. Some areas are specifically designated to remain as commercial, industrial, and other employment generating land uses, to accommodate future job growth. The civic and cultural precinct centred around Sydney Road and Glenlyon Road contains key public buildings and institutions, including Brunswick Town Hall, the Mechanics Institute, and educational facilities like RMIT campus and Brunswick Secondary College. Additionally, the Brunswick Design District, a collaborative initiative between RMIT University, Merri-bek City Council, and Creative Victoria, aims to support and nurture creative entrepreneurship in the area. Redevelopment of the iconic 33 Saxon Street site into a vibrant cultural and community hub is underway.

Challenges for public realm upgrades

- Retention of heavy vehicle access to existing industrial land uses and other businesses to ensure ongoing viability.
- Vehicle access to future development sites affects timing of streetscape upgrades, such as at Florence Street.
- Factories and warehouses with wide crossovers impact on pedestrian amenity, quality of footpaths and available space for trees and planting in streetscapes.
- Limited space around the outdoor pool at Brunswick Baths.

Opportunities for public realm upgrades

- Require streetscape upgrades to be delivered by developers when constructing major developments.
- Consider opportunities for artwork in the design of public realm upgrades to reinforce the role of Brunswick Design District.
- Upgrade Phoenix Street east of the rail line to better connect people with the new cultural and community hub at 33 Saxon Street
- Advocate to LXP and the State Government to allow Brunswick Baths to expand into the rail corridor to provide more space around the pool.
- Redevelopment of Council-owned car parks at 797-801 Sydney Road and 7-11 Dawson Street.

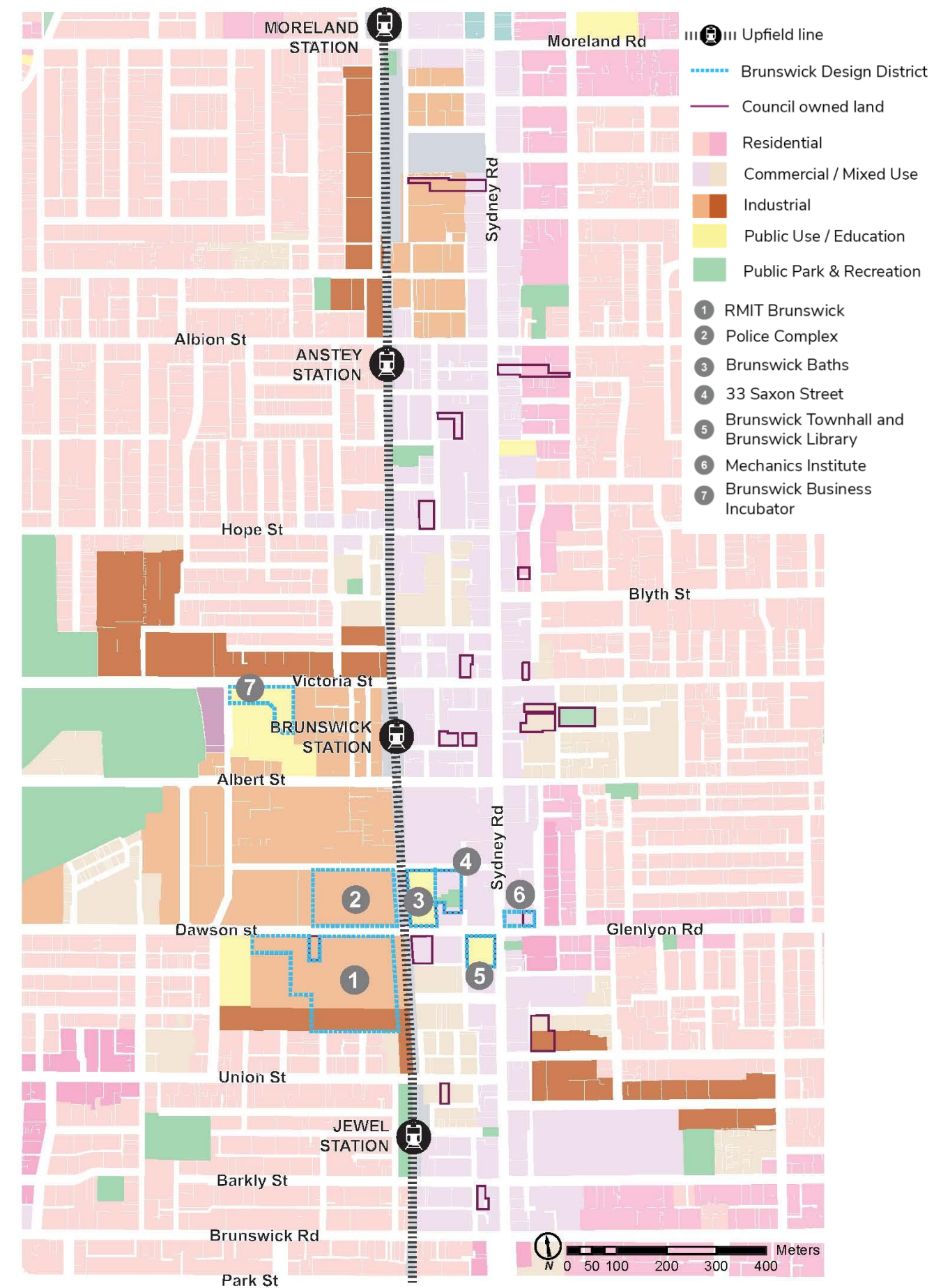


Figure 18: Land Use and Zoning along the Upfield Corridor, Brunswick



Figure 19: Artist's impression of the new 33 Saxon Street, pink dots are a placeholder for artwork (under construction)

3.2. Built form, character and heritage

Brunswick's industrial legacy is evident in its extensive use of brick in building design, complemented by its unique bluestone laneways and their modern interpretation of sawn bluestone paving around key civic areas.

Buildings are often sited right on the street edge, which means the spaces between buildings, usually street space, have a really important role in providing for open space, landscaping, and access to natural light.

There are a number of notable landmarks within the focus area that contribute to the character of Brunswick and act as reference points for orientation and wayfinding. The Brunswick Uniting Church spire opposite Michael Street, the iconic liquorice factory chimney opposite Brunswick Station, and the recent addition of the Jacinda Ardern silo artwork off Tinning Street all contribute the neighbourhood's historical and cultural significance.

The area has a dense, urban character with extensive hard surfaces and minimal landscaping, including both canopy tree cover and lower-level planting. This contributes to the urban heat island effect and increases stormwater runoff.

Challenges for public realm upgrades

- A mix of materials that have been applied over the years resulting in inconsistent public realm treatments.
- The existing streets present a harsh environment for trees to grow in, with hard surfaces that prevent passive irrigation and compacted soil in trafficable areas that limit tree growth.
- The typically high site coverage of developments and small private open spaces means streets need to perform important functions in addition to access and movement – providing shade, open space, managing stormwater, and places for people to relax and socialise.

Opportunities for public realm upgrades

- Identify, maintain and celebrate view lines to historic or landmark buildings.
- Increase consistency in material selection through application of the Merri-bek Technotes.
- Tree planting may be provided within the road reserve, either central median or between parking bays.
- Maximise opportunities for passive irrigation to new landscaping.
- Consider the use of structural soil and permeable paving in appropriate locations to promote tree growth.



Figure 20: Jacinda Ardern silo mural

3.3. Public open space

Since the Upfield Corridor Strategic Framework Plan (2014), there has been significant Council investment in open space within the upfield corridor and surrounding area.

Council's A Park Close to Home Program has seen the development of Garrong Park, Bullekebek Park and new projects at 260 Sydney Road and 1 Frith Street.

Smaller interventions such as the Saxon Lane public space next to the Brunswick Library, Town Hall forecourt upgrade, Mechanics Institute forecourt upgrade, Saxon Street Gardens (under construction) and Florence Street pop-up park have also contributed to the increased open space in the area.

Despite the development of new spaces, the pressure on existing open space will increase as Brunswick undergoes substantial growth in both residential and workforce populations. With 30,287 residents in 2021 projected to increase by 34% to 40,687 by 2041, and a workforce of 14,153 individuals in 2021 expected to grow by 26% to 17,858 workers by 2041, there will be an ongoing demand for more open space.

Challenges for public realm upgrades

- Significant and continued urban densification, and the growth in apartment living, increases the pressure on existing open spaces and the need to address reduced private open space
- High cost of purchasing land for the creation of new open space.

Opportunities for public realm upgrades

- Create a new pocket park in the vicinity of Ballarat Street to meet the needs of urban densification and close an open space gap identified in the Open Space Strategy.
- Advocate to the LXRP for the inclusion of dog park facilities to be included within the project area, as identified in the gap analysis of Council's Open Space Strategy.
- Provide a play space with Craig and Seeley Park to close a functional gap identified in Council's Open Space Strategy.
- Repurpose existing Council controlled road space to enlarge existing and proposed open spaces, to increase the opportunity for a variety of activities with open spaces.
- Increase the diversity of scale, infrastructure, form, and character of public open spaces close to where people live and work.
- Provide more places for visitors to stop and rest, spending more time in the activity centre and supporting local businesses.
- Provide opportunities for access to nature and natural elements including water.
- Integrate opportunities for new publicly accessible spaces delivered through major private developments.
- Advocate to the LXRP for VicTrack land adjacent to the rail corridor to be converted to open space and integrated into the project.

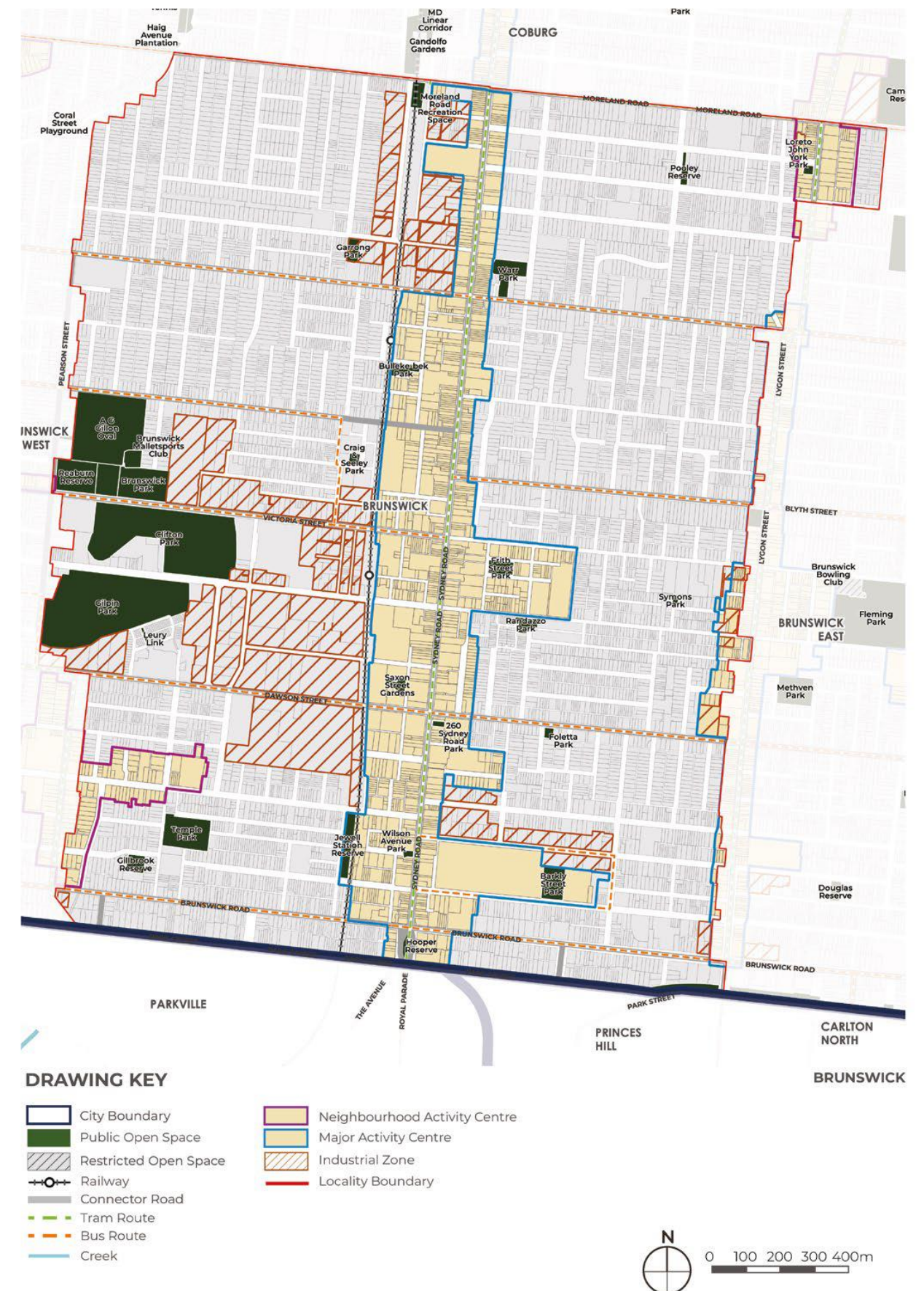


Figure 21: Brunswick, Existing Open Space Network, Merri-bek Open Space Strategy (2024) (Draft)

3.4. Movement and connectivity

Brunswick is a dense, walkable neighbourhood with a high proportion of trips made by walking or cycling. The Upfield Shared User Path is a major cycling route and part of the Strategic Cycling Corridor identified by the State Government. The area is also well serviced by public transport, with Sydney Road trams, the Upfield Train Line and multiple east-west bus routes. We know that as the population of Brunswick grows, more trips will need to be made using active transport and public transport, because the existing road space can't be expanded to accommodate more cars.

The current ground-level rail line is a physical barrier to east-west active transport but elevating it will make getting around easier with shorter travel distances to key destinations. However, many of the existing connections between stations, the Shared User Path and important destinations have poor accessibility, falling short of Council's vision for an inclusive and accessible city for everyone to enjoy.

Challenges for public realm upgrades

- Accessibility issues caused by uneven surfaces, limited pram ramps, and narrow footpaths with power poles or other obstructions.
- Some older dwellings have no off-street parking and rely on on-street parking, limiting space within the roadway for tree planting, WSUD and active transport infrastructure.
- Some streets are extremely narrow, like Albion Street and Hope Street.

Opportunities for public realm upgrades

- New public open space could be created in road space not required for vehicle access.
- Streets that already terminate at the rail line could be further closed with minimal disruption to vehicle traffic.
- Wide streets, such as Barkly Street, are prime opportunities to establish new public open areas.
- Potential to create shared zones where current footpath widths are inadequate, recognising that people already often walk on the street and formalising this arrangement.
- Enhance lighting infrastructure to improve the safety of people moving around at night.
- Implement improved wayfinding systems to direct residents to destinations like Garrong Park and 33 Saxon Street.
- Plan for new east-west pedestrian and cycling connections beneath the elevated rail structure
- Explore the potential for a new connection south of the tram depot through the Council-owned car park, improving connectivity between Sydney Road the rail corridor between Albion Street to Moreland Road.
- Create green and cool routes between key destinations to support active transport even on hot days.



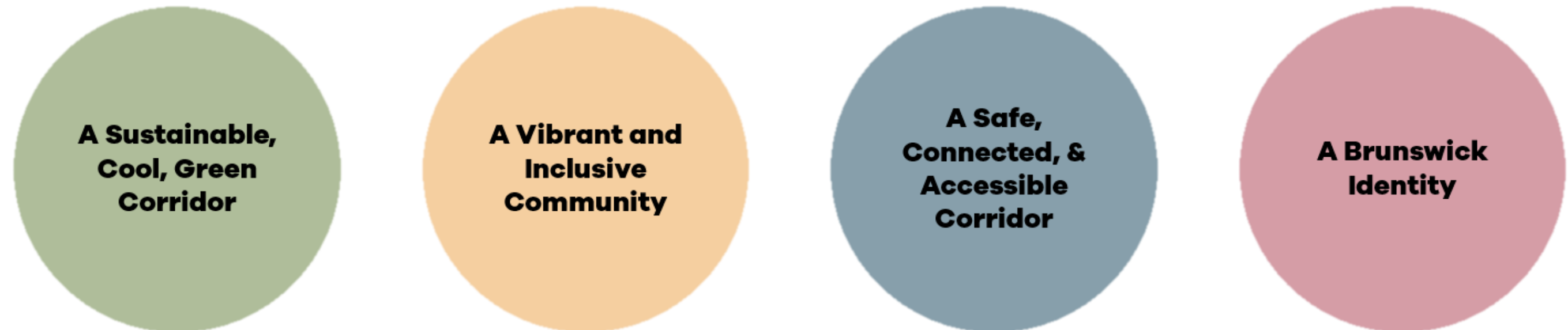
Figure 22: Key Movement Network, Upfield Corridor, Brunswick

4. Public Realm Design Principles

The following principles and strategies have been developed to guide the potential public realm upgrades that will complement the Brunswick level crossing removal project.

The starting point for these principles is the community vision for the Brunswick Level Crossing Removal Project, developed through consultation on Council's position paper, Reshaping Brunswick.

From there, they have been adapted to apply to public realm upgrades and expanded with specific strategies to achieve the vision of a broader revitalisation



Principle A: A Sustainable, Cool, Green Corridor

Objective: Enhance environmental sustainability and mitigate the Urban Heat Island Effect

Strategies:

A1	Increase Tree Canopy - Retain existing trees on Council owned land adjoining the rail corridor wherever possible - Plant new canopy trees within existing road space, prioritising species selection and location to maximise shading benefits - Replace existing unsuccessful street trees or those that provide limited shade with larger, climate-resilient species - Identify opportunities where overhead power lines may be bundled or placed underground to accommodate larger trees - Consider the use of structural soils in locations where trees are planting in trafficable locations	A4	Create a Water Sensitive City - Explore ways to hold water in the landscape for greening and cooling and release it to the stormwater network more slowly, including passive irrigation for new trees, stormwater harvesting to irrigate open spaces, and wicking systems for lawns - Integrate WSUD interventions into open spaces as features which are visible and enjoyable, creating opportunities to inform and educate communities about water sensitive design benefits and the need to maintain sustainable landscapes - Consider the wider catchment area to understand flows, water quality, flood risk issues and ensure any works meet Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines stormwater quality targets as a minimum
A2	Depave - Strategically remove unnecessary impervious surfaces to promote water penetration and absorption - Mitigate the Urban Heat Island Effect by minimising areas of high thermal mass materials like concrete and bitumen	A5	Increase Biodiversity - Select plant species to provide habitats that respond to the climate and biodiversity crisis - Incorporate new planting with a range of plant structures, vegetation heights and pollinator attracting varieties to increase biodiversity - Plant a diverse range of tree species to increase tree canopy cover to optimise shade benefits and related environmental services. - Enhance habitat features – include boulders, logs, nesting boxes, insect hotels, animal ladders, which would allow a diversity of native animal species using and navigating the habitat
A3	Expand Open Spaces - Explore the creation of new public open spaces within road reserves adjoining the corridor to connect with and expand current parks and open space to be delivered through the level crossing removal project		

Principle B: A Vibrant and Inclusive Community

Objective: Foster a diverse and inclusive community with a thriving creative ecosystem and local economy.

Strategies:

B1	Places for Social Interaction - Create inviting spaces for people to spend time in, rest, and socialise - Address the evolving needs resulting from increasing residential density and apartment living
B2	Informed by Community Feedback and Analysis - Prioritise public realm upgrades to address identified public open space gaps, including functional gaps like provision of play space or off leash dog areas - Incorporate community feedback into the design process
B3	Strengthen the Brunswick Creative Community - Identify opportunities to provide spaces for public art that is responsive to and celebrated by the community, supporting the Brunswick Design District.
B4	Acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the Land - Expand the design approach of the cultural and community hub at 33 Saxon Street into surrounding streets - Identify opportunities to create expanded public open space areas adjoining the rail corridor to support the LXRП delivery of spaces with meaning for First Nations people, as directed by engagement
B5	Support Local Businesses - Create a high-quality public realm that supports outdoor trading and encourages visitors to spend more time in the activity centre. - Maintain necessary vehicle access and loading zones to support local businesses

Principle C: A Safe, Connected, and Accessible Corridor

Objective: Improve safety, accessibility, and connectivity to the rail corridor for all community members.

Strategies:

C1	Enhance Connectivity - Create new east-west pedestrian routes across the rail corridor to shorten walking distances to key destinations - Identify opportunities to enhance wayfinding to connect people to key destinations - Anticipate desire paths and plan for the multiple connection points that will be needed to the new pedestrian and bicycle paths
C2	Prioritise Active Transport - Design to prioritise pedestrians, people with mobility issues, cyclists, and public transport users, and then vehicle drivers - Identify and upgrade key pedestrian and cycling streets to improve active transport connections between the rail corridor and key destinations
C3	Efficient Use of Car Parking - Provide new accessible on-street parking spaces and loading zones where appropriate to support people and businesses that require them - Ensure in-road tree planting is spaced to maintain as many parking spaces as possible while still providing for increased canopy cover
C4	Improve Safety - Identify opportunities to improve public lighting - Promote passive surveillance by creating public spaces that people want to spend time in
C5	Improve Accessibility - Ensure public realm upgrades improve accessibility and go beyond principles of Universal Design, whenever possible, so they can be accessed by everyone - Consider accessible paths of travel in the design of public realm upgrades, including removal of uneven surfaces, provision of pram ramps with appropriate gradients, and increasing footpath widths - Create new on-street shared zones where there is limited opportunity to increase footpath widths and they are too narrow to comply with accessibility requirements

Principle D: A Brunswick Identity

Objective: Preserve and celebrate Brunswick's unique identity, heritage, and character.

Strategies:

D1	Conserve and Enhance the Cultural Heritage of Brunswick - Preserve and celebrate Brunswick's bluestone heritage - Identify and enhance view lines to historic buildings - Integrate and connect public realm upgrades with existing heritage structures within the rail corridor, facilitating their adaptive reuse
D2	Design that Responds to Context - Ensure the design of public realm upgrades respond to the unique character and surrounding land uses of their context - Celebrate local landmarks and maintain key view lines - Increase consistency in material selection through use of the Merri-bek Technotes
D3	Enhance Brunswick’s Civic and Cultural Precinct - Consider how Council land within the Civic and Cultural Precinct can support this function



Figure 23: Michael Street, Brunswick

5. Adjoining Site Concepts (Stage 1)

The following pages contain concept plans for the upgrade of streets that terminate at or run parallel to the rail corridor.

Recommendations have been linked to the Public Realm Design Principles

Context Plan North



Context Plan South



Summary Table

All interface streets	UDF Stage 1 – Adjoining Site Concept	UDF Stage 2	No Concept Plan	Comments
Tinning Street & Colebrook Street				Refer to concept plans
Cameron Street				Required tram access to the depot limits opportunities for significant public realm upgrades.
Albion Street				To be considered in Stage 2
Florence Street, Orient Grove & West Street				Refer to concept plans
Duckett Street & Bryant Street				Refer to concept plans
Hope Street				To be considered in Stage 2
Lux Way, Ferrier Street & Nardella Way				Refer to concept plans
Ballarat Street, Talbot Street & Merrifield Street				Refer to concept plans
Victoria Street				Note existing project
Wilkinson Street				Refer to concept plans
Albert Street				To be considered in Stage 2
Phoenix Street				Refer to concept plans
Dawson Street				To be considered in Stage 2. Streetscape upgrade works between the rail line and Sydney Road have already been completed. On street bike lanes west of the rail line will be made permanent.
Michael Street				Refer to concept plans. Stage 2 to investigate the potential to also be a key pedestrian street providing access from Sydney Road to RMIT.
Railway Place				Refer to concept plans
Union Street				To be considered in Stage 2
Wilson Avenue				Already planned streetscape upgrade, awaiting completion of nearby development.
Watson Street				Opportunities for public realm upgrades dependent on LXRP plans for Jewell Station Reserve
Barkly Street				Refer to concept plans
Brunswick Road				Brunswick Road is controlled by the State Government
Park Street				Only the north side of Park Street is within Merri-bek. South side is City of Melbourne. Potential to be considered in Stage 2.

Character Images

The following images show precedents of public realm spaces and elements to convey the potential character of the recommendations in the Site Concept Plans. They are not intended as exact examples of designs, but to show a variety of possible treatments in these local streets and spaces.



Street and footpath
tree planting



Central median
tree planting



Seating and gathering
spaces



Raised thresholds and
shared zones



Biodiverse understorey
planting



Yarning circles and
designing with Country

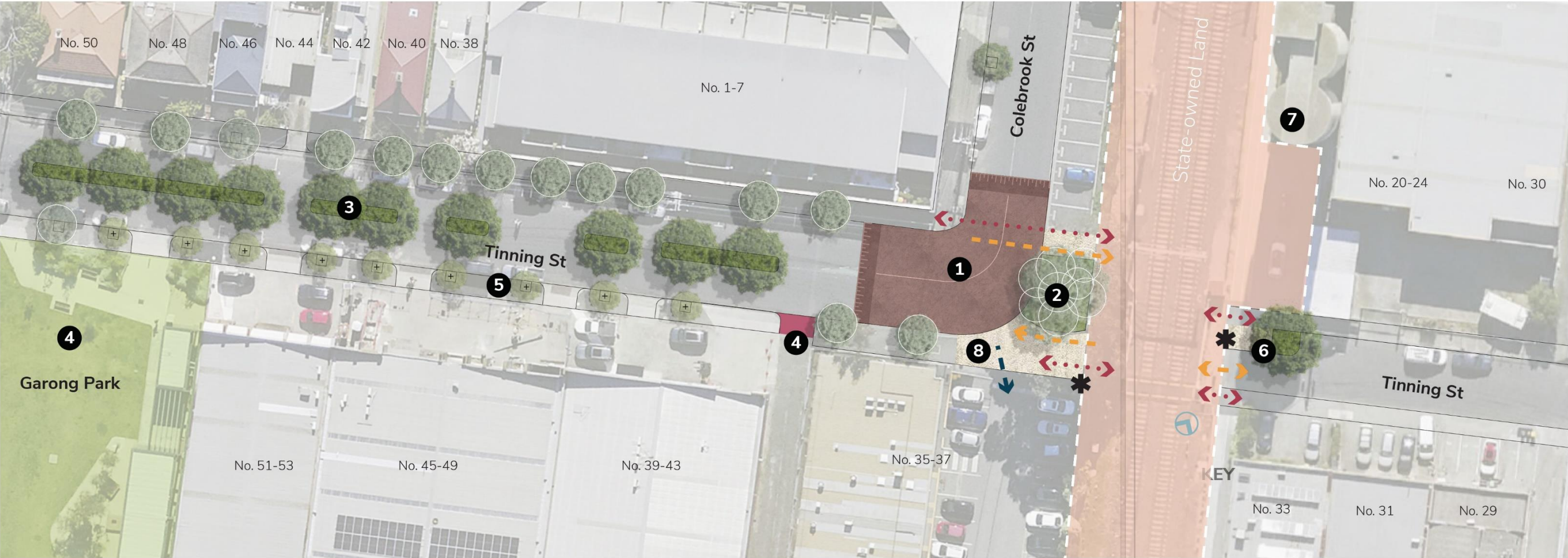


Water sensitive urban
design and raingardens



Wayfinding signage

5.1. Tinning Street and Colebrook Street



Legend

- Raised intersection/threshold
- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees
- Existing trees
- Existing trees (assess and replace as needed)
- Seating
- Wayfinding signage
- Existing open space

Recommendation

		Principles			
		A	B	C	D
1	Raised intersection at corner of Colebrook and Tinning St to slow traffic and allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross freely				
2	Retention of existing trees/micro-forest at end of Tinning St (west side) - retain benefits of existing mature native trees				
3	Introduce a central median with tree planting in Tinning St to increase tree canopy and amenity within wide street				
4	Improve connections to existing open space at Garong Park with new wayfinding signage and laneway crossing				
5	Replace failed footpath street trees in Tinning St for enhanced shade and amenity				
6	Create new kerb outstand at end of Tinning St (east side) for new seating space with planting and large canopy tree.				
7	Retain view to existing water tower mural				
8	Retain existing historic rail sidings in pavement				



Existing trees / microforest



View to landmark mural

5.2. Florence Street, Orient Grove & West Street



Recommendation	Principles			
	A	B	C	D
1 Raised intersection at corner of Orient Grove to slow traffic and allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross freely				
2 Retain and extend garden area at south end of Orient Grove, building on community character of local space				
3 New in-street raingardens in Orient Grove, subject to investigation, for stormwater treatment and infiltration				
4 Create new open space in closure of Florence St, subject to community engagement, and completion of 8 Florence St				
5 New planting and raingarden in closure at the end of West Street subject to investigation				
6 Continue design language from Bulleke-bek Park into rail corridor to extend and link existing open spaces				
7 Provide accessible carparking near Bulleke-bek Park				
Reduction of approx 1 carpark on West St and approx 7 carparks on Orient Grove				
* Concept designs are notional only and subject to further community engagement and design development				

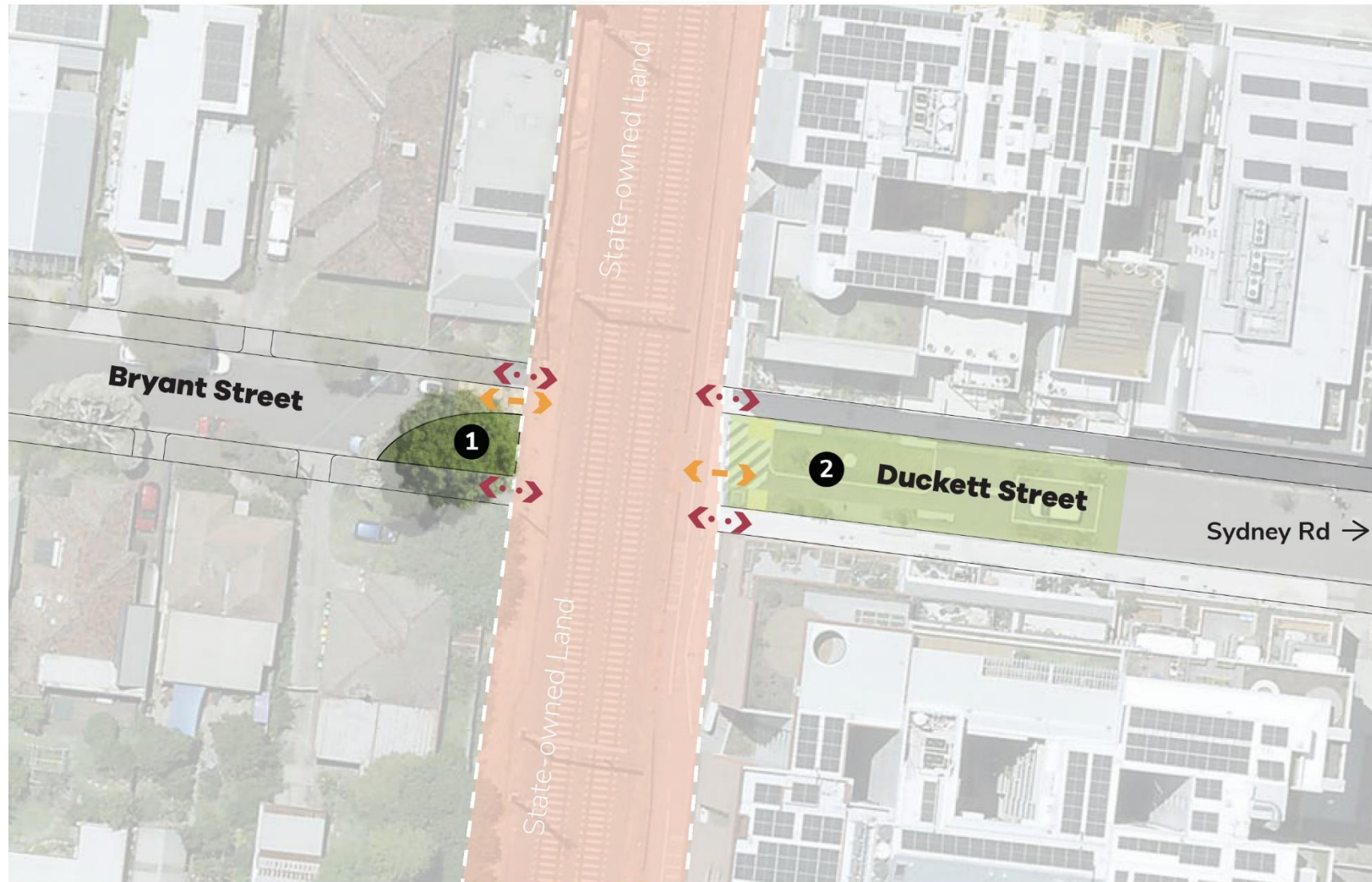


Orient Grove garden space



Space at end of West St

5.3. Duckett Street and Bryant Street



Legend

-  Raised intersection/threshold
-  Pedestrian pavements
-  Understorey planting
-  WSUD / raingarden
-  Accessible pedestrian connection
-  Cycling connection
-  Proposed trees

Recommendation

- 1 Create new kerb outstand at end of Bryant Street for new planting and large canopy tree in street space
- 2 Retain community-led landscape and gathering space at end of Duckett Street

Reduction of 3 carparks on Bryant St

Principles

A B C D

-



Duckett St open space

5.4. Lux Way, Ferrier Street & Nardella Way



Legend

- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees
- Wayfinding signage
- Existing open space

Recommendation

		Principles			
		A	B	C	D
1	New canopy tree planting along Nardella Way for enhanced shade and outlook for residents	●			
2	Retain heritage bluestone wall				●
3	Remove concrete wall, subject to community engagement, for enhanced connection to open space in rail corridor		●	●	
4	Improve connections to existing open space Craig & Seeley Park with new wayfinding signage and kerb ramp access.	●	●	●	
5	Investigate upgrade to Craig & Seeley Park and potential new playground per Open Space Strategy	●	●		

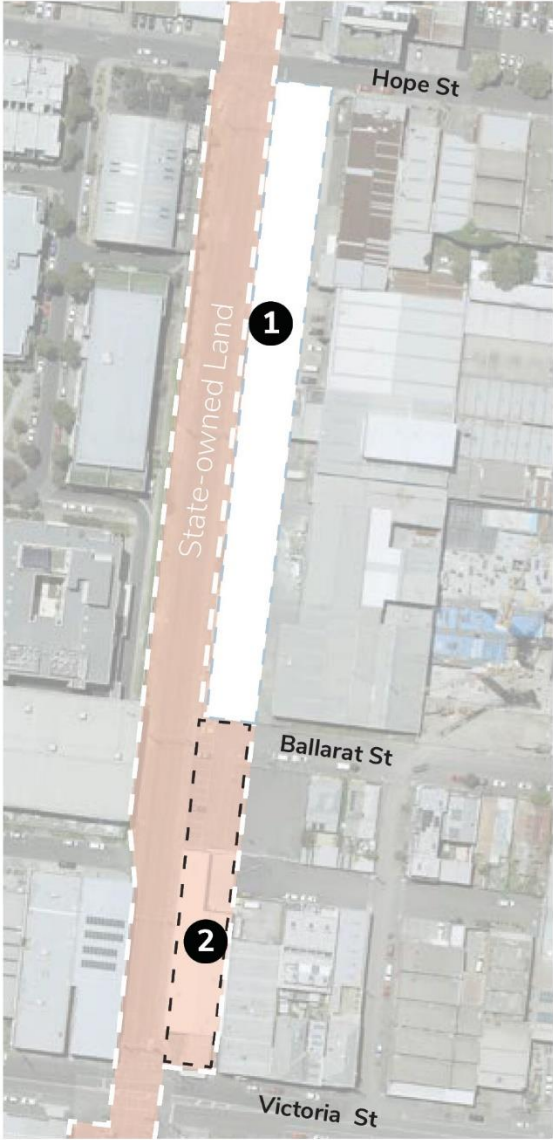


Craig & Seeley Park



Concrete wall creating barrier to future open space within rail corridor

5.5. Ballarat Street, Talbot Street & Merrifield Street



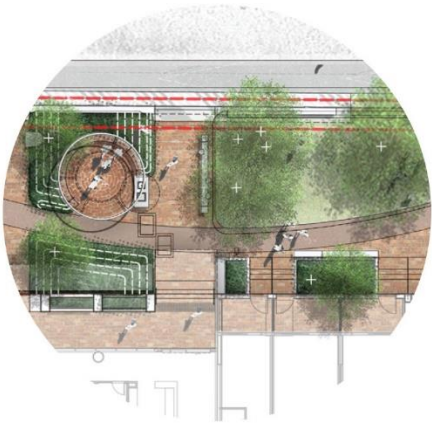
Legend

- Raised intersection/threshold
- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees
- Seating
- Wayfinding signage

Recommendation

		Principles			
		A	B	C	D
1	Future linear park (delivered by developer) from Hope St to Ballarat St				
2	Advocate to extend future linear park using VicTrack land for new open space from Ballarat St to Victoria St				
3	Extend linear park into Ballarat St, subject to community engagement, with road closure to create new open space				
4	Investigate raingarden, swale or other bioretention to utilise stormwater runoff in the landscape in Ballarat St.				
5	Create new kerb outstand at end of Talbot St for large canopy tree				
Reduction of approx 5 carparks on Ballarat St					

* Concept designs are notional only and subject to further community engagement and design development



Landscape plan for future linear park

5.6. Wilkinson Street



Legend

- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees

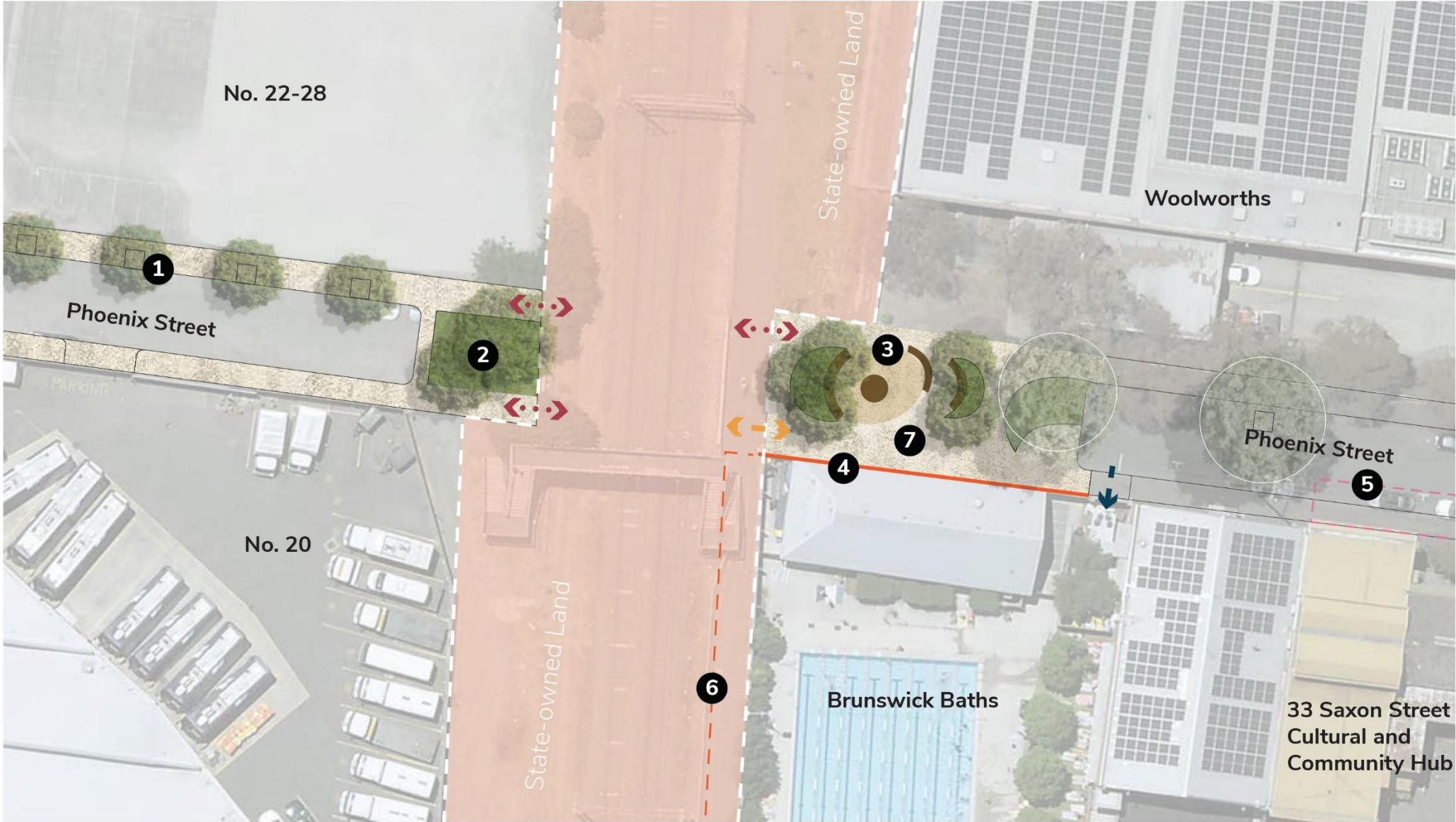
Recommendation

- 1** Convert end block of Wilkinson St to shared zone for better pedestrian access in very narrow street
- 2** New street tree planting in Wilkinson St between parking bays

Principles

A	B	C	D

5.7. Phoenix Street



Legend

- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees
- Existing trees
- Seating

Recommendation

Principles

		A	B	C	D
1	Formalise streetscape on Phoenix St (west side) with new kerb and channel, footpaths, and street trees,				
2	Create new green space at end of Phoenix St (west side) with new planting and raingarden, subject to investigation				
3	Close section of Phoenix St (east side) to create new gathering space based on Traditional Owner's design collaboration, linking to Saxon Street Hub				
4	Create new mural on north wall of Brunswick Baths, commissioning a First Nations artist				
5	Retain existing accessible parking near Saxon Street Hub and Brunswick Baths				
6	Advocate to LXP to allow Brunswick Baths to expand westwards to increase internal space and amenity				
7	Upgrade lighting to solar, removing the need for overhead wires				

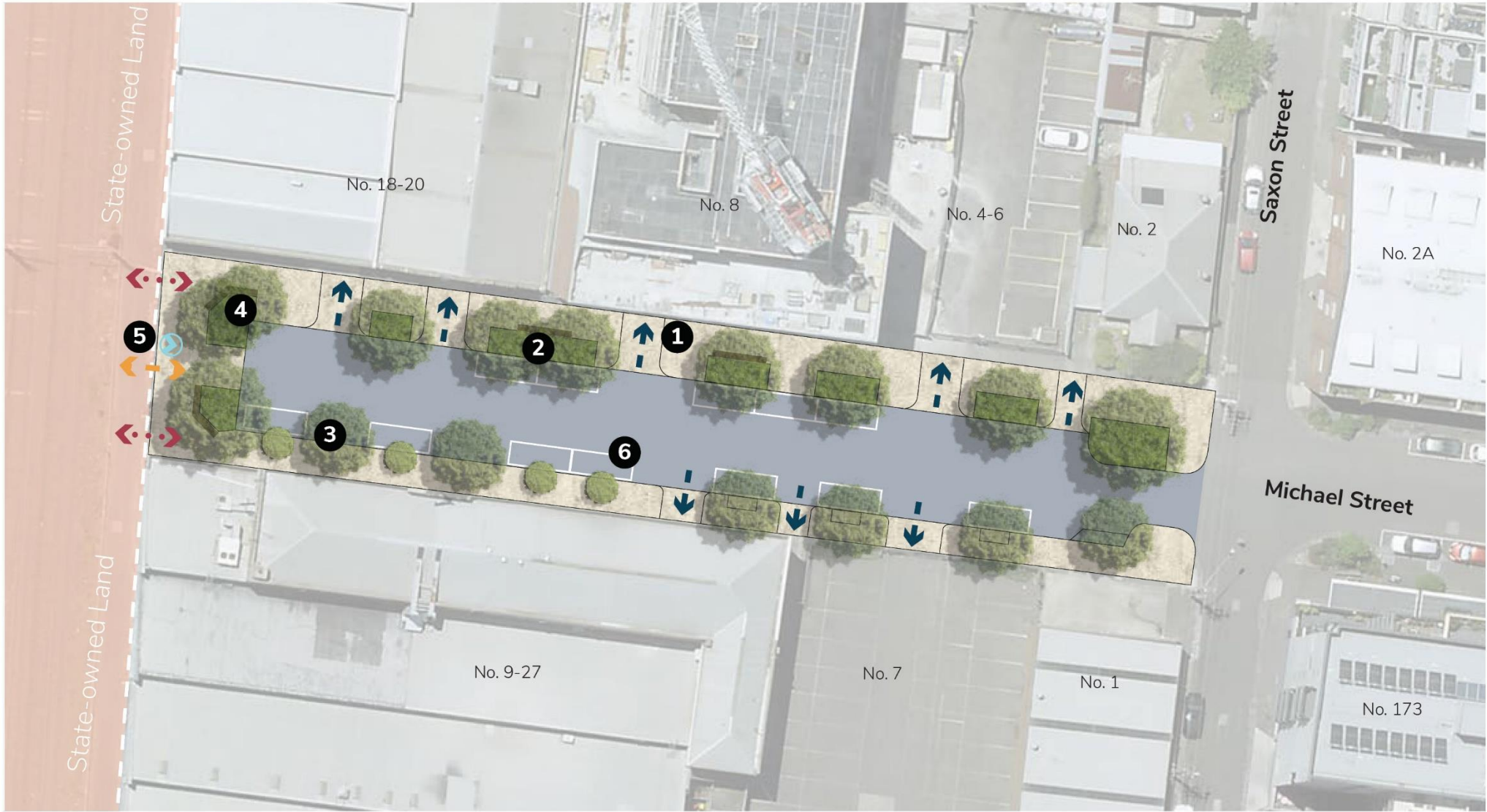
Reduction of approx 2 carparks on Phoenix St (east side)

* Concept designs are notional only and subject to further community engagement and design development



Link to future Saxon Street Hub

5.8. Michael Street



Legend

- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees
- Existing trees
- Seating

Recommendation

	Recommendation	Principles			
		A	B	C	D
1	Widen footpath on north side of Michael St for increased pedestrian space				
2	New large canopy footpath tree planting on north side of Michael St, incorporating planting and passive irrigation				
3	New tree planting on south side of Michael St between parking bays				
4	Create new seating area at end of Michael St with new planting and trees				
5	Retain and frame views down Michael St to Brunswick Unit-ing Church				
6	Narrow road pavement of Michael St and reconfigure to parallel parking (retain underground stormwater detention)				
Reduction of approx 11 carparks on Michael St					

* Concept designs are notional only and subject to further community engagement and design development



View to Uniting Church



Michael St with wide pavement

5.9. Railway Place



Legend

- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees

Recommendation

	Recommendation	Principles			
		A	B	C	D
1	New tree planting along Railway Place between parking bays				
2	Create accessible and usable space around heritage rail building, with potential to be repurposed				
3	Improve sightlines around heritage rail building				

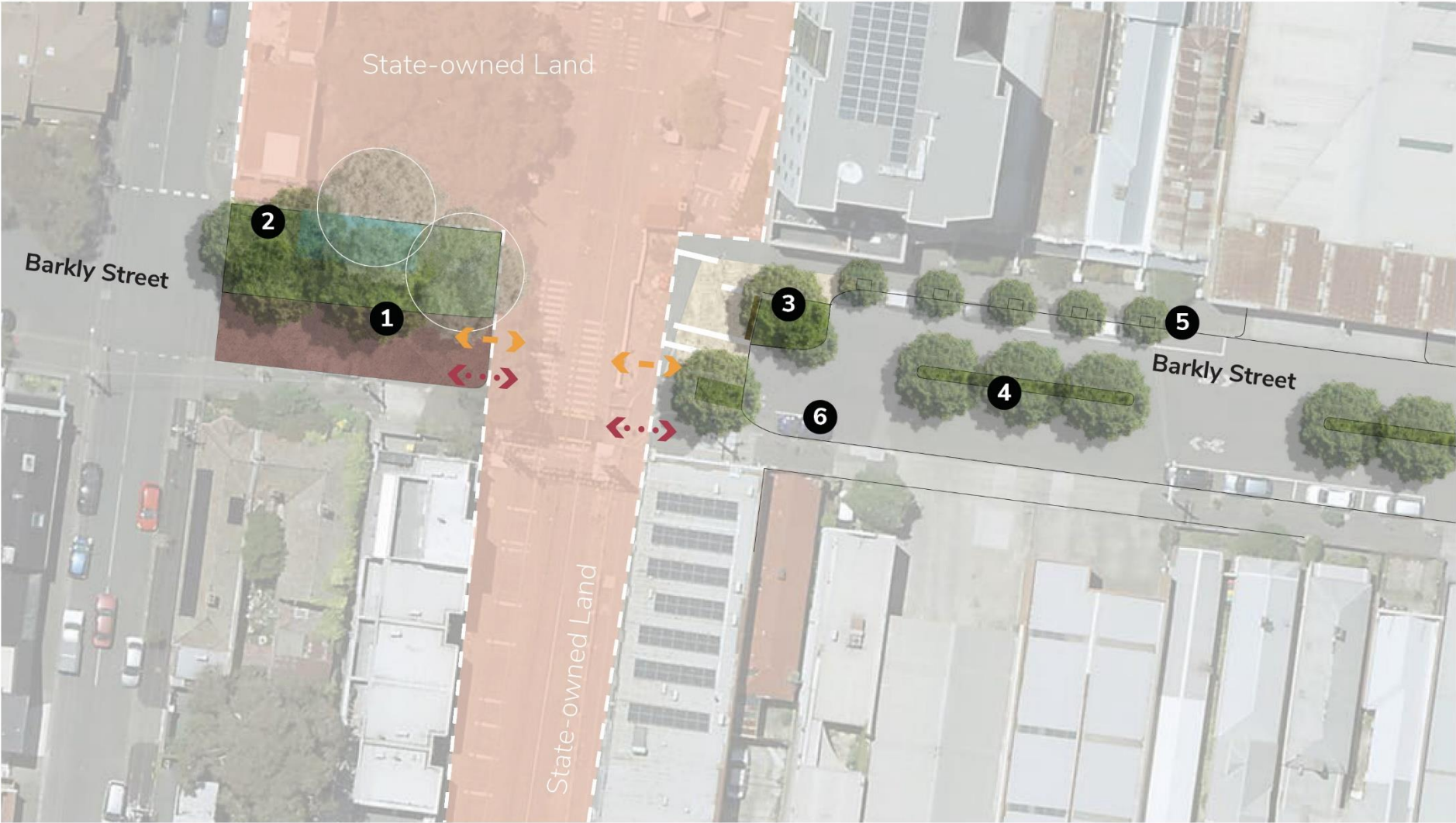


Potential reuse of building at Railway Place



View south along Railway Place with opportunity for street trees

5.10. Barkly Street



Legend

- Raised intersection/threshold
- Pedestrian pavements
- Understorey planting
- WSUD / raingarden
- Accessible pedestrian connection
- Cycling connection
- Vehicular access
- Proposed trees
- Existing trees
- Seating

Recommendation

- 1** Create new green space at end of Barkly St (west side) for planting, canopy trees and raingarden subject to investigation, with shared zone access to properties
 - 2** Relocate accessible parking spaces from end of Barkly St (west side) closer to future station locations
 - 3** Create new seating area at end of Barkly St (east side) for new seating area and large canopy trees
 - 4** Introduce central median with tree planting in Barkly St to increase tree canopy and amenity within the wide street
 - 5** New tree planting in footpath on north side of Barkly St
 - 6** Retain existing loading zone
- Reduction of approx 1 carpark on Barkly St (east) and approx 6 carparks + 2 accessible carparks on Barkly St (west)

Principles

A	B	C	D

* Concept designs are notional only and subject to further community engagement and design development



Space at end of Barkly St (west side)



Jewel Station landscape to extend into Barkly St (east side)

6. Station Precinct Diagrams (Stage 2)

This page is intentionally blank – to be developed in Stage 2 after station locations are known.

7. Key Pedestrian Street Concepts (Stage 2)

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