



Merri-bek
City Council



COBURG IS HERE ➤

An updated framework for central Coburg

June 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Coburg. We are grateful for their care of this Country and for the ongoing contributions of all First Nations communities to present day Coburg.

Foreword



Central Coburg is a much-loved destination. This is true not only for locals, but for people across Merri-bek, Melbourne, and beyond. Known for its eclectic mix of cafes, shops, local businesses, creative communities, and cultural heart, central Coburg is a place where people feel connected and at home.

However, Coburg is changing. We have an opportunity to secure its future as a vibrant economic, cultural and community-centred hub, with more housing, community and arts spaces, green space, transport connections and retail options.

And an obligation to hold on to the history we love about Coburg too.

Council's vision for central Coburg builds on years of planning, with the framework building on extensive community engagement in 2023 and 2025. While consistent with the State's 2025 reforms which seek to deliver more housing in well-located centres, our plan is distinctly tailored to Coburg. Council's plan takes a broader view that also supports local jobs and economic diversity, and prioritising a balanced outcome that accommodates growth, delivers a range of building scales (between three and 18 storeys) and embeds generous green areas and public open space.

Our Precinct Framework sets out a plan for how we will address housing needs, provide more community services, facilities and green space, and enhance the economic viability of the area whilst retaining Coburg's unique character. Some of the highlights of this plan include:

- > A new \$60 million library and piazza
- > New office and retail spaces
- > Affordable commercial spaces for community organisations and artists
- > Six new green spaces, and around 200 new trees
- > Around 1,000 new housing options, featuring a mix of market, affordable and social housing
- > Greener and safer streets, with safer and greener active transport connections
- > Around 900 public car parks for those who need to drive

This plan has been shaped by extensive community consultation to ensure our plans reflect community aspirations for the future of central Coburg. I'd like to thank everyone who contributed their voice, ideas and feedback to help us refine our vision for this much-loved precinct.

The next step in this plan will be the construction of our new library and piazza, which is set to open its door to the community in 2029.

We all look forward to working with the community to bring this vision for a vibrant future for central coburg to life.

Nat Abboud,
Mayor, Merri-bek City Council

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5	DELIVERING THE VISION	20	A LONG-TERM PLAN	64
Vision	6	The framework plan	21	Staging development	65
Community engagement	8	Coburg is community	22		
Key outcomes	10	Coburg is thriving	28		
		Coburg is home	32		
COBURG CONTEXT	12	Coburg is open	36		
Coburg's identity	13	Coburg is accessible	40		
Strategic context	14				
Designing for Country	16	THE PLAN FOR EACH SITE	52		
The existing sites	18	The six sites	53		
		Site A	54		
		Site B & C	56		
		Site D	58		
		Site E	60		
		Site F	62		



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ❖ Vision
- ❖ Delivering the vision
- ❖ Community engagement
- ❖ Key outcomes
- ❖ The six sites

Council acknowledges the work of our primary advisors: Bridge 42, SGS Economics and Planning, MGS Architects, GLAS Landscape Architects, Sibling Architecture, Traffix Group, Design Flow, Rain Consulting and Zinc Cost Management. First Nations Cultural Narratives prepared by Greenshoot Consulting. Visualisations prepared by Narrative.



View along Victoria Street Mall looking towards Sydney Road. Indicative visualisation by Narrative.

Vision

Central Coburg will be a welcoming and vibrant place for people to work, visit and live, full of parks and green spaces. As central Coburg changes over time, it will continually adapt to the needs of a growing community, while building on the unique character of Coburg.

A new inspiring library building will form the heart of Coburg, alongside a piazza that welcomes all to gather, play and rest. A new network of public spaces will be designed to support different activities and will play a vital role in managing water, restoring habitats and cooling the area.

More shops, businesses, cafes, restaurants, bars, services and a new supermarket will complement existing businesses and breathe new life into the area, creating activity day and night.

Around 1,000 new homes will allow people to live close to public transport, shops and services.

Safer streets full of trees will make walking and cycling more attractive options. For those who need to drive, public parking will be relocated into multi-deck car parks, designed to prioritise accessibility and safety while integrating greenery and other uses.

Delivering the vision

To deliver this vision for Coburg, a balance between the best community outcomes and financial feasibility is critical. The proposals outlined in this framework plan are financially feasible, but only by a fine margin. Feasibility can change with market conditions, constructions costs and interest rates. Council will also explore State and Commonwealth funding opportunities to further support the delivery of the framework plan.

Framework Plan and Development Standards

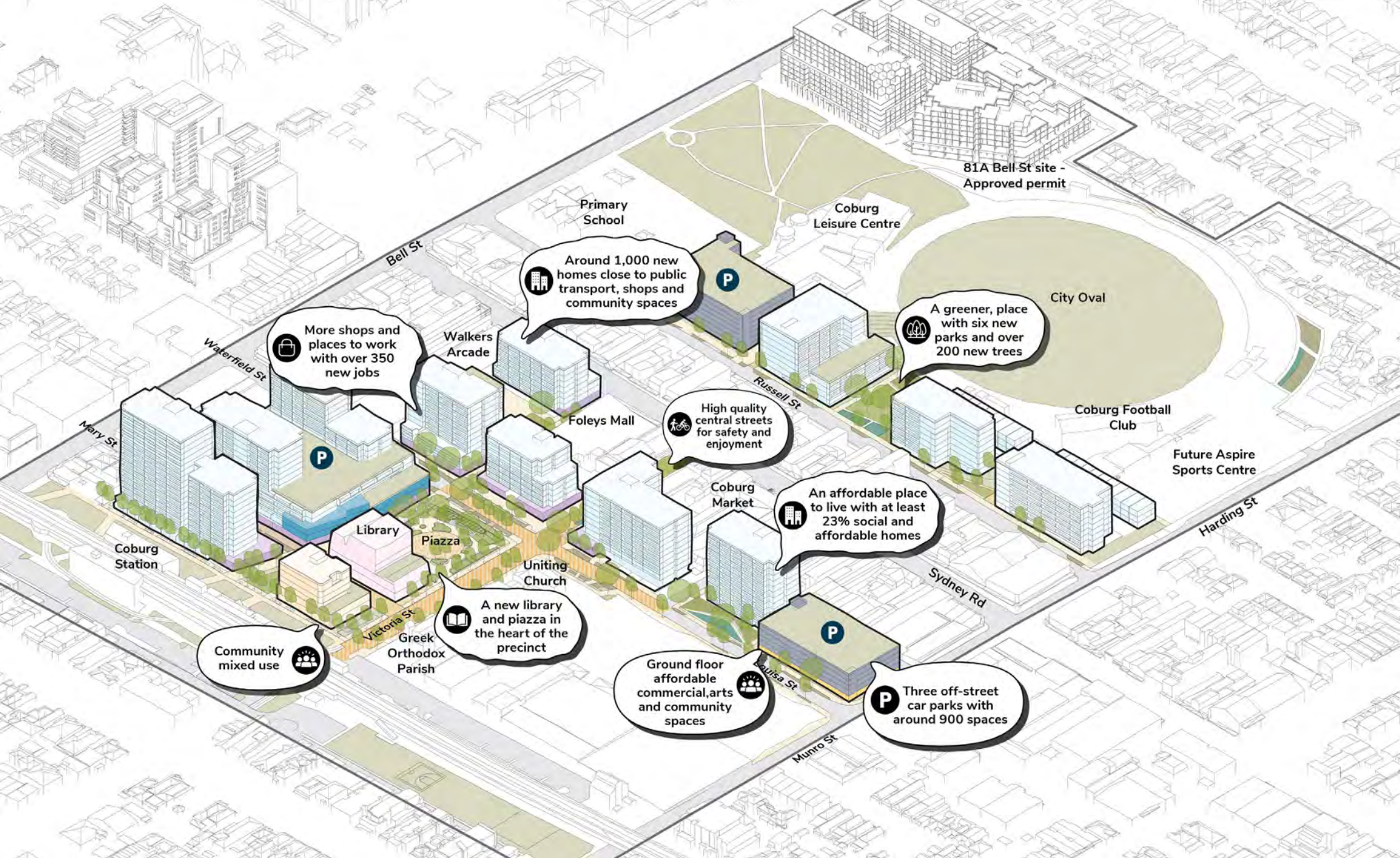
The updated framework plan sets the vision and aspirations for Council sites and surrounding streets in central Coburg. It outlines the uses and scale of the sites, and how we will manage parking, include social and affordable housing, provide open space, and stage development. Accompanying the framework plan are the Central Coburg Development Standards, which provide clear guidance on buildings, streets, and open spaces to support its implementation. The Merri-bek Planning Scheme provides the planning controls for assessing development applications.



Central Coburg Precinct Framework



Central Coburg Development Standards



An updated framework for central Coburg. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Community engagement

This framework plan responds to feedback received from two rounds of community and stakeholder engagement in 2023 and 2025. Over this time, we received over 2,500 pieces of community feedback.

The first round of engagement gathered the community's ideas and aspirations for central Coburg, which informed a carefully balanced draft plan. Responses to the draft were then collected in the second round of engagement which have helped us update the framework plan.

What we investigated

After listening to community and stakeholder feedback, we focused on making sure the updated framework plan reflects the ideas and concerns we heard. This included:

- > Ongoing engagement with highly impacted stakeholders
- > Reviewing the approach to public parking provision and distribution, including the potential to rebalance public car parking into the central Waterfield West site
- > Reviewing the provision of commercial, retail and community spaces to diversify retail (including affordable business and creative spaces) and create affordable spaces for a vibrant community
- > Developing design standards to ensure high quality design outcomes

- > Responding to feedback about sympathetic built form adjacent to the church precinct along Victoria Street
- > Identifying a preferred bicycle corridor and locations for bicycle parking
- > Exploring opportunities for increased greening in the precinct
- > Further thinking on the layout of the streets and managing traffic impacts
- > Further testing of the mix of social, affordable and market housing
- > Planning of construction and staging to minimise impacts on neighbours, and
- > Ongoing testing and refinement of building heights, car parking provision and feasibility.

After this refinement, we updated the framework. Table 1 provides an overview of the changes to the plan.

Table 1: Summary of changes to the framework plan

We heard that...	So we...
Community spaces for non-profits, artists and studio spaces should be included in central Coburg.	> Included additional community spaces and affordable commercial spaces, including studios. > Propose a new community mixed-use site next to the new library.
Concerns about the impact on the Presentation of Our Lord.	> Reduced the height and increased the setback of the building nearest to the Presentation of Our Lord.
Preferred cycling routes and parking locations in central Coburg should be identified.	> Included a shared off-road cycling route on Station Walk to connect Coburg Station, Coburg Library and Piazza, and Sydney Road. > Identified locations for future bike parking hubs.
Local businesses and community services rely on nearby public parking.	> Relocated public carparks from the south of Louisa Street to the north of Waterfield Street, to increase the number of conveniently located carparks in the centre of Coburg.
Concerns about car parking buildings being difficult to use.	> Improved the design of the multi-deck car park on Site E including making the floor flat and improving accessibility.
Growing traffic congestion in the area is a concern.	> Propose five key intersection improvements to improve efficiency and introduce smart parking signs to reduce the number of people circling the precinct looking for a carpark.
New buildings and urban design should be high quality.	> Prepared Development Standards for central Coburg to guide the quality of future development.
Coburg needs more open space and greening.	> Introduced an aspirational target to reach 40% canopy cover within new streets and public spaces. > Improved the designs for streets and introduced a new high-quality, slow and safe zone in the centre of Coburg.
Concerns about potential impacts during construction.	> Included a requirement to prepare a construction management plan in the development standards. > Will continue to work closely with local business and key stakeholders to ensure construction management plans consider community impacts. > Will optimise car park layouts during construction to maximise the number of spaces available.

Key outcomes

Our ambition is to deliver the community's aspirations and vision for central Coburg.



Coburg is Community

A community gathering place where the library, piazza and Victoria Street Mall will form the heart of central Coburg.

There will be a new \$60m library and piazza between Coburg Station and Victoria Street Mall. A new community mixed-use site on Victoria Street will consolidate a community-focussed heart in central Coburg, together with the two existing churches and new library and piazza. Local organisations and artists can access new affordable commercial spaces. Central Coburg will be better connected to the future Coburg health and community services precinct and Coburg Leisure Centre.



Coburg is Thriving

A bustling place where diverse businesses will complement each other and create new life and energy.

There will be over 10,000 square metres of new retail, office and community spaces located along key pedestrian streets. There will be a range of shapes and sizes for businesses. We propose new affordable commercial spaces to support local organisations, entrepreneurs and creatives. We want to keep the existing traders and add a broader offering, increasing evening trade.



Coburg is Home

A family-friendly place to live where jobs, shops, public transport, public spaces, schools, and community facilities are all nearby.

Around 1,000 new places to live including apartments that support families and larger households. This includes 23-30% social and affordable housing (at least 90 social housing dwellings), with the range and delivery timing influenced by funding availability. Design standards will ensure homes are well designed and meet the needs of a diverse community.



Coburg is Open

An open place where streets and parks provide comfortable, shady spaces for the community to connect.

Six vibrant new public spaces and more than 200 new trees will transform central Coburg into a greener, more liveable neighbourhood. Every resident will be just a short 300m walk from a brand new public space, with at least 5 square metres of public open space per person. Key streets will be reimagined as safe, inviting places that bring people together and support everyday community life. Thoughtfully designed buildings will minimise wind and shadow impacts and an aspirational 40% tree canopy cover target will help cool Central Coburg during heat events.



Coburg is Accessible

An accessible place where people will comfortably walk, cycle, catch public transport or drive and park their car.

Existing streets will be upgraded and new laneways will make it easier to move around. Around 900 existing public car parks will be relocated into three accessible locations within a two-minute walk to all parts of central Coburg. A new shared cycling path from Coburg Station though the precinct with plenty of bike parking at key destinations like the new library and piazza. Private buildings will ensure that there new residents have appropriate parking.

COBURG CONTEXT

- ❖ Coburg's identity
- ❖ Strategic context
- ❖ Designing for Country
- ❖ The existing sites



Victoria Street Mall. Photo by Simon Aubor.

Coburg's identity

Coburg is a unique suburb with a bustling heart. Over generations of immigration, Coburg has become a centre for cultural exchange and a place where differences are celebrated.



Dunnes Lane. Photo by Simon Aubor.

A part of Wurundjeri Country, Coburg was historically a wetland and today remains ecologically rich with the important waterway Merri Creek to the east.

The diversity of Coburg's community is part of what makes the suburb so special. With over 30% of Coburg's population born overseas, and more than 60% of Coburg's population having one or both parents born overseas, the area has a rich cultural tapestry woven over a long history of immigration.

Gathering spaces like Victoria Street Mall are often full of people mingling, socialising and sharing meals. The two local churches allow the community to gather, connect and reflect, and the library, set to be updated in coming years, is also a hub of activity. There are many public artworks, murals, artist studios and workshop spaces across central Coburg, which reflect the area's artistic and creative spirit.

Its commercial heart, defined by Sydney Road and Victoria Street Mall, is celebrated for its diverse and multicultural food offerings, specialised retail, and lively community gathering spaces. Many businesses have been in the area for years, are much-loved by the community, and are woven into Coburg's cultural history.

Strategic context

Coburg is a well-connected, central place with strong services, amenities, and transport links, and we are planning and advocating for the change and investment needed to support its next stage of growth.

Coburg Activity Centre

In March 2026, the Victorian Government increased building heights throughout the Coburg Activity Centre as part of the Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program, with the highest heights applied closest to the Coburg Station.

A catchment area within a comfortable walking distance to the Coburg and Batman Stations has also been defined at a lower scale than the core activity centre

Victoria Street Mall upgrades

Council will soon begin upgrading Victoria Mall, Coburg, improving shop fronts, awnings and lighting, while providing traders with umbrellas and a dedicated outdoor performer and busking space to enhance this well-loved area. These works are funded by the State Government's Multicultural Business Precinct Revitalisation Program and delivered in partnership with the Central Coburg Business Association.

Streets for People

We adopted the Streets for People Plan in 2025 identifying key streets in the municipality for improvement projects. It identifies Munro/Harding Street as an important east west corridor for transport improvements and other street upgrades to support the delivery of this framework plan and Coburg health and community services precinct.

Public transport improvements

Duplication of the Upfield Line is a key advocacy priority for Council. Funding has been allocated in the 2026-27 State Government budget to develop a business case and development program. Duplication of the Upfield line is essential for providing access to central Coburg.

Accessible tram stops are another an advocacy priority for Council. In 2026, the State Government committed funding to the planning of level access tram stops along Sydney Road to support access to of our activity centres and local businesses.

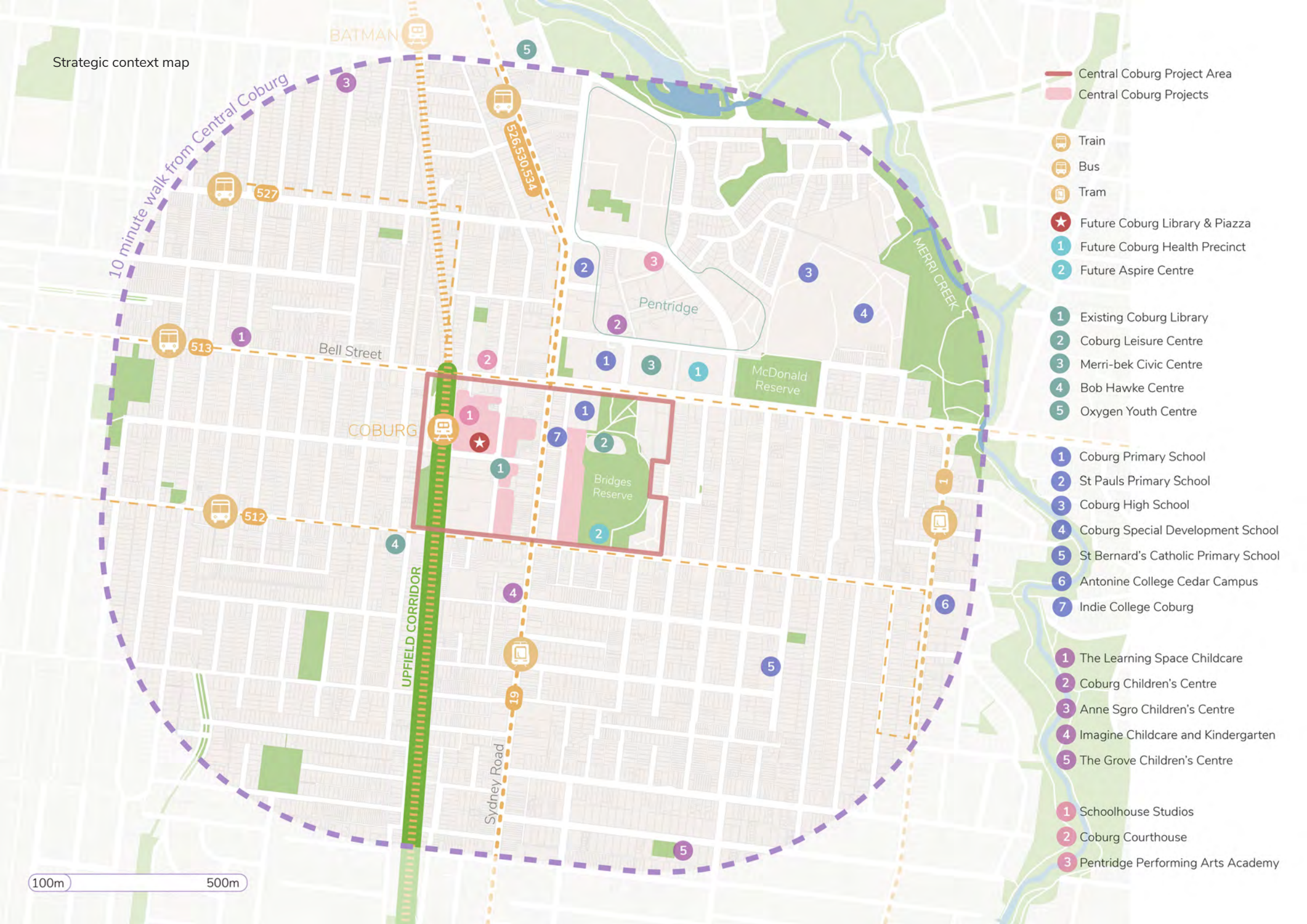
Coburg health and community services precinct

The Coburg Health Precinct Masterplan was endorsed by Council in 2022. The plan will create a new health precinct responding to identified local gaps in key health and community services, including GPs, aged care, childcare, dental, and allied health services located next to the Merri-bek Civic Centre on Bell Street. The precinct will also include affordable housing. Work on the first stage is expected to begin this year.

Aspire Sports Centre

Council is supporting the Bachar Houli foundation to developing a new school and sports centre on Harding Street, Coburg. The 'Aspire Sports Centre' will be a multipurpose indoor facility combining sport, education and community use. It will provide more access to indoor courts in Coburg, helping address growing demand for basketball, futsal and other indoor sports across Merri-bek.

Strategic context map



Central Coburg Project Area
Central Coburg Projects

- Train
- Bus
- Tram
- Future Coburg Library & Piazza
- Future Coburg Health Precinct
- Future Aspire Centre
- Existing Coburg Library
- Coburg Leisure Centre
- Merri-bek Civic Centre
- Bob Hawke Centre
- Oxygen Youth Centre
- Coburg Primary School
- St Pauls Primary School
- Coburg High School
- Coburg Special Development School
- St Bernard's Catholic Primary School
- Antonine College Cedar Campus
- Indie College Coburg
- The Learning Space Childcare
- Coburg Children's Centre
- Anne Sgro Children's Centre
- Imagine Childcare and Kindergarten
- The Grove Children's Centre
- Schoolhouse Studios
- Coburg Courthouse
- Pentridge Performing Arts Academy

100m 500m

Designing for Country

Coburg used to have many wetlands, lagoons, rivers and creeks. Merri Creek, Edgars Creek and Merylnston Creek remain important waterways with strong cultural associations for First Nations people. Waterways have been important places of connection for social and ceremonial gatherings, trade, initiation, marriage, and lore business for tens of thousands of years.

The ambition for central Coburg is to embed First Nations cultural narratives into the design of streets, public spaces and buildings.

To achieve this, Council have worked with Wurundjeri Elders to record First Nations Cultural Narratives for central Coburg. The purpose of these cultural narratives is to allow those delivering projects in central Coburg to embed First Nations storytelling into the urban fabric.

This is about taking a Country-centred approach to design. It moves away from viewing projects through a human-focused hierarchy, towards recognising the interconnected relationship between people, water, plants, animals and sky. This approach encourages designs that respond to and respect Country, recognising that people are part of a broader living system.

There are six cultural narratives for central Coburg:

1. Honouring ancestral connections and creation stories.
2. Truth-telling, knowledge sharing and public understanding.
3. Supporting ceremony and cross-cultural exchange.
4. Contemporary representations of culture.
5. Cultural knowledge transfer and intergenerational learning.
6. Connecting to Country: ecological and cultural heritage.



Wurundjeri Country. Image by Greenshoot Consulting.

The existing sites

The six sites each have a unique character and set of qualities. This presents an opportunity to create distinct and exciting new places on every site, responding to the specific opportunities of each.

These sites were purchased over several decades with the ambition to deliver better outcomes for central Coburg. A long-term vision to transform the six sites was developed 15 years ago, but then paused. We are now ready to move forward with an updated vision.



Waterfield West (Site A)

Open air public car park next to Coburg Station. It is home to a former supermarket building, currently occupied by Schoolhouse Studios.



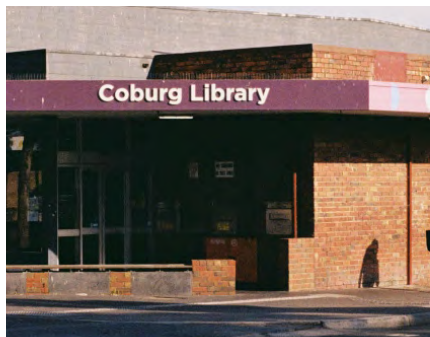
Waterfield East (Site B)

Coles supermarket and small businesses, fronting Sydney Road and accessible from Waterfield Street.



Victoria North (Site C)

Open air public car park fronting Victoria Street Mall and Waterfield Street.



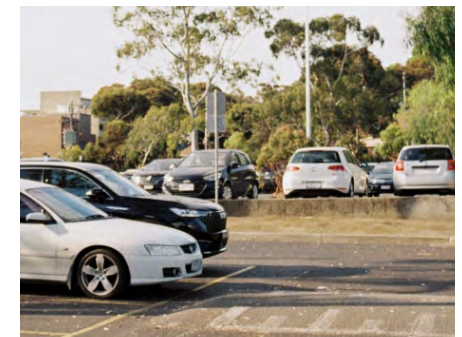
Victoria South (Site D)

Home to the current Coburg Library which opened in 1983 after the renovation of an existing supermarket. The new library will be on the Waterfield West site.



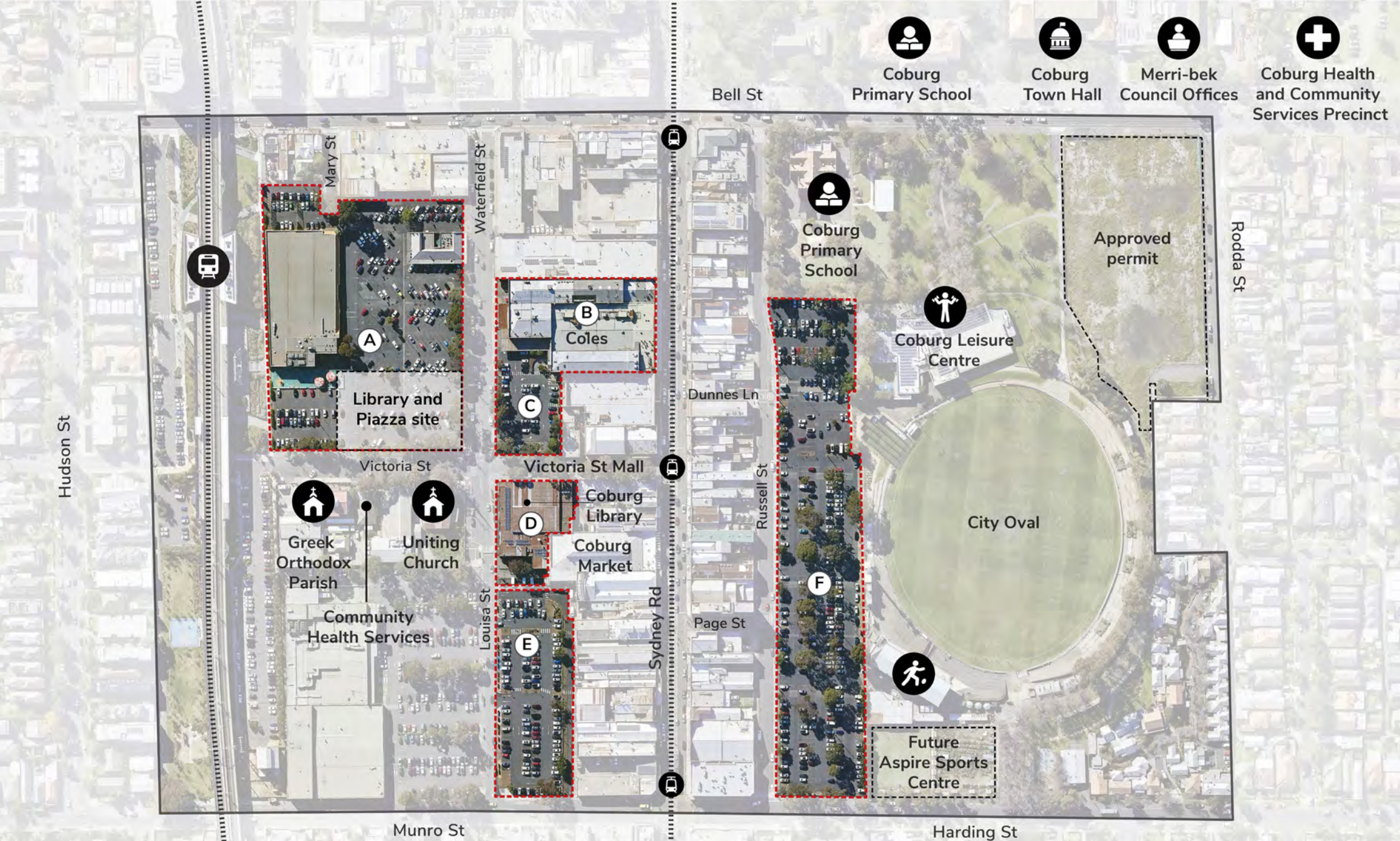
Louisa East (Site E)

Open air public car park that is directly behind the Coburg Library and Coburg Market. As well as car parks, there are trees and a small seating area on the site.



Russell East (Site F)

Open air public car park next to City Oval and the Coburg Leisure Centre. As well as car parks, there are trees, pathways and a public toilet on the site.



The existing sites, Image by MGS Architects.

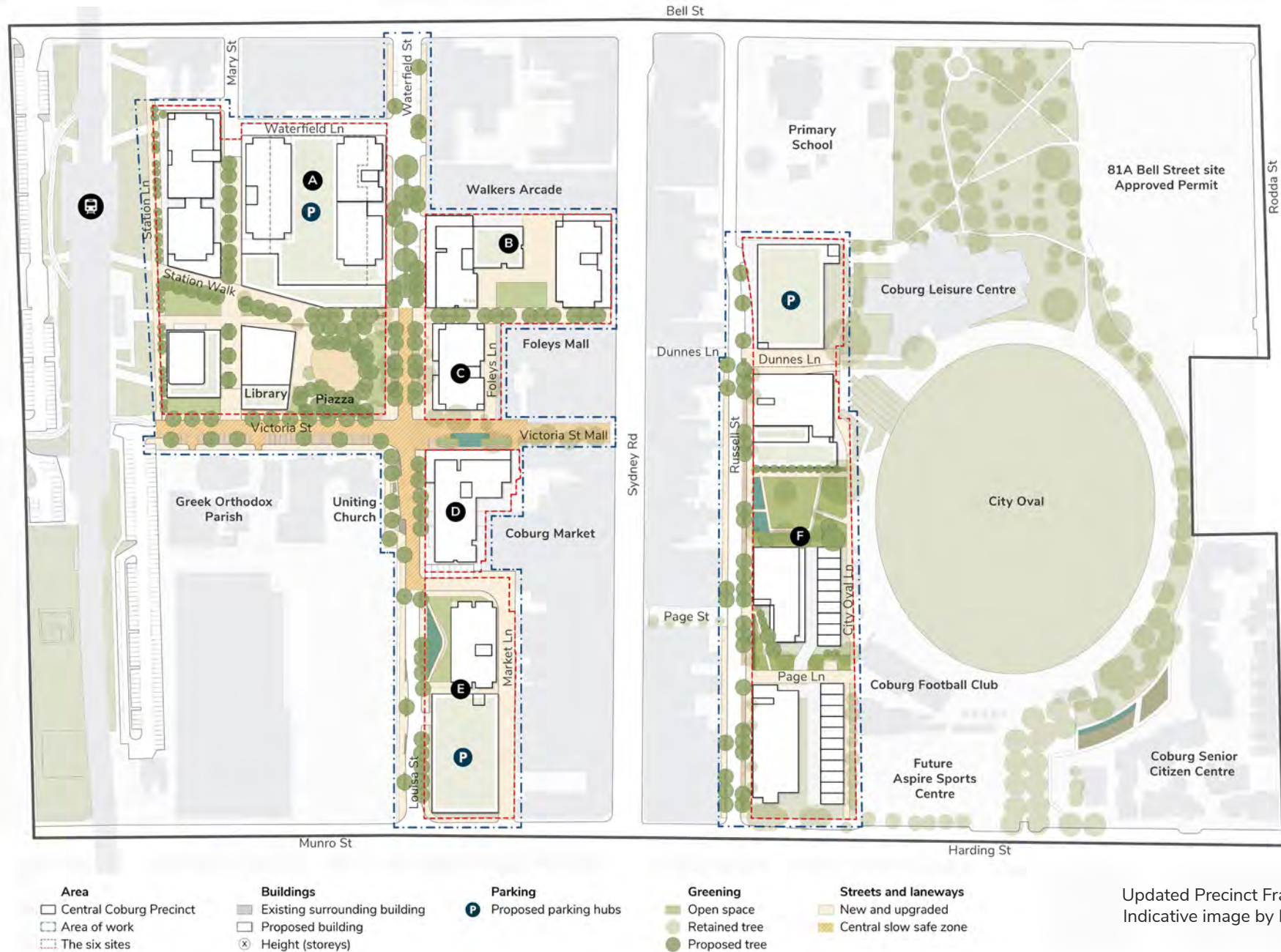
DELIVERING THE VISION

- ❖ The framework plan
- ❖ Coburg is community
- ❖ Coburg is thriving
- ❖ Coburg is home
- ❖ Coburg is open
- ❖ Coburg is accessible



Russell Neighbourhood Park, looking towards City Oval. Indicative visualisation by Narratives.

The framework plan



Coburg is community

A community gathering place where the library, piazza and Victoria Street Mall will form the heart of central Coburg.



New library and piazza

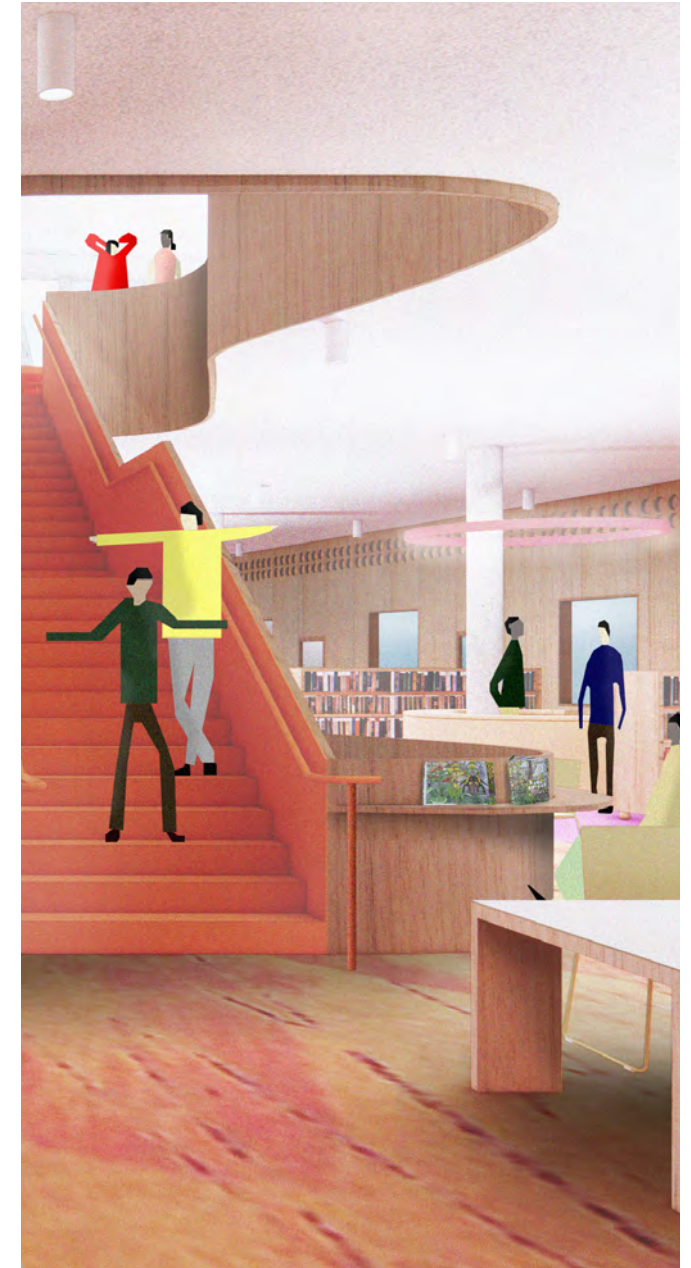
We are kickstarting the plan for central Coburg by designing and building a new library and piazza in the heart of Coburg. The current Coburg library is not fit for purpose and won't cater to the growing needs of our community. The new library and piazza will strengthen Coburg's civic heart and will be a welcoming place where people gather, connect, and celebrate.

The new library will include multipurpose event spaces, artist studios, bookable meeting rooms, a community kitchen, ample study and quiet spaces and a children's area on the ground floor. It will also host a local history space, prayer and sensory rooms and public bathroom and shower facilities making it much more than library.

The piazza will provide new shaded areas to sit and meet people, elements of play for all generations to enjoy and an informal mounded grass area to perch on with friends and enjoy some local snacks.

Council has appointed Durbach Block Jaggers, working in collaboration with Architecture Associates and Openwork to design the new library and piazza. The draft concept design is being reviewed to explore opportunities to further strengthen connections between existing central icons in the heart of Coburg, and to respond to feedback about access, parking, cycling routes and the location of built form. Construction on the new library and piazza is planned for 2029.

Narrm Ngarrgu by Six Degrees. Photo by Dan Preston of Split Milk, courtesy of City of Melbourne.



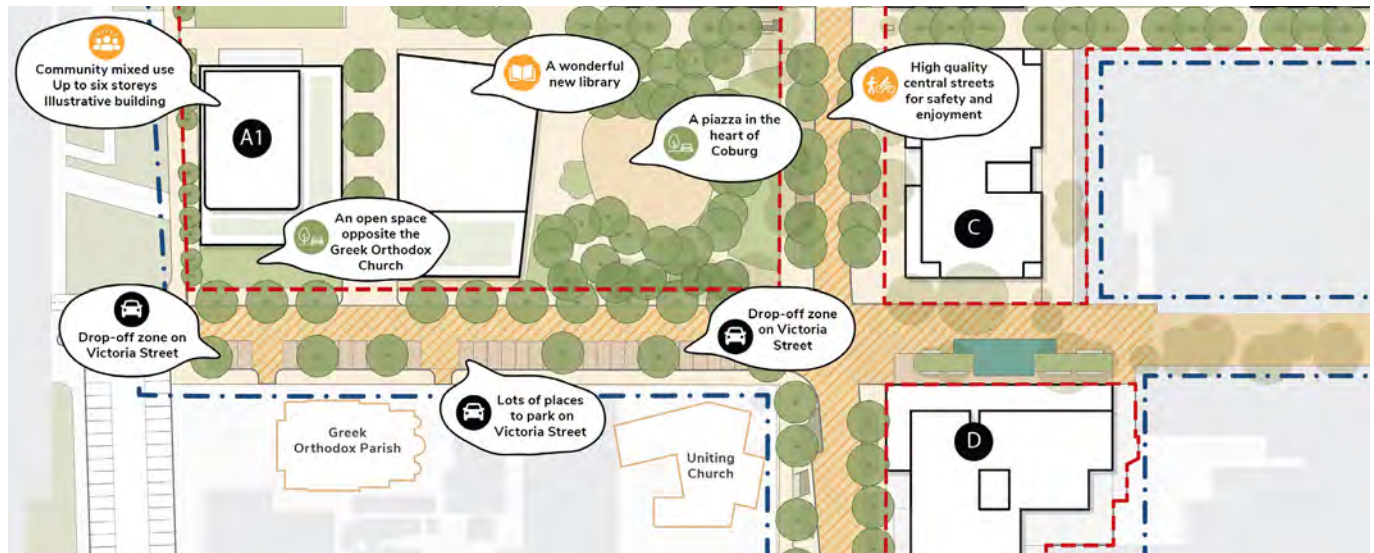
The draft concept for the library. Indicative visualisation by Durbach Block Jagers.

A new community mixed-use building is planned next to the library and across the road from the two churches

Community mixed-use building

We propose a new community mixed-use site next to the library and across the road from the two churches, forming a community-focussed precinct in the heart of central Coburg.

Led by a local community organisation(s), the building would support a broad range of community uses, services and activities, with potential opportunities for the arts, culture and creative uses that activate the precinct. This proposal is subject to a process to procure a suitable organisation(s) with a strong connection to Coburg.



Civic spine along Victoria Street with the churches, upgraded central streets and new library, piazza and community mixed-use building



View along Mary Walk looking towards Victoria Street. Indicative visualisation by Narrative.

High quality central streets will improve safety and enjoyment in the heart of Coburg.



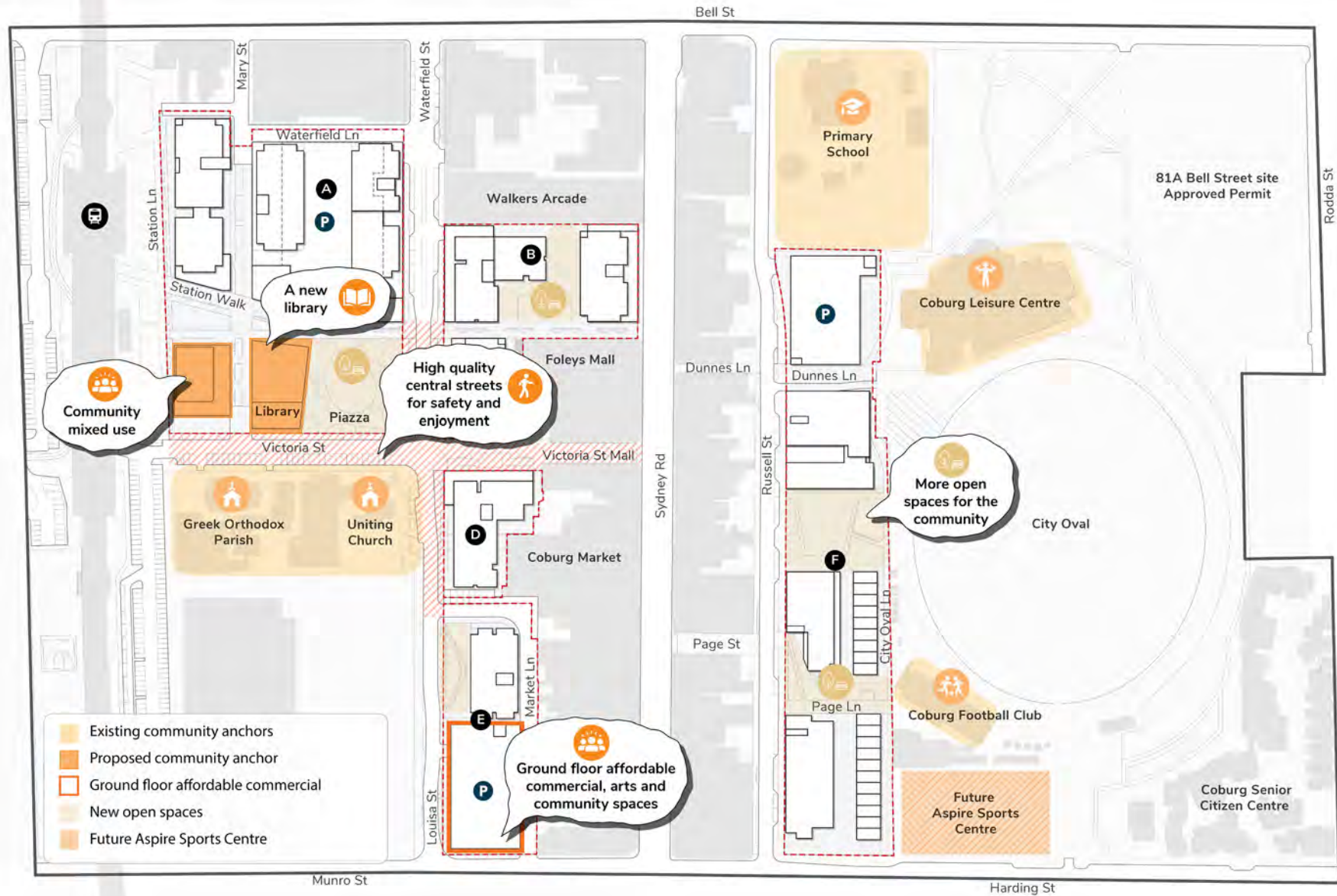
High quality, slow zone in Albert Street, Brunswick

Central heart

High quality central streets at the intersection of Victoria, Louisa and Waterfield Streets will improve safety and enjoyment in the heart of Coburg. Victoria Street Mall will also be revitalised and expanded as a key community destination. Upgrades to lighting, shopfronts and the public realm will enhance its character and appeal.

Other opportunities

- > Incorporate opportunities for public art and local expression in new buildings and streets.
- > Protect and frame key views, landmarks and culturally significant places.
- > Creating strong visual markers, clear sightlines, and legible connections that enhance sense of community.



Coburg is community. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Coburg is thriving

A bustling place where diverse businesses will complement each other and create new life and energy.

More retail and office spaces

A new network of affordable shops and small businesses at ground level, particularly along new streets and laneways, will help draw people from the train station into the heart of Coburg.

We propose small “hole-in-the-wall” shops to larger spaces to create a lively and welcoming place to shop, meet and spend time, extending activity into the evening and supporting a safer, more vibrant Coburg.

More active street frontage will also create a more vibrant central Coburg, welcoming residents and encouraging them to spend locally.

In total, almost 11,000 square metres will be dedicated to new retail, commercial and office space, providing opportunities for local businesses to grow and thrive, and creating a more vibrant, active central Coburg.

Local economic boost and job creation

The project will also deliver significant local benefits during construction, generating around \$700 million in economic activity across Merri-bek and supporting approximately 265 local construction jobs each year.

Once complete, central Coburg will continue to contribute to the local economy, supporting around 300-350 ongoing jobs in new retail and commercial spaces. With around 2,000 new residents calling the area home, a further 50 jobs are expected to be created in the local community.

The ground floor of residential buildings could also be considered for home offices or other commercial uses. This will be subject to demand.

Mixed use building

Anchored by a new supermarket and other retail, a mixed-use building on Site A will include public parking, office space and be topped with apartments.



9 Wilson Ave Brunswick by Neometro. Photo by Michael Pham.

We propose around 1,000 sqm of new affordable space for community organisations on Louisa Street.



Sydney Road, Coburg. Photo by Simon Aubor.

Supporting a thriving Sydney Road

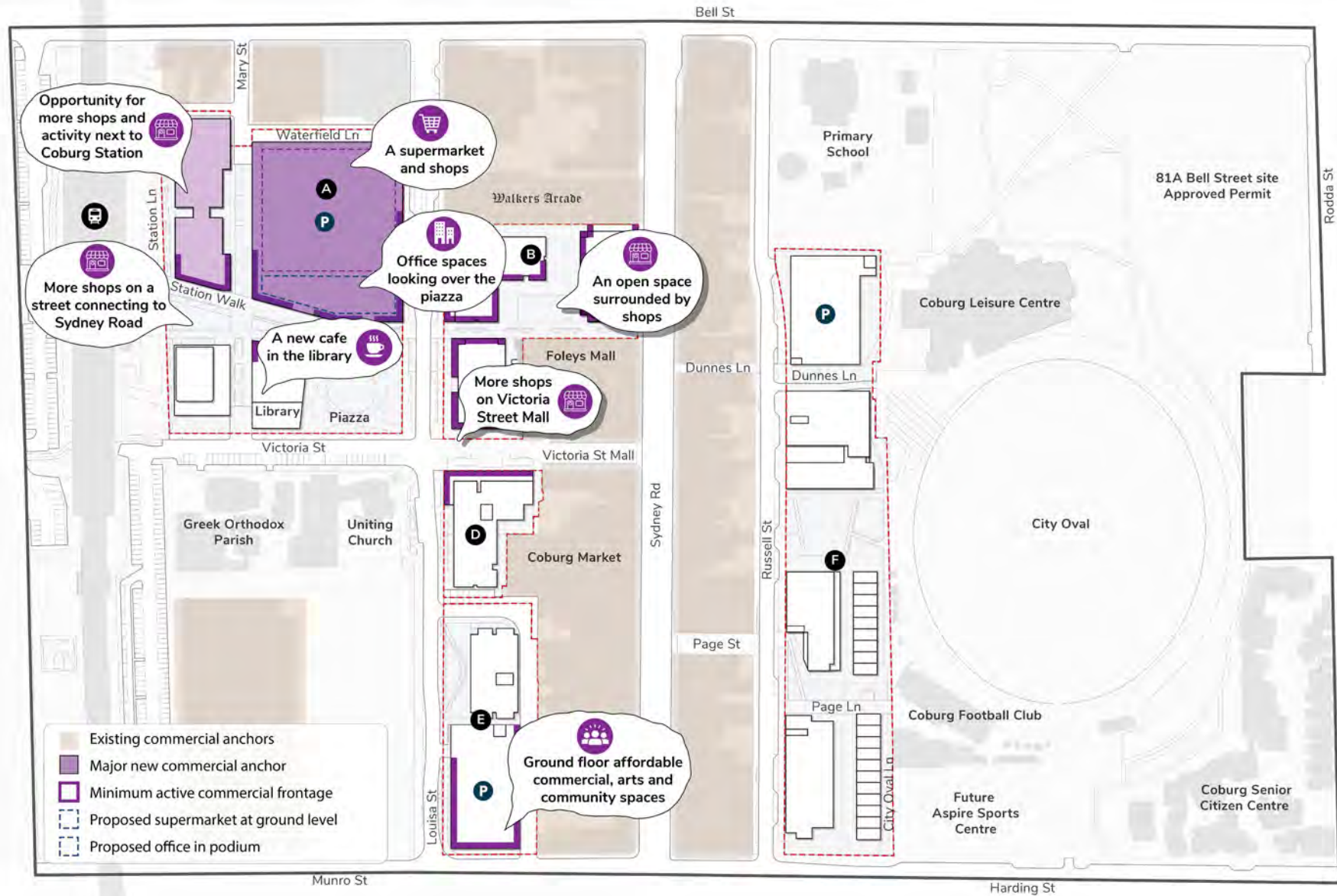
The vibrancy, safety and amenity of Sydney Road are fundamental to the success of local businesses in Coburg. Council will continue to partner with the Central Coburg Business Association to support the marketing, promotion and development of local businesses. This will be complemented by ongoing maintenance programs, improved street cleanliness and the identification of other opportunities to further enhance the quality and appeal of Sydney Road.

Affordable commercial space

We propose around 1,000 sqm of new affordable space for community organisations on Louisa Street. This will be in the ground floor of the car park building. It's proposed to be a home for creative industries, start ups, artists and small businesses.

Other opportunities

- > Maximise activation at ground floor near key destinations like Coburg Station, the library and the piazza.
- > Reinforce the precinct as a commercial heart that complements Sydney Road's existing trade.
- > Provide weather protection, such as awnings and canopies for new businesses.



Coburg is thriving. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Coburg is home

A family-friendly place to live where jobs, shops, public transport, public spaces, schools and community facilities are all nearby.

New housing options in the heart of Coburg

We are planning to meet the needs of a growing community. Analysis shows that 6,340 more people will require homes in Coburg by 2037. Addressing this need will require action from all levels of government, and we are committed to playing our part. We propose about 1,000 new dwellings in 10 buildings. The plan aims to support around 2,000 new residents, with homes designed to meet a variety of needs.

Larger apartments for families

Flexibility is an important part of this approach. Apartment designs will be adaptable, allowing homes to change over time, for example, combining two smaller apartments to create a larger family-sized home. Lower-scale townhouses are also proposed near City Oval alongside new public open spaces, to provide more family-oriented housing choices. This proposal is subject to further market testing to understand changing demand.

Much needed social and affordable housing

There is a clear and growing need for more affordable housing. Across Merri-bek, more than 4,300 households are currently in need, with around 84% classified as low or very low income. For this reason, increasing access to social and affordable housing is a key priority.

We are committed to providing at least 90 social housing dwellings and between 23% and 30% social and affordable housing across the precinct. We propose two buildings for social and affordable housing, and 10% affordable housing in all other residential buildings.

Feedback from the social and affordable housing sector has shown a preference for social housing to be provided in standalone buildings or mixed with affordable housing, rather than mixed with market housing. Dedicated buildings support building management and opportunities for service delivery for residents.

Our ability to deliver this is based on funding, grants and partnerships.



North Richmond Social Housing by Kerstin Thompson Architects and Hayball. Photo by Leo Showell.

To ensure development delivers lasting benefits, we have created clear development standards



Development standards to guide design quality

To ensure development delivers lasting benefits, we have created clear development standards to guide future projects in central Coburg. These standards will help deliver high-quality buildings, well-designed streets, and welcoming public spaces for the whole community.

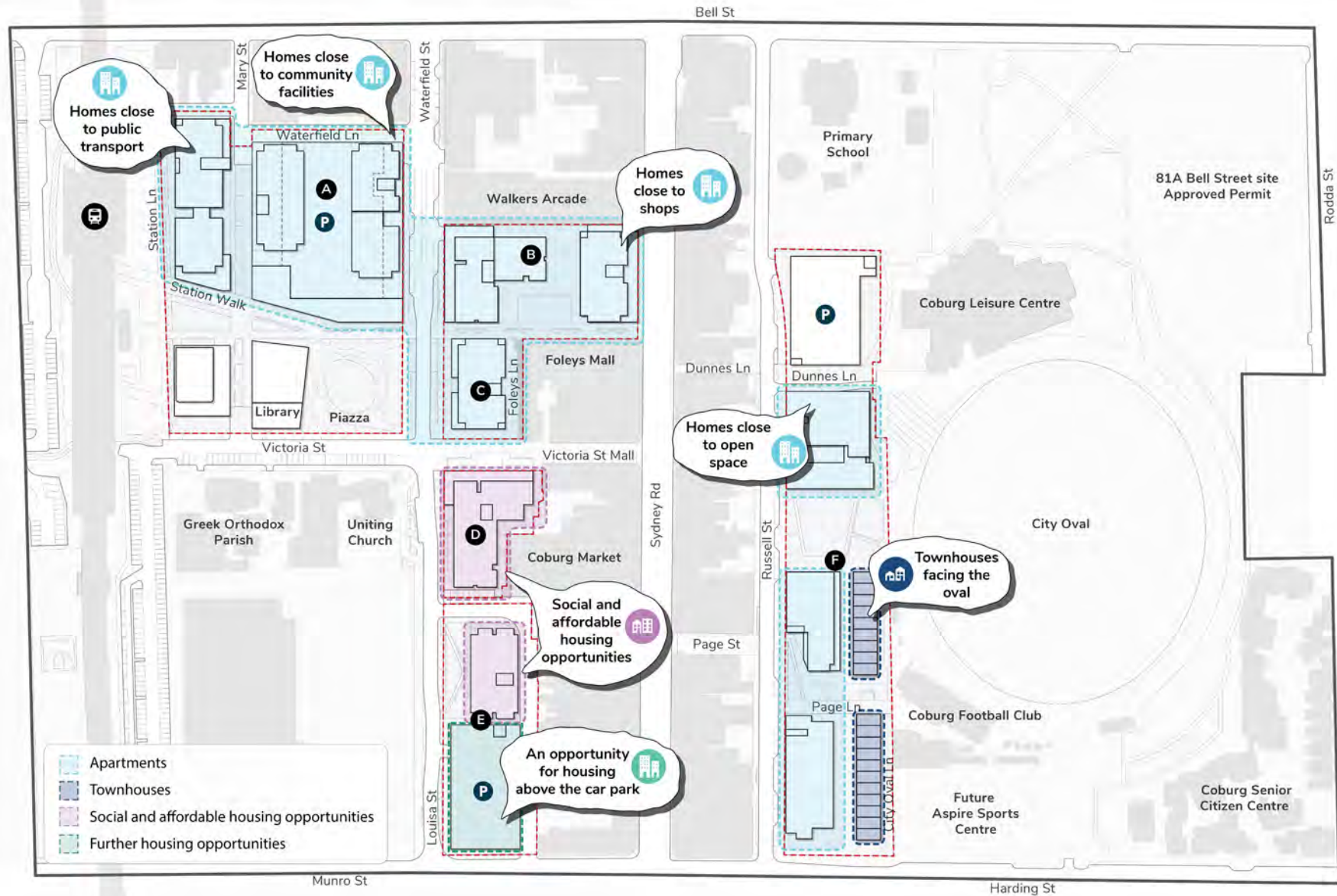
Additional housing

There is an opportunity to provide housing on top of the multi-deck car parks. This will be explored.

Breese Street by Milieu, DKO and Breathe Architecture. Photo by Tom Ross.

Other opportunities

- > Exceed the 23% minimum social and affordable housing target.
- > Deliver a balanced mix of bedroom types across developments.
- > Integrate balconies, planting and shading devices in new residential buildings to create visual interest.



Coburg is home. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Coburg is open

An open place where streets and parks provide comfortable, shady gathering places for the whole community.

Six new green spaces

Central Coburg will become greener, cooler and leafier, with a network of six new public open spaces delivering over 6,000 square metres of space for the community to enjoy. These spaces are thoughtfully located around existing mature trees, helping to retain biodiversity and the established character of the precinct.

Across the precinct, every resident will be within a short 300 metre walk of a public open space, with at least 5 square metres of open space per person.

Diverse planting

Open spaces designed around existing mature trees, with diverse planting that supports birds, insects and biodiversity. The new open spaces will also strengthen biodiversity and climate resilience. Urban wetlands, canopy trees and understory vegetation, will create habitats for birds and insects.

Integrated water management

The design of new public spaces is driven by a commitment to improve water management and climate resilience. As well as providing attractive and usable places for people, they will play an important role in managing stormwater, supporting urban cooling, improving biodiversity helping to reduce the impacts of heavy rainfall both within and beyond the precinct. Water-sensitive urban design initiatives such as raingardens, permeable surfaces, passive irrigation and stormwater harvesting will help direct and retain water within landscaped areas, supporting healthier trees and greener public spaces while reducing reliance on potable water.

Further opportunities for sustainable water use will continue to be explored, including the potential to capture and reuse water from City Oval to irrigate and support the long-term health of public spaces across the precinct.

Views to green spaces

New open spaces will also be highly visible and well connected, with many new homes and businesses directly fronting these spaces, providing attractive outlooks and bringing greenery into everyday life across the precinct.

Healthy canopy cover

Across the precinct, more than 200 new trees will be planted. An aspirational 40% tree canopy target will further strengthen Coburg's resilience to heat, ensuring the area remains comfortable and connected as it grows. Powerlines will be located underground where possible to enable significant canopy growth. Together, these initiatives will help reduce the urban heat island effect and create a cooler, more comfortable environment. Water-sensitive urban design initiatives, including passive irrigation, raingardens, stormwater harvesting and permeable surfaces, will help support long-term tree health and resilience by directing stormwater into landscaped areas and reducing reliance on potable water.



Balfe Park by Kerstin Thompson Architects. Photo by Leo Showell.

An open place where streets and parks provide comfortable, shady gathering places for the whole community.



Access to sunlight

The design of new buildings has been carefully considered to support these outcomes. Heights ranging from 3 to 18 storeys are arranged to protect sunlight access to both new and existing public spaces, as well as key pedestrian streets. Upper levels are set back to create a more open, human scaled streetscape, while minimising wind and overshadowing impacts.

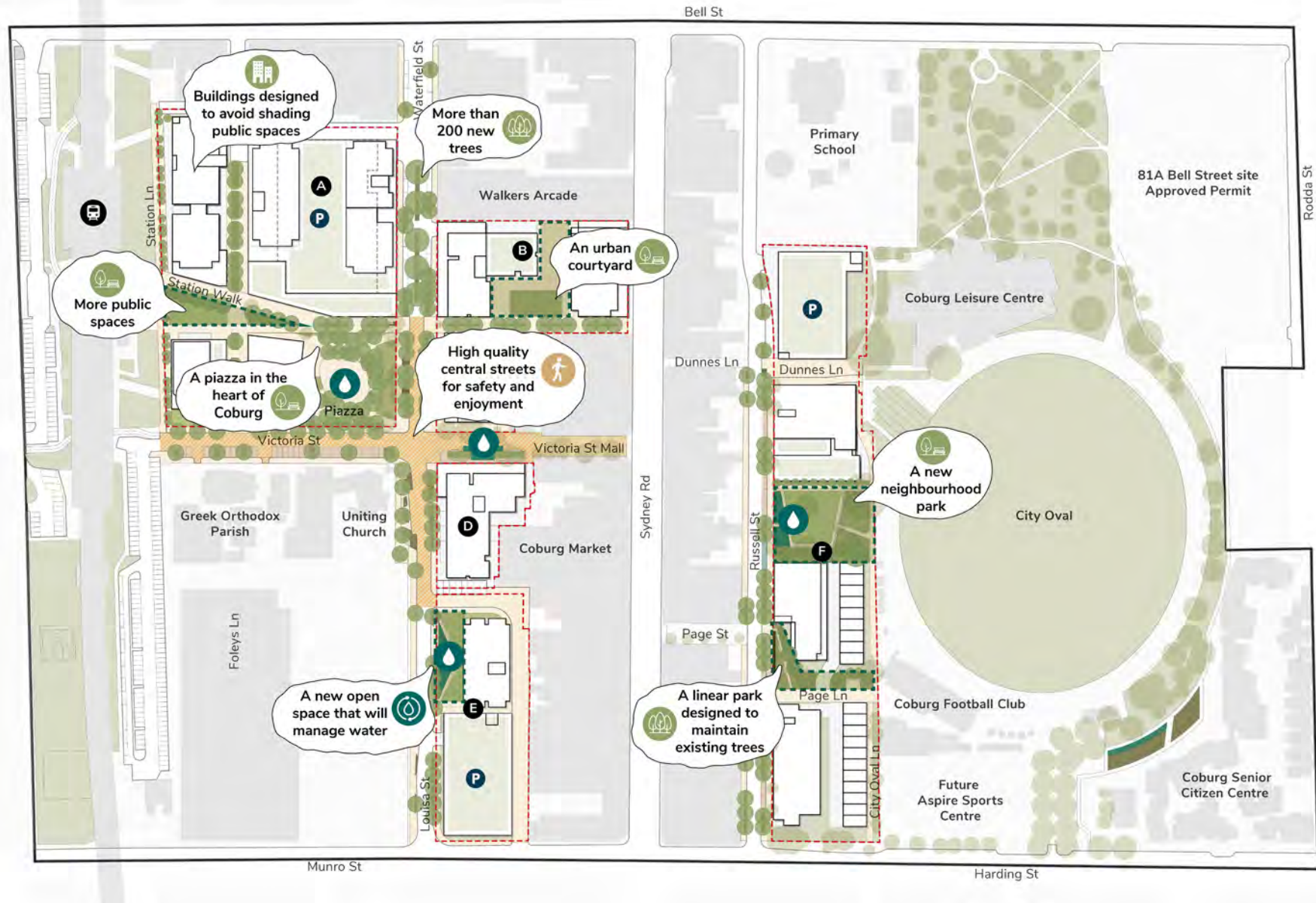
Central heart

High quality central streets at the intersection of Victoria, Louisa and Waterfield Streets will improve safety and enjoyment in the heart of Coburg. The streets will be designed to reduce the amount of through traffic that passes through the centre of Coburg.

Other opportunities

- > Deliver a connected and biodiverse landscape that supports habitat.
- > Deliver climate positive development that goes beyond net zero by generating surplus renewable energy.
- > Provide a recycling hub to enable effective ongoing resource recovery for residents.

Monash University Maths by Emergent Studios. Photo by Tom Ross.



Coburg is open. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Coburg is accessible

Moving through central Coburg will be easier and more enjoyable, with a new network of green streets and laneways.



Newcastle East End by SBJ et al. Photo by Brett Boardman.

An improved street network for all

Moving through central Coburg will be easier and more enjoyable, with a new network of green streets and laneways lined with diverse businesses, linking Coburg Station, Victoria Street Mall and Sydney Road. A 40% tree canopy cover target within new streets and open spaces will provide shade and cooling.

Upgrades to existing streets, will create safer and more direct routes for people walking and cycling through the area. These include a mix of off-road paths and shared low-speed streets, designed to support cycling while prioritising safety for all users.

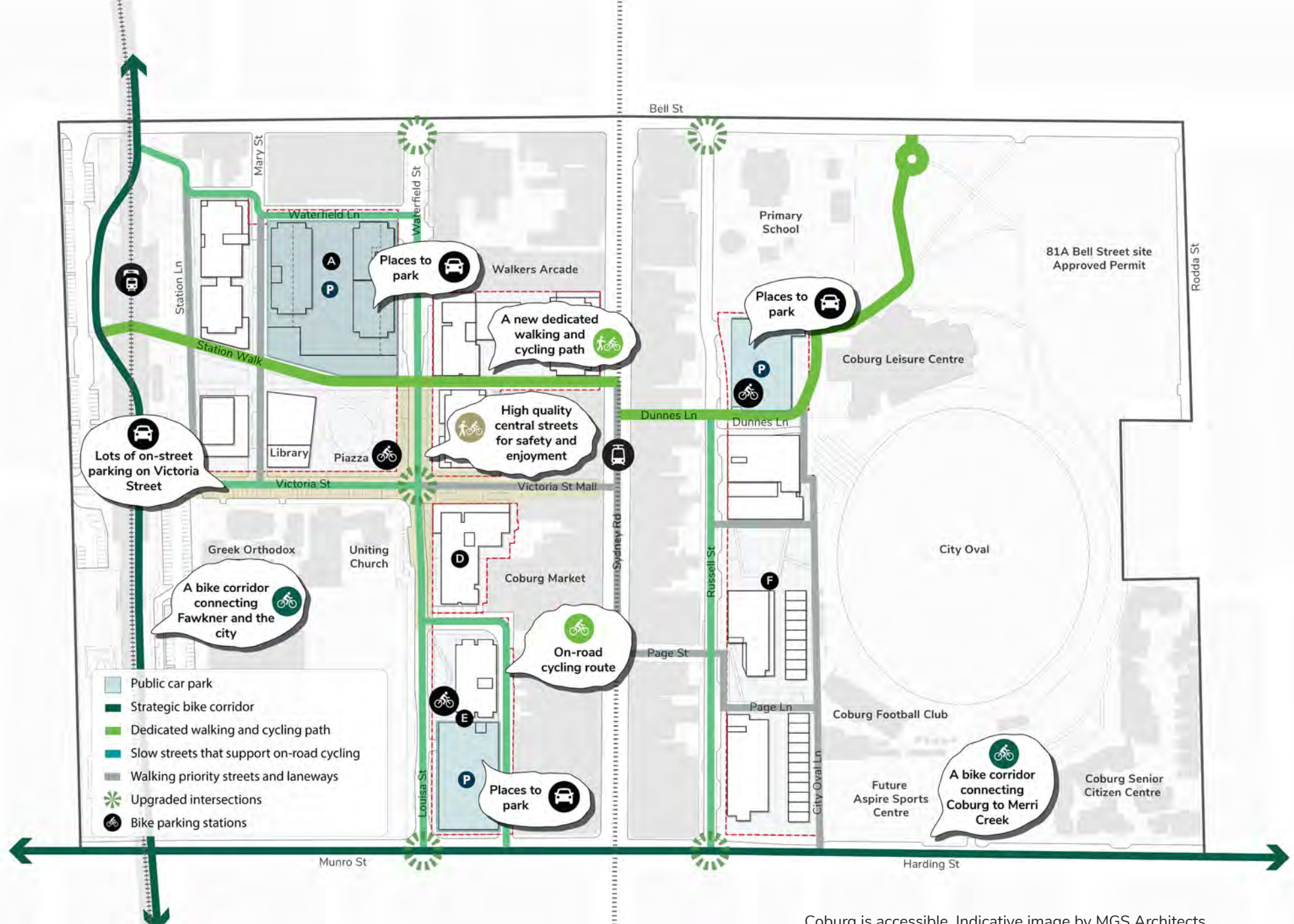
Traffic management

Traffic analysis shows the surrounding road network can accommodate the changes associated with the development, with the traffic network operating at a similar level to existing conditions today. At the same time, there is an opportunity to improve how people move through central Coburg.

We have identified a series of targeted intersection upgrades to enhance safety and accessibility, including:

- > Introducing bicycle lanes at the Munro Street / Harding Street / Sydney Road intersection
- > Simplifying turning movements at the Bell Street / Russell Street intersection
- > Improving safety at the Louisa Street / Munro Street roundabout
- > Enhancing line-marking at the Bell Street / Waterfield Street intersection
- > Introducing traffic calming measures at the Victoria Street / Victoria Street Mall and Waterfield Street intersection

Further traffic studies will be undertaken at each stage of the project as the design progresses to ensure these changes continue to support safe and efficient movement. Other improvements will be achieved through the removal of vehicle crossovers, reducing conflicts between drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. Together, these changes will support a safer, more accessible environment for all users.



Dedicated cycling routes to and through central Coburg and bike parking at key destinations will improve safety and access.



38 Albermarle Street Kensington by Assemble and Fieldwork.
Photo by Tom Ross.

A better connection to Coburg Station

Station Walk will provide a direct and legible connection between Coburg Station and Sydney Road, supporting pedestrian movement as well as slow cycling to key destinations such as the new library and piazza.

Safer cycling routes

Making it easier and safer to ride a bike is an important part of supporting a more vibrant and connected Coburg. Dedicated cycling routes to and through central Coburg, along with convenient bike parking at popular destinations, will make it simpler for more people to choose cycling for everyday trips.

A mix of cycling options will be provided to suit different comfort levels. Off-road shared paths will offer safe, slower routes that are ideal for families, children and less confident riders. On-road bike lanes will also be available for more confident cyclists, supported by measures such as lower speed limits, traffic calming, and safer crossings to help everyone feel more comfortable sharing the street.

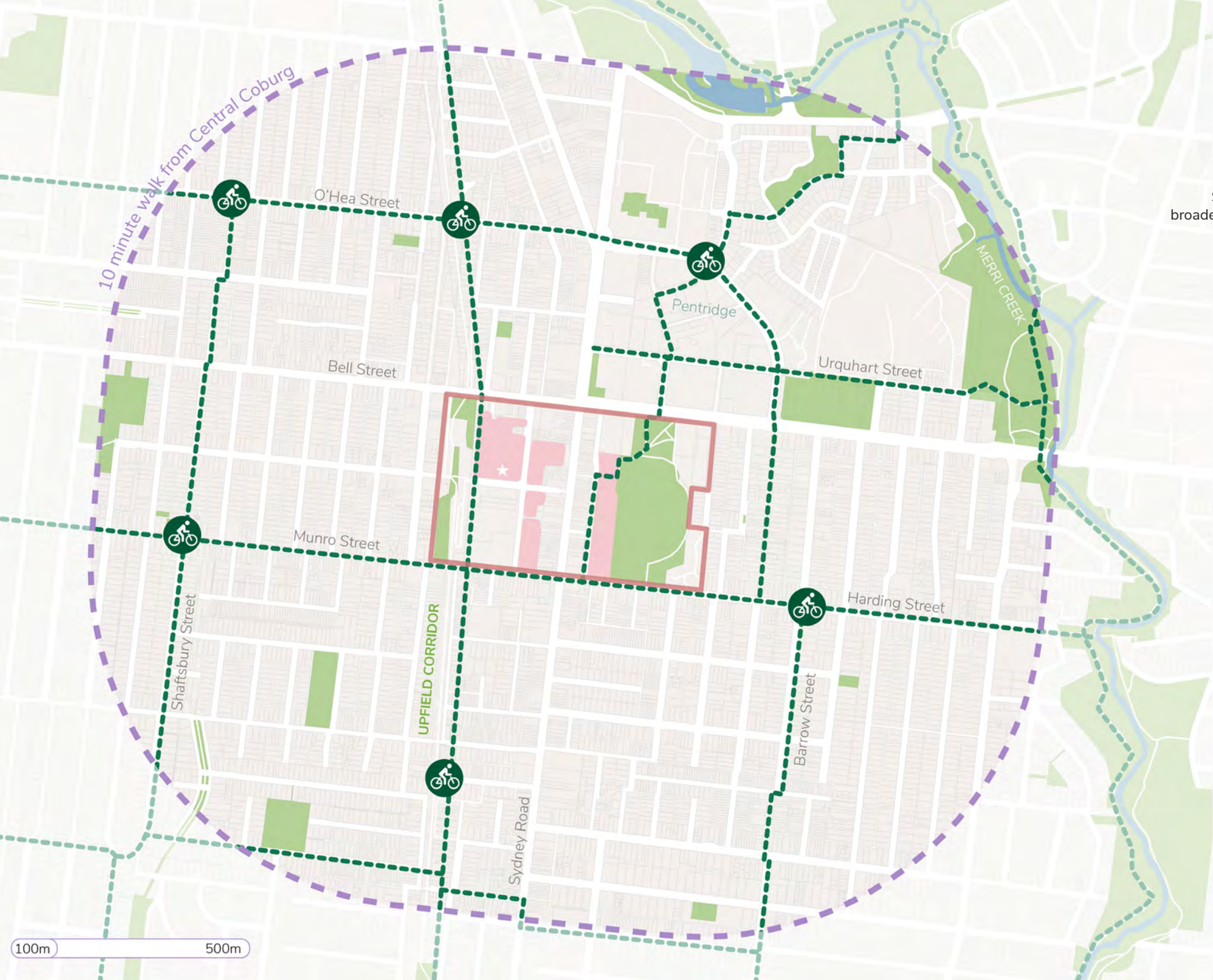
Clear guidance on the future design of streets and laneways is included in the development standards for central Coburg.

These local changes will be supported by broader work across Merri-bek, including the Streets for People Plan, which is focused on creating a connected network of safe and welcoming cycling routes across the municipality.

Everyone agrees that improvements to Sydney Road are necessary to support our businesses and community to support a more vibrant and successful precinct in Coburg.

A better Sydney Road

There is strong community support for improvements to Sydney Road to better support local businesses and create a more vibrant and welcoming central Coburg. Council is advocating for the State Government to work closely with traders and the community to shape the future of Sydney Road, and to explore opportunities that enhance vibrancy, connectivity, safety, liveability, greening and accessibility.



Streets for People
broader cycling network

An accessible place where people will comfortably walk, cycle, catch public transport or drive and park their car.

Plenty of public car parking

Parking plays an important role for many local businesses and visitors to central Coburg, particularly for those who find it more difficult to access the area by other modes of transport. To support this, around 900 public car spaces will be reprovided, equating to approximately 80% of existing supply, which has considered current and future parking demand patterns.

All parts of central Coburg will be within a short, two-minute walk of public parking in three new multi-deck parking locations. We are also proposing to introduce smart parking signage which directs people to available parking and reduces the number of people circling the precinct looking for a park.

Well-designed public car parks

The design of multi-deck car parks will also be carefully considered to ensure they make a positive contribution to the area. Ground floors will incorporate affordable commercial spaces to bring activity to the street, while features such as green façades, rooftop landscaping, and public art will help soften their appearance and integrate them into the surrounding neighbourhood.

On-street parking

A careful approach to street design will ensure greening aspirations are balanced with the need for accessible on-street parking. On-street spaces will be prioritised for accessible parking, short-term stays, and loading, while off-street parking will cater to longer-term use, trader parking, and EV charging.

Managing parking through staging

Parking provision will be front of mind when staging and construction is underway to ensure workers, residents and shoppers have adequate access to central Coburg throughout the delivery of the project.

Private car parking for new residents and workers

In addition to publicly accessible car parking, new private parking will be provided for residents and businesses as part of future development, with the final amount of parking provided to be confirmed in future stages. Measures will also be put in place to mitigate the impacts of increased parking demand on existing residents in surrounding streets.



Multi-deck carpark in Copenhagen, Park 'n' Play by JAJA Architects. Photo by Katherine Sundermann.

Waterfield Street and Louisa Street

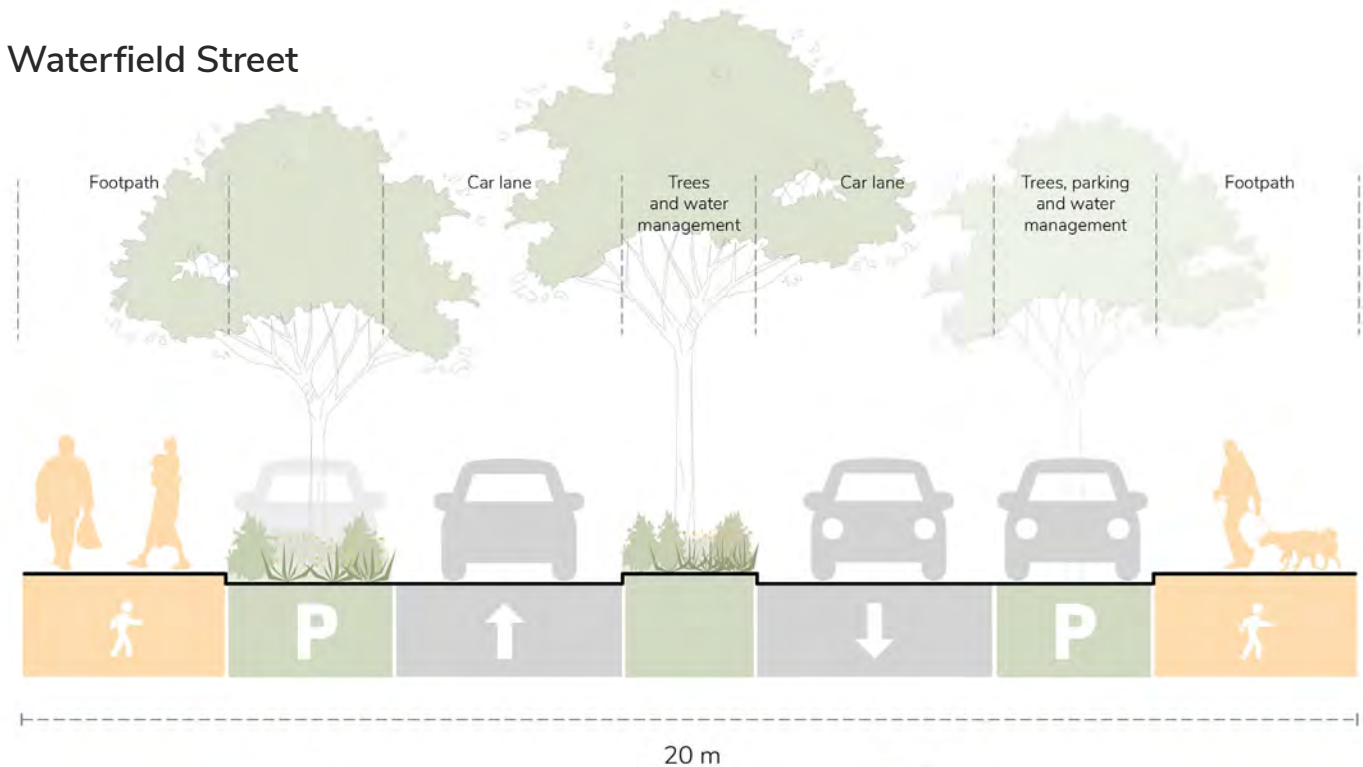
The Waterfield and Louisa Street corridor will include safer pedestrian paths, more trees, safer road crossings, integrated water management, on-street parking and loading zones. Cycling will be supported through on-road routes designed to be shared with slow-moving traffic, creating a safer and more comfortable environment for people riding.

It will form a secondary north-south cycling route through central Coburg. The central part of Waterfield Street and Louisa Street will have its own character, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists in the centre while still allowing for slow traffic movements.

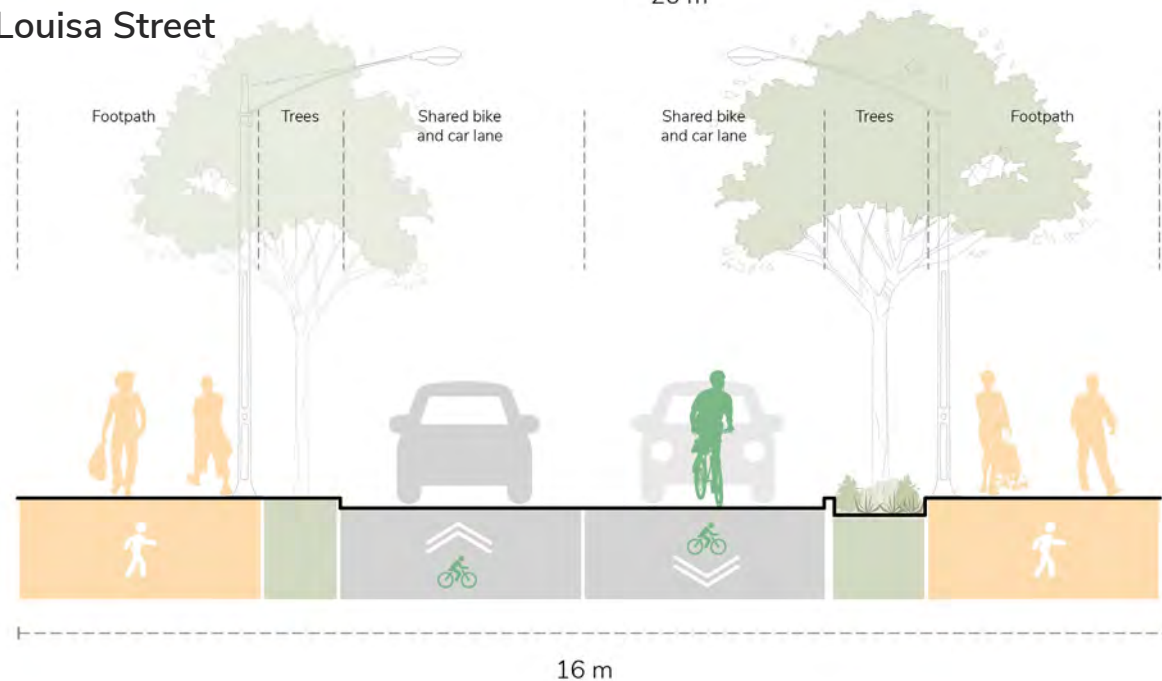
Indicative sections by GLAS Landscape Architects.

Delivering the vision > Coburg is accessible

Waterfield Street



Louisa Street



Victoria Street and Victoria Mall

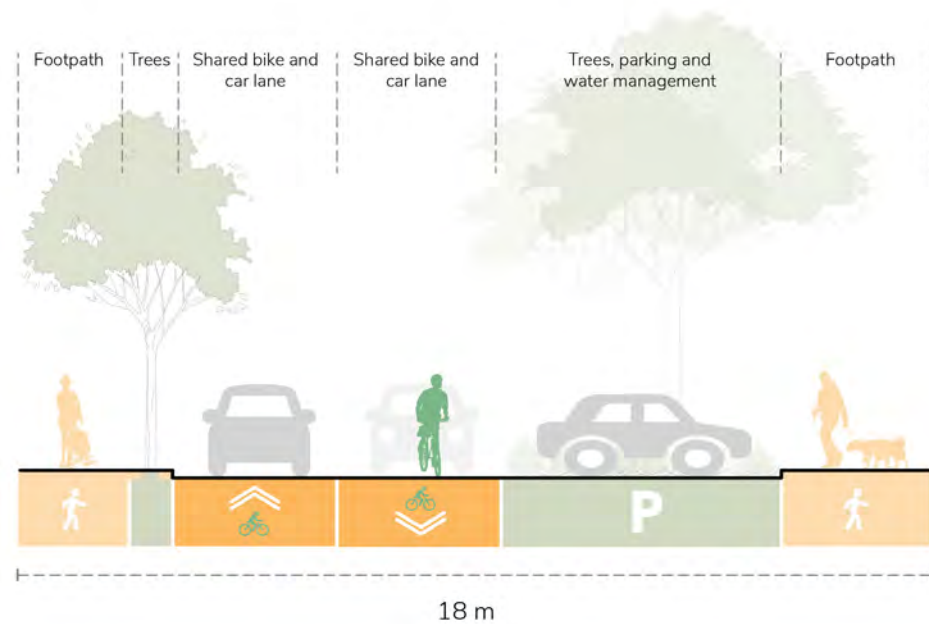
Victoria Street Mall will be upgraded to better support local businesses to thrive. The safety, pedestrian friendly character of the mall will be extended to the west, improving the connection between the mall to the new library and piazza.

The street will be greener with more trees and integrated water management. As well as greenery, it will still have lots of on-street parking to make sure there are options for people to park close to important destinations like Victoria Street Mall, the new library and piazza and the churches.

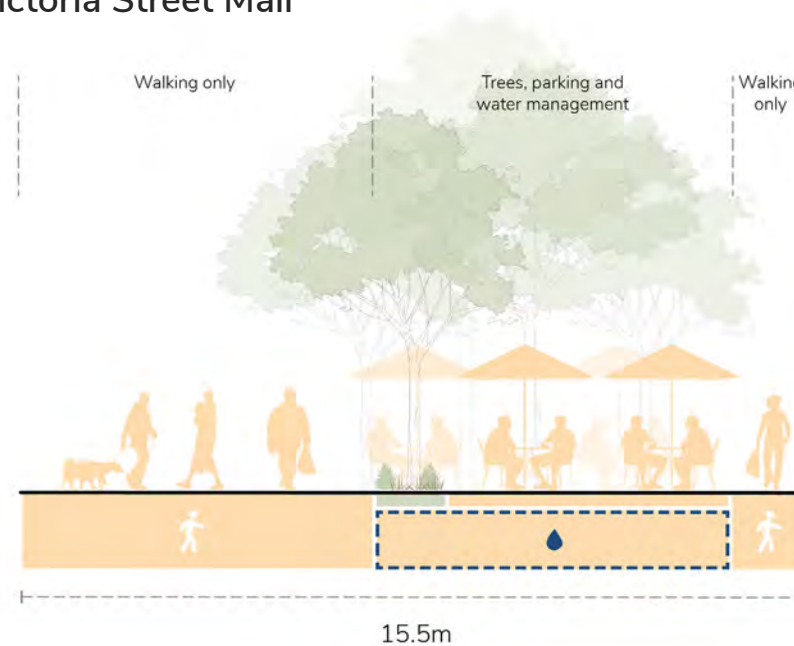
Like Waterfield Street and Louisa Street, Victoria Street will have a special character, prioritising pedestrians while still allowing for traffic to move through slowly. This space could incorporate public art and distinctive surface treatments to calm traffic, create a strong sense of place, and invite people to spend time in the area, whether visiting the new library, local shops or community services. These changes will celebrate the heart of Coburg and improve safety for all users.

Indicative sections by GLAS Landscape Architects.

Victoria Street



Victoria Street Mall

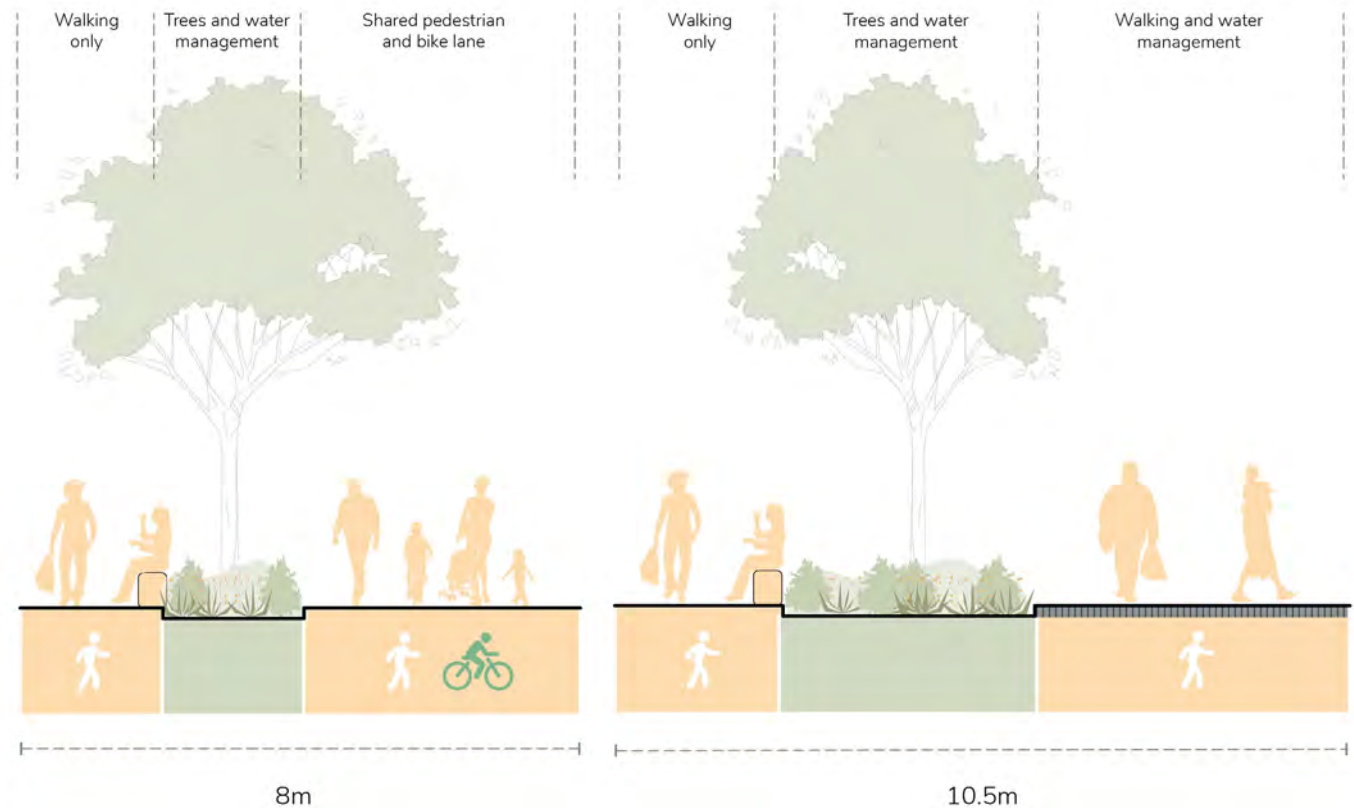


Station Walk

A new laneway will connect Coburg Station to the library, piazza, Waterfield Street and Sydney Road, creating views to the old heritage station. A shared cycling path will provide a safe route for slow cycling between the Upfield bike corridor and key destinations. The laneway will be lined with shops, businesses, the library and two new public spaces. It will have places to sit, be shaded from large trees and be designed to manage water.

Mary Walk

Mary Walk is a new safe pedestrian laneway connecting Mary Street to Victoria Street, with clear views to the Presentation of Our Lord church in the south. The laneway will be lined with community uses, shops and new homes. It will have places to sit, be shaded with large trees and be designed to manage water.



Station Walk

Mary Walk

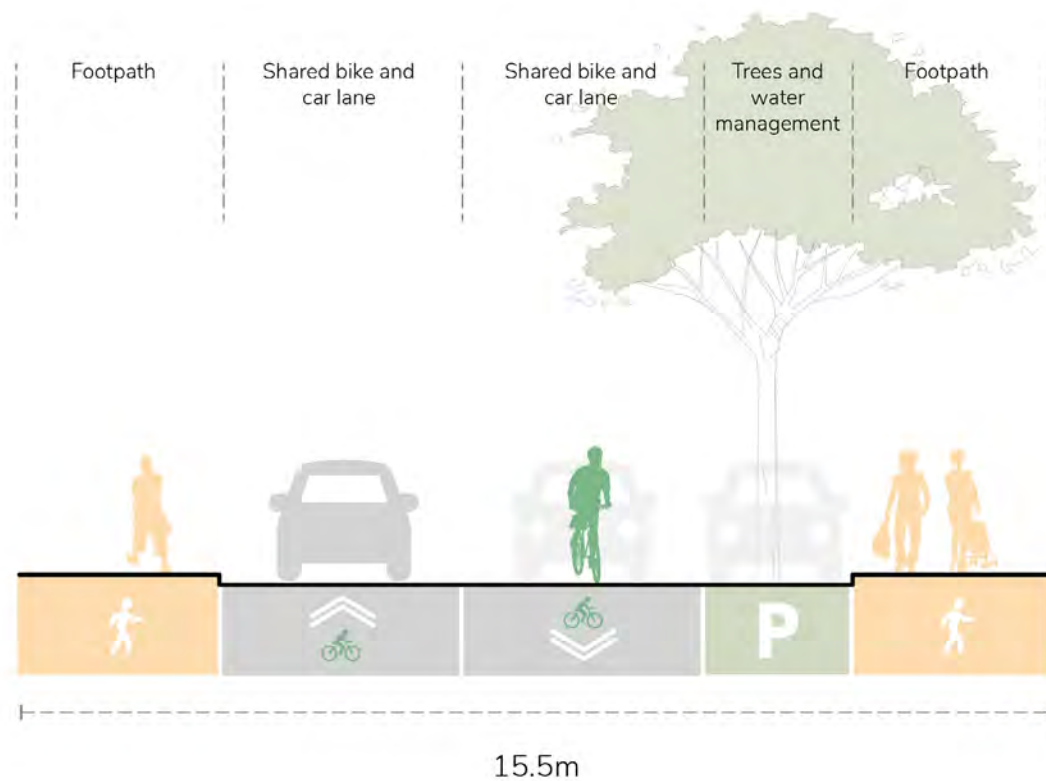
Indicative sections by GLAS Landscape Architects.



View along Station Walk looking towards the former Coburg Station. Indicative visualisation by Narrative.

Russell Street

Russell Street will have safe and accessible walking paths, on-street parking and big street trees. Cycling will be supported through on-road routes designed to be shared with slow-moving traffic, creating a safer and more comfortable environment for people riding. The street will connect the Coburg Leisure Centre, the multi-deck carpark, new homes, new public spaces and the future Aspire Centre.

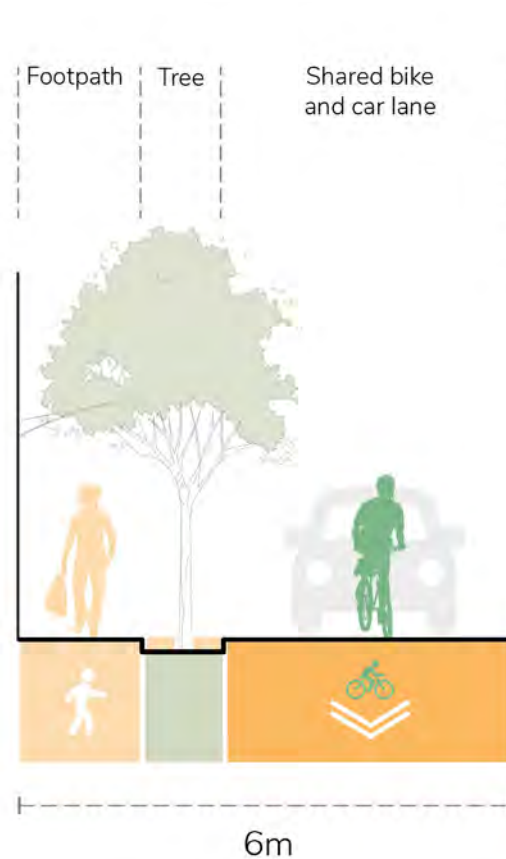


Russell Street

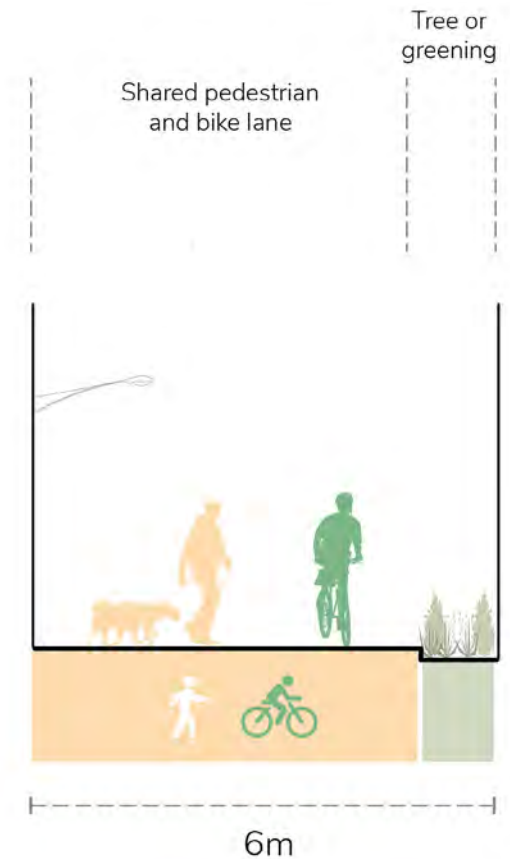
Indicative section by GLAS Landscape Architects.

Laneways

New laneways throughout central Coburg will provide greening and more ways to get around for all users. All laneways will be designed to support safe cycling and walking through central Coburg and to include greening where possible. While some laneways will be for pedestrians and cyclists only, others will allow for cars in order to support access to new and existing businesses.



Driving, walking and cycling lane

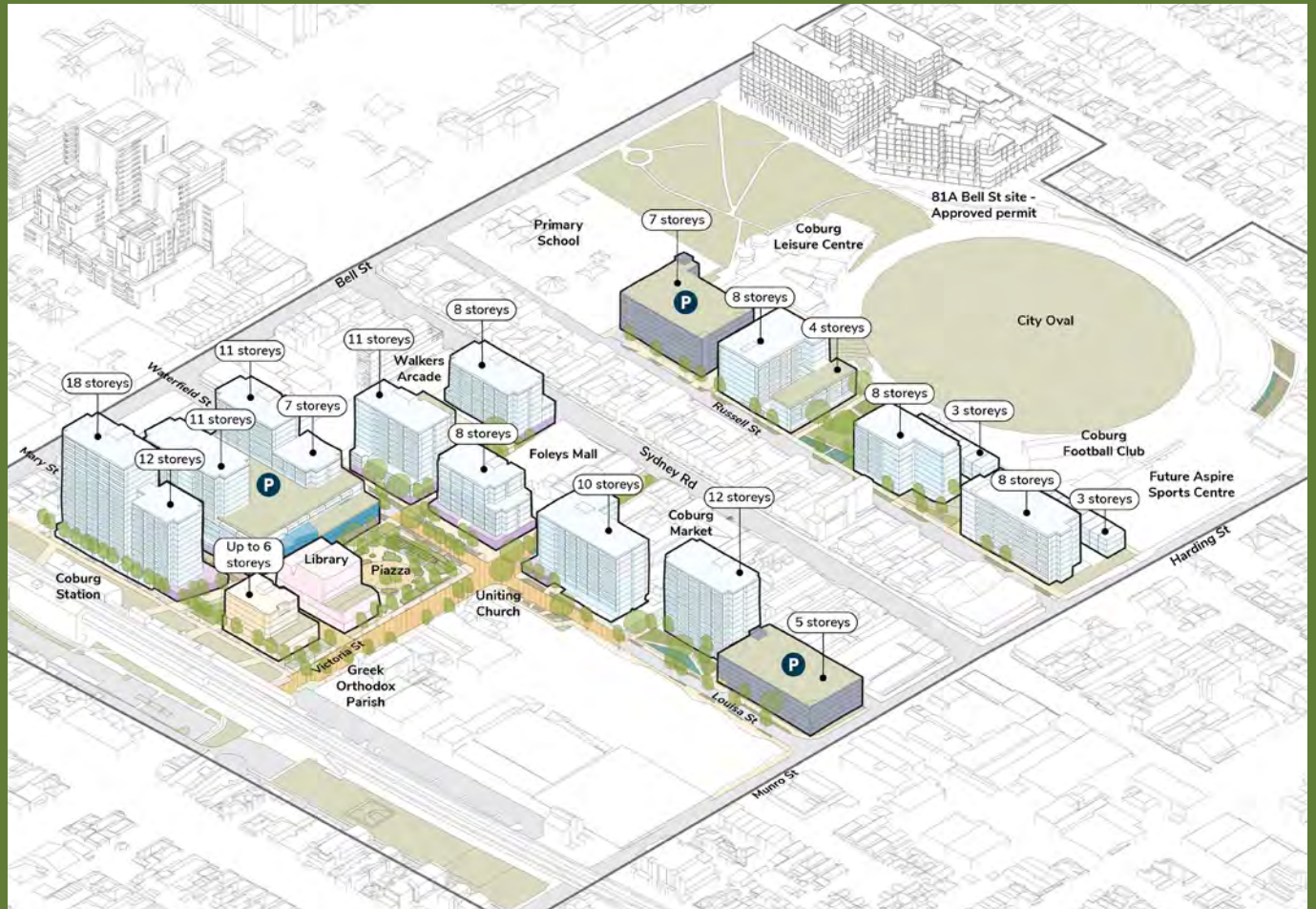


Walking and cycling lane

Indicative sections by GLAS Landscape Architects.

THE PLAN FOR EACH SITE

- ❖ The six sites
- ❖ Site A
- ❖ Site B & C
- ❖ Site D
- ❖ Site E
- ❖ Site F



An updated framework for central Coburg. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

The six sites

Each of the six sites offers a distinct opportunity for transformation. Varying in size, form, and surrounding context, each site calls for a tailored design response that reflects its unique characteristics.

Waterfield West

Site A is ideally suited for a mix of housing, retail, and commercial uses. Its immediate proximity to Coburg Station and the Upfield Corridor makes it highly accessible by public transport, as well as by walking and cycling.

Waterfield East

Site B is located along Sydney Road and within easy walking distance of the station, presents a great opportunity for vibrant retail and urban living.

Victoria North and Victoria South

Site C and D sit at the heart of Coburg, opening onto the Victoria Street Mall. These sites will bring new activity to the area with ground-floor retail and housing above, complementing existing businesses on Victoria Street Mall.

Louisa East

Site E will include a new public open space, housing and a multi-deck carpark. New residents will have direct access and views to greenery and the overall character of Louisa Street will be improved.

Russell East

Site F will include new public spaces, a multi-deck carpark, apartments and townhouses. New residents will live in direct proximity to City Oval, Bridges Reserve and the Coburg Leisure Centre with future residents having direct access to public open space and community facilities.

Site A

Waterfield West (A) is home to the new Coburg Library and piazza, housing, offices, retail and a new supermarket. Buildings range in height from up to 6-18 storeys.

A new library and piazza

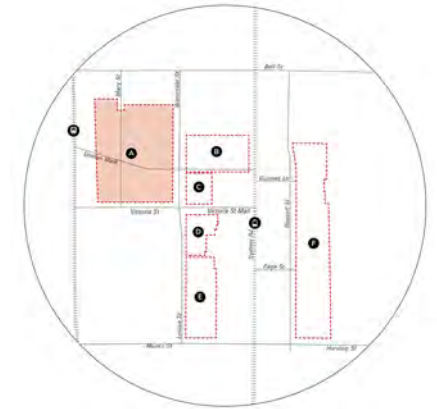
A new library and piazza will hold pride of place in central Coburg. The library will provide a welcoming space, services and resources for the local community, and the piazza will provide a green outdoor space for recreation, relaxation and events. The project is already underway, with doors expected to open in 2029.

More public open space

Station Triangle will be a new public space outside of the old heritage station. The space will welcome people into the area when arriving from Coburg Station and the Upfield Corridor.

New community spaces

On site A1, a new community mixed-use building delivered and operated by local community organisation(s). The maximum building envelope will be equivalent of around six-storeys. This new building will complement the existing local community infrastructure, expanding the offering for locals and visitors to central Coburg. This proposal is subject to a process to procure a suitable organisation(s) with a strong connection to Coburg.



A new laneway network

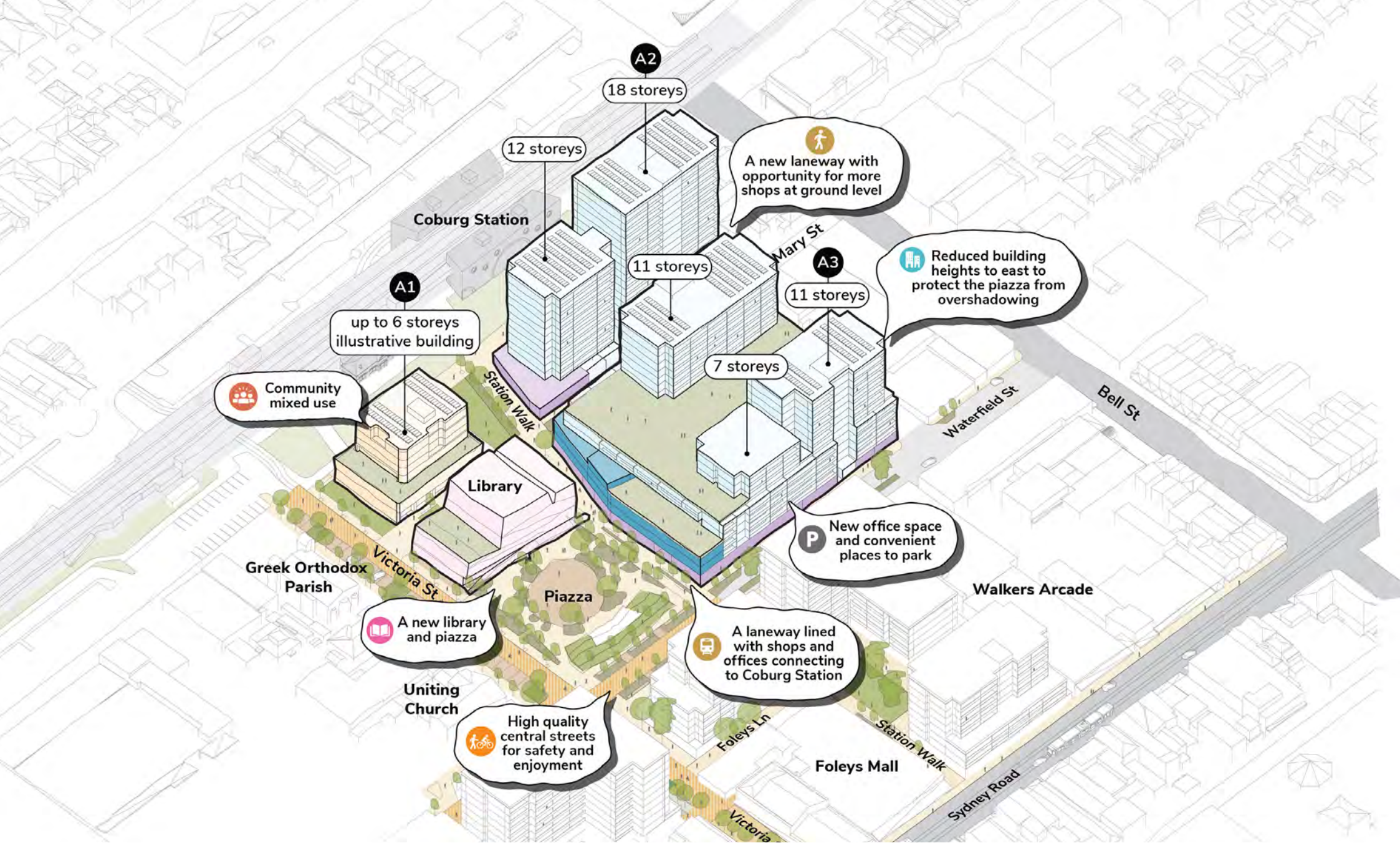
Station Walk will link Coburg Station and Waterfield Street, and Mary Walk will connect Mary Street and Victoria Street.

A taller building next to Coburg Station

Building A2 will be an 18-storey building that is mostly residential with some shops and businesses at the ground floor. There is an opportunity to explore additional employment uses in the ground floor of the building. An underground car park provides parking for new residents and businesses.

A mixed-use building with public parking

Building A3 will be an 11-storey building with a supermarket, shops and businesses to complement the existing hive of activity on Victoria Street Mall and Sydney Road. The upper levels of the building are setback to maintain solar access to the piazza. Public parking will be provided above the supermarket, a short walk to key destinations in central Coburg.



Site A. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Site B & C

Waterfield East (B) and Victoria North (C) will provide spaces to live, shop, and gather, centred around a new urban courtyard. Buildings range in height from 5-11 storeys.

An urban courtyard

An urban courtyard provides a place to gather and creates high quality views for those living at Waterfield East and Victoria North.

A new laneway network

Station Walk will link Coburg Station, Waterfield Street and Sydney Road. Foleys Lane will connect Station Walk to Victoria Street Mall.

A taller building on Waterfield Street

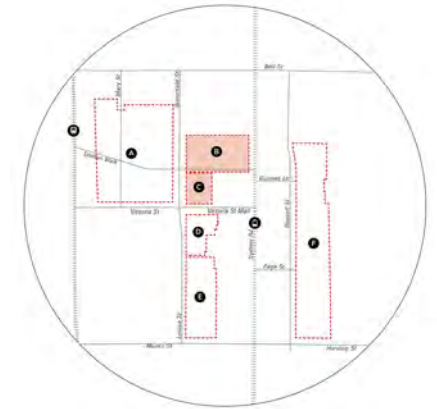
Building B1 will be an 11-storey building that steps down 5-storeys in the east to protect the urban courtyard from overshadowing. It will have shops and businesses at the ground floor onto both Waterfield Street and the urban courtyard. An underground car park provides parking for new residents and businesses on site.

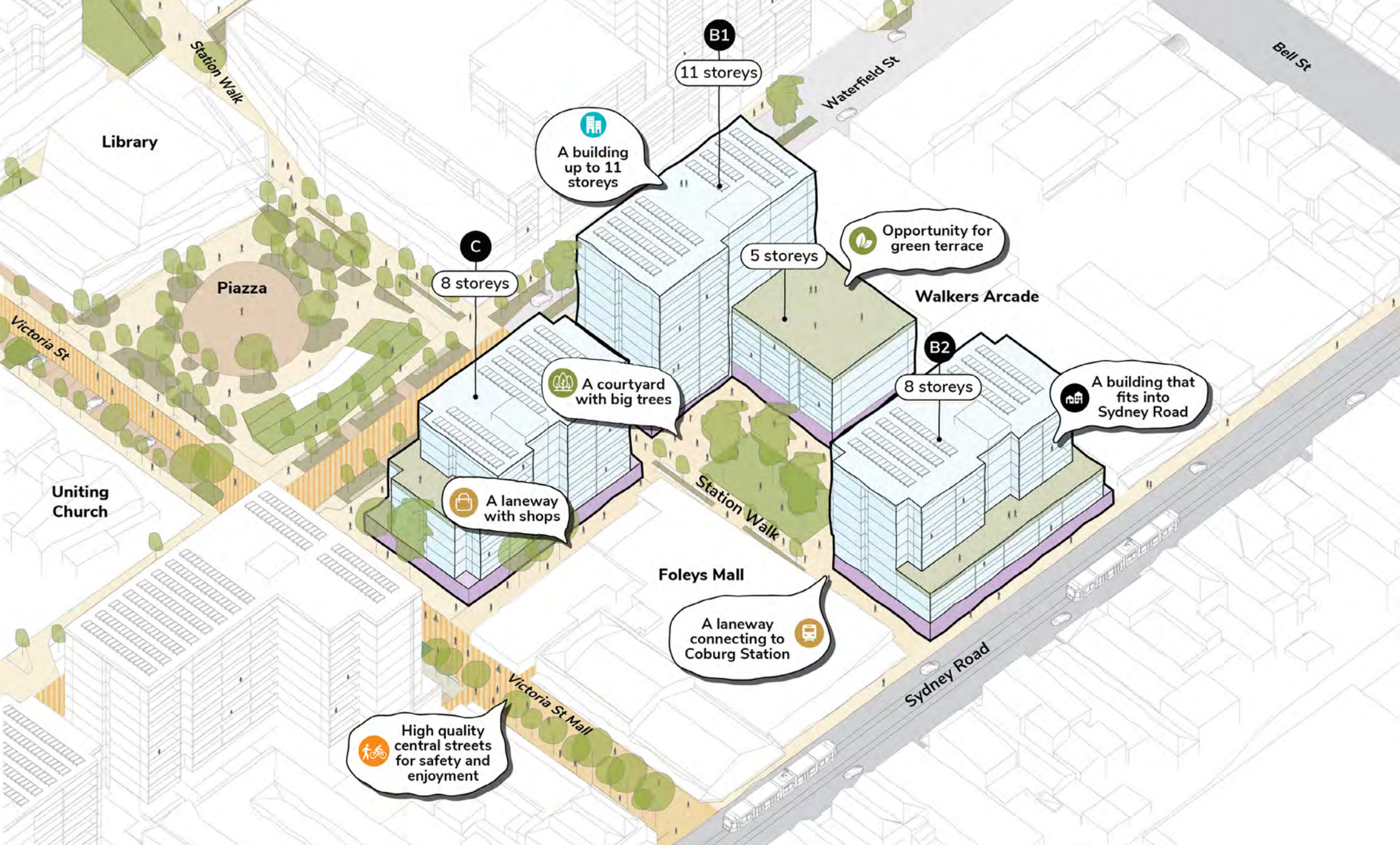
A building on Sydney Road

Building B2 will be an 8-storey building with a lower street wall to Sydney Road. At ground level, flexible retail spaces will create new opportunities for businesses and generate activity along Sydney Road and Station Walk.

A building on Victoria Street Mall

Building C will be an 8-storey building with a lower street wall to Victoria Street Mall to integrate with the existing character of the mall and protect it from overshadowing. At ground level, flexible retail spaces will create new opportunities for businesses and generate activity along Sydney Road and Station Walk. A new laneway to the east will maintain access to existing shops and businesses, including Foley's Mall.





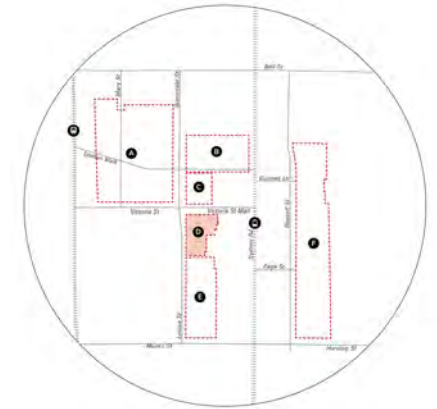
Site B & C. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Site D

Victoria South (D) is a place to live and shop right on Victoria Street Mall.

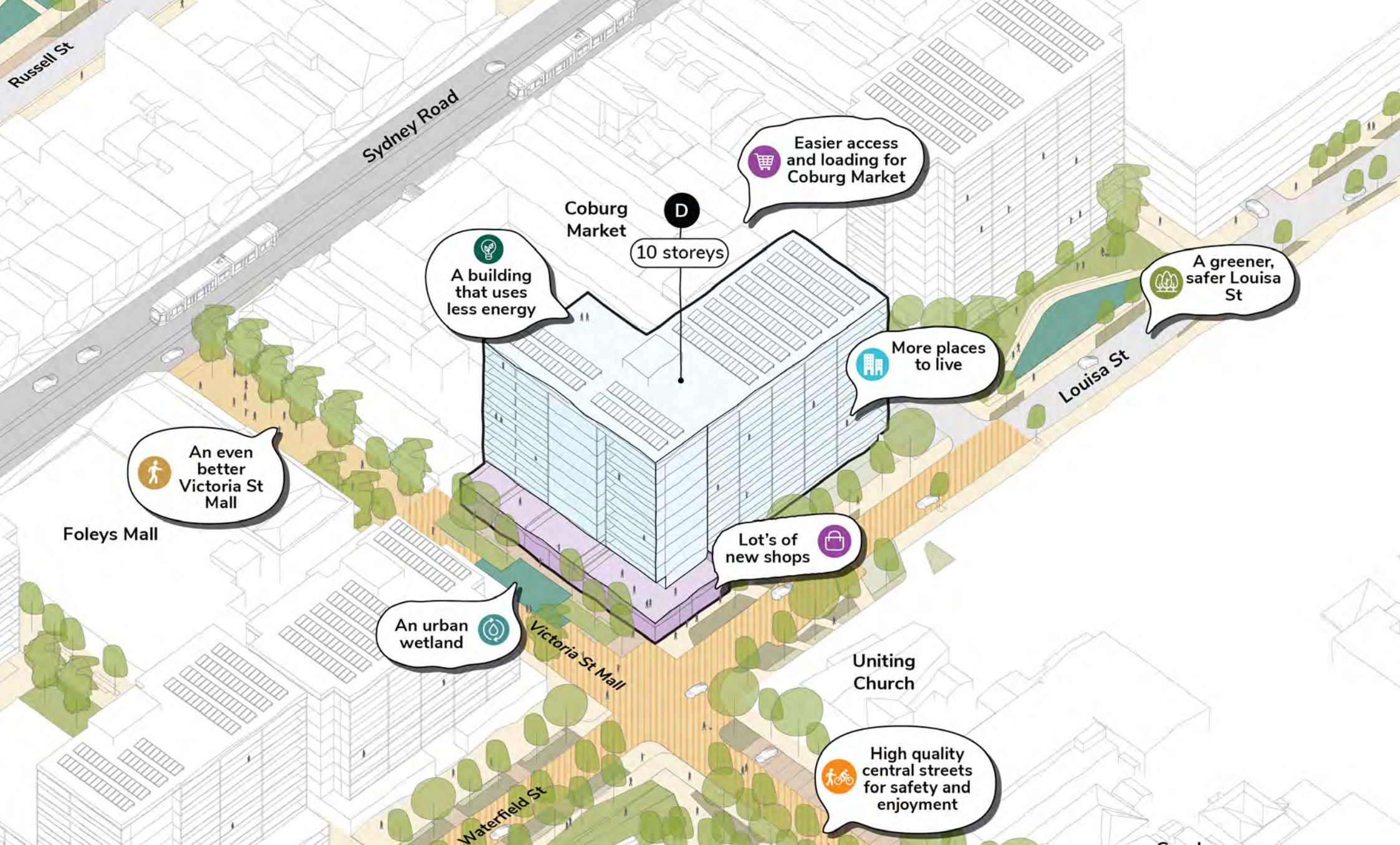
An extension of Victoria Street Mall

A new extension of the mall will be connected to the piazza by a new slow, safe zone at the intersection of Victoria, Louisa and Waterfield Streets, expanding places for the community to gather in the heart of Coburg. Victoria Street Mall will also be upgraded, respecting and celebrating the much-loved character of the mall as the centre of Coburg. New shops at the ground floor of Building D will complement the diversity of existing well-loved and much-visited businesses on Victoria Street Mall.



Convenient housing options

Building D will be a 10-storey building with housing at the upper levels, allowing people to live right in the middle of central Coburg. The upper levels of the building will be setback above the ground level to respect the low scale of the buildings along the mall.



Site D. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Site E

Louisa East (E) includes housing, a multi-deck car park, and a new public space.

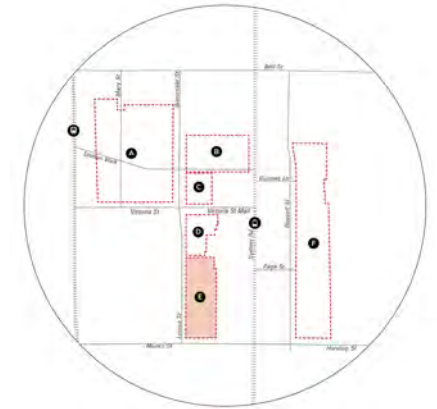
New housing and a pocket park

Building E will be a 12-storey residential building. It will overlook a new pocket park that features an urban wetland. This wetland will provide a distinctive landscape for the community to enjoy while also playing an important role in water management.

More public parking with an active ground floor

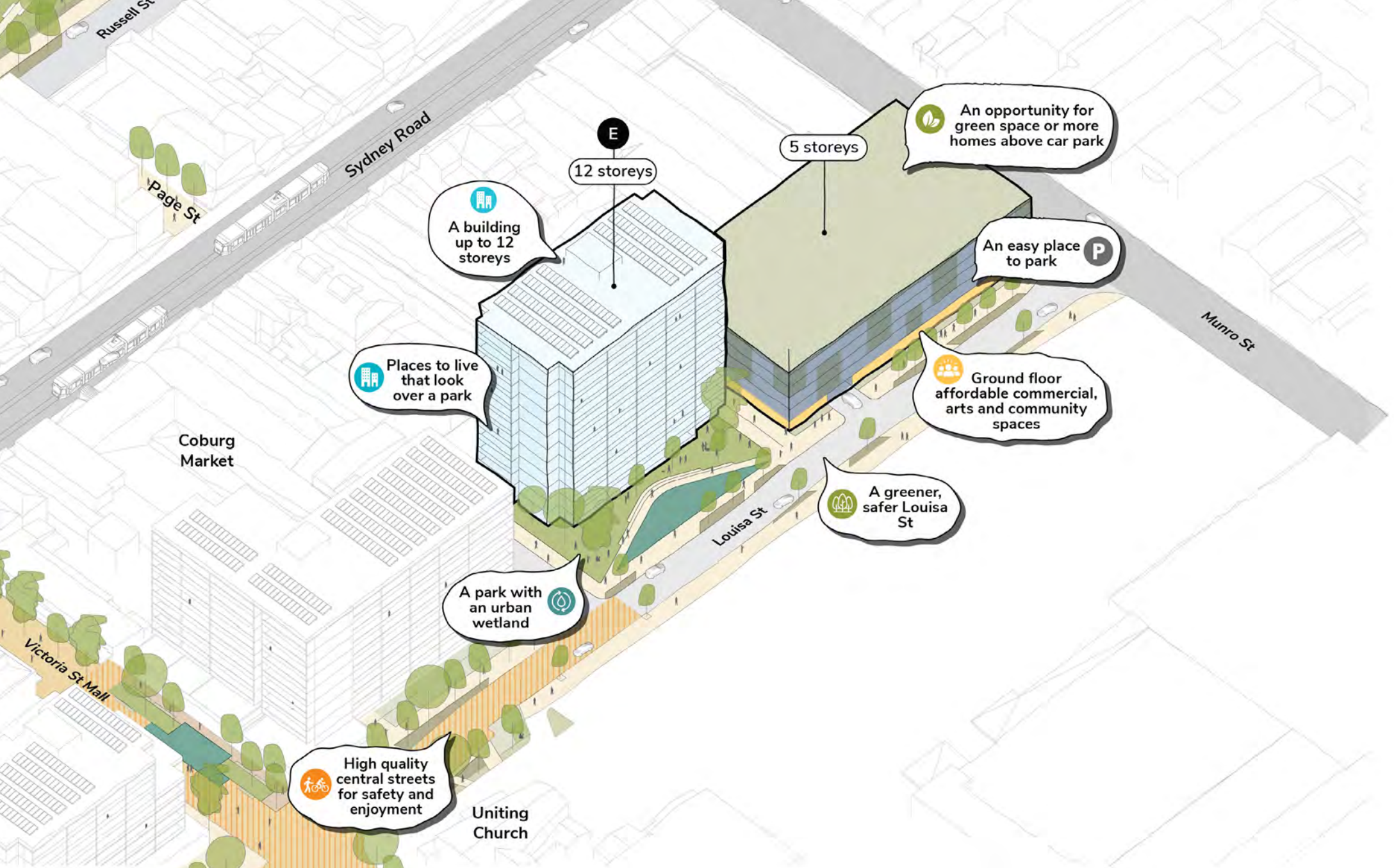
To the south, a new five-storey multi-deck car park will consolidate existing public parking in a convenient location, just a short walk from Victoria Street Mall and Sydney Road.

At ground level, the car park will incorporate affordable commercial uses, activating Louis Street and contributing to street life. The building will also integrate greening across its roof and façade, with further design detail to be developed in future stages. There is also the opportunity for housing on top of the car park building.



More new connections to Sydney Road

A new laneway between the buildings will create a connection through the centre of the site, improving permeability and access to Sydney Road.



Site E. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

Site F

Russell East (F) will deliver a mix of well-designed apartments and townhouses, offering diverse living options overlooking City Oval and with the Coburg Leisure Centre at their doorstep.

More green open space for Coburg

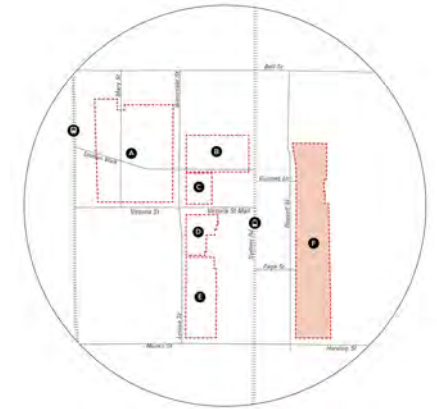
A neighbourhood park and a linear park will provide new open spaces for the community to enjoy. The parks are carefully arranged around existing, healthy mature trees and connect Russell Street to City Oval. An urban wetland within the neighbourhood park to the north will support natural water management while also providing habitat for local birdlife and insects.

A new laneway network

A new laneway network, including along City Oval and inbetween buildings will provide safe walking and cycling paths to better connect Russell Street to City Oval, Coburg Leisure Centre and the future Aspire Centre.

Apartments next to City Oval

Building F1 will be an 8-storey building that steps down to 4-storeys in the south to protect overshadowing of the neighbourhood park. Many of the apartments will have views to City Oval in the east and views to the neighbourhood park in the south.



Apartments and townhouses next to City Oval

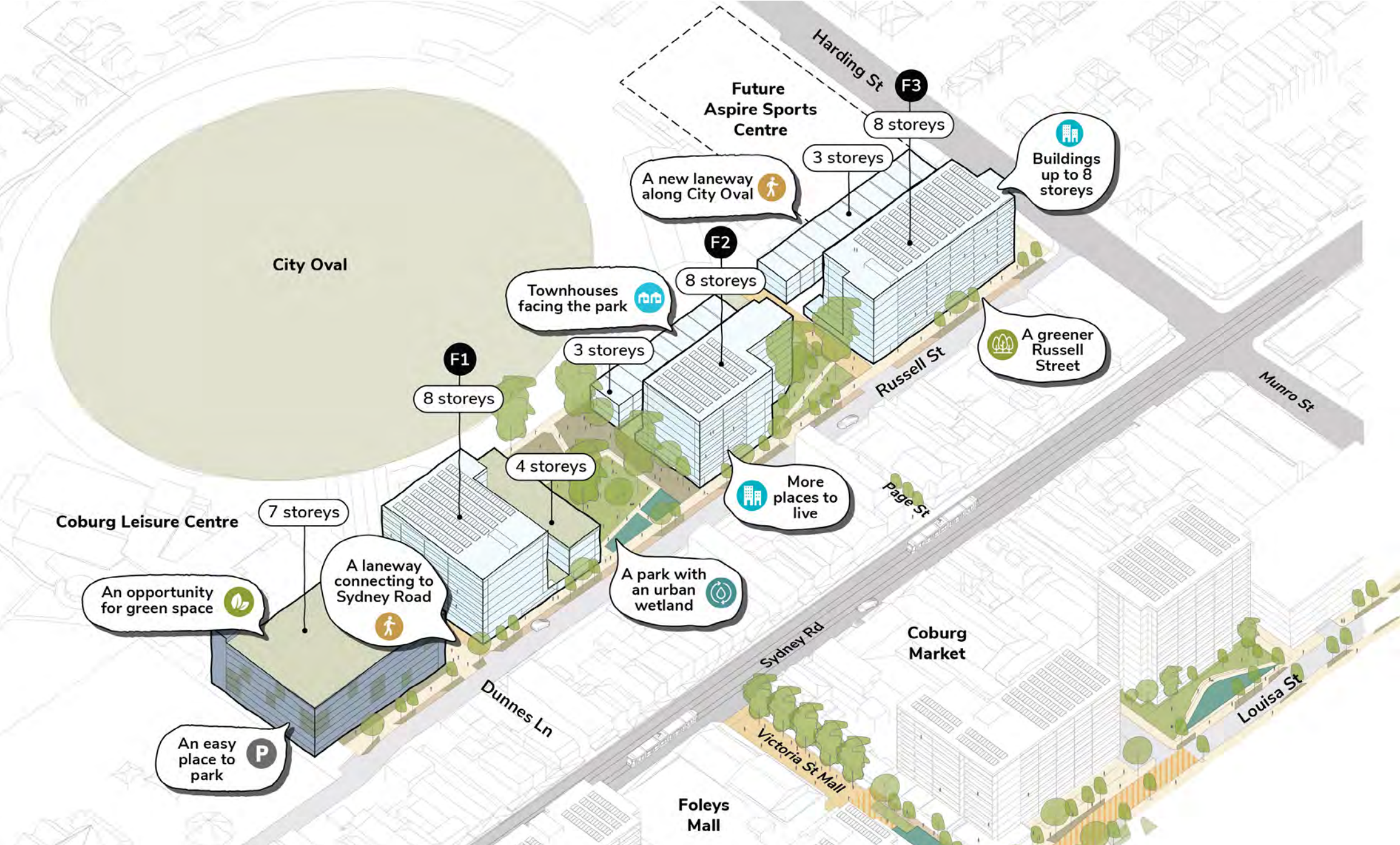
Building F2 will be a mix of 3-storey townhouses and 8-storey apartments. Many of the townhouses and apartments will have views to City Oval in the east, views to the neighbourhood park in the north and views to the linear park in the south.

Apartments and townhouses on Harding Street

Building F2 will be a mix of 3-storey townhouses and 8-storey apartments. Apartments to the north will have views to City Oval and the linear park.

Conveniently located public parking

Existing public parking will be relocated into a well-designed 7-storey multi-deck car park opposite the Coburg Leisure Centre. The building will integrate greening and be carefully designed to respond to its surroundings, contributing positively to the street. It will be within convenient walking distance of key destinations, including Coburg Primary School, City Oval, Sydney Road and the future Aspire Centre.



Site F. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

A LONG-TERM PLAN

❖ Staging development



Aerial view of central Coburg, looking towards Coburg Station.

Staging development

This is a long-term plan, with projects to be delivered in stages over 10-15 years. This improves the financial feasibility of the project, and allows interim impacts such as disruption from construction, such as access to parking, to be carefully managed.

Public realm upgrades are also staged, to make sure they align with the development of nearby sites. This means upgraded streets won't be damaged when sites are developed.



View along Victoria Street Mall looking towards Sydney Road. Photo by Simon Aubor.

The plan is to deliver in six stages and the first stage, the library and piazza, is already underway.

The stages are indicative and are subject to change over time. Future Council decisions regarding staging will consider external factors such as market conditions, partnerships, funding availability for social and affordable housing, and site assembly involving the small number of properties Council does not currently own. At each stage of development, we will undertake traffic and parking studies to effectively manage impacts during both construction and post-construction phases. We will also ensure that all development complies with accessibility requirements and promotes the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities.

Stage 1

Concept designs for the new library and piazza were revealed in early 2026 with further design refinement underway after community engagement. It is anticipated the new library will open in 2029.

We will undertake works to improve the public car parking on Waterfield Street and include an interim walk to connect Coburg Station to Waterfield Street and Victoria Street Mall.

Stage 2

A new community mixed-use site, led by a community organisation(s) to complement the existing churches and the new library and piazza. We will also undertake works to improve the quality of the public car park at this stage to improve amenity and maximise the number of spaces available.

Stage 3

A new mixed-use building on the former library site and upgrades to Victoria Street and Waterfield Street. Victoria Street Mall upgrades and a new laneway. This building is identified for social and affordable housing.

Stage 4

A new multi-deck car park with integrated community uses, residential building fronting a new pocket park, a new laneway connecting to Coburg Market and upgrades to Louisa Street. This building is identified for social and affordable housing.

Stage 5

New mixed-use buildings next to Coburg Station, a supermarket, more shops and housing. New laneways and a new multi-deck car park for public use with integrated community uses.

Stage 6

New mixed-use buildings with a new urban courtyard and a new neighbourhood park with integrated urban wetland. New housing options including townhouses by the City Oval.

What's next?

Now that there is a vision for central Coburg, we will prepare a business case to determine a delivery strategy and support future investment decisions. The business case will guide the feasibility and staging of the overall project.

As well as progressing with the new library and piazza, the second stage will be a new community mixed-use site to the west of the new library. To achieve this, we will soon commence a process to identify a suitable organisation(s) to develop and operate the site.



Potential staging. Indicative image by MGS Architects.

