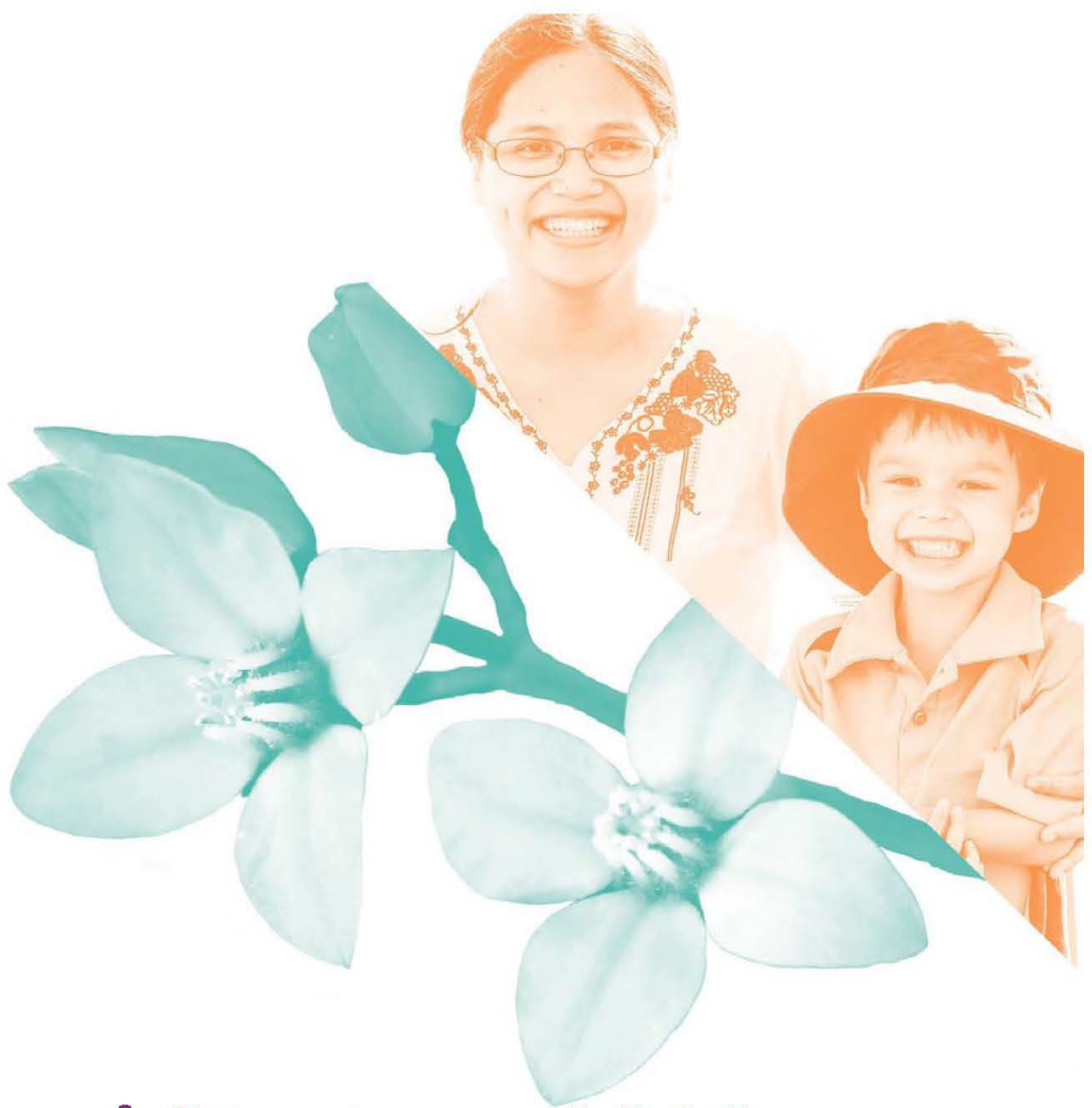


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Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019 (Revised 2021)



Boronia Renewal Project

Knox City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the City of Knox.

The Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

Disclaimer

This report is provided for information and it does not purport to be complete. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the report is accurate, we cannot guarantee that the report is without flaw of any kind. There may be errors and omissions or it may not be wholly appropriate for your particular purposes. In addition, the publication is a snapshot in time based on historic information which is liable to change. The City of Knox accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability or any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information contained in this report.

Contributions

The Boronia Renewal Strategy has been prepared by the City of Knox in conjunction with key stakeholders and the Boronia community. The development of this strategy for Boronia builds upon the review of the previous Boronia Structure Plan 'Your Life, Your Place: Our Future' October 2006 and forms the starting point of Council's vision towards 2040 for the Boronia Major Activity Centre.

The Renewal Strategy contains the collective of contributions and recommendations from a range of groups, with particular appreciation to:

- The Boronia community, interest groups and key stakeholders who were actively involved, participated in public discussions, responded to surveys, provided written submissions or who gave feedback on specific aspects of the Strategy.
- The Baird and Chandler Ward Councillors.
- Council staff and teams who participated in discussions, workshops and meetings as well as community engagement events, provided specific service information or technical advice:
 - Communications
 - Active and Creative Communities
 - Community Wellbeing
 - Community Infrastructure
 - City Development
 - City Futures.
- Officers of the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.
- Consultants involved in the preparation of supporting work:
 - HillPDA Consulting for the 'Boronia Economic Analysis Report'
 - Hansen Partnership Pty Ltd for the 'Urban Structure Report'
 - GTA consultants for the 'Movement and Access' report.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Boronia, the need for renewal

The suburb of Boronia is very different today from the Boronia when a Structure Plan was adopted for the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) by Council in 2006.

The Structure Plan recognised many parts of the Boronia MAC that were highly valued by the community, but did not factor in the impact that external trends i.e., apartment living, would have on the Centre. The Boronia MAC has kept many of the attributes that make it a unique and local place. Although there has been considerable investment in the Centre since then and the Centre has experienced many changes that have improved the quality of life for its residents and workers, it requires further renewal to see it through the next 20 years.

1.2. Boronia Major Activity Centre

Boronia is identified as a Major Activity Centre under the Victorian Government's metropolitan planning strategy Plan Melbourne 2017-2050. As such it is expected to provide a suburban focal point for services, employment, housing, public transport and social interaction.

1.3. Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019

The Boronia Renewal Strategy is based on an analysis of existing conditions, review of relevant literature, including Plan Melbourne and the Knox Planning Scheme, the support of multiple background reports and analysis, summary of stakeholder and community engagement, and the findings of the market demand assessments.

The Strategy includes a vision, key directions, objectives, strategies and actions to guide renewal in terms of the following strategic themes:

- Economic development and investment
- Land use and built form
- Movement and access
- Public realm
- Community wellbeing and infrastructure.

In response to a number of external influences impacting Boronia, the Strategy is forward looking to 2040 and serves several functions:

1. It sets out Knox Council's vision and development expectations and describes other types of changes that are needed and how they will be delivered.

2. It provides the rationale and strategic justification for changes to the planning controls within the Knox Planning Scheme.
3. It acts as a source document for the community and key stakeholders with an interest in the Boronia MAC.

Given this multi-faceted audience, the document contains aspirational and technical information in nature.

1.4. Boronia Structure Plan 2006

The 2006 Structure Plan for the Boronia MAC identified areas for retail and commercial concentration and for residential intensification. Apartment housing was considered appropriate, particularly above commercial businesses. The Structure Plan set a height limit of two to three storeys in residential areas and up to four storeys in commercially zoned areas in order to protect views to the Dandenong Ranges. A considerable time has elapsed since the introduction of planning controls that implemented the 2006 Structure Plan and the conditions have changed.

Existing interim built form controls (Design and Development Overlay Schedule 7) are due to expire in October 2021. Consequently, the Boronia

Renewal Strategy 2019 must articulate the built form outcomes desired, set the long term vision, as well as provide a strong and robust strategic justification for any future Planning Scheme provisions.

1.5. Activity Centre issues

There are issues that remain from the 2006 Structure Plan and some new ones that have arisen as a result of the growth it generated. The identified issues are discussed in greater detail where they are directly relevant as part of each theme chapter.

In the near future, Council and other service and infrastructure providers cannot address these issues with quick fix solutions and limited resources. A coordinated approach by major stakeholders is required to implement a place-based long term renewal strategy.

1.6. Key drivers for the Strategy

The development of the Boronia Renewal Strategy is driven by a number of factors, including:

- The need for a new, contemporary planning framework that takes into consideration the current strategic context.

- The need to review the Boronia MAC boundaries and built form controls.
- A need to reinvigorate the retail and commercial environment within the Boronia MAC.
- A need to consider ageing, failing or inadequate community and physical infrastructure in the long-term strategy for Boronia, such as Knox Basketball Stadium, Boronia Library, Bellbird Senior Citizens', Knox Leisureworks and the capacity of the Melbourne Water retarding basin.
- A need to consider social disadvantage in the area, including low incomes, family violence, lower education levels.
- The need for additional housing to be accommodated within the Boronia MAC.
- The redevelopment of significant parcels of under-utilised Victorian Government land within the Train Station Precinct which is expected to attract private sector investment.

1.7. Community Engagement

Listening to the community has been very important in the preparation of the Strategy. This

Strategy is the result of a comprehensive process of analysis and engagement with a broad cross section of the Boronia community.

In order to gain a better understanding of community perspectives, a number of consultation events and online surveys were conducted during 2017-2018 to collect information, ideas and views about Boronia, including:

- Community conversation events
- Workshops with specific audiences – service providers, community groups, local businesses
- Wayfinding walking tours
- Online surveys (4) - car parking, Boronia's future, perceptions of safety, and the Draft Renewal Strategy 2018
- Community safety audit walking tours
- Youth perspectives survey
- Young children's thoughts about Boronia
- Focus groups
- One-on-one key stakeholder meetings
- Social media postings.

The project was promoted regularly through

articles in the Boronia and Basin Community Newspaper, and a monthly newsletter that was distributed to over 480 subscribers.

Local newspapers and other social media were monitored for topics, issues or comments relevant to the future planning of Boronia.

In addition, there have been workshops, community conversation events and extended discussions with key stakeholders in the Victorian Government and agencies, with local businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

The appetite for change and regeneration in the community is evident from the feedback received and sustained levels of interest and participation.

1.8. Document Structure

The Strategy consists of the following sections:

1. Introduction – provides an overview of the document and the project.
2. Context – a description of the regional and local context of the place, its people and the policy context.
3. Vision, Key Directions and Big Move Projects – A 20-year vision, key directions and ‘Big Move’ projects to guide renewal of the Boronia MAC.

4– 8. Key Themes – Elements, issues, opportunities, preferred outcomes, objectives, strategies and actions relating to the five strategic themes: economic development and investment; land use and built form; movement and access; public realm; and community wellbeing and infrastructure.

9. Precinct Plans – specific plans for implementation of the objectives, strategies and action of the five strategic themes within the five identified precincts which make up the Boronia MAC.

- Precinct 1 - Commercial core
- Precinct 2 - Commercial edge
- Precinct 3 - Mixed use edge
- Precinct 4 - Sensitive residential growth
- Precinct 5 - Residential growth.

10. Implementation – details of how the Strategy will be implemented.

Implementation will include a combination of starting projects that can deliver tangible results in the near future, while at the same time planning for outcomes that will be implemented over the next 20-year period.

Given Council’s role as a major land and asset owner, one of the largest service providers and manager of the public realm within the Boronia MAC, Council will have a major role in implementation of the Renewal Strategy. However, implementation of the Strategy will rely heavily on strong partnerships with other government agencies, businesses, community organisations and the broader community.

Implementation will include the ongoing delivery of several projects which are already underway within the Boronia MAC and will result in immediate and short term initiatives (Integration Projects), as well larger projects, often affecting more than one precinct and relating to multiple objectives (Big Move Projects).

11. Appendix A – Policy Framework

12. Appendix B – Capacity Analysis

13. Appendix C - Glossary

2. Context

2.1. The Place

2.1.1 Regional context

The Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) is located approximately 32km east of the Melbourne CBD.

Strategically located at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, at a junction of arterial roads and the metropolitan Belgrave train line, Boronia MAC services a commercial catchment of Melbourne’s eastern suburbs, and is a gateway to the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

2.1.2 Local context

The Boronia MAC is one of five major activity centres within the City of Knox and is one of three in Knox located on the Belgrave train line.

The Boronia MAC is characterised by:

- A core commercial area, spread out over 30ha and bisected by two arterial roads area, which comprises a diverse street-based sub-regional retail and a variety of other services and provides an employment and cultural focus for the local area.
- Residential neighbourhoods surrounding the core area, with the most recent residential development characterised by increased

townhouse and villa unit development and a few new apartment style buildings on the edge of the commercial core.

- Key transport infrastructure including major arterial roads (Dorset and Boronia Roads), the Belgrave train line and Boronia Railway Station.
- Some major community facilities, including Boronia West Primary and Boronia College K-12 School and Council’s Leisureworks.
- Four open space reserves, including Tormore Reserve (active open space), Chandler Park (active open space), Boronia Park (active and passive open space), and Genista Park (passive and natural open space).

Its location, nestled at the base of the foothills, is a key part of its local identity. Glimpses of the foothills and the Dandenong Ranges can be seen from different parts of the town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods.

2.1.3 Boronia MAC boundary

The existing Boronia MAC boundary was defined in the 2006 Boronia Structure Plan (as shown in Figure 1), bounded approximately by Albert Avenue to the east, Hastings Avenue, Alfred Street,

Pine Crescent and Stonehaven Avenue to the south, Knox and St. Josephs School to the west, and roughly Oak Avenue, Elsie and Short Streets to the north.

The current Strategy relates to a revised Boronia MAC area (as shown in Figure 1), which has been recommended based on:

- The need to address policy conflict in relation to lots with a single dwelling covenant and/or incompatible development expectations on either side of Bambury and Elsie Streets.
- The need to provide a greater focus on walking and cycling, consistent with the concept of the 20-minute neighbourhood suggested in Plan Melbourne.
- The need to improve development viability within the Boronia MAC core area.
- A desire to retain a sense of place created by the strong relationship between key local destinations and the Boronia MAC core area as an important part of Boronia’s local identity.

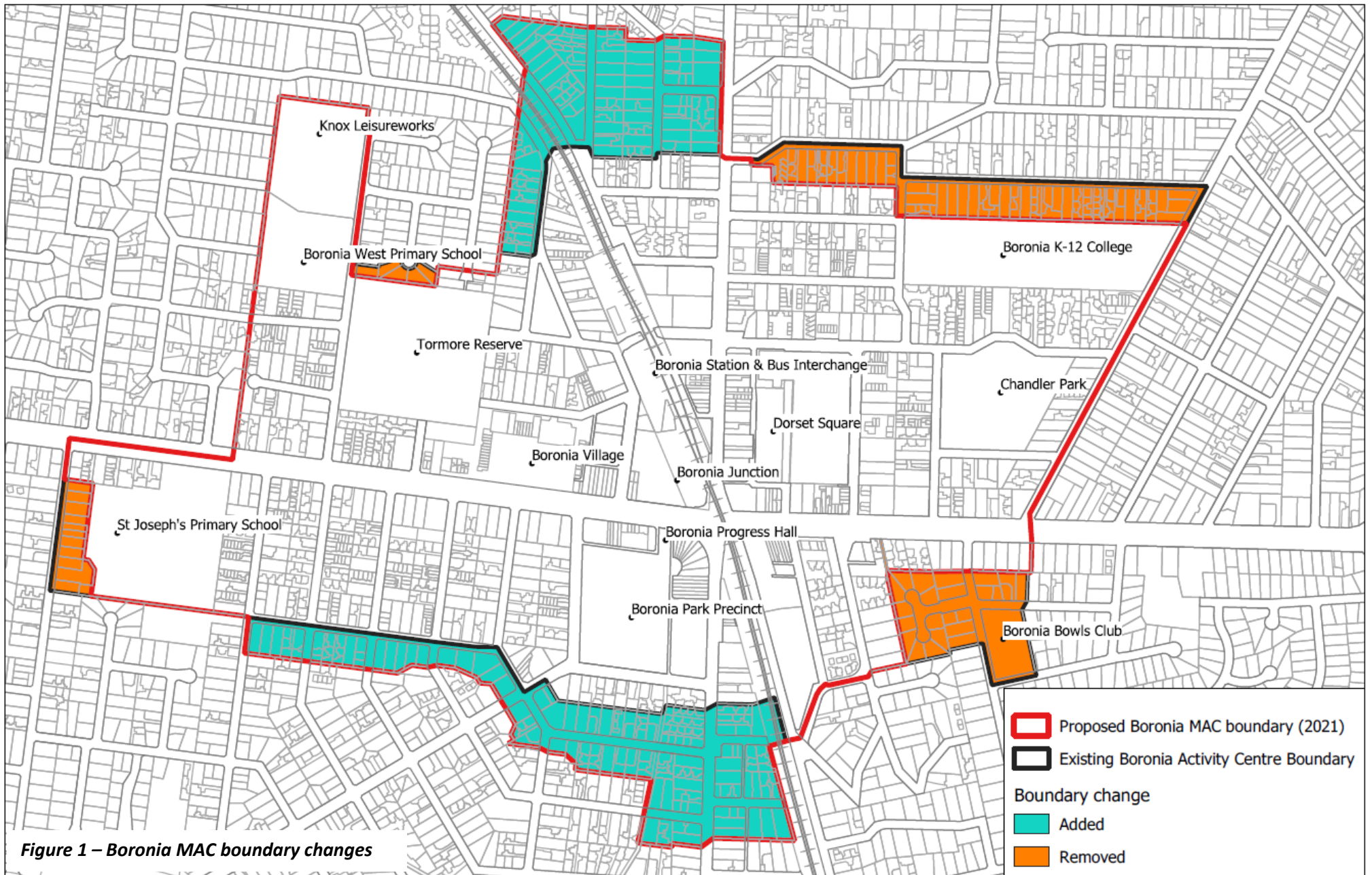
The newly defined Boronia MAC would have an area of approximately 135 ha.

More specifically, changes to the boundary area (as shown in Figure 1) are summarised as:

-
- Exclusion of the south side of Bambury Street and Elise Street; north of Tormore Reserve (part), and West of St Joseph’s Primary School not fronting Boronia Road.
 - Exclusion of single dwelling covenant lots, around Marie Street, not fronting Boronia Road.
 - Inclusion of properties on Iris Crescent, Short Street, Catherine Street and parts of Central Avenue, Power Road.
 - Inclusion of properties on Cypress Avenue, part of Pine Crescent, Douglas Street, and Alfred Street.

The Boronia MAC is made up of five distinct precincts which can then be categorised into two distinct parts commonly referred to in the Strategy:

1. Boronia MAC core area – refers to the commercial and mixed use areas which are likely to undergo transformation (Precincts 1, 2 and 3).
2. The surrounding residential neighbourhoods which have been identified to accommodate population growth (Precinct 4 and 5), each with a local community focus point.



2.2 The People

The newly defined Boronia MAC is home to around 14% of Boronia residents.

In 2020 Boronia's estimated population was 24,094. By 2041 Boronia is forecast to grow to approximately 27,006 people. Around 25.1% of this growth is forecast to be adults aged 60 years and over, and around 27.2% is forecast to be young people under 25 years (source: forecast.id).

At the 2016 Census, Boronia had the lowest proportion of couple households with children (28.4% of households), and the highest proportion of lone person households (26.8%) of all Knox suburbs. Boronia's household composition also varies from that of Greater Melbourne, in which 33.5% of households were couple households with children and 22.0% were lone person households.

2.2.1 Cultural diversity

Boronia is less culturally diverse than Knox and Greater Melbourne, but its diversity is increasing. At the 2016 Census 24.0% of Boronia residents were born overseas, lower than the Knox and Greater Melbourne rates (30.1% and 33.8% respectively), but up from Boronia's 2011 rate (22.7%). The most commonly reported overseas

countries of birth among Boronia residents at the 2016 Census were the United Kingdom (1,205 people), India (505 people), and China (482 people). India and China also feature as the two most commonly reported countries of birth among the 572 overseas born Boronia residents who first arrived to live in Australia between 1 January 2012 and the 2016 Census.

2.2.2 Education, income and employment

The majority of Boronia's population is engaged in education, training and/or employment. At the 2016 Census Boronia residents were more likely than Knox and Greater Melbourne residents to hold a trade qualification and less likely to hold a university qualification. The median household income in Boronia at the 2016 Census (\$1,294) was lower than the median for both Knox (\$1,558) and Greater Melbourne (\$1,539), and almost one in five Boronia households (18.2%) had a gross household income less than \$650 per week.

More than one in ten (11.4%) Boronia households was experiencing housing related financial stress at the time of the 2016 Census, similar to the Greater Melbourne rate (11.7%) and the second highest rate among Knox suburbs.

2.3 The Policy Framework

The principles, outcomes and directions in Plan Melbourne 2017- 2050 provide the metropolitan policy foundation for the Boronia Renewal Strategy. A summary of the relevant directions is included in Appendix A to this Strategy.

There are several other Victorian Government policies that provide direction for managing for change and planning for future redevelopment in Boronia, including:

- Metropolitan Open Space Strategy
- Victoria's Social Enterprise Strategy
- Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy.

Knox City Council also has a comprehensive policy and strategy framework which provides an additional part of the policy foundation for the objectives, strategies and actions identified within this strategy.

The Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021 identifies the priorities of our community for the future and guides the decision making of Knox Council and its partners, agencies and all stakeholders. All eight goals within the Plan are relevant to the Renewal Strategy.

The review of the previous Structure Plan and the preparation of a Renewal Strategy has been identified in the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017 – 2021 (Initiative 1.3.3) as a high priority.

A list of other relevant policies and strategies is included in Appendix A.

2.3.1 Knox Planning Scheme

The Knox Planning Scheme also provides a broad range of policy direction, primarily in relation to land use and development planning, for the Boronia MAC.

In particular, the Boronia MAC is affected by a wide range of policies, zones and overlays which are the result of successive studies and plans that have been implemented via a number of planning scheme amendments.

The majority of the current Boronia MAC area is affected by the:

- Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)
- Residential Growth Zone – Schedule 2 (RGZ2)

- General Residential Zone Schedule 4 (GRZ4).

The Boronia MAC also contains parcels of land in the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ), Road Zone (RDZ) and Public Use Zones for education (PUZ2), local government (PUZ6) and public transport (PUZ4).

Other key local planning clauses and overlays include:

- Clause 21.10-3 – Boronia Activity Centre
- Design and Development Overlay Schedule 7 (Boronia Structure Plan Area)¹.

¹ Proposed to be replaced by DDO10.

3. Vision, Key Directions and Big Move Projects

Boronia 2040 Vision:

A connected and resilient place that values its history and environment, and embraces its forward-thinking community to realise its potential for future generations.



3.1 Key Directions

Nine Key Directions have been identified to stimulate the urban renewal of the Boronia MAC.

The Key Directions focus on the elements that are important to retain and set out where efforts will be spent in terms of strategies and actions as well as the allocation of Knox Council's resources. The Key directions have been refined through community consultation.

- Boronia is a unique local place
- Boronia has quality living environments
- Boronia is a healthy, active and connected community
- Boronia is resilient
- Boronia nurtures local and creative business and social enterprise
- Boronia is a green place with spaces to play
- Boronia is smart and digital
- Boronia has an active nightlife
- Boronia has a unified urban structure.

3.2 Big Move Projects

Four Big Move Projects are identified in this Strategy to reinforce their importance for achieving the vision for the Boronia MAC over the next 20 years. These projects are large capital works projects that will affect, and require the involvement of, multiple stakeholders.

The Big Move Projects include:

- Boronia Park Master Plan
- Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan
- Dorset Square Town Square and Community Infrastructure Investigation (including a potential digital creative hub as part of a multi-purpose community centre)
- Green Spine Corridor (between Chandler Park and Tormore Reserve).

These are discussed and further detailed later in this Strategy.

Image on the next page:

- An aerial view of Boronia Activity Centre.



DORSET ROAD

CHANDLER ROAD

BORONIA ROAD

BORONIA ROAD

DORSET ROAD

CRAIG PERRY 2019

Boronia Activity Centre will have a strong local economy, enhanced by business expansion and diversification, particularly in the health, business services and retail sectors, and emerging social enterprise, and arts and creative industries, with reduced escape expenditure and increased local job opportunities.

4. Economic Development and Investment

Numerous retail vacancies, limited investment in the upkeep of properties and poor visual merchandising, among other things, suggest that Boronia's local economy is in need of revitalisation.

Overall renewal of the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) will support stimulation of the local economy. Regular and diverse events and cultural activities, a variety of entertainment and hospitality options, coupled with high standards of public realm and amenity will attract people, jobs and investment to the area. People prefer to visit, work, shop, and live in places they consider to be vibrant, convenient, safe and attractive.

Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Healthy, active and connected community
- Resilient
- Nurtures local business (health, creative and social)
- Smart and digital
- Active Nightlife

State

Planning and Environment Act 1987
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
Victoria's Social Enterprise Strategy
Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy

Knox

Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021
Land for Business Directions Plan 2018
Knox Planning Policy Framework

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and INVESTMENT

Background

Community Engagement
Boronia – Economic Demand, Land and Site
Options Analysis 2017 (HillPDA)

4.1 Elements

4.1.1 Role of the Boronia MAC

Boronia MAC performs a strong role in servicing the sub-regional area due largely to the existence of the metropolitan train line and train station, arterial road access, Kmart and two large format supermarkets.

As shown in Figure 2, Boronia has a primary retail trade catchment area within the Knox municipality that includes the suburbs of Bayswater, The Basin, Ferntree Gully and Upper Ferntree Gully. A secondary trade catchment area includes Wantirna, Wantirna South, Knoxfield, Rowville (north), part of Lysterfield, Bayswater North, Kilsyth South and part of Yarra Ranges Shire.

There are several other activity centres within Boronia's primary and secondary trade areas that perform regional, sub-regional and neighbourhood functions. Boronia's secondary catchment area overlaps with Knox Central Major Activity Centre.

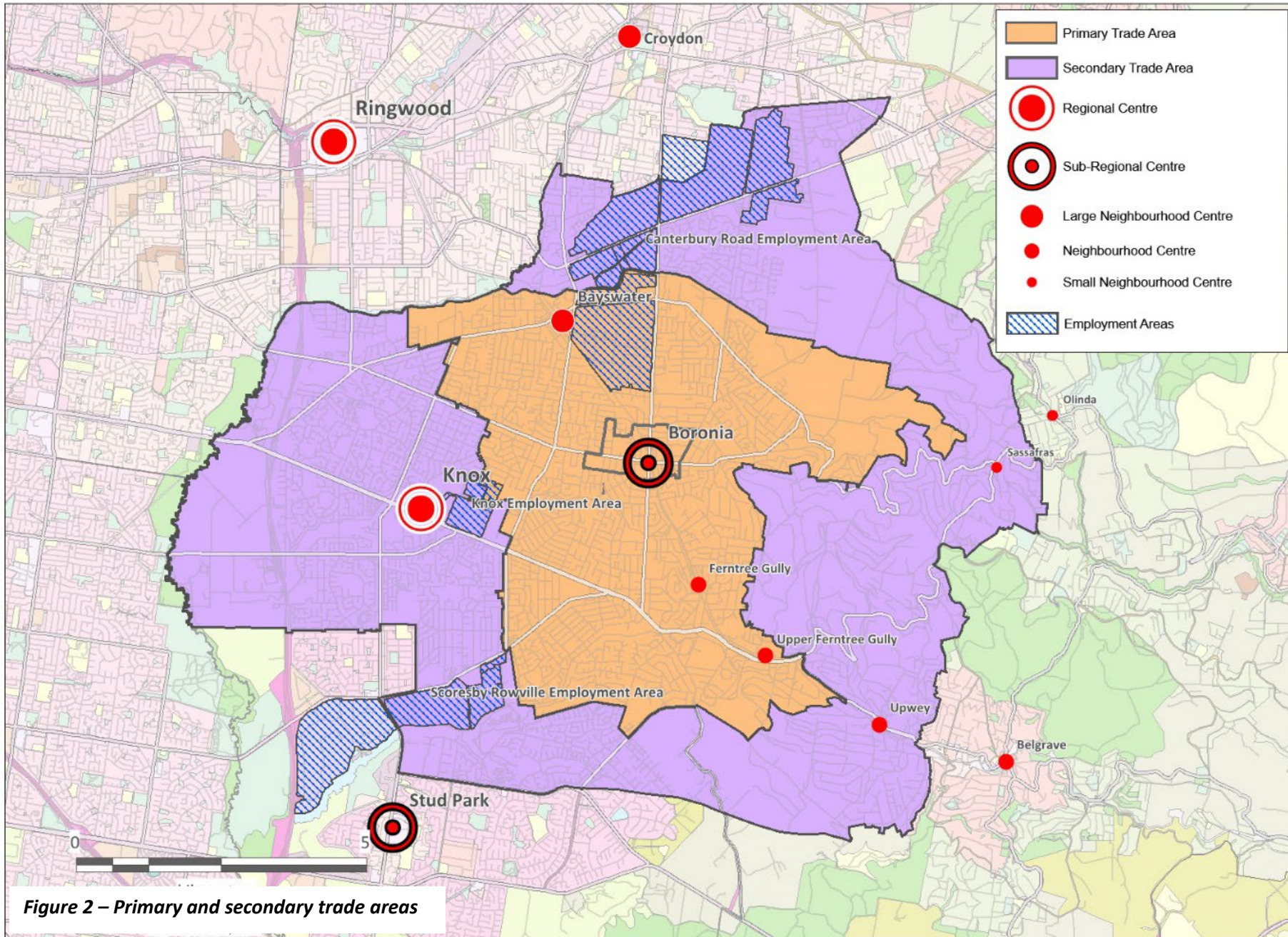
Currently, Boronia plays only a small economic role in comparison with Knox Central, Ringwood, Bayswater and Croydon, with only a 25% market share of the primary trade area spend and only 10% of spend in the secondary trade area.

Although the Centre has a Kmart and two large supermarkets, it serves a local retail role based on the current business mix and growth pattern.

It is estimated that the Boronia MAC serves a trade area of around 155,000 people (combined primary and secondary catchments). The population in this broader trade area is expected to increase to approximately 177,000 people over the next 20 years to 2041.

This population increase will present the Boronia MAC with opportunities for growth and change.

Along the Belgrave train line, both Boronia and Bayswater activity centres act as anchors for land use activity and intensification.



4.1.2 Economic activity

Most of the economic activity in the Boronia MAC is located within the core area (Figure 3). There are currently a total of 372 businesses in the Boronia MAC, with more home-based businesses located in the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

As shown in Table 1 below, Boronia has approximately 92,200 sqm of business (non-residential) floorspace within 429 properties. Retail (58,900 sqm) and commercial (office) (20,900 sqm) are the primary land use activities. Other notable uses include a range of community services.

Table 1 – Floorspace Profile²

Land Use	Floorspace (sqm)	Number of properties
Retail	58,866	281
Commercial	20,828	126
Community services	4,400	7
Special care residential	3,681	2
Café/ restaurant	2,243	2
Health	1,175	5
Other	747	5
Mixed Use	240	1
Total	92,180	429

4.1.3 Business Sectors

The Boronia local economy is made up of a number of key sectors:

- Retail

As indicated in Table 2, approximately 14,600sqm of retail floorspace is projected up to 2041, assuming continuation of the current sub-regional role of the Boronia MAC supported by a growing population.

Sectors of demand are likely to include supermarkets and grocery stores, restaurants, hotels and clubs and specialty retail.

² HillPDA consultants, Boronia Economic Analysis, 2021

Table 2 – Indicative Retail Demand³

Retail Sector	Potential Floorspace (sqm)
Supermarkets/ grocery stores	2,200
Restaurants, hotels & clubs	1,400
Specialty retail (various)	9,000
Department stores	2,000
Total retailing	14,600

- Offices

Office space in the Boronia MACarea currently accounts for approximately one-third of the various business mix groups identified. On this basis, office sector demand is expected to grow by around 4,400sqm by 2041, and would be further supported by any other major developments that occur.

The office demand is likely to come from

sectors such as catchment-serving finance, accounting, professional services and local real estate agents. Commercial office development beyond this range could also occur, most likely driven by large public sector offices.

- Social enterprises

Social enterprises are defined as organisations that:

- Are led by an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit.
- Trade and operate with the purpose to fulfil their mission.
- Gain a substantial portion of their income from trade.
- Reinvest the majority of their profit/surplus in the fulfilment of their mission.

Many social enterprises have their greatest impact in areas of disadvantage, addressing issues affecting young people, those people living with disabilities, the homeless, indigenous Australians, recently arrived immigrants, and those with lower literacy and

numeracy skills.

Social enterprises help to deliver social and economic outcomes, by creating jobs, improving workforce participation and boosting productivity.

In Boronia there is a diverse and growing offering of social enterprises that include established community ‘op-shop’ stores like the Salvation Army and Aussie Veterans and more recent, social enterprise ventures.

- Health and wellbeing businesses

Health and wellbeing businesses address physical, mental health, and social welfare. Such businesses include:

- Medical centres and clinics
- Specialist health services, such as radiology, dental, and optometry
- Health and personal counselling offices
- Aged care, maternal and child care facilities
- Social assistance and community services.

In Boronia, the healthcare and social assistance

³ HillPDA consultants, Boronia Economic Analysis, 2021

sector is significant, with well-established businesses and services like the Cypress Health and Boronia Medical Centre, Scope, EACH, and the Boronia Mall Medical Clinic.

There is a significant concentration of such businesses and facilities along the south side of Boronia Road, with other counselling offices and clinics sparsely located within the Boronia MAC.

- Arts-based and creative businesses

Arts based and creative businesses include:

- Visual and performing arts and music recording
- Digital media or multi-media production
- Broadcasting (local radio stations)/Film/TV Advertising and Marketing; Computer, animation, software development/ interactive content production
- Web design/writing/publishing online
- Design, industrial, fashion, architecture.

In Boronia, arts-based and creative businesses add a new aspect to urban planning and community building, as well as stimulating jobs

and investment in the local economy. Many visual artists live in Knox, as evidenced by registration on Council’s artist database, Artslink. In addition, the second largest camera club in Melbourne is located in Boronia, The Knox Photographic Society.

4.1.4 Employment

The Boronia MAC is estimated to accommodate approximately 2,500 jobs, representing 4.4% of the municipal total⁴.

The main industry classifications presenting current job levels in Boronia is shown below:

Table 3 – Jobs in Boronia

Industry classification	Jobs	%
Retail Trade	646	26%
Health Care & Social Assistance	388	15.6%
Professional, scientific & Technical Services	227	9.1%
Accommodation & Food Services	207	8.3%
Arts & Recreation Services	137	5.5%
Other	877	35.5%
Total	2,482	100%

⁴ HillPDA consultants, Boronia Economic Analysis, 2021

4.2 Issues

A number of key issues for the Strategy to address have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

4.2.1 Supply and demand

- Mismatch between supply and demand for commercial premises

Boronia has a large number of vacant, small, low quality tenancies. In some of the existing arcades, tenancies can be as small as 50sqm with limited service area access. Some of these tenancies have been vacant for more than two years.

Many property owners have rental expectations that do not reflect the setting, amenity or existing foot traffic volumes.

- Competition for commercially zoned land

There is increasing pressure for the conversion of commercial areas (zoned for commercial purposes) to residential uses at the ground floor level. This displaces local businesses in favour of land uses that currently provide a higher return. However, this has the flow-on impact of reducing the location choices for

businesses within the Boronia MAC core area.

Most retail and business rely on a broad catchment generated by good access and proximity to either high volume pedestrian or traffic routes. Residential intensification can increase the population density within local walkable catchments and increase the viability of shops as well. Ground level residential and non-employment uses that take up the bulk of the ground level reduce the opportunities for commercial uses.

- Lack of space or facilities for arts-based and cultural businesses

Despite the quality and diversity of cultural events offered in Knox, and the strong community support for festivals, arts and crafts, exhibitions and the performing and visual arts, there is no existing local facility, public or private, that can act as a creative cultural hub for Boronia.

The existing facilities assessment shows that there is a gap in the provision of rehearsal venues to hire and gallery display space for use by small groups providing art and cultural activities. Within Boronia there is sufficient unmet demand for arts based and creative

businesses, and opportunities such as a hub with a creative/arts/craft focus, should be investigated.

4.2.2 Investment

- Long term vacancies

In some prominent locations, property owners (often absentee) have allowed several tenancies to remain vacant and in need of an upgrade for many years.

Cumulatively, this creates a negative impression of the Centre, detracts from the supply, and contributes to the stagnation of the Boronia MAC.

- Limited property investment and maintenance

A large number of properties in prominent locations within the commercial core area have had minimal investment or upkeep.

There are several businesses that have been in the centre for a long time which have not changed in many years, or are returning very little, discouraging further investment by owners.

In addition, disparate land ownership and absentee landlords, can affect the appearance

and maintenance of the Boronia MAC.

4.2.3 Location

- Lack of activity intensity or clustering

In general, commercial activity in Boronia is spread across a number of small, disconnected precincts that cater for a mix of retail, hospitality and business activities, with few obvious synergies between the businesses within each. In addition, some of the anchor destinations, such as Kmart, Coles and Woolworths are isolated, relying on access by car and offer limited opportunities for ‘grazing’ nearby businesses for a longer stay.

More specifically, dining venues, take-away food premises and cafes are scattered along Boronia and Dorset Roads, and tucked away from easy view at Boronia Village and Boronia Junction. There are a few cafes located in Boronia Mall and the arcades running off Dorset Road with little or no kerbside dining.

The lack of clustering of food premises reduces the attraction of the centre.

4.2.4 Retail

- Retail escape expenditure

Compared to surrounding centres, Boronia is spread over a larger area, but its local economy is not performing to its potential, with an estimated 75% loss of spending dollars outside its primary trade area.

In addition, the Boronia MAC is only achieving a 10% share of its secondary trade area which includes Knox Central.

- The impact of online retail

The availability of online retail is having an impact on the Boronia MAC in a number of ways including:

- Direct competition with Boronia businesses that often do not have an online presence.
- Reduced demand for retail floor space in the Centre.

This has flow-on effects of diminishing demand for shop fronts, streetscapes becoming less active and inviting, and an increase in vacant spaces in the arcades due to a decline in pedestrian traffic through the Centre.

- Lack of awareness of niche retail offerings

A unique experience is cited as a key reason why people travel to visit a certain place to purchase goods, eat, drink or participate in a specific activity.

There are a growing number of small businesses, community groups or clubs that either specialise in goods or services that can be construed as niche or provide unique activities. Feedback from the community has indicated that many locals have a low awareness of the existence of these businesses/activities as particular attributes to Boronia.

4.2.5 Technology

- Lack of very fast broadband or NBN infrastructure

A digital economy relies on the local resident and business community having access to the very best digital infrastructure in order to engage with new technologies and participate in the enormous potential offered by the global digital economy.

For knowledge driven businesses, as well as for the many businesses that operate a home-

office, digital infrastructure like broadband is indispensable.

Boronia's level of internet connectivity is below the level of Knox (81.6% of households compared with 85.4% in Knox) and NBN deployment has not yet begun, with the suburb one of the last postcodes in Knox to get coverage.

- Businesses not keeping up with advances in digital business technology

Many businesses within the Boronia MAC are still running paper based systems and rely on a physical presence for their profile and are directed to car-based access or walk-in clientele.

A relatively small portion of the businesses have an online presence in the form of a webpage or actively use social media platforms.

4.2.6 Leisure and entertainment

- Lack of a night-time economy

There are three key elements that contribute to a successful night-time economy:

1. Diversity – a variety of activities that

appeal to different age groups, cultures, backgrounds and interests.

2. Inviting – a place where everyone feels they belong and is a safe place to be after dark.
3. Positive experiences – balancing the need to manage public spaces and allowing room for spontaneity, exploration and curiosity, so that people can meet, interact and have memorable experiences.

Currently there are limited choices for evening leisure or entertainment in Boronia. In addition, community perceptions are that the area, particularly existing arcades and laneways, feels unsafe.

One of the biggest barriers to growing a vibrant night-time economy is the entrenched negative perceptions of Boronia and in particular, crime and anti-social behaviour occurring after dark. Even though there is a gap between these perceptions and police crime statistics, creating activated nightspots that are busy with people, well-lit and vibrant can create a more positive experience of the Boronia MAC at night.

Night-time economy growth will need to be balanced with residential amenity, for those

who live within and close to the Boronia MAC.

4.3 Opportunities

A number of opportunities have been identified to support delivery of the vision and key directions of the Strategy.

4.3.1 Business sector growth opportunities

- Existing businesses

There are already a number of unique businesses within the catchment with an established local consumer base.

Future redevelopment should consolidate around the existing anchor large format retail stores, as well as established arcades, laneways and Dorset Road in the Boronia MAC core area, and support small businesses.

- Food

Dining: Future growth in the number of residents within Boronia is likely to generate demand for additional cafés and restaurants, including outdoor dining, within the Boronia MAC.

Fresh food: There is an opportunity to increase the range, and lift the profile, of Boronia's fresh food retail offer in several convenient locations to better meet the needs of

residents. A fresh food precinct, anchored by a smaller format supermarket and a range of unique food specialities (gourmet or ethnic foods) near the Train Station, would enhance the food offer and capitalise on the pedestrian traffic.

There is a clear trend towards consumers seeking a more direct farm-to-consumer connection as communities strive to get closer to nature. In addition, more people are opting for a plant-based diet. These two trends support a food-focused market, tapping into locally sourced produce.

Closely associated with increased interest in food production is an increased demand for knowledge and skills to prepare food. A growing interest in learning more about food (and its preparation) could further influence the retail offer.

- Knowledge

Local economies such as Boronia are moving towards being knowledge-based economies. Knowledge-based economy is a term used to describe an economy where businesses and other organisations have an increased dependence on knowledge, information and

high skill levels.

A shift will be necessary to strengthen a 'knowledge workforce' - one that creates economic value through its knowledge, skills and ability to use information effectively.

- Digital

There is a need to build capacity where everyone has adequate or equal access to broadband technologies and skills to participate in the global digital economy.

- Health and Wellbeing

Boronia is well served in terms of choice and access to health services. These facilities include the Melbourne Eastern Private Hospital (2.6km from Boronia – 5-minute drive), or the Knox Private Hospital (6km from Boronia – 10-minute drive). Both these hospitals are regional facilities, providing an extensive range of medical specialists and health services.

There is currently a large number of health related services located in the Boronia MAC. In addition to a range of general practitioners' clinics, there are over 40 medical and specialist health services, allied health professionals,

alternative complimentary therapies, mental health and counselling, and community health and support services.

Of the 620 additional jobs in Boronia between 2011 and 2016, there was an increase of 118 healthcare and social assistance jobs. Jobs growth in the health sector is likely to continue as the local population increases and ages.

A cluster of health businesses is developing along the south side of Boronia Road, particularly between Dorset Road and Tulip Crescent. This location is highly accessible and visible along an arterial road and is enhanced by the amenity and respite offered by Boronia Park.

A precinct with a specific healthcare focus could attract other ancillary and complementary uses, such as medical research activities, small-scale private hospital facilities, allied health, start-ups, innovation and creative industries, ancillary retail, and accommodation.

There are also current investments in the pipeline for medical clinic services.

- Social enterprises

Social enterprises are a growing sector within the Boronia MAC. There is the opportunity to attract more of these types of enterprises which contribute to diversifying the business mix within the Boronia MAC core area.

These types of enterprises need spaces that are affordable, well-presented and adaptable, especially in the start-up phase. They could also be a good match for many of the existing vacant premises that line Dorset Road, The Mall and the adjoining arcades.

- Arts-based and creative businesses

Local businesses with an arts or craft focus are popular in Boronia and more widely in the outer eastern suburbs of Knox. Several craft businesses are located within Boronia and several host groups and classes. These groups, organisations and collectives, have a growing membership from a catchment larger than Boronia itself and regularly meet in the local hall, library, churches and private homes.

Attracting artists to have a stronger link with the Boronia MAC and to nurture small enterprises could lead to increased innovation,

cultural diversity, and community engagement and participation.

There is an opportunity to cluster these types of activities in the Boronia MAC and attract ancillary creative/innovative businesses to Boronia. This business mix would fit well with the existing urban fabric, small tenancies, affordable rents, good access to public transport and established pedestrian areas.

- Makers in Boronia

Building on elements that are unique to Boronia could give the Boronia MAC core area a competitive edge. The emergence of several new businesses with a focus on ‘micro-making’ highlights a new entrepreneurial stream and adds a different facet to the local attractions.

Influencing trends include:

- Upcycling and greater use of recycled materials
- Restoration or digitalisation of heritage photos
- Creating handcrafts including scrapbooking, sewing, embroider, knitting etc.
- Personalising goods, styling and finding outlets for self-expression

- Knowing where things come from and how they are made
- Increasing demand for classes, teachers and craft materials
- Increasing emergence of local craft or produce markets.

- **Small scale offices**

Traditionally, Boronia is unlikely to be a major destination for businesses requiring high end office space. The pandemic has significantly impacted how offices operate with vacancy rates increasing as many workers adapting to working from home. However, a trend of traditionally CBD based firms seeking smaller 'satellite' office in suburban locations is emerging. New developments at nearby suburban business parks have a superior offer in terms of office space accommodation.

However, there is an opportunity for Boronia to provide small-scale secondary (B and C grade office spaces) premises catering to the needs of businesses that are more likely to have a local catchment.

Office space demand is likely to come from sectors such as healthcare, social assistance, finance, accounting, professional services and

local real estate agents. Although there is a preference for retail uses at ground floor level, office uses may be incorporated into mixed-use developments as a means of activating the street level during the daytime.

There are also government and non-government based community services within the commercial core of the Boronia MAC that could relocate or co-locate in existing buildings at the upper levels.

Well designed, high quality office development in the commercial core could increase local employment opportunities, provide for increased business networks and reduce demand for private vehicle-based transport. There is also potential for further demand if a critical mass of office uses is established.

4.3.2 New working environments

Post pandemic, demand for flexible workspaces is likely to increase as businesses seek to better accommodate staff demands for flexibility and better manage business growth uncertainty.

Co-working spaces represent environmentally-friendly and adaptable approaches to work. Sharing work facilities could mean less building and infrastructure development, as well as less energy

usage. Some co-working operators are taking new steps to differentiate their offer with green initiatives.

Many businesses are turning to co-working spaces to make sure their project teams have access to environments that encourage innovation, and the ability to foster collaboration opportunities and networking.

There is potential to take advantage of Boronia's locational attributes to attract this emerging way of working and help attract new, and retain existing, businesses and employees.

4.3.3 Home-based business

As the growing population increases demand for local services and increases the capacity of the workforce, the growth in home-based businesses will also be supported.

4.3.4 Local employment

Locally available jobs are vital to creating resilient and vibrant communities with diverse employment choices. Growing local jobs has not been a high priority in Boronia in recent years.

An emphasis on creating local jobs could help reduce car travel and reduce pressure to expand major roads to access more distant employment

nodes. Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Policy 1.1.7 suggests that an adequate supply of commercial land needs to be secured to accommodate jobs growth, as well as a range of services, entertainment and civic activities in suburban locations.

Council's Land for Business Directions Plan 2018 confirmed that the current amount of commercially zoned land must be maintained to optimise the Boronia MAC's potential to cater for future jobs growth.

The impact of residential intensification within the Boronia MAC is likely to increase the local workforce. In areas where residential density is increasing, each additional household, on average, requires around 1.3 jobs. It is desirable that as many of these jobs as possible are provided in the local area.

Aside from the need for better business connectivity, enabling investment in digital technologies within the Boronia MAC could also create the environment for learning and activity in digital creative industries, e-commerce, software design, gaming and access to online education, leading to improved employment prospects for the local workforce.

4.3.5 Smart communities

Through the effective implementation of design and place-making, a smart community accommodates and accelerates invention, innovation and creation of good ideas. Elements of a 'smart' community are emerging in Boronia and as renewal occurs there is the potential to further integrate smart technology in new developments, the public realm and in the types of businesses attracted to the centre.

Smart communities are:

- Globally connected - through communication infrastructure and transport links, with a strong identity. Future health and tertiary organisations offer this opportunity.
- Regionally networked - Strong physical, social, transport and digital connections promote strong integration across the eastern region of Melbourne.
- Locally connected – Infrastructure and support are provided to create a collaborative environment that acts as a catalyst to attract clusters of related activity.

4.3.6 Traders' Association

Introduction of a Traders' Association could support business growth and assist with promoting the Boronia MAC as a place to shop and visit.



Figure 3 – Economic Development and Investment Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

4.4 Preferred future outcomes

Local economy

- A strong local economy supported by a contemporary, diverse, vibrant retail and commercial centre.

Business Investment

- Increased investment in businesses and commercial premises.

Business mix

- A greater mix of niche and special interest retail, health and wellbeing services, arts-based and creative businesses and micro-making businesses.
- More social enterprises offering support programs and workshops on social innovation and opportunities.
- Home-based businesses that are connected either physically and/or digitally with Boronia MAC core area.

Boronia Food Precinct

- A distinctive food precinct that features local or special produce is provided through new shops or a regular market, as well as local

restaurants and cafes offering outdoor dining experiences.

Health Precinct

- A health precinct comprising a cluster of health and wellbeing services.

Night-time economy

- A strong and vibrant night-time economy which provides a variety of leisure and entertainment opportunities.

Knowledge and digital economy

- Infrastructure is provided to make Boronia regionally networked and globally connected.

New work environments

- A diverse range of settings, public or private, of various sizes and digitally accessible, for people to gather to exchange ideas and conduct business.

Employment

- Increased opportunities for local employment.
- Encourage the provision of more flexible office/work spaces, such as co-working spaces.

4.5 Objectives

1. To support local business growth and attract new business and investment.
2. To encourage a business mix with a focus on niche retail, food, health and wellbeing, knowledge and digital, and the arts based creative sectors.
3. To encourage the appropriate location and high-quality design and appearance of business premises within the Boronia MAC.
4. To encourage a strong night-time economy.
5. To stimulate local jobs growth.

Image on the next page:

- Looking south along Dorset Road.



4.6 Strategies

Business growth and investment

- Maintain support for local businesses to grow.
- Facilitate new investment in business in the Boronia MAC.
- Support an additional 14,600sqm of retail floor space within the commercial area to 2041.
- Support an additional 4,400sqm of office floor space within the commercial area to 2041.
- Facilitate the provision of infrastructure to support business growth in the Boronia MAC.
- Support increased expenditure in the Town Centre.

Business mix

- Strengthen changes to the business mix in the Boronia MAC with a focus on:
 - niche and special interest retail businesses
 - health and wellbeing services
 - social enterprises
 - arts-based and creative businesses
 - tech-savvy and knowledge-based businesses and services
 - digital and internet-based IT businesses

- entertainment and leisure to meet the needs of residents, workers, visitors and in particular, young people.
- Facilitate health care focused, office-based development which generates greater levels of employment and has beneficial ancillary businesses.

Location and design

- Facilitate the clustering of compatible uses within the Boronia MAC including the development of a food precinct, a health and wellbeing precinct, arts and creative businesses, and a digital creative hub as part of a multi-purpose community centre.
- Support additional commercial development in underutilised car parks to activate ground floor levels.
- Support co-working spaces as a means of regenerating vacant shops and tenancies within the Boronia MAC.
- Provide a diverse mix of retail spaces for different business types.
- Improve quality buildings and higher standards of maintenance.

- Minimise the underutilisation of commercial premises.

Night-time economy

- Support night-time events in the Boronia MAC.
- Strengthen food and dining uses and evening-based entertainment venues in the Boronia MAC.
- Support new live music venues to establish in the Boronia MAC in locations where any adverse off-site impacts can be managed.
- Support longer trading hours for retail premises throughout Boronia MAC.

Local employment

- Recognise local employment needs as part of business development within the Boronia MAC.
- Support the local workforce to upskill and to build their confidence, and technical and conceptual skills to align with health, creative and hospitality business needs.

4.7 Actions

Big Move Projects

1. Investigate the feasibility of a Digital Creative Hub to be provided as part of a multi-purpose community facility in Boronia, in partnership with the private sector and tertiary institutions.
2. Identify a business mix that will activate the ground level and streetscapes in the Boronia Train Station Precinct and Dorset Square Big Move Projects.
3. Identify ancillary and complementary business uses that could be in Boronia Park to provide activation, casual surveillance and generate an income for Council, as part of the Boronia Park Big Move Project.

Business growth and investment

4. Ensure the proposed built form controls provide sufficient development capacity for additional retail floorspace in the Boronia MAC.
5. Prepare information/prospectus that highlights the unique attributes and locational advantages of Boronia to attract new businesses and investment.

6. Promote the existing anchors of Kmart, Coles and Woolworths, to attract complementary businesses and private sector investment.
7. Investigate opportunities for facilitating better networking amongst the Boronia Traders.
8. Advocate for NBN infrastructure within the Boronia MAC to support business development and growth.
9. Promote education programs offered by external agencies and government departments based on the training needs of businesses.
10. Facilitate and support promotion and information for the Boronia MAC
11. Work with Boronia Traders to showcase their businesses through innovative events such as street-based night or weekend markets, mini festivals, street parties or food, music, fashion or art-based events that celebrate local business and culture and promote community connectedness.

Arts-based and creative businesses

12. Prepare an audit of creative and arts-based businesses in Boronia to build a database and to create a network, consolidate or cluster

activity and strengthen supply chain relationships.

13. Investigate opportunities to support arts based and creative businesses including:
 - Use of long term vacant or underutilised premises.
 - The creation and repurposing of spaces within the Boronia MAC for arts-based and creative businesses.
 - Provision of creative spaces (studios and workshops) for artists and the community.
 - Provision of performing spaces that are flexible enough to accommodate the needs of small music and dance ensembles as well as theatre companies.
 - Provision of affordable co-working office/incubator space with shared facilities for creative industry practitioners.
 - An arts and creative businesses hub.

Health and wellbeing

14. Reinforce existing public and private health services to create a health and wellbeing precinct on the south side of Boronia Road.
15. Raise awareness and promote the range of services available in Boronia by creating a health care network recognition scheme.

16. Establish a working group with representatives from the major health organisations to coordinate services, share information (where appropriate) and assist in the long term planning for the future provision of health and wellbeing services.

Location and design

17. Support increased food and hospitality activities in close proximity to Boronia Train Station.

18. Require retail and/or office uses to be located on the ground or first floors and residential uses on upper levels within the commercial core area.

19. Support opportunities for arts, cultural and creative businesses as part of mixed-use developments.

Night-time economy

20. Encourage entertainment uses to form part of new mixed-use developments.

21. Encourage an ongoing coordinated program of free, community and trader driven, night-time events, suitable for all ages, in the Boronia MAC, such as festivals, outdoor cinema, live music and Christmas or ‘makers’ markets.

22. Ensure that Council organised events are:

- welcoming for all young people
- safe for all users
- inclusive of people from different cultural backgrounds
- accessed at all times of day and in evening hours
- affordable
- encourage physical activity and positive social interaction.

Employment

23. Direct business growth into locations identified on the Preferred Future Outcomes Plan, to increase diverse employment opportunities.

A mix of land uses which meet community needs, including a vibrant retail and commercially based Town Centre and residential development at appropriate locations and densities to provide for the housing needs of the existing and future population.

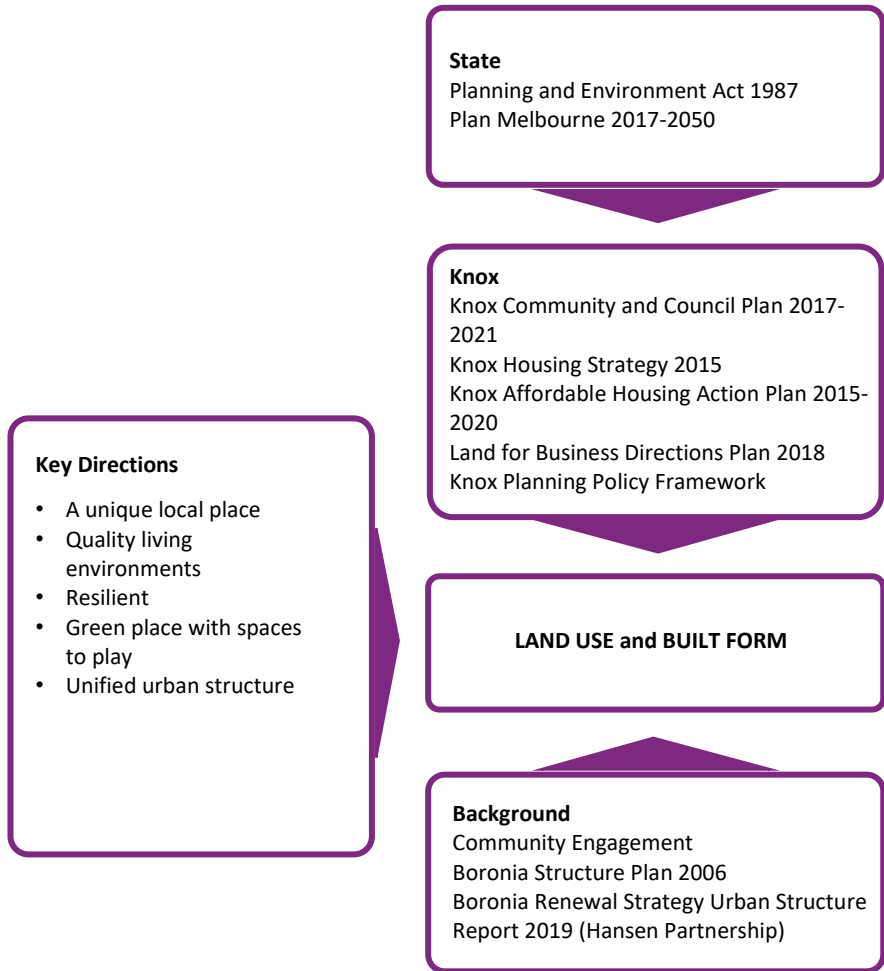
High quality, sustainable built form which respects the character of the Centre's precincts and protects valued viewlines to the Dandenong Ranges.

5. Land Use and Built Form

Early development in Boronia centred on the train line. The surrounding area included a range of agricultural uses, such as market gardens and orchards, and flowers were also grown commercially.

Boronia has experienced several growth surges where there was a significant amount of change over a short period (the 1970s, 1990s and most recently residential development from 2014–2017). These growth periods have been interspersed with long periods of stability and minimal change.

The early settlement pattern of the broader activity centre is predominantly intact. However, the town centre core area was reconfigured in the 1990s as part of the grade separation of the Belgrave train line. Prior to that time, Chandler Road did not connect to the western side of the train line and the intersection of Dorset and Boronia Roads required traffic to move through a ‘dog-leg’ to navigate the train crossing points.



Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Quality living environments
- Resilient
- Green place with spaces to play
- Unified urban structure

State
Planning and Environment Act 1987
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Knox
Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021
Knox Housing Strategy 2015
Knox Affordable Housing Action Plan 2015-2020
Land for Business Directions Plan 2018
Knox Planning Policy Framework

LAND USE and BUILT FORM

Background
Community Engagement
Boronia Structure Plan 2006
Boronia Renewal Strategy Urban Structure Report 2019 (Hansen Partnership)

5.1 Elements

5.1.1 Local identity and character

Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) predominantly has a low-rise built form character, and still largely comprises the original commercial buildings, representing both the initial era of development within the township, and the later period of suburbanisation.

There are limited landmark buildings, no identified heritage buildings, and the ‘backdrop’ of the nearby Dandenong Ranges is a defining and valued characteristic of Boronia.

5.1.2 Changing urban form

Boronia MAC is transforming from a predominantly suburban centre to one with pockets of higher urban densities and built form focused on public transport at its core.

The Boronia MAC has experienced an increase in medium density residential development but little change in the Boronia MAC core area in recent years.

State and Local policies suggest that the bulk of population growth should be accommodated within activity centres, near services, community facilities and public transport.

The Boronia Structure Plan 2006 allowed for moderate levels of change, including the development of apartment style buildings, within the Boronia MAC.

However, the market adopted a townhouse model that was easier to deliver, resulting in a disproportionately large amount of medium density development compared to the rest of Knox, particularly on the periphery of the Centre.

5.1.3 Existing land uses

Commercial

Commercial uses within the Boronia MAC core area are well-established, with the exception of several large at-grade car parks.

Commercial land use is typically along Dorset Road, and spread across three locations:

- Dorset Square/Boronia Mall
- Boronia Junction
- Boronia Village.

Additionally, a lesser amount of retail/service uses is located on the southern side of Boronia Road.

The main concentration of office uses (including medical centres) is along Boronia Road (west of

Dorset Road), and on the periphery of Dorset Square (Chandler Road and Floriston Road).

Large expanses of land are used for car parking within each quadrant of the Boronia MAC, particularly north of Boronia Road.

Commercial uses include ground floor shop and food and drink premises along Dorset Road, Dorset Square and Boronia Road. There is also a distinct expanse of ground floor spaces used for offices and private community uses within the commercial core.

A larger retail footprint abuts the southern end of the train station and eastern side of Dorset Square.

Residential

The residential neighbourhoods surrounding the Boronia MAC core area, previously characterised by single, one and two storey dwellings are experiencing an increase in townhouse and villa unit developments.

Only a few new apartment style buildings are located on the edge of the commercial area.

Those residential areas further from the Boronia MAC core are characterised by predominantly detached dwellings and villa units, with an evolving character towards townhouses.

Open space

Four open space reserves are located within Boronia MAC, including Tormore Reserve (active open space), Chandler Park (active open space), Boronia Park (active and passive open space), and Genista Park (passive and natural open space).

Public uses

Public uses are primarily located in the north-west of the Boronia MAC, including Boronia West Primary School, Leisureworks, the Boronia College K-12 site and the rail reservation that runs diagonally through the Boronia MAC.

5.1.4 Housing

Distribution and density

The Knox Housing Monitoring program shows that the bulk of planning permit applications for medium density development in Boronia are within the Boronia MAC boundary, suggesting that this policy direction is being achieved.

The majority of residential development can be classified as medium density, albeit at the lower end of medium density, and is located outside the Boronia MAC core area and is spilling out into the wider suburb.

There are fewer than 100 dwellings within the 36ha Boronia MAC core area.

Population and dwelling forecasts for the suburban of Boronia (source: forecast .id, 2021) are shown in the table below.

Table 4 – Population and dwelling forecasts

Year	Population	Dwellings
2016	22,798	9,623
2041	27,006	11,810
Change between 2016-2041	4,208	2,187

The Boronia MAC is estimated to accommodate a population of 2,934 residents in 2021. This is expected to increase to 5,079 by 2041. To accommodate this the Boronia MAC will require approximately 1,311 additional dwellings over the next 20 years.

Social and affordable housing

Secure and affordable housing, that is appropriate to a household's life circumstances, is a vital platform from which other needs can be met, such as education and employment. Knox City Council defines affordable housing as that where the cost

(whether mortgage repayment or rent) is no more than 30% of that household's net income. Exceeding this measure places one under 'housing stress', particularly in the lower 40% of the income distribution scale.

Boronia has historically provided housing which is relatively inexpensive when compared with other parts of Melbourne. In 2001 nearly 40% of rental lettings in Knox were 'affordable' for members of the community on very low incomes (welfare payments) compared with only 26.1% for Melbourne as a whole.

However, the cost of housing in Knox and Boronia has increased significantly since 2001 in absolute and relative terms. To illustrate, the median house price in Boronia was approximately 3.8 times the metropolitan median income in 2001, rising to 8.7 times by 2016.

Also, the median rental price in Boronia has increased relative to incomes. As a result, as of 2016 very few rental lettings (4.2%) were affordable for members of the community on very low incomes.

Data from the 2016 Census indicates that 19.3% of households in Boronia spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage repayments, a

similar proportion to Melbourne as a whole. Implications for households would vary depending on their level of income and wealth, living expenses (for example, whether the household has dependent children) and whether the household owns or rents.

Lack of housing diversity contributes to affordability issues in Knox and to a lesser extent Boronia. To illustrate, only a relatively small proportion of all housing in Knox (2.5%) and Boronia (2.4%) is comprised of high density (and typically less expensive) housing forms such as apartments (although townhouses do comprise a relatively high proportion of all dwellings in Boronia). Notwithstanding, smaller apartments (with 1 or 2 bedrooms) comprised a relatively large proportion of new lettings in Boronia between 2016 and 2018, indicating notable housing diversity in Boronia's rental market.

5.1.5 Built form

The current built form associated with commercial land use is typically one or two storeys in height. There are a few examples of three-storey commercial buildings along Dorset Road.

While Dorset Road and Boronia Road contain segments of a commercial strip shopping typology,

the more common format is large format retail or strips of shops fronting large surface car parking.

There are a number of factors which work collectively to justify a taller built form.

- Encouraging more intense forms of housing within the Boronia MAC will enable the broader suburb to better accommodate its projected population increase, while protecting the valued and prevailing character of the local residential streets.
- The need to improve development feasibility/viability within the Boronia MAC core area.
- Efficiencies and economies of scale gained through more intensive development.
- Location advantages making selected places more desirable for redevelopment.
- Proximity to public transport, services and community facilities.

The built form will be influenced by the following considerations:

- Context and location, slope, solar access
- To define the 'core' area of the Boronia MAC

- Proximity and access to public transport infrastructure
- Street role and character
- Protection of local public views and vistas
- Transition to sensitive residential interfaces
- Overshadowing impacts on the public realm and key public spaces and parks
- Public realm and semi-public spaces
- Activity and service needs.

5.1.6 Views

Views to the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills area are considered to be an intrinsic part of the local Boronia character. Boronia's community derives a sense of place from the knowledge and proximity to the Dandenong Ranges framed by the landscaped setting of the Foothills.

Special views, vistas and scenic settings contribute to liveability and quality of life.

Visually appealing distant views to a natural setting can assist in understanding the context and location of a place and generate positive experience of that place.

A view analysis was undertaken to refine views previously identified in the 2006 Boronia Structure Plan.

In order to identify the important views that embody Boronia's local identity and character, views from three locations in the public realm, were assessed. These were:

- Tormore Reserve, measured from the edge of the oval.
- Boronia Park, measured from the western side of Park Crescent.
- Boronia Road, although only an ephemeral view, is measured from the median strip at the western ridge line.

In order to measure the impact of the proposed built form controls as part of this Strategy on identified public views to the Dandenong Ranges, a digital 3D model, including accurate terrain and contour levels, has been prepared to test the impact of various building heights and locations in the Boronia MAC core area. The 3D model depicted the potential building envelopes of 4 storeys buildings (permitted under existing Design and Development Overlay Schedule 7) to form a base case from which the impact of taller development scenarios could be assessed.

The 3D model was utilised to determine the recommended preferred street setbacks, street wall heights and maximum heights and ensure that these new (increased) massing arrangements do not visually impinge of the key views towards the Dandenong Ranges from the defined key public vantage points.

It should be noted that the impact of existing vegetation and trees on those views has not been measured in the 3D model. Clear views to buildings shown in the 3D model findings may be concealed in the future by tree growth or may already be obscured by existing trees. Other existing elements, such as power lines, signage and street lights may also have a negative impact on the quality of views from particular locations.

Images on the next pages:

- View looking east from Tormore Reserve
- View looking east from Boronia Park



CRAIG PERRY 2019



CRAIG PERRY 2019

5.2 Issues

A number of key issues for the Strategy to address have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation. They are outlined below.

5.2.1 Local identity and character

- Retain the ‘bush boulevard’ feel along Boronia Road while embracing the more intense built form character.
- Retaining views to the nearby foothills which is an important and valued part of local character and identity.
- Balancing the leafy and green local character with growth pressures.
- Lack of a unifying theme, architectural features, visual cues or streetscape elements that create a cohesive Boronia MAC identity.

5.2.2 Managing change

- The difficulty of directing change.
- The loss of trees and landscaping and the increase in stormwater run-off associated with recent development.

- Protecting the long-term intensification potential of large sites from inappropriate short-term development.

5.2.3 Urban structure

- Fragmented land use and land ownership pattern with poor connections between activities.
- Residential intensification in surrounding neighbourhoods and not in the Boronia MAC core area.
- Increased pressure for infill development outside the Boronia MAC.
- Lack of genuine mixed-use development.

5.2.4 Accommodating population growth

- Forecasted population growth will result in increased pressure for housing within the Boronia MAC.
- The need to provide a diversity of housing types in terms of size, type, affordability and accessibility to respond to the changing needs of Boronia’s population.

5.2.5 Residential land use

- Uneven distribution of residential development within the Boronia MAC boundary.
- Limited capacity to accommodate growth in residential neighbourhoods surrounding the Boronia MAC core area.
- There is still little variety of house types or land uses in the Boronia MAC.
- Lack of dwelling variety in terms of size configuration (particularly) apartments suitable for families, and tenure.
- Land values yet to mature to indicate where good quality apartment developments are viable.

5.2.6 Social and affordable housing

- The gap between household income and housing prices is continuing to grow leading to higher levels of housing stress experienced by the community and the need for greater housing diversity.
- The difficulty in requiring social housing contribution as part of new developments.

5.2.7 Land use

- Poor appearance of privately owned buildings.
- Lack of well-located useable public spaces in the Boronia MAC core area.
- Existing regulatory barriers to increased residential density development in the Boronia MAC core area, i.e. existing built form and car parking provision rates.

5.2.8 Built form

- Inefficient site layout and building design responses for medium and higher density residential proposals.
- Poor design quality of some recent residential development.
- Council's limited ability to protect private views to the Dandenong Ranges that originate from private land.
- The community concerns related to the impact of new multi-storey development proposals on views.
- The need to manage introduction of taller built form in terms of design, amenity and community acceptance.

- Lack of passive surveillance and interaction with the public realm, streets and building entrances.
- Challenges of delivering well designed car parks at ground level, as construction of basement levels for car storage within new development is not currently viable.

5.3 Opportunities

A number of opportunities have been identified to support delivery of the vision and key directions of the Strategy.

5.3.1 Lot consolidation

Lot consolidation can be a catalyst for intensification by:

- Providing larger development sites with more generous dimensions
- Enabling more efficient building designs and construction
- Providing more flexible ground floor tenancy configurations
- Providing greater ability to set back from sensitive boundaries
- Reducing the frequency of driveway crossings
- Providing more scope for a contextual design response.

Where lot consolidation occurs on corner locations, there are further opportunities to improve access points and car parking arrangements, as well as the opportunity to set back further from sensitive boundaries.

5.3.2 Views

Three key public views towards the Dandenong Ranges have been established. These vantage points are from Tormore Reserve, Boronia Park and along Boronia Road.

The proposed built form controls have been tested and refined by a 3D massing model to ensure the increased heights will protect and maintain the existing views towards the Dandenong Ranges from these three key public locations.

As renewal and new development occurs, there is an opportunity to ensure that the upper levels of new buildings maximise views. The development of the Boronia Park masterplan will consider opportunities for views to the Dandenong Ranges to be established and ‘framed’.

5.3.3 Strategic Opportunity Sites

A total of 23 Strategic Opportunity Sites (SOS) have been identified in the Boronia MAC as suitable for redevelopment for a mix of uses, as well as higher density residential development.

These sites will play an important role in delivering renewal and warrant careful consideration to ensure redevelopment opportunities and benefits to the community are maximised.

These sites have been identified having regard to the following attributes:

- Ownership
- Size
- Planning Scheme controls
- Context/location
- Existing building age/condition
- Activity/land use.

All land within the core area was assessed against these attributes and a short list of sites was identified. These sites are considered to be the SOS sites and are the key land parcels within the Boronia MAC.

The identification of an SOS site within the Boronia MAC clearly identifies to the community and the development industry where development is considered more likely to occur within the near future and Council is keen to encourage and facilitate good design outcomes.

The 23 SOS Sites are as follows and shown in Figure 4. They are further described in Chapter 9 (Precinct Plans).

- (1) 202-210 Dorset Road & 103-109 Boronia Road

-
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (2) 218-224 Dorset Road | (21) 65 Boronia Road |
| (3) 230 Dorset Road | (22) 83 Boronia Road |
| (4) 236-238 Dorset Road | (23) 257 Dorset Road. |
| (5) 87 Boronia Road | |
| (6) 112-112A Boronia Road | |
| (7) 121 Boronia Road | |
| (8) 5-11 Erica Avenue | |
| (9) 31-39 Erica Avenue | |
| (10) 159 Boronia Road | |
| (11) 9/163 Boronia Road | |
| (12) 2 Langwith Avenue | |
| (13) 280 Dorset Road | |
| (14) 267 Dorset Road | |
| (15) 50 Dorset Square – Kmart | |
| (16) Boronia Mall | |
| (17) Coles multi-deck car park | |
| (18) 159 Boronia Road | |
| (19) 163 Boronia Road | |
| (20) 194-198 Dorset Road | |

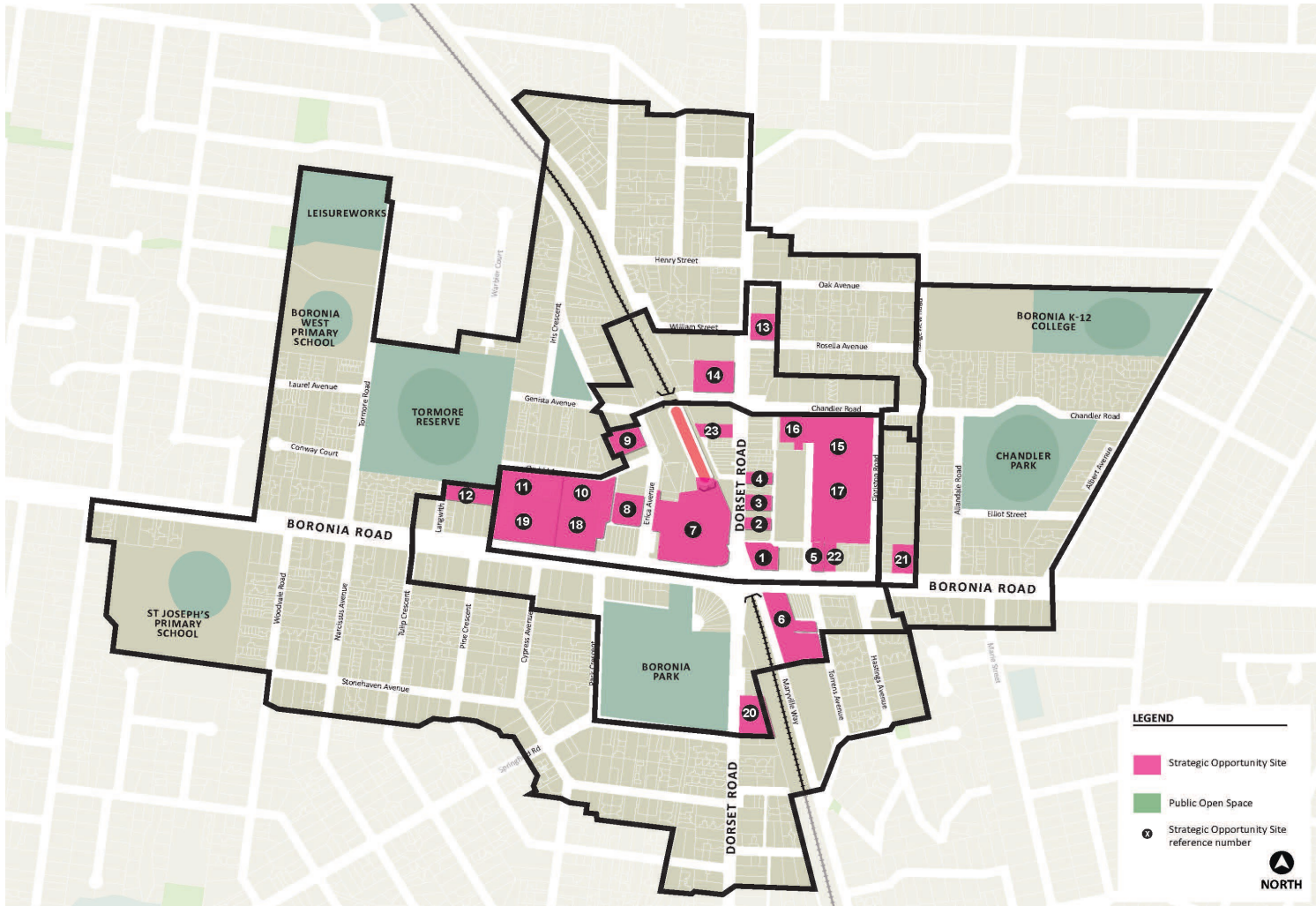


Figure 4 – Strategic Opportunity Sites

5.4 Preferred Future Outcomes

Local identity and character

- A more compact, vibrant and diverse Boronia MAC, with strong connections to its location near the Dandenong Ranges and with an enhanced green and leafy foothills identity.
- More people living and working in the Boronia MAC close to public transport, services and community infrastructure.

Land use

- Locations of land uses and housing densities support a significant mode shift to public transport, walking and cycling.
- Higher density, mixed-use development located in and close to the Boronia MAC core area.
- Medium density residential development in the neighbourhood areas surrounding the Boronia MAC core area.
- More intense commercial activity in the Boronia MAC core, focussed at ground and first floor levels.
- Major redevelopment focussed on identified Strategic Opportunity Sites.

- New focal points in residential neighbourhoods based on the consolidation of activities around existing community facilities, i.e. schools, parks and recreational facilities.
- Increased diversity of housing types, including social and affordable housing where there is good access to public transport, services and community facilities.

Built form

- High quality, well designed, sustainable and adaptable buildings.
- A range of building heights, transitioning from the tallest buildings at the intersection of Dorset and Boronia Roads to mid-rise developments, without infringing on the key public views identified.
- Building design that makes a positive contribution to the public realm and provides passive surveillance.

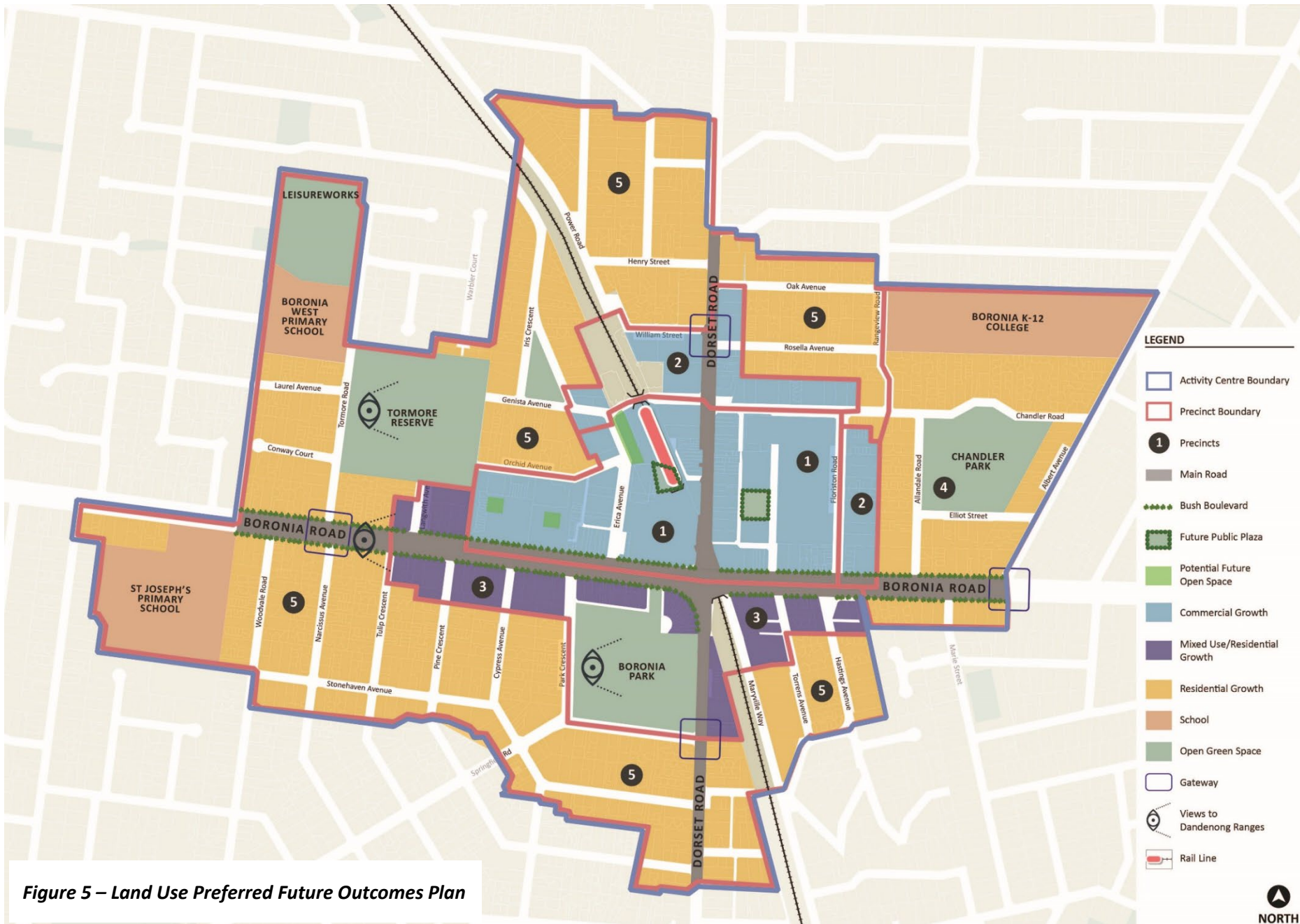


Figure 5 – Land Use Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

5.5 Objectives

1. To manage change in a way that protects and enhances the valued character and identity of the Boronia MAC and maximises opportunities for redevelopment and revitalisation.
2. To accommodate population and employment growth in appropriate locations within the Boronia MAC.
3. To encourage a diversity of dwelling types and tenures, including increased social and affordable housing.
4. To ensure that new development is well-designed, sustainable, and makes a positive contribution to the local neighbourhood.
5. To protect significant viewlines to the Dandenong Ranges.

5.6 Strategies

Accommodating population growth

- Direct residential and employment growth in the Boronia MAC to better utilise existing infrastructure, including public transport.
- Facilitate increased density of new residential development in the form of apartments within walking distance of the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN), retail, employment opportunity and community facilities.
- Facilitate increased number of dwellings in the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.
- Support lot consolidation to achieve a better development outcome.

Diversity

- Require a greater diversity of dwelling types with regard to size, design, materials, number of bedrooms and price range to cater for different household types.
- Facilitate an increased amount of social and affordable housing within the Boronia MAC.
- Facilitate more mixed-use development in the Boronia MAC core area, with ground floor levels being used for retail and office purposes

and upper levels for office or residential purposes.

Built form

- Support new buildings of a high-quality design.
- Require new residential, mixed use and commercial developments to improve their environmental sustainability.
- Provide fine grain built form that maintains the human scale and interaction of the traditional shop fronts along streets.
- Require buildings are designed to provide passive surveillance and interaction to streets, laneways and semi-public and public spaces.
- Support reinstatement and activation of the 'main street' character along both sides of Dorset Road between Chandler Road and Boronia Road.
- Reinforce opportunities for landscaping and increased tree canopy.

Protection of views

- Protect view lines to the Dandenong Ranges from key public location (i.e. Tormore Reserve, Boronia Road western approaches, Boronia Park).

- Use appropriate view modelling techniques when assessing sites that can accommodate taller built form e.g., 3D Modelling.

5.7 Actions

Managing change

1. Ensure Council's website is updated to provide information to the local community and developers about the Boronia Renewal Strategy and the preferred development outcomes in the Boronia MAC, including on the identified Strategic Opportunity Sites.
2. Reinforce the use of the pre-application advice to developers on Strategic Opportunity Sites and locations identified for higher density development in relation to the high-quality design outcomes sought.

Population growth and Development Density

3. Prepare planning controls that support higher density mixed use development, including apartments at upper levels, within walking distance of the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN).
4. Recognise opportunities to repurpose upper levels of existing commercial buildings for residential uses.
5. Advocate to the Victorian Government for the provision of social housing and inclusionary

zoning on private and government land to address the existing shortfall in supply.

6. Collaborate with local community housing organisations and private developers to identify suitable opportunities for social housing delivery at an early stage in the redevelopment process.
7. Investigate innovative 'models of provision' and partnership arrangements which enable the successful delivery of social housing as part of larger scale private residential development.
8. Require planning permit applications for residential developments to have an accessible and adaptable layout at ground floor level.

Built form

9. Support increased building height and facilitate mixed-use development with active frontages at ground level in the train station precinct.
10. Introduce built form controls as identified in Figure 6 to Boronia MAC Core (Precincts 1, 2 and 3).
11. Use the Victorian Government's Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria with regards to design elements.

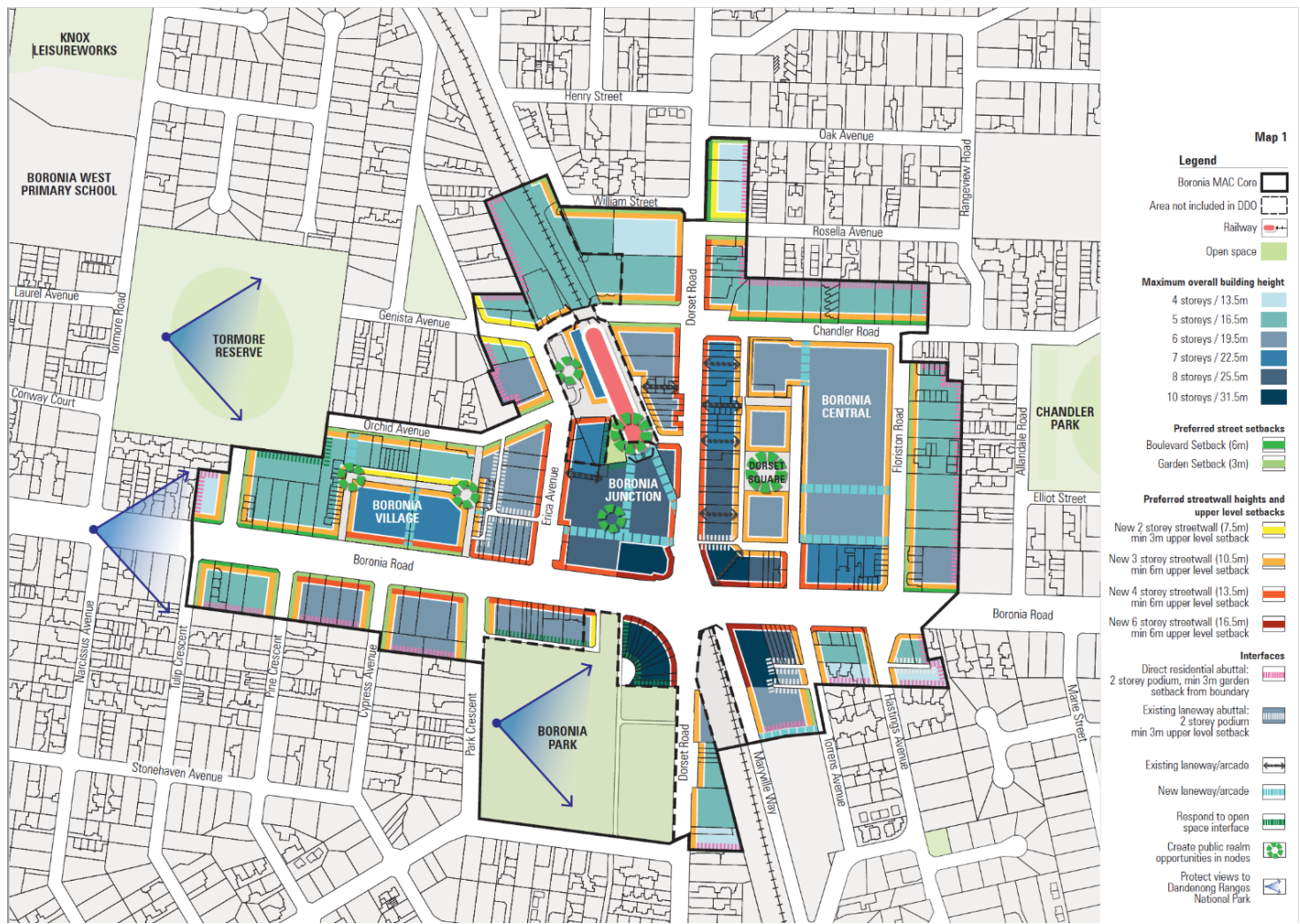


Figure 6 – Boronia MAC Core Future Built Form Plan (Precincts 1, 2 and 3)

High levels of accessibility and connectedness to and within the Centre, with a vibrant and contemporary transport hub, timely public transport services and priority for pedestrians and cyclists, reducing dependency on private car use for short trips.

6. Movement and Access

Boronia originated as an outer suburban township that relied mostly on private cars as the dominant mode of transport, despite being located on the metropolitan train network.

These origins have led to a car-based community and a core area which is bisected by major arterial roads. A substantial supply of car parking spaces is provided, mostly in large, 'at grade' areas, as well as two multi-storey parking structures.

Little has changed in the street network since 2006, although there has been substantial growth in population, residential development and consequently local and regional traffic volumes.

These conditions have led to increased congestion, overly large intersections and reduced amenity and connectedness for pedestrians and cyclists.

Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Quality living environments
- Healthy, active and connected community
- Resilient
- Nurtures local business (health, creative & social)
- Green place with spaces to play
- Smart and digital
- Active Nightlife
- Unified urban structure

State

Planning and Environment Act 1987
Transport Integration Act 2010
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
Amendment VC 148 – Principal Public Transport Network

Knox

Knox Planning Policy Framework
Knox Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025
Bicycle Plan Review
Knox Parking Policy 2018

MOVEMENT and ACCESS

Background

Community Engagement
Car Parking Survey 2018
Movement and Access Study 2018 (GTA Consultants)

6.1 Elements

6.1.1 Road network

Through and local vehicle traffic movements are largely channelled through the Boronia MAC via the two major arterial roads, Boronia Road and Dorset Road, both managed by the Victorian Government. These roads serve a regional catchment and provide direct access to major employment areas in Bayswater to the north, and Burwood Highway to the south.

6.1.2 Commercial vehicles

Businesses in the Boronia MAC require good access to retail or commercial premises for the loading and unloading of goods and for waste management. This is particularly important for food and beverage premises.

Dorset Road, and to a lesser extent Boronia Road, are used for freight movement. Dorset Road provides important access to and from the Bayswater Business Precinct which is identified as a Significant Business Location within the Knox Planning Scheme.

6.1.3 Car parking

A car parking audit of the Boronia MAC was carried out in March 2018 for the purpose of evaluating the current supply, restrictions and associated conditions (accessibility, lighting, and signage) of car parking spaces.

The audit identified that there are over 3,000 car parking spaces in various configurations clustered in different locations across the Boronia MAC. This includes on-street and off-street areas, as well as the Coles multi-deck building (which was under renovation at the time) and the Boronia Train Station commuter parking area.

6.1.4 Public transport

Boronia Train Station is well utilised, with comparable patronage to Mordialloc and Sunbury Train Stations. Of the employees that work in Boronia MAC, 7% arrive on public transport. This is significantly less than those within the entire Greater Metropolitan area (19%).⁵

A number of bus routes provide connections to the surrounding areas, including Bayswater, Ferntree Gully, Knox Central and Rowville, and bus stops are

located in the commercial core. A night bus also passes through the Boronia MAC, which connects Glen Waverley Train Station with Bayswater.

6.1.5 Walking

Only 2% of people working in Boronia walk to work.⁶ The condition of the walking environment is variable and crossing busy roads is an ongoing concern for the community. The footpath network through the Boronia MAC is generally along streets and through the three large reserves.

6.1.6 Cycling

Boronia is part of the eastern regional cycling network, and a cycling shared path (Ringwood-Belgrave Rail Trail) is located parallel to the train line as it passes through the Boronia MAC.

The Blind Creek Trail also runs near the south-west edge of the Boronia MAC connecting Boronia to the Knox Central Activity Centre.

Of the employees that work in Boronia MAC, 0.4% cycle to work.⁷

A 'Parkiteer' (bicycle facility) is provided at Boronia Train Station, though this is underutilised.

⁵ GTA Consultants, Movement and Access Study, 2018

⁶ GTA Consultants, Movement and Access Study, 2018

⁷ GTA Consultants, Movement and Access Study, 2018

6.2 Issues

A number of key issues for the Strategy to address have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation. They are outlined below.

6.2.1 Road Network

- Balancing the function of streets for through and local movement and as local places

Streets cannot only be considered from the perspective of vehicle movements. They can perform varied roles within the wider transport network. Currently, 85% of the road space is allocated to vehicles and only 12% to pedestrians. This reflects the strong focus on accommodating through and local trips by vehicles.

Planning for roads using this approach (known as Movement and Place concept) ensures that planning for all users, including vehicles are integrated.

- Poor way finding

Particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport, navigation of the centre is difficult. There are physical and visual barriers (particularly in the four quadrants of the

commercial core) and a lack of coherence in way finding elements such as signage, markers and identity.

A lack of designated connections and signage makes it difficult for visitors to the centre to know where things are and how to access local destinations by walking.

There is also a significant lack of wayfinding signage for cyclists throughout the Boronia MAC. Existing signage is not highly visible and only directs people along the existing shared paths.

- Traffic congestion

Traffic in the Boronia MAC is characterised by high volumes of short distance trips generating local traffic congestion, as well as cruising cars looking for car parking spaces.

6.2.2 Commercial vehicles

- Impact on amenity and safety

Although freight movement through the Boronia MAC core area is important, it also creates amenity and safety impacts for everyday users.

Inappropriate locations of loading bays or external storage areas also have a negative impact on the streetscape and pedestrian/cyclist amenity.

In some cases, reversing movements of large trucks also create safety concerns for pedestrians.

6.2.3 Private vehicles

- Dominance of cars

Feedback from the Car Parking Survey (included in the Community Engagement Report 2019) has indicated that rates of car ownership in Boronia are increasing, and that there is a high car dependency, partly due to limited public transport services.

The appearance and signage associated with many businesses in the Boronia MAC is oriented towards visibility from cars. This creates a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists that is cluttered and lacks any coherent or unifying place brand.

6.2.4 Car Parking

- Inefficient supply and management of car parking

The provision of car parking has a big impact on how people use the area. As the Boronia MAC grows and more people are attracted to the area, competition for limited car parking spaces increases between different users.

The community, business owners, employees and visitors to Boronia have all identified the management of car parking spaces as an area of concern. In particular, the supply (quantity and location) and management of existing car parking spaces in the Boronia MAC has been identified as a major theme and ongoing issue in multiple community surveys.

There is a range of different needs for car parking:

- Users of public transport (train) to access employment create a high demand for commuter parking spaces surrounding the Train Station.
- Many short trips to and around the Boronia MAC core area are taken by car, which could be due to the lack of parking information (availability of spaces) and the

perception that walking between locations is unsafe or inconvenient.

- The workforce associated with retail and commercial activity creates a demand for car spaces. Although some businesses provide car parking on their own land, many workers have to park in car parking areas intended for customers, or in surrounding residential streets.
- Business customers have expectations of having convenient and/or direct access to businesses. This can often result in cars ‘cruising’ and waiting for car parking spaces.
- Safe, well-lit and easily accessed car parking spaces for workers on late night shifts are also limited.

A review of the available spaces has identified that different management and enforcement arrangements are in place, with little consideration for the effectiveness of the restriction or where demand was at a premium.

There is often a mismatch between car parking demand for spaces at peak times and availability at selected locations, which can be compounded by time restrictions.

In order to ensure that a consistent and equitable approach to the short-term management of car parking spaces is taken, Council has prepared a Boronia Parking Management Plan 2019 for parking spaces across the Boronia MAC.

- Car parking areas used for access

In some locations, including around the Train Station, there are parking areas that are used by vehicles to avoid intersections, i.e., rat-running.

- Limited information about the availability of parking

There is very little directional signage from arterial roads to commuter parking or access to the Train Station.

Only Council owned parking areas are marked with standard parking signs at the entrances to give a general indication of where there are parking spaces, but there is limited information regarding the number of spaces or availability.

Only the Coles multi-deck car park has information at the entry points and red/green light system indicating where spaces are free.

-
- Limited on-street car parking on residential streets

As residential density increases, there is growing competition for on-street parking spaces. Currently there is no line marking on residential streets to formally identify appropriate parking locations.

There is a high demand for car parking spaces in residential areas close to shops and around the train station. Time restrictions are used to manage competing demands.

6.2.5 Public Transport

- Need for improved services and better connections between bus and train services

As activity centres intensify, there is an increased demand for improved public transport services. Typically, the provision of services has not been able to keep up with population growth across metropolitan Melbourne. This lag is recognised in Plan Melbourne, and although Boronia is only the third station on the Belgrave line, strong commuter patronage at peak times means there is reduced capacity at other stations down the line.

There is a low frequency of bus services between the Boronia Train Station and the surrounding suburbs, and many of the routes are indirect, leading to greater strain on car parking within the Boronia MAC.

- Need for improved amenity at public transport stops

There is an undersupply of seating and shelter at most bus stops and the Boronia Train Station. In addition, the lack of activity around the Boronia Train Station reduces the amenity and safety of the station.

6.2.6 Walking

- Poor condition of existing footpaths

Many footpaths in the Boronia MAC are in poor condition. Many are uneven and consist of a range of different surfaces and materials, which make it difficult for some users to navigate and are likely to increase the risk of trips and falls.

In the residential areas surrounding the Boronia MAC core area, footpath widths are inconsistent, which limits opportunities to walk side by side.

In some areas there is no existing footpath and people must walk on the grass verge or on the road.

- Poor perceptions of safety

Community perceptions are that walking is not safe, particularly in some locations, due to factors such as minimal passive surveillance and minimal street level activation.

A lack of lighting also affects perceptions of safety at night.

- Lack of crossing points

There are minimal crossing points over busy roads and pedestrian crossings are not provided at all sets of traffic lights, resulting in long delays for users.

- Poor and missing connections

In some parts of the Boronia MAC, pedestrian connections to local destinations are poor, or do not exist, and result in poor pedestrian permeability, and increase the distance to walk to local destinations.

This is the case between Orchid Avenue, Erica Avenue and Boronia/Dorset Roads, accessing the Warbler Estate off Tormore Road, and to

the north of the Boronia MAC where there are large blocks with few direct routes available.

In other locations pedestrian movements are interrupted by the predominance of barriers such as large car parks, level changes and poorly maintained safety barriers.

The absence of connections increases the distance to travel to local destinations such as Leisureworks, as well as east/west movement being limited by the train line.

- Accessibility of community facilities

Feedback from service providers suggests that the majority of clients use private cars to access services.

Some facilities are difficult to access on foot, are often located away from the road or kerbside, or require people to traverse through a car park to reach the entry point of a facility.

In addition, lighting in car parks and near entrances to some community facilities is poor and can discourage use at night.

6.2.7 Cycling

- Lack of cycle paths in some locations

There are no on-road or off-road cycle paths in an east-west direction along or adjacent to Boronia Road nor as a connection to the Blind Creek Trail.

The Belgrave-Ringwood Rail Trail also remain disconnected within the Boronia MAC with a gap between Marysville Way and Chandler Road.

- Lack of cycle parking facilities

Cycle hoops are not adequately provided in the Boronia MAC, and, where they are provided, they are sometimes used as parking safety barriers and as physical support for display of products on the footpath.

6.3 Opportunities

A number of opportunities have been identified to support delivery of the vision and key directions of the Strategy.

6.3.1 Changed approach to transport

A new approach is being used in Victoria and other parts of the world to designing, planning and delivering a modern transport system that meets the increasing needs of people and businesses whilst creating and improving places.⁸

Commonly referred to as Movement and Place thinking, it recognises that streets perform multiple functions. Transport links not only move people from one place to another, but they also serve as key places and destinations. There is a natural tension between these two functions.

Sometimes streets and roads change functions several times along the way and there may be competing demands between movement and place on our roads and streets.

Finding the right balance between the two is fundamental to integrated transport planning. This

way of thinking means that when we plan and develop the transport network, we need to consider the breadth of community needs, expectations and aspirations for the places they live and the roads and streets they use.

6.3.2 Emerging trends

- Vehicle technology
The Renewal Strategy will need to consider emerging vehicle technology including the increasing use of mobility scooters and electric cars and the need for charging points in public places.
- Digital information
Advances in technology are also being increasingly used to provide information about the availability of parking.
- Bike and scooter sharing
Although not available in Boronia as yet, dockless bikes and scooters accessed via a phone app, are being provided in many activity

centres to facilitate movement, particularly for short trips

6.3.3 Behaviour change

A key component of addressing the issues identified in relation to movement and access will be behaviour change.

Changes to infrastructure and services alone will not be sufficient to address all the issues identified. Such behaviour change will rely heavily on providing information about alternative choices for movement and access.

⁸ Department of Transport, Movement and Place in Victoria, 2019

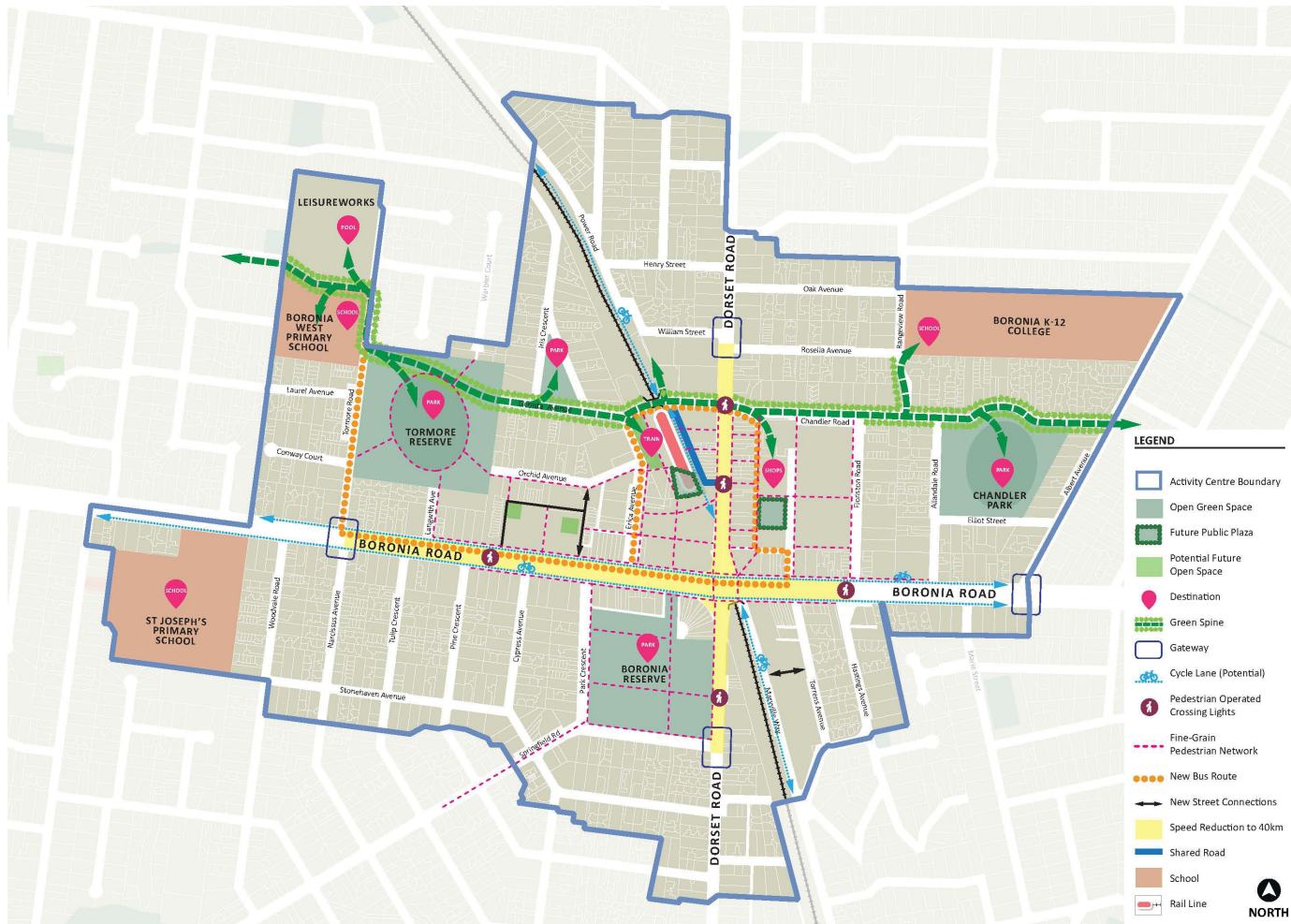


Figure 7 – Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

6.4 Preferred Future Outcomes

Changed Focus

- Change from a car-based focus to a greater focus on sustainable transport modes including public transport, cycling and walking.
- 35% of workers utilising active travel modes.

Roads

- Reduced congestion.
- Improved intersections and road designs to ensure safe pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movements.
- Well located loading and service areas.

Integration

- Better integration of land use and transport.

Walking and cycling

- An integrated, safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling network.

Public transport

- A high quality, easily accessible and integrated public transport service.
- Improved amenity and shelter at public transport stops.

Car parking

- A centre-wide approach to improved provision and management of car parking.

6.5 Objectives

1. To increase walking and cycling to and within the Boronia MAC by making it safer and more convenient.
2. To support integrated and accessible public transport.
3. To provide a well-designed and functional road network.
4. To provide a suitable level of appropriately located and designed car parking.

Image on next page:

- Looking east along Boronia Road from the intersection at Narcissus Avenue.



CRAIG PERRY 2019

6.6 Strategies

Walking and cycling

- Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over cars.
- Improve the connectivity, safety and amenity of the pedestrian and cycling networks to and within the Boronia MAC.

Public transport

- Support improvements to public transport services.
- Support increased use of and access to public transport.
- Support improvements to the Boronia Train Station and interchange.
- Provide areas for community bus drop off and pick up, 'kiss and ride' bays and taxi ranks adjacent to key core commercial uses and transport nodes.

Road network

- Use a Movement and Place approach to planning for the road network within the Boronia MAC.
- Design roads to provide high levels of amenity, safety and convenience for all road users.

Car parking

- Facilitate a whole of centre approach to planning, coordinating and managing the provision of car parking spaces, on private and public land within the Boronia MAC.
- Provide parking in a way which supports increased use of sustainable forms of transport including public transport, walking and cycling.
- Provide parking in a way which reduces its visual dominance and improves amenity.
- Provide for sustainable transport options, such as electric car charging point, car sharing spaces, and the ability to retrofit common property car parks with support infrastructure associated to low emissions vehicle technology.

6.7 Actions

Big Move Projects

1. Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety and movement east/west linking Knox Leisureworks, Tormore Reserve through to Chandler Park and Albert Avenue as part of the Green Spine Big Move Project.
2. Ensure the Dorset Square Town Square Big Move Project to consider pedestrians, cyclists and public transport movements.
3. Prepare a concept plan for the Boronia Train Station that delivers a transport interchange that offers an attractive, efficient, and safe environment with convenient access to services for users.

Walking and cycling

4. Create improved pedestrian and cycling connections between community facilities across the Boronia MAC.
5. Prepare a Wayfinding Strategy that includes walking and cycling times and distances between key services and destinations.
6. Plan to connect with the existing regional cycle path network north and south of the Boronia

MAC by improving cycling links through the Boronia MAC and along Boronia Road.

7. Provide bicycle infrastructure throughout the Boronia MAC to support the use of bikes.
8. Provide separated bike lanes in appropriate locations to improve safety for cyclists.
9. Provide wider footpaths and new public spaces for pedestrians to stop and rest.
10. Prepare a DDA access and mobility audit for Boronia MAC, to improve access for mobility aid users.
11. Facilitate enhanced laneways and arcades as safe and desirable pedestrian links.
12. Advocate for new Pedestrian Operated Signals (POS) in key locations.
13. Review intersection design to seek to reduce lanes and road widths at crossing points and main intersection in the Boronia MAC core area.
14. Provide appropriate levels of lighting for pedestrian routes as part of the Lighting Strategy.
15. Investigate the potential for creative lighting installations in 'dark spots' or along main

pedestrian routes to encourage feelings of safety at night as part of the Lighting Strategy.

16. Continue to provide planning application referral advice to ensure the design of new development considers the access and loading of large vehicles away from pedestrian routes.
17. Advocate the conversion of the Chandler Road and Dorset Road intersection into a pedestrian operated crossing.
18. Plan a shared space in Lupton Way where pedestrians have priority, though still providing for station pick-up and drop off and loading to retail.

Public transport

19. Advocate to the Victorian Government to improve the location, frequency, speed and convenience of the bus services running through Boronia.
20. Advocate to the Victorian Government to improve the capacity of the train services on the Belgrave line.
21. Support the inclusion of dedicated bus priority through Boronia Road, particularly at key intersections.

-
22. Redesign Turner Road intersection to reduce potential conflict with buses movements.
 23. Advocate for improvements to infrastructure related to public transport including shelters, seating, lighting and real time information for passengers.

Road network

24. Plan for reducing the speed to 40kph for all roads servicing the Boronia MAC core area.
25. Continue to provide planning application referral advice to ensure business traffic and freight movements through the Boronia MAC are balanced against the 'place' role of streets.
26. Use a Movement and Place approach to assessing the functions of Dorset Road and Boronia Road as well as local roads through the Boronia MAC, with a view to support reconfiguration and priority for pedestrians.

Car parking

27. Prepare a Car Parking Strategy that will:
 - Ensure sustainable solutions
 - Review public transport implications
 - Review supply and demand of car parking
 - Review whether car parking rate reductions should be considered

- Consider payments in-lieu of car parking reductions or waivers.
28. Continue to review long term car parking supply and demand in the Boronia MAC, having regard to the existing and future populations, to create vibrant and high amenity areas.
 29. Support multi-storey parking structures, to alleviate on-street parking space allocation and to enable new public spaces to be created.

A high quality public realm that will support and enhance Boronia's identity as a unique local place, as a town in a garden, nestled at the base of the foothills and nearby Dandenong Ranges, with strong links to the natural environment.

Both the town centre and surrounding residential neighbourhoods will be united by a leafy and green network of diverse and sustainable open spaces.

New and existing spaces will become places that encourage residents, visitors and workers to gather outdoors over extended hours, and cater for a variety of activities.

7. Public Realm

Public realm refers to external spaces in our local areas that are accessible to the public.

There is a range of different places and spaces that make up the public realm, including:

- Parks and reserves for active and passive open space (often referred to as public open space);
- Streetscapes (roads and footpaths);
- Urban plazas; and
- Other public spaces (e.g., public car parks).

A well-planned, high quality and well-maintained public realm delivers numerous benefits and makes places more desirable to live, work, invest in and visit. In particular, it:

- Improves community health and wellbeing
- Increases social interaction, relaxation, and recreational activities
- Provides settings for socialising and cultural expression
- Enhances the visual appearance and ‘greening’ of an area
- Provides opportunities:
 - for environmental benefits
 - to protect and enhance cultural heritage and character

- for tourism related activities.

State

Planning and Environment Act 1987
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
Metropolitan Open Space Network

Knox

Community and Council Plan 2017-2021
Open Space Strategy 2012 – 2022
Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012 - 2022
Knox Green Streets Policy (Aug 2014 – 2018)
Street Tree Asset Management Plan 2016
Sporting Reserve and Facilities Guidelines Policy
Knox Play Space Plan 2013-2023
Knox Public Art Policy 2017-2020
Knox Public Art Implementation Plan 2018-2022
Public Toilet Management Policy 2016
Knox Planning Policy Framework

Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Quality living environments
- Healthy, active and connected community
- Resilient
- Green place with spaces to play
- Smart and digital
- Active nightlife

PUBLIC REALM

Background

Community Engagement
Community Services and Facilities Review
2018

7.1 Elements

7.1.1 Identity and amenity

The public realm, in particular public open spaces, is a priority for the community in Boronia and forms an essential part of Boronia's local identity.

Boronia's leafy and green identity is inspired by its proximity to the Dandenong Ranges and foothills and is reinforced by the 'bush boulevard' character of Boronia Road. Three large reserves and three schools on the edges of the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) contribute to this identity.

Community feedback received has highlighted the valued amenity that the leafy and green appearance of Boronia provides and that this is an intrinsic part of the local identity.

Outside the Boronia MAC core area, Boronia's community is well served for public open space and recreation facilities. In the residential neighbourhoods, the streetscape and landscaped front gardens contribute to a green and leafy environment.

7.1.2 Parks and reserves

In Knox, large reserves primarily fulfil an active sports role, with other passive recreational and leisure activities being complementary functions.

Boronia has only a few small local or pocket parks, or similar spaces in its public realm.

The Boronia MAC contains five formal parks and reserves.

Chandler Park has an area of 3.18ha, includes a formal oval used for cricket and football, and is surrounded by a landscaped buffer. This park also accommodates three netball courts, a playground and a sports pavilion that is shared between the various sports clubs. In the north-east corner are two buildings which are used by the Scouts and Girl Guides.

Genista Park is a small informal park, 4,477sqm in area, with a small playground and an established canopy of native trees identified as a site of biological significance. There are no public toilets.

This park has a very natural environment feel/focus and does not provide the opportunity for activities other than passive recreation. Its location, off the main pedestrian network and detached from the core area, means that it is not well used by workers during the daytime.

Maguire Park is a landscaped remnant open space with two pieces of play equipment, situated in the car parking area adjacent to the train station. It is the only public open space in the core part of the

Boronia MAC and offers little amenity. Its main purpose is as a pedestrian through route.

Tormore Reserve is classified as a neighbourhood park in the Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022 due to its size of over 5ha and the range of activities it offers. This park provides for sports and recreation facilities that support multiple user groups, as well as some basic infrastructure for passive use.

The oval/pitch is surrounded by a variety of evergreen and deciduous mature trees. Tormore Reserve has a distinct feel within the general Knox landscape, being situated on a sloping site with the backdrop of the Dandenong Ranges. The character of the site typically reflects Knox's green leafy image. The park serves as a pedestrian transit route between residential areas to the west and the Train Station area.

Boronia Park is the largest area of public open spaces within the Boronia MAC, with an area of approximately 5ha, and has its main street frontages along Dorset Road and Park Crescent, as well as being accessible from Boronia Road. The Park accommodates a range of recreational and other community facilities, including the Boronia Basketball Stadium, Boronia branch Library and Park Crescent Children and Family Centre.

The Boronia Basketball Stadium was established in the mid-1970s and has been expanded to include six courts and associated community facilities. The facility is now over 40 years old and dated in appearance, internally and externally. Change rooms and facilities are generally in good condition; however there is significant and serious cracking in the entrance foyer, kiosk and multipurpose room.

The Boronia Remote Control Car Club, which hosts the State Championships, occupies about 100sqm in the south-east corner. At peak times the Club's activities expand into the adjoining tennis court space.

Over recent years, the Park has been subject to significant flooding, being situated at the low point of a large catchment and does not meet the flood level requirements of a 1 in 100 year storm event. To address this matter, a large retarding basin approximately 6000sqm in area, has been constructed along the Dorset Road edge. The Park is served by 300 car parking spaces, which are well used during the week and weekend.

7.1.3 Play spaces

All children have the right to play regardless of their abilities. Areas that are dedicated to

children's play space are highly valued by the community.

Provision of these types of spaces is important to enable children's outdoor play in natural and built environments. Play requires free access to a broad range of environments and play opportunities. Council is therefore committed to high quality 'compensatory' play provision that is appropriate, accessible, inclusive, local, stimulating and challenging for children in Knox, thereby offering them the opportunity to explore through freely chosen play.

7.1.4 Streetscapes

Boronia's streetscapes (roads and footpaths) perform much more than a movement and access function.

Streetscapes within the Boronia MAC are key public spaces that define the character of Boronia and provide the place for activity to occur.

Existing streetscapes in the Boronia MAC can be grouped into the following categories:

- Major arterial roads
- Local streets
- Arcades and laneways

- Residential streets
- Urban plazas.

Urban plazas provide focal points for social interaction and economic activity (such as kerbside dining) and can also perform a civic function and provide opportunities for community events.

Streetscapes can be key elements in creating a vibrant and attractive public realm.

7.1.5 Other public spaces

There are also other public spaces, such as public car parks which need to be considered as part of the overall network of public spaces which make up the public realm.

7.2 Issues

A number of key issues for the Strategy to address have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation. They are outlined below.

7.2.1 Role of the public realm

- Changing role and use of the public realm due to lifestyle changes and changing expectations

Among other things, patterns of work and leisure are changing, with an increase in part-time work, and an increase in sedentary recreation, particularly for children.

Fewer people now live in each household, yet new houses are frequently larger and private open space smaller.

The role of the public realm, particularly public open space, will need to respond to these changes.

- The role of the public realm in providing opportunities for public art

Public art can help make a place special and unique and contributes to local character and identity. It can be permanent, temporary or

ephemeral (such as performance) and of a large or small scale suited to the location.

From 1987-2007 Knox Council sponsored a program which delivered a large number of sculptures and murals into public buildings and spaces, many of which are located around the Boronia MAC.

Regular public art programs such as Immerse continue to contribute temporary and public art works to Boronia including installations, murals, exhibitions and projects. A series of light boxes located in Cinema Lane also act as an ongoing public art platform for display of a curated selection of artwork, murals, exhibitions and projects.

However currently there are limited places or opportunities to host ephemeral art in Boronia.

- Poor representation of the green character of the area within the public realm

Boronia's green and leafy image relies heavily on mature canopy trees planted on private property. This character is being eroded as development intensifies, and replacement trees are fragmented and do not create a canopy.

In addition, with only two small spaces inside the Boronia MAC core area (i.e., Genista Park and Maguire Park), there is a lack of green open space in the core of the Boronia MAC.

Street trees are also lacking in some areas and the approach to planting is inconsistent.

- Minimal civic plazas (urban spaces)

Recent residential and commercial developments within the Boronia MAC have not contributed or connected to existing civic plazas and urban spaces. Opportunities for an 'urban feel' have therefore not been realised.

7.2.2 Appearance

- Lack of good interfaces between private development and the public realm

Spaces and physical elements of building exteriors share a visual interface with the public realm and contribute to the amenity offered in public spaces.

Visual elements include building facades, features such as balconies, porticos and entry points, signage, infrastructure including power lines, substations, fire hydrants and air conditioners, and in some settings includes landscaping or front gardens on private land.

As development intensifies, rooftop gardens, green walls and other shading features that form part of private developments are becoming more prominent in the public realm. These elements combined make up identifiable views/vistas that can be attributed to forming part of the public realm.

- Poor representation of the green character of the area within the public realm

Boronia's green and leafy image relies heavily on mature canopy trees planted on private property. This character is being eroded as development intensifies, and replacement trees are fragmented and do not create a canopy.

In addition, there is a lack of green open space in the core of the activity centre.

Street trees are also lacking in some areas and the approach to planting is inconsistent.

- Poor physical appearance of public realm in the commercial core

Advertising signage dominates selected areas of the centre. Signs above awnings, attached to street posts and on blank walls, are

frequently out-of-date and in a state of disrepair.

There is also an inconsistent mix of pedestrian fencing, paving materials in a variety of conditions, missing or poorly located tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs), and the overall appearance of the commercial core is perceived as being poor.

In addition to the run-down nature of many of the shopfronts, the high degree of street clutter and a lack of visual coherence detrimentally affect the appearance of the Boronia MAC.

7.2.3 Accessibility

- Poor connections between various parts of the public realm

Many parts of the public realm consist of large spaces between buildings that are filled with expanses of car parks and are characterised by hard surfaces, paving and the rare seat or two. These conditions reduce amenity, increase walking distances, create poor interfaces between buildings and the surrounding environment, and create conflict points between pedestrian and cars.

7.2.4 Safety

- Poor perceptions of safety in parts of the existing public realm

The mix of land uses, poor physical environment and a lack of passive surveillance has made anti-social behaviour more common, particularly in the core of the Boronia MAC. This contributes to both a real and perceived lack of safety in key locations in and around the Boronia MAC, especially after-hours.

The majority of the commercial area is relatively devoid of human activity at night. The locations where evening activities do occur, including the public transport interchange, supermarkets and the Metro cinema, are isolated and usually accessed by car.

In order to assist with property security and to discourage crime and antisocial behaviour a number of CCTV cameras have been installed in car parks and key locations around the Boronia MAC. Increased monitoring and the ability to track activity in the public realm is often seen as a positive step in managing crime. However, the prominence of cameras

and associated signage also send a clear signal that crime occurs in the area and can reinforce negative perceptions.

Streets and roads in the centre are mostly designed for traffic management/safety with less focus on pedestrian and cyclist needs. Arcades and laneways are viewed as being dark, uninviting and poorly lit dead spaces, even during the daytime.

Hotspot lighting that is bright in only selected areas like entrances or doorways, causes dark spots in adjoining spaces.

Improved lighting in the multi-deck car park next to Coles has increased its use during the daytime and into the evening. However, the rooftop area, used for employee parking, is still sparsely lit and there are still dark spots around the service areas of the building.

Adjoining the Boronia Train Station, the multi-deck commuter car parking structure is poorly maintained, with low levels of lighting creating a dark environment, poor amenity and negative perceptions of safety even during daylight hours.

7.2.5 Parks and reserves

- Demand for additional public open space due to population growth and lifestyle changes

A consequence of higher density living is an absence of private open space within the immediate vicinity of dwellings, such as backyards or courtyards. This puts more pressure on public open space to provide respite and fulfil expectations for outdoor activities.

Increased density will also see the need for more shared spaces and community facilities such as community gardens, communal rooftop space and recreation facilities.

Boronia's open spaces will be expected to play a number of roles, sometimes with competing priorities. There is an ever increasing demand on open space to meet active recreational and passive leisure needs, as well as providing biodiversity, habitat and drainage functions.

As Boronia is a fully developed established suburb, there are also limited opportunities to accommodate future needs without purchasing additional land.

- Demand for open space for sport and active recreation

The Boronia community has access to a number of reserves that serve local sporting clubs and provide active recreation opportunities for general community use.

There is high usage and participation levels at all active recreation reserves in and around Boronia, with all local grounds considered to be at capacity.

Population projections indicate an increase in all age cohorts over the next 20 years, especially younger age cohorts. Together with increased female participation, there will likely be an under- supply of active recreation reserves in Boronia to meet demand from local clubs and the broader community into the future.

- A lack of open space in some parts of the Boronia MAC

The Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022 identified that there are poor pedestrian connections to Boronia Park, and more generally, that connections across roads need to be improved in the Boronia MAC to ensure

greater connectivity between open space areas.

Taking into account population projections and intensification of the commercial core, demand for existing open spaces will increase. This could have maintenance implications on existing open space areas, and result in a lack of open space to cater for the increase in residents.

- Ageing infrastructure

Within active recreation reserves, pavilions and other sporting infrastructure is ageing, and will likely need major upgrading/renewal over the next 20 years.

- Pressure on the role of public open space for flood management

There are a number of locations in Boronia that are prone to flooding. Property adjacent to Boronia Park on the corner of Dorset and Boronia Roads sit approximately 2m below the finished surface of the intersection and are continually subject to flooding. Properties on the south side of Boronia Road are also subject to flooding impacts during larger storms, as the natural overland flow path into the Park is constricted to the path between the Infolink,

St John's Ambulance centre and the Boronia Progress Hall.

Increased run-off from built form intensification is putting pressure on parks and sport grounds to manage water flows.

More particularly, the majority of facilities located within the Boronia Park are prone to flooding. The Park's car park currently falls to the south and guides overland flows directly towards the entrance of the library and basketball stadium.

The existing retarding basin adjacent to the library will struggle to cope with serious flooding events which are becoming more common. This area receives overland flows from 83 ha of surrounding urbanised land (at two inlets). The Boronia MAC is predominantly comprised of sealed surfaces of retail/commercial land, and major/local roads and car parks. There is limited green space (soil surfaces) or public open space areas upstream of the retarding basin that can absorb stormwater, hence the higher runoff volumes seen regularly.

The expansion of the retarding basin in 2014-15 increased its capacity from a 1 in 7 year

storm protection; to provide a 1 in 37 year ARI (storm protection) resulting in a 30% increase in footprint area.

7.2.6 Streetscapes

- Poor amenity

There is generally poor streetscape amenity, particularly on Dorset Road, parts of Boronia Road and the commercial core. This includes insufficient shade, seating, bins etc.

- Lack of active frontages to the street

Large scale buildings often present multiple blank walls to the public realm and, with few windows or access points at ground level, they lack interest. In addition, buildings with substantial setbacks from the street result in a disrupted street wall and intermittent street activity.

- Driveways and loading bays

In a number of high pedestrian traffic areas, driveways and loading bays consume large areas of the streetscape and footpaths, impede pedestrian movement and create potential conflict points.

7.3 Opportunities

A number of opportunities have been identified to support delivery of the vision and key directions of the Strategy.

7.3.1 Role of public realm

- The importance of the public realm in environmental sustainability

In addition to their recreational, social and cultural roles, the public realm has an important role to play in environmental sustainability, particularly protecting and enhancing biodiversity, reducing the heat island effect and stormwater management.

- The importance of public realm in providing a sense of local identity

Visual reminders and connections to the past are an important part of a place's identity. References to the local history of a precinct can be used in the design of public spaces to contribute to or reinforce local identity. They can bring a sense of authenticity, while educating current and future generations of previous land uses or past events.

Memorial spaces, such as the flag poles for the RSL, also play an important part in providing a

place for people to gather and remember, commemorate past events that have shaped the local community.

7.3.2 Digital Information

Digital technology is having an impact on the public realm and how public spaces are used. There are opportunities to embrace emerging technologies in our public realm.

Information about a place is becoming an important tool in attracting visitors, with many centres having a growing role in supporting local tourism.

Providing communications technology (e.g. wireless internet or hot spots) within public spaces (particularly within more densely populated urban areas) can facilitate increased access to information.

Australians are increasingly using public Wi-Fi Hotspots. A public Wi-Fi hotspot is a location offering a Wi-Fi internet connection to those with a suitable device, such as a smartphone, tablet, laptop or other Wi-Fi enabled devices.

At 30 June 2015, an average of almost 4.23 million Aussies went online using a public Wi-Fi hotspot. The prevalence of free Wi-Fi in many urban

locations facilitates the community's expectation that information about a place is accessible at anytime from anywhere. Publicly accessible and free Wi-Fi hotspots are now a common feature in many activity centres.

Access to this type of service can be available in cafés, parks, libraries, shopping centres, tourist attractions, museums or galleries. It is also becoming common practice to access the internet from buses, trains and public transport hubs.

Supporting infrastructure, that can often be seen on light posts or attached to buildings, will determine the extent of the network, although service coverage and signal strength may vary across an area.



Figure 8 – Public Realm Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

7.4 Preferred future outcomes

Expanded network and increased diversity

- A network of streetscapes and public spaces are active and green, and contribute to the economic and social vitality of the centre.
- The interface between ground level uses and public spaces are activated.
- Private developments include new civic and urban spaces that contribute and connect to the public realm.

Identity and amenity

- Boronia's green and leafy image is enhanced with increased landscaping in streetscapes, green walls and roof gardens.
- Boronia's streetscapes are of high amenity and are comfortable and safe for pedestrian movement.
- A green northern edge to the commercial area, through large tree planting and landscaping along the future Green Spine.
- Opportunities for public art are encouraged throughout the Boronia MAC that contributes to the local identity and sense of place.

- Boronia's community has a choice of public and semi-public spaces that are designed to incorporate best practice environmental sustainability in terms of reducing the heat island effect, promoting biodiversity and water sensitive urban design principles.

Parks and Reserves

- Existing parks and reserves are retained and enhanced.
- Recreational spaces for formal sports activities are retained within existing parks and reserves, with upgraded facilities to increase use and to provide focal points for the community.
- Boronia Park is designed with enhanced landscaping, improved stormwater retention basin capacity, improved pedestrian access and connectivity to the Boronia MAC and increased opportunities for active and passive recreation.

7.5 Objectives

1. To optimise the value of the public realm within the Boronia MAC for local residents, workers and visitors.
2. To provide an expanded network and increased diversity of accessible public open spaces and urban plazas that promote community gathering and interaction and reflect Boronia's character.
3. To enhance the role of private land in providing and connecting to open space.
4. To design and activate the public realm in a way which celebrates Boronia' character and identity.
5. To provide streetscapes with improved safety, amenity and sustainability.

7.6 Strategies

Optimised value

- Strengthen the accessibility, amenity and functionality of existing open spaces.
- Integrate water sensitive urban design principles in streetscape improvements and as public spaces are upgraded or created.
- Reinforce the role of public open spaces and streetscapes in enhancing and protecting biodiversity values.
- Support local food production and community garden spaces in appropriate places.
- Improve the safety of the public realm.

Expanded network and increased diversity

- Provide new, well located public open space and urban plazas at multiple locations within the Boronia MAC.
- Ensure designs for new public open space have regard to the role and function of other open space in the Boronia MAC.
- Plan and design public and semi-public open space to maximise comfort and enjoyment for all users through all seasons.

- Create small local public open spaces along streets, and at focal points in the residential neighbourhoods surrounding the Boronia MAC within easy walking/cycling distance of residents and workers.

Private land

- Require the provision of open space on private land and connectivity with public open space where appropriate.
- Facilitate improved use of arcades and laneways as semi-public spaces.

Boronia's character and identity

- Recognise and celebrate Boronia's local identity and history within the public realm through:
 - visual representation
 - memorial plaques
 - retention of valued structures, artefacts and landscaping
 - arts
 - community events.
- Reinforce Boronia's green and leafy image through landscaping and tree planting in the public and private realm.

Streetscapes

- Ensure that streetscapes are attractive, distinctive, sustainable and easy to maintain.
- Design streetscapes to contribute to the overall preferred character of Boronia MAC and respond to the needs of different users.
- Improve nature strips to increase the amount of landscaping, green areas and community gathering spaces to improve community connectedness, enhance amenity, and contribute to better stormwater quality.

7.7 Actions

Big Move Projects

1. Create new streetscapes with places for sitting and increased tree canopy, as part of the Green Spine Corridor Big Move Project.
2. Prepare an Issues and Options Paper, in preparation of a future Boronia Park Precinct Masterplan Big Move Project.
3. Plan for the creation of a public/civic space as part of the Dorset Square Town Square and Community Infrastructure Investigation Big Move Project.
4. Advocate for the creation of new forecourt spaces as part of the Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan Big Move Project.

Optimised value of the public realm

5. Encourage and promote greater use of existing open spaces by a variety of community groups and activities in non-peak sports times.
6. Investigate local food production opportunities in the redesign of public spaces and open space reserves.

7. Integrate water sensitive urban design principles in streetscape improvements, public space upgrades, and new open spaces.

Expanded network and increased diversity

8. Investigate opportunities to create new public open space and urban plazas within the Boronia MAC.

Role of private land

9. Facilitate new public/civic spaces that retain mature trees between the existing shops and the car parking area in Boronia Village.
10. Reinforce passive surveillance of the public realm from adjoining development.
11. Facilitate improvements to arcade, laneway and semi-public community space to ensure the spaces feel safe and are utilised more.

Boronia's character and identity

12. Plan for artwork and the ability to host outdoor performances when upgrading existing public spaces and parks, and creating new spaces at suitable locations.
13. Provide for public or community art in play spaces designs.

Streetscapes

14. Prepare a Streetscape Master Plan for Boronia MAC that includes:
 - increased street tree planting
 - sustainability measure
 - amenity improvements appropriate to the use and function of the footpaths and streetscape
 - conveniently located, high quality pedestrian infrastructure such as seating, bins, signage, landscaping, public art, security lighting and shade.
15. Prepare a Lighting Strategy to enhance the amenity and safety of streets, that will have regard to:
 - Wayfinding
 - Public art installations
 - Priority streets
 - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Community wellbeing in Boronia is enhanced through the provision of a network of health, education, cultural and recreation services and facilities that are accessible, adaptable and sustainable, and respond to the community's needs.

8. Community Wellbeing and Infrastructure

The provision of services and community infrastructure in the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) is fundamental to support community wellbeing.

“Community wellbeing is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfil their potential.”⁹

Community infrastructure is defined as: “Infrastructure provided by government or non-government organisations for accommodating a range of community support services, programs and activities. This includes facilities for education and learning universities and adult learning centres, early years, health and community services), community, arts and culture, sport, recreation and leisure, justice, voluntary and faith and emergency services.”¹⁰

Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Quality living environments
- Healthy, active and connected community
- Resilient
- Green place with spaces to play

State

Planning and Environment Act 1987
Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Knox

Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021
Community Facilities Planning Policy 2016
Key Life Stages Report
Knox Community Access and Equity Implementation plan 2017 – 2022
Municipal Disability Leadership Plan

COMMUNITY WELLBEING and INFRASTRUCTURE

Background

Community Engagement
Community Services and Facilities Review 2018
Boronia Social Issues Report 2018

⁹ www.whatworkswellbeing.org, 2017 (accessed 2019)

¹⁰ DPCD and Growth Areas Authority, A Guide to Delivering Community Precincts, 2010

8.1 Elements

Community wellbeing

Improved community wellbeing is measured by positive improvements to social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions.

In relation to the elements discussed below, this would be determined by improved mental health services, improved disability services, reduced crime, increased perceptions of safety, reduced dependency on drugs and alcohol, reduced levels of family violence, and reduced expenditure on electronic gaming.

8.1.1 Mental health

Mental health is a state of well-being which enables an individual to realise his or her own potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and contribute to her or his community. About one in five Australians will experience difficulties with their mental health at some stage of their lives. Some people living with mental health challenges experience times of homelessness, poverty, isolation, poor physical health, unemployment, and stigmatisation. These all combine to significantly affect a person's capacity to care for themselves and to continue in employment or education.

The data includes modelled estimates of the proportion of Boronia/Bayswater/Basin community (north-east of Knox) who have mental and behavioural problems and who experience high or very high psychological distress. The modelled estimates for Boronia, Bayswater and the Basin are slightly higher than for Knox, with an estimated 5,000 people with long term mental health issues.

8.1.2 Disability

Data from the 2016 Census shows that 5.3% of Boronia's population requires assistance with core daily activities, a slightly higher proportion than Melbourne as whole (4.9%). In the north-east of Knox (Boronia, Bayswater and the Basin) 5.3% of the community were receiving an aged or disability pension as of June 2016, a notably higher proportion than observed for Knox and Melbourne.

8.1.3 Safety and crime

Community surveys indicate that residents are concerned about poor physical amenity and antisocial behaviour within the Boronia MAC, leading to lowered perceptions of safety. Issues relating to drug and alcohol use and concerns, including the look and feel of the Boronia Train

Station and bus interchange, were commonly raised by respondents.

Crime offences have continued to increase in Boronia (suburb). The total offence rate for Boronia in 2017 was 106.0 per 1,000 population, increasing from 75.8 in 2013. The Boronia offence rate is consistently higher than the Knox average.

Engagement indicated that Boronia MAC is visited by residents of Boronia and visitors from surrounding suburbs, who are accessing the shops, Train Station and various social and community services. As a result, during business hours the Boronia MAC is a 'melting pot' used by long term local residents for daily shopping needs, commuters, and young people travelling to and from school, along with homeless individuals, and people who are unemployed or otherwise clearly disadvantaged. This eclectic mix of people and uses, combined with pockets of vacant or poor performing retail tenancies and an ageing and dated built environment, contribute to the poor sense of safety reported by some residents. In contrast, at night the Boronia MAC is lacking in activity, and there are large areas which are poorly lit and have poor surveillance.

8.1.4 Drug and alcohol dependency and misuse

Drug and alcohol dependency and misuse has the potential to cause significant negative health impacts for users and in some circumstances may be associated with anti-social and even violent behaviour, which may have consequences for others. Alcohol consumption in public places within the Boronia MAC has been reported as a concern by residents and is linked to reduced perceptions of safety in this location.

The most recent data on risky alcohol consumption available at the sub-municipal level is Australian Health Survey (AHS) data from 2011-12. The data shows that 3.1% of residents living in Boronia, Bayswater and the Basin consumed alcohol at levels considered to be a high risk to health in the week prior to the survey.

8.1.5 Family violence

Family violence is a serious and preventable issue, with Knox having one of the highest rates of reported family violence in Melbourne's Outer East for over 20 years. The rate of police callouts for family violence in Knox has begun to drop, with the rate being 1110 in 2015/16 compared to 1010 in 2017/18 (the average rate for police callouts for metropolitan Melbourne for the 2017/18 period

was 1042). In 2017/2018 period, Boronia had the highest number of police callouts in Knox per 1000 population at 13.7/1000, slightly ahead of Bayswater which recorded 13.5/1000. The Knox average was 10.4 callouts per 1000 of population.

Another issue of concern is that data has revealed that alcohol has a greater presence within family violence incidents in Knox compared to the Melbourne metropolitan region and Victoria. While certainly not a cause of violence, this finding is consistent with research that shows drug and alcohol use is a contributing factor to family violence.

8.1.6 Electronic gaming

Gaming is a legal activity in Victoria and for the majority of players, gaming is a source of recreation. However, unlike many other recreational activities, gaming has the potential to generate negative social/economic impacts for the player, their family and friends and the wider community.

Data on gaming expenditure and the incidence of problem gaming in association with electronic gaming machines is not available at the suburb level. With these limitations in mind, venue based spend data indicates that spending within Knox has

decreased progressively from \$747 per adult in 2007-08 to \$599 per adult in 2016-17, such that spending levels in Knox are now very similar to the metropolitan average (\$561 per adult). While over this period the number of electronic gaming machines per 1,000 adults in Knox reduced from 7.3 to 6.1, it should be noted that total player loss (expenditure) for 2017/2018 in Knox was \$75,860,235.00, with Knox ranking 14th, amongst metropolitan municipalities, for total player loss.

Community Infrastructure

8.1.7 Existing community infrastructure

Council and other organisations, including Government agencies, faith-based organisations and not-for-profit community organisations currently own, manage, maintain and fund a wide range of services and facilities in the Boronia MAC to support community wellbeing.

Council owned facilities located within Boronia MAC include:

- Bellbird Senior Citizens' Centre (Corner of Erica Avenue and Genista Avenue, Boronia)
- Boronia Basketball Stadium (7 Park Crescent, Boronia)

-
- Park Crescent Children and Family Centre
 - Boronia Progress Hall
 - Infolink building (134 Boronia Road, Boronia)
 - Boronia Library (Park Crescent)
 - Knox Leisureworks
 - Tormore Reserve
 - Chandler Park.

8.1.8 Community groups

There are over 60 different community groups operating within Boronia or that have a strong association with Boronia. Their contribution and support for participation in community life creates a highly engaged community. In most cases these groups operate independently and work autonomously to meet their own needs but could benefit from being linked to a larger network.

8.2 Issues

A number of key issues for the Strategy to address have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

8.2.1 Community services and facilities

- Community facilities are mostly located on an historic basis and concentrated within the Boronia MAC.
- Community services and facilities currently provided are not considered to be adequate for current demand and have some capacity to accommodate short term growth.
- Existing community infrastructure in Boronia is generally ageing and some facilities are no longer fit for purpose.
- Many of the community services and facilities in Boronia operate on an individual basis i.e. each facility type operates with different management models and ways to deliver the same service which can lead to overlap or duplication of services.
- Accessibility to facilities can be poor with low pedestrian access, not being completely Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant,

high private car use, poor lighting surrounding facilities and in car parks at night etc.

- There are limited opportunities for community groups or individuals to hire spaces for purposes such as cultural, educational, community activities or for meetings, particularly spaces suitable for smaller groups (unincorporated) and social groups.
- Existing community meeting room spaces are aging and do not always meet appropriate amenity standards (i.e., lack of air conditioning and insulation, poor parking, poor lighting, lack of security), making them less appealing for hire by some user groups, particularly groups catering for older residents or those with restricted mobility.

Specific issues for each key service/life stage include:

8.2.2 Families and children

- Due to the forecast population growth, there will be ongoing demand for programs and services to support families and children. This will be dependent on birth rate fluctuations.
- In order to reduce car dependency and increase overall accessibility, programs and

services need to remain close to public transport and with good pedestrian connections to surrounding residential areas.

8.2.3 Young people

- Several issues were identified from feedback received from young people:
 - No space/place for young people to hang out in the Boronia MAC.
 - Perceptions of safety, or lack thereof, are limiting how young people use the Boronia MAC.
 - Future jobs, gaining skills and education.
 - Health and wellbeing, especially mental health.
 - Access to activities (choices in active and creative activities).
 - Diversity and tolerance of difference.
 - Young people's participation.

8.2.4 Aged and disability

- Membership numbers of traditional model Senior Citizen groups are declining and members are struggling to maintain management responsibilities.

-
- Bellbird Senior Citizens Group will continue to meet but the format of the group's activities may change depending on its members.
 - Council's Senior Citizens Centres Asset Plan suggests the development of a new multi-purpose community facility similar to the one located in Carrington Park will be best placed to deliver multiple and diverse activity spaces for Bellbird Senior Citizens' group.
 - It will also be important to integrate and adjust Knox Council's disability support services to help people with a disability and older people to live independent and healthy lives in the community in the context of the NDIS.

8.2.5 Mental health

- In 2014-15 an estimated 13% of adults in the Boronia/Bayswater/Basin area reported experiencing high or very high levels of psychological distress, and an estimated 18% of all residents had a mental or behavioural condition or disorder.¹¹

8.2.6 Library service needs

- The existing Boronia Library is located at 11 Park Crescent, Boronia, (corner of Dorset Road and Park Crescent). The library is located adjacent to the basketball stadium that is planned to be decommissioned and relocated. Boronia Library will be left isolated and removed from other community infrastructure. Consideration of relocating the library to a more accessible integrated multipurpose community facility will be required. As the traditional model of libraries has rapidly changed over the past 20 years, consideration will need to be given to meeting future community expectations and needs i.e., providing intergenerational spaces where many activities are offered to the community to meet all needs.

8.2.7 Safety and security

- A key finding from community engagement was the negative perceptions of safety within the Boronia MAC. Areas of particular concern

identified include the Boronia Train Station Precinct and Dorset Square.

- Poor public behaviour and safety was the highest response when the community was asked what they like least about Boronia.
- As part of a Safety Perceptions Survey, 64% of respondents were dissatisfied regarding the feeling of safety in the Boronia MAC.

¹¹ Public Health Information Development Unit, 2019

8.3 Opportunities

A number of opportunities have been identified to support delivery of the vision and key directions of the Strategy.

8.3.1 Building on existing investment and relationships

- There is a strong existing foundation of significant investment by service providers, traders, community groups, community and Council to address some of the identified social issues.
- There are also strong existing relationships and opportunities for new partnerships to ensure that the changing needs of the Boronia community are met.
- Strengthened relationships and partnerships will ensure that appropriate and linked up services and social opportunities are offered to meet community need. A partnership approach will also ensure that initiatives are not duplicated and are targeted at those most in need.
- There are opportunities to work with the experts in the Boronia community, particularly residents, traders, community groups and

those who use the Boronia MAC for shopping, transit and other purposes. With Council's support, community capacity can be built to enable them to contribute to shaping the physical and social character of the Boronia MAC.

8.3.2 Co-location, shared, multi-purpose and integrated use of facilities

- There are numerous benefits for the community to be gained from clustering both community and private providers in a central and accessible location, in order to create a critical mass which will attract additional services and grow the range within the centre.
- In any planning and design process for new and/or upgraded facilities in Boronia, further consultation should be undertaken with relevant service providers/user groups (both Council and non-Council) to understand the functional needs of these agencies/groups and the services they provide, and to explore how best these could form part of co-located, integrated multi-purpose facility as part of a community hub.
- A multi-purpose facility would need to incorporate functional requirements of all

potential users in order to create spaces that are flexible, can cater for future services and facility needs. As well as the library service, other potential services to investigate in relation to co-location include Bellbird Seniors Centre, youth requirements, playgroup spaces, family/individual support services, community meeting spaces and neighbourhood house services.

8.3.3 Strengthening community groups

- Community groups and organisations play an integral role in providing social cohesion, volunteer opportunities and community services.

8.3.4 Strategic Asset Investment Strategy

- The Strategic Assets and Investment Strategy (SAIS) is an evidence-based approach intended to inform long-term investment decisions in relation to strategic assets, in particular for facilities, car parks and open space.
- The SAIS has considered assets based on their locational value, and seeks to assist Council in its decision making about the future of each asset. The SAIS will employ four designations:

-
1. Investment in an asset if it is well located but could function better.
 2. Conversion of an asset to an alternative community use if the asset is strategically better located for that alternative use.
 3. Divestment of an asset (land and/or building) to realise revenue in order to fund other community uses.
 4. Acquisition of a new asset (land and/or building) to address an identified gap in Knox's assets provision/impact if there are no other Knox assets which can address that gap.
- The SAIS will give Council and the community confidence in relation to future investment decisions for strategic assets. Council's strategic assets within the Boronia MAC are:
 - 257 Dorset Road
 - Boronia Park
 - Infolink
 - Boronia Progress Hall
 - Park Crescent Children and Family Centre
 - Dorset Square car park
 - Bellbird Senior Citizens Club (Building only)
 - Knox Leisureworks
 - Tormore Reserve
 - Chandler Park.
 - This project is ongoing and will provide the framework for Council's future financial and operative actions in terms of assets expenditure. The SAIS will mutually inform future investment and be informed by and the objectives of the Boronia Renewal Strategy.

8.3.5 Tormore Road neighbourhood focus

- Several community facilities and services are located in the vicinity of Tormore Road including Boronia West Primary School, Knox Leisureworks and Tormore Reserve. The Reserve contains an AFL oval, cricket pitches and a playground and is currently home to Boronia Cricket Club and Boronia Football Club
- A medium to long term opportunity will be assessing the Tormore Road community facilities and services as there are opportunities for strengthened relationships between them.
- The Reserve provides a direct link between the Boronia MAC core, including the Train Station, through to Boronia West Primary School and Knox Leisureworks.



Figure 9 – Community Wellbeing and Infrastructure Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

8.4 Preferred Future Outcomes

Community wellbeing

- Enhanced community well-being through the provision of appropriate community services and facilities, improved community connectedness and capacity, increased community safety and increased community pride.

Community services and facilities

- Community services and facilities that meet identified existing and future community needs.
- Community services and facilities that support social connection and foster active and healthy lifestyles.
- Well-planned community infrastructure that forms a network of accessible, welcoming and activated places, facilities and venues for the whole community.
- Council continuing to be the main provider of community infrastructure in Boronia.
- Partnerships with others to provide community services and facilities.

- A place-based approach to addressing identified key social issues, with a priority on support for those people who are marginalised, isolated or otherwise excluded from community life.

Community capacity and engagement

- A well-connected community.
- Well supported and capable community groups.
- Civic participation and inclusive engagement that fosters collaboration and supports planning for community services and facilities.

Safety

- Improved community safety and perceptions of safety.
- Safety of the natural and built environment is maintained and managed.

Community pride

- Increased community pride, facilitated by:
 - community-led place-making activities
 - community events.

8.5 Objectives

1. To provide for good quality, sustainable, accessible and adaptable community services and facilities that provide for the needs of existing and future populations.
2. To build relationships and partnerships to support more effective planning and delivery of community services and facilities.
3. To manage existing and new infrastructure assets efficiently and effectively.
4. To enhance social connectivity and engagement to create a more inclusive, safe and cohesive community.
5. To strengthen community groups to support community well-being.
6. To improve community safety and perceptions of safety.

8.6 Strategies

Provision of community services and facilities

- Plan for and deliver services and facilities which respond to the identified needs and expectations of existing and future populations, considering in particular:
 - Optimisation of services for senior citizens.
 - Services and facilities for young people.
 - Library services which meet community needs and respond to current trends in delivery of library services.
 - Services and facilities that support wellbeing and active lifestyles.
- Review opportunities to provide further community meeting and service spaces.
- Explore alternative models for delivery of services and facilities including service co-location and multipurpose facilities.

Partnerships

- Plan for, provide and partner with others to provide community services and facilities.
- Support and build capacity for established and emerging community groups to be sustainable and support community service provision.

- Facilitate connections between community service groups, organisations and facilities to enable a strengthened collective approach to service delivery to address key social issues including mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, problem gaming; family violence across life stages.

Infrastructure asset management and investment

- Manage existing and new infrastructure assets having regard to Council's Strategic Asset Investment Strategy.

Community connectedness and engagement

- Support community connectedness.
- Facilitate civic participation and inclusive engagement to ensure a community where everyone can participate with pride, purpose and a sense of belonging.

Community groups

- Maintain support and build the capacity of community groups.
- Enhance opportunities for community connections to improve perceptions of safety.

8.7 Actions

Big Move Projects

1. Plan for the future use of community facilities and investigate the inclusion of a multi-purpose community facility as part of the Boronia Park Precinct Masterplan Big Move Project, the Dorset Square Town Square Big Move Project, or the Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan Big Move Project. The plan to consider the inclusion of:
 - a relocated library
 - senior citizens facilities with a range of (size, hire costs and times) of spaces for casual and regular use by groups currently sub- leasing the Bellbird facility
 - family support services
 - neighbourhood house services
 - early years services and meeting spaces and
 - any new service requirements, including youth services and a potential digital creative hub.

Provision of community services and facilities

2. Establish an ongoing community engagement program within Boronia (key services and community) to understand changing

community needs and impacts on community services and facilities.

3. Continue to identify funding opportunities to support the ongoing provision of community infrastructure.

Partnerships

4. Develop partnerships with key stakeholders such as community health, family support services and community services to address gaps in service provision and develop responses to key social issues in Boronia.
5. Investigate opportunities for partnerships with the private industry to deliver future community facilities within Boronia, whilst ensuring the facilities are sufficiently flexible and can be extended as demand grows over time.
6. Create and facilitate connections between community service groups and organisations to enable a strengthened collective approach to service delivery.
7. Explore how established community groups can operate with greater interaction as part of a shared new community space, to deliver a more integrated suite of activities and

programs to meet the needs of older residents in Boronia.

8. Investigate opportunities for shared use of facilities/grounds with local schools and private organisations, for sports and recreation purposes.

Infrastructure asset management and investment

9. Use the Strategic Infrastructure Assessment Strategy to identify and guide the future status of Council's strategic assets in Boronia.
10. As part of the implementation of the Strategic Asset and Investment Strategy, regularly evaluate Council services and facilities (Place, Asset, Service) to ensure community satisfaction, social impact, return on investment/identified of community services and facilities.

Community engagement and connectedness

11. Use the Youth Advisory Committee to increase the youth voice in Council planning, including the development of Master Plans etc., and decision-making in relation to the implementation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy.

-
12. Continue to support and build the capacity of the community to enable grass roots actions that enhance connection and resilience.
 13. Continue to coordinate connections between community organisations and facilities in key locations e.g., Tormore Road.

Community groups

14. Review the needs of community group to better understand how Council can support existing groups or organisations to grow and become more sustainable, or encourage new groups to form around shared interests, learning new skills, hobbies etc. Existing community groups may benefit from additional support and future planning as membership wanes and transition to a different service model may be required.

Community safety

15. Deliver community-led community safety programs i.e., arts, positive community messaging to shift negative perceptions of safety
16. Develop programs that support community connectedness.

17. Continue to undertake research to identify the relationship between packaged liquor outlet density in Boronia MAC and alcohol-related harm.

Community place making/activation

18. Support delivery of community events that celebrate diversity and bring people together from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, faiths and age groups.
19. Explore and create opportunities to utilise a place making approach to planning, design and management of public spaces.
20. Engage and involve the Boronia community to plan place making activities and community events.
21. Trial a community-led place making initiative in the Boronia MAC where residents, traders and community groups are empowered to implement a project that reflects their local needs, character and identity.

Advocacy

22. Advocate for improved mental health services to meet community needs in partnership with key stakeholders.

9. Precinct Plans

Boronia MAC is made up of five distinct precincts, each with its own existing conditions, key challenges, future role and preferred outcomes (Figure 10).

The purpose of the Precinct Plans is to provide place specific information in relation to implementation of the objectives, strategies and actions relating to the five key strategic themes.

Preferred future outcomes for each precinct are outlined in relation to:

- Economic development and investment
- Land use and built form (including Strategic Opportunity Sites, where they exist)
- Movement and access
- Public realm
- Community wellbeing and infrastructure.

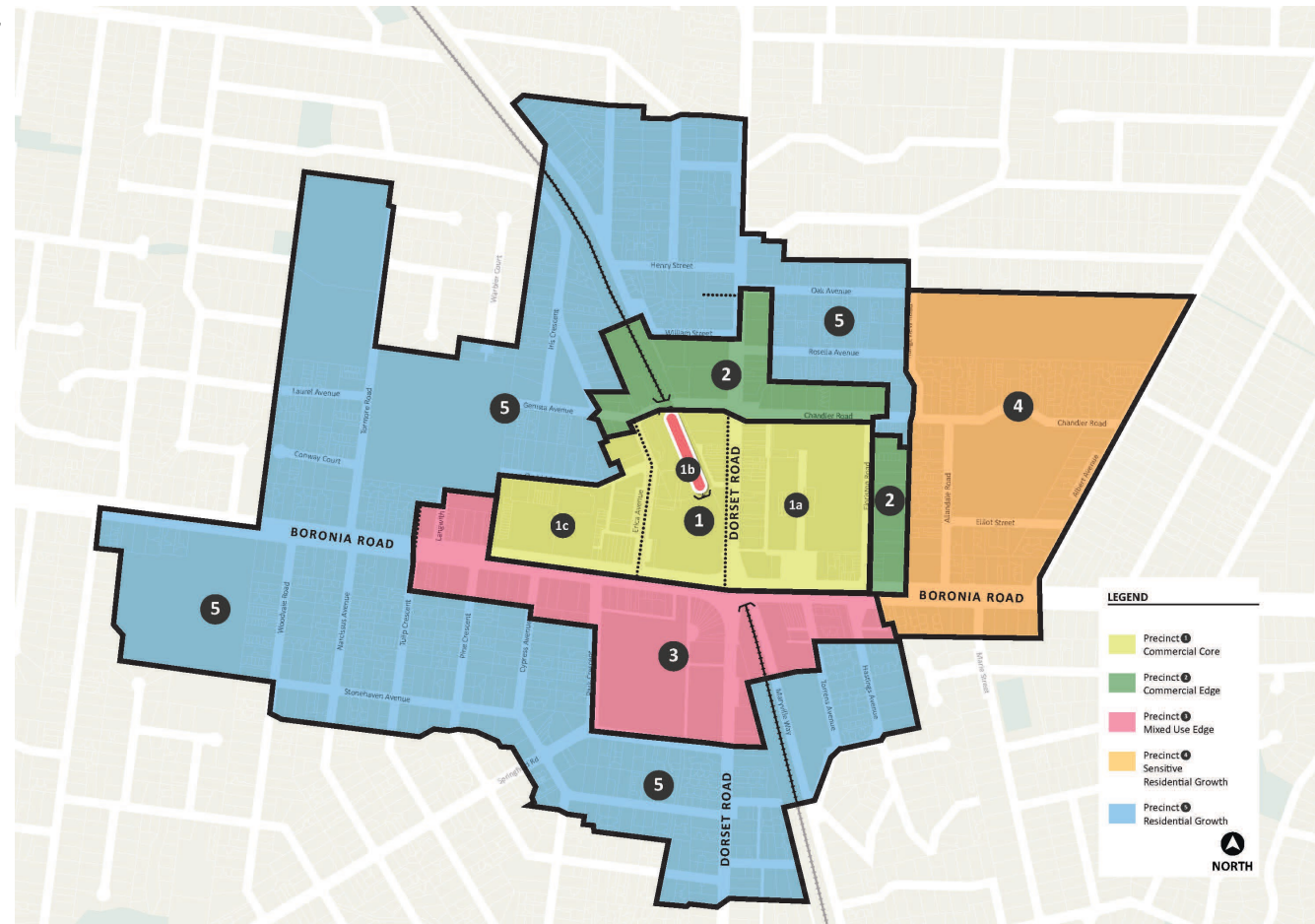


Figure 10 – Boronia Activity Centre

Precinct 1 – Commercial Core

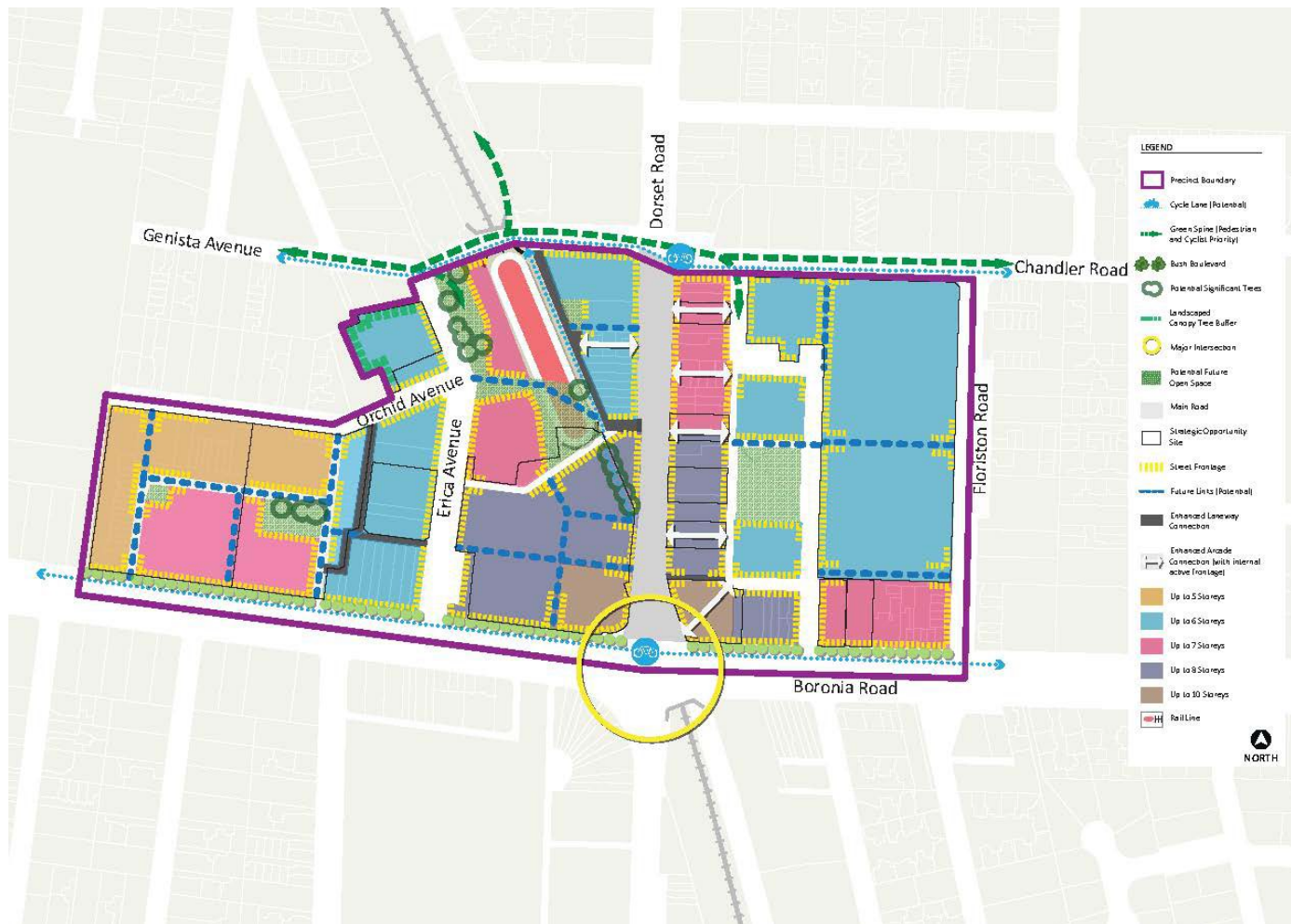


Figure 11 – Precinct 1

9.1 Precinct 1 – Commercial Core

9.1.1 Existing conditions

This precinct is a core area, approximately 16.1 ha in area, bounded by Chandler Road, Floriston Road, Boronia Road, Orchid Avenue and western boundary of 163 Boronia Road.

It includes Dorset Road and the Dorset Square shopping centre, and extends to the rear of Boronia Village.

This precinct contains mostly commercial, and retail uses and only a few dwellings.

Council owns land (1.4ha) at 257 Dorset Road and the at-grade car park known as Dorset Square. Apart from these land holdings, there are no other Council operated facilities or services delivered from this precinct.

The Train Station, Dorset Square, Dorset Road main street, Erica Avenue and Boronia Village shops are all focal points for change and are described as sub-precincts to assist in providing a tailored future direction.

The three sub-precincts are:

- Sub-precinct 1a - Dorset Square
- Sub-precinct 1b – Boronia Station and Boronia Junction shopping centre
- Sub-precinct 1c - Erica Avenue and Boronia Village.

Sub-precinct 1a – Dorset Square

Established in the 1970s, this retail sub-precinct includes the Boronia Mall shopping centre, Coles supermarket and Kmart department store, and serves a local catchment that extends to surrounding suburbs and municipalities. These businesses occupy the north and eastern side of the sub-precinct (abutting Chandler and Floriston Roads), and are served from a loading bay on Chandler Road.

The area predominantly contains ground floor retail/food premises, with some office spaces in upper storeys, and the Metro Cinema, all surrounding a large, central (Council owned) at-grade car park known as Dorset Square.

The central square connects to Dorset Road via a series of retail focused arcades and laneways. Dorset Road has reduced traffic speeds between Chandler Road and Boronia Road, with pedestrian

crossing points to sub-precinct 1b at the intersection of Boronia and Chandler Road, and south of Lupton Way.

Notably there are three taller buildings in this sub-precinct, being 252-254 Dorset Road, the former Vision Australia building, the local Metro Cinema which addresses Dorset Square, and the Coles multi-deck car park, which is accessed from Floriston Road.

The scale and design of the street wall and shop fronts lining Dorset Road retain many of the features valued in a traditional main street that could be revived.

Sub-precinct 1b - Boronia Train Station and Boronia Junction shopping centre

The Boronia Train Station and surrounds form the nucleus of this sub-precinct. The train line runs roughly north/south, with the station platforms located below grade in an open trench arrangement. The Station is accessed via a central corridor, which connects Lupton Way on the east side and a bus interchange area on the west. The Station area also contains a multi-deck commuter parking and a small at-grade parking areas.

Adjacent to the Train Station, the Boronia Junction shopping centre consists of a large format

Woolworths supermarket (approx. 3500sqm) with a loading bay fronting Erica Avenue. The site also includes a large 2000sqm tenancy occupied by a bowling alley and a further 1000sqm of small retail tenancies. These premises all face east onto a forecourt area. A large, at-grade car park area, comprising a service station, abuts Dorset Road and partially sits over the below grade train line.

The west side of Dorset Road has a reduced retail streetscape due to the Police Station, 257 Dorset Road (former Youth Hall site), and Boronia Junction car park occupying the majority of the frontage.

Lupton Way acts as a rear laneway to properties that front Dorset Road, including the Railway Arcade and an assortment of shops, as well as the Boronia Police Station car park.

Sub-precinct 1C - Erica Avenue and Boronia Village

This Erica Avenue is in transition. There is little daytime activity, with a mix of older one and two storey buildings, including several vacant shops and a Goodyear Tyre business on the corner of Orchid Avenue.

This local street is used as a short cut for traffic moving between Dorset Road (north) and Boronia Road to the west. The street is also wider to

accommodate large truck and bus turning movements. Dedicated pedestrian crossings exist at the Boronia Road and Orchid Avenue intersections.

Street frontages on the west side of the street are not consistent. The street frontages on the west side are also inconsistent with the east side, which is bounded by the Boronia Junction loading dock and the Train Station access to the multi-deck car parking structure bound the east side.

The west side of the street has been upgraded with indented car parking spaces, punctuated with street trees.

The Boronia Village Shopping Centre is located on the edge of the main commercial core and was identified as being suitable for mixed-use development, with residential above ground floor retail, in the Boronia Structure Plan 2006.

There has been little change over the past five years, apart from the upgrade of the large format Dan Murphy's shop (2,000sqm footprint) occupying the former Safeway supermarket building. The adjoining small shops are arranged in a 'U-shape' around two large car parks, set back almost 80m from Boronia Road.

The at-grade car parks are on separate levels and titles and connected via a single ramp near the frontage to Boronia Road. The western-most car park is approximately 5,500sqm and contains approximately 230 spaces managed by 2P time restrictions. The parking area at the front of Dan Murphy's is slightly smaller, being 4,000sqm with approximately 150 spaces, and is impacted by several significant large gum trees which are protected in the Planning Scheme by a Vegetation Protection Overlay.

A 7m wide landscaped buffer area runs along the western boundary of the Boronia Village property between Boronia Road and Orchid Avenue. The area comprises mostly 30 small-scale retail tenancies of shops, beauty/grooming care, and food and drink premises.

The area west of the landscape buffer, abutting Langwith Avenue, consists primarily of offices.

The predominance of vehicles in Boronia Village, and a lack of convenient crossing points over Boronia Road, hampers access and integration with surrounding precincts. The nearest signalised intersections are located at Erica Avenue, or Tormore Road, resulting in a gap between crossing points. This leads to informal and risky jaywalking

behaviour by pedestrians looking to shorten the distance to the shops.

9.1.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Activating and increasing the amenity around the Boronia Train Station and in car parks, in order to improve perceptions of safety.
- Reinstating and activating 'main street' character along both sides of Dorset Road between Chandler Road and Boronia Road, and along Erica Avenue.
- Improving the east/west connections through the existing arcades, laneways and across Dorset Road to the Train Station.
- The absence of a public/civic 'heart' plaza.
- Increasing the quantity and quality of public space at the entrances to the Train Station.
- Ensuring properties front onto and address the north side of Boronia Road between Erica Avenue and Floriston Road.
- Improving activation, passive surveillance and façade presentation to Floriston Road, Chandler Road, and local laneways.

- Reorganising pedestrian crossing points on Dorset Road.
- Ensuring lot consolidation to form efficient redevelopment parcels.
- Overcoming and retrofitting the existing large format, internalised and car-reliant 'mall model' of development and encouraging a more sustainable street-based format.
- Minimising the impact of the car parking areas that abut major roads, and in relation to at-grade car parks, encouraging development to site buildings to address Boronia Road.

9.1.3 Future role

Precinct 1 is forecast to experience the greatest amount of change and become Boronia's high density employment hub, with a vibrant mix of businesses, improved public transport and community facilities. It will foster a new character that is attractive, urban and vibrant, with high quality public realm providing amenity for existing workers and future residents.

As a gateway to the Boronia MAC for those using public transport, the Boronia Train Station should present a positive, welcoming appearance and be perceived as a safe place. Mixed-use, higher

density development should be concentrated around the Train Station to reconnect the street layout and foster compact building pattern in a finer grain.

9.1.4 Preferred future outcomes

Big Move Projects

- Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan
- Dorset Square Town Square
- Green Spine on the northern edge.

Economic development and investment

- Consolidated small tenancies or titles, creating new shop front spaces for co-working, collaboration and potentially incubator spaces for artists, creative and social enterprises.

Land use and built form

- A character focussed on pedestrian and street-based activity with interfacing new multi-storey, mixed-use development.
- A diverse mix of buildings, with variety of architectural styles, within a podium or street wall and tower recessed behind. Variation is provided through the treatment of the front façade, through the use of materials,

modulation and articulation of the built fabric and the placement of balconies or private open space at upper levels.

- Buildings with clear glazing to increase passive surveillance and perceptions of safety.
- Arcade network retained as part of the historic built form layout forming part of the unique local identity of the core of Boronia.
- On the upper levels, apartments with a mix of apartment sizes, tenure options and number of bedrooms.
- Taller buildings on the corner sites surrounding the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road, to create landmark features or provide for destination activities.
- In Sub-precinct 1a – Dorset Square, facades onto Chandler and Floriston Roads improved to increase street level amenity, street activation, passive surveillance, and improve the interface with Precinct 2.
- In Sub-precinct 1b – Boronia Station and Boronia Junction shopping centre, the introduction of more residential accommodation above public transport and shops.

- In Sub-precinct 1c – Erica Avenue and Boronia Village, provision of active frontages along the east side of Erica Avenue to consolidate its role as a hub for outdoor dining in Boronia and to improve safety for pedestrians. Also, in Boronia Village, retention of the existing Dan Murphy’s building, given the significance of the arched roof structure and its role as a visual icon and as part of the unique local identity of this precinct.
- Redevelopment of the two car parks adjacent to Dan Murphy’s to up to seven storeys, taking into account replacement of car parking and high-quality pedestrians and cyclists.
- The iconic view from Tormore Reserve to the Dandenong Ranges retained.
- Strategic Opportunity Sites:
 - Boronia Village - 163 Boronia Road
 - Dan Murphys - 159 Boronia Road
 - Boronia Junction – 121-127 Boronia Road
 - 1-11A Erica Avenue
 - 31-39 Erica Avenue
 - 257 Dorset Road
 - Chandler Arcade - 202-210 Dorset Road & 103-109 Boronia Road
 - 218-224 Dorset Road

- 230 Dorset Road
- 236-238 Dorset Road
- 87 Boronia Road
- 83 Boronia Road
- Kmart - 50 Dorset Square
- Boronia Mall
- Coles supermarket & multi-deck car park.

Movement and access

- Greater focus on provision of new mid-block connections and improvements to the pedestrian environment.
- A precinct approach to car parking that encourages increased turnover.
- Rationalised car parking at the rear of the shops into a more efficient arrangement.
- Car parking in redeveloped sites relocated to the rear of the site or in basement or upper levels.
- Car parking demand in large-scale development provided on-site and concealed as much as possible.
- In Sub-precinct 1c – Erica Avenue and Boronia Village:

- Consideration of widening of the western side footpath to encourage outdoor dining and other activities that extend into the evening.
- The Boronia Junction shopping centre encouraged to relocate its loading bay and provide a direct entrance onto Erica Avenue.
- A new crossing point over Boronia Road to serve this precinct.
- The laneway from the parking area to Orchid Avenue improved to provide a better connection.
- Any redevelopment of the car parking areas to include provision for a pedestrian link between Boronia Road, Orchid Avenue and Tormore Reserve.

Public realm

- The addition of parklets, small public/civic spaces or outdoor dining spaces for local cafes along the Green Spine, within Dorset Square, along Erica Avenue, and within the train station precinct.
- Enhanced tree planting and landscaping (including consistent species and spacing)

along Dorset Road to assist it to perform as an integrated “main street” for the Activity Centre.

- Provision of public toilets as the use of the area increases.
- New public spaces created when car parks are redeveloped to provide small pocket plazas where people can gather and rest.

Community wellbeing and infrastructure

- Community facilities, including the multi-purpose community facility, are centrally located and accessible.
- Packaged liquor premises not clustered together, and new premises discouraged where the sale is not in conjunction with, or ancillary to, another use.
- Integrated public art increased within civic spaces and along laneways and arcades, to enhance streetscape.
- Public spaces designed to accommodate community events.
- Community events held on public land and privately owned open spaces, to enhance urban life and diversity.

Precinct 2 – Commercial Edge

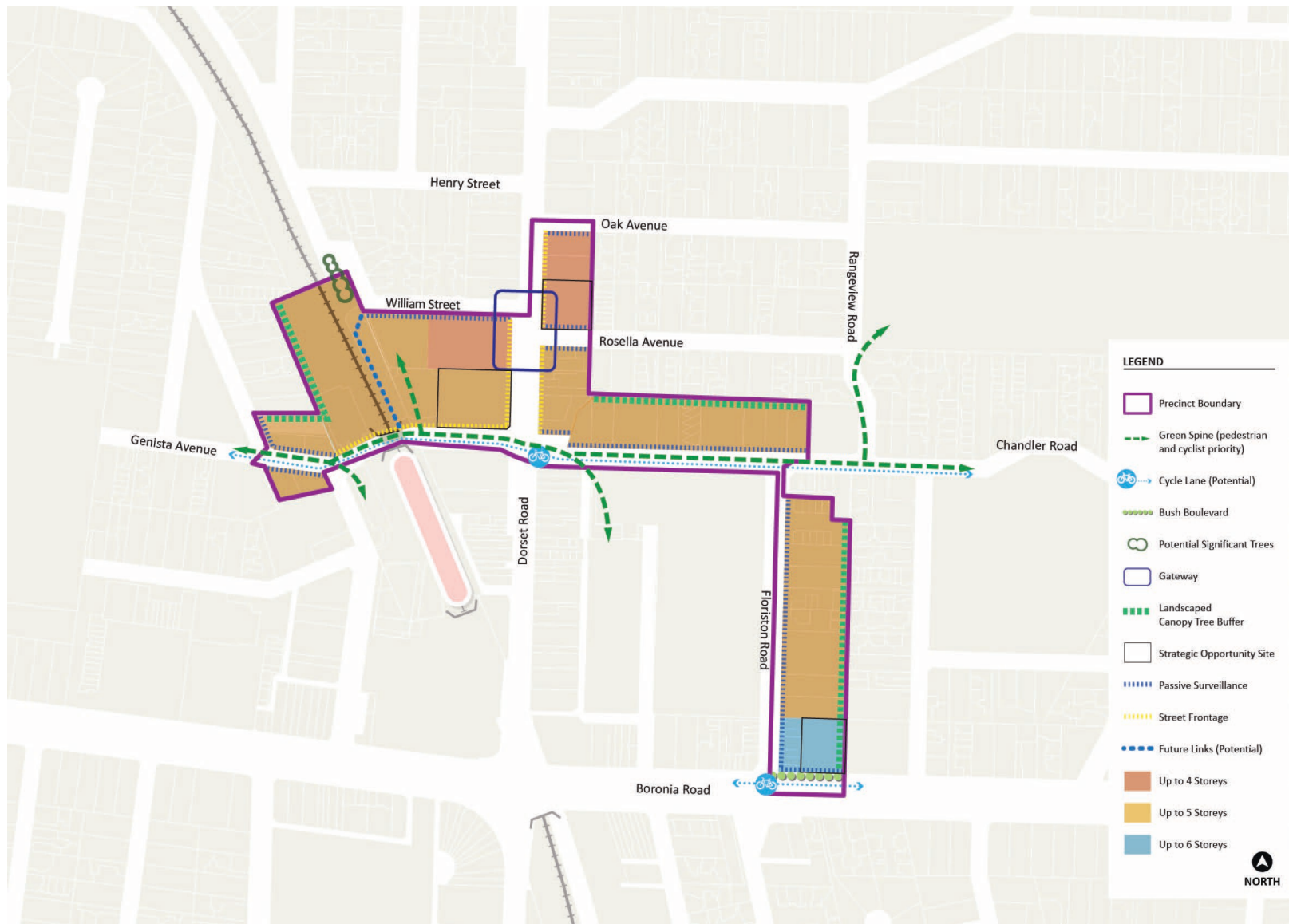


Figure 12 – Precinct 2

9.2 Precinct 2 – Commercial Edge

9.2.1 Existing conditions

This precinct, located to the north and west of the Commercial Core, has an area of about 7.3ha. The area to the north is focused along Floriston Road (east side) and Chandler Road (north side), and includes both sides of Dorset Road north of Chandler Road and several properties at intersection of Erica Avenue, Genista Avenue and Sundew Avenue.

This precinct comprises two spatially distinct areas, each with a different business mix and character:

- The Northern edge focussed along Chandler Road.
- The Eastern Edge along eastern side of Floriston Road.

The Northern Edge

This area includes the Dorset Road northern approach comprising a mixture of residential and business properties (offices).

This area also runs along Chandler Road, and forms an edge to the primary retail functions of Precinct 1 and buffer to the adjoining residential area to the north. There is a wide variety of businesses

fronting these roads, with sporadic residential encroachment and generally poor pedestrian conditions.

The area west of Dorset Road includes the northern part of the rail corridor and residential properties around the intersection of Genista Avenue, Erica Avenue, and Chandler Road. The proximity of these properties to the Train Station mean they will likely come under increasing redevelopment pressure.

The Eastern Edge

This area includes the properties on the eastern side of Floriston Road, which address the rear presentation of Kmart and Coles.

9.2.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Reducing the demand for car parking.
- Supporting the redevelopment of Chandler Road and Genista Avenue as part of the Green Spine.
- Changing perceptions of safety and increasing casual surveillance along pedestrian routes that lead to the Train Station.

- Balancing demand for housing with potential loss of commercial floor space.
- Retaining sufficient land and floor spaces to meet the forecasted demand for retail and office uses.
- Ensuring diverse frontages and interfaces.

9.2.3 Future role

Precinct 2 will provide for a mix of uses that activate the streetscape. Taller mixed-use buildings will provide commercial uses at ground level, and residential uses at upper levels.

The precinct will provide a built form scale that transitions from Precinct 1 to the surrounding residential precincts.

9.2.4 Preferred future outcomes

Economic development and investment

- No net loss of existing commercial floor space.
- Consolidated small tenancies or titles, creating new shop front spaces.
- New developments to integrate commercial opportunities, particularly with retail or office uses on the ground floor.

Land use and built Form

- A preferred built form character of buildings ranging between 4-6 storeys.
- New development features active frontages to all streets, reduced setbacks, increased landscaping, and reduced visual presence of parking.
- The interface with residential uses on Allandale Road is sensitively managed through increased rear setbacks, to allow sufficient space for planting large canopy trees to form a landscaped buffer.
- Strategic Opportunity Sites:
 - 280 Dorset Road
 - McDonald's - 267 Dorset Road
 - 65 Boronia Road.

Movement and Access

- Enhance the east-west Green Spine along Chandler Road.

Community wellbeing and infrastructure

- Packaged liquor premises not clustered together, and new premises discouraged where the sale is not in conjunction with, or ancillary to, another use.

Precinct 3 – Mixed Use Edge



Figure 13 – Precinct 3

9.3 Precinct 3 – Mixed Use Edge

9.3.1 Existing conditions

This linear precinct, with an area of 174.1 ha, includes Boronia Park, as well as properties fronting the south side of Boronia Road.

The Precinct forms the southern edge to the core area and acts as a buffer between Boronia Road and the residential precinct to the south.

Boronia Road

The character and uses are highly variable, with zero street setback in areas east of Boronia Park. To the west of Boronia Park, office uses are more prevalent with setbacks to Boronia Road. These also include an emerging health related uses cluster. Power lines are located in the streetscape west of Boronia Park, reducing opportunities for street trees.

Knox Council has two well-used community facilities fronting Boronia Road. The Progress Hall holds strong historic and cultural significance for the community. It was originally built in the early 20th century and restored after a fire in the early 1990s.

Several community services operate from Infolink, which is located in a domestic-scaled building. St

John's Ambulance has a training facility in a separate building at the rear.

The western edge, forming is primarily residential with an increasing amount of new residential development at higher densities.

Dorset Road and Boronia Road intersection

Within the southern approach along Dorset Road is characterised by small convenience retail, residual car parks, and a newly established apartment building at 198B Dorset Road. The Boronia Returned Services League (RSL) is also located there.

Boronia Road is over 40m and nine traffic lanes wide at the intersection, and presents a major challenge to integrating land uses on either side. At the south-western corner of the intersection, a number of single storey retail tenancies occupy the space between the intersection and Boronia Park.

Boronia Park

Boronia Park comprises important community infrastructure and Council- owned assets. It provides a focus for recreation/leisure needs for the local community as well as broader catchment.

The Park currently comprises:

- The Park Crescent Children and Family Centre, located along Park Crescent close to Springfield Road intersection.
- Knox Basketball Stadium and Boronia Community Library, located in the centre of the park.
- Boronia Radio Controlled Car Club, located at the corner of Dorset Road and Park Crescent, offering space for hobbyists to practice and meet.
- Stormwater retention basin, which occupies most of the Dorset Road frontage.

9.3.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Ensuring that any development on the south side of Boronia Road provides an activated streetscape to improve pedestrian safety and amenity.
- Reinvigorating Boronia Park, while accommodating recreation activities, increased stormwater retardation and increased vegetation.

- Reducing the impact of high traffic volume along Boronia Road and Dorset Road.
- Improving pedestrian connectivity over Boronia Road.
- Accommodating substantial built form on small titles at the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road.
- Ensuring development along the north side of Boronia Park has regard to potential stormwater events and retardation.
- Understanding the need and limitation of Council's leasehold on the private car park at 152 to 160 Boronia Road.

9.3.3 Future role

Precinct 3 will provide for a mix of uses that activate the streetscape, particularly along Boronia Road. This Precinct will include a new focus for health-related facilities.

The Precinct will encourage incremental height from the edge of the Precinct, rising to the Boronia/Dorset Road intersection with residential or office at upper level.

The precinct will balance street activation, passive surveillance and the provision of a bush boulevard streetscape along Boronia Road.

9.3.4 Preferred future outcomes

Economic Development

- The Precinct supports an assortment of businesses in smaller premises with a health focus.
- A mix of retail to service the local pedestrian catchment.
- Where permissible, cafes will be located on the periphery of, and front on to, Boronia Park, to increase activation.

Land use and built form

- A mix of non-residential uses, including convenience retail to serve the surrounding residential neighbourhoods are located at ground level and residential uses above, along arterial roads.
- Front setbacks are responsive to the width of the Boronia Road reserve, and have consideration towards activation, passive surveillance and landscaping.

- Health related uses and complementary uses are clustered in the Precinct.
- Taller development along Boronia Road, acting as a buffer to the residential areas to the south.
- A taller iconic building, up to 10 storeys, at the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road, developed with the consolidation of several titles to form an efficient development parcel. This landmark site could deliver a substantial amount of high quality apartment-style living, with amenity from the adjoining park and significant views in all directions could be gained from the upper levels.
- Built form gradually decreases in height from the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road, to a maximum 4 storeys.
- Strategic Opportunity Sites
 - 112-112A Boronia Road and 2 Torrens Road, Zagames. This site extends over five titles with frontages to Boronia Road, Torrens Avenue and Maryville Way. Redevelopment activates all roads and laneways via ground floor retail, offices or function centres, with accommodation above. The site provides pedestrian

linkages between Torrens Avenue and Maryville Way.

- 194-198 Dorset Road, Boronia RSL. The site extends over three titles. The site is consolidated to greater than 3300sqm for redevelopment in the long term.

Movement and access

- The southern edge of Boronia Road is upgraded through a combination of building setbacks and an urban bush boulevard treatment, improving pedestrian safety and amenity.
- Off-street car parking is located at the rear of properties.
- A new laneway is created along the boundary between the aged care facility and Zagame's car park to increase permeability between Torrens Avenue and Marysville Way and improve access to the train station.
- A new crossing point over Dorset Road to connect Boronia Park/Park Crescent with the eastern side of Dorset Road is considered.

Public realm

- Passive surveillance of the public realm is increased, including Boronia Park.

- Boronia Park is enhanced and caters for a mix of leisure and recreational activities, anchored by community services from upgraded or new facilities. The Park will be a green oasis for a sub-regional catchment, with a mix of active recreation uses and a significantly increased landscaped park/retarding basin area.
- Increased tree canopy and activation of the Boronia Road and Dorset Road streetscapes to improve pedestrian safety and amenity.
- Boronia Park title(s) are consolidated/realigned, including the formal closure of unformed road reserve running through the parkland.

Community wellbeing and infrastructure

- Community facilities, including the multi-purpose community facility, are centrally located and accessible.
- Packaged liquor premises not clustered together, and new premises discouraged where the sale is not in conjunction with, or ancillary to, another use.
- Integrated public art increased within civic spaces and along laneways and arcades, to enhance streetscape.

- Public spaces designed to accommodate community events.
- Community events held on public land and privately owned open spaces, to enhance urban life and diversity.
- Progress Hall - The future purpose and enhancement of Progress Hall to be determined through the Boronia Park Master Plan.
- Infolink and St John's Ambulance - The future of 136 Boronia Road is to be determined through the outcome of the Boronia Park Master Plan or the Strategic Asset Investment Strategy.

Precinct 4 – Sensitive Residential Growth



Figure 14 – Precinct 4

9.4 Precinct 4 – Sensitive Residential Growth

9.4.1 Existing conditions

This 19 ha residential neighbourhood precinct forms a buffer to the sensitive Dandenong foothills area.

Boronia College K-12 and Chandler Park are key focal points for community activity in this precinct. The Precinct is also home to several community groups, including the Guides and Scouts Associations.

The Precinct consists of mostly single and double storey medium density residential development. It is characterised by 1,000sqm lots, many of which have been subdivided for villa units, with only a scattering of older houses remaining. It has experienced considerable change over the past five years and further redevelopment opportunities are limited.

A small group of properties fronting Boronia Road, on the south side, are grade separated from the road by a 2m escarpment and can only be accessed via a dedicated slip lane from the east.

As Boronia Road starts to narrow from eight to four lanes, the 40m road reserve remains. This

road is a barrier for people wanting to cross into the core area either by walking or cycling.

9.4.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Realising the potential for new neighbourhood focal points, based on the consolidation of activities around existing local destinations, such as Boronia K-12 College and Chandler Park.
- Ensuring that there is a transition in development scale, bulk and form to the surrounding Dandenong foothills area.
- Increasing green spaces around buildings, by minimising hard surfaces and increasing landscaping outcomes.
- Retaining existing large canopy trees and increasing canopy tree coverage to transition to the surrounding Dandenong Foothills area.
- A small group of properties fronting Boronia Road could be impacted as traffic volumes increase and experience reduced amenity and accessibility.

9.4.3 Future role

Precinct 4 will accommodate incremental residential growth in compact taller development in a heavily landscaped setting with significantly increased tree canopy.

New development will transition to the surrounding low-scale development in the Dandenong foothills area and will respect identified significant views.

9.4.4 Preferred future outcomes

Economic development and investment

- The local population will be within walking distance of the core area, creating a localised demand for goods and services.

Land use and built form

- New low-rise apartment development up to 3 storeys, primarily along Boronia Road and abutting Precinct 2, that takes advantage of views to the west and tapers down to existing lower scale built form, and areas outside the Activity Centre.
- A mix of dwelling typologies, including 3–4 bedrooms to respond to the needs of large or integrated households.

-
- The interface between residential uses on Allandale Road with precinct 2 is sensitively managed through increased rear setbacks, to allow sufficient space for planting large canopy trees to form a landscaped buffer.
 - New development to have a smaller building footprint, to a maximum 50% of the site, to provide the opportunity for landscaping and canopy trees.
 - New development fronting Boronia Road designed to respond to the adverse conditions created by high traffic volumes, constrained access and reduced amenity.
 - Tree canopy coverage significantly increased through additional planting in front and rear setbacks and intensive street tree planting, to assist the transition through Precinct 4 to the foothills to the east.
 - Development of the east/west Green Spine.

Community wellbeing and infrastructure

- In Chandler Park, there is increased access and use of existing facilities from improved lighting and wider footpaths.

Movement and Access

- Dedicated cycle lanes along Chandler Road as part of the Green Spine and Boronia Road.
- The slip lane access to 70 to 82 Boronia Road is designed to balance pedestrian amenity and local vehicle movements.

Public Realm

- Increased pedestrian activity in the public realm, through the addition of improved lighting for pedestrians, wider footpaths, and dedicated cycle lanes and supported by passive surveillance from adjoining development.

Precinct 5 – Residential Growth

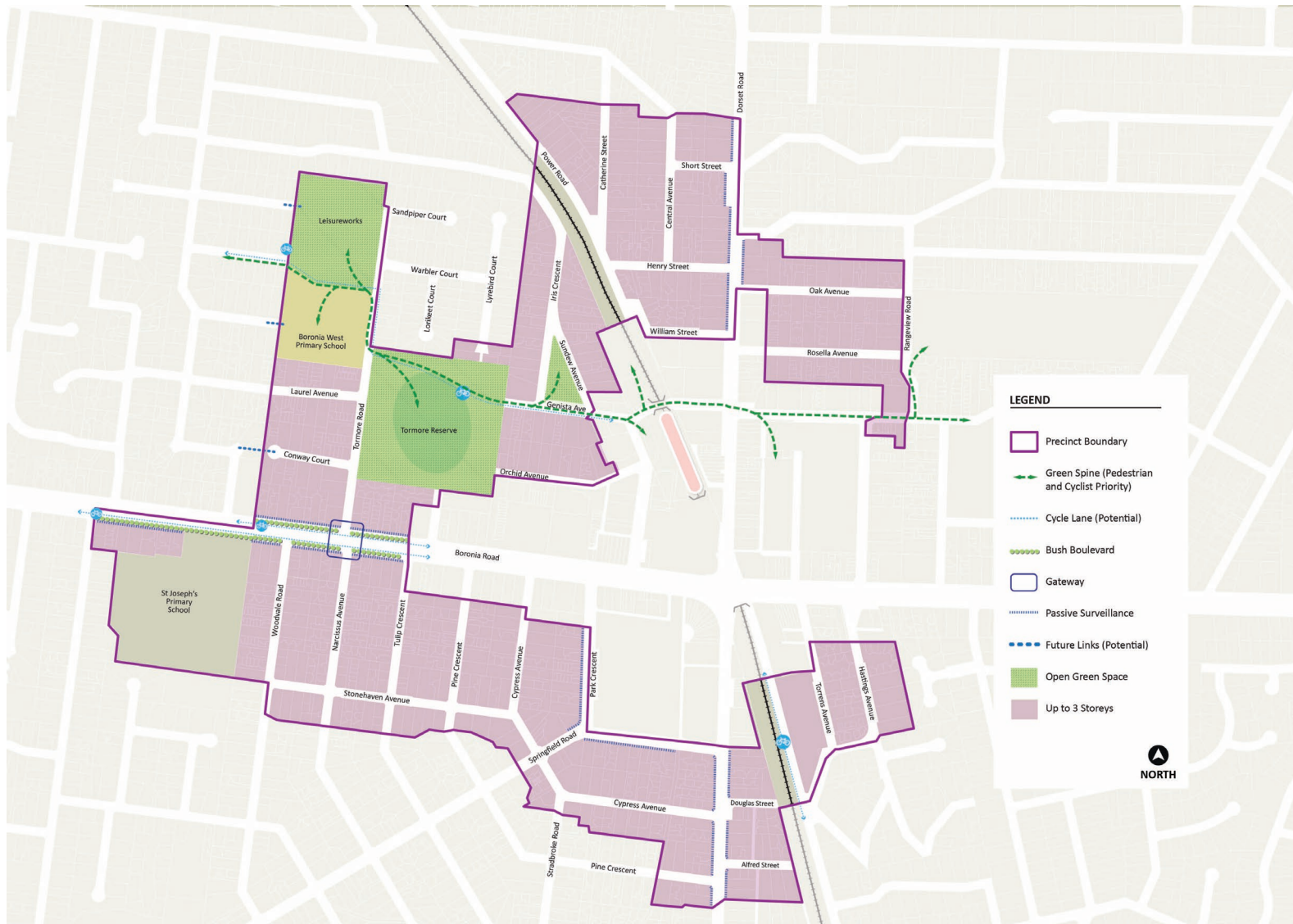


Figure 15 – Precinct 5

9.5 Precinct 5 –Residential Growth

9.5.1 Existing conditions

This large approximately 79ha precinct, is located to the northern, western and southern areas of the Boronia MAC.

Development along the eastern edge of Dorset Road is constrained by an existing Public Acquisition Overlay in favour of VicRoads under the Knox Planning Scheme. The Overlay impacts setback requirement for redevelopment due to the proposed road widening.

The northern part of this precinct is within 800 metres of the Boronia Train Station and walking and cycling access to the Boronia MAC core area along the direct routes of Dorset Road and Power Street.

The rail line forms a barrier to east/west movement, with no formal pedestrian crossing points between Chandler Road and Devenish Road.

The considerable parts of the precinct has already experienced substantial change in the form of townhouse redevelopments. There is a perception of disconnection and distance from the Boronia MAC core area caused by the barrier created by Boronia Road.

Parts of this precinct have a direct interface with the Dandenong Foothills Policy area to the north and east. Oak Avenue forms a buffer that acts as a transition to the adjoining foothills area.

This residential precinct is well served by schools, parks, churches and recreation facilities. Situated along a ridge providing views to the east, this precinct has a high quality amenity, generated by the open spaces associated with the schools.

Genista Park surrounds

This area will come under increasing pressure for redevelopment due to its proximity to the Boronia Train Station, the commercial core and large established parks.

The amenity and neighbourhood focal point for this sub-precinct is provided by the small triangular Genista Park which is surrounded by a mix of lower density detached houses and some townhouses and a three-storey apartment development. The amenity levels vary as some properties back onto the train line. Easy access to shops, services and Train Station make this a highly desirable location.

Northern and southern areas.

This area has experienced a large amount of residential redevelopment, primarily in the form of

townhouses. Part of the sub-precinct located south of Boronia Park is subject to overland flow from significant storm events, with stormwater run-off using the outlet of the Boronia Park retention basin, and flowing towards the Blind Creek catchment.

Hastings Avenue

This area is a buffer to the elevated foothills area to the east. Land located south of Boronia Road falls from the foothills area towards the rail line. There are a few remaining very large lots with detached houses. An existing aged-care facility (Maryville Hostel) occupies a large landholding along Maryville Way and Torrens Avenue.

The narrow road reserves are the only form of public realm in this sub-precinct. Most roads do not include footpaths and the absence of a pedestrian crossing over the rail line prevents access to the west.

Knox Leisureworks

The Precinct also hosts the Council's only aquatic facility, Leisureworks. There is a strong community connection with the Leisureworks facility, which was established in the mid-1970s. This facility acts as a focal point and anchor for the three key

facilities located within easy walking distance of each other.

Tormore Reserve

Another focal point for the Precinct is Tormore Reserve, which has an area of over 5 ha. The Reserve's sports pavilion is well utilised by sporting clubs most of the year. This Reserve, together with the Leisureworks and Primary School, are a walkable distance to the commercial core.

St Joseph's Primary School

The St Joseph's parish was established in the mid-1960s and has grown to be a key focal point for the surrounding community ever since. A variety of residential medium density development in the form of townhouses and villa units surrounds the school site. Although the school is currently in a residential zone there are no plans for its expansion or redevelopment at this stage.

The area is part of Sites of Biological Significance and comprises remnant canopy bushland.

9.5.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Improving connections, both visual and pedestrian, between local destinations and the Boronia MAC core area.
- Encouraging lot consolidation to facilitate increased residential density.
- Compact building footprints to allow for significant landscaping and canopy trees.
- Encouraging high quality infill development that offers modern, highly articulated facades and design that minimises its impact upon the amenity of existing dwellings.
- Ensuring stormwater events and associated overland flows to Boronia Park, within Boronia Park, and towards Blind Creek are managed appropriately.
- Ensuring appropriate connectivity in local streets where there is an absence of footpaths.
- Improving pedestrian connectivity across the precinct given the established street network barrier created by the train line and minimal crossing points.
- Delivering a Green Spine connection by creating improved streetscapes and pedestrian environments along Genista Avenue from Chandler Road to Tormore Reserve.
- Managing vehicle traffic along Genista Park area to balance safe pedestrian access to the park and the Green Spine.
- Improving vehicle manoeuvres at the end of no-through roads.
- Managing on-street car parking and limitations imposed by the street network and the north/south movement barrier created by Boronia Road.
- Linking the Boronia West Primary School, Knox Leisureworks and Tormore Reserve to provide a shared neighbourhood focus.
- Improving pedestrian linkages with areas outside the Activity Centre.
- Improving pedestrian connectivity across the Precinct, given the established street network of cul-de-sacs and minimal entry points.
- Delivering a Green Spine connection by creating improved streetscapes and pedestrian environments along Tormore Road and through the reserve.
- Improving the pedestrian environment of the Knox Leisureworks car park to improve safety for children and those using the pool.

- Enhancing access to Leisureworks by public transport, walking and cycling.
- Retaining remnant native vegetation and canopy trees in areas that are identified as being Sites of Biological Significance.

9.5.3 Future role

Being generally within 800m of the Train Station, Precinct 5 will support more intensive residential growth to better utilise and encourage residents' ability to walk or cycle to public transport and the Boronia MAC core.

It will also accommodate high quality medium density residential apartments (up to three storeys) in well landscaped surroundings with canopy trees, pedestrian friendly streetscapes. Supported by well-maintained or enhanced community facilities.

9.5.4 Preferred Future Outcomes

Economic development and investment

- The additional population within walkable distance of the core area will create a localised demand for goods and services.
- Local convenience retail is supported where it provides services to surrounding

neighbourhood, and to occupiers of adjoining public facilities.

- The establishment of pedestrian focused local convenience shops and food premises will provide local services to the Precinct and surrounding neighbourhood to meet community needs.
- Home-based businesses are encouraged where amenity impacts can be managed.

Land use and built form

- Higher density residential growth in the northern and southern parts of the Precinct.
- Lots are consolidated to increase development potential, and to ensure high quality design responses.
- A transition in intensity of development at the northern and southern edges to the low density residential development outside the Activity Centre boundary.
- Consideration of redevelopment on the fringe, in the context of the impact on views from Tormore Reserve and Boronia Park.

- Increasing green spaces around buildings, by minimising hard surfaces and increasing landscaping outcomes.
- Apartment redevelopment occurs on lots with a minimum width of 22m, to manage overlooking and provide sufficient setbacks for landscaping.
- New development has a smaller building footprint that allows for increased landscaping and canopy trees, especially along rear boundaries and at sensitive interfaces.
- New development has minimum front setback for canopy trees
- New development has a rear setback of 5m for canopy trees.
- Around Genista Park:
 - Taller three storey apartment buildings through lot consolidation and more efficient built form, to facilitate a smaller building footprint, more landscaping and better drainage.
 - New development along Orchid Avenue and those properties abutting the Park, to provide a direct and active frontage and to

-
- increase passive surveillance and improve perceptions of safety.
 - Taller residential development in the form of three storey apartment along the railway line, to provide a noise buffer for properties to the west.
 - New development along the Green Spine to incorporate minimum ground floor to ceiling height of 4 metres to allow for a flexibility of uses over time.
 - In northern and southern areas:
 - Residential density is increased, particularly adjacent to Boronia Park and the core area.
 - Minimising hard surfaces and ensuring design protect surface flows in areas south of Boronia Park to alleviate flood risks from stormwater run-off.
 - Land adjoining Hastings Avenue, Torrens Avenue and Maryville Way:
 - Larger lots means potential to increase residential density.
 - Retention of the aged care facility with the function incorporated into a taller built form.
 - Taller development in the form of three storey apartment buildings along this edge

will act as a noise buffer for properties to the east.

Movement and access

- Pedestrian and cyclist crossing points, particularly across Park Crescent, are improved.
- Improved pedestrian connections across the railway line.
- Improved pedestrian links from Iris Crescent to Warbler Estate.
- Improved streetscape treatments along Boronia Road encourage walking and cycling to St Joseph's School as well as perceptions of safety.
- A bus route along Tormore Road to provide mode choice and improved access to Knox Leisureworks.
- Car parking is provided on-site at the rear of buildings, in an undercroft or basement structure.
- Enhanced pedestrian connections to Norwich Street, and Grevillea Avenue are considered in the future configuration of Knox Leisureworks and Boronia West Primary School.

- A pedestrian connection between Conway Court and Zeising Court is investigated.
- Any future redevelopment of St Joseph's School, and 22 Woodvale Road, will consider the integration of pedestrian linkages from Rankin Road to Boronia Road and Woodvale Road

Public realm

- Boronia Park is enhanced as a sub-regional focal point, with increased vegetation, an improved stormwater retardation function, and improved leisure/recreation options.
- Pedestrian and cycling connections to the Blind Creek trail are improved.
- Passive surveillance of the public realm, including Boronia Park and Genista Park, is enhanced.
- Tree canopy coverage significantly increased through additional planting in front and rear setbacks.
- A green streetscape character, consisting of indigenous street trees, is provided along local streets, the Belgrave train line towards the Dandenong Foothills, and along bush boulevards. A green streetscape character is

also provided along Stonehaven Avenue, Springfield Road, and Dorset Road towards Boronia Park, and Iris Crescent towards Genista Park.

- Additional lighting and upgraded wider paths along streetscapes links to community facilities and through the Reserve to improve perceptions of safety and increase the usage of the area.

Community wellbeing and infrastructure

- Community facilities, including the multi-purpose community facility, are centrally located and accessible.
- Integrated public art increased within public open space.
- Public spaces designed to accommodate community events, which will enhance urban life and diversity.
- Increased activation of Tormore Reserve during the week through increased use of the facilities and the park.
- The sharing of School facilities for the community and recreation is facilitated.

- Expansion of Knox Leisureworks facilities to offer more choices for healthy living and to attract small compatible activities to co-locate within the facility.

10. Implementation

10.1 Action Plan

A detailed action plan will be developed following the finalisation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy. The action plan will outline responsibilities, priorities and timing for each of the identified actions in the Strategy.

Implementation of the Strategy will include the ongoing delivery of several projects which are already underway within the Boronia MAC and will result in immediate and short-term change (Integration Projects), as well larger projects that will affect more than one precinct and relate to multiple objectives (Big Move Projects), to be implemented over the next 20-year period.

Given its role as a major land and asset owner, and one of the largest service providers and manager of the public realm within the Boronia MAC, Council will have a major role in implementation of the Strategy. However, implementation of the Strategy will also rely heavily on strong partnerships with other government agencies, businesses, community organisations and the broader community.

10.2 Statutory Framework

The planning policies, applicable planning zones and recommended built form controls will be

introduced to the Knox Planning Scheme through a planning scheme amendment.

10.3 Integration Projects

Projects which are already underway and will contribute to the renewal of the Boronia MAC include:

- Creating a safer Boronia – solar lighting in Tormore Reserve, Orchid Avenue and Erica Avenue connecting to the Boronia Train Station.
- Framed by Gender public art project – part of Immerse 2019, which features two co-designed community arts projects based in the Boronia MAC.
- 257 Dorset Road pop-up space – temporary activation of vacant land using community engagement to generate ideas and options. Temporary activation for the public will not include temporary car parking.
- Knox Leisureworks renewal and activation project - redevelopment of the outdoor space to promote active play equipment, health and fitness facilities and spaces for leisure.

10.4 Big Move Projects

Four Big Move Projects have been identified to deliver tangible outcomes that contribute to realising the long term vision for the Boronia MAC.

These projects have been nominated to deliver objectives relating to multiple themes and often impact more than one precinct within the Centre.

These projects will take place over several years and will rely on multiple stakeholders and project partners for their successful delivery. In some cases, further work is required to fully flesh out the project scope and impact.

The identified Big Move Projects, which are described in more detail below are:

1. Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan.
2. Boronia Park Precinct Master Plan.
3. Dorset Square Town Square and Community Infrastructure Investigation (including a potential digital creative hub as part of a multi-purpose community centre).
4. Green Spine Corridor.

10.4.1 Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan

Project description

This Big Move Project is the preparation of a concept plan for the intensification and renewal of the Boronia Train Station Precinct.

The concept plan for land use and urban design for the area around Boronia Train Station, will outline Council's expectations and setting a clear direction for future redevelopment of the Train Station.

This project will give the private sector confidence and attract further private investment, which will have flow on economic benefits such as new jobs, expansion of existing businesses, and accommodating expected population growth.

Without the redevelopment of the Train Station precinct, renewal of the Boronia MAC core area will be very difficult.

Background

This Precinct was transformed in the early 1990s from a large at grade intersection with the train line running through the middle, to a grade separated train line that runs below the main roads. Chandler Road and Erica Avenue were connected through this process to create a

“bypass” option between Boronia and Dorset Roads. Apart from the upgrade works along Erica Avenue undertaken by Knox Council, there has been no other physical work in relation to the Train Station or surrounds.

The Train Station is accessed from Lupton Way to the east and via a bus interchange which abuts Erica Avenue to the west.

There is a two-storey car parking structure, accessed from Erica Avenue that also provides access to the Boronia Shopping Centre car park that extends to Dorset Road.

Located at the very core of the Boronia MAC, this area is characterized by car parking infrastructure and a poor pedestrian environment. This condition is created by the high demand for commuter car parking spaces generated by the large catchment which extends into the foothills area. Much of the feedback received from the community and public transport users has highlighted that the area feels unsafe, is unsightly and is difficult to access for pedestrians and cyclists. Although the public transport services are well used, the Train Station does not present a positive gateway entrance to the Boronia MAC.

These perceptions constrain redevelopment opportunities on private land surrounding the Station. Managing the movement patterns of all transport modes to improve prioritising pedestrians and cyclists will also be important.

Key considerations

Key considerations for the concept plan will be:

- Creation of a high quality/amenity public realm, including new civic spaces.
- Opportunities for redevelopment and increased private sector investment in relation to several strategic sites close to the Train Station.
- Opportunities for community facilities or services in this central and highly accessible location.
- Existing lease and sub-lease arrangements on public and private land will impact redevelopment opportunities.
- Managing the high car parking demands created by commuters using public transport.
- The high number of bus movements in and out of the interchange area.

- Freight movements through the area and loading or service areas that interface with the public realm.

Key Stakeholders

Knox City Council owns land at 257 Dorset Road, the Bellbird Senior Citizens facility and a small park which directly abuts VicTrack land, as well as managing the local road network and several car parking areas.

Other adjoining landowners include private landowners, Boronia Junction Shopping Centre and local businesses, as well as Transport for Victoria, VicTrack, MetroTrains, VicRoads, Public Transport Victoria and the Victoria Police.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- Activating public spaces to improve safety perceptions.
- Providing for mixed-use, street-based redevelopment (commercial on ground floor

with residential above) that can take advantage of the high pedestrian flows to and from the Station and interchange.

- Significantly increasing residential uses near the train station, with consideration of the potential for social housing.
- Providing for a civic space/ forecourt.
- Improving amenity, through means including public art and greening.
- Reducing the negative impact of car parking and shift towards more efficient and compact use solutions.
- The potential for a multi-purpose community facility (or some of the uses nominate within the facility, e.g., library).

10.4.2 Boronia Park Precinct Master Plan

Project description

This Big Move Project is a master plan that will set out in detail the range of uses and facilities that will be included in the Park Precinct as it is redeveloped over the next 10 years. This integrated Precinct will provide a mix of public open space, passive recreation, community

facilities and potentially other compatible not-for-profit or commercial uses.

Background

This 3.1ha area of Council-owned land contains many important community facilities and uses, including the library, the Progress Hall, the Park Crescent Children and Family Centre, and an important retarding basin to name a few.

The existing basketball stadium is to be decommissioned and demolished in the coming years, therefore creating the opportunity to reconsider the uses, functions and spaces within Boronia Park.

A master plan was previously included in the Boronia Structure Plan 2006. This Big Move Project would supersede the master plan from 2006.

Key considerations

Key considerations for the concept plan will be:

- Flood modelling and mapping to determine stormwater retention needs.
- Creation of a high quality/amenity public realm with infrastructure for all-ages.

- The future of existing community facilities, community and service providers' needs and opportunities for new community facilities.
- Existing lease and sub-lease arrangements.
- Improved pedestrian and cycling linkages into and within the park, with better connections to Dorset Road, Boronia Road, and Park Crescent, and to improve links to the core area, Erica Avenue, the eastern side of Dorset Road, and the Blind Creek trail.
- Integration with surrounding urban fabric to increase activation and passive surveillance.
- Consolidation or realignment of titles, including the closure of unformed road reserve to rationalise the formal network through the park.
- Balancing the need for active and passive recreation spaces with car parking supply.

Key stakeholders

Knox City Council owns this land, and manages the local road network and car parking areas.

Community service providers and tenants include:

- Eastern Regional Library

- Boronia Radio Controlled Car Club
- St. John's Ambulance
- Progress Hall users
- Infolink service providers.

Other key stakeholders include:

- VicRoads, which manages the abutting arterial Boronia and Dorset Roads.
- Melbourne Water, which manages the stormwater retention basin within part of Boronia Park.
- Public utility providers that may have infrastructure within or adjoining the park.
- Transport for Victoria.
- Adjoining commercial owners and occupiers.
- Other adjoining landowners and occupiers.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- Where possible increased open space and no net loss of open space.
- Enhanced prominence to increase patronage.
- Connection between water and nature.
- Reconfiguration of existing site elements/community infrastructure.
- Titles reviewed and rectified for the site.
- Move from formal recreation to flexible/passive recreation.
- Potential for multi-purpose community facility.

10.4.3 Dorset Square Town Square and Community Infrastructure Investigation (including a potential digital creative hub as part of a multi-purpose community centre)

Project description

This Big Move Project is an investigation of the opportunity to transform the car park into a public place that is comfortable to move through and where people can gather, relax and enjoy the Boronia MAC. It would also investigate the potential to create a new civic square and potentially a multi-purpose community facility

(potentially including a library service) as part of a mixed-use development redevelopment.

Through various consultation sessions, and in particular feedback from young people, it was identified that there are no youth-focused activity options in Boronia, apart from organised/active sports. Yet there is a growing trend towards digital leisure, eSports, and not-sports related hobbies that are not addressed.

Therefore, this project explores the potential to create a space/place where people with a creative or digital interest can come together for a range of economic, leisure, entertainment and educational activities in Boronia Town Centre. The Project supports new skills and retraining with a strong economic renewal focus with the potential to integrate arts-based and creative industries. This project would rely on partnerships with the private sector and tertiary institutions and Knox Council with a view to creating a clear point of difference for Boronia.

Background

Council owns 1.2ha of land known as Dorset Square. It is a car park and was established by two special rate schemes (1967 and 1977) and was recently upgraded by reconfiguring the parking

space arrangements and installing a central waste and public toilet facility.

There is also a footpath area (some on private land and some public) that connects the various shops and arcades.

The car park is monitored by recently upgraded CCTV cameras which are directly connected to the Boronia Police Station.

Uses/businesses around the Square rely heavily on the at-grade parking spaces for their customers.

The car park is sparsely landscaped with mature eucalypts.

Redevelopment of Dorset Square has the potential to make a positive impression for the Boronia MAC and change negative perceptions regarding safety.

There is the prospect of re-organising the car parking undercroft or in a basement arrangement that is more efficient and allows the at-grade space to be used for public open space.

Activating the Square would enhance night-time activity, especially around the Metro Cinema and encourage other business to open for longer hours.

A mix of uses within any redevelopment could be an opportunity for Council to generate some income to offset investment and ongoing maintenance costs of the new facilities.

Further tree planting and landscaping, that is able to withstand heavy use, would reinforce and improve the canopy tree cover while greening the Precinct.

Key considerations

Key considerations for the investigation will be:

- The compatible uses and businesses and mix of community services that could be accommodated in any redevelopment.
- How best to manage car parking supply and demand in the area.
- Staging opportunities for redevelopment, commencing with a public square and undercroft car park.
- The timing for the provision of high-speed internet access.
- The availability of existing underutilised buildings to provide temporary space for a Digital Creative Hub.

- Uses evolving over time with changes to demand and technology.

Key Stakeholders

Dorset Square car park is owned by Knox City Council. A range of public authorities, including Melbourne Water, Transport for Victoria etc., as well as community service providers and tenants, such as EACH, and youth organisations within the Boronia MAC will be affected.

Adjoining commercial owners, occupiers, and the body corporate, including:

- Boronia Mall owners, occupiers, and management
- Kmart department store
- Coles supermarket
- Metro Cinema
- Adjoining arcades owners, occupiers and management.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- Taking advantage of the existing slope to provide underground/undercroft car parking that frees up the land at ground level for activation.
- Improved activation over extended hours, lighting and visual amenity around the edges of the civic square.
- New civic space(s) which allow for markets, performances and other activities with public toilets, playground and seating, shelter and urban landscaping.
- Potential for multi-purpose community facility.
- Potential for public transport/bus stops to be closer to shops.
- Improved east-west connections and better use of the arcades between Dorset Square and Dorset Road, and the Train Station.
- Potential for additional social housing at upper levels of the development.
- Consideration of new management models that include commercial tenancies

- Greater use of landscaping and water sensitive urban design (WSUD).
- Potential for more efficient provision of car parking spaces with existing Coles multi-deck structure.
- Flexible spaces to cater for changing uses and technology over time.
- Leasing and use of underutilised buildings considered in the first instance, to enable a Digital Creative Hub to commence prior to the consideration of a fit-for-purpose structure.
- High-speed internet connection capacity is provided.
- The Hub is to be integrated and visible from the public realm, to ensure it is clearly identifiable and accessible, and to increase perceptions of safety.

10.4.4 Green spine corridor

Project description

This Big Move Project is from the creation of an east-west green spine comprising a shared path along the route connecting Leisureworks to Boronia College, including Tormore Road, through

Tormore Reserve, Genista Avenue, Chandler Road and Rangeview Road.

Background

Attractive, green and functional connections are an important feature of activity centres, as they improve the amenity of the precinct and encourage active forms of transport, including walking and cycling.

There are several key destinations within the Boronia MAC which could be better linked through improved east-west access, including:

- Knox Leisureworks
- Boronia West Primary School
- Tormore Reserve
- Genista Park
- Boronia Train Station and Interchange
- Boronia Mall
- Chandler Park
- Boronia K-12 College.

Key considerations

Key considerations for the project will be:

- Introducing a ‘Green Spine’ between Chandler Park and Tormore Reserve, that includes shared paths and additional street tree planting.
- Reducing lanes in Boronia Road to increase the amenity and safety for pedestrians.
- Improvements to the green/bush boulevard in Boronia Road.
- Improving the north-south connection between Boronia Park and Genista Avenue (along Erica Avenue) to encourage connectivity between Boronia Park and the new Green Spine.
- Providing guidance (streetscape design guidelines) for setbacks and redevelopment of properties along the route.
- Safety actions and urban design of the public realm – footpaths, parklets, streetscapes, walking and cycling.

Key stakeholders

Knox City Council manages the local road network and car parking areas where the Green Spine project is proposed.

Other key stakeholders include public utility providers, and transport agencies including Transport for Victoria, VicTrack, VicRoads, and Public Transport Victoria.

Given the location of the Green Spine project, the local police station, adjoining schools, community service providers and tenants within open space reserves, and other adjoining landowners and tenants, will be affected.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- An enhanced ‘green’ corridor with increased streetscape planting of indigenous street trees.
- Priority to pedestrian and cyclist movement through dedicated crossings and more space for active users.
- Activating public spaces to improve perceptions of safety.
- Passive surveillance and street activation from abutting properties.

-
- Streetscape and infrastructure design that incorporates improved wayfinding.

10.5 Monitoring and Review

As part of the implementation process, Council will regularly review progress on the implementation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy. This will include:

- Actions and projects that have been completed or are in progress
- The success of key actions or projects
- Any barriers to implementation.

This will allow Council to measure the success of the Strategy and allocated funds as necessary and enable adjustment of the implementation if necessary to ensure its vision and key directions are being achieved.

11. Appendix A – Policy Framework

The following is a summary of strategies and policies that support this Strategy.

11.1 Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050

Principles:

- A distinctive Melbourne
- A globally connected and competitive city
- A city of centres linked to regional Victoria
- Environmental resilience and sustainability
- Living locally – 20 minute neighbourhoods
- Social and economic participation
- Strong and healthy communities
- Infrastructure investment that supports balanced city growth
- Leadership and partnership.

The policy framework set in Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 emphasises the need for integrated solutions to respond to population growth in terms of land use planning and the provision of access and movement. As Boronia holds a Major Activity Centre status, Boronia is intended to provide a suburban focal point for services, employment, housing, public transport and social interaction. In particular, its focus on accommodating population

growth and the pressures on the transport system this creates, outlines the following concepts:

- Protecting the suburbs by delivering density in defined locations.
- Delivering a pipeline of large scale, city shaping infrastructure and urban renewal projects.
- Better use of existing assets, including increasing efficiency of road based transport.
- Improving transport/land use integration.
- Creating 20-minute neighbourhoods – places where people have access to local shops, schools, parks, jobs and a range of community services within 20 minutes of their home.

Plan Melbourne also specifies relevant outcomes and related directions including:

Outcome 4

Melbourne is a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity.

- Create more great public places across Melbourne.
- Strengthen Melbourne’s network of boulevards.

Outcome 5

Melbourne is a city of inclusive, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods

- Create neighbourhoods that support safe communities and healthy lifestyles.
- Deliver local parks and green neighbourhoods in collaboration with communities.
- Develop a network of accessible high-quality, local open spaces.
- Support community gardens and productive streetscapes.
- Make Melbourne cooler and greener; and
- Create a network of green spaces that support biodiversity conservation and opportunities to connect with nature.

11.2 Metropolitan Open Space Network (Victorian Planning Authority)

The VPA has identified six fundamental network planning principles to guide assessment of open space provision to assist in identifying and prioritising potential interventions. These are:

- Equitable distribution
- Access and connectivity

- Quality
- Quantity
- Diversity
- Sustainability.

11.3 Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021

The Community and Council Plan identifies the priorities of our community for the future and guides the decision making of Council and its partners, agencies and all stakeholders. Of most relevance to the Boronia MAC are the following initiatives:

- Initiative 1.3.3 – Undertake a strategic review of the Boronia Structure Plan including a detailed assessment of strategic sites (i.e., Boronia Park).
- Initiative 1.3.4 – Develop and undertake a review of the master plan for the Boronia Park precinct.
- Initiative 4.3.1 – Implement a community safety program and build community connections to improve perceptions of safety within key locations across the municipality (including Boronia MAC).

- Initiative 5.2.1 – Undertake a strategic review of the Boronia Structure Plan including detailed assessment of strategic sites.

11.4 Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022

Knox City Council prepared the Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022 to enhance and maintain our ‘green and leafy’ image and diverse lifestyle experience in our street network.

This plan was prepared with input from the Knox community at a series of neighbourhood workshops, and through the Future Parks and Streets Schools Competition.

The Plan describes the many demands on Knox’s road and streets network and the opportunities for them to be further improved to better meet the needs and aspirations of the community.

The Plan provides guidance on how Council can aim to achieve healthy and connected communities, create accessible transport choices and sustain the nature environment.

11.5 Bush Boulevards

The Liveable Streets Plan identifies Boronia Road as a Bush Boulevard, and the goals for which are to:

- Create visually y major traffic routes throughout the municipality.

11.6 Knox Green Streets Policy (August 2014-2018)

Knox City Council currently manages approximately. 67,000 street trees, with varying life expectancies, varying abilities to cope with changing environmental factors, and differing levels of acceptance by the community.

The Knox Green Streets Policy was developed following Council’s endorsement of the Knox Liveable Streets Plan (2012-2022) and the review of the Knox Streetscape Policy (2003).

The revision of the Knox Streetscape Policy has been named ‘Knox Green Streets Policy’ to reflect the importance of street trees and Knox’s urban greenery.

The Green Streets Policy guides the implementation of street tree planting and provides guidance for the community in the maintenance of nature strips.

11.7 Street Tree Asset Management Plan 2016

Knox City Council defines its urban forest as being the trees and vegetation on both public and private land, from indigenous bushland to planted

native and exotic trees in streets, residential gardens, parks and road reserves.

The Street Tree Asset Management Plan sets out:

- The recent history of street tree management practices within Knox.
- The status of street tree management.
- Council’s procedures and practices in managing street trees.
- Opportunities to improve street tree management.

Increasing canopy cover is a key goal of this Plan.

11.8 Sporting Reserve and Facilities Guidelines Policy 2014

This policy identifies that Council’s active sporting reserves are defined in four classifications:

- Regional
- Municipal
- Local
- School

These classifications reflect the standard of competition and accompanying provision of supporting infrastructure. A reserve may fall into

more than one classification based on its role, e.g., open space and sport and recreation.

11.9 Knox City Council Play Space Plan 2013-2023

The Play Space Plan provides a theoretical and practical framework for planning, design, management, and future direction of individual parks and public play spaces across Knox.

The Plan views children’s outdoor play as a critically important activity. It recognises the multi-faceted nature of play and the complexities of genuinely making spaces engaging to children, while managing a fragile natural environment, maintaining public safety, and keeping parks beautiful.

This plan views children’s activities in the natural environment as so important that active measures need to be taken by Council to facilitate it. Viewed in the context of an urbanising city, children’s access to open space, to the natural environment, and to quality play opportunities needs advocacy and protection.

11.10 Knox Public Art Policy 2017-2020 and Public Art Implementation Plan 2018-2022

The Knox Public Art Policy and Implementation Plan set out the guiding framework for the planning and delivery of culturally appropriate artworks in publicly accessible places and spaces across the municipality. The following guiding principles also apply to the future planning for artworks in Boronia:

- Consider work that contributes to a ‘sense of place’ and ‘identity’.
- Consider work that demonstrates the community’s commitment to culture and creativity, and expresses confidence about place and the future and is a symbol of civic pride and respect for public places.
- Consider how the work contributes to the activation of public spaces, with a view to creating safe, vibrant, lively, welcoming places that endeavour to reduce crime.
- Consider how the work provides a mechanism to encourage creativity, innovation and capacity building within the Knox arts community.

- Seek to support local creative people to build their confidence, and their technical and conceptual skills.
- Have a planned approach in order to gain maximum benefit and to ensure that strategic objectives of placemaking and community engagement are met.
- Consider how the work connects and engages communities, open space and built environments, with a view to building community cohesion and resilience.

11.11 City of Knox Principal Pedestrian Network Plan

The Knox Principal Pedestrian Network Plan was prepared and adopted by Council in 2017 to replace the previous Knox Pedestrian Plan.

The document encourages walking as a form of transport in Knox with the overall intent to build a healthier, more inclusive and safer city.

The Plan assesses the municipality's pedestrian network, maps pedestrian movement, and identifies priority routes based on origin and destinations.

The Plan included pedestrian counts recorded around Boronia, with the highest count being

around the train station and Chandler Road, and also identifies the difficulty in crossing Boronia Road, and that missing sections of footpaths discourage pedestrian activities in other areas.

11.12 City of Knox Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025

The Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025 was adopted by Council in 2015 to provide a framework for both the development and management of an integrated transport network. The Plan provides a current picture of Knox with regard to responsibilities and data for all modes of transportation. It also sets the municipal vision for movement and accessibility over a 10-year horizon.

11.13 City of Knox Bicycle Plan Review

The Knox Bicycle Plan was adopted by Council in 2008. The Plan includes the following:

- reviews the progress of bicycle facility implementation
- identifies underlying principles
- considers the community needs
- development programs for bicycle facilities

- encourages the increase in the use of bicycles as a means of transport through Knox.

The plan identifies the following strategies and actions relevant to Boronia:

- Linking people and spaces by extending the Dandenong Creek Trail from Boronia to the Dandenong Ranges National Park.
- A series of specific actions and improvements as result of evaluating specific crash involving cyclists.
- Site specific recommendations regarding bicycle facilities at Boronia's shopping centres, Boronia Park, and Boronia Train Station.

11.14 City of Knox Parking Policy 2018

The Knox Parking Policy was adopted in 2018. The document guides the decision making process of Council when considering parking concerns and restrictions, and:

- Provides a consistent and transparent approach to parking management within the municipality.
- Prioritises safe and accessible parking for users.

- Balances competing parking priorities in a fair manner.

The Parking Policy provides guidance for the management of parking in accordance to zones, with Zone A relating to activity centres and Zone B and C relating to adjacent areas within 400 and 800 metres of activity centres.

The Policy also provides a hierarchy for the provision of types of parking (including for all users, e.g. taxi, bicycle) and associated restrictions.

The Policy prioritises the preparation of parking management plans, with the Boronia MAC identified for preparation within Year 1 of the Policy.

11.15 Knox Housing Strategy 2015

The Knox Housing Strategy was prepared and adopted in 2015, and is still the guiding document for future residential development.

The Housing Strategy allows for a range of different house types to be developed within the Boronia MAC boundary area on land zoned for residential uses. These are categorised under four residential area types:

- Bush suburban
- Knox Neighbourhood

- Local Living
- Activity Areas

Residential areas within the Boronia MAC boundary come under the category of Local Living (with townhouses, villa units and dual occupancy being the preferred housing type) and a very small section included in the Activity Area type (with mixed-use/apartments as the preferred housing type).

11.16 Knox Affordable Housing Action Plan 2015-2020

There is a growing gap between living costs and household incomes which is contributing to housing stress. Knox City Council aspires to improve access to affordable housing and ensure there is an adequate supply of social housing for its residents.

The recently updated definition of ‘affordable housing’ in the Planning and Environment Act 1987, and Council’s definition of ‘social housing’ in the Affordable Housing Action Plan 2015-2020, have been adopted for the purposes of considering housing provision in Boronia.

The Action Plan sets out a pathway for Council to explore initiatives and delivery models that will

increase the supply of social and affordable housing in Knox.

Preliminary actions include consideration of leveraging Council owned land that could be used as a pilot social housing site to test how existing barriers can be reduced.

Other actions include:

- Promoting a dispersed supply approach in appropriate locations throughout the municipality.
- Providing a minimum of 10% social housing supply on Council owned land.
- Negotiating with private developers on a voluntary, site-by-site, basis for the inclusion of social housing in residential development.
- Identifying strategic sites for inclusion of social housing supply, including sites set out in the Knox Housing Strategy 2015.
- Supporting and implementing the introduction of obligatory contributions to affordable housing on larger-scale development through inclusionary zoning.

11.17 Community Facilities Planning Policy (2016)

This policy outlines a Community Facility Planning Process that forms the basis of an integrated and

robust process to plan for, assess, prioritise, deliver and manage Council's community facilities.

The five stage process has been used to identify the needs of each service and to assist in considering opportunities for multipurpose, co-located or integrated use opportunities when planning for new and/or upgrades of Council community facilities.

The key principles of the Policy are:

- Wellbeing
- Equity and opportunity
- Economic benefit
- Design and sustainability
- Location
- Community safety
- Partnership and alliance.

11.18 Key life Stages Plan 2017-2021

The Key Life Stages Plan was adopted in 2018 and brings together the previous Municipal Early Years, Youth Strategic, and Active Aging Plans.

The Plan focuses on the key life stages of early childhood, youth and older ages. The Plan aims to deliver an integrated and intergenerational approach to better respond to the needs and

priorities of residents across these various age groups.

12. Appendix B – Capacity analysis

Estimating Development Capacity (Hansen Partnership)

This desktop capacity analysis was undertaken to determine the potential future development floor space yield available under the proposed increase heights. The analysis was undertaken for the 'core' commercial and mixed use zoned areas of the Boronia MAC. It was not undertaken for the residential zoned areas, because much of these areas have already undergoing recent development to more intense forms of housing and have limited site's left that are likely to develop in the next 20 year period.

The assumptions for the capacity analysis are as follows:

- A number of properties or land was excluded from the capacity calculations due to their public nature, existing zoning and their associated unlikelihood to be redeveloped for commercial or residential purposes. These properties are as follows:
 - Boronia College (K-12)
 - Chandler Park
 - Dorset Square (Council car park)
 - Boronia Park

- St Josephs Primary School
- Boronia Train Station
- Tormore Reserve
- Boronia West Primary School
- Knox Leisureworks
- Genista Reserve.
- Net Floor Area (NFA) was calculated at 80% of Gross Floorspace Area (GFA);
- The average dwelling (apartment) size of 80sqm – being a 2 bedroom product;
- The provision of car parking is assumed to occur at basement level(s);
- Four development type scenarios were applied to reflect the likely future land use and development configuration applied to sites or areas. These developments types were as follows:
 - Type A: 50% site coverage – applied to areas with residential and landscape interface treatments, or large strategic sites requiring internal access, open spaces and building separation.
 - Type B: 60% site coverage – applied to areas with either residential or landscape interface treatments.

- Type C: 70% site coverage – applied to areas in secondary commercial streets not constrained by residential or landscape interface treatments.
- Type D: 80% site coverage – applied to areas in primary commercial streets not constrained by residential or landscape interface treatments.

The analysis was undertaken for the core Boronia MAC area, which comprises a total developable area of approximately 22.4ha.

It identified an approximate overall development GFA of 830,600sqm, including approximately 691,500sqm of residential GFA and 139,100sqm of commercial GFA.

At a development take up rate of 100%, that equates to a maximum residential capacity of approximately 6,800 dwellings (apartments).

However, based on projected population growth a more conservative development take up rate of 25% is considered appropriate for Boronia's likely built form change over the next 20 year period. At a 25% take up rate a capacity of approximately 1,700 dwellings was determined.

Similarly, at a 25% take up rate, the Boronia MAC has capacity for approximately 34,775sqm of gross

commercial floorspace over the next 20 year period.

The residential demand for the Boronia MAC is approximately 1,311 dwellings. This demonstrates that the proposed built form provisions have sufficient capacity to accommodate the projected residential demand.

The commercial/retail and office demand for the Boronia MAC is approximately 19,000sqm. This demonstrates that the proposed built form provisions also have sufficient capacity to accommodate the projected commercial demand.

Other factors

The capacity of the waste and drainage infrastructure for the Boronia MAC has not been included in this assessment.

Findings

Hansen Partnership conclude that the proposed new built form controls have more than sufficient capacity to accommodate the Boronia MAC's projected development demand within the next 20 year period at a conservative 25% take up rate.

13. Appendix C – Glossary

Active frontage - Building frontage containing uses that promote activity and interaction with the street and pedestrians.

Activity centre - Mixed use urban area with a concentration of commercial/economic activities, retail, residential and other uses providing a range of goods and community services as well as links to transport networks.

Affordable housing - Where the cost (whether mortgage repayment or rent) of housing is no more than 30 percent of that household's income. Exceeding this mark causes 'housing stress', particularly in the lower 40 percent of the income distribution scale. It includes social housing.

Amenity - A collection of qualities or features that make spaces attractive for people to be in.

Bush Boulevard - A tree-lined street with wide pedestrian spaces connecting key elements of the precinct.

Built form - A combination of features of a building, including its style, façade treatments, height and site coverage.

Community housing - A type of housing owned or managed by registered housing association, registered housing providers, and community of

church-based groups as not-for-profit basis for low income people, including those suffering from housing stress or eligible for public housing.

Community infrastructure - Assets (which may or may not include a building), that accommodate community services, including: health, individual, family and community support, education, arts and culture, information, community development, employment and training, open space and active and passive recreation opportunities.

Delivery model - A process adopted by implementation partners to combine resources in the most effective sequence to move from vision to finished product.

Digital/Knowledge economy - An economy focused on producing and using knowledge and information, through technological innovation and a highly-skilled workforce, to generate economic growth

Fine-grained - An urban environment with small-scale spaces, a mix of uses and relatively narrow street frontages and street blocks, to foster diverse activities and walkability.

Framework - A document setting out a vision for a precinct, key elements or principles that support the vision and next steps for implementation

Heat Island effect - A localised heating effect in urban areas caused by a concentration of hard surfaces such as pavements, walls and roofs that retain heat and radiate it back into the environment.

Housing Stress - Families and individuals in the lower percentile of the income scale who are paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent or mortgage repayments. These are categorised as experiencing housing stress and limited options to secure affordable housing.

Housing types (as referred by the Knox Housing Strategy, adopted by Council on 27 January 2015)

- Detached dwelling - One dwelling on a lot greater than 300 square metres.
- Dual occupancy - Two dwellings on a lot or in a duplex form.
- Villa units - Three or more dwellings on a lot with no shared walls.
- Townhouses - Three or more dwellings on a lot sharing a wall or roof.
- Apartments - A dwelling located above the ceiling level or below the floor level of another dwelling and is part of a building containing two or more dwellings.

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

Knox Planning Scheme - The legal document containing all the state and local planning policies and controls applying to all land in Knox. It is available online at knox.vic.gov.au

Large lots - Large lots in Knox are considered to be 1,000 square metres in area and above.

Linkages/Walkability - The degree to which an environment supports walking as a transport mode, for instance by providing frequent, safe and attractive paths that connect common trip origins and destinations.

Master plan - A plan that directs how a single site or land holding or a cluster of related sites will be developed. It may include direction on traffic movements, allocation of spaces, and provision of open space and key facilities. It is usually more detailed than a structure plan.

Medium rise - A building in the order of 5 to 10 storeys in overall height.

Multipurpose community facility - A facility providing a range of flexible, functional spaces to support access to services and participation in a range of active and passive lifestyle activities.

Open space (public) - Publicly owned land that is freely accessible to the community and primarily for outdoor recreation and leisure.

Open space (privately owned) - Privately owned, but publicly accessible, land such as laneways, arcades, plazas and building forecourts.

Overlay - A state-standard provision forming part of a suite of provisions in the Victorian Planning Provisions. Each planning scheme includes only those overlays that are required to implement the strategy for its municipal district and commonly include localised content within a schedule, alongside the state provision.

Parkiteer - A bicycle parking facility characterised by a secure and undercover cage structure.

Passive surveillance - Informal observation of street and public spaces, which increases perceptions of safety.

Public Housing - A type of social housing owned and managed by the State government for the primary purpose of meeting social objectives, such

as affordable rents (i.e. affordable housing), property management, security of tenure, and good location in relation to employment services.

Public realm - Incorporates all areas freely accessible to the public, including parks plazas, arcades, streets and laneways.

Social housing - (a sub-set of the broader 'affordable' housing)

Non-profit housing owned and managed for the primary purpose of meeting social objectives, such as affordable rents, responsible management, security of tenure and good location in relation to employment services. The term encompasses public housing and includes housing owned or managed by the community. The term social housing includes community housing and public housing.

Structure plan - A plan for implementing a framework or vision for a precinct. It may include proposed land zonings and building controls, plans for infrastructure provision, proposed development contributions, strategies for addressing issues such as drainage and nominated sites for more detailed master planning.

Urban renewal - The process of rebuilding as existing part of a city or town to accommodate

new land uses, often triggered by a shift in the place's economic base to higher and more intensive land uses.

Acronyms:

AFL – Australian Football League

AHS – Australian Health Survey

ARI – Average Recurrence Interval

C1Z – Commercial 1 Zone

CBD – Central Business District

CCTV – Close-circuit television

CP TED – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Cr - Councillor

DDA – Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992

GRZ – General Residential Zone

Ha – Hectare

MAC – Major Activity Centre

MPCF – Multi-Purpose Community Facility

MUZ – Mixed Use Zone

NBN – National Broadband Network

NRZ – Neighbourhood Residential Zone

POS – Pedestrian Operated Signals

PPRZ – Public Park and Recreation Zone

PUZ – Public Use Zone

RDZ – Road Zone

RGZ – Residential Growth Zone

RSL – Return Service League

SAIS – (Knox) Strategic Assets and Investment Strategy

SOS – Strategic Opportunity Site

SQM – Square metres

TGSIs – Tactile ground surface indicators

WSUD – Water Sensitive Urban Design