

Upper Gully Plan Volume 2

Consolidated Background Report

JANUARY 2017



'A bright future for Upper Gully'



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The Upper Gully Plan is a holistic plan to revitalise the Upper Gully. It includes two key elements, the Upper Gully Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) and the Streetscape Design Project.

The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the future development and improvements to Upper Gully (refer Map 01 overleaf), including recommendations for built form controls for the Upper Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre (Activity Centre). It also outlines Knox City Council's committed to support the opportunities for future investment, partnership and advocacy on private and State owned land in Upper Gully.

The Streetscape Design Project focuses on the physical streetscape improvements to the public realm in the Activity Centre.

The Strategic Plan and Streetscape Design Project have been developed through significant analysis, community and stakeholder engagement (refer Appendix 1), and the testing and development of strategies and ideas. This has occurred across a number of project phases. The Consolidated Background Report provides a summary of this analysis and identifies challenges, issues and opportunities to be addressed by the Upper Gully Plan. The Consolidated Background Report is supported by technical reports undertaken by specialist consultants (Appendices 2-4).

The Upper Gully Plan consists of the following parts:

- Volume 1 - Upper Gully Strategic Plan: Part 1 Strategic Plan and Part 2 Implementation Plan
- Volume 2 - Upper Gully Plan - Consolidated Background Report (including appendices)
- Volume 3 - Implementation Program: Part 1 Streetscape Design Project

Volume 2 - Consolidated Background Report should be read in conjunction with the other parts of the Upper Gully Plan.

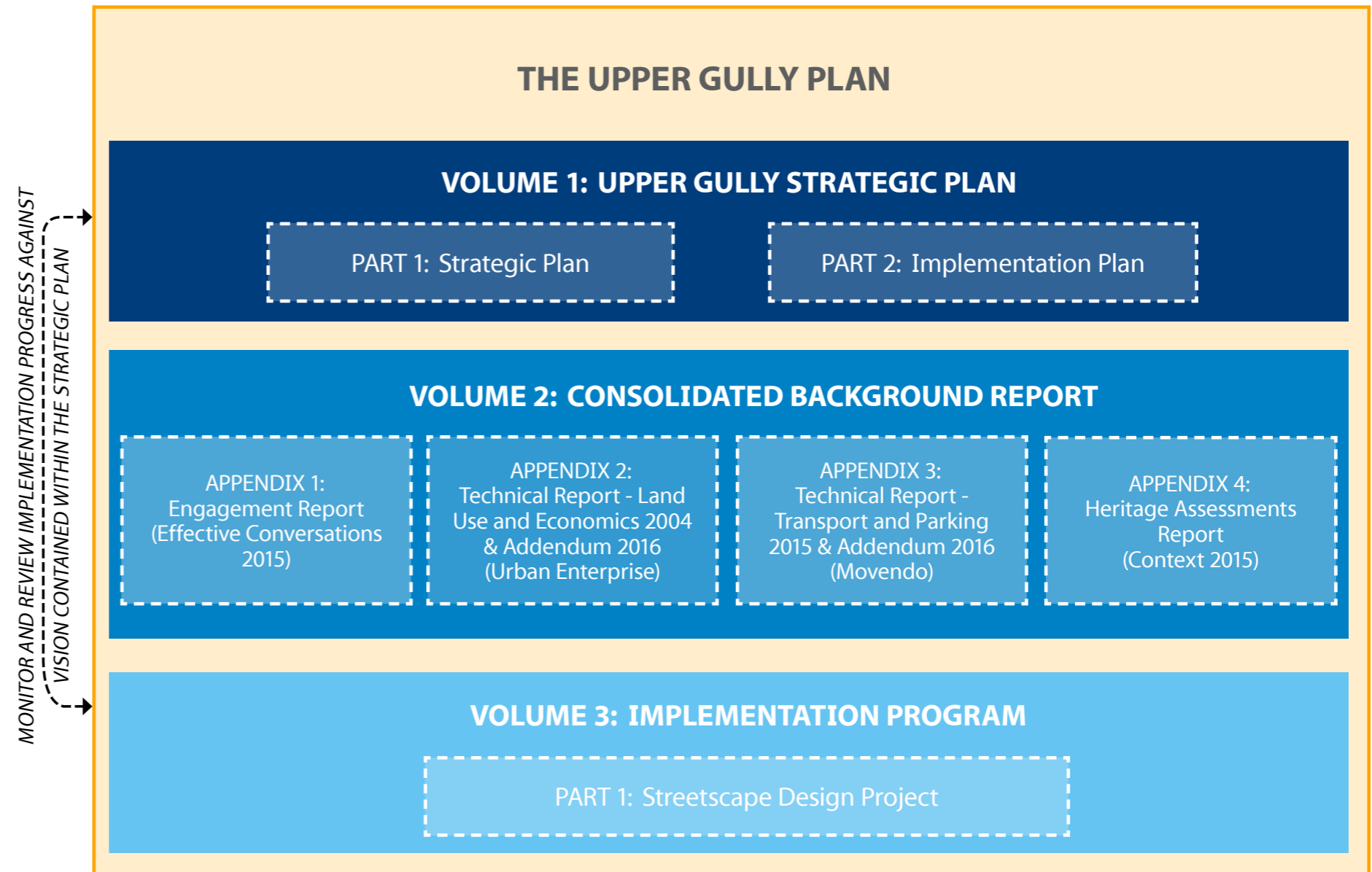


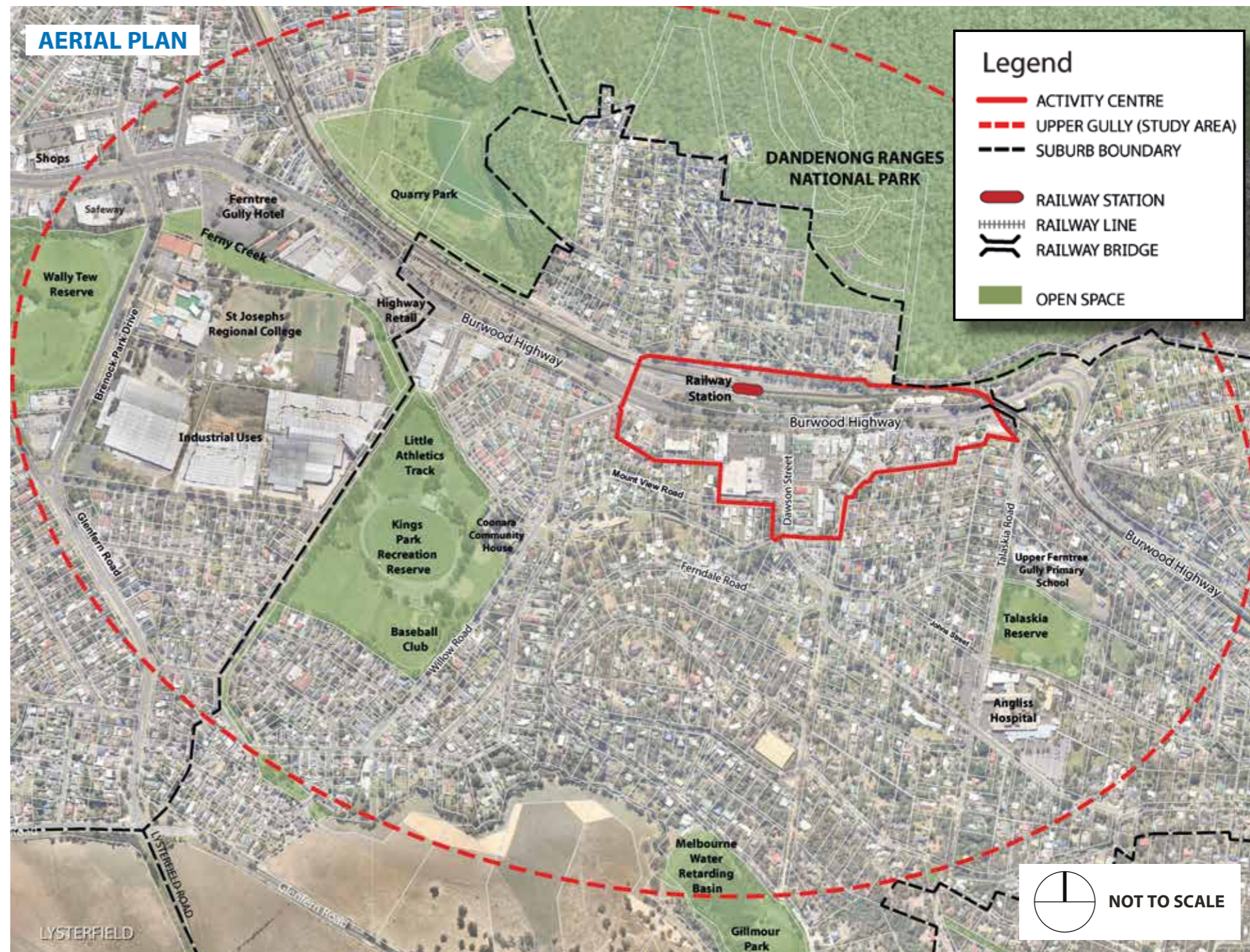
Figure 01. Elements of the Upper Gully Plan

Key Opportunities and Considerations for Upper Gully

Part B and C of the Consolidated Background Report provides the context for the project, the analysis and identifies the key opportunities and considerations for Upper Gully. These are summarised below:

Background and Context

- Plan Melbourne released by the State Government, proposes to create a city of 20-minute neighbourhoods to make neighbourhoods pedestrian friendly and to accommodate the majority of new dwellings within walking distance of the public transport networks. This initiative has particular relevance to Upper Gully due to its location along key public transport links.
- The Knox City Plan themes provide the framework through, which information is gathered, synthesised, presented and ultimately understood as part of the Strategic Plan.
- Current policy for the residential areas surrounding the Activity Centre maintain the existing low density detached dwelling typology. This may require the Activity Centre to accommodate any future growth or alternative housing options.
- The Commercial Zone 1 applied to the Activity Centre accommodates for a variety of land uses.



Map 01. Aerial Plan



Healthy, Connected Communities

- Upper Gully is well serviced by the hospital and associated medical services, however the community identified that there may be a need for a General Practitioner. There is the opportunity to provide built form within the Activity Centre that accommodates health service and promote complementary medical services to support forecasted population profile.
- Community facilities are generally located around Talaskia Road and Kings Park. The opportunity to cluster future community facilities around these existing hubs, to facilitate multi trip outcomes should be considered. There may also be an opportunity to provide additional small scale community facilities within the Activity Centre, within easy access of residents and well connected by public transport links.
- Coonara House provides a range of learning and community services to the local community. Located in Kings Park it provides a focus for community facilities for the Upper Gully community.
- Opportunity to provide for a safe, convenient and legible pedestrian access to community facilities and public transport. This may also help encourage active lifestyle choices.
- Opportunity to incorporate play and experiential amenities within the Activity Centre and upgrade existing play facilities, to enhance Upper Gully as a place for children and the youth.
- Opportunity to improve public amenity so that people may feel safe to use public spaces and access routes both during the day and at night.



Prosperous, Advancing Economy

- Upper Gully sits at the base of the Dandenong Ranges along Burwood Highway. Its history is deeply entrenched in its association with the foothills and its role providing amenity and facilities for tourists. There is currently a strong passing trade of visitors on their way to visit the Dandenong Ranges and in particular 1,000 Steps. There is the opportunity to capture greater visitation and expenditure from passing tourists, as well as enhance access to key attractions.
- The Activity Centre provides a level of services that meets local needs. Feedback from the community suggests that generally most services are accessible from Upper Gully.
- Commercial growth in the Activity Centre is likely to be limited, reflecting a marginal population growth that is anticipated.
- Vacant lots, unused shop fronts, car yards and other 'inactive uses' detract from the vibrancy and activity within the Activity Centre. These sites provide opportunities for greater residential intensification and mixed use development. Land uses that activate the Activity Centre during the day and night should be considered.
- Current planning controls of the surrounding residential catchment limit any additional dwelling development to maintain the current built residential form characterised by detached houses on larger lots.
- While population growth is anticipated to be marginal, changing demographics may require greater housing diversity within Knox. Opportunities for shop top and medium density housing should be considered within the Activity Centre, to provide housing choice as well as enhance activity in the centre.
- The residential interface with the Activity Centre could provide the opportunity to encourage greater housing intensification through medium density development.



Vibrant and Sustainable Built and Natural Environments

- Overall there is not a strongly defined built form style and character within the Activity Centre. Future building should be encouraged provide high quality contemporary development to reinvigorate the urban form of the centre. It will also be important to ensure that future development is of a high quality particularly on prominent sites and that it responds to the valued landscape setting. In saying this however, the Royal Hotel and Visitors Information Centre are valued Art Deco Style buildings in the Activity Centre.
- There are a number of underutilised sites within the Activity Centre, particularly to the west of Dawson Street. The Strategic Plan should encourage the redevelopment of these sites for retail, commercial and mixed use to provide for a continuation of activity along the Burwood Highway.
- Narrow shop fronts (fine grain built form), east of Dawson Street contributed to the positive street level experience. There are opportunities to encourage future fine grain development along Burwood Highway that creates variety and diversity in the streetscape and offers the potential for smaller traders to establish within the Activity Centre.
- Existing heritage and valued buildings should be maintained and celebrated, such as the Royal Hotel and the Visitors Information Centre.
- Future building heights and roof forms will need to consider existing views from the public realm to the Dandenong Ranges from within the Activity Centre.
- The character of Upper Gully is influenced by its proximity to the Dandenong Ranges which provide a visual backdrop for the community.
- Arrival into Upper Gully is primary experienced along Burwood Highway. Opportunities to improve this arrival experience and provide a cohesive character for Upper Ferntree Gully should be considered.

- The railway bridge provides a gateway to the Dandenong Ranges and Activity Centre. While owned by VicTrack, the Strategic Plan should consider opportunities to enhance the appearance of this bridge so that it positively contributes to the character of Upper Ferntree Gully.
- Quarry Park is a high quality public space located to the north of the railway line. Opportunities to improve access to this reserve should be considered, as well as continuing to enhance the space as a recreational asset for the community.
- Ferny Creek Trail provides a key open space link to community and recreational facilities within Upper Ferntree Gully. Opportunities to enhance this as a major recreational trail should be considered.
- Council is undertaking a master plan exercise for Talaskia Reserve. Recommendations from the strategic plan should be considered by the master plan, to ensure it responds to the community vision for Upper Ferntree Gully.
- Public spaces include open space reserves, environmental spaces, drainage corridors, open space links and streets. Opportunities to create an integrated network of public open spaces should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan.
- Car parking around the Angliss Hospital impacts on residents (particularly within Johns, Albert and Edward Streets) and parking areas within the Activity Centre. Opportunities to minimise these impacts should be considered in consultation with the Angliss Hospital.
- Car parking around the 1,000 Steps is highly utilised during the weekend, creating a dangerous situation with people pulling out and pedestrians moving between their cars and the 1,000 Steps. These impacts are regularly felt in the Activity Centre. The Strategic Plan should consider opportunities to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety around the 1,000 Steps.
- A number of key issues were highlighted in regards to roads and traffic within the Activity Centre, particularly along Burwood Highway. The Strategic Plan process provides an opportunity to address these issues.
- Burwood Highway is a key traffic route through the Activity Centre and is also the location for retail and commercial activity. Future streetscape upgrades should improve public amenity and encourage pedestrian priority within the Activity Centre.
- Access between key destinations is often fragmented, with limited amenity. Opportunities to improve these access between key destinations should be considered.
- Aged and disability access is poor with limited facilities provided.
- The railway station provides a transport hub, with many people moving between this space to the surrounding residential areas. While the railway station itself has only been recently upgraded, its surrounds, including car park areas, bus bays and entrances are unattractive and have limited pedestrian amenity. Improvements to access between the station and surrounding areas, as well as the amenity of the station should be considered.
- Bicycle infrastructure within Upper Gully is limited. Opportunities to provide cycling within the centre should be provided through the provision of additional bike infrastructure at key destinations.
- Drainage is a key constraint for building within the Activity Centre (overland flow paths, 100-year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) flooding) and will need to be carefully considered as part of the Strategic Plan, particularly any increase to hard surfaces or obstructions to overland flow paths.
- Vegetation is a defining feature of the Dandenong Ranges and contributes to Upper Gully's character and sense of place.
- Upper Ferntree Gully has no fire refuge area and is considered as a bushfire prone area. It is unlikely that a refuge area will be provided within Upper Ferntree Gully given its status and topography. Community engagement highlighted that evacuation routes are not clear and people are unsure about procedures during a fire.



Culturally Rich and Active Communities

- Opportunities for events within the Activity Centre are limited, as there is currently no public square or civic space. Opportunities to provide a civic space within the Activity Centre should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan.
- There are a number of heritage and non heritage (valued buildings) within the Activity Centre, that are valued by the community. Opportunity to conserve and celebrate these places within Upper Ferntree Gully, should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan to enhance the character, appeal and interest of Upper Gully.
- The Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station car parking (east) is utilised on Saturdays for the Gully Market. This was considered by many during community engagement to be an important part of living within Upper Ferntree Gully.
- Public art is currently not provided within the Activity Centre. Despite this, Upper Gully has a strong history of art and artists in the region, particularly associated with the Dandenong Ranges. The Strategic Plan should investigate opportunities to provide public art and other treatments within the public realm to express Upper Gully's unique character.
- Wally Tew Reserve provides a focus for social and cultural resources within Upper Ferntree Gully, not only for the local community but for the municipal community. Opportunities to improve access to Wally Tew Reserve from the Activity Centre and Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station should be considered.
- The 1812 Theatre provides a focal point for arts and culture within the Activity Centre and provides opportunities for people to participate and socialise in a supportive environment. The Strategic Plan should consider opportunities to facilitate an active arts and culture environment, with the 1812 Theatre providing the foundation. Entertainment and dining uses may also complement the function of the Theatre.



Democratic and Engaged Communities

- The community is concerned about local issues, as demonstrated by the workshop participants.
- There are a number of local and volunteer groups in the area and the opportunity to engage with and collaborate with these groups to deliver capital works projects, where appropriate, should be considered.
- People have indicated during community engagement that they appreciate the engagement opportunities provided (as part of the Strategic Plan) and suggest expanding the reach of the engagement to other groups that may not have necessarily been engaged to date (the youth, aged, families, Angliss Hospital staff etc).
- Upper Ferntree Gully sits on the border of the Shire of Yarra Ranges and Knox City Council. The community noted perceived challenges of being on the border.



Coonara Neighbourhood House

Part A: Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION



The following section provides an introduction to this report including its purpose and methodology.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Consolidated Background Report provides a summary of research and investigations undertaken as part of the Upper Gully Plan process, including desktop analysis, site visits, specialist technical reports, community and stakeholder engagement including ongoing Council officer contribution.

The findings of this report will influence decision making throughout the development of the Upper Gully Plan, including the Strategic Plan, Implementation Plan and associated Planning Scheme Amendment.

1.2 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of the Upper Gully - Consolidated Background Report is to present the key issues and opportunities facing the future planning and design of the Upper Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre (Activity Centre) and its context. More specifically, the report aims to:

- Consolidate a broad range of existing and new information that has relevance to the Activity Centre and Upper Gully in order to provide a framework for further plan making activities;
- Identify the key state and local policy provisions, programs and strategies that affect Upper Gully;
- Identify the key technical issues that affect the locality;
- Identify and analyse the key constraints and opportunities;
- Gain a preliminary understanding of the existing community, their needs and aspirations;
- Document and analyse project partner and key stakeholder needs and plans for Upper Gully;
- Identify any conflicting issues requiring resolution;
- Identify information gaps, where applicable; and
- Provide direction and recommendations for the Strategic Plan.

1.3 Methodology

The report combines research, technical studies, engagement with the community (including land owners and businesses in the Activity Centre), internal stakeholders and external agencies to identify opportunities and considerations for Upper Gully. More specifically, sources of information include:

- Built form and design – Desktop assessments, site visits and site photos, including Google Earth, Department of Environment and Primary Industries website (cultural heritage).

- Disability Discrimination Act – Site visits and site photos.
- Economic, Retail and Commercial Floorspace, Tourism Gaps and Opportunities were provided by the *Technical Report - Land Use and Economics, 2014 and Addendum 2016, Urban Enterprise* (refer Appendix 2).
- Transport and Parking - A comprehensive analysis of movement, public transport and parking provided by the *Technical Report Transport and Parking 2015 and Addendum 2016, Movendo* (refer Appendix 3).
- Heritage Assessments - A review of significant and Valued sites in and adjoining the Activity Centre, *Upper Ferntree Gully Heritage Assessments Report, Context 2015* (Appendix 4).
- Land use – Existing zoning information and site visits.
- Natural environment - Overlays (significant landscape, vegetation protection, land subject to inundation, flood and environmental significance overlays), discussions with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries website (cultural heritage).
- Natural Hazards risks (including bush fire, flooding and landslip) – Existing policies and ongoing discussions with Council officers, Melbourne Water and Country Fire Authority.
- Pedestrian and cycling access and movement – GIS data and site visits and principal pedestrian network analysis and specialist technical input (i.e. Movendo and Council Transport and Traffic Team).

In addition to the sources listed above, the Consolidated Background Report has been informed by community and stakeholder engagement including input from community engagement workshops, and ongoing input from State Government agencies, Council officers and the Ward Councillor (refer to *Upper Gully Plan Engagement report, Effective Conversations 2015*, Appendix 1).

1.4 How to read this Report

The Upper Gully - Consolidated Background Report comprises the following key sections :

Executive Summary

- Overview of the project, and summary of the key findings.

Part A: Introduction

- Report introduction, purpose, methodology and structure.

Part B: Background and Context

- Provides an overview Upper Gully, key background documents, policies and strategies and their implication, and includes a description of the Upper Gully Plan Project and its purpose.

Part C: Analysis, Issues and Opportunities

- Analysis and identification of the key issues and opportunities for Upper Gully. The structure of this section of the report is guided by the five key theme framework of the Knox Vision and City Plan 2013-17:
 - Healthy, Connection Communities
 - Prosperous, Advancing Economy
 - Vibrant and Sustainable Built and Natural Environment
 - Culturally Rich and Active Communities
 - Demographic and Engaged Communities.

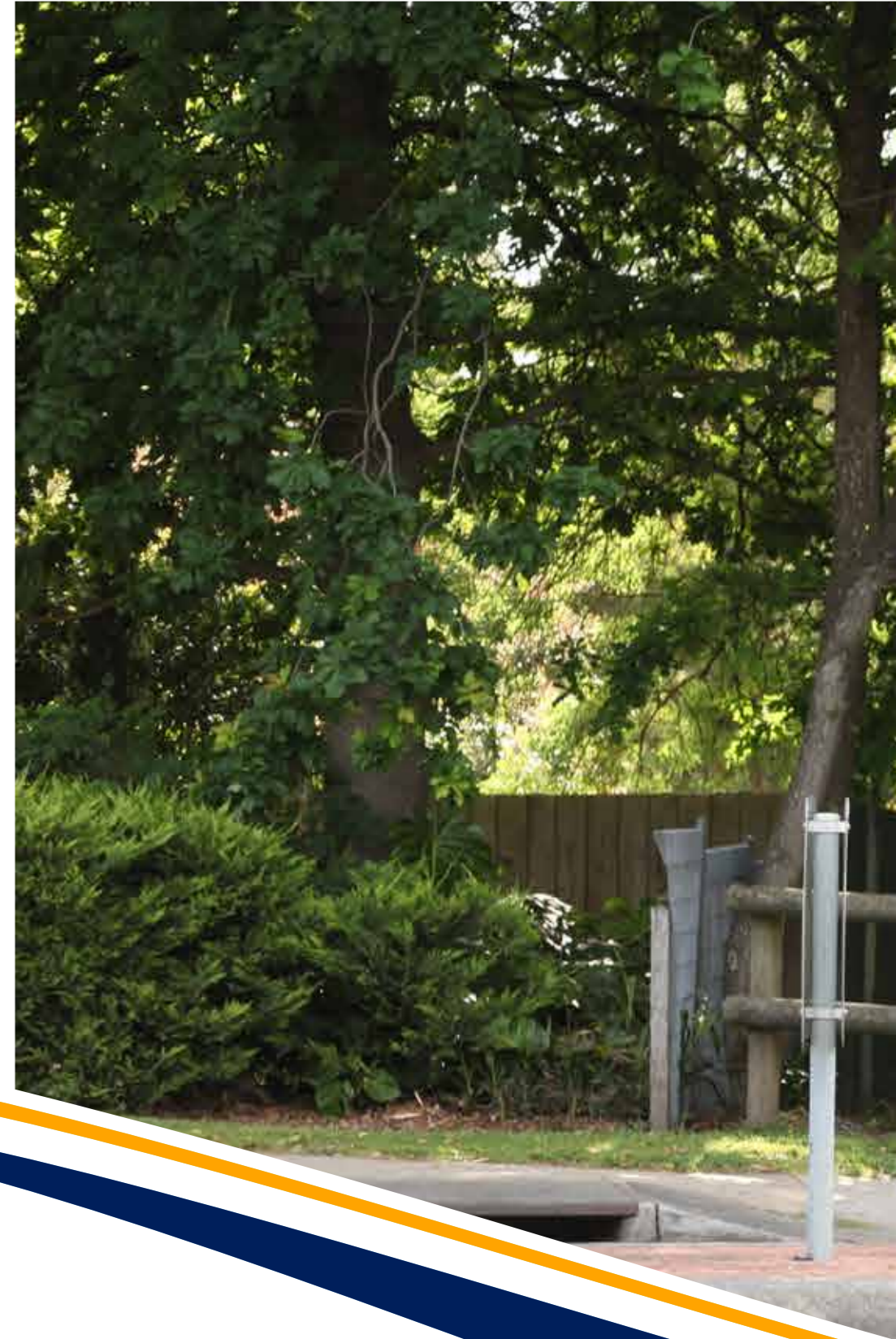
The Consolidated Background Report should also be read in conjunction with the other parts of the Upper Gully Plan (Figure 01 Elements of the Upper Gully Plan, p.6).



Railway bridge across Burwood Highway

Part B: Background and Context

2. BACKGROUND
3. ENGAGEMENT
4. KEY STRATEGIC INFLUENCES





The following section provides an introduction to the Strategic Plan process, as well as context information for the Upper Gully Plan.



2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Introducing Upper Gully

2.1.1 Setting

Upper Gully is located in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. It has a distinct visual character that is defined by its relationship with the surrounding treed landscape. Views to the surrounding hills, low density, 'green and leafy' residential neighbourhoods are important and highly valued by the local community.

Upper Gully is physically dissected by Burwood Highway, a major transport corridor that provides access between Melbourne and the eastern suburbs. It also provides a gateway for visitors to the Dandenong Ranges and the nearby Kokoda Memorial Trail (also known as the 1,000 Steps). Its function as a gateway is further reinforced by the presence of the Dandenong Ranges Visitors Information Centre located on Burwood Highway.

2.1.2 Walking and Cycling

The Activity Centre, generally, has good walking facilities in place with wide footpaths along shop frontages. Pedestrian connections into surrounding residential areas are provided however, steep topography in some areas makes walking difficult. Burwood Highway and the railway line creates a pedestrian barrier particularly for residents north of the Activity Centre.

Bike routes are provided through off-road trails along the railway line, Ferny Creek and parts of Burwood Highway. The Ringwood to Belgrave Rail Trail is an important regional cycle connection however, there is a missing link across Burwood Highway. A continuous north-south connection to the Activity Centre or the railway station is not provided.

There are opportunities to enhance walking and cycling facilities not only in the Activity Centre, but also along key streets and trails that lead into the shops and railway station.

2.1.3 Public Transport

The Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station (Railway Station) is located on the Belgrave line. The journey between Melbourne and Upper Ferntree Gully generally takes between 45 - 65 minutes. The frequency of services, parking and accessibility makes the Railway Station an important commuter station for locals. As a 'premium station', the station is staffed from the first train to the last, has a customer service centre (where passengers can buy tickets and pick up timetables), and has passenger facilities such as indoor waiting areas and toilets. As a result, it is utilised by commuters from surrounding areas.

A bus interchange is also located at the Railway Station providing access to three bus routes. These routes operate regional along Burwood Highway while some services provide local access to the Angliss Hospital and the Primary School.

2.1.4 Vehicle Access and Parking

Analysis for the Activity Centre identified a number of locations where traffic could be better managed to improve motorist and pedestrian safety and improve traffic flow. Such locations included the intersection of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road and the vehicle entrance into Ferntree Plaza from Burwood Highway.

The shopping areas of the Activity Centre are generally well catered for with car parking. However, parking occupancy issues exist at the railway station car park, in residential streets close to the Activity Centre and near the Angliss Hospital where commuters and employees take advantage of the unrestricted parking.

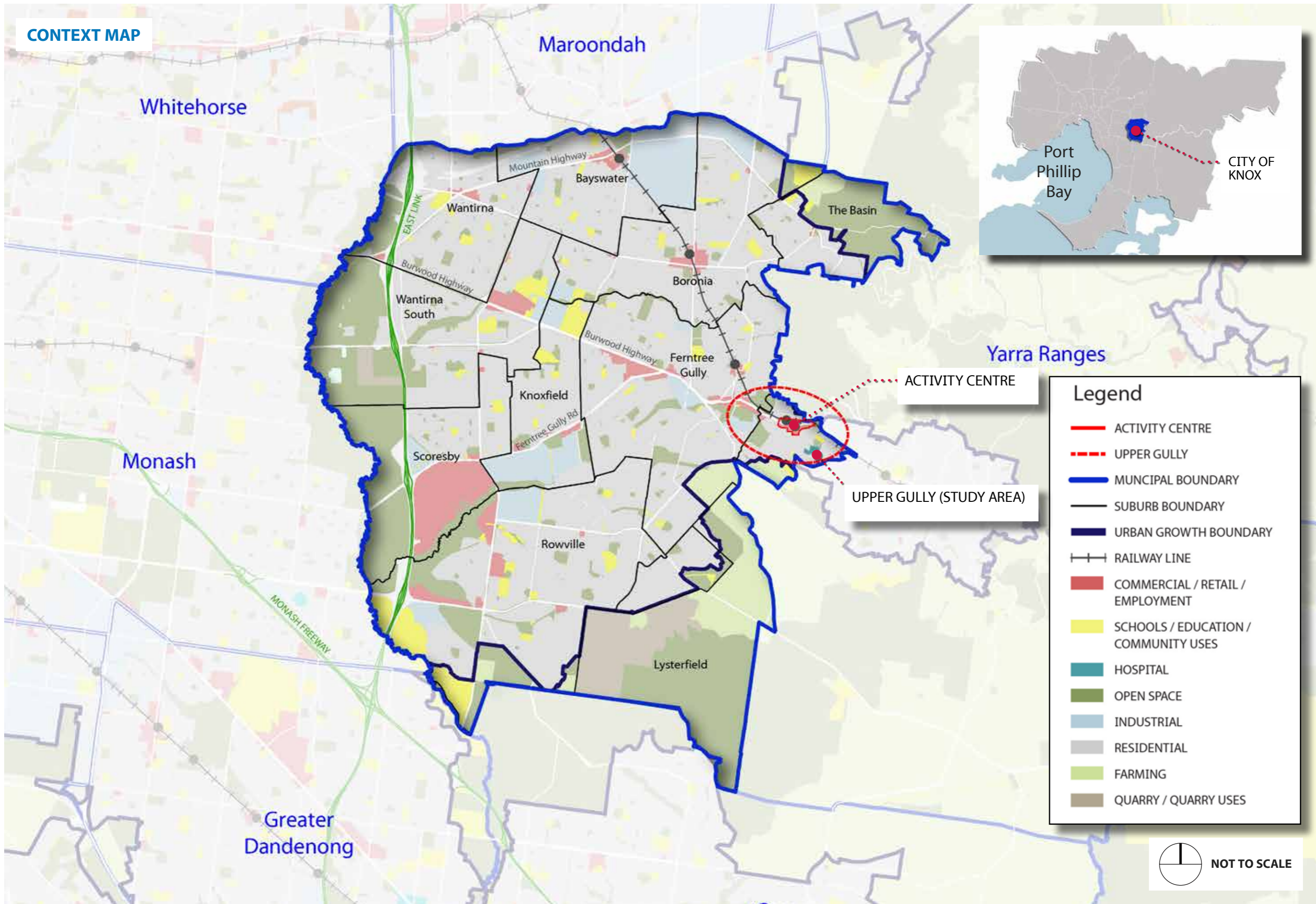
Management of parking around the 1,000 Steps has also been identified as an issue with overflow parking along Mount Dandenong Tourist Road creating safety issues for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.



Mix of retail, commercial and highway related uses are provided along Burwood Highway



Ferny Creek Trail provides an open space link to major open spaces within and surrounding Upper Gully



Map 02. Context Map

2.1.5 Land uses

The Activity Centre is relatively compact, and focused along Burwood Highway and Dawson Street. It includes a mix of retail, commercial and highway related uses and is anchored by Ferntree Plaza and Maxi Foods, a full line supermarket. The Activity Centre provides a number of functions including local convenience retail, community and health services, and a tourism function for visitors travelling to the nearby Dandenong Ranges.

The Angliss Hospital located on Talaskia Road (outside the Activity Centre) provides a key focus for health services within Upper Gully and to a large area of the eastern metropolitan region. It is supported by a range of allied health and community services located around the hospital and within the Activity Centre. These provide employment opportunities for Upper Gully, with much of the current local workforce employed in the health industry.



The Angliss Public Hospital and supporting health uses.

Coonara House located in Kings Park is a neighbourhood house and provides a range of learning and community services to the local community. Other community facilities are generally located around Talaskia Road and Kings Park.

Housing is currently provided outside of the Activity Centre in the form of detached dwellings on large lots. Existing planning controls applied to these surrounding residential areas maintain the dominant detached dwelling housing typology.

The Activity Centre provides opportunities for different types of housing such as apartments or shoptop housing which would enable people to age in place and benefit from proximity to shops, public transport and services.

2.1.6 Tourism

Upper Gully is located at the gateway to the Dandenong Ranges and is the last centre people pass through before heading into the Ranges. The Activity Centre is bordered by the Dandenong Ranges National Park to the north and is the location for the Dandenong Ranges Visitors Information Centre. It is only 800m from the major tourist attraction of the 1,000 Steps, which is growing significantly in its popularity.

There are significant opportunities to strengthen Upper Gully's tourism role as part of the arrival experience into the Dandenong Ranges. This could be through additional tourism land uses that build on existing tourist attractions, such as The Gully Market, which operates on Saturdays and Sundays, the 1812 Theatre, and existing restaurants and cafés. Opportunities also exist to enhance Upper Gully's streets and public spaces to enhance its 'brand' and attractiveness.

2.1.7 Arts and Culture

Upper Gully has an active arts and culture community with the 1812 Theatre providing a local focal point. The 1812 Theatre Company is recognised as one of Melbourne's longest running amateur theatre companies and provides an important role in developing arts and culture within the municipality. There are opportunities to strengthen the role of the Theatre to increase local participation and social interaction, and to enhance it as an attraction for visitors.

There is also strong history of art and artists in Upper Gully associated with the Dandenong Ranges. However, public art and references to Upper Gully's artistic history is limited in the Activity Centre. Opportunities exist to incorporate exciting and relevant public art into future projects across the Activity Centre.

Wally Tew Reserve is a key location for arts and culture located approximately 1.6km from the Activity Centre. It includes a number of cultural facilities including the Library, Placemakers Shed and Woodworkers Shed. The Placemakers Shed and Woodworkers Shed provide a studio and workshop for creative people within Upper Gully.

As well as the library, a number of arts and culture events are held at the reserve, including Knox Festival.



The 1812 Theatre, located on Rose Street

2.1.8 Open Space and Landscape

The major parks in Upper Gully include Kings Park, Talaskia Reserve and Quarry Park. These spaces provide the location for a number of sporting and social groups and provide visual relief and 'greening'. Social and cultural facilities are provided at Wally Tew Reserve, located in nearby Ferntree Gully. Ferny Creek Trail provides a key open space link between Wally Tew Reserve and the Activity Centre, as well as between Kings Park and community facilities.

Vegetation within Upper Gully is a significant contributor to its character and identity. Trees both within the public (streetscapes and parks) and private realm (surrounding canopy trees on lots) provide a strong link between the urban areas of Upper Gully and the more heavily treed areas of the Dandenongs Ranges.



Quarry Park provides the location for State Significant vegetation

2.1.9 Built Form

Buildings within the Activity Centre are predominately low scale single storey with the occasional two storey buildings providing subtle variation in the skyline and views across to the surrounding treed foothills. Most notable is the Royal Hotel, at a height of approximately 12.5m, which makes it the tallest building within the Activity Centre. Although the Royal Hotel is only two storeys, it is equivalent in height to a modern three storey building.

The style and character of buildings across the Activity Centre is generally undefined with simple detailing and parapets. Styles include a mix of recent (approx. 1980's), recently modified buildings and the occasional older built form styles, reflecting the incremental growth of the Activity Centre over a period of time. The surrounding catchment of the Activity Centre is predominantly residential and generally detached dwellings on large lots.

Narrow shop fronts (fine grain built form) along Burwood Highway, to the east of Dawson Street, are major contributors to the positive street experience. These buildings provide visual interest through the detailing and design of building elements, but also through elements such as a continuous built edge to the street, active ground floor uses, transparent frontages, awnings and clearly defined pedestrian entries. To the west of Dawson Street, as the scale and form of buildings increase, buildings are setback from the street and less active uses are present.

2.1.10 Heritage

A key historical building in the Activity Centre is the Royal Hotel which was built in 1889 and then modified at a later date with Art Deco architectural features. It is currently protected by a Heritage Overlay. The Visitors Information Centre is another important Art Deco style building in the Activity Centre, however it is not protected by a heritage overlay.

The Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station building is of architectural, historic and social significance. It first opened in 1889. The heritage and older style buildings provide visual landmarks in the Activity Centre and a link to the area's early development. These buildings along and to a lesser degree the 1812 Theatre and were identified by the community as important and valued historical buildings.

Adjoining the Activity Centre at 12 Mount View Road is the post war modernist style St Thomas Anglican Church. It was designed by the notable architect Keith Reid.

An independent heritage assessment was subsequently undertaken. Refer Appendix 4 *Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre Heritage Assessments Report (Context 2015)*.

The heritage and older style buildings provide visual landmarks in the Activity Centre and a link to the centre's early development. There are opportunities to enhance these valued buildings and ensure nearby development is designed to complement their heritage significance.



The Royal Hotel is a land mark building within the Activity Centre

2.2 Purpose of the Project

The Consolidated Background Report forms part of the Upper Gully Plan process. The Upper Gully Plan is a holistic plan intended to enhance Upper Gully. It includes two key elements:

- **Upper Gully Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan)** sets a framework for the future development of the Activity Centre based on technical research, community and stakeholder priorities; and
- **The Streetscape Design Project** focuses on physical improvements to the public realm within the Activity Centre.

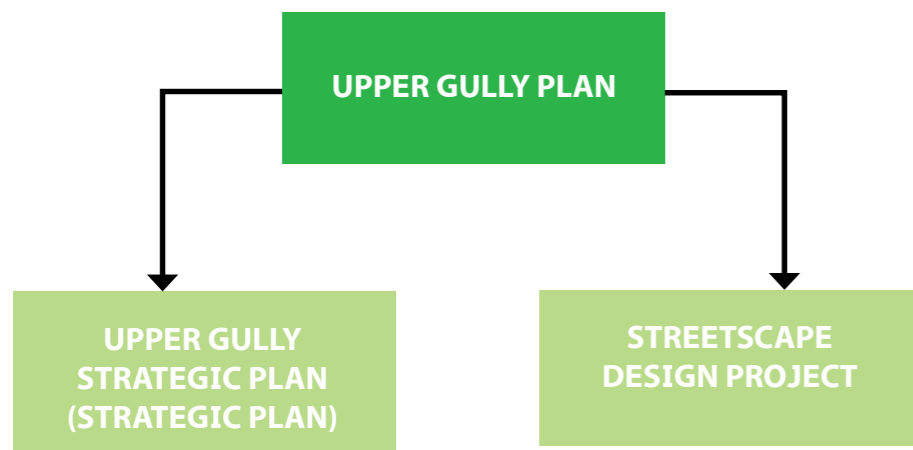


Figure 02. Components of the Upper Gully Plan

2.3 The Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan, outlines the preferred vision for the future growth and development of Upper Gully based on technical research, community and stakeholder aspirations and priorities. It is a strategic planning tool to manage, influence and facilitate future change in Upper Gully and assist Council in decision making. It considers the current conditions, issues and opportunities and develops ideas to influence future change and deliver real outcomes against aspirations and priorities.

More specifically, the Strategic Plan aims to:

- Provide a framework for guiding Council business and developing partnerships with major landholders and service providers including state government agencies to activate and provide the certainty needed for future and ongoing improvements for Upper Gully;
- Direct investment to capture the unique opportunities including those for business and tourism presented by Upper Gully's location, setting and individuality;
- Provide certainty for Upper Gully by guiding future improvements and development including planning controls;
- Deliver the objectives and strategies, outlined as part of the Knox Vision and Knox City Plan 2013-17 at a local level; and
- Be informed by significant research and stakeholder engagement.

To assist in implementing the Strategic Plan, steps are identified that Council and the community can take to achieve the plan's vision.

The Strategic Plan considers the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) Practice Note 58: Structure planning for activity centres and the aims outlined within.

2.3.1 Project Need

The Strategic Plan is being developed in response to concerns raised regarding the lack of specific planning controls for the Activity Centre within the Dandenong Foothills.

Amendment C130 incorporated into the Knox Planning Scheme on 20 November 2014, introduced an interim Design and Development Overlay (DDO) Schedule 10, applying a mandatory maximum building height of 7.5m in the activity areas of The Basin, Upper Ferntree Gully and Alchester Village for a period of 18 months. Amendment C146 extended the interim height controls until 30 October 2017.

The DDO provides Council with the time needed to complete detailed planning work for the Activity Centre to inform built form including permanent height controls. The Strategic Plan will provide much of this detailed planning work for the Activity Centre.

2.3.2 The Study Area (Upper Gully)

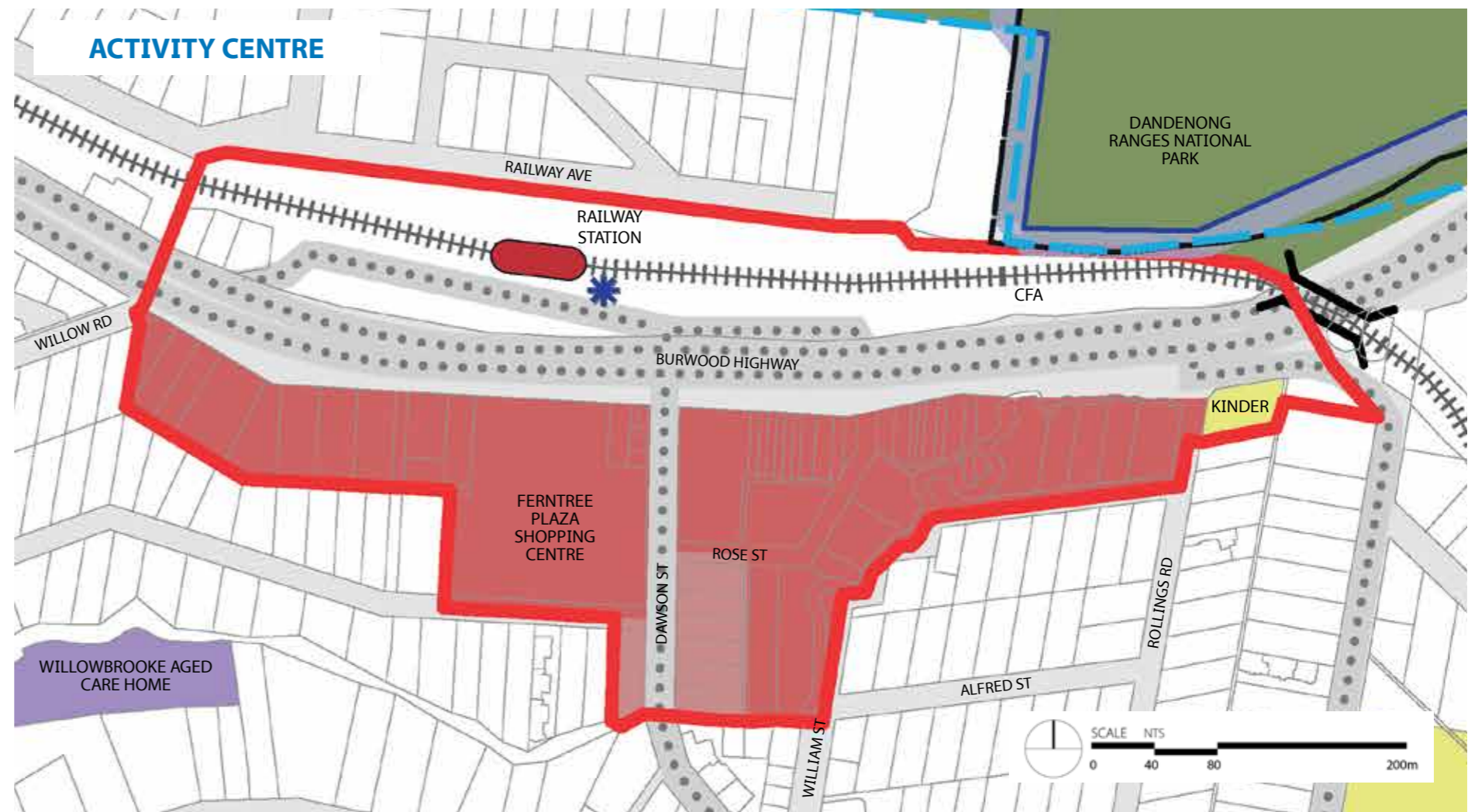
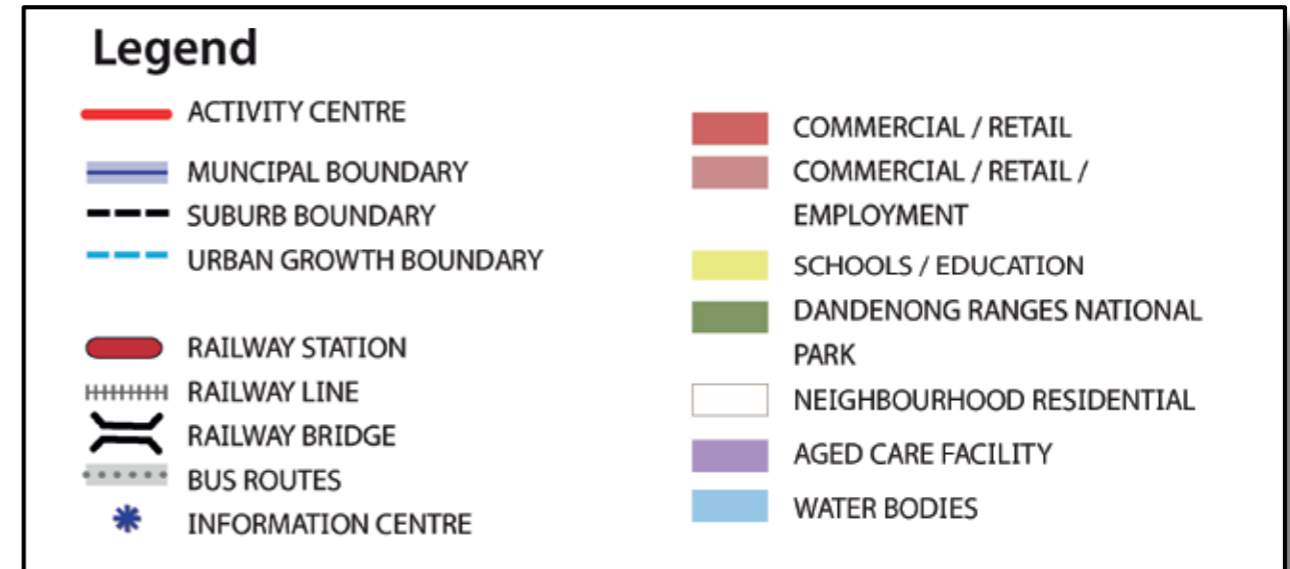
A key influence on the Activity Centre is the surrounding catchment, which comprises predominately residential uses and commercial uses along Burwood Highway and open space areas. This surrounding catchment, as illustrated on Map 04 (overleaf), is generally referred to as Upper Gully.

2.3.3 The Activity Centre

The Activity Centre includes the retail and commercial areas of Upper Ferntree Gully. The Activity Centre is defined by the Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 10 (DDO10) boundary included in the Knox Planning Scheme, referred to as the Neighbourhood Activity Centre (Activity Centre).

While the Strategic Plan focuses on the Activity Centre, influences outside the centre were also considered in order to provide a holistic and integrated plan for the future.

NB. Upper Ferntree Gully is used to reference the suburb and generally where available source data is suburb based for example ABS suburb profile data.



Map 03. Activity Centre

2.3.4 Report Framework

The Knox City Plan themes will provide the framework through which information is gathered, synthesised, presented and ultimately understood as part of the Strategic Plan. The Knox City Plan themes include:

- Healthy and Connected Communities
- Prosperous, Advancing Economy
- Vibrant and Sustainable Built And Natural Environments
- Culturally Rich and Active Communities
- Democratic and Engaged Communities

The themes outline the aspirations for Knox and will inform the priorities of not just Council but many key agencies into the future.

Assumptions

It is important to note that the Strategic Plan will not address changes to land use zoning and built form controls within surrounding residential areas, which are found in the Knox Planning Scheme.



The Angliss Hospital, located along Talaskia Road

2.3.5 Project Phases

The Strategic Plan project involves four key stages as outlined in Figure 03. The stages allow for a number of opportunities for community and stakeholder input to shape the future of Upper Gully.

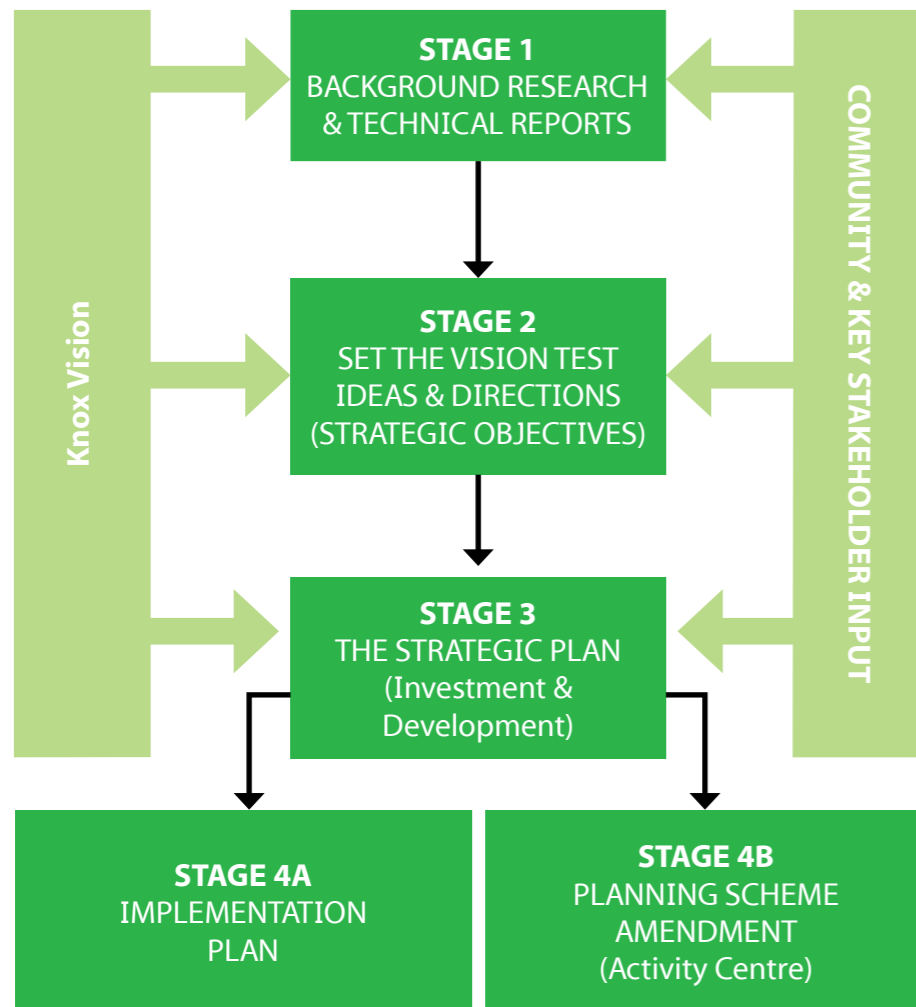


Figure 03. Strategic Plan Stages

The following broadly summarises the key objectives and outcomes from each stage:

Stage 1 - Background Research and Technical Reports

- Collate material, information etc.
- Review Policy Context
- Undertake community and stakeholder engagement to understand issues
- Prepare Technical Reports
- Prepare Consolidated Background Report

Stage 2 - Agenda Setting and Visioning

- Develop a draft vision and key strategic directions
- Develop scenarios for key sites and areas within the Strategic Plan boundary
- Test and refine scenarios with key stakeholders and community

Stage 3 - Draft Development and Delivery

- Consolidate scenario testing, objectives, strategies and actions into a draft structure plan
- Develop the Draft Strategic Plan
- Develop Built Form Guidelines
- Develop a Draft Implementation Plan
- Undertake community consultation to seek feedback on Draft Strategic Plan

Stage 4 - Planning Scheme Amendment Package

- Finalise the Draft Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan
- Develop Planning Scheme Amendment documentation
- Exhibition of Strategic Plan and Planning Scheme Amendment
- Finalise Planning Scheme Amendment documentation
- Council Adoption of the Strategic Plan and Planning Scheme Amendment

2.4 The Streetscape Design Project

The 'Streetscape Design Project' is undertaken in parallel with the Strategic Plan. It provides the design strategies for public realm streetscape improvements for the Activity Centre. It will document the objectives and priorities for streetscape improvements and how these can be achieved. It will be informed by a shared community and stakeholder vision, strategic objectives and aspirations for Upper Gully. The design will serve as the basis for capital works initiatives.



View along Burwood Highway streetscape, looking east from Rose Street

3. ENGAGEMENT

The consultation and engagement process was an important part of developing the Strategic Plan and underpinned the first three phases of the project.

A specialist engagement consultant managed the comprehensive engagement process. This engagement process aimed to inform the preparation of the Upper Gully Plan.

A number of stakeholder were consulted as part of the engagement process, including the general community, internal stakeholders and external State Government agencies.



Flyers were produced to promote and encourage participation in the Upper Gully Plan process

3.1 Community Engagement

A six-stage community engagement approach has been designed to enable a broad range of voices to contribute to discussions planning for the future of Upper Gully. This engagement has been designed to hear from the Upper Ferntree Gully community as well as neighbouring residents and interested groups. The engagement process included:

- **Stage 1:** Introduction to the project and understanding the current state and future aspirations for Upper Gully (Workshop Round 1)
- **Stage 2:** What we heard at Workshop 1 (Workshop Round 2)
- **Stage 3:** Testing proposed ideas for key directions and strategies (Workshop Round 3)
- **Stage 4:** Opportunity to refine the draft key directions and strategies for the Upper Gully Strategic Plan (Workshop Round 4)
- **Stage 5:** Opportunity to refine the strategic objectives and strategies (Workshop Round 5). This stage also included a two week display of the draft Strategic Plan prior to the finalisation of the draft.
- **Stage 6:** Public Exhibition of the Draft Strategic Plan package and Planning Scheme Amendment (Statutory Exhibition)

3.1.1 Engagement Objectives

The overall community engagement objectives for the project were to:

- Raise awareness in the community and stimulate, enable and encourage community dialogue and debate about change facing Upper Gully now and in the future (e.g. population growth, changing household needs, neighbourhood character and housing);
- Engage with diverse stakeholder interest groups and benefactors across the community about current issues and future aspirations for living in Upper Gully;
- Stimulate and encourage community debate and dialogue to inform the development of strategic directions for Upper Gully that will inform the development of a Strategic Plan and Streetscape Design Project; and
- Provide a strategic basis to develop and analyse future development scenarios for Upper Gully.

3.1.2 Promotional Activities

Opportunities to participate in the engagement activities were promoted as follows:

- Project webpage advertising workshop dates and opportunities to be involved
- Advertisement in The Foothills June – August 2014
- Letter to all owners and occupiers from the Ward Councillor promoting the project and community workshops 5 August, 2014
- Posters advertising Workshop Round 1 - 28 & 30 August

- Posters advertising Workshop Round 2 Posters - 11 & 13 September 2014
- Flyer invite to Workshops Round 3 (October 2014) and Round 4 (November 2014) - hand delivered to all business in the Activity Centre, Primary School and Talaskia Family and Children's Centre.
- Ward Councillor Articles – The Foothills Dec 2014 – Feb 2015
- Facebook page reaching 14,200 people

For further details on community consultation, please refer to the Community Engagement Report (Appendix 1).



Community workshop session - Stage 1

3.2 Internal Stakeholders

A series of meetings were held during September 2014 with key Council departments. The meetings provided an opportunity to identify key constraints and challenges and key opportunities and needs for the Activity Centre, determine existing plans and projects and to discuss initial research undertaken by the consultant team. Meetings were conducted with relevant Council departments on the following topics:

- Cultural and arts;
- Open space, public space and recreation;
- Social and community agendas;
- Traffic and transport; and
- Stormwater and Drainage.

A meeting was also held with the Councillor for the Dodson Ward to discuss opportunities and challenges for Upper Gully, as well as provide background regarding the interim building height controls.

Internal collaboration is essential and ongoing for the refinement and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

3.3 External Agencies

The engagement process also included meetings and discussions with key stakeholders and state agencies. The purpose of these discussions was to obtain their aspirations for Upper Gully, determine future plans and to test scenarios. Key stakeholders and state agencies engaged as part of this process included:

- Bicycle Network Victoria;
- Country Fire Authority (CFA);
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning;
- Department of Environment and Primary Industry (former);
- Environmental Protection Authority Victoria;
- Melbourne Water;
- Parks Victoria;
- Public Transport Victoria;
- Shire of Yarra Ranges;
- South East Water;
- Tourism Victoria;
- VicRoads;
- VicTrack; and
- Yarra Ranges Tourism.

Feedback from the consultation and engagement process was used to inform the vision and strategic objectives contained in this Strategic Plan.

3.4 Key Opportunities and Constraints

During the engagement process, a number of key opportunities and constraints were identified by the various stakeholders. A summary of these are provided below:

- While participants indicated they generally appreciated the level of community facilities and services provided within Upper Gully, the need for a General Practitioner was highlighted.
 - Improving access to community facilities was highlighted as a key opportunity.
 - It was generally appreciated that there was good access to variety of retail within Ferntree Plaza. This included access to the Maxi Foods supermarket, a Post Office, Chemist and Take Away which were all conveniently located in one location.
 - The opportunity to capture the passing tourism trade and benefit from the expenditure was identified by some members of the community, however others were wary that improvements should be focused in the first instance towards the needs of the local community.
 - Many participants commented on the poor, tired, rusted and ugly existing centre signage and indicated the opportunity to remove this in the future.
 - There was recognition by participants of the role of open space / playgrounds / play spaces in getting kids active due to many homes having steep backyards.
 - Participants identified a lack of communal or public space within the Activity Centre and expressed a desire for one to be provided.
 - Participants emphasised the importance of key views to the hills from the Activity Centre and the opportunity to retain these.
 - Participants frequently commented about “eyesores” such as:
 - Railway Bridge;
 - Car Yards - the mish-mash of retail & light industrial;
 - Graffiti;
 - Station & surrounds – especially rusty signage;
 - Royal Hotel – especially the rear; and
 - General tiredness & shabbiness demonstrated by empty shops.
- Participants indicated that improvements to these would help improve the character and identity of Upper Gully.
- Landscaping in and around the Activity Centre could be improved to enhance pedestrian amenity and the aesthetics of the centre.
 - A number of walking and cycling concerns were highlighted including:
 - Limited provision of safe footpaths in steep terrain (e.g. Albert St)
 - The poor condition of many existing footpaths (including along the north side Burwood Highway)
 - Pedestrian and cycling access around the station & Ferntree Plaza, where is a conflict between vehicle and pedestrian movements.
 - Limited connections between existing open spaces and key destinations including community facilities and services and the National Park.
 - The need to provide better pedestrian access for the aged, people with disabilities and other people with special requirements (i.e. parents with prams).
 - Participants identified the opportunity to provide improved pedestrian access across Upper Gully, focusing of connections between key destinations.
 - Vegetation, in particular the treed slopes was identified as a key feature of Upper Ferntree Gully and a feature that was valued by the community.
 - Car parking was noted as an issue particularly around:
 - The 1,000 Steps , which is highly utilised during the weekend, with parking spilling out to the adjacent streets;
 - The Angliss Hospital where parking impacts on nearby residential streets;
 - Mount View Road parking which has a high occupancy rate; and
 - Railway Station which has a high occupancy rate.
 - A number of key issues were highlighted in regards to vehicular access within Upper Gully, these included:
 - Entrance to Maxi Foods car parking (particularly the conflict between people entering at speed);
 - The intersection of Rollings Road and Old Belgrave Road;
 - The intersection of Rollings Road and John Street;
 - The one way Mount View Road;
 - The service road at Willow Street and Burwood Highway;
 - The intersection of Albert and Townley Streets;
 - Planting at Dawson Street and Burwood Highway;
 - Quarry Road being unsealed and dangerous due to speed of some vehicles; and
 - Limited evacuation routes as an alternative to the Highway.
 - Participants highlighted the opportunity to address traffic issues and improve vehicular and pedestrian safety.

- Drainage was highlighted as a key issue for Upper Gully. Discussions with Council staff indicated that flooding along Burwood Highway required upgrades to VicRoads infrastructure and that these were part of on going negotiations. Council staff also indicated noted that drainage would be a key constraint for development within the Activity Centre.
- Concern was raised regarding the risks of bushfire and bushfire safety, particularly during consultation sessions. Many people noted that during the 2009 Black Saturday bushfire, the closure of Burwood Highway made evacuating Upper Gully difficult, and many were unaware that the local fire refuge areas were located in Wantirna, Rowville and Boronia. Many people expressed concerns regarding the provision of accessible evacuation routes and the lack of a fire refuge area within Upper Gully.
- The Gully Market was considered by many as an important part of living within Upper Gully.
- Participants frequently commented that there is already “heritage & soul” in some existing buildings and were keen to have buildings including Royal Hotel and the Visitors Information Centre protected.
- The 1812 Theatre was identified as a valued asset of Upper Gully, with opportunities to expand its offering and engagement with the community.
- Discussions with Council staff indicated that funding for public art is limited, with only a small budget allocated to this within the municipality each year. This may have impacts for the provision of public art within the Activity Centre.
- Participants indicated that they appreciated the engagement opportunities provided (as part of the Strategic Plan).
- The community noted challenges of being on the border between the Shire of Knox and the Shire of Yarra Ranges and suggested greater co-ordination between the municipalities was required.

3.5 Key Observations

The key aspirations for Upper Gully identified during Community Workshop sessions Stage 1 and Stage 2, include:

- Maintaining access to services and facilities – 1812 Theatre, Plaza Shops, hospital, train station, schools, library & vet.
- Strengthening the presence of the hills, trees and green open space vista, especially the National Park.
- Building a stronger sense of community – friendliness of the people and the family friendly environment.
- Maintaining low density and large blocks and protecting the area from high rise development.
- Protecting the ‘heritage and soul’ of Upper Gully including buildings such as the Royal Hotel and the Visitors Information Centre.
- Protecting and enhancing the existing ‘village feel’ including the use of landscaping to improve the experience of public open space within the shopping centre.
- Providing access to a variety of retail uses.
- Improving existing ‘eyesores’ such as the railway bridge, car yards and light industrial, graffiti, station and surrounds, the rear of the Royal Hotel and general tiredness of shops.
- Improving pedestrian and cycle connections across the centre and to surrounding residential areas.
- Improving car parking access and management – 1,000 Steps, Angliss Hospital and the railway station.

*For further details on the community and stakeholder engagement process, refer to the **Upper Gully Plan Engagement Report, 2015 (Appendix 1)***



Community workshop session - Stage 1



4. KEY STRATEGIC INFLUENCES

4.1 Overview

The preparation of the Strategic Plan requires an understanding of policies, studies and projects that will influence the future planning for Upper Gully.

Key documents influencing the future planning and design of Upper Gully are summarised in this section.

4.2 State Government Policies/Plans

4.2.1 Plan Melbourne

Plan Melbourne was released in May 2014, by the then State Government. The document is Melbourne's metropolitan planning strategy for the next 40 years and will guide its development and growth, including matters such as infrastructure, housing, employment, transport and environment.

Directions relevant to Upper Gully in Plan Melbourne include:

- Direction 2.2 – Reduce the cost of living by increasing housing supply near services and public transport.
- Direction 4.1 – Create a city of 20 minute neighbourhoods.
- Direction 4.2 – Protect Melbourne and its suburbs from inappropriate development.
- Direction 4.3 – Create neighbourhoods that are safe for communities and healthy lifestyles.
- Direction 4.4 – Plan for future social infrastructure.
- Direction 4.5 – Make our city greener.
- Direction 4.8 – Achieve and promote design excellence.
- Direction 5.1 – Use the city structure to drive sustainable outcomes in managing growth.
- Direction 5.2 – Protect and restore natural habitats in urban and non-urban areas.

The Strategic Plan and the Knox Planning Scheme must be consistent with State Government strategies and policies such as Plan Melbourne.

4.2.2 Practice Note 58: Structure Planning For Activity Centres

The key elements of the project reflect the structure of the Department of Land, Water and Planning's (DELWP) Practice Note for Structure Planning for Activity Centres Practice Note No. 58, June 2015.

This note sets out the key steps and outputs that are required to develop a Structure Plan and provides examples of Structure Plans to follow as a template. The Practice Note outlines a 7-step process which is broadly being adopted for this project.

The Practice Note also outlines a structure for the report which is based around the following themes:

- Activities and Land Use
- Built Form
- Public Environment
- Movement and Transport
- Cultural and Environmental Values

In addition, key precinct-based outcomes are also provided as part of the template.

The Practice Note provides strong guidance on the process to delineate a Structure Plan boundary.

While the Practice Note 58: Structure Planning for Activity Centres themes will be incorporated into the Consolidated Background Report and Strategic Plan for Upper Gully it is important to note that these will be reconciled with Knox City Plan Themes (refer Section 4.4) and structured accordingly.

Implications for the Strategic Plan

- The Strategic Plan should look to create a 20 minute neighbourhood including priority for walking and cycling and designating higher land use densities and mixed use developments near railway stations, major bus terminals and transport interchanges, to be in accordance with State Planning Policy.

4.3 Planning Policies and Controls

4.3.1 State Planning Policy Framework

Clause 11 Settlement

Focuses on concentrating major retail, residential, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural developments into the Activity Centre, which provide a variety of land uses and are highly accessible to the community. Upper Ferntree Gully is identified in the hierarchy of activity centres as a Neighbourhood Activity Centre. This clause provides strategic direction for future land uses within Upper Gully.

Clause 13 Environmental Risk

Aims to avoid or minimise environmental degradation and hazards. Objectives with particular relevance to the Activity Centre include:

- To protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes.
- To assist to strengthen community resilience to bushfire.
- To assist the protection of:
 - Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard;
 - The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways;
 - The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways; and
 - Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river health.

These objectives provide strategic direction to encourage future planning and design for Upper Gully to appropriately respond to hazards and minimise risks from landslip, bushfire and flooding.

Clause 15 Built Environment and Heritage

Aims to ensure all new land use and development appropriately responds to its landscape, valued built form and cultural context, and protect places and sites with significant heritage, architectural, aesthetic, scientific and cultural value. Objectives with particular relevance to the Activity Centre include:

- To create urban environments that are safe, functional and provide good quality environments with a sense of place and cultural identity;
- To achieve architectural and urban design outcomes that contribute positively to local urban character and enhance the public realm while minimising detrimental impact on neighbouring properties;
- To improve community safety and encourage neighbourhood design that makes people feel safe;
- To recognise and protect cultural identity, neighbourhood character and sense of place;
- To encourage land use and development that is consistent with the efficient use of energy and the minimisation of greenhouse gas emissions; and
- To ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance.

These objectives provide strategic direction to encourage the future planning and design for the Activity Centre to provide high quality urban design. Design that responds to the needs of the community and the intrinsic qualities of the place.

Clause 16 Housing

Outlines a number of objectives and strategies to guide housing development within the State, including increasing housing supply and diversity in appropriate locations. Objectives with particular relevance to the Activity Centre include:

- To locate new housing in or close to activity centres and employment corridors and at other strategic redevelopment sites that offer good access to services and transport; and
- To provide for a range of housing types to meet increasingly diverse needs.

These objectives provide strategic direction to encourage future planning and design for Upper Gully to provide for potentially increased housing supply and diversity within the Activity Centre.

Clause 17 Economic Development

Aims to contribute to the economic well-being of communities and the State as a whole by supporting and fostering economic growth and development and providing land, facilitating decisions, and resolving land use conflicts, so that each district may build on its strengths and achieve its economic potential. Objectives with particular relevance to the Activity Centre include:

- To encourage development which meets the communities' needs for retail, entertainment, office and other commercial services and provides net community benefit in relation to accessibility, efficient infrastructure use and the aggregation and sustainability of commercial facilities;
- To encourage tourism development to maximise the employment and long-term economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the State as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination; and
- To maintain and develop Metropolitan Melbourne as a desirable tourist destination.

These objectives provide strategic direction to ensure future planning and design for Upper Gully provides a range of land uses within the Activity Centre that provide for both local and tourist needs.

Clause 18 Transport

Aims to ensure an integrated and sustainable transport system that provides access to social and economic opportunities, facilitates economic prosperity, contributes to environmental sustainability, coordinates reliable movements of people and goods, and is safe. Objectives with particular relevance to the Activity Centre include:

- To create a safe and sustainable transport system by integrating land-use and transport;
- To promote the use of sustainable personal transport; and
- To integrate planning for cycling with land use and development planning and encourage as alternative modes of travel.

A key strategy of this policy which is of particular relevance to Upper Gully is 'coordinating improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks with the ongoing development and redevelopment of the urban area'.

These objectives provide strategic direction to ensure future planning and design for Upper Gully provides a range of integrated and sustainable transport systems to make it easy and safe for people to get around.

Clause 19 Infrastructure

Aims to ensure social needs are recognised by providing land for a range of accessible community resources, such as education, cultural, health and community support facilities. This clause encourages the location of community resources that are highly accessible by public transport and walking and cycling paths. It also encourages the provision of water supply, sewerage and drainage services efficiently and effectively to meet State and community needs and protect the environment.

4.3.2 Local Planning Policy Framework

Local Planning Policies that are most relevant to Upper Gully include:

Clause 21.04 Urban Design

A key objective of this clause is to “Protect and enhance the aesthetic, environmental and landscape values and vistas of the Dandenong Foothills, Dandenong Creek Valley, local and national parklands”.

The clause also notes that built form is a major contributor to long-term sustainability objectives through the use of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles.

Other strategies with particular relevance to the Activity Centre include:

- Ensure development is reflective of, respects and builds upon the valued characteristics and cultural aspects of the local environment.
- Encourage the provision of public art in public spaces in activity nodes, activity centres and along major road networks;
- Encourage development along road corridors that emphasize views to the Dandenong Foothills, provides opportunities for passive surveillance to the road frontage and incorporates landscaping that will contribute to the “bush boulevard” character;
- Transform the east-west declared arterial roads and Stud Road into “bush boulevards” with extensive native planting as a way of expressing the landscape transition between the edge of the suburbs and the Dandenong Ranges;
- Encourage innovative and architecturally designed development that incorporates sustainable values and principles inherent in the City’s image, at identified points of entry into the city, and adjacent to intersections near or within major activity centres and working environments;

- Consolidate urban development around nodes of activity and public transport to reduce the level of car dependency and increase pedestrian activity.
- Ensure that advertising signage makes a positive contribution to the landscape theme of transport corridors, and does not detract from views; and
- Ensure an appropriate design response for signage, buildings and structures, and screen unattractive buildings and developments through planting.

This clause provides direction for the provision of built form that is ecologically sustainable and site responsive and for public art, signage and landscaping along Burwood Highway and for improved pedestrian networks within Upper Gully.

Clause 21.05 – Housing

This clause implements the Knox Housing Strategy 2015, including specifying the preferred locations for different types of housing within the municipality. The Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre is identified as an activity area with a greater range and increased densities of residential development are encouraged within the area. This Clause also recognises that that the environment and landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills outweighs the need for urban consolidation in the Foothills.”

21.06 Environment

Clause 21.06 Environment relates to the natural environment and cultural heritage. Key themes of this clause include the natural environment, sites of biological significance, the Dandenong Foothills, Urban Edge and Urban Growth Boundary, Dandenong Creek Valley, Creeks and Waterways, Cultural Heritage, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Sustainability. Key objectives and strategies under these themes that are relevant to Upper Gully include:

- To protect the landscape and environmental significance of the Dandenong Foothills.
- To protect and enhance creeks and waterways as key public, landscape and environmental assets.
- To reduce the impact of urban stormwater run-off on creeks, rivers, bays and other receiving waters and their surrounds, both within and outside the City.
- To ensure that development responds to drainage and flood constraints.
- To protect and enhance places of cultural heritage.
- To protect and enhance places of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

These objectives are considered in the Strategic Plan.

Clause 21.07 Economic Development

The Economic Strategic Framework Plan included within this policy identifies the Activity Centre as being Highway Retail, a Neighbourhood Activity Centre (with opportunities for infill residential development) and more specifically a gateway to tourist activity within the Dandenong Ranges (refer to Map 05, overleaf).

This clause provides direction for the Activity Centre in terms of its economic activity and its broader economic role within the municipality, including its role as a gateway to the Dandenong Ranges.

The clause also supports development in Neighbourhood Centres in the Dandenong Foothills (including Upper Ferntree Gully) that responds positively to the landscape and environmental sensitivities of the area and is well designed and respects and complements the local character, including height.

Clause 21.08 Infrastructure

Clause 21.08 Infrastructure relates to the provision of physical and social services. The key themes of this clause include providing and maintaining infrastructure, integrated transport, open space and recreation and community health and wellbeing. The objectives and strategies that may have implications for Upper Gully include:

- **Objective 2 (Providing and Maintaining Infrastructure)** - Aims to ensure the provision of new infrastructure is designed to contribute positively to the urban fabric and fulfill the needs of its intended life. Key strategies include the provision of new housing in locations that have good access to public transport and facilities and to encourage the co-location of community facilities.

- **Objective 3 (Integrated Transport)** - Aims to provide a safe integrated movement system that increases levels of accessibility, use and transport choice for all members of the community. Key strategies under this objective include improving connectivity between new and existing residential areas and transport networks, encouraging increased housing densities along public transport networks and in activity centres and enhancing walking and cycling.
- **Objective 4 (Integrated Transport)** - Aims to provide accessible, linked open space areas. Key strategies under this objective include improving access to and the quality of open space areas and providing for accessible, linked open space areas that protect natural values.
- **Objective 5 (Community Health and Wellbeing)** - Aims to ensure that social infrastructure is accessible and meets the existing and future needs of the community. Key strategies under this objective include co-location of community facilities and the provision of flexible and adaptable buildings.

Clause 22.01 Dandenong Foothills

Aims to protect and enhance the landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills, maintaining uninterrupted view lines from vantage points, and ensuring the sensitive design of buildings (development to be sited below the dominant tree canopy height).

This clause provides direction for the Activity Centre in terms of the design of buildings in order to retain key views.

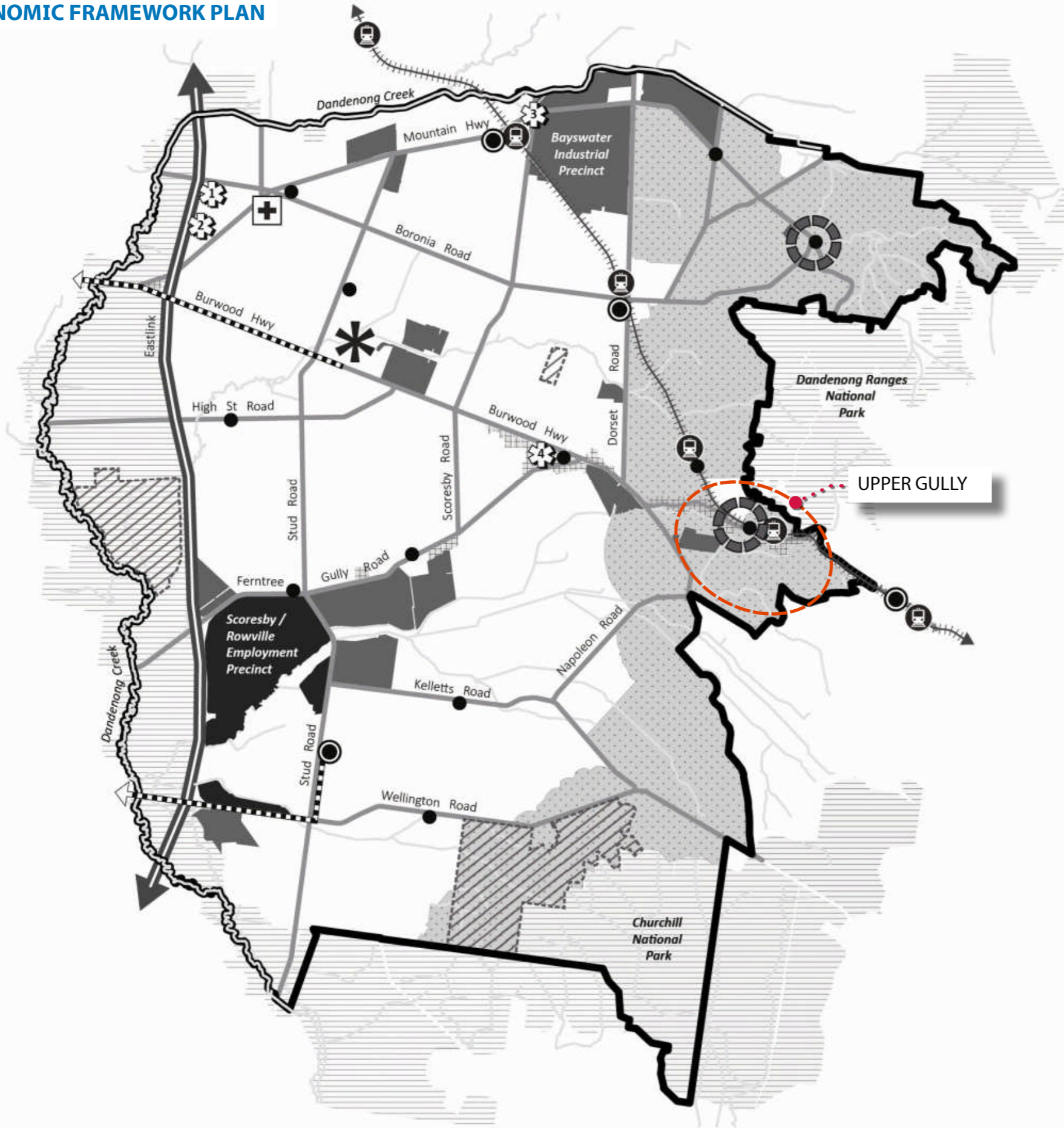
Clause 22.12 Residential Land Use and Development within the Commercial 1 Zone

This policy seeks to ensure that residential land use and development within activity centres, including the Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre is consistent with the role of the centre and that development is appropriate within its Dandenong Foothills context.











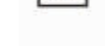
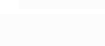



Implications for the Strategic Plan

- Existing policies limit the opportunity for further growth within the surrounding residential areas of Upper Gully and encourages future development within the Activity Centre.

ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK PLAN



LEGEND

-  RAIL CORRIDOR / TRAIN STATION
-  MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
-  DECLARED ARTERIAL ROAD
-  EASTLINK
-  EMERGING SPECIALISED ACTIVITY CENTRE: SCORESBY / ROWVILLE EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT
-  INDUSTRIAL AREAS: MAJOR SOURCE OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT
-  QUARRY: FUTURE REMEDIATION
-  MEDICAL PRECINCT: ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TO DETERMINE FUTURE POTENTIAL MEDICAL PRECINCT
-  HIERARCHY OF ACTIVITY CENTRES PRINCIPAL
-  MAJOR
-  NEIGHBOURHOOD
-  UPPER FERNTREE GULLY AND THE BASIN: DEMARCATATE GATEWAY TO TOURIST ACTIVITY WITHIN THE DANDENONG RANGES
-  REGIONAL TOURISM AND RECREATION WITHIN THE DANDENONG CREEK VALLEY / THE DANDENONG RANGES AND CHURCHILL NATIONAL PARKS
-  DANDENONG FOOTHILLS: SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL LANDSCAPE
-  HIGHWAY RETAIL
-  FUTURE BURWOOD HIGHWAY TRAM / ROWVILLE TRAIN (BEING ADVOCATED)
-  STRATEGIC SITES*

Map 05. Economic Framework Plan

Source: Knox Planning Scheme 2015

4.3.3 Zones

Upper Gully is affected by the following zones.

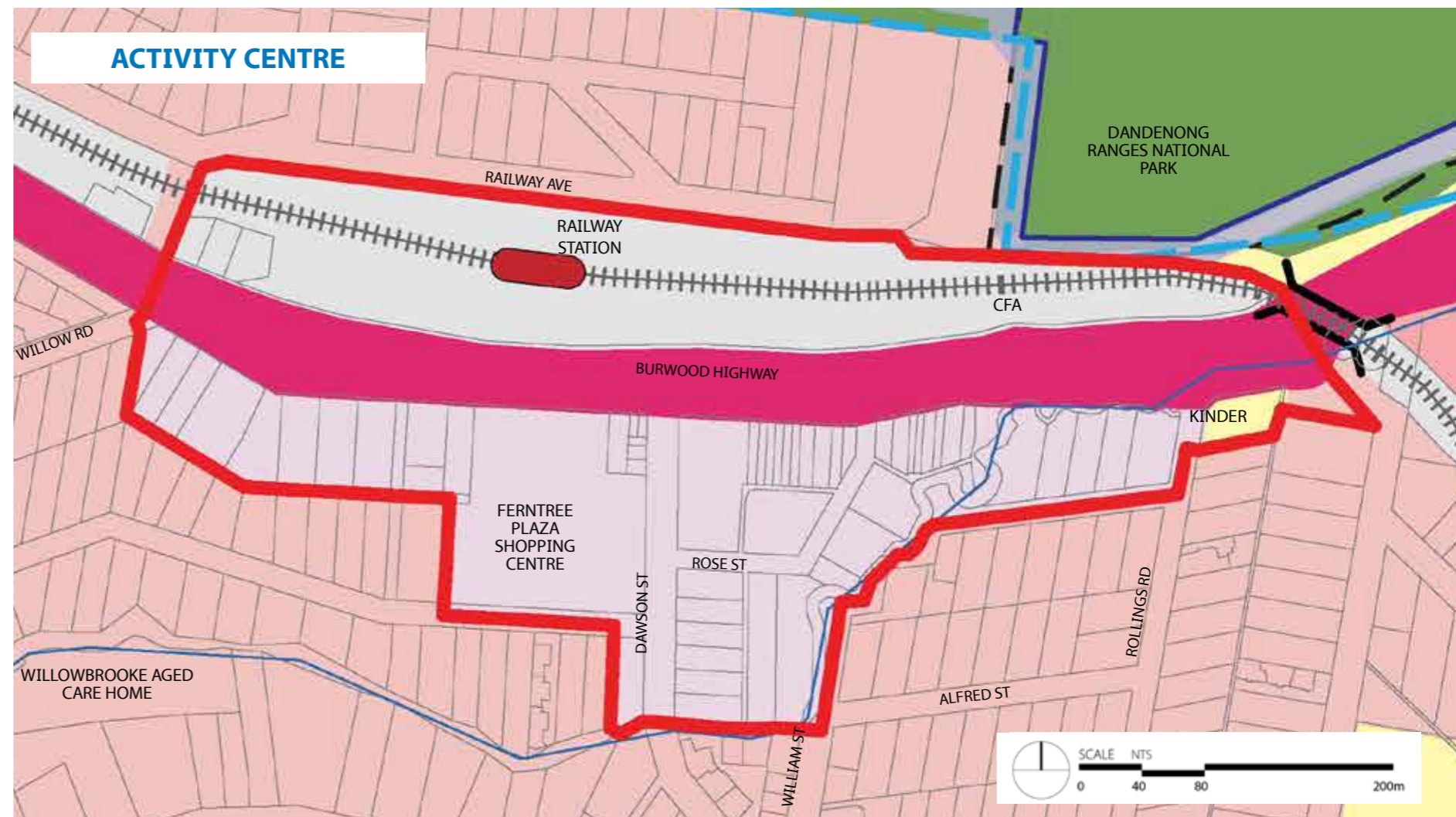
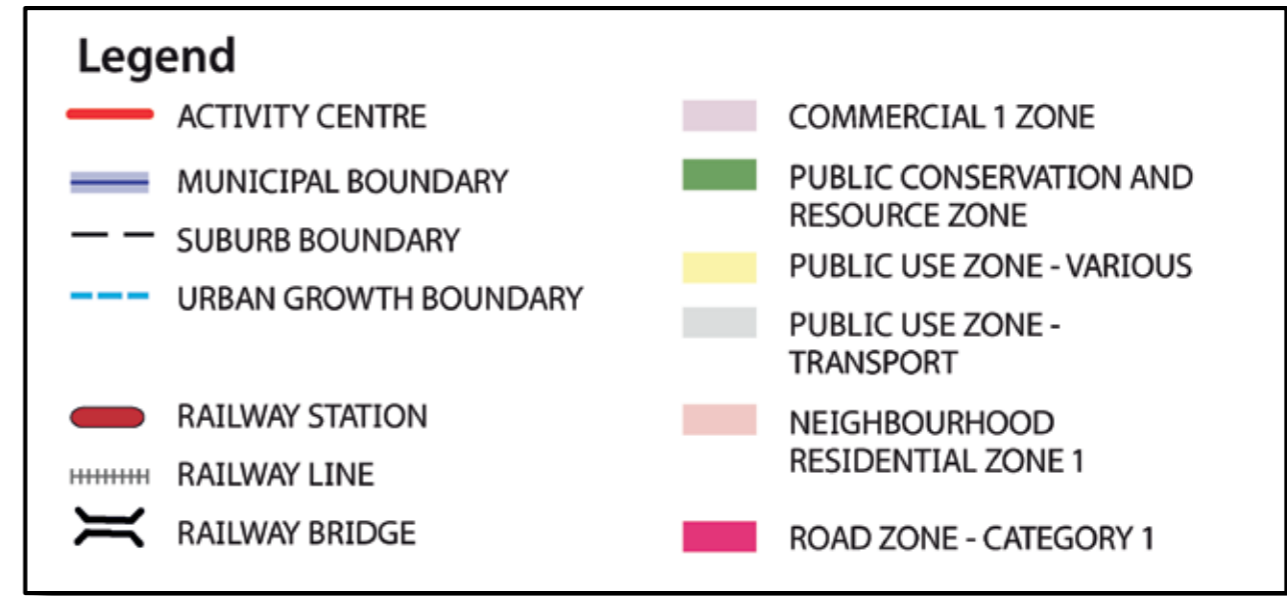
Commercial 1 Zone - Promotes vibrant mixed use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses, as well as residential uses at densities complementary to the role and scale of the commercial centre. The Commercial 1 Zone replaced the former Business 1 Zone (B1Z), Business 2 Zone (B2Z) and Business 5 Zone (B5Z) in 2014. The C1Z allows for residential above a commercial ground floor. Generally the schedule of uses for C1Z is less restrictive than the previous Business Zones. This zone applies to the majority of the centre.

Public Use Zone 4 – Transport - Aims to recognise public land use for public utility and community services and facilities, and provide for associated uses that are consistent with the intent of the public land reservation or purpose. The Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station, associated infrastructure and commuter car parking are included in the PUZ4.

Public Use Zone 6 –Local Government (PUZ6) - Aims to recognise land for community facilities and services, and covers the kindergarten on the corner of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) - Replaced the former General Residential Zone (GRZ) in 2016 and aims to encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area, implement neighbourhood character policy, provide a diversity of housing types and moderate housing growth in locations offering good access to services and transport. It also allows for educational, religious, recreational and community, and a limited range of non-residential uses to serve the local community in appropriate locations. Small scale retail uses are permitted with a number of conditions. This zone applies to the surrounding residential areas.

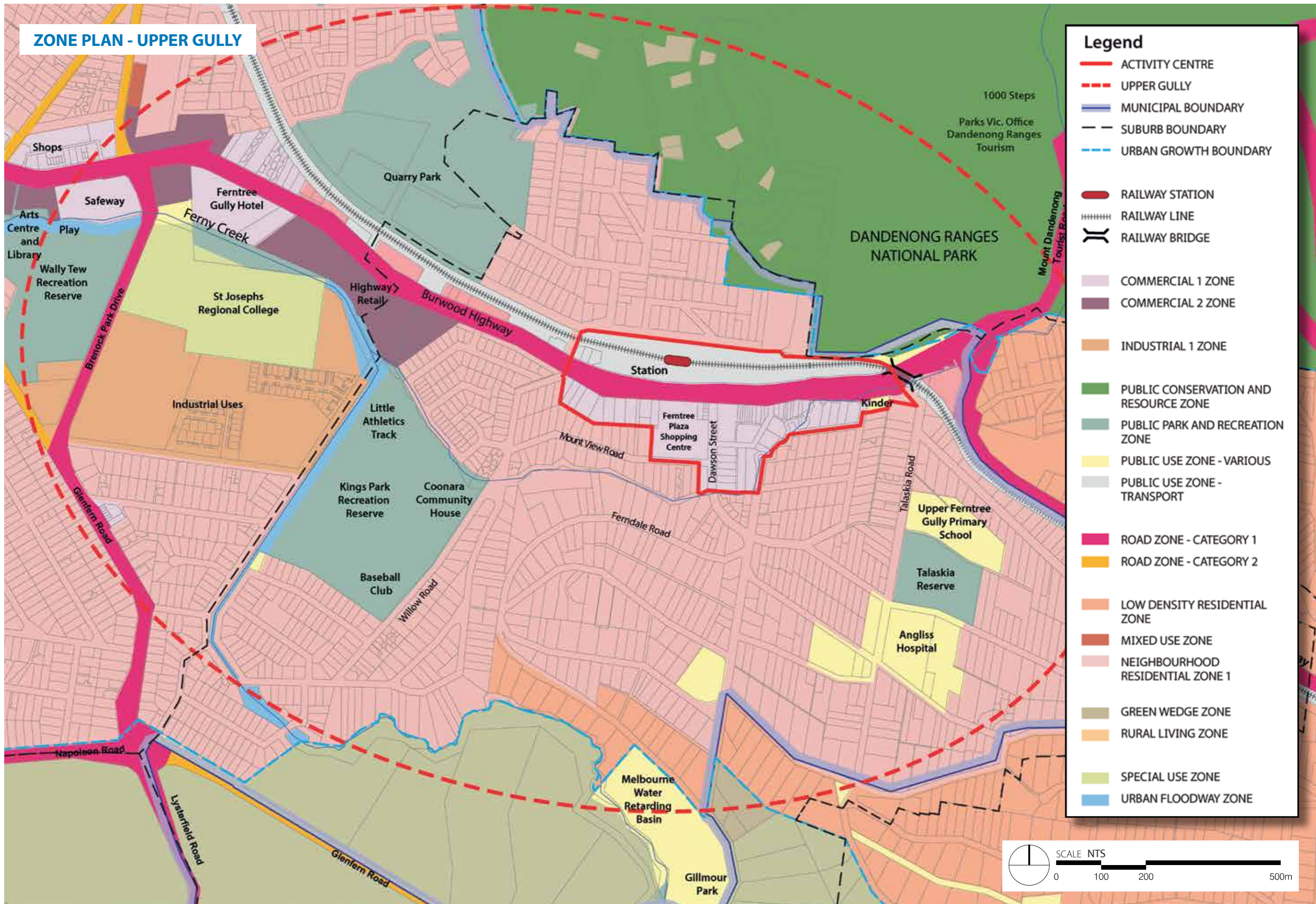
Maps 06 and 07 identifies the locations where these zones apply.



Map 06. Zone Plan - Activity Centre

Implications for the Strategic Plan

- Current Commercial Zone 1 provides flexibility for a variety of land uses to be accommodated within the Activity Centre.



Map 07. Zone Plan - Upper Gully

4.3.4 Overlays

OVERLAYS

The Strategic Plan is also affected by a number of overlays.

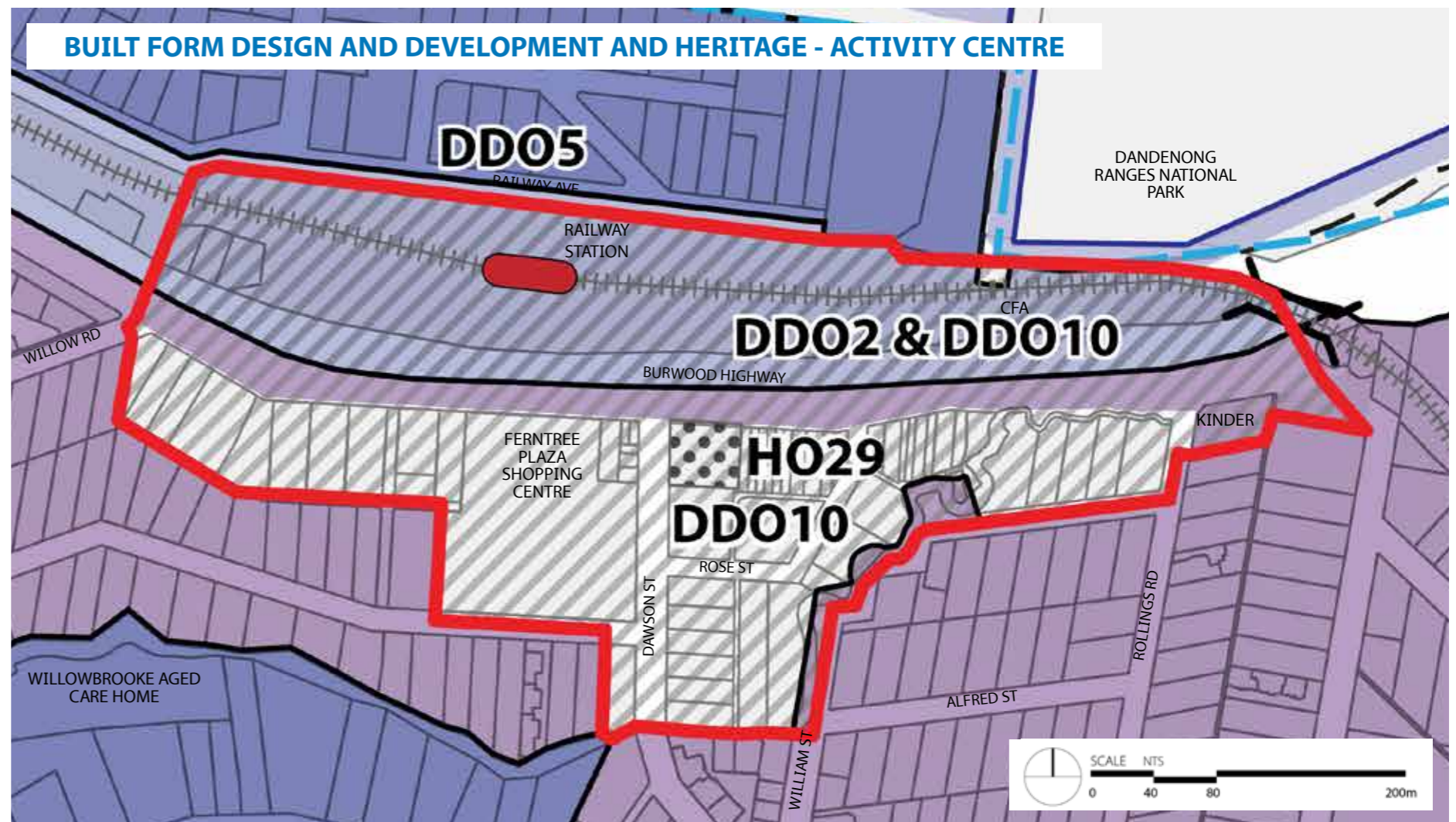
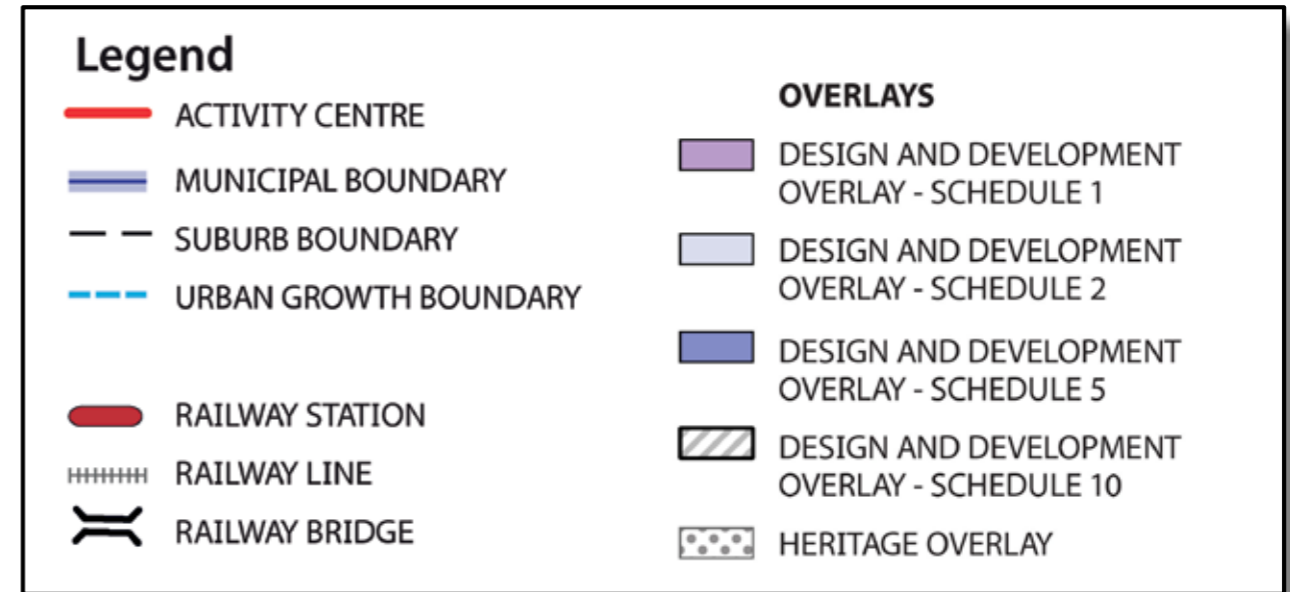
Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

Design and Development Overlays apply to both the Activity Centre and the surrounding residential areas of Upper Gully and generally limit the opportunity for further growth. Refer to Map 08 - 09.

- DDO1 - Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area - applies to an area along William Street and a strip along Burwood Highway. Development within this area must respect the existing subdivision character of the area and allow for tree retention and planting. A key development control is the minimum subdivision size of 1,000sqm.
- DDO2 - Dandenong Foothills: Lower Slope And Valley Area – applies to the railway station and associated rail infrastructure. Development within this area must respect the existing subdivision character of the area and allow for tree retention and planting. A key development control is the minimum subdivision size of 500sqm.
- DDO10 - Interim Neighbourhood Centre Height Control – applies to the entire Activity Centre. It provides interim height controls of 7.5m for the Activity Centre, allowing Council time to complete detailed planning work to inform permanent height controls.

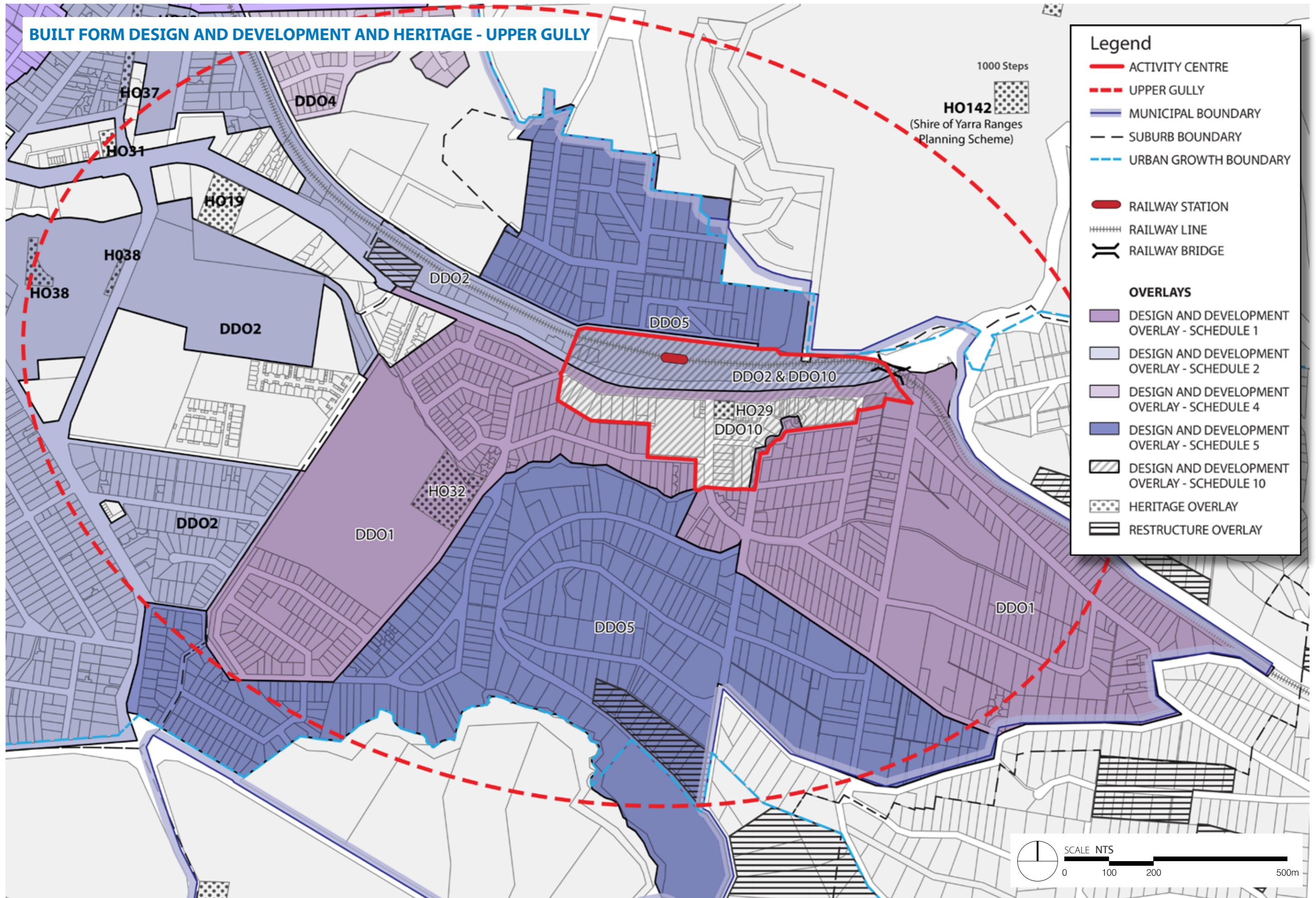
Heritage Overlay (HO)

- HO29 – Royal Hotel applies to the Royal Hotel located on the corner of Dawson Street and Burwood Highway, Upper Ferntree Gully. The Heritage Overlay aims to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance and requires that development does not adversely affect these places.



Map 08. Built Form Design and Development and Heritage - Activity Centre










BUILT FORM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE - UPPER GULLY

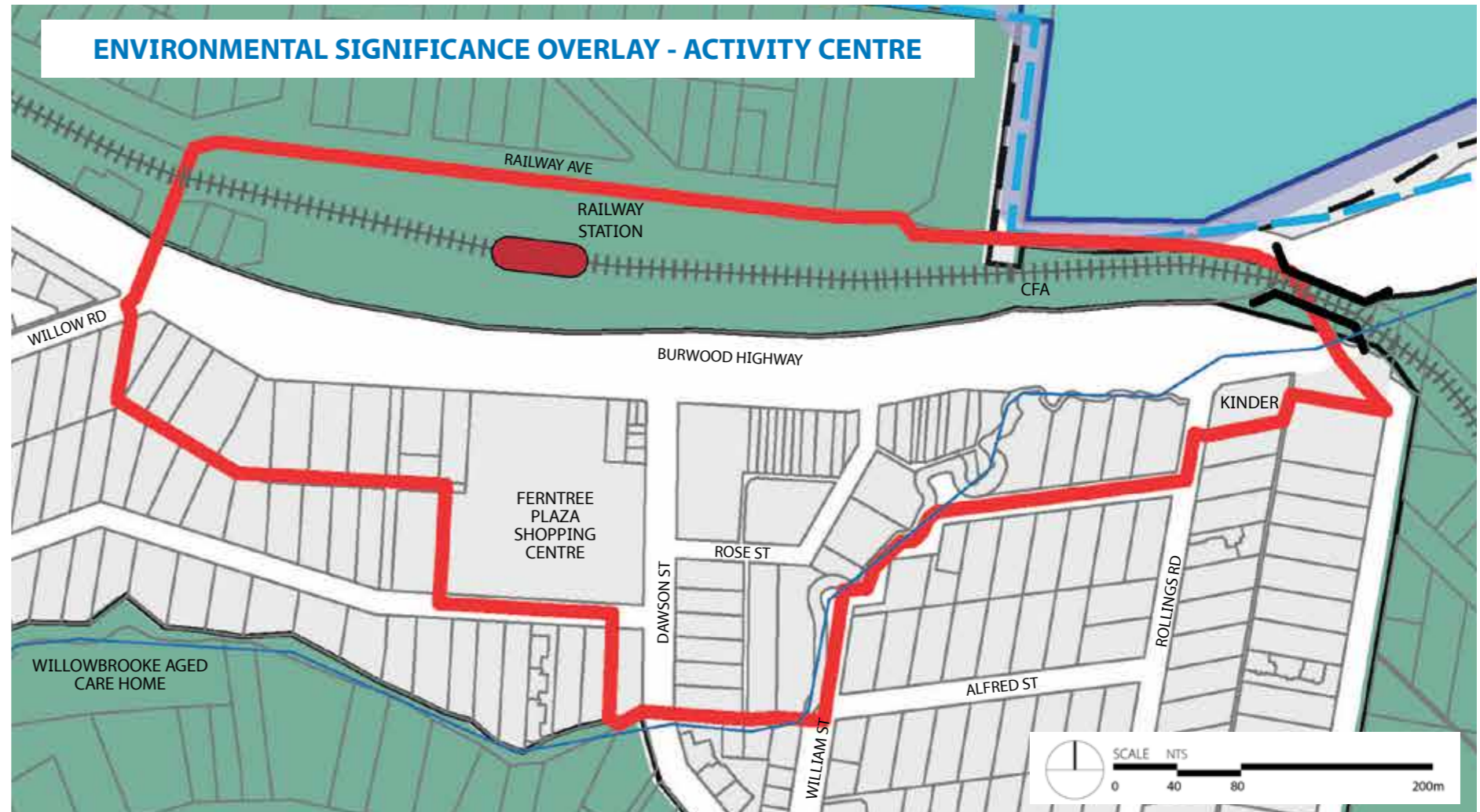


Map 09. Built Form Design and Development and Heritage - Upper Gully

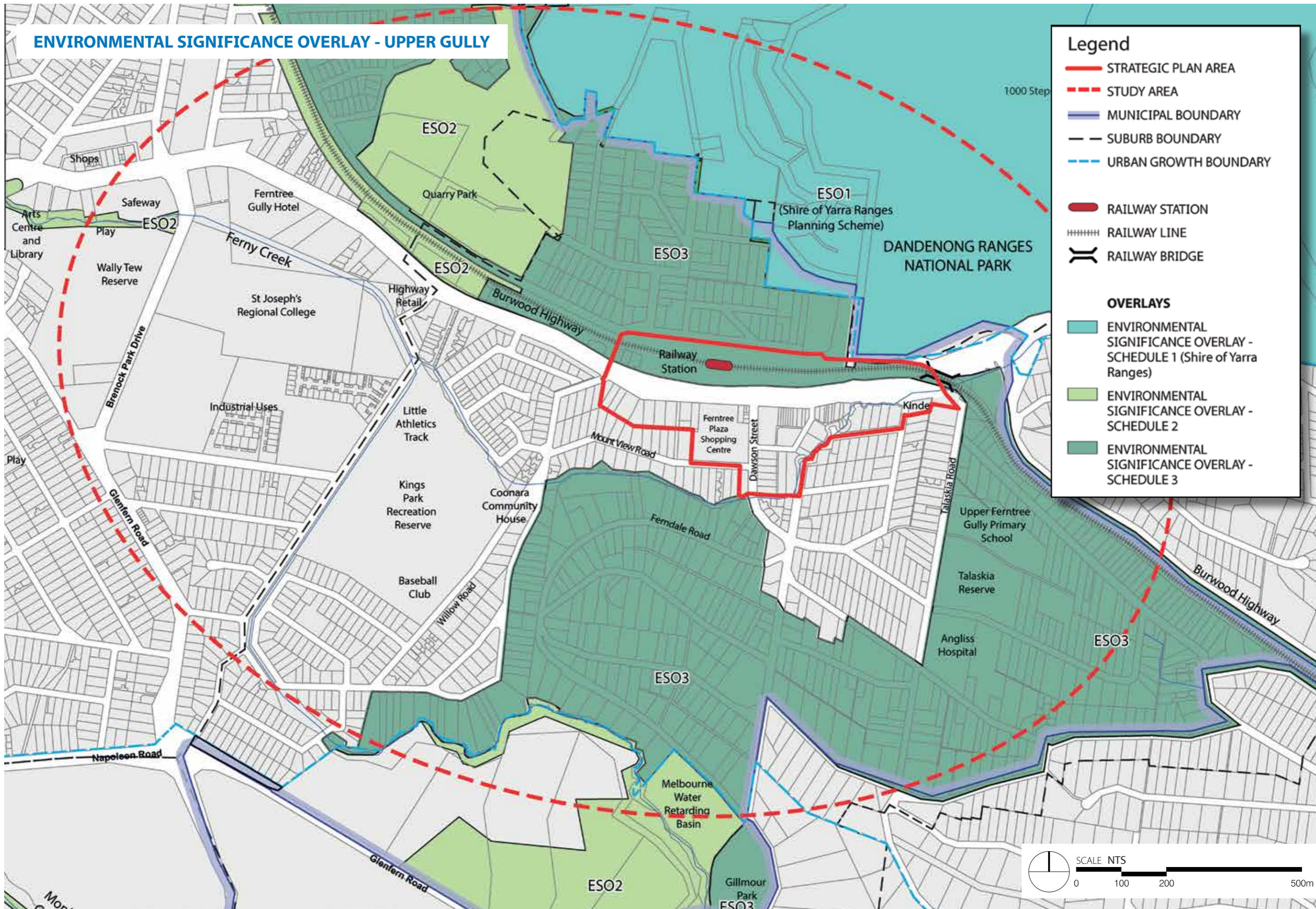
Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)

- ESO3 - Dandenong Ranges Buffer - applies to the railway station and associated rail infrastructure and surrounding land. This overlay recognises the environmental significance of indigenous vegetation to provide an ecological buffer zone to the Dandenong Ranges. Refer to Maps 10-11.

Legend		OVERLAYS	
	ACTIVITY CENTRE		ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY - SCHEDULE 1 (Shire of Yarra Ranges)
	MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY		ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY - SCHEDULE 3
	SUBURB BOUNDARY		
	URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY		
	RAILWAY STATION		
	RAILWAY LINE		
	RAILWAY BRIDGE		



Map 10. Environmental Significance Overlay - Activity Centre



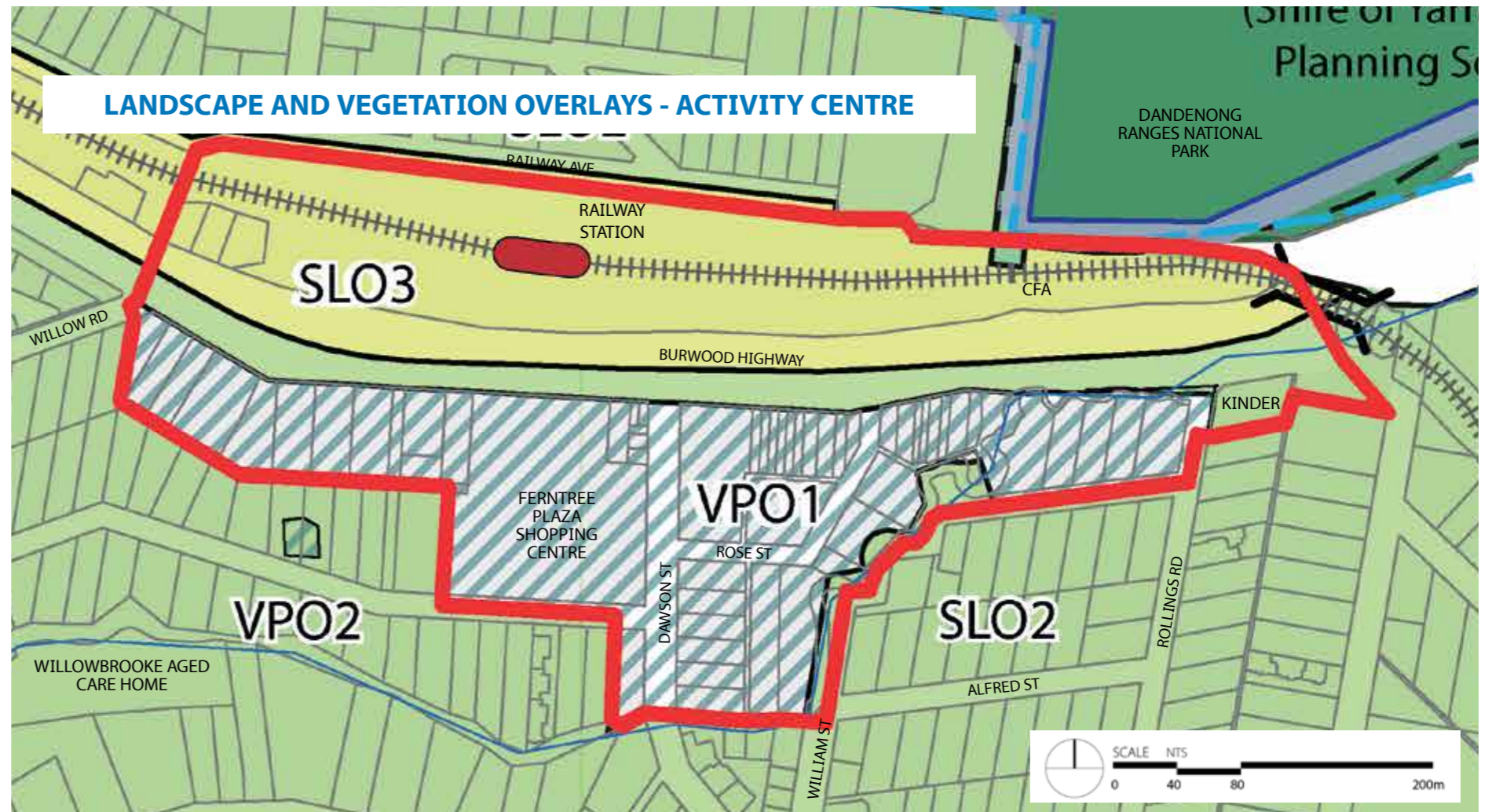
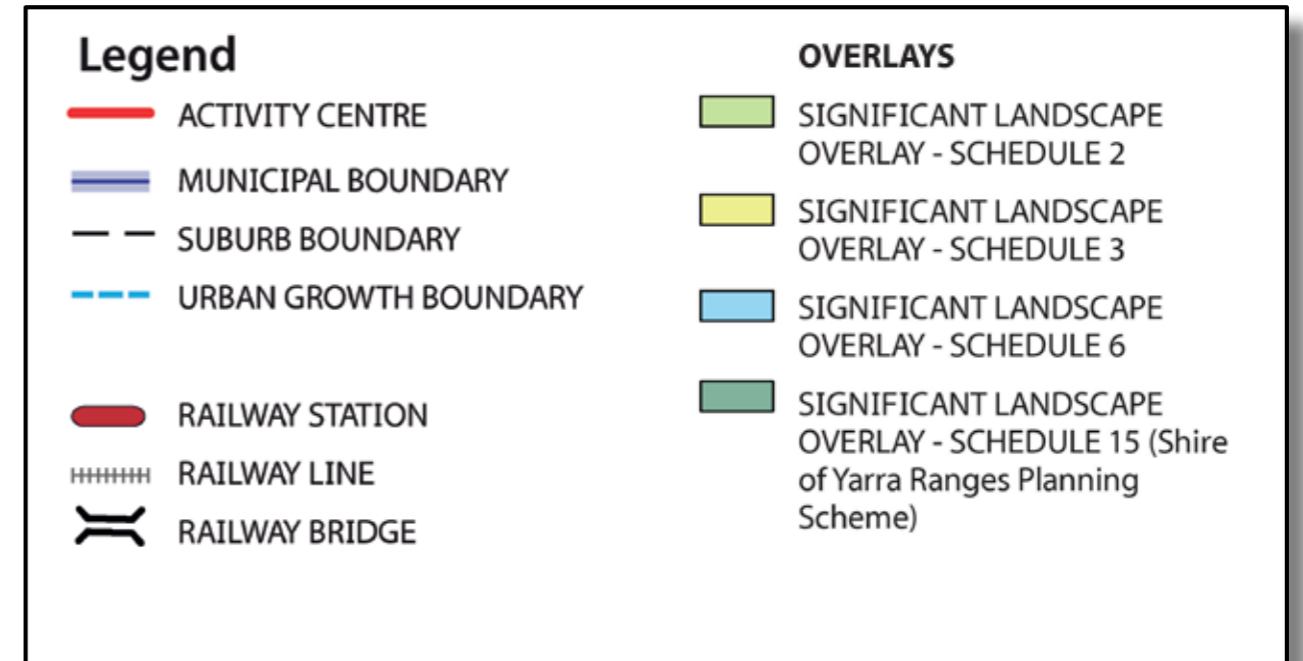
Map 11. Environmental Significance Overlay - Upper Gully

Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)

- SLO2 - Dandenong Foothills: Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area – applies to the southern half of Burwood Highway and surrounds the southern section of the Activity Centre. The purpose of SLO2 is to ensure development does not impede views towards the Dandenong Ranges. It also requires a permit for tree removal, but some exemptions apply.
- SLO3 - Dandenong Foothills: Lower Slope and Valley Area – applies to the railway station and associated rail infrastructure. SLO3 aims to protect visually sensitive areas of the Dandenong Foothills due to its proximity to the slopes of the Dandenong Ranges, which is recognised by the Natural Trust as having significant landscape values. It also requires a permit for tree removal, but some exemptions apply. Refer to Maps 12-13.

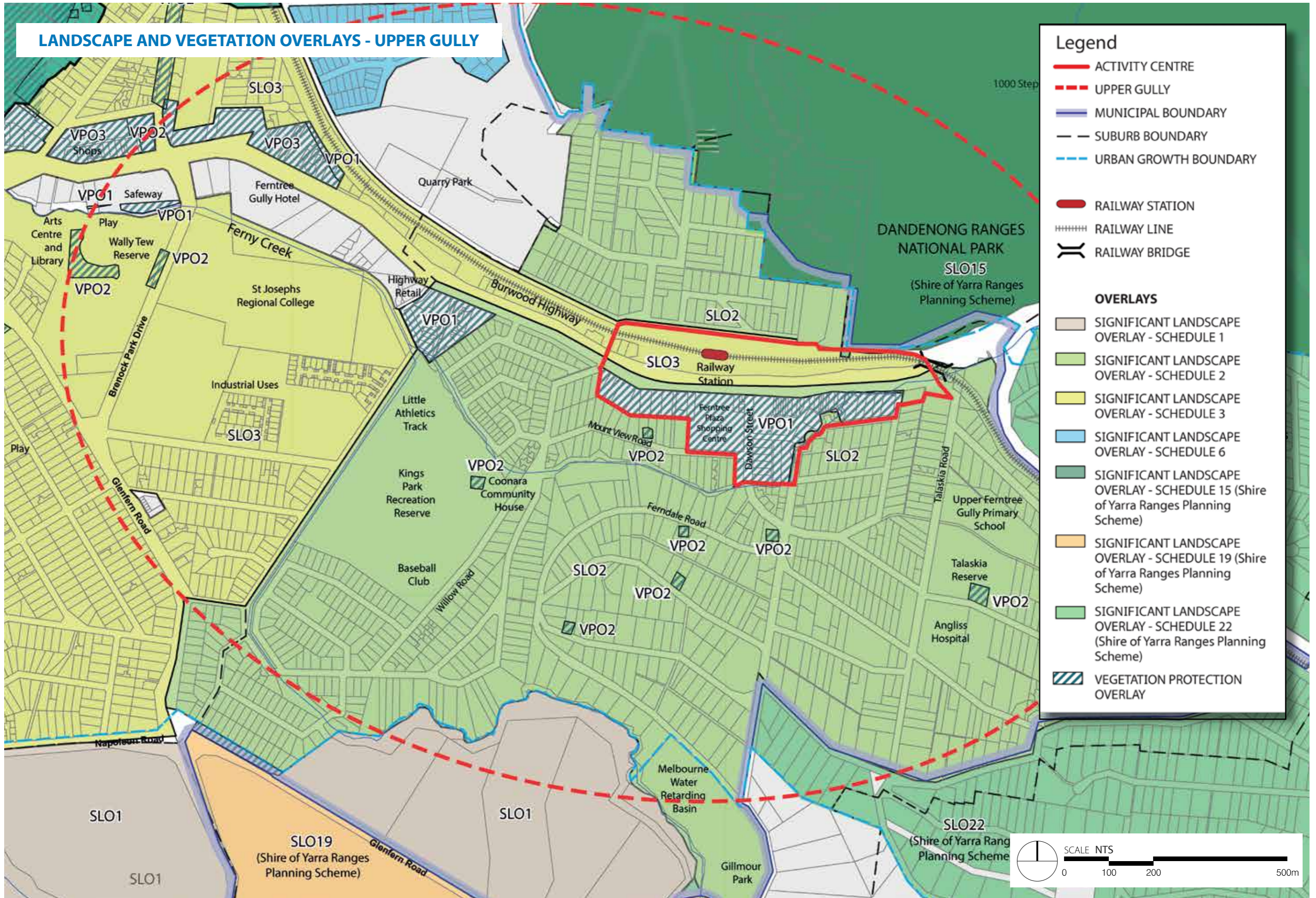
Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)

- VPO1 - Remnant Vegetation with a High Degree of Naturalness - applies to all land within the Activity Centre, south of Burwood Highway. VPO1 recognises the significance of the vegetation within close proximity to the Dandenong Ranges National Park, both visually and ecologically. VPO1 aims to protect existing vegetation and enhance the visual, environmental and cultural values of the Foothills landscape. Refer to Maps 12-13.
- VPO2 - Significant Exotic and Non Indigenous Native Trees applies to specific, exotic and non-indigenous native trees, which have been identified as having significant vegetation and landscape values based on a height of 10m or above, with a 10m spread, or with a trunk diameter of over 30cm. Specific locations for significant trees or groups of trees are listed within the Schedule. Refer to Maps 12-13.



Map 12. Landscape and Vegetation Overlays - Activity Centre

LANDSCAPE AND VEGETATION OVERLAYS - UPPER GULLY



Map 13. Landscape and Vegetation Overlays - Upper Gully

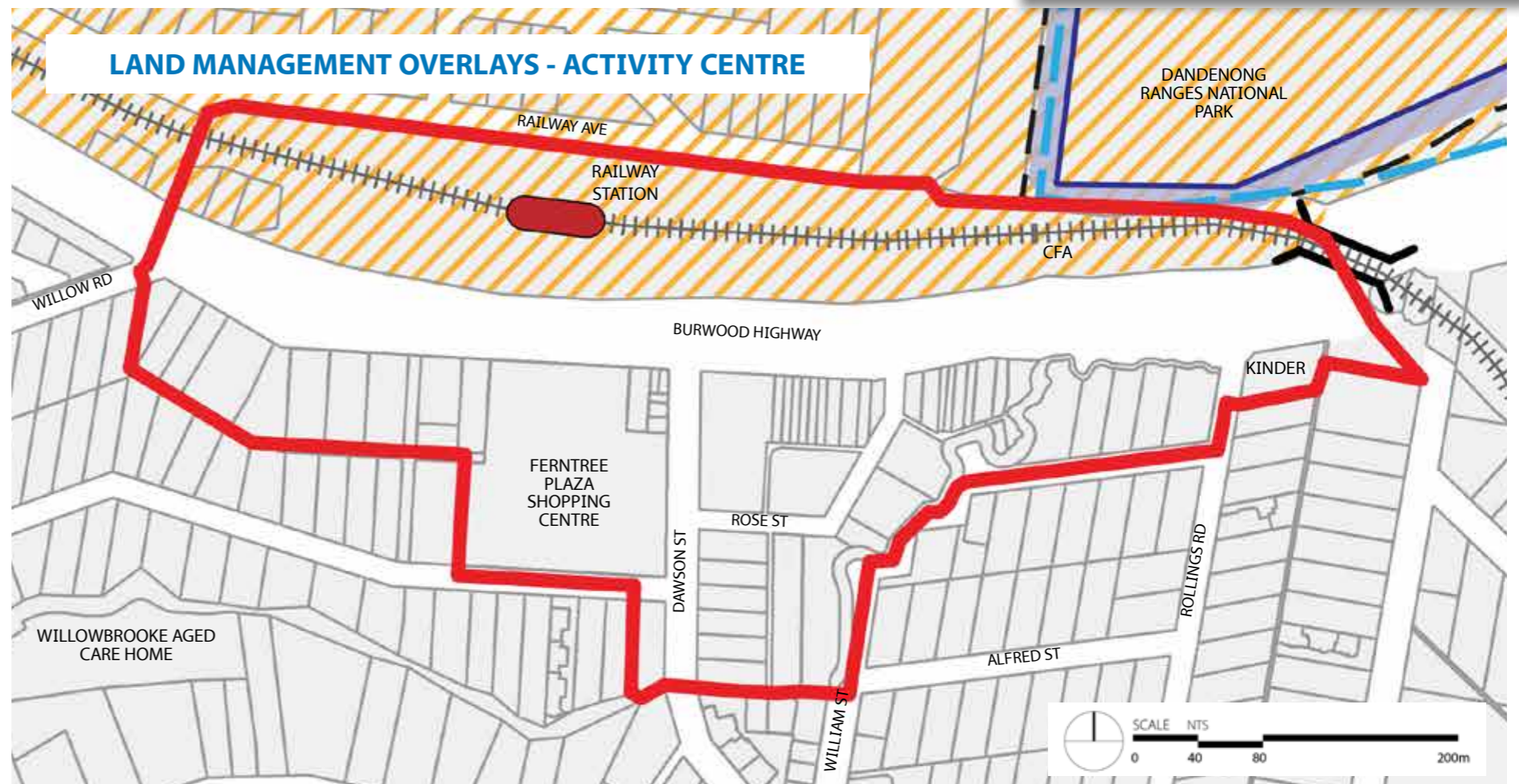
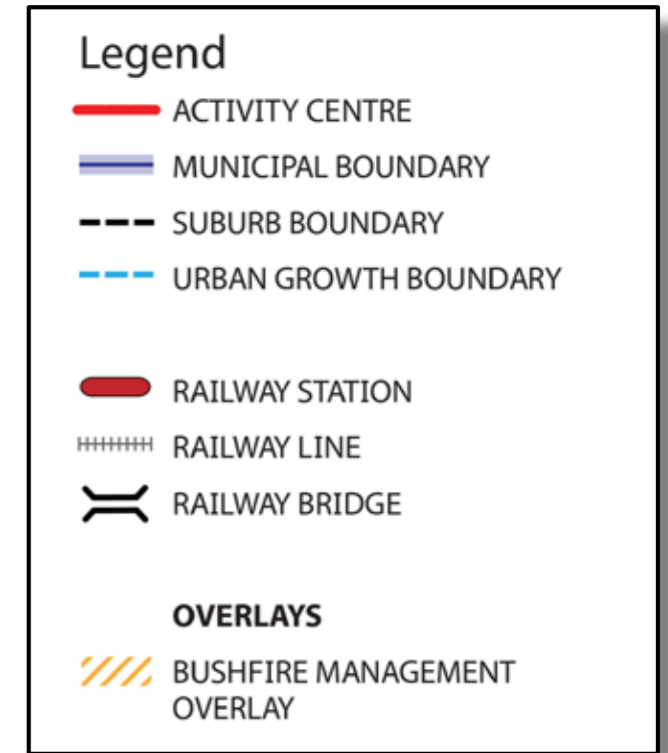
Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

- The BMO applies to the railway station and associated rail infrastructure and adjacent residential land to the north. The BMO identifies areas where bushfire is considered a hazard and warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented (refer to Maps 14-15)

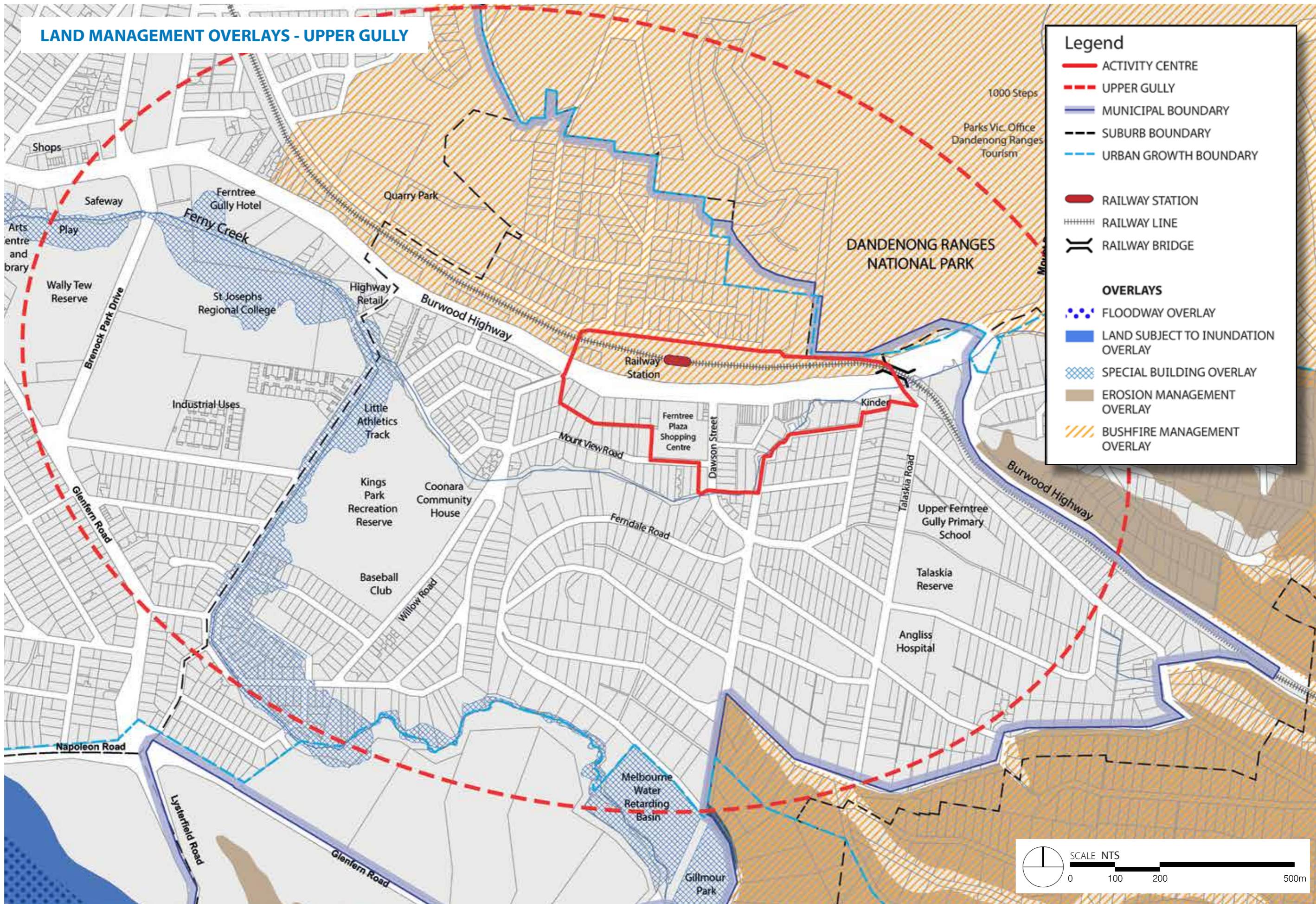
In general, zones and overlays limit opportunities for further growth within the surrounding residential areas of Upper Gully and aim to preserve the predominant character of detached dwellings on large lots.

Implications for the Strategic Plan

- While the Strategic Plan will focus on the Activity Centre, overlays may impact strategies suggested for areas outside this boundary.
- Design and Development Overlays generally maintain the existing detached dwelling housing typology in the residential areas of Upper Gully. DDO10 applies to the entire Activity Centre. It provides interim height controls for the Activity Centre, allowing Council time to complete detailed planning work to inform permanent height controls.
- The Heritage Overlay applied to the Royal Hotel ensures the preservation of this feature for future generations.
- An Erosion Management Overlay applies to areas of land slip within the Shire of Yarra Ranges. This overlay may also be applicable to landslip areas within Knox, which are currently not recognised by the planning scheme, however the existing building permit controls are recommended to be sufficient.
- Special Building Overlays, the Flood Overlay and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay highlight areas subject to flooding. These overlays may also be applicable to other areas within Upper Gully, where drainage issues are present including within the Activity Centre.



Map 14. Land Management Overlays - Activity Centre



Map 15. Land Management Overlays - Upper Gully



4.4 Key Studies and Strategies





4.4.1 Knox Vision and City Plan 2013-17


Knox Vision and City Plan

The Knox Vision provides a shared vision for the future of Knox that will deliver the lifestyle, jobs and industry, health and wellbeing desired by members of the Knox community. The vision is outlined under five themes, each containing a description of the ideal future, and identifying the features that will be in place when that future is achieved:

- 
Healthy, Connected Communities - Aims to provide a safe community with strong community connections, where learning and volunteering are valued and supported, and the Knox community benefits from good health and wellbeing at all life stages.
- 
Prosperous, Advancing Economy - Aims to provide a strong local economy that supports business growth, jobs and community wealth and improve local opportunities for people to live, work, learn and play in Knox.

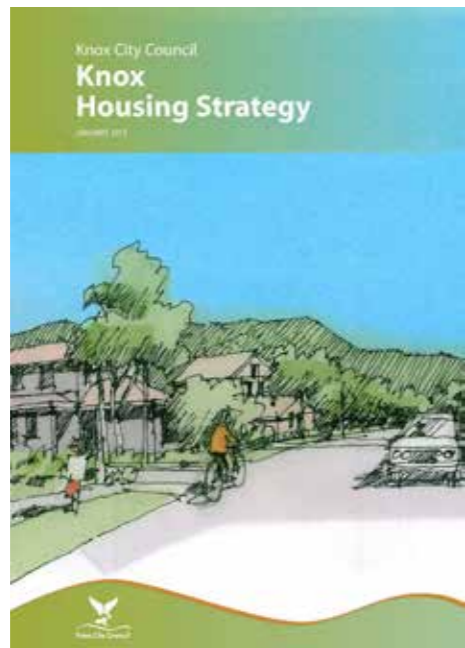

Vibrant and Sustainable Built and Natural Environments - Aims to ensure the changing needs of a diverse community are supported through planned growth and change in housing and infrastructure that respects both built form and natural systems, and resource availability. It also aims to ensure biodiversity and places of natural significance, including waterways and open space are highly valued, protected and enhanced and infrastructure networks provide transport choice, affordability and connectivity.


Culturally Rich and Active Communities - Aims to improve the acceptance and valuing of diversity and difference in the Knox community and increase the use of public spaces and infrastructure for the purposes of cultural expression and physical activity.


Democratic and Engaged Communities - Aims to improve community leadership and participation in Knox and ensure Council is well governed and demonstrates effective leadership.

These themes are used as indicators to monitor the community's wellbeing and achievement toward the broader Vision for Knox.

The Knox City Plan outlines the barriers, enablers and key strategies for achieving the aspirations for each theme outlined as part of the Knox Vision. These themes will provide a framework for the development of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan aims to deliver these objectives and strategies at a local level.



4.4.2 Knox Housing Strategy, 2015

The Knox Housing Strategy 2015 (the Housing Strategy) aims to balance the changing housing needs of current and future residents while ensuring that important aspects of Knox are retained and enhanced. The major trends which the Housing Strategy aims to respond to include:

- An aging population;
- Growing lone person households; and
- Growing couple only households and small drop in households with children.
- The Strategy aims to balance these demographic changes with the characteristics of Knox that are highly valued by the community, including:
 - The 'green and leafy' feel of Knox
 - A sense of openness and a 'country feel'
 - The specter of the Dandenong Ranges, for all residents, not just those living in the foothills.

The significance of the Dandenong Ranges is reflected in the Housing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy utilises a scaled approach to housing development, setting out the preferred types of housing in four different areas. The surrounding residential areas of Upper Gully are considered part of the Bush Suburban category i.e. areas which have significant biological and landscape values.

The Housing Strategy indicates that the surrounding residential area will continue to be low-scale neighbourhoods, characterised mostly by detached houses, where significant indigenous and native vegetation is retained and complemented. It also indicates that the preferred housing types in this area is detached dwellings and dual occupancies.

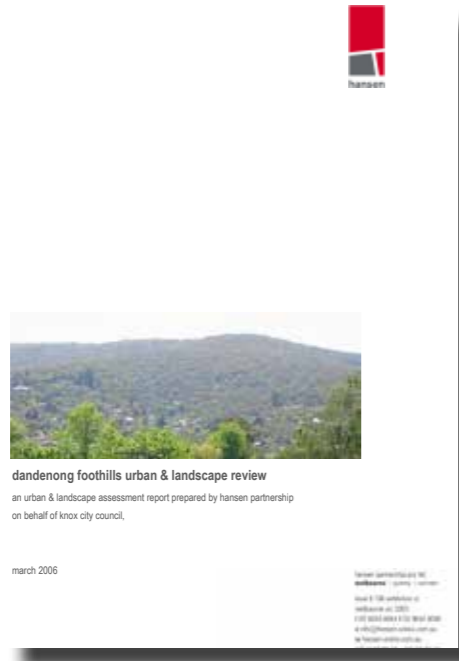
The Strategic Plan, will not consider changes to land use zoning and built form controls in surrounding residential areas, as these have been already been considered as part of the Knox Housing Strategy, 2015 and the associated Planning Scheme Amendment C131.



4.4.3 Knox Urban Design Framework 2020

The vision for the Knox Urban Design Framework is structured around elements of the natural and urban form within Knox, identified as the Dandenong Creek Valley, the Edge of the Suburbs, Creek Corridors, Activity Centres and Working Environments, Transport Corridors and Residential Environments. Design guidelines are proposed for each of these urban form areas.

The Activity Centre is identified in the urban form area - Edge of the Suburbs. Key objectives for this urban form area focus on preserving this area as a natural bush environment and to create a stable interface between the urban and non-urban environment. Design guideline seeks to achieve the objectives through measure such as minimum lot sizes to prevent removal of vegetation and building heights to preserve view towards the Dandenong Ranges, recognised as having both regional and State significance. The urban design framework creates strategic justification for urban design measures to be included into the Knox Planning Scheme through a combination of Municipal Strategic Statement, Local Policy and Overlay provisions.



4.4.4 Dandenong Foothills Urban & Landscape Review (March 2006).

The aim of the Dandenong Foothills Urban & Landscape review was to examine the existing urban design and landscape qualities of the Dandenong Foothills and in particular the existing design and landscape provisions.

Analysis was undertaken to identify character precincts and potential design objectives that could be included in future planning scheme amendments to implement planning provisions to protect the urban design and landscape attributes of the Dandenong Foothills.

4.4.5 Height Controls in Foothills Council Report

Height Controls in Foothills Council Report is a report outlining the intention to apply interim height controls of 7.5m through a schedule to the Design and Development Overlay and eventually permanent, mandatory provisions for Neighbourhood Activity Centres.

The report outlines key elements of the Planning Scheme Amendment history and the appropriateness for applying the Dandenong Foothill Controls to commercial areas within the neighbourhood activity centres, especially considering a panel recommended further strategic work, including a structure plan for the relevant neighbourhood activity centres before permanent controls.

4.4.6 Housing Policy Monitoring and Review Program

The Housing Policy Monitoring and Review program measures the effectiveness of Knox's Housing Policy and Housing Statement. The Housing Statement takes into account demographic and housing development trends projected over a 25 year period and the policy objectives of both the Council plan, Implemented through its MSS and State Government Strategic Plan.

The Housing Policy is part of the Knox planning Scheme under Clause 22.10 and is summarised in section 4.4.2 of this report.

4.4.7 Arts and Cultural Plan 2012-22

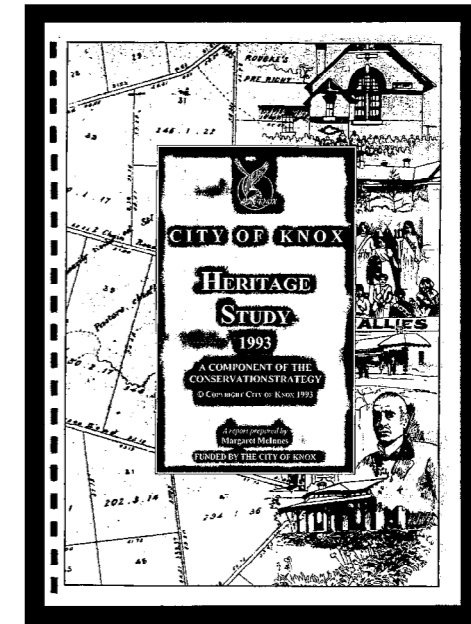
The Knox Arts and Culture Plan 2012- 22 identifies key outcomes for the arts and cultural wellbeing of Knox, focused on:

- Increasing community participation in the arts;
- Creating vibrant and interesting public spaces;
- Improving local relationships with the arts and cultural community;
- Improving local arts and cultural amenity; and
- Raising the visibility of arts and cultural activities.

Actions relevant for Upper Gully include:

- Enhance public places (including walking and cycling connections)
- Sharing resources

The 1812 Theatre and Coonara Community House are identified as key art facilities in the Activity Centre. Future planning and design should consider these objectives, actions in relation to Upper Gully.

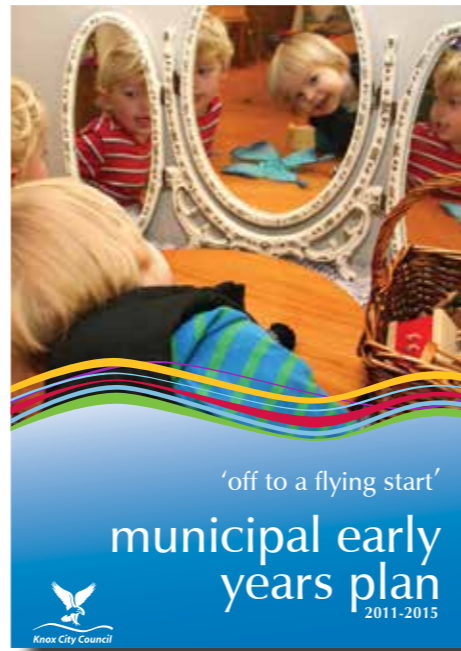


4.4.8 City of Knox Heritage Study 1993

The City of Knox Heritage Study 1993, is a technical document to identify and manage buildings and places of historic importance. Buildings and places identified that occur within the Activity Centre or surrounding residential areas include:

- The Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station is identified as having state heritage importance. The document recommends this place be registered with the National Trust Australia (Vic).
- Tourist Information Centre, Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station. This is identified as having local significance and was constructed circa 1930.
- Landscape of the Dandenong Ranges which was identified as having regional significance and was recorded with the National Trust.
- Royal Hotel (HO29). This was identified as having local and regional significance and as a landmark in the development of the Ferntree Gully tourism industry.

The importance of these buildings and places should be considered in the Strategic Plan.



4.4.9 Community Health and Well-being Plan 2013-2017

The Community Health and Wellbeing Plan articulates how Council will enable health and wellbeing outcomes in the Knox with a focus on eight priority areas to influence and change. These priorities include:

- Personal health and wellbeing
- Community connectedness
- Leisure, recreation/arts and cultural activities
- Housing affordability and choice
- Family violence
- Lifelong learning
- Mental health
- Lifestyle risks

In order to achieve these priorities the document outlines a number of strategies. These should be considered in the development of the Strategic Plan for Upper Gully.

4.4.10 Municipal Early Years Plan 2011-2015 'Off to a flying Start'

This study undertaken by Knox City Council and provides a plan for children aged 0 -12 years with a focus on early childhood years of 0-8. The study aligns with the Council's Youth Plan which is aimed at young people 10-25 years of age.

4.4.11 Knox City Council Mobility Study

The primary purpose of the Mobility Study is to improve the quality of the footpath and shared path infrastructure for the mobility impaired. The findings from the study aim to assist Council understand where the problem areas in the shared path network exist and where priorities for maintenance and upgrades are required.

The study notes that the Knox City Council Pedestrian Plan 2005 identified Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station as one of ten hot spots where improvements to pedestrian infrastructure was required.

4.4.12 Footpath Shared Path Plan

The Footpath and Shared Path Asset Management Plan outlines operational and asset management techniques for managing the footpath and shared path assets in Knox.

This plan identifies design standards for shared pedestrian paths within Knox, that should be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.

4.4.13 Ferntree Gully Traffic Study

The Ferntree Gully Traffic Study outlines traffic conditions and volumes for Ferntree Gully. Traffic counts have been undertaken for Upper Gully for Albert Street, Dawson Street, Ferndale Road, Railway Avenue, Rollings Road, Talaskia Road, William Street and Willow Road.

This information has been enhanced with Transport and Parking technical studies undertaken specifically for the Strategic Plan.



4.4.14 Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022

The Knox Open Space Plan outlines a vision and framework for over 700 hectares of open space managed by the Knox City Council. The plan is aligned with the key themes in Vision 2025 and aims to deliver on the Economic Development Strategy, Sustainable Environment Strategy and the Community Health and Well-Being Strategy.

The vision for open space in Knox is:

'Knox open space will be sustainable, attractive and green. It will provide for a diversity of leisure activities, and enable people to enjoy nature, engage with others, learn and play. Our open space network will be well-connected and accessible.'

Put simply, this means:

- Share our open spaces
- Nurture our natural places
- Activate community use
- Plan for great open spaces

The Strategic Plan should consider the open space plan and how ideas and directions apply to open space within Upper Gully.

4.4.15 Open Space Asset Management Plan, December 2011

The Open Space Asset Management Plan provides a strategic and practical framework for both Council and the community with regard to the management, protection and care of open space assets.

The Plan forms part of a suite of other Asset Management Plans and is intended to assist Council as it works towards more sustainable provision and management of an appropriate open space network.

As part of the process for developing the plan, an audit of open space was undertaken. The majority of Council's open space assets were found to be in good condition. Most open space sites were also found to have:

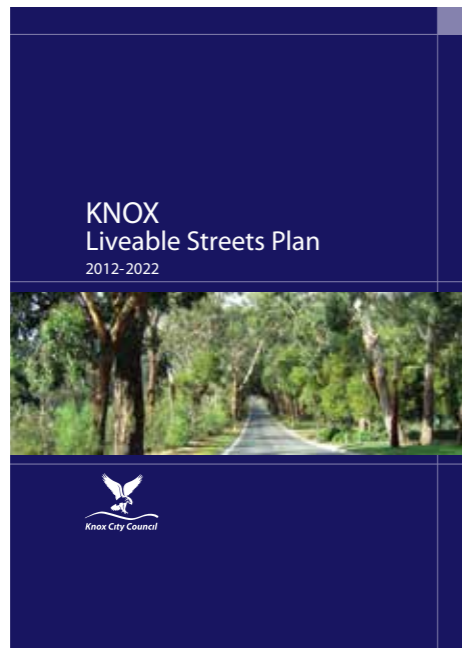
- Clear access and egress points on multiple sides at least 1.8 m wide
- Good levels of visibility with less than 50% of the perimeter blocked by non transparent fencing
- More than 80% of the surface areas available for unencumbered community activities
- Low levels of shade coverage

The Strategic Plan should consider these points in relation to Upper Gully and ensure improvements are made where applicable.

4.4.16 Green Street Policy Working Document

The purpose of the Green Street Policy is to provide a strategic and practical framework to both Council and the community with regard to the management, protection and care of the assets within the streetscape and in particular, the selection and management of street trees by Council, and the management of green naturestrips by the community.

This document provides a tree species list for planting within the Bush Suburban Neighbourhood Character area, which includes Upper Gully. These should be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.



4.4.17 Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022

The Knox Liveable Streets Plan promotes and provides tools for Council and the community to create change in attitudes by increasing pride, public use and ownership of their streets.

The plan includes a key strategic direction to promote 'streets as places', and subsequently put people and pedestrians as the priority in street designs. Other aspirations of this report are summarised below:

- More use of streets and an increase in health and wellbeing of residents;
- Less reliance on car travel for short and medium length journeys;
- More nature in our streets, healthier ecologies;
- More attractive streets to promote business opportunities and local street use;
- Safer streets;
- More pedestrian use in activity and retail hubs and subsequent rise in retail activity; and
- Streets for services and infrastructure.

This Strategic Plan is intended to be used to advocate for change in policy, standards and legislative requirements where they currently run counter to the concept of liveable streets.

The Knox Liveable Streets Plan builds on the Knox Urban Design Framework and the Neighbourhood Character study and includes a series of checklists and guides for streets design by neighbourhood type and street type.

In summary, the 'Knox Liveable Street Plan 2012-2022' provides a direction to promote pedestrian safety and activity by providing safe, attractive, and walkable streets which also promote nature and ecology. The directions outlined in the Knox Liveable Streets Plan should be considered as part of the development of the Strategic Plan.

4.4.18 Knox Bicycle Plan Review 2008

The Knox Bicycle Plan Review 2008 provides a vision that the Knox will, through well planned bicycle networks and programs, increase the use of bicycles for commuting and recreation in a safe, convenient and sustainable manner for residents and visitors. The main aims of the plan are summarised below and align with the vision of the 'Knox Liveable Street Plan 2012-2022' in regards to prioritising the safety of vulnerable road users and reducing the reliance on private car usage. The plan includes a goal of doubling the number of bike trips to work and increasing the number of children riding to school to 30% by 2013.

Other main aims of the plan are summarised below:

- Reduce the reliance on and use of cars for transport to work, school, shopping and recreation;
- Provide well designed shared paths and on-road lanes that link the Knox communities to public transport, activity centres and recreation areas as well as regional destinations;
- Plan to further reduce casualty crashes through well designed infrastructure and increase driver awareness of cyclists through pavement markings and signs;
- Advocate for VicRoads to provide on-road lanes as part of the Principal Bike Network and ensure that all new road works and or the introduction of bus lanes incorporate provision for bicycles;
- Promote and support the use of bicycles as a healthy, environmentally friendly means of transport as well as being safe and cost effective; and
- Measure bicycle use and the effectiveness of programs developed as part of this bicycle review.



4.4.19 Water Sensitive Urban Design and Stormwater Management Strategy, 2010

The Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and Stormwater Strategy aims to protect and improve the health of Knox's streams and creeks for our future generations, whilst improving the amenity value and sustainability of today's urban stormwater infrastructure.

Actions relating to these programs are also identified in the strategy. Those relevant to specific to Upper Gully include:

- Reduce Directly Connected Imperviousness (DCI) in Ferny Creek (East) catchment to <2%. Ferny Creek is also considered as a high value waterway, with levels of DCI which are low enough to make their protection and restoration feasible and cost-effective.

Opportunities for WSUD within Upper Gully should be considered by the Strategic Plan.



4.4.20 Knox City Council: 2008/2018 Sustainable Environment Strategy (August 2008).

The aim of the Sustainable Environment Strategy for Knox and its residents to move towards sustainability over the next ten years. A framework of delivering seven broad sustainability goals across seven broad themes is proposed. These goals include:

- Biodiversity;
- Water;
- Community engagement;
- Waste minimisation;
- Sustainable planning and development;
- Integrated transport; and
- Climate change.

Developing a Sustainable Environment Strategy aligns with Council's Vision 2025 and aims to deliver healthy connected communities, greater transport options, support for sustainable living, open spaces which are shared and safe amongst other objectives for achieving sustainability.

4.4.21 Sites of Biological Significance in Knox, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, 2010

The Sites of Biological Significance study was specifically foreshadowed in the 'Knox 2001 – 2010 Sustainable City Strategy'.

The purpose of the study is to:

- Gain a broad overview of native vegetation and wildlife in Knox, including their biological significance, threats and opportunities for improvements;
- Identify, carefully assess and document all sites in Knox that are so important to native flora and fauna that they warrant special recognition and protection; and
- Recommend ways of looking after, enhancing and monitoring Knox's natural vegetation and other habitat, including through amendments to the Knox Planning Scheme.

The study uncovered a number of previously unidentified biologically significant sites including seventy seven State significant sites and one Nationally significant located on both public and private land.

NB. While sites were not identified within this report, GIS data supplied from the Knox City Council identified the following sites relevant to Upper Gully.

State Significance

- Quarry Park

Regional Significance

- Gilmour Park
- A site located along Grand-view Crescent.

These sites are all located outside of the Activity Centre. The sites are however located within public reserves, ensuring protection and management of these sites.



Climate Change Response Plan 2012 – 2022

4.4.22 Climate Change Response Plan 2012-2022

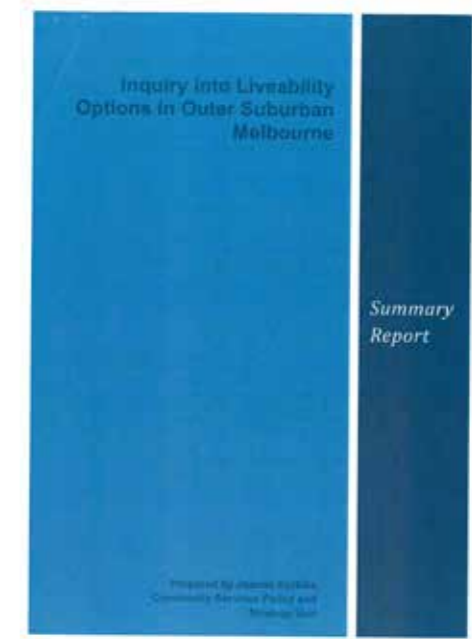
The Climate Change Response Plan reflects current thinking and approach to climate change response from Local Governments. The Plan aligns with the goals identified in the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2008 - 2018, which is to reduce greenhouse emissions, improve air quality and be well prepared for climate change. These goals are achieved through the following approaches as detailed in the Strategy:

- Achieve community and Council greenhouse gas reduction goals;
- Offset greenhouse gas emissions;
- Plan for adaptation to climate change;
- Develop partnerships to address climate change mitigation and adaptation, and
- Improve air quality.

The Climate Change Response Report identifies a number of challenges facing Council, including:

- Price on carbon
- Rising price of electricity
- Climate projects for Melbourne's East
- Heat waves and Urban Heat Island Effect
- Increased fire risk and drought
- Adaptability of buildings and infrastructure

These challenges and how they are applicable to Upper Gully will need to be considered as part of the Strategic Plan



4.4.23 Inquiry into liveability options in outer Suburban Melbourne, Summary Report

The purpose of this study was to understand the livability options for the outer suburbs of Melbourne. The guiding terms of the study were to understand planning policy relating to private housing and measure this against income and cost of living data. The provision of community services, such as health facilities and understanding international best practice of urban renewal were also analysed in order to improve livability in the outer suburbs.

Key findings indicated there was a delay in delivering social and physical infrastructure, especially transport in the form of local roads and public transport. Housing affordability was disproportionate to the cost of living. Lack of access to public open space, medical and health support services were identified as well as several pockets of socio-economic disadvantage. These challenges will need to be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.

4.4.24 Peregrine Heights Reserve, Asset Protection Zone Requirements - Draft Report, 2014

The Peregrine Heights Reserve, Asset Protection Zone Requirements was commissioned by Knox City Council in order to prepare a bushfire impact assessment to inform the establishment of Asset Protection Zones (APZs for Peregrine Heights Reserve, Ferntree Gully.

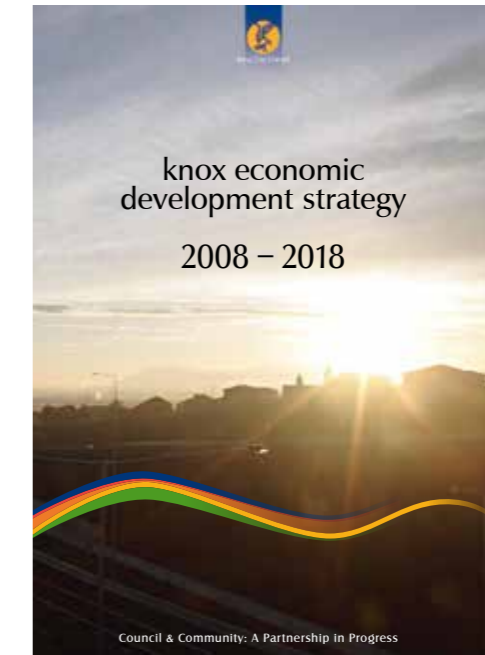
The report also makes a number of general recommendation regarding fire management actions on an around the reserve, which should be considered in the Strategic Plan.

4.4.25 Knox Economic Development Strategy

Knox's long-term planning framework is based on the Knox Vision 2025 strategic document, which provides direction for improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the city. The vision consists of key themes that describe the aspirations for the city. The following themes are relevant to this study:

- Activity centres with a unique and valued identity and image: Continue to develop local activity centres to provide a community hub for desirable and enhanced amenity for residents and traders.
- Provide local employment opportunities for a broad demographic across a full range of industries. Facilitate these opportunities by encouraging the development and growth of small to medium enterprises.
- Retail and industrial business attraction; an improved business mix as a result of a well-planned infrastructure and planning services.
- Advocate to link public and private transport to industrial and employment precincts.

The Structure Plan should respond to the key themes and objectives of the Economic Development Strategy, particularly those relating to local activity centres, and public transport links to employment precincts.





Aerial view of Upper Gully with the Dandenong Ranges backdrop

Part C:

Analysis, Issues and Opportunities

5. HEALTHY, CONNECTED COMMUNITIES
6. PROSPEROUS, ADVANCING ECONOMY
7. VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
8. CULTURALLY RICH AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES
9. DEMOCRATIC AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES





The following section provides the identification and analysis of the key issues and opportunities for Upper Gully. The structure of this section of the report is guided by the Knox Vision and City Plan framework and 5 key themes.



5. HEALTHY, CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

5.1 Community Facilities

WHAT WE KNOW

Community facilities in Upper Gully are generally clustered around three key locations including Kings Park, the Activity Centre and Talaskia Road. Wally Tew Reserve, located just outside Upper Gully also provides a focus for social and cultural resources, not only for the local Upper Gully community but the municipality.

Kings Park provides the location for a range of sporting clubs (refer to Section 7.4) and Coonara House. Coonara House is a neighbourhood house that offers learning services for the community. It includes alternative learning opportunities for adults and children, as well as programs, facilities and meeting spaces. Discussions with Council officers indicated that there is current demand for this facility and plans for its expansion to allow for additional services. Council staff also indicated that further learning services may be required for the community in the near future, however appropriate studies to determine these needs had not been undertaken.

Within the Activity Centre, community facilities include the Upper Ferntree Gully Preschool and a maternal and child health centre. These are located towards Talaskia Road, along Burwood Highway. These facilities have good links to the nearby railway station and residential area. The community noted that uneven footpath services made it difficult to maneuver prams to these locations.

Other community facilities within Upper Gully are generally focused around Talaskia Road. These facilities include Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School, Talaskia Reserve and the Angliss Hospital. Talaskia Reserve provides a range of sporting and recreation uses, while the Angliss Hospital and nearby supporting services provide a range of health care services to the local community (refer to Section 5.1.1).

Generally, community facilities within Upper Gully provide a local level of service. Regional community facilities, such as secondary schools and libraries, tend to be located where they best service the community, are easily accessible and can encourage broader community interactions. From this aspect it is important that services provided within the Activity Centre are multi-purpose to ensure they can provide for a range of community needs.

Play spaces within Upper Gully are generally located within open space areas, such as Talaskia Reserve and Kings Park. Council has indicated that play facilities at Talaskia Reserve are being reviewed as part of the Talaskia Reserve Master Plan, and upgrades to Kings Park playground are planned for the near future. Currently there are no play or recreation facilities provided within the Activity Centre.

Public toilets are a key public amenity. Public toilets are currently located at the railway station (as part of the station facility), within Ferntree Plaza, as well as a public facility provided at the eastern end of the railway station car park.

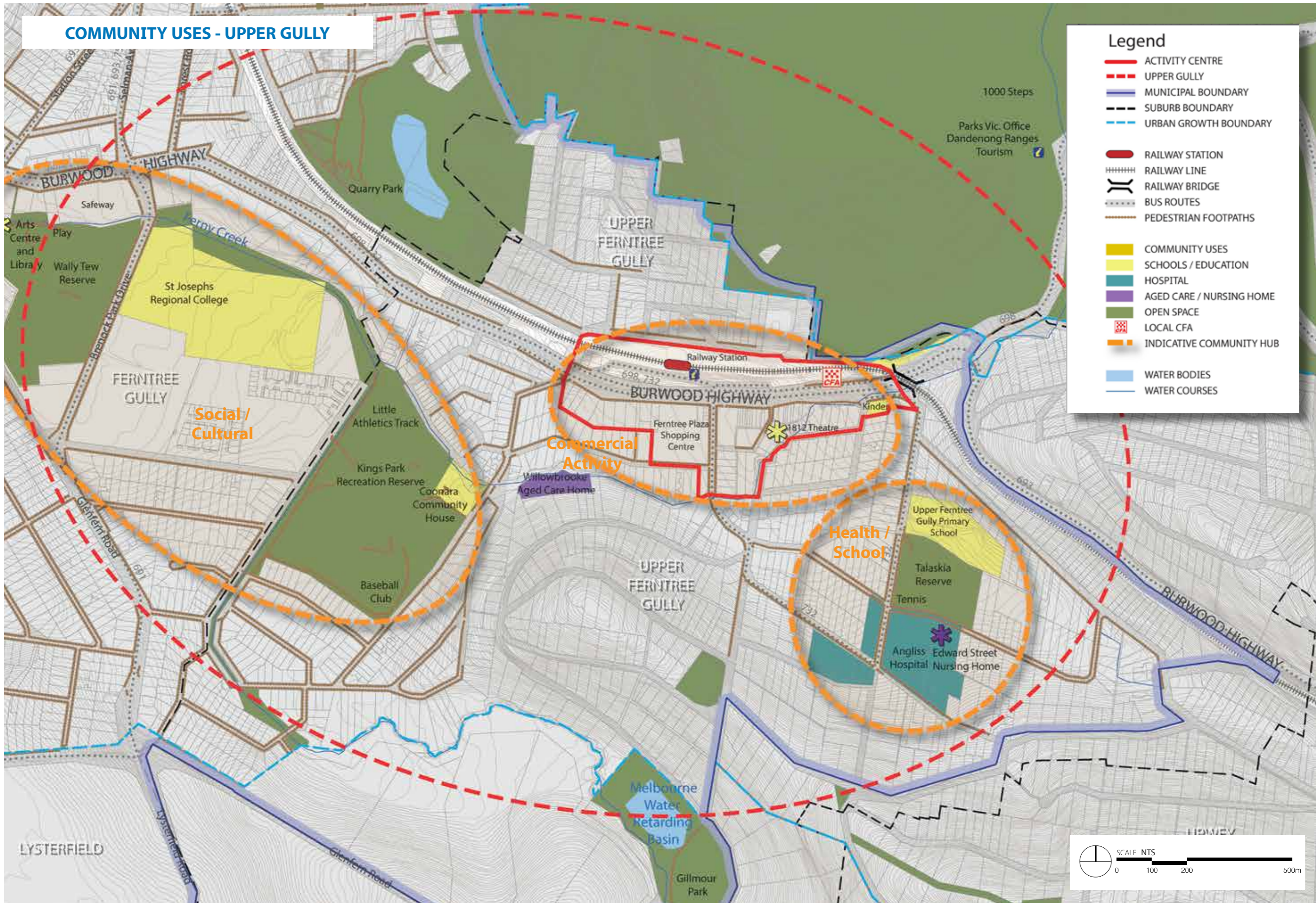
From the analysis undertaken it was unclear whether community services within Upper Gully meet the current and future community needs. Council indicated that a review of existing services within Upper Gully is required to identify existing and future needs for the community and to determine if existing facilities are 'fit for purpose'.

While the provision of community services is important, providing good access to community facilities is also equally important. Generally, footpath are provided to all community facilities but there is the opportunity to enhance this access and provide clear and safe connections from these facilities and public transport.



Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School

COMMUNITY USES - UPPER GULLY



Map 16. Community Uses - Upper Gully

5.1.1 Health Facilities

A State funded facility supported by the Department of Health (Eastern Health), Angliss Hospital provides a key focus for health services within Upper Gully. It is supported by a range of allied health and community services located around the hospital and within the Activity Centre.

Angliss Hospital provides an important service, not only providing health services to Upper Gully, but also to a large area of the eastern region. Services provided in and around the hospital include aged care, cancer treatment services, coronary care unit, elective surgery, emergency department, geriatric assessment, obstetrics, outpatient services, paediatrics services and rehabilitation services.

Angliss Hospital and associated health services also provide employment opportunities for Upper Gully and the region, with much of the current local workforce employed in the health industry (refer to Section 5.2). Demographic and population projections also indicate an aging, which may also generate focus for the provision of healthcare services.

Edward Street Nursing Home located along Edward Street provides individual high level of care to residents. The facility includes 30 rooms and is supported by various allied and health staff.

Willowbrooke Aged Care Home is located on Willow Road, adjacent Kings Park and Coonara House. The facility



Angliss Hospital

provides forty eight residents with low level care / aging in place services, with one respite care place also offered.

Other health facilities and services located within Activity Centre include a row of practitioners located along Rose Street, as well as a vet clinic and rehab clinic on Burwood Highway.

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

A variety of comments were received during engagement in relation to community and health facilities. A key point of discussion was the need to provide safe and accessible footpaths to existing and proposed community facilities throughout Upper Ferntree Gully).

Other key comments received included:

- *The need for easy access to a general practitioner (it is understood this service is no longer available within the Upper Ferntree Gully);*
- *An aging population with a limited ability to travel, may require greater levels of health care;*
- *The desire for quality and accessible public toilets (within the Activity Centre);*
- *Vehicular movements within the centre are prioritised, particularly along Burwood Highway;*
- *The community value services offered at the Angliss Hospital and being within close proximity to this facility;*
- *The opportunity to provide additional services including a hydro pool and a secondary school;*
- *The opportunity to make Upper Ferntree Gully kid safe, and provide places for kids to go; and*
- *The need to invest in retaining and providing family friendly facilities including learning programs, preschools, kinder and health centres to attract young families to the area.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Opportunity to provide a range of community facilities within Upper Gully that cater for local needs and requirements. A review of existing service provision within Upper Gully is required to identify existing and future needs for the community. This review should include a 'fit for purpose' audit of existing facilities, as well as capacity and demand needs.
- Community facilities are generally located around Talaskia Road and Kings Park. There is the opportunity to cluster future community facilities around existing hubs to enable resource sharing, strengthen synergies and encourage greater user participation.
- Upper Gully is well serviced by the hospital and associated medical services, however the community identified that there may be a need for a General Practitioner. The opportunity to provide built form within the Activity Centre that accommodates health service and promote complementary medical services to support forecasted population profile, should be explored.
- Coonara House provides a range of learning and community services to the local community. This role could be strengthened through:
 - Broadening the community service offered at Coonara House to provide a range of learning opportunity for all ages.
 - Reinforcing Coonara House as a focus for the community, enable resource sharing and encourage greater participation.

- Opportunity to provide for a safe, convenient and legible pedestrian access to community facilities and public transport. This may be achieved by:
 - Providing an integrated network of trails that provides clear and safe access between the centre, the railway station and community facilities within and around Upper Ferntree Gully. Trails should include signage to assist with way finding and legibility.
 - Providing a high level of pedestrian amenity along key connections including generous footpaths, weather protection (trees / shade), landscaping and appropriately located seating areas.
 - Providing lighting along key connections to community services to allow people to safely access these facilities at all hours of the day.
 - Enhancing Burwood Highway service road/Old Belgrave Road/Talaskia Road as a pedestrian priority route to connect the Activity Centre, Ferntree Gully Primary School and the Angliss Hospital.
 - Providing facilities that enhance universal access (DDA compliant) i.e. ramps, carefully considered seating / rest location, wide paths etc. In particular the footpaths along Talaskia Road and Burwood Highway (to the kinder and school uses).
 - Encouraging small format community services and facilities to locate within the Activity Centre to facilitate multi trip outcomes and benefit from its location near the railway station.
- Play facilities are not currently provided for within the Activity Centre, but could be to enhance it as a place for children and the youth.

- Enhancements to play facilities within Talaskia Reserve and Kings Park are currently planned.
- Opportunity to improve the level of service of public toilets in the Activity Centre. This may include upgrades to the public toilets located at the railway station to ensure they are well signed, safe and well maintained and providing additional public toilets within the Activity Centre, potentially collocated with a civic / public space.



Angliss Hospital Signage



Talaskia Reserve with Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School in the background



Coonara Neighbourhood House located within Kings Park

5.2 Health and Well Being

WHAT WE KNOW

5.2.1 Community Profile

Demographic data and population projections contained in this section have been sourced from Forecast ID. For the purpose of this research, the boundaries of the Upper Ferntree Gully profile area are utilised. This includes Dandenong Ranges National Park in the north, Burwood Highway, Royal Street, Old Belgrave Road, Wynette Avenue, Forest View Lane and Victoria Ridge in the east, Grandview Crescent, Gilmour Lane, Ferndale Road, New Road and Glenfern Road in the south, and Chalmers Grove, Arcadia Road, Burwood Highway and Quarry Road in the west.

Population

Between 2006 and 2011 the population of Upper Ferntree Gully remained stable with a population of 2,567 in 2011, up 22 from 2006. Population projections indicate that this trend will continue with a population of 2,563 estimate in 2036.

Age

Analysis of the service age groups in Upper Ferntree Gully identified that overall in 2011, 22.9% of the population was aged between 0 and 17 and 21.3% were aged 60 years. The largest changes in age structure in this area between 2006 and 2011 were in the age groups, empty nesters and retirees, aged 60 to 69 (increase of 84 people) and older workers and pre-retirees, aged 50 to 59 (increase of 51 people). Forecasted projections suggest that the number of people in these age groups will continue to increase with 23.5% of the total population aged between 0 and 17 and 26.5% aged 60 and over.

Household structure

Household type and family structure is also an important indicator the levels of demand for services and facilities. In 2011, the dominant household type in Upper Ferntree Gully was couple families with dependents, which accounted for 37.1% of all households. In the future, the largest change in household types is estimated to be for lone person households, with an increase by 49 households (accounting for 26.6% of all households). In contrast couple families with dependents are forecast to decrease by 21 households, to comprise 33.2% of all households in 2026, compared to 37.1% in 2011.

Employment

Employment provides an indicator of the socio economic status within Upper Ferntree Gully. In 2011, 1,214 people living in Upper Ferntree Gully were employed, of which 60% worked full-time and 39% part-time. An analysis of the jobs held by the resident population shows the three most popular industry sectors were:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (141 people or 11.6%)
- Construction (133 people or 10.9%)
- Manufacturing (128 people or 10.5%)

In combination, these three industries employed 402 people in total or 33.0% of the total employed resident population. Healthcare is forecast to remain as the primary industry for employment within Upper Ferntree Gully.

Income

Individual income statistics are linked to a number of factors including employment status, age, qualifications and type of employment. Overall, 9.9% of the population of Upper Ferntree Gully earned a high income (those earning \$1,500 per week or more), and 36.5% earned a low income (those earning less than \$400 per week), compared with 11.2% and 35.6% respectively for the .

Education

Analysis of the highest level of schooling attained by the population in Upper Ferntree Gully in 2011 compared to the municipality of Knox shows that there was a higher proportion of people who had left school at an early level (Year 10 or less) and a lower proportion of people who completed Year 12 or equivalent. Overall, 33.3% of the population left school at Year 10 or below, and 43.0% went on to complete Year 12 or equivalent, compared with 29.2% and 50.1% respectively for the municipality of Knox. These figures provide an insight into the employment and income levels outlined previously.

Travel to Work

In 2011, there were 110 people who caught public transport to work (train, bus, tram or ferry) in Upper Ferntree Gully, compared with 870 who drove in private vehicles (car – as driver, car – as passenger, motorbike, or truck).

Place of birth

Analysis of the country of birth of the population in Upper Ferntree Gully in 2011 compared to the municipality of Knox shows that there was a smaller proportion of people born overseas, as well as a smaller proportion of people from a non-English speaking background.

Overall, 19.8% of the population was born overseas, and 8.4% were from a non-English speaking background, compared with 27.8% and 19.7% respectively for the municipality of Knox.

Cultural Background

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of people born overseas decreased by 30 or 5.7%, and the number of people from a non-English speaking background decreased by 15 or 6.7%. Analysis of the ancestry responses of the population in Upper Ferntree Gully in 2011 shows that the top five ancestries nominated were:

- English (1,037 people or 41.7%)
- Australian (983 people or 39.5%)
- Irish (245 people or 9.8%)
- Scottish (220 people or 8.8%)
- German (155 people or 6.2%)

In combination these five ancestries account for 2,640 responses in total, or 106.11% of all responses.

Religion

Analysis of the religious affiliation of the population of Upper Ferntree Gully in 2011 compared to the municipality of Knox shows that there was a lower proportion of people who professed a religion and a higher proportion who stated they had no religion.

Overall, 56.0% of the population nominated a religion, and 32.2% said they had no religion, compared with 67.4% and 25.1% respectively for the municipality of Knox.



St Thomas Anglican Church is located adjacent to the Activity Centre, at 12 Mount View Road

Summary and Analysis

Demographic and social economic data indicates the following for Upper Ferntree Gully:

- While population growth is anticipated to be limited in Upper Ferntree Gully in the future, projections suggest that the number of people aged between 0 and 17 and 60 and over will increase. This trend is anticipated to have implications on housing demand, housing types, as well as consumer spending. It also provides insights into the levels of demand for age based services and facilities.
- The vast majority of existing housing types within Upper Ferntree Gully are detached dwellings (93%). The lack of diversity in housing types may be an issue in the future as housing trends towards smaller average household sizes, and higher numbers of lone person households.
- Healthcare and Social Assistance, Construction and Manufacturing are the three most popular industry sectors for jobs held by the residential population within Upper Ferntree Gully. Healthcare is forecast to remain the primary industry for employment within Upper Ferntree Gully. An aging population profile may also have implications for the levels of demand for health and medical services.
- Individual income statistics indicate that the population of Upper Ferntree Gully earned less than the municipality of Knox and Greater Melbourne in 2011. This statistic appears disproportionate when considered against other trends including housing types (detached dwellings) and travel to work, which generally increase the cost of living.

- Travel to work trends indicate that car travel is the predominate mode of travel within Upper Ferntree Gully, despite there being good access to train and bus services. The opportunity to promote train and bus travel, as well as walking and cycling should be considered to reduce car dependency and encourage more sustainable modes of travel.
- Analysis of the country of birth and cultural background indicated that the majority of Upper Ferntree Gully comes from an English or Australian background, with other backgrounds including Irish, Scottish and German. These cultural backgrounds could potentially provide the basis for cultural activities and events within the Activity Centre
- Analysis of the religious affiliation of the population of Upper Ferntree Gully in 2011 compared to the municipality of Knox shows that there was a lower proportion of people who professed a religion and a higher proportion who stated they had no religion.

5.2.2 Healthy and Active Lifestyle

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle not only has implications for personal health and well being but also has greater financial implication for the community in regards to health care and services.

Provisions should be made to encourage a healthy and active lifestyle within Upper Gully. This may be achieved through provision of safe and convenient walking and cycling trails. Upper Gully is already well placed to take advantage of the walking facilities provided at the Dandenong Ranges (the 1,000 Steps) and recreational opportunities including open space reserves, environmental spaces (national park); linear reserves/shared path corridors and streets. This could be expanded to ensure an integrated walking and cycling network is provided that encourages people to walk to key destinations including the Activity Centre, local parks, as well as community services and facilities. These should also be integrated with public transport links.



Walking tracks within the Dandenong Ranges including the 1,000 Steps

Facilities that support active recreation are limited within the Activity Centre include a drinking fountain, inappropriately located seating (no shade protection or not in comfortable or desired locations). Upgrades to these facilities may also help encourage a healthy and active lifestyle.

The Knox Liveable Streets Plan also discusses opportunities to improve streets for cyclists and pedestrians. Under the Theme 'Streets and the Economy', Approach 5 highlights the goal to 'Promote walking and cycling activity in Knox streets to reduce community health costs and increase well-being'. Key actions relevant to this goal include:

- Action 5.1 - Enact green neighbourhood streets to increase walking and cycling in local areas.
- Action 5.2 - Increase pedestrian and cycle amenity to make journeys more desirable with a priority on links to major destinations points such as open space, community hubs, schools and shopping precincts.
- Action 5.3 - Promote street and neighbourhood community events to build a local sense of identity and connection. Develop clear and easy procedures for community members to run these events.

These strategic directions should be reinforced in the Strategic Plan.

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *Access to the 1,000 Steps, walking tracks and bike paths were considered important assets in regards to health and well being within Upper Gully.*
- *Suggestions for enhancing health and well being within the community included the opportunity to increase access to locally grown fruit and vegetables i.e. The Gully Market.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Changes in demographics generally point to the need for smaller and affordable dwellings, and an increasing need for accessible dwellings for aged populations. The existing dwelling stock in Upper Gully is not well positioned to cater for these changes.
- The opportunity to encourage additional health and medical services within Activity Centre to support forecasted population profile and strengthen this industry sector.
- Consider the opportunity for cultural events and activities that celebrate existing cultural diversity within the community.
- Opportunity to encourage an active lifestyle through the provision of an integrated network of walking and cycling tracks. The network should provide access to key destinations within Upper Gully including community facilities, transport options, shopping and recreational uses and should be supported by facilities such as seating, shade and weather protection and drinking fountains, at appropriate locations.
- Opportunity to provide an integrated and sustainable transport systems, with links to public transport to encourage active lifestyle choices to address health and well being issues.

5.3 Safety and Surveillance

WHAT WE KNOW

The perception of safety can affect how and to what extent people engage in a space or place. Places that 'feel' safe can encourage people to use them and therefore become more active. Places that 'feel' unsafe tend to be avoided by people and therefore have less activity.

Lighting within the public realm can help enhance the perception of safety within public spaces by allowing for passive surveillance, increasing visibility and deterring anti-social behavior. Lighting within the Activity Centre is generally limited to street lights and ambient lighting from housing / shops. Lighting along pedestrian links is limited, while graffiti contributes to a sense of feeling unsafe.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a strategy that aims to lesson the opportunity for crime through the design of the physical environment. One of the main concepts of CPTED is that crime is less likely to occur if other people are around. CPTED principles should be considered as part of the Strategic Plan to facilitate safer public spaces in Upper Gully.



Informal pedestrian link connecting William Street to Burwood Highway

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *William Street and the pedestrian connection between it and Rose Street were identified by the community as spaces that felt unsafe and uncared for.*
- *People suggested that better lighting should be provided along all footpaths to improve safety when walking / cycling at night, particularly connections from the railway station and the hospital.*
- *Generally, people felt that rubbish around the around station and rear of shops should be cleaned up. Overgrown bushes and trees, which obscured pathways were also highlighted as elements contributed a people feeling unsafe within the public realm of Upper Gully.*



Pedestrian link connecting Willow Street to Dawson Street (to the rear of properties)

Opportunities and Considerations

- Opportunity to improve public amenity so that people may feel safe to use public spaces and access routes both during the day and at night. This maybe achieved through:
 - Providing lighting along key pedestrian and cycling paths and within key public spaces to allow for passive surveillance, increased visibility and to deter anti-social behaviour.
 - Providing land uses within the centre that provide for the activation of the streets throughout the day and night.
 - Encouraging new upper level residential development within the Activity Centre to provide effective surveillance of public spaces.
 - Encouraging the development of new facilities and infrastructure incorporates the principles of CPTED.
 - Encouraging graffiti, rubbish and damaged property is promptly removed within the centre to ensure it appears maintained and cared for.
 - Encouraging trader parking along William Street to generate activity and provide passive surveillance to the rear of shops

6. PROSPEROUS, ADVANCING ECONOMY

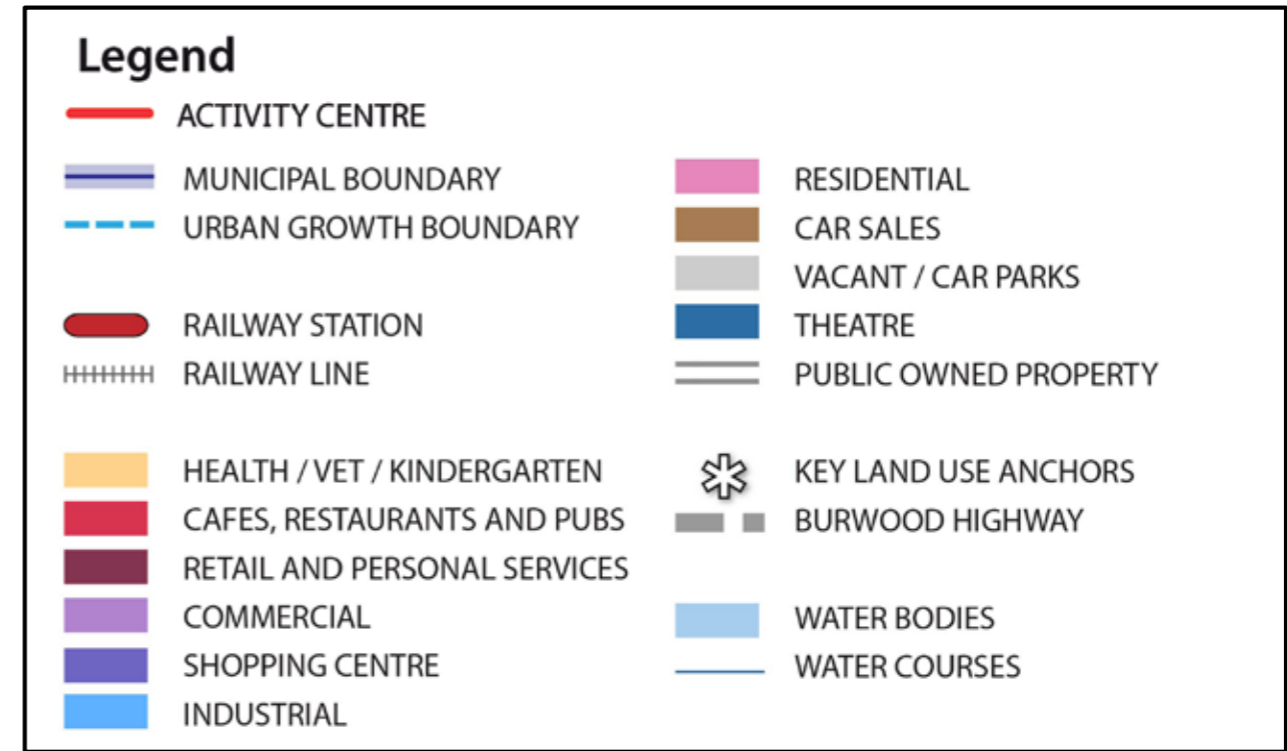
6.1 Land Use and Function

WHAT WE KNOW

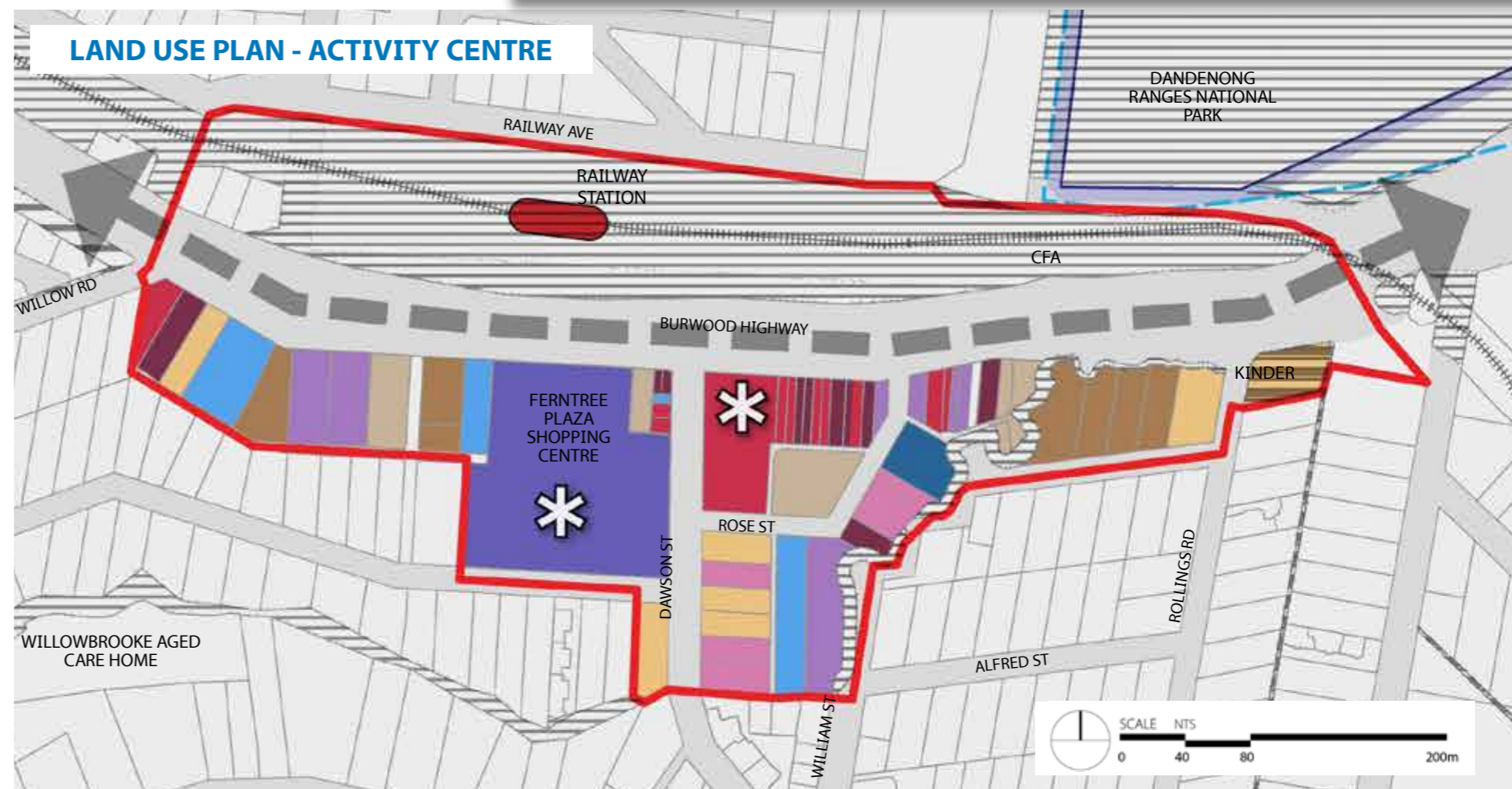
6.1.1 Land Use Zoning

The Activity Centre is largely within the C1Z, with a small portion in the PUZ6 (pre-school). The land area of the Activity Centre is approximately 73,000sqm (7.3ha).

Within the Activity Centre there are a number of public and private land assets. The public land assets include the railway corridor, open space along Ferntree Gully Creek, the Kindergarten and the streets. All other land within the Activity Centre is privately owned, which presents challenges for improvements. Land ownership and the implications of this is discussed further in Section 9.1.



Royal Hotel is a key landmark in the Activity Centre



Map 17. Land Use Plan - Activity Centre

6.1.2 The Role of Upper Ferntree Gully

Local Convenience

The centre is anchored by the Ferntree Plaza which contains a full line Maxi Foods Supermarket (approximately 3,000sqm) and other convenience retail offerings such as a bakery, butcher, take away outlets, pharmacy, and post office. There is a large amount of at grade parking surrounding the Plaza which serves local shoppers and passing commuters using Burwood Highway. There are also a number of personal services (hairdressers and tanning salons) and take-away shops fronting Burwood Highway to service passing commuters and local residents.

The convenience retail offering services the local residents as well as residents within the Dandenong Hills, which act as a strong secondary catchment.

Tourism

Retailers fronting Burwood Highway, between Rose and Dawson Streets, are predominately smaller scale specialty retail and hospitality uses. Many of these shops service visitors passing through the Activity Centre towards the Dandenong Ranges and 1,000 Steps and include antique shops, home wares, and cafes. The Royal Hotel also draws visitors to the Activity Centre.

The 1812 Theatre on Rose Street is also an important component of the Activity Centre. The theatre draws people from a broad catchment across the eastern metropolitan region and acts as a sub-regional entertainment attraction.

Large Format Highway Retail

Larger sites at the periphery of the centre, fronting Burwood Highway, are predominately used for large format uses (e.g. vehicle sales, garden supplies) which rely on the highway for exposure.

Health And Community Services

The Activity Centre, leveraging from the close proximity to the Angliss Hospital, supports a number of allied health and community service practitioners. This includes a row of practitioners along Rose Street. There is also a Veterinary Clinic, Kindergarten and Rehabilitation Clinic on Burwood Highway.

Small Scale Office

There are a number of small scale office uses scattered through the centre, including a building at 1174-1182 Burwood Highway which contains a number of professional services. There are a small amount of dwellings within the Activity Centre, which may also be used as home businesses. However, offices are not a significant land use in the centre.

Vacant Land

There are a small number of vacant lots and premises fronting Burwood Highway including a former car sales yard, former bank and two small shop fronts. There is also a parcel of land at 6-8 Rose Street which is undeveloped and currently used for Maxi Foods centre staff permit parking.



Ferntree Plaza provides the location for Maxi Foods and a number of other convenience retailing



Example of Large Format Highway Retail fronting Burwood Highway



Off-street parking located along Rose Street

Industrial Uses

There is a small level of light industrial use within the centre including a panel beater, screen manufacturing and garden supplier.

Role Summary

The role of the Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre can be summarised as follows

Primary:

- Local convenience, food and retail;
- Tourism, retail and hospitality;

Secondary:

- Employment (office and industrial);
- Highway sales; and
- Health services.

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *People liked the mix of local shops and businesses however expressed a desire for more eateries / cafes and longer opening hours.*
- *The need for a General Practitioner and complementary medical uses.*
- *Some comments identified the opportunity for more diversity in the mix of uses such as restaurants / cafe strip with shop top above.*
- *Generally people recognised the need to encourage tourism and recreation with the right amount of infrastructure support.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- The Activity Centre provides a level of services that meet local needs. Feedback from the community suggests that generally they are satisfied with the existing level of services.
- Vacant lots, unused shop fronts, car yards and other 'inactive uses' detract from the vibrancy and activity within the Activity Centre.



Retail shops fronting Burwood Highway

6.2 Regional Context (Employment and Economic)

WHAT WE KNOW

6.2.1 Employment

Municipality

The table opposite shows the employment industries in Knox compared to Metropolitan Melbourne. Manufacturing is the largest employing industry, followed by Retail and Healthcare and Social Assistance. Compared to the Melbourne average there are smaller proportions of professional service workers.

The concentration of workers within Manufacturing, Retail and Wholesale Trade is a key issue for the local economy. Macro-economic shifts over the past decade have presented challenging conditions for these industries, as demonstrated by the decline in employment over the last census period. This follows a similar trend across Metropolitan Melbourne, especially in the eastern suburbs which has historically been a strong base for manufacturing.

Industries which have increased significantly over the past Census period include Healthcare and Social Assistance, Professional Scientific and Technical Services. These industries are expected to continue to grow over the short-term due to demographic shifts in the population. This may provide new opportunities for employment within activity centres and within proximity to major health services. Upper Ferntree Gully is well located to facilitate growth in these sectors due to its locality on the public transport network, proximity to the Angliss Hospital, and opportunities to provide for small-scale office development to support professional services.

Table 1 – Knox Employment By Industry 2011

Industry	# Workers	% Knox Workers	% Melbourne Workers
Manufacturing	12,569	23%	11%
Retail Trade	7,441	13%	11%
Wholesale Trade	6,240	11%	5%
Health Care & Social Assistance	6,172	11%	12%
Construction	4,102	7%	6%
Education & Training	3,181	6%	9%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	3,053	5%	10%
Accommodation & Food Services	2,848	5%	6%
Other Services	2,401	4%	4%
Public Administration & Safety	1,605	3%	5%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	1,469	3%	5%
Administrative & Support Services	1,444	3%	3%
Financial & Insurance Services	955	2%	5%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	666	1%	2%
Arts & Recreation Services	665	1%	2%
Information Media & Telecommunications	592	1%	2%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	279	0%	1%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	78	0%	0%
Mining	47	0%	0%
Total	55,807	100%	100%

Source: Knox Remplan Profile, 2014

Table 2 – Change In Employment By Industry 2006-2011

Industry	Growth in Knox Workers 2006-2011	% Growth of Knox Workers 2006-2011	% Growth of Melbourne Workers 2006-2011
Health Care & Social Assistance	828	15%	25%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	727	31%	22%
Construction	326	9%	28%
Education & Training	174	6%	18%
Information Media & Telecommunications	81	16%	4%
Administrative & Support Services	73	5%	12%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	38	16%	50%
Public Administration & Safety	36	2%	17%
Arts & Recreation Services	28	4%	26%
Accommodation & Food Services	18	1%	18%
Mining	6	15%	37%
Other Services	-15	-1%	12%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	-17	-18%	-1%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	-35	-5%	17%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	-259	-15%	17%
Financial & Insurance Services	-316	-25%	14%
Retail Trade	-529	-7%	4%
Wholesale Trade	-603	-9%	2%
Manufacturing	-1,020	-8%	-6%
Total	-459	-1%	13%

Source: Knox Remplan Profile, 2014

Local Employment

Employment in the Upper Ferntree Gully suburb is shown in the table below. There are 1,578 employees in the Upper Ferntree Gully suburb. Health Care and Social Assistance is the major local industry due to the presence of the Angliss Hospital. Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services are the next largest industries, with a combined 214 employees, most of which are located in the Activity Centre.

Table 3 – Upper Ferntree Gully Employment 2011

Industry	No. Employees	% Employees
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,001	63%
Retail Trade	150	10%
Accommodation & Food Services	64	4%
Education & Training	56	4%
Administrative & Support Services	55	3%
Wholesale Trade	51	3%
Other Services	38	2%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	36	2%
Construction	36	2%
Manufacturing	34	2%
Financial & Insurance Services	30	2%
Public Administration & Safety	17	1%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	11	1%
Total	1,578	100%

Source: Knox Remplan Profile, 2014

6.2.2 Activity Centre Hierarchy

The recently released metropolitan strategy, Plan Melbourne, has removed certain activity centre categories which were a feature of Melbourne 2030. However, from an analysis perspective, the previous categories provide a useful method to understand the role and function of the centre within a regional context. The function and role of activity centres within Knox is guided by clause 21.07 Economic Development of the Knox Planning Scheme.

Upper Ferntree Gully was one of four Neighbourhood Activity Centres in the Dandenong Foothills. Melbourne 2030 identified Activity Centres as providing a limited mix of uses for local convenience to service the basic needs of the immediate residents, important focal points for the surrounding neighbourhood, ideally located close to community services, as well as being accessible by public transport.

The following provides a summary of the Activity Centre hierarchy within its proximity, as shown in Map 19.

Principal Activity Centre

Knox Central is the Principal Activity Centre for the region, with Westfield Knox serving as the premier shopping, entertainment, and employment centre for the Knox municipality. It is the third largest shopping centre in Melbourne with a leasable area of approximately 142,500sqm and is currently seeking Council approval for redevelopment which would expand the leasable floorspace to 188,500sqm. There is also a large employment precinct to the east of the shopping centre which generally consists of light industrial and associated office and civic uses.

Major Activity Centres

Major activity centres in proximity to the Activity Centre include the following.

- Boronia Mall Shopping Centre is centred on the Boronia Railway Station, and contains two full-line supermarkets and a K-mart. The area also has a night-time entertainment function containing a cinema and bowling entertainment centre.
- Mountain Gate Shopping Centre is located at the junction of Burwood Highway and Ferntree Gully Road, approximately 3.5km from the Activity Centre. Similar to Boronia Mall Shopping Centre, it has a significant convenience shopping function with two full-line supermarkets. Due to the shopping centre's proximity to the Activity Centre and position along Burwood Highway, it would be expected to compete strongly with the Activity Centre for convenience retail expenditure, especially for commuters residing in the Dandenong Hills.

Neighbourhood Activity Centres

In close proximity to Upper Gully is the Ferntree Gully Village Activity Centre (the Village). The Village shares a number of attributes with the Activity Centre including its location on the Belgrave train line as well as the setting within the Dandenong Foothills. As a result of their close proximity, it is expected that the Village and the Activity Centre compete in attracting demand for residential, retail and commercial development. Understanding the key competitive differences between the centres will be important for future positioning. The Activity Centre's relative strengths include its proximity to Angliss hospital and opportunity for continued growth in the health services sector, and the role of the Activity Centre as a key gateway to the Dandenong Ranges and opportunities for tourism development.

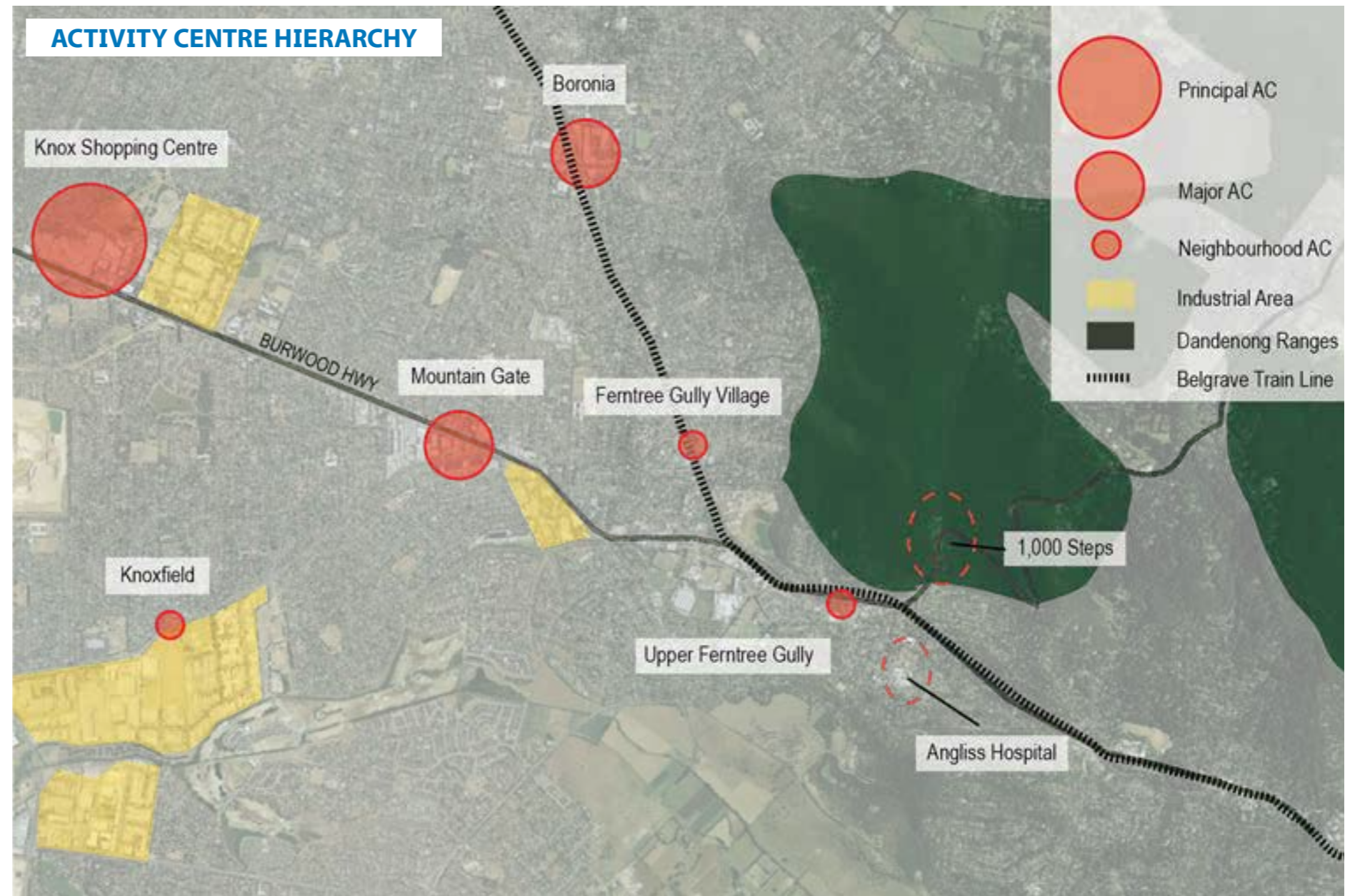
In addition, there are important synergies between the two centres. Each play an important role within the local community. The Village has a strong presence of community services including education, mental health, and disability support, whilst Upper Gully has a strong health and medical services focus. This positions the Activity Centre as an attractive residential location for older residents through ready access to both community and health services.

Other Economic Drivers

Facilities which play an important role in the region include the following:

- Angliss Hospital.** The public hospital is located less than a kilometre from the commercial centre of the Activity Centre. The hospital services cover a region including the south of Knox to the south west of the Yarra Ranges, as well as Croydon and parts of Ringwood. The services provided include emergency care, general medicine, surgery, midwifery, paediatrics and rehabilitation. The other hospitals in the region include Maroondah Health (public) and Knox Private Hospital.
- 1,000 Steps.** The popular Kokoda Memorial Walk (1,000 Steps) is located less than a kilometre from the Activity Centre. No detailed assessment of visitation to the Steps is available with reports estimating over 75,000 people per month visit the Steps. The 1,000 Steps are particularly popular on weekends for visitors undertaking leisure and fitness activities and visiting the recently constructed World War II memorial.

In addition to the 1,000 Steps, the Activity Centre also functions as a key gateway to the Dandenong Ranges tourism region and National Parks which drives strong weekend trading for cafes within the Activity Centre.



Map 19. Activity Centre Hierarchy

Table 4 – Knox Employment By Industry 2011

	Type*	Distance to UFG	% Melbourne Workers
Knox	Principal	7km	High-order comparison shopping Convenience shopping Employment Entertainment
Mountain Gate	Major	3.5km	Limited comparison shopping Convenience shopping Personal services Bulky goods
Boronia	Major	5.5km	Limited comparison shopping Convenience shopping Personal services Entertainment (cinema and bowling) Rail commuting
Ferntree Gully Village	Neighbourhood	2.5km	Convenience shopping Personal services Community services and NFP organisations Rail commuting
Upper Ferntree Gully	Neighbourhood		Convenience shopping Health and wellbeing Tourism Rail commuting

6.2.3 Competitive Strengths

Future positioning of the centre should leverage from the competitive strengths of the Activity Centre within the regional activity centre hierarchy. The key strengths which may influence future development are summarised below.

Regional Role

Upper Ferntree Gully has a unique function compared with most Activity Centres. In general, the role of a Activity Centre is to service the basic retail needs of immediate residents and provide some ancillary services and employment opportunities. The Activity Centre plays a more regional role in some respects due its location along a major highway and train line, proximity to the regionally significant Angliss Hospital, and the high number of tourists passing through the Activity Centre. This regional role attracts a diverse range of user groups to the Activity Centre from outside the local catchment for a range of purposes such as health and wellbeing, tourism and hospitality, and local convenience. This results in an existing Activity Centre which is relatively economically diversified and contains key points of difference and competitive advantages due its local infrastructure and assets (highway exposure, rail, health, and tourism). Further development of employment and economic uses within the centre could leverage from these advantages as discussed below.

Health And Wellbeing

There is a significant concentration of health services within the Activity Centre including medical consulting offices (physiotherapist, podiatrist, and dentist) and wellbeing studios (pilates studio). These services leverage from the proximity to the Angliss Hospital and to a lesser extent the 1,000 Steps which attracts a large number of fitness enthusiasts. Health is a key economic growth sector both in the broader economy and in the local area due to the proximity to the Angliss Hospital and aging community. This may provide future development and employment opportunities in the Activity Centre, especially for small businesses and practitioners.



The Angliss Hospital and associated medical uses

Tourism And Hospitality

The Activity Centre position as a major gateway to the Dandenong Ranges tourism region and National Parks is a key strength and has the potential to drive future demand for goods and services in the Activity Centre. The opportunity exists to improve the tourism offering within the centre (including retail mix, hospitality, and streetscape) to better service this market. Recent trends in consumer spending show significant increase in hospitality spending. During the first half of 2014, retail expenditure for cafes, restaurants and takeaway food grew by 10.3%, more than double the growth of all other retail sectors. This is considered a key opportunity for the Activity Centre in the future given the important tourism role of the Dandenong Ranges and 1,000 Steps in the broader region.



Signage for the Visitors Information Centre

Opportunities and Considerations

- Industries such as healthcare and social assistance, and professional, scientific and technical services are anticipated to continue to grow over the short term due to demographic shifts in population. The Activity Centres well located to facilitate growth in these sectors due to its locality on the public transport network, proximity to the Angliss Hospital, and opportunities to provide for small-scale office development to support professional services.
- The Activity Center's relative strengths include its proximity to Angliss Hospital and opportunity for continued growth in the health services sector, and the role of Upper Gully as a key gateway to the Dandenong Ranges and opportunities for tourism development.
- Upper Gully has a strong health and medical services focus. This positions Upper Gully as an attractive residential location for older residents through access to both community and health services.
- Health is a key economic growth sector and may provide future development and employment opportunities in the Activity Centre, especially for small businesses and practitioners.
- The location of Upper Gully, near the 1,000 Steps and at the gateway to the Dandenong Ranges National Parks, as well as recent trends indicate a significant increase in hospitality spending provides opportunities for tourism development within the Activity Centre.

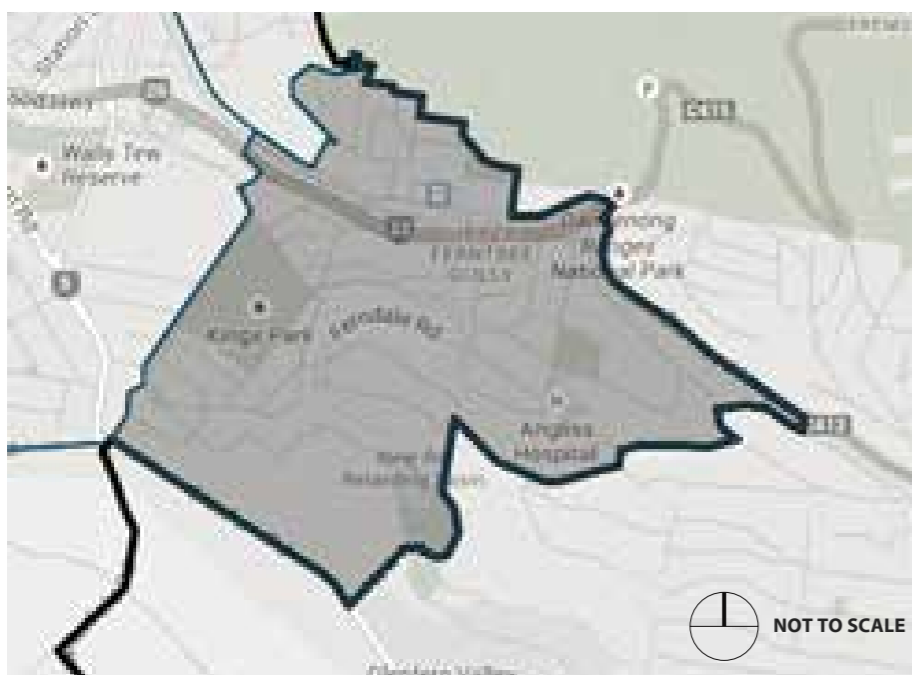
6.3 Residential Profile

WHAT WE KNOW

This section provides a profile of residential land use in the Activity Centre and surrounding suburb. The main trends impacting future dwelling requirements are analysed. Demand for future residential growth within the commercial centre is analysed including potential development opportunities.

Demographic data and population projections were sourced from Forecast ID. The boundaries of Upper Ferntree Gully are shown in Map 20.

Victoria in Future (VIF) 2014 projections were also analysed - these are the official State Government projections, however, projections are not available at the local level.



Map 20. Upper Ferntree Gully Population Projection Area Source: Forecast ID, 2014

6.3.1 Population

Historical Population Growth

The resident population of Knox City at the 2011 Census was 149,300 persons. The municipal population increased by 2,562 people at an average rate of 0.4% per annum between 2006 and 2011. Over the same period, the average population growth for Metropolitan Melbourne was significantly higher (2.3% per annum). Population increased modestly in Upper Ferntree Gully by 22 residents (0.2%).

Table 5 – Historical Population Growth 2006-2011

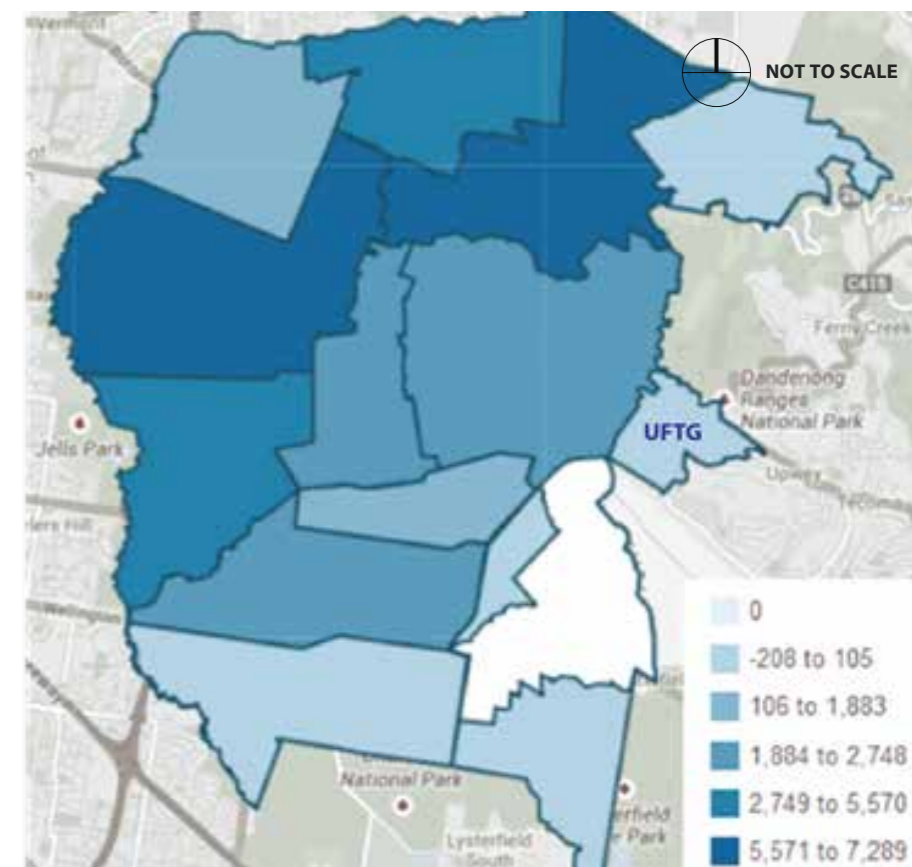
	2006	2011	Difference	% Growth p.a.
Upper Ferntree Gully	2,466	2,488	+22	0.2%
Knox	146,738	149,300	+2,562	0.4%
Metropolitan Melbourne	3,592,591	3,999,982	+407,391	2.3%

Source: Profile ID, 2014

Population Projections

According to Forecast ID the Knox population is forecast to grow to 184,821 by 2036. This corresponds to an increase of 30,204 residents between 2011 and 2036, and an annual growth rate of 0.72% p.a. This is slightly higher than the VIF2014 projections which predict an annual growth rate of 0.69% p.a. to 2031. Greater Melbourne is expected to grow at a higher rate of 1.72% p.a. over the same period (VIF 2014).

The population for Upper Ferntree Gully is projected to remain stable from 2,567 in 2011 to 2,563 in 2036 (Forecast ID). It is predicted that population growth across the municipality will occur in other areas where there are identified significant development sites, as shown in the map opposite.



Map 21. Forecast Population Growth in Knox 2011-36
Source: Forecast ID, 2014

6.3.2 Age

The median age of the Upper Ferntree Gully suburb in 2011 was 39 years, slightly older than the Knox municipality at 38 years, and Greater Melbourne at 36 years.

The age profile of Upper Ferntree Gully is expected to mature, with a significant increase in seniors aged 70 years and over. The trend of an aging population is taking place across Australia and will also have implications on demand for housing, as well as consumer spending. Currently there are a high proportion of people aged in the 'older workers and pre-retirees' age bracket (50-59 years old). As this group matures to 70 years and over, they may seek other housing options such as downsizing or aged care. With a lack of housing diversity in the local area, these residents may need to move away from their community to seek other housing options unless a greater diversity can be provided in the local area.

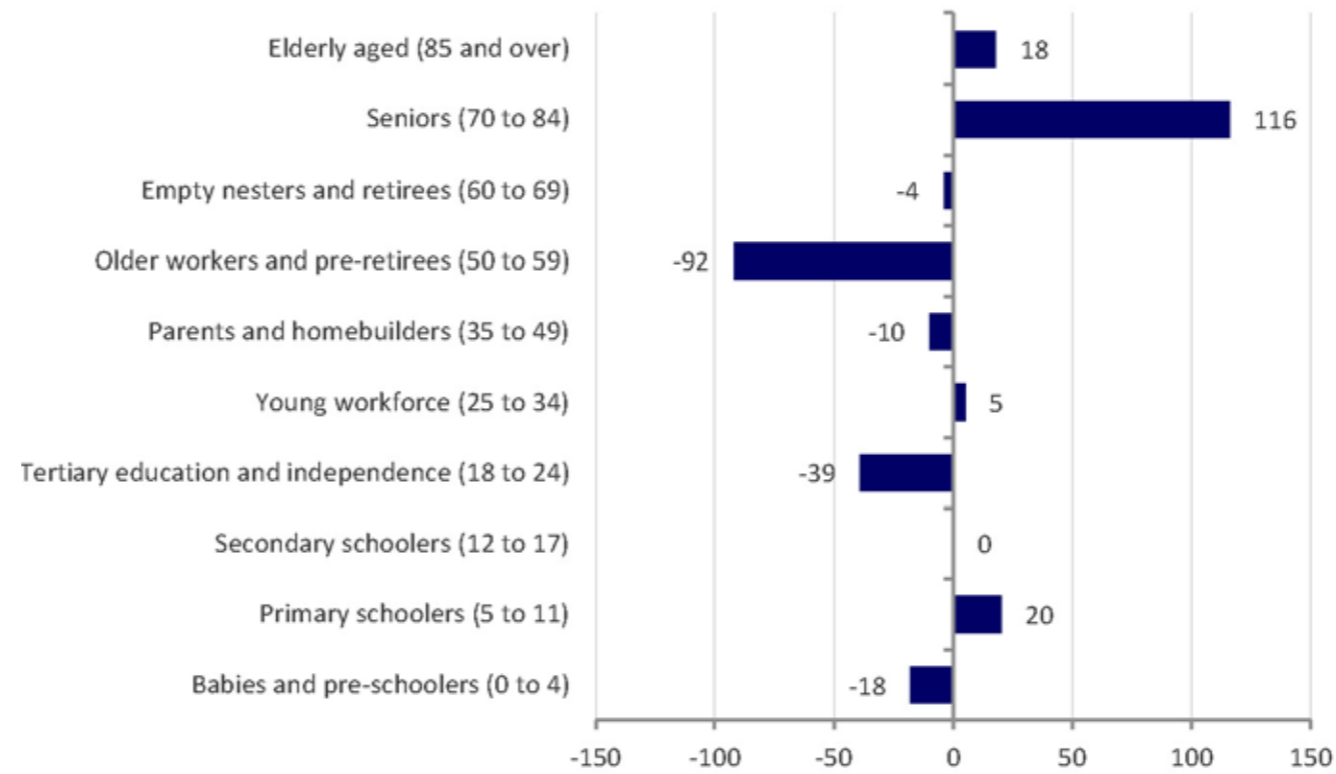


Figure 04. Upper Ferntree Gully Change in Age 2011-2036

Source: Forecast ID, 2014

6.4 Household Indicators

6.4.1 Number of Dwellings

Historical Dwelling Growth

The number of households in Knox at the 2011 Census was 53,111, which was an increase of 1,877 dwellings since 2006. Over the same period, the number of households in Upper Ferntree Gully has remained relatively stable with a slight decline from 886 to 884 dwellings.

Table 6 – Historical Dwelling Growth 2006-2011

	2006	2011	Difference	% Growth
Upper Ferntree Gully	886	884	-2	-0.2%
Knox	51,234	53,111	1,877	4%
Metropolitan Melbourne	1,471,155	1,636,167	165,012	11%

Source: Profile ID, 2014

Projected Dwelling Growth

Dwelling projections for Knox are sourced from the Forecast ID Projections. The municipality of Knox is forecast to grow to 72,461 dwellings by 2036. This corresponds to an increase of 15,604 dwellings, or 0.97% p.a. VIF 2014 projections predict a similar annual growth rate of 0.98% p.a. This is significantly lower than forecast dwelling growth rate across Melbourne over the same period at 1.89% p.a. (Victorian In Future 2014).

Forecast ID projections for Upper Ferntree Gully predict that dwelling growth will be minimal. Between 2011 and 2036 it is forecast that only 33 new dwellings will be established in Upper Ferntree Gully, an increase of just 0.14% p.a. Upper Ferntree Gully's planning controls and lack of significant development sites will mean that projected dwelling growth will need to occur in other parts of the municipality.

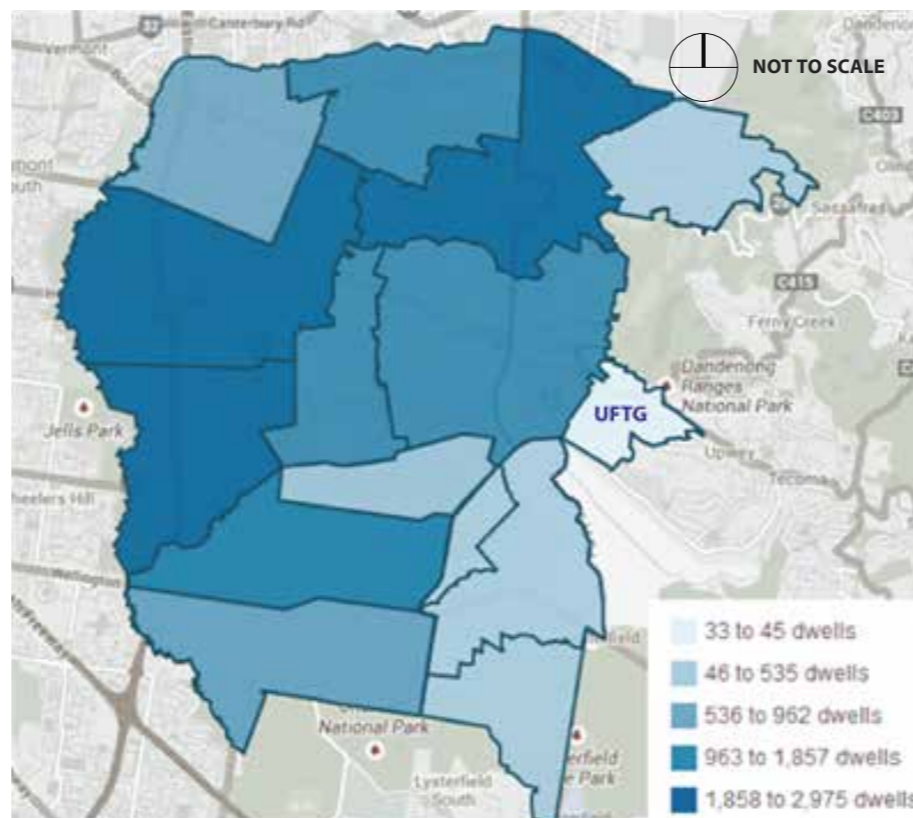


Figure 05. Projected Dwelling Growth in Knox 2011-36

Source: Forecast ID, 2014

6.4.2 Household Type

Household Size

The average household size in Upper Ferntree Gully was 2.7 people in 2011, slightly lower than Knox at 2.8. The average household size is predicted to slightly decrease over time.

Table 7 – Average Household Size

	2011	2036
Upper Ferntree Gully	2.7	2.6
Knox	2.8	2.6
Metropolitan Melbourne	2.6	2.5

Source: Forecast ID 2014 and VIF, 2014



Residential homes nestled into the landscape of the Dandenong Ranges and foothills

Household Composition

The household composition of Upper Ferntree Gully is similar to the Knox average. The largest household type in Upper Ferntree Gully was 'couple family with children', representing 37% of all households, and 'couples without children' representing 24%. Lone person households are slightly higher in Upper Ferntree Gully making up 22% of households.

Figure 06 shows the forecast change in household composition for Upper Ferntree Gully to 2036. Lone person households are projected to increase by 27%. 'Couples without children' are also expected to increase by 26 households, while 'couples with children' will decrease by 17 households.



Example of detached home in Upper Ferntree Gully

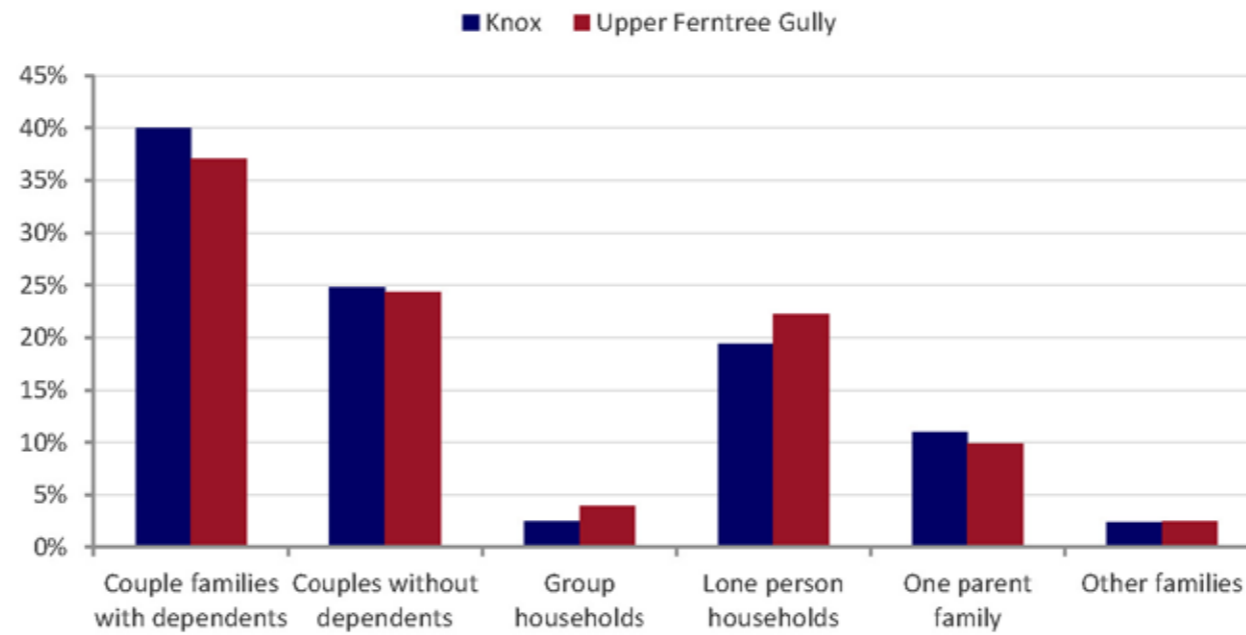


Figure 06. Household Composition 2011

Source: Forecast ID, 2014

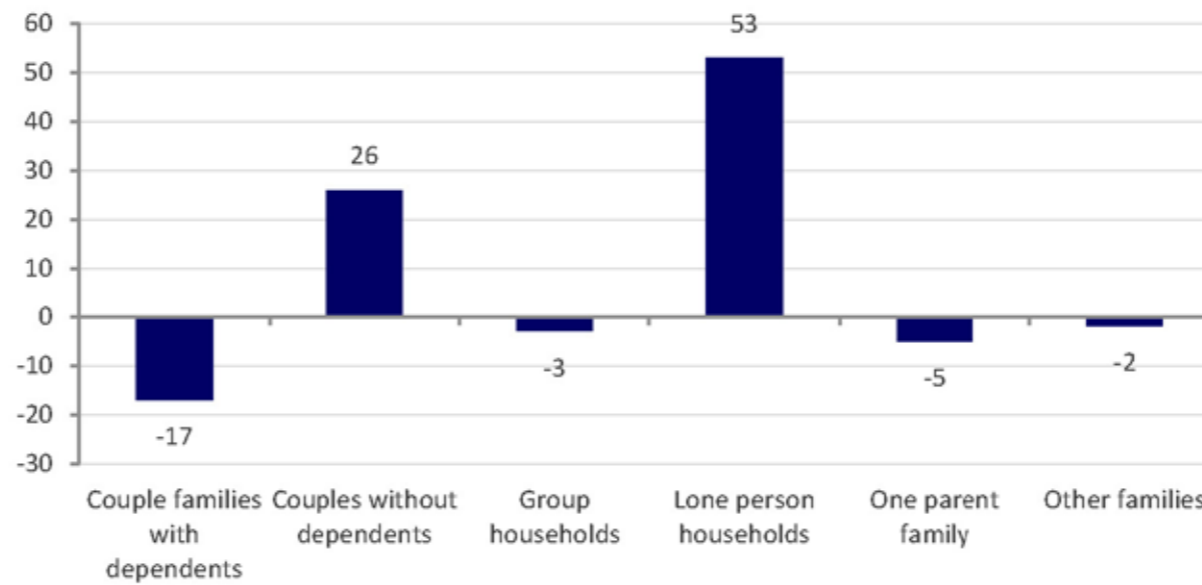


Figure 07. Change in Household Composition 2011-2036 Upper Ferntree Gully

Source: Forecast ID, 2014

Dwelling Type

In 2011 the vast majority of dwellings in Upper Ferntree Gully were detached dwellings (93%), with a small amount of medium density (7%).

The lack of diversity in housing types may be an issue in the future as housing trends towards smaller average household sizes, and higher numbers of lone person households.

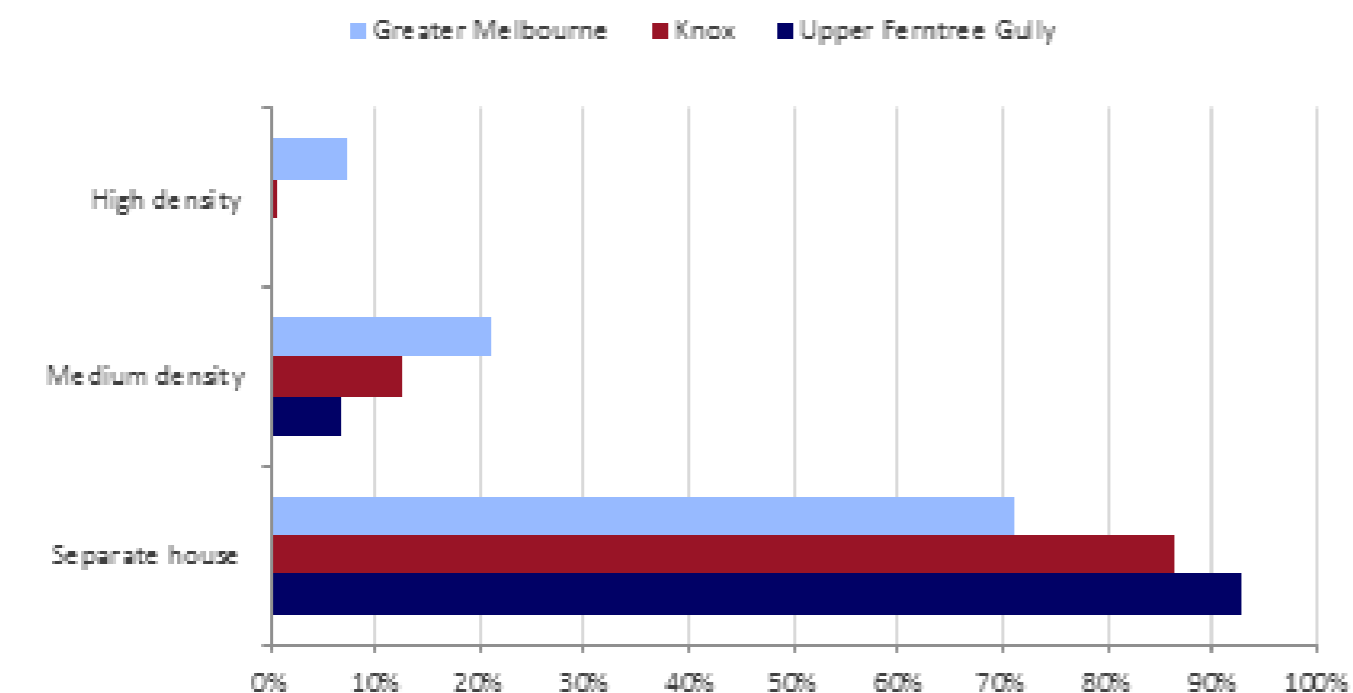


Figure 08. Dwelling Type 2011

‘Separate house’ includes all free-standing dwellings separated from neighbouring dwellings by a gap of at least half a metre.

‘Medium density’ includes all semi-detached, row, terrace, townhouses and villa units, plus flats and apartments in blocks of one or two storeys, and flats attached to houses.

‘High density’ includes flats and apartments in three storey and larger blocks.

Source: Profile id 2014, ABS Census 2011

Number Of Bedrooms

In 2011, 78% of dwellings in Upper Ferntree Gully were 3 bedrooms or larger, compared to the Greater Melbourne average of 70%. There is a very small provision of one bedroom dwellings with only 2% within Upper Ferntree Gully.

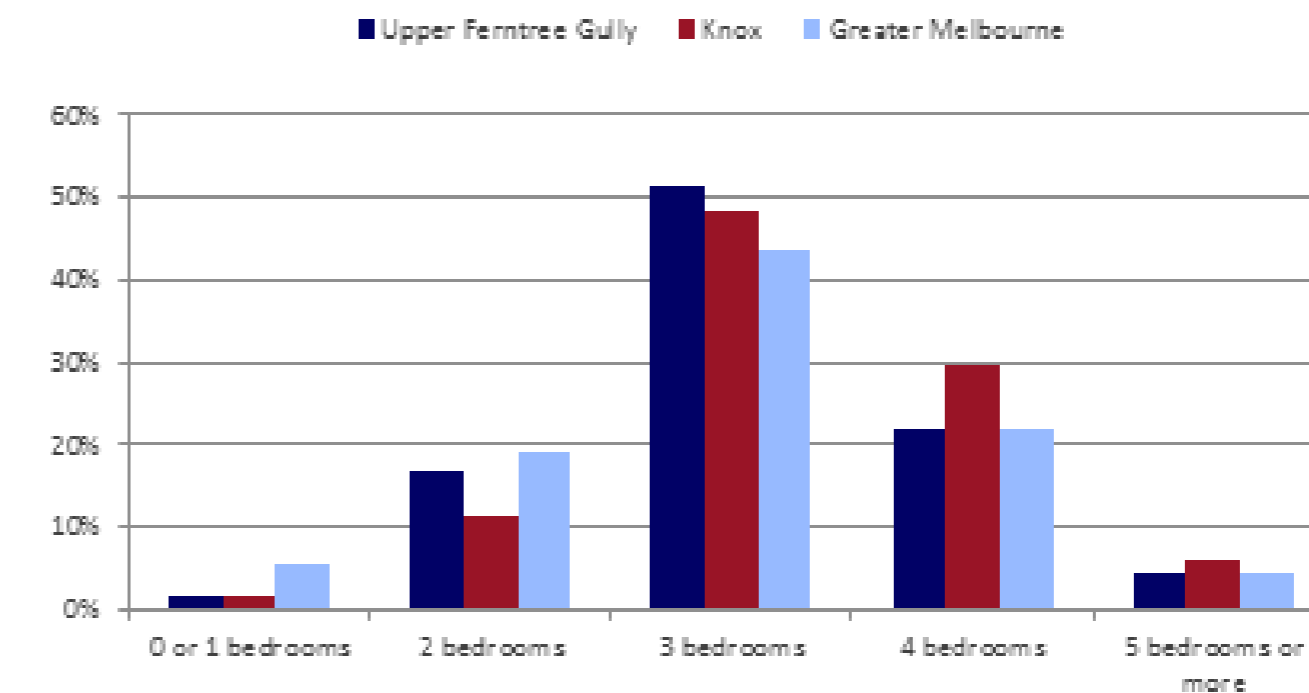


Figure 09. Number of Bedrooms 2011

Source: Profile id 2014, ABS Census 2011

6.4.3 Property Prices

House Price

In 2013 the median house sale price in Upper Ferntree Gully (suburb) was \$450,000, which is lower than Knox and Greater Melbourne. Over the period 2003-2013, the Upper Ferntree Gully and Knox median house price grew at 6.0% p.a. and 6.5% p.a. respectively, slightly higher than the Metropolitan Melbourne average (4.8% p.a.).

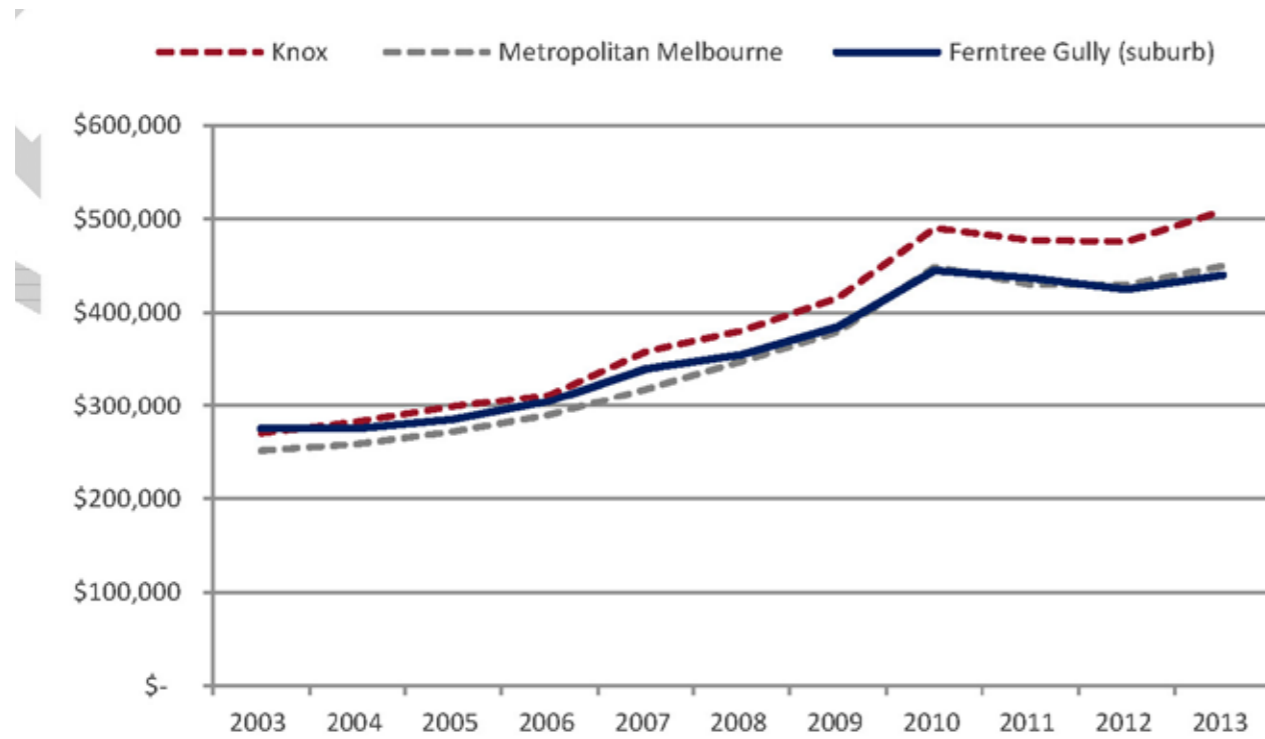


Figure 10. Median House Price 2003-13
Source: DSE Guide to Property Values 2013

Unit/Apartment Price

In 2013 the median unit and apartment price in Upper Ferntree Gully (suburb) was \$369,000, which was lower than Knox (\$389,500), and significantly lower than Metropolitan Melbourne (\$520,000). Over the period 2003-2013, the median unit and apartment prices in Upper Ferntree Gully grew at 5.7% p.a., similar to Knox (5.8% p.a.) and Metropolitan Melbourne (5.9% p.a.).

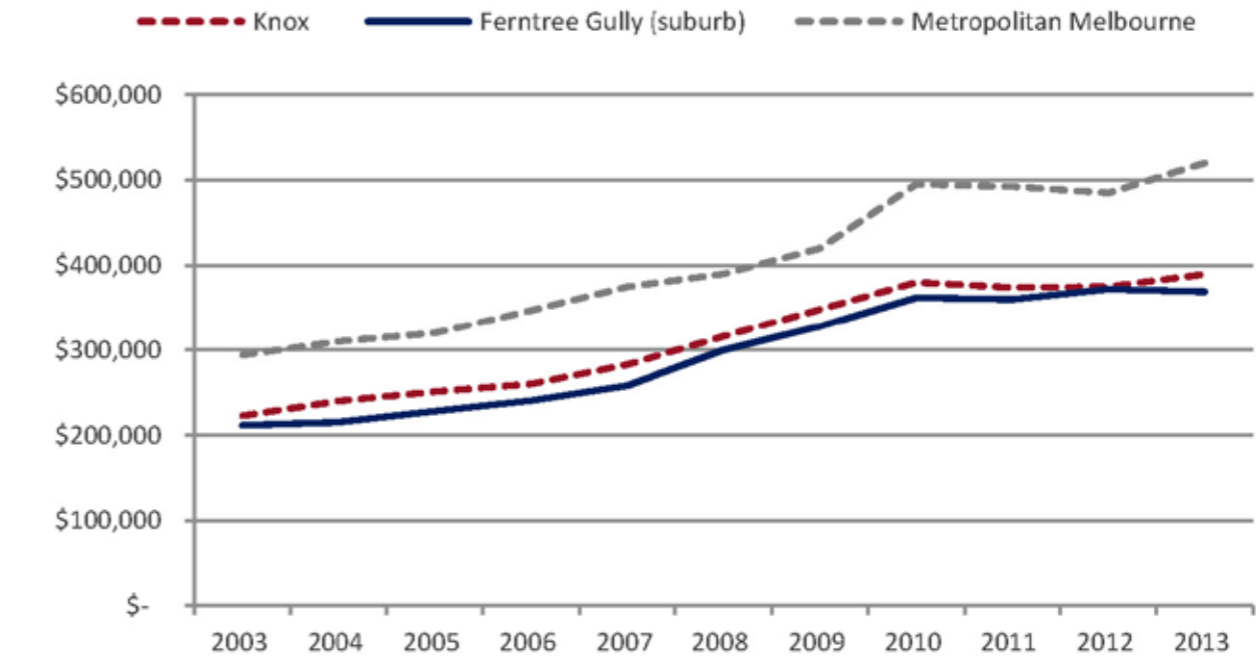


Figure 11. Median Unit / Apartment Price 2003-13
Source: DSE Guide to Property Values 2013

6.4.4 Planning And Building Permits

Historical housing demand and development activity was investigated by analysing dwelling approvals for the past five years within the Upper Gully catchment area. The permit data shows that in recent years there has been very little residential development activity in the Activity Centre and surrounding catchment.

According to building permit data, there have been 11 new dwellings approved in the past five years, all within the R3Z (now NRZ). All new dwellings appear to be detached dwellings on a single lot.

The records of subdivisions for the catchment area show only four approved residential subdivisions over the past five years. All subdivisions were within the R3Z (now NRZ) and included subdivision from one to two lots. The small number of subdivisions is a reflection of the restrictive planning controls and indicates that the capacity to subdivide at the current minimum lot size is very limited.

Analysis of planning permit data shows that there have been some recent applications for mixed-use development within the commercial area. These include:

- 1172 Burwood Highway (approved 2013). Development of land for two storey development comprising offices (two offices at 61sqm and 67sqm), 19 dwellings (one and two bedrooms), and basement car park with 24 spaces.
- 1168 Burwood Highway (2017, pending VCAT refusal). Development of the land for a three storey apartment building containing 14 dwellings, basement car parking.

Both of these proposed developments are on the western periphery of the activity centre where the lot pattern and size can accommodate larger scale development.

6.4.5 Real Estate Agent Discussions

Residential demand is largely driven by Upper Ferntree Gully's scenic location, high level of amenity, and family friendly location. Consultation with real estate agents showed there was moderate amount of interest in apartment style living within the local area. The proposed development at 1172 Burwood Highway provides apartment style living within the Activity Centre. Apartment buyers include a mixture of local elderly residents seeking to downsize, first home buyers and investors. The area was appealing to buyers due to the proximity to the railway station, shops, and lifestyle amenity.

Agents reported developer interest in developing additional mixed-use, apartment style developments within the commercial centre. However, it was unclear whether there was sufficient demand for apartment-style living at this stage to support such development. Medium density development such as townhouse, villa, and dual occupancy was seen as a more attractive residential product for the market.



Proposed residential development along Burwood Highway

Opportunities and Considerations

- Upper Gully will continue to be an attractive location for detached dwellings due to the suburban setting and existing housing stock.
 - Analysis of housing trends in Upper Gully and the wider region, however indicate changing factors influencing housing demand and needs. These trends include:
 - An aging population;
 - Decreasing household size;
 - Growing number of lone person households; and
 - Growing number of 'couple only' households and a small decrease in households with children.
 - Changes in demographics generally point to the need for smaller dwellings, reduced needs for large lots/open space, and increasing need for accessible dwellings for aged populations. The existing dwelling stock in Upper Gully is not well positioned to cater for these changes, as identified in this section.
 - Research suggests that housing preferences have undergone somewhat of a 'cultural change' with greater acceptance of higher density housing and attached dwellings. Upper Gully's access to public transport, health and community services, and retail facilities make it a strategic location for some level of residential intensification, particularly for older residents. It is also a strategic objective of the Knox Housing Strategy 2015 to enable residents to 'age in place'.
- Planning and building permit data indicate that in recent years there has been very limited development activity within Upper Gully, with applications for mixed use development within the Activity Centre focused on lots where larger scale development can be accommodated.
 - The small number of subdivisions in Upper Gully reflect the restrictive planning controls and indicate that capacity to subdivide (particularly in the surrounding residential areas) is limited.
 - Current planning controls of the surrounding residential catchment limit any additional dwelling development to maintain the current built residential form characterised by detached houses on larger lots.

6.5 Development Opportunities

WHAT WE KNOW

Primary Development Opportunities

The key development sites within the Activity Centre which may provide opportunity for future residential growth generally include the larger sites at the periphery of the activity centre. These sites include a mixture of vacant lots, and large format uses such as car sales and nurseries. The sites have been selected due to the large lot sizes, proximity to the activity centre core, and relative underutilisation of the land (both from a land use and site coverage perspective).

As discussed earlier, there have been two development applications in this area (1172 and 1168 Burwood Highway), for mixed used development with apartment dwellings and retail/office space on the ground floor frontage.

A case study of the permitted development for 1172 Burwood Highway provides an indication of the type and scale of development which could be accommodated within these areas in the future. Although there was some community objection to the intensity and scale of the development it was considered to be consistent with local planning policy by Council, a decision which was upheld at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The development site is 1,329sqm, irregular shape, and contains a car sales yard. The proposal comprises;

- Two storey mixed used development;
- Two ground floor offices, at 61sqm and 67sqm;
- Nineteen dwellings (all with one or two bedrooms); and
- Basement car park with 24 car spaces.

Applying these development parameters to other potential development sites provides an indication of the potential capacity for higher density residential development, as shown in Table 8. It is important to note that the dwelling capacities are a high-level assessment and does not take into account a range of factors e.g. lot shape, access etc.

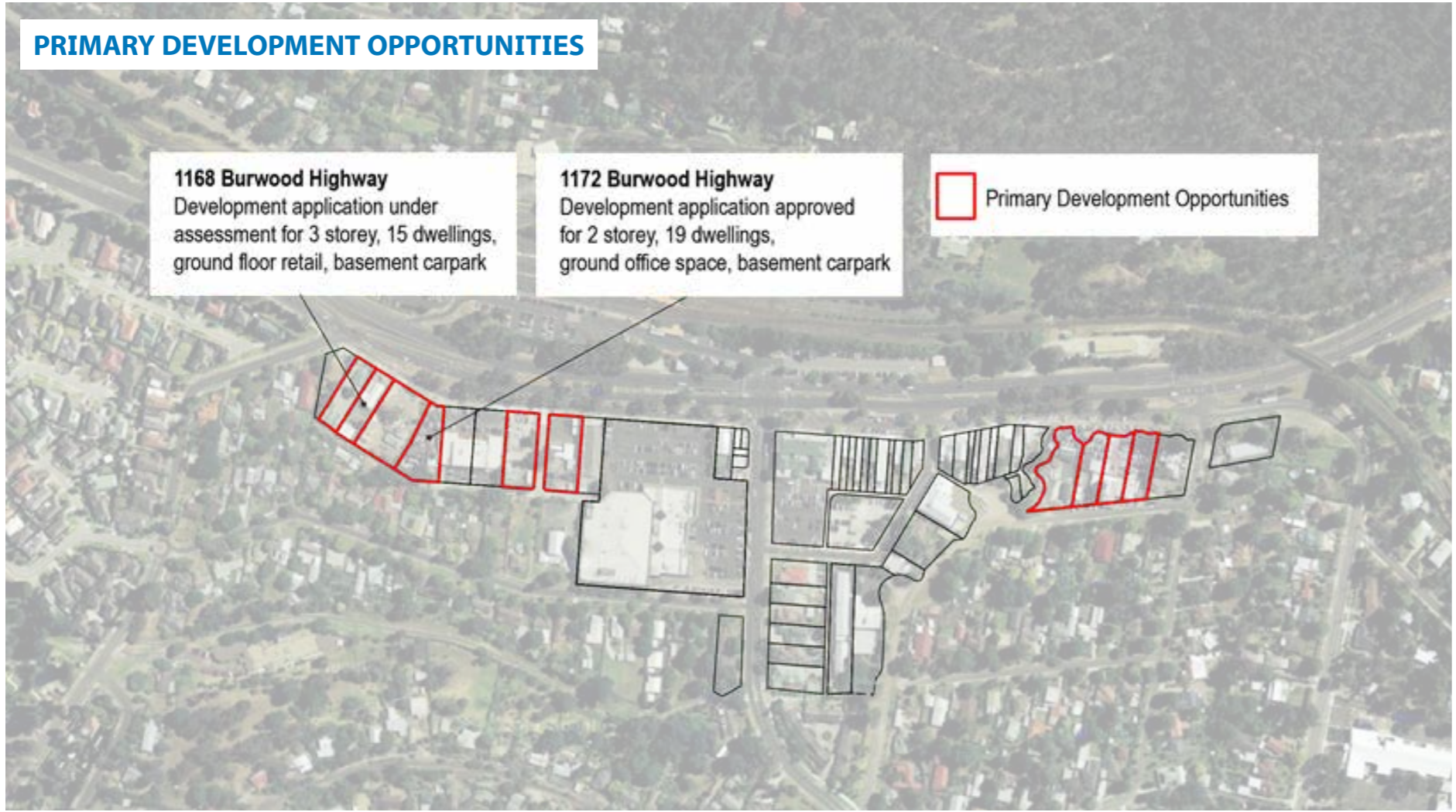
Table 8 – Primary Development Opportunities

Site Address	Current Use	Area (sqm)	Indicative Dwelling Capacity
1168 Burwood Hwy	Heath Clinic (development application pending)	935	15
1170 Burwood Hwy	Nursery	2,026	28
1172 Burwood Hwy	Car Sales (development application approved)	1,329	19
1186 Burwood Hwy	Vacant (former car sales yard)	1,394	19
1192 Burwood Hwy	Car Wash	1,477	21
1254 Burwood Hwy	Car Sales	1,459	21
1270 Burwood Hwy	Car Sales	983	14
1272 Burwood Hwy	Car Sales	966	13
1284 Burwood Hwy	Car Sales	962	13

The total residential capacity of the primary development sites is estimated to be in the order of 150-170 dwellings. Although there appears to be some demand for apartment living in the area, it is considered that at this time, the level of market demand as indicated by population projections and discussions with real estate agents is considered to be insufficient to support any significant increase in the number of apartment developments in the Activity Centre. These sites are considered to be strategic long-term opportunities, as the population of Knox increases, residents seek new housing types, and the other activity centres closer to Melbourne experience greater mixed use development.



Vacant lot proposed for redevelopment along Burwood Highway



Map 22. Primary Development Opportunities



Primary development opportunities located to the west of Ferntree Plaza

Secondary Development Opportunities

Secondary development opportunities include the central car park area which provides at-grade parking either side of Dawson Street for the Ferntree Gully Plaza, hotel, and retail specialties. As the centre continues to develop and to incorporate a greater mix of uses, the central supermarket and hotel car parks could be consolidated/ redeveloped to re-orientate the centre towards the supermarket and provide new retail tenancies with frontage to Dawson Street and connect the two Burwood Highway fronting sections of the Activity Centre. These areas could be suitable for core retail/commercial uses.

Additionally, three sites in the south-west of the commercial centre (5, 9 and 13 Rose Street) are large sized lots which could accommodate residential development. The sites are currently used for a dwelling, screen manufacturer and an office, which appear to be well established on the site. Planning permit records show that there has previously been an application to develop eight double storey dwellings on 13 Rose Street, however this was subsequently withdrawn. The size and shape of the lots would suit medium density, townhouse or villa type development. This housing type is considered as being in high demand, currently under provided in the area, and would suit older members of the community looking to downsize within the local area. Such unit/townhouse development at these locations would support walkability and access to public transport and retail stores. Redevelopment of sites on Rose Street may also provide the opportunity to improve the pedestrian links between the supermarket and tourism precinct.



Map 23. Secondary Development Opportunities



Secondary development opportunities located along Rose Street

Activity Centre Interface

There is opportunity to encourage greater housing intensification through dual occupancy development at the interface of the Activity Centre and residential area. This would allow improved transition from higher density development on Burwood Highway, to the suburban residential areas to the south and facilitate the provision of a greater diversity of dwelling sizes in the catchment area.

Current planning controls limit residential intensification on the periphery due to the prescribed minimum subdivision size of 1,000sqm (DDO1). Most lots range between 1,000 and 1,500sqm meaning that no further subdivision can take place under current controls. Dual occupancy subdivisions, would provide for a greater choice of dwelling size and type in the local area, and would allow some dwelling growth in the area without relying solely on apartment developments, which do not necessarily match the market demand in the area at this time. The review of residential zones undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy 2015 has not recommended changes to the surrounding residential areas. Therefore, this option is not being considered as part of the Strategic Plan process.

Growth Scenario Modelling

In 2016, an additional assessment of residential development demand until 20 was undertaken by Urban Enterprise (Urban Enterprise, November 2016). Three growth scenarios were investigated with the outcome of this analysis indicating that under a low growth scenario an additional 60 dwellings could be expected to be delivered, in the mid growth scenario 100 dwellings could be expected to be delivered and in the upper growth scenario 376 dwellings could be expected to be delivered over the next 20 years throughout the whole of the Activity Centre (refer Appendix 2).

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The community articulated that 'high density' within Upper Gully would not be supported.*
- *This being said, some support was expressed for 'medium density' including 'shop top' development (within the Activity Centre), with most of the community indicating that 'low density' development was preferred. It should be noted that the meaning of high, medium and low density development was not clearly defined by the community however, low density generally referred to current development densities and building heights.*
- *Concern about unit / apartment developments and a loss of green views was also identified in relation to built form.*
- *The community indicated that narrow shop fronts are preferred for future development, providing opportunities for smaller, and local businesses.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- The primary opportunities for residential growth are the larger sites at the periphery of the Activity Centre. These sites could accommodate greater residential intensification and mixed use development. These 'primary' sites are considered long-term strategic opportunities.
- There is the opportunity to consider a range of local streetscape improvements to support residential amenity in the Activity Centre such as landscaping, lighting, and pedestrian connectivity (including stronger links to railway station and retail core).
- The residential interface with the Activity Centre could provide the opportunity to encourage greater housing choice through development.

6.6 Commercial Land Assessment

WHAT WE KNOW

This section provides a profile of commercial land use in the Upper Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre, including retail, tourism, and office. The main drivers of commercial growth are discussed as well as analysis of existing retail and non-retail supply. Future commercial floorspace requirements are projected and strategic directions for growth discussed.

6.6.1 Existing Floorspace

A site visit and analysis of aerial photography was undertaken in July 2014 to provide an estimate of the existing commercial and retail floorspace in the Activity Centre. This was supplemented by comparison against Council's rates database. The overall building floorspace (excluding stand alone facilities such as car sales, and industrial uses), are shown by type in Table 9.

There is approximately 10,700sqm of retail floorspace in the Activity Centre. The retail categories 'food, liquor, groceries' and 'food catering' are the prominent retail types making up 63% of retail floorspace. This demonstrates the primary function of providing local convenience retail to the immediate residential catchment and nearby suburbs.

The turnover of the retail centre is estimated to be \$62m. The Maxi Foods Supermarket is likely to contribute almost half of the retail turnover of the centre.

Table 9 – Existing Floorspace

Turnover was estimated by applying typical turnover densities to each retail category

Category	Floorspace (m2)	% of Total Floorspace	Indicative Retail Turnover (millions)*
Food, Liquor, Groceries	3,600	24%	\$29m
Food Catering	3,200	21%	\$16m
Apparel Home wares and Leisure	1,300	9%	\$5m
Bulky Goods	300	2%	\$1m
Retail Services	2,300	15%	\$10m
Retail sub-total	10,700	72%	\$62m
Commercial	2,000	13%	-
Health and Community services	1,400	9%	-
Vacant	800	5%	-
Total Commercial Floorspace	14,900	100%	-

Source: Urban Enterprise, 2014



Maxi Foods Supermarket and car park area located along Burwood Highway

6.6.2 Regional Retail Hierarchy

Within close proximity to the Activity Centre are a number of higher-order activity centres and major supermarkets which define the competitive retail hierarchy and retail catchment of the centre.

Map 24 overleaf shows the distribution of competing retail centres and supermarkets in the region. Retail competition to the west of Upper Gully is very strong with a number of large retail centres including Knox City Shopping Centre, Mountain Gate Shopping Centre, and Boronia Shopping Centre. These all contain full-line supermarkets and a number of diverse retail offerings. In addition, there are also Woolworths and Aldi supermarkets on Burwood Highway, only 3km to the west of Upper Gully. There is also a Coles Supermarket in Rowville, approximately 9km to the south.

Retail competition to the east of the Activity Centre is limited with no full line supermarkets; there is a Foodworks (convenience supermarket) in Upwey and a small Woolworths supermarket in Belgrave (less than 2,000sqm). The Maxi Foods Supermarket is the last full-line supermarket before arriving in the Dandenong Hills. This suggests that residents within the Dandenong Hills including Upwey, Tecoma and Belgrave are an important customer base for the Activity Centre. Although some of the convenience retail turnover of these residents would be captured in local small supermarkets, it is considered that the weekly shopping needs would be met at a full-line supermarket such as Maxi Foods, Woolworths (Burwood Highway), or Aldi (Burwood Highway).

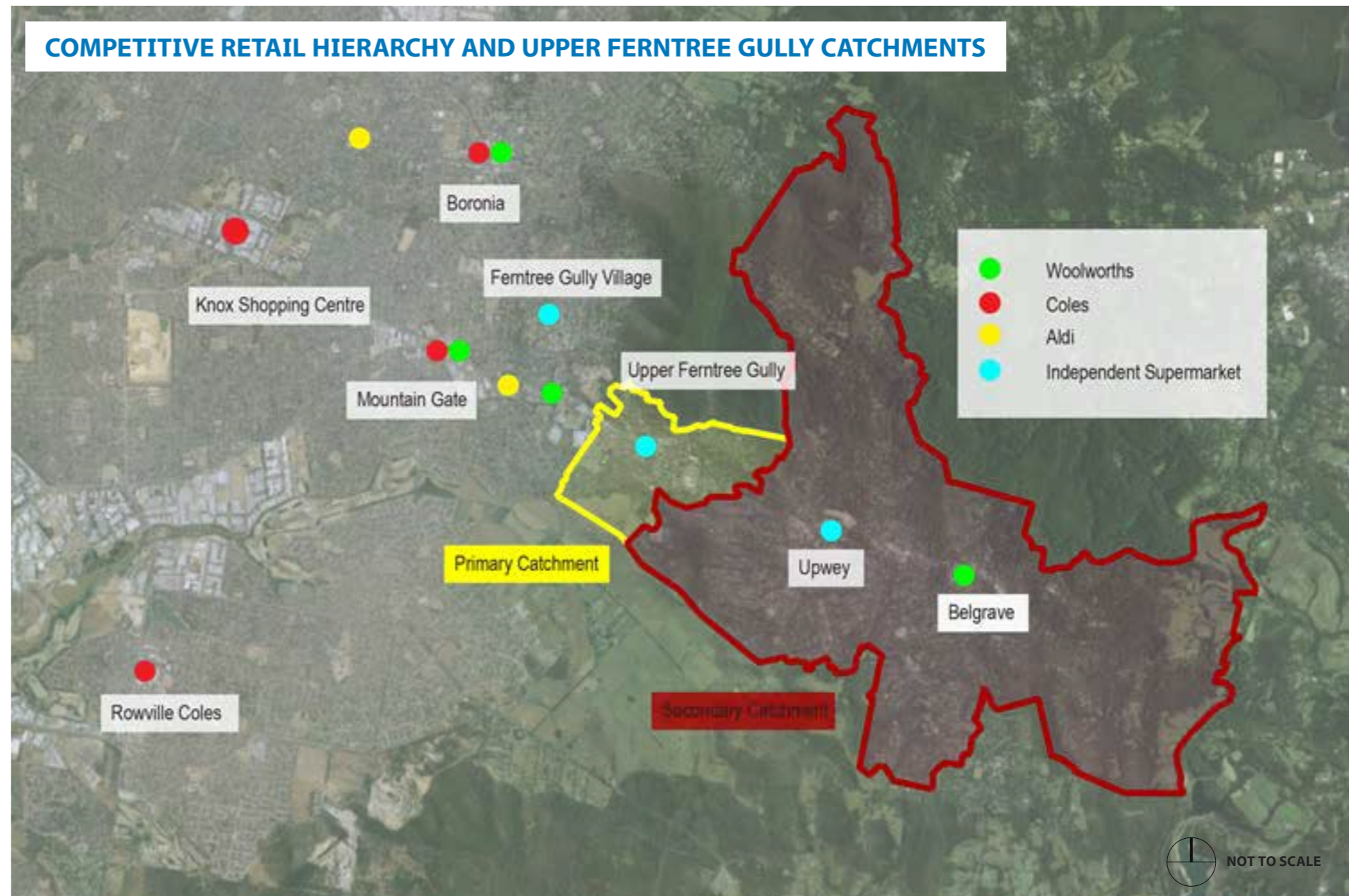
Retail Catchments

Based on the competitive supply of retail centre, the retail catchment for the Activity Centre is estimated to include:

- Primary Catchment; Service the needs of the immediate residential population, as shown by the yellow line in the map 24; and
- Secondary Catchment; Residents in the Dandenong Ranges including Upwey, Tecoma and Belgrave, as shown by the red line in the map 24.

Table 10 – Activity Centre Hierarchy

Supermarket Type	Type	Distance from the Activity Centre
Knox Shopping Centre	Full line Supermarket	7km
Mountain Gate	Two Full-line Supermarkets	3.5km
Boronia	Two Full-line Supermarkets	3.5km
Ferntree Gully Village	Mid-size Supermarket	2km
Ferntree Gully Woolworths	Full line Supermarket	2km
Ferntree Gully Aldi	Full line Supermarket	2km
Upwey Foodworks	Mid-size Supermarket	2km
Belgrave Woolworths	Mid-size Supermarket	5km



Map 24. Competitive Retail Hierarchy and Activity Centre Catchments

6.6.3 Historical Floorspace Growth

Analysis of building and planning permit data for the commercial centre shows there has been little development over the past five years and no increase in commercial floorspace. There were 11 building applications approved, mostly for small-scale repairs and signage. One permit included a fit out of a retail shop to a café. This provides some indication of growing demand for tourism oriented uses.

6.6.4 Demand Drivers

Future demand for retail floorspace will be primarily driven by the following key markets:

- Local Residents - Servicing the needs of the primary and secondary catchments for convenience food and retail;
- External Demand - Visitors Information Centre to the Activity Centre for community and health services, or passing trade from commuters by train and car; and
- Tourism - Passing tourists who are visiting the Dandenong Ranges or the 1,000 Steps.

An overview of these key markets is outlined in the following sections.



Kokoda Memorial Track, also known as the 1,000 Steps'

Local Residents

Servicing the needs of the local catchment is an important function of the Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre. The centre includes a full line supermarket (Maxi Foods), a number of personal services (e.g. hairdressers), and take away food outlets.

Analysis of existing retail expenditure within the primary catchment was undertaken using data from 'MarketInfo'; a retail micro simulation model. The primary area has an estimated retail expenditure of approximately \$12,500 per person, which based on the current population equates to a total retail expenditure of approximately \$31 million per annum. Consumer spending is slightly lower in this area due to the higher proportion of retirees in the residential catchment. Typically, 28% of local spending is directed to Activity Centres. At an average turnover density of \$6,000/sqm (higher than \$6,000/sqm for supermarkets, lower for specialty and other retail types), this expenditure would support only 1,500sqm of retail floorspace in local and neighbourhood centres. This represents just 13% of the floorspace within the Activity Centre, and demonstrates the importance of the secondary catchment in the Dandenong Hills, and passing trade.

External Demand

The Activity Centre is located along Burwood Highway, a major arterial road in eastern Melbourne, and includes the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station, a premium grade railway station. Passing demand from commuters is expected to drive a significant proportion of the retail turnover in the Activity Centre. Although the station attracts a high number commuters and visitors, the pedestrian connections between the station and retail centre are very poor. This limits the potential to encourage retail expenditure from train commuters in the centre.

The commercial centre is in close proximity to the Angliss Hospital and Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School, and contains a number of health and community services. Visitors to these services will also drive demand for convenience retail through trip sharing.

Tourism

The Activity Centre plays an important role in servicing the visitor economy, with a number of tourism uses such as cafes and antique stores. Many of these uses have trading hours which are oriented towards visitor times (e.g. weekends).

Burwood Highway is a major gateway to the Dandenong Ranges, with an estimated 27% of visitors to the Dandenong Ranges using the highway. The popular Kokoda Memorial Trail (the 1,000 Steps) is located less than a kilometer, (a ten minute walk along a shared path) from the Activity Centre. The 1,000 Steps are particularly popular on weekends. Consultation with staff at the Visitors Information Centre indicated that 16% of visitors to the Visitors Information Centre were visiting the 1,000 Steps. The strength of the passing visitor trade also supports a weekend market which operates every Saturday and Sunday (except for public holidays) on the station car park.

Consultation with local real estate agents highlighted the importance of the 1,000 Steps in generating activity in the centre, especially in the eastern section of the shopping strip fronting Burwood Highway (between 1208 and 1248 Burwood Highway). This area is somewhat protected from the harsh highway environment by trees and landscaping. An agent for a vacant property reported high interest in this area for tourism oriented uses such as a café and juice bar.

The 1812 Theatre on Rose Street is also an important component of the visitor economy. The theatre draws people from around the Eastern suburbs and acts as a sub-regional entertainment attraction and strengthens this section of the Activity Centre for tourism uses.

6.6.5 Projected Demand

Projecting retail demand is complex and limited by the availability of data industry wide. An expenditure model based on population growth is widely accepted as the most appropriate measure for future retail demand. However, due to the unique role of Activity Centre in servicing a broad catchment and passing tourists, a localised catchment model which estimates future floorspace growth would not be sufficient. Instead, a strategic approach is used to demonstrate the key drivers of demand, particularly the tourism potential of the centre.

Resident Demand

The need for additional floorspace for convenience retail is typically driven by population growth within the primary and secondary retail catchments. Population projections to 2031 were sourced from Forecast ID Knox and Yarra Ranges, and are shown in the table below. Population is predicted to decline in the primary and secondary catchments by a total of 794 people. Negative population growth generally reflects existing planning controls which protect the area from increased housing intensity due to location within the environmentally significant Dandenong Hills. In addition, the existing population is aging with smaller household sizes, and minimal opportunities for residential dwelling construction.

Table 11 – Catchment Growth 2011-2031

*Secondary Catchment is made up of 'Kallista and Surrounds', 'Belgrave-Selby', 'Upwey and Surrounds', and 'Belgrave Heights and Surrounds'

Area	Population 2011	Population 2031	Difference
Primary Catchment (Upper Ferntree Gully)	2,567	2,552	-15
Secondary Catchment*	24,902	24,123	-779
Total	27,469	26,675	-794

Source: Forecast ID Knox 2014, Forecast ID Yarra Ranges, 2014

Although population is not expected to grow within the retail catchment, this will not necessarily have a negative impact on the turnover available in the Activity Centre. Retail expenditure per person is expected to increase over time (in real terms), which would have a balancing effect on population decline. However, future floorspace growth is very unlikely to be driven by population and retail expenditure growth in the residential catchment.

Tourism Demand

Future growth in retail floorspace within the Activity Centre could be driven by demand from outside the current retail catchment, such as increasing retention or capture of passing visitors expenditure.

A high level profile of visitor activities and groups for the Dandenong Range and Yarra Valley are shown in the Tables 12 and 13. The region has a diverse range of attractions for tourists. Strengths of the region include bush-walking and other outdoor activities, food and wine, and heritage attractions (e.g. Puffing Billy). The region is also becoming increasingly popular with cyclists including road and mountain bike riders who use tracks further into the heart of the ranges.

The majority of visitors traveled as an adult couple, family group, or with friends and relatives. The region is particularly popular with couples due to its proximity to Melbourne and accessibility for overnight getaways and daytrips.

Table 12 – Dandenong Region Visitor Activities

Activity	Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges	Regional Victoria
Visit friends & relatives	54%	46%
Eat out / dine at a restaurant and/or cafe	50%	53%
Go shopping for pleasure	28%	22%
Sightseeing/looking around	26%	28%
Bush-walking / rainforest walks	24%	14%
Visit national parks / state parks	19%	12%
Visit wineries	12%	5%
Pubs, clubs, and discos	10%	19%
Going to markets	9%	10%
Picnics and BBQs	8%	8%

Source: Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley Market Profile, Tourism Victoria, 2013

Table 13 – Dandenong Region Travel Party

Travel Party	Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges	Regional Victoria
Traveling alone	15%	20%
Adult couple	37%	29%
Family group - parents and children	22%	24%
Friends and relatives	20%	23%
Business associations	0%	2%
Other	6%	2%

Source: Forecast Visitation, Tourism Victoria 2014, Urban Enterprise, 2014

According to Tourism Research Australia (TRA) visitor estimates, the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley currently receive an estimated 3.8 million domestic visitors and 350,000 international visitors per annum (a total of 4.15 million visitors). It is estimated that 27% of visitors to the Yarra Ranges Shire utilise Burwood Highway as an entry point, generating a significant number of tourists passing through the Activity Centre every day.

It should be noted that Tourism Research Australia (TRA) defines a daytrip as being a minimum stay of over 4 hours, and a round trip of over 50km. Therefore, the majority of visitors from eastern Melbourne and visitors to the 1,000 Steps (who generally spend less than 4 hours), would not be included within Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley visitation estimates. Including these visitors would increase estimates significantly.

Tourism in Australia is expected to grow significantly in the future with increased international visitation, increased numbers of trips by domestic visitors, and increased visitor expenditure. The following table (Table 14) shows the projected increase in visitation to the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley, by applying Tourism Victoria forecasts. Tourism visitation to Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley is forecast to grow to 4.74 million by 2023, an increase of approximately 600,000 visitors over the next 10 years. Given that the majority of tourism product is in the Yarra Ranges Shire a large proportion of these additional visitors would be expected to access the region through Burwood Highway.

Table 14 – Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley Visitor Projections

Visitor Market	2013 Visitation	% Growth p.a.	2023 Visitation Projection
Domestic	3.8 million	1.3% p.a.	4.3 million
International	350,000	4.9% p.a.	435,000
Total	4.15 million		4.74 million

Source: Forecast Visitation, Tourism Victoria 2014, Urban Enterprise, 2014

Commercial Office Space

There is currently a small provision of employment uses (professional service offices and light industrial). Discussions with agents indicated little demand for office space in the area. This is demonstrated by the closure of the Commonwealth Bank, which is intended be converted to a dentist practice. The lack of population growth in the area is also expected to impact demand for professional services.

Future opportunities will be for minor, incremental growth for small-scale office space. This is likely to be linked with mixed use residential developments, as shown by the proposed development at 1172 Burwood Highway.



Commercial office uses located along Burwood Highway within the Activity Centre

6.6.6 Non-Retail Commercial Land

The current provision of employment uses within the centre includes a mixture of small-scale professional offices, light industrial and medical consulting clinics. Economic trends in the broader region demonstrate shifts in employment towards health and social assistance and professional services. These trends may result in businesses in these industries seeking to establish within the centre given the proximity to Angliss Hospital.

Discussions with real estate agents indicated that there is currently a low level of demand for commercial office space in the Activity Centre, as well as the broader region. Recent amendments to industrial zones which remove office floorspace caps in industrial areas is expected to draw a small proportion of office demand away from commercial centres such as Activity Centre. The lack of population growth in the area is also expected to impact demand for professional services and commercial floorspace. Future opportunities within the Activity Centre will be for incremental growth for small-scale office space. This is likely to be linked with mixed use residential



Existing industrial uses located along Burwood Highway within the Activity Centre

developments (as shown by the proposed development at 1172 Burwood Highway) or use of existing retail/shop front space.

Employment opportunities are expected to be driven by the health and wellbeing sector. This is demonstrated by recent property transactions, as sourced through consultation with real estate agents, including the closure of Commonwealth Bank, which is intended to be converted into a dental practice, and the leasing of a shop front on Burwood Highway for a podiatry clinic. Future opportunities for growth in the sector should be investigated through identifying gaps in the health services provision in the sub-region which could be accommodated in the Activity Centre.

Opportunities for small and home businesses could be provided in residential areas within close proximity to the Activity Centre. For example, 'medical centre' and 'home occupation' are as of right uses in the proposed Neighbourhood Residential Zone. These types of uses would be expected to locate, or wish to locate, between the Activity Centre and hospital precinct (along or near Dawson Street).

Industrial and similar uses within the centre are relatively small scale, low intensity, and light industrial operations, such as a panel beater, car sales, and garden supplies. Whilst these provide local employment opportunities, the location is not well suited to industrial use given nearby residential and sensitive uses and relatively small land holdings. Employment trends show that industrial sectors are generally declining in Knox and limited demand for service industrial uses will be generated through local population growth.

6.6.7 Summary of Addendum to the Technical Report – Land Use & Economics 2014

An Addendum Report (refer Appendix 2) was prepared to complement the report *Technical Report – Land Use and Economics 2014*.

The Addendum was prepared to provide additional analysis for the Upper Gully Strategic Plan to address the Panel direction to provide further assessment of traffic impacts based on “anticipated future development in the activity centre”.

The Addendum summarises the potential capacity of the centre based on revised built form controls proposed through Amendment C141 (as endorsed by Council 28 June 2016) and scenarios for development over a 20-year timeframe (2016 to 2036). The proposed changes to the planning controls would allow an additional storey for any developments in the ‘central core’ (refer figure 2 in Addendum) of the NAC compared with the current controls, and therefore it is likely that new developments would generally comprise three storeys as opposed to two storeys, increasing the overall capacity of the Activity Centre.

Despite the proposed increase in maximum building height from 7.5m to 8.5m, the overall capacity of properties at the periphery of the Activity Centre will not be materially impacted by the changes proposed given that a two storey height limit will continue to apply to these areas. The broad assessment is based on the following assumptions:

- Sites can be consolidated to create suitable development parcels;
- Each property / area is developed for a mix of uses comprising commercial / retail uses on the ground floor and residential uses (apartments) at upper levels;

- Maximum allowable development of the site based on proposed controls (i.e. 100% coverage on allowable building footprints allowing for relevant setbacks);
- Internal circulation space of 20% for upper levels (for corridors, stairwells, services, etc) and 40% at ground level (parking access, storage, access to upper levels, etc);
- Average apartment size of 80sqm;
- All car spaces are provided in basements. Note: a detailed assessment of carparking needs has not been undertaken as part of this assessment and it assumed that required carparking would be accommodated at basement levels.

Under the proposed planning controls, sites subject to a three storey height limit would have capacity to accommodate a net increase of 7,000sqm of commercial or retail floorspace (over and above the current floorspace) and a net increase of 432 dwellings (apartments) at upper levels. However given that the current controls allow buildings of up to two storeys, proposed three controls would only effectively permit an additional level of apartments to be constructed. This additional level could result in a capacity of up to 197 additional apartments being accommodated in core of the Activity Centre.

The height changes would not create any additional capacity for retail or commercial floorspace under the assumptions outlined in the Addendum. It is unlikely that demand would support occupation of all of this floorspace within the next 20 years, and similarly unlikely that development of all properties will be possible within the timeframe. A high growth scenario has been added to the assessment which assumes that 50% of this floorspace is provided over the 20 year planning timeframe, a total of 3,500sqm. This scenario would require a significant increase of demand from current levels over the period, but provides an indication of the upper level of demand for traffic and parking that might be generated over the period. For further information refer to Appendix 2 Addendum to the Technical Report – Land Use & Economics 2014

6.6.8 Tourism Opportunities

Capturing greater visitation and expenditure from passing tourists is considered a key opportunity for Upper Ferntree Gully. Leveraging this opportunity will require improving the retail and product mix to appeal to visitors, and design and landscape interventions to improve the connectivity and appeal of the Activity Centre to encourage passing visitors to stop in the centre. Tourism opportunities should be considered in the Strategic Plan and accompanying Streetscape Design Project.

Signage And Branding

The current signage within the Activity Centre and at key entry points along Burwood Highway is limited. For visitors passing through, there is little indication of what is available in Upper Gully and that they are entering the Dandenong Ranges tourism region. Improved signage through a consistent approach to branding, particularly at key entry points along Burwood Highway will encourage greater visitation from passing traffic. This also includes improved wayfinding signage and exposure of the Visitors Information Centre, which provides a clear indication that visitors are entering the tourism region.

The signage and branding of the centre should communicate the recreational and lifestyle values and opportunities which are available in the centre.

Design And Landscaping

Tourism focused retail within Upper Gully is concentrated around the shops fronting Burwood Highway, between Rose Street and Dawson Street. The shops include a mix of specialty retail and cafes which have a strong visitor focus. Improved landscaping and streetscape improvements to make this area appealing and provide further protection from the heavy traffic on Burwood Highway will encourage a greater number of passing visitors to stop and engage with the retail offerings in this area. This may also facilitate outdoor dining opportunities.

Although Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station receives a large number of daily commuters and visitors, heavy traffic along Burwood Highway and poor pedestrian connections mean that there are a relatively small number of train users visiting the commercial centre. Improving pedestrian connections across Burwood Highway and wayfinding throughout the centre to bring greater numbers of train users into the commercial centre should be considered in the Strategic Plan.

Cycling

The Dandenong Ranges is a popular location for cyclists including road cyclists who challenge themselves on the steep road climbs, and mountain bike riders who use tracks further into the heart of the ranges. Analysis of 'Strava' routes (a website and mobile application used to track athletic activity via GPS) shows that a large number of cyclists either use Upper Ferntree Gully as a starting point, or pass through on their way to the hills. The popular climbs known as 'Devil's Elbow' and 'One Tree Hill', commence from Upper Ferntree Gully.

Encouraging cyclists to utilise the Activity Centre as a base and engage with the retail offerings may provide opportunity for future growth. Cyclists are considered a high yielding visitor segment. Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station also provides easy access for cyclists by train. Greater yield could be achieved through improved cycling infrastructure (e.g. trails, bike lanes, bike parking) and consideration of cycling within streetscape design.

Retail Mix

Analysis of building permits, and discussions with real estate agents showed that there are a growing number of retailers which are targeting visitor trade. Tourism hospitality uses such as cafes and eateries have showed interest in establishing in the Activity Centre. Facilitating an improved retail and product mix including improving the hospitality offering to appeal to visitors should be considered in the Strategic Plan.

The centres growth in health and wellbeing services is considered complimentary to its tourism appeal. The 1,000 Steps is very popular with fitness enthusiasts, particularly on weekends. Commercial opportunities to service this market including fitness studios, health food stores and juice bars should be encouraged in the Activity Centre.



4 KIDS

nothing beats streets

Indian Logan Josh
NORTH INDIAN & THAI COOKING CUISINE 4758 1388

studio

BAKERY

Computers

INVAI HOTEL

GARDEN ST
HOSPITAL

KEEP LEFT

ONE WAY

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

Comments received during engagement in regards to Commercial Land and Tourism opportunities included:

- *People liked the mix of local shops and businesses however expressed a desire for more eateries / cafes and longer opening hours;*
- *Some comments alluded to the possibility for more diversity such as restaurants / cafe strip with low rise apartments above. Other additional business opportunities included a medical centre, child care, community bank and nursery;*
- *The opportunity to capitalise on passing tourists to the Dandenongs was suggested. This could be achieved through a traders associations, emphasising historical links, promoting activities and events, eateries and additional boutique shops;*
- *Opportunity to create local employment opportunities / apprenticeships; and*
- *Investigate opportunity to provide incentives to fill empty shops and provide more variety within the Activity Centre.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Tourism visitation is considered to be the key opportunity for future retail and economic activity in the Activity Centre. Considering the volume of tourists passing through the Activity Centre, the yield from passing visitors is currently low. With tourism numbers expected to increase, opportunities to capture greater yield and expenditure include:
 - Improved signage and branding;
 - A retail and product mix which appeals to visitors;
 - Improve cycling infrastructure; and
 - Street and landscape improvements to improve the:
 - Amenity and attractiveness of the centre;
 - Streetscape of the shops fronting Burwood Highway, between Dawson and Rose Streets, where much of the tourism activity is concentrated; and
 - Walkability and wayfinding, particularly the connections between the railway station and commercial centre.
 - Opportunity to encourage the redevelopment of large sites at the periphery of the Activity Centre for large format tourism uses.
 - Support mixed-used development within the Activity Centre, and encourage a mixture of residential dwellings with commercial and employment functions at lower levels.
 - Liaise with the owners of Ferntree Plaza regarding any plans for future expansion with a view to ensuring future development provides for a consolidation of core retail uses along Dawson Street, with active frontages where possible.
- Investigate opportunities for outdoor dining within the identified tourism/hospitality area.
 - Promote and investigate the role of the Activity Centre in providing business premises for the health and wellbeing sector. Engage with major health institutions and aged care facilities in the area to identify gaps in health services which could be located in the Activity Centre or in adjacent residential areas.
 - Investigate the opportunity to promote Upper Gully as a gateway to the Dandenong Ranges. This may be achieved through:
 - Provision of a strong and consistent landscape and planting theme along Burwood Highway to enhance its visual appearance, reinforce its links to the Dandenong Ranges and enhance its amenity.
 - Enhancing the Information Centre as a jumping off point for visitors to explore the greater Dandenong Ranges. Access to the Visitors Information Centre should be improved with designated parking, clear signage and improved pedestrian access between parking, the centre and the station.
 - Investigating the opportunity to work with VicTrack and utilise the railway bridge as a 'gateway' marker for Upper Gully.
 - Support streetscape upgrades within the Activity Centre to provide a catalyst for future investment and revitalisation.

7. VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

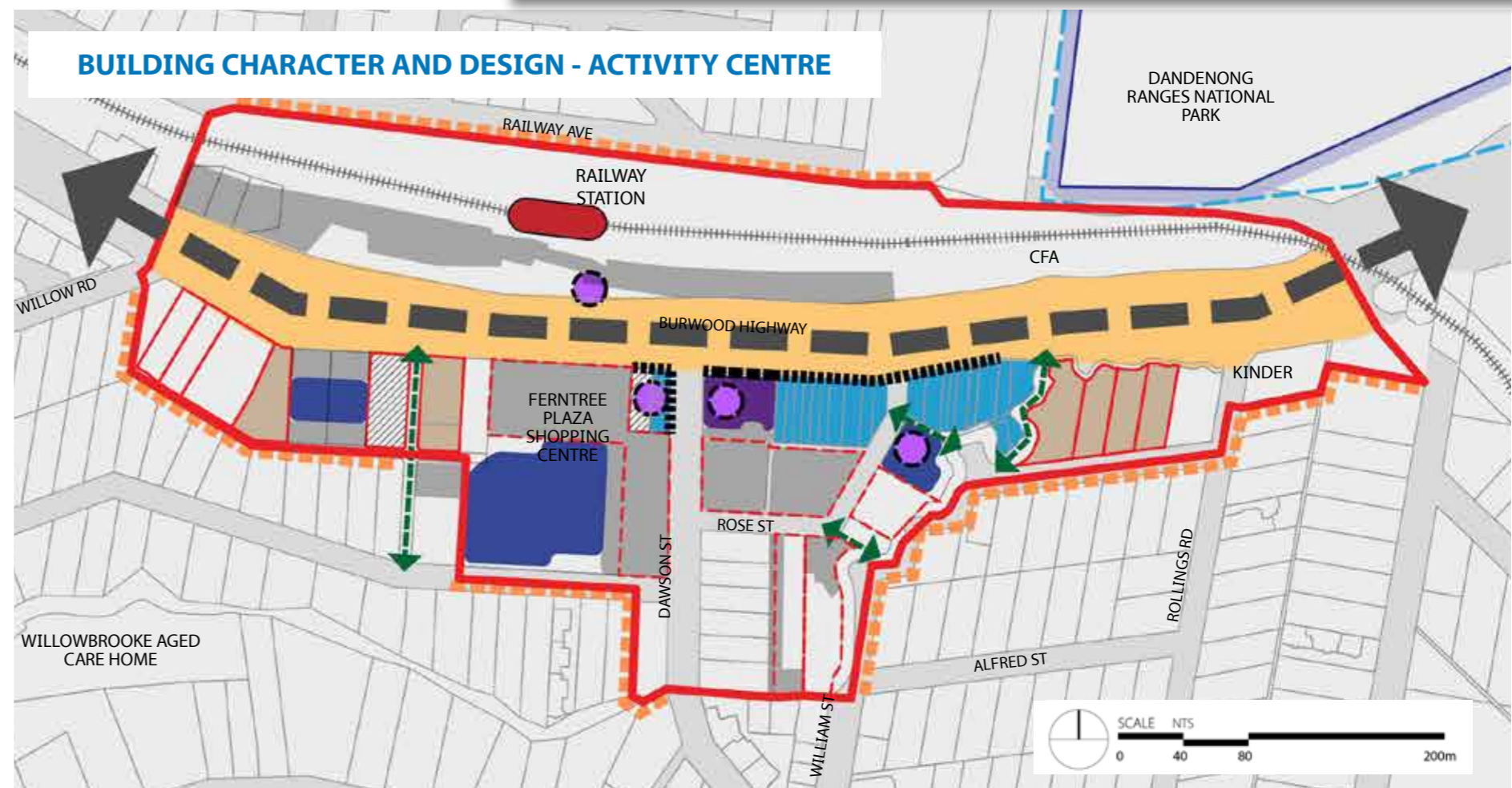
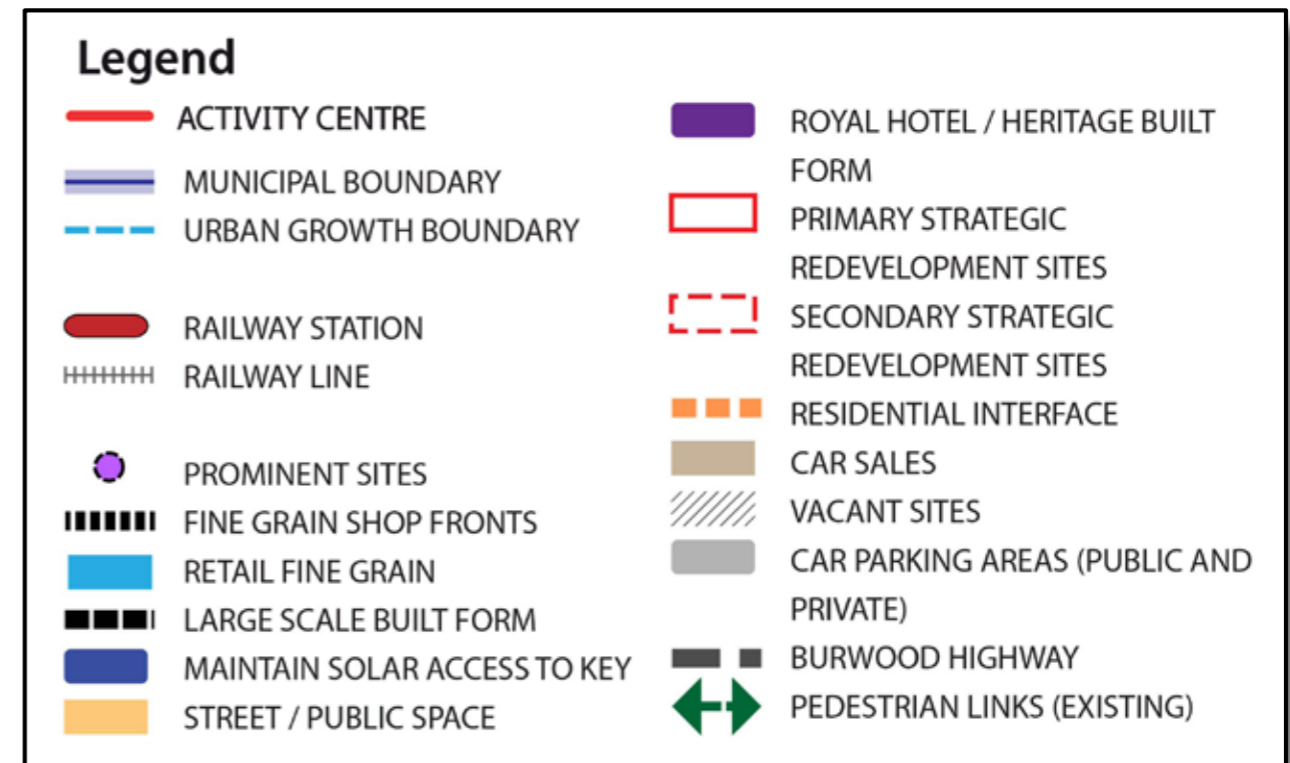
7.1 Built Form

WHAT WE KNOW

7.1.1 Retail and Commercial Built Form Character

Buildings within the Activity Centre are predominately low scale single storey with the occasional two storey building providing subtle variation in the skyline. The style and character of buildings across the Activity Centre is generally nondescript with simple detailing and parapets. Styles include a mix of recent (approx. 1980's), recently modified buildings and the occasional older built form styles, reflecting the incremental growth of the Activity Centre over a period of time.

Overall there isn't a consistently strong defined built form style and character within the Activity Centre. However, community engagement revealed that the Art Deco architectural style of the Visitors Information Centre and the Royal Hotel are highly valued by the community. This provides opportunities for high quality contemporary development to complement this style and to reinvigorate the urban form of the Activity Centre. It will be important to ensure that future development is of a high quality, particularly on prominent sites.



Map 25. Building Character and Design - Activity Centre

7.1.2 Heritage / Valued Buildings

The historic buildings within Upper Ferntree Gully are important both as visual landmarks and providing a link to its early development.

Only one building within Activity Centre is covered by the Heritage Overlay:

- HO29 - Royal Hotel located on the corner of Dawson Street and Burwood Highway, Upper Ferntree Gully.

Other buildings covered by the Heritage Overlay outside the Activity Centre within the suburb of Upper Ferntree Gully include:

- HO32 - Stone cottage (Coonara House) and early plantings, 22 Willow Road, Upper Ferntree Gully.

There are also buildings in and around the Activity Centre that while not protected by a Heritage Overlay, are considered to important by the community as expressed during the engagement phases. The Visitors Information Centre was identified as one of these buildings. This building is currently managed by the Yarra Ranges Tourism.

An independent heritage assessment for the Activity Centre was undertaken as part of this project. The Report found that the Visitors Information Centre, St Thomas Anglican Church and the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station as buildings of heritage significance. For further information on the heritage assessment refer to the *Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre Heritage Assessments Report, Context 2015*.

Given that there are relatively few examples of heritage / valued buildings within Upper Gully, it is particularly important that the buildings identified are retained, celebrated and complemented by future development.



The Royal Hotel is a landmark heritage building within the Activity Centre



St Thomas Anglican Church located at 12 Mount View Road, is a significant building outside of the Activity Centre



The Visitors Information Centre, located on Burwood Highway on VicTrack land



The Upper Gully Railway Station, located on Burwood Highway behind the Visitors Information Centre

7.1.3 Building Frontages

Along Burwood Highway, to the east of Dawson Street, a major contributor to the positive street level experience, is the narrow shop fronts (fine grain built form). These buildings provide visual interest through their individual articulation, but also provide a greater diversity of land uses and business opportunities for smaller traders.

Open and engaging shop fronts, east of Dawson Street (along the Burwood Highway), also contribute a positive street level experience. This is achieved through elements such as a continuous built edge to the street, active ground floor uses, transparent frontages, awnings and clearly defined pedestrian entries.

To the west of Dawson Street, as the scale and form of buildings increase, buildings are setback from the street and less active uses are present. This provides for a less lively street level experience and limited amenity for pedestrians.

These uses currently occupy significant land parcels within the center, fragment the Activity Centre and do not positively contribute to the character of Upper Gully. There is the opportunity to encourage the redevelopment of these underutilised sites to increase the intensity of activity within the Activity Centre and along Burwood Highway.

A key challenge will be to retain the existing pattern of fine grain built form that is a positive feature of the Activity Centre and encourage a fine-grain pattern on larger redevelopment sites. Given that fine grain built form is most important at ground levels, there is an opportunity for large scale redevelopment to provide fine grain built form at street level.

7.1.4 Building setbacks

Buildings setbacks will play a key role in defining the character of the Activity Centre. Buildings across the commercial area of the Activity Centre, particularly along Burwood Highway should be built to the front boundary to create a continuous edge to the street. This will ensure ground floor uses engage as best as possible with the street, are visible and clearly define the streetscape.

The majority of buildings along Burwood Highway are built to the street (have no setback), however notable exceptions include:

- Ferntree Plaza, which has a setback of approximately 50m along Burwood Highway and approximately 35m along Dawson Street to allow for at grade parking along the street edge
- Car yards and industrial uses along Burwood Highway where buildings are set back to allow for cars to be displayed at the front of the premise.
- A small number of vacant lots

The inconsistency of setbacks towards the outer edges of the Activity Centre fragments the centre and provides limited amenity for pedestrians through an absence of awnings and less activity at the street edge.



The majority of buildings along Burwood Highway have zero building setback

7.1.5 Building Heights

Built form is predominantly low scale with heights generally single storey and views provided across the roof-lines to the surrounding treed hillsides. These views were highlighted as a valued characteristic of the Activity Centre during community engagement.

Within the Activity Centre there are also the occasional two storey buildings that provide vertical articulation and variation in the skyline. Most notable is the Royal Hotel, at a height of approximately 12.5m. Although the Royal Hotel is only two storeys, it is equivalent in height to a modern three storey building.

The Visitors Information Centre is another prominent two storey building within the Activity Centre on an elevated position diagonally opposite the Royal Hotel.

Building heights for residential land surrounding the Activity Centre and within railway land along the Activity Centre's northern boundary, are controlled by various planning policies. Built form controls in these areas will not be considered as part of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan however should consider how built form in the Activity Centre transitions to these residential areas.

Within the Activity Centre, interim building height controls prescribe a maximum height of 7.5m.

3D modeling was undertaken for the centre to test two storey (8.5m) building heights and three storey (12.0m) building heights across the Activity Centre. The two

storey building heights maintained good visibility of the surrounding Dandenong Ranges particularly when looking south from the northern side of the Burwood Highway. The three storey building heights did reduce visibility of the Dandenong Ranges however some sense of the surrounding hills was maintained.

The view along Dawson Street is currently very open as the car parks on either side of the road are undeveloped. This enables expansive views to the vegetated hills when traveling north along the street. Testing of the built form scenarios indicated that an upper level recessed by 2m increased the views to the vegetated hillside and retained a stronger sense of openness than the scenario with no upper level setback. The 2m upper level setback also supports opportunities for upper level balconies.



Looking west across the Burwood Highway shops

A key consideration in determining building heights is the impact on the amenity of the internal spaces. Existing floor to ceiling heights within the Activity Centre are generally 3.5m-4.5m for ground levels, with an additional 1.0m - 2.0m in height provided by parapets. Upper level floor to ceiling heights for two storey buildings are mixed responding to the roof form and period of the building.

Figure 12 illustrates an indicative building design that could be achieved under the interim building height controls of 7.5m. The figure shows that floor to ceiling heights for the ground floor are restrictive and will not allow for a generous space commonly associated with retail uses.

Generous floor to ceiling heights allow for adaptable designs and accommodate either residential, retail or commercial uses over time. They also allow a greater level of amenity for occupants by allowing more light to enter the building, improved natural ventilation and reduced heat gain. At the ground level, generous ceiling heights provided improved entrance design, window and engagement opportunities.

Roof form should also be considered in determining future building heights. Feedback during the engagement phases indicated that participants preferred variation in the building skyline. This is currently provided in the Activity Centre through a mix of single and double storey heights and the occasional pitched roof form.

The interim height controls of 7.5m provide little opportunity for the integration of a roof form. It will be important to consider opportunities for roof articulation in future building heights. This will contribute to a visually interesting skyline in the Activity Centre and better respond to the undulating land form.

Flooding and drainage are key consideration for building heights within the Activity Centre as much of it is affected by 100-year Annual Recurrence Interval (ARI) flooding. For development within the 100 -year ARI year flood line, minimum free boards are required. Refer to Map 55-56 for flood levels.

Given much of the land within the Activity Centre is affected by 100-year ARI floods and overland flows, this requirement has significant impact on future development and building heights within the Activity Centre. Council staff have indicated that a minimum free boards of 300mm is generally required within 100-year ARI overland flow flood areas.

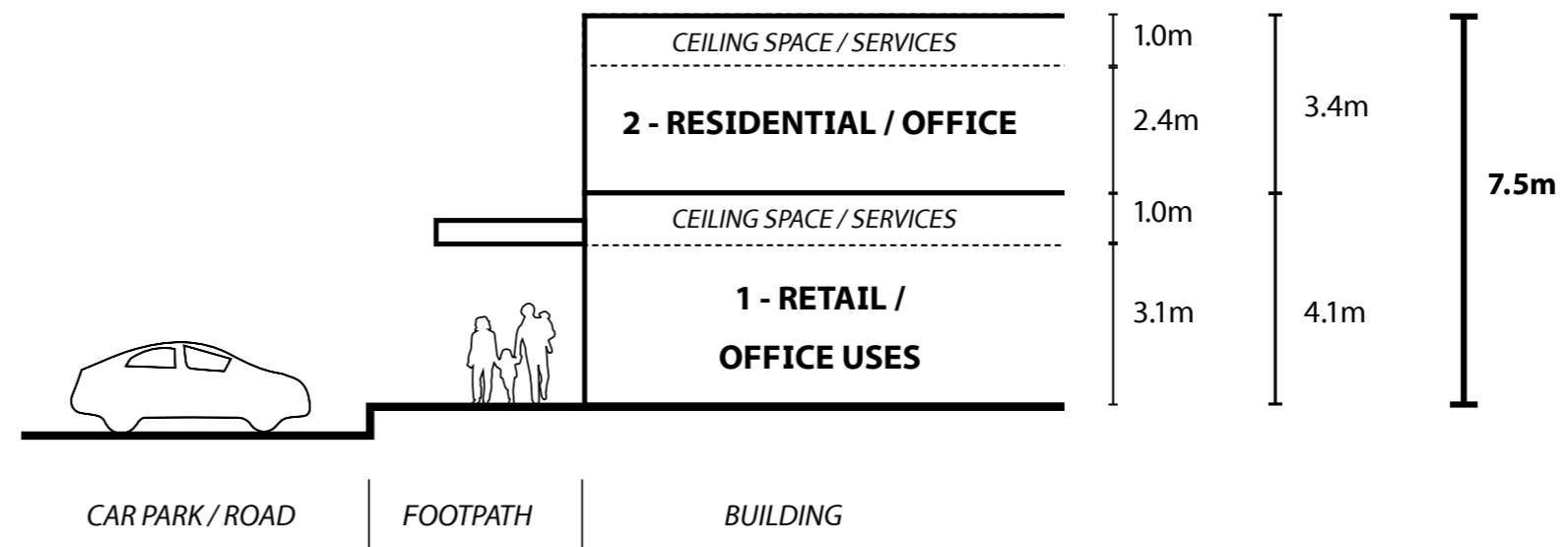


Figure 12. Indicative building design under interim building height controls of 7.5m

7.1.6 3D Model Visualisations

The following 3D model visualisations demonstrate the impact of indicative two and three storey building heights on key views across the Activity Centre.

Photos and Google Maps Streetview images have been selected to show the existing view from approximately the same area as the modelled viewpoints. The photos and Streetview images may vary slightly from the modelled viewpoints in some instances, but this does not affect the accuracy of the 3D modelling.

The following outlines the parameters adopted for the 3D modelling:

Existing Topography

The 3D topographic models were developed using 0.5 metre interval Lidar contours for the Activity Centre and immediate surrounds, drawn from Council mapping information. VicMap contours at 1 metre intervals (State Government mapping information) were used for the surrounding areas. A Nearmap aerial photo is then draped over the 3D topographic model to provide the base images for the 3D modelling.

The surrounding topographic model was elevated by 15 metres to account for the existing tree canopy on the Dandenong Ranges foothills and ridgelines.

Buildings Heights

The modelling of building heights for two storey (8.5m) and three storey (12m) excluding allowances for architectural features, roof forms, and flooding constraints, generally adopted the following floor to floor heights:

- Ground floor - Retail / restaurant use (4.5m)
- First floor - Mix of commercial and residential (3.6m)
- Second floor - Mix of commercial (3.6m) and residential uses (3.2m)

Flooding Constraints

Flooding constraints have been factored into the modelling. The ground floors of buildings on sites affected by overland flow flooding were elevated 0.3m (freeboard) above the 100 Year ARI Flood Depths shown on Map 68. The midpoint of the water depth was adopted i.e. for properties in the 0-200mm water depth area a flood depth of 100mm was adopted.

Building Setbacks and Design

Ground level setbacks have been adopted from Map 15 - Preferred Setbacks and Design Outcomes for Built Form contained in the Strategic Plan. As a general rule, a second floor setback of 2m was adopted across the Activity Centre from all three storey locations. However no second floor setback was provided on the corner of the Burwood Highway and Rose Street and the south west corner of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street. This minimises the impact on the potential development area and provides for a strong building presence on corner sites. An upper level setback of 2m was also adopted for two storey buildings on the eastern side of Dawson Street, north of Rose Street, to reduce the visual bulk and to complement the foothills setting and the Royal Hotel, as a valued landmark building in the Activity Centre.

All buildings in the modelling have been designed to satisfy the Built Form Guidelines in Section 5.2 of the Strategic Plan.

Roof Forms

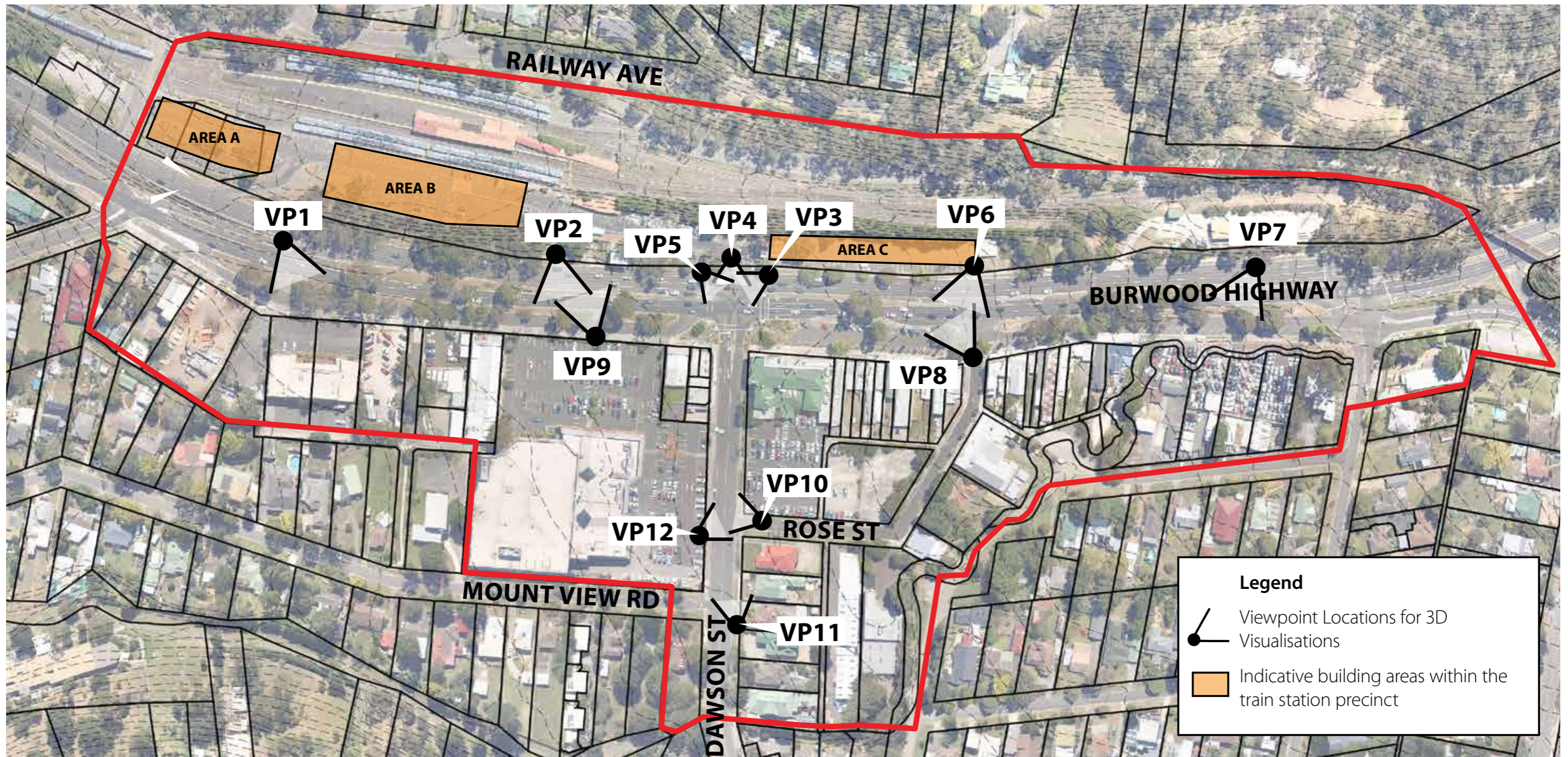
A mix of roof forms were modelled in accordance with the Built Form Guidelines. Flat roof forms were integrated within the above floor to floor heights and pitched roof forms extended above the floor to floor heights.

Train Station Site

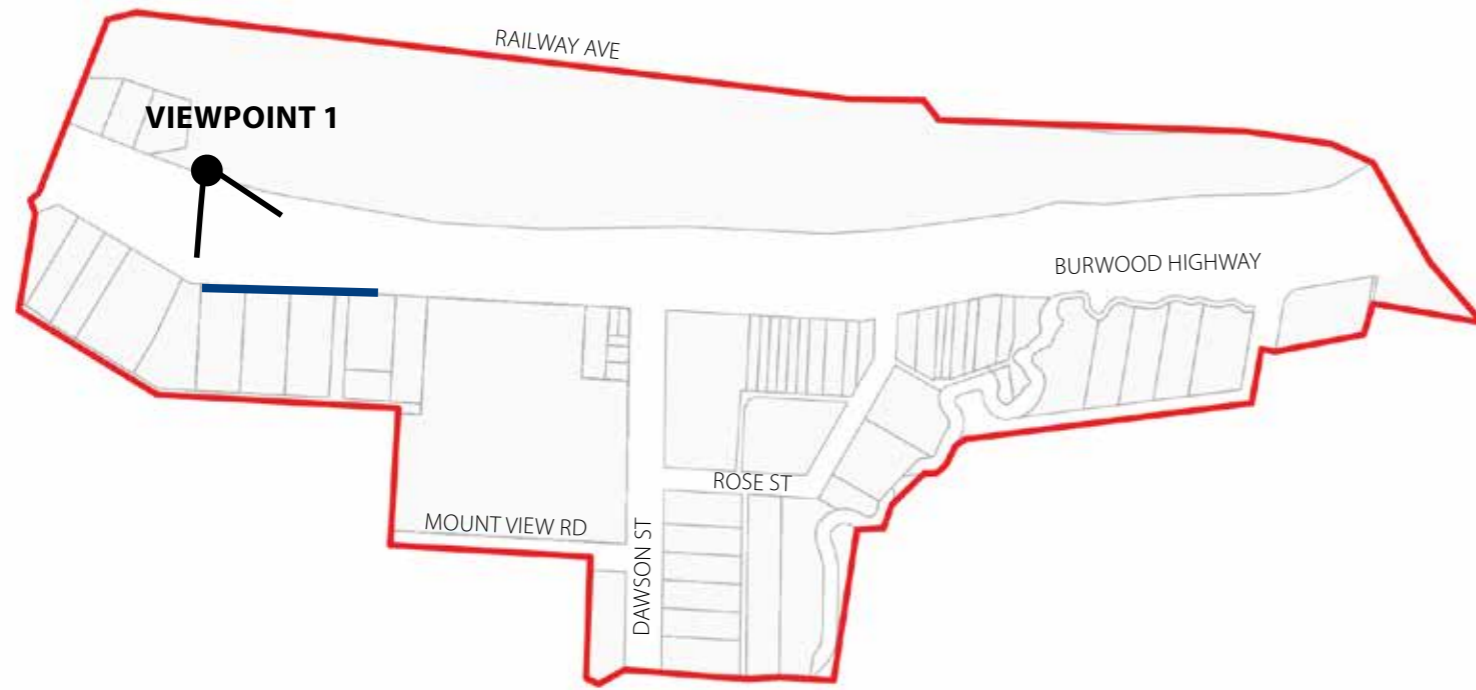
Although the Strategic Plan acknowledges that the train station site is to remain for the primary purpose of a public transport hub with associated car parking facilities, indicative buildings were modelled to illustrate the potential impact of two and three storey building height options to the Activity Centre.

Buildings have been located on the station site to depict a potential development outcome as shown on Map 27. The modelled setbacks to Burwood Highway are as follows:

- Area A - 10m to 20m, Area B - 20m to 23m, Area C - 7.5m
- Residential development outcomes were assumed for the station precinct.



Map 26. 3D Visualisation Viewpoint Plan



Map 27. Viewpoint 1 - Key Plan



Figure 13. Viewpoint 1 - Burwood Highway looking south: Existing (Google Streetview Image)



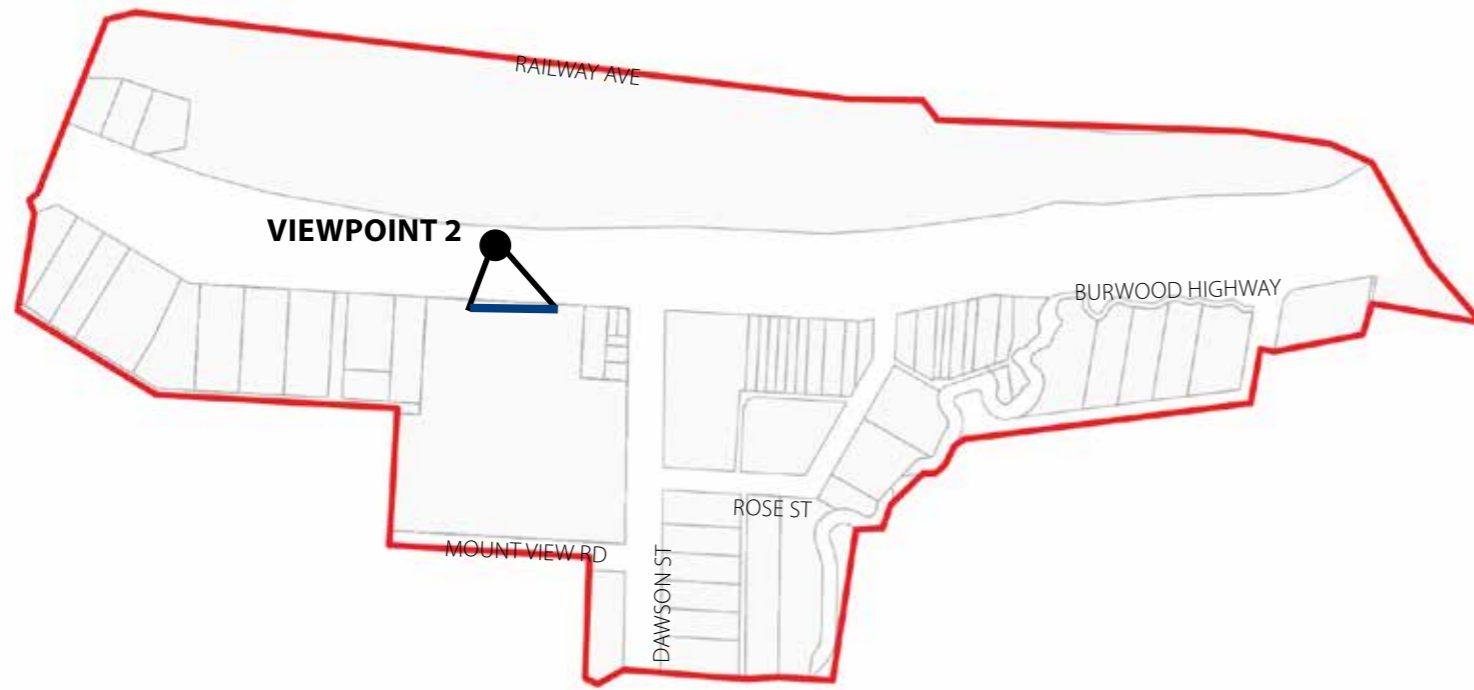
Figure 14. Viewpoint 1 - Burwood Highway looking south: 2 Storey Option



Figure 15. Viewpoint 1 - Burwood Highway looking south: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The two storey option represents a low-impact scenario with views to and the visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop maintained. The three storey built form option reduces the dominance of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop however a small section of the hills remains visible.



Map 28. Viewpoint 2 - Key Plan



Figure 16. Viewpoint 2 - Burwood Highway near the Visitors Information Centre car park looking south: (Google Streetview Image)



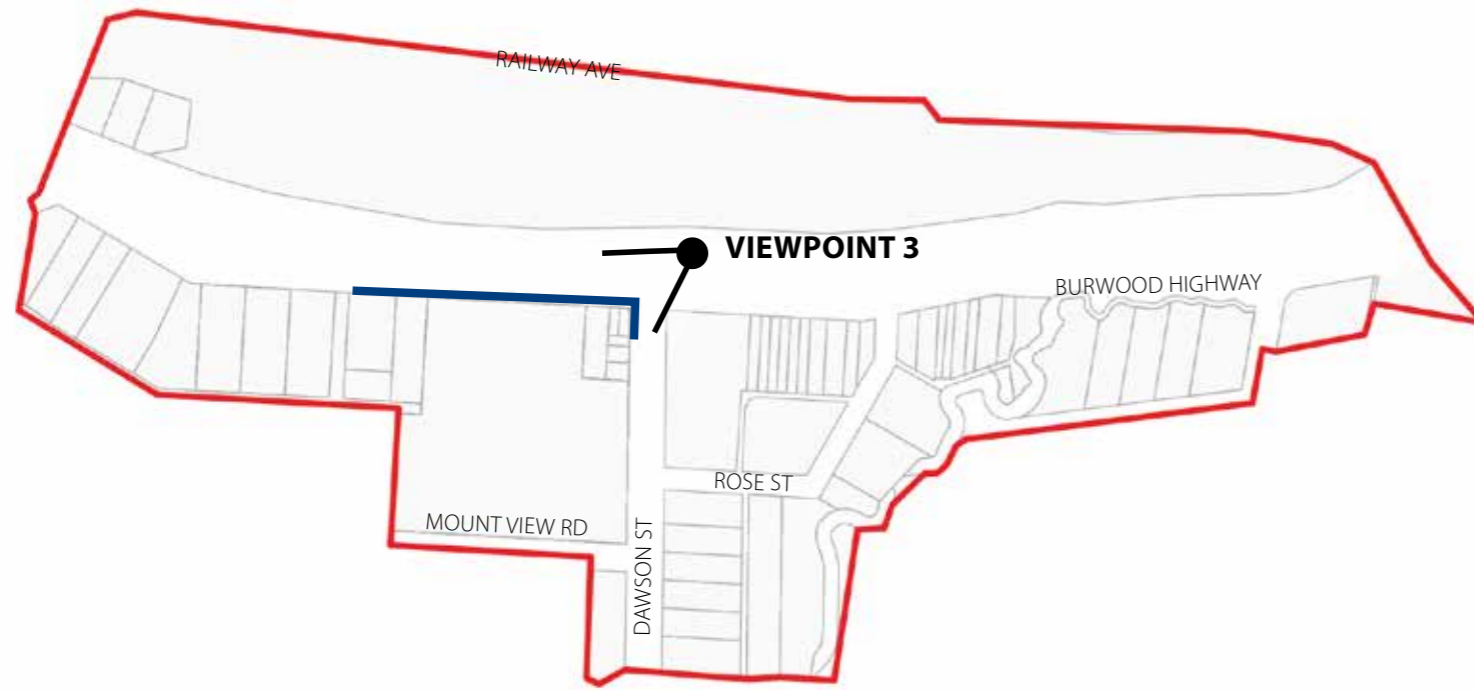
Figure 17. Viewpoint 2 - Burwood Highway near the Visitors Information Centre car park looking south: 2 Storey Option



Figure 18. Viewpoint 2 - Burwood Highway near the Visitors Information Centre car park looking south: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The two storey option represents a moderate-impact scenario with views to and the visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop maintained. The three storey built form option reduces the dominance of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop however a small section of the hills are still visible.



Map 29. Viewpoint 3 - Key Plan



Figure 19. Viewpoint 3 - From the Station entry looking south west along Burwood Highway: Existing



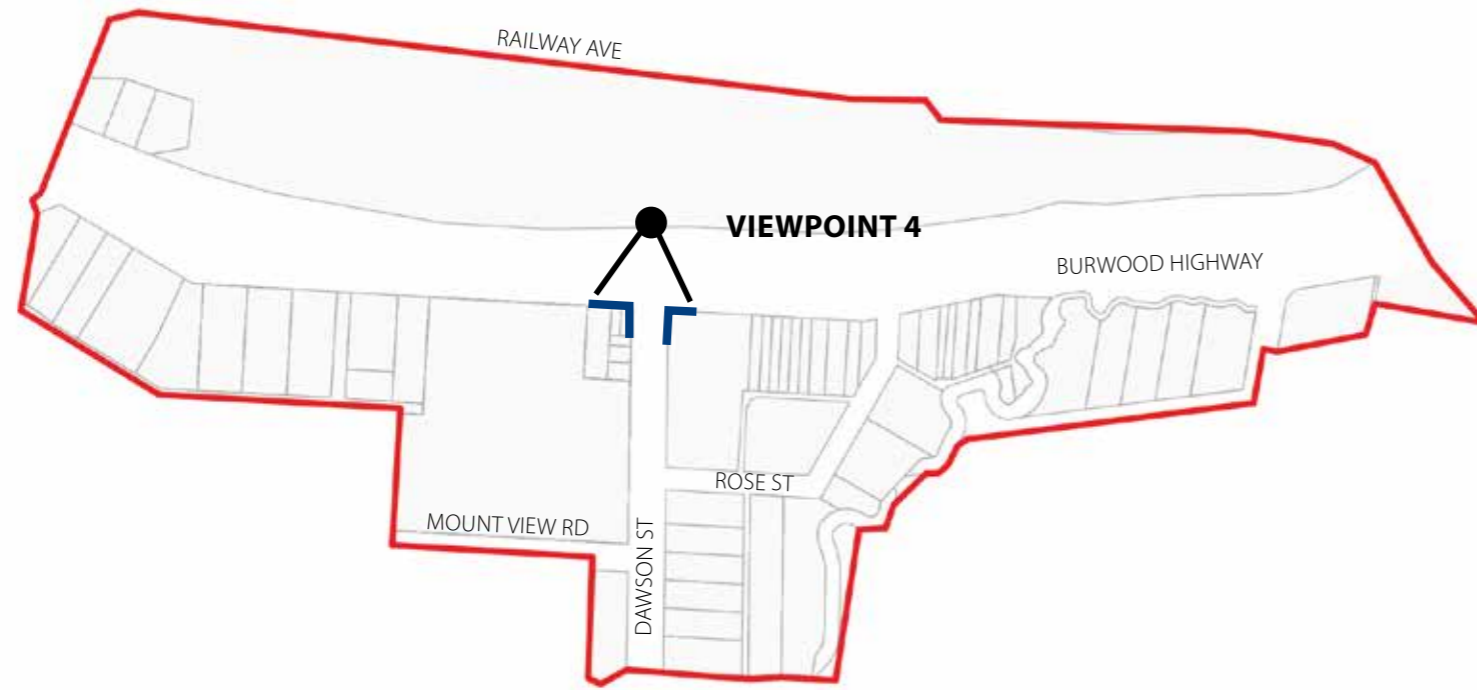
Figure 20. Viewpoint 3 - From the Station entry looking south west along Burwood Highway: 2 Storey Option



Figure 21. Viewpoint 3 - From the Station entry looking south west along Burwood Highway: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

From this viewpoint, there is little presence of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop as the view is focused west towards the Melbourne CBD. As a result, two and three storey built form does not impact on views towards the Dandenong Ranges.



Map 30. Viewpoint 4 - Key Plan



Figure 22. Viewpoint 4 - From the Station entry looking south along Dawson Street: Existing (Google Streetview Image)



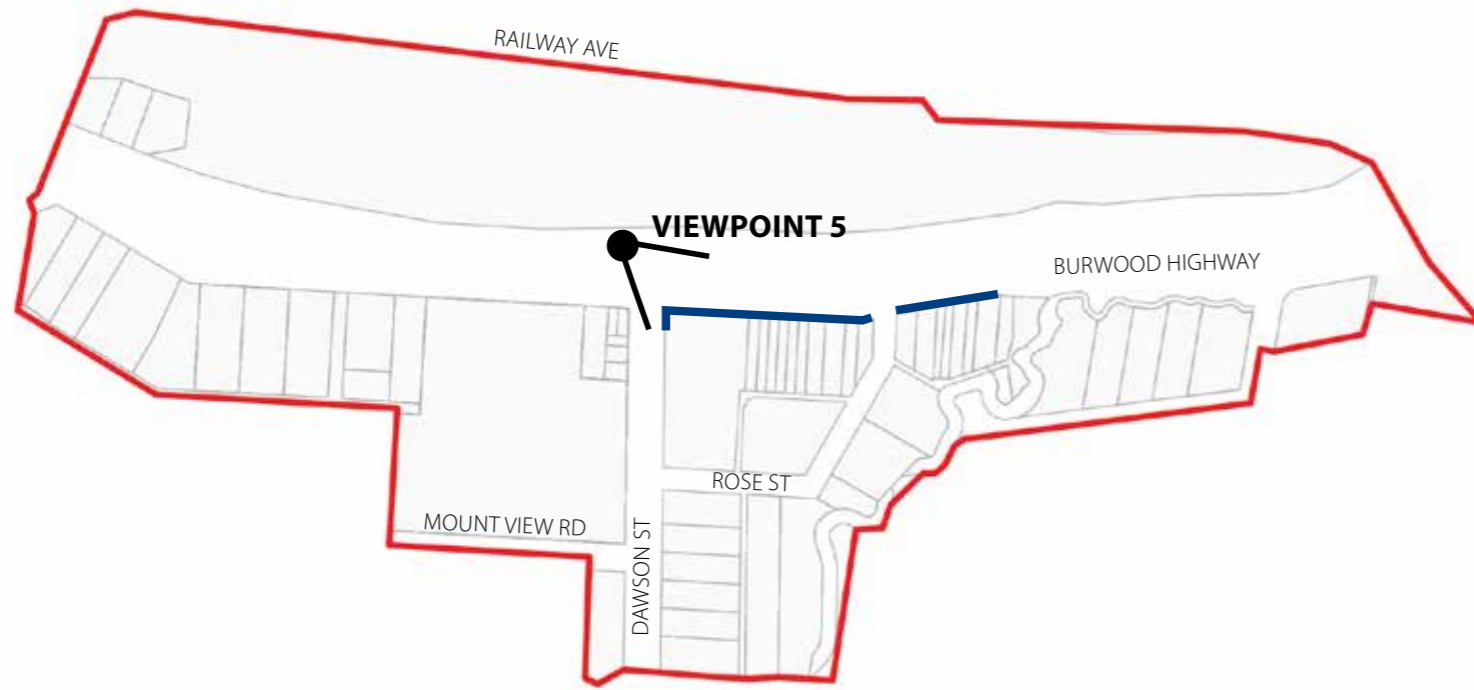
Figure 23. Viewpoint 4 - From the Station entry looking south along Dawson Street: 2 Storey Option



Figure 24. Viewpoint 4 - From the Station entry looking south along Dawson Street: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The two storey option represents a low-impact scenario with views to and the visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop remaining intact. The dominance of the Royal Hotel as a landmark heritage site is also maintained with the two storey built form scenario. The three storey option reduces visibility of the Dandenong Ranges with a small section of the surrounding hills remaining visible.



Map 31. Viewpoint 5 - Key Plan



Figure 25. Viewpoint 5 - From the Station entry looking south east along Burwood Highway: Existing



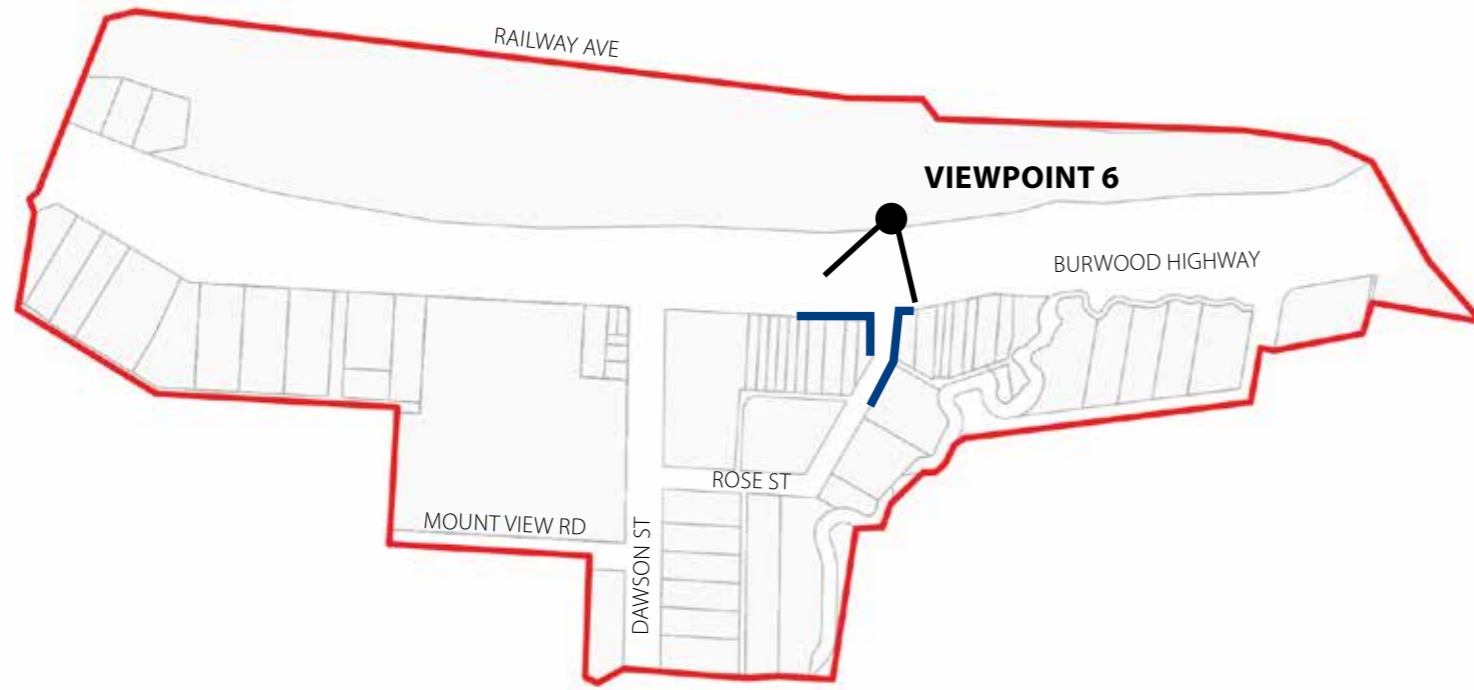
Figure 26. Viewpoint 5 - From the Station entry looking south east along Burwood Highway: 2 Storey Option



Figure 27. Viewpoint 5 - From the Station entry looking south east along Burwood Highway: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

From this viewpoint, two and three storey options have minimal impact on the view to surrounding Dandenong Ranges. However, the dominance of the Royal Hotel as a landmark heritage site is reduced by adjoining buildings in the three storey option.



Map 32. Viewpoint 6 - Key Plan



Figure 28. Viewpoint 6 - From the Station car park looking south to Rose Street: Existing



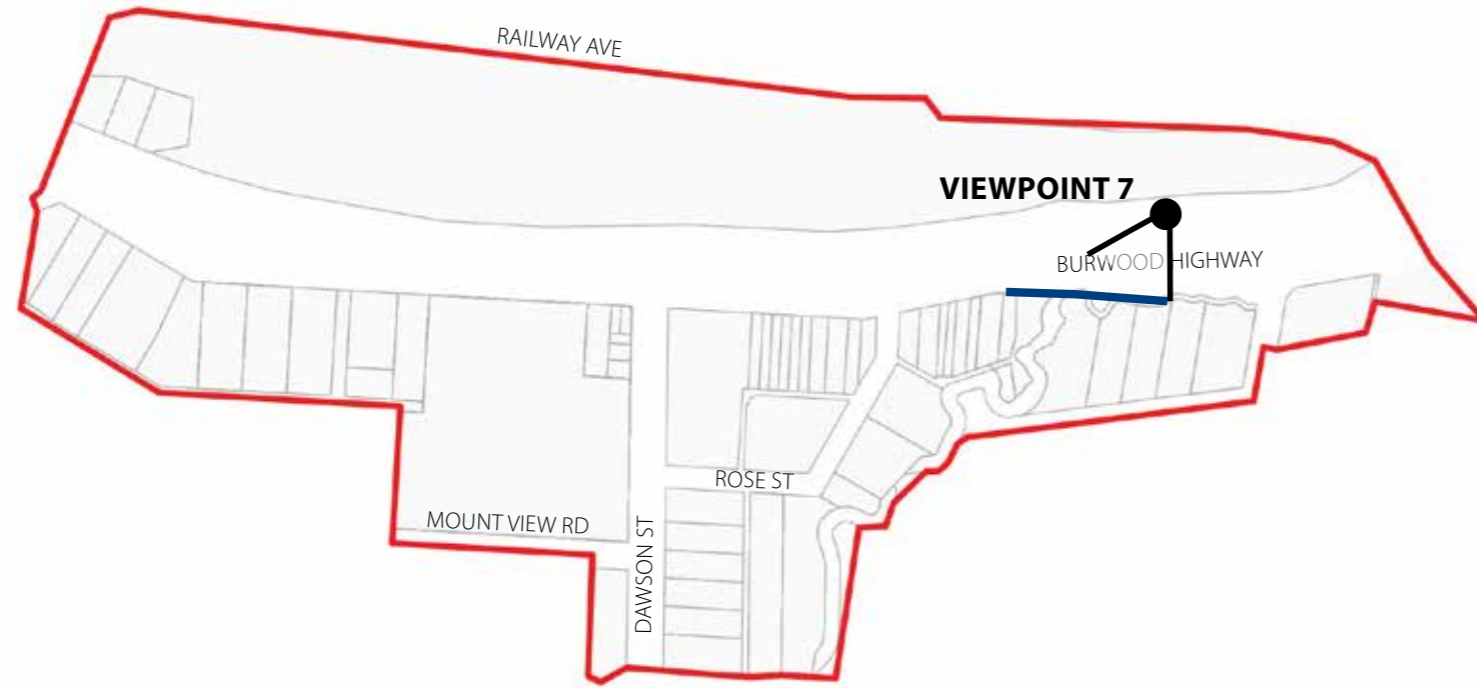
Figure 29. Viewpoint 6 - From the Station car park looking south to Rose Street: 2 Storey Scenario



Figure 30. Viewpoint 6 - From the Station car park looking south to Rose Street: 3 Storey Setback Scenario

Analysis

The two storey option represents a low-impact scenario with views to and the visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop remaining intact. The three storey option reduces the visibility of the Dandenong Ranges however a small section of the hills remains visible.



Map 33. Viewpoint 7 - Key Plan



Figure 31. Viewpoint 7 - Burwood Highway looking south: Existing (Google Streetview)



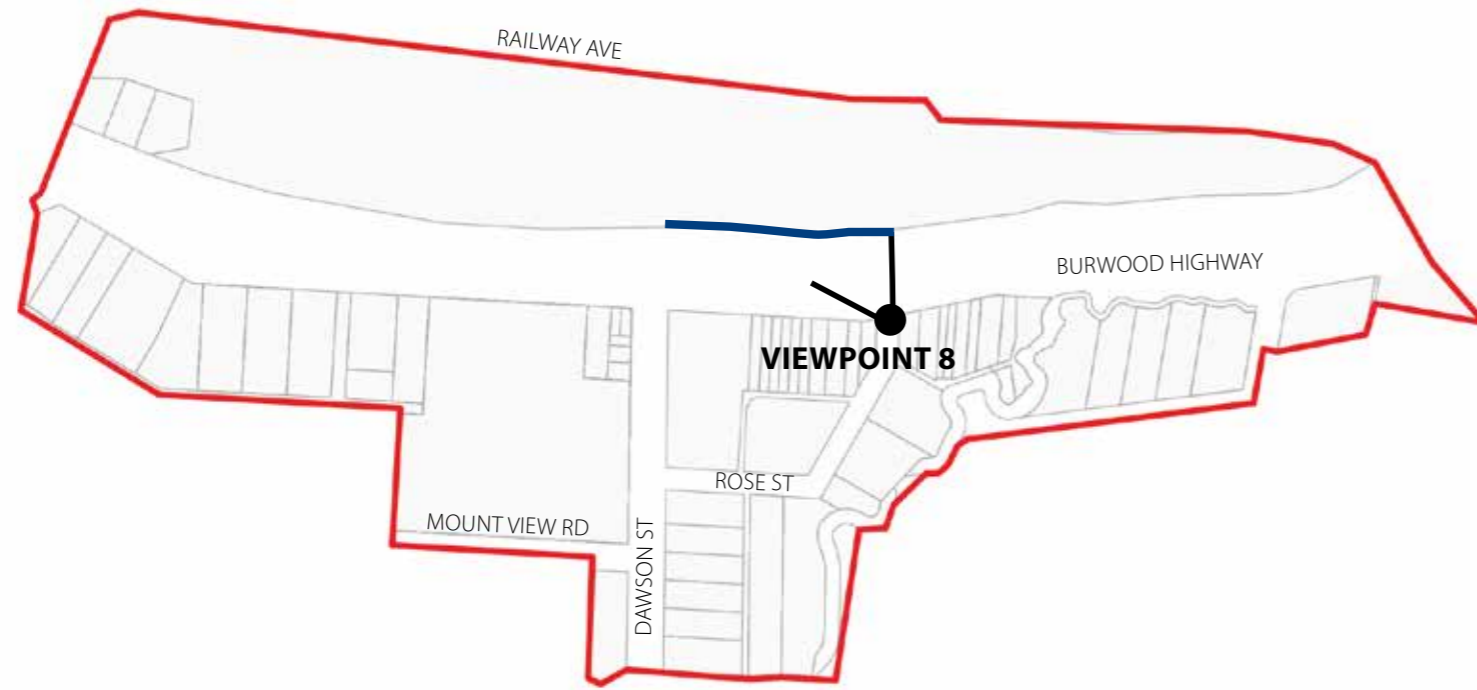
Figure 32. Viewpoint 7 - Burwood Highway looking south: 2 Storey Option



Figure 33. Viewpoint 7 - Burwood Highway looking south: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The two storey option results in a moderate impact on the views to the Dandenong Ranges. The three storey option reduces visibility of the however a small section with only a small section of the hills visible.



Map 34. Viewpoint 8 - Key Plan



Figure 34. Viewpoint 8 - Burwood Highway footpath looking north towards the Station car park: Existing (Google Streetview Image)



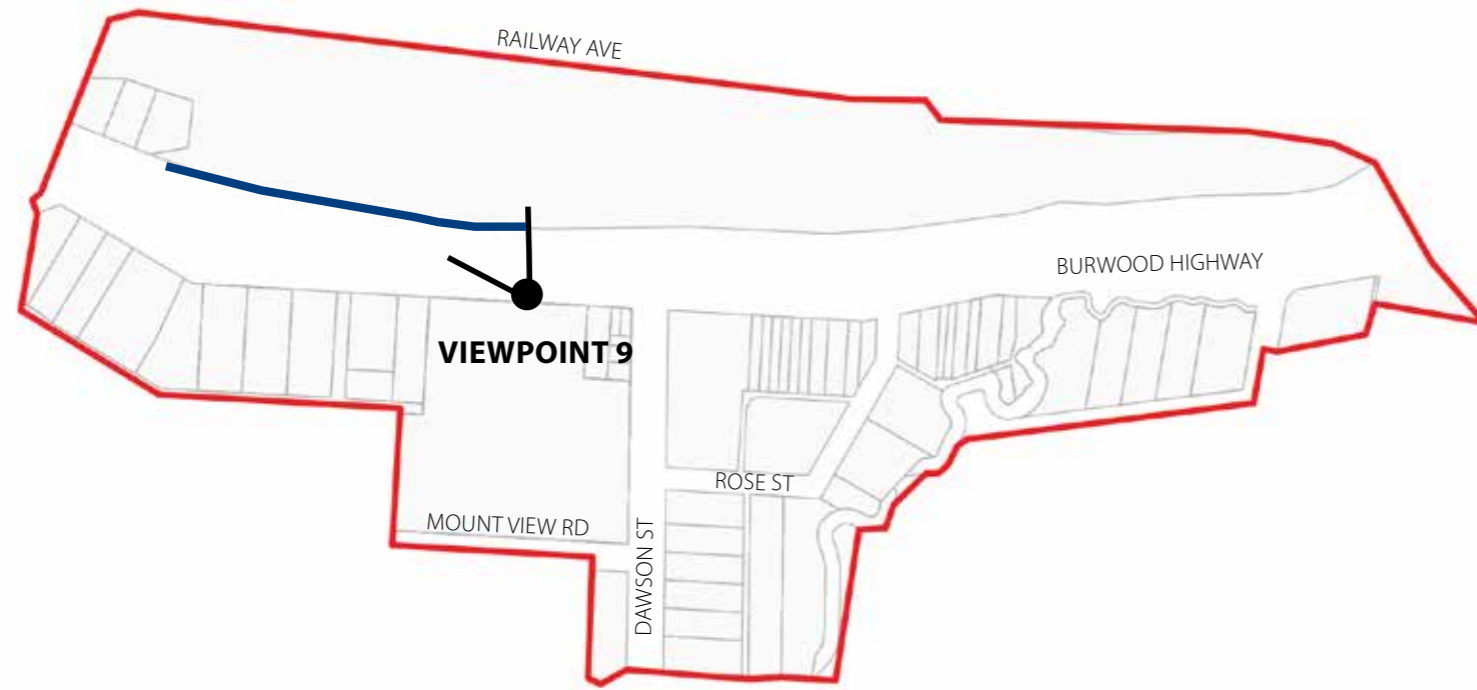
Figure 35. Viewpoint 8 - Burwood Highway footpath looking north towards the Station car park: 2 Storey Option



Figure 36. Viewpoint 8 - Burwood Highway footpath looking north towards the Station car park: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

This viewpoint currently presents a heavily treed backdrop with minimal development. Both the two and three storey options change the character of the existing view however the two storey options retains a strong presence of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop. The three storey option has a significant impact on the backdrop.



Map 35. Viewpoint 9 - Key Plan

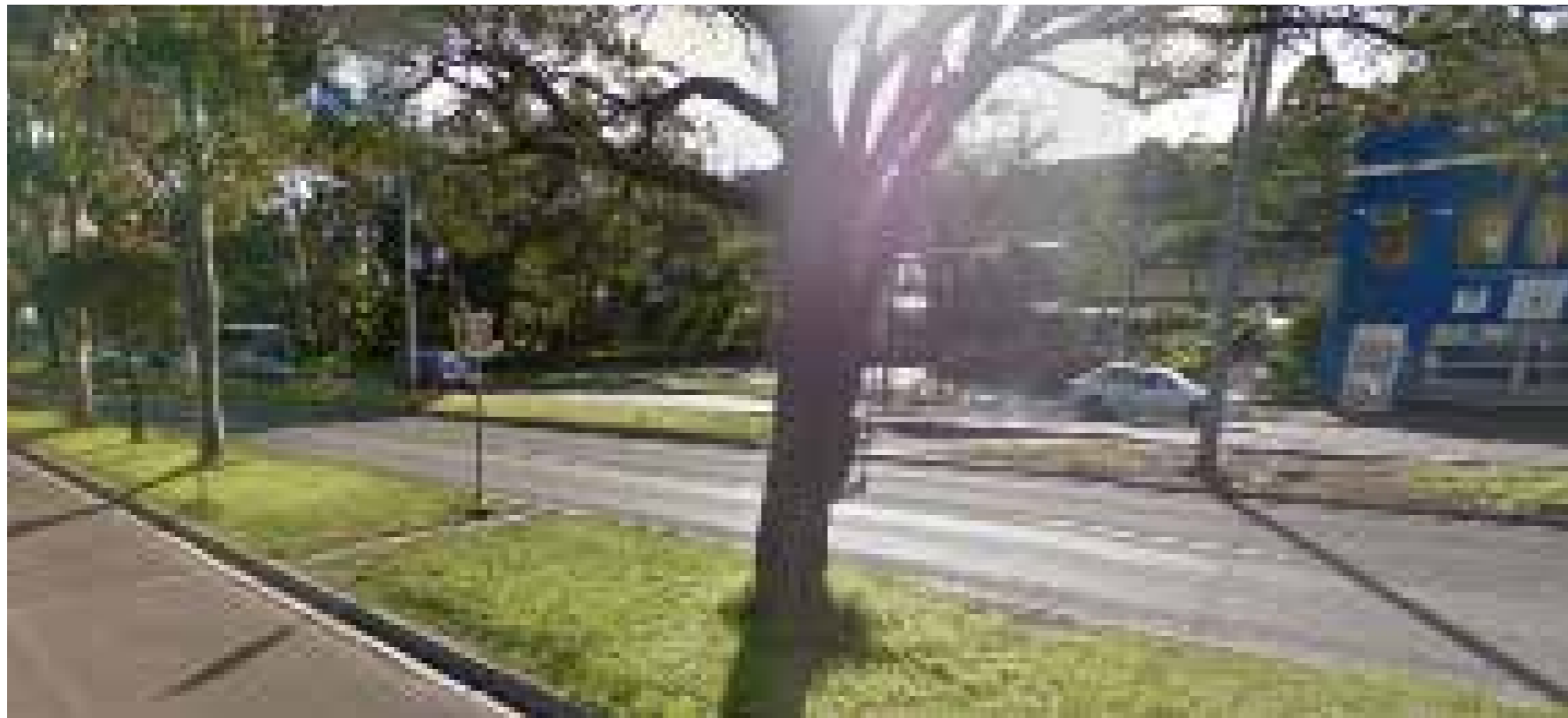


Figure 37. Viewpoint 9 - Burwood Highway footpath near Maxi Foods car park looking north: Existing (Google Streetview Image)



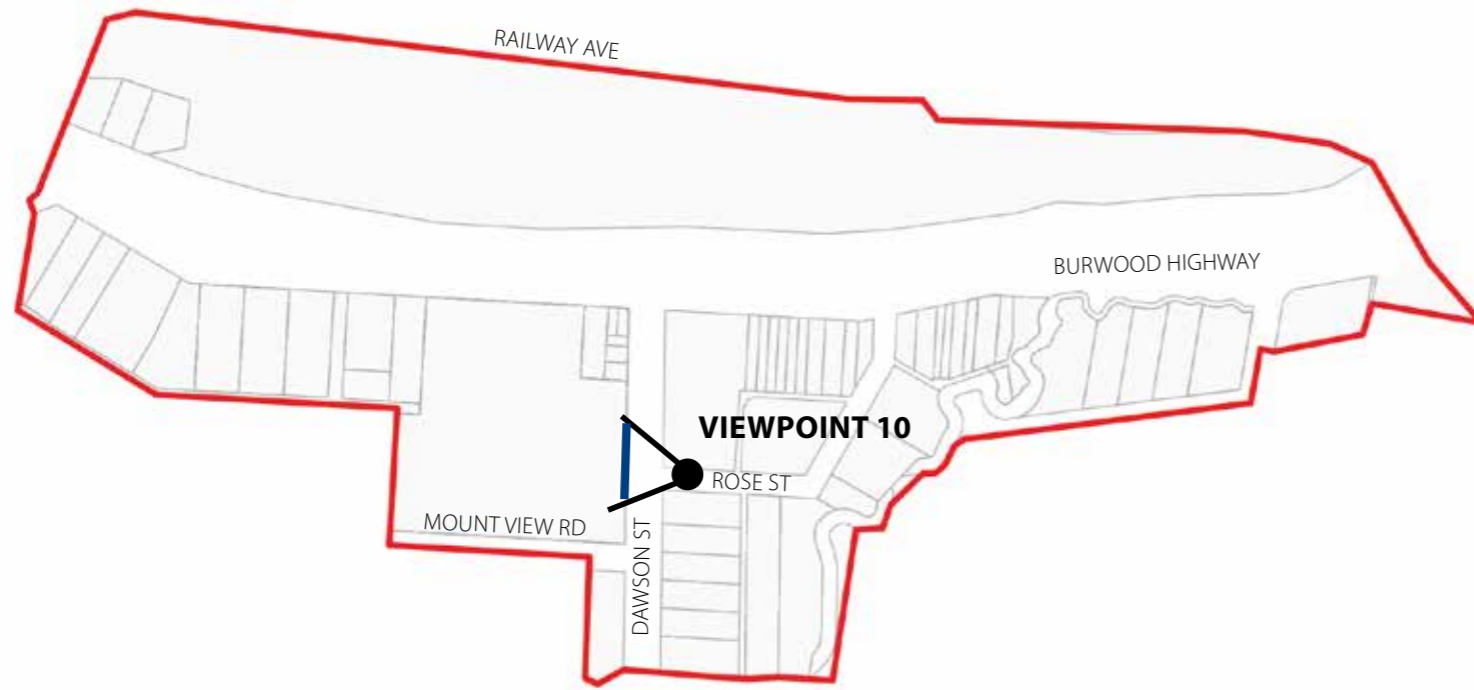
Figure 38. Viewpoint 9 - Burwood Highway footpath near Maxi Foods car park looking north: 2 Storey Option



Figure 39. Viewpoint 9 - Burwood Highway footpath near Maxi Foods car park looking north: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The two and three storey options demonstrate a negative impact with some views to the Dandenong Ranges backdrop diminished. The three storey option dominates the local landscape setting with its scale greater than the landscaped embankment of the Burwood Highway.



Map 36. Viewpoint 10 - Key Plan



Figure 40. Viewpoint 10 - Rose Street looking west across the Maxi Foods car park: Existing (Google Street View)



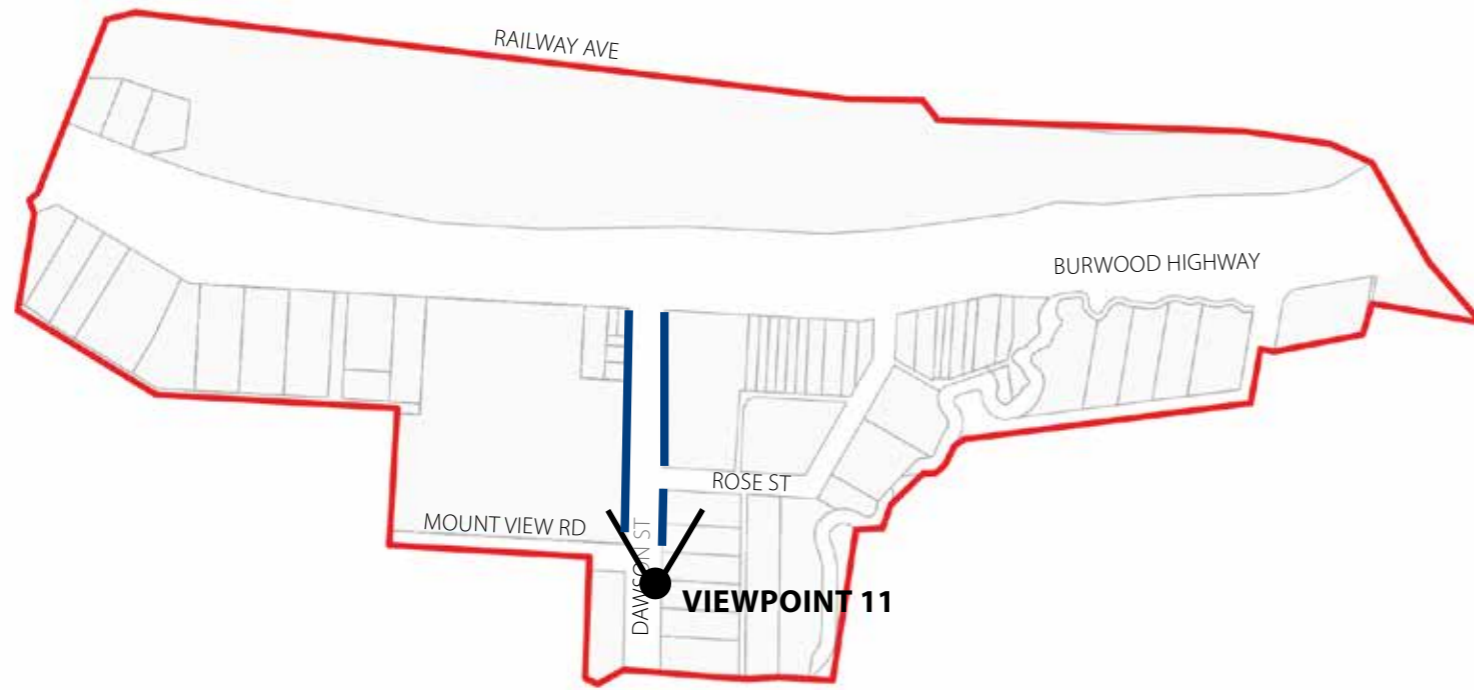
Figure 41. Viewpoint 10 - Rose Street looking west across the Maxi Foods car park: 2 Storey Option



Figure 42. Viewpoint 10 - Rose Street looking west across the Maxi Foods car park: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

This viewpoint currently presents an open car park with some visibility of surrounding trees. Both the two and three storey development options change the character of this view.



Map 37. Viewpoint 11 - Key Plan



Figure 43. Viewpoint 11 - Dawson Street Looking North: Existing

VIEWPOINT 16 - DAWSON STREET LOOKING NORTH: EXISTING



Figure 44. Viewpoint 11 - Dawson Street Looking North: 2 Storey Option



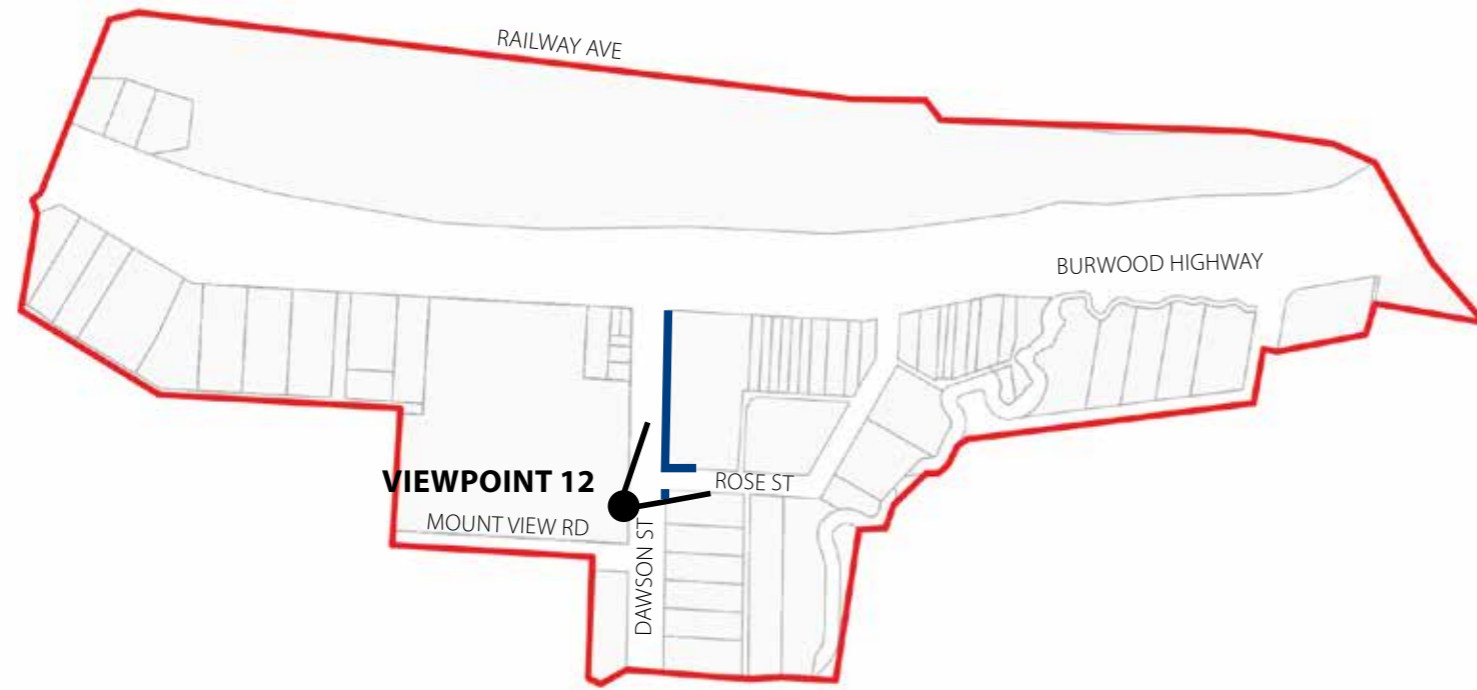
Figure 45. Viewpoint 11 - Dawson Street Looking North: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The Dandenong Ranges National park is highly visible along Dawson Street and across the Maxi Foods car park in the existing view.

Both the two and three storey options maintain this view however the west side of Dawson Street is impacted. The three storey option results in slightly more of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop being diminished compared to the two storey option.

Ground level landscaped setbacks applied to properties south of Rose Street assist in maintaining a sense of openness in the streetscape from this viewpoint.



Map 38. Viewpoint 12 - Key Plan



Figure 46. Viewpoint 12 - Dawson Street looking north east: Existing (Google Streetview Image)



Figure 47. Viewpoint 12 - Dawson Street looking north east: 2 Storey Option



Figure 48. Viewpoint 12 - Dawson Street looking north east: 3 Storey Setback Option

Analysis

The two storey option maintains some views north and north-east to the Dandenong Ranges. The three storey built form scenario impedes the north-east view to the Dandenong Ranges.

7.1.7 Weather protection

East of Dawson Street (along Burwood Highway), awnings are generally provided along the frontage of buildings and extend over most of the adjacent footpath. These are a positive asset to the streetscape, providing continuous weather protection. West of Dawson Street, awnings are not provided along the street, with buildings generally setback from the streetscape.

Buildings along Burwood Highway also benefit from good solar access (due to the orientation of street) which supports outdoor dining and creates a pleasant environment for people.



Generally continuous weather protection provided along Burwood Highway, east of Dawson Street.

7.1.8 Materials, signage and detailing

The majority of buildings with the Activity Centre, are built from brick with simple or minimal detailing. Materials and detailing typical of the buildings to east of Dawson Street include:

- Large windows and extensive areas of clear or opaque glazing
- Use of bricks, often orange in colour, for building facades with simple detailing.
- Painted or rendered buildings in a variety of colours ranging from subtle earthy tones (browns and reds) to bolder colours such as blue.
- Clearly defined pedestrian entrances at grade, generally located along the property line but sometimes recessed into the building.
- Parapets in brick or clad in iron sheeting (occasionally incorporating advertising signage)
- Signage incorporated as part of the front of the awning and on the underside (as a hanging sign).

Materials and detailing typical of the buildings to west of Dawson Street include:

- Less extensive areas of glazing
- A mix of precast – tilt slab concrete and brick with simple detailing.
- Painted buildings generally utilising subtle earthy tones (creams), with the occasional bold colour scheme (blue).
- Pedestrian entrances obscured, obstructed or setback from the street.
- Signage incorporated along the property boundary in a variety of forms.

Material and detailing for future buildings should be sympathetic and complement the features of the surrounding environment.



Example of simple brick built form along Burwood Highway

7.1.9 Residential Character

The surrounding residential areas of Upper Ferntree Gully have a distinct character that is defined by the large lots and canopy tree planting. This character is protected by the Foothills Local Policy (clause 22.01) of the Knox Planning Scheme and limits the minimum size of lots.

Housing within Upper Gully generally comprises detached dwelling, set on large landscaped lots. Some unit and subdivision developments are apparent closer to the Activity Centre however, examples of within Upper Ferntree Gully are fairly dispersed.

There are opportunities within the Activity Centre to provide some residential intensification and housing diversity. It is important to consider that changing demographics may require greater diversity in housing choice to enable aging in place. Greater housing diversity and residential intensification is also encourage through state and local planning policies.



View along Talaskia Road. Talaskia Road includes a mix of residential, community and medical uses

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The Royal Hotel, Visitors Information Centre were identified as buildings that were valued by the local community. Opportunities to promote the significance of these buildings through signage etc was also identified.*
- *While the community articulated that 'high density' within Upper Ferntree Gully would not be supported, some support was expressed for 'medium density' including shop top development (within the Activity Centre), with most of the community indicating that 'low density' development was preferred. It should be noted that the meaning of high, medium and low density development was not clearly defined by the community however low density generally referred to current development densities and building heights.*
- *Concern about unit /apartment developments and a loss of green views was also identified in relation to built form.*
- *Building heights were vigorously discussed by the community during engagement sessions. The Royal Hotel was discussed as a benchmark for building heights with a general consensus that future heights should not exceed this building.*
- *It was generally suggested that buildings within the Activity Centre should not exceed two storeys and should be respectful of the surrounding views.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Overall there isn't a strong defined built form style and character within the Activity Centre. This provides opportunities for high quality contemporary development to reinvigorate the urban form of the Activity Centre.
 - Support appropriate future development on underutilised sites to increase the intensity of activity within the center and create a hard street edge.
 - Opportunity to encourage fine grain development along Burwood Highway that creates variety and diversity in the streetscape and offers opportunities for smaller traders.
 - Require new development within the Activity Centre to respond and respect the heritage character of the Royal Hotel. Existing views of the Royal Hotel should be retained and emphasised.
 - Utilise prominent corners to provide high quality buildings that reflects the character of Upper Ferntree Gully and enhance wayfinding.
 - Opportunity to encourage new development to be designed to suit the local environment and provide a high standard of amenity.
 - Built form guidelines will be required to facilitate sustainable development within the Activity Centre that provides for solar access, private open space and encourages the maintenance of existing buildings.
- Provide built form controls that respect valued buildings including the Royal Hotel and the Visitors Information Centre,
 - Future building heights will need to consider views to Dandenong Ranges from within the Activity Centre.
 - Investigate the opportunity to ensure new development is designed to be consistent with the scale and rhythm of development within the centre and surrounding areas.
 - Use of materials and colours to complement the Activity Centre's landscape setting (at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges).
 - Require high quality architecture and built form outcomes.
 - Support mixed use development i.e. shop / office at ground level and residential / office above.
 - The majority of buildings with the Activity Centre, are built from brick with simple or minimal detailing. The material and detailing for future buildings should be sympathetic and complement the features of the surrounding environment.

7.2 Wayfinding

WHAT WE KNOW

Wayfinding is about knowing where you are and how to move about within a location. People typically rely on buildings and visual cues, lighting, sight-lines and signage to support their decisions for how to move through a space.

Wayfinding within Upper Ferntree Gully is limited to streets signs, views and isolated landscape treatments. Signage includes street signs along Burwood Highway directing people to the Angliss Hospital, indicating the upcoming Visitors Information Centre, the railway station or locality markers located at the entrance and exit to the Activity Centre. Generally these are small signs with Council branding and do not reflect the character or identity of Upper Gully. Unique and locally specific signage has the potential to enhance the character and identity of a place and should be considered for Upper Ferntree Gully. This should be located at key decision points including intersections and should direct people to key locations within the Activity Centre i.e. the 1,000 Steps, the hospital, community facilities and open spaces.

Views to the Dandenong Ranges are a key aspect for wayfinding within Upper Gully. Key views along streets help people navigate their way to and through the Activity Centre, particularly along Burwood Highway where these views help define the arrival experience and sense of place.

Landscape treatments at the intersection of Dawson Street and Burwood Highway and the Royal Hotel reinforce the importance of this intersection within the Activity Centre. A similar treatment is also provided at the intersection of Rose Street and Burwood Highway. These treatments are generally nondescript and do not consider CPTED principles of passive surveillance, as highlighted through community engagement. A key opportunity for the Activity Centre is to reinforce the road hierarchy through tree planting and landscape treatments, particularly at key intersection. Such treatments can improve wayfinding around Upper Gully.



Billboard signage along Burwood Highway

Way finding between the railway station and the Activity Centre is a particular issue. The slope between the station and the Visitors Information Centre building, compromises views from the station entrance to the commercial core. There are limited visual cues provided around the station to direct people to the Activity Centre and the pedestrian crossing located at the intersection of Dawson Street and Burwood Highway. Rather, viewlines are directed via a pedestrian path and stairs along the western edge of the Visitors Information Centre to Ferntree Plaza. While no formal crossing is provided at this location across Burwood Highway. On site observations suggest this is an unsafe desire line for pedestrians.

Wayfinding to tourist and visitor infrastructure is poor within the Activity Centre, in particular access to the Visitors Information Centre, between the station and the 1,000 Steps and to facilities such as toilets.

Access to the Visitors Information Centre is slightly elevated by the topography and slightly obscured by planting along Burwood Highway, while pedestrian access is orientated towards the railway station. Wayfinding between the Visitors Information Centre and the Activity Centre is limited, although the bright blue colour of the building, typically associated with Visitors Information Centres, helps signify its presence.

The station provides an alternative mode of transport for visitors coming to the 1,000 Steps. While a shared path provides physical access between the two, there are few other visual cues to direct visitors to this key attractor. An opportunity exists to improve the signage and path experience to the 1,000 Steps from the railway station.

Other improvements may include use planting, street furniture, buildings and paving treatments as visual cues within the landscape to provide the Activity Centre with a unique character that is easily recognisable in the context of Knox.

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

Generally people indicated that wayfinding within Upper Ferntree Gully could be improved. Specific opportunities included:

- *Improved wayfinding signage for facilities (toilets / railway station / national park etc);*
- *Improved signage for shops / businesses;*
- *Improved street and bike path signs;*
- *Replacement of the old gateway sign that signifies entry into Upper Gully, along Burwood Highway.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Wayfinding within the Activity Centre is limited to streets signs, views and isolated landscape treatments.
- Key views along streets help people navigate their way to and through the Activity Centre, particularly along Burwood Highway where these views help define the arrival experience and sense of place. These views should be strengthened.
- Dawson Street and Burwood Highway is a key intersection within the Activity Centre, with the Royal Hotel reinforcing the importance of this intersection.
- Opportunity to reinforce the road hierarchy through tree planting and landscape treatments to improve legibility and wayfinding around Upper Gully. Treatments should also consider views along these streets to the Dandenong Ranges.
- Opportunity to provide unique and consistent directional signage at key locations (particularly intersections) to help direct people between the Activity Centre, the railway station, the 1,000 Steps and the rest of Upper Gully. Signage should reflect the character and identity of Upper Gully.

- Opportunity to use planting, street furniture, buildings and paving treatments as visual cues within the landscape to provide the Activity Centre with a unique character that is easily recognisable in the context of Knox. These elements should be used consistently within the Activity Centre, but may also be used to link the Activity Centre to other key destinations.
- Opportunity to provide high quality building or landscape treatments at prominent corners to enhance way finding and legibility, particularly on the corner of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street (opposite the Royal Hotel).
- Opportunity to provide clear and safe access to the Visitors Information Centre for passing visitors, including signage and improved sight lines to the Visitors Information Centre.

7.3 Presentation / Visual Appearance

WHAT WE KNOW

The visual appearance of a place is important for both locals and visitors. For visitors a well presented place can attract people to stop and explore, while for locals it can contribute to community pride, the perception of safety and enhance peoples experience of a place.

Upper Gully is well placed to take advantage of its spectacular landscape setting, with views to the hills provided for along key streets. The visual appearance of the Activity Centre is also influenced by:

- Street trees and landscaping along Burwood Highway that provide visual separation and relief from traffic along this road.
- A large billboard located within the railway station area, that appears unmaintained and unkempt.
- Corner planting treatments that provide greening.
- Vacant shops and car park areas, particularly along the periphery of the Activity Centre that detract from the vibrancy of the Activity Centre.
- Parking arrangements, street furniture, planting and overhead power lines currently clutter the streetscape.
- Graffiti along shop fronts, within laneways and pedestrian links.
- The interface between the Activity Centre and the surrounding residential neighbourhood. Generally this interface is defined by services areas, residential streets, laneways, railway lines or rear boundaries.

There is the opportunity to enhance the elements mentioned above to creates a sense of pride and enhance peoples experience of the Activity Centre.

The edges of the Activity Centre (the interface between the Activity Centre and the surrounding residential neighbourhood) are areas that need to be treated sensitively to ensure that commercial development does not adversely impact on the amenity of the adjoining residents.

To the south east of the Activity Centre, service areas, residential streets and laneways define this edge. These areas typically provide space for access to the rear of shops, employee parking, bins and storage, with fencing, built form, open storage areas and security doors defining this edge. Due to the nature of these activities, these areas appeared untidy and unkempt.

Opportunities for passive surveillance along this interface and to nearby pedestrian walkways are provided from adjacent residential properties that overlook these spaces, however are also restricted by angled streets and planting. Due to the nature of uses within these areas, this interface presents poorly to the adjacent streetscape / residential uses and is unattractive. Graffiti along this edge also suggests that there maybe distributive or anti social behavior occurring along this interface.

Ferntree Plaza also forms part of the southern boundary of the Activity Centre. This building addresses Burwood Highway and Dawson Street, presenting a large solid blank walls to residential areas along its southern and western edges. While planting has been provided to soften this edge, the walls present poorly to the residential street and provide little pedestrian amenity and surveillance.

The northern boundary of the Activity Centre is defined by the railway line, and Railway Avenue, with residential properties fronting this street. There is the opportunity to better connect the Activity Centre and the railway station.



Burwood Highway looking east towards the Dandenong Ranges and the spectacular landscape setting



Commercial uses along William Street provide an opportunity for improvements

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The community identified amenity as being an important consideration for the Strategic Plan.*
- *Car yards, the railway station, the rail bridge, vacant shops, the rear of commercial uses, some buildings, power lines, the walkway between the shops and William Street, the billboard sign at the station, graffiti and kinder facade were considered 'ugly' elements within the centre.*
- *People generally noted the 'untidy' interface of shops backing onto William Street, as well as the blank wall of Maxi Foods along Mount View Road.*
- *Limited concern was also raised regarding the proximity of uses considered as light industrial (such as automotive uses), that were considered to impact the noise and air quality of surrounding residents.*



Rear of shopping present an unattractive interface to residential and adjacent uses

Opportunities and Considerations

- Upper Gully is well placed to take advantage of its spectacular landscape setting, with views to the hills provided for along key streets.
- Visual amenity was identified as important by the community.
- Car yards, the railway station, the rail bridge, vacant shops, the rear of commercial uses, some buildings, power lines, the walkway between the shops and William Street, the billboard sign at the station, graffiti and kinder facade were considered 'ugly' elements within the Activity Centre. Opportunities to improve these elements may include:
 - Ensure graffiti, rubbish and damaged property is promptly removed within the Activity Centre to ensure it appears maintained and cared for.
 - Provide landscaping and planting within parking areas to screen and improve their appearance, particularly car parks located along Burwood Highway (such as the railway station and Maxi Foods).
 - Provide incentives for vacant shops to be leased out by small businesses, for public art and artist workshops, pop up shops etc., to create vibrancy and activity within the streetscapes. These may provide opportunities for smaller businesses to set up within the centre, for sub branches of shops within the Dandenongs.
- Underground or aerial bundle overhead power lines to ensure they do not visually detract from the aesthetics and continuity of the street, particularly along Burwood Highway and Dawson Street.
- Redevelop underutilised and unattractive sites with well-designed buildings that contribute to the character of the Activity Centre.
- Investigate the opportunity to provide kerb extensions that allow for additional tree planting within car service road parking areas along Burwood Highway.
- Remove the existing /unused billboard located within VicTrack land and enhance the edge with landscape treatments - subject to discussions with VicTrack.
- Beautify the railway bridge and enhance its contribution to the character and arrival experience into and out of the Activity Centre.
- Encourage businesses to address rear of properties with windows / habitable spaces to provide surveillance of adjoining spaces.
- The edges of the Activity Centre (the interface between the Activity Centre and the surrounding residential neighbourhood) are areas that need to be treated sensitively. There is the opportunity to improve the visual appearance of this interface and generate activity to improve surveillance opportunities and deter vandalism.

7.4 Public Realm

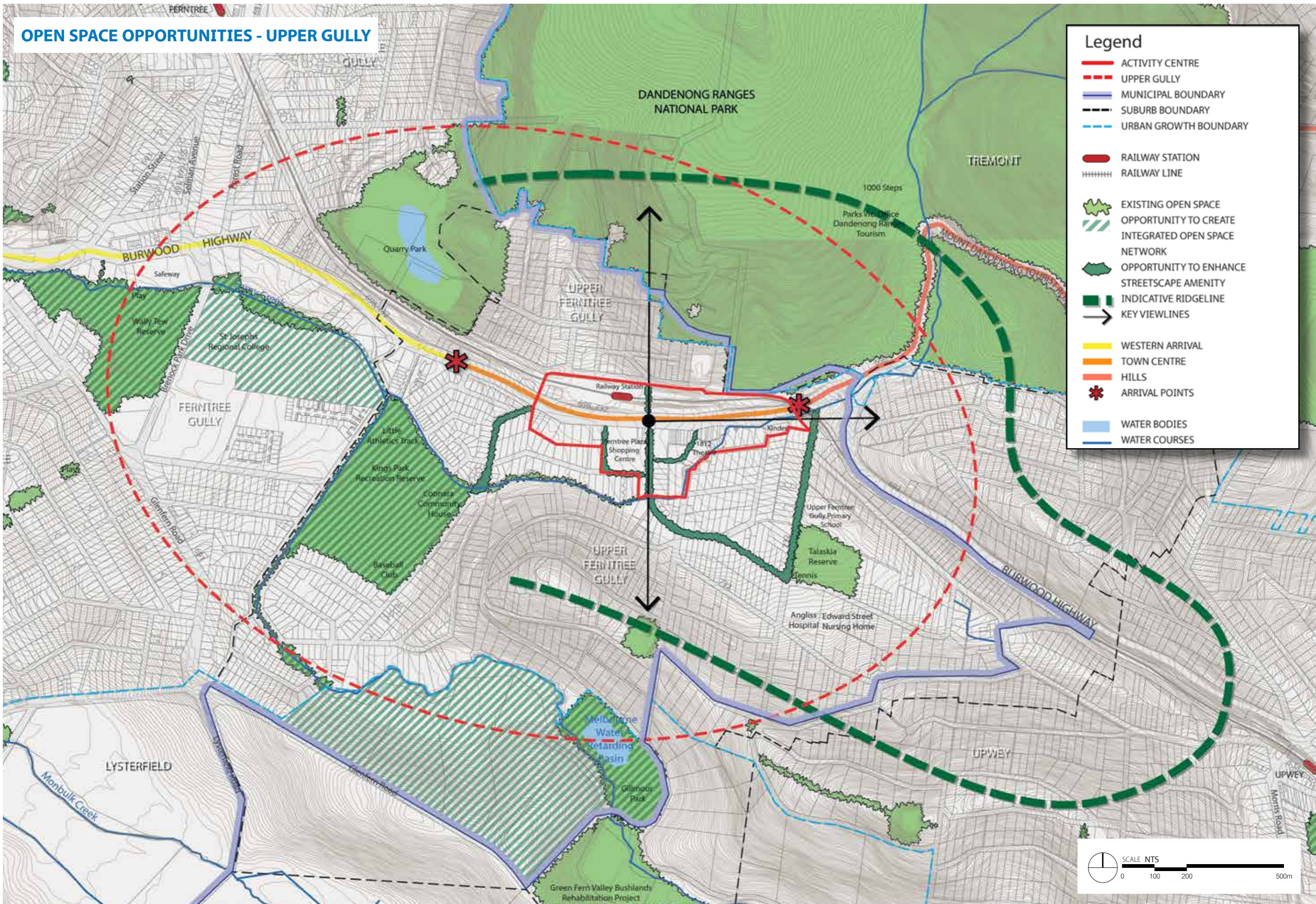
WHAT WE KNOW

7.4.1 Character and Identity

Landscape character and visual identity are qualities that are linked to physical context (the broader geographical location), the place (the physical setting of the centre), land use functions and activities within the Activity Centre, and to the nature of the community itself. These are important qualities that underpin community values and link people to the place where they live. They also improve wayfinding and orientation for visitors, increase the level of use of a place and support commercial viability and environmental sustainability.

Upper Gully has a number of key physical and community based characteristics that reinforce the character and identity of the place (refer to Map 43, overleaf). It is important that these qualities are retained and developed into the future:

- Landform - Upper Gully sits within a valley enclosed between elevated, wooded hills. These landform features explain the location of the Activity Centre and the reason for the distinctive pattern of development. They are a constant visual reference point within the Activity Centre and reinforce the sense that the centre has a specific relationship with the hills environment. This is important to the identity of Upper Gully as a place and a community.
- Waterways – Creeks and flood paths provide a continuous system of green spaces within the low points of the landscape. These corridors due to landform, are also typically associated with parks, schools, recreation reserves and community facilities. This system, like the hills, provides a continuous visual and environmental reference for residents.
- Road & rail corridors – The alignment of road and rail corridors reflect the settlement history of the region and the physical constraints of the landscape. They provide a continuous window to the landscape and environment of the region and to the different settlements that have developed along those routes. It is important that these corridor landscapes and their related views represent the best environmental qualities of the regional landscape and the place specific qualities of the settlements, including Upper Gully .
- Gateway elements – Changes in the alignment and topography of Burwood Highway, the location of parks, the rail reservation, rail overpass and key buildings all act as visual cues to the structure and boundaries of Upper Gully and the Activity Centre. It is important that Upper Gully ‘reads’ as a place that is separate from other locations along the Burwood Highway.
- Views – Views and viewing patterns (both car and pedestrian based) are a defining feature of the Upper Gully setting. They link the viewer to the landscape and environment of the site and to locations within the Activity Centre and residential neighbourhoods.
- Vegetation – Vegetation within Upper Gully is a mixture of species and planting styles within the highway, commercial and residential environment. Vegetation can indicate environment, history and place specific qualities. It is important that landscape within the Activity Centre is seen as a distinctive, place specific cultural and environmental feature and not subsumed by generic, highway based planting themes.
- Development scale – Upper Gully residential and commercial development is generally defined by low building scale (below tree height) and by a pattern of development that sits within a dominant landscape. It is important that retail development and future development continues to relate to the pedestrian scale. The Activity Centre should appear as a development ‘within’ a landscape rather than landscape elements within a development.
- Civic places – The Activity Centre has few settings that can support rest and recreation, social activities and special events – activities that can be a focus of community life. There is an opportunity to further activate the commercial centre through developing a greater focus on pedestrian and civic based activities and special events.
- Community networks – Upper Gully is a small community which functions at a local level, and at a regional level as a part of an outer suburban network of places that provide a wider range of higher order social, sporting, employment and commercial needs. It is important that this network system and key relationships are recognised as an integral part of the life and character of the Upper Gully community. Not all community service requirements need to be met within the Activity Centre.



Map 39. Open Space Opportunities - Upper Gully

7.4.2 Key Views

The visual setting of the Activity Centre was consistently mentioned by the community during engagement and views are highly valued and linked to the identity of the place and the Upper Gully community. This landscape setting is protected through the planning scheme.

Key visual attributes that must be managed include:

- The orientation of the streets and the low scale heights of built form within the Activity Centre means that generally link to views to the Dandenong Ranges.
- Preserving vegetation height and density at key view destinations and reference points – elevated landforms and creek lines / drainage lines.
- Maintaining the visual separation of residential buildings by vegetation.
- During community engagement there was a specific concern for controlling increased building height and the potential for effectively privatising views through building height / mass.



View to the Dandenong Ranges from Dawson Street, looking north

7.4.3 Arrival Experiences

Major entry points or gateways are important in establishing a sense of arrival and the environmental character and cultural identity of the place and to wayfinding for visitors.

Entry points have a greater significance in Activity Centre, due to its location at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges and at a location where a main highway (Burwood Highway) and rail line come together. The Activity Centre is the last centre people pass through before arriving at the Dandenongs and provides a gateway to this region. It provides the location for the Dandenong Ranges Visitors Information Centre and is part of the arrival experience in the hills.

The elements that enhance the sense of location within the Activity Centre road arrival sequence include:

- The landform of the highway becomes more strongly undulating to the east and this links to the nature of the surrounding landform.
- Changes in the alignment the highway result in directed views to surrounding landscape features such as parks, rail reserve land and surrounding hills.
- Increasing grade separation between carriageways provides unique views and road landscapes.
- Older buildings such as the Royal Hotel and Visitors Information Centre have distinctive Art Deco style and positioned that mark the location of old centres.
- Road landscapes with distinctive, large scale areas of planting that is unique to that location.
- Features such as the rail overpass and adjoining intersection.
- Unique signage elements such as the 'welcome to the Dandenongs' sign which have become cultural symbols.
- Residential development with substantial gardens and large tree planting.

Elements which reduce the sense of location include:

- Commercial land uses with varied building setbacks and car parking arrangements along the highway.
- Large scale commercial signage.
- Generic highway planting styles and areas with fragmented, inconsistent or small scale planting.
- Generic place signs that are not supported by landscape and other place specific features.
- Overhead power lines and services infrastructure that interrupts views and prevents tree planting; and
- Residential development with minimal gardens and tree planting'.

Arrival into the Activity Centre is characterised by four different but interrelated arrival experiences based on the western approach, western arrival, Activity Centre and the hills road sections.

Western approach – Burwood Highway west of Glenfern Road.

- Traditional subdivision and garden patterns.
- Relatively straight road alignment.
- Distant / intermittent views across to the approaching Dandenong Ranges.
- Commercial land uses generally lining both sides of the road edge.
- Mixed native road landscapes.

This road section represents the general road based visual character of the eastern suburbs. Overall, the area has a poor sense of identity and connection to place or environment.



Burwood Highway, west of Glenfern Road, travelling west towards Upper Ferntree Gully

Western arrival – Burwood Highway from Glenfern Road to Willow Road

- Road reorientation and increasing level changes.
- A more irregular subdivision pattern with more residential uses north of the highway.
- Larger scale tree planting within the road corridor.
- Continuous native vegetation within the rail reserve.
- A closer and more detailed visual connection to the Dandenong Ranges landscape.
- Awareness of the enclosing landforms north and south of the Activity Centre.
- Signage marking the Activity Centre and tourism features.
- Commercial development on the southern road edge only.
- Intermittent residential development with significant garden elements.

This road landscape represents an area of environmental and landscape change where the driver becomes aware of the landform and environment of the Dandenong Ranges and the role that this landscape plays on the settlement pattern of Upper Gully.



Signage coming into the Activity Centre from the east along Burwood Highway

Activity Centre – Willow Road to the rail overpass

- A visually dominant landform that shapes infrastructure and land use patterns.
- Subdivision pattern shaped by topography.
- The Dandenong Ranges are a dominant visual reference point and form a backdrop to the Activity Centre.
- A dominant landscape character based on native vegetation in the road and rail reserves.
- An overall increase in the amount of tree planting
- Mainly commercial uses on the southern side with a variety of building setbacks and car park treatments. Access to these uses is provided via a service road.
- The Visitors Information Centre and Royal Hotel are key visual landmarks.
- The rail reserve and associated parking infrastructure is a continuous visual element.
- Pedestrian movement is centred on the Dawson Street signalised intersection.
- There is a clear change in the spatial arrangement of commercial uses and parking areas.

This road landscape has visual and spatial features which clearly identify this as the retail centre but features such as signage, power lines and generic highway planting weaken the perception of place.

Hills – East of the rail overpass

- The rail bridge across Burwood Highway.
- The split road alignments that separate the Mount Dandenong Tourist Road from the Burwood Highway.
- The change in landform / level that is associated with the Ranges landscape east of the overpass.

Arrival by Train

The railway station and railway line provides an alternative entry into Upper Ferntree Gully for both residents and visitors. While the station itself has only been recently upgraded, its surrounds, including car park areas, bus bays and entrances, pedestrian amenity could be further improved.

The railway corridor is a state government asset and is managed by VicTrack. Council therefore have little influence over the appearance and amenity of public spaces around the station, however can advocate for improvements where appropriate.

Arrival experiences for the Activity Centre should emphasise the character and identity of Upper Gully and contribute to civic pride, create a clear role / function for the Activity Centre, create a sense of presence upon entry into Upper Gully and provide attractions and activity that 'draw people in'. For the Activity Centre, a key opportunity to enhance its arrival experiences lies in strengthening its visual and physical connection to the surrounding landscape, in particular the Dandenong Ranges.



Crest that forms slope into Upper Ferntree Gully when approaching from the west



Signalised lights at the intersection of Burwood Highway and Mount Dandenong Tourist Road



Railway bridge that define entry in the Activity Centre from the east

7.4.4 Key Streets within the Activity Centre

Burwood Highway

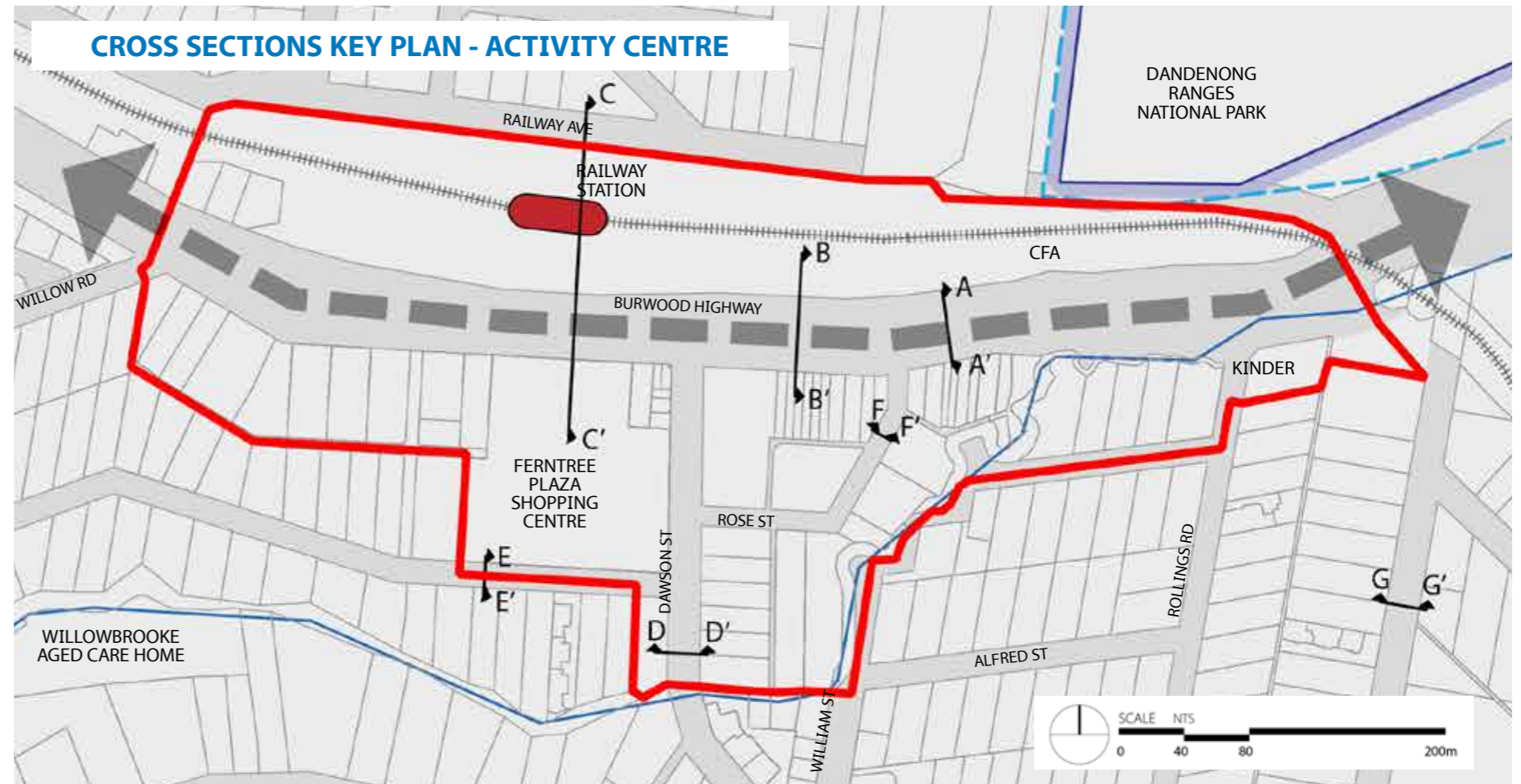
Burwood Highway is the key access route to Upper Ferntree Gully and provides the location for retail and other commercial uses within the Activity Centre.

Burwood Highway provides the main southern access point to the Dandenong Ranges, which leads to a significant volume of through traffic for Dandenong Ranges residents, as well as day visitors and tourists. These conditions lead to a road environment which is quite different in character to Upper Gully.

Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station is a premium station with extensive parking that is not available at stations further east. As a result, the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station attracts commuters from other places, which increase the amount of traffic and the number of people using both the station precinct and Activity Centre at key times during the day / evening.

Landform, land use, road intersection locations and rail crossing locations all influence the pattern of pedestrian movement within the Burwood Highway corridor and as a result, pedestrian paths are unevenly distributed. The southern side of the highway has a continuous path system with narrow naturestrip and tree planting, overhead power lines and commercial land uses (driveway crossovers and parking) restrict tree planting locations and the overall quality of the pedestrian environment.

Planting in the road reserve is a mixture of drought tolerant native tree species (not locally indigenous) that are common to Burwood Highway and other main road networks and the overall effect is a fragmented and mixed landscape character that does not match the qualities of the Dandenong Ranges National Park or the ordered street landscapes of the residential areas that sit behind the highway.



Map 40. Cross Section Key Plan - Activity Centre

The northern side of the highway has a steeper landform and is dominated by the rail reserve. Footpaths are intermittent and highway crossing points are generally limited to road intersections and to locations that are not constrained by grade separated carriageways. Much of the pedestrian movement in these areas is within the railway car park, which is elevated above the level of the highway. Much of the rail reservation area is natural bushland which has been degraded by fire, clearance and weed intrusion, but the overall landscape and visual character of this area is important to Upper Gully and helps to visually mark the location for people traveling through by road or rail.

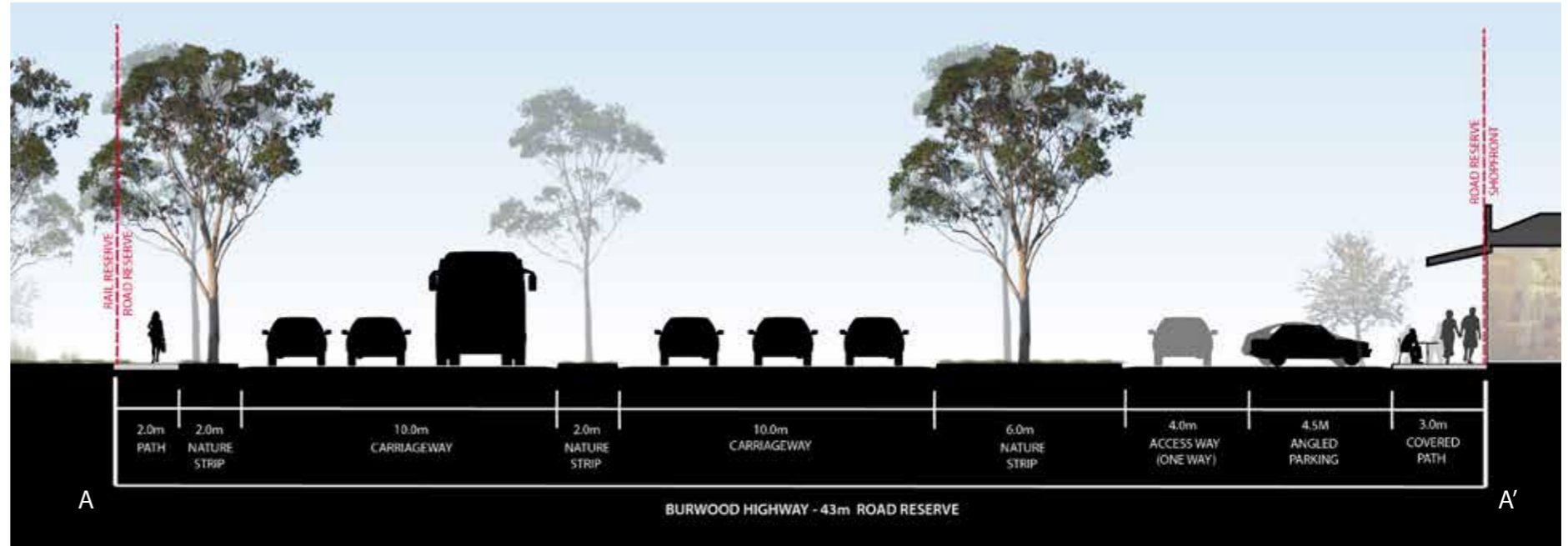


Figure 49. Cross Section A-A' - Burwood Highway

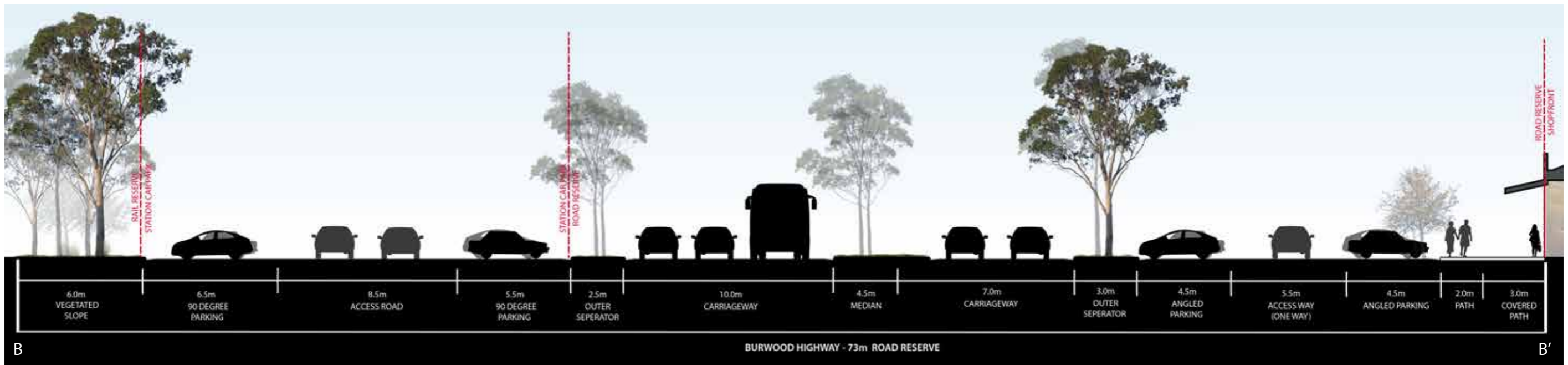


Figure 50. Cross Section B - B' - Burwood Highway



Commercial uses located to the east of Rose Street, along Burwood Highway



Commercial uses located to the west of Rose Street, along Burwood Highway



View along Burwood Highway, looking east towards the Dandenong Ranges and the Visitors Information Centre

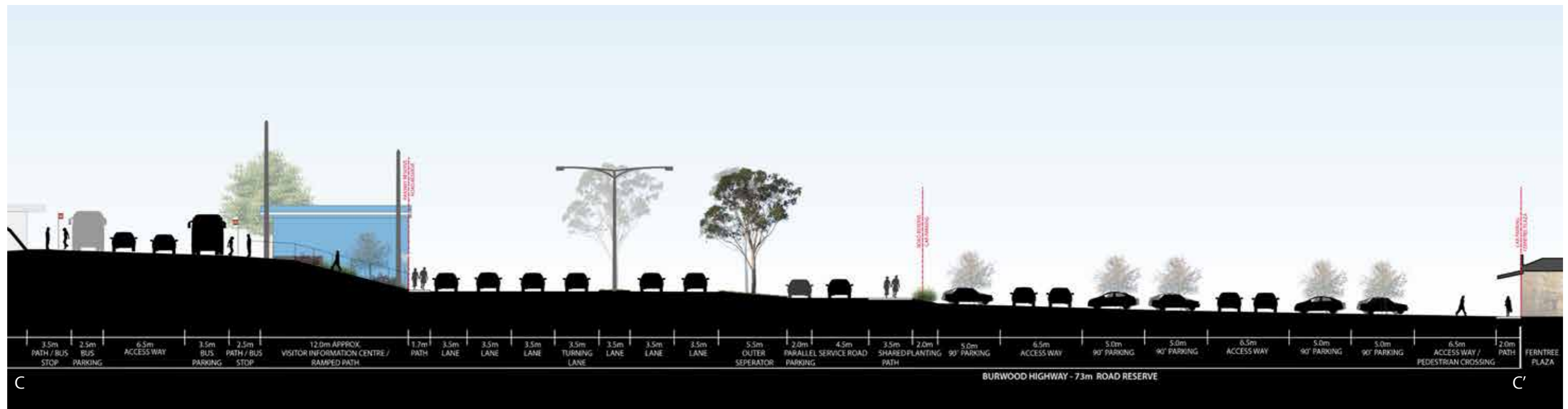


Figure 51. Cross Section C - C' - Burwood Highway to Station and Ferntree Plaza

The highway edge retail strip east of Dawson Street has minimal footpath widths with mixed native ground cover planting and deciduous tree planting. These treatments are well maintained but small scale and fairly generic in terms of style. These landscape features are not supported by other landscapes within the Activity Centre which results in the highway landscape being the dominant, large scale landscape form within Upper Gully rather than the centre itself.

Dawson Street

Dawson Street provides a key link between the Activity Centre and medical uses associated with the Angliss Hospital. It is also afforded with spectacular views in both directions (from within the Activity Centre) to the Dandenong Ranges.

Pedestrian access between these uses is provided via a 1.5m footpath along both sides of the street. Tree planting is predominately located along the southern side of the street and includes a mix of native and exotic species. Along the northern side of the street, overhead power lines restrict planting and visually clutter the streetscape.

Opportunities to locate power lines underground should be investigated to improve the appearance of Dawson Street. Landscaping treatments could also be used to strengthen views along Dawson Street and reinforce it as a key road within Activity Centre.

Rose Street

Rose Street provides access to car parking areas along the southern side of the Activity Centre and to adjacent commercial and retail uses, as well as the 1812 Theatre. It is a one way street, with a footpath and is only provided along part of the road (near the 1812 Theatre). While planting is provided at the elbow of the road, there is generally a lack of tree planting along this street and in the adjacent car park areas. This lack of planting creates an environment that appears dry and harsh and offers little visual or environmental amenity to pedestrians. Opportunities to improve the pedestrian amenity along Rose Street may include the provision of street tree planting and / or active and engaging built form that includes weather protection (awnings).

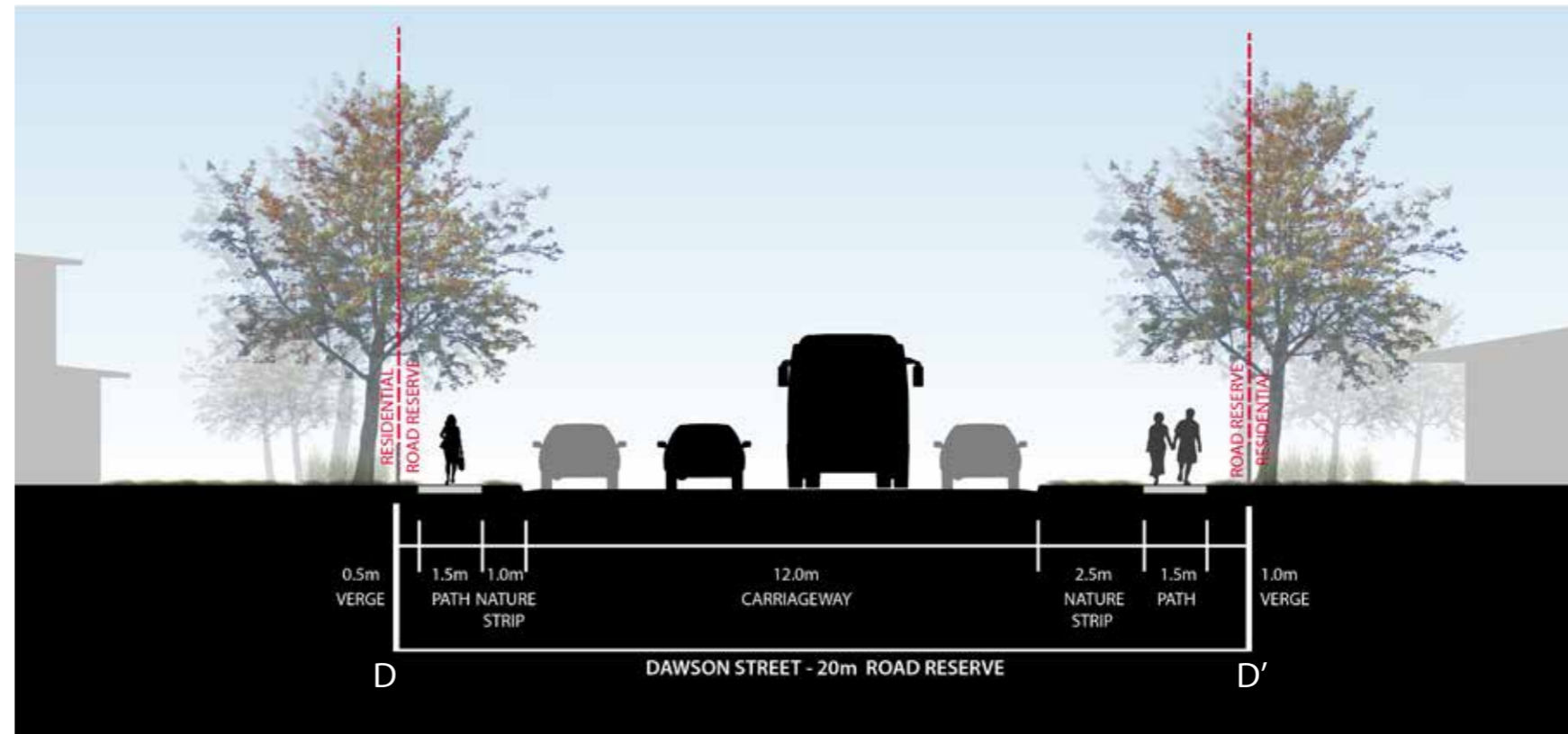


Figure 52. Cross Section D - D' - Dawson Street

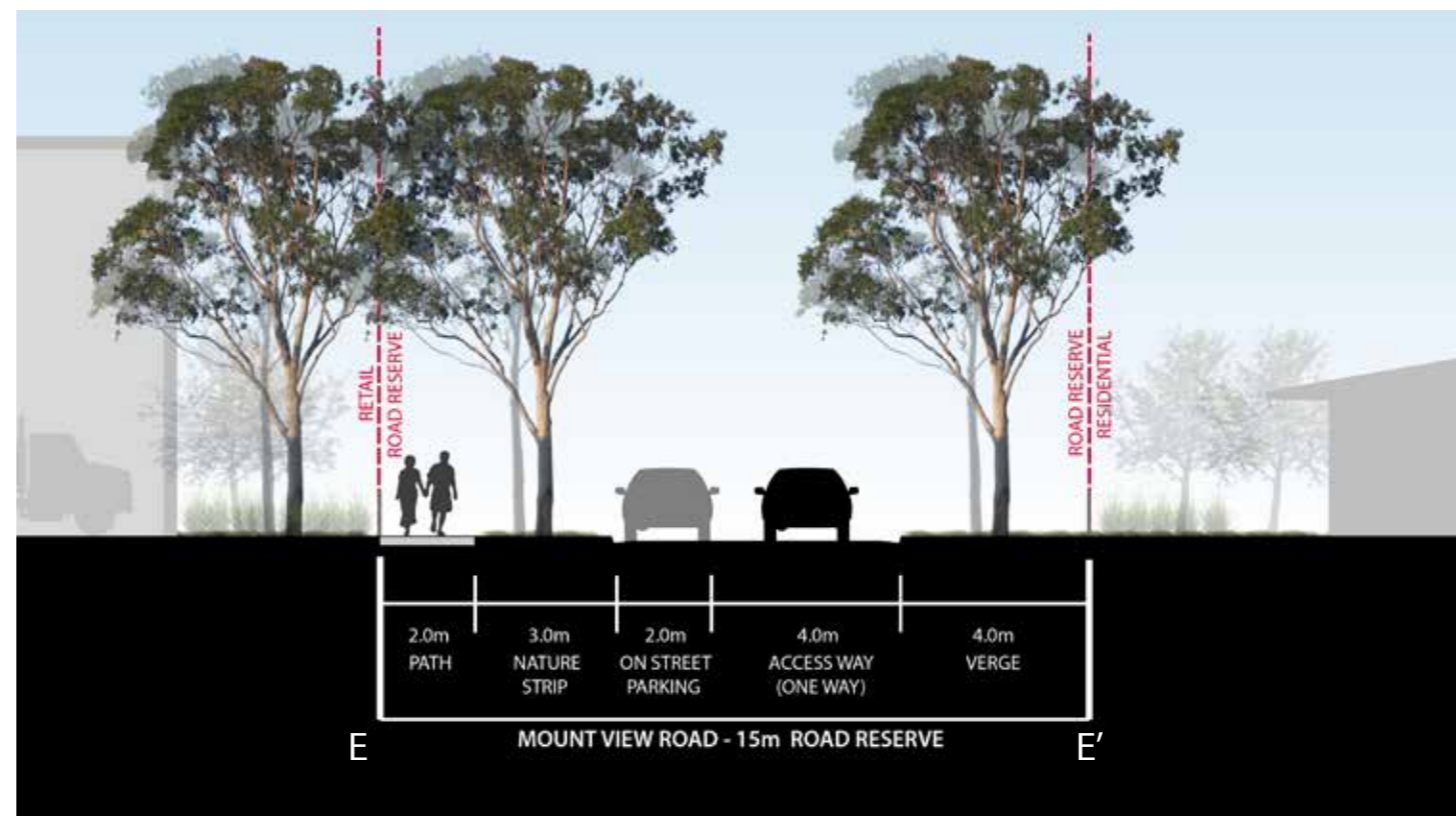


Figure 53. Cross Section E - E' - Mount View Road

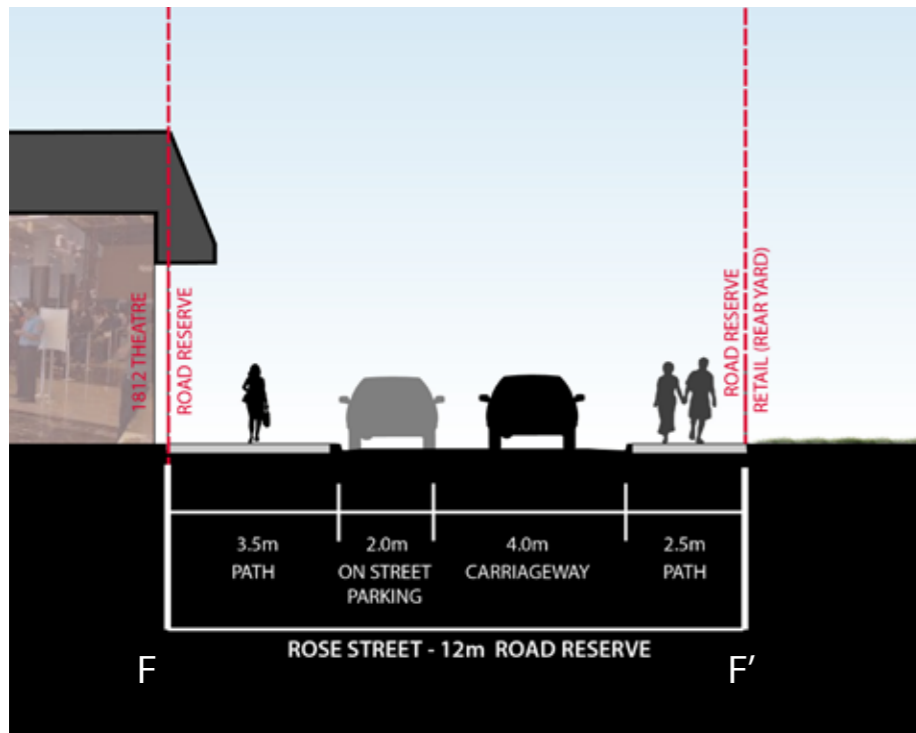


Figure 54. Cross Section F - F' - Rose Street - Near 1812 Theatre

Mount View Road

Mount View Road is a one way, west to east, residential street that provides a link between Willow Street and Dawson Street. This street is characterised by tree planting and grassed verges consistent with its primary role of a residential street. Car parking is provided along the northern edge of the street. While parking along the edge of the street is convenient and encourages activity within the street, it detracts from the amenity of the streetscape and impacts access to surrounding residential areas.

7.4.5 Key Roads in Surrounding Residential Areas

Talaskia Road

Talaskia Road is a key street within Upper Ferntree Gully. It provides access to a number of key community facilities including Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School, Talaskia Reserve and the Angliss Hospital. Along the eastern side of the road a 2.5m shared path provides pedestrian access to community uses along this edge, while a 1.5m path is provided adjacent residential uses. Formal / marked on-street parking is provided where driveway crossovers allow. While tree planting along Talaskia Road is sporadic and mixed, tree and shrub planting in residential properties along the road contribute significantly to the character and amenity of this street.

Topography is a key consideration of this and many streets within the surrounding residential areas. In many places, the topography becomes relatively steep, making it difficult for people to walk along the street.

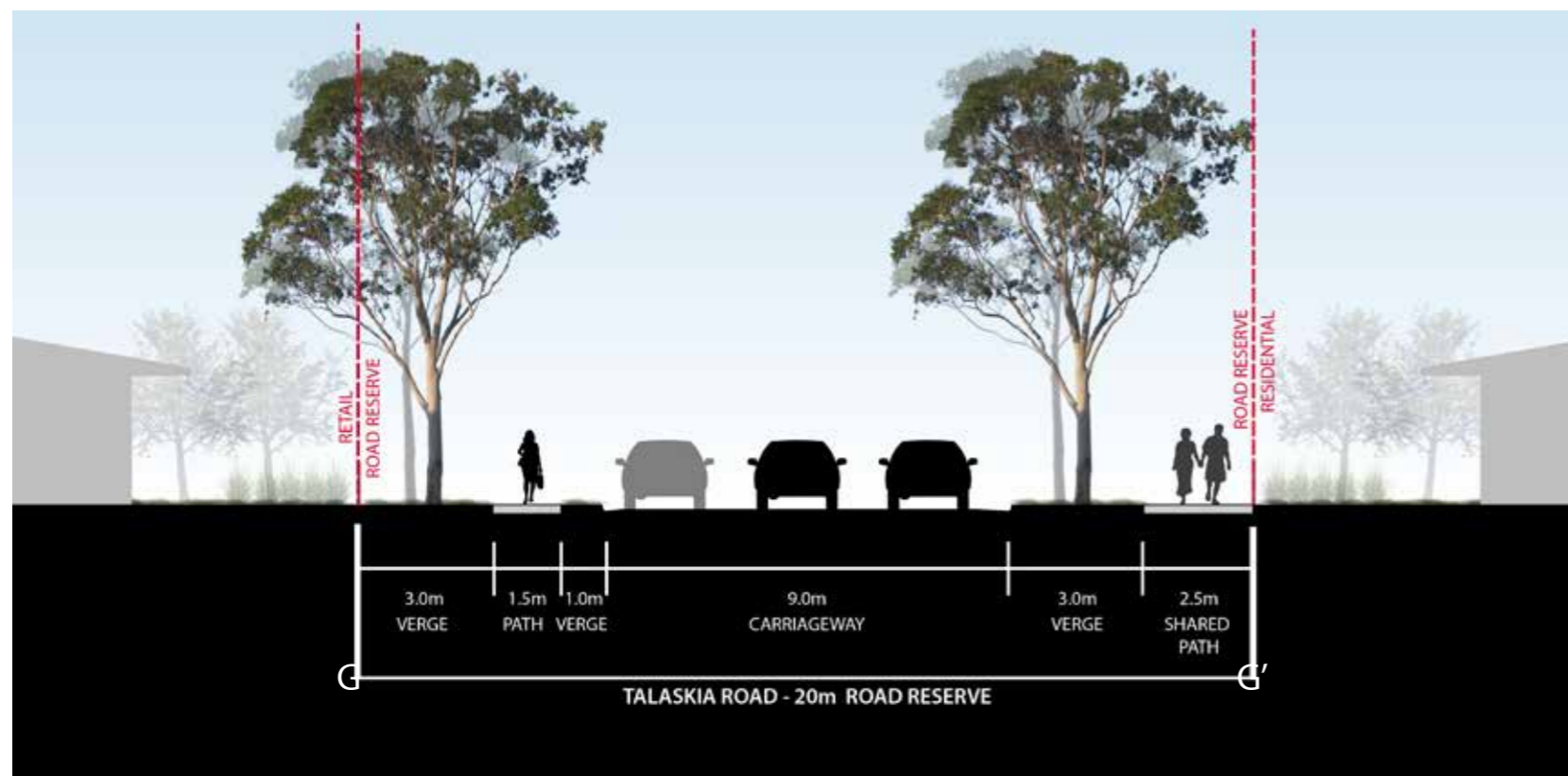


Figure 55. Cross Section G - G' - Talaskia Road

7.4.6 Parks and Reserves

Parks and reserves, including green spaces, creek reserves and drainage ways, are a key ingredient of a successful place. These areas provide opportunities for passive and active recreation, social interaction, drainage functions and for physical and visual connections. They allow for the retention of highly valued vegetation and cultural elements and provide a framework around which residential neighbourhoods can develop.

The major parks in Upper Gully are Talaskia Reserve and Kings Park, which serve a range of functions including:

- Venues for sport and leisure uses – both active and passive uses;
- Civic purposes – relating to their role as community meeting places and special event venues;
- Orientation point – a location marker within Upper Gully;
- Off road trail venue – a part of the pedestrian and cycle movement network;
- Environmental resource – related to their value as ecological habitat and wildlife corridors; and
- Service function – related to their role as a part of the stormwater drainage management system.



Kings Park Recreation Reserve

Kings Park

Kings Park is the premier reserve within Upper Gully. The park provides a mix of active, passive and community uses and includes an oval, training area, cricket nets, pavilion, baseball complex, athletics complex and netball courts. Coonara House is also located within the reserve enhancing the parks roles as a key community hub within Upper Gully.

The park is defined by Willow Street along its eastern edge, Ferny Creek along its western edge and Ferntree Gully Creek along its northern edge. Open space along Ferny Creek connects the park to the broader open space network including Wally Tew Reserve in Ferntree Gully, and to Gilmour Park in Upper Gully and forms part of the Ferny Creek Trail. The parks aesthetic is typical of a 'country' sports reserve, with large areas of grass and perimeter tree planting. Views to the surrounding Dandenongs however provide a unique and spectacular backdrop to the reserve.

Connections between the Activity Centre and Kings Park are facilitated along Willow Street and a linear link associated with the Ferny Creek Trail that runs along the back of properties fronting Mount View Road and Ferndale Road. Rear fencing defines the edge of this link, and includes a continuous pedestrian path, grassing and limited tree planting.

Talaskia Reserve

Talaskia Reserve is located between Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School and the Angliss Hospital and provides a range of active and active uses. It includes an oval, car parking, a playground and tennis courts, which are not in use anymore.

The location of the reserve adjacent the Primary School is a positive feature that enables resource sharing, the strengthening of synergies that exist between facilities, and it encourages greater user participation and community interaction. Access between the Activity Centre and Talaskia Reserve is provided along key

streetscapes including Talaskia Road and Dawson Street (via Talaskia Road), as well as a shared trails (partially on road) that connect to the Ferny Creek Trail. Landscaping generally comprises tree planting and grass, as well as stone retaining walls and seating.

Council is currently undertaking a master plan exercise for Talaskia Reserve. Considerations of this master plan include future reuse of the tennis courts. Recommendations from the master plan should be reflected in the Strategic Plan.

Wally Tew Reserve

Wally Tew Reserve is a key recreational, cultural and community hub within Knox City Council. Located along Glenfern Road / Brenock Park Drive, the reserve includes a playground (to be upgraded as part of capital works for 2015-2016), a community centre, library, two ovals, pavilion, scout hall, parking and toilets. The reserve contains a number of key recreational and community facilities that attract people from Upper Gully. Access to these facilities should therefore be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.



Talaskia Recreation Reserve

Quarry Park

Quarry Park is located to the north of the railway line, adjacent the Dandenong Ranges National Park. It includes walking trails, seating and kick around space, all overlooking a lake and escarpment of a former quarry. A boardwalk is planned for the park and will provide connections to nearby trails within the National Park. An important recreational asset, access to this park is limited, particularly from the Activity Centre and Railway Station. Opportunities to improve access to this reserve and make it a key recreational asset for Upper Gully should be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.

Dandenong Ranges National Park

The Activity Centre is bordered by the Dandenong Ranges National Park to the north, which attracts over 1 million visitors annually. The park covers an area of 3,500 Hectares and Upper Ferntree Gully is closest major entry point to the Park from Melbourne. The Upper Gully Activity Centre is located only 800m from the major tourist attraction of the 1,000 Steps, which is growing significantly in its popularity.

There are good opportunities to strengthen pedestrian and cycle links between the National Park and the Activity Centre.



Wally Tew Reserve

7.4.7 Pedestrian linkages

Pedestrian linkages are connecting spaces that generally provide pedestrian only access between various destinations. A number of links are provided within Upper Gully that connect the Activity Centre to surrounding residential areas. These include:

- A lane way along the northern side of the 1812 Theatre. This provides access between Rose Street and William Street.
- An informal along the southern side of the Opportunity Shop on Rose Street, through a commercial car park area. Again this provides access between William Street and Rose Street.
- A formal pedestrian link providing access between Burwood Highway and Mount View Road. This link also functions as an overland flow path.
- A crown land link provided between Burwood Highway and William Street. This link also denotes the historic path of the Ferny Creek (now piped underground here) and caters for overland flows.

Generally these links have limited amenity and include, at most, a simple path with limited landscaping. Passive surveillance is limited with few windows addressing these areas and with little or no lighting. Opportunities to increase active and integrate these links within the Activity Centre should be considered.

7.4.8 Civic Spaces

Civic spaces are at the heart of the community, influencing the Activity Centre's character and sense of place. They provide a place for people to come together and socialise.

While Kings Park and Talaskia Reserve currently provide a key focus of community activity for Upper Gully, there are opportunities for additional urban civic spaces (gathering spaces including but not limited to a hardscaped square or plaza). These spaces can be complementary to formal areas, where the local community can meet, wait and relax.

These would ideally be located in or adjacent to Upper Ferntree Gully's existing retail uses, providing an opportunity for these uses to activate and 'spill out' into the public space.



Seating node located along Burwood Highway

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

Existing open spaces / public realm areas were identified as an important asset for the community. Generally people suggested that existing public realm areas should be retained although improvements could be made.

Some of these improvements included:

- *Access to Quarry Park could be improved to make the space more 'usable';*
- *Better connections were required to the Dandenong Ranges National Park, particularly to improve local access to the park on weekends;*
- *General improvements to Talaskia Reserve;*
- *Upgrades to the playground at Kings Park;*
- *Enhance the railway bridge across Burwood Highway to provide an gateway for Upper Gully; and*
- *Opportunity to make 1812 Theatre area in Rose Street a pedestrian street.*

As well as improvements to existing open space / public realm areas, people also discussed were additional spaces / facilities could be provided. These included:

- *A community parkland / community garden;*
- *More playgrounds / places for children and young people; and*
- *Provision of a town square / public square for community events and gathering.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Upper Gully's character and identity is influenced by a number of key characteristics including landform, waterways, roads and rail corridors, gateway elements, views, vegetation, development scale, civic places and community networks.
- The visual setting of Upper Gully is highly valued by the community and linked to its sense of place.
- The Activity Centre is the last centre people pass through before arriving at the Dandenong Ranges and provides a gateway to this region. Arrival into the Activity Centre is primarily experienced along Burwood Highway. Opportunities to improve this arrival experience and provide a cohesive character for Upper Gully should be considered.
- The railway bridge provides a gateway to the Dandenong Ranges and Upper Gully. While owned by VicTrack, the Strategic Plan should consider opportunities to enhance the appearance of this bridge so that it positively contributes to the character of Upper Gully.
- The train provides an alternative arrival experience into the Activity Centre. It could be enhanced to create a thriving and attractive transport hub for residents and visitors.
- Burwood Highway, Dawson Street, Rose Street, Mount View Road and Talaskia Road are all key roads within and surrounding the Activity Centre. Opportunities to provide high quality public realm and streetscapes that reinforce the pedestrian-based environment, make it easy for people to get around the centre and reinforce the character of Upper Gully, should be considered.
- Public spaces include open space reserves, environmental spaces, drainage corridors, open space links and streets. Opportunities to create an integrated network of public open spaces should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan.
- Kings Park and Talaskia Reserve are key open space assets in Upper Gully and their role should be reinforced. Future improvements should focus on creating a clear and logical structure and a high quality public space for all people to enjoy.
- Quarry Park is a high quality public space located to the north of the railway line. Opportunities to improve access to this reserve should be considered, as well as continuing to enhance the space as a recreational asset for the community.
- Ferny Creek Trail provides a key open space link to community and recreational facilities within Upper Gully. Opportunities to enhance this as a major recreational trail should be considered.
- There is currently no public square or civic space within the Activity Centre. Opportunities to provide a civic space within the Activity Centre should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan.

7.5 Environment and Sustainability

WHAT WE KNOW

All public spaces within Upper Gully provide opportunities to contribute to an integrated environmental system.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) should be incorporated into streetscapes where possible. Water collection and treatment in new streetscape improvements should be provided in an integrated way i.e. utilise water collected within the streets to irrigate new public open space.

Opportunities to enhance environmental links between the commercial areas and the surrounding public open space should also be explored. Careful consideration should be given to tree and low level planting species to strengthen these opportunities.

There are also opportunities to reduce the heat island effect of hard spaces in the public realm. Large street trees with strong canopies should be provided across the centre to provide shade to footpaths. Where appropriate low level planting can also be provided to manage heat in public spaces.

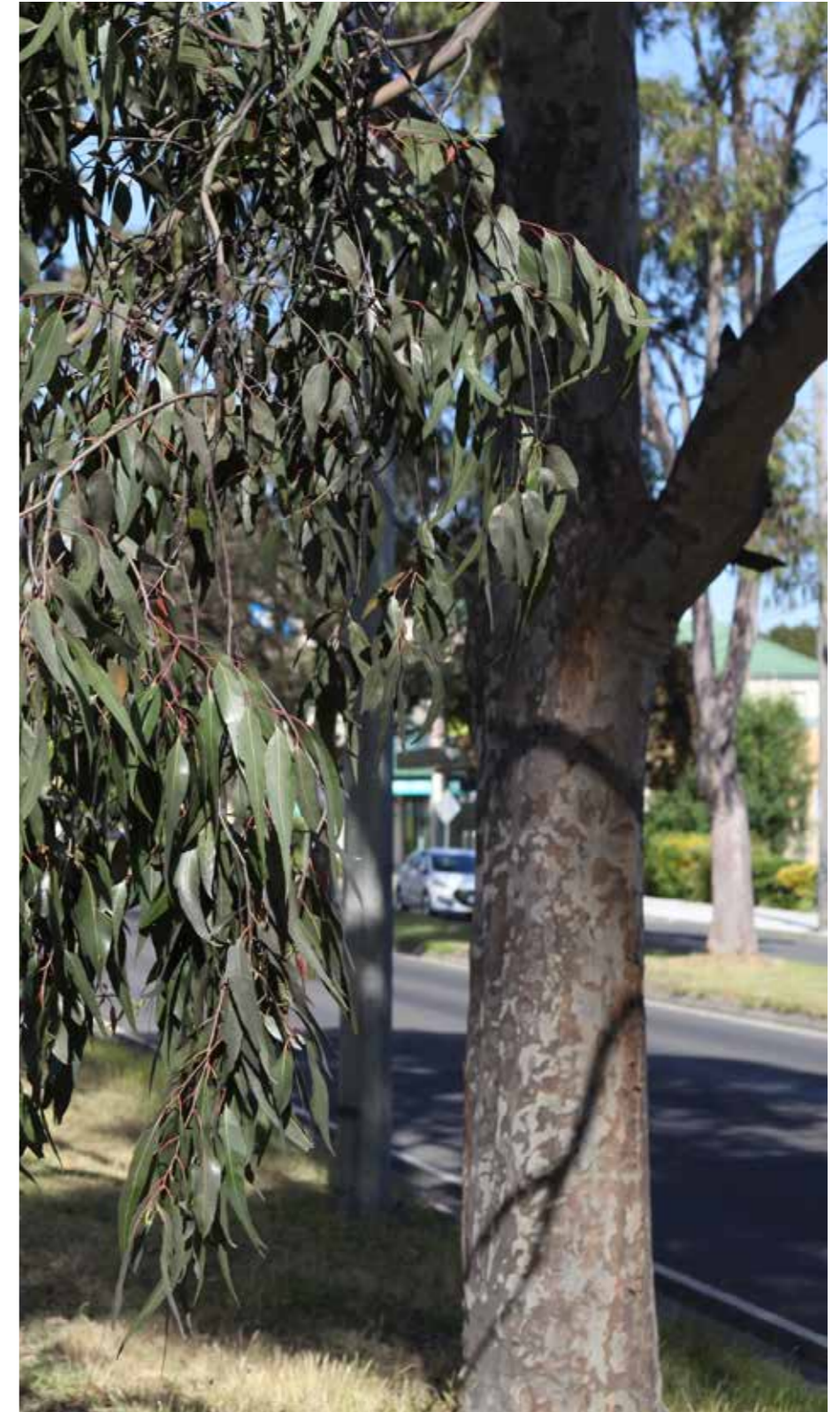
Buildings also have a role in contributing the environment and sustainability of Upper Gully. Built form within the Activity Centre is generally tired looking and there are limited examples of environmentally sustainable architecture. There is the opportunity to encourage future development within the Activity Centre to be designed for sustainability and to provide a high standard of amenity.

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The surrounding foothills and landscape were identified by the community as valued characteristics of Upper Gully.*
- *The community noted the importance of preserving these hills, the trees and the green open spaces. Key opportunities identified by the community included improved maintenance of existing trees and the provision of additional tree planting, particularly in service lanes.*
- *The environmental benefits of local and indigenous species was noted by the community, however species that were more resilient during a bushfire were preferred (with exotic species mentioned in some cases. It was also noted that trees within residential areas should be maintained.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Opportunity for an integrated environmental approach to sustainability that implements measures across the streets and urban spaces
- Opportunities to integrate Water Sensitive Urban Design into the design of streets and public spaces to conserve water, store, treat and re-use
- Opportunity to strengthen the biodiversity links to open spaces through tree species selection



Tree planting along Burwood Highway provide shade

7.6 Pedestrian / Cycle Access

WHAT WE KNOW

7.6.1 Walking Access

Walking is a fundamental and direct means of access to most places and to goods and services. It is an environmentally sustainable form of transport and can have sustainable health benefits. Walking can be an ideal substitute for short car trips, including those to public transport stops.

There are opportunities to clearly define and prioritise walking within Upper Gully so that it is convenient, comfortable and provides an enjoyable experience for pedestrians. Prioritising walking will help to create vibrant streets, improve safety and surveillance, and strengthen businesses.

The Activity Centre, generally, has good walking facilities in place with wide footpaths along shop frontages. There is also good lighting and active street frontages particularly along Burwood Highway which contribute to the feeling of safety. Intersections generally provide tight kerb radii to reduce vehicle turning speeds and reduce pedestrian crossing distances. A school crossing guard controls crossings of Talaskia Road from the Primary School and on-site observations revealed no children cross informally at locations away from the controlled crossing point.

The locations where footpath facilities could be improved or enhanced include the following:

Burwood Highway service road – east of Dawson Street

The south side of the Burwood Highway service road between Rollings Road and Dawson Street provides some attractive street front shops, cafes and restaurants. A small number of kerbside cafes are already in operation. Kerbside cafes are recommended wherever feasible in order to assist the economic profitability of abutting businesses, improve the vibrancy of the street and increase the passive security of the area by the provision of active street frontages. However, kerbside café significantly reduces the effective walkable width of the footpath. Subsequently, any opportunities to increase the width of the footpath should be explored to ensure that the kerbside cafes can be maintained in this location while also providing around 2m width of 'usable' pedestrian clearance space to cater for accessibility along the footpath by pedestrians, wheelchairs and prams. This may require a reconfiguration of existing outdoor seating and tables if the footpath is ultimately not widened.



Burwood Highway service road – east of Dawson Street

Burwood Highway service road – west of Dawson Street

The Maxi Foods Shopping Centre is provided on the south side of the Burwood Highway service road, immediately west of the intersection with Dawson Street. This south side of Burwood Highway provides a continuous footpath and accommodates any east/west pedestrian movements along Burwood Highway (given the current lack of footpath facilities on the north side of Burwood Highway adjacent to the railway station and beyond the station to the east).

The south side footpath is generally well provided and attractive for pedestrians. However, a vehicle entrance point to the Maxi Foods Shopping Centre car park is provided immediately west of the Dawson Street intersection and the location and alignment of the entrance encourages motorists to cross the footpath and enter the car park at relatively high speeds. Subsequently, opportunities to improve pedestrian safety at this location should be explored.



Vehicle entrance to Maxi Foods from Burwood Highway

North side of Burwood Highway service road – adjacent to the railway station

The north side of Burwood Highway provides a formal footpath to the west of the railway station car park. An informal gravel footpath is provided to the east of the railway station car park, which leads to the 1,000 Steps. However, adjacent to the railway station, the footpath disappears completely and leaves pedestrians vulnerable, with the only options to walk circuitously through the station car park, cross Burwood Highway at an uncontrolled location or to walk informally along the non-footpath area. Opportunities to provide a continuous footpath facility along the north side of Burwood Highway should be explored. This should include a footpath facility adjacent to the eastern end of the station car park to assist train passengers walk from their parked car to the station platforms.



Informal path along Burwood Highway, adjacent to the railway station

Intersection of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street

The intersection of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street provides reasonably safe walking facilities. Signalised pedestrian crossings are provided on all four legs of the intersection and the south leg provides landscaped kerb extensions to assist pedestrians walking along the south side footpath of Burwood Highway.

Nevertheless, site observations revealed that some motorists turning right from either Dawson Street or the railway station car park into Burwood Highway often fail to adequately give way to pedestrians crossing the west and east legs of the intersection. The current signal phasing allows permissive right turns in these directions where right turning motorists must give way to opposing traffic flows and crossing pedestrians before performing their turn.

Given the desire to maintain traffic capacity on Burwood Highway, the pedestrian crossings on the west and east legs of this intersection are 25m in length and leave pedestrians exposed to motorists performing the right turn at high speed. It is therefore recommended that any opportunities to improve pedestrian safety at this intersection be explored, particularly relating to potential conflicts with right turning motorists.

Intersection of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road

The intersection of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road is complex and permits numerous vehicle turning movements. Observations revealed that motorists are often confused as to where to turn from and which movements are permitted.

Pedestrians crossing the south leg of the intersection are also relatively exposed despite the presence of a physical pedestrian refuge island. Pedestrians must be aware of motorists approaching this crossing from many angles and approaches and are also confronted with large kerb radii which increase vehicle turning speeds and pedestrian crossing distances.

Observations revealed that parents and children use this crossing. This is presumably due to the presence of a childcare centre which is located immediately east of the intersection. This crossing may also be used as part of the walking route for school children walking to the nearby Primary School on Talaskia Road.

Others

- Link between Dawson Street and Ferntree Plaza - while a pedestrian path is provided, it is not aligned to the entry of the plaza (i.e. desire line);
- Along Rose Street - inconsistent provision of path, particularly along southern section, near Dawson Street and limited trees/ weather protection;
- Pedestrian links - generally have no path and limited passive surveillance; and
- Railway station area - dominated by vehicular and bus requirements. Large areas of asphalt, inconsistent path provision and limited signage ensues an areas that is difficult for pedestrians to navigate.

Path along the western side of the Visitors Information Centre

During site visits it was also observed that a many pedestrians would illegally cross Burwood Highway near the Visitors Information Centre, to access between the Railway Station and Ferntree Plaza. This is considered a key desire line and opportunities to improve safety here and at the crossing at the Dawson Street - Burwood Highway intersection, should be considered by the Strategic Plan.

Pedestrian Facilities

Throughout the Activity Centre, Council branded seating is provided at a range of locations for pedestrians. The challenge though is to ensure it is appropriately located, with supporting facilities. Seating nodes at the corner of Dawson Street and Burwood Highway are highly exposed. While planting provides some sense of enclosure and separation from the passing traffic, there is limited shade and is detached from activity along the shop fronts.

Connections to surrounding residential areas

Walking and cycling connections from surrounding residential areas into the Activity Centre are also important. The Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) Analysis identifies several key links where there is likely to be a larger proportion of pedestrian trips. These streets should provide additional shade through a continuous canopy of street trees, continuous and generous footpaths, good lighting, and minimal delay for pedestrians at crossings/intersections. This will make it easier for residents to move between their homes and key destinations in Upper Gully.



Intersection of Rollings Road and Burwood Highway



Connection from Dawson Street to Ferntree Plaza

7.6.2 Principal Pedestrian Network Analysis

Maps 45-51 provide an analysis of the likely pedestrian trips from surrounding residential areas to a number of destinations across Upper Ferntree Gully. The increase in colour intensity indicates a greater number of potential pedestrian trips along a section of the street. This analysis is based on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Principal Pedestrian Network Methodology.

This analysis is particularly useful in determining the key routes that connect from beyond the surrounding residential areas into the commercial area. The key routes identified on the map opposite could be a focus for future streetscape improvements.

Railway Station

Map 45 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 2km of the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station and Ferntree Gully Station (to the north west). The analysis reveals that a number of key facilities and the Activity Centre are within 2km of the railway station. Dawson Street particularly is identified as a key route that is likely to carry a large number of pedestrian trips.

Bus Stops

Map 46 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 1km of existing bus stops. The analysis shows localised access to bus stops primarily focused Burwood Highway, the Angliss Hospital and Dawson Street.

Primary Schools

Map 47 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 1km of the primary schools. The analysis shows Talaskia Road as a key routes close to Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School with Johns Street, parts of Albert Street and Old Belgrave Road being identified as key routes.

Secondary Schools

Map 48 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 1km of the secondary schools. St Josephs Regional College is the closest Secondary School to the Activity Centre. The shared path along Ferny Creek is identified as the key route for accessing this school from Upper Gully.

Retail

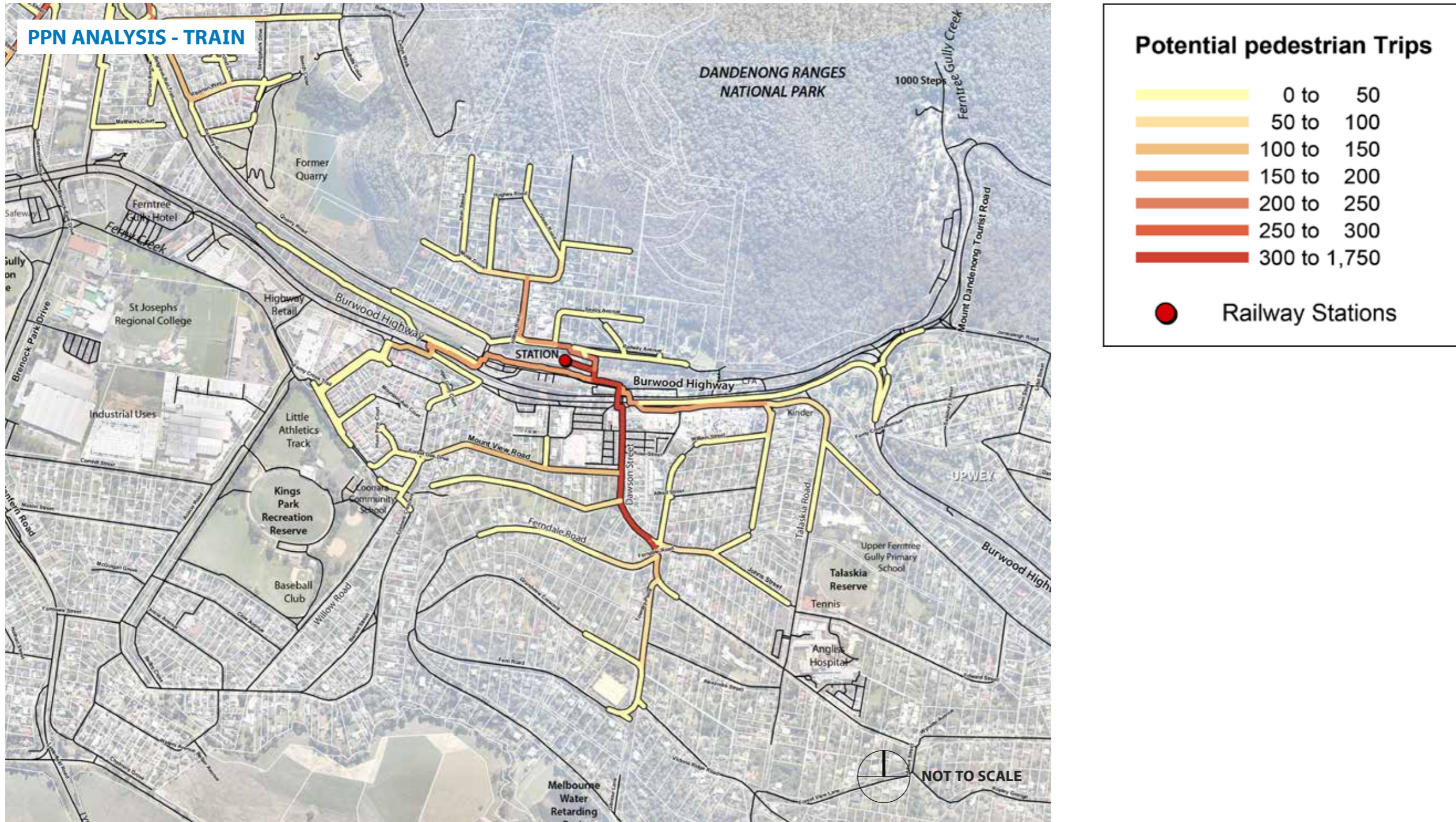
Map 49 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 1km of existing shops. The analysis identifies Burwood Highway, Mount View Road and Dawson Street as the key streets that are likely to carry a significant number of pedestrian trips.

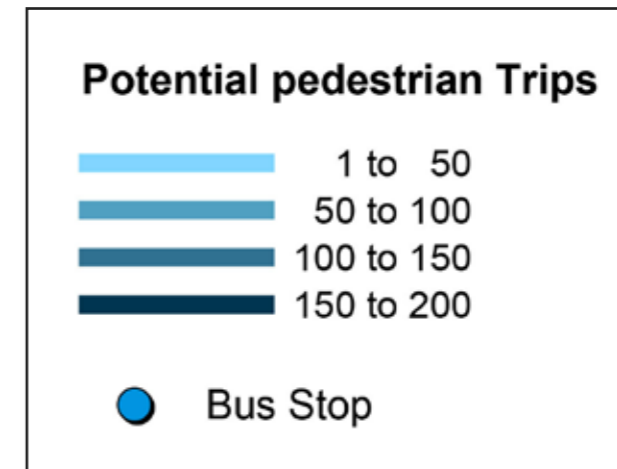
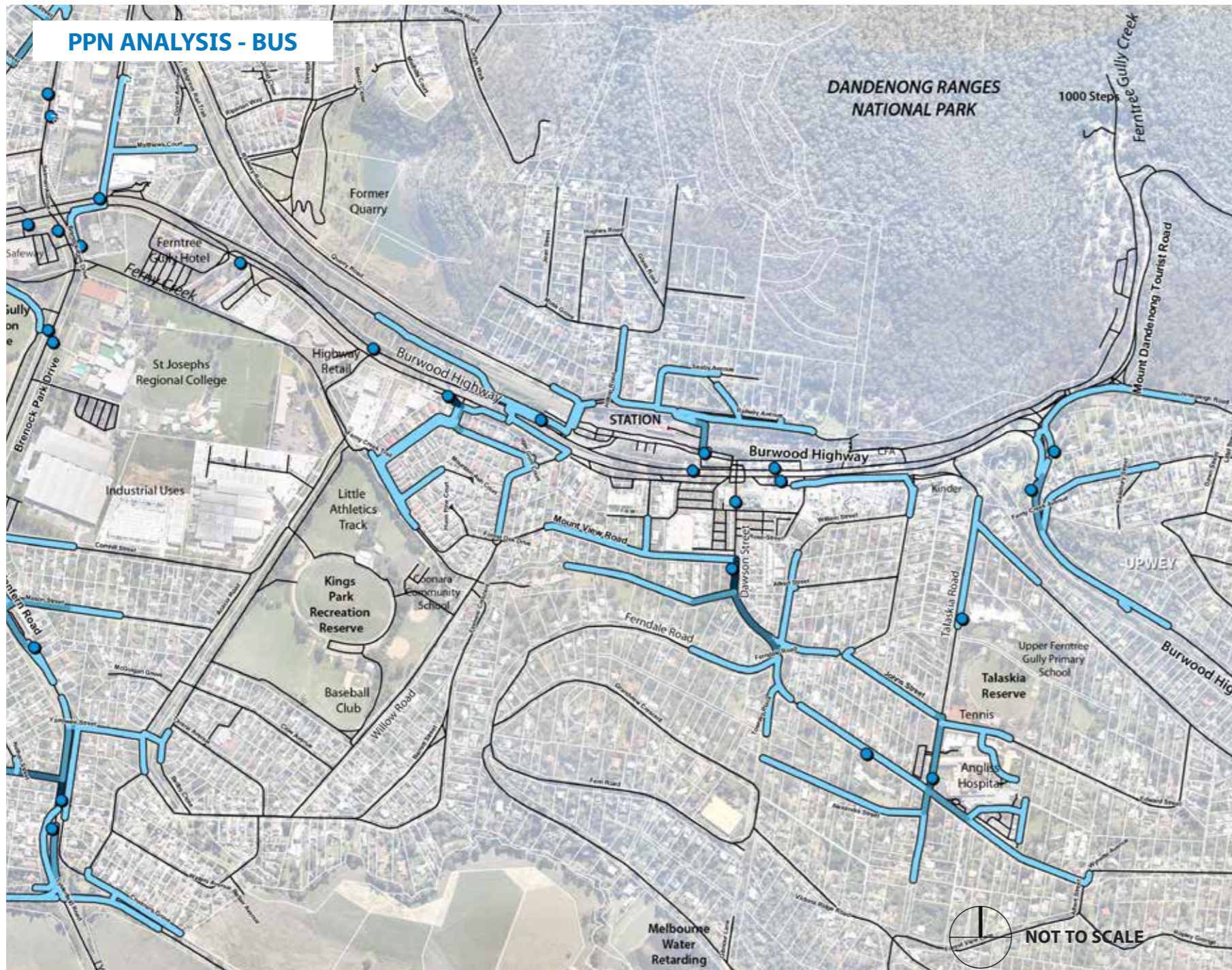
Community Facilities

Map 50 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 1km of existing community facilities. The analysis shows Willow Road, as well as a shared path along the back of properties (between Mount View Road and Ferndale Road) as key routes to community facilities (Coonara Neighbourhood House). Other community facilities located in Wally Tew Reserve are further than 1km street walking distance from the Activity Centre.

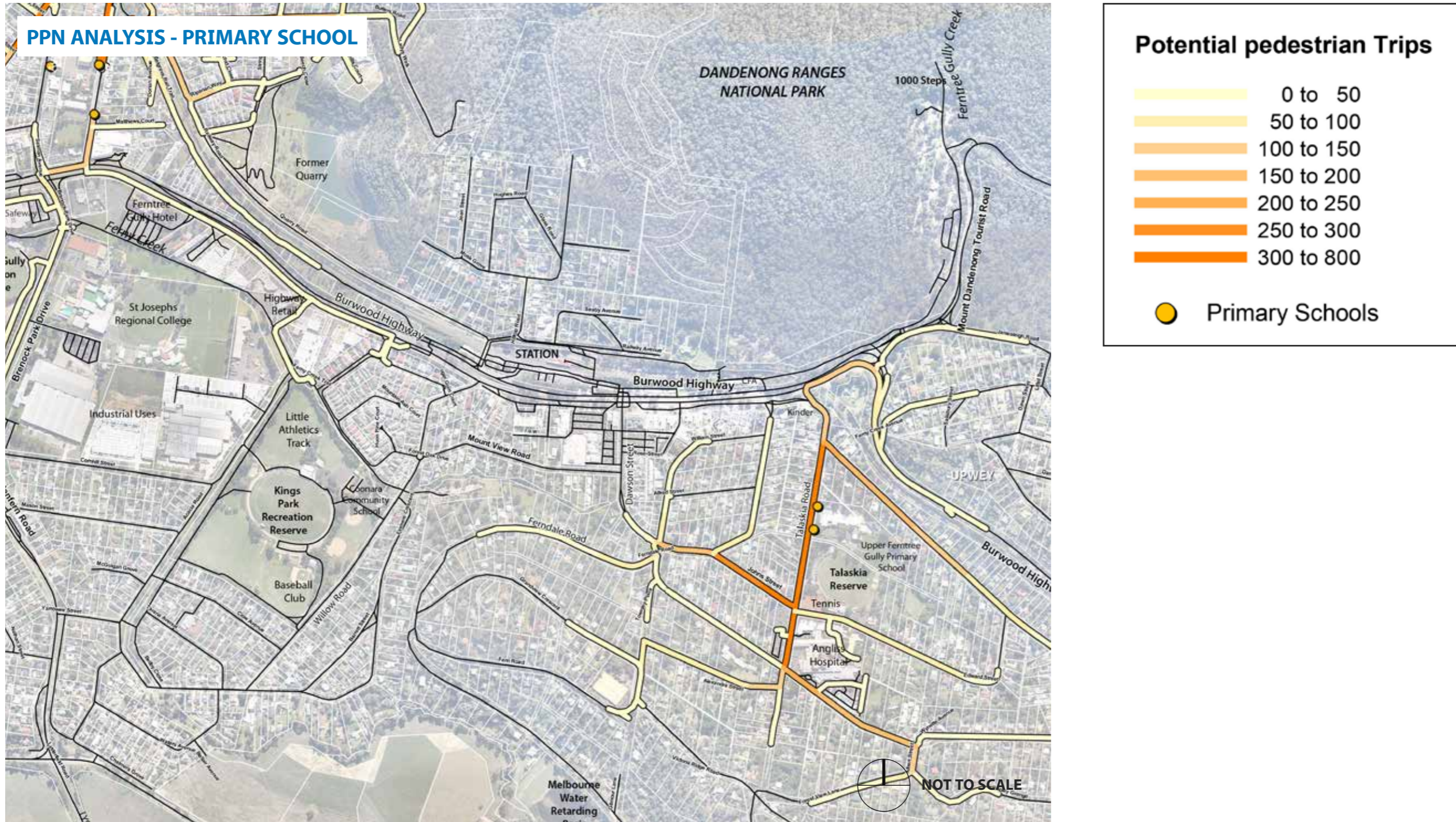
Open Space

Map 51 shows the potential pedestrian trips along streets within 1km of existing public open space. The analysis reveals localised access to public open space across the established areas of Upper Gully, focused around Kings Park, Talaskia Reserve and the 1,000 Steps.

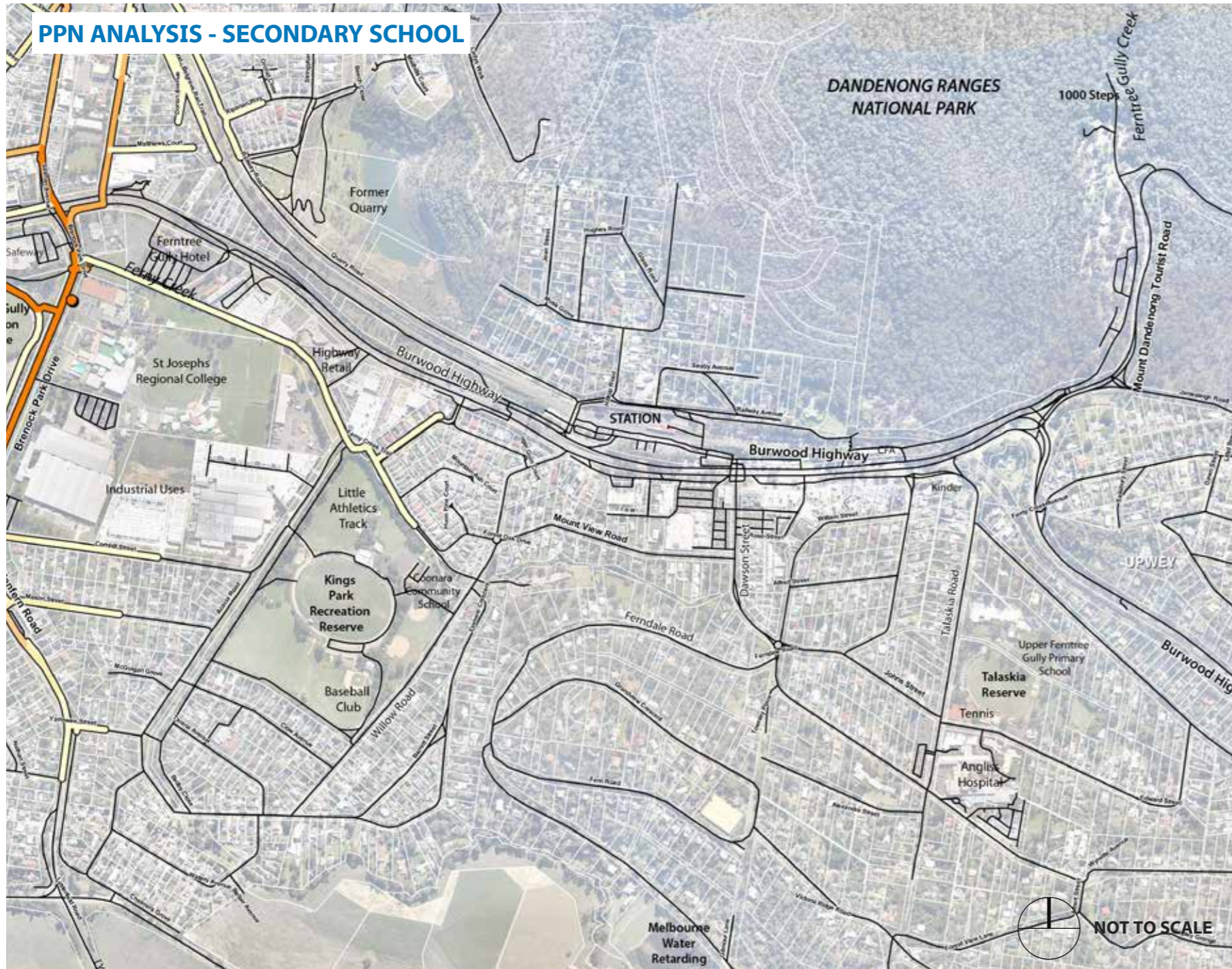




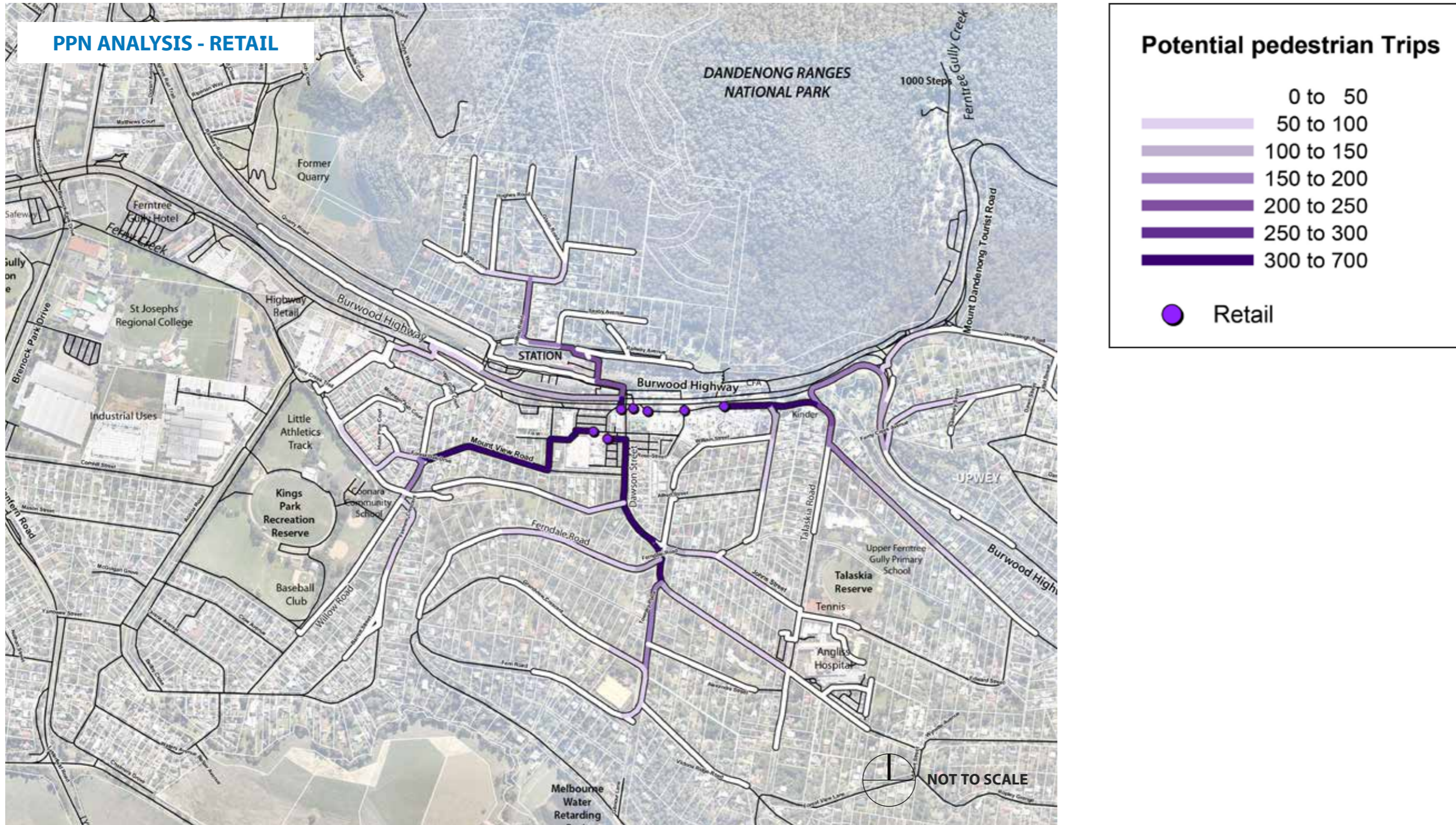
Map 42. PPN Analysis - Bus



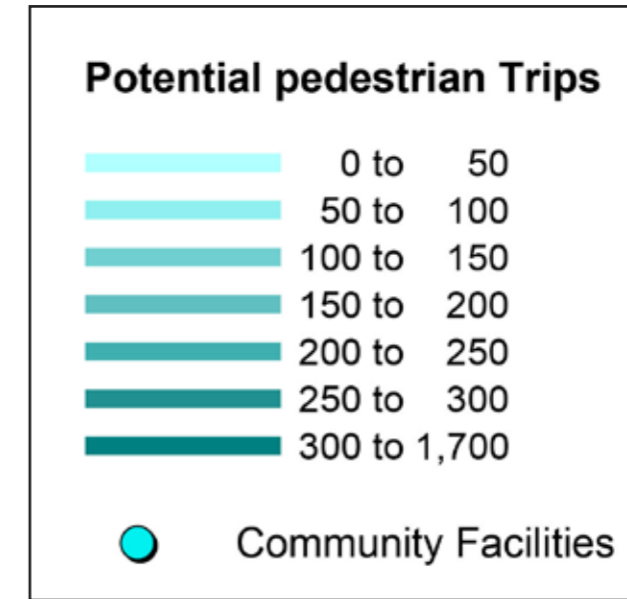
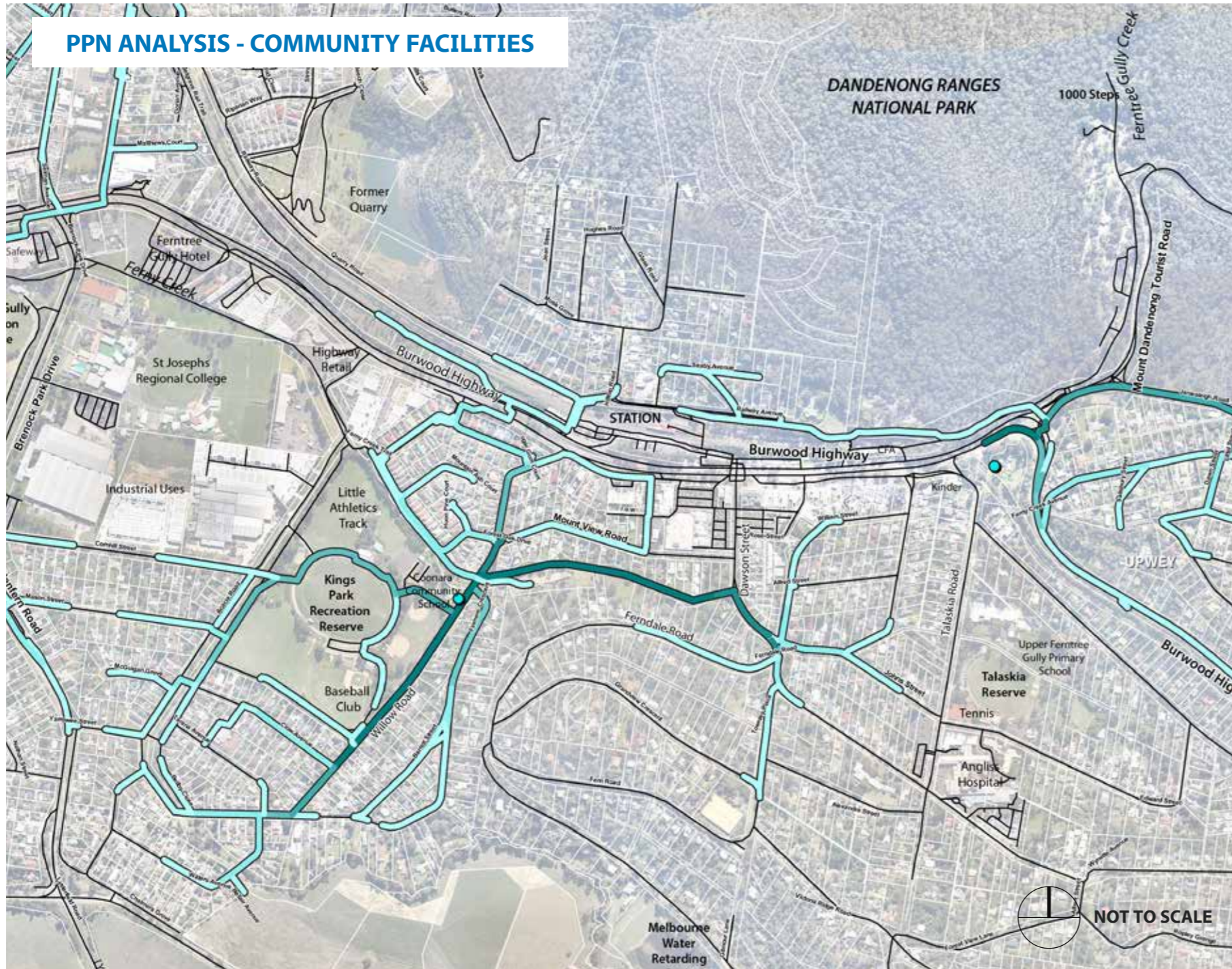
Map 43. PPN Analysis - Primary School



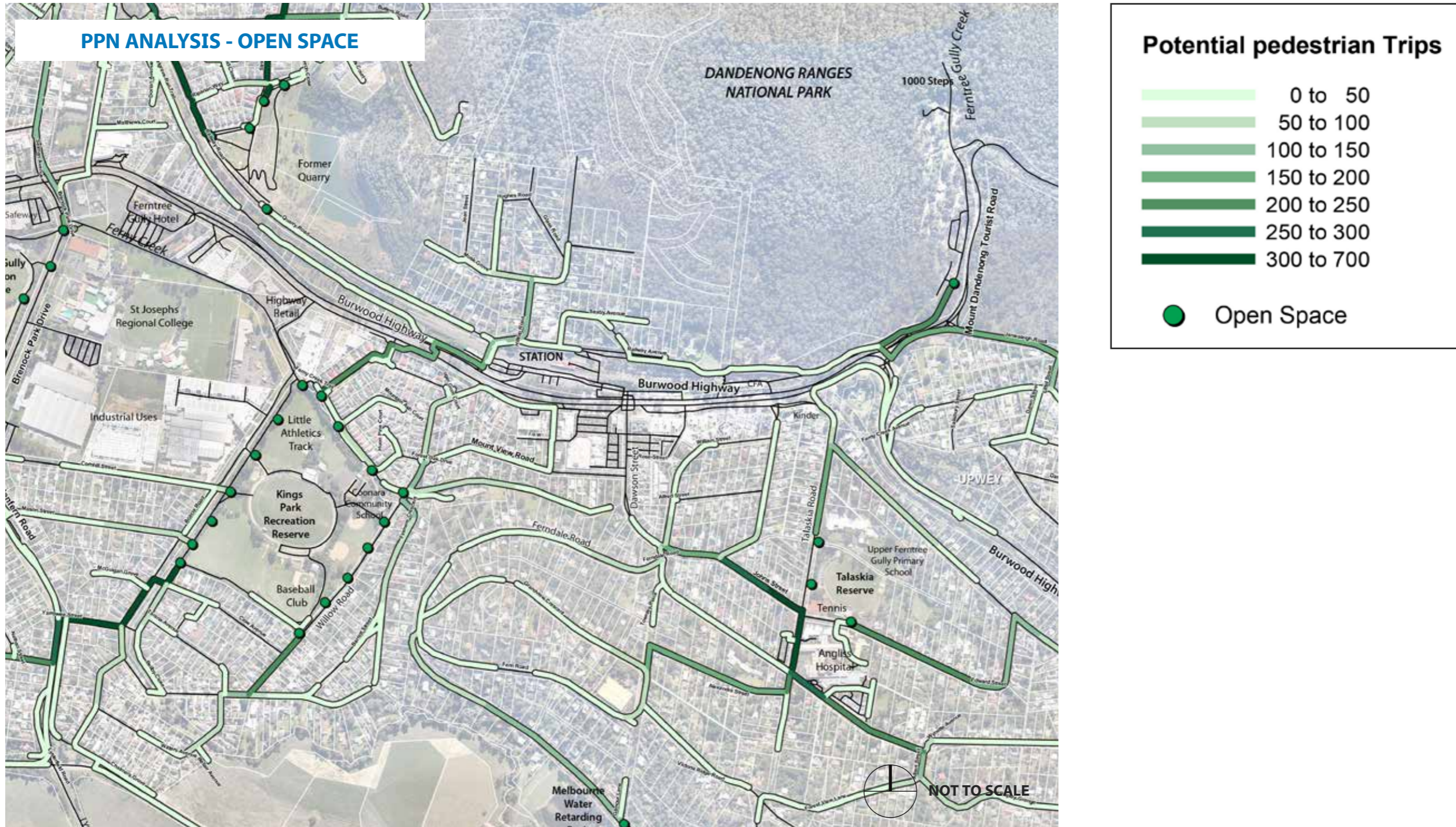
Map 44. PPN Analysis - Secondary School



Map 45. PPN Analysis - Retail



Map 46. PPN Analysis - Community Facilities



Map 47. PPN Analysis - Open Space

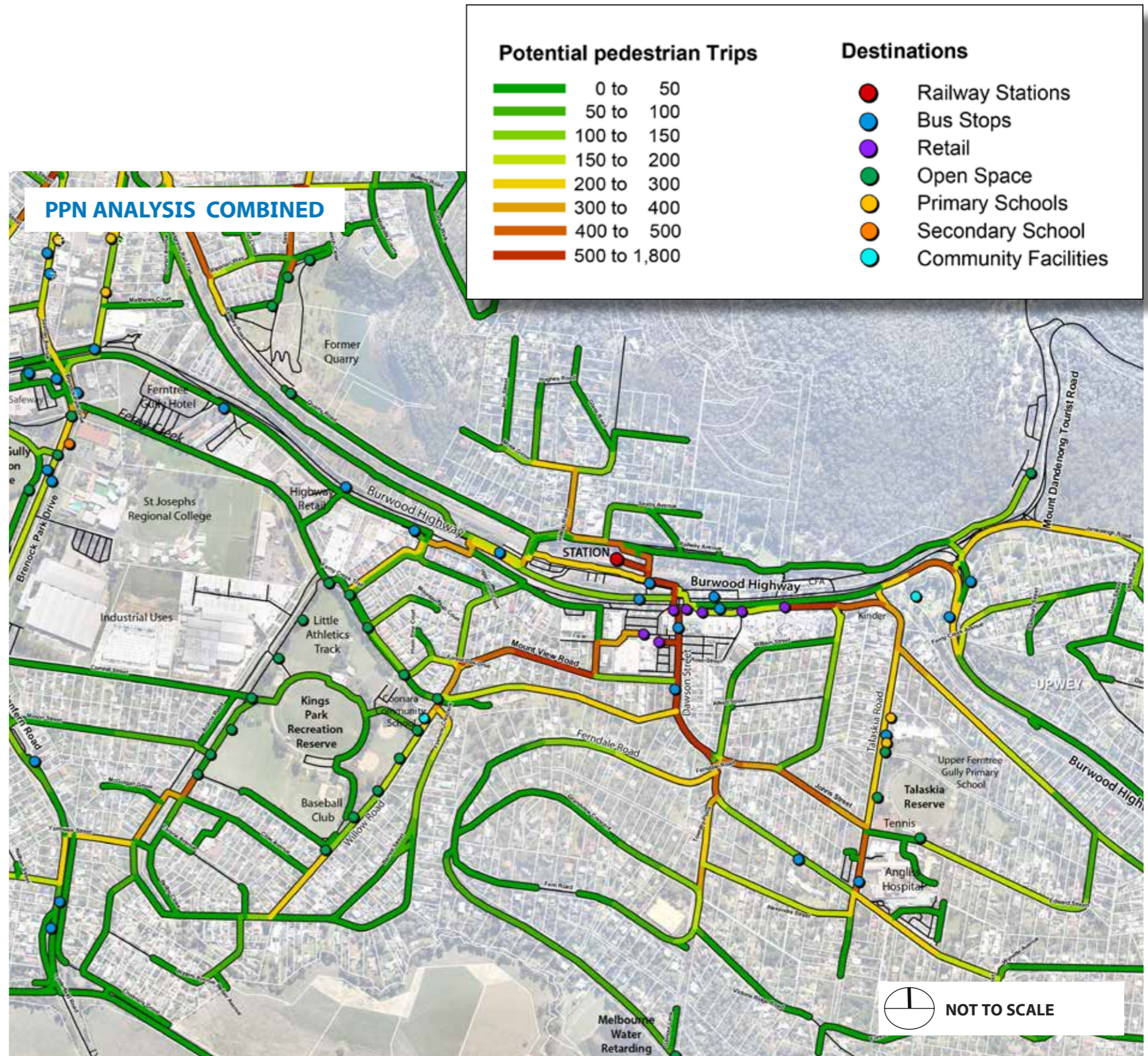
Combined Access Analysis

Map 52 and 53 combines the analysis and shows a weighting of the various maps shown previously. We have adopted the following weightings:

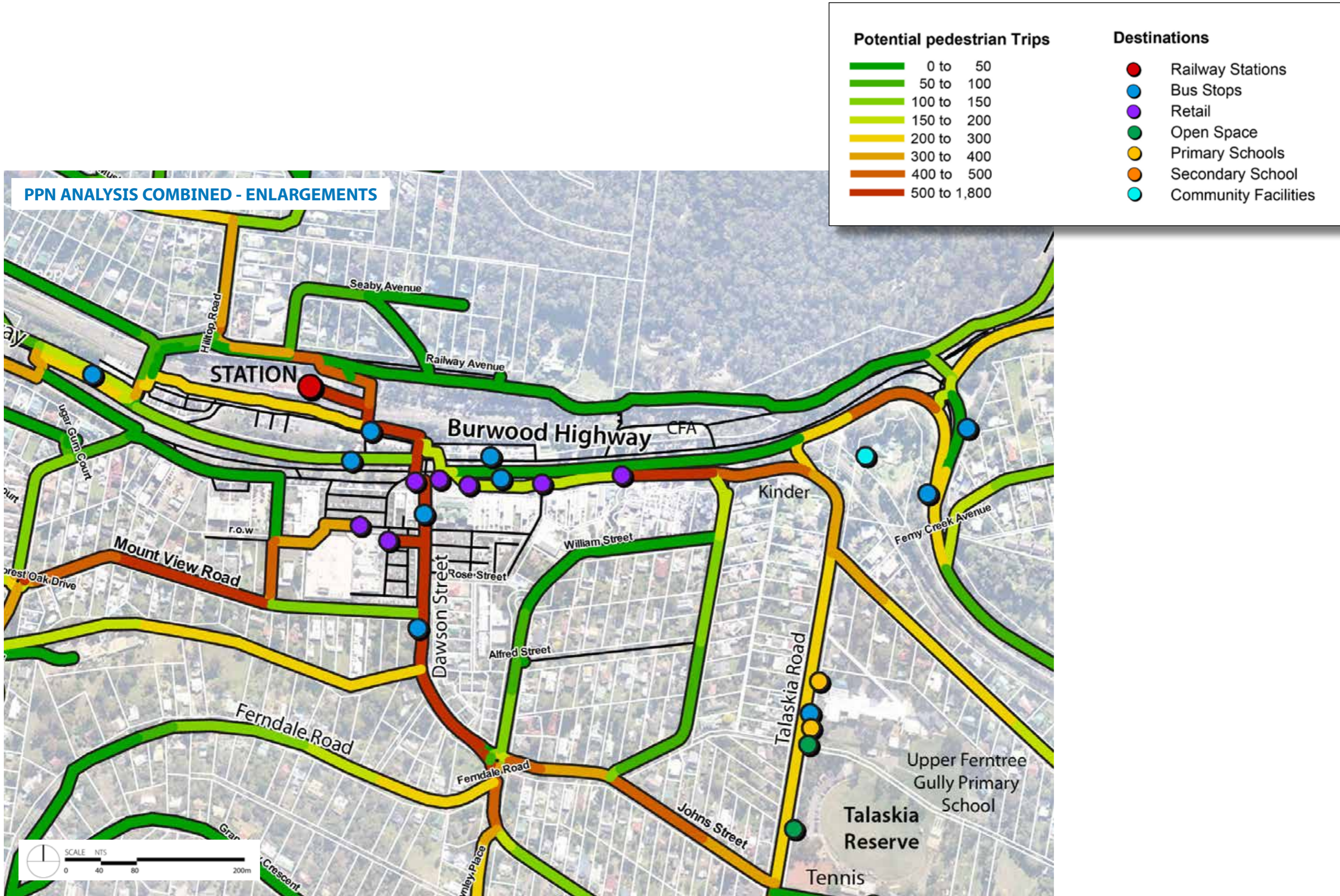
- Retail – 100%
- Railway station – 100%
- Bus Stops – 66%
- Open Space – 66%
- Schools – 33%
- Community Facilities – 33%

The Combined Access Analysis identified key pedestrian routes within Upper Gully. This map shows a number of key routes focused primarily around the edges of the Activity Centre. Key east west routes include Burwood Highway and Mount View Road. Dawson Street is also identified as a key north-south street with links to Johns and Talaskia Streets. The Combined Access Analysis aims to inform and prioritise the location of capital works and pedestrian priority projects to encourage walking within the Activity Centre. Those areas identified as key pedestrian routes provide primary access into the Activity Centre and surrounding services and should be the focus of future upgrades.

It should be noted that while this analysis identifies the shortest route to various destinations, it does not take into account other factors such as the slope of the terrain. It does however, provide a basis for further interrogation.



Map 48. PPN Analysis Combined



Map 49. PPN Analysis Combined - Enlargement

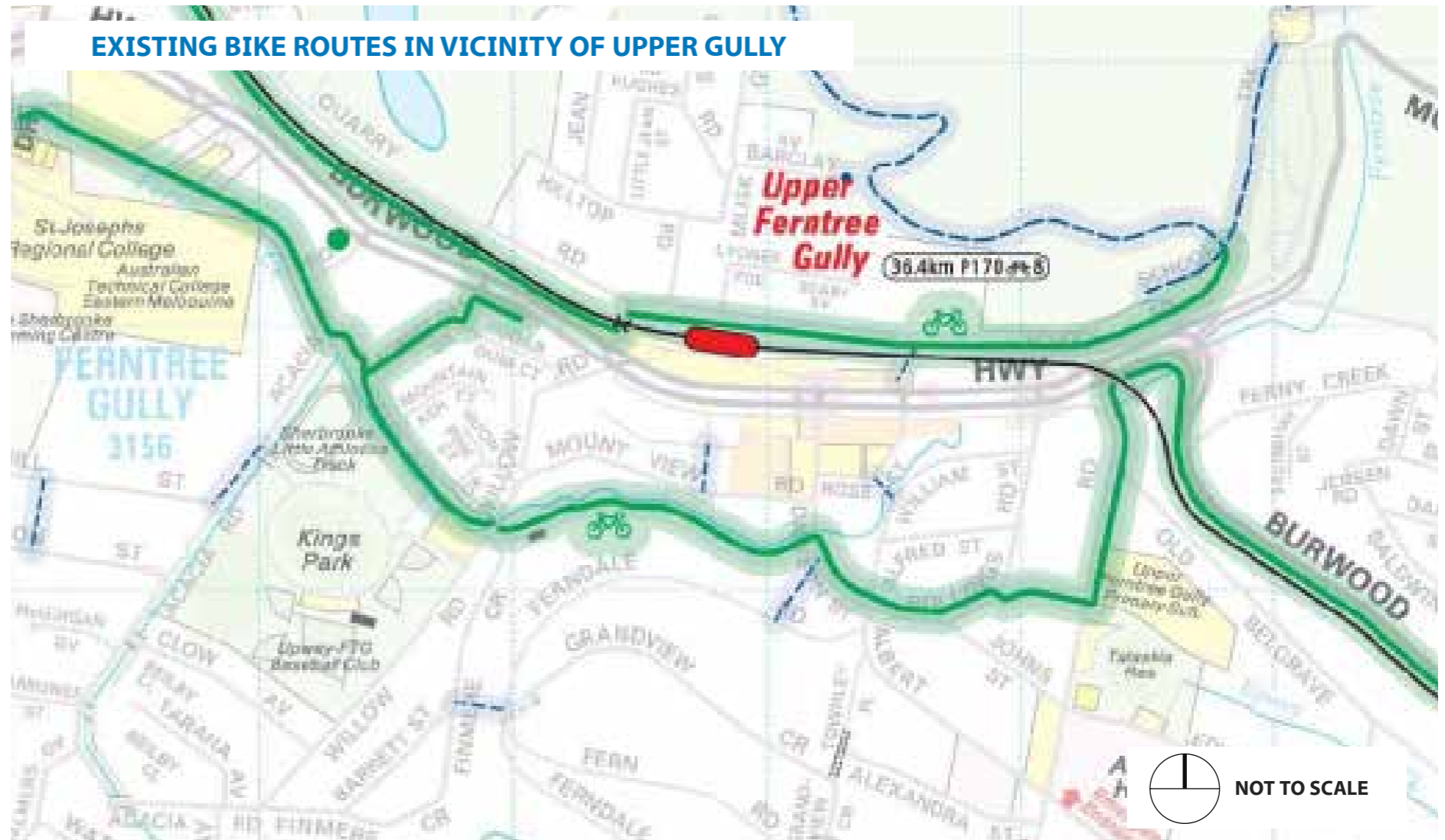
7.6.3 Bicycle Access

Bicycles are an excellent form of transport, as they have almost no impact on the environment, produce no greenhouse gases, make no noise and consume no fossil fuels. They rarely cause serious injury or death to other road users. Cycling is also good for people’s health and fitness and is an enjoyable pastime.

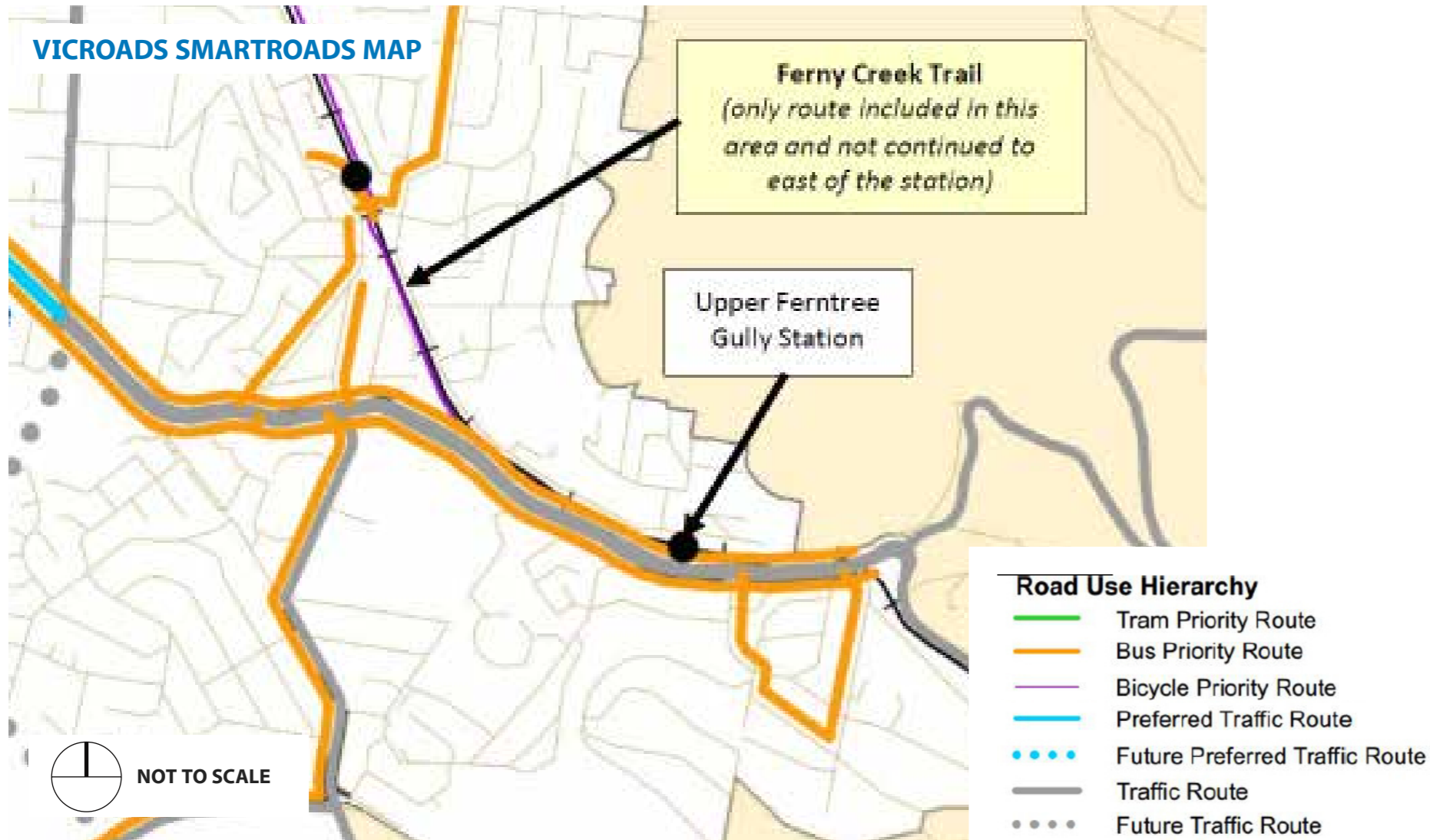
VicRoads is currently finalising plans for the Principle Bicycle Network (PBN) for each municipality. VicRoads Priority Bike Routes (PBR’s) are a priority set of the PBN and are shown on VicRoads SmartRoads maps for each municipality. The SmartRoads map in the vicinity of Upper Gully is shown as Map 55 (overleaf) and the PBR is indicated by purple lines. This map shows that only the Ferny Creek Trail is included as a Bike Priority Route within the vicinity of the Activity Centre.



Bike connections to residential areas outside of the Activity Centre



Map 50. Existing Bike Routes in Vicinity of Upper Gully



Map 51. VicRoads SmartRoads Map

The existing bike route plan indicates that the majority of bike routes in the area are provided in the form of off-road trails on either side of Burwood Highway, which provide excellent and safe long distance connections. Directing cyclists to these trails should be promoted and prioritised.

There is currently no connection across Burwood Highway between the trails provided on either side of Burwood Highway, to the east of the railway station. The plan also shows no continuous connection to the Activity Centre or the station from the south. It is recommended that consideration be given to improving connections to the Activity Centre, the railway station and between the trails on either side of Burwood Highway.

The plan also indicates that sections of Dawson Street and Rollings Road are included as part of a bike route which connects off-road trails and the shared path on the east side of Talaskia Road. These streets currently do not provide any bike lane facilities and no directional signage is present to direct cyclists along this route.



Signalised pedestrian crossing with tactile markers across Burwood Highway

The Activity Centre and railway station currently provides very minimal levels of bike parking. The railway station provides some secure bike parking which accommodates a small number of bicycles. It is recommended that the installation of bike parking hoops in the Activity Centre and within the railway station be considered to attract new cyclists.

The Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School currently provides bike parking within the confines of its boundary and in an attractive location in close proximity to the classrooms. Observations revealed that many children cycle to school. Consideration should be given to providing a shelter above the bike parking at the school to protect bikes from the elements. Bike route improvements should also be made in the vicinity of the Primary School. This could include improved on-road bike lane facilities and improved directional signage, as well as upgrades to the Rollings Road and Dawson Street route which connects to Talaskia Road via the short off-road trail. This off-road trail currently includes no directional signage.

On-site observations revealed that bike directional signage is currently poorly provided throughout Upper Gully. Signage is either not provided at all, or needs maintenance. Also, shared path pavement markings are rarely provided.

7.6.4 Disabled Access

Within the Activity Centre, the topography is generally flat, allowing generally for ease of movement throughout the centre. Where the topography becomes steep, particularly around the station area, access is constrained. Map 62 - Slope Map (p.179) demonstrates the significant increases in slope away from the Activity Centre.

Generally aged and disabled access within the Activity Centre is poorly considered and does not adequately address user needs. While tactile pavers are provided at the Burwood Highway and Dawson Street intersection, elsewhere in the Activity Centre, they are limited. There is also currently no accessibility policy for Upper Gully.

To allow for ease of movement, paving footpaths should be consistent, safe and free of cracks and other trip hazards. Paving within the Activity Centre is currently inconsistent with cracks, 'patch ups' and services making the surface rough and uneven. These issues will need to be addressed as part of the Streetscape Design Project for the Activity Centre.

An important link to enhance for people with limited mobility is the connection between the Activity Centre shops and the railway station / bus interchange. This link comprises of a number of pedestrian / vehicle conflict points and includes sections of ramp that are not currently Disability and Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant because the grades and absence of landings.

Ensuring adequate disabled parking is another important element for improving access across the Activity Centre. Disabled parking should be strategically located at key destinations such as the railway station, Visitors Information Centre, the Burwood Highway shops, the Royal Hotel car park and the Ferntree Plaza car park. Providing DDA compliant access between the car parks and the destination is also important.



Example of condition of pedestrian paths along Burwood Highway



Steep topography at station area next to the Visitors Information Centre

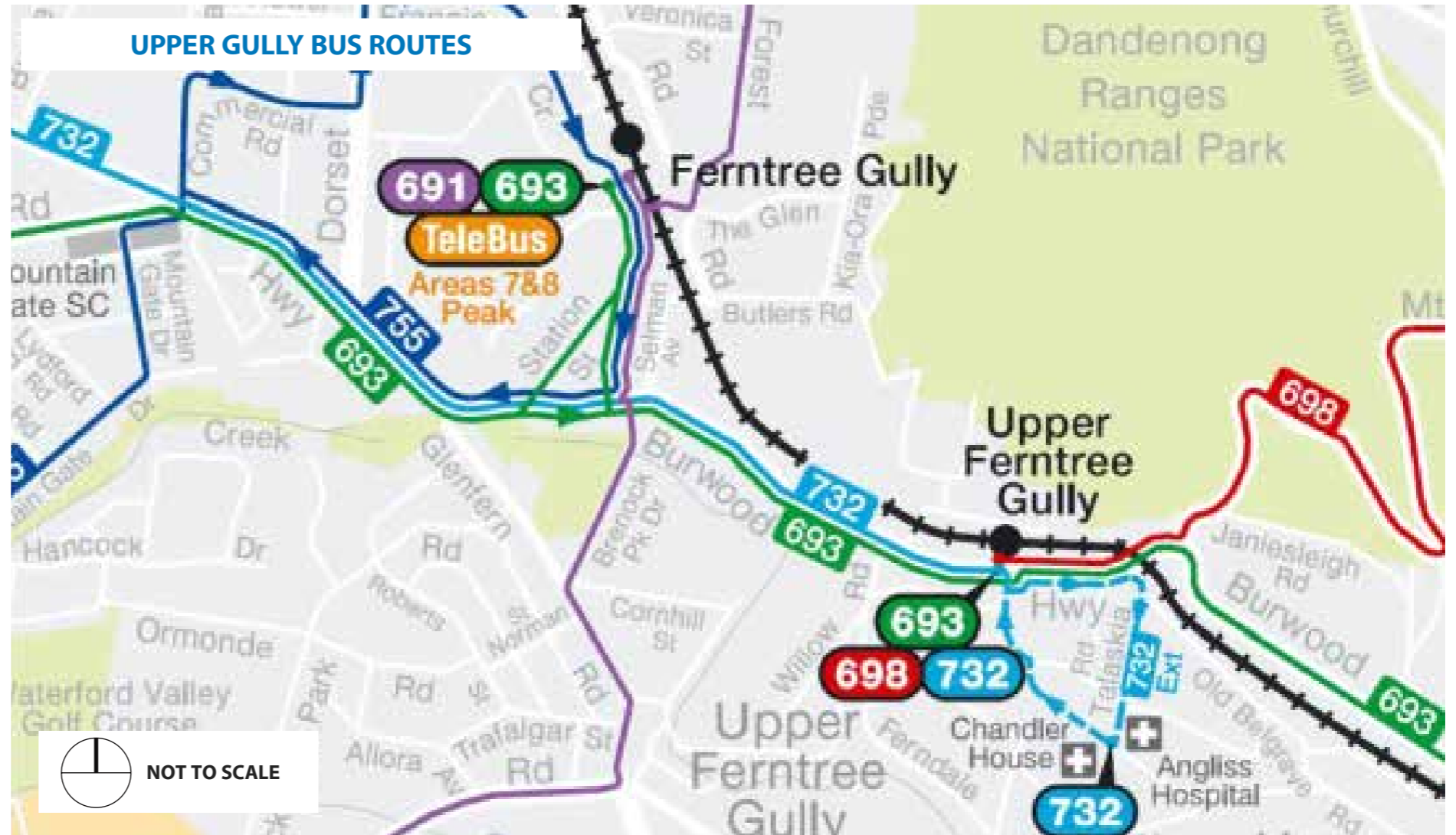
7.6.5 Public Transport

Public transport around Upper Gully includes train services that operate along Belgrave Line, as well as bus services.

Train services are operated by Metro and run seven days a week with direct connections between Melbourne and Belgrave. Services typically depart at 30 minute intervals during the day and approximately 15 minute intervals during the peak hours.

Public transport bus routes 688, 693 and 732 service the Upper Ferntree Gully Rail Station. All bus routes operate regionally along Burwood Highway. Some Route 732 services also includes a route deviation extension which operates locally along Dawson Street, Albert Street, Talaskia Road and Burwood Highway. This 732 extension route services the Angliss Hospital, the Primary School and the Activity Centre.

The late-night 'Night Rider' bus service also operates along Burwood Highway to and from the city. The 'Night Rider' service shares the westbound bus stop located on the main carriageway of Burwood Highway between Rose and Dawson Streets with the 693 bus route service. A private airport shuttle bus also provides a signed stop at this location.



Map 52. Upper Ferntree Gully Bus Routes

The bus services enter and exit the railway station car park in both directions and subsequently bus stops are provided on both sides of the internal roadway, immediately outside the main station pedestrian access point. Two white lines are provided at the eastern end of the bus stops, which seem to have been installed to imply a pedestrian crossing location to enable pedestrians to cross the internal roadway to and from the westbound bus stop location (on the south side of the internal roadway).

This informal crossing may also be used by pedestrians walking to and from Dawson Street and a small pick-up and set-down car parking area accessed from the north side of Burwood Highway. The existing crossing facility is considered confusing for pedestrians, motorists and bus drivers. Consideration should be given to improving pedestrian priority around the railway station.



Entrance to the Upper Ferntree Gully Station

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

During community engagement significant discussion was focused around walking and cycling within the Activity Centre and to surrounding residential areas and facilities. Key issues highlighted included:

- *The quality of existing footpaths within the Activity Centre and surrounding residential areas (i.e. uneven surfaces, cracks etc), particularly along Burwood Highway.*
- *A general lack of footpaths and unsafe footpaths in residential areas due to the steep terrain of the Dandenong Ranges.*
- *The need for better pedestrian access for the aged and people with disabilities.*
- *The missing path along the northern side of Burwood Highway.*
- *The pedestrian crossings at the corner of Dawson Street and Burwood Highway, where sight lines are limited by planting.*
- *Limited pedestrian paths from surrounding streets to Maxi Foods (through the car park).*
- *The dangerous footpath located at the front of Maxi Foods (conflict between pedestrians and cars entering from Burwood Highway at speed).*
- *The footpath along Old Belgrave Road which is steep, rough, narrow and slippery.*
- *Accessibility issues associated with the steps to the south of Talaskia Road;*
- *The limited connections between the railway station and the Activity Centre.*
- *The lack of pedestrian / cycle infrastructure between Quarry Park and pedestrian path between the Activity Centre / railway station.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Walking and cycling are environmentally sustainable forms of transport and can have health benefits for the community.
- While walking facilities within the Activity Centre are considered generally good, there are opportunities to improve and enhance these facilities in some locations. These opportunities include:
 - Increase footpath width along shop fronts along the southern side of Burwood Highway to allow for outdoor dining.
 - Improve pedestrian safety at the frontage of Ferntree Plaza.
 - Provide a continuous footpath facility along the north side of Burwood Highway.
 - Improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street.
 - Improve pedestrian safety at the intersection of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road.
 - Improve pedestrian access through car park areas, particularly Ferntree Plaza.
 - Improve pedestrian amenity along Rose Street.
 - Improve pedestrian priority throughout the Activity Centre and the railway station area.
 - A pedestrian path located along side the Visitors Information Centre encourages unsafe crossing between the railway station and Ferntree Plaza.

- The Principal Pedestrian Network identifies several key links where there is likely to be a larger proportion of pedestrian trips. Those areas identified as key pedestrian routes provide primary access into the Activity Centre and surrounding services and should be the focus of future upgrades.
- Currently bike routes within the Activity Centre include off-road trails on either side of Burwood Highway. Dawson Street and Rollings Road also form part of the existing bike route network however have no facilities for bike travel. Note bike travel maybe restricted in some areas by slope.
- VicRoads is currently finalising plans for the Principle Bicycle Network (PBN). VicRoads SmartRoads maps identify Ferny Creek Trail as a Bike Priority Route.
- Bike parking at the railway station is minimal and could be increased.
- On-site observations revealed that many children cycle to Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School. Bike route improvements could be made in the vicinity of the Primary School to encourage others to travel to school by bike.
- Directional signage is poorly provided. There is the opportunity to provide wayfinding signage to assist in navigating the site.
- Opportunity to provide facilities that improve access for people with special needs including aged and disability access i.e. ramps, tactile markers, carefully considered seating / rest location, wide paths etc.

- Upper Gully is well serviced by public transport, including trains and buses. Bus services and train services converge at Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station, which forms a hub for movement.
- Access between buses services, car parks and train services is provided via a informal crossing at the front of the station building. The existing crossing facility is considered confusing for pedestrians, motorists and bus drivers. Consideration should be given to improving pedestrian priority around the railway station.

7.7 Transport and Parking

WHAT WE KNOW

7.7.1 Parking Surveys

Parking surveys were initially undertaken in the vicinity of the railway station and the Activity Centre in the week of 25-29 August 2014.

The surveys recorded occupancy levels for on-street and off-street parking areas at various periods throughout the day between 6am and 6pm. Some turnover surveys were undertaken to determine duration of stay and whether motorists were overstaying posted time limits.

The off-street car parks surveyed included:

- The railway station car park (288 unrestricted spaces and 8 other spaces);
- Maxi Foods Shopping Centre car park (217 '2 hour limit' spaces and 5 disabled spaces);
- Royal Hotel Pub Car Park (75 patron spaces and 4 disabled spaces);
- 2-4 Rose Street car park (35 Permit Zone spaces);
- 6-8 Rose Street car park (24 unsigned spaces immediately adjacent to the pub car park);
- Caesars Restaurant car park (30 customer spaces); and
- Anglican Church car park – accessed from Mount View Road (approximately 15 spaces in gravel parking area).

The surveys also included observation in the vicinity of Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School during the afternoon peak in order to evaluate traffic and parking operations, and the subsequent impact on pedestrian safety. Observations were not undertaken during the peak morning drop-off period, as parking occupancies are generally higher in the afternoon when parents park for longer periods, making this time the representative of peak conditions around the school. Observations of parking occupancies in the precinct surrounding the primary school and the hospital district were also provided. Based on the initial observations of parking occupancy in the vicinity of the hospital, extensive surveys were approved as an addition to the original scope of work. These additional surveys were undertaken in this precinct in the week of 13-17 October 2014.

The additional surveys recorded occupancy levels for on-street and off-street parking areas at various periods throughout the day between 6am and 6pm. Turnover surveys were undertaken at all on-street locations and most off-street car parks to determine duration of stay and whether motorists were overstaying posted time limits. The turnover surveys were not undertaken within the large hospital car parking areas.

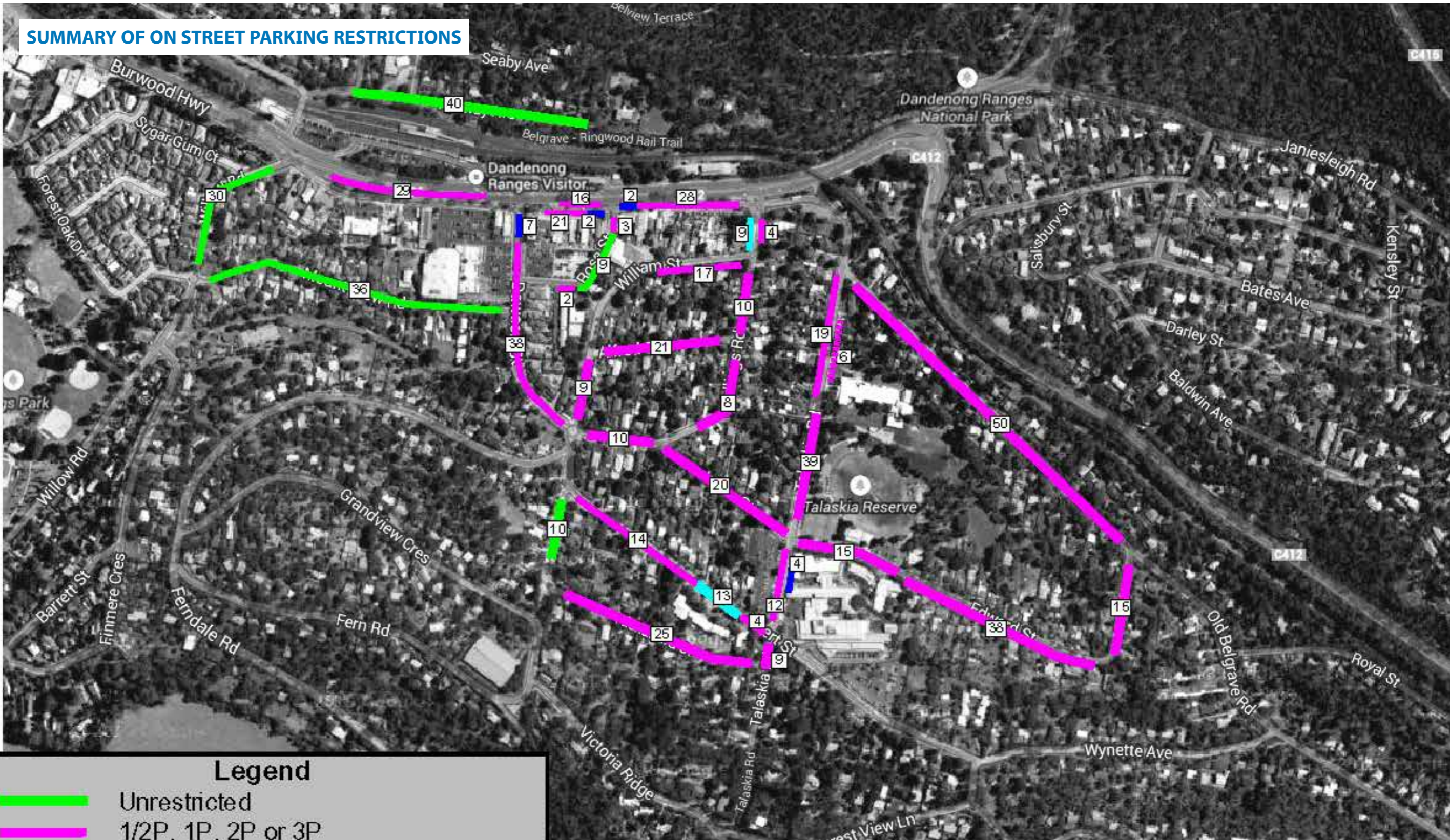
The off-street car parks surveyed included:

- Angliss Hospital car parks for staff and visitors (389 spaces total);
- Main Talaskia Reserve car park (65 total spaces: 2P, 3P and Unrestricted);
- Small Talaskia Reserve car park near Tennis Club (34 total spaces: 1P, 2P and Permit);
- Childcare car park (approximately 20 spaces in gravel parking area); and
- Informal parking areas on the side of William Street (14 spaces for volunteers and 6 spaces for Norm Reynolds Service Centre).

A visual summary of all the on-street spaces surveyed during both survey periods and the corresponding parking restrictions is provided as Map 57. A visual summary of all off-street car parking areas surveyed during both survey periods is provided as Map 58.



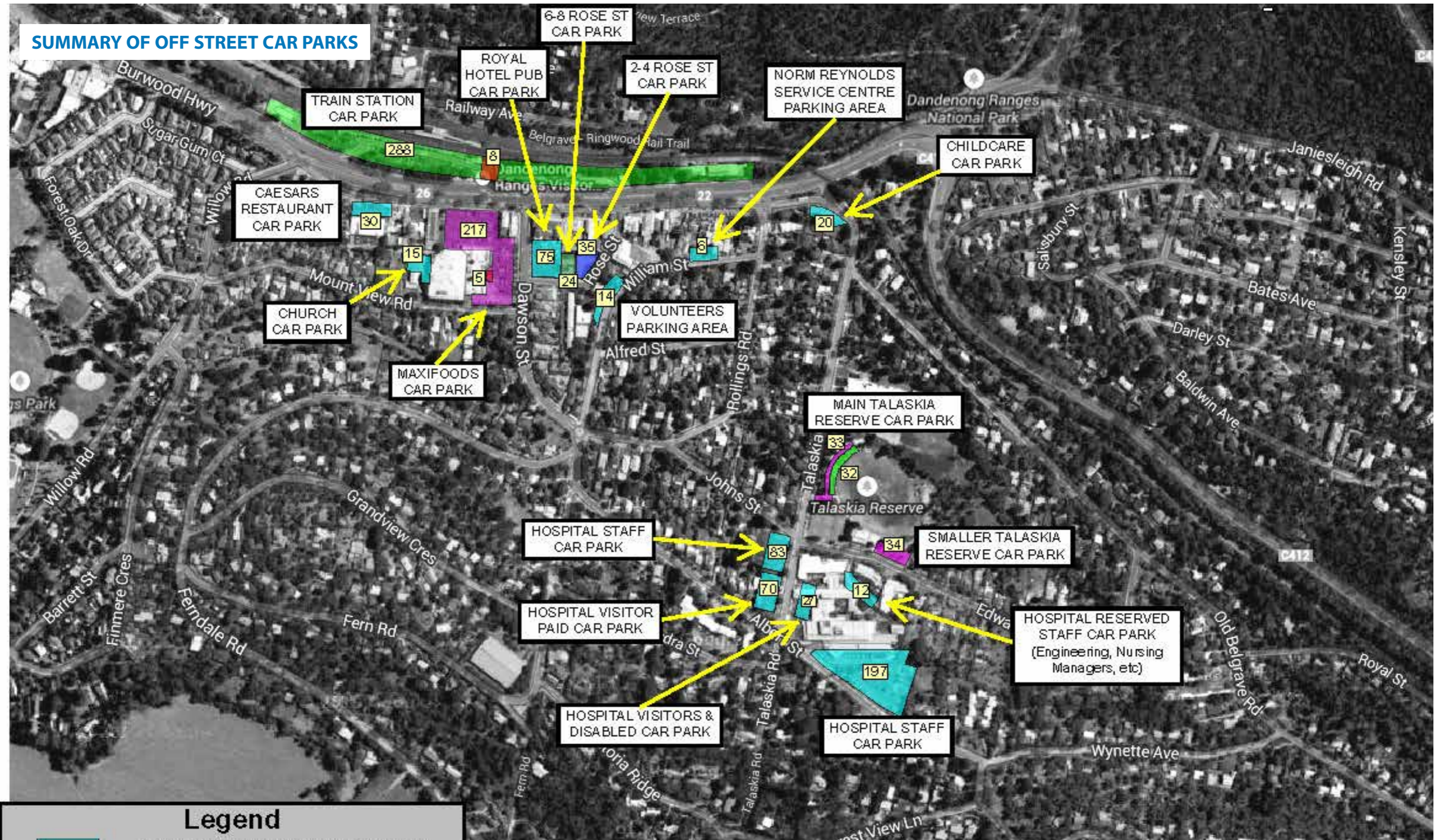
Angled parking provided along Burwood Highway, east of Dawson Street



SUMMARY OF ON STREET PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Legend	
	Unrestricted
	1/2P, 1P, 2P or 3P
	Loading Zone, Disabled or Short Term
	Customer / Visitor Parking
	Number of On-Street Spaces

Map 53. Summary of On-Street Parking Restrictions



SUMMARY OF OFF STREET CAR PARKS

- 6-8 ROSE ST CAR PARK
- ROYAL HOTEL PUB CAR PARK
- 2-4 ROSE ST CAR PARK
- NORM REYNOLDS SERVICE CENTRE PARKING AREA
- CHILD CARE CAR PARK
- TRAIN STATION CAR PARK
- CAESARS RESTAURANT CAR PARK
- CHURCH CAR PARK
- MAXIFOODS CAR PARK
- VOLUNTEERS PARKING AREA
- MAIN TALASKIA RESERVE CAR PARK
- SMALLER TALASKIA RESERVE CAR PARK
- HOSPITAL STAFF CAR PARK
- HOSPITAL VISITOR PAID CAR PARK
- HOSPITAL VISITORS & DISABLED CAR PARK
- HOSPITAL STAFF CAR PARK
- HOSPITAL RESERVED STAFF CAR PARK (Engineering, Nursing Managers, etc)

Legend

- Customer or Staff Parking
- Permit Zone Car Park
- Unrestricted Parking
- 1, 2 or 3 hour limit parking

20 Number of Off-Street Spaces

Map 54. Summary of Off-Street Car Parks

Parking Occupancy Results

A tabulated summary of the number of available parking spaces is provided as Table 15.

In summary:

- The majority of on-street spaces throughout the Activity Centre precinct exhibited very modest parking occupancies throughout the day, with the exception of unrestricted parking spaces in Rose Street and Mount View Road, which were fully occupied during the middle of the day.
- The railway station car park was essentially fully occupied from early in the morning and throughout the day.
- The Maxi Foods car park was modestly occupied throughout the day (58% maximum occupancy) and therefore provides substantial spare parking availability.
- The Royal Hotel pub car park peaked at 79% occupancy at 2pm and is therefore operating reasonably effectively. Occupancies at other times of the day ranged from 5% to 59%.
- The on-street parking in proximity to the Angliss Hospital exhibits reasonably high parking occupancies and peaked at 75% at 2pm. On-street parking occupancy is extremely low throughout the day in areas beyond the immediate vicinity of the hospital.
- The main and smaller Talaskia Reserve off-street car parks exhibited reasonably high occupancy levels. In particular, the unrestricted spaces in the main car park were fully occupied from 9am to 2pm (observations of users indicate that the occupancy is likely to be related to hospital staff and visitors). Occupancy levels throughout this car park reduced significantly between 2pm and 4pm which assists in accommodating parents picking up children from the adjacent Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School.

Table 15 – Spare Parking Availability - Summary

Parking Area	Parking Capacity	Spaces available at time period surveyed					
		6.00am	9.00am	Midday	2.00pm	4.00pm	6.00pm
Railway Station Car Park (Unrestricted)	288	256	15	8	5	16	109
Maxi Foods Car Park (2P)	217	205	139	111	114	91	139
Royal Hotel Car Park (Customer Parking)	75	71	62	41	16	31	45
Private Car Park - 6-8 Rose Street (unsigned)	24	24	0	0	2	6	21
Permit Zone Car Park - 2-4 Rose Street (PZ)	35	35	27	21	20	24	31
Caesars Restaurant Car Park (Customer Parking)	30	30	12	6	11	9	20
Hospital Car Parks	389	332	139	90	77	138	232
Main Talaskia Reserve Car Park	65	46	20	16	19	44	53
Smaller Talaskia Reserve Car Park	34	33	13	5	3	8	14
Other Off-Street Car Parks	55	55	29	37	30	44	54
Total off-street spaces available	1212	1087	456	335	297	411	718
Proportion of Off-Street Spaces Available		90%	38%	28%	25%	34%	59%
On-Street (1/2P to 4P: Time Limited)	482	447	370	338	336	347	380
On-Street (Unrestricted)	125	103	64	62	64	85	107
On-Street (LZ, Disabled, Short Term, other)	37	37	26	23	15	15	28
Total on-street spaces available	644	587	460	423	415	447	515
Proportion of On-Street Spaces Available		91%	71%	66%	64%	69%	80%
All Total Spaces Available	1856	1674	916	758	712	858	1233
Proportion of All Spaces Available		90%	49%	41%	38%	46%	66%

Source: Movendo 2015

- The Angliss Hospital off-street car parks are well occupied. The paid visitor car park peaked at 90% occupancy at midday and 2pm, indicating the willingness of visitors to pay in order to park for longer than 2 hours and in proximity to the hospital. The staff car parking areas (two different car parks with total capacity of 280 spaces) peaked at 80% occupancy at 2pm.

Car Park Monitoring and Enforcement

Observations during the parking occupancy surveys indicated that several vehicles had been issued infringement notices for overstaying the posted time limits, particularly in the vicinity of Angliss Hospital. This suggests that Council officers are monitoring and enforcing the on-street parking restrictions. The parking turnover surveys (summarised below) also suggest that the majority of motorists are adhering to posted time limits which suggests that regular enforcement is occurring and having its desired results.

Parking Turnover Surveys

In general, motorists were extremely compliant with posted time limits. Low proportions of motorists overstayed posted '2 hour limit' in either the Maxi Foods Shopping Centre car park or in on-street and off-street parking areas in the hospital precinct.

The small Talaskia Reserve car park (adjacent to the Tennis Club) exhibited the highest rate of motorists illegally overstaying the posted time limit.

Summary of Parking Findings

The railway station car park is essentially 100% occupied by 8.30am. Parking demands currently overflow into a gravel car park area provided at the west end of the station car park, which is also approaching capacity. The unrestricted parking spaces provided in Mount View Road and Rose Street are also fully occupied during the day, presumably by train commuters and local workers.

Subsequently, there is currently minimal spare parking capacity to accommodate future increases in demand for vehicle parking for train commuters. This could lead to a combination of the following potentially undesirable outcomes:

- Parking demands spreading into residential streets.
- Train commuters encouraged to drive a further distance to an alternative railway station.
- Potential train commuters encouraged to drive for the entire journey to their final destination.

The Strategic Plan outlines that the residential population of Upper Ferntree Gully is expected to remain stable between 2011 and 2036 (forecast to change from 2,567 to 2,563). This would suggest that parking demands for key attractions, such as the railway station are unlikely to increase significantly in the future. Therefore, the consideration of constructing new parking facilities in the vicinity of the railway station is not recommended as a priority, particularly given the high cost of such projects and the uncertainty of where a potential site would even be feasible.

Nevertheless, the railway station car park is currently at capacity and even a marginal increase in future demand could lead to the associated negative outcomes outlined.

Angliss Hospital generates reasonably high parking occupancies in the streets in the immediate vicinity of the hospital. However, the high parking demands are concentrated only in the immediate vicinity of the hospital and do not extend along Talaskia Road all the way to the Primary School. Consequently, there is negligible overlap of parking demands generated by the hospital and the primary school.

The occupancy of the main Talaskia Reserve car park peaks at midday at 75%. The occupancy has reduced significantly by 3.30pm and provides significant spare capacity at this time. Therefore, parents who are picking up school children are able to obtain parking in the vicinity of the school either on Talaskia Road or within the Main Talaskia Reserve car park. Turnover surveys revealed that very few motorists overstay the posted on-street time limits (generally 1 or 2 hour limit) surrounding the hospital. Visitors and staff are utilising the off-street car parks for longer duration stays.

For full results refer to the full Transport and Parking Technical Report, prepared by Movendo 2015 (Appendix 3).

7.7.2 Manual Traffic Volume Surveys

Manual traffic volume surveys were undertaken during the AM (8-9am) and PM (5-6pm) peak hours at the following intersections and are summarised as Map 59 and Map 60 (overleaf):

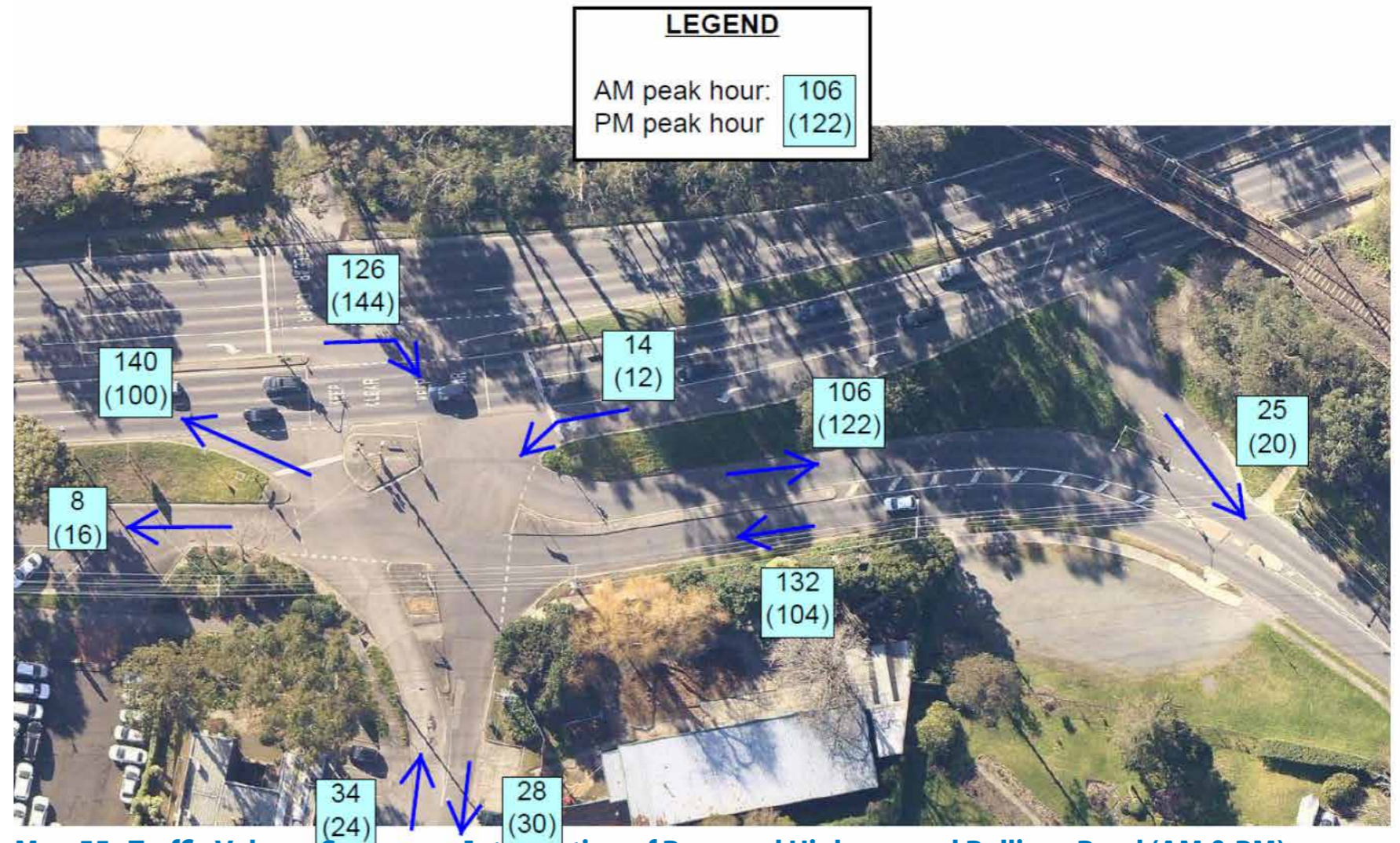
- Burwood Highway and Rollings Road; and
- Burwood Highway and Dawson Street.

Surveys of traffic volumes entering the railway station car park at all entrance points were also undertaken during the morning peak period from 6.30 to 8.15am in order to determine origin locations of motorists and is summarised as Map 61 (overleaf).

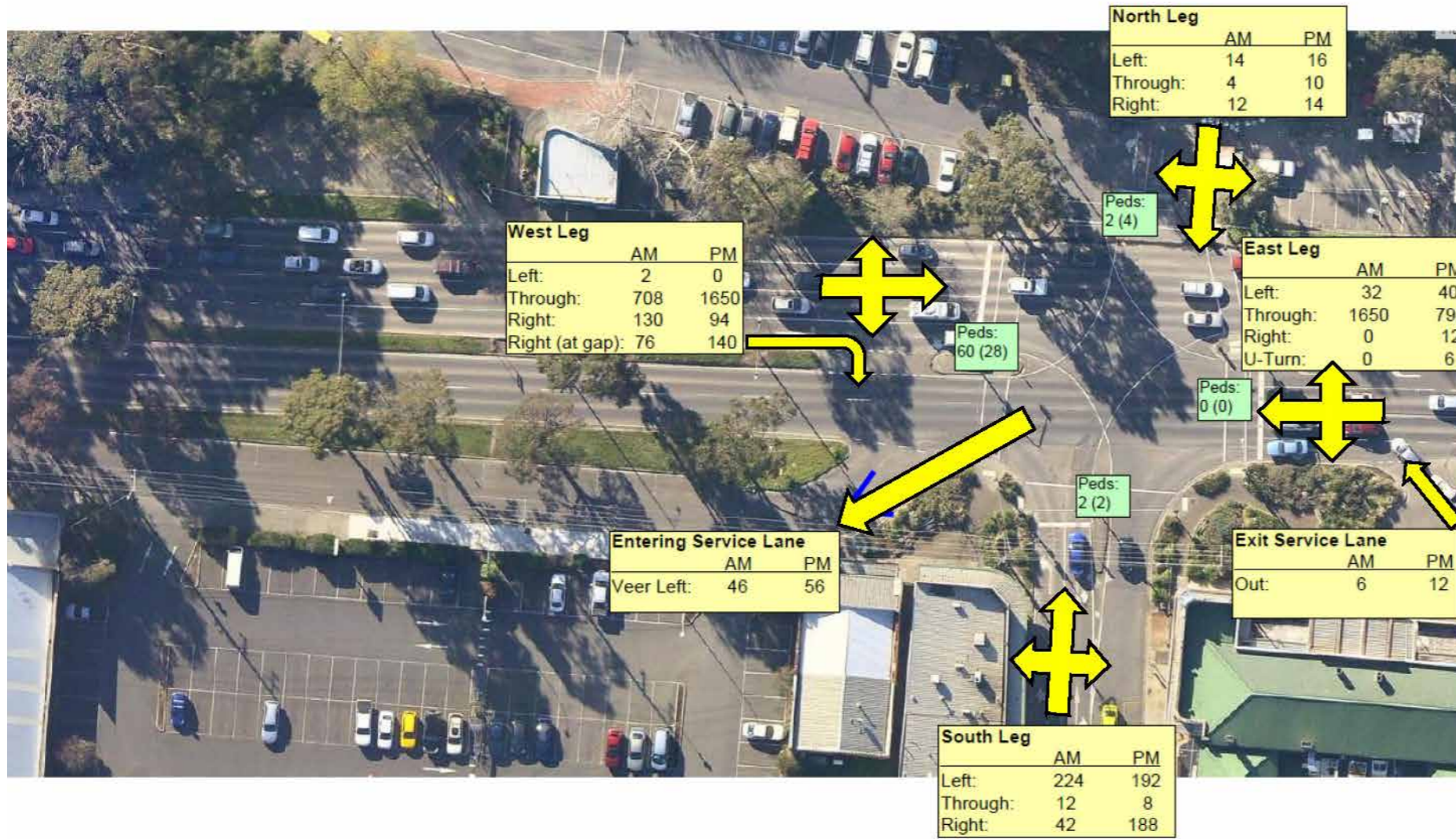
The results reveal that:

- The majority of traffic entering the railway station car park during the morning (77%) is originating from the east. This is presumably because people living to the west of the station are more likely to travel to the Ferntree Gully Station located one stop closer to the city.
- Minimal traffic (9%) enters at the western end of the station car park via either Hilltop Road or the left turn slip lane from Burwood Highway. Site observations revealed that motorists braking to enter the slip lane could potentially cause a traffic hazard and those motorists entering at very high speeds compromise the safety of any pedestrians currently using an informal 'goat track' footpath along the north side of Burwood Highway. Subsequently, opportunities may exist to require all traffic from this direction (approximately only 15 vehicles per hour) to enter the station via Hilltop Road. The removal of the slip lane would give opportunities to improve pedestrian connectivity, increase green space and increase car parking capacity. PTV will also need to be consulted if this proposal.
- The current configuration of the intersection of

Burwood Highway and Rollings Road is extremely complex and is confusing for motorists and represents a potential safety hazard for pedestrians and motorists (Map 59). The majority of traffic at this complex intersection connects between Burwood Highway (west leg) and the Burwood Highway Service Road which loops around to Talaskia Avenue. The minimal traffic volumes performing other movements provide opportunities to simplify and remodel the intersection.



Map 55. Traffic Volume Summary: Intersection of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road (AM & PM)



Map 56. Traffic Volume Summary: Intersection of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street (AM & PM)



Map 57. Traffic Volume Summary: Vehicles Entering Railway Station Car Park (AM peak)

The intersection of Burwood Highway and Dawson Street is a key intersection within the site (Map 60). Key observations at this intersection include:

- Currently motorists enter the Maxi Foods car park at high speed from this access point having immediately exited the main carriageway of Burwood Highway, which is subject to a 70km/h speed limit. The roadway alignment encourages motorists to directly enter the Maxi Foods car park without having to slow down or perform a true 90 degree left turn. This represents a significant safety hazard for pedestrians walking along the footpath across the entry lane. Closing this access point would require motorists to continue along the service road and then turn left into the two-way access located at the west end of the car park, thereby increasing their travel distance by 70m. Note that management of Maxi Foods and Ferntree Plaza will need to be consulted in regards to this recommendation.
- Motorists turning right from either Dawson Street or the railway station car park into Burwood Highway fail to adequately give way to pedestrians crossing on the west and east legs of this intersection. This may be a result of the large size of this intersection and the fact that some motorists are concentrating on giving way to opposing traffic flows more so than pedestrians. While 'Crashstats' do not have any recorded collisions of this nature in the past five years, many near-misses may have occurred which could discourage pedestrian movements, particularly by less able bodied pedestrians.
- The observations revealed that traffic movements at this intersection are generally not currently at capacity. Therefore, opportunities may exist to improve pedestrian priority at this intersection.

7.7.3 Automatic Traffic Counts

Historical and new automatic traffic count data at mid-block locations were collected to ascertain vehicle volumes and speeds using the street network in the project area.

The main results are presented in Table 16 and illustrate that the 85th percentile speeds are above 50km/h in several residential streets, including Talaskia Road in the immediate vicinity of the Primary School. Council could investigate reduced speed limits and traffic calming measures with an aim of reducing 85th percentile speeds to 40km/h.

Table 16 – Spare Parking Availability - Summary

Automatic Count Location	Date	Weekday Traffic Volumes			Speeds (7-Day Average)	
		24 Hour	AM 8-9am	PM 5-6pm	Mean	85th Percentile
Dawson St (Burwood Hwy to Rose St)	July 2009	4972	397	416	44	54
	Aug 2014	3107	235	275	39	46
Ferndale Rd (near Retarding Basin)	Feb 2008	176	13	20	34	40
William St (Rollings Rd to Alfred St)	May 2009	243	28	22	34	40
Willow Rd (Burwood Hwy to Mount View Rd)	May 2009	1735	172	186	39	45
Mount View Rd (Willow Rd to Dawson St)	Aug 2014	1121	106	115	44	51
Burwood Hwy Service Road (Rose St to Dawson St)	Aug 2014	693	35	42	17	22
Burwood Hwy Service Road (Dawson St to Willow Rd)	Aug 2014	542	30	40	29	34
Dawson St (South of Mount View Rd)	Aug 2014	2412	198	196	48	54
Hilltop Rd (Burwood Highway to Rail Line)	Aug 2014	466	37	46	21	27
Old Belgrave Rd (Talaskia Rd to Edward St)	Aug 2014	599	63	40	43	49
Rose St (Adjacent to Pub Car Park)	Aug 2014	270	15	12	26	34
Albert St (Towney Pl to Talaskia Rd)	Aug 2014	2472	169	192	46	55
Talaskia Rd (Old Belgrave Rd to Primary School)	Mar 2012	1970	188	137	51	60

Source: Movendo 2015

Summary of Traffic Findings

The intersection of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road is currently extremely complex and allows numerous movements between the main and service carriageways of Burwood Highway and Rollings Road. On-site observations noticed that several motorists were confused and undertook potentially hazardous turning movements from incorrect roadway positions. Large kerb radii are provided throughout the intersection. This allows high vehicle turning speeds and increases pedestrian crossing distances. A childcare centre is located immediately adjacent to this intersection resulting in several parents and children crossing Rollings Road at this location. Children walking to the Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School may also cross Rollings Road at this location to walk towards Talaskia Road.

Modest traffic volumes were recorded using Rollings Road (approximately 60 vehicles two-way per hour) and the west leg of the service road (approximately 10-20 vehicles per hour) during the peak periods.

The operation of the school departure phase was extremely well organised and provides a safe environment for children. No children were observed crossing Talaskia Road at an uncontrolled location. In this regard, every child who crossed Talaskia Road used the designated and patrolled school crossing. This assists children and parents who wish to cross the street to walk to parents parked on the opposite (west) side of Talaskia Road or those wishing to walk or cycle along the short section of off-road trail which connects through to Dawson Street. The fact that all children use the patrolled crossing is extremely important, as children running between parked cars represent a potential safety hazard due to insufficient sight lines for motorists. Nevertheless, the current 40km/h speed limit signage for the school is provided for only a short distance on Talaskia Road and motorists can observe 50km/h signs while driving past the school. This encourages motorists to accelerate to 50km/h prior to departing the school precinct. Discussions with the school

crossing guard indicated that his main concern is vehicle speed on Talaskia Road. This concern is endorsed by the automatic traffic count, which recorded an 85th percentile speed of approximately 60km/h on Talaskia Road in the vicinity of the school.



7.7.4 Summary of Addendum to the Technical Report – Transport and Parking Upper Gully Strategic Plan January 2015

An Addendum Report (refer Appendix 3) was prepared to complement the report titled *‘Technical Report – Transport and Parking Upper Gully Strategic Plan January 2015’* in response to a request at the Directions Hearing for Amendment C141 held 14 October 2016 to address:

- the extent of additional traffic and parking to be generated by anticipated future development in the activity centre; and
- any road network and parking capacity upgrades needed in response to additional traffic and parking needs.

The Addendum Report presents traffic and parking forecasts based on future development for three storey ‘core’ scenarios presented in the report prepared by Urban Enterprise, *‘Upper Ferntree Gully Capacity Assessment Addendum to Upper Gully Technical Report – Land Use and Economics – 4 November 2016’* (refer Appendix 2).

The parking analysis is summarised in Table 4 and Table 5 of the Addendum Report. The total parking demand is 88, 157 or 548 for the low growth, mid growth and upper growth scenarios respectively. The Addendum Report concluded that changes to the Planning Scheme (as envisaged under Amendment C141) should not result in adverse parking consequences. The reason is that the Planning Scheme explicitly places requirements on developments to provide parking on-site and at supply-levels that are set to contain all parking demand off surrounding public roads. Only Council (or VCAT on review) can provide an exception to the requirement to provide on-site parking. These exceptions normally only arise where developers can satisfy Council that lower (or no) levels of on-site parking are required (in accordance with a justification process set out in the Planning Scheme) – and the Council grants a planning permit to allow that on-site parking exemption to take place.

In other words, increased development should not translate to increases in on-street parking demand unless Council deliberately allows that to occur by dispensing with statutory parking requirements for a development. In contrast, there is no explicit mechanism in the Planning Scheme that requires developers to ‘provide roads’ to manage traffic impacts or manage traffic within the development site.

By its very nature, traffic travels to and from an area using existing public roads. Hence, traffic is typically the ‘unknown quantity’ that needs careful consideration when examining Planning Scheme Amendments. The adequacy of road networks servicing a precinct is typically resolved in the very early subdivisional stages of planning communities – a process normally conducted as a precinct structure plan (PSP) in Victoria. The PSP process ‘sets’ the transport network that will service communities in future years.

Based on the future development scenarios and traffic and parking analysis which is presented in the Addendum Report, it has been concluded that there will be comparatively modest increases in traffic and parking demand under the likely development growth in the activity centre. As such, there is no need to pursue road network and parking capacity upgrades in response to the forecast additional traffic and parking demands.

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *Car parking around the 1,000 Steps is highly utilised during the weekend, with parking spilling out to the adjacent streets. This creates a dangerous situation with people pulling out and pedestrians moving between their cars and the 1,000 Steps. There is the opportunity to provide additional parking to accommodate peak demand;*
- *Car parking around the Angliss Hospital impacts on residents (particularly within Johns, Albert and Edward Streets) and parking areas within the centre.*
- *Mount View Road parking has a high occupancy rate. It allows for unrestricted parking within close proximity to the centre. It is understood anecdotally that this parking is used by Ferntree Plaza staff, despite staff parking being provided off Rose Street.*
- *Quarry Road is currently unsealed. It is the key road in an out for those residents to the north of Upper Gully, provides a link to the railway station and also to Quarry Park.*
- *A number of key issues were highlighted in regards to vehicular access within the Activity Centre. These included:*
 - *Entrance to Maxi Foods car parking (particularly the conflict between people entering at speed);*
 - *The intersection of Rollings Road and Old Belgrave Road;*
 - *The intersection of Rollings Road and Johns Street;*
 - *The one way Mount View Road;*
 - *The service road at Willow Street and Burwood Highway;*
 - *The intersection of Albert and Townley Streets; and*
 - *Planting at Dawson Street and Burwood Highway.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- The parking occupancy results reveal that the railway station carpark exhibits virtually 100% occupancy throughout the day on weekdays. Demand is anticipated to remain unchanged due to limited population growth, demographic changes and other factors influencing car usage such as roadway congestion and petrol prices.
- Mount View Road and Rose Street, which provide unrestricted parking in proximity to the Activity Centre and the railway station, also exhibit 100% occupancy.
- Most other on-street and off-street spaces within the Activity Centre exhibit modest occupancy rates and provide ample parking opportunities.
- Car parking around the 1,000 Steps is highly utilised during weekends, creating a dangerous situation with people pulling out and pedestrians moving between their cars and the 1,000 Steps. Opportunities to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety around the 1,000 Steps should be investigated.
- The on-street and off-street parking areas in the immediate vicinity of the Angliss Hospital exhibited high occupancy rates. Opportunities to effectively manage parking around the Hospital and ensure that it does not adversely impact on surrounding residents should be considered.
- Along Talaskia Road, parking demand is significantly reduced (to minimal usage rates) for parking spaces located as close as 250m from the hospital. Thus, hospital parking demand does not result in impacts for parents dropping off or picking up children at the nearby Upper Ferntree Gully Primary School.

- Observations revealed that the before- and after-school departure phases were extremely well managed and children always crossed Talaskia Road with the assistance of the school crossing supervisor.
- A number of key issues were highlighted in regards to roads and traffic within Upper Gully, particularly along Burwood Highway. The Strategic Plan provide the opportunity to resolve some of these issues and provide a safer movement network through Upper Gully.

7.8 Natural Environment

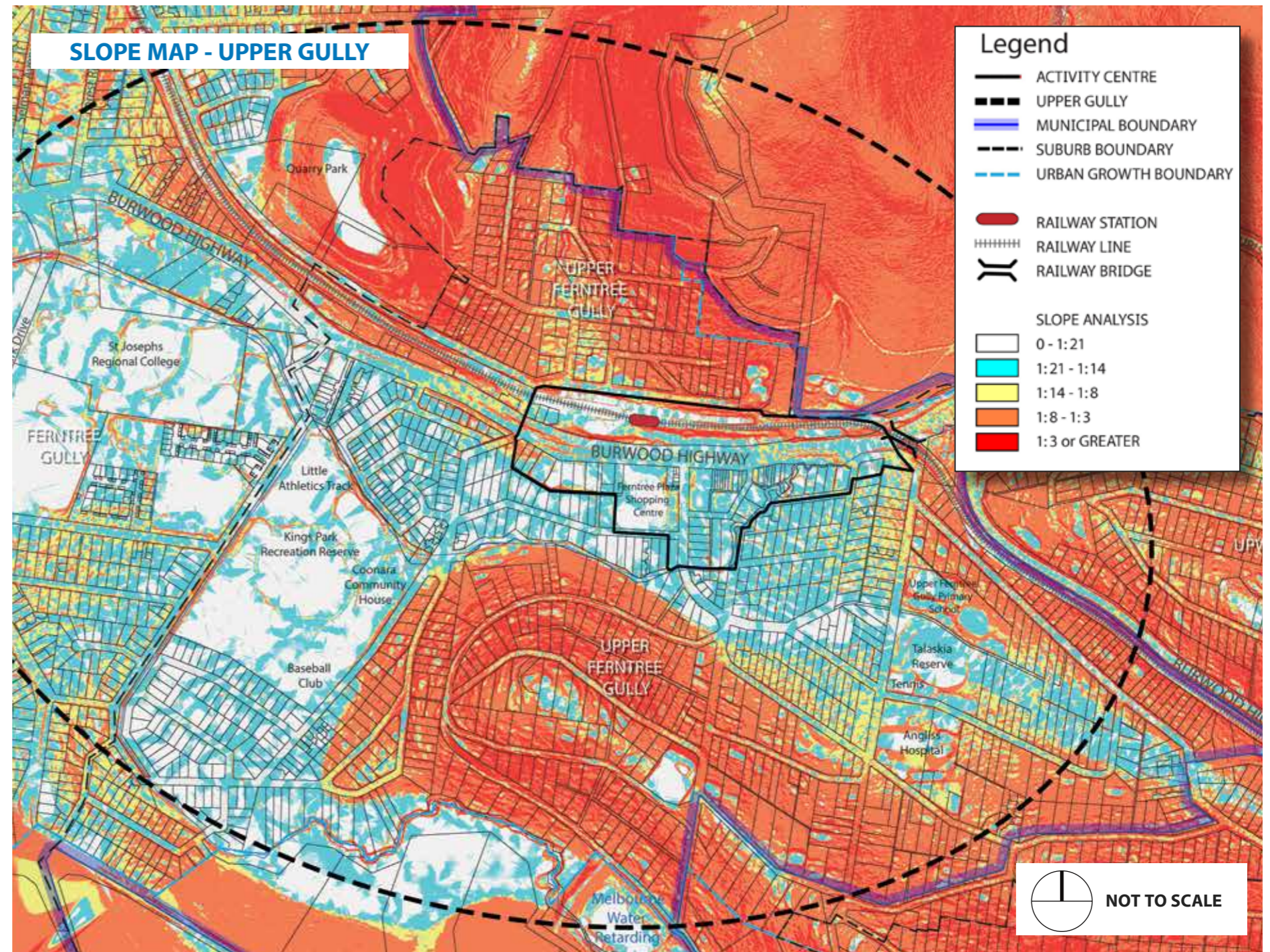
WHAT WE KNOW

7.8.1 Landform

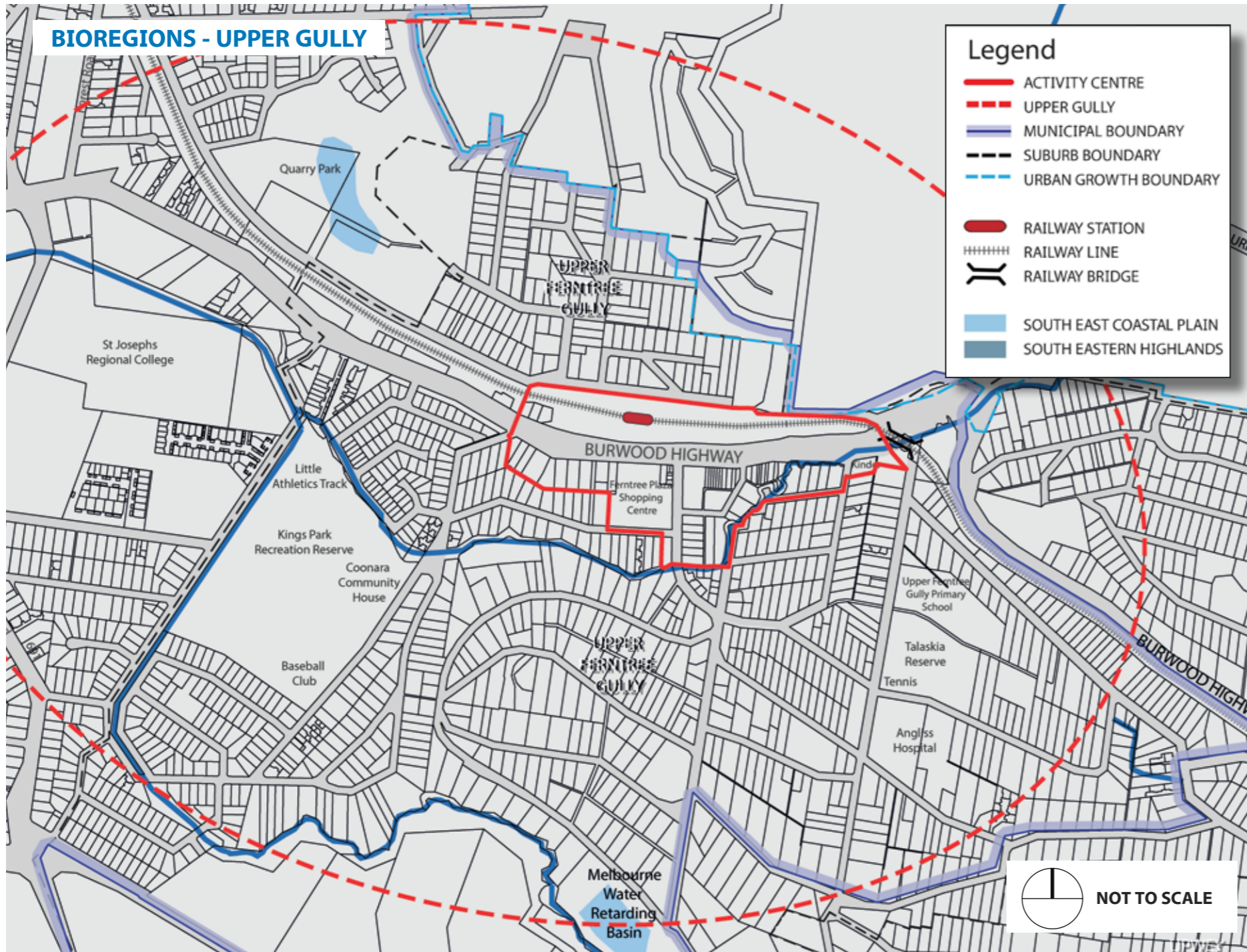
Landform is a significant contributor to the character and identity of Upper Gully. The Dandenong Ranges provide the Activity Centre with a strong sense of enclosure and a spectacular backdrop.

The slope plan (refer to Map 62) clearly demonstrates the landform of and surrounding Upper Gully, including the dramatic slope changes that provide a sense of containment. To the north, east and south of the Activity Centre, the significant slope is identified by a red colour (1:3 slope). Within the Activity Centre, the slope is less dramatic (generally less than 1:14 and considered a walkable slope), however some sections of steep slope are located along Burwood Highway and the railway line. While slope is considered a significant feature, it also has implications including drainage and flooding, accessibility / walkability and landslip.

The Activity Centre is located on the interface of two BioRegions, the South East Coastal Plain Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia IBRA Bioregion (Gippsland Plain sub region) and the South Eastern Highlands (Highlands – Southern Fall sub region), which also contains the Dandenong Ranges. BioRegions are a landscape-scale approach to classifying the environment using a range of attributes such as climate, geomorphology, geology, soils and vegetation (refer to Map 63).



Map 58. Slope Map - Upper Gully



Map 59. BioRegions - Upper Gully



View to significant slope surrounding the Activity Centre

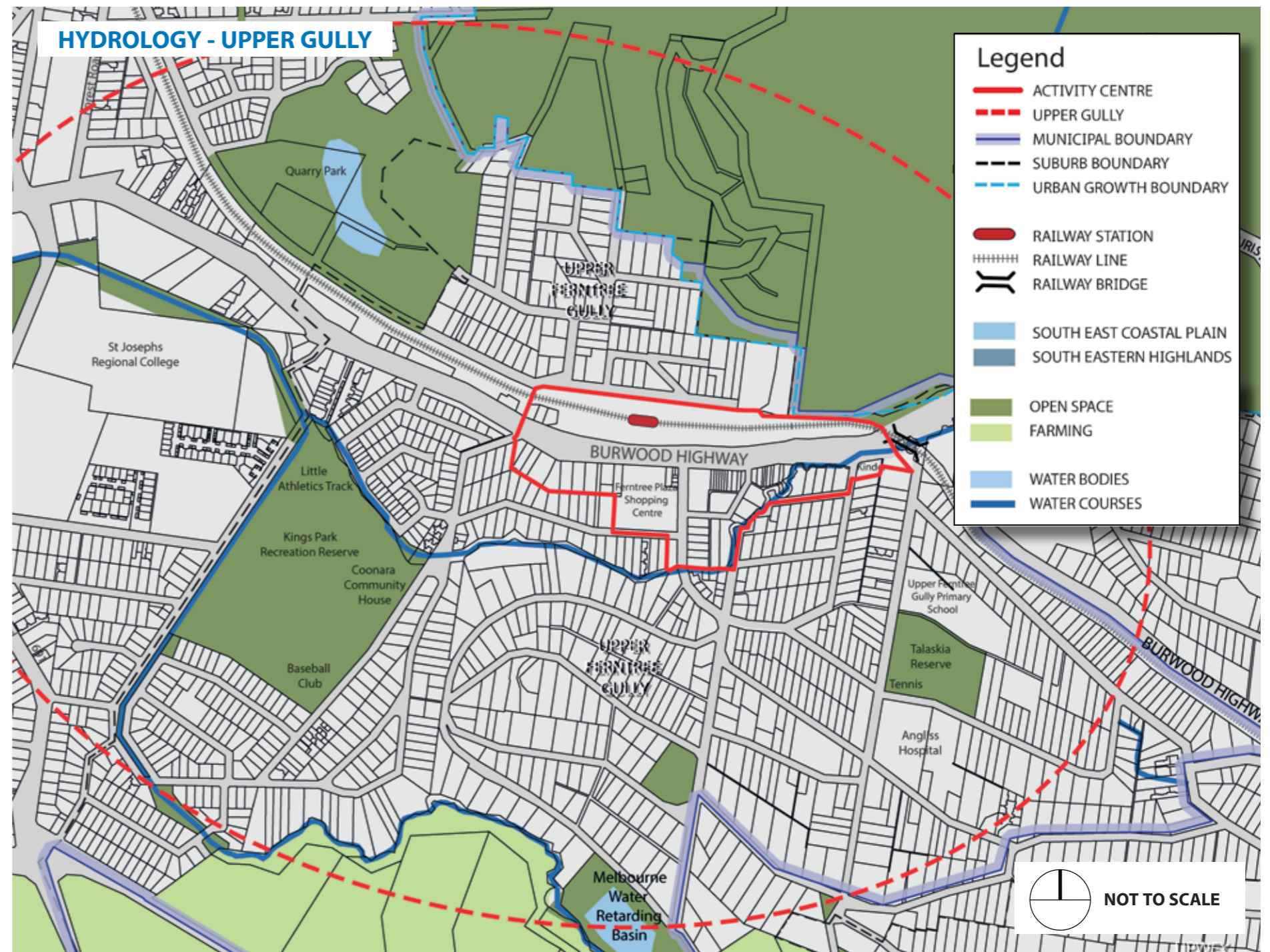
7.8.2 Hydrology

Waterways and waterbodies provide a ranges of recreational and environmental benefits to the community.

From an environmental perspective the provide habitat for local fauna and flora and contribute the health of the environment. From a social perspective, help define residential neighbourhoods, contribute to the character and identity of a place, provide recreational and visual amenity and enables the community to connect with the natural environment.

A number of waterbodies and water courses are located in and around Upper Gully. Generally these are located within drainage corridors / open space, allowing for public enjoyments and providing open space links throughout Upper Gully.

Ferny Creek was identified as a key waterway within the Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and stormwater management plan. The creek defines the western edge of Upper Gully, providing the interface to Ferntree Gully. Ferny Creek is a tributary of the Dandenong Creek. Ferny Creek Trail is a shared path that follows Ferny Creek and connects to the Belgrave Rail Trail to the east of the Activity Centre. To the west, a connection to Dandenong Creek is proposed and will provide for regional public open space connections. The opportunity to enhance this link within Upper Gully, should also be explored.



Map 60. Hydrology - Upper Gully

Monbulk and Ferntree Gully Creek are also tributaries to the Dandenong Creek and are located within Upper Ferntree Gully.

Monbulk Creek is one of only two waterway systems in the Dandenong Valley known to support platypuses.

Ferntree Gully Creek extends from the Dandenong Ranges and traverses Upper Gully from east to west, before reaching Ferny Creek. Parts of Ferntree Gully Creek, particularly through the Activity Centre, have been piped underground, with landform and open space providing the only above ground evidence of their former path.

Melbourne Water's current policy is to 'daylight' creeks where possible, however there are currently not plans to daylight any creeks within Upper Gully.

Key waterbodies located within Upper Gully include:

- A rehabilitated quarry to north west that has been filled with water and forms part of Quarry Park, a substantial open space asset for the community.
- Melbourne Waters Retarding Basin, which forms part of Gilmour Reserve.

These waterbodies have the potential to provide environmental and recreational benefits to the community, and as demonstrated during recent fire events, can provide an important resource for emergency services (refer to Section 7.9.3 - Bushfire).

Watercourse and waterbodies are important features of Upper Gully and help define its character and identity. Access to and celebration of these features should be explored.



Ferny Creek corridor provides an open space link through the Activity Centre

7.8.3 Vegetation

Map 65 and Map 66 provide a comparison of vegetation within Upper Gully, between 1750 (pre-settlement) and 2005 (current / post settlement). Prior to European settlement Environmental Vegetation Classes (EVC's) for Upper Ferntree Gully would have been dominated by Swampy Woodland and Shrubby Foothills Forest within the Activity Centre and west of Upper Gully, with Herb Rich Foothills Forest, Shrubby Foothills Forest and Grassy Forest located on the surrounding slopes. The Ferny Creek Corridor would have been defined by Swampy Riparian with Valley Grasslands Forest to the south and Swampy Woodlands to the west.

Post settlement mapping (refer to Map 66) indicates a highly modified landscape where remnant patches of vegetation are located in the Dandenong Ranges and undeveloped areas only. Vegetation along Ferny Creek and Ferntree Gully Creek has been mostly removed and within the site, remnant vegetation is located along the railway corridor only.

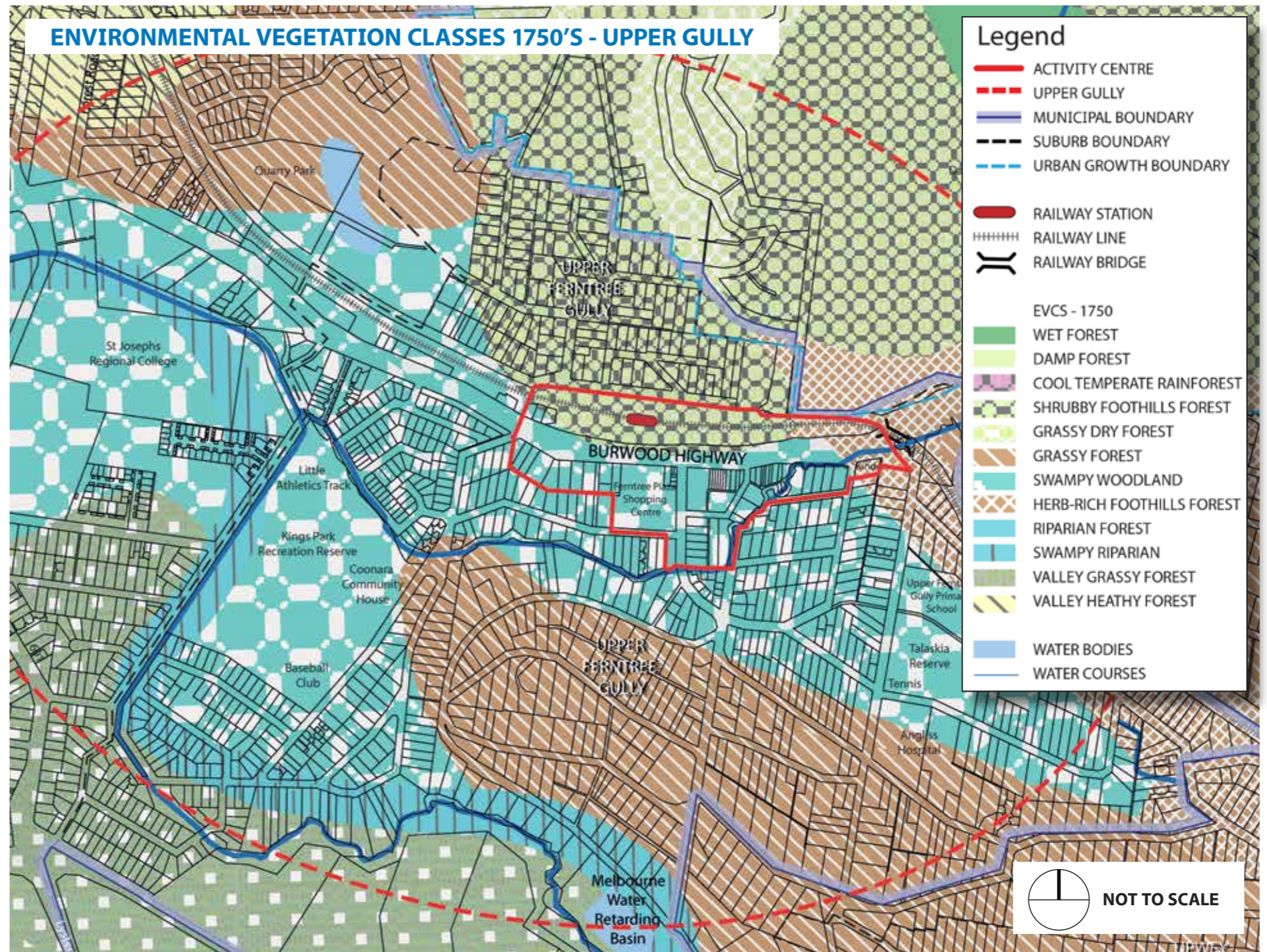
Sites of biological significance were also identified in the a report undertaken for Council. Sites include:

State Significance

- Quarry Park

Regional Significance

- Gilmour Park and
- Grand-View Crescent

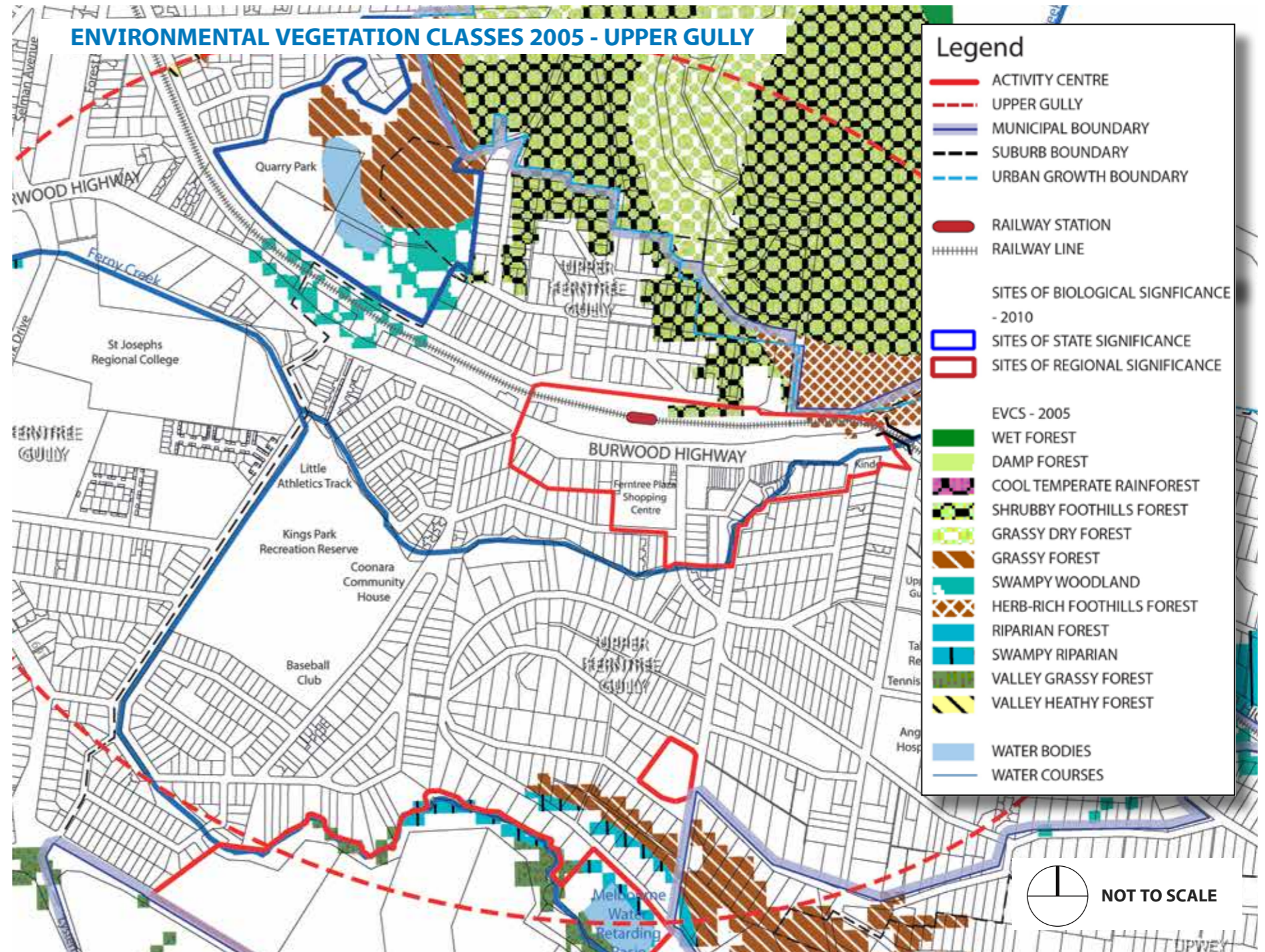


Map 61. Environmental Vegetation Classes 1750's - Upper Gully

Vegetation within Upper Gully is also a significant contributor to its character and identity. Trees both within the public (streetscapes and parks) and private realm (canopy trees on lots) provide a strong link between the urban areas of Upper Gully and the more heavily treed areas of the Dandenongs. They provide a strong canopy cover within residential areas and help minimise the visibility of buildings within the landscape. The importance of trees to the character and identity of Upper Gully is acknowledge through various planning controls, most notably, the Dandenong Foothills policy.



Quarry Park provides the location for State Significant Vegetation



Map 62. Environmental Vegetation Classes 2005 - Upper Gully

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The surrounding foothills and its landscape were identified by the community as valued characteristics of Upper Gully. The community noted the importance of preserving these hills, the trees and the green open spaces. Coupled with this was the importance of the views from within the Activity Centre to these hills.*
- *While the hills were identified as key features, it was also discussed that the steep terrain meant some areas of Upper Gully were difficult to access.*



Drainage corridors used as pedestrian links within Upper Gully

Opportunities and Considerations

- Landform is a significant contributor to the character and identity of Upper Gully, providing a sense of containment.
 - Opportunity to maintain and enhance key vistas to the surrounding foothills
 - Opportunity to use natural features and open space systems to enhance Upper Gully's character, connections to the local environment and its sense of place.
 - Vegetation is a defining feature of the Dandenong Ranges and contributes to Upper Gully's character and sense of place.
 - Opportunity to encourage vegetation planting within the centre that reinforces and complements the landscape character of the surrounding foothills.
 - Opportunity to develop vegetation and planting strategy for the Activity Centre acknowledges the local environment and biodiversity values but also its relationship with the surrounding foothills. Planting should also consider the neighbourhood character of the surrounding residential areas.
 - Waterways and waterbodies are generally located within open spaces and drainage corridors. These spaces should be retained and reinforced to help define residential neighbourhoods, contribute to the character and identity of a place, provide recreational and visual amenity and enables the community to connect with the natural environment. They also provide the opportunity to link open spaces and provide an integrated open space network.
- Opportunity to improve the health of Upper Gully's water systems.
 - Investigate the opportunity to 'daylight' creeks within the Activity Centre to enhance their environmental quality and allow for community appreciation of these assets.
 - Opportunity to provide quality and consistent directional and interpretive signage along shared path trails, particularly along Ferny Trail, recognise and celebrate the significance and value of drainage corridors and flooding issues, to educate the community and to enrich the communities appreciation and experience of their local environment.

7.9 Natural Hazards

WHAT WE KNOW

7.9.1 Flooding

A number of waterways traverse Upper Ferntree Gully, including Ferny Creek, Monbulk Creek and Ferntree Gully Creek. Landform also has implications for flooding within Upper Gully.

Flood mapping undertaken for Upper Ferntree Gully (refer to Map 67), indicates that a significant portion of the Activity Centre is affected by drainage issues. Key drainage issues include:

- 100-year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) Flood. This indicates that areas within Activity Centre boundary will be subject to depths of up to 800mm during a 100-year ARI flood event as determined by Melbourne Water (Map 68, p.187)
- Overland flow - These paths have been determined based on contour data only and therefore are indicative. Presently, Council requires a property affected by an identified overland flow path to ensure discharge from property at pre-development levels, consistent with State policy.

Planning Scheme constraints include the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO), Special Building Overlay (SBO) and Flood Overlay (FO) and are based on Melbourne Water mapping only (refer to Map 15, p.47). These overlays trigger approval by Melbourne Water, however this mapping is not formally adopted.

Floor levels for habitable rooms are determined by Melbourne Water and set out in the requirements of the Melbourne Water's *'Guidelines for Development in Flood - Prone Areas'*. These floor levels have implications on development within areas identified on Map 68 (following) as 'Overland Flow Paths', as well as areas affected by the LSIO and SBO (refer to section 4.3.4 Overlays). The guidelines set out the following requirements for freeboard levels:

- For development within a floodplain (LSIO) - Building floor levels should be at least 0.6m above the 100-year ARI flood level. Outbuilding floor levels should be at least 0.3m above the 100-year ARI flood level.
- For development within an overland flow path (SBO)- Building floor levels should be at least 0.3m above the 100-year ARI flood level. Outbuilding floor levels should be at least 0.15m above the 100-year ARI flood level.

Building regulations set the height of buildings from flooding. Building regulations capture all applications, even if a planning permit is not required. Not all applications are captured by flooding overlays or Flooding Area constraints.

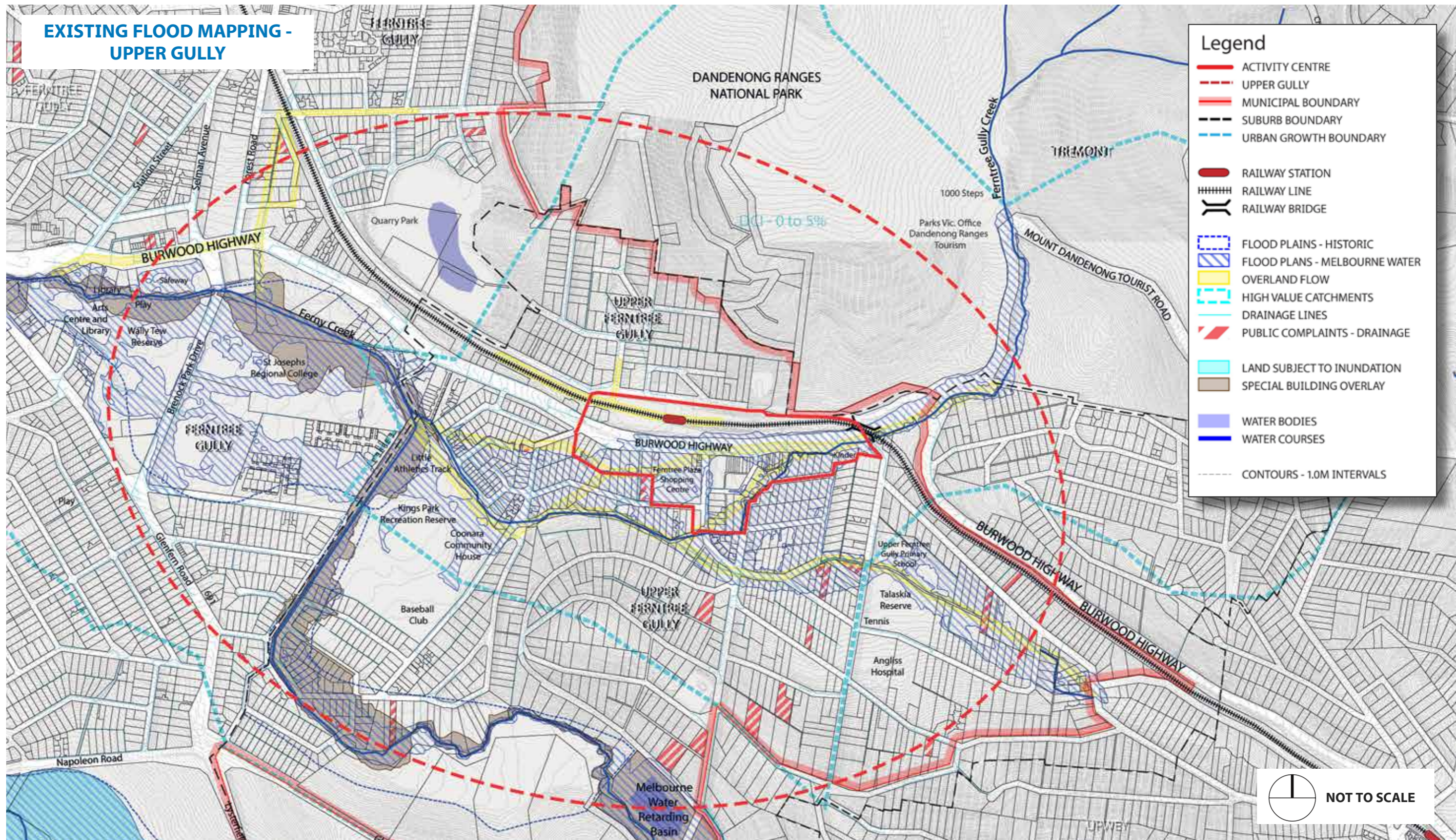
Clause 56.07-4 Integrated Water Management, is a standard policy that captures the need to minimise urban run-off in residential areas. This policy does not apply to commercial and industrial land use areas.

In addition to the above, discussions with Council highlighted the following issues in relation to drainage in Upper Gully:

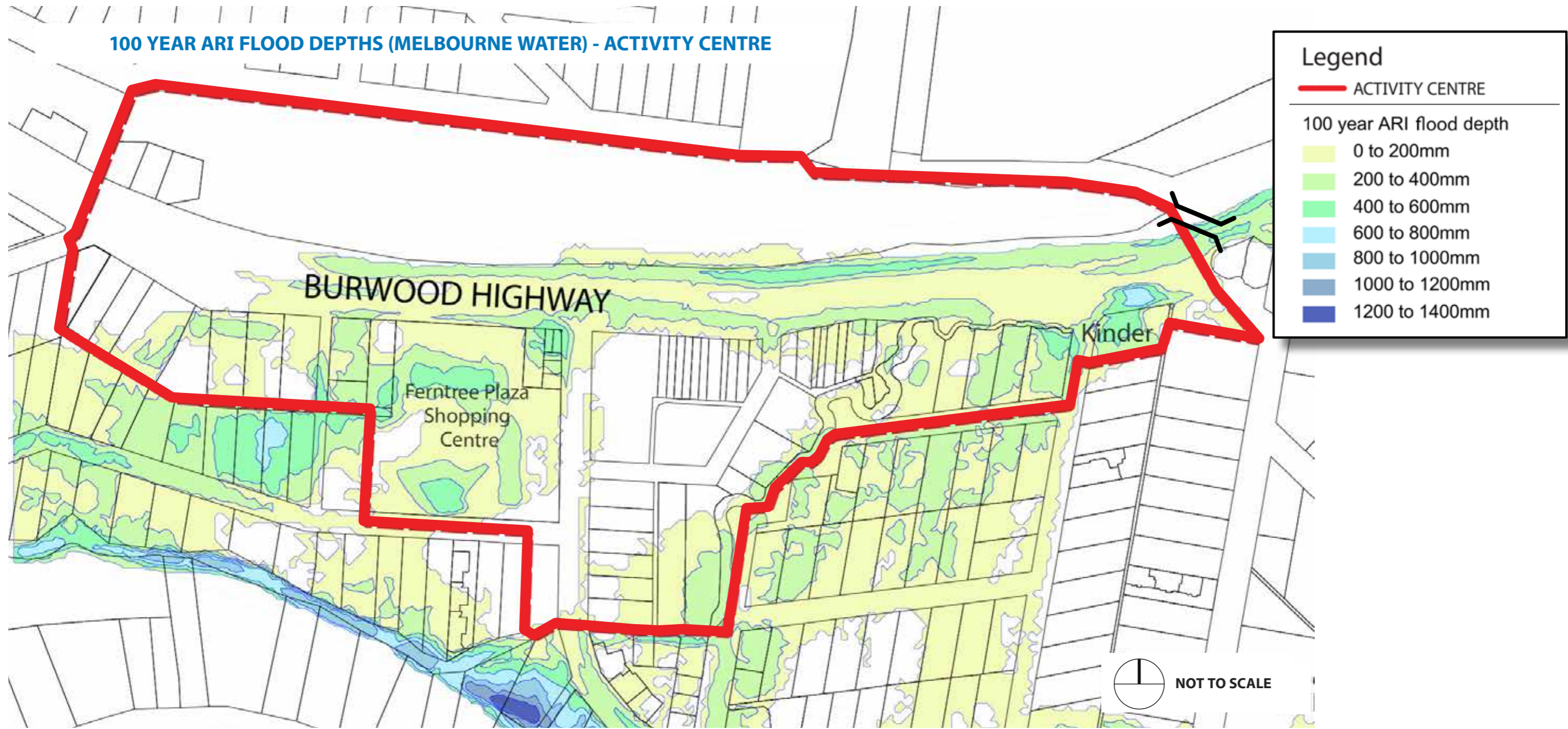
- Talaskia Reserve is considered to have significant drainage and water quality issues;
- An increase in hard surfaces or obstructions to overland flow paths may have implications for drainage and flooding; and
- The capacity of the local system is unknown. Detailed local studies for Upper Gully have not been undertaken and drainage knowledge is limited to Melbourne Water data at this stage.

Map 63 Existing Flood Mapping, identifies flood and drainage risks for Upper Gully.

Flood inundation is a key consideration in the Activity Centre with some private properties are subject to flooding depths of up to 0.6m with most affected areas less than 0.4m in a 100-year ARI flood event (refer to Maps 67 & 68). Future development will need to respond to flooding constraints by providing floor levels at a suitable height above the flood level.



Map 63. Existing Flood Mapping - Upper Gully

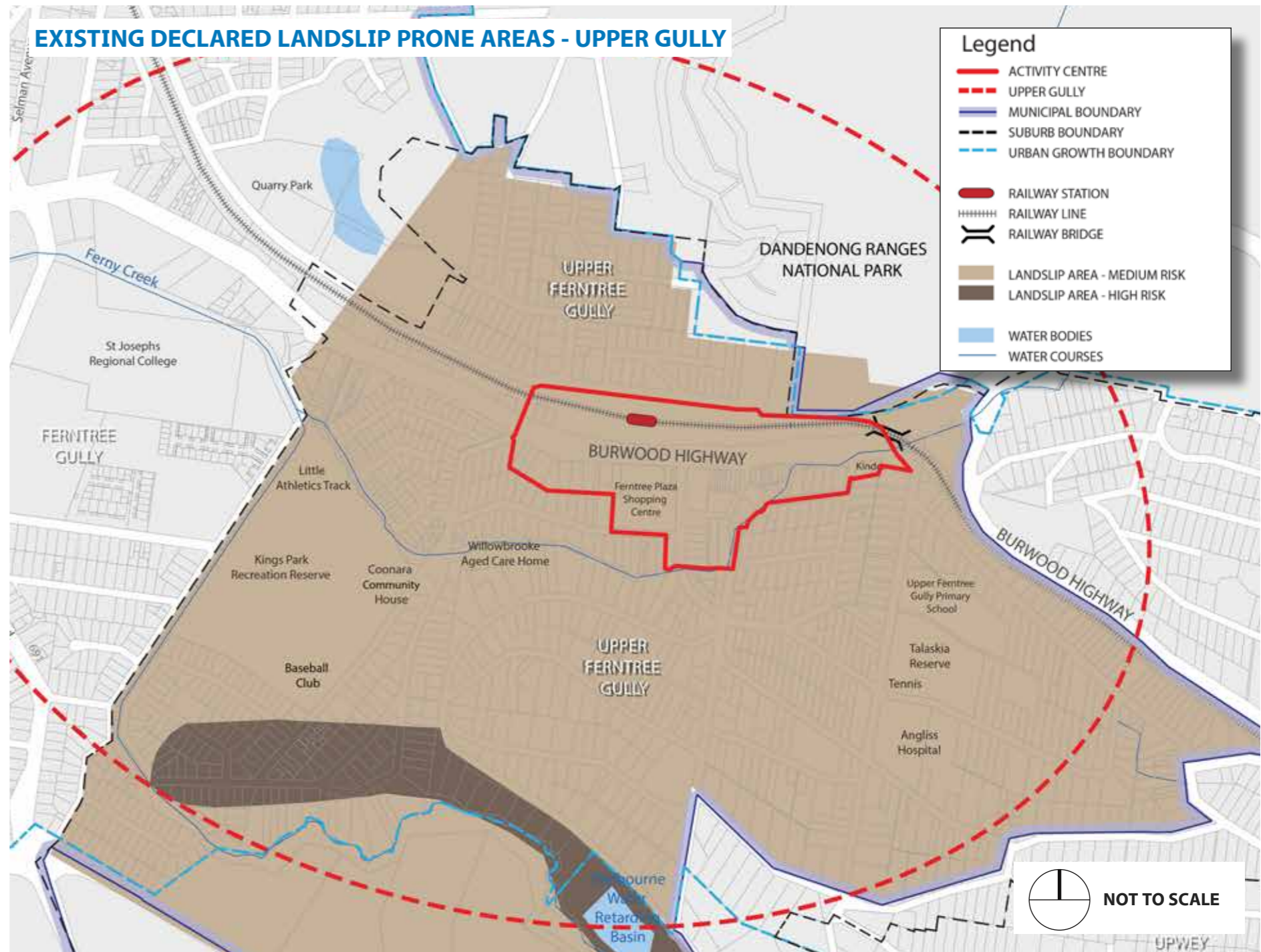


Map 64. 100 Year ARI Flood Depths (Melbourne Water) - Activity Centre

7.9.2 Declared Landslip Areas

A significant proportion of Upper Ferntree Gully is considered to be at risk of landslip. Those areas prone to landslip are categorised as either medium risk or high risk (refer to Map 69). Areas of medium risk apply to the majority of Upper Ferntree Gully, while areas of high risk are isolated to the batter slopes along the southern waterway of Ferny Creek.

While the scale and nature of development in Upper Ferntree Gully is generally low, there are currently no planning tools in place to acknowledge these areas at risk of landslip. Council officers have advised that existing building permit controls are adequate to manage any foreseeable landslip risk.



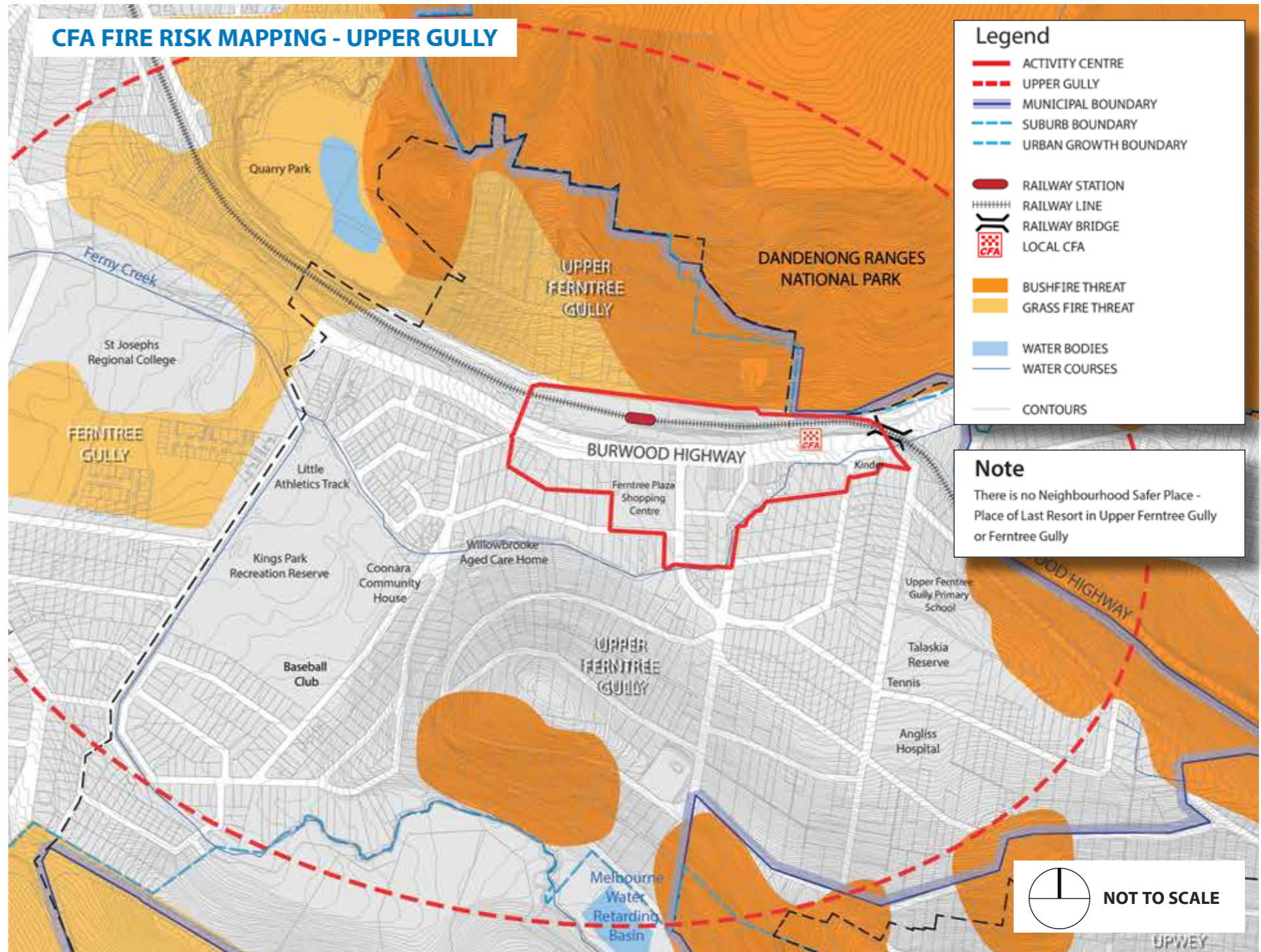
Map 65. Existing Declared Landslip Prone Areas - Upper Gully

Bushfire

The CFA's *Upper Ferntree Gully and Ferntree Gully Community Information Guide* identifies an 'extreme' bushfire risk for both communities. This classification is based on high fuel loads in the bordering forest, the hilly terrain, a lack of accessibility with narrow dead-end roads and homes nestled into bushland.

The Community Information Guide also states that there are no designated 'Neighbourhood Safer Places – Places of Last Resort' in Upper Ferntree Gully or Ferntree Gully.

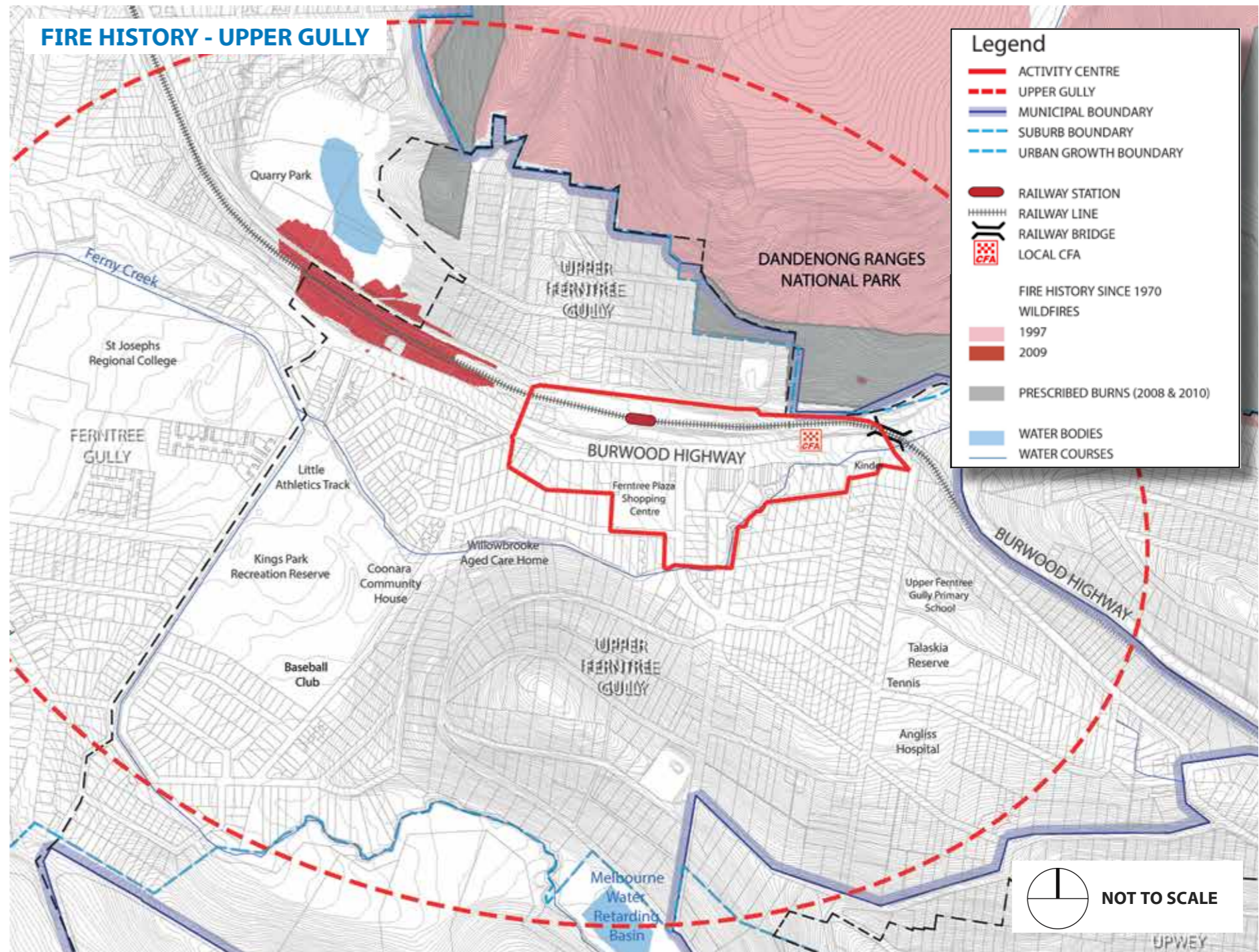
It is currently unlikely that a refuge area will be provided within Upper Gully given its status and topography and its close proximity to places not at risk of bushfire. Travelling on roads in the area during a bushfire is dangerous. The Community Information Guide provides important community bushfire safety information to guide the community to make informed decisions during a bushfire event.



Map 66. CFA Fire Risk Mapping - Upper Gully

Recent fire history also alludes to the risks bushfire for Upper Gully. Fire history mapping identifies recent fire activity to include both wildfires and prescribe burns (Map 71). The 1997 wildfire identified on the Fire History Plan, was a deliberately lit fire that originated in Kalorama and spread, burning 400ha within the Dandenong Ranges and a total of 41 homes were destroyed. Within Upper Gully, the fire destroyed much of the bushland between the Dandenongs and Burwood Highway and saw a number of homes destroyed.

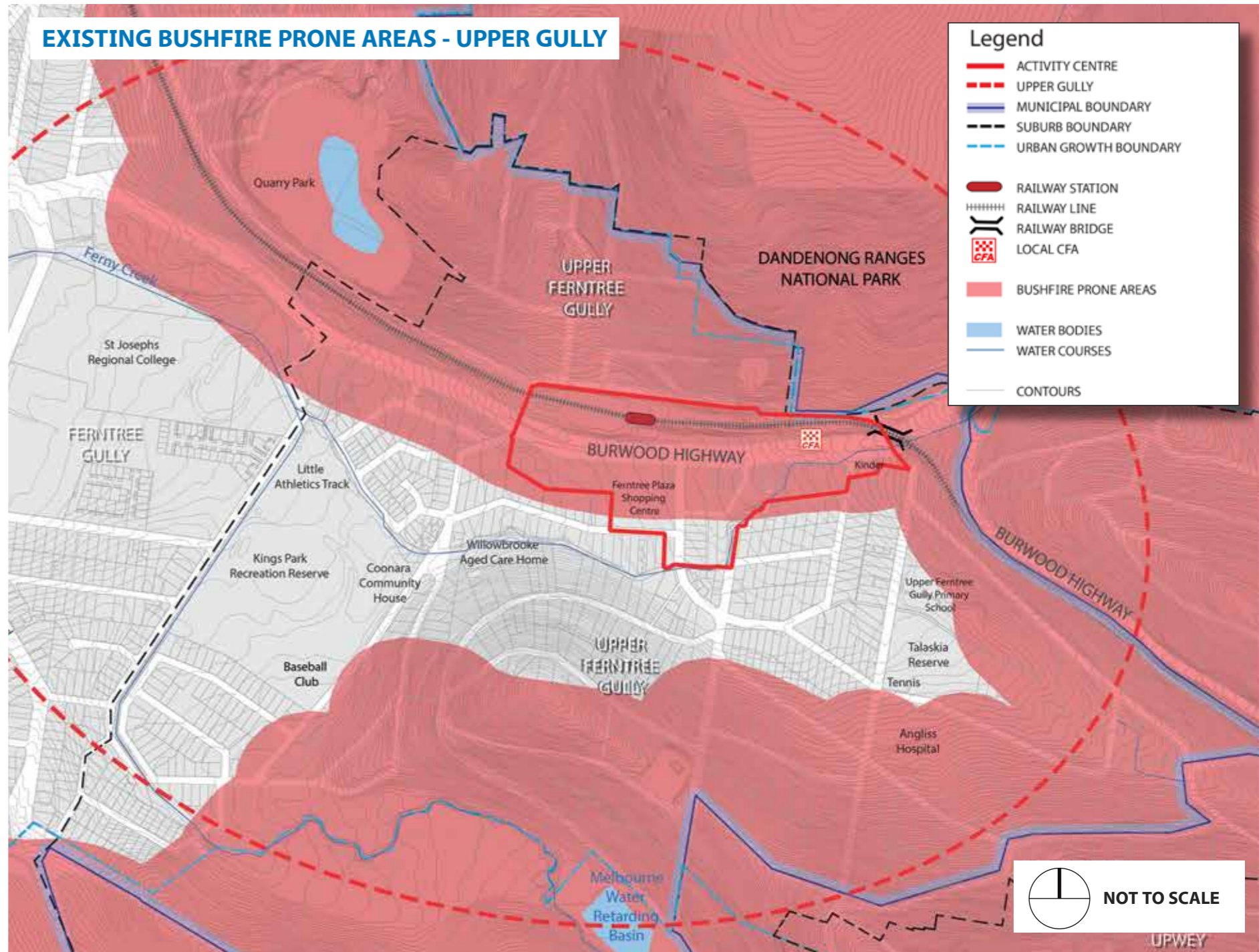
More recently, Upper Gully experienced the impacts of the 2009 wildfire, one of a number of fires contributing to the 2009 Black Saturday fires. The Upper Gully fire originated at the corner of Burwood Highway and Quarry Road. The Royal Commission formed to investigate the fires found that a total of 4ha were destroyed with no fatalities or homes destroyed. The report acknowledged that water was used from the nearby quarry and was vital in stopping the spread of the fire reaching nearby residential properties and the surrounding Dandenong Ranges. Access to this water body should be considered as part of future planning within Upper Gully.



Map 67. Fire History - Upper Gully

In regards to fire infrastructure, Upper Gully has a local CFA Brigade located on the north side of Burwood Highway, just near the railway bridge. The Upper Ferntree Gully CFA is a volunteer Brigade with members drawn from the local community. Anecdotally it is understood that the CFA is constrained for space in its current location north of Burwood Highway and may look to expand or relocate its facility in the near future. Further discussions are required with the CFA to confirm their future plans.

Current planning tools in place relating to bushfire within Upper Gully include the BMO (refer to section 4.3.4 Overlays). This form part of the Knox and Yarra Ranges Planning Schemes. BMO are typically applied to land significantly affected by the risks of a bushfire and requires future development to provide adequate bushfire protection measures. 'Bushfire Prone Areas' (refer to Map 72) however, cover a greater area within the Activity Centre (area north of Rose Street) and is implemented under the Building Regulations.



Map 68. Existing Bushfire Prone Areas (State Government)

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- During community engagement, concern was raised regarding the risks of bushfire and bushfire safety. Many people noted that during the 2009 Black Saturday bushfire, the closure of Burwood Highway made evacuating Upper Gully difficult, and many were unaware that the local fire refuge areas were located in Wantirna, Rowville and Boronia. Many people expressed concerns regarding the provision of accessible evacuation routes and the lack of a fire refuge area within Upper Gully.
- Other natural hazards that were highlighted by the community included flooding, particularly sheet flooding (from the adjacent hills) and flooding along Burwood Highway. Discussions with Council staff indicated that flooding along Burwood Highway required upgrades to VicRoads infrastructure and that these were part of on going negotiations.



Upper Ferntree Gully CFA, located along Burwood Highway

Opportunities and Considerations

- Drainage is a key constraint for building within the Activity Centre (overland flow paths, 100 Year ARI flooding etc) and will need to be carefully considered as part of the Strategic Plan, particularly any increase to hard surfaces or obstructions to overland flow paths.
 - Opportunity to manage flood risks and enhance the environmental qualities of the flood network.
 - Opportunity to acknowledge areas subject to flooding in the planning scheme i.e. Flooding Overlay, Land Subject to Inundation Overlay or Special Building Overlay, to ensure that future planning and design respond appropriately to the issue of flooding and appropriate referrals are triggered.
 - Ensure future development does not adversely impact on downstream properties and the natural path of water and ensure overland flow paths are not blocked by buildings and other features.
 - Investigate the opportunity to incorporate appropriate WSUD techniques into streetscapes, where appropriate to filter and reduce the rate of stormwater from paved areas.
- Opportunity to incorporate underground water storage including WSUD within public reserves to mitigate flooding impacts within the Activity Centre. This should also be included within the proposed Talaskia Reserve Master Plan.
 - While Upper Gully contains areas at high and medium risk of landslip, Council officers have advised that the existing building approval process appropriately manages this risk.
 - Upper Gully has no fire refuge area and is considered as a bushfire prone area. It is unlikely that a refuge area will be provided within Upper Gully given its status and topography. The risk of bushfire is however a key risk identified as a concern by the community.
 - Opportunity to work with the responsible authorities including the CFA, to identify evacuation routes for the community during an emergency and emergency vehicle access routes.
 - Opportunity to upgrade streets that could be considered as evacuation routes.

8. CULTURALLY RICH AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

8.1 Local events and activities

WHAT WE KNOW

Events and activities offer a range of opportunities and benefits to a community. These create opportunities for a community to come together, to showcase local talent and creativity, to engage in social interaction, foster community pride and to create a sense of belonging. Knox City Council offers a range of events and activities for the community throughout the year. While most events are held in larger activity centres including Boronia, Rowville and Wantirna South, some events are also held close to Upper Gully. One such event includes the Knox Festival, which is the most popular festival in Knox.

The Knox Festival is the key cultural event in Knox and has been operating for approximately 30 years. The event offers a range of community workshops and events, as well as a twilight cinema. Held in March, the primary location for this event is Wally Tew Reserve. The festival is a celebration of Knox and includes a range of events include performers, arts and craft, live music, artist, food and competitions. Council staff indicated that a permanent stage at Wally Tew Reserve would be beneficial for the future staging of this event, as well as providing opportunities for other events throughout the year.

Also forming part of the festival is the Oppy Bike Ride. Aimed at encouraging bike riding throughout the municipality, the ride offers three routes for various levels of cyclists. While the ride take in many of the centres within the shire, the Activity Centre does not feature in the routes, despite being located within proximity of the event.

Coonara House provides another key location for events and activities within Knox. Recently the community house provided the location of the Suburban Bloom exhibition. This exhibit, aimed at celebrating the Women of Knox, included two aspects, one a sculptural and performance based piece, and the second, a photography project combining the written word and visual installations of women and girls thoughts, ideas, dreams and hopes.

Due to its proximity to the Dandenong, Upper Gully also has a strong link to community events and activities within this broader network. Noticeboards at local businesses, the railway station and the Visitors Information Centre demonstrate this connection with events listed in the Dandenongs, and the Yarra Valley.

More localised events for Upper Gully include the The Gully Market, as well as events associated with local community groups and the 1812 Theatre. Utilising the eastern section of the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station car park, the The Gully Market is held every Saturday and Sunday and is considered an important feature of Upper Gully.

The 1812 Theatre also provides entertainment for the community, providing a range of performances throughout the year. The 1812 Theatre Company is one of Melbourne's longest running amateur theatre companies and provides an important role in developing arts and culture within the municipality. There are opportunities to strengthen the role of the Theatre to increase local participation and social interaction, and to enhance it as a tourist attraction.

Other community events within the Activity Centre are limited. Currently, there are no formal public / civic space provided for within the Activity Centre to allow for community gathering. Generally events are provided for outside of the Activity Centre within recreation reserves, the railway station car park and Coonara House.



Entertainment provided for at 1812 Theatre

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- The community expressed a desire for more events and activities within the Activity Centre, particularly focused around key dates such as Christmas.
- While The Gully Market was noted as being a valued asset and potentially providing an attraction for tourists, many felt it was in need of revitalisation. Some ideas for revitalising the market included encouraging increased and diverse stall holders and promoting the Market.

Opportunities and Considerations

- Opportunities for events within the Activity Centre are limited, as there is currently no public square or civic space. Opportunities to provide a civic space within the Activity Centre should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan.
- Opportunity to provide events and activities within the Activity Centre that celebrate and reinforce its character and build upon existing facilities in the area.
- Opportunity for a permanent stage for performances to be provided at Wally Tew Reserve. Stage would require a scoping exercise to be undertaken. A stage would also enable other opportunities including music festivals or a cinema under the stars.
- The Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station car parking (east) is utilised on Saturdays for a weekly market. This was considered by many during community engagement to be an important part of living in Upper Gully.



Event board provided near the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station

8.2 Heritage

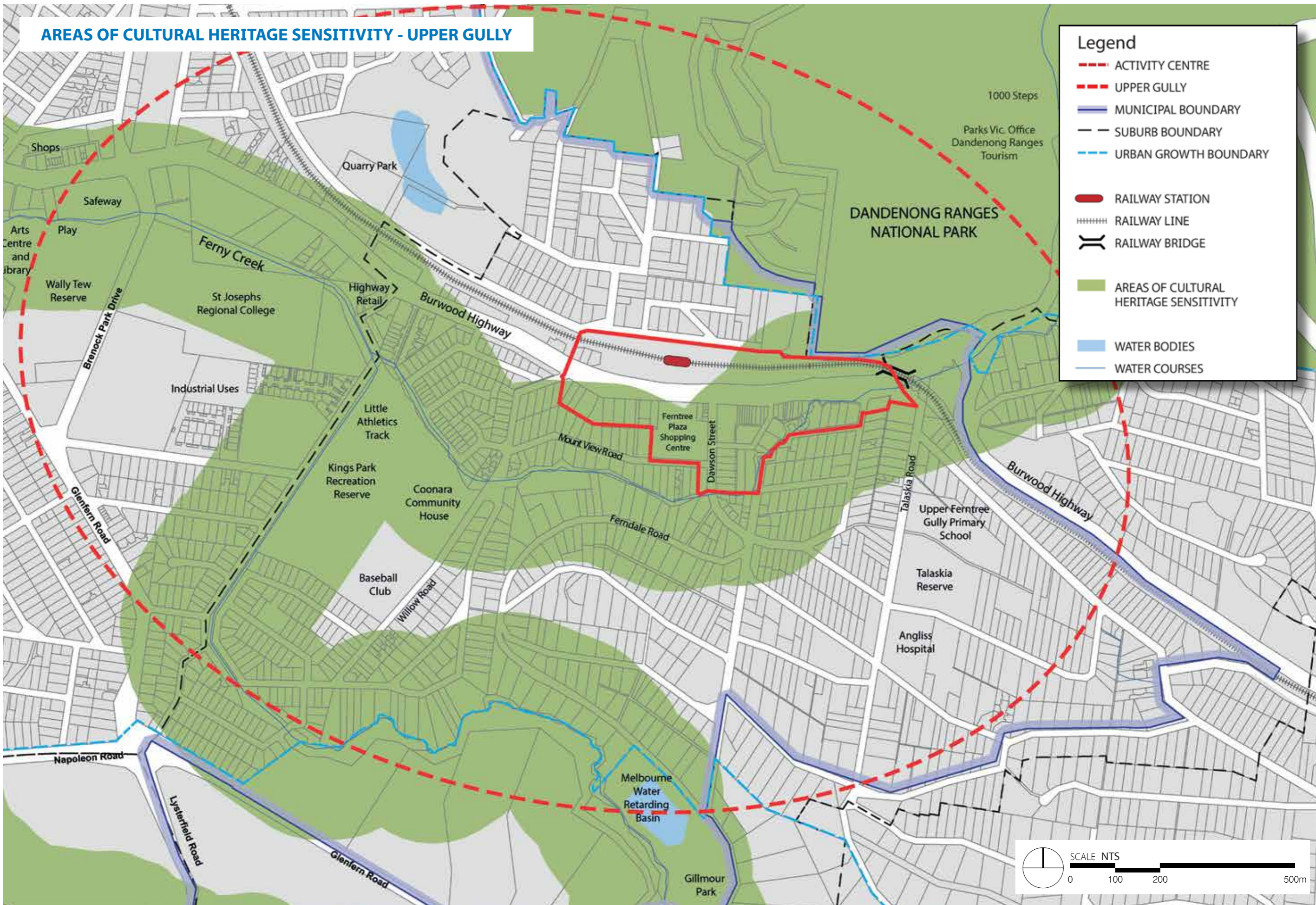
WHAT WE KNOW

8.2.1 Indigenous History

The land on which Upper Gully is located forms part of the land of the Woi Wurrung people who belong to a federation of five indigenous tribes united by beliefs, language, customs, marriage and moiety and rites known as the Kulin. Upper Gully sits in the mountainous region described by Protector of Aborigines, William Thomas in 1840, from information he received from local tribal elders, as the Koranwaribin Range. Corhanwarrabul Creek, which flows through the southern part of Knox, draws its name from the range. The range's shadowy creeks and mist filled ravines widen to become the Dandenong Creek and Ferny Creek where there are sacred places. It is referred to today as the Dandenong Ranges, with the Dandenong National Park overlooking Upper Gully. This place is the origin of stories of significance to Kulin people, and particularly to the Woi Wurrung, whose voice in this place are the elders of the Wurundjeri people.

Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity are identified on Map 73 (p. 197 overleaf). Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity are registered Aboriginal cultural heritage places, as well as landforms and land categories that are generally regarded as more likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. Map 73 indicates that all of the Activity Centre south of Burwood Highway, is considered as to be an area of cultural heritage sensitivity.

Under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required *'if all or part of the proposed activity is in an area of culture heritage sensitivity, and all, or part of the activity is a high impact activity'*. This will have implications for future development within the Activity Centre.



Map 69. Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity - Upper Gully

8.2.2 European / Cultural Heritage

Its location, at the foothills of the Dandenongs has played an important role in the settlement and history of Upper Gully. Timber was the first known industry in the region and in the early days, many timber splitters settled in Upper Ferntree Gully. The rich soils also supported local farming and produce production.

In the 1870's Upper Ferntree Gully became a popular tourist destination with many holiday makers and day trippers from Melbourne making their way out to Upper Ferntree Gully to enjoy the 'hills'. This trip was made easier by the opening of the Ringwood to Upper Ferntree Gully line in 1889. The line was also utilised by local farmers to transport their produce. In 1900 this line was extended to Belgrave, with 'Puffing Billy' providing rail access to the 'hills'.

Remnants of this history is evidenced by existing heritage buildings. These buildings (refer section 7.1.2 Heritage/ Valued Buildings) provide a connection to the past history of Upper Gully and should be retained. Interpretation signage and associated landscaping is located at the front of the Royal Hotel and provides information regarding the significance of the Royal Hotel. This is the only building currently recognised by the Heritage Overlay in the Activity Centre. This along with the Visitors Information Centre and landmark buildings in the Activity Centre.

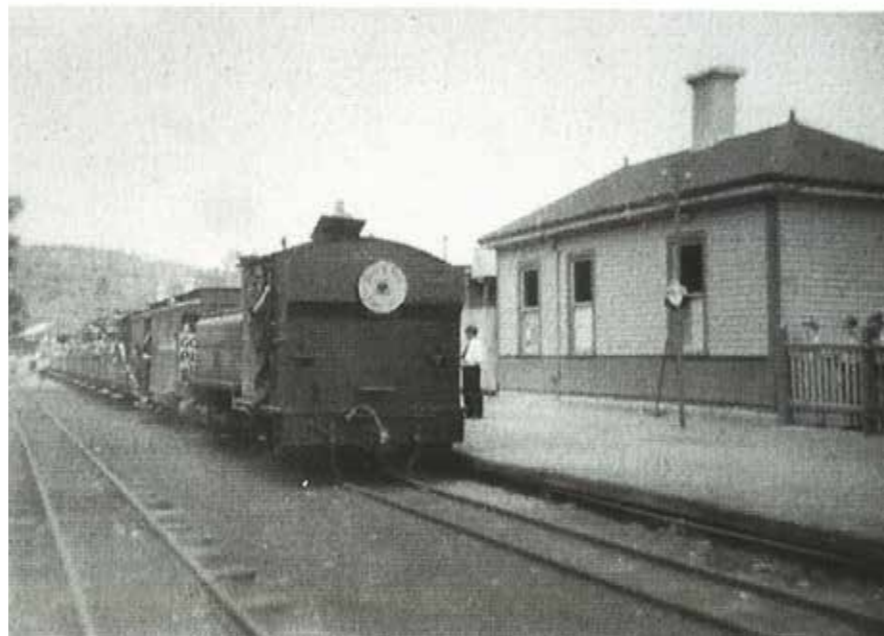


Pinnacle Cafe, now the Information Centre. Date unknown

Source: Reflections of the Past Vol 3

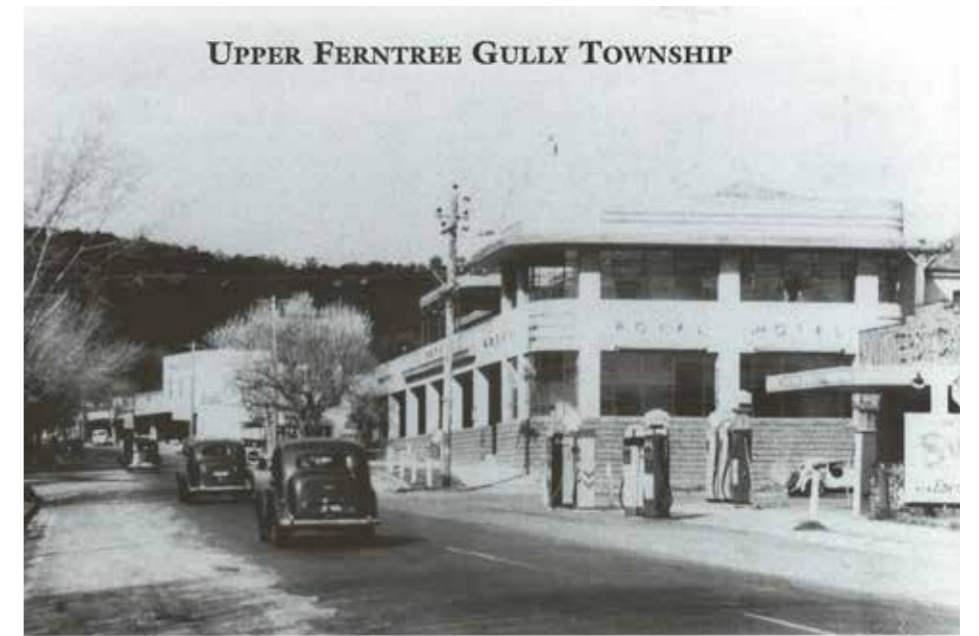


Interpretation signage location out the front of the Royal Hotel



Puffing Billy entering Upper Ferntree Gully Station. Date unknown

Source: Reflections of the Past Vol 1



View along Burwood Highway, Upper Ferntree Gully in the 1940s.

Source: Reflections of the Past Vol 3

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The Royal Hotel, Visitors Information Centre and the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station are considered historically important assets and were frequently mentioned during engagement as being valued by the local community.*
- *People identified the opportunity to promote the historical relevance of these buildings and features i.e. historical boards.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Cultural Heritage Mapping indicates that the majority of the Activity Centre, including all areas south of Burwood Highway, are considered as 'Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity'. Under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required for proposed activity within or partly within these areas.
- Opportunity to protect existing, and yet to be discovered, Aboriginal places for future generations. The presence of aboriginal heritage within the landscape should be respected and protected, while impacts to land where artifacts are situated should be minimised.
- Opportunity to provide interpretation to recognise and celebrate the significance and value of aboriginal places, to educate the community, to provide a connection to our past and to enhance the experience of Upper Gully.
- There are a number of heritage and non heritage buildings within the Activity Centre that are valued by the community. Opportunity to conserve and celebrate these places within Upper Gully, should be explored as part of the Strategic Plan to enhance the character, appeal and interests of Upper Gully.
- Opportunity to provide interpretation to recognise and celebrate the significance and value of heritage places, to educate the community, provide a connection to our past and to enrich the communities appreciation and experience of Upper Gully.

8.3 Arts and Culture

WHAT WE KNOW

Ferntree Gully Arts Centre, located along Burwood Highway in Ferntree Gully, is the closest arts centre to Upper Gully. It is approximately 1.6km from Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station, which is approximately a 20-25 minute walk or a 5 minute drive. A hub of activity and creativity, the centre provides a range of art classes and workshops for adults and children, with a focus on pottery.

Wally Tew Reserve the key location for arts and culture within the municipality. It includes a number of cultural facilities including the Library, Placemakers Shed and Woodworkers Shed.

The Placemakers Shed and Woodworkers Shed provide a studio and workshop for creative people within Upper Gully. In its current location, it is isolated from other activities within Wally Tew Reserve, and Council discussions indicated a need for additional storage space. As well as the library, a number of arts and culture events are held at the reserve, including Knox Festival (refer to Section 8.1).

The 1812 Theatre provides a focal point for arts and culture within Upper Gully but also provides opportunities for people to participate and socialise in a supportive environment. The 1812 Theatre Company is recognised as one of Melbourne's longest running amateur theatre companies and provides an important role in developing arts and culture within the municipality. It was noted by representative of the theatre during engagement sessions that the profile of theatre participants is aging and there is the potential to encourage greater involvement from younger community members.

The building occupied by The 1812 Theatre Company originally started life as the Loyalty Theatre, a movie theatre screening black and white movies to the general public. While the theatre company itself was formed in the 1940's, it did move to Rose Street until 1972, where it has remained ever since.

Discussions with Council staff also indicated that there are existing interests in craft and music within the municipality and suggested that future development and investment in arts and culture within Upper Gully should look to capitalise on these interests.



Mural on facade of Opportunity Shop, Rose Street

8.3.1 Public Art

Public art adds vitality, visual interest and contributes to the sense of place. Artworks may be permanent such as a sculpture or temporary such as chalk art. Generally public art work is 'outside' and is accessible to all.

Public art is currently limited within the Activity Centre and includes murals, painting on private buildings and fencing i.e. the Opportunity Shop on Rose Street. Despite this, Upper Gully has a strong history of art and artists in the region, particularly associated with the Dandenong Ranges. The Strategic Plan should investigate opportunities to provide public art and other treatments within the public realm to express Upper Gully's unique character. It should be noted however, that any proposed public art would need to be approved by the Public Arts Committee at Knox City Council.



Private art visible within the public domain

WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- Generally community engagement confirmed that public art in the Activity Centre is limited. The opportunity to incorporate public art in the public realm was identified as a key aspiration of the community.
- Discussions with Council staff indicated that funding for public art is also limited, with only a small budget allocated to this within the municipality each year. Other sources of funding were discussed including as part of the Streetscape Design Project.
- The 1812 Theatre was identified as a valued asset within the community. It was noted however, that the profile of the theatre participants was aging and there is the potential to encourage greater involvement from younger community members. Discussions with theatre participants also revealed a desire to utilise space around the theatre to provide associated purposes including dining and an outdoor theatre.

Opportunities and Considerations

- Wally Tew Reserve provides a focus for social and cultural resources within Upper Gully, not only for the local community but for the municipal community.
- Opportunity to continue to focus Arts and Culture facilities within close proximity to Wally Tew Reserve to allow for resource sharing and relationships to develop between various groups.
- Opportunity to better link activities in the Placemakers Shed and the Woodworkers Shed with activities at Wally Tew Reserve. This would require car parking facilities to be augmented.
- The 1812 Theatre provides a focal point for arts and culture within the Activity Centre, but also provides opportunities for people to participate and socialise in a supportive environment.
- Opportunity to facilitate an active arts and culture environment and utilise the 1812 Theatre. This may be achieved through:
 - Encouraging greater interaction between the 1812 Theatre and the community through community and youth programs.
 - Improving the public realm within Rose Street to enhance the 1812 Theatre as a destination.
 - Facilitating the ability for The 1812 Theatre Company to offer a wider range of productions.
- Public art within Upper Gully is limited, despite the centre's links to art and artists.
- Potential opportunity to fund public art through the Streetscape Design Project and open space funding.

- Opportunity to enhance the character and visual interest of the Activity Centre by incorporating carefully selected and community driven art pieces into the streetscape.
- Investigate the opportunity to engage / commission local artists to develop art pieces that are locally relevant and embrace Upper Gully's sense of place.



The 1812 Theatre, located on Rose Street

9. DEMOCRATIC AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

9.1 Public Land Management

WHAT WE KNOW

Upper Ferntree Gully formed part of the Shire of Sherbrooke and the Shire of Ferntree Gully, before these municipalities were amalgamated in 1994. Within Upper Gully there are a number of existing public land assets that are owned and managed by a number of government agencies. The majority of parks and sports reserves across Upper Gully are owned and managed Knox City Council. The major exception is the Dandenong Ranges National Park which is Crown Land managed by Parks Victoria.

VicTrack is a major land owner within the Activity Centre, owning land around the railway station and surrounding car park areas. There are also a number of Crown Land parcels across the centre, which are managed by various government agencies (refer Map 74 overleaf).

It will be important for Council to work closely with relevant government agencies in implementing improvements across land, which is not owned or managed by Council. These areas, particularly the railway station, are critical in planning for the future of the Activity Centre.

It is important to consider the limitations of and different approaches required to public and private land within the Activity Centre. Generally, future land use and development within privately owned properties will be controlled by the Knox Planning Scheme, while development within publicly owned properties will be controlled by a variety of mechanisms and public land managers.

9.2 Community and Local Groups

There are a number of local community groups within Upper Ferntree Gully. Some of these groups include:

- Country Fire Authority (Burwood Highway);
- Talaskia Scout Group (Talaskia Reserve);
- St Thomas Anglican Church (Mount View Road, Upper Ferntree Gully);
- International Women's Group (Coonara House);
- Coonara Community House (Coonara House); and
- Gully Gardeners Group (Coonara House).

There are a number of sporting organisations based in Upper Ferntree Gully, some of which include:

- Upper Ferntree Gully Football Club competing in the Eastern Football League (Kings Park);
- Upwey/Ferntree Gully Baseball Club (Kings Park);
- Upper Ferntree Gully Cricket Club (Kings Park);
- Upwey Tecoma Junior Football Club (Talaskia Road);
- Upper Ferntree Gully Tennis Club (Talaskia Road);
- St John's Tecoma Cricket Club (Talaskia Road);
- Sherbrooke Little Athletic Centre (Kings Park);
- Sherbrooke Archery Club (Gilmour Park);
- Kenlaural Dance Centre; and
- 1812 Amateur Theatre Group (Rose Street).

These groups contribute to and engage the community members within Upper Gully. They provide conduits for communication with the community and may have access to people with particular skills and resources that could benefit the greater community.

Council has been granted the opportunity to discuss the Strategic Plan with a number of the sporting community groups in Upper Gully.

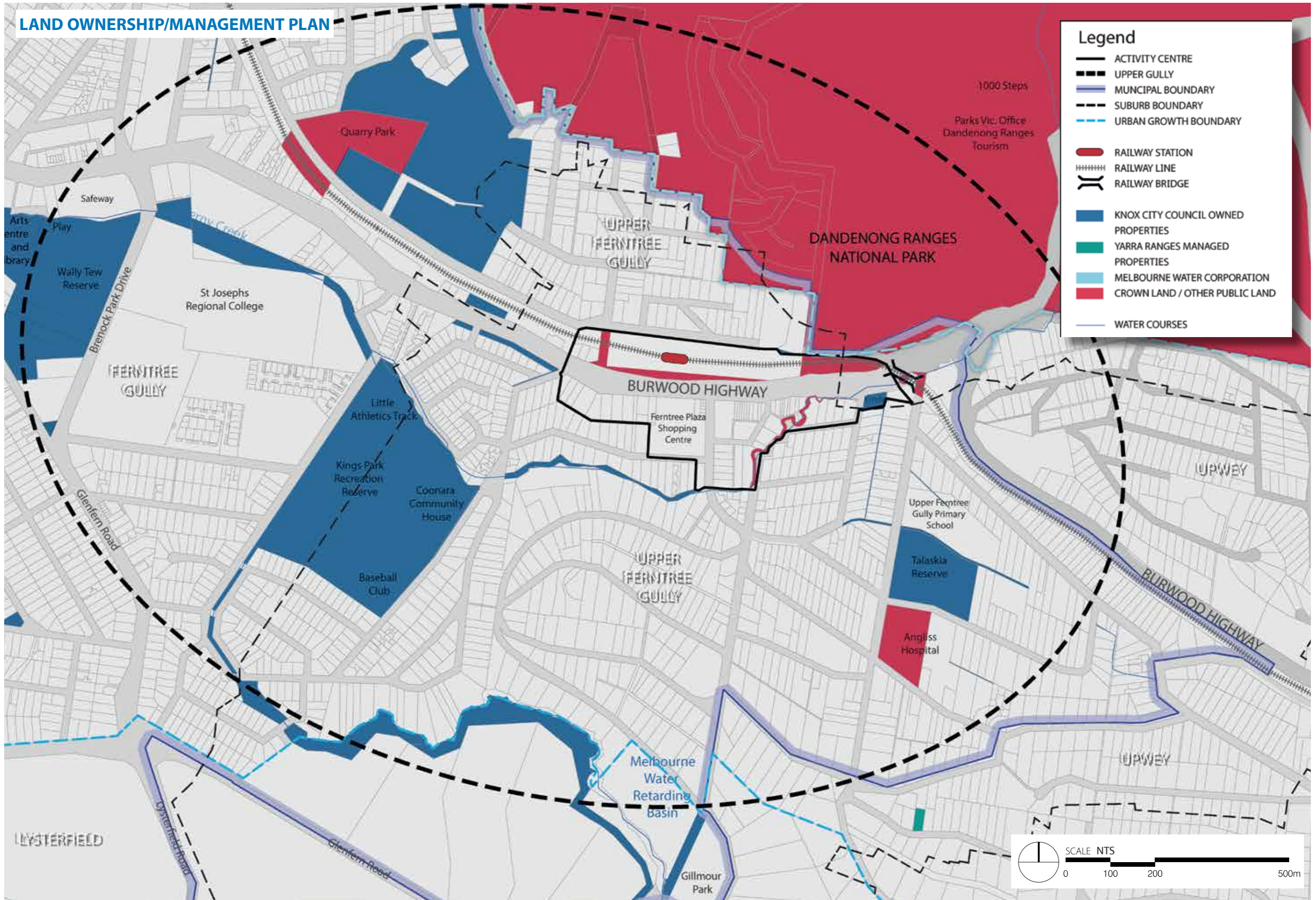
WHAT YOU'VE SAID

- *The community articulated a number of challenges associated with being on the boundary of two Councils. This included drainage concerns, frequency of rubbish collection and the differences between planning policies.*
- *People also noted that they appreciated the engagement opportunities offered as part of the Strategic Plan process and suggested opportunities for other demographics to be engaged including young families, older residents and the Angliss Hospital.*

Opportunities and Considerations

- Upper Gully sits on the border of the Shire of Yarra Ranges and Knox City Council. The community noted challenges of being on the border during engagement.
- Opportunity to maintain and improve the relationship with the Shire of Yarra Ranges to facilitate collaborative partnerships in projects impacting on both Council areas.
- There is an opportunity to develop relationships with State agency landholders to advocate for improvements on public land within Upper Gully and particularly in the Activity Centre.
- The community is concerned about local issues, as demonstrated by the attendance to the Upper Gully workshops.
- There are a number of local and volunteer groups in the area. There is the opportunity to engage with and collaborate with these groups to deliver capital works projects, where appropriate.

LAND OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT PLAN



Map 70. Land Ownership / Management Plan



Visitors Information Centre and car parking located along Burwood Highway, within VicTrack managed land

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Attachments

- A1. Upper Gully Plan Engagement Report 2015, Effective Conversations**
- A2. Technical Report - Land Use and Economics 2014 and Addendum 2016, Urban Enterprise**
- A3. Technical Report - Transport and Parking 2015 and Addendum 2016, Movendo**
- A4. Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centre Heritage Assessments Report 2015, Context**



