



FAIRFIELD VILLAGE ACTION PLAN

hansen partnership in association with essential economics
for darebin city council

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Workshop 1: Fairfield Action Plan, Economic Role and Function Paper, Essential Economics

Appendix 2A: Workshop 2: Fairfield Action Plan, Design Guidelines Review, Hansen Partnership

Appendix 2B: Workshop 2: Fairfield Action Plan, Revised Design Guidelines, Hansen Partnership

Appendix 3: Workshop 3: Fairfield Action Plan, Development Potential & Indicative Designs, Hansen Partnership

Appendix 4: Workshop 3: Fairfield Action Plan, Achieving Density, Essential Economics

Appendix 5: Workshop 4: Fairfield Action Plan, Streetscape Design & Infrastructure Analysis, Hansen Partnership

Appendix 6: Workshop 5: Fairfield Action Plan, Streetscape/ Public Realm Improvements Framework Plan, Hansen Partnership



1 INTRODUCTION

In April 2015, Hansen Partnership, in association with Essential Economics were engaged by the Darebin City Council to prepare the Fairfield Village Action Plan.

The Action Plan is a framework to assist and guide Council in identifying strategic projects and works in the Fairfield Activity Centre (known as 'Fairfield Village') to improve its amenity, guide development and support long term viability.

The Action Plan was undertaken through a series of five collaborative workshops, involving key Council officers and representatives from VicRoads and Melbourne Water. Each workshop was focused on a different theme as follows:

- Economics – understanding the role and function of Fairfield;
- Urban Design – a review of existing conditions and previous design guidelines;
- Development Typologies – a review of development drivers and incentives;
- Movement and Infrastructure – a review of access, movement and infrastructure; and
- Landscape Architecture – identification of streetscape/public realm improvements.

The findings of each workshop have been documented in a series of outputs comprising:

- The Role and Function of Fairfield paper;
- Revised Design Guidelines document;
- Development Potential and Indicative Designs;
- Streetscape Design and Infrastructure Analysis; and
- Streetscape/Public Realm Improvements Concept Framework Plan.

These outputs, together with this summary report, form a package of documents which is the Fairfield Village Action Plan.



Fairfield Library

1.1 Purpose

The Fairfield Village Action Plan is a strategic 'internal' Council document to help guide decision making on future private and public investment in the Fairfield Activity Centre ('Fairfield Village').

The primary catalyst for this piece of work is the pending redevelopment of the former Amcor Paper Mill site, which will contain a significant new Activity Centre, less than 1km from Fairfield Village. At time of writing, the proposed development will accommodate approximately 15,000m² of new commercial floor space and 5,000 new residents. However, it is located within the City of Yarra and therefore the City of Darebin has limited strategic involvement in the redevelopment or the quantum of its retail floor space. The City of Darebin has recognised the need to investigate and better understand the potential impacts of this significant regional site redevelopment on Fairfield Village.

Another catalyst for the project was a desire to review and update the 2008 Design Guidelines for Station Street. The southern end of Station Street (between the Activity Centre and Heidelberg Road) has recently experienced considerable built form change in the form of a number of medium density residential developments as a result of a recent municipal Zone review. However, the 'core' section of Station Street (within the Activity Centre) has seen comparatively little redevelopment or investment. Council is keen to understand why only limited 'shop-top' development has occurred since 2008, despite development in Activity Centres being expressly encouraged in Council's strategic planning policies.

1.2 Background

Overall, Council has identified the need for a cohesive approach in the planning and management of Fairfield Village to support its ongoing viability and amenity. Measures and recommendations for further work outlined in this Action Plan aim to address long standing issues around transport pressures, the public realm and pedestrian experience, and appropriate redevelopment of land in and around the Centre. These measures, along with business strategies building on identified strengths and opportunities, will help position the Centre to meet the challenges of increased economic competition, whilst meeting the retail and community service needs of the Fairfield and Alphington community.

1.3 The Place

The study area for this project is the Commercial 1 Zoned (C1Z) land, primarily along Station Street and extending to the west around the train station along both Wingrove Street and Railway Place. This area defines the Fairfield Village Activity Centre. In undertaking the scope of works, a broader area of influence was considered. This area radiated approximately 2km around the Fairfield Village. Refer to Figure 1.



Station Street streetscape



hansen

fairfield village study area

legend

fairfield village



1m contours



Figure 1





2 THE ROLE & FUNCTION OF FAIRFIELD

The starting point for the development of the Action Plan and purpose of workshop 1 was to review and confirm the role and function of the Fairfield Village in order to 'set the scene' in terms of the Activity Centre's current and likely economic role and function. In order to do so, an initial background review was undertaken by Essential Economics to consider the Activity Centre's sphere of influence, its strengths, weaknesses and threats.

2.1 Findings

The first collaborative workshop determined that Fairfield Activity Centre has a strong 'village' feel hence its name, reinforced by its 'traditional high street' layout and the significant number of independent or 'niche' shops and cafés. The absence of a large supermarket enables multiple smaller grocery businesses to coexist. It was determined that the Amcor redevelopment would not pose a significant threat to the existing role and function of Fairfield Village, as was initially feared. Economic analysis clearly suggests that the two Activity Centres (Fairfield and Amcor centre) can complement each other, rather than directly compete as they are likely to have different destination activities, qualities and a distinctly different physical form.

The nearby Amcor redevelopment was assessed to provide an opportunity for Fairfield Village, because it will provide a significant increase in residents within the retail catchment and is unlikely to have a retail offer that competes directly with Fairfield Village. The Amcor development will provide an increased population of approximately 5000 additional residents within walking distance of Fairfield Village. Further, it is anticipated that Amcor residents will choose to use the Fairfield Village as their local street based Shopping Centre, particularly in the evening and on weekends due to its authentic character and genuine café feel, as opposed to new or more generic franchised retail offers likely to be available within the Amcor development.

Fairfield Village should therefore play to its strengths as a traditional strip, street based Centre and seek to enhance its 'point of difference' from the new Amcor Centre. In particular, this highlights its role and image as a generous 'public' place with a particular diverse range of food convenience and local produce stores in tandem with civic and community destinations.

There are limited opportunities for the Fairfield Activity Centre to expand. However, given its current success and the proposed activity at Amcor, it is considered that its role and function is relatively stable.



Niche café in Fairfield Village

2.2 Output

A Role and Function Paper was prepared by Essential Economic. It is located at Appendix 1.

2.3 Recommendations

Council should prepare a Business Strategy for the Fairfield Village that builds on the Centre's strengths and opportunities, as outlined in Section 2.1 and further identified in Appendix 1.

Council should engage with the local Business Association to build on the Activity Centre's strengths, improve the overall presentation of the built form and public realm to ensure that the Fairfield Village remains a destination of choice.

Council and/or the local Business Association should prepare promotional material targeted at the future/new residents of the Amcor development, introducing them to Fairfield Village and offering incentives such as vouchers at various shops and cafés to entice them to visit Fairfield as an alternative to the more generic offer provided on site.

Promote and make the most of the spatial relationship between Fairfield and Amcor. Fairfield is approximately 800m to 1km from Amcor, depending on the route taken. This distance is considered convenient enough to encourage residents to walk or cycle from Amcor to Fairfield to access its destinations including public transport, dining and civic services. Council should pursue opportunities for improved shared pathways between the two sites.

Council should encourage a greater intensity of activity to and around the Train Station, that build on its high amenity and public transport accessibility.

Fairfield should also focus on becoming a more 'age-friendly' Centre, in order to better cater to an ageing local and regional demographic. Improvements to the public realm must be Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant and allow for universal access.



Station Street, existing public realm





3 DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design Guidelines for development of commercial land in Station Street, Fairfield were prepared in 2008. These were never incorporated into the Planning Scheme, rather used as a background document in development assessment.

The purpose of workshop 2 was to review these Design Guidelines (in light of current development trends, recent and current VCAT/development approvals, Plan Melbourne and current Darebin Planning Policy). Further, the review sought to identify areas within Fairfield Village which have experienced change to determine what amendments may be made to the 2008 Design Guidelines in order to appropriately respond to current best practice.

3.1 Discussion

Since the 2008 Design Guidelines were prepared:

- The commercial land within the Activity Centre has been rezoned from Business 1 Zone (B1Z) to Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z);
- The land fronting Station Street between the railway line and Heidelberg Road is zoned Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) following Amendment C147 which was approved last month;
- The residential hinterland surrounding the Fairfield Village has been rezoned from Residential 1 Zone (R1Z) to General Residential Zone 2 (GRZ2); and

- The interim Design and Development Overlay (DDO) imposed by the State Government across many Neighbourhood Centres in Melbourne ceased on 31st March 2010.

Only limited redevelopment has occurred since 2008 within the 'core' Station Street area. This is likely due to the following reasons:

- The majority of the lots in the commercial area are deep and narrow, and many without rear laneway access; therefore making the accommodation of cars on site problematic;
- It is a well-known flood prone area, having flooded in the past decade. This is likely to be a constraint on capital improvement (until the flood issue is resolved);
- Many businesses trading from the property are also owners, therefore development at upper levels would disrupt existing business activities at the ground floor. Landowners are typically more focused on continued business operation; and
- Of those properties which are leased, many have been owned for a long time: owners therefore have little or no finance owing, with existing rental return sufficient to not warrant further investment to create additional upper floor space for rent or sale.



Opportunity for upper level development along Station Street



3.2 Findings

The second collaborative workshop found that Fairfield Village is distinguished by three character precincts (as shown in section 3.4 of this report) aligned along the Station Street 'spine'. The precincts are notable for their different qualities such as their era of development, lot size, frontage setback and streetscape presentation.

The precincts are identified in figure 2 and are as follows:

South of the rail corridor is the **Garden Precinct**. This precinct is defined by the 'green' corridor of significant trees along the rail corridor, and around the station complex. Railway Place has a different orientation and 'feel' to the rest of Fairfield. It enjoys an increased amenity due to its sunny northern aspect, open outlook across the rail corridor (which is well vegetated) and lack of traffic, given its distinctly local function. This is further reinforced by the strong presence of destination 'local' businesses, such as popular cafés. This character can be further enhanced with future public realm works.

Between Wingrove Street and Duncan Street to the north, is the **Charm Precinct**. This precinct is the 'core' of Fairfield Village and contains valued and relatively consistent traditional built form characteristics which are to be protected and enhanced. This precinct represents an initial era of development from the 1910s to 1930s with notable consistent attached facades along Station Street. The profile of this precinct is defined by its generally single storey projecting parapets and recessive upper levels. The Design Guidelines seek to enhance existing traditional facades and parapets, while allowing for recessive upper levels.

To the north of Duncan Street is the **Emerging Character Precinct**. This precinct lacks the valued character and strong parapets evident to the south and is reflective of a later period of development which is predominantly single storey and of a modest profile. There has also been significant recent development on consolidated lots (i.e. 149-153 Station Street), which alter the traditional integrity and character of this part of Station Street. Therefore, the Design Guidelines should place less emphasis on protecting and enhancing existing parapets.

Relatively limited development has occurred within the Fairfield Village in recent years. The only notable development within the Activity Centre has occurred at:

- 84 Station Street, being a 2 storey redevelopment which retained the existing façade and constructed a recessive upper level; and
- 149-153 Station Street, being a mixed use 4 storey redevelopment, comprising a new 2 storey street wall, and 2 staggered recessive upper levels.

However, there has been significant redevelopment to the south of the Fairfield Village commercial core, at 62-64 Station Street (4 storey development) and immediately adjacent to the former Post Office site at 92 Arthur Street to the east. These sites sit beside or behind the primary Station Street commercial spine and have emerged as more convenient candidate sites. As the availability of such sites lessen, it is anticipated that Commercial 1 Zoned land will become a more viable development opportunity.

The 2008 Design Guidelines nominated a predominantly 3 storey (10.5m) maximum building height along Station Street, with properties fronting Railway Place and Wingrove Street recommended for a 4 storey (13.5m) maximum building height.

Further afield, the stretch of Station Street between Heidelberg Road and Railway Place has experienced significant change in recent years. The majority of the higher density residential infill development has been 4 storeys in scale. Therefore, it may be appropriate to allow slightly taller forms within the Activity Centre core in streetscape terms (provided these are successfully accommodated and will not result in unreasonable off-site amenity impacts).

Within the Centre's spine, there is also a recent 5 storey approval on a former VicTrack site (72A Station Street), which has two street frontages and direct rail corridor abuttal. This approval sets a precedent for maximum building height within the Village, but should be noted as being distinguishable for its unique site conditions. The guidelines should acknowledge such conditions and the desire for more intensity in close proximity to the Train Station.

There is also a current permit application for the redevelopment of the RSL site (5 Railway Place). This site represents a significant redevelopment opportunity within Railway Place (Garden Precinct). Approximately half of this consolidated site is within the Commercial 1 Zone, while the remainder is within the General Residential Zone – Schedule 2 with a frontage to Gillies Street, which has a strong residential character.



Example of development in and around Fairfield Village

3.3 Output

Revised Design Guidelines have been prepared by Hansen Partnership in response to the character assessment and are located at Appendix 2B.

The Design Guidelines seek to:

- reinforce the traditional character of the Station Street 'core' precinct;
- encourage shop-top development within the Village;
- contemplate higher built form intensity clustered around the Train Station; and
- sensitively transition built form massing to the residential edges.

3.4 Recommendations

Council should firstly exhibit the revised Design Guidelines to the public and seek feedback.

Secondly, Council should respond to feedback received, make any necessary amendments and adopt the revised Design Guidelines as a reference document.

Finally, Council should consider translating the Design Guidelines into a formal planning tool such as a Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to formalise the guidelines into clear and enforceable policy and controls in the Darebin Planning Scheme.



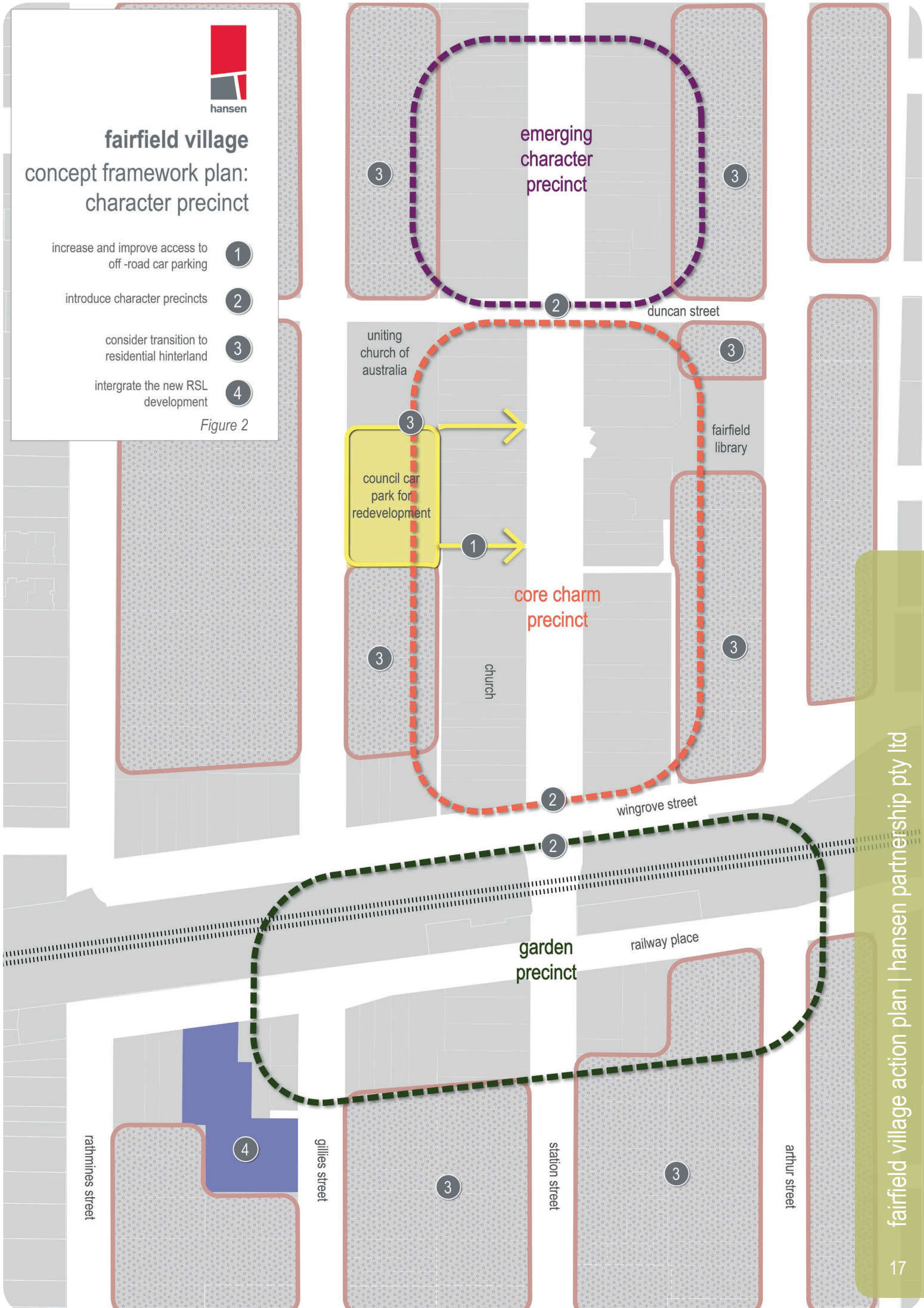
Fairfield & Alphington RSL



fairfield village concept framework plan: character precinct

- 1 increase and improve access to off-road car parking
- 2 introduce character precincts
- 3 consider transition to residential hinterland
- 4 integrate the new RSL development

Figure 2





4 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL & INDICATIVE DESIGNS

The purpose of workshop 3 was to explore and test the implications of the revised urban design guidelines and determine how high quality, high amenity “shop-top” infill development (refer to Figure 3) may be configured in the context of the subdivision and landownership pattern of Station Street. It also sought to explore how development could occur on narrow un-consolidated sites, as well as wider consolidated sites.

4.1 Findings

This stage of the process assembled a collection of indicative commercial area development designs as a template for best-contemporary practice in strip centres. This stage also advanced a list of development steps and potential incentives for Council to consider in more detail. A further additional scope of work to ‘package’ designs and associated incentives in an appropriate format, for public or landowner presentation - may be contemplated.





Figure 4: Example of narrow lot development amenity

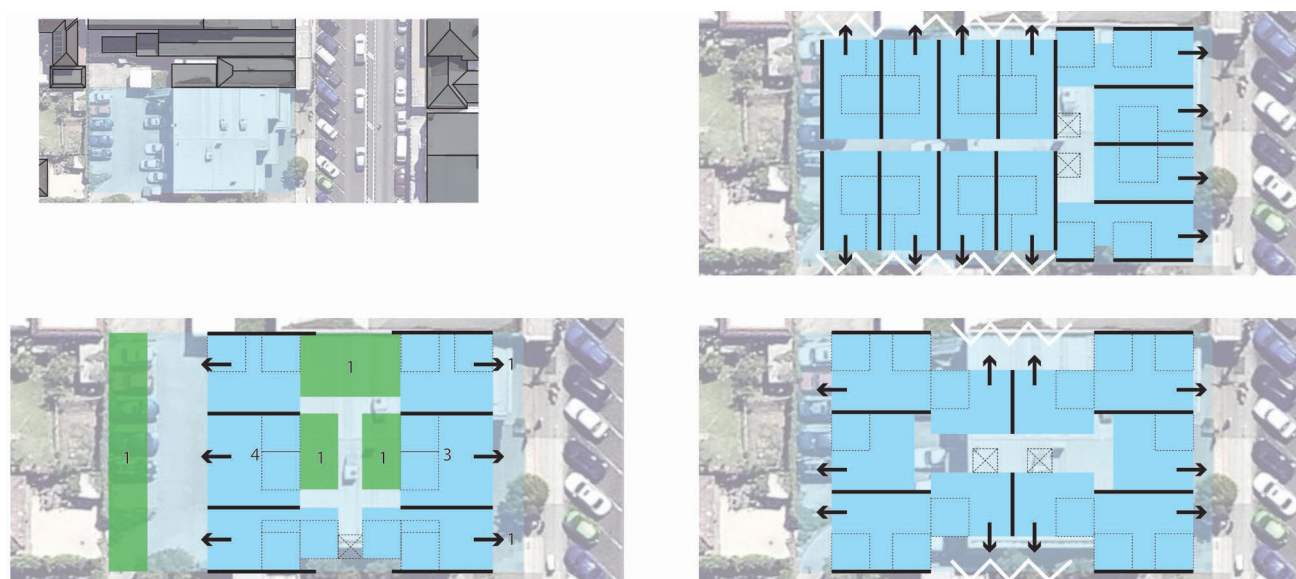


Figure 5: Example of consolidated development amenity



4.2 Output

Once the Council has determined the preferred development outcomes and incentives, a promotional information brochure (or other communication collateral) can be produced and distributed to the target audience/s.

This material should be highly visual and contain simple 3 dimensional development configurations, which comply with the Design Guidelines and clearly illustrate the encouraged development capacity within both narrow and consolidated sites.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of development case studies, a number of actions and potential incentives (refer to Figure 6) have been identified that can encourage investment and redevelopment of properties fronting Station Street. These are outlined below:

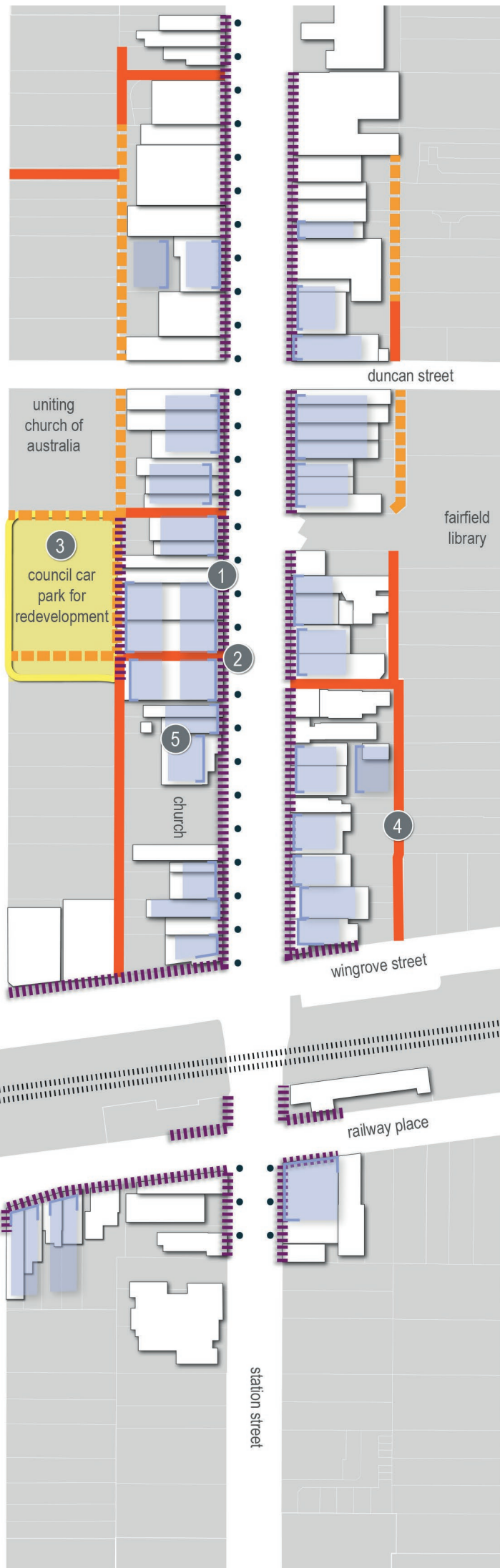
- Council prepare a promote a modest development model for 'shop-top' integrated form on a typical commercial site and assess the potential for a demonstration project.
- Council provide grants towards the restoration of existing traditional parapets to improve the facade presentation of buildings within the streetscape. A grant could off-set the cost of repainting the façade, removal of old or unnecessary signage (to reduce visual clutter), provision of new (high quality) signage (subject to Council approval).
- Council facilitate a streamlined planning approval process for compliant development applications within the streetscape.
- Council offer discounted or reduced property rates during the period of construction.
- Council provide access to Council-owned spaces within the Fairfield Village enabling businesses to continue trading within Fairfield (retaining its customers) during the construction phase.
- Relocate existing overhead powerlines (from poles) to aerial bundled location behind parapets, or underground in consultation with relevant authorities.
- Council allow reduced car parking rates (dispensations) for new 'shop-top' development.
- Establish and/or formalise rear laneway access arrangements to properties fronting Station Street (in consultation with land owners).
- Council redevelop the Gillies Street car park into a multi-level car park as a facility to support public parking and other private off-site parking for new 'shop-top' developments along Station Street and/or a car share program.
- Council help coordinate development facilitation and liaison between adjoining land owners to 'unlock' greater investment potential by encouraging redevelopment in a more coordinated and contiguous manner, across existing property ownership lines.



fairfield village concept framework plan: development incentives

- 1 declutter facade signage
 - 2 relocate powerlines along station street (ie. underground)
 - 3 potential redevelopment of the council car park
 - 4 establish and/or formalise the laneway network
 - 5 encourage upper level (shop top) development along station street
- existing laneway ———
proposed laneway ———

Figure 6





5 STREETScape DESIGN & INFRASTRUCTURE

The purpose of workshop 4 was to examine critical issues of street infrastructure including matters of mobility and access. The process sought firstly to discuss the current state of play in relation to car parking and traffic within the Fairfield Village, as well as sustainable transport options and appropriate design. Secondly, the process sought to identify opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycling priority and safety, and the potential for Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) given drainage management issues.

5.1 Findings

The following findings reflect the particular aspirations for site specific locations within the centre and particular infrastructure issues.

5.1.1 Station Street

The Station Street road reserve is 24m wide and presently managed by VicRoads. It presently accounts for 20,000 AADT. Its image as a local village strip is affected by traffic congestion.

Under the VicRoads SmartRoads framework, Station Street (through Fairfield Village) is identified as a Pedestrian Priority Area. This applies a 40kph speed limit and a road corridor within which pedestrian movement takes priority over vehicle movements and higher pedestrian amenity is encouraged. This is presently not evident in the streetscape profile.

Station Street had significant canopy street trees until they were removed and replaced 5-6 years ago. Their removal has dramatically changed the streetscape character of Station Street, exposing shop facades and signage, and resulting in a greater sense of openness.


Grange Road (to the east of Station Street) is identified by VicRoads as the Preferred Traffic Route with one of the State Government's identified future grade separation projects. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Grange Road will be a preferred north-south through traffic route to carry the bulk of north-south traffic in the area. Thereby relieving a considerable amount of through movements in Station Street. It is also noted that the Chandler Highway bridge duplication project is now underway.



Station Street circa 2008, with canopy trees



Public seating along Station Street



There are considerable pedestrian safety issues around the Station Street railway level crossing as a result of the crest in the carriageway (across the rail corridor), which creates poor sightlines at the Wingrove Street and Station Street junction. This presents issues for motorists seeking to exit Wingrove Street into Station Street, cyclists seeking to cross Station Street (and continue along the east-west on-street cycle route along Wingrove Street), as well as pedestrian movements along Station Street and across Wingrove Street.

Under current management arrangements, Station Street is under the jurisdiction of VicRoads and Council is responsible for the areas between the back of kerb and property lines (i.e. footpath) and manages the on-street parking. VicRoads has indicated that their 5 year Strategic Network Review could facilitate transfer of the asset to Council 'ownership'. However, Council would then become responsible for the cost of maintenance of the road reserve. While Council has yet to take on this responsibility, it is clear that improvement to the road reserve and its pedestrian amenity would be improved if it were the responsible party.

Council may wish to undertake an economic cost-benefit analysis to help determine whether there is a case for taking over management of the Station Street road reserve (and therefore maintenance costs) from VicRoads. The case in favor of assuming management responsibility will require a strong evidence base in order to justify the additional cost. It will need to find the value and benefit to Council (and the community) in having greater control over the corridor to initiate public realm and traffic management improvements.

It is also noted that Council's Green Streets Strategy (2012-2020) incentives Station Street as one of Darebin's 'Major Gateway Streetscapes', where a Streetscape Master Plan will be required to develop a coordinated plan for renewal.

Given the desire to improve the pedestrian image of the street and the recent loss of notable street trees, a sense of designated 'pausepoints,' signalised crossings and crossing 'refuges' were tabled. The provision of a planted central median strip was suggested as a transformative device to enhance pedestrian priority within the Fairfield Village. This is discussed in more detail at Section 6.2.

Cycling

Council does not expressly encourage cycling along Station Street (through Fairfield Village). North-south cycle movements are encouraged along Gillies Street to the west and further west, along Victoria Street.

Wingrove Street is identified as major east-west cycle link. However, the east-west crossing of Station Street is perceived as a significant barrier to movement. Improved traffic signals and safety measures should be explored at this key location in association with the level crossing review.



5.1.2 Duncan Street

Given the narrow profile of Duncan Street and the complexities of the Station Street junction, workshop 4 suggested that the section of Duncan Street between Station Street and Gillies Street be converted to a one-way (west bound) street. This part of Duncan Street has a road reserve of approximately 10.5m, which currently allows for a 3m traffic lane in each direction with no provision for on-street car parking and particularly narrow footpaths to each side. The section of Duncan Street further to the west of Gillies Street is currently one way (east bound). Altering traffic movements between Station Street and Gilles Street in such a way will prevent right-turn movements from Duncan Street into Station Street, thereby improving traffic safety for both pedestrians and motorists. The main traffic function of this section of Duncan Street will allow access from Station Street westwards to Gillies Street in order access in the Gillies Street car park.

The implementation of such a one-way street will provide opportunities to narrow the road pavement and broaden footpaths to improve pedestrian amenity and access and also provide more space for cyclists. This should be supported by properties which 'wrap' the corner from Station Street into Duncan Street, and potentially extend kerbside trading into Duncan Street. Alternatively, a shared surface treatment could be implemented which would afford the opportunity to close Duncan Street (to traffic) for events such as street festivals or markets.

The Business Association have put forward a proposal to close Duncan Street to traffic and create a civic plaza, which could contain a public toilet. This concept is not inconsistent with the notion of a centrally located prime public space at or near Duncan and Station Streets.



Existing Duncan Street condition, looking west from Station Street

5.1.3 Laneways

The Fairfield Village currently has a variety of formal (and informal) access arrangements to rear service laneways and the rear of Commercial 1 Zoned properties. These existing access-ways currently exist under the following classifications:

- Formal Laneway; and
- Access Easements.

There are a number of informal or missing links in the Village's access network. As a general principle, Council should seek to address these missing links to create a more functional access network to all properties fronting Station Street. This would in particular benefit properties which currently have no legal right of access (to the rear). Provision of such access would greatly assist the redevelopment potential of these properties. Refer to Figure 10 for the proposed lane links.

These include links to:

- The rear of 114 to 126 Station Street;
- The rear of 128 to 144 Station Street;
- The rear of 143 to 145 Station Street; and
- The rear of 125 to 135 Station Street.

In relation to the Gillies Street car park, two options were discussed in relation to the informal access way to the rear of properties at 110-124 Station Street.

These include links at:

- Two new east-west laneways along the northern and southern edge of the car park land; and
- A new north-south laneway along the eastern edge of the car park land, to the rear of 96-114 Station Street.



5.1.4 Flooding

Fairfield Village suffers from the threat of occasional flooding, which has a considerable influence on both its function and image while also affecting redevelopment potential. The extent of the Special Building Overlay is shown.

In the Special Building Overlay configuration in the Planning Scheme. This condition is worsened by the rail alignment which acts as a levy wall to the natural overland flow path from the north-west. The only outlet (across the rail line) for overland flow is the pedestrian underpass (of the rail corridor) between Wingrove Street and Railway Place (at the southern end of Arthur Street).

There are 3 key areas within the Fairfield Village where the issue of flooding could be addressed (refer to Figure 7). These are:

- Council's Gillies Street car park;
- The Wingrove/Arthur Street junction and pedestrian rail underpass; and
- Along Station Street, between Duncan Street and the rail corridor.

New streetscape works in Station Street within the overland flow path would need to be sensitive to and complement the overland flow regime. This highlights the benefits of a planted median within the road reserve and WSUD treatments. Any central median in Station Street would need breaks or openings along its length to maintain the existing flow of flood waters across the road. Such streetscape works also present opportunities to incorporate flood mitigation and overland flow retardation.

Given the drainage pinch point at Wingrove and Arthur Streets concepts, were advanced for WSUD improvements of the setting, including a potential widening of the pedestrian underpass. This could form part of a holistic review of the junction, which is presently framed as a 'car friendly' roundabout. The existing roundabout occupies a portion of land which is a Council open space reserve (and not justifiable as the most appropriate use of the land). Given this location's role on an identified cycle route and its proximity to the rail crossing an alternative design is worth contemplating. There is potential to reconfigure the intersection to provide an improved intersection treatment that gives priority to east-west movement that requires a lesser footprint. Such a rationalised design would enable an increased area of consolidated public space abutting the northern entrance to the pedestrian underpass and in turn enhance flood mitigation measures.



Figure 7: Existing Special Building Overlay (SBO) extent and proposed subtractions

5.1.5 Gillies Street car park

The workshop 4 process determined that there should be no net loss of public car parking within the Fairfield Village. Analysis of Council's 2013 car parking data demonstrates that the Council-owned Gillies Street car park (at 75-81 Gillies Street) was not operating at peak capacity. This finding differs to anecdotal evidence from locals and businesses.

Given this significant Council asset is well located and connected (via two pedestrian laneways) to the 'core' area of the Fairfield Village, it has the potential to fulfill a critical role in unlocking the development potential of nearby Commercial 1 Zone properties, while still retaining its current public car parking function.

A redevelopment of this surface car park site could accommodate a number of different uses and functions that are currently lacking (or can not be accommodated within nearby private land), while also maintaining a critical service and parking role.

These uses, functions and considerations for potential development are shown on Figure 9 and include reference following matters as per the listing shown:

- Car parking;
- Service vehicle access;
- Continued business operation;
- Public toilet;
- Flooding;
- Potential Public Space; and
- Housing.

Car parking

The primary function of the site is the provision of off-street car parking. Accommodating on-site car parking on nearby commercial properties (which front onto Station Street) is a significant challenge and in some cases not possible. This is partly due to the lack of legal access to the rear of properties, but also due to their narrow widths and the inability to accommodate sufficient car parking spaces to enable additional floorspace (at upper levels). This is a key limiting factor in relation to redevelopment on the western side of Station Street, between Wingrove Street and Duncan Street.

The potential redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park could accommodate additional car park spaces that could service new private development along Station Street. The existing car park contains 77 spaces. As indicated in Figure 9, this provision could be significantly increased to at least 139 spaces. The provision of public parking in tandem with private 'off site' parking spaces could be undertaken through various ownership, lease arrangements or car share programs and are worthy of further consideration.



Gillies Street car park

Service vehicle access

There is a carriageway easement at the approximate mid-point of the Gillies Street car park frontage, but this is not physically evident in the car park layout (refer to Figure 8). It allows legal access to the rear of 102-106 Station Street. However, 96 Station Street (Foodworks), 98 Station Street (Biviano & Sons) and 108-112 Station Street do not have a legal right of carriage to the rear of their properties, despite access currently being provided through the car park.

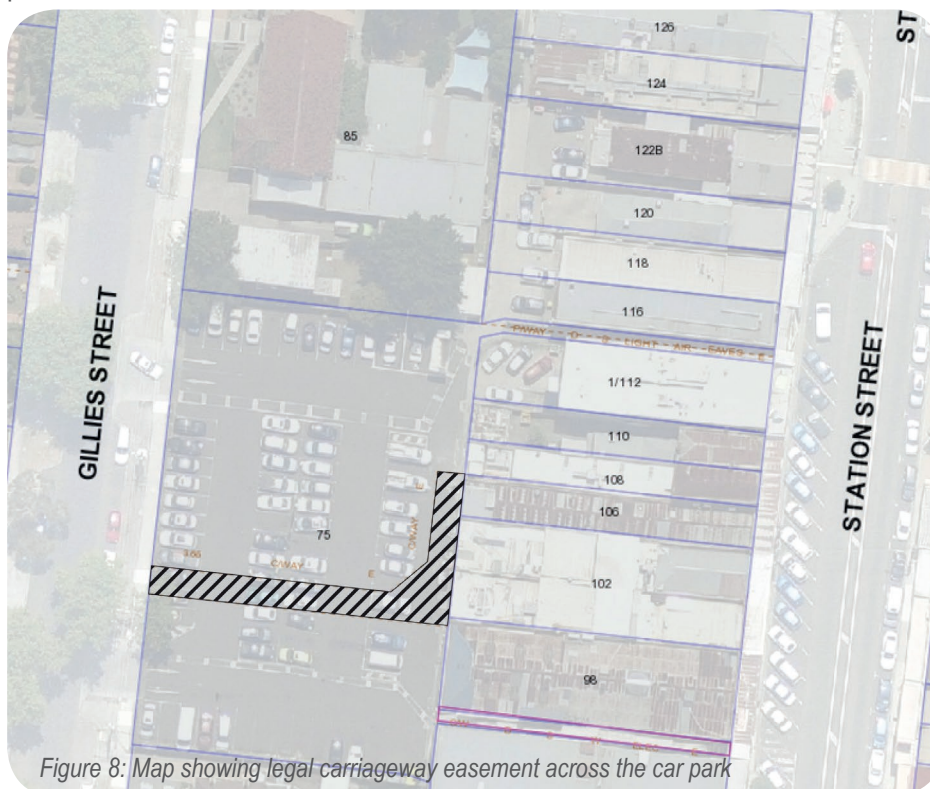
Therefore, any redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park should allow continued service vehicle access to the rear of all Station Street properties (96-112 Station Street) adjacent to the car park. This access should be sufficient to accommodate a 12m semi-rigid design vehicle which is a standard IGA supermarket service vehicle. This could be established via a one-way loop around the site with access running along the northern and southern boundaries of the car park to minimise the need for vehicles to turn around. This would also ensure that the majority of the site remains as a consolidated parcel.

Continued business operation

Another perceived impediment to redevelopment of properties along Station Street is the potential threat to continued business operation during construction phase.

There is potential for redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park to accommodate new or interim tenancies, which would front Gillies Street as an active 'sleeve' to a car park structure. These tenancies could be Council assets that are leased to business owners who are either in the process of redeveloping their property (to include shop-top housing) or to new local businesses.

These tenancies could also be utilised as small business incubators, civic or community services, short term festival or function operators or other fringe commercial operations.



Public toilet

Any redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park could incorporate a safe and secure public toilet. This facility should be located in a highly visible and trafficable area at ground floor.

Flooding

There is potential for a redevelopment of the Council owned car park as a new freestanding structure with parking and associated retail frontage. Any redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park is unlikely to be able to support a conventional basement given potential for flooding. However, given the substantial size of the site and the need for extensive ground works and foundations to support a possible multi-storey mixed use car park structure, there is the potential to design and construct a substantial subterranean structure that could accommodate a volume of water. The storage cell could accommodate large water tanks that would fill during a peak rainfall events, thus reducing the pressure on existing stormwater infrastructure.

It is estimated that approximately 3600m³ litres of stormwater could be accommodated and later released into the drainage system or recycled to civic benefit.



Gillies Street car park

Potential Public Space

The top level of the multi-storey car park is not likely to be fully utilised for parking in the short to medium term. The ultimate demand will depend on the take up of shop-top housing. Therefore, there is potential for the top level to accommodate a public/semi-public space, which can benefit from unimpeded access to sunlight and distant views.

One potential use could be as a community garden, similar to the 'Pop up Patch' at Federation Square. Through a membership program, it enables local residents, restaurants and businesses the opportunity to grow their own fresh produce. Other potential uses for the rooftop as a public space could include a:

- Child Care Centre;
- Beer Garden;
- Skate Park;
- Rooftop Cinema; or
- Farmer's Market.

Figure 9 contains an indicative concept plan of a multi-level mixed use car park. The plans and section document a site planning concept based on an efficient car park layout with the constraints of the site and its access requirements.

Housing

Parts of any redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park can also include a mixed use profile allowing for housing or home office functions. Multi level redevelopment of sites of this kind are well suited to community, co-op or housing association projects that can provide a positive financial return to Council without it sacrificing ownership of the land. This could also allow a continuing private car park function consistent with the status quo.



Pop up patch at Federation Square

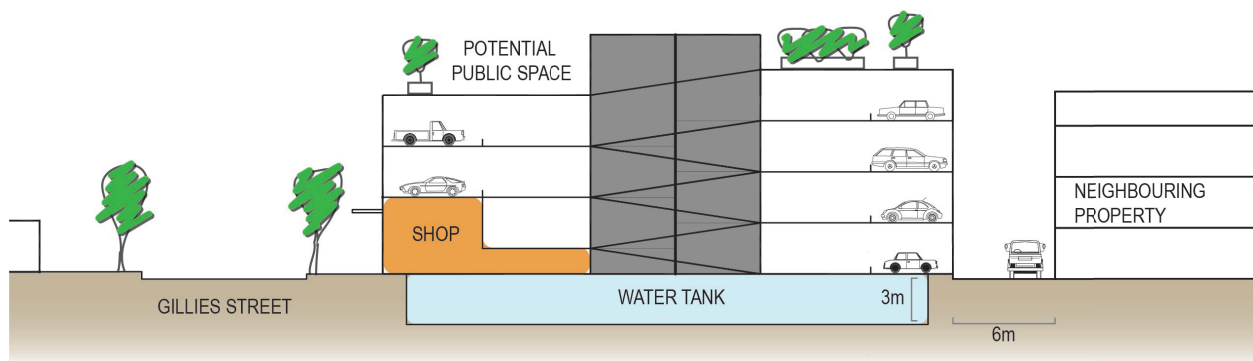
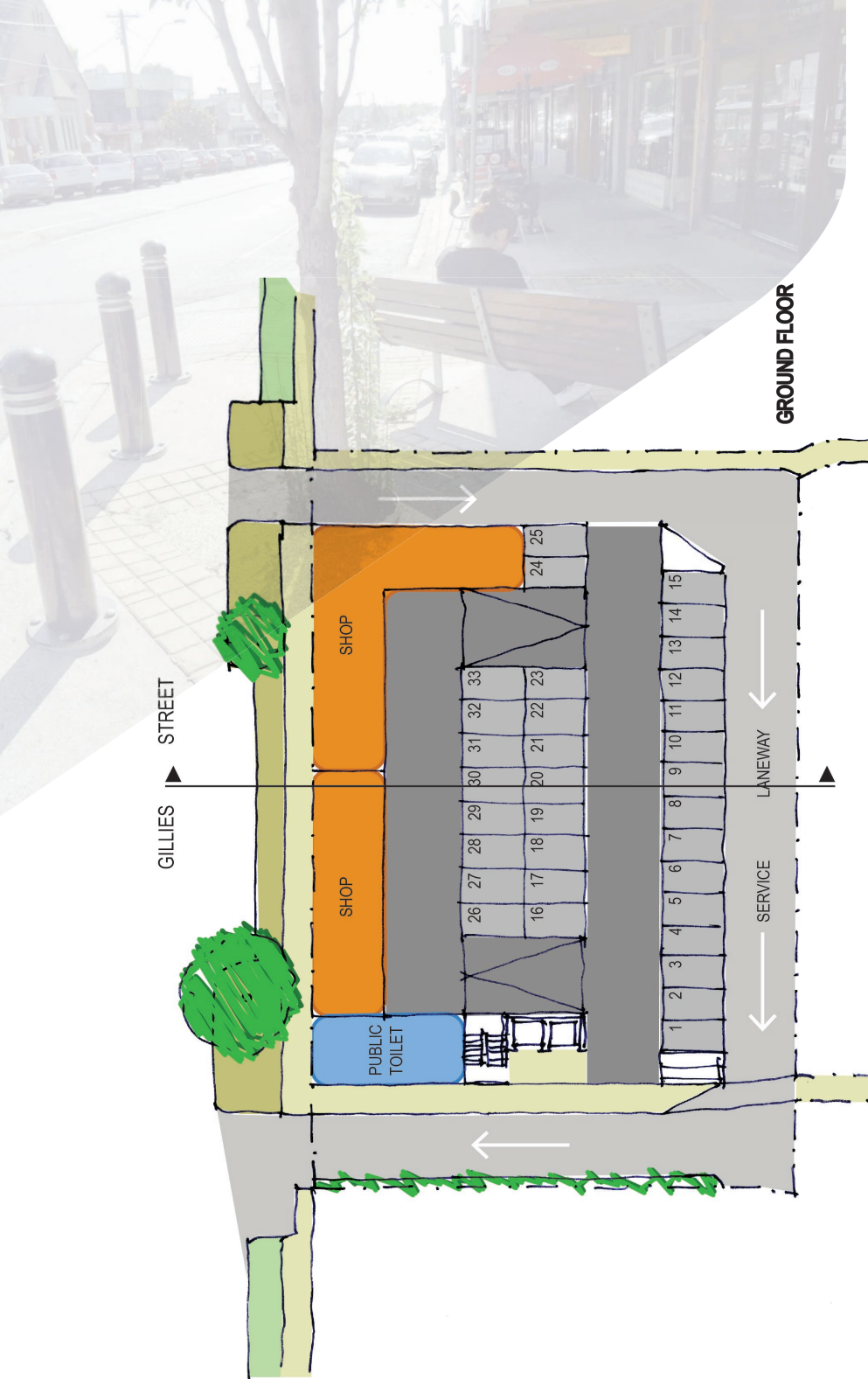


Figure 9: Indicative potential layout and design for Gillies Street car park redevelopment

GILLIES STREET CAR PARK SECTION DETAIL

Recommendations

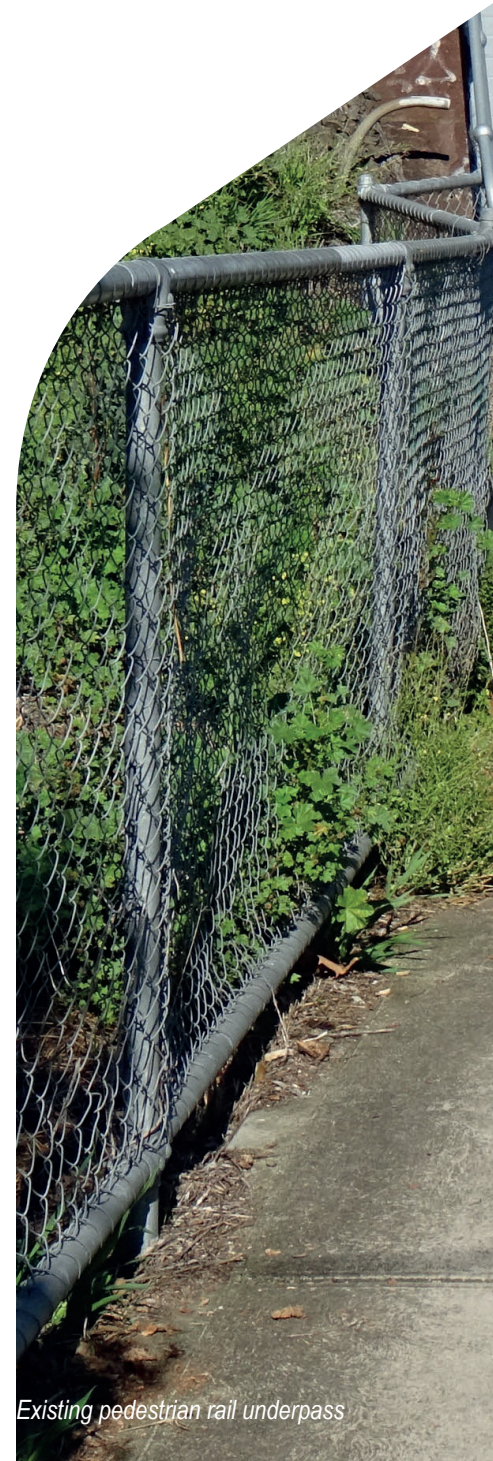
The following are the recommendations in relation to streetscape design and infrastructure matters (refer to Figure 10 and 11):

- Undertake a car parking study of the Gilles Street car park to determine current parking usage and users (shoppers, business operators/employees) and delivery vehicle access arrangements.
- Improve cyclist access and safety along Wingrove Street and in particular across Station Street.
- Undertake a street 'greening' initiative to incorporate more canopy trees and other WSUD treatments to 'soften' the streetscape.
- A formal clustering of trees (grove) should be planted at formalised pedestrian crossings to provide increased amenity for pedestrians and provide visual cues to motorists.
- Install a central planted median strip along Station Street, focusing on the area between the railway corridor and the northern edge of the Activity Centre.
- Undertake a strategic footpath upgrade incorporating treatments to both the existing footpaths and along the rear laneways within the Activity Centre.
- Creation of a unified zone, incorporating surface treatments and removal of armco barriers along the level crossing on Station Street (between Railway Place and Wingrove Street).
- Provide additional pedestrian crossing points along Station Street at Wingrove and Duncan Streets and allow for more informal mid-block pedestrian crossings.
- Formalise a rear laneway to the rear of 110-124 Station Street and a link to the rear of 126 Station Street, to provide a continuous connection between the Gillies Street car park and Duncan Street.
- Engage with affected properties owners in relation to formalising legal rights of access and 'filling in' the identified missing links in the Village's laneway network.
- Council undertake flood mitigation works and other flood management initiatives to address the known flood problems in partnership with Melbourne Water.
- Explore opportunities to incorporate flood mitigation treatments in any streetscape works within Station Street, between Wingrove and Duncan Streets.
- Investigate options for installing signals to one side of the rail crossing to improve pedestrian safety. This could occur either at Railway Place/Station Street or Wingrove Street/Station Street.
- Investigate the potential to rationalise the roundabout at Wingrove and Arthur Streets, prioritise east-west movements and create an increased area of consolidated public open space in this location.
- Investigate the potential to make Duncan Street (between Station Street and Gillies Street) a one-way street, with a broader footpaths or shared surface treatment.
- Incorporate water tanks within any future redevelopment of the Gilles Street car park to accommodate stormwater.



Recommendations (continued)

- Implement public realm enhancement around the rail-pedestrian underpass as a key pedestrian entrance to Fairfield Village.
- At the northern end of the underpass explore the potential to incorporate a stormwater retarding basin as part of any upgrade to the existing public open space.
- Widen the pedestrian rail underpass (drainage culvert) to both increase the drainage capacity underneath the rail corridor (during peak events), as well as to improve the safety and sightlines for pedestrian and cyclists using the underpass.



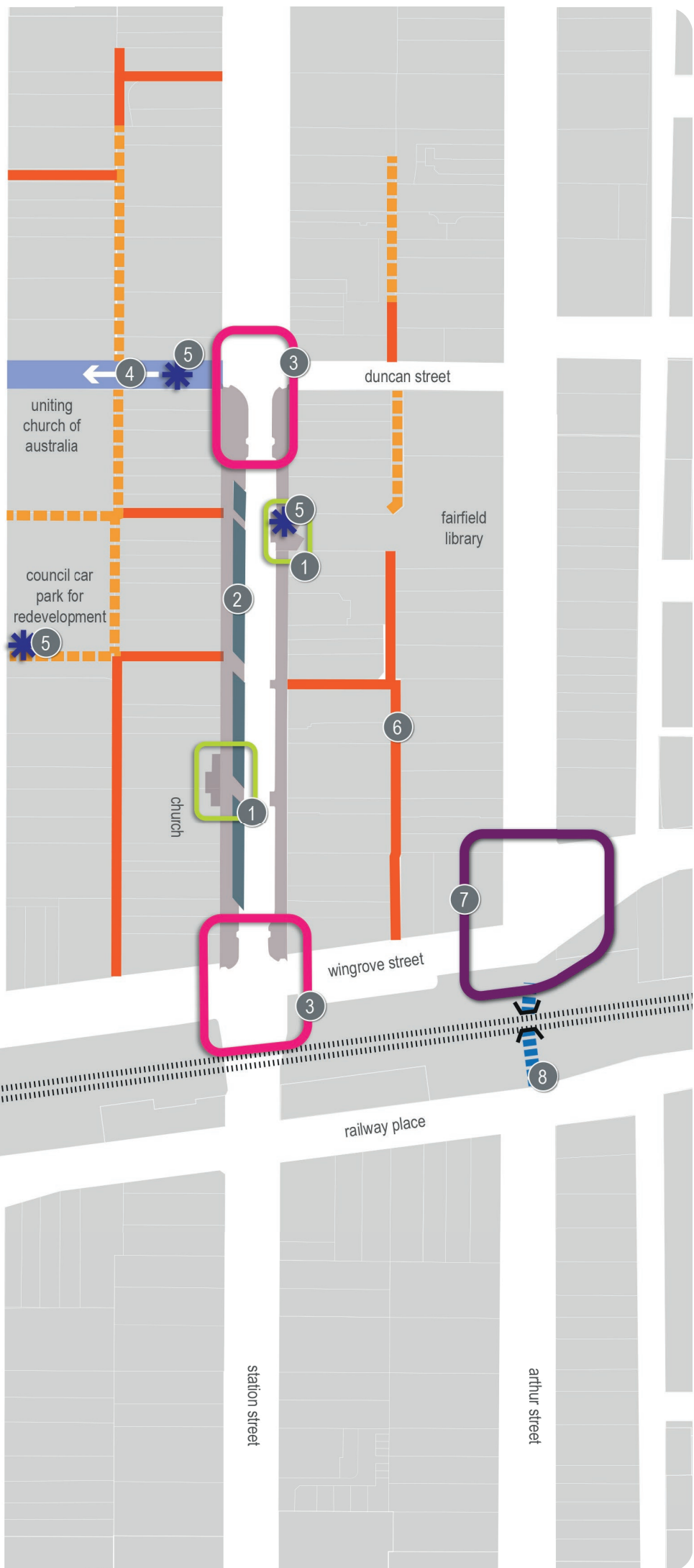
Existing pedestrian rail underpass



fairfield village concept framework plan: infrastructure

- 1 establish nodes or pause points along station street
 - 2 explore opportunity to integrate WSUD within existing kerb
 - 3 demarcate major junctions along station street
 - 4 establish one way street along duncan street
 - 5 provide public toilets (potential location)
 - 6 establish laneway network
 - 7 investigate opportunity to improve intersection
 - 8 widen pedestrian underpass
- existing laneway ———
- proposed laneway - - - - -

Figure 10





fairfield village concept framework plan: open space/ drainage

improve drainage along station street
by introducing WSUD treatments

1

install a water tank in the
redevelopment of the council car park

2

provide retarding basin

3

widen pedestrian underpass

4

Figure 11





6 STREETScape / PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS FRAMEWORK PLAN

The purpose of workshop 5 was to define a series of clear streetscape and public realm improvements that were informed by an understanding of the strategic directions for the streetscape. The conclusion of this phase was to set out a concise plan or 'road map' for Fairfield Village's public space regime.

6.1 Discussion

In formulating public realm improvements, it was considered important to recognise the existing characteristics of Fairfield's streetscape character. The following words were identified as representing the Fairfield 'Village feel':

- Organic,
- Earthy,
- Local, and
- Inner-urban grit.

Furthermore, the following key themes and cues were identified as a basis for a 'responsive' local design expression.

Local histories

Fairfield has a strong local history, with many of the local culture and residents and business owners having occupied and used the Activity Centre for generations. The opportunity exists to gather the language of place through oral history and utilise 'stories' in public realm improvements. Publically displaying and sharing the oral history of Fairfield adds 'meaning' to place and can assist further in reinforcing a distinction between the Village and other nearby shopping malls. An example of this can be found at Elwood Canal, where hand-made ceramic tiles tell brief stories of the canal's history.

Recording oral histories can be incorporated into the engagement and consultation processes Council undertakes in delivering strategic projects. Documenting a place's past is often a positive way to start a debate about public design.



Image of the Elwood Canal precedent



Public realm improvements in Fairfield Village

Community Engagement

The Fairfield community are also likely to be highly responsive to a 'tactical urbanism' approach (utilising low cost, temporary changes within the public realm) to engagement with the local community while testing and prototyping public realm improvements, such as additional street furniture or pop-up parks. It is also proven that a local community is more likely to be engaged by an interactive and more informal consultation program than a more traditional empirical survey.

Fairfield is also a good place to undertake pilot projects with an environmentally sustainable focus. The community are known to be progressive about sustainability, with good results in the uptake of community and public project initiatives.

Fairfield Mosaics

The existing Station Street public realm contains a relatively modest profile of concrete paving with standardised street furnishing and recent landscape plantings. The streetscape's most distinctive elements are the individual mosaic artworks inlaid into the footpath at regular intervals. These mosaics (from 1994) were created by local community and businesses at the time. Their designs and subject matter reference and celebrate Fairfield's history and development. These mosaics are highly valued by the local community and need to be respectfully incorporated in any future public realm enhancements.



Sample of existing mosaic in Station Street footpath

Fairfield Industrial Dog Object (FIDO)

FIDO is the key public realm landmark within the Village, standing 5.5m tall and in a prominent position along Station Street, near the Train Station, this timber sculpture has become the symbol for Fairfield. Despite the initial controversy when the public art sculpture was announced (in 1999), Fido has become accepted by the community. It's recycled hardwood timber construction has since been strongly referenced in more recent public realm improvements, such as the informal seating located between FIDO and the Train Station entrance and also elsewhere along Station Street.

Wingrove Reserve

Council's Playspace Strategy (2010-2020) and Open Space Strategy (2007-2017) recommend an informal 'play' and landscaping upgrade to the Wingrove Reserve. Given the Reserve's immediate proximity to the rail pedestrian underpass and its drainage and WSUD potential, it is recommended that informal 'play' opportunities should be integrated into a future detention basin.



Informal timber seating



FIDO

6.2 Findings

Potential for Central Median

The Station Street road reserve (north of the rail corridor) is 24m wide. The total width available for traffic and parking is 16m wide. The existing road reserve dimensions are as follows (refer to Figure 12):

- Angled parking - 5.0m
- North bound lane - 3.5m
- Painted median - 1.5m
- South bound lane - 3.5m
- Parallel parking - 2.5m

As part of the workshop processes, Council's traffic team undertook traffic investigations to determine if there was sufficient space to accommodate a planted central median, without affecting the existing car parking arrangement. Following this investigation, the follow reviewed measurements were proposed:

- Angled parking – retain at 5.0m
- North bound lane – retain at 3.5m
- Central median – increase to 1.9m
- South bound lane – retain at 3.5m
- Parallel parking – reduce to 2.1m

This provides the basis as demonstrated in High Street, Preston for an established median with greenery.



Figure 12: Draft Station Street cross-section incorporating a 1.9m wide central median, prepared by Council

In order to accommodate the 1.9m wide central median, 0.4m has been deducted from parallel parking along the eastern side of Station Street, in addition to greening opportunities, by introducing a central median limits opportunities for vehicles to 'veer out' behind reversing cars, resulting in further slowing of traffic and an improved pedestrian environment.

Council's engineering services have confirmed that there are no services passing along the middle of the Station Street that would affect the potential for a central median (and tree planting). However, there is an existing sewer line which is offset approximately 4m from the centreline of Station Street, which may need to be addressed when selecting tree species and associated root spread.



Vehicle 'veering out' onto existing painted median

Street Greening

There is an acknowledged distinction between the favourable public amenity of Railway Place in the south, with its considerable greenery and the relatively bare profile of Station Street and its car dominated setting. To facilitate a shift in this imbalance, new steps to 'regreen' Station Street should be contemplated, with a combination of median effects, plantings and the potential for flexible expanded pedestrian spaces in shoppide locations, which can be co-utilised for parking or pedestrian space at dedicated times. These initiatives should be designed in keeping with the themes identified above.

Kerbside/Pavement Extensions

Potential for the widening of the pedestrian realm at particular locations such as at defined 'pause points', crossing locations or laneway links represents a viable opportunity. This can be achieved in places with a 'flush' pavement in lieu of the traditional stepped kerb and channel, with drainage achieved through a linear grille. Such a configuration also envisages a WSUD treatment, located beneath a trafficable, perforated grate. Native grasses could be grown through the grate to further 'green' the streetscape and may be designed in tandem with tree grates, canopy plantings and a solid timber wheel stop or bench seat at the edge of the footpath. In certain instances, the space can function as a fluid pedestrian zone to good effect. This model is to a regime of repetitious upstand bollard at 5m centres. (Refer to Figure 13).

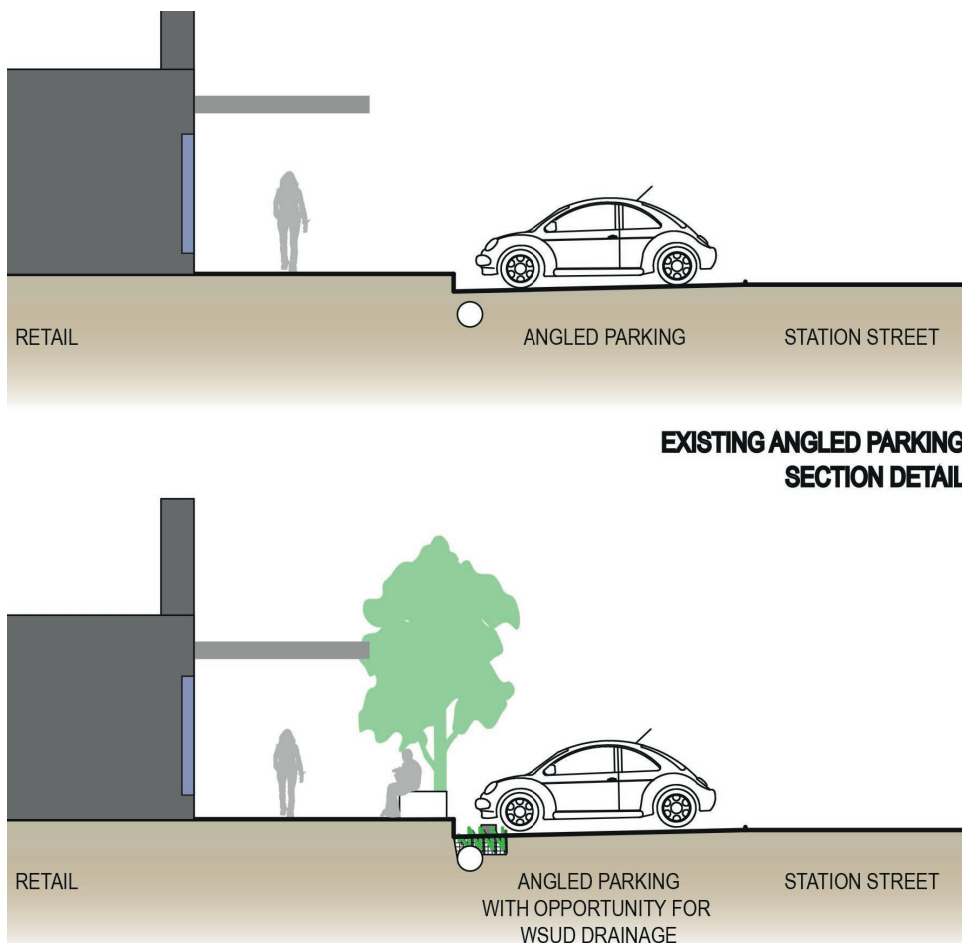


Figure 13: Indicative integrated WSUD kerb design for angled parking along Station Street



Existing no U-turn sign on Station Street



Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)

Council is keen to encourage WSUD treatments within the Fairfield Village. One possible feature could be the use of more consistent or continuous permeable paving and road surfaces to reduce instances of overland flooding. This is recommended along the western side of Station Street in Figure 13.

Another important WSUD feature could be a detention basin within the Wingrove Street road reserves near the junction of Arthur Street. Such a detention basin would perform an important drainage function by capturing and storing stormwater (during a storm event) as well as an enhanced entrance to the existing pedestrian rail underpass. It would incorporate improved sightlines into the underpass. It could also contain informal 'play' opportunities to align with Council's Open Space Strategy.

Railway Place

Railway Place has a different character and feel when compared to the rest of the Fairfield Village and in particular Station Street. Therefore, any future public realm enhancements in Railway Place should seek to further enhance this differentiation.

The east-west alignment of Railway Place results in a sunny northern aspect to the footpath on the southern side of the street. Further, the train station provides an open and leafy outlook from within the street.

It is recommended that the section of Railway Place between Station Street and Gillies Street be modified into a shared zone so to encourage greater pedestrian and cyclist priority. This may be realised in the form of painted surface effects, raised thresholds or a narrowed carriageway. Each option serves to increase cross permeability, to and from the train station.

Pedestrian improvements around level crossing

The area incorporating the intersection of Station Street/ Wingrove Street/ Railway Place, including the railway level crossing, has emerged as a key area of focus for investigating improvements to pedestrian safety and accessibility. Due to the complex layout of the railway level crossing and street layouts, Station Street traffic volumes, cycling facilities, bus routes and pedestrian movements, the intersection experience is relatively dangerous and accommodates various competing transport modes and movements.

Council has commissioned design plans for treatment options that address pedestrian safety and impact on all modes of transport. All designs are to include provision for safe bicycle crossing of both the railway level crossing and Station Street. In addition, public realm improvement opportunities will be incorporated where possible. The focus of this design should reinforce the need for greenery and pedestrian visibility at this key junction. The design work will be completed by the end of 2015.

Traffic requirements

Councillors have also requested that investigation into safety barriers along the length of Station Street be undertaken, given recent incidents of where cars have mounted the footpath and damaged shop fronts.

Local Businesses are seeking bollards or wheel stops to prevent cars from accessing the footpath. Conventional bollards are not a preferred model in this case, however a simple timber wheel stop-bench configuration maybe contemplated. The implementation of a central median with WSUD treatments will also assist safety concerns, and slow vehicle movements and manoeuvres in the immediate locality of the footpath.

Breaks should be provided for in the central median at junctions only to allow existing right-turn movements into streets or laneways. Provision of mid-block breaks for U-turn purposes are not supported, as the turning movements are considered too tight (and would likely result in a need for 3 point manoeuvres).

Waste Management

Council requires both litter and recycling bins to be retained in the street. It is important that bins and their location and frequency (spatial separation from bin to bin) are a fixed part of any streetscape masterplan. Bins should be placed at a maximum intervals of 40m.



Existing level crossing on Station Street



Public Toilet

There is a shared community and business owners desire for a 'proper' public toilet within the Fairfield Village. There is currently a lack of fully accessible public toilets within the Village. The only current public toilet is within the Fairfield Community Centre (Fairfield Library) at 121 Station Street. However, these are located within the Community Centre and are only accessible when the Centre is open (Mon-Fri 8:30am – 5:30pm and Sat 9am-12pm). For much of the evening and weekend, there is no public toilet facilities within the Village.

There are also public toilets at the Fairfield Station, however they are only accessible to Metro customers, within the ticketed area of the southern (city bound) platform.

There are numerous alternative options to provide a safe and fully accessible public toilet within the Fairfield Village. These are:

- To renovate the existing toilets within the Community Centre so that they can be accessed directly off the Station Street frontage of the building and therefore can be accessible outside the operating hours of the Community Centre;
- To provide a new public toilet integrated within any redevelopment of the Gillies Street car park site;
- To provide a new public toilet as part of a public realm upgrade to the section of Duncan Street (between Station and Gillies Streets); and
- To advocate for the existing toilets within the Station to be renovated, so that they are accessible from the Railway Place frontage of the station and do not require a valid train ticket.

Council is in the process of preparing a Public Toilet Strategy (2015-2025). This strategy is presently at draft status and is about to conduct a detailed audit of all public toilet facilities. The above options should be considered in Council's forthcoming strategy.

Public Drinking Fountain

There is potential for a Yarra Valley Water (YVW) drinking fountain in the Fairfield Village. Council have previously identified a location near the timber dog structure (FIDO) however, this has not been realised. Council should further advocate to YVW for a public drinking fountain. In this setting and also established nodes such as recommended pause points and crossing locations.



Example of public toilet

6.3 Output

The Fairfield Village Concept Framework Plan, it is located at figure 14.

6.4 Recommendations

Undertake a Streetscape Audit to document the existing streetscape elements and features and safety or amenity matters of note. This audit is to inform a future Streetscape Master Plan.

Prepare a Streetscape Master Plan for the Fairfield Villages which seeks to (refer to Figure 14):

- Retain, enhance and reinterpret the existing mosaics within the public realm;
- Implement a 1.9m (wide) central median along Station Street between the rail corridor and the northern extent of the Commercial 1 Zoned land;
- Incorporate WSUD treatments along Station Street, to provide further 'greening' and minor flood mitigation;
- Investigate provision of an improved pedestrian realm and shared surface treatment in Railway Place;
- Investigate pedestrian and traffic movement improvements to and around the level crossing;
- Retain the provision and location of bins in all future public realm improvements;
- Investigate options for public toilet facilities, either new or improved existing facility;
- Investigate appropriate location for a public water fountains;
- Explore treatments of the one-way section of Duncan Street; and
- Advance concepts for 'flush' parking pavement to aid select area pause points and WSUD effects.

Further explore options for timber integrated seat/wheelstops along Station Street.

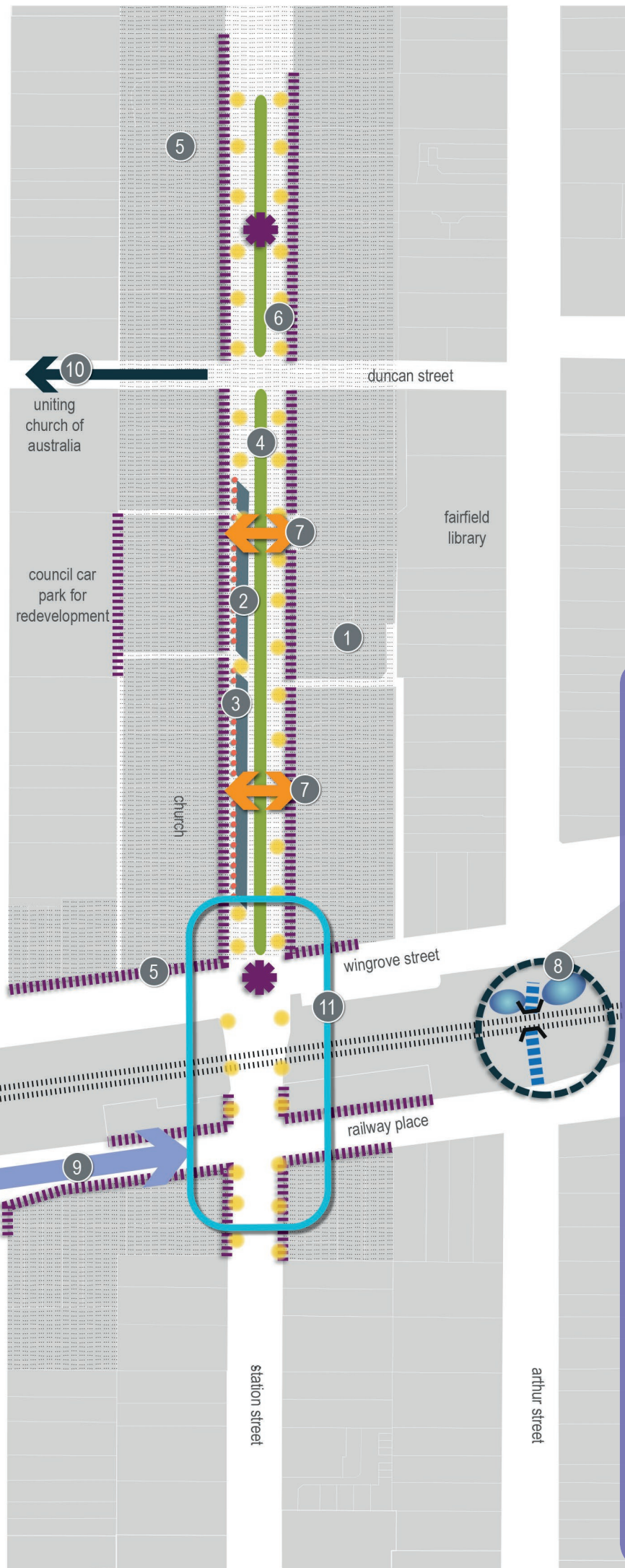


Example of landscaped central median

fairfield village concept framework plan: streetscape

- 1 retain urban grit & organic character
- 2 explore opportunity to integrate WSUD within existing kerb
- 3 investigate the need for safety barriers along angled parking
- 4 establish a 1.9m wide median strip along station street
- 5 improve and declutter signage (facade signage and demarcation signage)
- 6 improve street lighting along station street
- 7 provide additional mid block pedestrian crossing points
- 8 provide retarding basin
- 9 establish a shared way
- 10 investigate one-way traffic movement and public realm improvements
- 11 investigate pedestrian and traffic movement improvements

Figure 14





7 FAIRFIELD VILLAGE CONCEPT FRAMEWORK PLAN

legend

- emerging precinct
- core charm precinct
- garden precinct
- major pedestrian priority intersection nodes/ gathering spaces
- laneway junctions
- new development sites
- existing development site
- potential development envelopes
- indicative upper level / shop top housing
- pedestrian priority area
- unified paving treatment (road)
- indicative pedestrian/vehicle shared way
- laneway network (existing)
- laneway network (proposed)
- pedestrian connections (existing)
- pedestrian connections (proposed)
- pedestrian overpass/ underpass
- encouraged pedestrian network
- existing pedestrian crossings
- opportunity to formalise pedestrian crossing
- central median strip
- commercial buildings
- residential buildings
- community buildings
- train station
- railway line
- retarding basin
- bus stop
- existing / proposed canopy trees

scale: 1:700 @A1

Figure 15

