

GIPPS PRECINCT



Islington Street – looking south from near Collingwood College

Local Area Plan

Adopted 16 February 2010

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Purpose

This Local Area Plan (the Plan) aims to direct and manage change in the Gipps Precinct to increase economic activity and employment, improve the local environment and character and make it a better place for those who visit, work and live in the area.

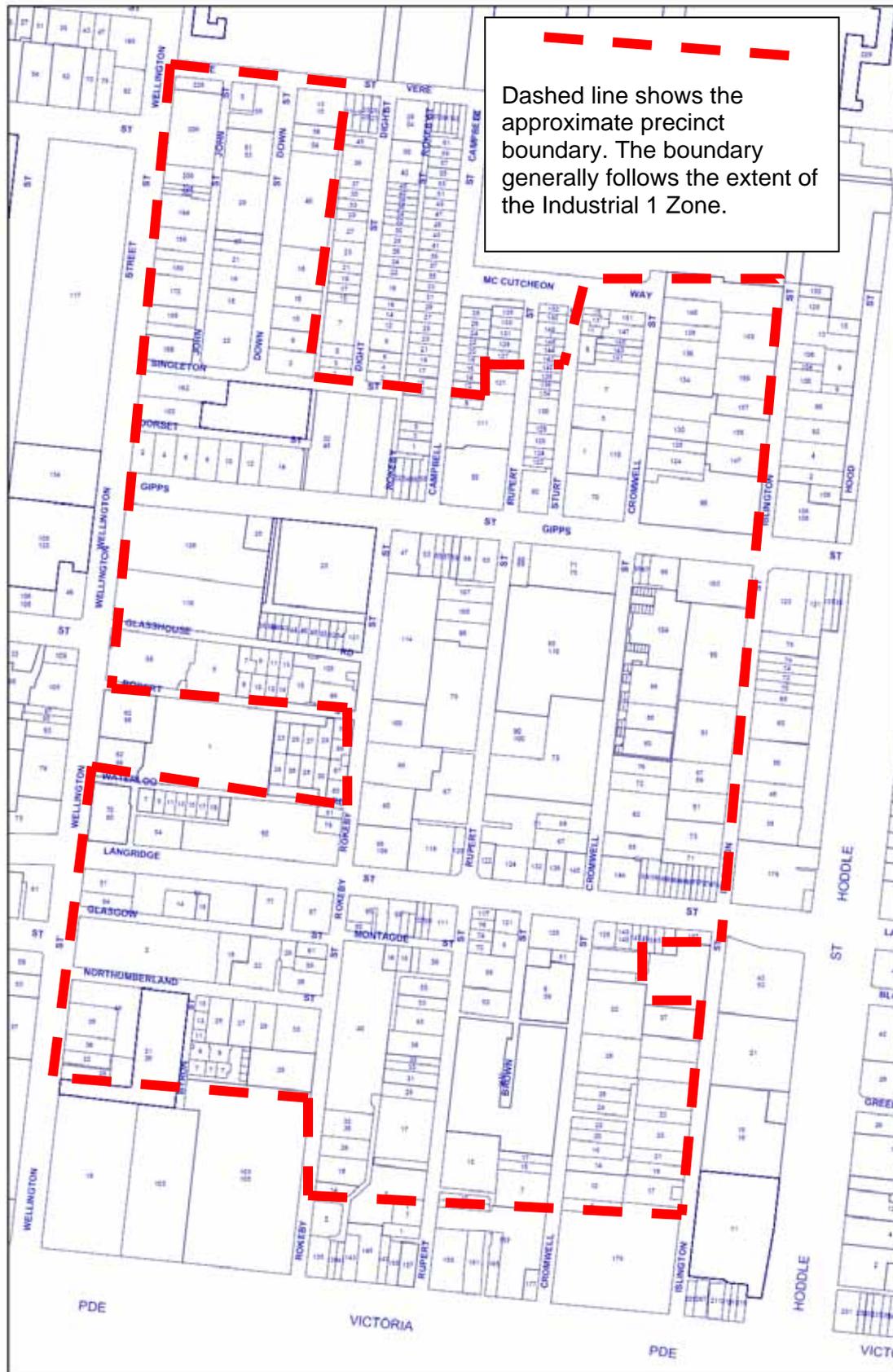
The Gipps Precinct includes all the land within the Industrial 1 Zone between Wellington Street, Victoria Parade, Hoddle Street and Vere Street, Collingwood, as shown on **Plan 1** below.

Plan 1 - Zones



The Precinct area and boundary is shown on Plan 2 Precinct Area.

Plan 2 - Precinct area



The Local Area Plan has been prepared because the Gipps Precinct is proposed to be rezoned, from the current Industrial 1 Zone to a Business 3 Zone. It takes a medium to long term view. It considers activity mix (the mix of land uses), urban form and building design, transport and sustainability.

The Plan includes objectives, strategies and actions which deal with Planning Scheme changes, future land use and form of development, physical improvements and infrastructure investments. It provides the strategic basis for future development and activity mix, preferred future character, a guide for new public works and infrastructure, design guidance and an overall approach to implementation and priorities.

Background

History

The area bounded by Victoria Parade, Hoddle Street, Wellington Street and Vere Street started to take its present form when early roads were established in the 1850's and 60's. Early subdivision and road patterns were haphazard and helped create the network of narrow and poorly connecting streets which form the basic structure of streets and lanes seen today. The name given this precinct comes from Gipps Street named after Sir George Gipps, Governor of New South Wales from 1838 to 1846.

Industry came to this area, as it did in many parts of Fitzroy, Collingwood, Abbotsford and Richmond, to serve local needs and provide local employment. Early industries included boot-making and brewing.

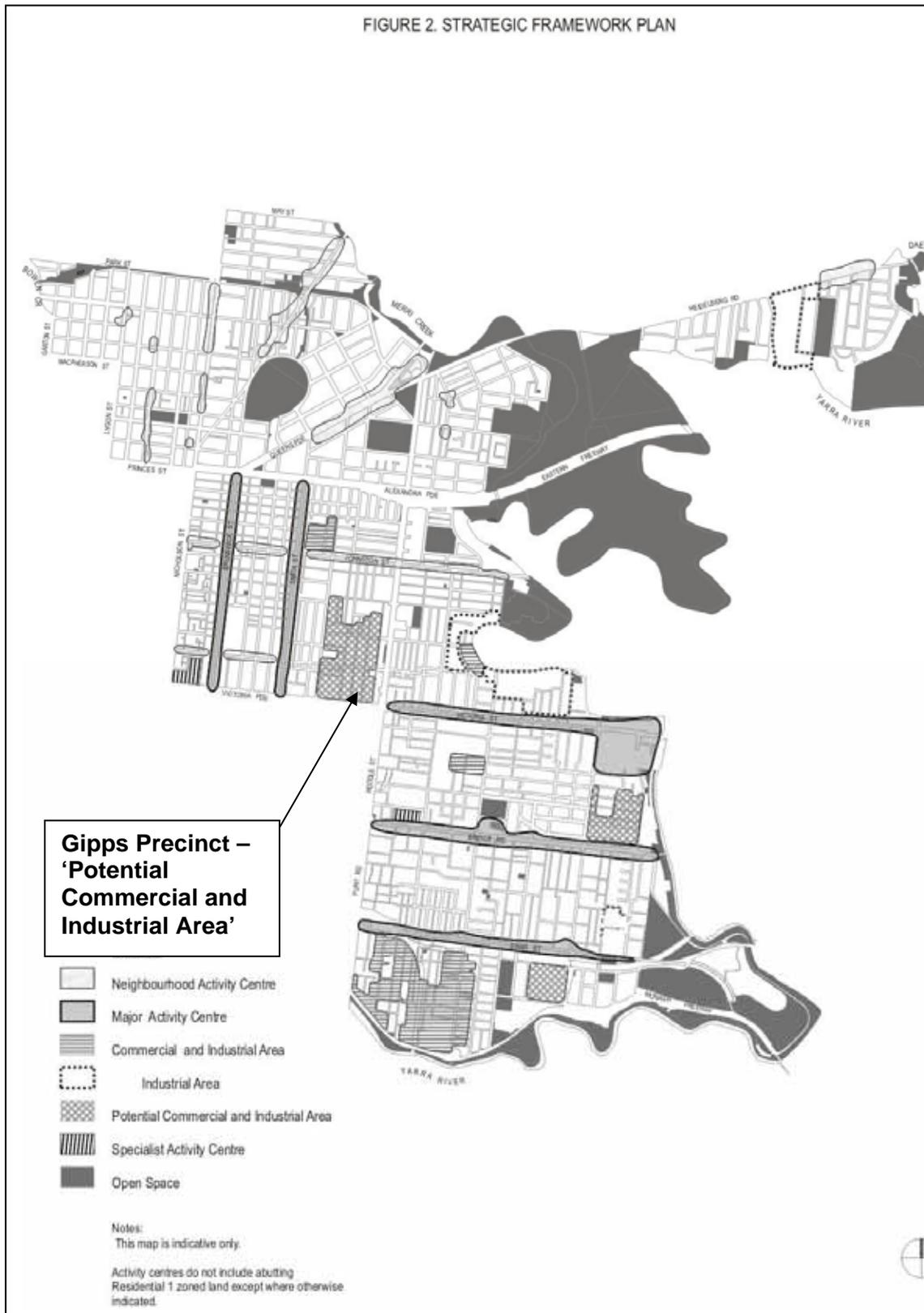
The pattern of land parcels seen today is a complex mix of small, medium and a few larger parcels. A small number of house sites and businesses on former house sites reflect the relatively unplanned mix of housing and industry common in inner Melbourne. An early image of the Yorkshire Brewery in 1890 shows industry, housing and shops close together. Other early images of the area show much more housing in the early part of the 20th Century. Industry gradually replaced housing up to and after 1955.

Recent changes in the metropolitan and global economies have seen a dramatic decline in local manufacturing. Major local employers in the textile clothing and footwear (TCF) industries have relocated or disappeared. In the Gipps Precinct some TCF remains along with a range of other industries including automotive repairs and service industries. There are indications of higher order, value adding TCF in this part of Collingwood, establishing new economic niches.

Recent changes in the precinct

The *Yarra Industrial and Business Land Strategy Review (2004)*(Review 2004) found that the current Industrial 1 Zone in this area was restricting the range of economically viable businesses moving into the area. It recommended re-zoning to a Business 3 Zone to allow a wider range of service business and office activity.

Plan 3 - Extract from the revised Municipal Strategic Statement – adopted 2008



The Review 2004 found that total employment in this precinct was just under 6,000 in 2001 or around 11% of the total Yarra employment. The mix of activities is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 employment mix 2001*

Activity	Percentage of employment %
Manufacturing	21%
Wholesale trade	17
Health services	13
Retail, cafes and restaurants	15
Office based activities	14

Source Yarra Industrial and Business Land Strategy Review (2004)

In the Precinct total employment contracted by 118 people between 1996 and 2001. This was mainly due to significant falls in TCF and the communications sector. There was significant job growth in the following sectors:

- Printing publishing and recorded media;
- Personal and household goods wholesaling;
- Road transport; and
- Business services.

Strategic context

The revised *Municipal Strategic Statement* for the City of Yarra (adopted April 2008) includes the following relevant strategic directions:

21.04-3 Industry, office and commercial

.....
The commercial and industrial sectors underpin a sustainable economy and provide employment. Yarra plans to retain and foster a diverse and viable economic base.

The decline in manufacturing activity has created an opportunity for service businesses which has maintained employment levels within Yarra. There is also a continuing demand for industrial land for those activities that value an inner metropolitan location. For this reason some land, as identified on the neighbourhood plans, can be rezoned to permit a combination of industrial and office use. In these areas rezonings to permit residential uses would not be supported, as residential amenity requirements are a threat to the survival of ongoing industrial activities.

The precinct is identified on the MSS Strategic Framework Plan (**Plan 3** above) as a *Potential Commercial and Industrial Area*. The adopted MSS also specifically supports 'the rezoning of the Gipps Street industrial precinct to the Business 3 Zone'.

Plan 4 - Features of the precinct



Characteristics of the precinct

The Review 2004 made a range of observations about the Precinct. These and more recent observations include:

Pattern of land use and activity

- The interface with surrounding areas (see Plan 4 above) includes:
 - Victorian era housing and an irregular boundary to the north;
 - Collingwood College (a state secondary school) forms part of the northern boundary with an entry off McCutcheon Way at the north end of Cromwell Street;
 - A large mixed residential, industrial and office area west of Wellington Street with recent new residential development; and

- The rear of a mix of business, office and other activities in a business zone fronting both Victoria Parade to the south and Hoddle Street to the east.
- New development has occurred along Wellington Street including showrooms and larger floor-space retail outlets.
- Activities in the precinct include:
 - Service industry such as printers and auto repairs;
 - Office / showrooms and office / warehouses – particularly associated with TCF; and
- Some larger warehouses and distribution operations but no ‘anchor’ industries.
- New clothing distribution and office businesses are moving into the area, particularly around Langridge Street.
- There is pressure for residential and non-industrial land use in the area, particularly with residential warehouse conversions in a range of locations to the west and along Victoria Parade and Hoddle Streets.

Subdivision, landscape and street pattern

- The area is flat with no significant topographic features.
- Site sizes vary considerably with:
 - A scattering of lots less than 300m² with some in clusters reflecting the earlier housing building forms and subdivision;
 - A scattering of lots 300 to 500m²; and
 - A further scattering of larger sites greater than 500m² throughout but particularly between Gipps and Langridge Streets.
- The majority of properties front narrow streets with a complex one-way traffic system.
- Wellington, Langridge and Gipps Streets are wider through-streets offering exposure to businesses and some opportunities for landscape / streetscape improvement (some recent planting of deciduous street trees has occurred in Langridge Street).
- There were a small number of building vacancies.
 - Broader linking streets – Langridge and Gipps east – west and Wellington north – south.
 - These wider connecting streets carry heavy through traffic and feature bike lanes and moderate levels of bike traffic.
 - Many narrow streets restricted in width to one-way traffic and narrow footpaths with road pavements of 5 to 6 metres and footpaths of less than 1.5 or 1.2 metres (see Plan 5 below).
 - Street and footpath space often blocked by parked or loading vehicles, street infrastructure such as power poles or rubbish bins or skips.
 - A number of smaller streets have interesting paving or other features including at least one narrow street fully paved in bluestone (Glasshouse Street).
 - Langridge Street has some street trees and Gipps Street big old plane trees.
 - Most other streets are too narrow for or unsuited to street landscaping.
 - Traffic and car-parking have a significant impact on the character of the Precinct. Through traffic in the wider streets is heavy and traffic in the narrower streets is chaotic and confusing to the visitor who is likely to be baffled by the one-way street system (see Plan 5 below) and the lack of space to pass and the tendency for parked cars to block passage.
 - Access for cyclists and pedestrians is facilitated by a permeable grid of streets but pedestrians may be hampered by narrow footpaths and vehicles or other obstacles across footpaths and vehicle crossings.
 - Many of the street blocks are much longer north-south than east-west reducing permeability.

- Pedestrian traffic is generally light but is heavier in the north near residential areas and around the Collingwood College at school drop-off times (8.30-9.30am and 3-4pm).
- The larger arterial road network abuts three sides of the precinct with contrasting boulevard and streetscape character recognised in the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 2 **Main Roads and Boulevards**.

Buildings

- A mixture of older and in some cases heritage significant industrial, commercial and, in small numbers, residential buildings among more recent and architecturally indifferent buildings.
- Building heights are predominantly one and two storeys.
- A very small number of taller buildings including the heritage protected Yorkshire Brewery tower building and a number of silos.
- About 10% of the area is affected by a Heritage Overlay, including the whole block between Roberts Street and Waterloo Road, the site of Yorkshire Brewery and a number of clusters of smaller sites (including existing or former dwellings) (see Plan 6 below)
- The existing building mix provides an affordable location close to the Central Activity District (CAD) and wider agglomerations around Central Melbourne.

Gipps Street - looking east from near Wellington Street

Showing bicycle lanes, mature Plane trees and mid-afternoon traffic.



Plan 5 - One - way street system



Plan 6 - Streetscape and heritage related overlays in the Yarra Planning Scheme



Design and Development Overlay

Heritage Overlay

Issues and analysis

This section of the Plan analyses some of the issues likely to affect future development of the precinct.

Changes in industry, business and office activity

- The Review 2004 found that there are significant trends at a metropolitan and local level which in broad terms point to:
 - A continuing reduction in manufacturing activity;
 - A significant increase in technical and business services activity; and
 - Increased wholesaling activity.
- A related broad trend was for increased higher value added activity based on innovation and on white-collar employment rather than production.

Changes in employment and the local and regional workforce

- Assessments of the key employment sectors in Yarra suggest that the employment mix needs to shift more to office and white-collar work to match the shift in composition of the local workforce.
- This argument recognises that while manufacturing industry plays a smaller role in the local economy service business and office based activities can provide more employment. This is a key rationale for the proposed Business 3 Zone in the Precinct.
- A further argument relating employment to sustainability, favours increased local employment which can help reduce the journey to work by making more jobs available to the local workforce.
- These changes indicate the need for more office space and conversion of industrial space from manufacturing activities to a range of activities in other industrial and commercial sectors.
- This should be allowed within the parameters of excluding residential and the majority of retail activity because they are likely to disrupt or conflict with industry and to a lesser extent office activities.

What should the future character be?

- The existing character of the Precinct is influenced by the street pattern, street paving, kerb and channel and other street features, building stock and more ephemeral things like advertising and signs.
- A change in activity mix will change the character in a number of ways including:
 - New or redeveloped/refurbished building form;
 - Increased levels of traffic and activity; and
 - Changes to advertising and signs.
- This raises issues about how building form and signs should be controlled. While a Design and Development Overlay applies to major road corridors around the precinct (see Plan 5) there are no current Planning Scheme provisions to guide building form or future character within the precinct.
- Building heights which depart significantly from the current low scale of development are likely to have impacts on:

- Local amenity;
- Local and precinct character;
- Certainty and / or a perception of uncertainty about the future character of the precinct; and
- Activity intensity and the capacity of the narrow street network to deal with traffic.

Activities and buildings

- The extent of new development for example for office activity will depend on a range of variables including:
 - The broader economic climate;
 - The metropolitan and local market for office space; and
 - Trends and innovations in business and the development industry.
- The most obvious differences in site potential and position are between the wider and narrower streets.
- Wellington, Langridge and Gipps Street offer greater exposure and accessibility for activities like showrooms and larger office developments.

Retail activity in the precinct

- The precinct has a small number of retail outlets mostly related to clothing with other specialised outlets including for example second hand building materials and period features.
- The majority of existing retail sites are along Wellington Street and to a lesser extent Gipps and Langridge Streets.
- One niche for retailing would be for retailing associated with adjoining distribution or processing.
- A significant increase in retailing would disrupt the viability of industry in the area.
- The major arguments against allowing retail activity (including the range of activities allowed under 'retail premises' and 'restricted retail premises') include:
 - The area is not part of an activity centre
 - Any significant retail development could conflict with the Municipal Strategic Statement objective to maintain the viability of activity centres; and
 - Retailing of any significant extent would be out-of centre development contrary to the activity centres policy of Melbourne 2030

Transport and access

- The precinct has excellent access to arterial roads and the wider road network.
- Public transport is limited to nearby tram and train routes outside the precinct which are moderately accessible but separated by major arterial roads.
- The internal road network is constrained by the narrow smaller streets which make finding destinations and understanding the nature of the precinct more difficult.
- The street network is permeable but could be made more permeable with additional mid-block east-west connections.

Reduce car travel into the precinct

- A broader policy objective to implement Council's Strategic Transport Statement is to reduce the proportion of trips into and out of the precinct by car.
- Reduced car travel will depend primarily on broader initiatives beyond the scope of this plan.
- Local initiatives should aim to improve walking and cycle access and connections to public transport and slowing car and other vehicle traffic in and around the precinct.

Make the area better for walking and cycling

- The area has the potential to be attractive for cyclists and pedestrians
- Traffic is constrained to move slowly along the smaller streets by their scale and the obstacles discussed above.
- In the longer term as pedestrian numbers increase, with more office based activity, improvements could include targeted improvements to footpaths and crossings to create better surfaces.
- Introduction of shared zones should be investigated in the entire small street network and depending on the amount of traffic and the intensity of redevelopment this could also include, in the medium to longer term, re-profiling the street pavement and footpaths to reduce or remove kerbs.

Managing the narrow back streets to improve access

- On street parking will need to be very carefully managed and limited to achieve other objectives.
- Some form of 'shared zone' allowing pedestrian use of the road may be the only solution to dealing with and encouraging increased pedestrian activity either through a formal 'shared zone' or informal acceptance that roads function in this 'shared zone' way already – the footpaths in most of the smaller streets do not function effectively as pedestrian, let alone wheel-chair or pram access.
- Given the constrained nature of these streets the number of vehicle crossings should be minimised to maximise the potential for on-street parking and reduce conflicts with road users.

Infrastructure

As development in the precinct changes and the needs of visitors, employees and others who use the area change new infrastructure may be required. This includes street works such as traffic management measures, footpath widening and possibly changes to the street profile (particularly in the narrow street network). The extent and nature of these works will depend on the rate and intensity of new development.

- The potential improvements include:
 - Street landscaping in the wider streets – sustaining the mature trees and filling gaps.
 - Creating a physical 'shared zone' in smaller streets
 - Investigate creating a road link between the north end of Islington Street and Cromwell Street through the existing car-park to address the semi dead-end nature of the north end of Islington Street and improve local connectivity.
- Car-parking in the precinct will continue to be a mix of on-street and off-street spaces:

- On-street parking should be managed to make better use of the space and reduce congestion.
- Off-street parking should be located to minimise adverse impacts on street activity and streetscape amenity – open-lot and street frontage car-parks should be avoided.

Enhancing the public domain – outdoor spaces

The precinct lacks attractive places to rest, meet or eat outdoors. Opportunities for creating outdoor spaces for seating and casual interaction include:

- Kerb extensions at or near existing or future street oriented activities such as cafes;
- Widened footpaths at street corners with the wider streets;
- Kerb extensions/wider footpaths and building set-backs which combine attractive street oriented activities and sun access on the south side of wider streets; and
- Protecting access to sunlight on the south side of the wider east-west streets by restricting building heights to the north so significant overshadowing does not occur.

These sorts of locations are shown on the **Public Spaces and Infrastructure** plan in the ***Urban form, buildings and design*** section on page 20.

Aim, objectives, strategies and actions

This section of the Local Area Plan sets out the overall aim for the area and then details a series of objectives, strategies and actions for the following categories:

1. Activity (Land Use)
2. Urban form, buildings and design
3. Transport
4. Environmental sustainability

These categories are the similar to those used in the adopted Municipal Strategic Statement.

Aim of the plan

The Gipps Precinct Local Area Plan aims to direct and manage change in the Gipps Precinct to increase economic activity and employment, improve the local environment and character and make it a better place for those who visit, work and live in the area.

Objectives, strategies and actions

1. Activity (Land Use)

Objectives

1. A wider range of commercial and industrial activities which create increased local employment and economic activity.
2. Enhanced street life and active surveillance.

Strategies

1. Use Planning Scheme provisions to encourage and manage a range of industrial and commercial activities but to exclude residential and the majority of retail activity.
2. Orient street related activity to all ground floor frontages to increase street life and surveillance.

Actions

1. Change the zoning of the Precinct from an Industrial 1 Zone to a Business 3 Zone.
2. Introduce a Local Policy to outline the preferred range of activities and specifically exclude the majority of retail activity including retail premises and restricted retail premises.
3. Incorporate 'active frontage' requirements in a Design and Development Overlay in the Yarra Planning Scheme for all street frontages.

2. Urban form, buildings and design

Objectives

1. A new and distinctive character for the precinct based on:
 - a. an eclectic industrial and commercial history, heritage and building stock;
 - b. generally low rise development;
 - c. high quality contemporary design;
 - d. a 'gateway' role for the wider streets as the main entry points for the precinct; and
 - e. the unusually narrow and elongated streetscapes of the smaller streets network.
2. Improved physical form and function of the precinct.
3. Develop outdoor public space for meeting, resting and eating.

Strategies

1. Develop a future character for the precinct which derives from the unusual grid network of narrow streets and their links to the wider Gipps Street and Langridge Street which provide the main public gateway to the area.
2. Limit development to generally low rise building heights of between two and three storeys with a maximum of four storeys.
3. Conserve significant heritage features in both the private buildings and the public infrastructure including street form and materials as a key contributor to the character of the precinct as a whole and particular component areas.
4. Encourage contemporary design which highlights the industrial and commercial character of the precinct through the use of materials and building forms.
5. Minimise the intrusion of car-parking access-ways and structures on streetscapes and active street frontages. Avoid open lot, street frontage visible and other car-parks which occupy longer cross-over frontages and/or direct off-street access.
6. Over the longer term as activity and development in the precinct intensifies change the physical form of the smaller streets to facilitate shared use of the limited street and footpath space by all users.
7. Develop opportunities for outdoor public spaces for meeting, rest and eating, preferably oriented to locations where activity and food outlets complement good solar access and potential for seating and shade trees.
8. Restrict building heights on the northern side of the wider east west streets (Gipps and Langridge Streets) so that their southern footpaths are not significantly overshadowed during the middle hours of winter days (no shading between 11am and 2pm at the winter solstice – 22 June).
9. Target a number of locations for physical improvement such as street junctions, wider street crossings or other features of the Precinct including cafes, hotels and outdoor eating areas.
10. Encourage the construction of buildings to the building street frontage and designed to facilitate surveillance and interaction between street and site activity.

Actions

1. Introduce a Design and Development Overlay (DDO) or similar mechanism in the Planning Scheme to give effect to these strategies (potentially supported by design guidelines to illustrate preferred approaches).

2. Investigate heritage features in the narrow street system for potential additional local Planning Scheme control or documentation.
3. Investigate further street landscaping for the wider streets to reinforce the existing large canopy deciduous shade trees and to reinforce their 'gateway' role in the precinct.
4. Investigate the staged introduction of a new street surface profile in the narrow streets which emphasises shared use by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and reduces or removes the distinction between footpaths and road surface.
5. Use the opportunities of redevelopment or new development to introduce changes to the street profile.
6. Develop a staged program of physical improvements at street junctions, wider street crossings and other features including:
 - a. The entrance to Collingwood College and adjoining sections of McCutcheon Way and Cromwell Street;
 - b. The possible improved pedestrian and cycle north-south crossings shown on Plan 7; and
 - c. Kerb extensions on the south side of the wider east-west streets to take advantage of the available space, street trees and solar access; and
 - d. Street junctions associated with corner-site redevelopment.
7. Monitor opportunities for creating outdoor public spaces preferably on corner sites in the locations shown on Plan 6 and fulfilling the objective and strategy above

Plan 7 - Public Spaces and Infrastructure



Key	
	Opportunity for north oriented outdoor space
	Opportunity for improved pedestrian / cycle crossing
	Opportunity for improved entry to Collingwood College

3. Transport

Objectives

1. Optimised access by all users of the precinct.
2. Improved access for pedestrians and cyclists.
3. An increased proportion of trips to and within the precinct by walking, cycling and public transport.
4. In the medium and longer term, the narrow streets working better as informal shared use zones for access and parking.
5. An appropriate mix of on-street and off-street car-parking to meet the broader objectives for the precinct and to encourage alternative modes of travel.

Strategies

1. Reinforce the implied slow speeds of traffic in the narrow streets by managing the location and amount of on-street parking to create informal slow points and encouraging on-street parking in preferred locations.
2. Develop a 'shared use' approach to managing walking, cycling and all vehicle access in the smaller streets.
3. Apply this approach to the whole network of smaller streets with a gradual or staged introduction of physical changes and other interventions to change traffic behaviour.
4. Use opportunities, particularly at street corners, to re-profile the small streets and integrate these changes with new development and activity.

Actions

1. Integrate these strategies with Local Area Traffic Management plans for the precinct.
2. Develop design guidelines for standard treatments for shared use zones in the narrow street network.
3. Integrate transport improvements with amenity improvements such as kerb extensions.
4. Incorporate requirements for transport related improvements and integrating public and private development into the Design and Development Overlay referred to above.

4. Environmental sustainability

Objectives

1. Improved environmental sustainability of development as it relates to the particular physical and geographic characteristics of the precinct.

Strategies

1. Use the character of the local street network to develop local water sensitive urban design (WSUD) solutions to improve water quality and potentially link treatments to urban design improvements such as street landscaping and outdoor public meeting space adjoining the wider east-west streets.

2. Encourage improved industrial and commercial practice in managing air quality, waste management and noise emissions.

Actions

1. Work with Melbourne Water and other agencies to develop WSUD as part of urban design and transport strategies and actions in the Precinct.
2. Develop an information and awareness raising program to encourage better environmental practice by local businesses.



John Street – looking south from Vere Street

Showing different forms of parking, silos and Yorkshire Brewery tower (semi-concealed)