

# Traffix Group

## Amendment C273yara to the Yarra Planning Scheme

**Planning Panels Victoria**

**Date of Hearing:** Commencing Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

**Date of Statement:** 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2024

**Prepared for:** Yarra City Council

**Instructed by:** Maddocks

STATEMENT TO THE PLANNING PANEL APPOINTED BY THE MINISTER FOR  
PLANNING IN RELATION TO AMENDMENT C273 OF THE YARRA PLANNING SCHEME  
BY LEIGH FURNESS, TRAFFIC ENGINEER

## **Document Control**

**Our Reference: G33281A-01A**

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## Executive Summary

- 1 Amendment C273 has been prepared by Yarra City Council, which proposes principles, guidelines and requirements to guide future development of the commercial areas along the south side of the Heidelberg Road Activity Centre.
- 2 The Amendment introduces the following changes:
  - Replaces the interim Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) to Clause 43.02 with a new DDO18 that introduces permanent planning controls.
  - Apply a heritage overlay to the land at 730-734 Heidelberg Road and 760-764 Heidelberg Road, Alphington.
  - Incorporate the Statements of Significance for the new Heritage Overlays into the Scheme.
  - Delete the existing Heritage Overlay from land at 2 Killop Street, Alphington.
  - Amend Local Area Policy at Clause 11.03-1L Activity centres.
  - Replaces the Schedule to Clause 72.08 with a new Schedule to insert key strategic documents. This includes The Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group (dated November 2019).
- 3 I have been engaged by Maddocks on behalf of Yarra City Council to undertake a traffic engineering review of the Amendment documentation, the consequential transport implications of the amendment and whether it provides a suitable response to support future development of the Heidelberg Road Activity Centre.
- 4 A key part of my review has been the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group for the Heidelberg Road Activity Centre in November 2019 (**2019 Transport Assessment**), its recommended actions and whether the Amendment supports this study and Council's sustainable transport objectives.
- 5 In summary, the 2019 Transport Assessment provided:
  - An overview of the likely traffic impacts of increased development along Heidelberg Road.
  - A review of parking implication of new development.
  - A review of access options for new development.
  - Recommendations regarding sustainable transport improvements to support the Activity Centre.
- 6 The Study identifies that the area is well placed to encourage this mode shift by locating population and employment within an existing Activity Centre serviced with transport options and providing local living opportunities. The recommendations in the 2019 Transport Assessment include a variety of projects aimed at supporting mode shift to sustainable transport including:
  - Pedestrian improvements.
  - Access management policies.

- Laneway management.
- Improved cycling connections.
- Car parking management.
- Various policy support and advocacy actions.

7 I am satisfied that the recommendations in the 2019 Transport Assessment still stand today and support Council's sustainable transport objectives, mode shift and the growth of the Activity Centre.

8 I generally support the Amendment and planning controls related to transport planning, with the following recommended changes:

- Re-word requirement for bicycle ingress/egress to be provided directly from adjacent bicycle lanes.

*Bicycle ingress/egress points should be clearly identifiable from the street frontage.*

- Re-order and consolidate dot points in Section 2.2.10 Access, parking and loading bay requirements, to clarify vehicle access preferences on Heidelberg Road.

*Development should not provide new vehicular access from Heidelberg Road and avoid disruptions to bicycle lanes. Where crossovers currently exist or new crossovers are unavoidable along Heidelberg Road, development should provide only one vehicle access point to Heidelberg Road to retain active frontages and minimise disruption to cycling and pedestrian activity.*

*Vehicle access points should be spaced apart from neighboring access points to avoid wide expanses of crossover.*

- Specify relevant property numbers that needs to provide splays at intersections of laneways.

*Properties on the inside corner of bends in laneways should provide a minimum 3m x 3m splay to facilitate vehicle access at the intersection of the two abutting laneways or otherwise demonstrate suitable vehicle access around the corner.*

9 At Section 6, I have had consideration to various traffic related concerns of third-party submissions.

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## 1. Introduction

- 10 Amendment C273 has been prepared by Yarra City Council, which proposes to implement a Built Form Framework for the Heidelberg Road Neighbourhood Activity Centre. The Amendment updates relevant local planning policies, modifies heritage controls and introduces permanent planning controls via a new Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) to the commercial areas along the south side of the Heidelberg Road corridor.
- 11 The Amendment introduces the following changes:
- Replaces the interim Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) to Clause 43.02 with a new DDO18 that introduces permanent planning controls.
  - Apply a Heritage Overlay (HO451 and HO455) to the land at 730-734 Heidelberg Road and 760-764 Heidelberg Road, Alphington.
  - Incorporate the Statements of Significance for the new Heritage Overlays into the Scheme.
  - Delete the existing Heritage Overlay from land at 2 Killop Street, Alphington.
  - Amend Local Area Policy at Clause 11.03-1L Activity centres.
  - Replaces the Schedule to Clause 72.08 with a new Schedule to insert key strategic documents. This schedule includes the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group (dated November 2019).
- 12 I have been engaged by Maddocks on behalf of Yarra City Council to undertake an assessment of the Amendment and supporting documents from a traffic engineering perspective.
- 13 The Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group (dated November 2019) is a key document and my review of the Amendment has focused on assessing the opinions and recommendations stated in this document in particular.
- 14 As part of my review, I have had regard to submissions by third parties.

## **2. Statement of Witness**

### **2.1. Qualifications and Experience**

**Name**

15 Leigh Alan Furness

**Position**

16 Director, Traffix Group

**Address**

17 Level 28, 459 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000

**Qualifications and Experience**

18 My qualifications and membership of professional associations are as follows:

- Bachelor of Civil Engineering (honours), Monash University, Clayton
- Bachelor of Science, Monash University, Clayton
- Masters of Traffic, Monash University
- Member, Engineers Australia
- Member, Victorian Planning & Environmental Law Association
- Member, The Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management (AITPM)

19 I have over 15 years' experience as a Traffic Engineering and Transport Planning consultant with Traffix Group Pty Ltd. My experience also includes two local government appointments which involved acting in the role of a Traffic Engineer at the City of Frankston and City of Stonnington.

**Area of Expertise**

20 I have experience and expertise in traffic management, road safety planning and engineering, parking management and strategy development, and development impact assessment of a range of land-use developments.

### **2.2. Project Team**

21 Lily Green (Traffic Engineer, Traffix Group) assisted with site inspections, review and analysis of the Amendment material and the preparation of this statement.

### **2.3. Scope of Work**

22 This report specifically reviews the traffic engineering implications of the proposed Amendment C273 to the Yarra Planning Scheme. My specific instructions are to provide an expert witness report that should:

- *be prepared in accordance with the Guide to Expert Evidence;*

- *not refer to any submitter by name (please use submission numbers);*
- *provide an overview of your involvement and role of Traffix Group in respect of the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment – Heidelberg Road, Fairfield / Alphington (November 2019) prepared by Traffix Group;*
- *express your opinion on the Amendment insofar as it relates to your area of expertise. In particular, we ask that you consider:*
  - *the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment – Heidelberg Road, Fairfield / Alphington (November 2019) prepared by Traffix Group;*
  - *the impact of the proposed permanent DDO18 on traffic and transport outcomes in the Heidelberg Road Activity Centre;*
- *express your opinion on the key issues, as relevant to your expertise, raised by submissions to the Amendment and the Council position in respect of those matters; and*
- *express your opinion on any directions issued by the SAC, as relevant to your expertise.*

23 As part of my review, I have had regard to submissions by third parties.

## **2.4. Key Tasks**

- 24 Based on the exhibited documents and planning history of the area, the scope of my engagement has included the following tasks:
- review of the study area and the surrounding transportation network,
  - review of supporting documentation and planning history,
  - review of Council policies and other relevant documents,
  - review of the traffic and parking impacts of the amendment, in particular the effect of increased development on the Activity Centre,
  - review of third-party submissions, and
  - preparation and giving of Expert Evidence in accordance with Planning Panels Victoria – Guide to Expert Evidence.

### **2.4.1. Investigations**

- 25 I have visited the study area on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2024 to examine the local transport network and observe traffic and parking activity within the study area.
- 26 I was directly involved in the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group in November 2019 for the Heidelberg Road Activity Centre. I have also assisted Council with its review of the development at Alphington Paper Mill over many years. I am familiar with the area as a result.

#### **2.4.2. Reference Documents**

- 27 The following key documents have been relied upon when preparing this report:
- Various exhibited Amendment documentation, including the exhibited plans and other material. In particular:
    - Heidelberg Road Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group (dated November 2019).
    - Heidelberg Road Built Form Framework Part 1 and Part 2 by Hodyl&Co, dated November, 2019.
    - Schedule 18 to Clause 43.02 (DDO18).
  - Various Council reports related to Amendment C273.
  - Relevant sections of the Yarra Planning Scheme.
  - Department of Transport Open Data Hub.
  - Various Yarra Traffic and Transport policy and strategy documents including:
    - Clause 18 of the Yarra Planning Scheme
    - Yarra’s Transport Strategy 2022-2032
    - Yarra’s Parking Management Strategy (undated)
  - Third-party submissions.

### **3. Proposal**

- 28 On 22 October, 2021, an interim Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) was gazetted into the Yarra Planning Scheme via Amendment C272. These interim controls were informed by a series of studies, including the 2019 Transport Assessment prepared by Traffix Group.
- 29 The City of Yarra has now prepared Amendment C273, which was first publicly exhibited in July 2023. In response to exhibition, Council received 117 submissions.
- 30 On 12 December 2023, Council considered the submissions to the Amendment and resolved to refer all submissions to a Standing Advisory Committee (SAC).
- 31 In response to submissions, Council officers recommended some changes be made to Schedule 18 to the Design and Development Overlay (DDO18) for the purposes of Council's advocacy position before the SAC. I have had regard to the proposed controls updated by Council in December 2023 as part of my review.
- 32 The Amendment proposes to implement a Built Form Framework by updating relevant local planning policies, applying a heritage overlay to particular land and by introducing permanent planning controls via a new Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) to the commercial areas along the south side of the Heidelberg Road Activity Centre.
- 33 The Amendment introduces the following changes:
- Replaces the interim Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) to Clause 43.02 with a new DDO18 that introduces permanent planning controls. Figure 1 shows the extent of DDO18 within Precinct 1/2 and Figure 2 shows the extent of DDO18 within Precinct 3a/3b.
  - Apply a heritage overlay to the land at 730-734 Heidelberg Road and 760-764 Heidelberg Road, Alphington.
  - Incorporate the Statements of Significance for the new Heritage Overlays into the Scheme.
  - Delete the existing Heritage Overlay from land at 2 Killop Street, Alphington.
  - Amend Local Area Policy at Clause 11.03-1L Activity Centres.
  - Replaces the Schedule to Clause 72.08 with a new Schedule to insert key strategic documents. One of these key documents includes the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment prepared by Traffix Group (dated November 2019).

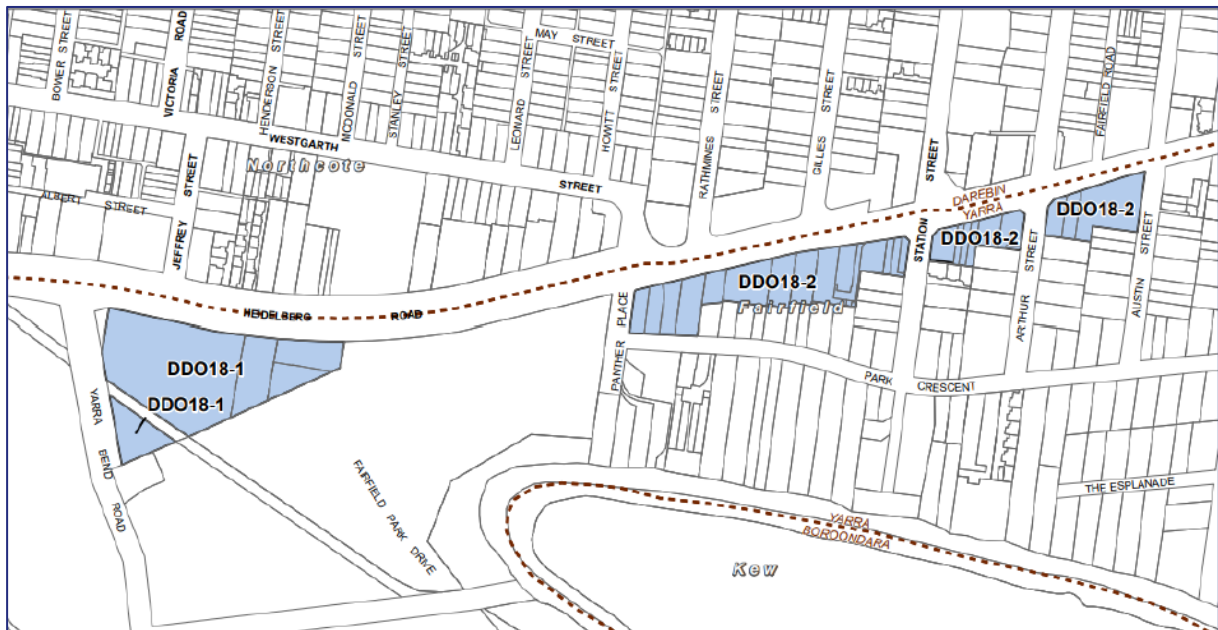


Figure 1: Extent of proposed DDO18 (Precinct 1 & 2)

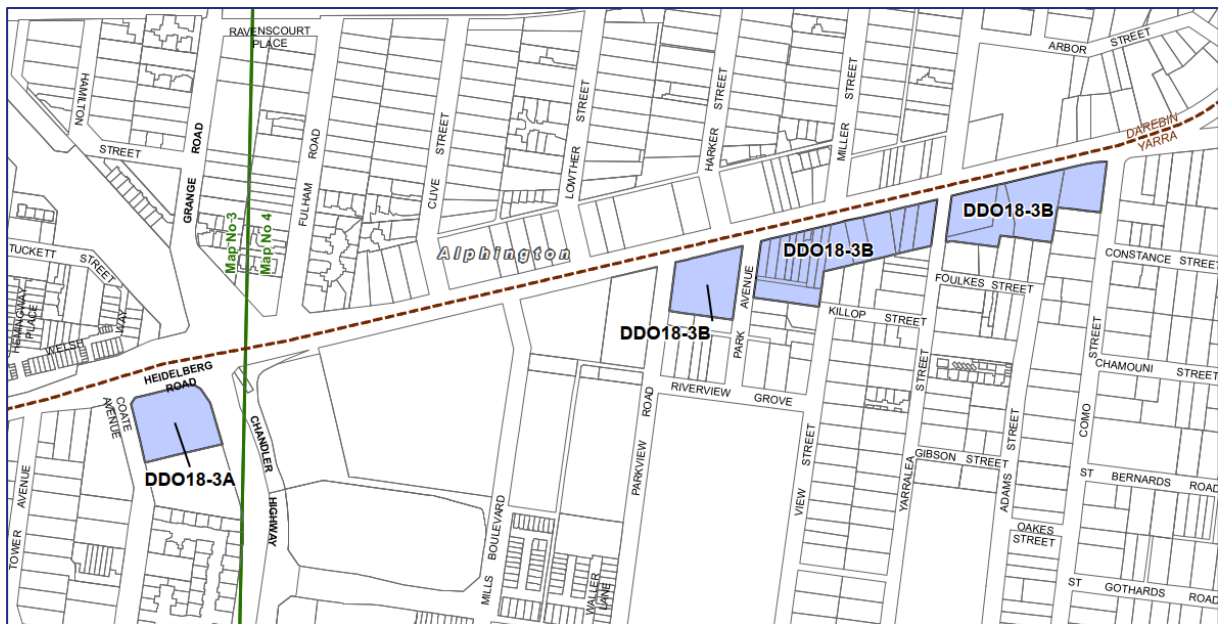


Figure 2: Extent of proposed DDO18 (Precinct 3A & 3B)

- 34 I have been engaged by Maddocks on behalf of Yarra City Council to undertake an assessment of the Amendment and supporting documents from a traffic engineering perspective.
- 35 The 2019 Transport Assessment is a key document and my review of the Amendment has focused on assessing the opinions and recommendations stated in this document in particular.
- 36 As part of my review, I have had regard to submissions by third parties.
- 37 The study area of the 2019 Transport Assessment is shown at Figure 3 below.

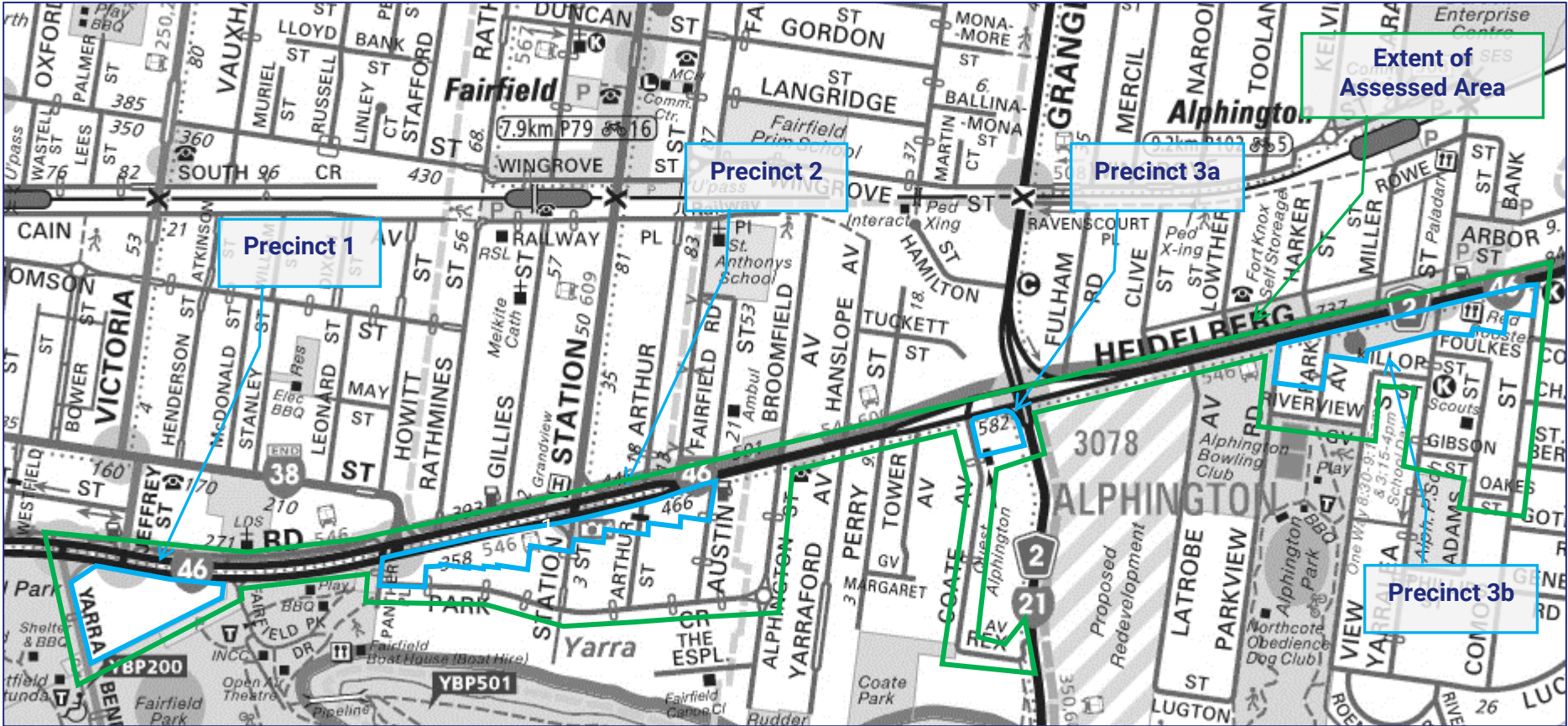


Figure 3: Study Area of the Assessment (as per the 2019 assessment)

Source: Melway

## **4. Review of the Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment (2019)**

- 38 In November 2019, Traffix Group prepared a Traffic and Vehicle Access Assessment (the 2019  
Transport Assessment, our Ref: G27460R-01B,) in relation to the study area to inform the  
preparation of DDO controls and policy. I was the Director responsible for this project.
- 39 The scope of the assessment was to conduct:
- a high level assessment of the future traffic conditions and performance of Heidelberg Road and local street network with the planned future development,
  - access and movement plans for the study area showing the location and form of new, altered and retained access arrangements and laneways required to provide appropriate access to future developments,
  - advice on the content of the future Design and Development Overlay to facilitate appropriate access and movement through new development, and
  - a review of the existing public transport, bicycle and pedestrian considerations and infrastructure within the study area.
- 40 I have completed a thorough re-examination of the 2019 Transport Assessment in reviewing this Amendment. Section 4 of my evidence:
- Reviews the 2019 Transport Assessment.
  - Reviews how the policy context and existing conditions of the study area have altered since the assessment was completed in November 2019.
- 41 My review of the proposed DDO18 planning controls is provided at Section 5.
- 42 I have had consideration of and responded to third-party submissions at Section 6.

## 4.1. Policy Context

- 43 The following section reviews any changes to the policy context from the 2019 Transport Assessment.

### Local and State Planning and Policy Frameworks

- 44 Since the 2019 Transport Assessment, Local, Regional and State Planning and Policies related to transport planning have been updated and/or relocated into Clause 18 of the Yarra Planning Scheme<sup>1</sup>. The table below provides a summary of the policies and transport objectives under Clause 18 - Transport.

*Table 1: PPF Transport Objectives*

Clause	Objectives
<b>18.01-1S</b> <b>Land Use and Transport Integration</b>	To facilitate access to social, cultural and economic opportunities by effectively integrating land use and transport.
<b>18.01-2S</b> <b>Transport System</b>	To facilitate the efficient, coordinated and reliable movement of people and goods by developing an integrated and efficient transport system.
<b>18.01-3S</b> <b>Sustainable and Safe Transport</b>	To facilitate an environmentally sustainable transport system that is safe and supports health and wellbeing.
<b>18.01-3R</b> <b>Sustainable and Safe Transport Metropolitan Melbourne</b>	Improve local travel options for walking and cycling to support 20-minute neighbourhoods.
<b>18.01-3L</b> <b>Sustainable Transport</b>	To support a sustainable transport system that reduces the impact of private motor vehicle traffic and on-street parking.

- 45 Detailed state-wide requirements in relation to car parking, loading and bicycle parking remain at Clause 52.06, 65.01 and 52.34 of the Planning Scheme respectively.

### Yarra's Transport Strategy 2022-2032

- 46 This document supersedes the Strategic Transport Statement 2006 and Strategic Transport Statement Status Report and Recommended Changes and Actions 2012–2016.
- 47 The aim of this strategy is to:

<sup>1</sup> As part of Amendment C269.

- *support our community's transition to sustainable and zero emission transport*
- *create a safer and more accessible city*
- *promote a healthy and active lifestyle*
- *prioritise cheaper ways of moving around*
- *build a transport network that is easy for locals and visitors to use*
- *support job growth and local investment*
- *improve pedestrian and cycling access and safety*
- *reduce traffic congestion by focusing on more efficient and accessible transport*

48 The document also provides a hierarchy of transport modes that guides decisions in relation to transport within the Municipality, as presented in Figure 4.

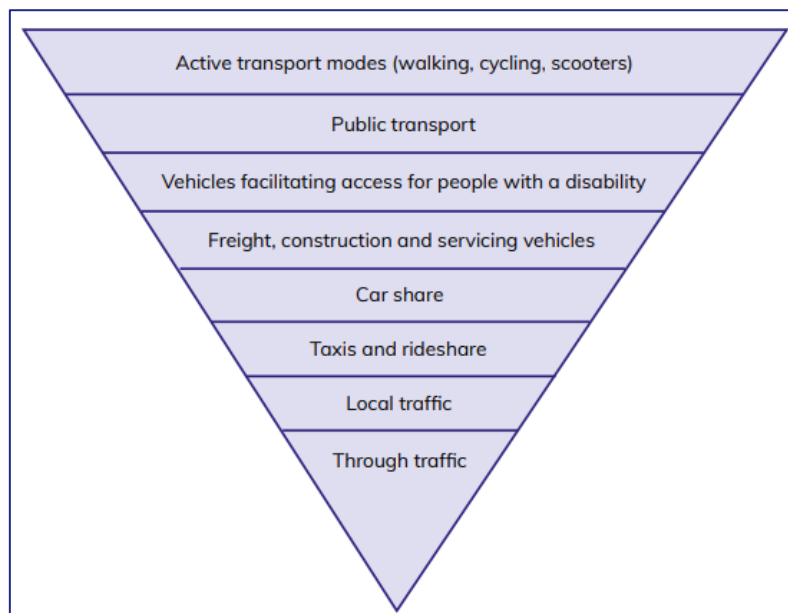


Figure 4: Yarra's Transport Mode Hierarchy

#### Heidelberg Road Corridor Local Area Plan (Draft, March 2021)

49 As per Councils website:

*In a collaborative project with Darebin City Council, Yarra City Council has prepared a high-level Heidelberg Road Local Area Plan (LAP) between the Merri and Darebin Creeks.*

*A draft LAP was adopted by Yarra City Council on 4 February to help inform interim built form controls in Amendment C272yara. The LAP would be finalised once Darebin City Council has completed its own background work to inform it.*

*The LAP will provide a framework to manage future growth and change along the Heidelberg Road Corridor. It sets out a preferred vision and a number of objectives relating to land use, built form, public realm, access to open space and transport matters.*

50 The draft includes a range of objectives in relation to future transport services and accessibility, including:

- *Improve public transport service to and along Heidelberg Road*
- *Improve access to existing public transport*
- *Increase connections and safety for bike riders*
- *Increase permeability for pedestrians across Heidelberg Road*
- *Increase safety for pedestrians*
- *Minimise pressure on parking in residential areas behind Heidelberg Road*
- *Reduce or limit vehicle crossovers onto Heidelberg Road*

## **4.2. Review of Existing Transport Conditions**

- 51 The study area (as shown in Figure 3) extends for an approximately 1.2km long section of Heidelberg Road between Yarra Bend Road and Como Street. The total study area is spread out along this stretch of Heidelberg Road and comprises of 4 precincts (Precincts 1, 2, 3a and 3b). The study area straddles City of Yarra and City of Darebin with Heidelberg Road separating the two municipalities. Land within the amendment area is generally zoned either 'Commercial 1 Zone' or 'Commercial 2 Zone'.
- 52 The following section reviews any changes to the existing conditions from the 2019 Transport assessment.

### **4.2.1. Alphington Paper Mill**

- 53 Since the 2019 Transport Assessment, Alphington Paper Mill Redevelopment has continued.
- 54 A parcel of land that fronts Heidelberg Road, known as Lot 2B 640 Heidelberg Road, is particularly important and it will eventually comprise of a range of residential and commercial uses. This includes two supermarkets, speciality retail, food and drink/restaurants, a gym, restricted retail and community space. This parcel of land is situated between Precincts 3A and 3B, as shown in the figure below.
- 55 While this development has not yet commenced, it will significantly change the area by bringing everyday land uses and services to the Heidelberg Road Neighbourhood Activity Centre and in doing so increase the walkability of the area (i.e. nearby residents can walk to these services, rather than use a private car).

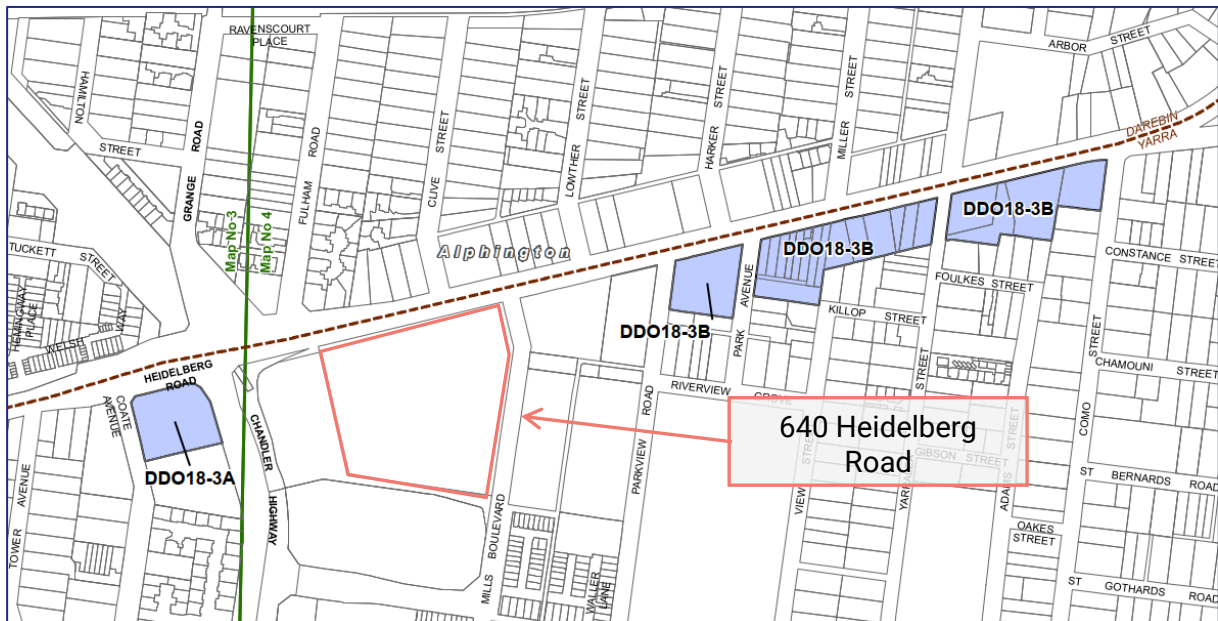


Figure 5: 640 Heidelberg Road, Alphington in relation to Precinct 3A & 3B

## 4.2.2. Road Network

### Arterial Road Traffic Volumes

- 56 Figure 6 compares the Average Annual Daily Traffic Volumes of the arterial roads within the study area between April 2018 and the updated May 2023 data. This information is sourced from the VicRoads Arterial Road Database. Overall, there are minor fluxes, which are not material to the recommendations made throughout the assessment.
- 57 The only significant change was to Grange Road. In April 2018 the grade separation of the rail line on Grange Road and the widening of Chandler Road were not yet complete. The removal of the Grange Road level crossing was the one change that made a material difference to daily traffic volumes in the area.
- 58 The removal of a traffic lane from Heidelberg Road as part of the pop up bicycle lanes made no material difference to daily traffic volumes on Heidelberg Road.

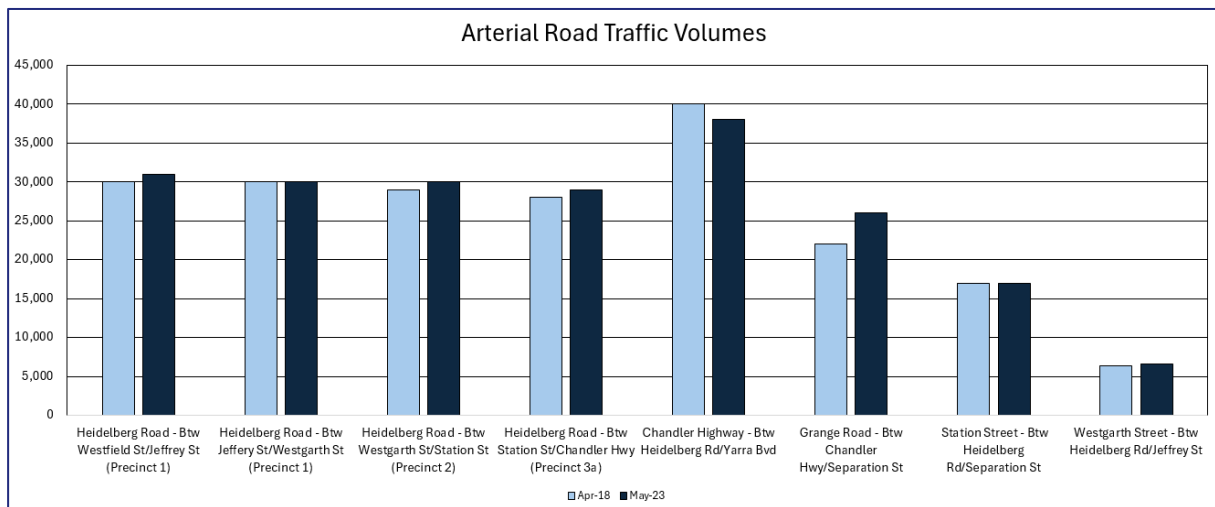


Figure 6: Arterial Road Traffic Volumes (Source: VicRoads Arterial Road Database – data updated May 2023)

### Existing Car Parking Conditions

- 59 Since the 2019 Transport Assessment, several changes to parking restrictions were observed. These include:
- Removal of on-street parking along sections of Heidelberg Road through the introduction of dedicated bicycle lanes. This is explained in further detail in the section relevant to sustainable transport modes.
  - Additional short-term restrictions within local roads, including;
    - Park Crescent
    - Parkview Road
    - Park Avenue
    - Riverview Grove
  - Additional on-street authorised car share vehicle spaces
- 60 An updated map detailing the various car parking restrictions throughout each precinct is provided at Appendix A.
- 61 In my view, these changes do not change the conclusions of the Transport Assessment of the acceptability of the proposed Amendment. In particular, I expect further changes to on-street parking as Council seeks to balance resident parking needs against other uses and new development.

#### 4.2.3. Public Transport

- 62 Public transport routes that service the study area have essentially not changed since the 2019 Transport Assessment. There are minor timetabling updates but overall, bus operations remain limited on weekends and outside of peak periods.
- 63 The key issue with public transport access in the nearby area is limited service times and frequencies, with the bus routes on Heidelberg Road only operating a limited number of hours per day at relatively long frequencies (30min+) and not on weekends.

#### 4.2.4. Sustainable Travel Modes – Improved Bicycle Infrastructure

- 64 In December 2020, pop-up bicycle lanes were introduced throughout Darebin and Yarra along Heidelberg Road as part of the VicRoads Pop-up Bicycle Lane Program. The extent of the program is shown in Figure 7, and highlights the precincts subject to the 273Yara Amendment.
- 65 A comparison of the road network at key intersections prior to December 2020 and as of current is presented following.

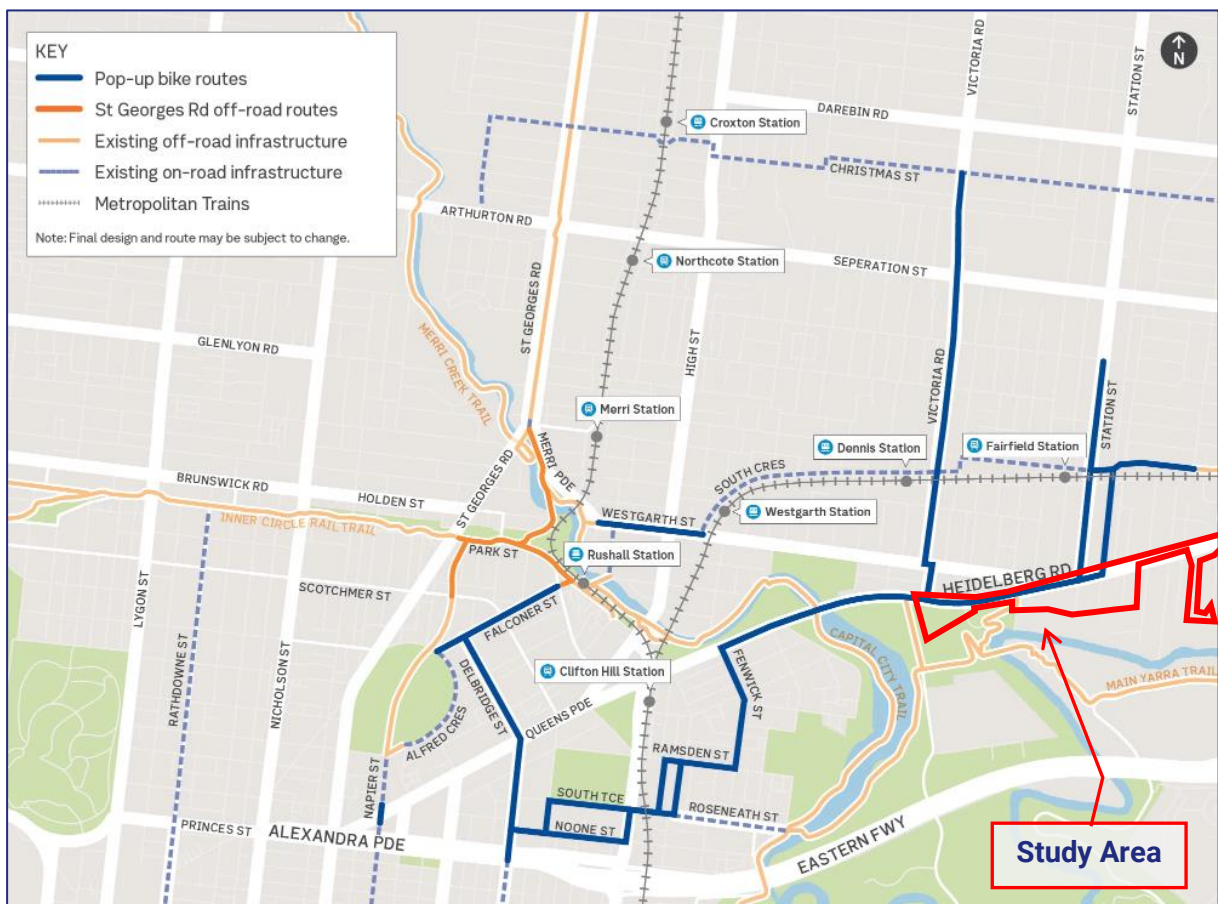


Figure 7: Pop-up bicycle lane program (Source: VicRoads)



Figure 8: Intersection of Station Street and Heidelberg Road - 2020 vs 2024 (Source: NearMap)



Figure 9: Intersection of Westgarth Street and Heidelberg Road - 2020 vs 2024 (Source: NearMap)

66 Within the study area, this program resulted in:

- Separated on-road bicycle lanes in the eastbound and westbound direction along Heidelberg Road, between Yarra Bend Road and Arthur Street (Precincts 1 and 2). An example of its configuration is provided in Figure 10.
- Removal of on-street parking and subsequently, the introduction of more 'No Stopping' areas on Heidelberg Road. These areas are detailed in the updated parking conditions at Appendix A.

- Additional road safety and on-street parking signage, samples of which are shown at Figure 11.

- 67 In August 2024, it was announced that the trial of the pop up bicycle lanes was successful, and these bicycle facilities would become permanent.
- 68 The Station Street and Heidelberg Road intersection has recently undergone upgrades to improve bicycle user experience, including, bicycle head start lanterns, bicycle boxes and LED bicycle safety signage.



Figure 10: Heidelberg Road – view west from Arthur Street (Precinct 2)



Figure 11: Various road signage for pop-up bicycle lane program

- 69 These upgrades to bicycle infrastructure address the shortcomings with existing cycling infrastructure outlined in the 2019 Transport Assessment from Precincts 1 and 2. Previously

on-road bicycle facilities were discontinuous and inconsistent and usually did not offer separated space for cyclists.

#### 4.2.5. Demographics

- 70 The existing assessment completed a review of car ownership statistics for 'flats units and apartments' within the suburbs of Fairfield and Alphington and the City of Yarra highlights the following average car ownership statistics. This data was recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in the 2016 census.
- 71 The Census was again completed in 2021, with updated car ownership data available. Figure 12 compares the average number of cars per dwelling for a Flat/Unit/Apartment in a one or more storey block from the 2021 Census with the 2016 data.

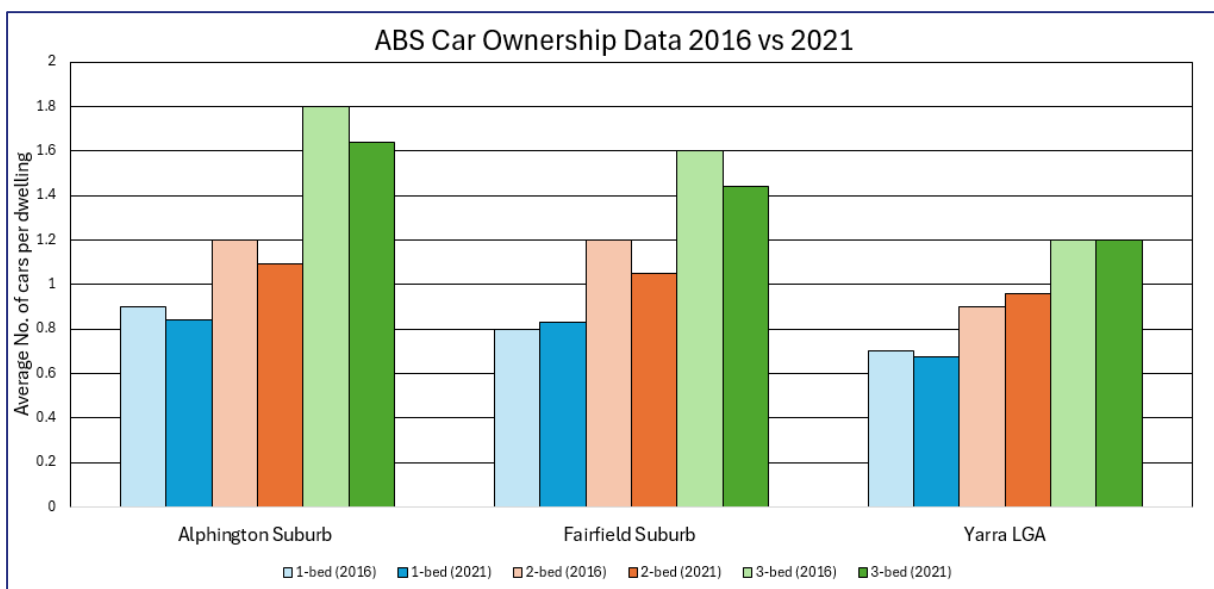


Figure 12: ABS Census Car Ownership Statistics – Flat/Unit/Apartment (2016 vs 2021)

- 72 This data shows an overall downward trend in car ownership for households residing in apartments in the nearby area.
- 73 A review of Journey to Work data for the suburbs of Alphington and Fairfield, the City of Yarra and the Greater Melbourne was also undertaken in the 2019 Assessment. This data was recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in the 2016 Census. It is appropriate to retain this dataset as the most recent data available given the impacts of COVID-19 travel restrictions during the 2021 Census.

#### 4.2.6. Traffic Management

- 74 An updated review of the existing traffic management measures within the study area is provided at Appendix B.
- 75 The main change since the 2019 Transport Assessment (besides the introduction of pop up bicycle lanes as discussed above) is the construction of pedestrian signals on Heidelberg Road at Precinct 3B, within proximity to Harker Street.

#### 4.2.7. Public Acquisition Overlay

- 76 A Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) applies to the south side of Heidelberg Road, within Precinct 3B.
- 77 That PAO has not changed since the 2019 Transport Assessment. This Amendment does not seek to change the PAO, which has been imposed for the purposes widening Heidelberg Road.
- 78 It also applies to the North side of Heidelberg Road, adjacent to the study area. This land is outside the Yarra LGA and within the City of Darebin. As such, that land is outside the scope of the C273 Amendment.
- 79 A map outlining the PAO in relation to the study area is presented below.

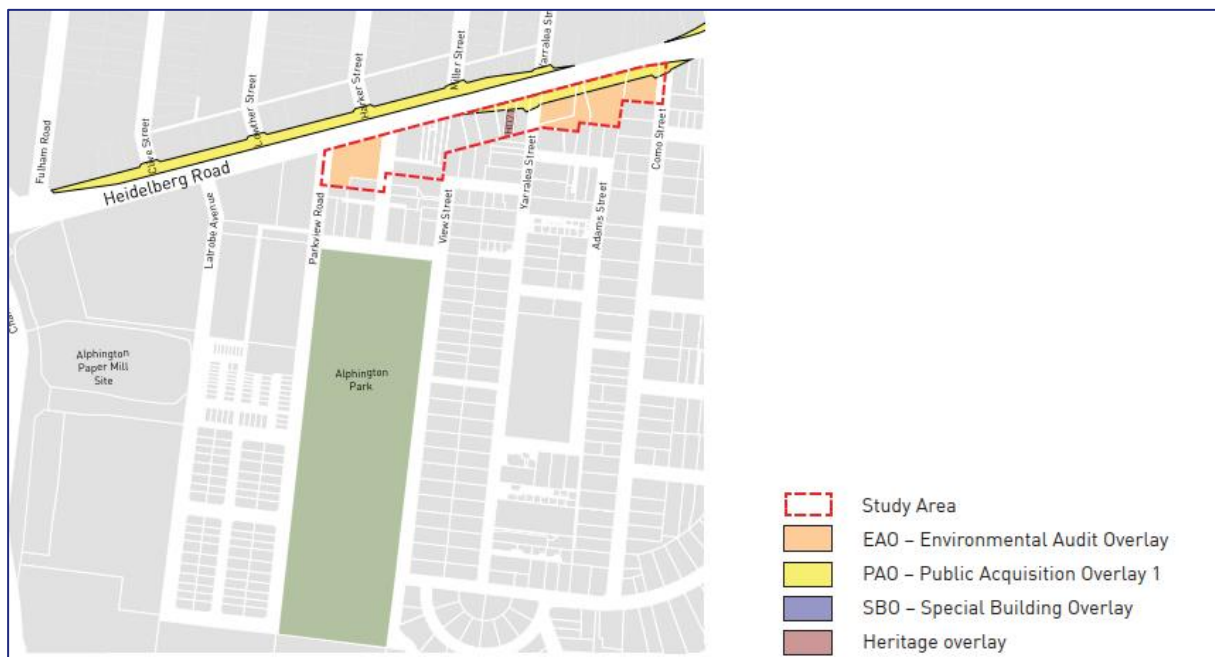


Figure 13: Precinct 3B – Public Acquisition Overlay (Source: Hodyl+ Co – July 2019 Urban Context Analysis)

#### **4.2.8. Summary**

- 80 Overall, the main change to the Study Area since the 2019 Transport Assessment is the pop-up bicycle lanes on Heidelberg Road. This facility provides a high quality cycling link to/from the Melbourne CBD and protecting this facility as part of the DDO is one of the key transport objectives of the DDO.
- 81 This review also highlights how that over the last 5 years traffic volumes on Heidelberg Road remain stable over time, even with increased development. This includes the impact removing a traffic lane on Heidelberg Road. There have also been a series of sustainable transport alternatives such cycling infrastructure, pedestrian connections and new car share vehicles introduced since 2019.
- 82 The precinct has further opportunities for improvement with respect to public transport services (routes, frequency, hours) but this is outside the scope of the amendment as a State responsibility.

#### **4.3. Summary of the 2019 Transport Assessment**

- 83 The 2019 Transport Assessment found that the traffic implications of the growth of the Heidelberg Road NAC could be accommodated by a combination of mode shift, supported by sustainable infrastructure improvements. The Victoria Street Activity Centre was cited as a case study of example where considerable growth did not result in additional traffic on Victoria Street. Local intersections may warrant further analysis as part of the normal planning permit process, but there was no specific need to alter the road network at this time to accommodate additional growth.
- 84 The car parking impacts of new development can continue to be assessed under framework of Clause 52.06, which includes consideration of impacts on the nearby area. Council also has further levers to manage car parking through parking restrictions to protect the residential areas as development increases along the corridor.
- 85 The 2019 Transport Assessment made a series of recommendations to improve the transport network and support new development, noting that most of these recommendations lie outside of the scope of the Planning Scheme Amendment:
- a) The proposed DDO controls should limit vehicle access to Heidelberg Road to improve the safety and efficiency of this important arterial road.
  - b) Council work with DTP to improve bicycle infrastructure along Heidelberg Road.
  - c) Council request DTP to improve bicycle parking at nearby railway stations.
  - d) Council request DTP improve bus services in the area by:
    - i) Extending operating times and reducing frequencies of bus services.
    - ii) Improve bus stops.
    - iii) Consider bus improvements if the Heidelberg Road PAO is ever activated.
  - e) Council work with Darebin and DTP to provide a footpath link along the disused rail corridor to Fairfield Station.

- 86 The 2019 Transport Assessment concluded as follows:

*The assessment of future traffic conditions is in the form of a case study regarding the changes to transport patterns over the last 10 years along Victoria Street, where significant development has been undertaken. This review found that there has been a significant mode shift in the area, resulting in reduction in traffic on the arterial road network. This is due to a combination of factors including changes in land use patterns, the changing demographics of Richmond and additional residents working and living locally.*

*The Heidelberg Road corridor is placed to encourage each of these outcomes. Heidelberg Road is readily accessible by public transport and alternative transport modes and can readily encourage local living through a greater diversity of land uses. As such, we are satisfied that the traffic impacts of new development on Heidelberg Road can be managed, with a large proportion of the new trips generated, being taken up by travel modes other than private car.*

*Access and Movement Plans have been prepared for all properties abutting Heidelberg Road to map out how vehicle access to new developments can be managed to reduce the impact of vehicle access directly to Heidelberg Road. Suitably designed and controlled vehicle access is a key component in achieving the objectives of maximising the efficiency of Heidelberg Road for vehicles, cyclists and providing a high quality pedestrian environment.*

*Additional studies may be required for some locations to determine whether laneway widening is required as a result of some development. Additional studies may also be required to determine any detrimental impacts on signalised intersections within the precincts.*

*Recommendations have been made in relation to liaising with other stakeholders in relation to upgrading bicycle infrastructure throughout the precincts, improving the connectivity to nearby railway stations and improving the level of service for buses within the area.*

- 87 Overall, I am satisfied that the 2019 Transport Assessment remains relevant and forms a suitable body of work to support the proposed DDO.

## **5. Review of DDO Planning Controls**

- 88 The Amendment seeks to replace the interim Design and Development Overlay Schedule 18 (DDO18) to Clause 43.02 with a new DDO18 that introduces permanent planning controls.
- 89 The 2019 Transport Assessment provided commentary on the working draft interim DDO18 planning controls. Given the time elapsed, I have concentrated on reviewing the DDO18 controls proposed by the Amendment.

Table 2: Review of Design and Development Overlay

Proposed Control	Comments	Potential Re-Wording
<b>2.2.1 Street wall height requirements</b>		
<i>Development of non-heritage buildings on street corners should provide a corner splay at minimum of 1 x 1 metre at the site's corner boundaries.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>This is to provide increased pedestrian visibility at road intersections, rather than a hard corner. This is not required or necessary for vehicle access/sightlines.</p> <p>The inclusion of the word 'should' ought to be retained, as there are instances where alternative solutions would provide the same result.</p>	-
<b>2.2.10 Access, parking and loading bay requirements</b>		
<i>Pedestrian access to buildings should be achieved via streets and avoid primary access from laneways. Where pedestrian access from a laneway is appropriate, the building setback should include a pedestrian refuge or landing.</i>	Agree.	-
<i>Ensure pedestrian entrances are clearly visible, secure, well lit and have an identifiable sense of address.</i>	Agree.	-

Proposed Control	Comments	Potential Re-Wording
<i>Residential and commercial pedestrian entrances should be distinguishable from each other.</i>	Agree.  Although I see this as largely an urban design matter.	-
<i>The common pedestrian areas of new buildings should be designed with legible and convenient access, with hallway and lobby areas of a size that reflects the quantity of apartments serviced and which can be naturally lit and naturally ventilated.</i>	Agree.  Although I see this as largely an urban design matter.	-
<i>Car parking should be located within a basement or concealed from the public realm.</i>	Agree.	-
<i>Bicycle parking should be provided to the rates and design guidelines recommended in the Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS) tool.</i>	Agree.  The BESS tool provides guidance regarding bicycle parking, end of trip facilities and car share schemes. These rates are typically greater than the rates required statutory under Clause 52.34 of the Planning Scheme, which is a Clause that has not been updated for many years and I regard as somewhat dated.  Supporting increased bicycle parking is a key tool to also improve sustainable transport use.	-

Proposed Control	Comments	Potential Re-Wording
<i>Bicycle ingress/egress should be provided directly from adjacent bicycle lanes and paths.</i>	<p>Consider Rewording.</p> <p>The bicycle access points should be clearly identifiable from any abutting bicycle network, but it is not clear what “directly” implies. It may mean that there is a separate entrance to on-site bicycle parking areas directly to bicycle infrastructure (i.e. directly to Heidelberg Road). My reading is that it could imply crossovers or more sophisticated access points, when a simple, easy to find entrance to the building is all that is required.</p>	<i>Bicycle ingress/egress points should be clearly identifiable from the street frontage.</i>
<i>Resident and staff bicycle parking should be located, preferably at ground floor, and designed to be secure and conveniently accessible from the street and associated uses.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>The inclusion of the word ‘should/preferable’ ought to be retained, as there are instances where this would not be viable. Sites with small footprints (and there are many examples along Heidelberg Road) may struggle to accommodate bicycle parking at ground level, which is in competition for space with building entries, ground floor tenancies, active frontages, building core and other essential services.</p>	-
<i>Vehicle ingress and egress into development, including loading facilities and building servicing, should be designed to ensure a high standard of pedestrian amenity and limit potential conflict between vehicle movements</i>	<p>Agree.</p>	-

Proposed Control	Comments	Potential Re-Wording
<i>and pedestrian activity and avoid adversely impacting the continuity of the public realm.</i>		
<i>Vehicle ingress/egress points should be spaced apart from other existing and/or proposed ingress/egress points to avoid wide crossover points.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>However, consider re-ordering and consolidating the controls directly related to vehicle access so that they are all read in conjunction with other vehicle access requirements.</p> <p>It should also be made clear that the control is in regard to crossovers at neighbouring properties, rather than on the same property.</p>	<i>Development should not provide new vehicular access from Heidelberg Road and avoid disruptions to bicycle lanes. Where crossovers currently exist or new crossovers are unavoidable along Heidelberg Road, development should provide only one vehicle access point to Heidelberg Road to retain active frontages and minimise disruption to cycling and pedestrian activity.</i>
<i>Development should not provide new vehicular access from Heidelberg Road and avoid disruptions to bicycle lanes.</i>	Agree.	<i>Vehicle access points should be spaced apart from neighboring access points to avoid wide expanses of crossover.</i>
<i>Where crossovers currently exist or new crossovers are unavoidable along Heidelberg Road, development should consolidate multiple vehicle access points along Heidelberg Road, where applicable.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>However, this should be clearly the second preference to the above control. Consider re-ordering the controls.</p>	
<i>Development with redundant vehicle access points should reinstate the kerb, line-marked parking bays, and relocate any parking signs.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>This is standard practice for any new development.</p>	-

Proposed Control	Comments	Potential Re-Wording
<i>Where a ground level setback is provided to achieve practicable vehicle access to a laneway, a minimum headroom clearance of 3.6 metres should be provided to any overhang of the first floor and careful consideration given to create a safe pedestrian environment.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Setbacks of laneways are common in new development, either for access reasons (such as at-grade parking directly from laneways) or for traffic management reasons (providing passing areas at ground level.</p> <p>This headroom clearance means that any setback would allow all car-sized vehicles and small trucks to be able to use these areas, thereby increasing the functionality of the laneway.</p>	-
<i>Properties on the inside corner of bends in laneways or at intersections between two laneways should provide a minimum 3m x 3m splay to facilitate vehicle access.</i>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>However, this only applies to one laneway in the study area, which abuts property numbers 416 to 432 Heidelberg Road. Specifically, the only property on the inside corner of the bend a splay would apply to is No. 420.</p> <p>It is noted that the 2019 assessment suggested this laneway (in the north/south direction) could be widened to provide two-way movements. If this was provided, the corner splay would not be needed.</p>	<i>Properties on the inside corner of bends in laneways should provide a minimum 3m x 3m splay to facilitate vehicle access at the intersection of the two abutting laneways or otherwise demonstrate suitable vehicle access around the corner.</i>

Proposed Control	Comments	Potential Re-Wording
<b>5.0 Application Requirements</b>		
<p><i>A Traffic Engineering Report prepared by a suitably qualified traffic engineer that demonstrates how the development:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- minimises impacts on the level of service, safety and amenity of the arterial road network (including bicycle lanes);</i></li> <li><i>- reduces car dependence and promotes sustainable transport modes, and</i></li> <li><i>- assesses the impacts of traffic and parking in the Precincts including an assessment of the ongoing functionality of laneway/s, where applicable.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>This was a key recommendation from the 2019 Transport Study, that the local traffic impacts of new development should be assessed at the application stage and that these should consider these key issues.</p>	-
<b>6.0 Decision Guidelines</b>		
<p><i>the impact of development on traffic and parking in the nearby area, including on the functionality of laneways and bicycle lanes;</i></p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Laneways and the Heidelberg Road bicycle lanes are the two key pieces of transport infrastructure that require consideration with new development.</p>	-
<p><i>whether the layout and appearance of areas set aside for vehicular access, loading, unloading and the location of any proposed car parking is practicable, safe and supports a pedestrian-oriented design outcome.</i></p>	<p>Agree.</p>	-

## 6. Consideration of Third-Party Submissions

- 90 A total of 117 submissions have been received in relation to the amendment.
- 91 The following table sets out my comments in relation to the traffic engineering related issues raised by third party submitters relating to this amendment.
- 92 I note that Submission 42 contained 70 joint respondents.

Table 3: Consideration of third-party submissions

Submission No.	Traffic Engineering Matter Raised	Response
<b>Impact on the Road Network</b>		
11, 12, 14, 21, 29, 35, 36, 37, 38 and 40	Congestion on arterial roads such as Heidelberg Road and Chandler Highway.	<p>A review of traffic volumes on Heidelberg Road and Chandler Highway has found that in the 5 years since the original Transport Assessment, daily volumes on these roads have hardly changed.</p> <p>I am satisfied that densification of Heidelberg Road will not automatically lead to more traffic and congestion, as evidenced by the Victoria Street case study. What is important is that sustainable transport initiatives continue to improve as the area develops. This is the key to managing additional development in the area.</p>
15, 24, 25 & 27	Local streets are also under pressure. Streets such as Park Crescent are used as a bypass by some drivers.	<p>The traffic generated by new development is spread across four precincts and does not redirect traffic to one particular street.</p> <p>In any case, Park Street includes traffic calming devices along its length and in the event that there is an issue with rat-running, this can be managed by Council.</p>
6 & 25	Changes and improvements to infrastructure are also impacting on traffic. This includes parking loss and the new bike lane along Heidelberg Road.	<p>The new bicycle lane on Heidelberg Road did require the loss of some kerbside parking on Heidelberg Road. Small areas of parking and loading facilities have been retained.</p> <p>In my view, the new Heidelberg Road bicycle lane is a key network improvement and fits with the strategy outlined in the 2019 Transport Strategy.</p>

Submission No.	Traffic Engineering Matter Raised	Response
		New development applications along Heidelberg Road will need to have their car parking needs (and any overflow) assessed at the time of the application with consideration that public parking in some areas is more limited than others.
Public Transport		
21, 25, 35 & 37	Existing public transport does not meet the needs of the existing population. Bus services are run at minimal timetables and trains aren't frequent enough to move more people.	Ultimately the delivery of public transport services is a State responsibility and outside the scope of the Amendment.  I agree that existing bus services in particular require a boost in frequency and operating hours (along with better bus shelters and pedestrian connections). This represents an area of opportunity for the precinct.
25	Concerns development will place further strain on public transport.	Council is well aware of the opportunity here to increase public transport services and this forms a recommendation of both the 2019 Transport Assessment and the Local Area Plan.
21	One submitter commented they spoke to the Department of Transport and was advised there was no planned changes to services.	
11, 12, 13, 35, 37 & 38	The amendment does not include a plan for improving public transport. Improvements are needed if population levels are to increase. Some noted the amendment should not progress until this is addressed.	
On-Street Parking		
6 & 21	The amendment does not consider the need to improve infrastructure and parking to cater for increased resident and worker populations. Some considered no new development should occur until infrastructure is improved.	I am satisfied that the parking impacts of the redeveloped sites will not have a detrimental impact to the parking availability of the area.  At the time of the planning application, each new development proposal will be assessed under Clause 52.06, as appropriate. This assessment will have to have consideration to the existing conditions at the time, including car parking availability.
11, 12, 21, 35, 36 & 37	There is a lack of on-street parking. It is already difficult to find a parking space. This is an issue for both visitors and residents in the area.	

Submission No.	Traffic Engineering Matter Raised	Response
4, 21, 27 & 115	Increased commercial and residential density would accentuate the current problem.	The residential areas which abut the commercial areas to the south generally have car parking restrictions which protect these areas from parking associated with the commercial precincts. i.e. short/medium term and permit zones. Accordingly, these parking restrictions will continue to protect the residential areas when development increases along the corridor.  Those on-street car parking areas which are not currently protected by timed or 'Permit Zone; restrictions can be contemplated by Council.
42 & 112	One submitter questioned how car parking would be accommodated if development were to occur in line with the proposed heights.	
Access		
30	A submitter notes that Clause 2.2.10 contains conflicting vehicle access requirements. One discourages collocating access points, while another specifically encourages it along Heidelberg Road, leading to inconsistency.	In Section 5, I have provided a recommendation to re-order and slightly reword some of the vehicle access controls that should improve how Clause 2.2.10 is read.
POA		
32	Confirm specific intentions of the public acquisition overlay (PAO) and how development within the PAO will be managed.	The existing PAO is not part of this Planning Scheme Amendment.

## 7. Conclusions

93 This report reviews the changes proposed by Amendment C273, its supporting strategic documents and the submissions by third parties regarding the Amendment. My opinions are set out as follows:

- a) The Heidelberg Road Activity Centre is well placed to accommodate additional population and employment density due to its sustainable transport options and local living opportunities, in accordance with the direction of Plan Melbourne.
- b) The traffic impacts of the development can be accommodated by the surrounding transport network through a combination of mode shift and selected transport improvements.
- c) The recommendations in the 2019 Assessment include a variety of projects aimed at supporting mode shift to sustainable transport including:
  - i. Pedestrian improvements.
  - ii. Access management policies.
  - iii. Laneway management.
  - iv. Improved cycling connections.
  - v. Car parking management, including reduced car parking provisions.
  - vi. Various policy support and advocacy actions.
- d) The car parking impacts of the Amendment can be accommodated. The 2019 Assessment includes an appropriate range of actions to manage potential impacts. Ultimately, each Development Application will have its car parking assessed at the time of Planning Application under Clause 52.06.
- e) The laneway network is important to facilitating vehicle access and the 2019 Assessment sets out an appropriate suite of actions to promote and manage laneway usage in the study area.
- f) I recommend that the following changes are incorporated into the final DDO:
  - Re-word requirement for bicycle ingress/egress to be provided directly from adjacent bicycle lanes.

*Bicycle ingress/egress points should be clearly identifiable from the street frontage.*
  - Re-order dot points in Section 2.2.10 Access, parking and loading bay requirements, to clarify vehicle access controls on Heidelberg Road frontages.

*Development should not provide new vehicular access from Heidelberg Road and avoid disruptions to bicycle lanes. Where crossovers currently exist or new crossovers are unavoidable along Heidelberg Road, development should provide only one vehicle access point to Heidelberg Road to retain active frontages and minimise disruption to cycling and pedestrian activity.*

*Vehicle access points should be spaced apart from neighboring access points to avoid wide expanses of crossover.*

- Minor changes to splay requirements on laneway corners.

*Properties on the inside corner of bends in laneways should provide a minimum 3m x 3m splay to facilitate vehicle access at the intersection of the two abutting laneways or otherwise demonstrate suitable vehicle access around the corner.*

- 94 I have made all inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and there are no matters of significance which I regard as relevant which, to the best of my knowledge, have been withheld from the Panel.



LEIGH ALAN FURNESS

B.SC./B.E. (Civil) Hons., Masters of Traffic, M.V.P.E.L.A



# Appendix A

## Existing Parking Conditions

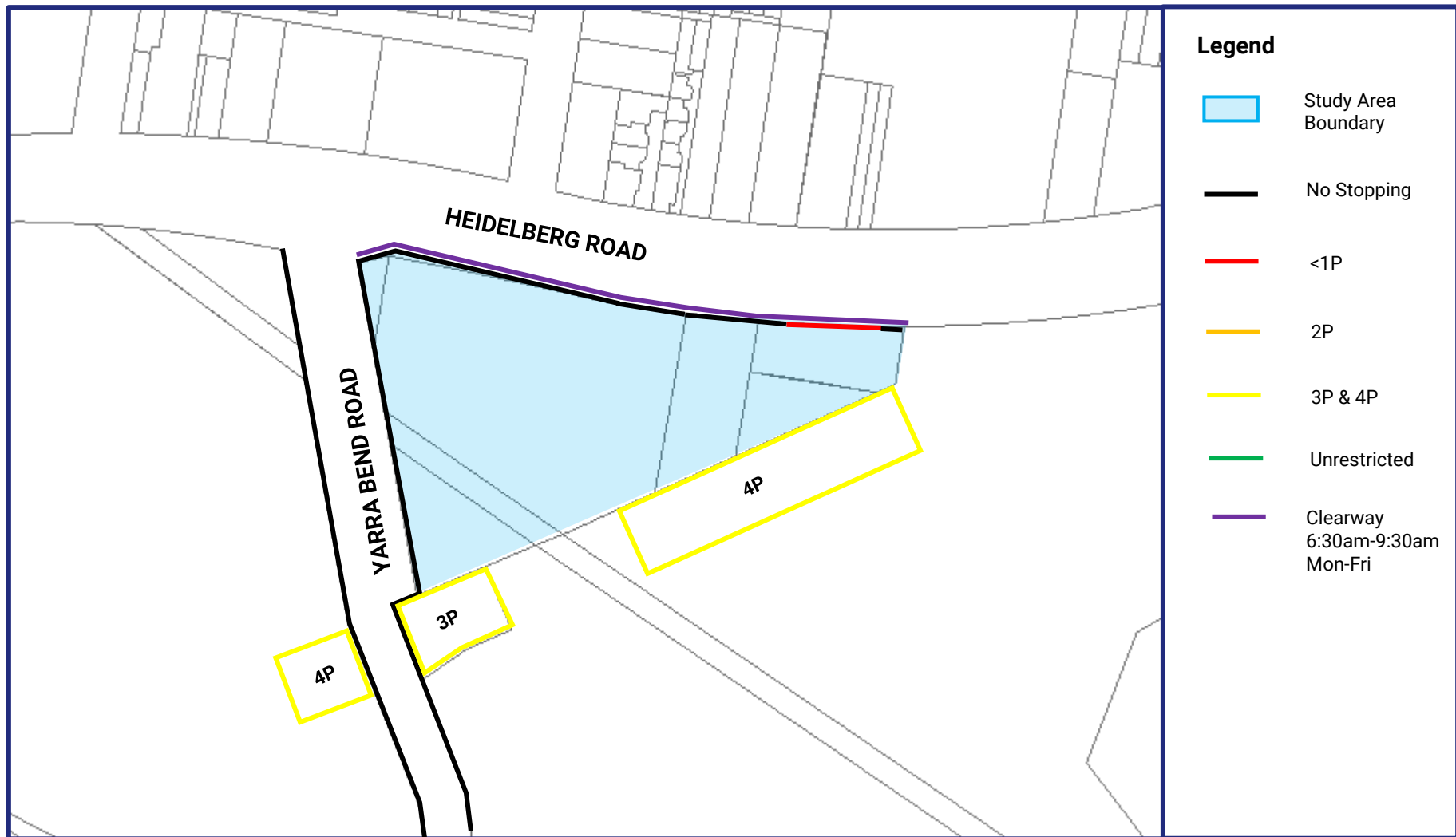


Figure B1: Precinct 1



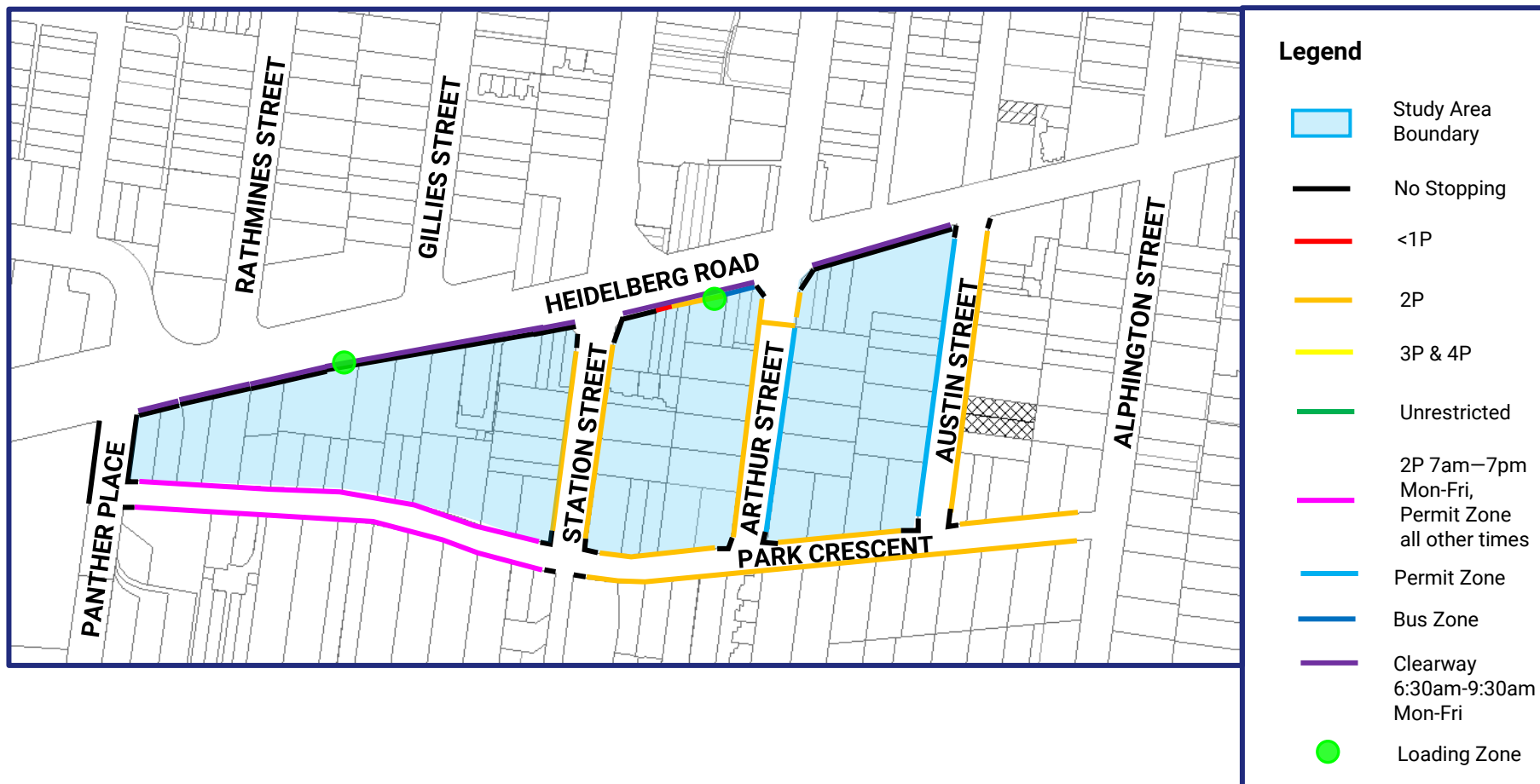


Figure B2: Precinct 2



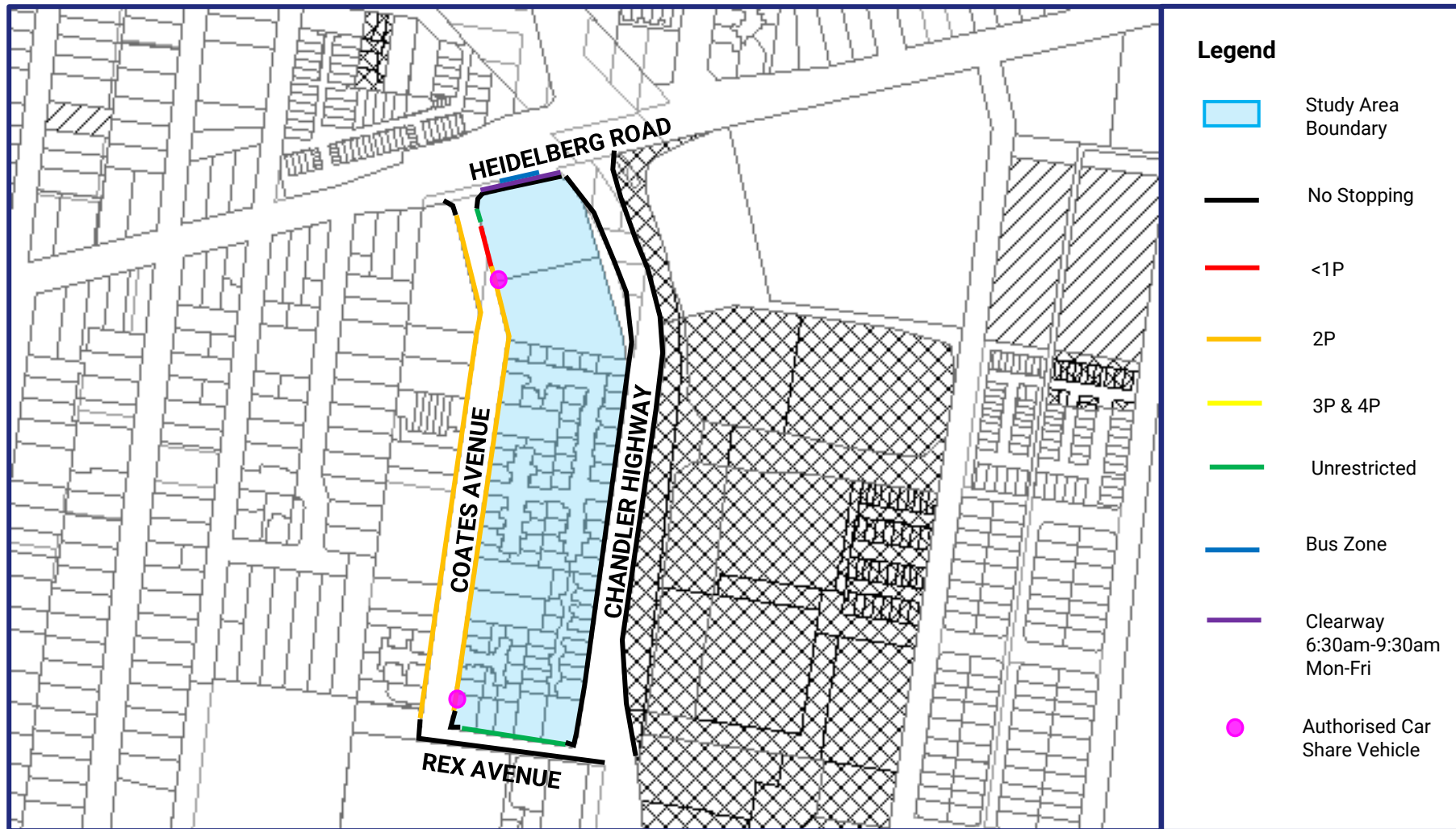


Figure B3: Precinct 3A



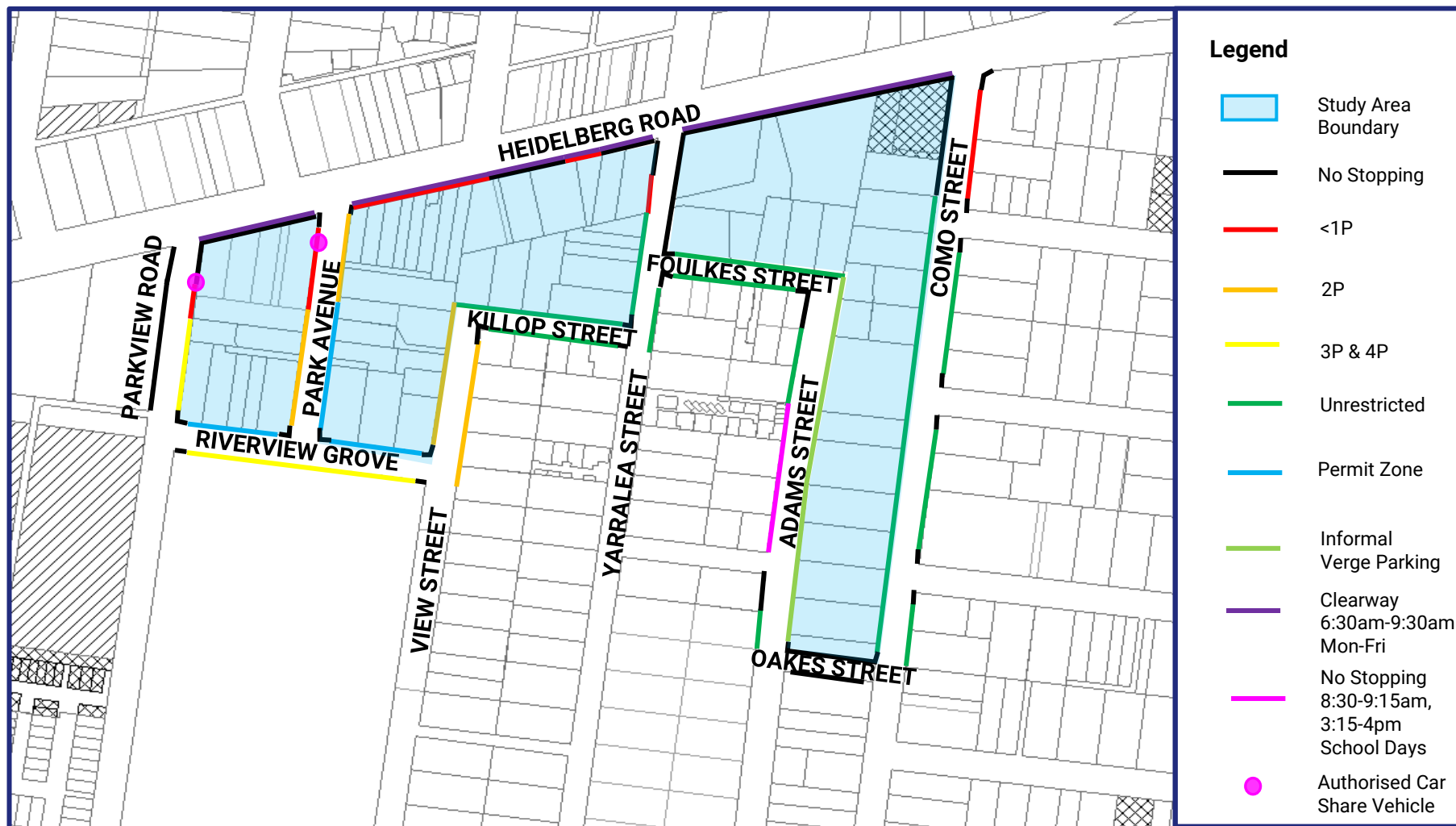


Figure B4: Precinct 3B





# Appendix B

## Existing Traffic Management Conditions



Figure C1: Precinct Area 1





Figure C2: Precinct 2





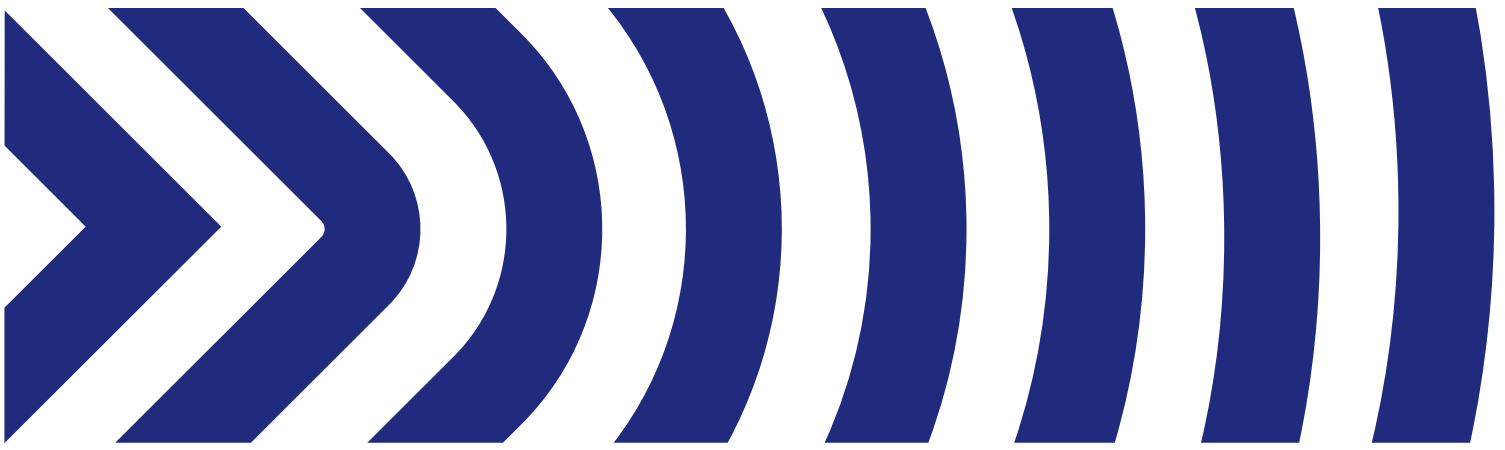
Figure C3: Precinct 3A





Figure C4: Precinct 3B





# Appendix C

## Existing Access Conditions

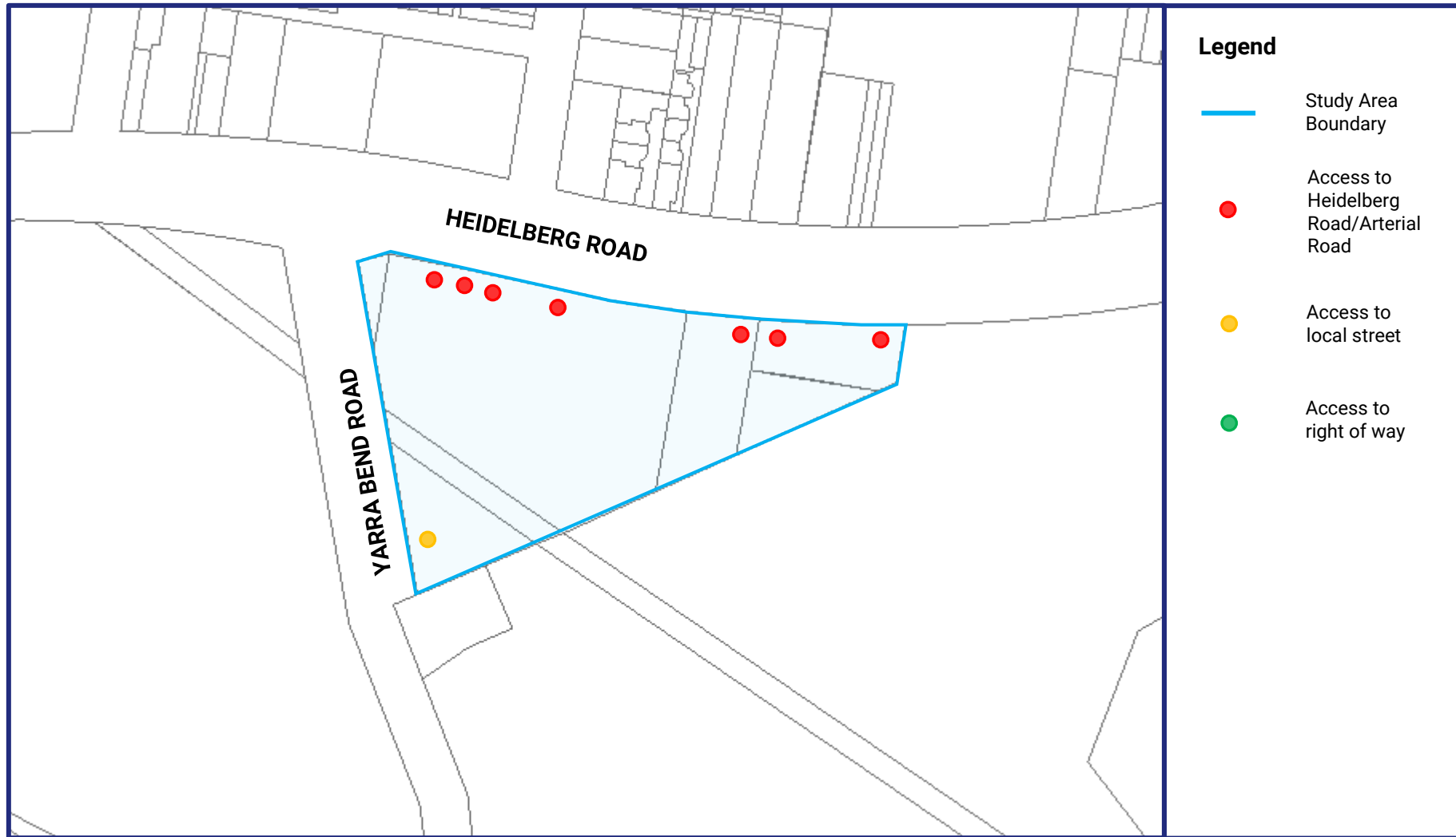


Figure E1: Precinct 1



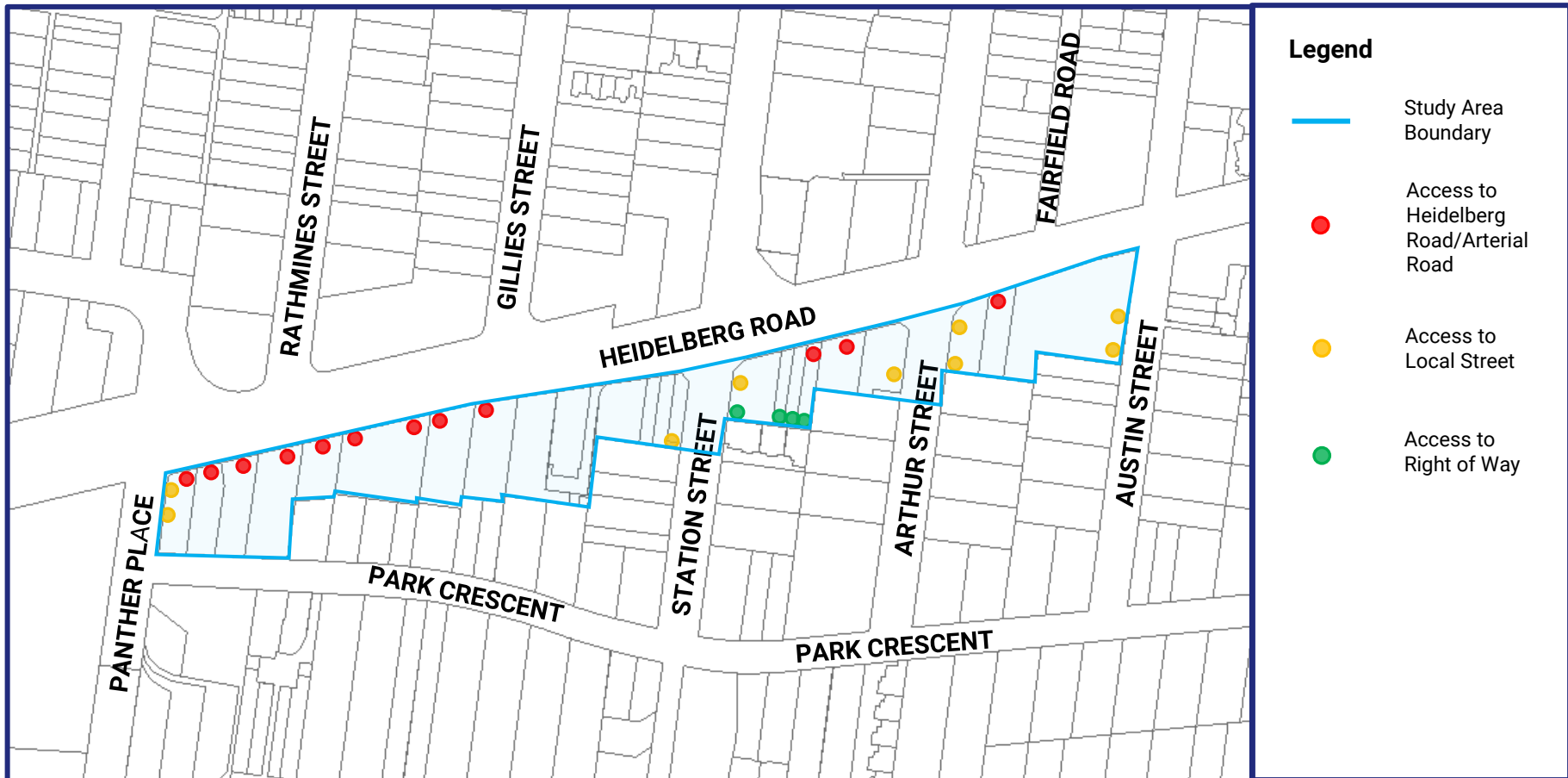


Figure E2: Precinct 2



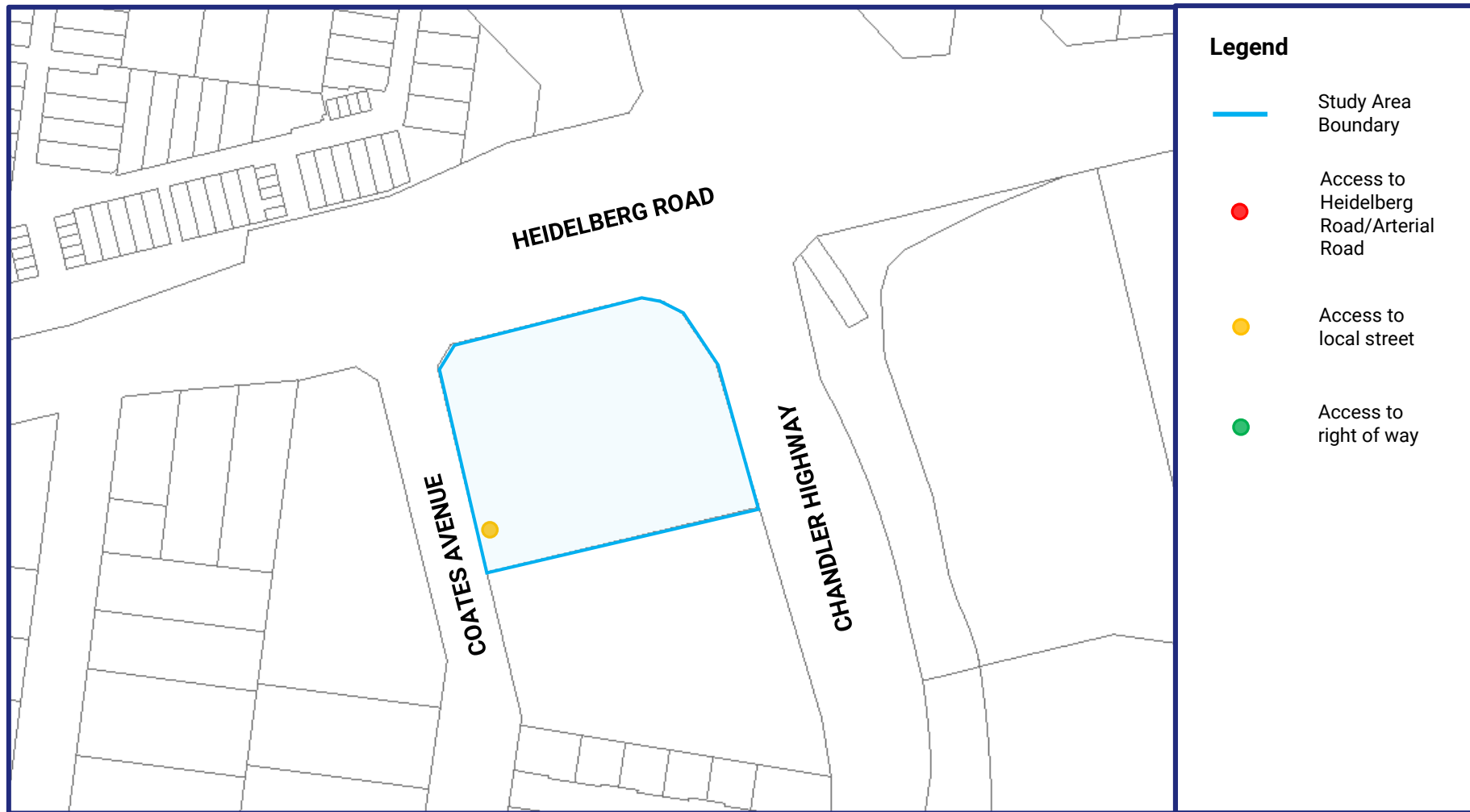


Figure E3: Precinct 3a



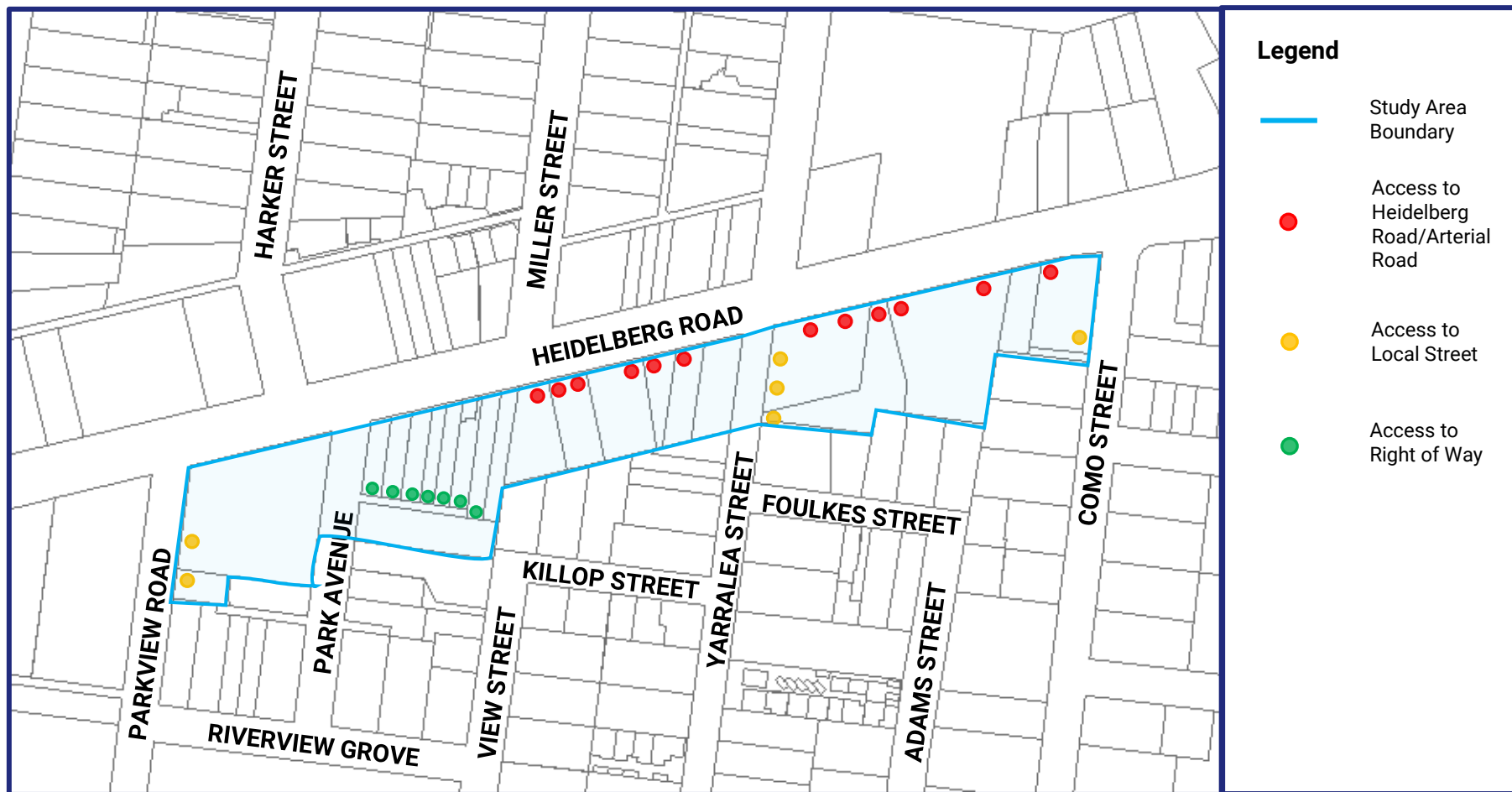


Figure E4: Precinct 3b

