

A.

APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONTEXT

Appendix A outlines the existing strategic and physical context for the Bentleigh Structure plan Study Area in relation to built form.

Discussion is separated into three parts:

- A1. Strategic context
- A2. Glen Eira Planning Scheme
- A3. Land and built form character analysis



A1.

STRATEGIC
CONTEXT

Strategic context

Plan Melbourne

Bentleigh is located approximately 13km from the CBD of metropolitan Melbourne, within the City of Glen Eira.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017) sets out the strategic policy directions required to manage metropolitan Melbourne's growth and change towards 2050.

The plan identifies six metropolitan regions: Inner Metro, Inner South East Metro, Western Metro, Northern Metro, Eastern Metro and Southern Metro.

The City of Glen Eira is located in the Inner South East Metro Region, along with the cities of Bayside, Stonnington and Boroondara.

Plan Melbourne identifies Bentleigh as a major activity centre, that will be expected to support additional housing and employment growth given its proximity to public transport, services and facilities.

The plan recognises that local strategic planning is required to identify planning controls that support and manage planned growth for the area.



Glen Eira City Plan

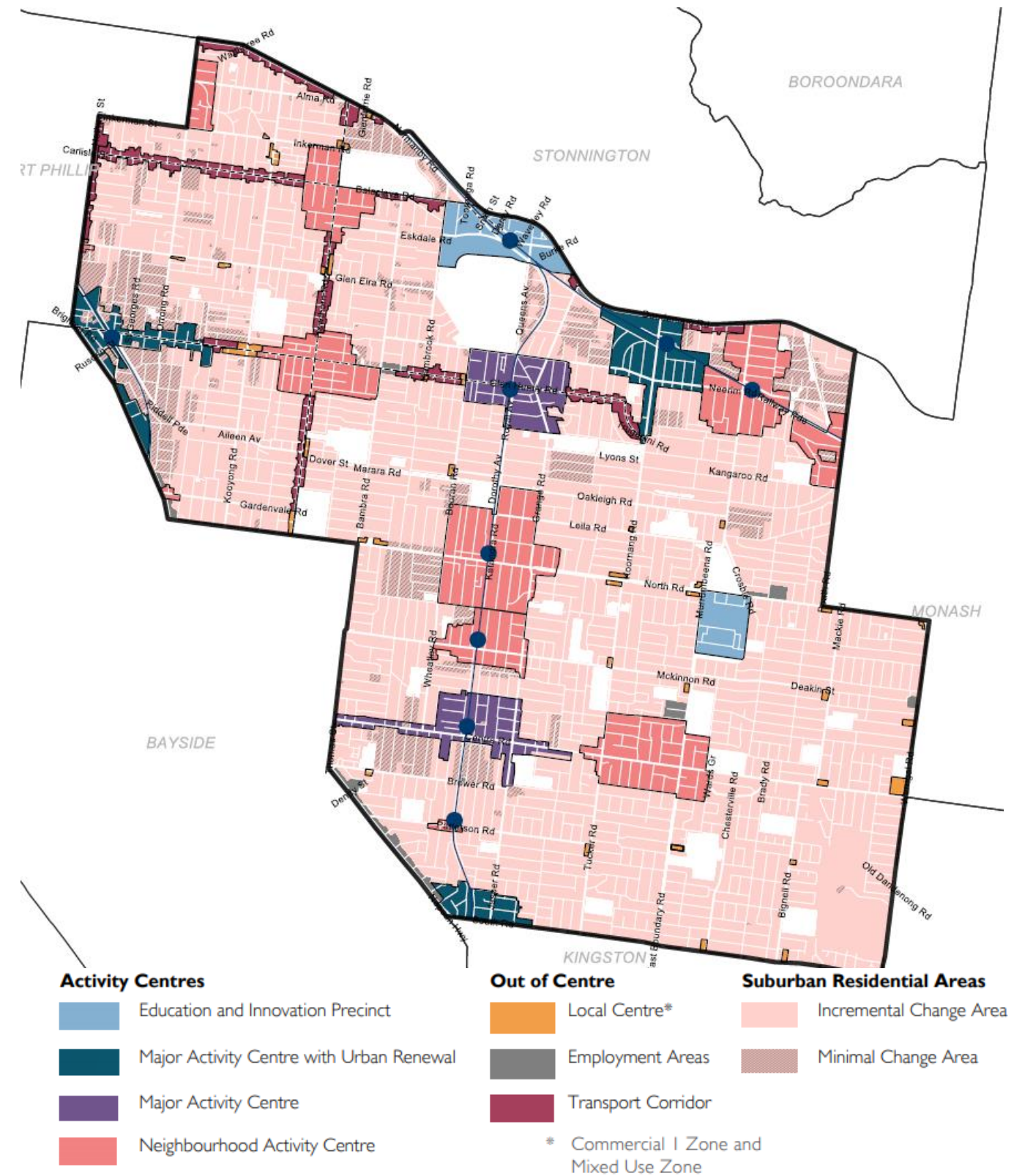
The *Glen Eira City Plan: Activity Centre, Housing, and Local Economy Strategy, 2020* (the City Plan) provides a framework for planned growth across the City of Glen Eira. The Strategy addresses housing, employment and placemaking opportunities and reinforces Glen Eira's network of activity centres, local centres and suburban areas. The strategy identifies a vision for Glen Eira's activity centres:

"Glen Eira will be a city of walkable neighbourhoods that are centred on a network of vibrant, socially inclusive and well designed activity centres, providing for the needs of and reflecting the character of their communities."

The City Plan identifies **Bentleigh as a Major Activity Centre**, with a local vision for the precinct:

"Bentleigh will be an accessible, local shopping destination with a vibrant cafe and restaurant culture. It will maintain its community feel with open space, places for people to meet and gather and a broad range of local businesses which meet the needs of a diverse community."

A key action of the Strategy is to undertake structure plans for Glen Eira's Activity Centres. The Bentleigh Structure Plan provides a range of local objectives and implementation actions that seek to deliver on the City Plan's vision for Bentleigh alongside State and local planning policy directions.



City Strategic Framework Plan (source: Glen Eira City Plan)

Bentleigh

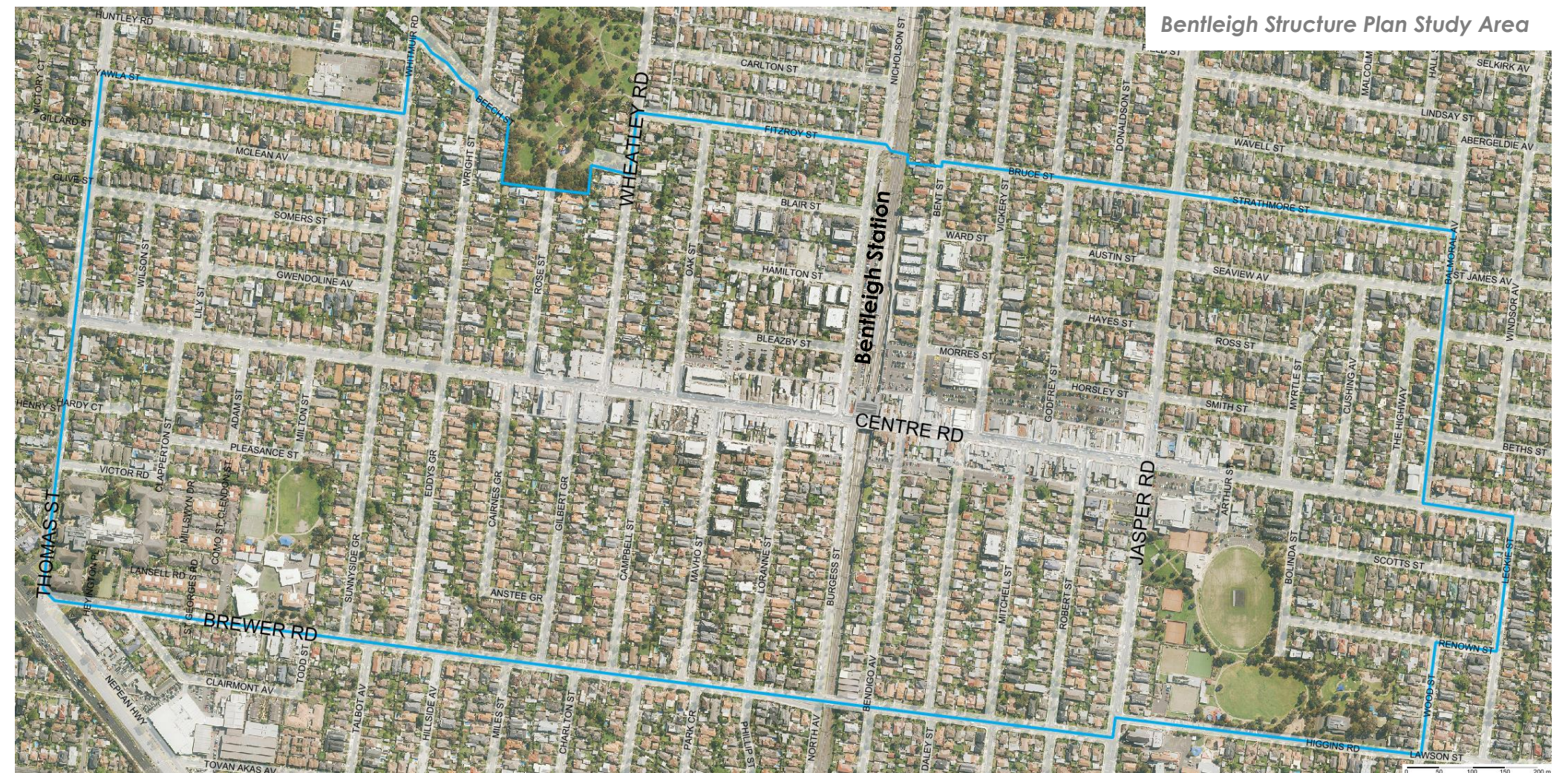
The Suburb of Bentleigh

Bentleigh is an established residential suburb with commercial areas along Centre Road. Major features of the suburb include the Centre Road retail shopping strip, a number of supermarkets as well as a range of speciality shops including cafes and restaurants and other commercial/office space. Other features include Bentleigh Rotunda, Bentleigh Reserve, Hodgson Reserve, Bentleigh Library and a primary school.

Subdivision occurred in the late 19th and early 20th century. The residential area of Bentleigh is predominantly late 1920s to 1960s garden suburban development based around the shopping centre and the railway station. Inter war bungalows and villas contribute to the built form character. Over recent years, modern infill development of apartment blocks and smaller, multi dwelling development has occurred, predominantly north of Centre Road.



Suburb of Bentleigh vs Bentleigh Structure Plan Study Area



Bentleigh Structure Plan Study Area

The Study Area

This report reviews land within the suburb of Bentleigh identified as the Bentleigh activity centre study area.

The study area is bounded by Beech, Fitzroy, Bruce and Strathmore Streets to the north, Thomas Street to the west, Balmoral, Leckie and Wood Streets to the east and Brewer and Higgins Roads to the south. The railway line runs through the heart of the activity centre.

The activity centre study area is focused on the commercial core of Centre Road with a catchment size of approximately 800 metres to one kilometre — which is an approximate 10-minute walking distance extended to the nearest main road.

The recent removal of the level crossing will increase the benefits to the Centre Road shopping strip. Public transport access to the centre is available via train and bus.

The final Bentleigh Activity Centre boundary does not include all areas within the study area boundary. As the design analysis in this report will reveal, not all areas within the study area were considered suitable for inclusion within the activity centre boundary. Their inclusion within the study area however, was important to fully understand the context of the centre, and to determine where the appropriate activity centre boundaries should be.

A2.

GLEN EIRA PLANNING SCHEME

This section outlines the existing requirements of the Glen Eira Planning Scheme applicable to the Bentleigh Structure Plan Study Area.

Updating the Glen Eira Planning Scheme

The City of Glen Eira was formed in 1994 following the amalgamation of the former City of Caulfield with the northern part of the former City of Moorabbin.

From 1994-2004 Council established the majority of its strategic work. This initial period is defined by establishment of the City and original planning scheme, including key planning strategies, local policies and an Activity Centre hierarchy identifying the current urban structure for the city with:

- Minimal Change Areas
- Housing Diversity Areas
- Urban Villages
- Phoenix Precinct

From 2005, Council's focus shifted towards smaller projects including the roll-out of individual strategic sites & single issue policies.

In 2016, Glen Eira adopted a new work plan focusing on reform through activity centre planning and a major planning scheme re-write to address contemporary planning issues.

The current Local Planning Policy Framework of the Glen Eira Planning Scheme is proposed to be updated, to implement the *Glen Eira City Plan: Activity Centre, Housing and Local Economy Strategy, 2020* (the City Plan) into the planning scheme.

This update is proposed to be undertaken in 2020/21 as part of a comprehensive rewrite of the planning scheme to meet the new structure and formatting requirements of the State Government.

Existing policy in the planning scheme for Bentleigh Activity Centre is not inconsistent with the new policy directions at a broad level, however planning scheme updates are required to ensure full alignment with the directions of Plan Melbourne and the new City Plan, and to implement more detailed design controls arising from the structure plan.

A three stage approach to updating the planning scheme is proposed:

Stage 1: Amendment C157 (interim)

Planning controls introduced into the planning scheme to provide interim policy and design guidance for new development to generally reflect the structure plan directions, until permanent controls are developed.

Status: Completed August 2018; interim controls expire 31 March 2021

Stage 2: Amendment C184 (permanent)

Implement the recommendations of the Bentleigh and Carnegie Structure plans into the planning scheme on a permanent basis.

Status: Amendment documentation completed; Exhibition in 2020

Stage 3: Planning Scheme rewrite

Undertake a comprehensive rewrite of the Planning Policy Framework of the Glen Eira Planning Scheme. This will include implementation of the directions of the City Plan, including activity centre and housing frameworks for the whole city, into the planning scheme.

Status: Rewrite to be undertaken in 2020; Exhibition in 2021

The following section outlines existing planning scheme provisions. However, it should be noted that recommendations of this report have been informed by the directions contained in both the City Plan (adopted February 2020) and the Bentleigh Structure Plan (as adopted 2020).

Existing Local Policy Framework

Activity Centre Hierarchy

Clause 21.04 of the Glen Eira Planning Scheme provides Glen Eira's Housing and Residential Development Policy framework.

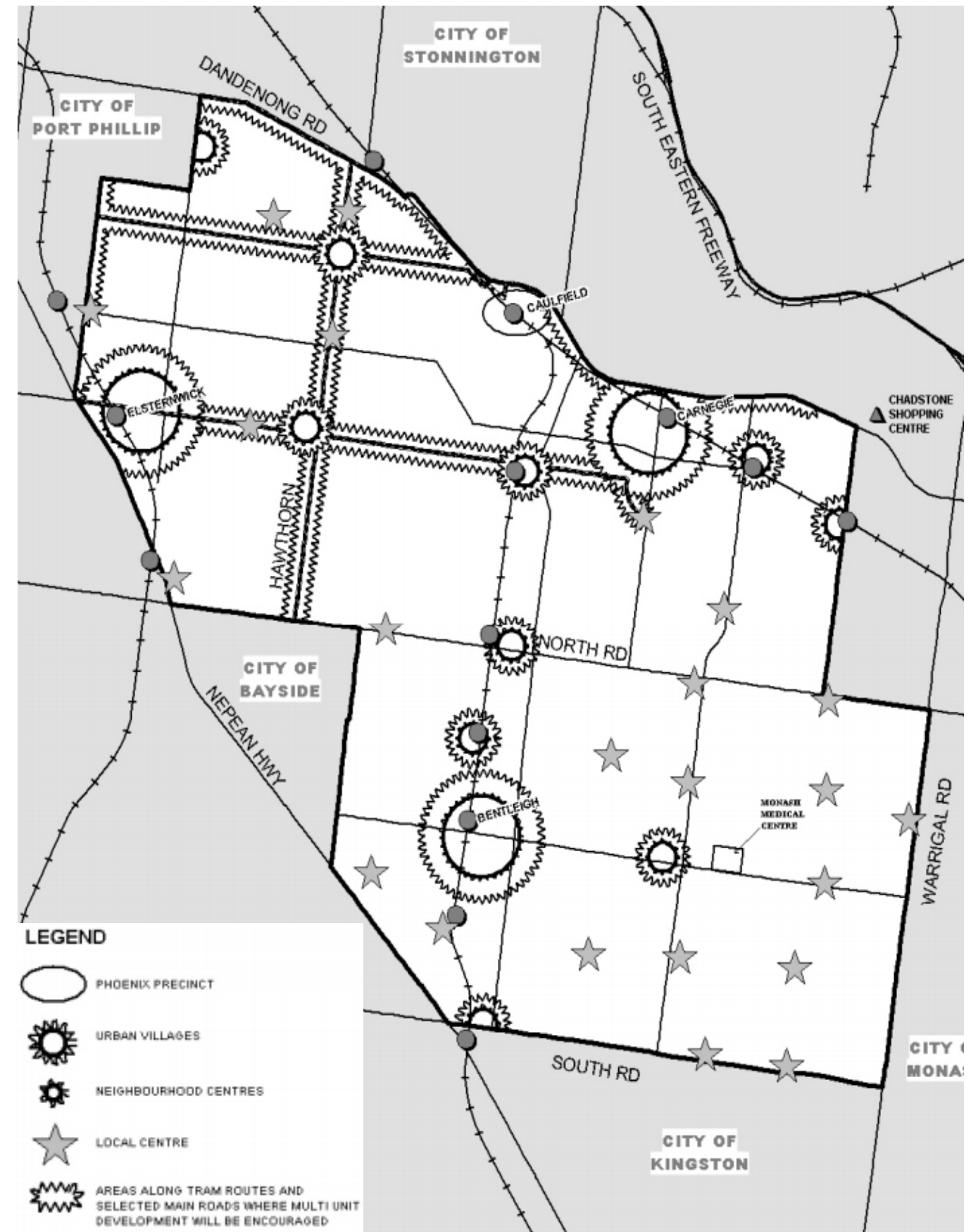
The framework sets out a hierarchy of housing diversity areas. A different density, mass and scale of development is sought for each type of area and different issues should be taken into account.

This hierarchy is implemented through local policy:

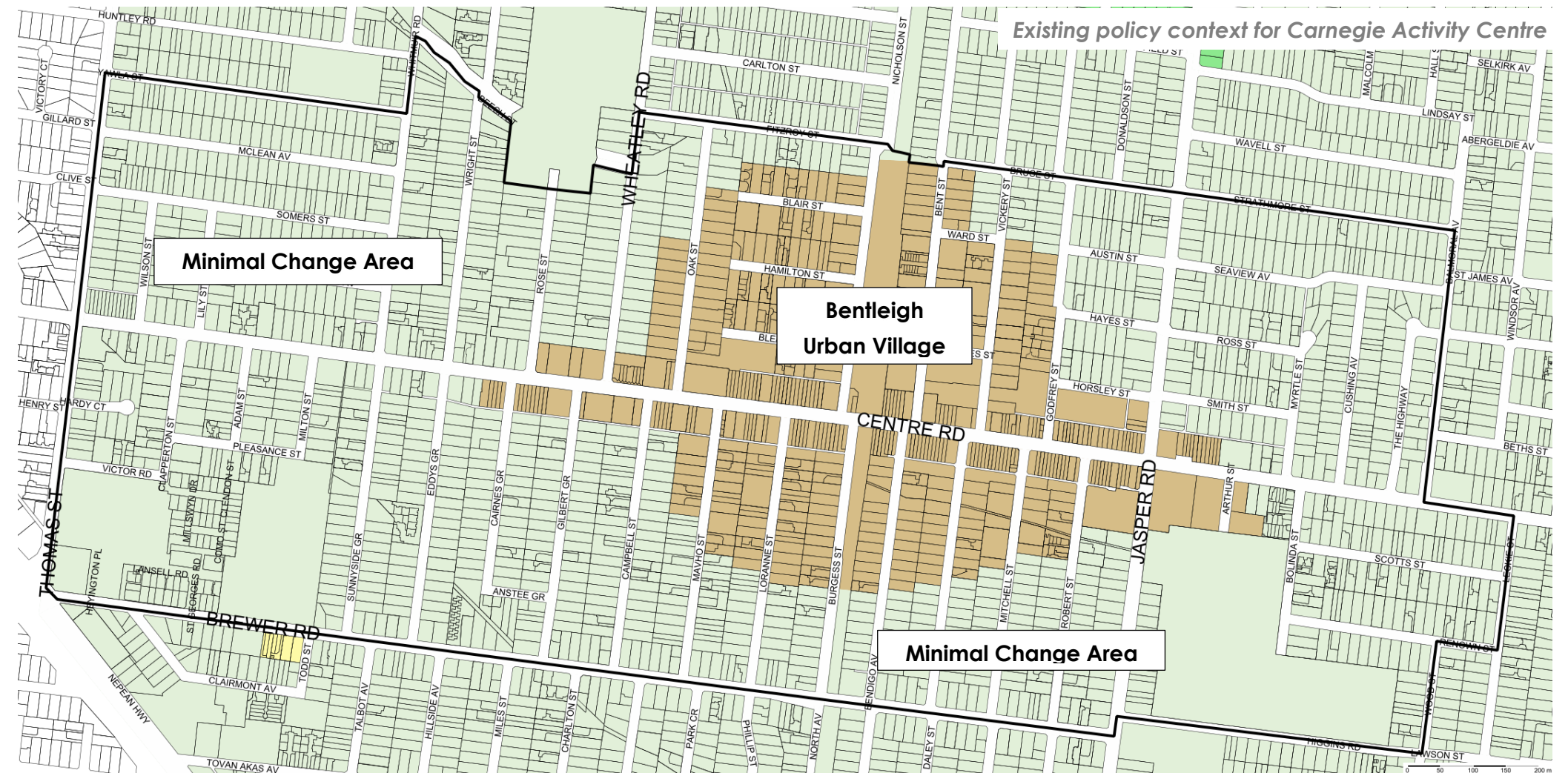
- Clause 22.06 Phoenix Precinct
- Clause 22.07 Urban Villages
- Clause 22.05 Housing Diversity Areas. (Neighbourhood Centres, Local Centres, Tram Routes and Selected Main Road)
- Clause 22.08 Minimal Change Areas (all other areas)

Bentleigh is identified as an Urban Village, along with abutting Local Centres, Tram Routes and Selected Main Roads.

The existing policies will be translated into the new Planning Policy Framework as part of the Stage 3 planning scheme rewrite amendment, and updated where necessary to align with the City Plan directions.



Existing Residential Framework Plan – Clause 21.04



Bentleigh Urban Village

The study area contains a number of policy areas and is centered on the Bentleigh Urban Village.

The Glen Eira Planning Scheme nominates Urban Villages as places with the highest residential development densities and are the centre for business and community life.

Built form guidance and zoning is implemented by 8 precincts in the Urban Villages Policy.

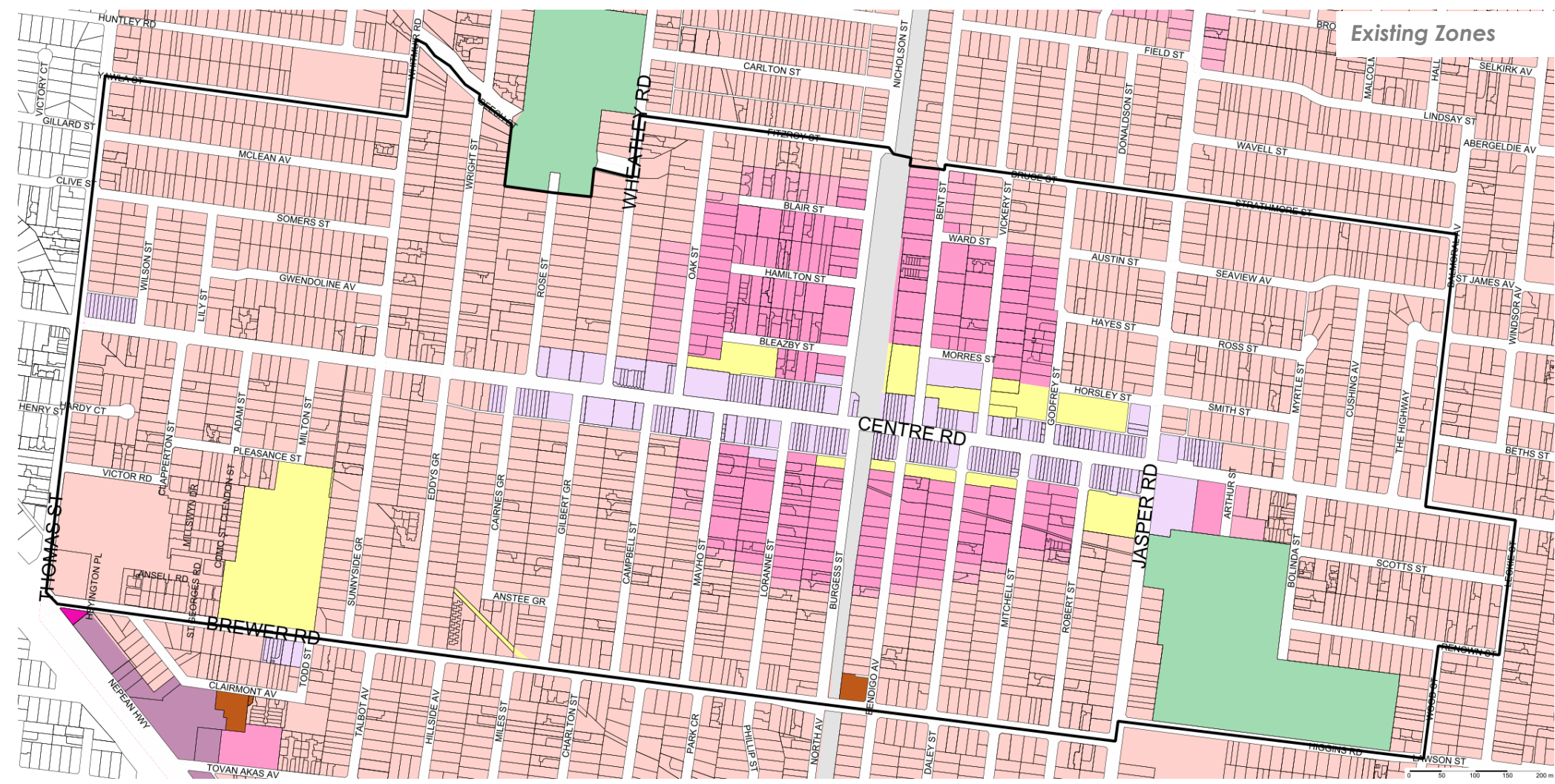
The Precincts are broadly based upon the *Urban Village Structure Plan, Glen Eira City Council, June 1999*, which reviewed areas within a circular walking catchment around the retail core of approximately 500 metres.

The Urban Villages policy content relating to Bentleigh is proposed to be updated as required as part of the Stage 2 Amendment C184, to implement the directions of the Bentleigh Structure Plan into the planning scheme.



Zones

Current zones have been reviewed as part of the work undertaken for the Bentleigh Structure Plan and this Urban Form report.



C1Z Commercial 1 Zone

Existing commercial areas are nominated within the Commercial 1 Zone. Building scale and intensity for these areas is broadly aligned with local policy. However, specific height requirements remained undefined until 2017 when interim height controls were introduced at part of structure planning (see: DDO8 on the following page). Building scale and intensity for commercial is broadly aligned with local policy. However, specific design and building height requirements remained undefined until 2018 when interim height and other design controls were introduced as part of Amendment C157 (see discussion on DDO9 on the following pages).

RGZ1 Residential Growth Zone

The RGZ1 (max height of 13.5 metres, 4 storeys) is applied to the Phoenix Precinct and Urban Villages. In Bentleigh, the RGZ is applied in a radial fashion around the Bentleigh train station. The application of this zone represents a radius of approximately 300m (on average), being a short walkable distance from the centre.

GRZ2 General Residential Zone

The GRZ2 (max height of 11 metres, 3 storeys) is applied as a transitional area to the periphery of Urban Villages as well as to Tram Routes and Selected Main Roads. The GRZ2 schedule contains additional rear setback requirements for transition.

NRZ1 Neighbourhood Residential Zone

The Neighbourhood Residential Zone (maximum height of 9 metres, 2 storeys) applies to all residential land located within a Minimal Change Area.

RDZ1 Road Zone Category 1 (not shown)

This zone is applied to State controlled Roads and provides additional requirements for adjoining development. In Bentleigh it applies to Centre Road and Jasper Road.

PUZ Public Use Zone

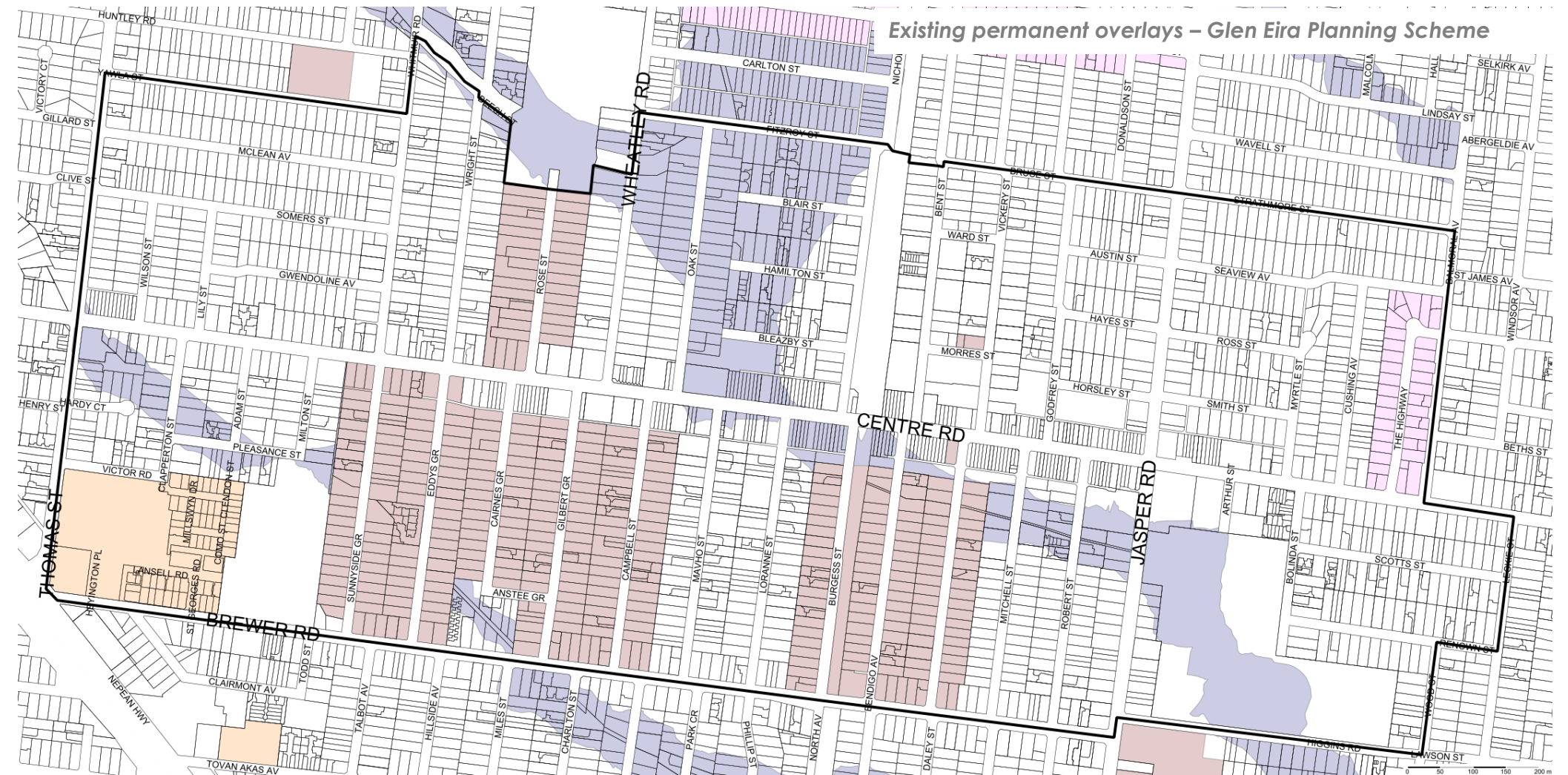
Public land is nominated within the PUZ. This includes the Drainage Reserve, Bentleigh West Primary School. Bentleigh Railway Station and the line. Bentleigh's local government uses under the PUZ are Bentleigh Library and a number of car parks. The PUZ also includes a number of car parks.

PPRZ Public Park and Recreation

This zone is applied to public recreation and open space areas. In Bentleigh, this is the Bentleigh Hodgson Reserve.

Overlays

Current Overlays have been reviewed as part of the work undertaken for the Bentleigh Structure Plan and this Urban Form report.



Permanent Overlays

NCO1 Schedule 1 to the Neighbourhood Character Overlay

This overlay applies to Nepean Highway in Bentleigh, applying detailed neighbourhood character built form requirements protecting this intact street of Interwar – early modern clinker brick and rendered dwellings set in manicured gardens.

DDO2 Schedules 2 to the Design and Development Overlay

This overlay applies to front fencing controls associated with Neighbourhood Character Overlay areas.

SBO Special Building Overlay

Identifies land liable to inundation. See 'topography and flooding' section in the following pages.

EAO Environmental Audit Overlay

Applies to the traditionally commercial/industrial areas where environmental assessments will be required prior to future development. Note: an EAO also applies to land Marked DPO1.

PO Parking Overlay (not shown)

Applies to Urban Village and Housing Diversity Area Policy areas in Bentleigh. The overlay allows reduced parking requirements for student housing (refer Glen Eira planning Scheme maps to identify boundaries).

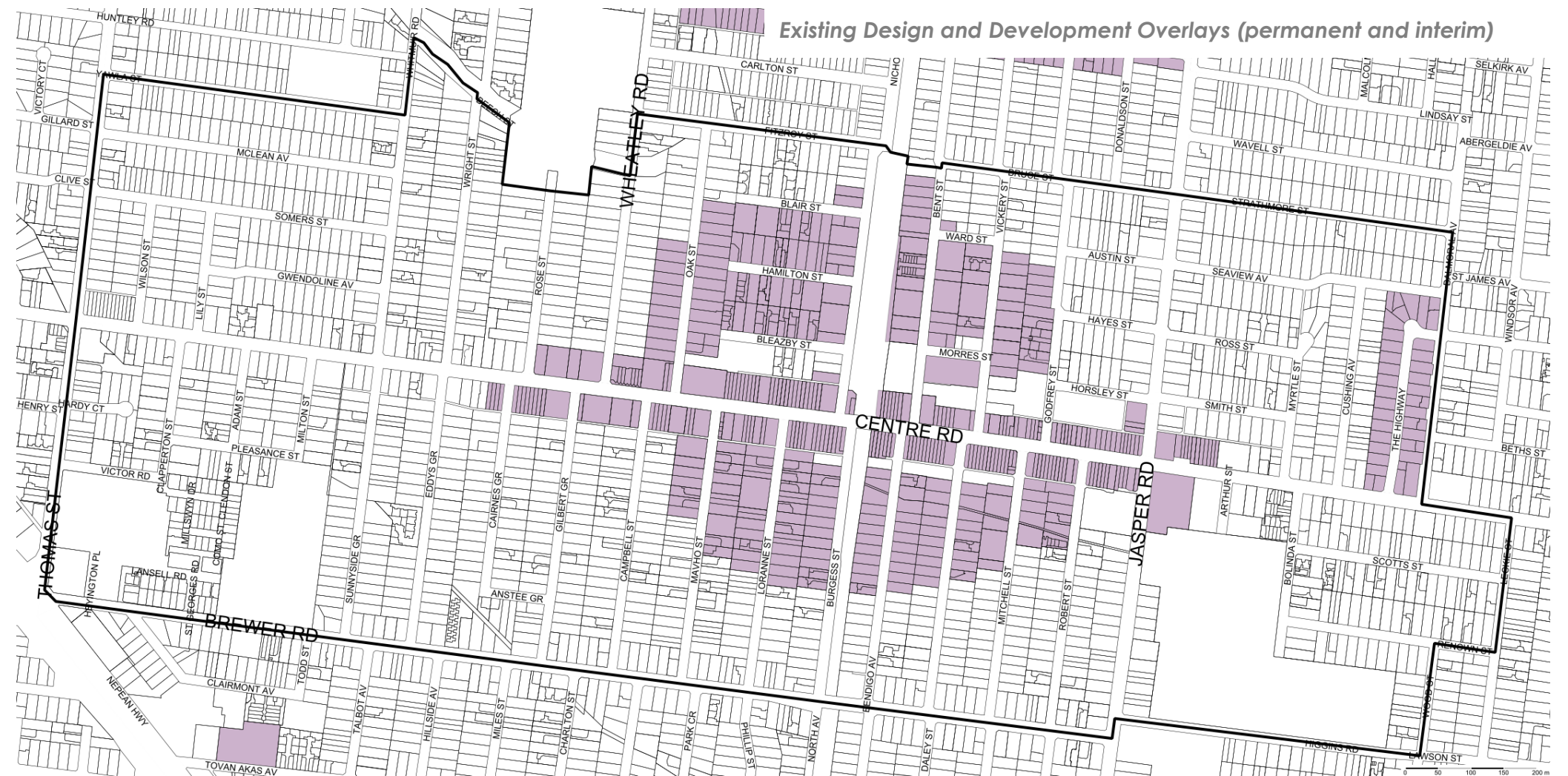
HO Heritage Overlays

Applies to individual sites. Note: new precincts are nominated as shown on the following page.

- HO69 – Heritage Overlay for Bentleigh Environs
- HO98 – 438 and 438B Centre Road, Bentleigh
- HO142 – 9 Vickery Street and 1 Morres Street, Bentleigh

DPO1 Development Plan Overlay

Development Plan Overlay requires an overall plan to be prepared, setting out future land use and built form requirements for 2 Victor Road, Brighton East.



Interim Overlays (Structure Plan)

DDO8 Interim Schedule 8 to the Design and Development Overlay

Prior to structure planning, built form guidance for the Bentleigh Activity Centre was provided in the form of local policy only and there were no building heights or other design controls prescribed in the planning scheme (except for maximum heights in residential zones).

An interim DDO8 applies to the existing Bentleigh Urban Village policy area located within the Bentleigh Structure Plan Study Area. Approved in August 2018, the DDO8 provides interim height controls and design guidance to reflect the key recommendations of the structure plan where current policy varies. This is to ensure new development does not prejudice the implementation of the structure plan in the longer term until permanent controls are able to be introduced.

Permanent DDO8 controls, to introduce the design and built form recommendations of the Structure Plan will form part of a comprehensive suite of planning controls as part of Amendment C184, including new policy and zone and overlay schedules.

The boundaries of the permanent DDO8 will be different to the interim DDO, reflecting the amended activity centre boundary when compared to the original urban villages policy boundary and the comprehensive nature of the permanent controls that seek to implement planning controls using a number of planning tools, not just through a DDO.



Proposed Overlays (Heritage)

The structure planning process for Bentleigh recognised that further work needed to be undertaken to identify areas of heritage significance. In particular, to:

- Investigate potential heritage significance of identified properties within the Structure Plan area
- Locate heritage/character shop-top buildings along Centre Road to provide medium scale commercial development that does not dominate the low scale character of the street.

Council commissioned RBA Architects in 2018 to prepare the Glen Eira Heritage Review – Bentleigh and Carnegie Structure Plans Stage One (Commercial).

This process has nominated new heritage precincts and individually significant buildings.

Separate planning scheme amendments are being progressed to provide heritage policy and protection for these sites.

Amendment C199 proposes interim heritage controls and Amendment C190 proposes permanent heritage controls, nominating new or varied heritage overlay areas as follows:

Proposed planning controls recommended in this Urban Form report have taken into account proposed heritage overlay areas, where they are relevant to future built form outcomes.

A3.

LAND AND BUILT FORM CHARACTER ANALYSIS

This section outlines the physical features of the Bentleigh Structure Plan Study Area, including topography, subdivision pattern, housing stock, place attributes, building heights, permit activity, built form character and open space.

Place Attributes



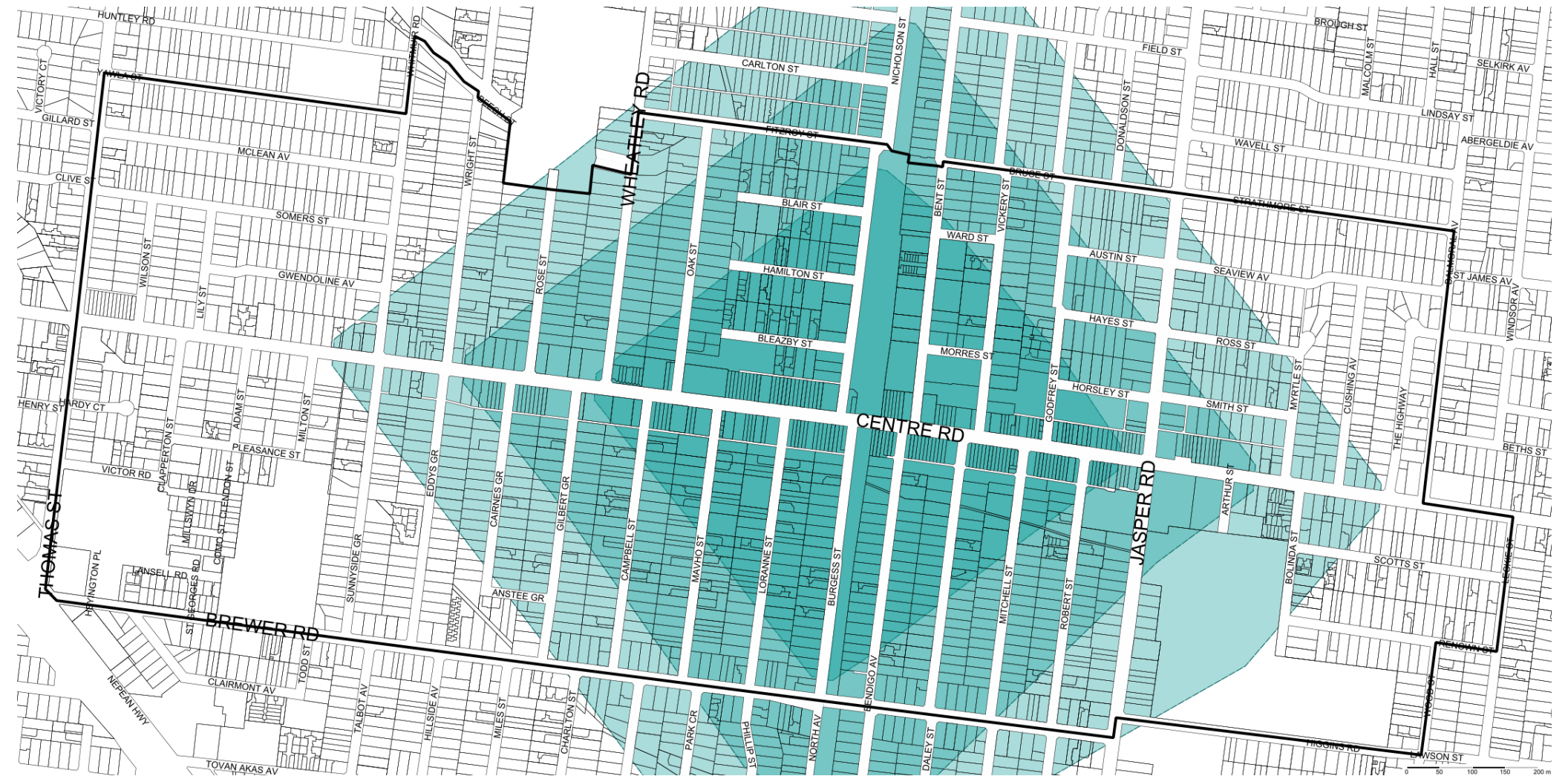
Bentleigh is a leafy green residential area with a characterful shopping strip. The centre is known for its restaurant and shopping options and is anchored by two full line supermarkets, community hub (library), and train station that connects people efficiently to the City.

Bentleigh has many unique attributes that contribute to its local identity and sense of place.

These include:

1. The western gateway to the centre is the Grand View Estate shops at 165-185 Centre Road. The eastern gateway is less defined as residential land becomes commercial, the Greek Orthodox Church, Uniting Church and the Bentleigh RSL are the major landmarks on this side of the centre.
2. The revitalised Bentleigh Station as a result of the level crossing removal.
3. Bentleigh Rotunda.
4. Heritage buildings along Centre Road, particularly on the south side.
5. Rotary Sunday Market in the Bent Street Carpark.
6. Coles on Vickery Street.
7. Woolworths on corner of Centre and Jasper Roads.
8. Bentleigh Library.
9. Bentleigh Hodgson Reserve.
10. A number of Heritage and Neighbourhood Character Overlay precincts in the surrounding residential hinterland.

Walking Distance



The pedestrian and street network is a key element of the urban structure in Bentleigh.

This map shows the walking distance from the Bentleigh Train Station. The map shows walking distances of 400m, 600m and 800m, travelling by roads (rather than a direct radius).

The Centre Road shopping strip is a long, linear strip, measuring 1160m in length, spreading nearly 600m in either direction from the central train station.

Like most other activity centres in Glen Eira, the higher density residential areas in Bentleigh Urban Village were originally defined based on a 400-500m direct radial distance from the train station. Updated zone boundaries should account for walking distance.

Open Spaces

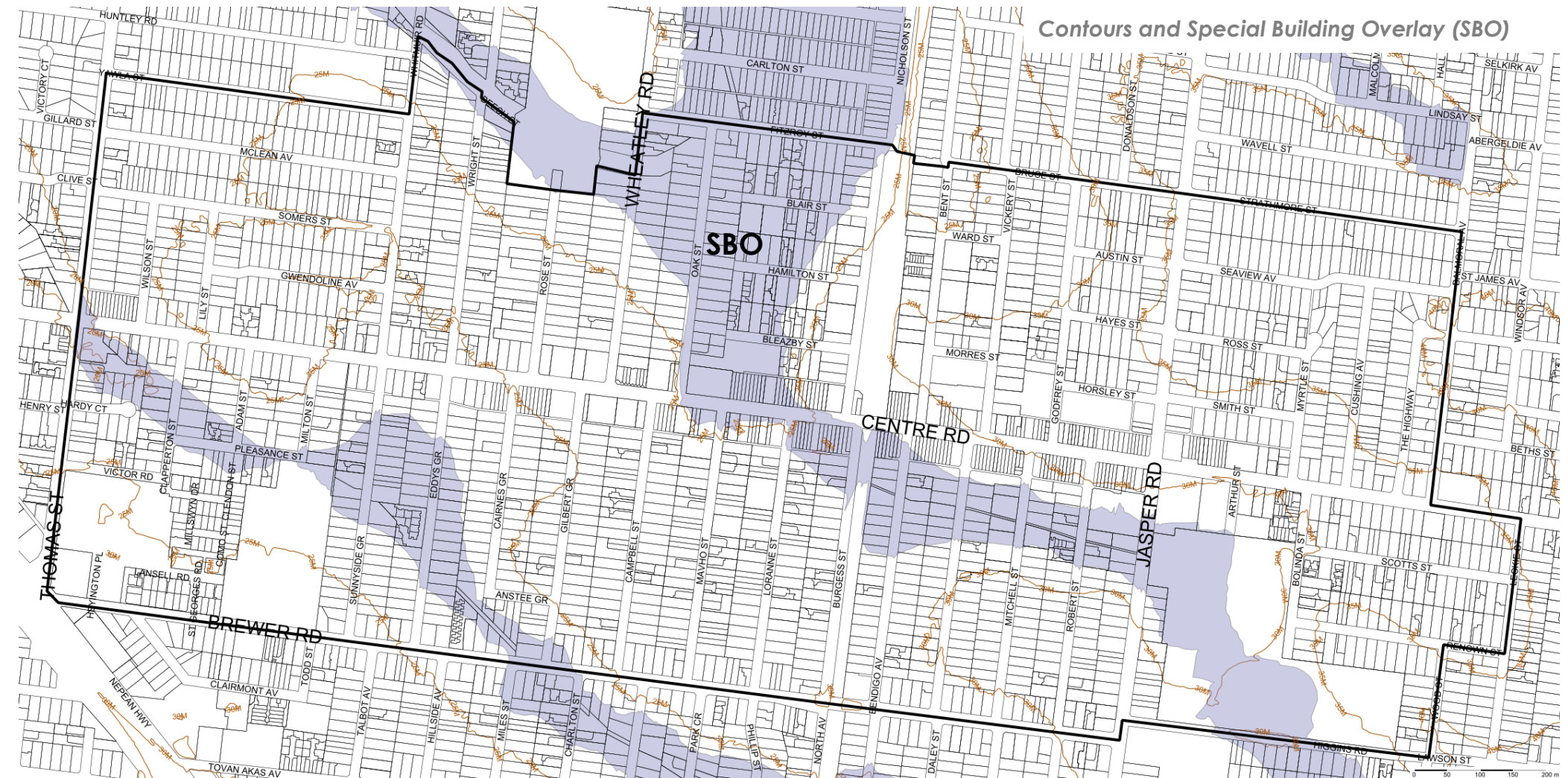


The *Glen Eira Open Space Strategy 2014* outlines the existing open spaces in the suburb of Bentleigh and their relative walking catchments, with gaps identified in the north west and the south east of the study area.

Structure planning has provided an opportunity for Council to coordinate a network of existing and future open spaces.

- A. New Plaza (proposed by Council)**
- B. Bentleigh Rotunda (existing)**
- C. Godfrey Street Park (proposed by Council)**
- D. Allnutt Park (existing)**
- E. Bentleigh Hodgson Reserve (existing)**

Topography & Flooding



The topography of the study area is **relatively flat**, with no notable slopes or other topographical land features. There are limited implications for built form as no particular sites will appear less or more dominant based on contours of the land.

Land towards the south-east of the Study Area is identified within the Special Building Overlay (**SBO**) of the Glen Eira Planning Scheme.

The SBO identifies land in urban areas liable to inundation by overland flows from the urban drainage system as determined by, or in consultation with, the floodplain management authority (Melbourne Water).

Flood mitigation is managed on these sites through the planning permit process.

Subdivision Pattern



The study area has a mixed subdivision pattern allowing for a variety of lot sizes and building types.



Residential Areas

Residential subdivision patterns primarily reflect the time of initial development. Residential land generally ranges from 400 to 700 square metres, with the majority around 600 square metres.

Larger lots mostly represent properties that have already been consolidated and developed for apartment buildings. Smaller lots are in the retirement village as well as an emerging smaller lot pattern reflecting semi-detached development.

Commercial & Mixed Use Areas

The Centre Road retail core contains a fine grain lot pattern, with lots generally ranging from 200 to 400 square metres and street frontages commonly between 5 and 6 metres wide. Building frontages within this catchment reflect a historic fine grain character.

The commercial surrounds abutting the retail core contain medium to larger sites, with major strategic opportunities to the north of the Centre Road Retail Core and either side of the railway line.

Building Heights



The activity centre has experienced rapid transformation in recent years. In addition to Melbourne's recent housing boom, this targeted transformation in Bentleigh could be seen as a flow-on effect of the new residential zones introduced in 2013 (amendment C110), which provided clarity for growth directions in Urban Villages.

Commercial/Mixed Use Areas

Centre Road has experienced recent permit activity. Taller buildings have been approved or constructed to the west of the train station (3-8 storeys). Limited permit activity is present in the east of the retail core. This Centre Road strip has been subject to an interim DDO since early 2017, restricting heights to 3-5 storeys.

Residential Areas

There is a clustering of 3-4 storey apartment buildings north of the retail core, namely along Bent, Nicholson, Blair and Hamilton Streets. These are also the areas where recent approved development has occurred.

On the southern side of Centre Road, Loranne Street, Mahvo Street and Mitchell Street contain the most 3-4 storey apartment development. In mid-2018, a residential DDO was applied to this area to reflect the Structure Plan.

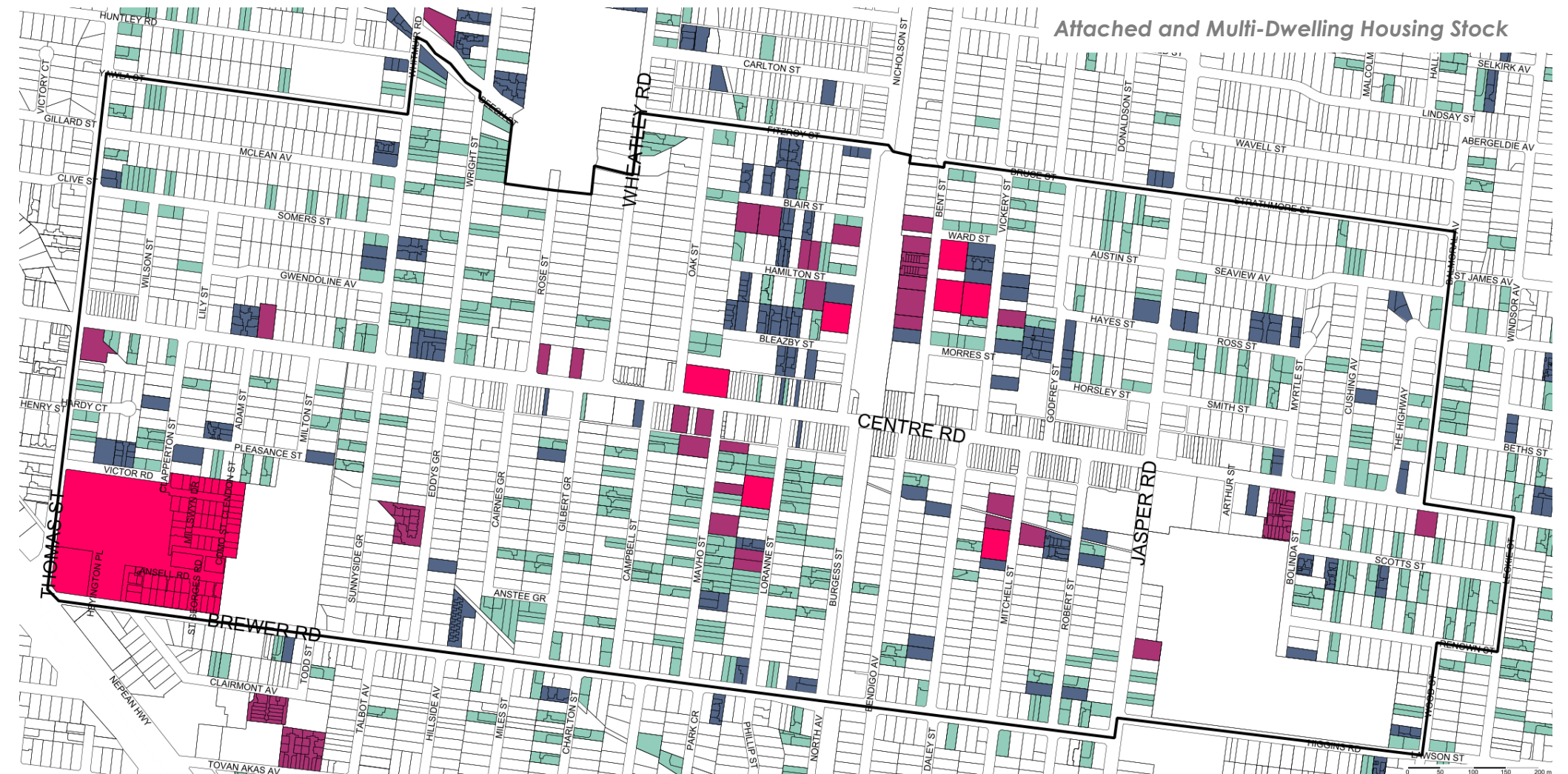
Limited permit activity is present outside of the GRZ and RGZ surrounding the retail core.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Up to 2 storeys | 5 storeys |
| 3 storeys | 7 storeys |
| 4 storeys | 8 storeys |

Striped lines represent approved development that is not constructed. For example, striped orange identifies an approval of 5 storeys, while solid orange identifies an existing constructed development of 5 storeys.

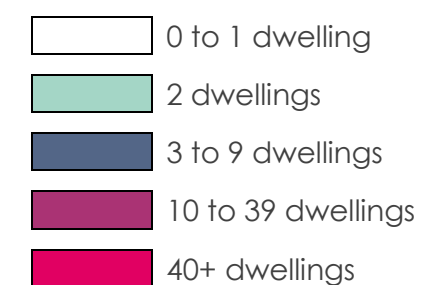
Building Height Data Notes:
Height (storeys) data is based on a visual site survey and desktop assessment conducted over May-June 2018, followed by an updated desktop assessment in December 2019. The data represents total floor count as visible from the street and does not equate to height in metres. Permit data is based on a review of new planning permits issued within the study area between August 2013 to December 2019 (i.e. since the reformed residential zones were introduced in Glen Eira. Permit data represents new permits issued within this timeframe only and does not account for permit amendments when original permits were issued prior. Data excludes buildings in public open spaces or public use zone.

Residential



Bentleigh is an interwar garden suburban area with modern infill development. The suburb's traditional built form character is defined by a mix of 1 to 2 storey detached or semi-detached dwellings. Buildings are generally constructed with brick or rendered facades and pitched, tiled roofing. Buildings traditionally have low site coverage and substantial front and rear setbacks, with greenery and canopy trees contributing to a valued garden setting. Victorian and Edwardian (late 19th and early 20th century) residential development occurred in areas closest to the station and shopping centre with interwar dwellings providing the most dominant wave of development for the area.

Since the 1960s, many dwellings in this location were demolished to make way for single and double story multi-dwelling developments such as villas and walk-up flats. The 21st century has seen a new wave of apartment and dual occupancy development. New developments since 2011 in particular have rapidly transformed Bentleigh's traditional streets establishing a dense urban environment of 3 to 4 storey apartment buildings with high site coverage and reduced setbacks. New developments have generally adopted a contemporary architectural approach with geometric or 'box' styled rendered facades combined with timber, brick or stone feature elements referencing the suburb's traditional elements.



Housing Stock Data Notes:

The existing housing stock data represents:

- Existing stock: Existing multi-dwelling housing (2 or more dwellings on a lot) or housing that is generally interpreted as such (i.e. dual occupancy development in attached side-by-side or detached 'bottle axe' arrangement).
- Under construction: Multi-dwelling housing that is under construction based on a current planning permit.
- Impending construction: sites cleared for construction where a planning permit is valid at October 2019.

This map is created based on a qualitative desktop assessment:

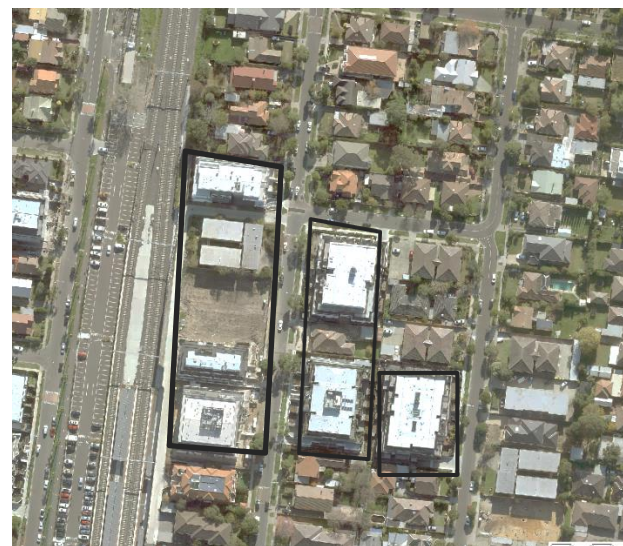
- Start with 2016 base mapping from State Government Housing Development Data (HDD 2016).
- October-December 2019 desktop update using Council aerial photography (oct 2019), property data and rates data for multi dwelling sites (December 2019).

Transformation

The following imagery demonstrates the significant transformation of Bentleigh's residential areas (2011 vs 2018). The aerial photographs depict Bent Street, east of the railway line.



2011



2018

(sites developed between 2011 and 2018 are outlined in this image)

Examples of Traditional Housing

Campbell Street (HO)



Bendigo Avenue (HO)



Residential Street example



Traditional/emerging interface



Examples of Emerging Housing

11 Bent Street



20 Hamilton Street



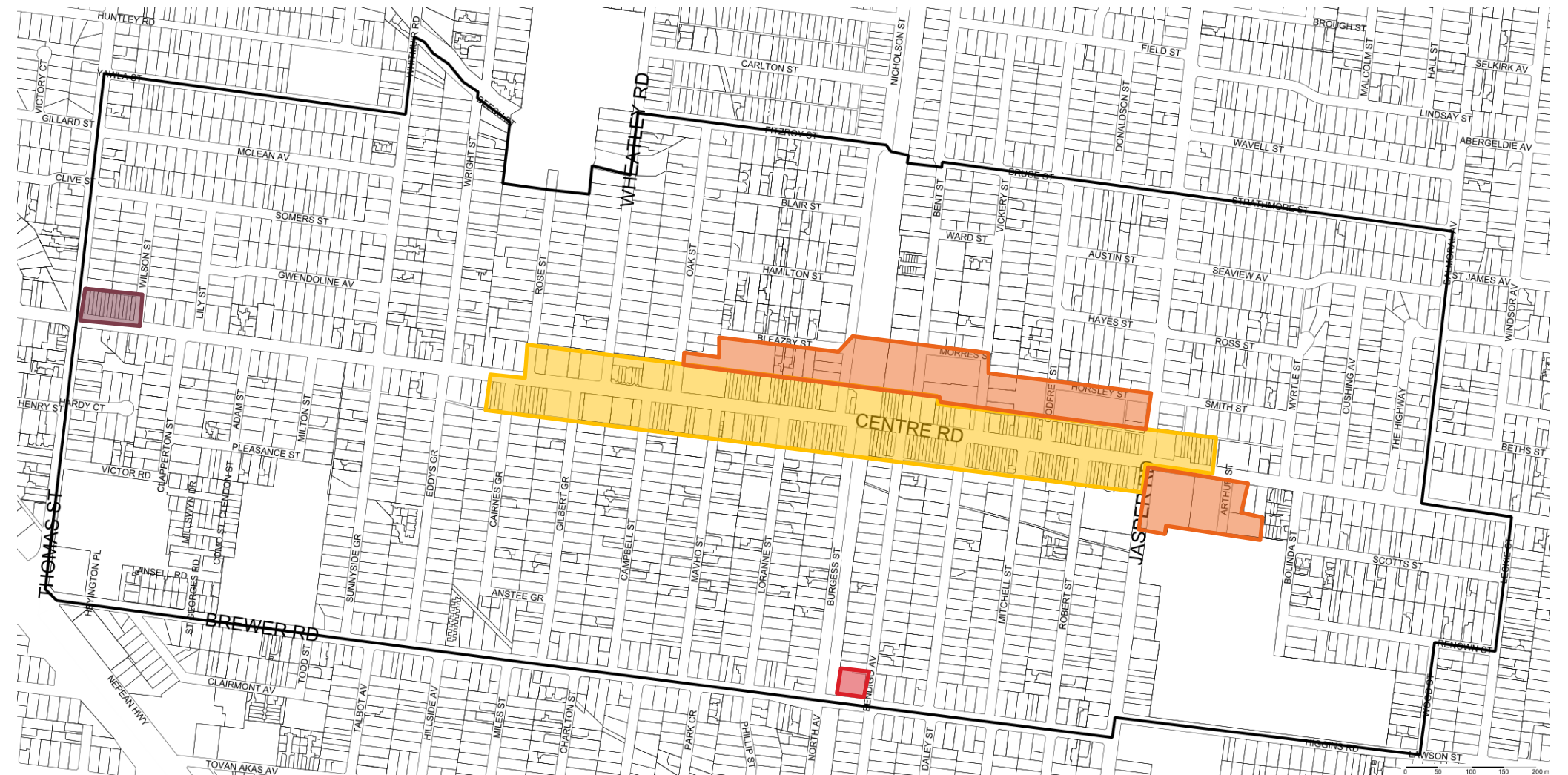
22 Bent Street



24 Mahvo Street



Commercial, Mixed Use & Public Use Areas



Existing conditions analysis of the commercial, mixed use and public use areas has been split into four areas.

This assessment has been used to inform precinct boundaries for the purpose of more detailed built form analysis in Section B of this report.

- Centre Road Retail Core
- Centre Road Surrounds
- Local Centres
- 99 Brewer Road



Centre road retail core

The Centre Road shopping strip is bisected by the railway line, which has recently undergone a level crossing upgrade. There is no distinct difference between the east and west area of the activity centre, with both sides comprising of a consistent two storey built form scale, with isolated older buildings dispersed throughout. Many individual premises form part of larger building consisting of two or more similar premises.

There is currently minimal infill development within the Bentleigh activity centre with the existing built form and dominating character being a mix of one and two storey buildings, with some including a parapet.

The low scale of the existing built form lends itself to an intimate pedestrian streetscape environment, and break out areas along Centre Road provide landscaping, seating and shade through street trees. The majority of buildings provide an active frontage with a mix of shops, offices and restaurants spilling into the street. However street tree planting is minimal and would benefit from canopy trees and improved landscaping in public plaza and rest areas.

The road has an approximate street width of 20 metres from building to building. Buildings are built to the street frontage. The fine grain development pattern incorporates 5-6m street frontage widths.

Vehicle access is provided at the rear of lots via existing laneways and carparks, avoiding driveway access from the main street.

Centre Road (from Mitchell Street)



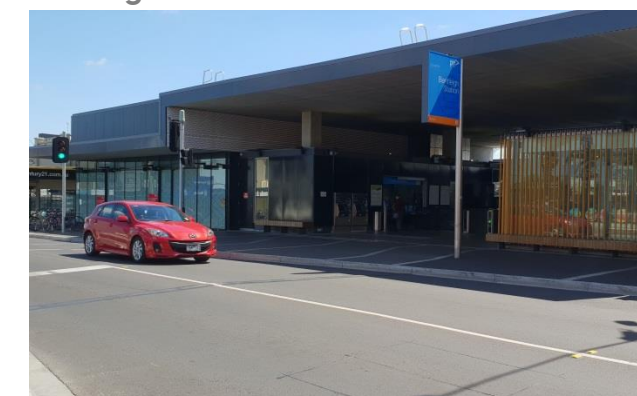
Centre Road from (Bendigo Avenue)



Bentleigh Rotunda



Bentleigh Station



Centre Road (western end)





Centre Road Surrounds

Buildings in the Centre Road surrounds are generally between 1 to 2 storeys in height. There is a mixed building character with a range of street frontages and property sizes that are less consistent than within the Centre Road retail core. Council commissioned RBA Architects in 2018 to prepare the *Glen Eira Heritage Review – Bentleigh & Carnegie Structure Plans Stage One (Commercial)*. Refer to that report for further comment on proposed updates to heritage significance of buildings along Centre Road.

There is current market demand for mid-rise apartment development, with commercial at the ground level. In the future, additional retail floor space, community facilities and open space will be required. Opportunities for consideration include:

- There is an opportunity to harness development around the station within the carparks, with greater opportunities within the northern carpark to create linkages to the station and between other community anchors.
- There are larger sites located on the corner of Jasper Road and provide the area with opportunities to create a gateway into the area through choice and style of development.

A number of strategic opportunities are identified in the *Structure Plan* with a mix of land use and open space opportunities in these areas.

The rear of the shops on both the north and south of Centre Road face large and expansive car parking areas that pedestrians must navigate en route to the shopping strip.

The existing pedestrian desire lines within and through the carparks are heavily disrupted by vehicle movement. There is opportunity in creating a more pedestrian focused movement layout within the car parks.

Existing side streets and carparks should serve as the basis for the activation of the rear of shops. These areas would allow for a highly pedestrianised street network that would create a vibrant and connected area.



Bleazby Street car park



Woolworths on Jasper Road



Entry to Vickery Street from Centre Road



Godfrey Street car park



Vickery Street car park



Sensitive residential interfaces

Expansive surface carparks north and south of the main strip provide a buffer between residential neighbourhoods and commercial development (identified in purple on this map).

However, in many parts of the centre, residential sites have a direct interface (or just laneway separation) to commercial sites (identified as blue on this map). Any future development on commercial sites or within the carparks could impact upon adjoining residential sites.

Interfaces with public space must also consider overshadowing impacts and ensure for the provision of a positive and active frontage to the open space that encourages passive surveillance. Other sensitive areas such as the immediate local street network will need to be considered when investigating future side street closures or upgrades that effect traffic flow. Public realm and pedestrian improvements need to be fully investigated; as they have flow on effects as to how the local streets are used.

Bentleigh Station & Level Crossing Removal

The Centre Road Level Crossing removal project by the Victorian Government was removed by lowering the rail line below Centre Road in 2016.

- *Before Level Crossing Removal* – Centre Road maintained a continuous low-scale open character from west to east of the railway line, however split by the railway line at ground level.
- *After Level Crossing Removal* – The physical separation between west and east has been removed.

Bentleigh Station, Centre Road





Centre Road west group

There is one local centre located within the study area. With an existing historic character of 1 to 2 storeys.

The west group on Centre Road – between Thomas Road (west) and Wilson Street (east) - mainly date to the early Post-war period (nos. 169-189) except for nos. 165-167, which date to the interwar period. This small strip has a two storey character.

The design and era of the buildings creates a link with the Centre Road retail core, despite their physical separation.

Their abuttal to sensitive residential areas suggests a more moderated approach to building height than the commercial core of larger centres.

Corner Thomas Street and Centre Road



Industrial - 99 Brewer Road

There is one industrial lot of land on the boundary of the centre, adjacent to the railway line. It also has a sensitive interface: residential and is located at the end of the Benthleigh Environs Heritage Overlay.

99 Brewer Road (view from railway line)



99 Brewer Road (residential interface to Bendigo Avenue)



Design Issues

Community & VCAT Feedback – Planning Scheme Review 2018



Glen Eira has experienced a significant increase in permit activity and construction in recent years. This increase directly correlates with a construction boom experienced across Metropolitan Melbourne as well as Glen Eira's introduction of new residential zones in August 2013 (Amendment C110), which more clearly directed growth towards Council's Housing Diversity Areas and Urban Villages.

In 2016, Council completed an extensive community engagement process to review the Glen Eira Planning Scheme. More than 430 people participated in the discussion with 247 attending the scheduled meetings and 68 participating via Council's *Have Your Say* online forum. A total of 122 submissions were received. The *Glen Eira Planning Scheme Review Report 2016 and 2018 update* contain the analysis, findings and work plan recommendations from this process.

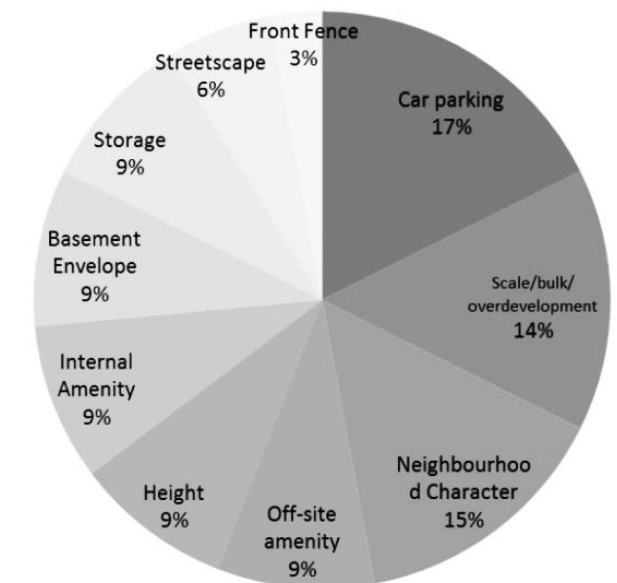
The Planning Scheme Review report 2018 contained an analysis of key VCAT issues to determine the leading planning and policy issues disputed at VCAT for Glen Eira City Council. Key issues across the city (which suggest key areas of community and developer conflict) included:

- basement envelope;
- building transition;
- car parking;
- first floor extent (minimal change areas);
- front fence height;
- internal amenity;
- neighbourhood character;
- off-site amenity;
- scale/bulk/overdevelopment;
- storage; and
- streetscape appearance & integration.

The key issues for Urban Villages Policy areas such as Bentleigh, Carnegie and Elsternwick Urban Villages were related to:

- Car parking (17.65%);
- Scale/bulk/overdevelopment (14.71%);
- Neighbourhood character (14.71%);
- Off-site amenity (8.82%); and
- Height (8.82%).

The full breakdown includes:



VCAT trends indicated that further policy guidance was required to provide greater clarity on neighbourhood character outcomes in areas of increased density (Council's Housing Diversity Areas, Urban Villages and the Phoenix Precinct). It was also apparent that scale, bulk and overdevelopment were linked to issues regarding Neighbourhood Character. The key issues relating to car parking required reform relating to transport policy.

Consultant Review – Urban Context and Design



In 2017, Council appointed Planisphere consultants to review the urban context of Glen Eira's Activity Centres and provide recommendations for Council's strategies, guidelines and structure plans to improve built form and character outcomes.

Planisphere prepared two reports, being the Glen Eira Urban Context Report (June 2017) and Activity Centre Urban Design Guidelines (July 2017).

The Activity Centres Urban Design Guidelines informed development of Council's adopted *Quality Design Guidelines*. The Urban Context Report highlighted a number of development issues and opportunities across commercial and residential areas:

Key design issues in commercial areas:

- **Ground level activation** – providing active frontages on main streets, and minimising vehicle access points and building services.
- **Interface response & amenity** – overshadowing, overlooking, building bulk, and equitable development issues resulting from minimal upper floor setbacks.
- **Podium expression** – Commercial development often has limited streetwall consistency. Defined podium and tower forms with upper floor setbacks will help to emphasise the lower parts of the building and transition visual bulk and volume away from the streetscape.
- **Design quality** – designs should be well articulated (vertically and horizontally) with visually interesting facades and treatments to break up the visual bulk of

upper floors and respond to street rhythm.

- **Rear transition to residential** – development should respond better to sensitive interfaces, particularly addressing overlooking, overshadowing, vehicle movement and noise.

Key design issues in residential areas:

- **Excessive site coverage & limited front setbacks** – High density development often disrupts the residential scale and rhythm of the streetscapes. The large development footprint leaves very little area for the vegetation and landscaping associated with traditional front yard areas. The vegetation in front setbacks is just as important as street trees in creating a sense of greenery in the streetscape. Greater setbacks will achieve more greenery while allowing for secluded private open space in front yards.
- **Street presentation** – Design detailing can improve the way a development integrates with the streetscape. Designs should incorporate vertical and horizontal articulation and visually interesting facades to break up larger extents and respond to street rhythm.
- **Side interfaces** – Boundary to boundary site coverage creates apartments with outlooks to the adjacent residential dwellings along the entire side boundary, with minimal side setbacks. Dwelling orientation should avoid this.
- **Dominant vehicle access ways** – vehicle accessways should be designed to be visually appealing with landscaping and articulated elements in the surrounds.