

PART 3

DISTILLATION



4

KEY ISSUES

4.1 Centre-wide issues

- > Melbourne is growing towards Newport, and strategies to direct (and utilise) the growth are not sufficiently developed.
- > Heritage is a key part of Newport's identity. However, its intrinsic significance is diminished by the visual and spatial impacts of the Melbourne Road overpass. Additionally, there have been very limited attempts to celebrate heritage by means of design responses.
- > The momentum of iconic, character-defining developments has been interrupted since the construction of the overpass (with limited exceptions). Rekindling the development momentum in a manner that respects Newport's heritage character is a challenge.
- > Sense of arrival when approaching from the north and south is severely impaired by unappealing built form and land uses that would be better located outside the NAC.
- > Visually, spatially, and thematically, there is a lack of relationship between different precincts within the Activity Centre.
- > Pedestrian and cyclist access within several parts of the Activity Centre is poor.
- > Increased residential development will place additional pressure on existing community infrastructure, some of which is already at capacity.
- > Unbalanced population growth between east and west may create/exacerbate differences in the economic performance between eastern and western sides of the Activity Centre.
- > There is a lack of certainty with respect to the construction and location of an underground train link to Fisherman's Bend.
- > Competition from nearby Activity Centres is considerable, and the pattern of escape expenditure presents a challenge.
- > There is limited access to affordable housing in Newport for households on very low to moderate income.
- > The role of the Centre, taking into account its strategic advantages, requires resolution in order to avoid inappropriate development.
- > Existing heritage areas in Newport greatly influences Newport's neighbourhood character. Preservation of this heritage character substantially limits the potential for residential intensification.

4.2 Location Specific Constraints

- > The advisory areas associated with the Major Hazard Facilities (MHFs) limit the nature and intensity of development that is available within the northern sections of the periphery of the Centre.
- > The historic mill is a major redevelopment opportunity, but development potential is suspended due to the site's location within the MHF advisory areas.
- > VicTrack land south of the Substation is underutilised as a car park.
- > Restrictions associated with building over or near pipelines as per the *Pipelines Act 2005* and the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme must be considered.

4.3 Precinct-Specific Issues (see Figure 10)

Northern Gateway Precinct

1. There is little sense of arrival when approaching the centre from Melbourne from the North.
2. Commercial uses at the town entry from Melbourne contribute little towards establishing a village identity and vibrancy, and do not convey the importance of this precinct as part of the Activity Centre core.
3. There is a lack of consistency in scale and form within the Precinct, especially having regard for the eastern and western sections of Melbourne Road.
4. Streetscape appearance does not convey adequate pride of place. Street enhancements and furniture are of basic quality, there are unscreened views of unkempt or industrial areas, above ground powerlines create visual clutter, and general streetscape appearance can be improved.
4. East-west access for pedestrians and cyclists is limited (other than at the intersection of Mason Street and Melbourne Road). In part, this is related to the (unavoidable) vehicular priority of Melbourne Road within the State network.
6. Sites on the eastern side of Melbourne Road are narrow and affected by fuel pipelines, which restrict the extent of developable area.

Arts and Recreation Precinct

12. The railway land to the south of the Substation is the largest site in the Centre, but is utilised solely as commuter parking, which misses the opportunity to use built form as a means of enhancing the town's identity, as well as the economic and land use offer.
13. The interface between the Precinct and the railway reserve presents very poorly and fails to integrate with the Precinct, with the exception of an articulated entry under the Melbourne Road overpass.
14. Access to the train station and through to the east does not comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards.

Southern Gateway Precinct

19. The clear 'village' form on the eastern side of the road and the consistent townhouse character on the western side combine to create a sense of arrival. However, the narrative of Activity Centre form is interrupted by the Melbourne Road roundabout and overpass. This disconnect is exacerbated by the historic residential development between the Hall Street and Southern Gateway Precincts.

Mason Street Precinct

7. Mason Street plays an important social and commercial function, and has several positive 'village characteristics, but the function and characteristics are not discernible from Melbourne Road.
8. The intensity of land use and activity within several parts of the Precinct can be increased.
9. Development potential is greatest where design can respond to taller heritage buildings in the Activity Centre landscape, but opportunities to utilise this potential have not been grasped (other than some limited exceptions).
10. A car park blocks the pedestrian desire line between Bryan Martyn Oval and Paine Reserve, neglecting an opportunity for connecting facilities and precincts.
11. Pedestrian and cyclist connections between Paine Reserve and the Market Street transit plaza are impaired by traffic movements on Market Street. Additionally, the pedestrian and cyclist crossing only caters for one path of travel that is likely to be used by pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport patrons.

Hall Street Precinct

15. Hall Street features the densest cluster of heritage buildings, but is visually disconnected from surrounding Precincts by infrastructure, impacting the presence of the Precinct within the overall civic and commercial fabric.
16. There is a lack of visitation relative to the Precinct's potential.
17. The interface with the railway reserve at the southern section of Hall Street (at the Precinct entry) is very poor.
18. Access to the train station and through to the west does not comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards.
20. The rhythm of built form is interrupted at the southern corner of Wilkins Street and Melbourne Road by inconsistent built form and siting that creates car parking dominance.
21. Landscape treatments between the eastern and western sides of Melbourne Road are inconsistent.

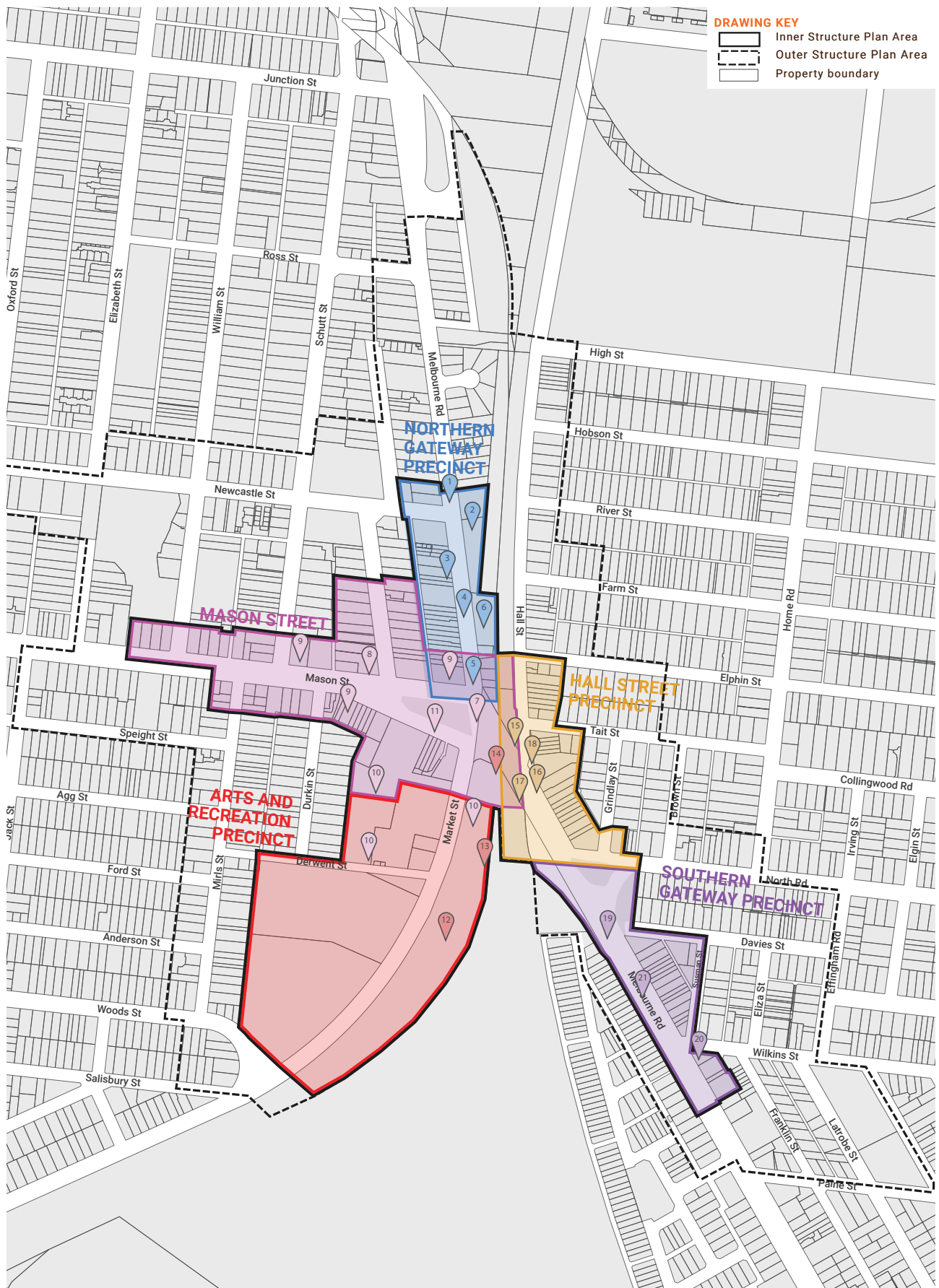


Figure 10 - Newport Activity Centre - Precinct Specific Issues

5

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

5.1 Centre Wide Opportunities

- > Melbourne's growth and Newport's gentrification create opportunities to attract re-development, which delivers land use, economic, and built form improvements to the Activity Centre.
- > Public and active transport access to the Melbourne CBD provide strong drawcards for attracting residents and visitors, creating opportunities to enhance the Centre beyond its current role, function, and appearance. Potential exists for this public transport access to be significantly improved, should the Melbourne Metro 2 project eventuate.
- > Williamstown has significance to the greater Melbourne area as a means of accessing the Yarra River and Port Phillip Bay, and Newport acts as a gateway to Williamstown (albeit this role has not been developed to its potential).
- > Newport's demand for meeting day to day shopping and service needs is likely to grow with an increasing and gentrifying population, strengthening its role as a NAC within the wider centres network.
- > Heritage and industrial character are at the core of the Centre's identity, providing valuable themes that constitute a sound foundation for the next major phase in the Activity Centre's evolution.
- > There are a number of sites with significant re-development potential, which are likely to appeal to developers, provided planning controls are appropriately facilitative.
- > Higher density residential development on upper levels can contribute an increased economic base for supporting and attracting non-residential uses.
- > New residential developments provide opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable housing for households on very low to moderate incomes.
- > Streetscapes can be improved throughout the Centre to develop a cohesive narrative within the public realm.
- > Laneways support zero-metre front setbacks, with shops supported by operational access from the rear. This arrangement should be retained.
- > Design guidelines and effective planning controls can ensure Newport's heritage character is appropriately conserved and enhanced as development intensifies.

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5.2 Precinct-specific opportunities (see Figure 11)

Northern Gateway Precinct

1. There is considerable potential for development to contribute a defined urban character that creates a gateway into Newport.
2. The diversity and mix of uses can be notably increased through redevelopment, taking into account the extent of low scale and lower order uses, as well as fewer heritage constraints (relative to other parts of the Activity Centre).

Mason Street Precinct

3. Proximity to growing residential areas in the west and north renders this Precinct as a natural choice for lifestyle and convenience retail.
4. The civic and commercial village characteristics, as well as the proximity to schools, child care centres, open space network, etcetera create natural strengths that can be leveraged.
5. Paine Reserve connections can be improved towards the transport plaza to the north, and towards Bryan Martin Oval to the south.
6. The mosque at the corner of Mason Street and Walker Street is a key redevelopment site, as a new mosque has been constructed in Newport West and the site is understood to be surplus to congregation needs.

Arts and Recreation Precinct

7. The relationship between the Substation, open space areas, commercial uses, and railway reserve can be improved through public space enhancements and strategic redevelopment.
8. Older, low scale building stock on the corner of Market and Derwent Street have potential for redevelopment (subject to further investigation), retaining the recreational uses at ground level (in modified form) and building on upper levels. Any redevelopment must consider applied heritage controls and be respectful of valued heritage elements.

Hall Street Precinct

9. Strong heritage character, combined with visibility from the Melbourne Road overpass, provide opportunities for heritage sensitive development within the commercial uses on upper levels to increase the Precinct visibility and presence.
10. Unattractive railway interfaces can be screened, without impacting long term potential for enhancements as part of a potential rail connection to Fisherman's Bend.
11. The site at the north-eastern corner of North Road and Grindlay Street is underutilised and has sufficient area to attract re-development that is respectful and enhances valued heritage elements..

Southern Gateway Precinct

12. Built form within the southern gateway is readily discernible from the street, with two-storey residential to the west and up to 3 storey development to the east. These elements begin to convey a sense of arrival into Newport, which can be further enhanced.
13. Low rise sections of the Precinct can be re-developed, having regard to heritage values.
14. Streetscaping quality can be improved, commensurate with the western side of Melbourne Road.

Other opportunities

15. There is significant potential for well designed multi-storey development on VicTrack land to the south of the substation.
16. The former mill site may have redevelopment potential, subject to successful negotiation with the MHF stakeholders, and the State's future planning controls for implementing the findings of the MHF Advisory Committee's recommendations.

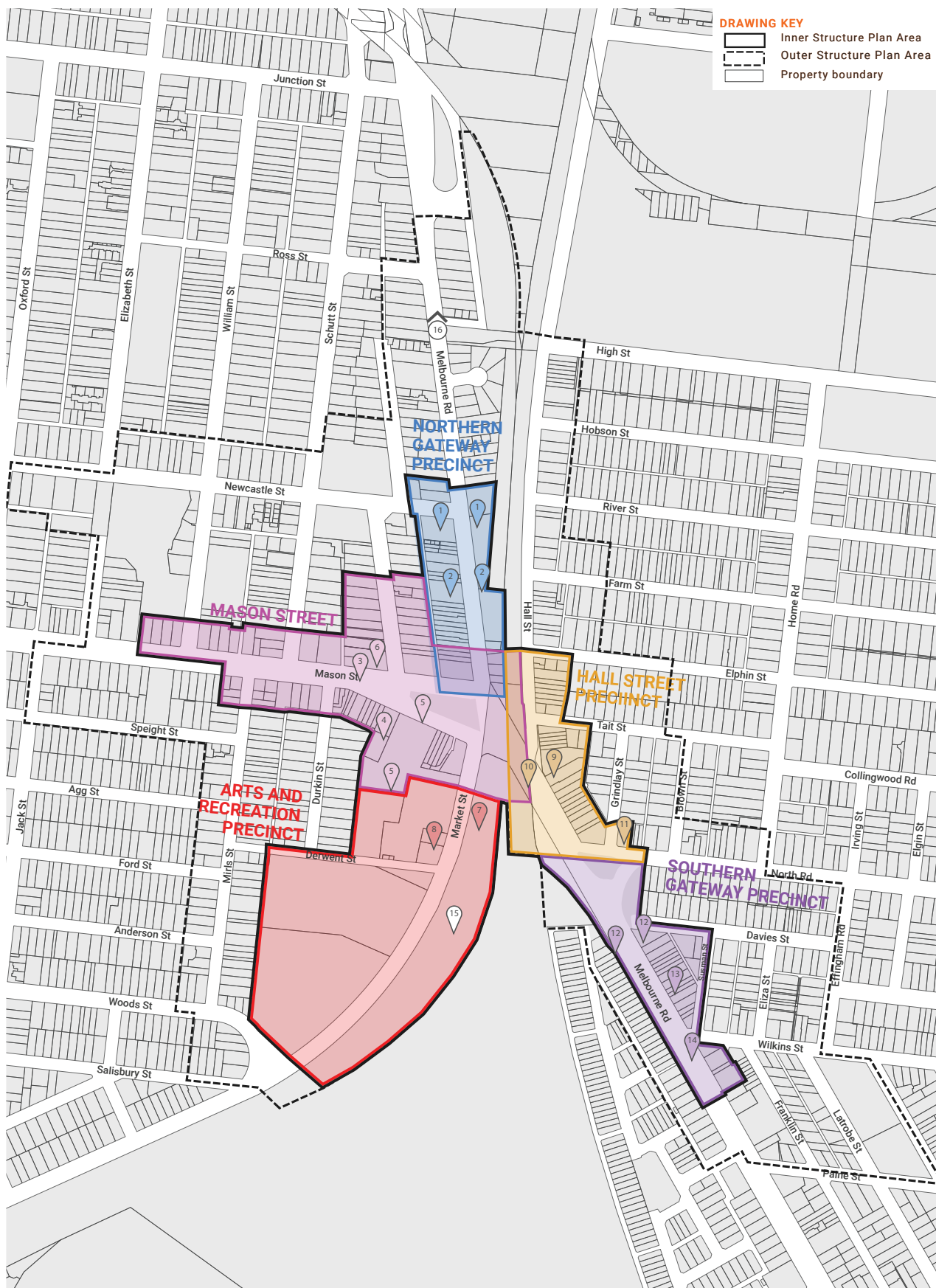


Figure 11 - Newport Activity Centre - Opportunities