



LOCAL TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT PLAN

BACKGROUND REPORT

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL



LOCAL TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT PLAN BACKGROUND REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SALT has been engaged by Hobsons Bay City Council to prepare a Local Transport and Movement Plan for the western suburbs of Altona Meadows, Laverton and Seabrook. This report provides the framework to guide future investment in transport infrastructure, conduct community programs and carry out advocacy to address the key challenges and constraints surrounding the existing transport network.

The study area comprises a total area of approximately 19 square kilometres and encompasses a population of approximately 29,200 people from a range of ancestries.

To promote walking as a safe transport mode, pedestrians need continuous, safe and unobstructed pathways. As such, future opportunities to improve pedestrian amenity include constructing raised crossings and threshold treatments, providing frequent opportunities for rest, installing clear signage and wayfinding that is universally understood and providing new connections and links which shorten walking distances.

Whilst the natural topography of the study area supports cycling, there are currently no formal on-road connections through the centre of the study area. Cycling infrastructure can be improved through the construction of parallel north-south and east-west segregated cycling routes, provision of bicycle parking at key destinations including railway stations and installing wayfinding signage to direct cyclists to other routes and destinations.

To further encourage public transport service use in the area, improvements in the coverage and frequency of strategic bus routes and the provision of direct and express services between neighbourhoods and train stations are recommended. In addition, the provision of bus stops near key activity generators which provide real time information on bus arrivals should be made a priority. Relocating bus interchanges and taxi ranks near stations to provide ideal access to all road users should also be considered.

To effectively manage the limited road space on arterial and collector roads, it has been recommended to develop a Road User Hierarchy to help govern road space across the study area. The introduction of lower speed zones, traffic calming measures, improved line marking, and signage will improve pedestrian and cyclist safety and improve access to public transport interchanges, schools and activity centres. With respect to parking, it is advised that maps and information on road rules are provided together with higher levels of enforcement to minimise parking circulation within busy areas and ensure regular turnover of spaces.

Following this report, a future *Local Transport and Movement Plan – West* (LTMP) technical report will identify projects and other opportunities that are required to improve transport access, safety and connectivity in the study area. It will provide strategies and actions to improve transport accessibility, connectivity and safety within the study area. Data will be collected and analysed as part of this stage including traffic counts and community consultation surveys.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Hobsons Bay City Council (HBCC) is situated within 5 to 20 kilometres south-west of the Melbourne CBD, between the Princes Freeway to the north-west and Port Philip Bay to the east. Covering an area of 66 square kilometres, Hobsons Bay is home to a diverse range of open space areas, including coastal wetlands, creeks and grasslands.

The suburbs of Altona, Seabrook and Laverton are primarily residential in nature, and are surrounded by large encompasses of open space, including Laverton Creek to the north east; Truganina Park and Cheetham Wetlands to the south east; and Skeleton Creek along the east of Seabrook. Access into these suburbs is generally provided by the Princes Freeway, Merton Street, Queen Street and Point Cook Road, however, as these roads are the main links into and out of the area, these roads become highly congested during peak periods.

Recent strategic work conducted by Hobson Bay identifies transport, infrastructure and connectivity as key components in creating an accessible, safe, inclusive and connected community. The Hobsons Bay Integrated Transport Plan outlines a range of projects and initiatives throughout the municipality focusing on improving neighbourhood accessibility and connectivity, including local area traffic management plans, car parking studies and pedestrian network planning.

1.1 VISION & OBJECTIVES

The Local Transport and Movement Plan – West Package aims to identify and understand the key challenges and constraints surrounding the transport network in Altona Meadows, Seabrook and Laverton. It is anticipated that this study will provide the framework to guide future investment in transport infrastructure, conduct community programs and carry out advocacy.

The plan will deliver a clear program for transport and traffic improvement works with a clear strategic vision to realise safe, sustainable and efficient transport systems that better connect to people to their destinations. To achieve this, the following objectives have been set:

Objective 1 – A program for key infrastructure improvement works

- To develop a program for precinct-wide infrastructure works across Altona Meadows, Seabrook and Laverton for the next 5 to 10 years.
- To determine high-priority, stand-alone projects involving infrastructure works to support the vision.

Objective 2 – Identification of advocacy priorities

- To develop and research key advocacy priorities with external authorities. These include, but are not limited to, improved bus services and connections and changes to road user prioritisation on arterial roads.

Objective 3 – A safer road environment

- Develop plans for infrastructure and advocacy in-line with the National Road Safety Strategy and the Safe Systems approach, including effective traffic calming devices and treatments.

- To achieve a reduction in casualty crashes in Altona Meadows, Seabrook and Laverton.
- To increase the adoption of active transport modes within the study area by providing an accessible, safe and connected network for pedestrians and cyclists.

1.2 FOCUS

Local Movement and Transport Plans (LTMPs) consider the planning and management of the current road and transport networks within a neighbourhood or suburb. In this, LTMPs look at the movements of pedestrians, cyclists, freight and heavy vehicles, private vehicles and public transport within the area, and identifies opportunities to improve the safety, connectivity, amenity and accessibility for all.

Roads and streets are often unable to accommodate all road users due to physical constraints. To encourage more trips by walking, cycling and public transport without significantly impacting on vehicle mobility, LTMPs consider community concerns, existing conditions, local points of interest and infrastructure requirements to develop solutions to the competing demands.

In contrast to local area traffic management strategies, LTMPs will consider new and improved infrastructure alongside operational changes, policy alterations, education and other initiatives in order to provide a holistic approach to managing traffic and transport demand and access.

1.3 OUTLINE OF THIS REPORT

This report details the background research and assessment conducted in the development of the future **Local Transport and Movement Plan – West**, which will focus on the areas of Laverton, Altona Meadows and Seabrook within the HBCC boundary.

In preparing this report, the following activities were completed:

- Review of the relevant background material;
 - Undertaking a driving and foot survey of the study area to gain an understanding of the area at the vehicle and pedestrian level;
 - Discussions with Council officers; and
 - Comprehensive analysis of 622 customer requests, 267 lines of traffic counts and additional crash statistics and project information as provided by Council.
- Local Area Traffic Management Studies
 - Hobsons Bay Strategic Bicycle Plan 2013–2017
 - Western Metropolitan Region Trails Strategic Plan
 - Hobsons Bay Grade Separation Principles
 - West Gate Tunnel Project – Council Position
 - Hobsons Bay Cumulative Impact Assessment
 - ABS Census Data 2016
 - Council traffic volume data
 - VicRoads traffic volume data
 - VicRoads Crash Statistics
 - Public Transport Victoria patronage data

1.4 REFERENCES

The following references have been consulted and are publicly accessible online:

- Transport Integration Act (2010)
- Plan Melbourne – Metropolitan Planning Strategy (2013)
- Western Melbourne Transport Strategy (2012)
- Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2013–17
- Hobsons Bay 2030 – Community Vision
- Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2017–214
- Hobsons Bay Integrated Transport Plan (2017)
- Universal Design Policy (2017)
- Activity Centre Strategy (2006)

1.5 STUDY AREA

The study area comprises of the suburbs of Altona Meadows, Laverton and Seabrook across a total area of approximately 19 square kilometres. It is situated on the far west perimeter of HBCC, as highlighted in Figure 2

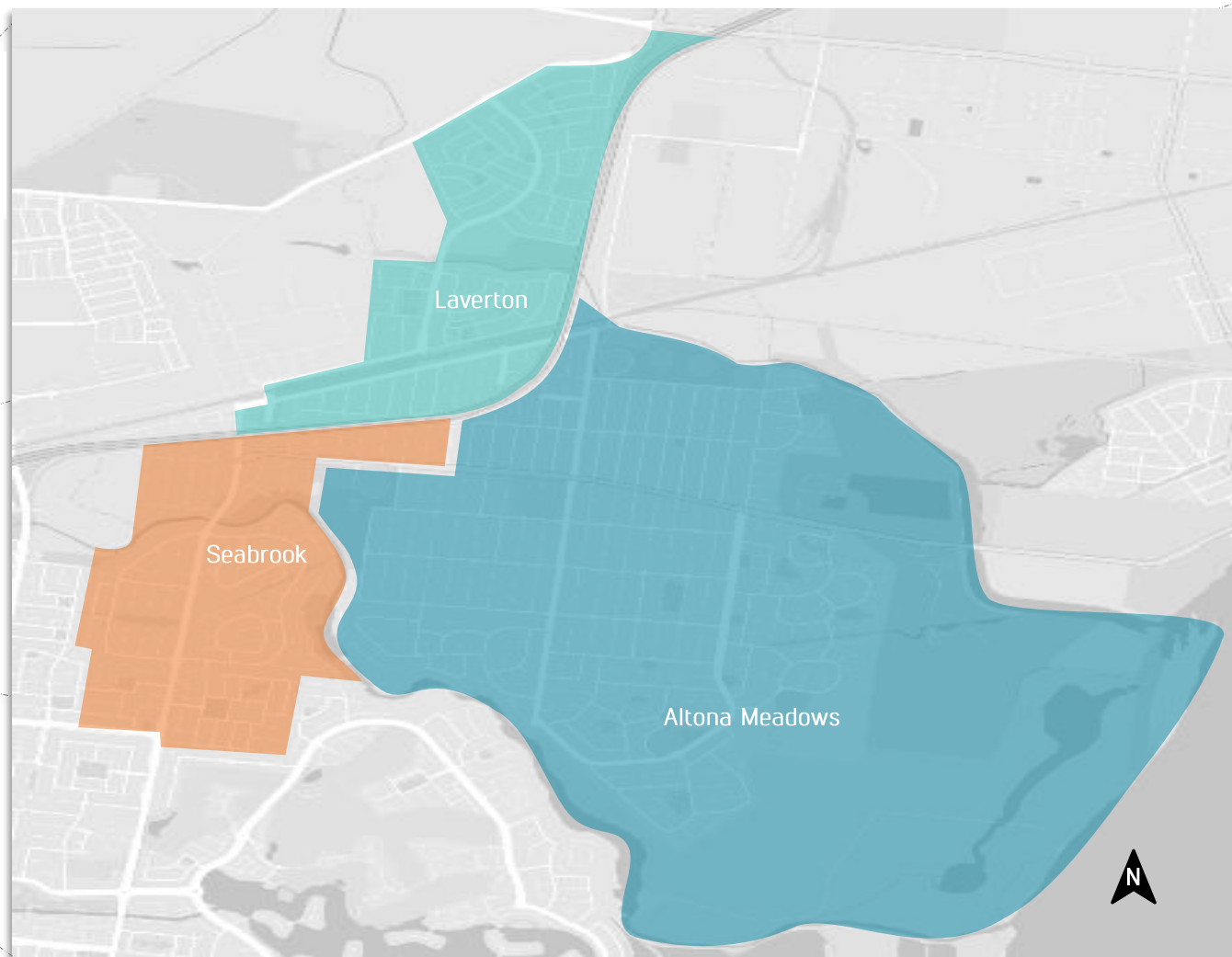
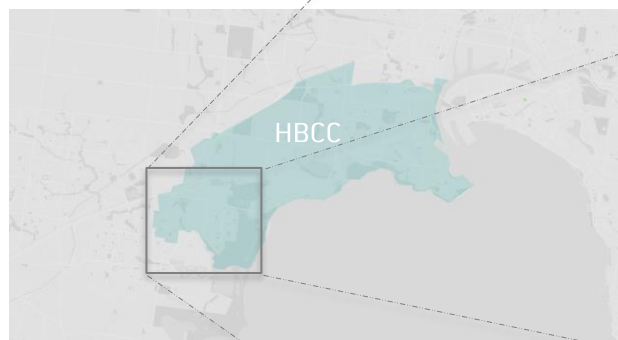


Figure 1 Wider Hobsons Bay City Council Context Map (above)

Figure 2 Study Boundary (right)

SECTION 1 CONTEXT

2 STATE & REGIONAL POLICY

The responsibility for the provision and planning of transport within Hobsons Bay is shared between the Council and the Victorian Government. The following sections outline the state and regional influences on transport planning within the municipality.

2.1 THE TRANSPORT INTEGRATION ACT 2010

The Transport Integration Act 2010 sets out decision-making principles that are to be applied when specified organisations undertake transport planning. Where councils make decisions that impact upon the transport system, the Act requires that transport system objectives and decision-making principles be considered. Transport planning across all levels of Government must follow these principles when developing transport plans.

2.2 PLAN MELBOURNE

Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050 is the metropolitan planning strategy for Melbourne that sets the vision for and guides Melbourne's growth to the year 2050. It seeks to integrate long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning to meet the population, housing and employment needs of the future.

Plan Melbourne recognises that Victoria's growing population is placing increased pressure on the transport systems, including our roads and public transport services. To assist in managing and responding to this increased demand, Plan Melbourne

outlines a range of principles, directions and projects that look to improve transport safety, accessibility and reliability. Within the study area, Plan Melbourne earmarked the Aircraft railway level crossing as a key project that will improve train reliability and congestion in the area. The Level Crossing Removal Authority has already commenced planning for this important project, with early concept plans released in 2018.

The relevant principles, directions and policies of *Plan Melbourne* are as follows:

Principle 1: Melbourne is a productive city that attracts investment, supports innovation and creates jobs

- Direction 1.2 – Improve access to jobs across Melbourne and closer to where people live
 - Support the development of a network of activity centres linked by transport
 - Facilitate investment in Melbourne's outer areas to increase local access to employment
- Direction 3.1 – Transform Melbourne's transport system to support a productive city
 - Improve the efficiency of the motorway network
 - Support cycling for commuting

Principle 3: A city of centres linked to regional Victoria

- Direction 3.2 – Improve transport in Melbourne's outer suburbs
 - Improve roads in growth areas and outer suburbs
 - Improve outer-suburban public transport

Principle 5: Living locally—20-minute neighbourhoods

- Direction 3.3 – Improve local travel options to support 20-minute neighbourhoods
 - Create pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods
 - Create a network of cycling links for local trips
 - Improve local transport choices

2.3 WESTERN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Developed by Lead West, the Western Transport Alliance and local governments in Melbourne's western suburbs, the Western Transport Strategy (WTS) outlines the priorities for transport projects in the region that is required to improve transport infrastructure, services and accessibility.

The WTS recognises the role transport plays in providing a safe, socially inclusive, accessible, sustainable and economically prosperous community. To ensure the region as the freight, road network and public transport it needs to grow successfully, the WTS outlines a range of objectives, strategic directions and key projects needed to support this growth.

Within Hobsons Bay and the study area, the WTS identifies a number of arterial road, public transport and regional shared trail network improvements required to improve transport reliability and accessibility in the region.

3 LOCAL POLICY

This section outlines the Council policies, strategies and plans that influence the transport, public realm and use of public space within Hobsons Bay and the study area.

3.1 HOBSONS BAY 2030 – COMMUNITY VISION

Hobsons Bay 2030 outlines the community's vision for the municipality over the next 13 years. It considers the key issues identified by the community and outlines the key steps that Council and other stakeholders can take to alleviate them.

The document outlines transport as a key issue impacting the community and the challenge of providing transport and other infrastructure to meeting the needs of the growing communities and industries. Key priorities include improving accessibility through updated infrastructure and wayfinding, and improving the sustainable transport network (public transport, walking and cycling) so that it caters for people of all abilities.

Hobsons Bay 2030 acknowledges the role that HBCC, the Victorian Government and other key stakeholders play in improving transport accessibility across the municipality.

3.2 HOBSONS BAY COUNCIL PLAN 2017-21

The Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2017-21 was adopted by Council in June 2017 and sets out the strategic direction of the Council and the strategies for achieving those objectives for the next four years.

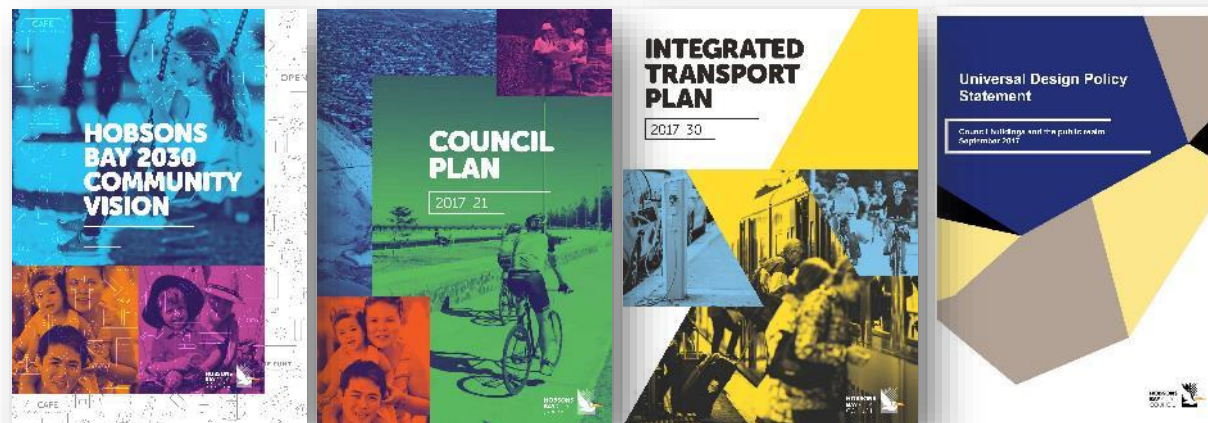


Figure 3 Council Transport and Public Realm Strategies

The "Connected and Engaged Community" focus area aims to encourage people to meet, participate and move safely and easily to access services and opportunities. A key strategy under this focus area is to *"Provide the infrastructure in pathways and roads for our community to go about their day in a safe manner with the ability to access what they require near and far."*

3.3 HOBSONS BAY INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLAN (2017)

The Hobsons Bay Integrated Transport Plan (HBITP) provides guidance for future transport network investment in Hobsons Bay. The HBITP identifies a need to focus on improving transport networks at both the neighbourhood and regional levels, recognising there are different challenges, focuses and opportunities for each area.

The HBITP recommended a number of actions to improve access to alternative transport modes, including:

- Developing Hobsons Bay wayfinding policy and style guide;
- Conducting car parking studies within priority areas;
- Finalising Hobsons Bay cycling network plans (to be incorporated into future strategic cycling planning);
- Conducting Local Area Traffic Management studies within priority areas;
- Undertake pedestrian network planning within Hobsons Bay neighbourhoods; and
- Developing a Hobsons Bay Road User Hierarchy Plan.

3.4 UNIVERSAL DESIGN POLICY (2017)

Hobsons Bay City Council proposes that fully accessible and inclusive communities be created to improve the wellbeing of people of all ages and abilities. The Universal Design Policy (UDP) supports this view by committing Council to include universal design principles when building new or improving public buildings, and the public realm, including on streets and within parklands.

Within these areas, the UDP requires the consideration of key elements such as continuous paths of accessible travel that are clear from obstacles, clear wayfinding and signage, resting places with seating, and public facilities such as restrooms and drinking fountains.

3.5 ACTIVITY CENTRE STRATEGY (2006)

The Hobsons Bay Activity Centre Strategy (ACS) reviews the network of centres across the municipality in order to identify the improvements needed to serve the expected population growth. In this, the ACS identifies Woods Street, Laverton; Aviation Road, Aircraft; and Central Square, Altona Meadows as key activity nodes for the LTMP study area.

The ACS acknowledges the importance of transport in ensuring the ongoing economic viability of these centres. In particular, it identifies that these nodes have medium to poor public transport accessibility, and that there are opportunities to improve the walking and cycling experience to encourage local access.

3.6 LOCAL AREA TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Hobsons Bay City Council, in line with the Council Plan, has undertaken a number of Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) studies across the municipality. The LATM studies sought to identify key routes and opportunities for infrastructure improvements to address community concerns in relation to traffic and access. Whilst outdated, since the publication of these reports Council have engaged in strategic planning and have experienced significant growth. As such, a new LATM will be completed.

3.7 HOBSONS BAY STRATEGIC BICYCLE PLAN 2013-2017

The Hobsons Bay Strategic Bicycle Plan 2013-2017 builds on the recommendations of the previous plan, the Hobsons Bay Integrated Transport Strategy and the Council Plan. In particular, it highlighted that:

- There are many gaps remaining within the existing bicycle network, both on and off-road routes;
- There is currently inadequate directional and user etiquette signage on the shared trails;
- There is a lack of local route signage in various locations for the on-road network; and
- There has been a steady increase in the numbers of cyclists and range of cyclists (e.g. commuters, sports training, recreational) using the network, leading to more conflict on off-road trails between cyclists and pedestrians/dog walkers reported.

Within the study area of the *Local Transport and Movement Plan – West*, the Bicycle Plan identifies as priorities the completion of sections of the Laverton

Creek Trail and Skeleton Creek Trail and improving local route signage for on-road routes within the area. These have been evaluated and addressed in this LTMP.

3.8 WESTERN METROPOLITAN REGION TRAILS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Western Metropolitan Region Trails Strategic Plan (West Trails) is a collaboration between Councils in the western metropolitan area, including HBCC, to improve the connectivity, quality and usage of regional trails in Melbourne's western region over the next 10 years.

Within the study area, West Trails identified the Skeleton Creek Trail, the Laverton Creek Trail and the Coastal Trail as important components of the network and provided recommendations to address gaps and connections along these inter-connections to improve overall accessibility.

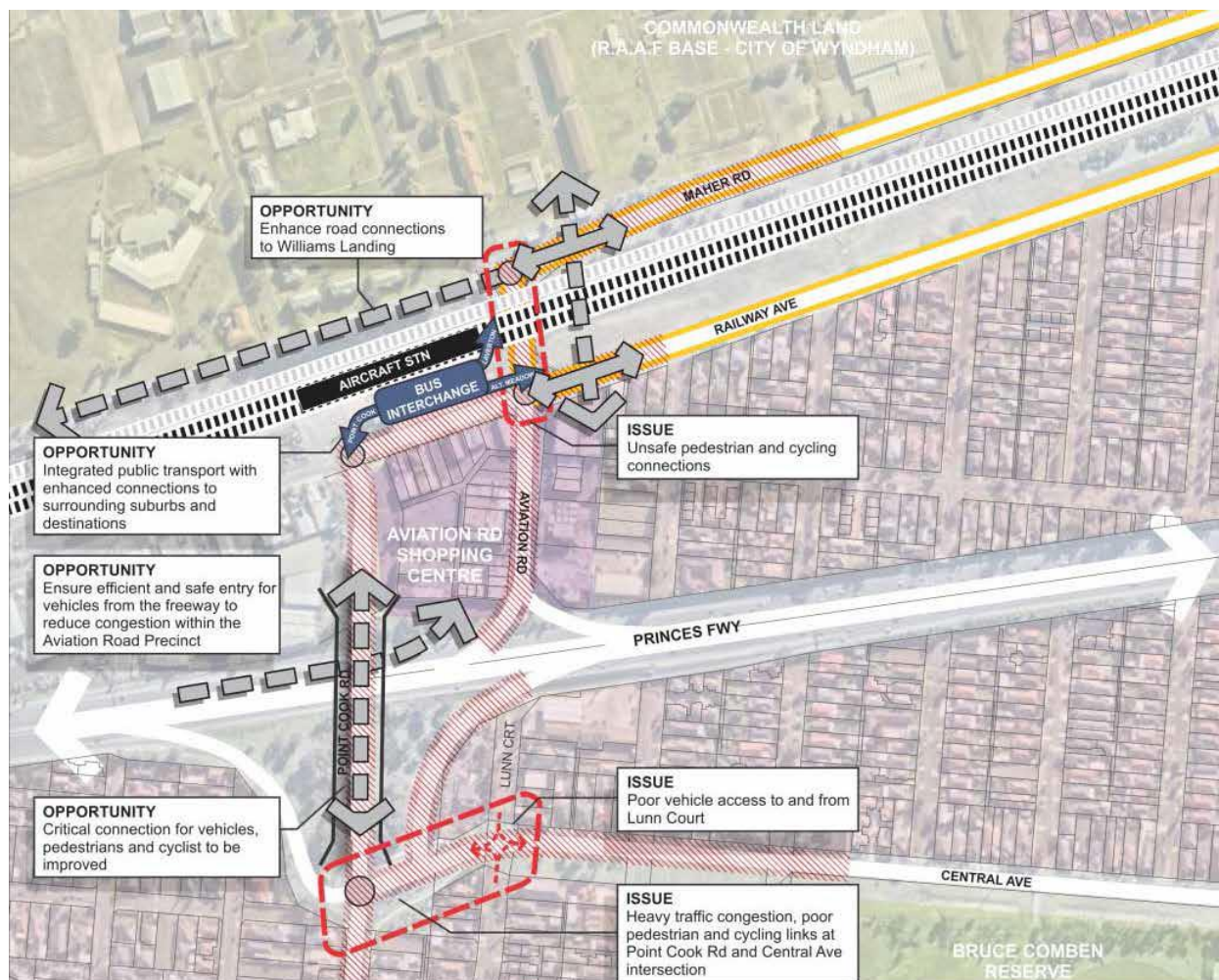


Figure 4 Aircraft Station, Laverton – Issues and Opportunities

(Source: Hobsons Bay Grade Separation Principles)

3.9 HOBSONS BAY GRADE SEPARATION PRINCIPLES

As part of its long-term transport plan, the Victorian Government has committed to removing 50 rail level crossings across metropolitan Melbourne. Of these crossings, three fall within the Hobsons Bay municipality, including one within the study area of the *Local Transport and Movement Plan – West* (Aviation Road, Laverton).

In preparation for these works, Council endorsed a range of principles relating to the planning, design, consultation and implementation of any grade separation project, to ensure level crossing removals are well integrated with the local area and that community amenity is protected. For the Aviation Road Level Crossing removal project, these principles seek to ensure that the resulting outcomes of the project provide:

- An integrated precinct to ensure the level crossing removal is integrated into the surrounding land uses;
- A connected community by improving public transport and active transport (pedestrians & cyclists) links as part of the project;
- A thriving shopping precinct within the Aviation Road Shopping Centre;
- An efficient road network by ensuring any new road alignments create an attractive and functional network; and
- A welcoming gateway by improving the appearance and sense of arrival for those entering Laverton and Hobsons Bay.

3.10 WEST GATE TUNNEL PROJECT – COUNCIL POSITION

The West Gate Tunnel Project is a key transport project led by the Victorian Government to improve the transport capacity and performance of Melbourne's road network and support future growth within the western metropolitan region. While outside the study area of the *Local Transport and Movement Plan – West*, the West Gate Tunnel is expected to have a significant impact on traffic within Hobsons Bay and as such should be considered in the future planning of the transport network.

Hobson Bay City Council have a formal position on the West Gate Tunnel, highlighting risks and unknown impacts on the local road and transport network that could be introduced as part of the project. Council's position seeks further refinement with regard to traffic and transport considerations, community health and wellbeing, and consideration for the local economy.

3.11 HOBSONS BAY CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Hobsons Bay Cumulative Impact Assessment (HBCC CIA) is a high level strategic analysis of the Hobsons Bay area. Completed in 2016, the HBCC CIA considers the long-term capacity of the main road corridors within the municipality, focusing on the Melbourne Road, Millers Road, Blackshaws Road and associated arterial and local road network in Hobsons Bay.

The HBCC CIA uses the Victorian Integrated Transport Model (VITM) to provide an understanding of how traffic may behave in the future as various strategic redevelopment sites are developed. This assessment reveals that while traffic volumes and congestion may increase along routes connecting to the Princes and Westgate Freeway, congestion in the local network will largely remain unchanged. However, the HBCC CIA highlights the importance of maintaining and upgrading access to public transport, including Laverton and Aircraft stations, in order to accommodate future transport demand in the area.

4 LOCAL CONTEXT

The suburbs of Altona Meadows, Laverton and Seabrook cover an area of 19 square kilometres and encompasses a mixed landscape of residential areas, natural parks, wetlands, schools and shops. 29,200 people from a range of ancestries including English, Irish, Maltese, Indian, Italian, Burmese, Chinese and, Maltese make up the study area population.

The Princes Freeway and Werribee Train Line are the two major traffic corridors which link the area with the wider Melbourne area. The train line is accessed via Laverton Railway Station and Aircraft Railway Station, with residents within the study area demonstrating a high propensity for train travel to residents in suburbs less connected by public transport.

Influenced by the neighbouring industrial areas in Altona North, Laverton North and Derrimut, residents within the study area are more likely to be employed in road freight transport and machine operation jobs in comparison to the Greater Melbourne populace.

Despite their proximity to one another, the three suburbs have their own distinct profiles varying in some key demographic indicators.

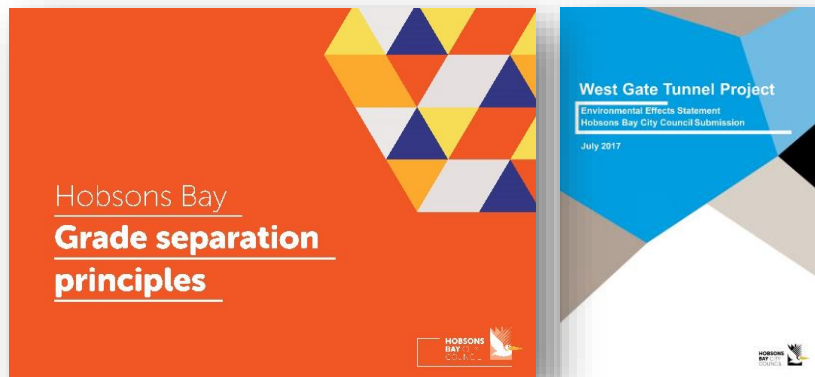
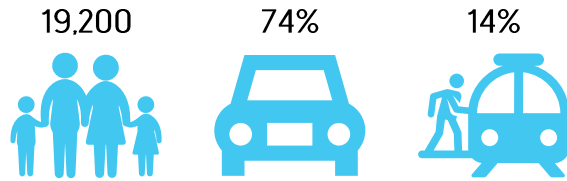


Figure 5 Council Position Papers – Major Transport Projects

4.1 ALTONA MEADOWS



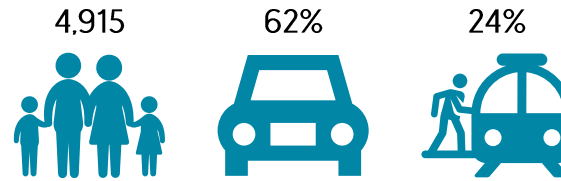
Altona Meadows is the largest of the three suburbs, covering 10 square kilometres. Most residents within the study area (66%) live in Altona Meadows.

Households in Altona Meadows are predominately families, accounting for nearly three-quarters of all households. Car ownership is slightly higher than the greater Melbourne Average, with an average of 1.8 motor vehicles per dwelling.

In 2016, 9,000 people living in Altona Meadows were employed, with 64% working full time. Of the working population, a significant portion work within retail, manufacturing, healthcare and transport.

With a large workforce employed in trades, industry and manual labour, over two-thirds of workers travel to work by car, which is higher than both the Hobsons Bay and Greater Melbourne averages. Another 13.5% travel by public transport. Active travel modes, such as walking and cycling, account for far fewer commuter trips than the Greater Melbourne average but account for a greater percentage of short trips. Approximately 56% of Hobsons Bay residents carried out short trips through means of walking or cycling.

4.2 LAVERTON

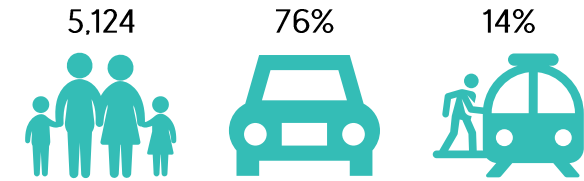


Laverton covers an area of 7 square kilometres and is home to nearly 5,000 people. Unlike Altona Meadows and Seabrook, Laverton is home to a large student population, who are typically employed within industries such as accommodation and food trades, retail trades and transport, postal and warehousing.

Laverton is home to a diverse community, with nearly 50% speaking a language other than English at home. One third of the 1,800 households comprise of couples with one or more children, and there is also a high proportion of lone-person households (comprising nearly a quarter of all households), and households of couples without children.

While over half of Laverton residents travel to work by car each day, there is high uptake in train patronage for Laverton residents in comparison to both Hobsons Bay and Greater Melbourne. This is expected given the suburb's proximity and access to Laverton and Aircraft Railway Stations located on the northern side as the Princes Freeway.

4.3 SEABROOK



Seabrook is the smallest of the three suburbs, covering an area of nearly two square kilometres and home to just over 5,000. On the western most boundary of the study area and on the western side of the Hobsons Bay municipality, it borders with Point Cook and Sanctuary Lakes, which are both suburbs within Wyndham City Council.

Over a third of the population is between 35 years and 59 years old, which is slightly higher than the average for Greater Melbourne. There is also a slightly higher proportion of children under the age of 17, accounting for nearly a quarter of the population.

Seabrook contains the highest proportion of families with young children, comprising of nearly half of all households across the suburb. Lone person and group households are less common within Seabrook, with these household types accounting for much less than the Greater Melbourne average.

While there is a significant number of residents employed in trade industries, Seabrook also boasts the highest proportion of workers employed in a professional capacity within the LTMP study area.

Most households in Seabrook own one or two vehicles, with over 98 percent of households owning at least one vehicle. Over two-thirds of workers drive to work as their primary mode of transport.

SECTION 2 KEY ISSUES

5 WALKING

Every trip begins and ends with walking, and as such everyone becomes a pedestrian at some point. At the neighbourhood level, streets should be designed to encourage walking in all locations, and prioritise pedestrian movements around key activity generators such as schools, railway stations and activity centres.

To promote walking as a safe transport mode, particularly for short trips, pedestrians need continuous and unobstructed pathways. Across the LTMP study area, the footpath network is discontinuous, and often obstructed by construction works or other obstacles.

Some streets were observed to be unpleasant to walk along because footpaths were too narrow, too bumpy, missing kerb ramps, have little or no buffer space between pedestrians and traffic, or have no provision for pedestrians.

There are also pedestrian crossings on major roads, such as Point Cook Road in Seabrook, Railway Avenue in Laverton and Merton Street in Altona Meadows that don't align with the preferred pedestrian routes. Pedestrians were observed along these streets to cross away from controlled crossing points.

Around Laverton, pedestrian permeability is limited by the Princes Freeway and Werribee Railway Line. Currently there are limited opportunities to access Seabrook and Altona Meadows to the south of Princes Freeway by walking, with access only provided via the pedestrian overpass at Fitzroy Street and Cameron Avenue, and along the Point Cook overpass, where the



Figure 5 Obstructed footpath on Railway Avenue, Laverton

Figure 6 Pedestrian connection on Seabrook Boulevard

available footpath width does not allow opportunity for two prams or wheelchairs to pass.

Providing a safe walking environment is a critical component of a good pedestrian network, particularly for the younger (15 years of age and under) and older (over 60 years of age) residents, who are at a higher risk of being involved in a pedestrian causality crash than other age groups. While footpaths and safe crossing points are key features of this, it is also important to provide well-lit spaces, inviting building edges, shaded places to rest and walk, and wayfinding signage in order to provide a safe and comfortable street experience.

Ensuring pedestrians feel safe is also an important factor in promoting walking as a transport mode. Safe walking environments can be achieved through the adoption of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Crime (CPTED) principles, which looks at opportunities to design the urban environment to reduce crime and improve the perception and level of safety. This includes providing maps in public open space including parks and activity centres that identify key routes, entrances and exit points; and incorporating effective speed control measures along key pedestrian routes to maximise pedestrian safety.

Key Challenges



Pedestrian routes are indirect, discontinuous, and there are barriers to accessing some areas on foot, including across Point Cook Drive and Skeleton Creek.



Signalised crossings don't always align with pedestrian desire lines, encouraging pedestrians to cross in unsafe locations.



Some sections of footpath are inaccessible by wheelchairs or prams due to temporary or permanent obstructions, including under the Princes Freeway.



There are streets that feel unsafe due to low passive surveillance or limited protection between pedestrians and vehicles.

Future Opportunities



Provide raised crossings and threshold treatments in locations where pedestrians have priority, such as around train stations, schools and shopping centres



Provide frequent opportunities for people to pause and rest whilst also activating building edges and utilising shade regions. This is particularly important on key pedestrian routes, such as the Skeleton Creek trail and Laverton Trail, and between activity generators such as shopping centres and train stations.



Provide consistent pedestrian signage in a clear visual language that can be universally understood. This helps those who are unfamiliar with the area get to where



Look for opportunities to provide direct pedestrian links and shorten the distance people need to walk to their destination. This includes providing links and crossing points between shared paths, such as across Point Cook Road, and improving connections across the railway line and Princes Freeway

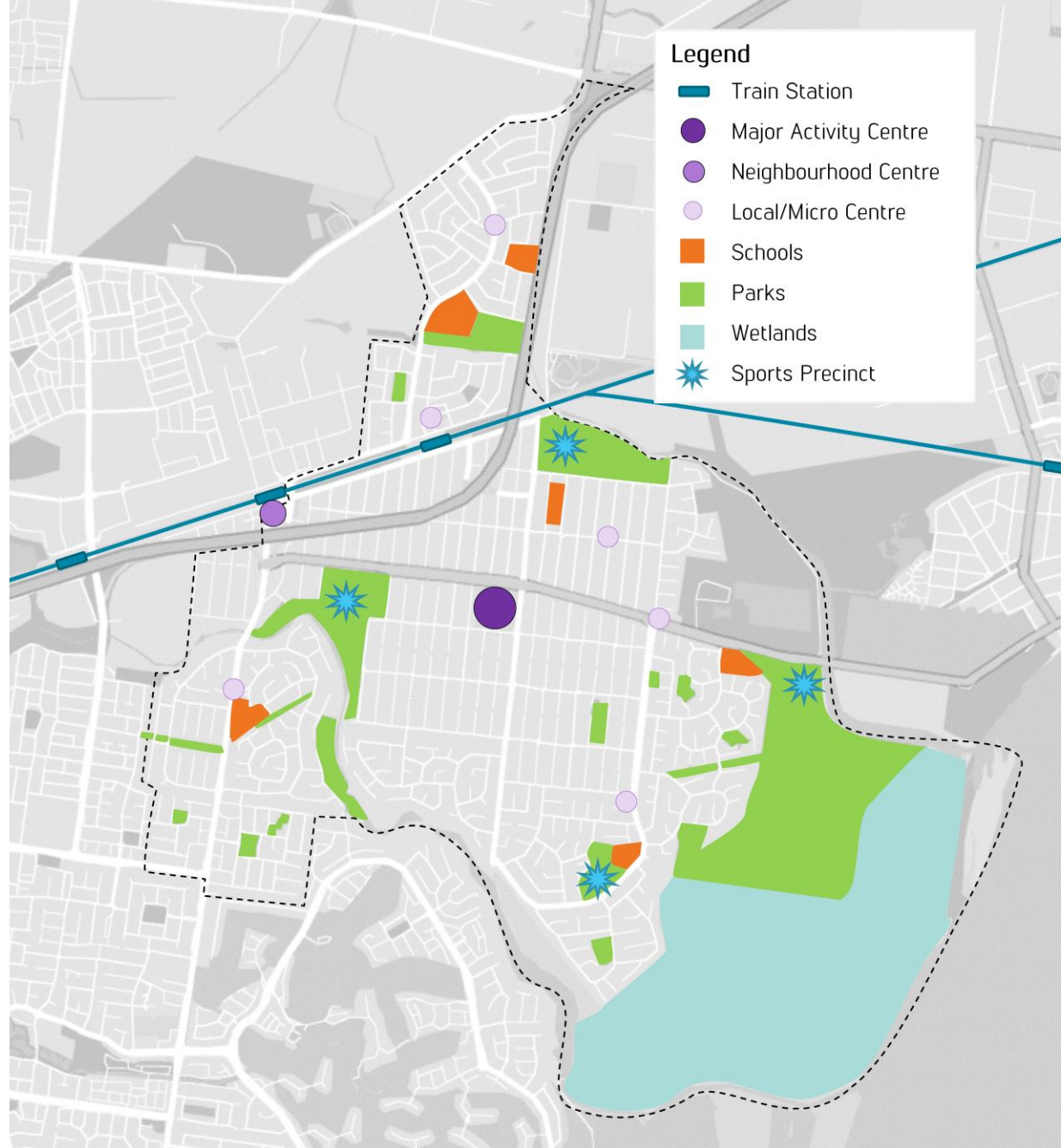


Figure 7 Key Walking Destinations

6 CYCLING

Cycling is a healthy, affordable, equitable, and sustainable transport mode. However, while many people may be interested in cycling as a recreational activity or as a means of commuting to work, they are often discouraged from riding as they perceive it as impractical and dangerous. The possibility of stressful interactions with cars and other vehicles, the lack of or limited connectivity in cycling infrastructure, and the absence of good, usable end-of-trip facilities all contribute to this perception.

A safe, comfortable and connected bicycle network plays a key role in promoting cycling as a viable transport option. The natural topography of the study area supports cycling; unlike other parts of metropolitan Melbourne, the terrain is largely flat and creates opportunities to provide direct routes without steep inclines or hills.

Within Altona Meadows, Seabrook and Laverton, there are limited direct connections across the study area. When travelling east to west, there are currently no formal on-road connections through the centre of the study area, and there not many opportunities to cross Skeleton or Laverton Creeks.

When considering the north-south cycling network, Merton Street and Victoria Street has on-road cycling lanes that connect the Skeleton Creek and Coastal Trails to the south and the Laverton Creek Trail to the north. However, the overall cycling experience is poor, particularly along sections of Merton Street, as cyclists are often forced into the busy through traffic lanes due to parked vehicles.

The Princes Freeway and the Werribee Railway Line are also significant barriers to north-south connectivity,



Figure 8 Unprotected bicycle lanes on Victoria Street, Altona Meadows

Figure 9 Shared Path or End of Trip facilities

with limited road or other user connections from the residential areas in Seabrook and Altona Meadows to the south, and the railway stations and Laverton to the north.

The existing shared-path network along the creeks and coast link the study area through to Altona and Williamstown to the east, and Point Cook to the west. However, as these paths are generally on the periphery of the residential areas, they provide limited direct connectivity to key destinations, such as schools, parks, shopping centres and railway stations.

Wayfinding and end-of-trip facilities are also important components of a good bicycle network. Wayfinding, signage, and markings are elements that identify cycle routes to reach major destinations or connecting cycle facilities. These include signs with directions, specially designed street signs, and markings on the road.

Key Challenges



There are limited east-west cycling connections through the study area, particularly in Altona Meadows. There are also limited connections across the Princes Freeway, restricting those in Altona Meadows and Seabrook from riding to the railway station.



Some roads aren't wide enough to accommodate moving traffic, cyclists and parked cars, creating conflicting priorities. This includes along Merton Street and some sections of Railway Avenue.



Additional routes are required to allow cyclists of all ages and abilities to travel through the area. The current on-street network directs cyclists along busy roads, which can be a barrier for younger or less experienced cyclist.



There is limited connectivity between shared paths and the rest of the cycling network, and no guidance for cyclists when navigating these areas.

Future Opportunities



Look for opportunities to provide parallel north-south cycling routes away from busy roads, or segregated facilities that separate cyclists from vehicles. This could include along Donald Street and Skehan Boulevard, which provides connections across Princes Freeway and to the shared path network



Make use of the flat topography by providing additional east-west connections for cyclists, with different routes for different abilities. Cameron Avenue, Lan Avenue and Roser Drive may be good opportunities for an east-west connection.



Improve and provide bicycle parking at key destinations, including providing additional bicycle parking at stations where demand exists.



Improve wayfinding for cyclists that direct them to other routes and destinations. This could include street signs, pavement markings and directional signs.



Figure 10 Current Cycling Routes

7 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport services connect people with places. All ages and abilities can use public transport, enabling access to a broader range of services, education, job and recreational opportunities.

While Laverton has excellent access to the train network through Laverton and Aircraft railway stations, Seabrook and Altona Meadows must rely on bus services as the primary mode of public transport. Alternatively, commuters would require travelling to the station via car, bicycle or foot before transferring to a train service.

Ensuring adequate parking options for both vehicles and cyclists helps support multi-mode travel and supports sustainable transport within the municipality. This could include improved railway station parking and additional “Parkiteer” facilities in locations that provide the most convenient access for the community.

The study area comprises of Tier 2 and Tier 3 bus services which provide alternative or indirect connections between neighbourhoods and railway stations. Coverage of these services is concentrated, with some residential areas in Altona Meadows located more than 550m (typically 400m maximum) from a bus service or stop. Service frequency and duration of these services are lower than other areas of metropolitan Melbourne, with limited bus services running early morning, late evening or on weekends. As a result, dependency on car usage increases.

In Seabrook, bus services travel along the congested Point Cook Road corridor before connecting through to Laverton Station via Central Square. For residents in Seabrook wishing to access the train, this deviation results in an additional 10 minutes travel time, making



Figure 11 Pedestrian access to Aircraft Station is currently indirect and not convenient for pedestrians.

Figure 12 Pedestrians travelling between the Bus Interchange and Laverton Railway Station

a bus-to-train connection unattractive to most commuters.

As well as improving the coverage and directness of bus services, it is also important to provide safe, convenient and effective interchange facilities between transport modes. Commuters connecting from bus services at Laverton Railway Station are required to walk through parked vehicles to access the main entrance to Laverton Station. This increases opportunity for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, presenting an opportunity to relocate the bus interchange/taxi rank to a location that would improve safety and encourage a higher public transport uptake.

Infrastructure plays a large role in ensuring bus stops and train stations are accessible for all users, and that on-road services (such as buses) can travel through the

road network with relative ease. In some locations, such as Merton Street, the carriageway width is insufficient to provide for dedicated bus, vehicle and bicycle priority. These areas need to be carefully managed so that some modes, such as public bus services, are granted priority in these locations.

It is important to note that the different levels of Government each play a different role in providing a safe, efficient and effective public transport system. Hobsons Bay City Council can improve access, connectivity and amenity around railway stations and bus stops, whilst improving service frequency, connectivity and reliability falls under the responsibility of State Government and transport authorities.

Key Challenges



Bus services between Laverton, Seabrook & Altona North and train stations are indirect and infrequent, with some routes not running outside peak periods or on weekends.



Large parts of the residential areas of Seabrook and Altona Meadows are further than 500m from their nearest bus stop.



Bus services along busy arterial roads, including Point Cook Road, Queen Street and Merton Street, are often caught in congestion, reducing service reliability.



Bus Interchange facilities at Laverton Railway Station force pedestrians to walk through parked vehicles to access the train station.

Future Opportunities



Improve coverage and frequency of strategic bus routes and introduce direct, express services through State Government & PTV advocacy.

This could include introducing bus services through Wackett Street and Tyquin Street in Laverton,



Support increased services linking key destinations within and beyond the study area, Hobsons Bay and beyond.



Ensure bus stops are safe, comfortable and accessible and upgraded to provide reliable, real time information on bus arrivals. Bus stops near other transport modes and key activity generators, such as Laverton and Aircraft Station, should be a priority for these works.



Consider a Road User hierarchy that looks to provide all road users with ideal access, including priority for buses along key routes. This could include relocating Bus interchanges and taxi ranks near stations to improve pedestrian safety, and reduce the overall distance travelled between these sustainable transport modes.

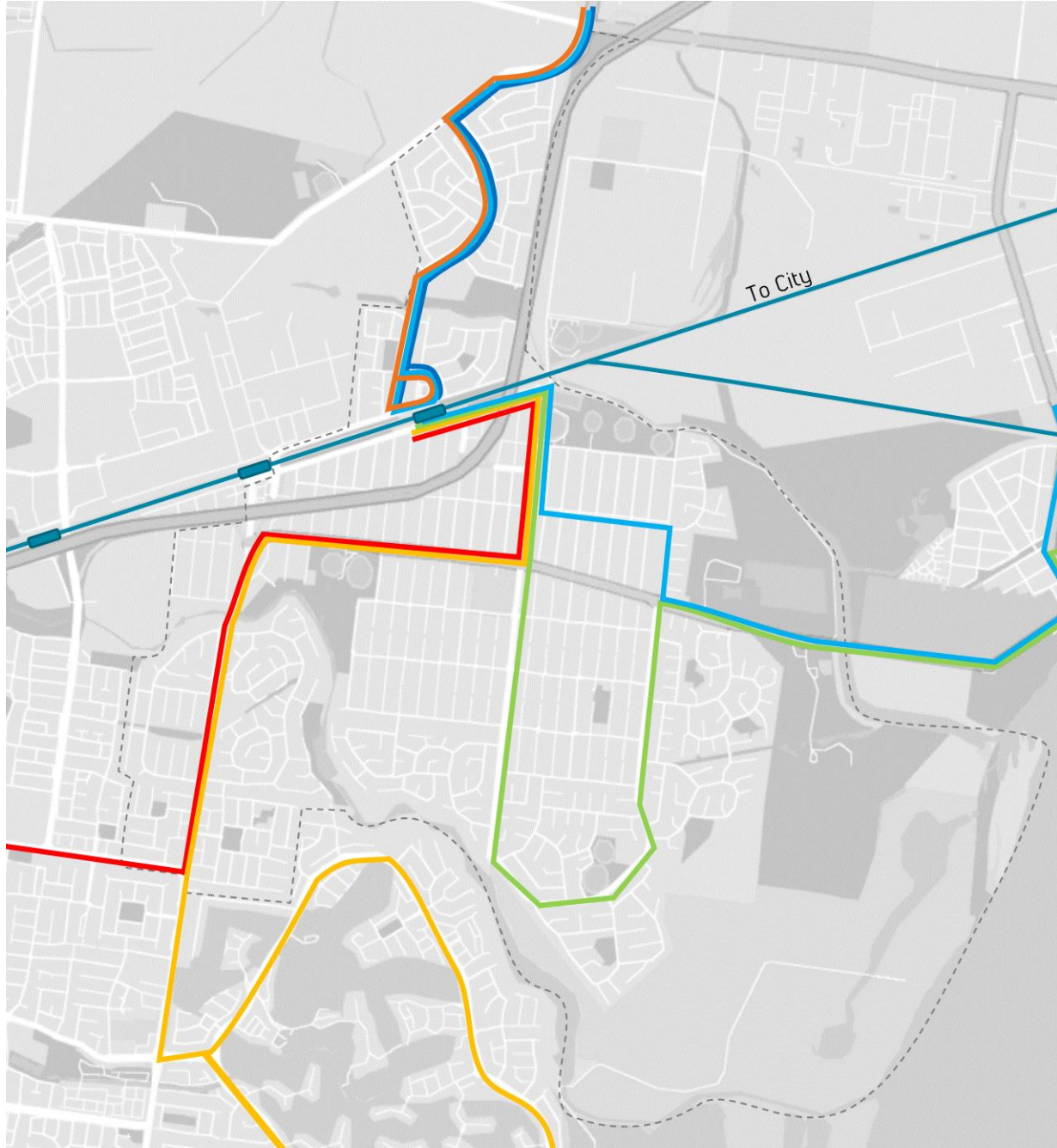


Figure 13 Current Public Transport Network

8 ROAD NETWORK

Roads and streets serve an important part of the transport network. As well as providing vital components of residential and commercial areas, they also get people and goods from one place to another. Given the wide number of users that access the road network each day, this asset must be managed carefully in order to provide equitable access and a safe, efficient transport system.

Across the LTMP study area, residents experience difficulties merging from local access streets to major collector roads during peak periods. Due to the configuration of the road network, there are limited opportunities for vehicles to enter or cross the Princes Freeway. For residents of Altona Meadows and Seabrook, they are often restricted to inconvenient routes via Palmers Road or Aviation Road to enter the freeway city-bound. This places significant pressure on Merton Street, Seabrook Boulevard, Point Cook Road, Aviation Road and Victoria Street, which provide the only links to the surrounding road network.

Given the number of vehicles accessing the road network each day, ensuring all road users, including passengers and drivers of private vehicles, cyclists, public transport users and pedestrians, remain safe is a critical part of the transport system. While the number of crashes has declined in previous years, some streets are still perceived as unsafe, particularly where hooning and dangerous driving behaviour occurs.

Around schools and other activity generators, congestion during peak times is of concern to the community. Walking in these areas is often discouraged due to the difficulty pedestrians experience in crossing busy roads, which often have limited breaks in traffic to safely cross.



Figure 14 Traffic on Railway Avenue, Laverton

Figure 15 Speed cushions

The design of streets plays an important part in how we use and travel along them. Many streets within the study area feature unnecessarily wide kerb side lanes, speed cushions and build outs at crossings not designed to be accommodating to cyclists. Subsequently, these present challenges and act as a deterrent for cyclists desiring to use the road. The road space on the key traffic corridors also appear to be underutilised in their potential to carry traffic, which often results in lanes being continuously blocked by cars and busses.

Observations of infrastructure conditions highlighted that line marking and signage on many roads, particularly approaching major intersections, is not clear and evident to drivers. This can often cause confusion with regard to direction of travel and priority for road users,

Key Challenges



Some roads allow vehicles to travel at excessive speeds, increasing the risk of crashes. This includes along Central Avenue and Victoria Street



Key roads within the study are under-utilised, creating an inefficient road network.



Limited connectivity to the Princes Highway increases congestion at major intersections during peak periods.



Roads feel unsafe and uninviting, and discourages the uptake of active transport by road users such as pedestrians or cyclists who may otherwise travel along them

Future Opportunities



Introduce lower speed zones in areas of high pedestrian activity such as along Bladin Street and Merton Street where there are public transport interchanges, schools and activity centres.



Consider the use of a Road User Hierarchy to help govern road space across the study area.



Ensure the safety of all road users is considered and addressed in the design and implementation of all transport infrastructure works and upgrades. Implementing chevron arrows for cyclists at roundabout approaches, as successfully implemented in Yarra City Council, is one such example.



Look at redesigning key streets by introducing traffic calming measures and improving line marking and signage in order to reduce vehicle speeds and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

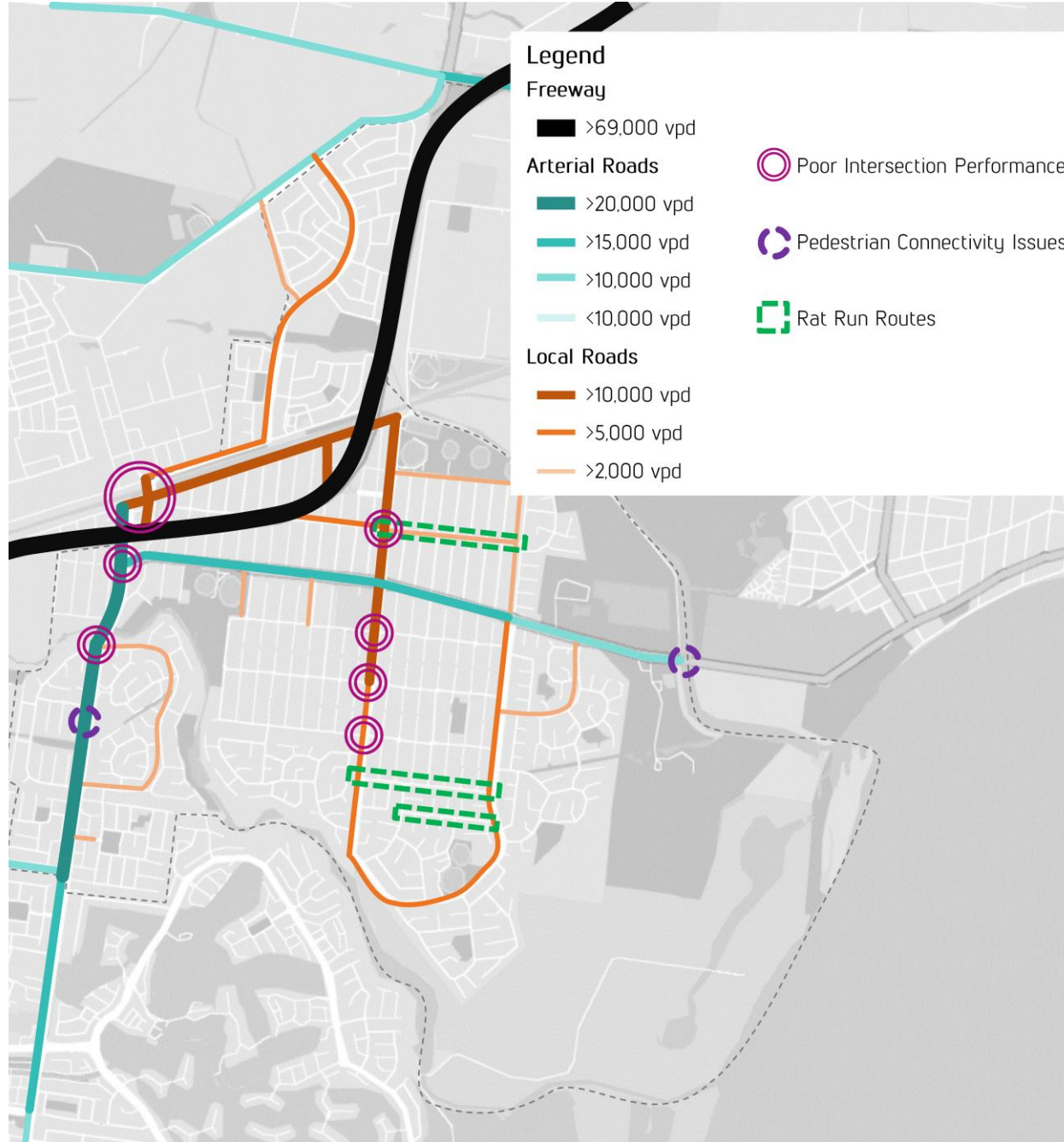


Figure 16 Road Network Issues

9 PARKING

The community has frequently raised concerns with parking and availability, particularly around key activity generators such as the Laverton and Aircraft Railway Station, and around schools and activity centres. In these areas, there is often limited on-street parking space available, and it is a challenge to provide enough car parking to satisfy demand for all users. Furthermore, along some streets there is insufficient width to accommodate traffic flow as well as provide everyone with a parking space.

Demand for parking around Laverton and Aircraft Railway Stations is high, which is typical for suburban railway stations. Around 1,150 formal commuter parking spaces across both stations become occupied early during the morning peak, with the surrounding road network left to accommodate the residual commuters.

Parking restrictions have been installed over time in these streets to assist residents and their visitors in finding a parking space in the high demand areas. However, this has resulted in an underutilisation of parking in these streets, and has forced the parking demand into other unrestricted streets.

While additional car parking can be provided to meet this demand, it also creates more traffic movements around these high activity areas, adding to already increased levels of congestion. Moreover, the provision of additional parking spaces precludes the associated land from being used to support sustainable transport infrastructure and local developments.

The residential areas of Altona Meadows, Laverton and Seabrook experience localised demand, including around Altona Green, Altona Meadows and Seabrook primary schools. Some streets around these schools have been designed to accommodate parking on both sides of the road as well as through traffic.



Figure 17 Underutilised streets around Laverton Railway Station

Figure 18 Informal parking at Aircraft Station

However, there are narrower streets around these schools that, during peak school periods, don't allow parking on both sides of the road and still accommodate traffic flow.

In these areas, it is necessary to balance the needs and safety of all road users when considering the allocation of road space. It is not always possible nor feasible to widen the road so that every user has the space that they are require. As such, there may be some locations and days where parking is prohibited in order to provide a safe and accessible road environment for all road users.

Where parking is permitted, these spaces should be allocated to those who need it – including residents and their visitors in residential areas, but also for those other land uses within the area, including short-term

parking around schools and parking for commuters near railway stations.

Key Challenges



There are inconsistent parking restrictions across the study area, making it difficult for motorists to understand where and how long they can park.



There are underutilized parking spaces in some streets, particularly in areas of high demand such as around railway stations.



Parking enforcement across the study area appears to be low, particularly in areas of high demand such as schools.



Parking Permits are available on an ad-hoc basis, and it is unclear who is or isn't eligible and where they should park.

Future Opportunities



Help the community identify where to park in busy areas through providing maps and other information on road rules.



Look at formalising the Parking Permit policy for residents and other user groups to ensure consistency in its application.



Consider increasing enforcement and education on road rules for parking.

SECTION 3 SUMMARY

10 KEY ISSUES

The Local Transport and Movement Plan – West Package aims to identify and understand the key challenges and constraints surrounding the transport network in Altona Meadows, Seabrook and Laverton. It seeks to achieve this by serving as a platform to develop a program for key infrastructure works, identify opportunities to advocate to various authorities for improved public transport services and road network improvements, and create a safer road environment.

The findings presented in this report represent the amalgamation of data and information collected from site inspections, meetings with Council, community complaint records (since 2009), traffic counts and the demography of the study area. Furthermore, the proposed recommendations which will serve to develop the future *Local Transport and Movement Plan – West* considers existing and future State and Local Government policy outlined in their respective publications.

In addition, a number of key issues and opportunities for improvements across the major modes of transport in the study area have been identified. Whilst not an exhaustive list of issues, it represents critical problem areas which when addressed, would resolve the minor issues nested within them.

These are summarised as follows:

- Multiple transport modes compete for priority on the same roads
- Limited connectivity between access roads and major transport corridors exist
- Roundabout intersection controls are inefficient

- Current street network layout encourages “rat runs” and speeding
- Vehicle ownership is high resulting in a high focus on vehicle priority in the road network
- Unrestricted parking shortfalls exist forcing drivers to circulate the street network in search of parking
- Demand for railway station car parking will continue to increase
- The provision of suitable infrastructure to encourage an increased adoption in active transport can be improved
- The cycling network is disjointed and lacks links between key transport corridors and shared paths
- Bicycle lanes end abruptly discouraging riders to cycle to destinations within the study area
- Bus service frequency during AM and PM peak periods are lower than desirable
- Bus services have no priority access on road network
- Current bus services within Seabrook and Altona Meadows do not run direct/express to railway stations
- Pedestrian access is highly restricted between Laverton and Altona Meadows/Seabrook
- Footpaths lack important accessibility features making them unattractive to pedestrians
- Footpaths alignments deviate from natural course, encouraging unsafe crossing

11 LTMP – WEST

The future *Local Transport and Movement Plan – West* (LTMP) will identify projects and other opportunities that are required to improve transport access, safety and connectivity in the study area. This LTMP will be prepared as a subsequent technical report to this background report in due course.

Building on from the issues identified in this background report, the LTMP will provide strategies and actions to improve transport accessibility, connectivity and safety within Seabrook, Altona Meadows and Laverton.

To assist in this process, data will be collected in a variety of forms by way of:

- Carrying out traffic counts to ascertain existing and future vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle volumes on major arterial and collector roads
- Facilitating two community drop-in sessions to collect information on traffic and transport issues in the area; and
- Issuing community surveys to collect individualised input on specific issues pertinent to travel within the study area.

This Road User Hierarchy will be further developed and refined as the LTMP progresses through feedback and ideas gained from Council, the community and other key stakeholders

To guide the development of the LTMP, a draft road user hierarchy has been prepared (see Figure 19 below) in consideration of the issues and opportunities identified within this report. This hierarchy will be used to guide how road space should be allocated within the study area, and help focus where infrastructure treatments are required to provide road users with ideal facilities.

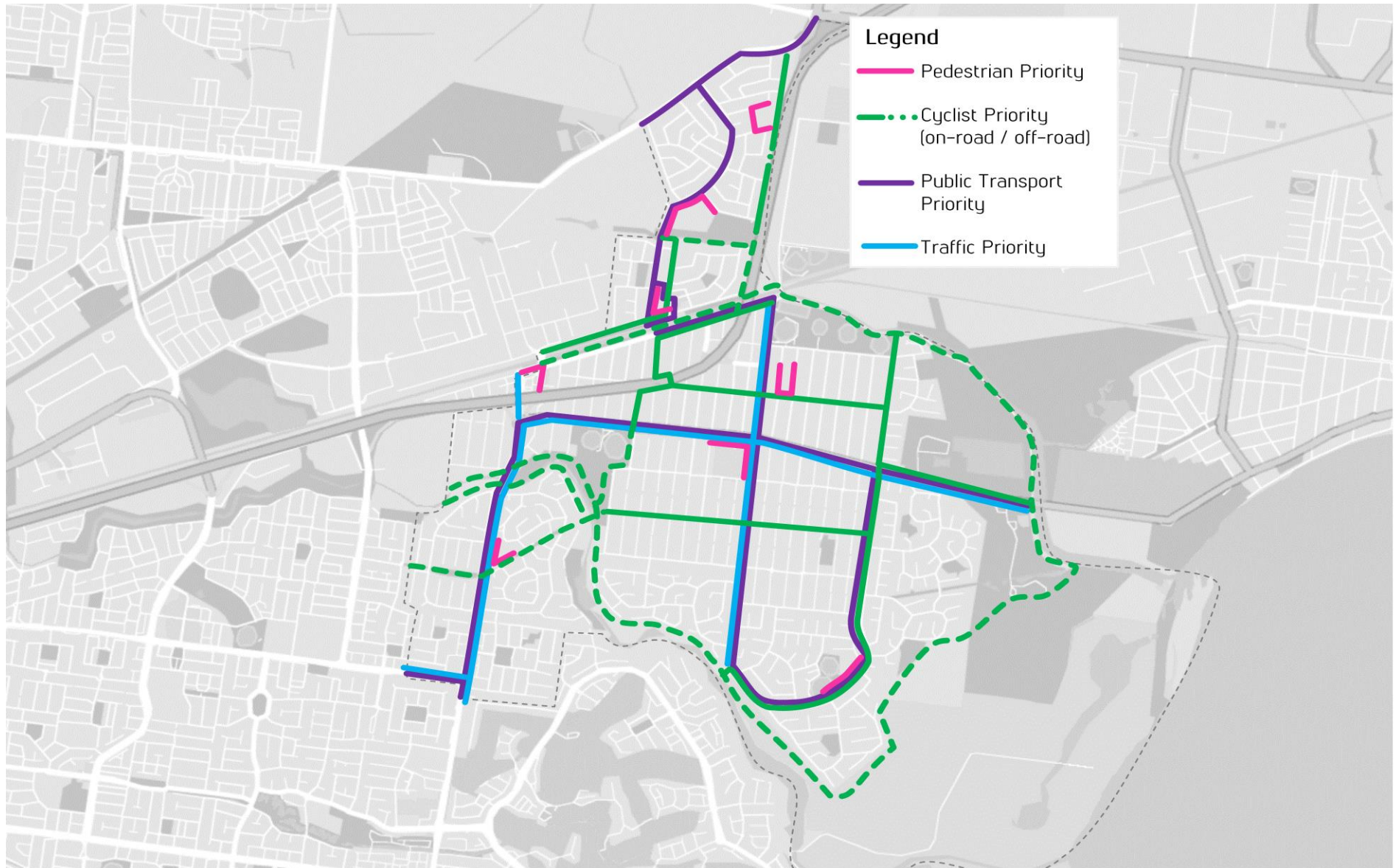


Figure 19 Draft Road User Hierarchy

