



## Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan

August 2004

**Council modifications to the *Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan*  
(August 2004)**

Date of Council Modification	Previous	Modification	Rationale
May 2006	On page 49 (Precinct 4) the following action was listed under Community Facilities:  Encourage the development of an integrated sports club facility potentially incorporating the RSL, existing clubrooms and medium sized function facilities	This action was deleted.	Council resolved in May 2006 (item 3.031/06) to delete this action from the <i>Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan</i> (August 2004) on advice that there was no community support for this proposal.
May 2007	On pages 48-49 (Precinct 4) the following action was listed under Land Use:  Offer the Shire-owned sites between the Library and the CFA for sale and redevelopment according to the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The built form of any redevelopment should reflect the key design themes of the Cultural Facility Concept Design (2001) (to be provided by Council)</li> <li>•The architectural quality of the proposed developments shall be emphasised in assessment of proposals</li> <li>•Uses should be consistent with the existing Business 2 Zone (office, medium density housing)</li> <li>•Preferred uses will include elements that provide for usage by the local community such as the art gallery, restaurant, medical centre</li> <li>•Uses should not complement, nor detract, from the nearby core retail precinct, and should not include uses such take-away food, service station or any substantial retail</li> <li>•The redevelopment must provide for at least 500 metres<sup>2</sup> of community facility space (unless user groups prefer a different location)</li> <li>•Public, private and not-for-profit groups will all be invited to submit proposals</li> <li>•Any financial proceeds from the sale of the sites will be directed to provision or improvement of community facilities within or near the Eltham Activity Centre</li> </ul> <p>Appropriate arrangements will be made for continuing on-site and alternative recognition of the history of this site as a War Memorial in consultation with the RSL and local history groups.</p> <p>In support of the above action, the map on page 51 indicated that mixed use facilities should occur on the Shire owned sites.</p>	<p>This was replaced with:</p> <p>Retain the Shire-owned sites between the Library and the CFA in Council ownership for public use by, or on behalf of, local government. To provide for the recommended land use, rezone the sites from the Business 2 Zone to the Public Use Zone: Schedule 6 - Local Government.</p> <p>In conjunction with the above change, the map on page 51 was modified to not indicate that the Shire owned sites should provide mixed use facilities.</p>	<p>The modifications removed the action (with supporting guidelines) that the sites 895 and 903-7 Main Road, Eltham be sold from Council ownership and be used in a manner consistent with the Business 2 Zone.</p> <p>Council resolved at its May 2007 Ordinary Meeting (item PS. 022/07) to remove this action from the <i>Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan</i> (August 2004), thereby making the document consistent with its April 2007 resolution (item PS. 019/07) to rezone the two sites from the Business 2 Zone to the Public Use Zone: Schedule 6 – Local Government for the purpose of retaining the sites in Council ownership for public use by, or on behalf of, local government.</p>

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## 01 Introduction

HASSELL, in conjunction with Essential Economics and Hyder Consulting, has prepared this Eltham Major Activity Centre (Eltham MAC) Structure Plan for the Nillumbik Shire Council. This plan is the outcome of extensive analysis of the centre and its environs, and consultation with Council and the local community. The Plan proposes a vision for the centre that recognises its unique character and spirit, and it proposes a range of actions to build on the centre's strengths and to realise its opportunities. The challenge is to improve the centre's landscape character, to ensure that it continues to be the heart for the Eltham community, and respond to new needs and opportunities particularly in housing, transport, retailing and community life.

A partnership amongst the many stakeholders is needed to implement this Plan. Council plays a pivotal role in the centre through its town planning, capital works, traffic management and parking policies, and its many community facilities in the centre. There are many other key stakeholders whose actions will impact on the centre's future. These stakeholders include other government agencies, particularly the transport, roads and health agencies, youth, community and sports groups, all landowners and local businesses, and local residents in and around the centre. This Plan provides a framework to enable all the stakeholders to share the vision, and to align their plans and energies to achieve the key outcomes of this Plan. Working together, Eltham will continue to be a special place.

### Background to the Plan

This Structure Plan establishes a 20 year vision for the Eltham Major Activity Centre. The vision gives direction to the activities, urban form, landscape, access and movement, and community life in and around the centre. The Plan is based on, and embodies the spirit and form that is widely known as the unique character of Eltham.

The Plan is set within the framework of Melbourne 2030, which is a strategic plan prepared to manage growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne and surrounding regions. Within Melbourne 2030, Eltham is identified as a Major Activity Centre.

Melbourne 2030 requires that a Structure Plan be undertaken for each Major Activity Centre. A Structure Plan is:

- *A planning tool which sets out the integrated vision for the desired future development of a place, and*
- *A planning and management framework to guide development and land-use change in order to achieve stated environmental, social and economic objectives*

Essentially, the Structure Plan for the Eltham Major Activity Centre will need to (amongst other things):

- *Assess the role and function of the activity centre and the scope for change, renewal and diversification*
- *Identify the boundaries of the centre, or where necessary, redefine them to provide for a new and expanded activity*



Figure 1 - The unique character of Eltham

## 01 Introduction

- *Cover the form and development, land-use, higher density housing, roads and public transport, services and community infrastructure*
- *Identify opportunities for a range of housing, office, large format retailing and entertainment uses, particularly in mixed-use developments*
- *Identify opportunities for expansion, improvement or redevelopment in land-uses and business mix*
- *Consider the existing provision of and opportunities for large development sites*
- *Address the interface with the surrounding area*
- *Establish design parameters for the centre*
- *Evaluate existing accessibility, traffic arrangements, controls and car parking demand, assess the availability of public transport, and the changes required to improve the public transport infrastructure, particularly public transport services, walking and cycling*
- *Address the need for non-motorised travel, including access by walking and cycling*
- *Identify the means of providing future physical infrastructure and community facilities; and*
- *Provide for marketing and centre management*

### Key Themes

This Plan retains the key themes identified in the Issues and Opportunities Paper. These are:

- Urban Design Framework
- Land Use within the Major Activity Centre
- Community Facility and Recreation Provision
- Circulation, traffic management and car parking

### Structure of the Plan

This Plan is structured to be readily accessible and understood.

Section 2 of the Plan provides an overview of the centre's key challenges and opportunities, structured under the four main themes. This section also includes an overview of the key concerns and ideas that were generated through the community consultation processes.

Section 3 of the report provides a brief overview of the planning framework for the centre, particularly Melbourne 2030 and the key principles of the Nillumbik Municipal Strategic Statement and local policies. The section outlines the key objectives of the metropolitan strategy, and assesses their implications and application to Eltham.

Extensive reports on the issues and challenges facing the centre, the planning framework and the community consultation are set out in Appendices A, B and C.

Appendix D includes the consultants'

## 01 Introduction



Figure 2 - Study Area

recommendations in respect of several matters that are not directly included in the Structure Plan.

The preceding analysis sets a sound basis to propose a 20 year vision for the centre, which is outlined in Section 4. The centre's vision is articulated through a short statement that embodies its spirit and life. The vision is given more depth through outcomes for each of the four key themes of urban design, land-use, community and recreation, and circulation, traffic management and car parking.

Section 5 and 6 sets out in greater detail the vision for the centre. Strategic directions and detailed plans are included for the key precincts in the centre and its surrounds. A guiding objective is proposed for each precinct, and detailed strategies and actions are set out under the themes of urban design, land-use, community and recreation, and traffic management and car parking.

An Implementation Plan to be

prepared will include actions for the short, medium and long term, and indicates responsibility for leading the actions. The Implementation Plan includes modifications to town planning controls, capital works, new development opportunities, landscape improvements, and new activities for the centre.

## Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



Figure 3 - Existing Conditions Plan

## 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities



Figure 4 - Context Plan



Figure 5 - The Eltham MAC consists of three main components, the retail centre, parkland and industrial centre

### The Existing Centre – Challenges and Opportunities

Eltham Major Activity Centre is widely known as a special place characterised by trees, interesting architecture, community events and “arts and jazz”. It also enables the wider Eltham community to access a wide range of shopping opportunities, community and health services, and public transport services. Main Road is a significant north-south regional connection. This section examines the character of Eltham and highlights the strengths and opportunities that can form the basis for the 20 year vision. The analysis is based on the material presented in the Issues and Opportunities Paper (February 2004) and subsequent community comment.

### Context of the Eltham MAC

Eltham Major Activity Centre is located approximately 25 kilometres to the east of Melbourne’s CBD. The centre is located on Main Road, which is the major north-south road link connecting Eltham and other smaller townships to Melbourne’s metropolitan suburbs. The commercial centre is located in the valley of the Diamond Creek. From the commercial centre, there are views of extensive tree canopies and ridges. With lower density suburban housing surrounding the centre, it appears to be part of a semi-rural landscape.

The centre is located on the fringe of Melbourne’s outer eastern suburbs, at the interface with the Green Wedges. Nillumbik is known as the “Green Wedge Shire”. Green Wedges have strong environmental and landscape value, they accommodate a range of uses and are an important resource for recreational pursuits (*Melbourne 2030*). The key features of the Nillumbik Green Wedge in the vicinity of the Eltham MAC are the areas of environmental and landscape quality near the Yarra River, Plenty River, Diamond Creek and surrounding areas. The recently

approved Urban Growth Boundary is located close by, and will constrain further urban development.

The Eltham MAC provides a wide range of services to its local community and townships further north on Main Road. However, local residents also have the choice to shop and work in many regional centres such as Doncaster Shoppingtown and Greensborough, as well as smaller centres such as Diamond Creek and St Helena. These other commercial centres have major impacts on the trade catchment and commercial role of the Eltham MAC.

Approximately one kilometre to the south west of the retail centre is the Bridge Street industrial precinct. Bounded generally by the Eltham railway line, Bolton Street, Susan Street and Brougham Street, this area contains mainly small industrial businesses that provide services to local businesses and households.

A shortage of alternative appropriately zoned land is encouraging peripheral sales/bulky goods premises to establish in this precinct as they find it difficult to find suitable sites in the core retail area.

To the south of the Eltham MAC along Main Road is the Eltham Gateway. On the west side is a spine of public open space that largely follows the Diamond Creek from Fitzsimons Lane in the south to the Eltham MAC and beyond to the north. On the east side (and a small portion of the west side) of Main Road is a mix of housing, professional offices, and community facilities including schools, a hotel and the RSL. The Gateway contains several community buildings that are places of community life, learning and vitality. These contribute to the unique qualities that differentiate Eltham from other places.

## 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities

### Overview of Analysis

This section provides an overview of the key challenges and opportunities that face Eltham MAC. The section also proposes some possible responses to these matters. It therefore provides the basis for the vision and the strategies and actions that are outlined in Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the report. More detailed analysis of the key issues is included in Appendix A.

### Urban Design

The Eltham Activity Centre is located in a valley between two ridgelines. The most important view from the retail area is westward towards the Diamond Creek. This view provides a grand vista of a heavily treed ridgeline and open space network. The north-south view from Bridge Street towards the Diamond Creek and open space is also important. These views need to be protected and enhanced.

Community consultation and the consultants' analysis suggest that the Eltham MAC needs to be more reflective of the natural beauty of the area and more reflective of the community's cultural aspirations.

Along with the area's natural qualities, Eltham is known as a meeting place. Eltham is where urban meets rural, where rolling hills meets the valley floor and where the community meets to celebrate and discuss. This theme however has been only partially expressed in the existing centre. There is little expression of the art for which Eltham is famous. The urban built form has not been softened within the retail area, and is unattractive in the Bridge Street precinct. There is little evidence of a distinctive place in the Eltham MAC.

There are three major gateways to



Figure 6 - Open Space along Diamond Creek



Figure 7 - Vegetation cover

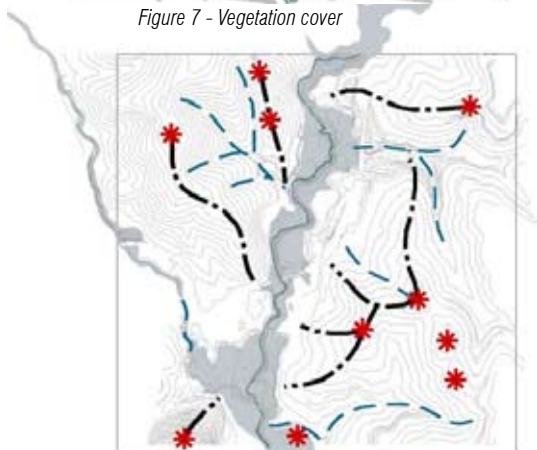


Figure 8 - Land Form, including highpoints, ridges and drainage lines



Figure 9 - Floodplains



Figure 10 - Existing Views

### 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities

the Eltham MAC. The community consultation indicated there is a need to improve the gateways into the centre. The gateways can be improved through facilitating iconic buildings on key sites, and through the implementation of vegetation and artwork at strategic locations.

Eltham MAC comprises three separate precincts. At a conceptual level, the two “urban” areas are connected by the central green spine of Alistair Knox Park and Central Park. This spine can be enhanced, and its connections with the two urban areas strengthened to create one unified and integrated centre, with a strong central place. This “Town Centre” can become a place where people meet and interact, and where individuals can enhance their well being through leisure, social and recreational pursuits.

The built form of the MAC is one of contrast. As a whole, the quality of the buildings and the urban spaces is generally poor with little architectural merit or quality.

The Town Square is poorly linked into the centre, but has the potential to become a focal point for the retail area.

It is strategically located to become the focus of the major pedestrian link between the station, Post Office, and Safeway.

The Town Square has not yet been successful as a “people place.” The Square can be improved through encouraging restaurants and cafes close by the Square, and by changing some features in the Square to make it more attractive and a livelier place.

Pedestrian linkages through the centre are generally poor. In particular, the station and bus interchange are poorly connected to the retail area and the parks. Pedestrian linkages between Main Road and the Town Square are poor and unattractive. Youth Road is underutilised, feels unsafe, but has potential for considerable improvement due to its proximity to the railway station, parkland and Diamond Creek. The fragmented car parking areas also contribute to a confusing network throughout the centre.

The Bridge Street precinct is characterised by ad hoc development, poor legibility, little character and few architectural features. Most of the area presents a run down appearance,



*Figure 11 – The image of Eltham is often different from the reality of the place*

## 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities



Figure 12 - Building Footprints



Figure 13- Main Street, Eltham



Figure 14- Bridge Street precinct



Figure 15- Views to heavily vegetated ridgelines

with ad hoc car parking and little landscaping. The area is unfriendly for pedestrians and visitors.

### Land-Use

Essential Economics notes the Eltham MAC contains approximately 20,500m<sup>2</sup> of retail floor area and 7,500m<sup>2</sup> of office space. The centre serves a population of about 49,000 persons in the Main Trade Catchment and approximately 25,000 people in the Primary Trade Catchment. The trade areas are constrained by the presence of other regional retail centres.

The Eltham MAC performs the role of convenience shopping and some limited comparison shopping. Essential Economics concludes that by reducing the level of escape expenditure from 63% to 55%, there is sufficient expenditure to support in the order of an additional 7,500m<sup>2</sup> of retail floor space. The escape expenditure creates an opportunity to secure further anchor and specialty stores to broaden the range of retailing available. There is a strong community view that additional retail outlets should largely comprise independent boutique outlets that differentiate Eltham from regional shopping centres.

There is a very high demand for office floor space. Essential Economics estimates that the Eltham MAC could support an additional 1,000 to 3,800m<sup>2</sup> of office floor space. These estimates are based on the application of the average provision of office floor space per person across suburban Melbourne. On this basis, Eltham currently meets only 35% of the office space demand generated by its population. The provision of office floor space could be increased given the demand and the positive location attributes of the Eltham MAC.

The Bridge Street precinct presently contains approximately 220 businesses. Approximately 55% of these businesses are light industrial and a further 34% are retail uses.

Continued investment in the Bridge Street precinct is constrained by poor appearance and low amenity, poor access, parking difficulties, and a limited number of available sites for redevelopment. Current Council policy, supported by many community comments, supports the retention of Bridge Street as an industrial area and non-industrial uses are presently prevented from locating in this area.

Over recent years, medium density dwellings have replaced a number of single dwellings close to the Eltham MAC. Essential Economics notes that Eltham has a lower proportion of medium density housing than metropolitan Melbourne, but a higher proportion than neighbouring Templestowe and Bulleen. More medium density housing can meet the demand for smaller dwellings likely to be generated by an ageing population and the trend toward smaller households. Preferably, additional medium density dwellings should be located close to the Eltham MAC.

One mechanism that should be investigated is a Restructure Overlay in order to encourage site amalgamation (eg, 1500m<sup>2</sup> based on the amalgamation of two lots). This will assist in achieving better design outcomes for medium density housing.

### Community Facilities and Recreation Provision

The Eltham Major Activity Centre contains an extensive range of community, health and recreation facilities, either within or adjacent

## 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities



Figure 16 - Location of community facilities



Figure 17 - Eltham Library



Figure 18 - Eltham Community & Reception Centre



Figure 19 - The Living and Learning Centre



Figure 20 - The former Shire Office site

to the centre. This Plan considers some modifications to the provision of community spaces to better meet the range of community events and celebrations, and to recognise the capabilities and limitations of the current facilities.

The initial community consultation indicated that there is lack of good quality, affordable multi-purpose meeting spaces, together with facilities for large events with over 300 attendees. The Eltham Community and Reception Centre suffers from design issues and poor acoustics that limit its utility and capacity for large events. Such a new hall is needed to meet the community demand for events with over 300 guests. A new hall would enable the Community and Reception Centre to focus on smaller events, and specialise as the centre for art and cultural displays and events. It could also become a key centre for further learning and art/craft courses, in conjunction with the Living and Learning Centre. The Eltham High School has indicated a desire to develop a major meeting hall in the medium term, which could be made available for community events. Satisfactory car parking and access arrangements will need to be provided for the hall.

The Library is an iconic building with a strong community focus. The venue is easily accessed by car, public transport and walking and cycling. It is also located close to the Eltham MAC and forms a key focus for the area. The Library has limited car parking, mainly due to spaces being used for all day parking.

Its large, undeveloped basement is a key opportunity. With an area of approximately 170 square metres, and the potential to expand the space, the basement offers a range of opportunities to consolidate other activities into the Eltham MAC. Its

design may enable the space to be used as an internet cafe or a community space with computer facilities. It could also be developed for meeting rooms to complement those in the main Library.

The Living and Learning Centre is increasingly focusing on vocational training in addition to the art/craft and education. The existing facilities are not suited to vocational training which needs a more formal style classroom. Some of the vocational learning activities of the Living and Learning Centre could be relocated. The relocation of the vocational training programs would enable the Living and Learning Centre to forge a close alliance with the Community and Reception Centre and jointly focus on arts and learning.

The Shire Office site, with an area of approximately 5,990 square metres on the west side of Main Road, is vacant and is included in a Business 2 Zone. Many community submissions prefer that this site is retained to meet future community needs. It could also be developed for activities that contribute positively to a vibrant "town heart" that could be the focus for a range of community and commercial services. Any new building(s) on this site will need to be iconic and reflect an "Eltham" style and appearance. It is desirable the discussion of the site distinguish between ownership, use and built form of the site, and be clear about key priorities and outcomes.

The Pre School, Maternal and Child Health Centre, and Memorial Hall are presently underused and in poor condition. These sites could be combined into one for greater efficiency. The site is zoned Business 2 under the Nillumbik Planning Scheme, which indicates that the land could

## 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities



Figure 21 - Pre-School, Maternal & Child Health Centre



Figure 22 - CFA



Figure 23 - Community Health Centre



Figure 24 - Eltham Central Park



Figure 25 - Eltham RSL



Figure 26 - Senior Citizen's Club



Figure 27 - Youth Road

be used for offices and professional consulting suites, medical facilities or shops. The Pre-School could be relocated adjacent to a Primary School, or adequate capacity is available in other pre-schools in the local area.

Any redevelopment of the Memorial Hall site would need to acknowledge and respect the historic legacy of the current building.

Although the CFA building has been designed to meet the needs of the CFA, its location has several operational disadvantages, and the CFA would prefer to relocate to another site outside the Eltham MAC.

The Community Health Centre is fully occupied and would prefer to gain some additional space in Eltham to provide improved staff accommodation, and provide better quality meeting spaces. It is likely to use community spaces provided in new multi-purpose centres.

There is an opportunity in the Eltham Central Park to develop an integrated community based club facility. Preliminary discussions have occurred between the RSL and local sporting groups in relation to a proposal to relocate the RSL in a new integrated community sports club. There are opportunities to site a new sporting club/RSL adjacent to the existing clubrooms. This area is reasonably remote from sensitive uses.

It has been suggested that the Senior Citizen's Club could join the proposed community club located adjacent to the Eltham Central Park. The proposed sports club may be too remote for many senior citizen club members from the core retail area. There are several relocation options, one arrangement may be to relocate the senior citizens into a new multi-purpose facility on Youth Road, and provide pedestrian

access to the core retail area via a new pedestrian link across the railway line to St Laurence Lane, opposite Arthur Street. This site would be flatter and more accessible than the current Senior Citizen's Centre. It would also positively contribute to the activity level around Youth Road, improving safety and surveillance of the area.

Another potential location for the Senior Citizen's Centre would be the existing CFA site on Main Road, which could be converted in the long term when the CFA relocates.

The child care facility adjacent to the Eltham Central Park is considering expansion, and redevelopment of this area would need to accommodate their plans.

Four community halls are currently located in single purpose buildings on Youth Road. Single purpose buildings often suit the occupants, but can lead to buildings being underutilised with higher than necessary overheads such as maintenance, and lost opportunities to enhance social links amongst groups. There are opportunities to replace the current facilities with one or two multi-purpose community halls.

The Youth Road area also provides opportunities to contribute to the use of public transport by providing commuter day car parking, some medium density housing, and by activating the station area.

### **Circulation, Traffic Management and Car Parking Provision**

Eltham has a diverse range of transport challenges. The level of car-based travel is high, for example many people pick-up and collect their children by car from school, and most travel to work by car. Public transport achieves reasonable patronage levels, although provision within the local street

## 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities



Figure 28 - Vehicle Movement



Figure 29 - Public Transport



Figure 30 - Cycle Movement

network is poor. Recreational walking and cycling is popular, especially on weekends.

### Traffic within the Town Centre

#### Main Road

There is the opportunity to review the current type and combination of intersections along Main Road between Diamond Street/Cecil Street and Henry Street.

The options for alternate intersection improvements on Main Road have been discussed with VicRoads who support the principle of amending the existing intersections.

Presently Main Road is limited by people using it as part of an anti-clockwise "lapping" route around the main shopping centre. This causes significant delays to through-traffic flow. Parking manoeuvres along Main Road also create significant delays for through traffic and may lead to operational difficulties at times.

Proposals to bypass the town centre will relocate the traffic to sensitive residential or environmental areas, and will not be further explored in this Plan.

#### East- West Streets

The purpose of the pair of one-way streets is unclear and opening up Luck and Pryor Streets to two-way traffic will improve the connectivity of Bible Street to Main Road.

At the Luck Street roundabout, there are substantial problems for traffic in most directions. Tall vegetation obscures driver visibility.

Pryor Street performs a very understated function in the context of the shopping precinct. Removing the one-way restriction may offer an opportunity to further improve circulation within the precinct.

Left turning vehicles out of Pryor Street into Main Road struggle to find gaps in

the traffic as a result of the continuous exiting from the roundabout. Changing this intersection may improve the overall circulation of the precinct.

Arthur Street serves the two largest retailers in the town centre, namely Safeway and Coles. As a main entry into the shopping precinct, Arthur Street does not perform well. The pedestrian crossing in Arthur Street, opposite the pedestrian entrance to Coles is too close to the intersection with Main Road and should be relocated.

Dudley Street appears to be under-utilised. Parking restrictions are severe and the abutting parking areas do not "link" easily to the shops. The traffic lights at this intersection provide a safe opportunity to turn across the busy Main Road. Many motorists still prefer to use the unsignalised intersection at Arthur Street to enter the town centre.

### North South circulation within the Retail Core Area

Commercial Place is a very busy road and the primary access point for many shoppers leaving the parking areas of Safeway and Bunnings to head north. Commercial Place also serves as part of a rat-run from Bible Street via Pryor Street towards the roundabout. The high pedestrian activity to and from the car parks in this area is in conflict with this heavy usage.

The introduction of the Town Square has caused problems with circulation within Commercial Place (including the shared zone between Arthur Street and Pryor Street) because motorists cannot easily drive between north and south parts of the centre. For many locals, the decked Safeway car park has become the next best alternative.

Motorists can legally traverse the

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Figure 31 - Traffic on Arthur Street



Figure 32 - View to Town Square



Figure 33 - Bus interchange



Figure 34 - Existing carparking provisions

shopping precinct from Dudley Street through to Luck Street and back again without using Main Road or Bible Street to do so. Two routes for doing so currently exist across the many linked car parks.

The analysis shows a significant amount of through-traffic from Bible Street South to Bible Street North. It appears that most of this traffic is destined for the residential areas to the north-east and is bypassing Main Road through the town centre. This also indicates that Bible Street has an important through-traffic function.

### Bus and Station Precinct

This area is poorly designed. The layout of the bus platforms requires passengers to walk between manoeuvring vehicles. The bus exit from the bus interchange onto Main Road is awkward. There is unsatisfactory provision for taxis and drop off points.

Pedestrians presently cross under the railway line at the station and at the Eltham Library, some 400 metres apart. The underpass at the station is not well defined and the crossing at the Library is quite remote from the town centre.

Bus egress from the station is difficult, and there are opportunities to improve the safety and operation of buses, provide better facilities at passenger boarding and improve the interaction with traffic travelling along main road.

Pivotal to the success of this modified interchange is the relocation of the roundabout to Pryor Street. This will form the entry statement into the station and allow for easier bus turning movements to occur. All bus movements can be catered for in a more conventional manner rather than have the Main Road crossing and the kerbside bus bays. Whilst a detailed engineering design has not been undertaken, it is confirmed that buses

will be able to complete the turning movements within the station area.

As a result of the roundabout forming part of the station redesign, an area of land is freed up alongside the existing Post Office. The proposal is to set aside some of this area for public art, public open space and/or an iconic building structure. Some of this land will however have to be used to replace the short-term parking and 5 minute drop off bays which currently exist and are in great demand (approximately 12 to 15 bays).

Indications are that provision for at least 8 bus stops can be achieved along with enhanced kiss and ride drop off areas and some short term car parking added near the Post Office corner. Not only is this more than what is currently provided, but the location will be more orderly and be centred around a bus island with coordinated passenger arrival and departure times.

A more detailed design is required to fully explore the opportunities and seek the support of public transport operators and the DOI and DSE.

Consultation will also need to occur with affected retailers and the railway authorities.

### Parking Supply and Demand

Surveys commissioned by the Council conclude that there are sufficient parking areas provided within a convenient walking distance to the shopping and retail precinct during most times of the day. Commuter car parking areas in close proximity to the station are fully utilised. Above ground parking areas supporting major retail outlets are well utilised. Parking along Main Road is almost always fully utilised.

### 02 An Overview of the Centre's Challenges and Opportunities

There is a significant requirement for short stay parking particularly up to 30-minute duration of stay.

As there is a general lack of dedicated short stay parking provided within the town centre, and people park in the two hours restricted areas (given the lack of one hour restrictions) resulting in a very high turnover of parking and a busy circulation of cars therein.

More emphasis on a short-term parking strategy will encourage a higher turnover of vehicles and shoppers within the heart of the town centre. A preferred approach would be to provide shorter term parking within the town centre in close proximity to the smaller shops and longer term parking on the periphery of the town.

More detailed comments on the various parking areas are provided in Appendix A.

**Melbourne 2030** has become a major influence on Melbourne's development, and it will lead to some restructuring of the metropolitan area, particularly the density and types of development in and around Major Activity Centres. The nomination of Eltham as a Major Activity Centre in *Melbourne 2030*, offers new and exciting development opportunities in and around that centre. These opportunities need to be planned carefully to ensure that new proposals are consistent with the existing character, culture and landscape that is valued by the Eltham community.

In Melbourne 2030, Activity Centres have a special importance. They are to be the preferred locations for higher density residential development, retail and professional services, public

### 03 An Overview of the Planning Framework

transport services, and entertainment facilities. Rather than being enclosed shopping centres, Activity Centres are seen to be places that are multi-functional, social meeting places in the day and night, highly accessible, and providing a wide range of employment opportunities and services. They are also the preferred locations for higher density housing, meeting the accommodation needs of a diverse community.

The key elements of Melbourne 2030 are explained in greater detail in Appendix B.

Nillumbik Shire Council has developed a range of policies to guide development throughout the Shire. These policies are also described in greater detail in Appendix B.

The Nillumbik Municipal Strategic Statement, which forms part of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme includes policies on the Eltham Town Centre, as well as transport, housing and urban design. Generally these policies support some infill residential development to meet the needs of a more diverse range of households. This approach is supported by the Nillumbik Housing Strategy, which encourages increased population densities in areas close to public transport, commercial centres and community facilities.

The Eltham Town Centre Policy both support the continued role of the Eltham MAC as an important centre for convenience and comparison retailing, and for business services. Additional retail development should be located on the eastern side of Main Road, and priorities for new development include an additional supermarket and other attractors, enlivening Commercial Place

and the Town Square, and ensuring that the retail core is not dissipated by the intrusion of office activities.

The Eltham Town Centre Policy also supports increased residential development close to the commercial centre, provided that:

- medium density housing development is responsive to the unique environmental/landscape characteristics of the wider Eltham region
- the height of medium density housing generally does not exceed two storeys
- the preferred maximum density is one dwelling per 400 square metres.

### 03 An Overview of the Planning Framework



Figure 35 – The vision for Eltham MAC: residence, shopping, professional services, meet and recreate

The zones under the Nillumbik Planning Scheme also reflect the broader strategic directions. The Residential 1 Zone applies to the residential areas around the Activity Centre and promotes the provision of a diverse range of dwellings and encourages residential development that respects the neighbourhood character.

The Business 1 Zone applies to the retail core and has an objective to encourage the intensive development of a business centre for retailing, and other complementary commercial, entertainment and community uses.

The land on the west side of Main Road including the Post Office and the Shire Office site is zoned Business 2 Zone (B2Z). The purpose of this zone is to encourage the development of offices and associated commercial uses.

The east side of Main Road, south of Dudley Street and on the west side, south of Bridge Street is zoned Mixed Use Zone, which provides for a wide mix of residential, office and industrial uses. The Bridge Street precinct is included in the Industrial 3 Zone.

#### The Structure Plan

##### ***The Vision for the Eltham Major Activity Centre***

Key themes for the continued roles and form of the Eltham MAC have arisen from consultation with the local community, traders, and Council. These generally complement the analysis of the character of the centre and the key directions of Melbourne 2030 and the Nillumbik Municipal Strategic Statement.

The themes can be expressed as a vision that can guide new land uses, streetscape works, improvements to public transport, community facilities and open space, encourage some development but discourage other development that is inconsistent with

the vision.

This section proposes an overall 20 year vision for the centre. The vision outlines the character and form of the centre at the end of the 20 year period.

The vision is described in greater detail through key objectives that apply throughout the centre. The vision is also given greater detail through the strategies and actions for each of the precincts that comprise the Eltham MAC.

#### The Concept

The concept for the Eltham MAC recognises that the three existing precincts of the centre that are presently viewed as separate are three parts of one whole centre. The core retail area, the town heart, and the Bridge Street industrial areas are not separate areas, but are inter-related parts. The area around the Library is the geographic and iconic heart of the town, which can be linked to the other two areas. The life in the heart needs to be supported and strengthened, and linked much more clearly and strongly to the other two areas

## 04 The Vision for the Centre



Figure 36 - One centre with three parts

### Vision for the Centre

*Eltham MAC will be a focus for community life, and provide a wide range of residences, shopping and professional services, and places to meet and recreate. Residents, workers and visitors will enjoy an attractive, distinctive, indigenous, safe and highly accessible urban environment.*

### Urban Design

The Eltham MAC will be:

- Modest and compact in scale
- Distinct in design, utilising materials and styles reflecting local character and landscape
- Characterised by an extensive native tree canopy
- Visibly connected to the surrounding ridges and tree lines surrounding the town centre
- A celebration of Eltham's art, cultural and historic heritage
- A place that encourages and supports, through high quality urban design, social interaction and community life
- Safe and highly permeable with convenient connections between its precincts
- Recognised for the high quality of design, landscaping and urban amenity
- Recognition for environmentally sustainable and sensitive design
- Extensively landscaped with indigenous vegetation and integrated street furniture
- Developed to create a transition in uses and built form scale between the town centre and the nearby residential precincts
- An entity that is greater than its parts.

### Land-Use

The Eltham MAC will offer a wide range of activities, including:

- Convenient access to daily and weekly shopping
- Access to a modest amount of comparison goods, reflecting Eltham's role as a significant village centre serving its local community
- Leisure and social opportunities that operate day and night, and at weekends
- A wide range of health, family support and professional services accommodated in high quality offices
- Civic and community spaces that enhance community interaction and general health and well-being
- Dwellings and home offices designed to suit one or two person households in mixed-use buildings

### Community Facilities

The Eltham MAC will enhance civic life and identity by:

- Accommodating a wide variety of community functions, performances and events of all sizes in high quality venues, mainly located in the town centre precinct
- Having a range of community meeting spaces to accommodate a wide range of activities and local community groups
- Displaying community art and artefacts in high quality spaces
- Progressively improving the quality of the existing venues and spaces
- Encouraging complementary community groups to share facilities and venues

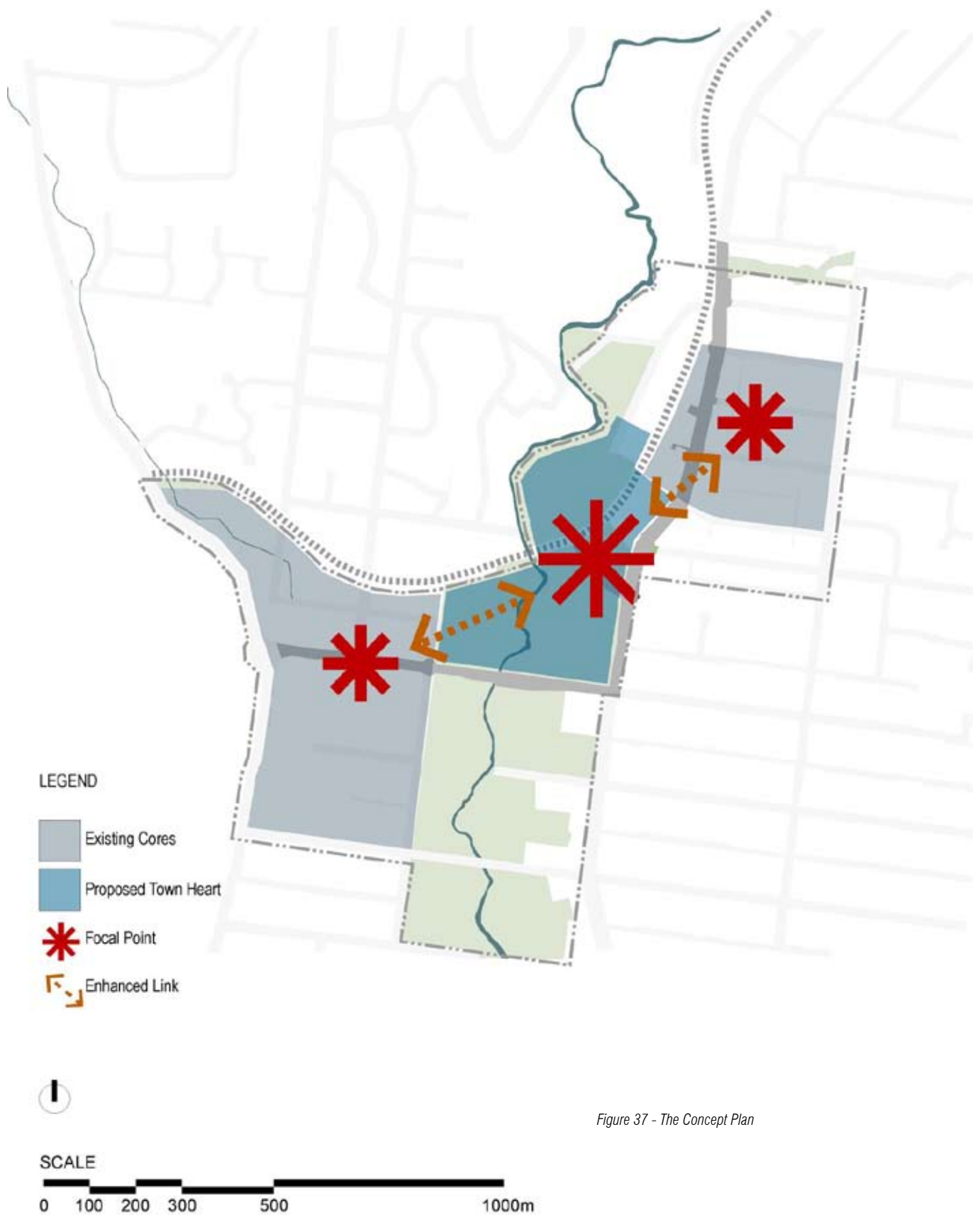


Figure 37 - The Concept Plan

### 04 The Vision for the Centre

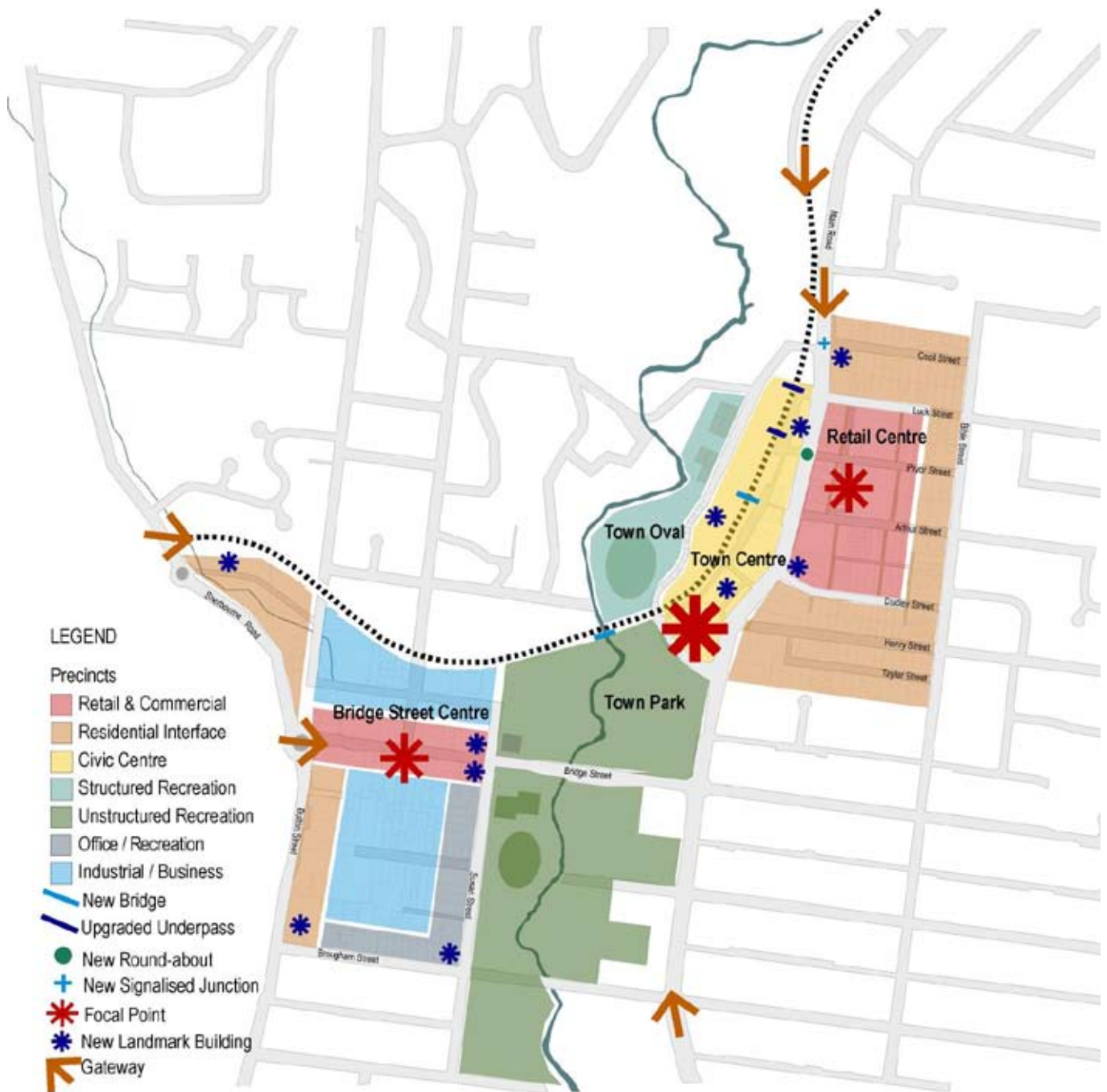
- Enhancing community safety through fostering community uses and surveillance of community spaces and venues
- Providing a range of structured and unstructured open space areas.

#### ***Circulation, Traffic and Parking***

The Eltham MAC will have a transport and circulation network that:

- Enhances convenient access to shopping
- Encourages people to walk and cycle safely and conveniently to, and within the centre
- Balances the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Assists the movement of public transport in the overall traffic patterns
- Enables pedestrians to enjoy convenient and safe crossings of the railway line and Diamond Creek
- Links the local pedestrian and cycle routes to the regional networks
- Provides conveniently located and accessible car parking with a range of time limits.

# Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



SCALE



Figure 38 - The Structure Plan

### 05 Strategic Directions

Eltham is a special place that has a unique character formed by the topography, vegetation, its long association with the arts and a passionate and committed community that keenly values the local area. However, places are not static, and change occurs over time as buildings and landscaping need to be replaced, as new opportunities arise, and as the community changes.

Melbourne 2030 proposes that Melbourne as a whole should not continue to develop in the same way that it has over the past 20 years, and that an increasing proportion of new housing, community facilities and commercial development should be focused around the fixed public transport network. The challenge is to facilitate changes that meet the community needs in ways that also retain and enhance the landscape, built form and features that are valued by the community and that give the place its special character.

The preceding analysis of the centre and the vision provide a sound basis to propose strategies and actions that enable the vision to be implemented. The extensive community input in the various community information sessions and the extensive written submissions also inform the strategies that will implement the vision.

This section integrates the preceding sections of planning policy, community input, and the analysis of the centre to identify the strategies to guide change over the next 20 years.

#### **Urban Design**

Urban design draws together the many elements of place-making to create places of distinct identity.

The preceding analysis and the community comments confirm that the Eltham MAC is a special place for

residents. The landform of the MAC is a valley flanked by two steep hills, both of which are extensively treed. Other key elements such as the Eltham Gateway confirm the perception that Eltham is at the interface of the urban and rural edges of Melbourne, and is neither totally one nor the other, but comprises many of the features of both. It is a built environment in which trees, open space and lifestyle are highly valued and important. The close proximity of the “rural” underpins the preference for earthy colours and materials in buildings and urban places, as a reminder and link to the natural environment that is very nearby. Examples include the Library, and the mud brick buildings created by Alistair Knox.

Eltham is also unique for the important role assigned to artistic and cultural activities and outcomes. Music, art sculpture and crafts are part of the locality and an expression of the community. Eltham is one of the few localities where both music and art have extensive heritage and community support.

The Eltham MAC comprises several different precincts that should be connected to ensure that their differences are subordinate to the features that integrate. The precincts interact, complement and support the others in many different ways. It is therefore important that the precincts are linked together to enable convenient movement and permeability. The Structure Plan proposes improvements to existing, and new pedestrian spaces to enhance the connectivity within the centre.

Many of these spaces will be areas shared with motor vehicles. These areas can be designed to ensure they are low speed zones. Consistent materials will enhance the pedestrian network.



*Figure 39 - Community groups can be encouraged to protect and enhance Eltham's natural environment*



*Figure 40 - Artwork in the urban environment should be encouraged*

## 05 Strategic Directions

These traditions generate several strategic directions that will underpin the Structure Plan.

There is a need to ensure that key gateway and strategically important sites, if developed, attain a built form that reflects an Eltham character and tradition. New development should not replicate and copy existing iconic buildings such as the library, but should respect and draw on the traditions that these buildings express.

The cultural life of Eltham should be celebrated in a variety of ways. Art work can be installed in the parks to enable local residents and visitors to enjoy and appreciate. It would also be a fitting way to express the connection between the urban and rural that is a foundation of the Eltham experience.

The urban design strategies for the Eltham MAC are to:

- Ensure that places for people are safe, comfortable, varied and attractive
- Ensure that people places provide the opportunity for people to meet, have fun and interact with their community
- Encourage distinctive design responses that arise from and complement its settings
- Balance the man made and the natural features of the area
- Encourage a variety of forms and design responses to create stimulating and enjoyable experience
- Encourage flexible design that enables places to adapt to changes in lifestyle, demography and use.

### **Landscape and Open Space**

The community consultation and the analysis indicate that the vegetation within and around the centre is an integral part of its character. For example, people would like to see more indigenous vegetation.

Many of the community comments indicated that the ground level planting could be replaced in some parts of the centre by trees with an extensive canopy. Many regard the low vegetation along Main Road as a safety hazard.

The Gateway and the parks that abut Main Road, south of the Eltham MAC, are a special feature of the centre, and their continued health is highly important. Management practices will need to ensure the continued good health of the existing vegetation through protection from vandalism, continued control of disease, exclusion of vehicles and confining people to dedicated walking paths, and ongoing vigilance about weeds. Reinvigorating the existing tree cover is an important strategy to ensure the long term health of these areas.

Diamond Creek is another crucial landscape element. It creates a north-south linear link through the centre and a link to the regional trail to central Melbourne. While it is highly valued by the community and it is an important feature in the local landscape, it is not the integrating and interesting element that it should be. It is weed infested, difficult to access, and has few crossing points. The pathway that parallels the Creek is generally in poor repair and is secluded and remote from casual surveillance in many places, particularly in Central Park.

The Creek could become an interesting

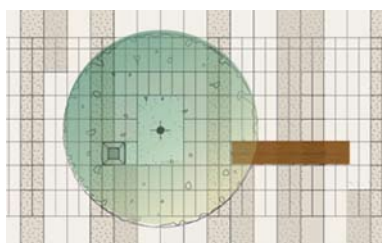


Figure 41 - Contemporary landscape works can define the character of a place and increase the enjoyment of it's users

## 05 Strategic Directions

and exciting place to walk, run and cycle. It could provide a range of recreation opportunities, including short walking and jogging trips around Central Park, medium trips including Alistair Knox Park and Pitt Street Park, and longer trips to Fitzsimons Lane and beyond. The pathways should be safe, capable of being under casual surveillance and provide for walkers and cyclists. An additional creek crossing could be located adjacent to the railway line to provide better linkage with the Bridge Street area.

Alistair Knox Park is another important element in the local environment. It provides structured and unstructured recreation opportunities. The community comments indicate a strong preference for the park to remain unchanged, with improvements to strengthen the existing character and functions. It is desirable that this role continues as it provides the local community with places to spend time alone or with their family and friends. A tranquil park enables people to balance the often hectic demands of family and work, and to replenish their energy and vitality.

A skateboard facility is proposed to be installed near the intersection of Bridge Street and Susan Street. Such a facility is supported provided that it is separated from the tranquil, passive areas of the park. Many recreation studies find that teenagers increasingly favour unstructured recreation activities in preference to the traditional sports that require club membership and team activities. Skate facilities are a positive recreation pursuit but require casual surveillance, high levels of maintenance and shade and water. Removal of the former dwelling on the corner of Susan and Bridge Streets would be desirable to improve surveillance of the skateboard area.

In the long term vision, the Alistair Knox Park will continue to provide passive recreation opportunities, and these should continue to be located on the Main Road frontage. The Park can be made more interesting by upgrading Diamond Creek. Artwork can also be installed in the Park to reflect the importance of the local arts, and to create interest, for example, some sculptures could be located at the corner of Main Road and Bridge Street. The area adjacent to Library Place would continue to be a preferred location for outdoor community events and complement the important role of the Library. The Alistair Knox Park also complements the town hub that is proposed around the Library.

### ***A Centre with a Wider Range of Retailing and Services***

The preceding analysis and community comment indicate that Eltham is primarily used for convenience shopping and professional services, particularly health services, post office and banking. Comparison shopping is limited by the competition from other shopping centres, particularly the larger regional centres. Essential Economics estimate that approximately 65% of the local community's retail expenditure is spent in other centres. If some of this expenditure could occur in Eltham, it could support additional retail floor space. Essential Economics concludes that Eltham could accommodate an additional 7,000 square metres of shops by reducing expenditure in other centres.

Local traders would like additional shops in Eltham to provide a wider range of goods and more choice. An additional anchor store such as a supermarket or discount department store is highly desirable. Many of the community submissions would also like additional shops, but want Eltham



*Figure 42 - Diamond Creek is a natural asset which should be protected and enhanced*



*Figure 43 - The existing cycle/pedestrian path can be further extended to increase connectivity within the MAC*



*Figure 44 - Artwork in Alistair Knox Park is representative of the character of Eltham*

## 05 Strategic Directions



Figure 45 - Contemporary bus and railway interchange which includes an attractive urban plaza



Figure 46 - Boutique retailing



Figure 47 - Friendly, community retailing



Figure 48 - Future office developments should have active edges and include a variety of uses

to continue to be different to the larger regional centres. The local community values the boutique shops that characterise this centre.

Essential Economics also conclude that Eltham has a comparatively low level of offices, and there is the demand for an additional 1,000 to 3,800 square metres in the centre.

Additional shops and offices in Eltham will be a positive outcome for the local and wider community. They can reduce the need for residents to travel to work outside the local areas. They will provide greater choice for retail goods and services. More traders will ensure that prices are competitive, and that service is friendly and helpful. More traders are able to work together to undertake centre wide marketing campaigns. A viable and successful retail sector also generates local jobs and apprenticeships, and provides an important base of support for local community groups. A viable local centre also enhances the quality of life for local residents. People can purchase items in their local centre, meet friends, attend community events and walk, cycle or use public transport to the centre. A viable local centre is in integral part of a sustainable local community.

It is desirable to keep the Eltham retail core as compact as possible. Allowing commercial development to move through to Bible Street, at the crest of a prominent hill would spoil the tree canopy that is one of the valued features of the centre. The Eltham retail core is presently spread out, and contains extensive areas of ground level, informal car parking. New shops should be located on the existing car parks and some other vacant sites generally on Pryor, Arthur and Dudley Streets.

The proposed development will

require additional car parking in the Eltham MAC. The Nillumbik Planning Scheme prescribes rates for car parking requirements as follows:

- Office: 3.5 car spaces to each 100 sq m of net floor area
- Shop: 8 car spaces to each 100 sq m of leasable floor area

Based on the Planning Scheme parking requirements an additional 665 car parking spaces are required to meet the demand associated with the proposed development (assuming that all 10,000 square metres of floor space will be leasable).

The Planning Scheme provides the opportunity for Council to waive or reduce the car parking provision if it can be demonstrated that the reduced provision is justified.

This could be deemed applicable to Eltham MAC. The existing car parking restrictions should reflect the actual demand for parking in the area. Furthermore, the existing on and off-street parking is underutilised.

The opportunity for greater sharing of parking spaces is an important consideration. Different land-uses will have peak parking demands at different times of the day and week, and this provides an opportunity to reduce the overall parking requirement in the centre.

The commercial core is located opposite Eltham railway station and bus interchange. Pedestrian operated signals provide a link between the train station and the core commercial precinct. Whilst existing patronage in the area is reasonable, the opportunity exists to improve usage of public transport through improved pedestrian linkage (for example a pedestrian footbridge) and enhanced facilities at the train and bus stations. An efficient

## 05 Strategic Directions



Figure 49 - Contemporary architecture providing solutions for medium density housing

and user friendly public transport interchange would encourage less reliance on private cars and therefore reduce the demand for parking in the area. A key strategy will be to improve the public transport facilities in the centre.

Finally, it is considered desirable to restrict car parking in the core commercial precinct to enhance the overall amenity of the centre and improve the pedestrian environment.

The Planning Scheme suggests that a Parking Precinct Plan may be introduced to form part of a more general land-use or other strategic plan or policy for a defined area. A holistic approach to car parking needs to be undertaken and a Parking Precinct Plan should be completed to enable the existing car parking provision, future car parking demands and the potential reductions in parking requirements to reflect public transport and the local environment to be considered.

Conservatively a 20% reduction in car parking spaces would not be considered unreasonable with the potential for much higher reductions as great as 60%. This would result in a requirement of somewhere between 270 and 530 additional parking spaces. These could be provided in a combination of ways (but should be considered as part of a wider Parking Precinct Plan) including:

- Spare capacity on-street
- Spare capacity in existing off-street car parks
- New long stay parking facilities for commuters to the west of the railway station with enhanced pedestrian links to Eltham MAC.

Additional decked parking is not considered necessary, however may be appropriate for certain sites with suitable topography.

In order to encourage the growth and development of Eltham MAC, parking in the short-term should remain free. This will maximise the likelihood of attracting development opportunities to the centre.

Paid parking should be viewed as a long term strategy and follows the successful development of the centre.

### ***A More Diverse Housing Stock***

Melbourne 2030 proposes that Major Activity Centres should be regarded as preferred locations for households that do not need a single detached house on a larger lot. The metropolitan strategy recommends that additional medium density housing should be developed in close proximity to public transport, shops and community centres. This will enable more people to walk to work, shops or use public transport, and be more involved in their local community. If more people can live within walking distance to public transport, there will be fewer car trips and Melbourne will be a more sustainable city. The level of medium density housing in a particular place should be consistent with the local character of that area.

This planning approach is supported by Council's planning policies.

The submissions from the community indicate that there is a range of views about additional medium density housing close to the Eltham MAC. Some consider that Eltham already has too much medium density housing, while others consider that there is a need for further housing for smaller households, particularly aged people. Most submitters agree that any new residential development should be low scale, and not intrude onto the treed landscape, particularly close to the Bible Street ridgeline.

Essential Economics estimates that approximately 400 new dwellings

## 05 Strategic Directions

will be required to meet the projected population increase of 965 people. Of these new dwellings, a proportion can be medium density dwellings close to the Eltham MAC. It should be noted that Eltham could accommodate more or fewer households than forecast, depending on land availability and medium density housing policies.

The preferred number of new dwellings that should be accommodated in and around the Eltham MAC will be an outcome of urban design, traffic and land availability considerations.

The area between the commercial core and Bible Street is a popular location for medium density housing. This type of development has taken the form of 2-4 dwellings replacing one single detached dwelling on a single lot. The medium density dwellings are often two storeys to balance occupant demands for 3 bedrooms, private open space and off-street car parking.

The area around the Eltham MAC has a number of older single dwellings on single lots, particularly Henry, Taylor, Cecil and Bible Streets. These lots provide opportunities for additional medium density housing.

Melbourne 2030 suggests that mixed-use buildings which may include offices or shops at street level, and residences, above should be considered. Mixed-use buildings could be located on the western side of Main Road, Youth Road and in Luck Street.

The topography suggests that development close to Bible Street should be no more than two storeys. Medium density development and the rear of mixed-use buildings adjacent to the railway line could be up to 3 or 4 storeys.

Aged person facilities have changed considerably in recent years. The increasingly complex health needs

of aged people and the policy approach that encourages “ageing in place” has resulted in aged persons accommodation providing a mix of high and low care beds and respite care, rather than only one type of care. The facilities are also likely to provide a range of activities and support services. Increasingly, aged accommodation facilities are at least 100 beds in order to efficiently provide the range of care that is demanded.

Taking the general design parameters and the availability of land, Eltham MAC could accommodate in the order of additional 140 to 200 medium density dwellings and 100-150 aged person rooms.

### **The Town Square**

The Town Square is a fundamentally sound idea that has not met its initial expectations. Many of the community submissions, especially from the local businesses would like the Town Square to be made more attractive. Some submissions cited problems with graffiti and anti-social behaviour.

Creating a town hub is an important element in establishing a commercially successful centre which is also an attractive place for people to meet. A successful Town Square should be safe, comfortable in all seasons, and have activities around the square that encourage people to visit and stay. Typically a successful Town Square has cafés and restaurants in, or around its edges and these encourage people to stay and rest, and to casually observe people moving through the square. This approach should be pursued at Eltham and is strongly supported by many submitters.

At present the Town Square is poorly connected to the other parts of the centre. The best connection to Main Road would be through an open air forecourt or plaza that is bordered

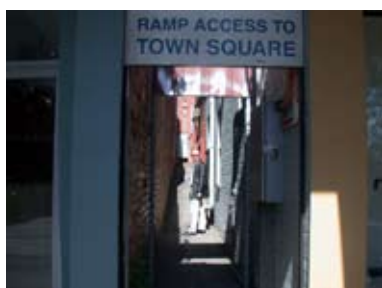


Figure 50 - Access to the Town Square could be improved



Figure 51 - Eltham Town Square



Figure 52 - A vibrant and active café

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Figure 53 - The three distinct components of the Eltham MAC are within a walkable distance



Figure 54 - Existing landmark buildings



Figure 55 - Proposed landmark buildings

by shops and cafés. The links to the other parts of the business centre could be improved through integrated landscaping, lighting and street furniture.

The community submissions indicate a range of views about the two way traffic between the Town Square and the supermarket car park. The existing traffic arrangements emerged from a lengthy consultation process that aimed to meet the needs of local businesses, and the objectives of creating an attractive town square. The analysis of traffic movements around the Eltham MAC indicates that there is considerable north-south movement. It is desirable that this movement continues to be accommodated, and that the centre become as permeable and convenient as possible for both vehicles and pedestrians. This link should be considered as an access way shared by pedestrians and vehicles. It is desirable that the access way be designed to ensure that vehicle speeds are very slow, and that over time the number of vehicles using this route declines.

### Creating a Town Centre

Eltham MAC comprises two separate centres, the core commercial centre, with the associated areas on the west side of Main Road, and the industrial area around Bridge Street. These two areas are separated and disconnected by Alistair Knox Park and various sites including the former Shire Office site, Maternal and Child Health Centre, Pre-School and the Senior Citizen's Centre. The Library is also an important facility located between the two areas.

The core concept of the Eltham MAC vision is to consider all the areas as one integrated activity centre that provides a wide range of opportunities and activities. The "lynch pin" that joins the commercial area and Bridge Street

is the town heart, located generally around the Library.

A town centre is a place that has a range of places and activities that create an identity, that bring people together and that provide services or facilities that are not found elsewhere. It is a place that includes buildings and places that are iconic, in that they reflect the special characteristics of the locality. These buildings and places do not need to be in public ownership, but should invite public access, and be a source of local pride. The town centre should also be a place that facilitates connectivity from one part of the wider centre to another.

The area between the Library and the Post Office should become the recognised town centre of the Eltham MAC, comprising a range of community uses, commercial businesses and residential activities that together can create the centre of Eltham.

Alistair Knox Park will be upgraded to create a new town park which supports the notion of creating a town centre focused on the area around the Eltham Library. It is recommended that a masterplan and management plan be carried out with the view of upgrading the park while retaining its present character. Revegetation works along Diamond Creek should be carried out in stages, with the first stage being carried out in the vicinity of Alistair Knox Park.

Comments received from the community advocate that sites such as the former Shire Office site, the Senior Citizen's Centre, the Memorial Hall site and the pre schools and Maternal and Child Health Centre should remain in public ownership, and continue to be used.

A different town centre can be imagined. The preferred range of

### 05 Strategic Directions



Figure 56 - Examples of contemporary architectural and landscape design which is in keeping with the character of Eltham

uses that would be appropriate in this new town centre are medium density residential, commercial offices, health services, and restaurants.

The Library is its focal point. As such, its significance could be increased by it becoming a learning resource for many in the community. This approach makes use of the Library basement, and encourages synergies and sharing of resources between the Living and Learning Centre and the Library. It also encourages the current Living and Learning Centre to focus on the activities for which it is best suited, such as arts, crafts and social interaction.

The former Shire Office site is suitable for an iconic building that uses form and materials to reflect the unique Eltham character. The building does not need to be a public building for it to be iconic, as many of the architecturally important buildings in Eltham are privately owned.

Many submissions advocate that the site should remain undeveloped and in public ownership, even if no obvious use can be identified. However, if the site remains undeveloped it will detract from the efforts to consolidate a mix of uses that can create a sense of place.

This and other studies have been unable to identify a public use for this site. Council has previously considered the development of a performing arts centre or cultural facility, but decided not to proceed due to the capital and recurrent costs. Other public uses suggested for the site can be, or are currently being provided elsewhere in the centre, in ways that make better use of Council resources. For example, tourist information is available from the restaurant in the Library building and this activity could be enhanced if appropriate.

It is considered more important for Eltham to achieve a high quality building than to retain it in public ownership for an unidentified future purpose. To facilitate the development of this key site, and to ensure suitable outcomes, Council may wish to undertake an expression of interest process that requires interested parties to indicate how they will achieve the best design outcomes for the site.

A sporting club and community facility has been also suggested for the former Shire Office site. It is considered that this facility is better located at Eltham Central Park given that it is remote from residential areas, has adequate car parking, and provides opportunities to watch and participate in the sports on the oval.

The Eltham Community and Reception Centre has limitations, and there is some community concern to extend the building to provide a hall for larger community events. The preceding analysis and community comment has also highlighted the need for Eltham to have dedicated and quality spaces to display and teach art and music. A preferred approach is to develop a partnership with Eltham High School to develop a venue for large community events, and encourage the Community and Reception Centre to focus on art and music programs.

#### **Youth Road and Eltham Central Park**

Youth Road and Eltham Central Park are strategically important opportunities to enhance the overall centre. Presently these areas are remote, unsafe and underutilised. Through positive urban design measures they can be transformed into lively places that enhance community life and activity.

Youth Road is presently an unattractive environment that contains four

## 05 Strategic Directions

significant community facilities, and land that is largely forgotten. Its location adjacent to the railway station and bus interchange, and next to the parkland and Diamond Creek create many possibilities. The area adjacent to the station, opposite the tennis courts, would be an excellent location for medium density housing. People could have easy access to the trains and buses, as well as the shops and services. The current single purpose facilities can be replaced with multi-purpose facilities that provide benefits to their users. These benefits can include sharing some of the operating expenses, access to more modern facilities, opportunities to combine activities with other community groups, and improved opportunities for major funding grants that often favour multiple applicants.

The relocation of the Senior Citizen's Club to Youth Road is one option for this group as they will be located closer to the centre via a proposed pedestrian path over the railway station. Access and car parking will be easier than the current site, and they will enjoy a more modern facility.

It has been suggested that to connect Panther Place to Youth Road may encourage a certain amount of additional traffic to use this alternative to Main Road, west of the railway line. However, this increased level of accessibility will more than likely improve the amenity of the area for younger or aged persons by an increased level of activity and passive surveillance. Improved accessibility to the sporting arena must result in a greater sense of awareness of the underdeveloped part of Eltham thereby attracting private investment, greater all day use and improved Council attention and ultimately upgrading.

The recommendation is therefore

to provide the connection between Panther Place and Youth Road, but restrict the speed limit, curtail the lines of sight for drivers, introduce a number of twists and turns and generally suppress the attractiveness of this route for through traffic. As a strategy, southbound movements will be relatively unrestricted as compared to northbound movements which will be discouraged in an attempt to limit rat running through to Diamond Street in the evening peak to avoid Main Road traffic.

A significant amount of informal parking occurs along Youth Road during the day. It is recommended that the parking be formalised with the use of angled or 90 degree parking. This will lead to a large amount of additional parking by being available for use by the current patrons in the area, new commuters, shoppers and staff who currently park behind the Coles shopping centre.

Further, this will enable the existing commuter car parks between Main Road and the station to become redevelopment sites for offices, further strengthening the employment base of the centre, and the use of public transport.

On-site observations suggest that up to 30 cars regularly park on the verges and along the unmade road edge of Youth Road. Formalising this car park with 90 degree parking along the eastern edge (railway side) would create parking for up to 90 car spaces, ie, an additional 40 spaces. Parking along the western edge next to the tennis court will remain for use by patrons of the recreational facilities.

Central Park can also be transformed from a remote and inaccessible area to an active part of the Eltham MAC. A number of community submissions oppose the relocation of the RSL to



Figure 57 - Eltham gateway

### 05 Strategic Directions

Central Park, primarily on the basis that a commercial club should not be located on public land.

The development of an integrated sporting club, supported by catering and meeting facilities strengthens the whole centre by providing jobs, entertainment and meeting places. Importantly the RSL can potentially contribute capital funds that can enable new facilities to be developed for the wider community, which will enjoy enhanced access and use of this area.

#### **Eltham Gateway**

The Eltham Gateway, located on Main Road between the retail centre and Fitzsimons Lane, is a unique local environment. Main Road is two lanes in this section and winds through an area of indigenous and exotic vegetation that reminds the traveller that Eltham is a transition area between metropolitan Melbourne and its rural hinterland. Private properties have frontages to Main Road, and these were originally developed as residences. Over the years, many of these properties have been converted or redeveloped for a range of commercial use, including commercial offices, consulting suites, and reception places. The inclusion of the land in the Mixed Use Zone under the Nillumbik Planning Scheme indicates that the preferred use of the area is for a mix of residential and compatible commercial activities.

The intrusion of commercial activities into the Gateway is not consistent with the long term vision for Eltham. Commercial uses in this area introduce advertising signs and clients who need short-term car parking and disrupt the traffic as they leave or re-enter Main Road. Such commercial activity undermines the sense of tranquillity that should characterise this area.

The preferred strategic direction for

the Eltham Gateway for it to gradually revert to residential uses. The Structure Plan can provide more opportunities for offices and other commercial uses to locate in the Eltham MAC, which should reduce the need for commercial uses to locate in the Gateway.

#### **Traffic Management and Parking Issues**

The traffic analysis and community feedback have indicated that there is a range of concerns with the current arrangements, and that some new strategic directions are appropriate.

The analysis indicates that there is considerable vehicle movement around the centre, and that Main Road, Bible Street and Commercial Place are being used as the primary north-south roads. Anti-clockwise lapping around the town centre causes problems for through traffic on Main Road. The problems on Main Road are compounded by the poor intersection arrangements, particularly at Diamond Street, Luck Street and Arthur Street.

An assessment of the current parking area layout based on the informal layout adopted by users of the vacant land suggests that the area between Arthur and Dudley Streets can accommodate up to 200 car spaces.

Observations of usage indicate that the area is typically used by up to 100 vehicles.

An assessment of the available road edge to accommodate parking along the proposed length of the circulatory road between Dudley, Arthur and Pryor streets suggests that up to 100 cars can be accommodated along the length if need be. An additional 30 car spaces can be provided on the road reserve.

The introduction of the Town Square has caused problems with circulation within Commercial Place, and many motorists use the decked Safeway car park as an alternate route.



Figure 58 – Shared pedestrian and vehicles

## 05 Strategic Directions

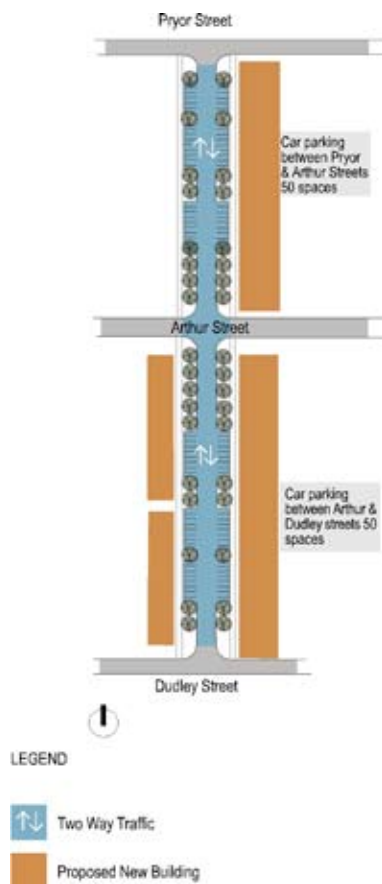


Figure 59 - Proposed Internal Link Road

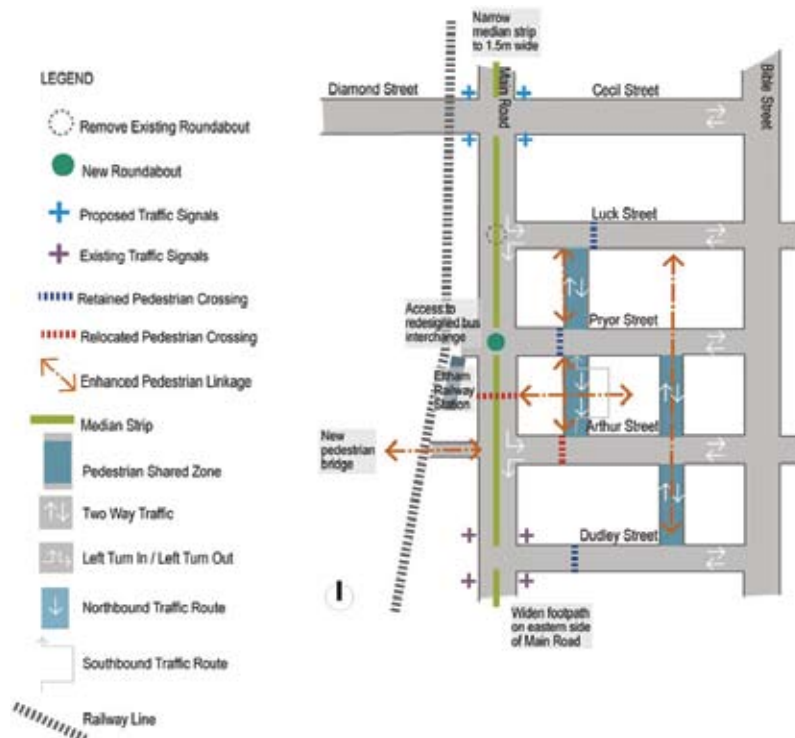


Figure 60 - Proposed traffic plan

It is desirable that a strategic approach be taken to traffic management in the centre. Alternate traffic arrangements should aim to improve the safety and functioning of Main Road for through traffic, and local traffic. New intersection treatments should be implemented to create gaps or traffic shadows to enable the other intersections to operate more effectively.

Two parking bays are currently located dangerously close to the corner of Dudley Street and Main Road. This has the effect of restricting the free flow of traffic up Dudley Street and can at times screen pedestrians and make them difficult for motorists to see. The recommendation is that opportunities to recess these parking bays into the footway or relocate the bays higher up the road should be investigated.

There is a regional transport study underway to address issues of traffic congestion. The proposed traffic treatments will provide a more effective flow through the centre. Changes to the regional road network are beyond scope of this Plan.

A number of alternate treatments have been considered and it is proposed that Main Road be modified as follows:

- Cecil/ Diamond  
Signalised intersection
- Luck Street  
Remove roundabout and allow only left in and left out turns
- Pryor Street  
Install new roundabout, including new access point to station/bus interchange
- Arthur Street  
Left in and left out only
- Dudley Street  
Unchanged

An example of this is the pedestrian crossing that currently exists opposite the Post Office which will be relocated further south to provide a safer clear distance from the new roundabout at Pryor Street. AustRoads guidelines suggest that this needs to be located at least 30-35metres away from the roundabout to ensure sufficient Stopping Sight Distance for motorists.

## 05 Strategic Directions



Figure 61 - Eltham industrial precinct



Figure 62 - Contemporary architecture with significant landscape component

The potential for higher exit speeds may need to be checked on site before agreeing to the exact location.

Pool fencing will need to be provided along the road edge either side of the approaches to channel pedestrians towards the new crossing point and restricting jay walking within the immediate vicinity of the roundabout. Signal phasing needs to be checked and optimised when the new arrangements are put into place.

The benefits of this proposal are that it enables the creation of a northern entry statement and a focus for the town. The roundabout will also compensate for the removal of some of the right turn manoeuvres. Other benefits of these arrangements include improved access and circulation through limiting turns at certain intersections. It also goes some way to address some of the accident problems identified through the analysis.

The costs of the proposals are dependent on a number of factors some of which are unknown at present. As a result, this can only be established through further detailed design and discussions with the relevant authorities.

The Eltham MAC provides a number of opportunities for people to circulate between north and south areas without needing to use Main Road. They use Bible Street or weave their way through the town centre via Commercial Place and the various car parks.

The results of the OD survey undertaken in December 2003 suggest that there is a significant need to provide for greater north-south permeability of both traffic and pedestrians through Eltham. Indications are that this can be provided by the provision of a new link between Dudley, Arthur and Pryor streets along the alignment of the land set aside for the circulatory road. This area is

currently used as staff car parking. It is recommended that a new two-way, two-lane connection be introduced as a low speed pedestrian shared use environment/connection. This will be treated with trees and vegetation and have a cobbled or brick paved surface and be bordered by angled or 90 degree parking along one or both sides for some length.

A connection from Pryor Street through to Luck Street is not required in terms of the proposal as moving the roundabout from Luck Street to Pryor Street will shift the emphasis from Luck Street as the main northerly exit from the town centre area.

It is desirable to facilitate opportunities for people to travel between the northern and southern parts of the centre via shared zones that are low speed areas that are safe for pedestrians and vehicles

Removing the one-way restrictions on Luck and Pryor Streets will also improve the internal circulation.

Realigning the existing link between Luck and Pryor Streets to run parallel and adjacent to the car parking spaces along the back wall of the Bunnings store will also improve the permeability in the centre. This realignment will have several benefits including opening up the space in Commercial Place outside the café area and aligning the road with the existing access between Pryor and Arthur Streets. The parking along the back of the Bunnings store may also be extended along the length of the link.

Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the provision of parking that supports the smaller retailers and businesses along Main Road. This parking has been somewhat lost by the

### 05 Strategic Directions

provision of a large Safeway car park and Coles underground parking areas. The amphitheatre and the vegetation within the Town Square screens the front of the shops. The alternative layout provided changes the emphasis of the car park from supporting the large retail complex to apportioning the parking to meet both the short-term and long term needs of the town.

No significant geometric change is proposed to Commercial Place between Pryor and Arthur Streets.

As part of the changes proposed to the Town Square and Commercial Place, it is recommended that the direction of traffic flow through the Town Square be reversed and signed as north-to-south. This will lead to an improved circulation of traffic within the town as vehicles “lap” around the internal street block making safer and easier left-hand turns at each corner intersection. South to north movement through Commercial Place is still possible, but this will need to be via a more convoluted route through the underground car park if absolutely necessary.

#### ***Industrial and Bulky Goods Retailing in Bridge Street***

The Bridge Street industrial area is an important part of the wider Eltham MAC, and has many opportunities to be a focal point for new investment and employment.

Council policy and planning controls have designated this area primarily for industrial activities. The community feedback indicates a range of views about the transition of some of this area to peripheral sales. In the analysis of the centre, Essential Economics indicates that a modification of this

approach may generate more benefits than the current policy position. The Bridge Street area should be considered as mainly an employment precinct. Industrial businesses generate the lowest rate of jobs per unit of floor space when compared to other commercial activities. For every job generated in industrial activity, a shop creates 5 jobs, and a showroom creates 3 jobs. An office creates 12 jobs for the same area of floor space.

Eltham should continue to have access to light industrial businesses, and parts of the Bridge Street precinct should continue to be reserved for these businesses. However there are community benefits from concentrating peripheral sales to the Bridge Street area. Redevelopment of the older industrial premises on Bridge Street will create a new and attractive secondary gateway to the Eltham MAC. The sites in the industrial area are larger than in the retail core, and Eltham residents will enjoy convenient access to a wider range of household goods rather than travelling to Doncaster or Greensborough.

#### ***Bolton, Brougham and Susan Street interface***

These areas abut residential and open space uses, and should be considered differently to the central industrial areas in the Bridge Street precinct. Strategically they are an interface between sensitive residential uses and industrial uses, and alternative uses should be considered. Possible uses include small commercial offices, health and fitness centres, indoor sports and recreation centres, particularly on Susan Street. These facilities can develop links with the park, as well as

## 05 Strategic Directions

the nearby fitness and leisure centre.

Brougham Street is a narrow residential street, and the preferred uses should include small-scale offices for businesses that do not need a location in the main commercial centre. The benefits of uses other than industrial in these areas are that the employment opportunities in the Eltham MAC are broadened, the adjoining residential uses enjoy better amenity, and Nillumbik residents can access a wider range of facilities and services than are presently available.

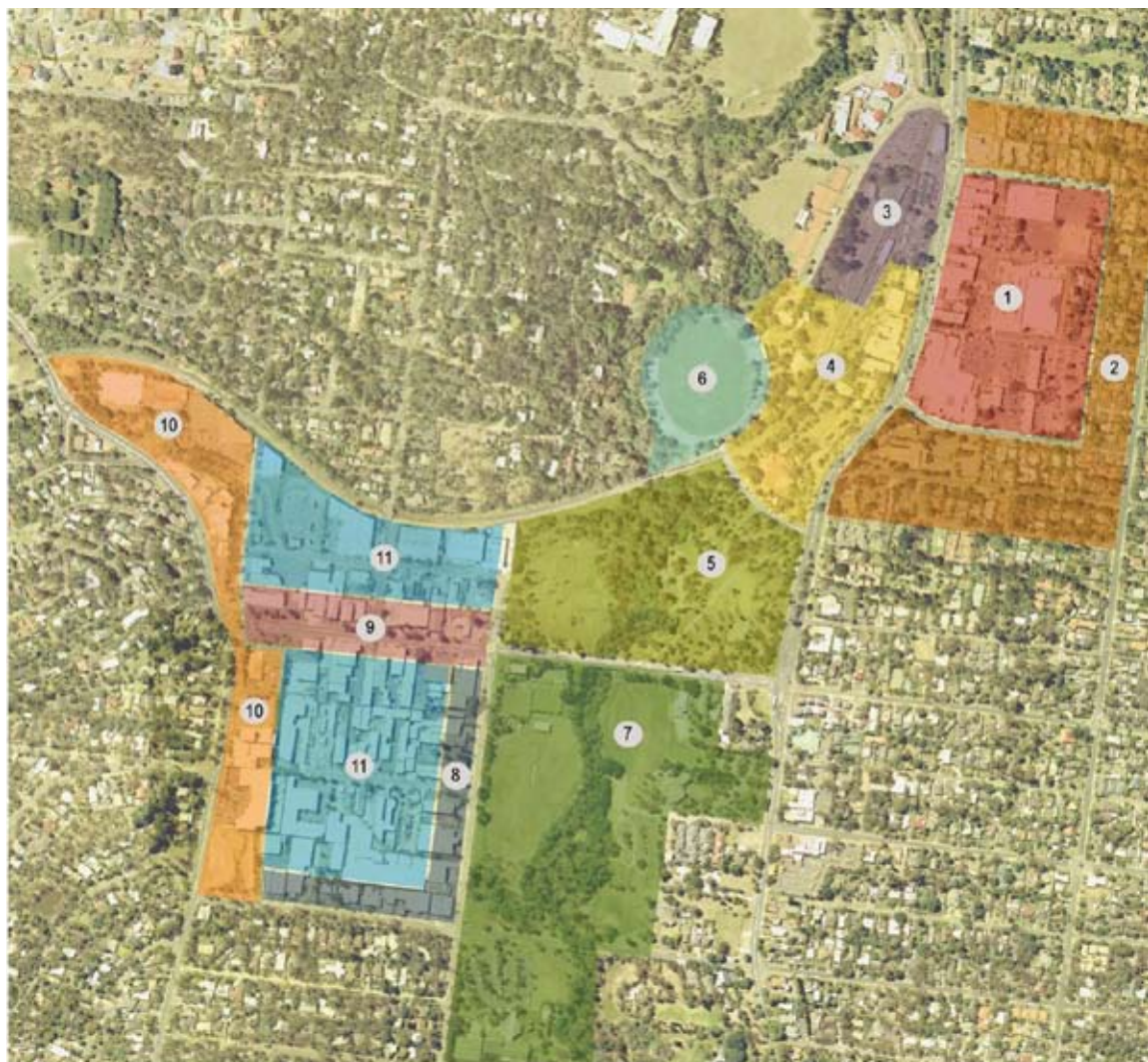
### Conclusion

The Eltham MAC has a distinct character that is derived from its topography, community and culture. Planning policy, demographic change and the need for clear directions to guide Council's decisions indicate that new opportunities are possible to create a vibrant, interesting and sustainable Activity Centre that is faithful to its legacies, but open to new possibilities. The key strategic directions set out in this section are elaborated in the next section that sets out proposed strategies and actions.

## 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

### Precinct Plans

The Eltham Major Activity Centre comprises several different areas that have their distinct character. Importantly, each precinct will play different roles in achieving the overall vision for the Centre. The emphasis and mix of strategies and actions will vary in different precincts, reflecting their varying character, existing built form and land-uses, and opportunities for improvement.



#### LEGEND

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #e67e82; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 1. Commercial Core       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #76a5af; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 7. Pitt St Parkland                 |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #d9b48f; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 2. Residential Interface | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #5f738d; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 8. Office / Recreation              |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #a699c1; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 3. Transport             | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #e699b2; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 9. Peripheral Sales                 |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #f1d78d; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 4. Town Centre           | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #f1a35d; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 10. Sherbourne Road / Bolton Street |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #b2c48d; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 5. Town Park             | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #5fb3d9; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 11. Industrial Core                 |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #82c9c1; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> 6. Sporting Oval         |  |

Figure 63 - Precinct Plan

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### Precinct 1 - Commercial Core



This precinct is bounded by Main Road, Dudley Street and Luck Street, and generally 100 metres west of Bible Street.

#### ***Current Role of Precinct***

This precinct is currently the preferred location for convenience and comparison shopping, and some professional services. Two major supermarkets, a Dan Murphy's, a Bunnings and Liquorland store, and a wide range of smaller specialty shops anchor the retail role. The precinct includes the Town Square that provides a resting place for workers and shoppers. The precinct includes dispersed car parking and a complex local circulation road network. There are opportunities to increase the retail and office floor space and to simplify the internal circulation. The Town Square can be upgraded, and its pedestrian connections to the remainder of the centre improved.

#### ***Precinct Objective***

To provide in a safe, attractive and convenient centre a range of retail outlets to meet most of the daily and weekly convenience shopping needs, and some of the comparison needs of the Eltham community.

#### ***Strategies and Actions***

##### **Theme: LAND-USE**

##### ***Strategies***

*Create the opportunities through the centre for mixed-use (residential and office) developments.*

##### **Actions**

- Encourage mixed-use residential and office buildings in Luck and Dudley Streets
- Encourage new office development in the eastern part of the precinct between Arthur and Dudley Streets, and in Luck Street
- Encourage new retail development in Pryor Street and Commercial Place, Arthur Street and Dudley Street
- Encourage an outdoor café in the areas adjacent to the Town Square
- Encourage Coles supermarket to improve the Main Street façade through articulation, inclusion of windows, entries, verandahs and retail activity and displays
- Encourage active frontages to east-west streets by encouraging small shops and offices at ground level.

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

##### Strategies

*Improve access to Council services and information.*

##### Actions

- ← Continue to monitor community needs for a Council service facility in Eltham.

#### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

##### Strategies

*Improve the operation and safety of Main Road.*

*Improve traffic circulation around the centre.*

*Enhance pedestrian circulation within the centre.*

*Improve car parking arrangements in the centre.*

##### Actions

- Limit vegetation in the Main Road central median to shrubs less than 1 metre high and canopy trees, to maintain visibility for drivers and pedestrians
- Install traffic signals at Main Road, Cecil Street and Diamond Street intersection, including pedestrian phase
- Remove the traffic roundabout at Main Road and Luck Street
- Install a traffic roundabout at Main Road and Pryor Street
- Retain the traffic signals at Main Road and Dudley Street
- Restrict traffic movements at the intersections of Luck and Arthur Streets at Main Road to left in and left out only
- Construct a circulatory/access road as a single lane, 2-way road between Dudley Street and Pryor Street, with kerbside parking and appropriate landscaping
- Enhance north-south circulation by reversing the direction of Commercial Place
- Reduce the number of car parking exit points from Bunnings to Pryor Street and Commercial Place
- Continue to allow one-way traffic movements through the Town Square, pending review following construction of the circulatory/access road between Arthur and Pryor Streets
- Allow 2-way traffic on Luck and Pryor Streets
- Enhance pedestrian links between Dudley and Arthur Streets, and Pryor and Luck Streets
- Create a new link between Pryor and Dudley Streets
- Relocate the pedestrian lights further south on Main Road to create a safer link between the station and the Town Square if warranted for safety reasons by Pryor Street intersection works
- Relocate the pedestrian crossing in Arthur Street further eastwards to provide a better link between car parks and supermarkets if warranted following Arthur Street/Main Road intersection works (which should reduce traffic congestion and pedestrian risks)
- Investigate restricting car access to the bottle shop on Main Street and Pryor Street to evenings and weekends
- Remove or ease the parking limits on Dudley Street
- Develop a Parking Precinct Plan.

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### **Theme: URBAN DESIGN**

##### **Strategies**

*Improve the appearance and functionality of the Town Square as a meeting place.*

*Improve the quality of the built environment throughout.*

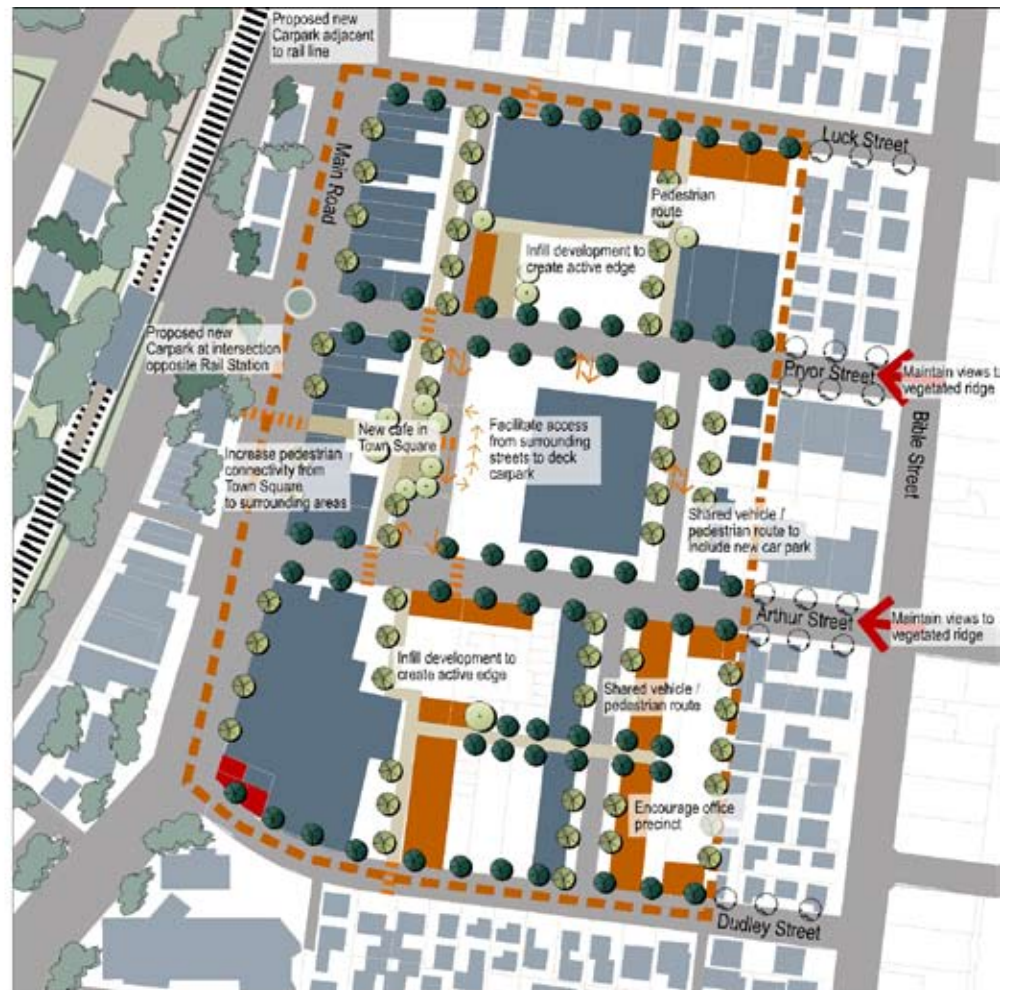
*Facilitate a more consistent appearance throughout the centre that reflects the Eltham character.*

*Enhance the gateways to the centre.*

##### **Actions**

- Prepare a concept plan to replace the existing water feature with an outdoor cafe
- Encourage businesses that will contribute to a vibrant, and active Town Square to locate to the shops adjacent to the Town Square
- Create a new pedestrian link between the Square and Main Road by converting one of the retail premises fronting Main Road into an open plaza
- Implement urban design guidelines in Appendix E
- Ensure that development is generally no more than 2 storeys at the northern-eastern end of the precinct, and no more than 3 storeys on Main Road, or between Dudley Street and Arthur Street (as per existing adjacent buildings)
- Plant indigenous trees throughout
- Provide additional shade trees in car parks
- Encourage well designed, site responsive, contemporary architecture
- Encourage the development of a landmark building on the corner of Main Road and Dudley Street

# Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



## LEGEND

-  Enhance street tree planting
-  Retain existing vegetation
-  Urban open space & enhanced pedestrian linkages
-  New landmark building with commercial function
-  New building
-  Significant views
-  Proposed Traffic Flow
-  Pedestrian Crossing

## COMMERCIAL CORE

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 2 - Residential Interface

The area lies between the linear park to the rear of properties facing Cecil Street, and properties facing Taylor Street and Dudley Street, and generally within 100 metres of the west side of Bible Street. The area has experienced some redevelopment for smaller scale medium density residential development, primarily the replacement of a single detached house with 2-4 smaller dwellings. Some medical consulting rooms have established on Bible Street and along Luck Street. The area close to Bible Street is close to the crest of a ridgeline, and development should be relatively low rise.

#### Role of Precinct

This is a transition area between the retail core and the residential areas to the east, south and north of the centre. The area should provide opportunities for more medium density housing, including aged housing, and include some opportunities for small professional offices.

#### Precinct Objective

To provide opportunities for medium density housing and small professional suites in close walking distance to the Eltham MAC.

#### Strategies and Actions

##### Theme: LAND-USE

##### Strategies

*Encourage medium density housing development and small professional consulting premises and home offices in the area.*

##### Actions

- Encourage mixed residential and small office development on the north side of Luck Street
- Encourage medium density housing between Cecil and Dudley Streets generally within 100 metres of Bible Street.
- Rezone the area to Mixed Use Zone, with the exception of properties fronting Taylor, Henry and Cecil Streets which should retain the Residential 1 Zone. Prepare policy and/or DDO to provide incentives for higher quality medium density housing on larger sites, including fast tracking planning applications. Explore the potential use of a restructure overlay to achieve high quality design and maximises the efficient development of medium density housing in the Residential 1 Zone in this precinct.

## 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

#### Strategies

N/A

#### Actions

N/A

### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

#### Strategies

*Improve the operation and safety of Main Road.*

#### Actions

- Install new traffic signals at the intersection of Main Road, Cecil Street and Diamond Street
- Remove the traffic roundabout at Main Road and Luck Street
- Designate Bible Street as a key part of the centre's local circulation road network
- Retain the traffic signals at Main Road and Dudley Street
- Remove car parking restrictions in Dudley Street
- Allow reduced car parking provision for smaller scale medium density dwelling units close to the retail centre and the railway station

### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

#### Strategies

*Ensure that the built form provides a transition between the core commercial area and the adjoining residential areas.*

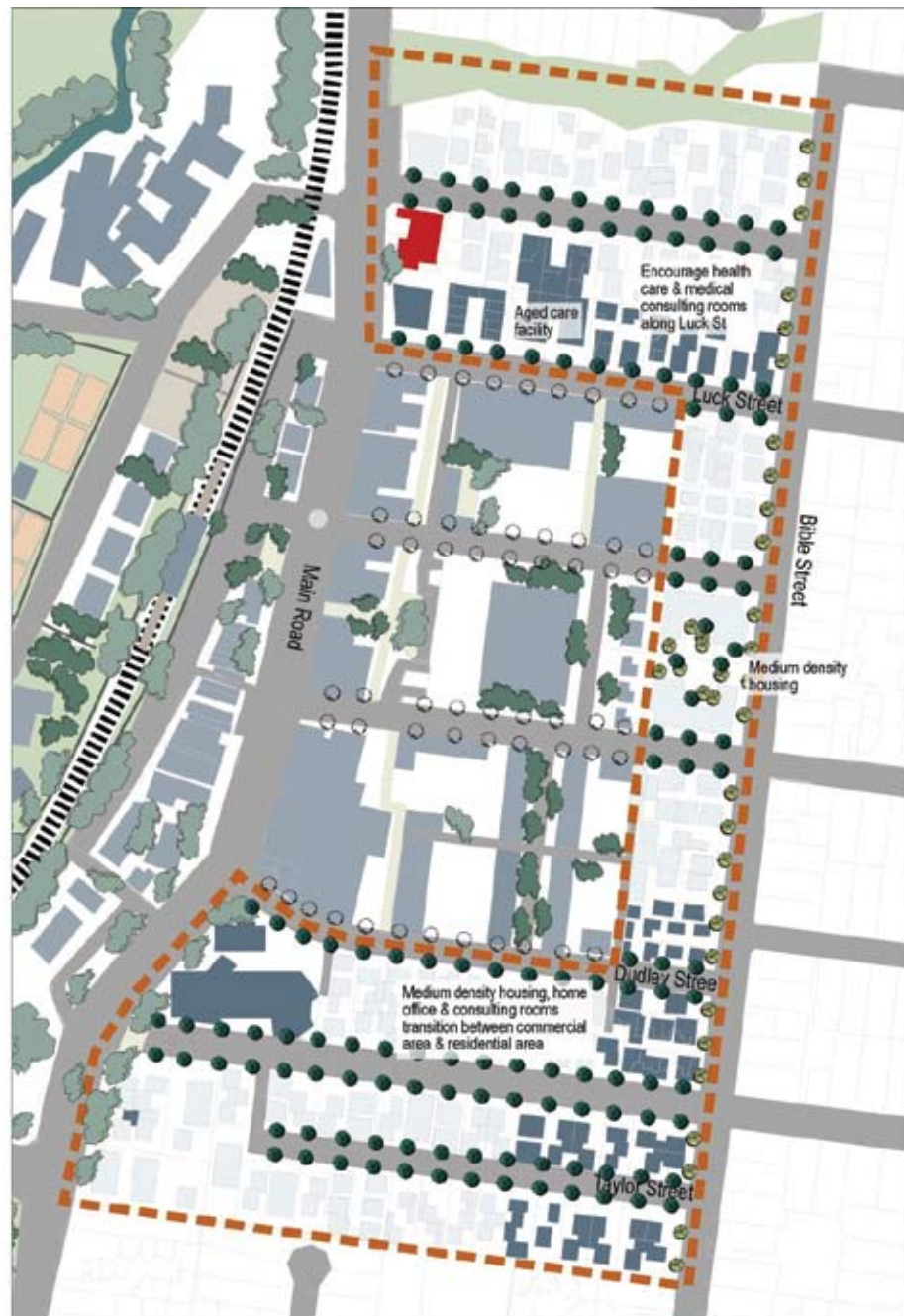
*Ensure that the built form does not block views of the ridgelines surrounding the MAC.*

*Enhance the gateways to the centre.*

#### Actions

- Encourage development to be generally 2 storeys adjacent to Bible Street, and 3 storeys adjacent to Main Road
- Implement the urban design guidelines in Appendix E
- Plant indigenous trees where possible
- Implement planning controls that provide incentives to consolidate residential lots for well designed integrated residential developments. These may include DDO's and Restructure Overlay Controls
- Encourage the development of a landmark building on the corner of Main Road and Cecil Street.

# Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



## LEGEND



Enhance street tree planting



Possible medium density housing, home office & small consulting rooms



New landmark building with commercial function

## RESIDENTIAL INTERFACE

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 3 - Transport

This precinct includes the area between Main Street, Youth Road, Diamond Street and the bus interchange/railway station. The precinct includes the railway station, bus stops, commuter car parking and a retail shop. Access arrangements to the station area can be improved, particularly to assist buses leaving the terminal. The traffic roundabout at Main Road and Luck Street creates major traffic problems. The commuter car parks fronting Main Road are an opportunity to attract development that will create a more attractive frontage to Main Road, and accommodate more people close to the railway station and bus services. The residual land between Youth Road and the railway station also creates opportunities to formalise the commuter car parking and to develop medium density housing.

#### Role of Precinct

The precinct can be improved to encourage increased use of public transport services by encouraging more people to live or work close to transport services.

#### Precinct Objective

To enhance access to, and use of, public transport services, and to create a more attractive frontage to Main Road.

#### Strategies and Actions

##### Theme: LAND-USE

##### Strategies

*Create opportunities through the centre for mixed-use (residential, retail and office) developments.*

##### Actions

- Offer the commuter car parks area as key commercial development sites subject to bus access requirements at the modal interchange
- Encourage the development of medium density housing on the east side of Youth Road in the order of 3 storeys with reduced car parking requirements for smaller units
- Rezone part of Youth Road to Residential and a DDO to guide outcomes for building bulk, heights and access points.

##### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

##### Strategies

*Encourage service organisations to consider more consolidated facilities that meet their needs.*

##### Actions

- Continue to work with Youth Road community groups to explore the scope to relocate to a new multi-purpose centre in Youth Road (Southern end)
- Improve access to the Diamond Creek parkland by relocating one tennis court to create a forecourt and access way adjacent to the tennis clubrooms.

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

##### **Strategies**

*Support the use of and operation of public transport services.*

##### **Actions**

- Construct another pedestrian crossing through the centre of the station connecting Youth Road to Main Street
- Improve access into the station car park through a new entry/exit at Main Road and Pryor Street subject to detailed design and consultation with VicRoads
- Encourage buses to egress the station area via a new roundabout at Main Road and Pryor Street subject to detailed design and consultation with VicRoads
- Install speed control devices in the area at the rear of the shops and adjacent to the railway line to slow traffic and give priority to pedestrian movements.
- Formalise the commuter car parking along Youth Road, including 90 or 60 degree parking
- Widen St Laurence Lane, and construct an elevated footbridge over the station to Youth Road
- Improve the existing pedestrian underpasses by widening, and opening to natural light wherever possible
- Retain and improve the links between Main Road and the car parks adjacent to the railway line, south of the station

#### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

##### **Strategies**

*Substantially enhance landscape and treatment along the railway line.*

*Improve accessibility for all people.*

*Upgrade the quality of the built environment.*

##### **Actions**

- Redesign the frontage to the station and bus area, and around the Post Office to create a more attractive and functional civic space
- Upgrade the bus stops to create an attractive civic plaza
- Activate the station area by developing additional shops along Main Road subject to detailed design and consultation with VicRoads and bus operators
- Refurbish and maintain the station area, including management of graffiti, cleanliness and rubbish removal
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E
- Plant indigenous trees where possible
- Formalise the pedestrian access through the informal car park between the Library and station, adjacent to the railway line.

## Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



LEGEND

## TRANSPORT



### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 4 - Town Centre

This precinct includes the area generally bounded by Main Road, the southern end of Youth Road, Panther Place, and the Post Office.

#### Role of Precinct

This precinct is the central heart of Eltham where people celebrate their local community and artistic spirit, and access a range of health and professional services. The Library and its associated facilities is the key iconic building. It is also the precinct that culturally and physically links the other parts of the Eltham MAC. The precinct should comprise a range of community and commercial activities that will attract people and provide opportunities to access services and participate in events and activities. The precinct includes sites and buildings that are underused, and that provide opportunities to attract new facilities that can accommodate events and activities. Planning controls for this precinct should demand iconic and high quality development. The slope of the area provides the opportunity to have mixed-use buildings in which commercial or community activities can front to Main Road, and residences in the same building can face over the railway line to Diamond Creek.

The precinct also includes an area west of the railway line. Part of the area is subject to flooding which limits the opportunities for additional facilities. It is relatively isolated from residential uses and hence can accommodate some community activities that will benefit by some separation from sensitive uses.

#### Precinct Objective

To create an active, vibrant heart for the Eltham MAC by providing a range of community, residential and professional services.

#### Strategies and Actions

##### Theme: LAND-USE

##### Strategies

*Enable community activities and events to be held in an attractive and treed landscape.*

##### Actions

- Facilitate the redevelopment of existing buildings for retail or small professional businesses on the ground floor facing Main Road and residential dwellings above and to the rear facing Diamond Creek
- Retain the Shire-owned sites between the Library and the CFA in Council ownership for public use by, or on behalf of, local government. To provide for the recommended land use, rezone the sites from the Business 2 Zone to the Public Use Zone: Schedule 6 - Local Government.

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

##### **Strategies**

*Facilitate and support community life and individual growth and well being*

##### **Actions**

- Investigate options to relocate the Senior Citizen's to possibly Youth Road or redevelop their current site, to achieve the principles of improved site accessibility, proximity to other key services and the utility/functionality of the facility for users. Also consider the option of locating this facility in the CFA building following CFA relocation in the long term
- Continue to work with Youth Road community groups to explore the scope to relocate to a new multi-purpose centre in Youth Road (southern end)
- Encourage and support the relocation of the CFA to another site outside the Eltham MAC
- Develop the Library basement for youth internet café, and/or community meeting spaces.

#### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

##### **Strategies**

*Improve pedestrian and vehicle circulation within the precinct, and its connections to other precincts.*

##### **Actions**

- In designing new buildings between Youth Road and Central Oval, provide sufficient width (6-7 metres) to allow for a road, but initially develop for pedestrian access only. Only consider one-way, north to south, vehicle connection if required in long-term
- Improve pedestrian access between the retail core and this precinct
- Construct a footpath between this precinct and the Bridge Street precinct generally along the railway line alignment
- Retain commuter car parking adjacent to the railway line
- Construct a pedestrian pathway adjacent to the railway line to separate pedestrians from the car parking
- Widen St Laurence Lane sufficient to allow construction of a pedestrian bridge across the station to Youth Road.

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### **Theme: URBAN DESIGN**

##### ***Strategies***

*Ensure that the area is developed as the iconic heart of Eltham and that it is effectively linked to the remainder of the Eltham MAC.*

##### **Actions**

- Encourage well designed, contemporary, site responsive architecture
- Place more artwork in the precinct
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E
- Plant indigenous trees throughout the town centre
- Ensure new development on the former Shire Office site and War Memorial site is of exemplary quality.

## Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



### LEGEND



TOWN CENTRE

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 5 - Town Park

This precinct includes the existing public open space generally bounded by Library Place, Main Road, Bridge Street and the railway line.

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct is currently used for a range of public open space. It is extensively vegetated with native and indigenous species of trees and bushes, and is an important part of the Eltham Gateway on the edge of the Eltham MAC. It is significant as a place for community events and gatherings as well as for connections to the station, retail area and Bridge Street. Council is committed to constructing a skateboard facility near the corner of Susan and Bridge Streets.

##### Precinct Objective

To create a new town park which supports the notion of a new town centre whilst retaining the present character of the park.

#### Strategies and Actions

##### Theme: LAND USE

###### Strategies

*Strengthen the links with the adjacent interface precinct.*

###### Actions

Design the park area adjacent to the Library to ensure that this area can be readily used for outdoor community events.

##### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

###### Strategies

*Enhance public safety within the precinct.*

###### Actions

- Support and provide for activities that complement the skateboard facility in Alistair Knox Park
- Implement management regimes to minimise graffiti and enhance public safety through the town park precinct

##### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

###### Strategies

*Enhance the links between this precinct and the remainder of the Eltham MAC*

###### Actions

- Construct a new pedestrian footbridge across the Diamond Creek, adjacent to the railway line
- Create a circular cycling/pedestrian route around the Alistair Knox Park and Gateway
- Upgrade and improve the pedestrian and cycling link along Diamond Creek, and integrate with the Yarra Regional Trail.

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

#### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

##### **Strategies**

*Retain and enhance the quality of the park.*

*Continue to enhance the quality of Diamond Creek.*

##### **Actions**

- Prepare landscape strategy to replenish and manage the existing tree stock.
- Prepare a signage and furniture strategy to create integrated themes
- Install significant artwork preferably by local artists at Main Road and Bridge Street corner
- Install artwork preferably by local artists through Alistair Knox Park.
- Upgrade and improve the management of the Creek
- Undertake additional planting in the parkland adjacent to Diamond Creek
- Include additional seating and other facilities to make park area more attractive for passive recreation
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E
- Remove the existing building on the corner of Bridge and Susan Streets (noting heritage advice to Council that the building does not merit retention)
- Redesign stormwater catchment system near the lake, including rainwater tanks at the Library to keep the lake full
- Carry out a masterplan and management plan for the park.

# Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



## LEGEND



TOWN PARK

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 6 - Sporting Oval

This precinct includes the Eltham Central Park oval adjacent to Diamond Creek.

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct includes the main recreation sports oval close to the Eltham MAC. It presently contains a sports oval and associated sports clubrooms and car parking. The Eltham Festival is held on the sports oval

##### Precinct Objective

To provide for sporting and recreation activities and some community festivals.

##### Strategies and Actions

###### Theme: LAND-USE

###### Strategies

*Continue to use as a sporting facility.*

###### Actions

Continue to support active sports use.

###### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

###### Strategies

*Ensure that a range of community groups and clubs use the facilities.*

###### Actions

Investigate the shared use of the oval and clubrooms by a wide range of sporting groups.

###### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

###### Strategies

*Improve the accessibility of the precinct.*

###### Actions

- Upgrade and improve the pedestrian and cycling link along Diamond Creek, and integrate with the Yarra Regional Trail
- Upgrade vehicle and pedestrian/cycling pathways through the precinct.

###### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

###### Strategies

*Improve the vegetation in the precinct.*

*Maintain the distant views from the oval.*

*Progressively improve signage, furniture and fencing.*





###### Actions

- Upgrade and improve the management of the Creek
- Improve and upgrade the vegetation and planting of indigenous species
- Undertake additional planting in the parkland adjacent to Diamond Creek
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E.

## Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



### LEGEND

-  Diamond Creek
-  Retain existing vegetation
-  Pedestrian / cycle network
-  Pedestrian / cycle bridge

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 7 - Pitt Street Park

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct is generally bounded by Pitt Street, Susan Street, Bridge Street and Main Road. Diamond Creek divides the precinct into two halves. This precinct features extensive indigenous vegetation, attractive walks and informal recreation opportunities. It also includes a number of outdoor sporting facilities including the Pitt Street oval, BMX bike course, rugby field and associate facilities, and a bowls club. The precinct also contains several iconic Eltham community facilities, including the Eltham Community and Reception Centre, the Eltham Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool, and the Living and Learning Centre.

##### Precinct Objective

To enhance individual well being and community life by supporting a range of recreation opportunities and community events in high quality and safe spaces.

#### Strategies and Actions

##### Theme: LAND-USE

##### Strategies

*Enhance Main Road as an attractive entry to Eltham that reflects the environmental quality of Eltham.*

##### Actions

Rezone the land fronting Main Road (Eltham Gateway) from Mixed Use to Residential 1.

##### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

##### Strategies

*Continue to ensure the provision of high quality spaces and venues for community events, social interaction and individual learning.*

##### Actions

- Support the Community and Reception Centre and the Living and Learning Centre to work more closely together as a campus/complex for arts and learning
- Manage the former clubrooms of the Eltham bowling club as a multi-purpose community venue in the short term, potentially convert to restaurant/café in medium term as community meeting space becomes available in the town heart
- Continue to progressively improve the Eltham Leisure Centre
- Investigate providing car parking at the Leisure Centre to support major events in a large hall/place of assembly at the Eltham High School
- Encourage recreation providers in Susan Street and the Leisure Centre to hold structured recreation activities in the park adjacent to Susan Street
- Investigate the development of a 500 seat hall at Eltham High School, subject to the satisfactory provision of access and car parking.

## 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions

### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

#### **Strategies**

*Enhance the role of the Gateway as a linear pedestrian cycle trail.*

#### **Actions**

Upgrade and improve the pedestrian and cycling link along Diamond Creek, and integrate with the Yarra Regional Trail

### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

#### **Strategies**

*Retain and enhance the quality of the Gateway landscape.*

#### **Actions**

- Manage and replenish the vegetation throughout the Gateway
- Upgrade and improve the management of the Creek
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E.



LEGEND



PITT STREET PARK

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 8 - Office / Recreation

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct is the interface or transition area between the industrial precinct and the public open space or residential uses on the opposite side of Brougham and Susan Streets. This precinct should include medium and small scale offices, and larger indoor health and recreation facilities on Susan Street. The long term role of the precinct is to provide employment opportunities in businesses that are compatible with the adjoining residential and open space land uses.

##### Precinct Objective

To provide for medium and small scale offices and indoor recreation/health facilities.

##### Strategies and Actions

###### Theme: LAND-USE

###### Strategies

*Provide a wide range employment opportunities and services to local residents.*

###### Actions

Encourage low impact uses such as offices, health centres and recreation venues on the edges of the precinct by rezoning the land to Business 3 Zone.

###### Theme: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

###### Strategies

*Enhance the link with the Pitt Street Park, and widen the range of recreation opportunities.*

###### Actions

Invite recreation providers in Susan Street and the Leisure Centre to hold some of their programs in the Pitt Street Park.

###### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

###### Strategies

*Enable the area to function effectively.*

###### Actions

Prepare a Parking Precinct Plan and investigate formalising car parking along Susan Street.

###### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

###### Strategies

*Improve the appearance and amenity of the precinct.*



###### Actions

- Encourage the development of larger buildings along Susan and Brougham Streets
- Plant indigenous species where possible
- Encourage smaller scale offices along Brougham Street
- Encourage the development of an iconic building on the corner of Bolton and Brougham Streets
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E.

# Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan



## LEGEND

-  Enhance street tree planting
-  Retain existing vegetation
-  New landmark building with peripheral sales function

## OFFICE / RECREATION

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 9 - Peripheral Sales

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct presently includes a mix of fast food, small bulky goods retailers and small scale industrial uses such as panel beaters. The precinct should become the preferred location for medium and larger bulky goods outlets. It should also have a civic space that creates a sense of place that can be linked to the remainder of the Eltham MAC.

##### Precinct Objective

Be the preferred location for bulky goods retailing, and provide a small civic space that can link the precinct to the Eltham MAC.

##### Strategies and Actions

###### Theme: LAND-USE

###### Strategies

*Encourage the precinct to be the preferred location for bulky goods and showroom type retailing.*

###### Actions

- Rezone the area to Business 4 Zone
- Encourage site consolidation to enable larger stores to locate in the area.

###### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

###### Strategies

*Ensure that the area has convenient car parking.*

###### Actions

- Investigate implementing a public car park funded through a special rates scheme
- Enhance the pedestrian link between Peel Street to the focal point at Bridge/Diamond Street intersection
- Investigate the provision of a pedestrian crossing on Bridge Street.

###### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

###### Strategies

*Recognise and improve Bridge Street as a significant Gateway to Eltham.*

###### Actions

- Implement the Urban Design Framework for this precinct
- Create a focal point at the intersection of Bridge Street and Diamond Street
- Encourage the development of landmark buildings on the western corners of Bridge and Susan Streets
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E.



LEGEND

-  Enhance street tree planting
-  Retain existing vegetation
-  Urban open space & enhanced pedestrian linkages
-  New landmark building with peripheral sales function
-  New building

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 10 - Sherbourne Street and Bolton Street

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct presently accommodates various bulky goods retail outlets and some medium and small scale industrial uses. Bolton Street between Bridge and Brougham Streets should accommodate bulky goods retailing, fast foods or indoor leisure facilities. Council has approved additional bulky goods retailing on the corner of Bolton and Brougham Streets. The precinct is opposite residences, and Bolton Street is a relatively narrow road that is in urgent need of upgrading, as it provides an alternative route to Main Road. Some measures may be needed to protect the amenity of the nearby residences.

The area north of Bridge Street presently accommodates a small scale self storage facility and an electricity transmission terminal. It also has a small watercourse that creates opportunities to create a more attractive landscape. This area should be redeveloped for medium density housing. Residential development also creates the opportunity to reinstate the creek as a public walking trail, and as a buffer between the residential and industrial uses.

##### Precinct Objective

To accommodate medium density residential development in an attractive and functional environment.

##### Strategies and Actions

###### Theme: LAND-USE

###### Strategies

*Encourage bulky goods retailing and residential development.*

###### Actions

- Rezone the 'Fort Knox' site to Residential 1 (subject to the owner's support) and prepare a DDO to encourage and guide the redevelopment of the area
- Rezone properties between Sherbourne Road and Brisbane Street to Business 4 Zone.

###### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

###### Strategies

*Provide separate access for residential and industrial traffic.*

###### Actions

- Determine the role of Bolton Street in the regional road network and implement appropriate traffic management measures
- Restrict car parking on the west side of Bolton Road
- Create an additional access point to Sherbourne Road in conjunction with residential development.

###### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

###### Strategies

*Improve the appearance and amenity of the precinct.*





*Ensure that new development is a scale compatible with the nearby residential uses.*

###### Actions

- Reinstall the open creek in conjunction with adjacent resident development
- Implement Bridge Street Urban Design Framework
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E.



LEGEND

-  Enhance street tree planting
-  Retain existing vegetation
-  New landmark building with medium density housing or peripheral sales function
-  New building

SHERBOURNE ROAD / BOLTON STREET

### 06 Precinct Plans - Strategies and Actions



#### Precinct 11 - Internal Bridge Street Industrial Areas

##### Role of Precinct

This precinct accommodates a wide range of small industrial businesses, many of which provide services to other local businesses as well as households. The precinct should continue to accommodate small scale industrial activities that do not generate negative off site impacts. Key issues that need to be addressed in the precinct include car parking, landscaping, signage, and pedestrian access.

##### Precinct Objective

To be an attractive and functional business park for small and medium scale light industrial activities, primarily servicing local community needs.

##### Strategies and Actions

###### Theme: LAND-USE

###### Strategies

*Encourage the area to continue to be the preferred location for light industrial activities.*

###### Actions

- Retain the Industrial 3 Zone for this precinct.

###### Theme: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

###### Strategies

*Provide separate access for residential and industrial traffic.*

###### Actions

Investigate the purchase of land for a public car park, funded by a special rate scheme.

###### Theme: URBAN DESIGN

###### Strategies

*Improve the appearance and amenity of the precinct.*

###### Actions

- Implement the landscape recommendations of the Bridge Street Urban Design Framework Plan
- Improve the pedestrian links to the Bridge Street focal point
- Implement the Urban Design Guidelines in Appendix E.

# Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan

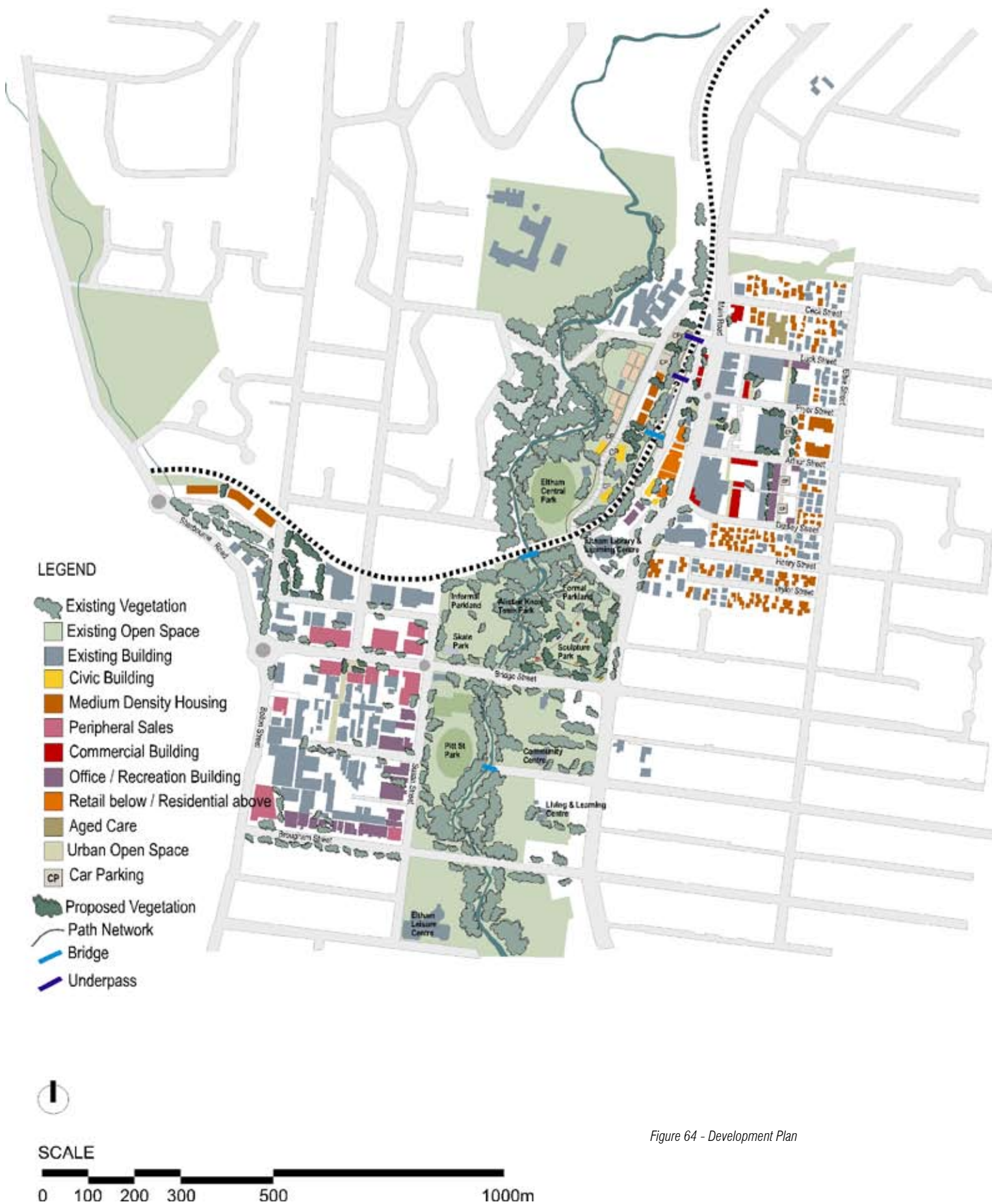


Figure 64 - Development Plan