

# Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019

Revised 2021  
Adopted 27 May 2024



Knox City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the City of Knox.

The Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

**Disclaimer**

This report is provided for information and it does not purport to be complete. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the report is accurate, we cannot guarantee that the report is without flaw of any kind. There may be errors and omissions or it may not be wholly appropriate for your particular purposes. In addition, the publication is a snapshot in time based on historic information which is liable to change. The City of Knox accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability or any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information contained in this report.

# Contributions

---

The Boronia Renewal Strategy has been prepared by the City of Knox in conjunction with key stakeholders and the Boronia community. The development of this strategy for Boronia builds upon the review of the previous Boronia Structure Plan 'Your Life, Your Place: Our Future' October 2006 and forms the starting point of Council's vision towards 2040 for the Boronia Major Activity Centre.

The Renewal Strategy contains the collective of contributions and recommendations from a range of groups, with appreciation to:

- The Boronia community, interest groups and key stakeholders who were actively involved, participated in public discussions, responded to surveys, provided written submissions or who gave feedback on specific aspects of the Strategy.
- The Baird and Chandler Ward Councillors.
- Council staffs and teams who participated in discussions, workshops, and meetings as well as community engagement events, and provided specific service information or technical advice
- Officers from Departments of the Victorian Government
- Consultants involved in the preparation of supporting background strategic work:
  - HillPDA Consulting for the 'Boronia Economic Analysis Report'
  - Hansen Partnership Pty Ltd for the 'Urban Structure Report'
  - GTA consultants for the 'Movement and Access' report

# Table of contents

---

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Context .....	8
3. Vision, Key Directions and Big Move Projects .....	13
4. Economic Development and Investment .....	17
5. Land Use and Built Form.....	38
6. Movement and Access.....	56
7. Public Realm .....	72
8. Community Wellbeing and Infrastructure.....	86
9. Precinct Plans.....	98
10. Implementation .....	120
11. Appendix A – Policy Framework.....	129
12. Appendix B – Capacity Analysis .....	135
13. Appendix C – Glossary .....	137



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Boronia, the need for all-encompassing renewal

The Knox regulatory and policy regime, as well as the suburb of Boronia, have continued to evolve since the adoption of a Structure Plan for the Boronia Major Activity Centre by Council in 2006.

The 2006 Structure Plan recognised many parts that were highly valued by the community, but it failed to grasp the impact that external trends i.e., development trends and pressure, demographic changes, apartment living, new technologies, would have on the Centre. On one hand, the Boronia Activity Centre has kept many of the urban form attributes that make it a unique place. These attributes are defined in this report as part of the local context and existing conditions. Although there has been previous infrastructure considerable investment in the Centre, since then and the Centre has experienced many changes that have improved the quality of life for its residents and workers, it requires further renewal beyond solely infrastructure delivery to see it improvement through the next 20 years.

## 1.2 Boronia Major Activity Centre

Boronia is identified as a Major Activity Centre (MAC) under the Victorian Government's metropolitan planning strategy Plan Melbourne 2017-2050. As such it is expected to provide a suburban focal point for services, employment, housing, public transport, and social interaction.

Knox's own Planning Scheme and its 2015 Housing Strategy identifies the need for activity centres outside the Dandenong Foothills to accommodate growth and see substantial changes according to their scale. One goal of the goal is to reduce or limit pressure on other parts residential parts of Knox, so that these areas can maintain their character.

## 1.3 Boronia Renewal Strategy

The Boronia Renewal Strategy is the result from an analysis of contextual review of existing conditions, relevant literature, including the policy context, multiple background analytical reports, findings of market demand assessment, and the summary of stakeholder and community engagement.

This review provides the aspiration for Boronia in the form of an overall vision and key directions. These were refined through objectives, strategies,

and actions to guide renewal in terms of the following strategic themes, and with a precinct-based approach:

- Economic development and investment
- Land use and built form
- Movement and access
- Public realm
- Community wellbeing and infrastructure

The Strategy is forward looking to 2040 and serves to:

- Set out Knox Council's vision and development expectations and describes other types of changes that are needed and how they will be delivered.
- Provide the rationale and strategic justification for changes to the planning controls within the Knox Planning Scheme.
- Act as a source reference document for the community and key stakeholders with an interest in the Boronia MAC.

Given this multi-faceted audience, the document contains both aspirational and technical (i.e. advocacy and operational) information in nature.

---

#### 1.4 Boronia Structure Plan 2006

The 2006 Structure Plan for the Boronia Activity Centre identified areas for retail and commercial concentration and for residential intensification. Apartment housing was considered appropriate, particularly above commercial businesses, albeit at a small scale. The 2006 Structure Plan set preferred height limit of two to three storeys in residential areas and four storeys in commercially zoned areas implemented in a discretionary matter to protect viewlines to the Dandenong Ranges. This means every developer can exceed the preferred height following a case-by-case assessment of the impact on the viewlines. A considerable time has elapsed since the introduction of planning controls that implemented the 2006 Structure Plan in an interim manner and the conditions have changed.

Those existing interim built form controls (Design and Development Overlay Schedule 7) are due to expire in 2024. Once they expire, there would be no control or design guidelines applying to Boronia. Consequently, the Boronia Renewal Strategy must articulate the desired built form outcomes, set the long-term vision, as well as provide a strong and robust strategic justification to implement permanent Planning Scheme provisions.

#### 1.5 Activity Centre issues and opportunities

There are issues that remain unchanged since the 2006 Structure Plan and some new ones that have arisen. The identified issues are discussed in greater detail as part of each theme chapter.

These issues need to be balanced against opportunities to help support the vision for Boronia. Council and other service and infrastructure providers cannot address all issues with quick fix solutions and limited resources. As such, a key opportunity for this strategy is to aim for a coordinated approach with all major stakeholders to implement a place-based long term renewal outcome.

#### 1.6 Key drivers for the Strategy

The development of the Boronia Renewal Strategy is driven by several factors, including:

- The need for a new, contemporary planning framework that considers the strategic context set by Plan Melbourne and Council's adopted policies.
- The need to review the Boronia MAC boundaries and built form controls.
- A need to reinvigorate the retail commercial environment and urban structure within the Boronia MAC.
- A need to consider ageing, failing or inadequate community and physical

infrastructure in the long-term strategy for Boronia, such as Knox Basketball Stadium, Boronia Library, Bellbird Senior Citizens,' Knox Leisureworks and the capacity of the Melbourne Water retarding basin.

- A need to consider social disadvantages in the area, including issues of low incomes, family violence, lower education levels.
- The need for additional housing to be accommodated within the Boronia MAC.
- The potential redevelopment of significant parcels of under-utilised Victorian Government land within the Train Station Precinct, as a mean to attract private sector investment.

#### 1.7 Community Engagement

Listening to the community has been important in preparing the Strategy. This Strategy is the result of a comprehensive process of analysis and engagement with a broad cross section of the Boronia community. In order to gain a better understanding of community perspectives, consultation events and online surveys were conducted during 2017-2019 to collect information, ideas, and views about Boronia, including:

- Community conversation events



- Workshops with specific audiences – service providers, community groups, local businesses
- Wayfinding walking tours
- Four thematic online surveys (4) on the following topics: - car parking, Boronia’s future, perceptions of safety, and the Draft Renewal Strategy 2018 Key Directions
- Community safety audit walking tours
- Youth perspectives survey
- Young children’s thoughts about Boronia
- Focus groups
- One-on-one key stakeholder meetings
- Social media postings

The project was promoted regularly through articles in the Boronia and Basin Community Newspaper, and a monthly newsletter that was distributed to over 480 subscribers. Local newspapers and other social media were monitored for topics, issues, or comments relevant to the future planning of Boronia.

In addition, there have been workshops, community conversation events and extended discussions with key stakeholders in the Victorian Government and agencies, local businesses, and not-for-profit organisations.

The appetite for change and regeneration in the community is evident from the feedback received

and sustained levels of interest and participation.

### 1.8 Document Structure

The Strategy consists of the following chapters:

1. Introduction – provides an overview of the document and the project.
2. Context – describes the regional and local context of the place, its people and relevant policy.
3. Vision, Key Directions and Big Move Projects – sets up our aspiration through a 20-year vision and, key directions, while ‘Big Move’ projects identifies targeted renewal project for of the Boronia MAC.
- 4.-8. Key Themes review – the elements, issues, opportunities, and sets preferred outcomes of what we want relating to the five key themes: - economic development and investment; - land use and built form; - movement and access; - public realm; and - community wellbeing and infrastructure.

Each theme further includes:

- Objectives: What are our goals for the future
- Strategies: How we intend to achieve these goals
- Actions: Which tangible steps will we take to implement these goals

9. Precinct Plans – provide further structure planning basis for implementing the objectives, strategies, and actions within five identified precincts.

- Precinct 1 - Commercial core
- Precinct 2 - Commercial edge
- Precinct 3 - Mixed use edge
- Precinct 4 - Sensitive residential growth
- Precinct 5 - Residential growth

10. Implementation – details of how the Strategy will be implemented. This will include a combination of projects that can deliver tangible results in the short-term, while at the same time planning for outcomes that will be implemented incrementally over the next 20-year period.

11. Appendix A – Policy Framework
12. Appendix B – Capacity Analysis
13. Appendix C – Glossary

## 2. Context

### 2.1 The Place

#### 2.1.1 Regional context

The Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) is located about 32km east of the Melbourne CBD.

Strategically located at the base of the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, at a junction of arterial roads and the metropolitan Belgrave train line, Boronia MAC services a commercial catchment of Melbourne's eastern suburbs in complements to the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre; and serves as a gateway to the northern slopes of the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

#### 2.1.2 Local context

The Boronia MAC is one of five major activity centres within the City of Knox and is one of two in Knox located on the Belgrave train line.

The Boronia MAC is characterised by:

- A core commercial area, spread out over 30ha and bisected by two arterial roads area, which comprises a diverse street-based sub-regional retail and a variety of other services and provides an employment and cultural focus for the local area.

- Residential neighbourhoods immediately surrounding the core area, with the most recent residential development characterised by increased townhouses development, a few new apartment style buildings, and older villa unit development.
- Key transport infrastructure includes major arterial roads (Dorset and Boronia Roads), the Belgrave train line and Boronia Railway Station, as well as the Belgrave-Ringwood Cycling Trail.
- Major community facilities, including Boronia West Primary, Boronia College K- 12 School, and Knox Leisureworks.
- Four open space reserves, including Tormore Reserve (active open space), Chandler Park (active open space), Boronia Park (active and passive open space), and Genista Park (passive and biodiversity conservation space).

Its location, nestled in a valley at the base of the foothills, is a key part of its local identity. Glimpses of the foothills and the Dandenong Ranges can be seen from various parts of the western slope of the town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods.

#### 2.1.3 Boronia MAC boundary

The existing Boronia MAC boundary was defined in the 2006 Boronia Structure Plan (as shown in *Figure 1*), bounded by Albert Avenue to the east, Hastings Avenue, Alfred Street, Pine Crescent and Stonehaven Avenue to the south, Knox Leisureworks and St. Joseph's School to the west, and roughly Oak Avenue, Elsie, and Short Streets to the north.

The current Strategy relates to a revised Boronia MAC area (as shown in *Figure 1*), which has been recommended based on:

- The need to address policy conflict in relation to lots with a single dwelling covenant and/or incompatible development expectations on either side of Bambury and Elsie Streets.
- The need to provide street activation and improve walking and cycling, consistent with the 20-minute neighbourhood walkability concept as suggested in Plan Melbourne.



- 
- The need to improve development viability within the Boronia MAC core area and apply a precinct-based approach to the urban form.
  - A desire to retain a sense of place created by the strong relationship between key local destinations and the Boronia MAC core area as an important part of Boronia's local identity.

The newly defined Boronia MAC will have an area of approximately 135 ha.

More specifically, changes to the boundary area (as shown in Figure 1) are summarised as:

- Exclusion of the south side of Bambury Street and Elsie Street; parts north of Tormore Reserve adjoining Lorikeet Court; and West of St Joseph's Primary School not fronting Boronia Road.
- Exclusion of single dwelling covenant lots, around Marie Street, not fronting Boronia Road.
- Inclusion of properties on Iris Crescent, Short Street, Catherine Street and parts of Central Avenue, and Power Road.
- Inclusion of properties on Cypress Avenue, part of Pine Crescent, Douglas Street, and Alfred Street.

The Boronia MAC is made up of five distinct precincts which can then be categorised into two

distinct parts commonly referred to in the Strategy:

- Boronia MAC core area (precincts 1, 2, and 3)– refers to the commercial and mixed- use areas which are likely to undergo transformation.
- The surrounding residential neighbourhoods (precincts 4 and 5) which have been identified to accommodate population growth, each with a local community focus point.

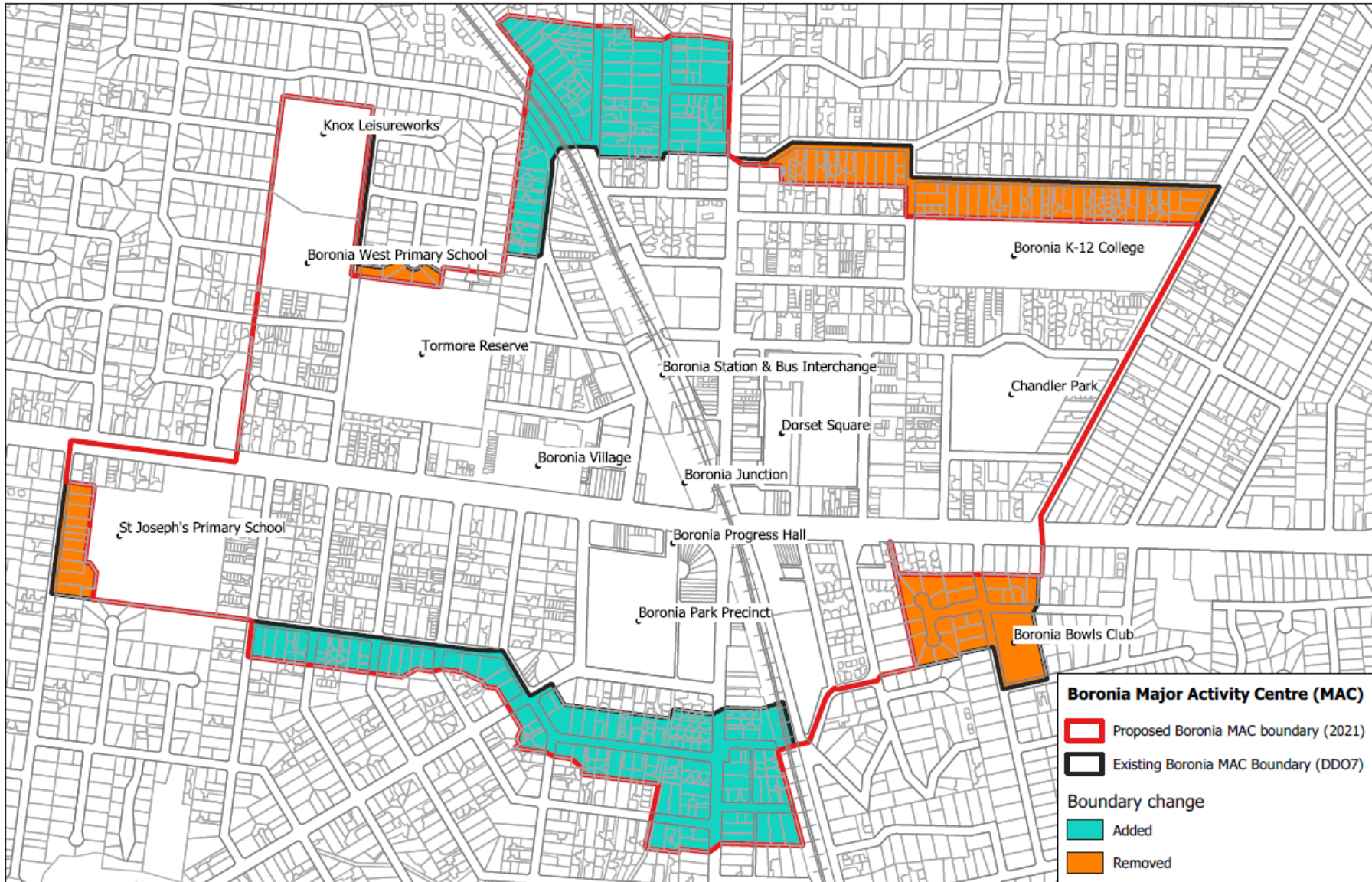


Figure 1 - Boronia MAC boundary changes



---

## 2.2 The People

The newly defined Boronia MAC is home to around 14% of Boronia residents.

In 2020 Boronia's estimated population was 24,094. By 2041, the suburb of Boronia is forecast to grow to approximately 27,006 people. Around 25.1% of this growth is forecast to be adults aged 60 years and over, and around 27.2% is forecast to be young people under 25 years (source: forecast.id).

At the 2016 Census, Boronia had the lowest proportion of couple households with children (28.4% of households), and the highest proportion of lone person households (26.8%) of all Knox suburbs. Boronia's household composition also varies from that of Greater Melbourne, in which 33.5% of households were couple households with children and 22.0% were lone person households.

### 2.2.1 Cultural diversity

Boronia is less culturally diverse than Knox and Greater Melbourne, but its diversity is increasing. At the 2016 Census 24.0% of Boronia residents were born overseas, lower than the Knox and Greater Melbourne rates (30.1% and 33.8% respectively), but up from Boronia's 2011 rate (22.7%). The most reported overseas countries of birth among Boronia residents at the 2016 Census

were the United Kingdom (1,205 people), India (505 people), and China (482 people). India and China also feature as the two most reported countries of birth among the 572 overseas born Boronia residents who first arrived to live in Australia between 1 January 2012 and the 2016 Census.

### 2.2.2 Education, income, and employment

Most of the Boronia's population is engaged in education, training and/or employment. At the 2016 Census, Boronia residents were more likely than Knox and Greater Melbourne residents to hold a trade qualification and less likely to hold a university qualification. The median household income in Boronia at the 2016 Census (\$1,294) was lower than the median for both Knox (\$1,558) and Greater Melbourne (\$1,539), and almost one in five Boronia households (18.2%) had a gross household income less than \$650 per week.

More than one in ten (11.4%) Boronia households were experiencing housing related financial stress at the time of the 2016 Census, similar to the Greater Melbourne rate (11.7%) and the second highest rate among Knox suburbs.

## 2.3 The Policy Framework

The principles, outcomes and directions in Plan Melbourne 2017- 2050 provide the metropolitan

policy foundation for the Boronia Renewal Strategy. A summary of the relevant directions is included in Appendix A to this Strategy.

There are several other Victorian Government policies that provide direction for managing for change and planning for future redevelopment in Boronia, including:

- Metropolitan Open Space Strategy
- Victoria's Social Enterprise Strategy
- Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy

Knox City Council also has a comprehensive policy and strategy framework which provides an additional part of the policy foundation for the objectives, strategies and actions identified within this strategy.

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 (and their subsequent iterations) identify the priorities of our community for the future while also guiding the decision-making and future budget allocations of Knox Council and its partners, agencies, and all stakeholders. All current goals and initiatives of these plans are relevant to the Renewal Strategy.

The review of the previous Structure Plan and the preparation of a Renewal Strategy was identified in the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017 – 2021 (*Initiative 1.3.3*) as a high priority and implementation of the Boronia Renewal Program

---

remain an initiative of the Knox Council Plan 2021 - 2025.

A list of other relevant policies and strategies, such as the Knox Housing Strategy, is included in Appendix A.

### **2.3.1 Knox Planning Scheme**

The Knox Planning Scheme also provides a broad range of state and local policy direction, and the strategic framework vision in relation to land use and development planning.

In particular, the Boronia MAC is affected by a wide range of policies, zones and overlays which are the result of successive studies and plans that have been implemented via several planning scheme amendments which guides the future of Knox and Boronia in particular.

The current Boronia MAC area is affected by the following zoning regime:

- Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)
- Residential Growth Zone – Schedule 2 (RGZ2)
- General Residential Zone Schedule 4 (GRZ4)

The Boronia MAC also contains parcels of land in the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ),

Transport Zone (TRZ) and Public Use Zones (PUZ) for education (PUZ2), local government (PUZ6) and public transport (PUZ4).

Other key local planning clauses provisions and overlays include:

- Clause 21.10-3 – Boronia Activity Centre
- Design and Development Overlay Schedule 7 (DDO7 - Boronia Structure Plan Area)<sup>1</sup>.

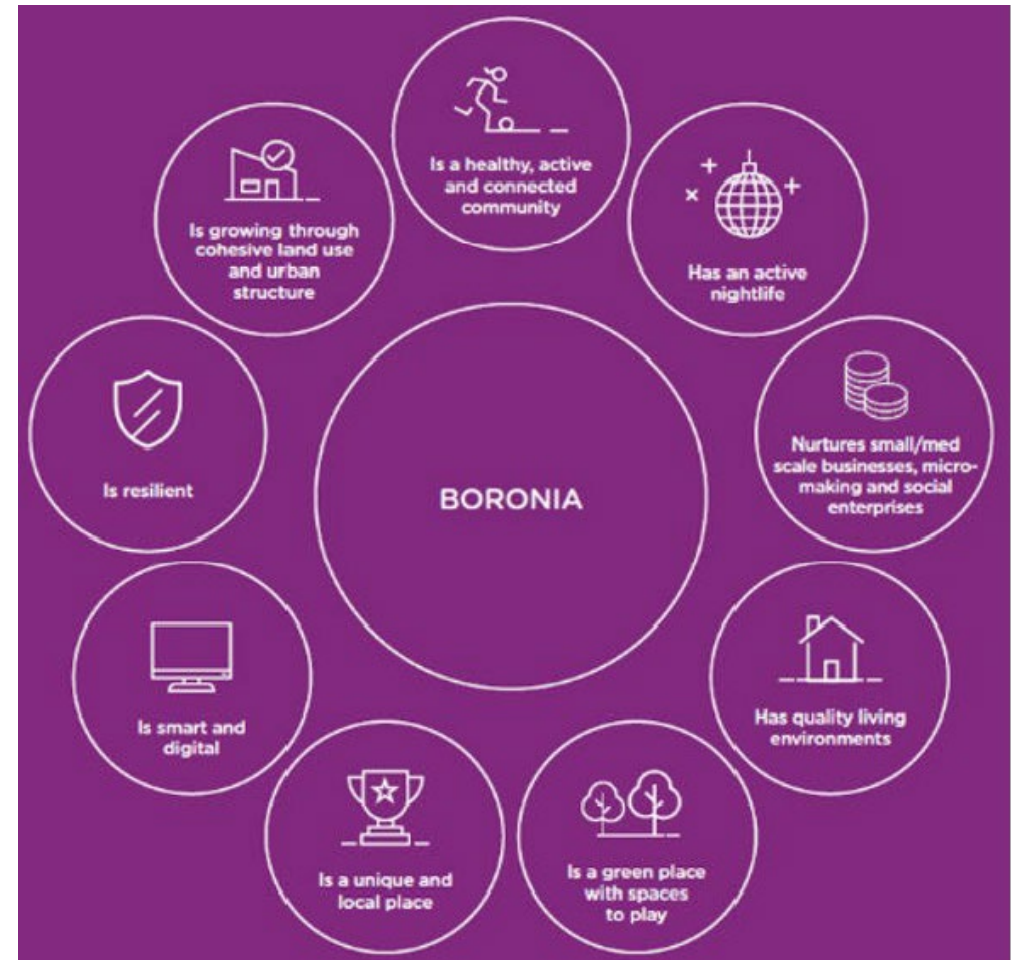
---

<sup>1</sup> Proposed to be replaced by DDO10.

### 3. Vision, Key Directions and Big Move Projects

#### Boronia 2040 Vision:

A connected and resilient place that values its history and environment and embraces its forward-thinking community to realise its potential for future generations.





---

### 3.1 Key Directions

Nine Key Directions have been identified to stimulate the urban and social renewal of the Boronia MAC.

The Key Directions focus on important elements to retain and set out where efforts will be spent in terms of strategies and actions as well as the allocation of Knox Council's resources. The Key directions have been refined through community consultation.

- Boronia is a unique local place
- Boronia has quality living environments
- Boronia is a healthy, active, and connected community
- Boronia is resilient
- Boronia nurtures local and creative business and social enterprise
- Boronia is a green place with spaces to play
- Boronia is smart and digital
- Boronia has an active nightlife
- Boronia has a unified urban structure

### 3.2 Big Move Projects

Four Big Move Projects are identified in this Strategy to reinforce opportunity to achieve the vision for the Boronia MAC over the next 20 years. These projects are large capital works

projects that will affect, and require the involvement of, multiple stakeholders.

The Big Move Projects include:

- Boronia Park Master Plan
- Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan
- Dorset Square Town Square
  - All three areas will include Community Infrastructure Investigation (together with a potential digital creative hub as part of a multi- purpose community centre)
- Green Spine Corridor (between Chandler Park and Tormore Reserve).

These are discussed in further detail in this Strategy.

*Image on the next page:*

*Artist aerial rendition of the Boronia Activity Centre*





DORSET ROAD

CHANDLER ROAD

BORONIA ROAD

BORONIA ROAD

DORSET ROAD

CRAIG PERRY 2019



Boronia Activity Centre will have a strong local economy, enhanced by business expansion and diversification, particularly in the health, business services and retail sectors, and emerging social enterprise, and arts and creative industries, with reduced escape expenditure and increased local job opportunities.



# 1. Economic Development and Investment

Retail vacancies, limited investment in the upkeep of properties and poor visual merchandising, among other things, suggest that Boronia's local economy needs revitalisation.

Overall renewal of the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) will support stimulation of the local economy. Regular and diverse events and cultural activities, a variety of entertainment and hospitality options, coupled with high standards of public realm and amenity will attract people, jobs and investment to the area. People will prefer to visit, work, shop, and live in places they consider to be vibrant, convenient, safe, and attractive.

## Key Directions

- A unique local place
- A healthy, active, and connected community
- Resilient
- Nurtures local and creative business and social enterprise
- Smart and digital
- An active nightlife

## State

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Local Government Act 1989
- Victoria's Social Enterprise Strategy
- Unlocking Enterprise in a Changing Economy

## Knox

- Knox Community Plan 2021-2023
- Knox Council Plan 2021-2025
- Land for Business Directions Plan 2018
- Knox Planning Policy framework

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and INVESTMENT

## Background

- Community Engagement
- Boronia – Economic Demand, Land and Site Options Analysis 2017 (HillPDA)

---

## 4.1 Elements

### 4.1.1 Role of the Boronia MAC

Boronia MAC performs a strong role in servicing the sub-regional area due to the existence of the metropolitan train line and train station, arterial road access, Kmart and two large format supermarkets.

As shown in Figure 2, Boronia has a primary retail trade catchment area within the Knox municipality that extends along the major arterial to include the suburbs of Bayswater, The Basin, Ferntree Gully, and Upper Ferntree Gully. A secondary trade catchment area includes Wantirna, Wantirna South, Knoxfield, Rowville (north), part of Lysterfield, Bayswater North, Kilsyth South, and part of Yarra Ranges Shire.

There are several other activity centres within Boronia's primary and secondary trade areas that perform regional, sub-regional and neighbourhood functions. Boronia's secondary catchment area overlaps with Knox Central Major Activity Centre.

Currently, Boronia plays only a sub-regional economic role in comparison to Knox Central and Ringwood with only a 25% market share of the primary trade area spend and only 10% of spend in the secondary trade area.

Although the Centre has a Kmart and two large supermarkets, it serves a local retail role based on the current business mix and growth pattern.

It is estimated that the Boronia MAC serves a trade area of around 155,000 people (combined primary and secondary catchments). The population in this broader trade area is expected to increase to approximately 177,000 people over the next 20 years to 2041.

This population increase will present the Boronia MAC with opportunities for growth and change.

Along the Belgrave train line, both Boronia and Bayswater activity centres act as complementary anchors to each other for land use activity and intensification albeit with Boronia carrying more retail activities.

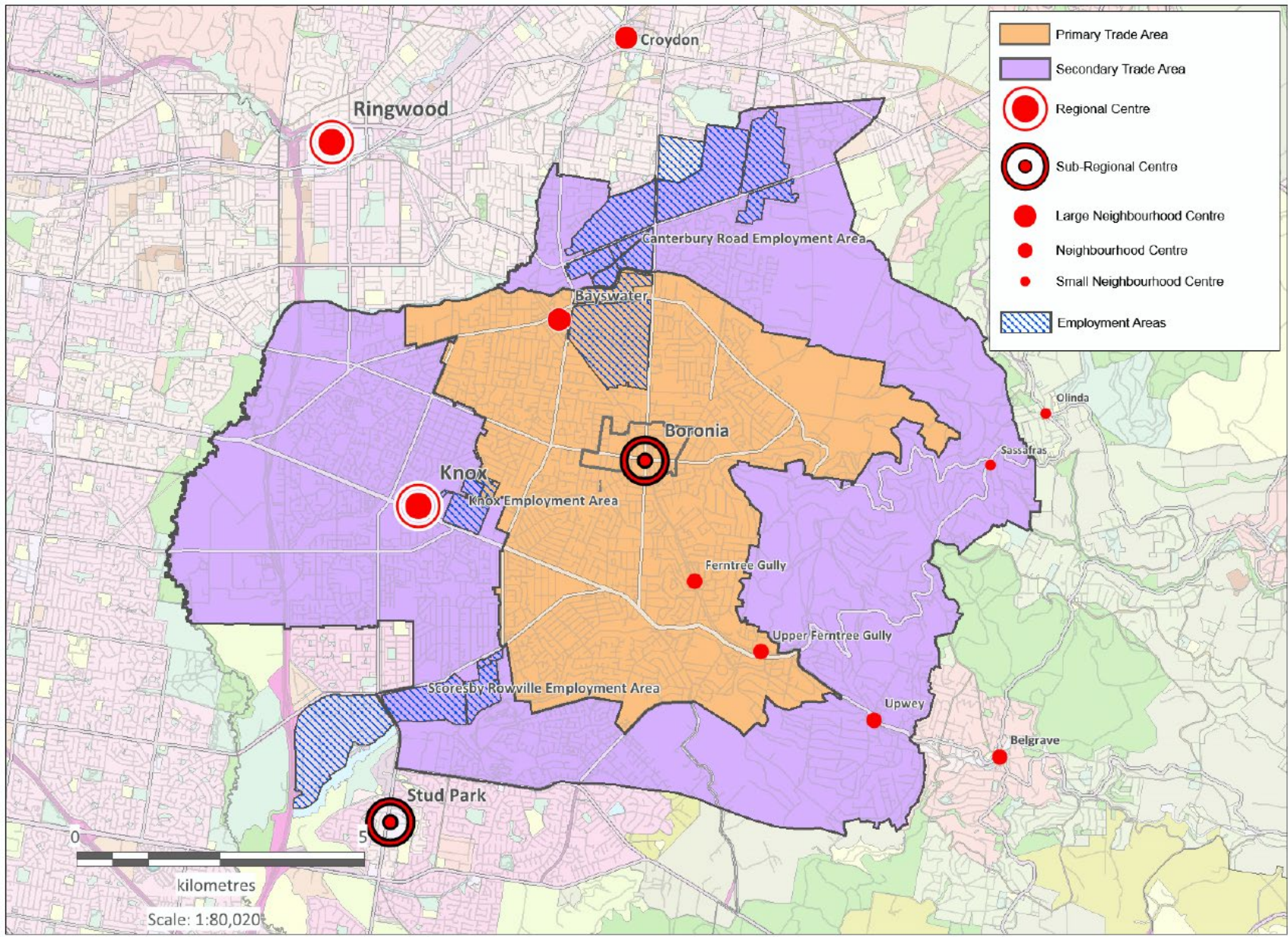


Figure 2 - Primary and secondary trade areas



#### 4.1.2 Economic activity

Most of the economic activity in the Boronia MAC is within the core area (Figure 3). As of 2021, there are a total of 372 businesses in the core area, with more home-based businesses located in the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

As shown in Table 1 below, Boronia has approximately 92,200 sqm of business (non-residential) floorspace within 429 properties.

Retail (58,900 sqm) and commercial (office) (20,900 sqm) are the primary land use activities. Other notable uses include a range of community services.

**Table 1 – Floorspace Profile<sup>2</sup>**

Land Use	Floorspace (sqm)	Number of properties
Retail, including Café/Restaurant	61,109	283
Commercial	20,828	126
Community services	4,400	7
Special care residential	3,681	2
Health	1,175	5
Other	747	5
Mixed Use	240	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>92,180</b>	<b>429</b>

#### 4.1.3 Business Sectors

The Boronia local economy is made up of several

key sectors:

- **Retail**

As indicated in Table 2, approximately 14,600sqm of retail floorspace is projected up to 2041, assuming continuation of the current sub-regional role of the Boronia MAC supported by a growing population. Sectors of demand are likely to include supermarkets and grocery stores, restaurants, hospitality, and specialty retail.

**Table 2 – Indicative Retail Demand<sup>3</sup>**

Retail Sector	Potential Floorspace (sqm)
Supermarkets/grocery stores	2,200
Restaurants, hotels & clubs ( <i>hospitality</i> )	1,400
Specialty retail ( <i>various</i> )	9,000
Department stores	2,000
<b>Total retailing</b>	<b>14,600</b>

<sup>2</sup> HillPDA consultants, Boronia Economic Analysis, 2021

<sup>3</sup> HillPDA consultants, Boronia Economic Analysis, 2021

---

- **Offices**

Office space in the Boronia MAC area currently accounts for approximately one-third of the various business mix groups identified. On this basis, office sector demand is expected to grow by around 4,400sqm by 2041, and would be further supported by any other major developments that occur.

The office demand is likely to come from sectors such as catchment-serving finance, accounting, professional services, and local real estate agents. Commercial office development beyond this range could also occur, driven by large public sector offices.

- **Social enterprises**

Social enterprises are defined as organisations that:

- Are led by an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit.
- Trade and operate with the purpose to fulfil their mission.
- Gain a substantial portion of their income from trade.
- Reinvest most of their profit/surplus in the fulfilment of their mission.

Many social enterprises have their greatest

impact in areas of disadvantage, addressing issues affecting young people, those people living with disabilities, the homeless, indigenous Australians, recently arrived immigrants, and those with lower literacy and numeracy skills.

Social enterprises help to deliver social and economic outcomes, by creating jobs, improving workforce participation, and boosting productivity.

In Boronia there is a diverse and growing range of social enterprises that include established community 'op-shop' stores like the Salvation Army and Aussie Veterans and more recent, social enterprise ventures.

- **Health and wellbeing businesses**

Health and wellbeing businesses address physical, mental health, and social welfare. Such businesses include:

- Medical centres and clinics
- Specialist health services, such as radiology, dental, and optometry
- Health and personal counselling offices
- Aged care, maternal and childcare facilities
- Social assistance and community services

In Boronia, the healthcare and social assistance sector is significant, with well-established businesses and services like the Cypress Health and Boronia Medical Centre, Scope, EACH, and the Boronia Mall Medical Clinic. There is a significant concentration of such businesses and facilities along the south side of Boronia Road, with other counselling offices and clinics sparsely located within the Boronia MAC.

- **Arts-based and creative businesses**

Arts based and creative businesses include:

- Visual and performing arts and music recording
- Digital media or multi-media production
- Broadcasting (local radio stations)/Film/TV Advertising and Marketing; Computer, animation, software development/ interactive content production
- Web design/writing/publishing online
- Design, industrial, fashion, architecture.

In Boronia, arts-based and creative businesses add a new aspect to urban planning and community building, as well as stimulating jobs and investment in the local economy. Many visual artists live in Knox, as

evidenced by registration on Council’s artist database, Artslink. In addition, the second largest camera club in Metropolitan Melbourne is in Boronia: The Knox Photographic Society.

#### 4.1.4 Employment

The Boronia MAC is estimated to accommodate 2,500 jobs, representing 4.4% of the municipal total<sup>4</sup>.

The main industry classifications presenting current job levels in Boronia is shown in Table 3:

**Table 3 – Jobs in Boronia**

Industry classification	Jobs	%
Retail Trade	646	26%
Health Care & Social Assistance	388	15.6%
Professional, scientific & Technical Services	227	9.1%
Accommodation & Food Services	207	8.3%
Arts & Recreation Services	137	5.5%
Other	877	35.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,482</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4.2 Issues

The following key economic issues have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

### 4.2.1 Supply and demand

- **Mismatch between supply and demand for commercial premises.**

Boronia has several vacant, small, low-quality tenancies. In some of the existing arcades, tenancies can be as small as 50sqm with limited-service area access. Some of these tenancies have been vacant for more than two years. Many property owners have rental income expectations that do not reflect the setting, amenity, or existing foot traffic volumes.

- **Competition for commercially zoned land**  
There is pressure by owners of properties to convert commercial-zoned ground floor premises on the edge of the commercial core in Precinct 2 to residential uses to achieve higher rental return. This displaces local businesses and has a flow-on impact of reducing size of the commercial area.

<sup>4</sup> HillPDA consultants, Boronia Economic Analysis, 2021



---

Most retail and businesses rely on a broad catchment generated by good access and proximity to either high volume pedestrian or traffic routes. While residential intensification in the core can increase the population density within local walkable catchments and increase the viability of shops as well the loss of ground level to non-employment uses reduce the opportunities to meet future commercial demand.

- **Lack of space or facilities for arts-based and cultural businesses**

Despite the quality and diversity of cultural events offered in Knox, and the strong community support for festivals, arts and crafts, exhibitions and the performing and visual arts, there is no existing local facility, public or private, that can act as a creative cultural hub for Boronia.

The existing facilities assessment shows that there is a gap in the provision of rehearsal venues to hire and gallery display space for use by small groups providing art and cultural activities. Within Boronia there is sufficient unmet demand for arts based and creative businesses.

#### 4.2.2 Investment

- **Long term vacancies**

Property owners (often absentee owners) have allowed several tenancies to remain vacant with limited effort to find tenants to provide activities and draw foot traffic. Cumulatively, this creates a stagnating and negative impression of the Centre which detracts attention from the existing supply and reduces attractiveness for private investment in the Centre.

- **Limited property investment and maintenance**

Properties within the commercial core area have received minimal investment, service upgrades or upkeep. Multiple businesses have been in the centre for a long time or are returning very little, discouraging further facade upkeep or other investment by owners. In addition, disparate land ownership, vacancies, and absentee landlords affect the appearance and maintenance of the Boronia MAC.

#### 4.2.3 Location

- **Lack of activity intensity or clustering**

In general, commercial activity in Boronia is spread across a few small, disconnected

nodes that cater for a mix of retail, hospitality, and business activities, with few obvious synergies between the businesses within each. In addition, some of the anchor destinations, such as Kmart, Coles and Woolworths are isolated, relying on access by car and offer limited opportunities for ‘grazing’ nearby businesses for a longer stay.

More specifically, dining venues, take-away food premises and cafes are scattered along Boronia and Dorset Roads, and tucked away from easy view at Boronia Village and Boronia Junction. There are a few cafes located in Boronia Mall and the arcades running off Dorset Road with little or no kerbside or outdoor dining. The lack of clustering of food premises reduces the attraction of the centre.

#### 4.2.4 Retail

- **Retail escape expenditure**

Compared to surrounding centres, Boronia is spread over a larger area, but its local economy is not performing to its potential, with an estimated 75% loss of spending dollars outside its primary trade in the surrounding area.

In addition, the Boronia MAC is only achieving

---

a 10% share of its secondary trade area, which includes Knox Central.

- **The impact of online retail**

Online retail impacts on the Boronia MAC in many ways including:

- Direct competition with Boronia businesses that often do not have an online presence.
- Reduced demand for retail floor space in the Centre.

This has flow-on effects of diminishing demand for shop fronts, streetscapes becoming less active and inviting, and an increase in vacant spaces in the arcades due to a decline in pedestrian traffic through the Centre.

- **Lack of awareness of niche retail offerings**

A unique experience is cited as a key reason people travel to visit a certain place to purchase goods, eat, drink, or participate in a specific activity.

There are a growing number of small businesses, community groups or clubs that either specialise in goods or services that can be construed as niche or provide unique activities and create a retail identity in

Boronia. Feedback from the community has indicated that many locals have a low awareness of the existence of these businesses/activities as particular attributes to Boronia.

#### 4.2.5 Technology

- **Lack of fast broadband or NBN infrastructure**

For knowledge driven businesses, as well as for the many businesses that operate a home-office, digital infrastructure like broadband is indispensable. As of 2018, Boronia was still not connected to NBN broadband.

Based on the 2016 census, Boronia's level of internet connectivity is below the level of Knox (81.6% of households compared with 85.4% in Knox) and although the recent NBN deployment may have improved this situation.

- **Businesses not keeping up with advances in digital business technology.**

Many businesses within the Boronia MAC are still running paper-based systems and rely on a physical trading presence for their profile which is primarily directed to attracting car-based or walk-in clientele.

However, only small portion of the

businesses have a webpage or actively use social media platforms for their digital presence which creates a disconnect to inform a wider audience to and increase opportunities to attract walk-in clientele.

#### 4.2.6 Leisure and entertainment

- **Lack of a night-time economy**

Choices are currently limited for evening leisure or entertainment in Boronia. In addition, the low perception of community safety in the area, particularly existing arcades, and laneways, creates a barrier to growing a vibrant night-time economy. These negative perceptions are entrenched, through crime and anti-social behaviour occurring after dark.

#### 4.3 Opportunities

The following economic opportunities exists to support changes in Boronia.

##### 4.3.1 Business sector growth opportunities

- **Existing businesses**

There are already several unique businesses within the catchment with an established local consumer base. Future urban redevelopment form should consolidate

---

around the existing anchor large format retail stores, as well as established arcades, laneways, and Dorset Road in the Boronia MAC core area, to support the growth of these small businesses.

- **Food**

Dining: Future growth in the number of residents within Boronia is likely to generate demand for additional cafés and restaurants, including outdoor dining, within the Boronia MAC.

Fresh food: There is an opportunity to increase the range, and lift the profile, of Boronia’s fresh food retail offer in several convenient locations to better meet the needs of residents. A fresh food district, anchored by a smaller format supermarket and a range of unique food specialties (gourmet or ethnic foods) near the Train Station, would enhance the food offer and capitalise on the pedestrian traffic.

There is a clear trend towards consumers seeking a more direct farm-to-consumer connection as communities strive to get closer to nature. In addition, more people are opting for a plant-based diet. These two trends support a food-focused market, tapping into locally sourced produce.

Closely associated with increased interest in food production is an increased demand for knowledge and skills to prepare food. A growing interest in learning more about food (and its preparation) could further influence the retail offer.

- **Night-time economy**

There are three key elements that contribute to a successful night-time economy:

Diversity – a variety of activities that appeal to different age groups, cultures, backgrounds, and interests.

Inviting – a place where everyone feels they belong and is a safe place to be after dark.

Positive experiences – balancing the need to manage public spaces and allowing room for spontaneity, exploration, and curiosity, so that people can meet, interact, and have memorable experiences.

Even though there is a gap between the community safety perceptions and crime statistics, creating well-lit and vibrant night spots can create a more positive experience and increase frequentation of the Boronia MAC at night.

Night-time economic growth will need to be

balanced with residential amenities, for those who live within and close to the Boronia MAC.

- **Knowledge**

Local economies such as Boronia are moving towards being knowledge-based economies. This term is used to describe an economy where businesses and other organisations have an increased dependence on knowledge, information and high- skill trades.

A shift will be necessary to strengthen a ‘knowledge workforce’- one that creates economic value through its knowledge, skills, and ability to use information effectively.

- **Digital**

The delivery of the NBN will improve access to broadband technology. There is an opportunity to develop programs or implement projects that will help build community capacity for equal access to broadband technologies and improve skills to participate in the global digital economy.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

Boronia is well served in terms of choice and access to health services. These facilities include the Melbourne Eastern Private

---

Hospital (2.6km from Boronia – 5-minute drive), or the Knox Private Hospital (6km from Boronia – 10-minute drive). Both these hospitals are regional facilities, providing an extensive range of medical specialists and health services.

There is currently many health-related services located in the Boronia MAC. In addition to a range of general practitioners' clinics, there are over 40 medical and specialist health services, allied health professionals, alternative complimentary therapies, mental health and counselling, and community health and support services.

Of the 620 additional jobs in Boronia between 2011 and 2016, there was an increase of 118 healthcare and social assistance jobs. Jobs growth in the health sector is likely to continue as the local population increases and ages.

A cluster of health businesses exists along the south side of Boronia Road, particularly between Dorset Road and Tulip Crescent. This location is highly accessible and visible along an arterial road and is enhanced by the amenity and respite offered by Boronia Park.

A district with a specific healthcare focus could attract other ancillary and

complementary uses, such as medical research activities, small-scale private hospital facilities, allied health, start-ups, innovation and creative industries, ancillary retail, and accommodation.

There are also current private investments in the pipeline for the redevelopment of medical clinic services south of Boronia Road.

- **Social enterprises**

Social enterprises are a growing sector within the Boronia MAC. There is the opportunity to attract more of these types of enterprises which contribute to diversifying the business mix within the Boronia MAC core area.

These types of enterprises need spaces that are affordable, well-presented, and adaptable, especially in the start-up phase. They could also be a good match for many of the existing vacant premises that line Dorset Road, the Boronia Mall, and the adjoining arcades.

- **Arts-based and creative businesses**

Local businesses with an arts or craft focus are popular in Boronia and more widely in the outer eastern suburbs of Knox. Several craft businesses are located within Boronia and several host groups and classes with a

growing membership from a catchment larger than Boronia itself. These groups/businesses and regularly meet in local halls, libraries, churches, and private homes.

There may be an opportunity to investigate or support the creation of a hub with a creative/art/craft focus as a mean to attract artists, consolidate and nurture small creative enterprises in the Boronia MAC. This approach could lead to increased innovation, cultural diversity, local identity building, and community engagement and participation.

The resulting business mix would fit well with the existing urban fabric, acting as a vector for short term renewal by taking advantage of small tenancies, affordable rents, good access to public transport and established pedestrian areas.

- **Makers in Boronia**

Building on elements that are unique to Boronia could give the Boronia MAC core area a competitive edge. The emergence of several new businesses with a focus on 'micro-making' highlights a new entrepreneurial stream in Boronia and adds a different facet to the local attractions.

Influencing trends include:



- Upcycling and greater use of recycled materials
- Restoration or digitalisation of heritage photos
- Creating handcrafts including scrapbooking, sewing, embroidering, knitting etc
- Personalising goods, styling and finding outlets for self-expression
- Knowing where things come from and how they are made
- Increasing demand for classes, teachers, and craft materials
- Increasing emergence of local craft or produce markets

- **Small scale offices**

Boronia is unlikely to be a major destination for businesses requiring high-end office space. The pandemic has significantly impacted how offices operate with vacancy rates increasing as workers adapt to working from home or a hybrid work environment. However, a trend of traditionally CBD based firms seeking smaller ‘satellite’ office in suburban locations is emerging. New developments at nearby suburban business parks have a superior offer in terms of office

space accommodation.

However, there is an opportunity for Boronia to provide small-scale secondary (B and C grade office spaces) premises catering to the needs of businesses that are more likely to have a local catchment.

Office space demand is likely to come from sectors such as healthcare, social assistance, finance, accounting, professional services, and local real estate agents. Although there is a preference for retail uses at ground floor level, office uses may be incorporated into mixed- use developments as a means of activating the street level during the daytime.

There are also government and non-government community services within the commercial core of the Boronia MAC that could relocate or co- locate in existing buildings at the upper levels.

Well-designed, high-quality office development in the commercial core could increase local employment opportunities, provide for increased business networks, and reduce demand for private vehicle-based transport.

There is also potential for further demand if a critical mass of office uses is established.

#### **4.3.2 New working environments**

Post pandemic, demand for flexible workspaces is likely to increase as businesses seek to better accommodate staff demands for flexibility and better manage business growth uncertainty.

Co-working spaces represent environmentally-friendly and adaptable approaches to work. Sharing work facilities could mean less building and infrastructure development, as well as less energy usage. Some co-working operators are taking new steps to differentiate their offer with green initiatives.

Many businesses are turning to co-working spaces to make sure their project teams have access to environments that encourage innovation, and the ability to foster collaboration opportunities and networking.

There is potential to take advantage of Boronia’s locational attributes to attract this emerging way of working and help attract new, and retain existing, businesses and employees.

#### **4.3.3 Home-based business**

As the growing population increases demand for local services and increases the capacity of the workforce, this will have a direct flow-on effect in growth of home-based businesses in the surrounding residential areas.

---

It is also important to note; many home-based businesses do not require statutory approval from Council. However, home-based businesses which trigger a planning permit will be assessed for their impact on the local amenity, which includes their impacts on street parking. A proposal that would result in a detrimental impact is unlikely to be supported.

#### **4.3.4 Local employment**

Locally available jobs are vital to creating resilient and vibrant communities with diverse employment choices. Growing local jobs has not been a high priority in Boronia in recent years.

An emphasis on creating local jobs could help reduce car travel and reduce pressure to expand major roads to access more distant employment nodes. Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Policy 1.1.7 suggests that an adequate supply of commercial land needs to be secured to accommodate jobs growth, as well as a range of services, entertainment, and civic activities in suburban locations.

Consequently, Knox's Land for Business Directions Plan 2018 confirmed that the current amount of commercially- zoned land must be maintained to optimise the Boronia MAC's potential to cater for future jobs growth.

The impact of residential intensification within the Boronia MAC is likely to increase the local workforce. In areas where residential density is increasing, each additional household, on average, requires around 1.3 jobs. It is desirable that as many of these jobs as possible are provided in the local area.

Aside from the need for better business connectivity, enabling investment in digital technologies within the Boronia MAC could also create the environment for learning and activity in digital creative industries, e-commerce, software design, gaming, and access to online education, leading to improved employment prospects for the local workforce.

#### **4.3.5 Smart communities**

Through the effective implementation of design and place-making, a smart community accommodates and accelerates invention or innovative ideas. Elements of a 'smart' community are emerging in Boronia and as renewal occurs there is the potential to further integrate smart technology in new developments, the public realm and in the types of businesses attracted to the centre.

Smart communities are:

- Globally connected - through communication infrastructure and transport links, with a strong identity. Future health and tertiary organisations offer this opportunity.
- Regionally networked - Strong physical, social, transport and digital connections promote strong integration across the eastern region of Melbourne.
- Locally connected – Infrastructure and support are provided to create a collaborative environment that acts as a catalyst to attract clusters of related activity.

#### **4.3.6 Digital Information**

Digital technology impacts the usage of public spaces. There are opportunities to embrace emerging technologies in our public realm. Information about what is available around a place is an important economic tool in attracting visitors and helping them navigate the centre.

Providing communications technology (e.g. wireless internet or hot spots) within public spaces (in more densely populated urban areas) can facilitate increased access to information.

This could notably be done through public Wi-Fi hotspot which offers internet connection access to those with a suitable device, such as a smartphone, tablet, laptop, or other Wi-Fi enabled

---

devices without needing to use their data.

As of 30 June 2015, an average of almost 4.23 million Aussies went online using a public Wi-Fi hotspot. The prevalence of free Wi-Fi in many urban locations increase the community's expectation that information about a place is accessible at anytime from anywhere.

Access to this type of service can be available in cafés, parks, libraries, shopping centres, tourist attractions, museums, or galleries. It is also becoming common practice to access the internet from buses, trains, public transport hubs, or public squares.

Supporting infrastructure on light posts or attached to buildings can determine the extent of the public network. There is an opportunity to also include a homepage that promotes Boronia as part of accessing this public Wi-Fi.

#### **4.3.7 Traders' Association**

The introduction of a Traders' Association could support business growth through a business community-led approach to assist with promoting the Boronia MAC as a place to shop and visit.





Figure 3 - Economic Development and Investment Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

---

#### 4.4 Preferred future outcomes (what we want by 2040)

##### Local economy

- There is a strong local economy resulting in diverse, vibrant commercial activity supported by retail anchors.

##### Business Investment

- Increased private investment in businesses is achieved with improved ongoing maintenance and amenity to commercial premises.
- Investment regenerates under-utilised land into new uses and activities.

##### Business mix

- A local identity focused on a greater mix of niche and special interest retail, health and wellbeing services, hospitality, arts-based and creative businesses and micro- making businesses is achieved throughout the MAC core.
- Social enterprises are offering more workshops opportunities and support on social innovation programs.
- A mix of local home-based businesses connected digitally and expanding physically from the edge of the Boronia MAC core area.

##### Boronia Food Precinct

- Distinctive food districts exist to feature local and special produce through new local shops, or a regular market supported by a strong restaurants and cafes base offering outdoor dining space for customers and commuters to socialise and linger in the MAC core.

##### Health Precinct

- A health district clusters health and wellbeing services together.

##### Night-time economy

- A strong and vibrant night-time economy provides a variety of leisure, hospitality, and entertainment opportunities in the core of the centre.

##### Knowledge and digital economy

- Public Wi-Fi infrastructure is available to make Boronia globally connected.

##### New work environments

- A diverse range of digitally accessible workplace settings exists to allow people to gather, conduct business, and exchange ideas.

##### Employment

- Increased local employment opportunities are established.
- More flexible office/workspaces design, such as co-working spaces are available.

#### 4.5 Objectives (Our Economic Goals)

- To support local business growth and attract new business and investment.
- To encourage a business mix with a focus on niche retail, food, health and wellbeing, knowledge and digital, and the arts based creative sectors.
- To encourage the appropriate location and high-quality design and appearance of business premises within the Boronia MAC.
- To encourage a strong night-time economy.
- To stimulate local jobs growth.

*Image on the next page:*

*Artist rendition – Looking south along Dorset Road.*







---

#### 4.6 Strategies (how we intend to achieve these economic goals)

##### We will:

##### **Business growth and investment**

- Support increased expenditure in the Town Centre. *(Aspirational)*
- Maintain support for local businesses to grow. *(Operational)*
- Provide infrastructure to support business growth and facilitate new investment in businesses in the Boronia MAC. *(Operational)*
- Support an additional 14,600sqm of retail floor space within the commercial core area to 2041. *(Urban Planning)*
- Support an additional 4,400sqm of office floor space within the commercial core area to 2041. *(Urban Planning)*
- Use arts and creative businesses as a propulsive opportunity for urban renewal. *(Operational and Aspirational)*
- Minimise the underutilisation of commercial premises. *(Aspirational and Urban Planning)*

##### **Business mix**

- Strengthen changes to the business mix in the Boronia MAC with a focus on:

- niche and special interest retail businesses
- health and wellbeing services
- social enterprises
- arts-based and creative businesses
- tech-savvy and knowledge-based businesses and services
- digital and internet-based IT businesses entertainment and leisure to meet the needs of residents, workers, visitors, and young people. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*

- Support health care focused, office-based development which generates greater levels of employment and has beneficial ancillary businesses. *(Urban Planning)*
- Provide a diverse mix of retail spaces for different business types. *(Aspirational)*
- Support co-working spaces to regenerate vacant shops and tenancies within the Boronia MAC. *(Aspirational)*

##### **Location and design**

- Facilitate the clustering of compatible uses within the Boronia MAC including the development of a food precinct, a health and wellbeing precinct, arts and creative businesses, and a digital creative hub as part

of a multi-purpose community centre. *(Urban Planning and Aspirational)*

- Facilitate additional commercial development in underutilised car parks to activate ground floor levels. *(Urban Planning)*
- Require higher standards of maintenance and design for commercial buildings and signs. *(Urban Planning)*

##### **Night-time economy**

- Support longer trading hours for retail premises throughout Boronia MAC. *(Aspirational and Advocacy)*
- Support night-time events and new live music to establish in the Boronia MAC. *(Aspirational and Advocacy)*
- Strengthen food and dining uses and evening-based entertainment venues in the Boronia MAC. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*
- Direct new live music and entertainment venues in locations where any adverse off-site impacts can be managed. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*

##### **Local employment**

- Maintain local employment needs as part of business development within the Boronia MAC. *(Operational)*

- Support the local workforce to build their confidence through technical upskilling to align with health, creative and hospitality business needs. *(Operational)*

#### **4.7 Actions (What we will do to achieve these goals)**

As part of Council’s Economic Development department operation:

- Continue to facilitate information and support promotion for the Boronia MAC, including information to developers on preferred development outcomes and on the identified Strategic Opportunity Sites, through a determined online platform in addition to the current e-newsletters and KnoxBiz.
- Prepare information prospectus that highlights the unique attributes, the existing anchors, and locational advantages of Boronia to attract new and complementary businesses, and investment.
- Raise awareness and promote the range of services available in Boronia through information prospectus and promotion for the Boronia MAC.
- Promote educational programs offered by Council, external agencies, and government

departments based on the training needs and opportunities for businesses.

#### **Big Move Projects**

##### ***Boronia Train Station Precinct Redevelopment Concept and Dorset Square Concept Plan***

As part of the concept planning for these precincts:

- Identify a business mix demand that will support a night-time, food and hospitality economic focus and revitalise the area.
- Explore suitable location for such business mix to activate the ground level and public realm of the Boronia Train Station Precinct and Dorset Square Big Move Projects Precinct.
  - Advocate for and promote the outcome of this identification to the business community, landowners, and through internal referral advice to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications to ensure design does not impede future opportunities.

#### **Boronia Park Masterplan**

As part of the masterplan of Boronia Park:

- Identify ancillary and complementary tenancies that could integrate with the main parkland purpose of Boronia Park to provide activation, casual surveillance, and generate an income for Council.
- Advocate for and promote for a business mix that will activate ground floor level, and upper levels that will provide passive surveillance, to the park and ensure opportunities are achieved through internal referral advice to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications.

#### **Digital Creative Hub Big Move Project**

As part of the Multi-Purpose Community Hub assessment:

- Investigate the feasibility and opportunity to include a Digital Creative Hub component as part of a multi-purpose community facility in Boronia, which could be delivered or operated in partnership with the private sector and tertiary institutions.

---

## **Knox Planning Scheme**

### Implement an amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme to:

- Provide proposed built form controls and policy to maintain sufficient development capacity for additional ground floor retail floor space in the Boronia MAC and avoid net loss of commercial and office space.
- Require ground floor activation to the public realm through retail uses with other non-active uses locating on the upper levels within the commercial core area.
- Support consolidation of sites to achieve efficient development outcomes, the clustering of activities, and activities established in accordance with Figure 3 – Economic development and investment preferred future outcomes plan and the relevant Precinct preferred approach.
- Reinforce existing public and private health services to create a health and wellbeing precinct on the south side of Boronia Road.

## **Business growth and investment**

### *Boronia Traders*

- Investigate opportunities to facilitate better networking amongst the Boronia Traders

through State Government funding and programs.

- Work with Boronia Traders to showcase their businesses through innovative events such as street-based night or weekend markets, mini festivals, street parties or food, music, fashion, or art-based events that celebrate local business and which, in collaboration with Council's Arts and Culture Department, potentially links with community events.

### *Technology*

- Investigate partnership with a telecommunication provider to explore the delivery of public WI-FI areas generally in accordance with the Economic Development and Investment Preferred Future Outcome Plan as a mean to connect the community to digital information and support business development to grow.

### *Arts-based and creative businesses*

- Prepare an audit of existing creative and arts-based businesses to build an internal database of the current condition in Boronia; This situational awareness will help confirm opportunities to establish a network, consolidate or cluster activity for these

businesses, as well as strengthen their supply chain relationships.

- Subject to the audit, and together with the creative and arts-based community, investigate opportunities to support these businesses to grow or establish within Boronia MAC as a propulsive mechanism for renewal through:
  - The creation and repurposing of spaces for arts-based and creative businesses such as via the use of long-term vacant or underutilised premises.
  - The provision of creative spaces (studios and workshops) for artists and the community.
  - The provision of performing spaces that are flexible enough to accommodate the needs of small music and dance ensembles, and theatre companies.
  - The provision of affordable co-working office/incubator space with shared facilities for creative industry practitioners.
  - A digital arts and creative businesses hub.

- 
- Advocate for and facilitate opportunities for arts, cultural and creative businesses cluster as part of mixed-use developments to landowners, and through internal referral advice to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications to ensure design does not impede future opportunities.

#### **Night-time economy**

- In collaboration with Council's Arts and Cultural Services, encourage an ongoing coordinated program of free community and trader driven, night-time events, designed in accordance with Council's accessibility and equality policy, in the Boronia MAC; such as pop-ups, live music and Christmas or 'makers' markets.

#### **Employment**

- Through advocacy with the business community, direct business growth into locations identified on the Preferred Future Outcomes Plan, to increase diverse employment opportunities.



A mix of land uses which meet community needs, including a vibrant retail and commercially based Town Centre and residential development at appropriate locations and densities to provide for the housing needs of the existing and future population.

High quality, sustainable built form which respects the character of the Centre's precincts and protects valued viewlines to the Dandenong Ranges.

## 2. Land Use and Built Form

Early 1920s settlement of Boronia centred along the train line intersection with major roads. The surrounding area included agricultural uses in the form of market gardens, orchards, and flower crops grown commercially for the Melbourne market.

Boronia subsequently experienced several significant growth surges and changes over short periods that transformed the area from a rural agricultural place to a full-fledged metropolitan suburb (through the 1970s, 1990s and, most recently from 2014– 2017 in its residential area). These growth periods have been interspersed with extended periods of stability and minimal change.

Apart from the late 1990s grade separation of the Belgrave Train line, the early settlement pattern of the core commercial activity centre is intact. Prior to the grade separation, Chandler Road did not connect to the western side of the train line and the intersection of Dorset and Boronia Roads required traffic to address the train crossing points.



---

## 5.1 Elements

### 5.1.1 Local identity and character

Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) has a low-rise built form character, and still largely comprises the original commercial buildings, representing both the initial era of development within the township, and the later period of car centric suburbanisation.

There are limited landmark buildings, no identified heritage buildings, and the 'backdrop' of the nearby Dandenong Ranges is a defining and valued characteristic of Boronia.

### 5.1.2 Changing urban form

As a Major Activity Centre, Boronia is naturally transforming from a suburban centre to one with pockets of urban densities in proximity to public transport over time.

The Boronia MAC has experienced an increase in residential townhouses development, but little change has resulted in the Boronia MAC core area in recent years.

State and Local policies suggest that the bulk of population growth should be accommodated within activity centres, near services, community facilities and public transport. Large sways of Boronia (suburb) are subject to the Dandenong

Foothills and Bush Suburban policies as sensitive no growth area. Consequently, it is estimated that most of the forecasted demographic growth will be in the MAC and needs to be accommodated within the MAC to reduce pressure on the rest of Boronia and maintain the local bush suburban character.

The Boronia Structure Plan 2006 allowed for moderate levels of change through the interim building controls but still included apartment style opportunities, within the Boronia MAC.

However, to date, the market adopted a townhouse model that was easier to deliver, resulting in a disproportionately large amount of two and three storeys residential development density compared to the rest of Knox, particularly on the periphery of the Centre. Redevelopment of the commercial core is likely to follow suit once all the less restrictive sites have been used.

### 5.1.3 Existing land uses

- Commercial  
Commercial uses are well-established within the Boronia MAC core area, particularly along Dorset Road and, except for several large at-grade car parks, spread across three locations.
  - Dorset Square/Boronia Mall

- Boronia Junction
- Boronia Village

Additionally, some retail/service uses are also located on the southern side of Boronia Road.

The main concentration of office uses (including medical centres) is along Boronia Road (west of Dorset Road), and Chandler Road and Floriston Road.

Large expanses of land are used for car parking within each quadrant of the Boronia MAC, particularly north of Boronia Road. Commercial uses include ground floor shop and food and drink premises along Dorset Road, Dorset Square and Boronia Road. There is also a distinct expanse of ground floor spaces used for offices and private community uses within the commercial core.

A larger retail footprint abuts the southern end of the train station (Boronia Junction Shopping Centre) and eastern side of Dorset Square (Coles and Kmart).

- Residential  
The residential neighbourhoods surrounding the Boronia MAC core area are gradually changing from detached dwellings and scattered villa units through an increase in

townhouse developments and a few new apartment buildings located on the edge of the commercial area.

Residential areas outside the Boronia MAC remain predominantly detached dwellings and scattered villa units, with an evolving pressure towards townhouses including in the Knox Neighbourhood housing character area to the west of the Boronia MAC.

- Open space

Four open space reserves are located within Boronia MAC, including Tormore Reserve (active open space), Chandler Park (active open space), Boronia Park (active and passive open space), and Genista Park (passive and natural open space).

- Public uses

Public uses are primarily located in the north-west of the Boronia MAC, including Boronia West Primary School, Leisureworks, the Boronia College K-12 site and the rail reservation that runs diagonally through the Boronia MAC.

#### 5.1.4 Housing

- Distribution and density

The Knox Housing Monitoring program

shows that the bulk of planning permit applications for medium-density development in Boronia is within the Boronia MAC boundary, suggesting that this policy direction is being achieved.

Most of the residential development can be classified as medium density, albeit at the low-rise type/lower tier of medium density, located outside the Boronia MAC core area with pressure for it spilling out into the wider suburb through applications for townhouses. There are fewer than 100 dwellings within the 36ha Boronia MAC core area.

Population and dwelling forecasts for the suburban of Boronia (source: forecast .id, 2021) are shown in the table below.

**Table 4 – Population and dwelling forecasts**

Year	Population	Dwellings
2016	22,798	9,623
2041	27,006	11,810
<b>Change between 2016-2041</b>	<b>4,208</b>	<b>2,187</b>

The Boronia MAC is estimated to accommodate a population of 2,934 residents in 2021. This is expected to increase to 5,079 by 2041. To accommodate this the Boronia MAC will require approximately 1,311 additional dwellings over the next 20 years. This will reduce growth pressure on other residential areas of Boronia and help preserve the bush suburban housing character of the Dandenong Foothills area.

- Social and affordable housing

Secure, suitable, and affordable housing is a vital base to enable households to meet their other needs, such as education and employment. Knox City Council defines affordable housing as where the cost of mortgage repayment or rent is no more than 30% of that household's net income. Exceeding this threshold places one under 'housing stress,' particularly notable in the lower 40% of the income households.

Boronia historically provided housing which was inexpensive when compared with other parts of Melbourne. In 2001, nearly 40% of rental lettings in Knox were 'affordable' for members of the community on very low incomes (welfare payments) compared with



---

only 26.1% for Melbourne as a whole.

However, the cost of housing in Knox and Boronia has increased significantly since 2001 in absolute and relative terms. To illustrate, the median house price in Boronia was approximately 3.8 times the metropolitan median income in 2001, rising to 8.7 times by 2016. Also, the median rental price in Boronia has increased relative to incomes. As a result, as of 2016 very few rental lettings (4.2%) were affordable for members of the community on very low incomes.

Data from the 2016 Census indicates that 19.3% of households in Boronia spend more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage repayments, a similar proportion to Melbourne as a whole. Implications for households would vary depending on their level of income and wealth, living expenses (for example, whether the household has dependent children) and whether the household owns or rents.

Lack of housing diversity contributes to affordability issues in Knox and Boronia. To illustrate, only a small proportion of all housing in Knox (2.5%) and Boronia (2.4%) is comprised of more compact (and typically less expensive) housing forms such as

apartments (although townhouses do comprise a high proportion of all dwellings in Boronia). Notwithstanding, smaller apartments (with 1 or 2 bedrooms) comprised a large proportion of new lettings in Boronia between 2016 and 2018, indicating notable housing diversity in Boronia's rental market.

- Commercial Built form

The current built form associated with commercial land use is typically one or two storeys in height. There are a few examples of three-storey commercial buildings along Dorset Road. While Dorset Road and Boronia Road contain segments of a commercial strip shopping typology, the more common format is large format retail or strips of shops fronting large surface car parking.

There are several factors which work collectively to justify a taller built form:

- More intense forms of housing within the Boronia MAC will enable the broader suburb to better accommodate its projected population increase, while protecting the valued and surrounding bush suburban character of the local residential streets.

- The need to improve viability of the Boronia MAC core area.
- Efficiencies and economies of scale gained on both infrastructure and businesses vitality through more intensive development and an increase in population catchment.
- Location advantages, close to public transport, services, and community facilities making selected places more desirable for redevelopment.

The ultimate built form will be influenced by the following considerations:

- Context and location, slope, solar access
- The defined the 'core' and precinct areas of the Boronia MAC Proximity and access to public transport infrastructure
- Street role activation and character, including space for landscaping and the greening of the urban environment
- Protection of key local public views and vistas
- Transition to sensitive residential interfaces, between precincts, and out of MAC areas

- Amenity impacts, such as overshadowing on the public realm and surrounding development.
- The need for public realm and semi-public spaces, including the need for space to improve local movements.
- Activity and service needs.

### 5.1.6 Views

Views of the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills area are considered an intrinsic part of the local Boronia character. Boronia’s community derives a sense of place from the knowledge and proximity to the Dandenong Ranges framed by the landscaped setting of the Foothills.

Special views, vistas and scenic settings contribute to liveability, wayfinding, and quality of life.

Visually appealing distant views to a natural setting can assist in understanding the context and location of a place and generate positive experience of that place.

A view analysis was undertaken to refine and strengthen the status of views previously identified in the 2006 Boronia Structure Plan.

The important public realm views to the Dandenong Ranges that embody Boronia’s local

identity and character were assessed based on, three locations. These were:

- Tormore Reserve, measured from the edge of the oval.
- Boronia Park, measured from the western side of Park Crescent.
- Boronia Road, although only an ephemeral view, is measured from the median strip at the western ridge line.

As part of this Strategy, a digital 3D model, including accurate terrain and contour levels, has been prepared to test the impact of various building heights and locations in the Boronia MAC core area on the identified public views. The 3D model depicted the potential building envelopes of 4 storeys buildings (permitted under existing Design and Development Overlay Schedule 7) as a base case from which the impact of taller development scenarios would be assessed.

The 3D model was utilised to determine the recommended preferred street setbacks, street wall heights and maximum heights and ensure that these new (increased) massing arrangements do not visually impinge of the key views towards the Dandenong Ranges from the defined key public vantage points.

It should be noted that the impact of existing vegetation and trees on those views has not been

measured in the 3D model. Clear views to buildings shown in the 3D model findings may be concealed in the future by tree growth or may already be obscured by existing trees. Other existing elements, such as power lines, signage and streetlights may also have a negative impact on the quality of views.

*Images on the next pages:*

*Artist rendition - View looking east from Tormore Reserve*

*Artist rendition - View looking east from Boronia Park*





CRAIG PERRY 2019





CRAIG PERRY 2019



---

## 5.2 Issues

The following key land use and built form issues have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

### 5.2.1 Local identity and character

- Balancing the space required to retain the ‘bush boulevard’ feel along Boronia Road and the leafy and green local character while embracing the more intense built form and managing growth pressures.
- Managing the scale of development to retain views of the foothills, which is an important and valued part of local character and identity.
- Lack of a unifying theme, architectural features, visual cues, or streetscape element that create a cohesive Boronia MAC identity.

### 5.2.2 Managing change

- The difficulty of directing change and aspirational outcome for private land in a proponent-lead system.
- The loss of trees and landscaping and the increase in stormwater run-off resulting from recent development in residential precincts.

- Protecting the long-term intensification potential of large sites from inappropriate short-term development.

### 5.2.3 Urban structure

- Fragmented land use and ownership pattern with poor connections between activities nodes.
- Residential intensification happening in the form of townhouses in surrounding neighbourhoods but not as mixed-use development in the Boronia MAC core area.
- Increased pressure for infill development outside the Boronia MAC.
- Lack of genuine mixed-use development.

### 5.2.4 Accommodating population growth

- Forecasted population growth will result in increased pressure for housing within the suburb of Boronia, and the Boronia MAC in particular.
- The need to achieve a diversity of housing types in terms of size, type, affordability, and accessibility to respond to the changing needs of Boronia’s population.

### 5.2.5 Residential land use

- Uneven distribution of residential development type within the Boronia MAC boundary.
- Limited remaining capacity to accommodate growth in residential precincts of the Boronia MAC core area.
- Lack of dwelling variety of housing types in terms of size configuration (particularly) apartments suitable for families, and tenure.
- Land values are yet to mature to support viability of quality apartment developments.

### 5.2.6 Social and affordable housing

- The gap between household income and housing prices is continuing to grow leading to higher levels of housing stress experienced by the community and the need for greater housing diversity.
- The difficulty in requiring social housing contribution as part of new developments due to the absence of a statutory process to that effect.

---

### 5.2.7 Land use

- Poor appearance and maintenance of privately owned buildings.
- Lack of well-located useable public spaces in the Boronia MAC core area.
- Existing regulatory barriers to increased residential density development in the Boronia MAC core area, i.e. existing built form, and car parking provision rates.

### 5.2.8 Built form

- Inefficient site layout and building design responses for medium and higher density residential proposals.
- Poor design quality of some recent residential developments, including the choice and longevity of materials and colours, which undermines community's confidence in future improvements.
- Council's limited ability to protect private views to the Dandenong Ranges that originate from private land, notably that of the Boronia Village car park.
- The community perceived concerns related to the impact of new multi-storey development proposals on views.

- The need to manage introduction of taller built form in terms of design, amenity, and community acceptance, including internal amenities for future residents.
- Lack of passive surveillance/visibility and interaction with the public realm, streets and building entrances.
- Challenges of delivering well designed car parks at ground level, as construction of basement levels for car storage within new development is not currently viable.

### 5.3 Opportunities

The following land use and built form opportunities exist

#### 5.3.1 Lot consolidation

Lot consolidation can be a catalyst for intensification by:

- Providing larger development sites with more generous dimensions
- Enabling more efficient building designs and construction
- Providing more flexible ground floor tenancy configurations
- Providing greater ability to set back from sensitive boundaries

- Reducing the frequency of driveway crossings
- Providing more scope for a contextual design response

Where lot consolidation occurs on corner locations, there are further opportunities to improve access points and car parking arrangements, as well as the opportunity to set back further from sensitive boundaries.

#### 5.3.2 Views

Three key public views towards the Dandenong Ranges have been established. These vantage points are from Tormore Reserve, Boronia Park and along Boronia Road.

The proposed built form controls have been tested and refined by a 3D massing model to ensure the increased heights will protect and maintain the existing views towards the Dandenong Ranges from these three key public locations. Tormore Reserve will provide a wide vista at ground level, while Boronia Road provides a 'framed' view towards part of Chandler peak in the alignment of the road. The development of the Boronia Park masterplan will consider opportunities for views to the Dandenong Ranges to be established and 'framed.'

As renewal and new development occurs, there is an opportunity to ensure that the upper levels of

---

new buildings maximise views which can include providing a stepped built form with outdoor terraces or the use of rooftop terraces to accentuate views.

### 5.3.3 Strategic Opportunity Sites

A total of 23 Strategic Opportunity Sites (SOS) have been identified in the Boronia MAC as suitable for redevelopment for a mix of uses, as well as higher density residential development.

These sites provide the opportunity to play a significant role in reshaping Boronia. They warrant careful consideration to ensure redevelopment opportunities and beneficial contributions to the community are maximised.

They were considered based on identified having regard to the following attributes:

- Singular ownership
- Adequacy of the property size
- Extent of Planning Scheme controls affecting the site
- Context/location in the MAC Core
- Existing building age/condition
- Activity/land use

All land within the MAC core was assessed against these attributes and a short list of sites was

identified as SOS sites.

The identification of an SOS site within the Boronia MAC clearly identifies to the community and the development industry where some development is considered more likely to occur within the near future and that Council is keen to engage with prospective developers early in the process to encourage and facilitate good design outcomes and achieve the MAC long-term vision.

The 23 SOS Sites are as follows and shown in Figure 4. They are further described in Chapter 9 (Precinct Plans).

1. 202-210 Dorset Road & 103-109 Boronia Road – Chandler Arcade (Sub-precinct 1A)
2. 218-224 Dorset Road – AEC Arcade (Sub-precinct 1A)
3. 230 Dorset Road (Sub-precinct 1A)
4. 236-238 Dorset Road - ‘Craves’ Lane (Sub-precinct 1A)
5. 87 Boronia Road (Sub-precinct 1A)
6. 112-112A Boronia Road (Precinct 3)
7. 121-127 Boronia Road – Boronia Junction (Sub-precinct 1B)
8. 5-11 Erica Avenue (Sub-precinct 1C)
9. 31-39 Erica Avenue (Sub-precinct 1C)
10. Part of 159 Boronia Road (Sub-precinct 1C)

11. 9/163 Boronia Road (Sub-precinct 1C)
12. 2 Langwith Avenue (Precinct 3)
13. 280 Dorset Road (Precinct 2)
14. 267 Dorset Road (Precinct 2)
15. 50 Dorset Square – Kmart (Sub-precinct 1A)
16. Boronia Mall (Sub-precinct 1A)
17. 50 Dorset Square - Coles multi-deck car park (Sub-precinct 1A)
18. Part of 159 Boronia Road (Sub-precinct 1C)
19. 163 Boronia Road (Sub-precinct 1C)
20. 194-198 Dorset Road (Precinct 3)
21. 65 Boronia Road (Precinct 2)
22. 83 Boronia Road (Sub-precinct 1A)
23. 257 Dorset Road (Sub-precinct 1B)

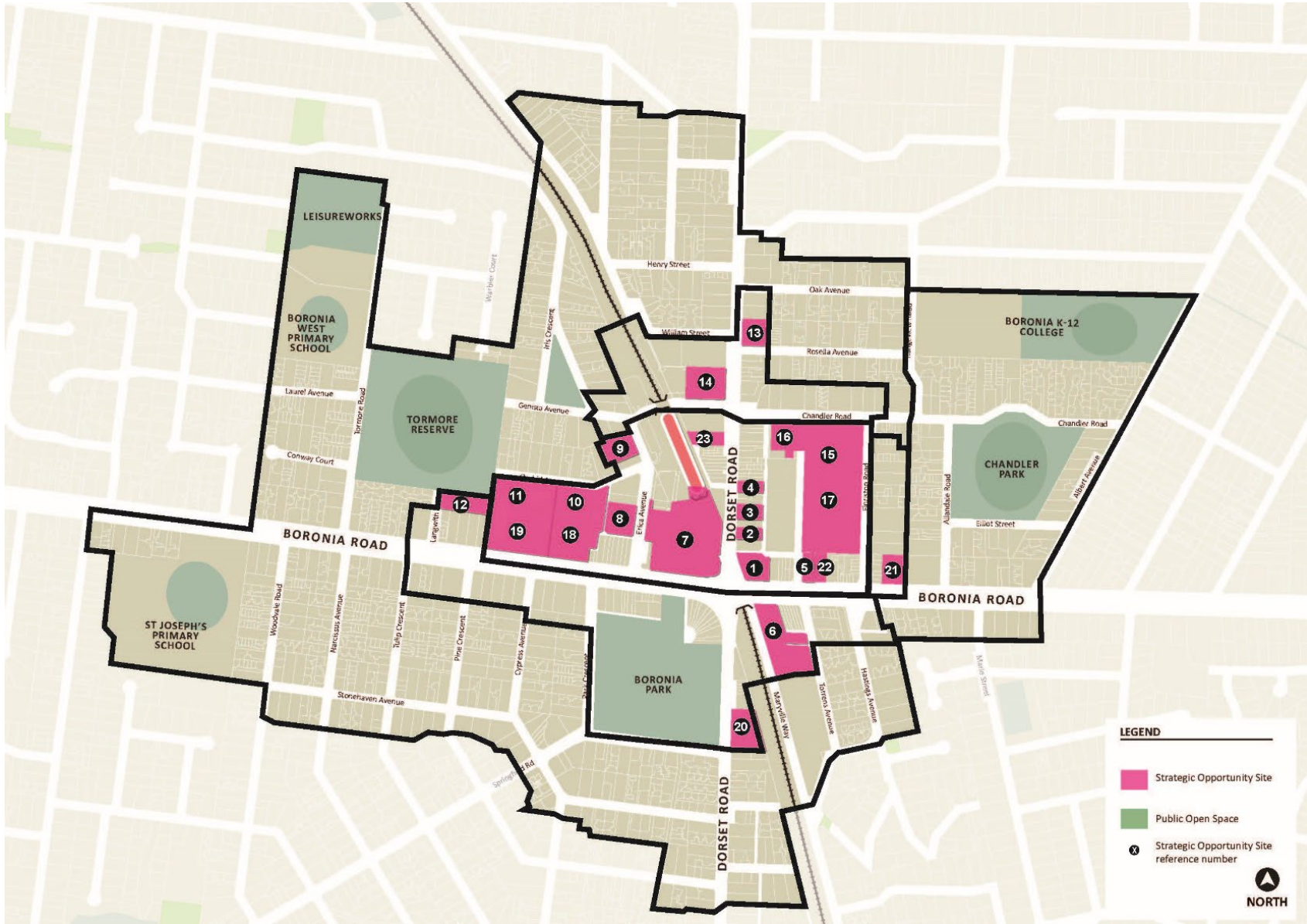


Figure 4 - Strategic Opportunity Sites



---

## 5.4 Preferred Future Outcomes (*what we want by 2040*)

### Local identity and character

- The Boronia MAC provides a more compact, vibrant, and diverse character, and maintained a strong connection to the Dandenong Ranges and its foothills through an enhanced green and leafy identity and key views.
- More people live and work in the Boronia MAC close to public transport, services, and community infrastructure.
- The green and leafy character of Boronia is strengthened (*refer to Public Realm chapter*).

### Land use

- Land uses and housing densities are sited and designed to support a significant mobility mode shift to public transport, walking and cycling.
- Higher density in the form of mixed-use development exists in and close to the Boronia MAC core area.
- Substantial change in residential development results in the Precinct 5 surrounding the Boronia MAC core area.

- The ground and first floor levels of the Boronia MAC core are the focus of more intense and active commercial activities.
- Major redevelopment focused on identified Strategic Opportunity Sites to reshape Boronia.
- In Precinct 4 and 5: Existing community facilities (e.g. schools, parks, and recreation) serves as focal points for the consolidation of new use and activities in their immediate vicinity.
- Increased diversity in housing types exists in Boronia, including social and affordable housing options sited in the immediate vicinity of the public transport hub, or sites linked to community facilities and services.

### Built form

- Buildings are well- designed, sustainable, and adaptable over time.
- Vertical greening options are established as part of the design of buildings and infrastructures.
- Buildings are clad with high-quality materials comprising colours and texture that accentuate vibrancy and activation at the ground level, but which solidifies the

local foothills character identity at upper levels.

- A range of building heights do not infringe on the key public views while providing a transition from the tallest buildings at the intersection of Dorset and Boronia Roads to mid-rise developments in the core that further taper down towards the edge of the MAC.
- Building design makes a positive contribution to the public realm, activates the street, and provides visibility for passive surveillance.



Figure 5 - Land Use Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

---

## 5.5 Objectives (*Our Land Use and Built Form Goals*)

- To manage change in a way that protects and enhances the valued character and identity of the Boronia MAC and maximises opportunities for redevelopment and revitalisation.
- To accommodate population and employment growth in appropriate locations within the Boronia MAC.
- To encourage a diversity of dwelling types and tenures, including increased social and affordable housing.
- To ensure that new development is well-designed, sustainable, and makes a positive contribution to the local neighbourhood.
- To protect significant viewlines to the Dandenong Ranges.

## 5.6 Strategies (*how we intend to achieve these land use and built form goals*)

### We will:

#### **Accommodating population growth**

- Direct residential and employment growth in the Boronia MAC to better utilise existing infrastructure, including public transport. (*Urban Planning*)

- Facilitate increased density of new residential development in the form of apartments within walking distance of the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN), retail, employment opportunity and community facilities. (*Urban Planning*)
- Facilitate increased number of dwellings in the surrounding residential neighbourhoods. (*Urban Planning*)
- Support lot consolidation to achieve a better development outcome. (*Aspirational and Urban Planning*)

#### **Housing Diversity**

- Require a greater diversity of dwelling types in relation to size, design, materials, number of bedrooms and price range to cater for different household types. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)
- Facilitate more mixed-use development in the Boronia MAC core area, with ground floor levels being used for retail and office purposes and upper levels for office or residential purposes. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)
- Facilitate an increased amount of social and affordable housing within the Boronia MAC. (*Aspirational and Advocacy*)

#### **Built form**

- Support new buildings of a high-quality design through their sustainability, internal amenity, particularly and breaking of mass, and street appeal. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)
- Require new residential, mixed use and commercial developments to improve their environmental sustainability. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)
- Provide fine-grain built form that maintains the human scale and interaction of the traditional shop fronts along streets. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)
- Require buildings design to provide passive surveillance and interaction to streets, laneways, and semi-public and public spaces. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)
- Support reinstatement and activation of the ‘main street’ character along both sides of Dorset Road between Chandler Road and Boronia Road. (*Aspirational and Urban Planning*)
- Reinforce opportunities for landscaping and increased tree canopy. (*Aspirational and Urban Planning*)

---

## Protection of views

- Protect view lines to the Dandenong Ranges from key public location (i.e. Tormore Reserve, Boronia Road western approaches, Boronia Park).
- Use appropriate view modelling techniques when assessing sites that can accommodate taller built form e.g., 3D Modelling.

### 5.7 Actions (*what we will do to achieve these goals*)

#### As part of Council's City Strategy and Planning, and Statutory Planning departments operations:

- Promote and reinforce the pre-application process to landowners and developers of sites within the Boronia MAC core and particularly on Strategic Opportunity Sites to support high-quality design outcomes and local considerations at an early stage of pre-design and planning.
- Use the Victorian Government's Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria to design elements.

## Social Housing

#### As part of Council's Community Partnerships department operations:

Advocate to the Victorian Government for the provision of social housing and inclusionary zoning on both private and government land within the MAC core to address the existing shortfall in supply and provide social housing close to services and transport hubs.

### Big Move Projects

#### **Boronia Train Station Precinct Redevelopment Concept and Dorset Square Concept Plan**

- As part of the concept planning for these precincts:
  - Plan and explore social housing opportunities for the future redevelopment of land owned by State Government agencies and advocate to the Victorian Government for the inclusion/delivery of social housing components. (*Train Station*)
  - Plan and explore for social housing opportunities on the future redevelopment of land owned by Council.
  - Collaborate with local community housing organisations and private developers to identify suitable opportunities for social housing

delivery in the redevelopment process of the precincts.

### **Knox Planning Scheme**

- Implement an amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme to:
  - Replace the Existing Design and Development Overlay 7 (DDO7) with a new provision that introduce built form controls and transition as identified in Figure 6 to Boronia MAC Core (Precincts 1, 2 and 3), including mandatory height controls to protect key public views to the Dandenong Ranges.
  - Support increased building height and facilitate mixed-use development with active frontages at ground level, apartments at upper levels, and improved walkability throughout the centre.
  - Support use and development in accordance with Figure 4 Strategic Opportunity Sites, Figure 5 Land Use Preferred Future Outcomes Plan, Figure 6 Boronia MAC Core Future Built Form Plan, the relevant Precinct



- 
- preferred approach, and including the redevelopment of at-grade car parks.
- Implement an amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme and apply principles to planning permit applications to:
    - Ensure ground floor design, scale, and placement of signage will not deter from achieving an active ground floor with a vibrant and pedestrian focused centre.
    - Support three storeys along the railway corridor.
    - Support the inclusion of rooftop terraces in development.
    - Promote ground floor to ceiling height of 4m to future flexibility and potential long-term conversion.
    - Ensure development is sustainably engineered to achieve potential conversion and ensure buildings can achieve their full development potential in the future.
    - Ensure residential developments have an accessible and adaptable layout at ground floor level.

### **Managing change**

- Plan for material and colour schedule guidelines to provide direction for developers and statutory functions of Council and complement built form controls. The guideline will have regard to:
  - The purpose of the precinct.
  - The need to create vibrancy and street appeal at ground levels in Precincts 1, 2, and 3.
  - The quality, durability, affordability, availability, and long-term sustainability of the material.
  - The durability to vandalism and graffiti.
  - The representation of the Dandenong Foothills in the pallet of colours and tones to allow to blend with the hillside, relevant for upper levels in Precincts 1, 2, and 3.
- Investigate a vertical greening technical detail sheet to provide guidance for developers and statutory functions of Council in the type of green roofs, facades, and green walls that is acceptable, achievable, and suitable to the context of Boronia.
- Monitor and apply a 5-year review (as required) of the development outcome of Precinct 4 to determine whether it achieves a sensitive residential growth outcome that transitions to the Dandenong Foothills. Monitoring will consider the change in canopy tree coverage, the typology of development, and its landscaping outcome.

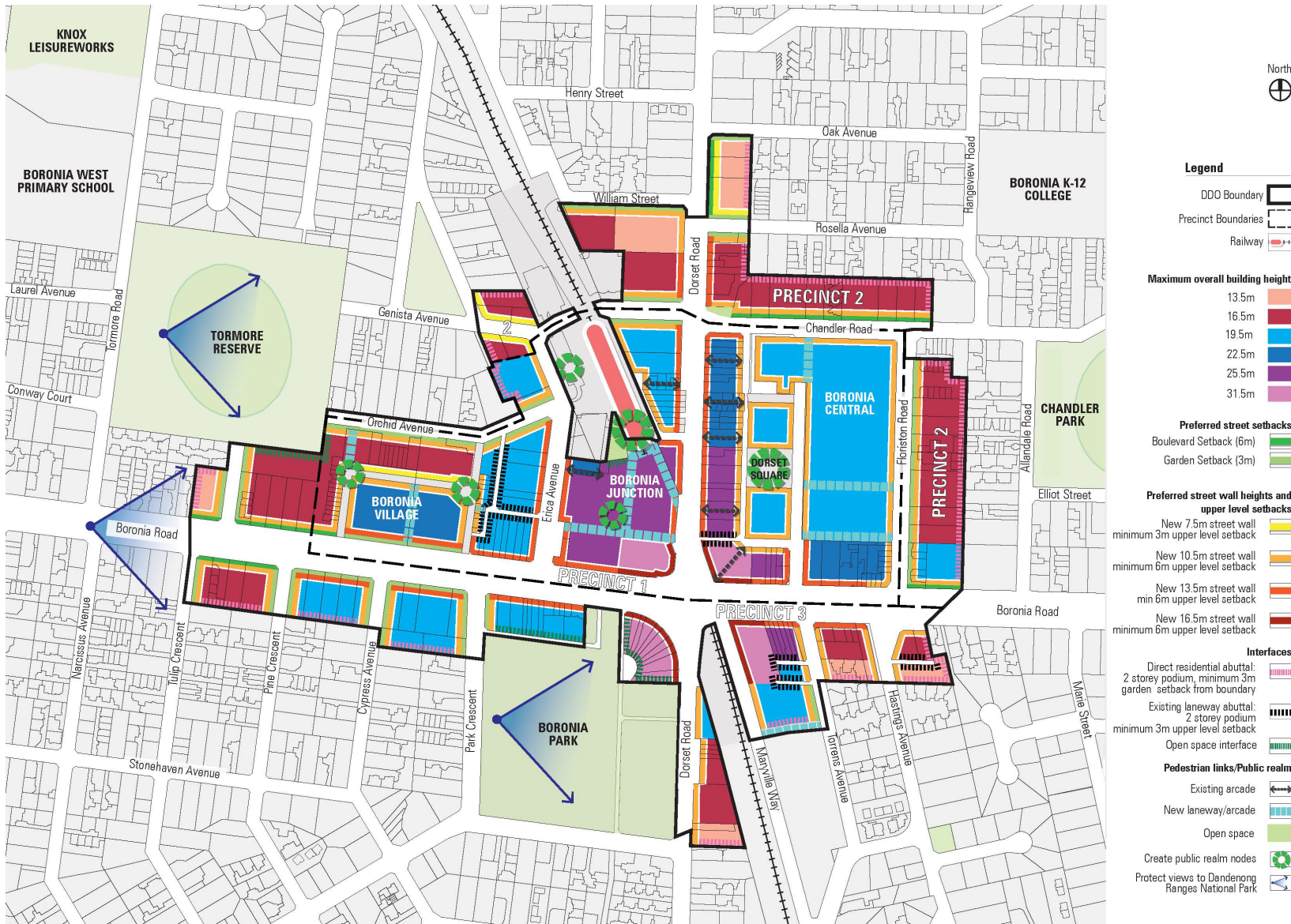


Figure 6 - Boronia MAC Core Future Built Form Plan (Precincts 1, 2 and 3)

**High levels of accessibility and connectedness to and within the Centre, with a vibrant and contemporary transport hub, timely public transport services and priority for pedestrians and cyclists, reducing dependency on private car use for short trips.**

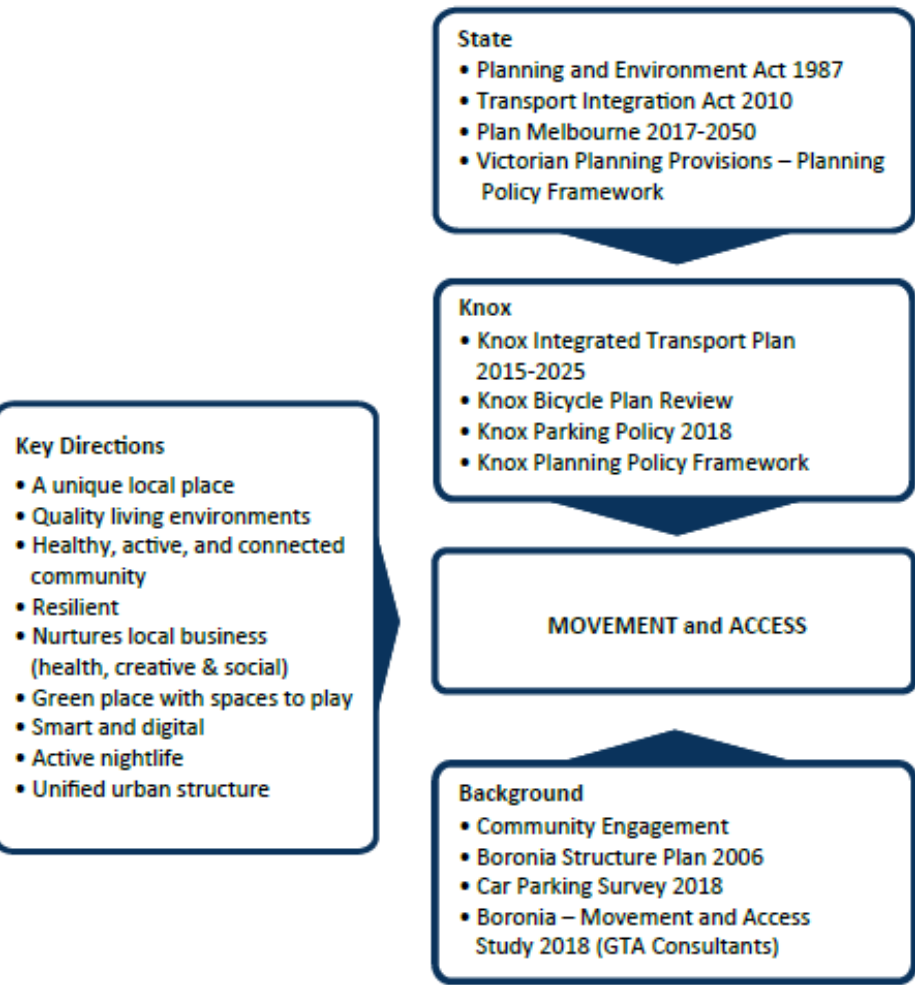
# 3. Movement and Access

Boronia originated as an urban edge metropolitan suburban township relying mostly on private cars as the dominant mode of transport, despite being located on the metropolitan train network.

This has led to the entrenchment of a car-based dynamic and an urban bisected by major arterial roads. A substantial supply of car parking spaces is provided, mostly as large 'at grade' areas, but also through two multi-storey parking structures.

Little has changed in the street network since 2006 despite the substantial growth in population and residential development resulting in an increase of local and regional traffic volumes.

These conditions have led to peak hour congestion in the network, the design of overly large arterial roads and intersections resulting in reduced amenity and connectedness for pedestrians and cyclists.





---

## 6.1 Elements

### 6.1.1 Road network

Transit and local vehicle traffic movements are channelled through the Boronia MAC via the two major declared arterial roads: Boronia Road and Dorset Road, which are both managed by the Victorian Government.

### 6.1.2 Commercial vehicles

Businesses in the Boronia MAC require good access to retail or commercial premises for the loading and unloading of goods and for waste management. This is particularly important for food and beverage premises.

Dorset Road, and to a lesser extent Boronia Road, are used for freight movement and are gazetted as B-double roads. These roads serve as arterial transit for the regional catchment, with Dorset Road providing direct access to major employment areas in the Bayswater Business Precinct to the north, and the Mountain Gate Centre to the south.

### 6.1.3 Car parking

A car parking audit of the Boronia MAC was carried out in March 2018 for the purpose of evaluating the current supply, restrictions, and associated conditions (accessibility, lighting, and signage) of car parking spaces.

The audit identified that there are over 3,000 car parking spaces in various configurations clustered in different locations across the Boronia MAC. This includes on- and off-street areas, the Coles multi-deck building (which was under renovation at the time of the audit) and the Boronia Train Station commuter parking area.

### 6.1.4 Public transport

Boronia Train Station is well-utilised, with comparable patronage to Mordialloc and Sunbury Train Stations. Of the employees that work in Boronia MAC, 7% arrive on public transport. This is significantly less than those within the entire Greater Metropolitan area (19%)<sup>5</sup>.

Several bus routes provide connections to the surrounding areas, including Bayswater, Croydon, Ferntree Gully, Knox Central and Rowville, and bus stops are in the commercial core with the train

station vicinity also including a bus interchange station. A night bus also passes through the Boronia MAC, which links Glen Waverley Train Station with Bayswater.

### 6.1.5 Walking

Only 2% of people working in Boronia walk to work<sup>6</sup>. The condition of the walking environment is variable and crossing busy roads is an ongoing concern for the community. The footpath network through the Boronia MAC is along streets and through the three large reserves.

### 6.1.6 Cycling

Boronia is part of the eastern regional cycling network, and a cycling shared path (Ringwood-Belgrave Rail Trail) is located parallel to the train line as it passes through the Boronia MAC. The Blind Creek Trail also runs near the external south-west edge of the Boronia MAC connecting Boronia to the Knox Central Activity Centre.

Of the employees that work in Boronia MAC, 0.4% cycle to work<sup>7</sup>. A 'Parkiteer' (bicycle facility) is provided at Boronia Train Station, though this is underutilised and located on the opposite side of

---

<sup>5</sup> GTA Consultants, Movement and Access Study, 2018

<sup>6</sup> GTA Consultants, Movement and Access Study, 2018

<sup>7</sup> GTA Consultants, Movement and Access Study, 2018

---

the rail corridor from the cycle path.

## 6.2 Issues

The following key movement and access issues have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

### 6.2.1 Road Network

- Balancing the function of streets for through mobility and as local urban environment (Movement and Place)

Streets cannot only be considered from the perspective of vehicle movements. They can perform varied roles within the wider transport network. Currently, 85% of the road space is allocated to vehicles and only 12% to pedestrians. This reflects the strong focus on accommodating through and local trips by vehicles.

- Poor wayfinding

Particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport, navigation of the centre is difficult. There are physical and visual barriers (particularly in the four quadrants of the commercial core) and a lack of coherence in finding elements such as signage, markers, visual cues, and identity.

A lack of designated connections and signage makes it difficult for visitors to the centre to know where things are and how to access local destinations by walking.

There is also a significant lack of wayfinding signage for cyclists throughout the Boronia MAC. Existing signage is not highly visible and only directs people along the existing shared paths.

- Traffic congestion

Traffic in the Boronia MAC is characterised by high volumes of short-distance trips generating local traffic congestion, as well as cruising cars looking for parking spaces.

### 6.2.2 Commercial vehicles

- Impact on amenity and safety

Although freight movement through the Boronia MAC core area is important, it also creates amenity and safety impacts for everyday users. Inappropriate locations of loading bays or external storage areas also have a negative impact on the streetscape and pedestrian/cyclist amenity. In some cases, reversing movements of large trucks also create safety concerns for pedestrians.

### 6.2.3 Private vehicles

- Dominance of cars

Feedback from the Car Parking Survey (included in the Community Engagement Report 2019) has indicated that rates of car ownership in Boronia are increasing, and that there is a high car dependency, partly due to limited public transport services.

The appearance and signage associated with many businesses in the Boronia MAC is oriented towards visibility from cars. This creates a hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists that is cluttered and lacks any coherent or unifying place brand.

### 6.2.4 Car Parking

- Inefficient supply and management of car parking

The provision of car parking has a significant impact on how people use the area. As the Boronia MAC grows and more people are attracted to the area, competition for parking spaces increases between different users.

The community, business owners, employees and visitors to Boronia have all identified the management of car parking spaces as an area of concern. In particular, the supply (quantity and location) and management of existing car

---

parking spaces in the Boronia MAC has been identified as a major theme and ongoing issue in multiple community surveys.

There is a range of diverse needs for car parking:

- Users of public transport (train) to access employment create a high demand for commuter parking spaces surrounding the Train Station.
- Many short trips to and around the Boronia MAC core area are taken by car, which could be due to the lack of parking information (availability of spaces) and the perception that walking between locations is unsafe or inconvenient.
- The workforce associated with retail and commercial activity creates a demand for car spaces. Although some businesses provide car parking on their own land, many workers must park in car parking areas intended for customers, or in surrounding residential streets.
- Business customers have expectations of having convenient and/or direct access to businesses. This can often result in

cars ‘cruising’ and waiting for car parking spaces.

- Safe, well-lit, and easily accessed car parking spaces for workers on late night shifts are also limited.

A review of the available spaces has identified that different management and enforcement arrangements are in place, with little consideration for the effectiveness of the restriction or where demand was at a premium.

There is often a mismatch between car parking demand for spaces at peak times and availability at selected locations, which can be compounded by time restrictions. To ensure that a consistent and equitable approach to the short-term management of car parking spaces is taken, Council has prepared a Boronia Parking Management Plan 2019 for parking spaces across the Boronia MAC.

- Car parking areas used for access  
In some locations, including around the Train Station, there are parking areas used by vehicles to avoid intersections, i.e., rat-running.

- Limited information about the availability of parking

There is little directional signage from arterial roads to commuter parking or access to the Train Station.

Only Council owned parking areas are marked with standard parking signs at the entrances to give a general indication of where there are parking spaces, but there is limited information regarding the number of spaces or availability.

Only the Coles multi-deck car park has information at the entry points and a ‘red/green’ light system indicating where spaces are free.

- Limited resource of on-street car parking on residential streets

As residential density increases, there will be growing competition for on-street parking spaces. Currently there is no line marking on residential streets to formally identify appropriate parking locations. The width and traditional design of local residential streets affects vehicle flow when cars are parked on both sides which accentuates the residents’ perception of overcrowding and traffic. This demand is exacerbated by the off-street parking requirements as stipulated in the



---

Victorian Planning Provisions.

There is a high demand for parking spaces in residential areas close to shops and around the train station. Time restrictions are used to manage competing demands.

### 6.2.5 Public Transport

- Need for improved services and better connections between bus and train services

As activity intensifies there will be an increased demand for improved public transport services. Typically, the provision of services has not kept up with population growth across metropolitan Melbourne. This lag is recognised in Plan Melbourne, and although Boronia is only the third station on the Belgrave line, strong commuter patronage at peak times means there is reduced capacity at other stations down the line.

There is a low frequency of bus services between the Boronia Train Station and the surrounding suburbs, and many of the routes are indirect, leading to greater strain on car parking within the Boronia MAC.

- Need for improved amenity at public transport stops

There is an undersupply of seating and shelter at most bus stops and the Boronia

Train Station. In addition, the lack of activity around the Boronia Train Station reduces its amenity and safety.

Bus stops are sited as an afterthought and not integrated with the surrounding urban form and land use, resulting in a missed opportunity for mutual activation, improved visibility, and place-making.

### 6.2.6 Walking

- Poor condition of existing footpaths

Many footpaths in the Boronia MAC are in poor condition. Many are uneven and consist of a range of different surfaces and materials, which make it difficult for some users to navigate and are likely to increase the risk of trips and falls.

In the residential areas surrounding the Boronia MAC core area, footpath widths are inconsistent, which limits opportunities to walk side by side.

In some areas there is no existing footpath and people must walk on the grass verge or on the road next to parked cars while in other areas, public infrastructures are placed as an afterthought which impacts access for people with mobility aid.

- Poor perceptions of safety

Community perceptions are that walking is not safe, particularly in some locations, due to factors such as minimal passive surveillance and minimal street level activation. A lack of lighting also affects perceptions of safety at night.

- Lack of crossing points

There are minimal crossing points over busy roads and pedestrian crossings are not provided at all sets of traffic lights, resulting in delays for users.

- Poor and missing connections

In some parts of the Boronia MAC, pedestrian connections to local destinations are poor, or do not exist, and result in poor pedestrian permeability, and increase the distance to walk to local destinations.

This is the case between Orchid Avenue, Erica Avenue and Boronia/Dorset Roads, Dorset Square and Floriston Road, accessing the Warbler Estate off Tormore Road, and to the north of the Boronia MAC where there are large blocks with few direct routes available.

In other locations pedestrian movements are interrupted by the predominance of barriers such as large car parks, level changes and

---

poorly maintained safety barriers. The absence of connections increases the distance to travel to local destinations such as Leisureworks, as well as east/west movement being limited by the train line.

- Accessibility of community facilities

Feedback from service providers suggests that most clients use private cars to access services. Some facilities are difficult to access on foot, are often located away from the road or kerbside, or require people to traverse through a car park to reach the entry point of a facility. In addition, lighting in car parks and near entrances to some community facilities is poor and can discourage use at night.

### 6.2.7 Cycling

- Lack of cycle paths in some locations

There are no on-road or off-road cycle paths in an east-west direction along or adjacent to Boronia Road nor as a connection to the Blind Creek Trail.

The Belgrave-Ringwood Rail Trail also remains disconnected within the Boronia MAC with a gap between Marysville Way and Chandler

Road.

- Lack of cycle parking facilities

Cycle hoops are not adequately provided in the Boronia MAC, and, where they are provided, they are sometimes used as parking safety barriers and as physical support for display of products on the footpath.

The Train Station parkiteer is located on the west side of the rail corridor, away from the cycle paths, which are on the east side of the railway.

### 6.3 Opportunities

The following movement and access opportunities have been identified.

#### 6.3.1 Changed approach

- o transport

A new approach is being used in Victoria and other parts of the world to design, plan and deliver a modern transport system that meets the increasing needs of people and businesses whilst creating and improving

places<sup>8</sup>.

Commonly referred to as Movement and Place thinking, it recognises that streets perform multiple functions. Transport links not only move people from one place to another, but they also serve as key places and destinations. There is a natural tension between these two functions.

Sometimes streets and roads change functions several times along the way and there may be competing demands between movement and place on our roads and streets.

Finding the right balance between the two is fundamental to integrated transport planning. This way of thinking means that when we plan and develop the transport network, we need to consider the breadth of community needs, expectations, and aspirations for the places they live and the roads and streets they use. A changed approach can also explore a better synergy and intermodal outcome between transport modes, especially by applying emerging trends.

---

<sup>8</sup> Department of Transport, Movement and Place in Victoria, 2019

---

- to road design

The renewal of road assets (upgrading, resealing, rebuild) provides an opportunity to review the design of local residential streets and be more responsive to the 'place' component including measures that address street parking. Kerb alignment, canopy, and active movements;

This would depart from a traditional kerb-to-kerb design and change the community's expectations related to on-street parking and continuous travel access.

### 6.3.2 Emerging trends

- Vehicle technology

The Renewal Strategy will need to consider emerging vehicle technology including the increasing use of mobility scooters, car shares, and electric cars and the need for charging points in public places. This also includes making sure that new private development includes the capacity for electric vehicles charging points.

- Digital information

Advances in technology are also being increasingly used to provide information about the availability of parking.

- Bike and scooter sharing

Although not available in Boronia, dockless bikes and scooters accessed via a phone app, are being provided in many activity centres to facilitate movement, particularly for short trips.

- Bike racks on buses

Bike racks on buses are not a new concept and have been in place in Europe, Canada, the US, and South America since the early 1990s, and even exists in Canberra. Apart from a trial at some Victorian Council in 2016, the concept is near non-existent in Victoria. Bikes on buses could facilitate a shift change from car dependency to cycling with the intermodal support of buses. This opportunity could also provide an economic advantage by tapping onto cyclists from Metropolitan Melbourne wishing to cycle through the Dandenong Ranges and using Boronia as a starting/ending point.

### 6.3.3 Behaviour change

A key component of addressing the issues identified in relation to movement and access will be behaviour change. Changes to infrastructure and services alone will not be sufficient to address all the issues identified. Such behaviour change will rely heavily on providing information about

alternative choices for movement and access.

### 6.3.4 Gradual completion of the pedestrian network through developers' contributions

The Knox Planning Scheme already includes a local planning strategy to ensure development provides footpaths and cycle paths to complement the existing path network and improve connectivity and accessibility. However, this strategy is not delivered in practice through planning permits conditions requiring footpaths along the frontages to be delivered as part of development.

This leads to missed opportunities to improve connectivity and gradually achieve completion of the footpath network. As such, the provision of frontage footpaths by developers where none exists should also start to form part of developer's contributions to help achieve a behaviour change from car dependency.

There is scope to ensure that new developments will contribute improvements to the pedestrian or cycling connectivity where their sites will directly improve this outcome. The delivery of connectivity infrastructure could also be explored as part of future Development Contributions requirements, such as a Development Contribution Plan Overlay.



Figure 7 - Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcomes Plan



---

## 6.4 Preferred Future Outcomes (*what we want by 2040*)

### Changed Focus

- There is a local change within the centre from a car-based dynamic to a greater focus on sustainable transport modes including public transport, cycling, and walking.
- 35% of workers utilises active travel modes.

### Roads

- Car dependency is reduced in favour of more effective access to alternative forms of transport.
- Road design and intersections are improved to provide safe pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicular movements.
- Loading and servicing facilities are located to avoid conflict and do not affect the streetscape.

### Integration

- Land use and transport are integrated together.
- Pedestrian and cyclists are using the network, which is safe, convenient, and integrated with the urban form.

### Public transport

- The public transport service is easily accessible, of high-quality, and integrated with the urban form.
- The urban form provides for improved amenity and shelter at public transport stops.

### Car parking

- Car parking accessibility and provisions is managed through a centre-wide approach instead of case-by-case.

## 6.5 Objectives (*Our Movement and Access Goals*)

- To increase walking and cycling to and within the Boronia MAC by making it safer and more convenient.
- To support integrated and accessible public transport.
- To provide a well-designed and functional road network.
- To provide a suitable level of appropriately located and designed car parking.

*Image on next page:*

*Artist rendition - Looking east along Boronia Road from the intersection at Narcissus Avenue*



CRAIG PERRY 2019



---

## 6.6 Strategies (*how we intend to achieve these movement and access goals*)

### We will:

#### Walking and cycling

- Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over cars within the core area of the Boronia MAC. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*
- Improve the connectivity, safety and amenity of the pedestrian and cycling networks to and within the Boronia MAC. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*

#### Public transport

- Support improvements to public transport services. *(Aspirational and Advocacy)*
- Support increased use of and access to public transport. *(Aspirational and Advocacy)*
- Support improvements to the Boronia Train Station and interchange. *(Aspirational and Advocacy)*
- Provide areas for community bus drop off and pick up, 'kiss and ride' bays and taxi ranks adjacent to key core commercial uses and transport nodes. *(Operational and Advocacy)*

#### Road network

- Use a Movement and Place approach to planning for the road network within the Boronia MAC. *(Operational)*
- Design roads to provide high levels of amenity, safety, and convenience for all road users. *(Operational and Advocacy)*

#### Car parking

- Facilitate a whole of centre approach to planning; coordinating and managing the provision of car parking spaces on private and public land within the Boronia MAC. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*
- Provide parking in a way which reduces its visual dominance and improves amenity. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*
- Provide sustainable transport options, such as electric car charging points, car sharing spaces, and the ability to retrofit common property car parks with support infrastructure associated to low emissions vehicle technology. *(Operational and Urban Planning)*
- Deliver an approach to parking management that supports increased use of sustainable forms of transport including public transport, walking, and cycling; and provides

streetscaping improvement opportunities. *(Operational and Aspirational)*

## 6.7 Actions (*What we will do to achieve these goals*)

As part of Council's Traffic and Transport department operation:

#### Public transport

- Advocate to the Victorian Government to improve bus services running through Boronia via:
  - The location of bus stops within the precinct, including a new stop via Dorset Square
  - The timetable with more night-time services and frequencies throughout the day
  - The speed and convenience of bus routes
  - The gradual inclusion of bike racks on buses along lines serving Boronia
- Advocate to the Victorian Government to improve the capacity of the train services on the Belgrave line through longer hours of operations and extended higher frequencies to cater for peak travel time.

- Advocate for the delivery of dedicated bus priority lanes on Boronia Road, including bus priority movement at key intersections.
- Advocate for improvements to bus stops infrastructure related to public transport including shelters, seating, lighting, and real time information for passengers.
- Advocate for new Pedestrian Operated Signals (POS) across Boronia Road and Dorset Road at locations in accordance with the Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcome Plan and the relevant Precinct preferred approach.
- Advocate the conversion of the Chandler Road and Dorset Road intersection into a scrambled pedestrian crossing, operated with its own dedicated pedestrian crossing cycle.
- Advocate for a speed reduction to 40kph for Boronia and Dorset roads within the MAC Core area.

### **Walking and Cycling**

- Provide public bicycle parking infrastructure throughout the Boronia MAC to support cycling to retail premises.
- Provide wider footpaths and new public spaces for pedestrians to stop and rest, facilitate movement, outdoor trading and

greening of our street in the Boronia MAC core.

### **Development**

- Provide internal referral advice, including permit conditions, to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications to:
  - Require access and loading of large vehicles to be designed away from pedestrian routes.
  - Require development to contribute and deliver public footpaths to their frontage where such footpaths are currently inexistent with the Boronia MAC.
  - Ensure development delivers a gain in linkages as identified on the Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcome Plan and the relevant Precinct preferred approach as a condition to their approval.
  - Provide bicycle parking space to all residential units across the Boronia MAC.
  - Ensure all commercial and office development provide bicycle parking infrastructure contributions to support cycling.
  - Require traffic assessment be provided with applications, ensure business traffic

and freight movements through the Boronia MAC addresses the function of ‘Place’ in their assessment and achieve a balanced outcome between the ‘Movement’ and ‘Place’ role of streets.

- Advocate for the design of buildings to integrate and respond to adjoining bus stop infrastructure through an urban form that provides adequate spacing, activation, and improves safety.
- Maintain a no-net loss of arcades to Dorset Square.
- Require car parks, including access and egress, to be concealed as part of the design and located 1-in basement, 2-at upper level, or 3- at the rear of the site while maintaining a pedestrian street activation first.
- Ensure new street connections are provided within Boronia Village, and between Torrens Avenue and Marysville Way in accordance with the Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcome Plan.
- Ensure new development provides sustainable transport options, such as electric car charging points, car sharing spaces and the ability to retrofit common



---

property car parks with infrastructure associated with low emission vehicle technology is achieved.

### **Big Move Projects**

#### **Green Spine**

- As part of the design for this project:
  - Design and deliver a Green Spine to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety and east/west movement across the MAC to deliver easier linkages from Knox Leisureworks, Tormore Reserve through to Chandler Park, Rangeview Road, and Albert Avenue.

#### **Dorset Square Concept Plan**

- As part of the concept planning for this precinct:
  - Investigate the option to bring a public transport route through Dorset Square, including the potential redesign of Turner Road and Boronia Road intersection to reduce potential conflict with buses movements.
  - Design and deliver improved east-west connections and better use of the arcades between Floriston Road,

Chandler Road, Dorset Road, and Boronia Road.

- Investigate public multi-storey parking structures to review Dorset Square parking space allocation and to enable new public spaces to be created.

#### **Boronia Train Station Precinct Redevelopment Concept**

- As part of the concept planning for this precinct:
  - Plan a transport interchange that offers an attractive, efficient, and safe environment with convenient access to services for users.
  - Advocate for commuter multi-storey parking structures to enable spaces to be allocated for other functions.
  - Plan a shared space in Lupton Way where pedestrians have priority, though still providing for station pick-up and drop off and loading to retail.
  - Plan to connect the missing link in the existing regional Ringwood to Belgrave cycle path between Lupton Way and Marysville Way, including:
    - Advocate to the Victorian Government to deliver cycle

network improvements for this path along Dorset Road and through the intersection of Boronia and Dorset roads.

- Plan for design cycle network improvements across the site of Boronia Junction Shopping Centre.
- Plan for improved east-west pedestrian movements reconnecting Sub-Precinct 1a and 1c via the Train Station Precinct (1b) generally in accordance with Figure 7 Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcomes Plan and the relevant Precinct Plan.
- Advocate and plan for the delivery of additional and improved bicycle parking facilities (parkiteers) at the Boronia Train Station.

#### **Boronia Park Masterplan**

- As part of the master plan for this precinct:
  - Plan to connect Boronia MAC (Erica Avenue and Dorset Road) with the existing Blind Creek cycle path network through Boronia Park.

- Formalise the closure of unformed road reserve to rationalise the formal network through the park.
- Review the provision of car parking supply in balance with sufficient leisure space.

### **Knox Planning Scheme**

- Implement an amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme to:
  - Facilitate pedestrians and cyclists' amenity, legibility, passive surveillance, safety, and connectivity throughout Boronia.
  - Provide gain in pedestrian connectivity, maintain a no-net loss in existing connections (laneways and arcades), and provide sustainable transport options.
  - Improve the efficiency, safety, amenity, and operation of car parks.

### **Walking and cycling**

- Deliver improved pedestrian and cycling linkages across the Boronia MAC, including future potential pedestrian links, in accordance with the Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcome Plan and the

relevant Precinct preferred approach. This also includes:

- Investigate opportunities for a direct laneway connection between Erica Avenue and Boronia Village.
- Plan to connect Boronia MAC with the existing Blind Creek cycle path network.
- Prepare a Wayfinding Strategy that includes walking and cycling times and distances between key services and destinations.
- Prepare a DDA access and mobility audit of:
  - The public realm across the Boronia MAC including of private land linkages identified on the Movement and Access Preferred Future Outcome Plan and the relevant Precinct preferred approach and towards key destinations in other Preferred Future Outcome Plan of this Strategy. This audit aims to determine the current situation and identify access improvements that can be delivered in future design.
  - Both public facilities to draw a picture of the current accessibility gaps to public facilities in Boronia and identify strategic improvements that can be included for these facilities.

- Private venues within the MAC core to draw a picture of the current accessibility situation in Boronia. Use the outcome of this audit to both:
  - Advocate to business and landowners for access improvements and through internal referral advice to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications to ensure buildings and works achieves the DDA requirements.
  - Promote businesses that achieve DDA access via a centre-wide key map/information leaflet to the DDA community.
- Plan and advocate for cycling lanes to be delivered along Boronia Road.
- Formalise laneways and arcades as pedestrian links.

### **Road network**

- Formalise the slip lane access to 70 to 82 Boronia Road as a shared space.
- Upgrade the end of no-through roads to facilitate turn-around manoeuvres of vehicles.

- 
- Plan for reducing the speed to 40kph for all local roads servicing the Boronia MAC core.
  - Use a Movement and Place approach to assessing the functions of Dorset Road and Boronia Road and local roads through the Boronia MAC, with a view to support reconfiguration and priority for pedestrians.
  - Plan and design for Boronia Road carriageway and Boronia Road/Dorset Road intersection design to reduce lanes and road widths while incorporating sustainable transport modes and streetscaping.
    - Subsequently, advocate to the Victorian Government for delivering an improved Boronia Road and Boronia Road/Dorset Road intersection.
  - Monitor and apply a 10-year review (as required) of the long-term car parking supply and demand in the Boronia MAC. Monitoring will consider existing and future populations needs and the aspirational shift away from car dependency and in favour of active transport to deliver a vibrant and high amenity centre.

### **Car parking**

- Prepare a Car Parking Management Strategy that will investigate solutions to improve:
  - Car parking access and utilisation through signage
  - Sustainable solutions
  - Review planning scheme car parking provisions to determine appropriate car parking rate
  - Consider payments in-lieu of car parking reductions or waivers

A high-quality public realm that will support and enhance Boronia's identity as a unique local place, as a town in a garden, nestled at the base of the foothills and nearby Dandenong Ranges, with strong links to the natural environment.

Both the town centre and surrounding residential neighbourhoods will be united by a leafy and green network of diverse and sustainable open spaces.

New and existing spaces will become places that encourage residents, visitors, and workers to gather outdoors over extended hours, and cater for a variety of activities.



# 4. Public Realm

Public realm refers to external spaces that are accessible to the public.

These include spaces managed by public authorities such as:

- Parks and reserves for active and passive open space (often referred to as public open space)
- Streetscapes (roads and footpaths)
- Urban plazas
- Spaces provided by public authorities (e.g., public car parks)
- Other publicly accessible spaces (e.g., spaces that are privately-owned by serving public functions such as squares, forecourt, or laneways). These will often be managed and designed as part of a private development

A well-planned, high quality and well-maintained public realm delivers numerous benefits and makes places more desirable to live, work, invest in and visit. It:

- Improves community health and wellbeing
- Increases social interaction, relaxation, and recreational activities
- Provides settings for wayfinding, socialising, and cultural expression

- Enhances the visual appearance and 'greening' of an area
- Provides opportunities:
  - for environmental benefits
  - to protect and enhance cultural heritage and character
  - for tourism related activities

### Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Quality living environments
- Healthy, active and connected community
- Resilient
- Green place with spaces to play
- Smart and digital
- Unified urban structure

### State

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Metropolitan Open Space Network

### Knox

- Knox Community Plan 2021-2031
- Knox Council Plan 2021-2025
- Open Space Strategy 2012-2022
- Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022
- Knox Green Streets Policy 2014-2018
- Street Tree Asset Management Plan 2016
- Sporting Reserve and Facilities Guideline Policy
- Knox Open Space Plan 2013-2023
- Knox Public Art Policy 2022-2026
- Knox Public Art Implementation Plan 2018-2022
- Public Toilet Management Policy 2016
- Knox Planning Policy Framework

## PUBLIC REALM

### Background

- Community Engagement
- Community Services and Facilities Review 2018

---

## 7.1 Elements

### 7.1.1 Identity and amenity

The public realm, in particular public open spaces, is a priority for the community in Boronia and forms an essential part of Boronia's local identity.

Boronia's leafy and green identity is inspired by its proximity to the Dandenong Ranges and foothills and reinforced by the existing 'bush boulevard' character of Boronia Road. Three large reserves and three schools on the edges of the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) contribute to this identity.

Community feedback has highlighted that the leafy and green appearance of Boronia provides a valued amenity that is an intrinsic part of the local identity.

Outside the Boronia MAC core area, Boronia's community is well served for public open space and recreation facilities. In the residential neighbourhoods, the streetscape and landscaped front gardens already contribute to a strong green and leafy environment.

### 7.1.2 Parks and reserves

In Boronia, large reserves primarily fulfil an active sports role, with other passive recreational and leisure activities being complementary functions.

There are only a few small local or pocket parks, or similar spaces that provide a small passive resting space in its public realm.

The Boronia MAC contains five formal parks and reserves:

- **Chandler Park** has an area of 3.18ha, includes a formal oval used for cricket and football, and is surrounded by a vegetated buffer. This park accommodates three netball courts, a playground, and a sports pavilion shared between various sports clubs. Two additional buildings in the north-east corner are used by the Scouts and Girl Guides. There are no public toilets.
- **Genista Park** is a small park, 0.44ha in area, with a playground and a portion consisting of established native canopy trees identified as a site of biological significance. There are no public toilets. This park has a natural feel/biodiversity focus means it only serves as passive recreation space. Its location, off the main core area, means that it is not well used by workers during the daytime.
- **Maguire Park** (also referred to as Boronia Station Reserve) is a 0.08ha remnant open space with two pieces of play equipment. It is situated adjacent to the train station and car park as the only public open space in the core

part of the Boronia MAC. It offers little amenity and acts solely as a pedestrian route between Boronia Junction Shopping Centre and the Train Station.

- **Tormore Reserve** is classified as a neighbourhood park in the Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022, with a size of 5.4ha. This park primarily provides for sports and recreation facilities that support multiple sports groups and some basic infrastructure for passive use.  
The oval/pitch is surrounded by a variety of evergreen and deciduous mature trees. Tormore Reserve has a distinct feel within the general Knox landscape, being situated on the western slope of the Boronia valley with the backdrop of the Dandenong Ranges which provides the key scenic character that reflects Knox's green leafy image. The park serves as a pedestrian transit route between residential areas to the west and the Train Station area via either Genista or Orchid avenues.
- **Boronia Park** is another large area of public open spaces within the Boronia MAC covering 4ha. It fronts Dorset Road and Park Crescent, as well as small access frontage to Boronia Road. The Park accommodates a range of recreational and other community facilities,

---

including the Boronia Basketball Stadium, Boronia branch Library and Marie Chandler/Park Crescent Children and Family Centre.

The Boronia Basketball Stadium was established in the mid-1970s and has expanded to include six courts and associated community facilities. The facility is now over 40 years old and dated in appearance, both internally and externally. While change rooms and facilities are in good condition, there is significant and serious cracking in the entrance foyer, kiosk and multipurpose room affecting the structural integrity of the building. Following the construction of the Knox State Basketball Centre in Wantirna South, the Boronia Stadium is earmarked to be decommissioned.

The Boronia Remote Control Car Club, which hosts the State Championships, occupies about 100sqm in the south-east corner. At peak times, the Club's activities expand into the adjoining tennis court space.

Over recent years, the Park has been subject to significant flooding, due to being the low point of a large catchment expanding north of Boronia. To address flood requirements of a 1 in 100-year storm event, a large retarding basin, approximately 8,000sqm in area exists

along the Dorset Road frontage. The Park also includes 300 car parking spaces, which are well used during the week and weekend.

### **7.1.3 Play spaces**

Areas dedicated to children's play space are highly valued by the community and address children's right to play regardless of their abilities.

Council is committed to high-quality 'compensatory' play provision that is appropriate, accessible, inclusive, local, stimulating and challenging for children in Knox, thereby offering them the opportunity to explore and play. These play spaces are located according to the Knox Play Space Plan and currently found at Boronia Park, Tormore Reserve, Genista Park, Chandler Park, and Penrith Street Reserve.

### **7.1.4 Streetscapes**

Boronia's streetscapes (roads and paths) perform much more than a movement and access function.

Streetscapes within the Boronia MAC are key public spaces that help define the green character of Boronia and provide places for additional social activities to occur.

Existing streetscapes in the Boronia MAC can be grouped into the following categories:

- Major arterial roads
- Local streets
- Arcades and laneways
- Residential streets
- Urban plazas
- Pathways

Urban plazas provide focal points for social interaction and economic activity (such as kerbside dining) and can also perform a civic function and provide opportunities for community events.

Streetscapes can be key elements in creating a vibrant and attractive public realm, as well as one option for the further 'greening' of Boronia.

### **7.1.5 Other public spaces**

There are also other public spaces, such as public car parks, which need to be considered as part of the overall network of public spaces making up the public realm.

## **7.2 Issues**

The following key public realm issues have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

---

### 7.2.1 Role of the public realm

- Changing role and use of the public realm due to lifestyle changes and changing expectations

Among other things, patterns of work and leisure are changing, with an increase in part-time work, and an increase in sedentary recreation, particularly for children.

Fewer people now live in each household, yet the current trend in new suburban houses is that they are frequently larger with smaller private open space smaller.

The role of the public realm, particularly public open space, will need to respond to these changes, particularly in the context of a denser urban centre where residents of apartments will rely on public open space for play, passive leisure, and relaxation.

- The role of the public realm in providing opportunities for public art

Public art can help make a place special, unique, and contribute to local character and identity. It may be permanent, temporary, or ephemeral (such as performances) and of a large or small scale depending on the suitability of the location.

Between 1987-2007, Knox Council sponsored

a program which delivered many sculptures and murals into public buildings and spaces, many of which are still located around the Boronia MAC.

Regular public art programs such as Immerse continue to contribute temporary and public art works to Boronia including installations, murals, exhibitions, and projects. A series of light boxes located in Cinema Lane also act as an ongoing public art platform for display of a curated selection of artwork, murals, exhibitions, and projects.

However, there are currently limited places dedicated to, or opportunities to, host ephemeral art in Boronia.

- Poor representation of the green character of the area within the public realm

Boronia's green and leafy image relies heavily on mature canopy trees planted on private property. This character is being eroded as development intensifies, and replacement trees are fragmented and do not create a canopy.

Additionally, with only two small spaces inside the Boronia MAC core area (i.e., Genista Park and Maguire Park), there is a lack of open space, and green space immediately in the core of the Boronia MAC.

Street trees are also lacking alongside some streets and the approach to planting is inconsistent.

- Minimal civic plazas (urban spaces)

Recent residential and commercial developments within the Boronia MAC have not contributed or connected to existing civic plazas and urban spaces, even in the case of publicly accessible private space. Opportunities for an 'urban feel' have therefore not been realised.

### 7.2.2 Appearance

- Lack of good interfaces between private development and the public realm

Spaces, frontages, and physical elements of building exteriors share a visual interface with the public realm and contribute to the amenity offered in public spaces.

Visual elements include building facades, features such as balconies, porticos and entry points, signage, infrastructure including power lines, substations, fire hydrants and air conditioners, and in some settings includes landscaping or front gardens on private land.

As development intensifies, rooftop gardens, terraces, green walls, and other shading features that form part of private



---

developments are becoming more prominent in the public realm. These elements combined make up identifiable views/vistas that can be attributed to forming part of the public realm.

- Poor physical appearance of public realm in the commercial core

Advertising signs dominate selected areas of the centre with a display often targeted at passing vehicles rather than addressing foot traffic. Signs above awnings, attached to street posts and on blank walls, are frequently out-of-date and in a state of disrepair. This is further exacerbated by front shop windows being covered in signage or billboards effecting a reduction of mutual interactions between pedestrians and businesses and a lack of street activation.

There is also an inconsistent mix of pedestrian fencing, paving materials in a variety of conditions, missing or poorly located tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs), and the overall appearance of the commercial core is perceived as unappealing.

In addition to the run-down nature of many of the shopfronts, the high degree of street clutter and a lack of visual coherence detrimentally affect the appearance of the

Boronia MAC.

### 7.2.3 Accessibility

- Poor connections between various parts of the public realm

Many parts of the public realm consist of large spaces between buildings that are filled with expanses of car parks and are characterised by hard surfaces, paving and the rare seat or two. These conditions reduce amenity, increase walking distances, create poor interfaces between buildings and the surrounding environment, and create conflict points between pedestrians and cars.

### 7.2.4 Safety

- Poor perceptions of safety in parts of the existing public realm

The mix of land uses, poor physical environment, blind and blank space or walls, and a lack of passive surveillance through social interactions has made anti-social behaviour more common, particularly in the core of the Boronia MAC. This contributes to both a real and perceived lack of safety in key locations in and around the Boronia MAC, especially after-hours.

Much of the commercial area is devoid of

human activity at night. The locations where evening activities do occur, including the public transport interchange, supermarkets, and the Metro cinema, are isolated and usually accessed by car.

In recent years, CCTV cameras have been installed in car parks and key locations around the Boronia MAC in response to the community's concerns and request to assist with property security and discourage crime and antisocial behaviour. Increased monitoring, policing, and the ability to track activity in the public realm is often requested as a step in managing crime. However, the prominence of cameras and associated signage also sends a clear signal that crime occurs in the area and can reinforce negative perceptions.

A preferred alternative is to increase activation, street life and design buildings that improve passive surveillance. The term passive surveillance refers to designing buildings and an urban realm that maximise visibility through clear sight lines, effective lighting, and active edges to give the ability for residents and shopkeepers to see what is happening on the surrounding public realm. The aim is to provide for an urban environment that reduces public space where

---

nefarious activities can occur ‘out of the public eyes’ and provide opportunity to improve perceptions of safety through greater community interactions.

Streets and roads in the centre are mostly designed for traffic management/safety with less focus and consideration of pedestrian and cyclist needs. Arcades and laneways are viewed as dark, uninviting, and poorly lit void, even during the daytime. Hotspot lighting that is bright in only selected areas like entrances or doorways, causes dark spots in adjoining spaces.

Improved lighting in the multi-deck car park next to Coles has increased its use during the daytime and into the evening. However, the rooftop area of the car park, used for employee parking, is still sparsely lit with dark spots around the building service areas.

Adjoining the Boronia Train Station, the multi-deck commuter car parking structure is poorly maintained, with low floor to ceiling levels on the northern side, a dark environment due to low lighting, and poor amenity which gives a negative perception of safety even during daylight hours.

### 7.2.5 Parks and reserves

- Demand for additional public open space due to population growth and lifestyle changes

A consequence of higher density living is an absence of private open space within the immediate vicinity of dwellings, such as backyards or courtyards. This puts more pressure on public open space to provide respite and fulfil expectations for outdoor activities.

Increased density will also see the need for more shared spaces and community facilities such as community gardens, communal rooftop space and recreation facilities.

Boronia’s open spaces are expected to play various roles, sometimes with competing priorities. There is an ever-increasing demand for open space to meet active recreational and passive leisure needs, as well as providing biodiversity, habitat, and drainage functions. As Boronia is a fully developed established suburb, there are also limited opportunities to accommodate future needs without purchasing additional land. This also means that residential apartments will need to also cater for shared spaces to provide for a beneficial internal amenity of their future residents and not solely relying on public

land.

- Demand for open space for sport and active recreation

The Boronia community has access to several reserves that serve local sporting clubs and provide active recreation opportunities for general community use. There are high usage and participation levels at all active recreation reserves in and around Boronia, with all local grounds considered at capacity.

Population projections indicate an increase in all age cohorts over the next 20 years, especially younger age cohorts. Together with increased female participation, there will be an under-supply of active recreation reserves in Boronia to meet demand from local clubs and the broader community into the future.

- A lack of open space in some parts of the Boronia MAC

The Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022 identified that there are poor pedestrian connections to Boronia Park, and more generally, that connections across roads need to be improved in the Boronia MAC to ensure greater connectivity between open space areas.

Considering population projections and

---

intensification of the commercial core, demand for existing open spaces will increase. This could have maintenance implications on existing open space areas, and result in a lack of open space to cater for the increase in residents.

- Ageing infrastructure

Within active recreation reserves, pavilions and other sporting infrastructure is ageing, and will need major upgrading/renewal over the next 20 years.

- Pressure on the role of public open space for flood management

There are several locations in Boronia that are prone to flooding. Properties adjacent to Boronia Park on the corner of Dorset and Boronia Roads sit approximately 2m below the finished surface of the intersection and are continually subject to flooding. Properties on the south side of Boronia Road are also subject to flooding impacts during larger storms, as the natural overland flow path is constricted to an area next to the Infolink, St John's Ambulance centre and the Boronia Progress Hall.

Increased run-off from built form intensification puts pressure on parks and sport grounds to manage water flows.

More particularly, facilities located within the Boronia Park are prone to flooding. The Park's car park slopes southward which guides overland flows directly into the entrance of the library and basketball stadium.

The existing retarding basin adjacent to the library will struggle to cope with serious flooding events which are becoming more common. This area receives overland flows from 83 ha of surrounding urbanised land (at two inlets). The Boronia MAC comprises extensive occupied or sealed surfaces because of commercial land, major/local roads, and car parks. There is limited green space (percolating surfaces) or public open space areas upstream of the retarding basin that can absorb and slow stormwater, hence higher runoff volumes are regularly seen.

The expansion of the retarding basin in 2014-15 increased its capacity from a 1 in 7-year storm protection; to provide a 1 in 37-year ARI (storm protection) resulting in a 30% increase in footprint area.

### 7.2.6 Streetscapes

- Poor amenity

There is poor streetscape amenity,

particularly on Dorset Road, parts of Boronia Road and the commercial core. This includes insufficient shade, seating, public waste and recycling bins etc.

- Lack of active frontages to the street

Large scale buildings often present multiple blank walls to the public realm and, with few windows or access points at ground level, they lack interest. In addition, buildings with substantial setbacks from the street result in a disrupted street wall and intermittent street activity.

- Driveways and loading bays

In many high pedestrian traffic areas, driveways and loading bays occupy large sways of the streetscape and footpath abutments which, impedes pedestrian movement and create potential conflict points with vehicles.

- Waste management and littering

In certain areas, the look and feel resulting from waste dumping, littering, or the storage of waste containers increases the blight and lack of care feel of the centre.

There is currently no centre-wide consistency in the formatting and location of waste and recycling bins that are managed by private

---

entities (e.g. shopping centres). This impacts on:

- The look and feel of the centre in relation to type and colours of containers used, with some being plastic, some being metal, with an additional mix of bins managed by the adjoining centres.
- The lack of containers in certain areas along pedestrian routes or noted as unnoticeable within sightlines. In which people are more likely to litter as opposed to carrying their waste to a nearby container they can visually identify within their sightlines.
- Long-term sustainability by favouring the disposal of waste being sorted out in appropriate containers.

Older buildings and shops did not traditionally include waste management practices in the past. As a result, they often lack appropriately dedicated waste container storage facilities. This results in private commercial bins often being stored along pathways or not being screened from the public realm and causing amenity issues. The attempt at providing a joint facility for the retailers of Dorset Square has not been

delivered in the most effective way and lessons need to be learned.

### 7.3 Opportunities

The following public realm opportunities have been identified.

#### 7.3.1 Role of public realm

- The importance of the public realm in environmental sustainability  
In addition to their recreational, social, and cultural roles, the public realm has a vital role to play in environmental sustainability, particularly protecting and enhancing biodiversity, providing shade, reducing the heat island effect and stormwater management.
- The importance of public realm in providing a sense of local identity  
Visual reminders and connections to the past are an important part of a place's identity. References to the local history of a precinct can be used in the design of public spaces to contribute to or reinforce local identity. They can bring a sense of authenticity, while educating current and future generations about previous land uses or past events.  
Memorial spaces, such as the flag poles for

the RSL, and plaques also play an important part in providing a place for people to gather and remember, commemorate past events that have shaped the local community.

#### 7.3.2 Waste/littering

Council is currently developing a 'Waste as a Resource' Strategy which will set direction and vision for the future of waste and resource recovery across Knox to 2030. The goals and action of this future strategy will offer opportunities to review the management of public bins and littering across Knox (and Boronia) through Council's normal operations.





Figure 8 - Public Realm Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

---

#### 7.4 Preferred future outcomes (*what we want by 2040*)

##### Expanded network and increased diversity

- Public spaces are linked together through a green streetscape network at a scale that balances street activities expectations, contributes to the economic and social vitality of the centre, and improves wayfinding.
- The ground level frontage of building activates with public spaces.
- Key private developments include new civic and urban spaces that improve wayfinding and contribute to the public realm.

##### Identity and amenity

- The green and leafy image of Boronia is enhanced with increased landscaping in streetscapes, and the use of green walls or roof gardens in private development.
- The streetscaping of the public realm is of high amenity and provide for comfortable and safe pedestrian movement.
- A green northern edge is accentuated to the commercial area, through large tree planting and landscaping along the future Green Spine.

- Public art contributes to the local identity and sense of place with additional public art opportunities remaining encouraged throughout the MAC.
- Boronia's community has a choice of public and semi-public spaces that are also designed to incorporate best practice environmental sustainability, helps reduce the heat island effect, promote biodiversity linkages, and comprises water sensitive urban design principles.

##### Parks and Reserves

- Existing parks and reserves are retained and further enhanced.
- Recreational spaces for formal sports activities are retained within existing active reserves. Facilities are upgraded to meet the demand and to provide focal points for the community.
- Boronia Park has enhanced landscaping, a mixture of active and passive recreation, provides an improved stormwater retention basin capacity to the benefit of the whole centre, improved pedestrian access and connectivity to the Boronia MAC and surrounds.

- A centre-wide waste management approach is applied to the public realm, which responds to population growth, is sustainable, and delivers a centre free of littering.

#### 7.5 Objectives (*Our public realm goals*)

- To optimise the value of the public realm within the Boronia MAC for residents, workers, and visitors.
- To provide an expanded network and increased diversity of accessible public open spaces and urban plazas that promote community gathering and interaction and reflect Boronia's character.
- To enhance the role of private land in providing and connecting to open space.
- To design and activate the public realm in a way which celebrates Boronia' character and identity.
- To provide streetscapes with improved safety, amenity, and sustainability.

---

## 7.6 Strategies (*how we intend to achieve these public realm goals*)

### We will:

#### Optimised value

- Strengthen the accessibility, amenity, and functionality of existing open spaces. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Integrate water sensitive urban design principles in streetscape improvements and in the upgrade or creation of public spaces. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Reinforce the role of public open spaces and streetscapes in enhancing and protecting biodiversity values. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Support opportunities for local food production and community garden spaces where appropriate. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Improve the safety, maintenance, and visual amenity of the public realm. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Plan for a waste management approach that responds to increasing density. (*Operational*)

#### Expanded network and increased diversity

- Provide new open space and urban plazas within the Boronia MAC in accordance with the Public Realm Preferred Future Outcome Plan. (*Operational, Urban Planning, and Aspirational*)
- Design new public open space with a dedicated function based on the role of other open space in the Boronia MAC. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Require the design of public and semi-public open space to maximise comfort, amenity, and enjoyment for all users through all seasons. (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Plan for small local public open spaces along streets, and at focal points in the residential neighbourhoods surrounding the Boronia MAC within easy walking/cycling distance of residents and workers. (*Operational, Urban Planning, and Aspirational*)

#### Private land

- Require open spaces to be provided on key private land in accordance with the Public Realm Preferred Future Outcome Plan and designed to connect with other public open spaces. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)

- Facilitate improved use of arcades and laneways as semi-public spaces. (*Operational and Urban Planning*)

#### Boronia's character and identity

- Recognise and celebrate Boronia's local identity and history within the public realm through:
  - memorial plaques
  - retention of valued structures, artefacts, and landscaping
  - arts
  - connection with cultural heritage
  - community events (*Operational and Aspirational*)
- Reinforce Boronia's green and leafy image through landscaping and tree planting in the public and private realm. (*Operational and Aspirational*)

#### Streetscapes

- Provide streetscapes that are attractive, distinctive, sustainable, and easy to maintain over time. (*Operational and Aspirational*).
- Design streetscapes to contribute to the overall preferred character of Boronia MAC and respond to the needs of different users. (*Operational and Aspirational*)

- Plan for long-term tree replacement program as part of the streetscape design. *(Operational)*
- Improve nature strips to increase the amount of landscaping, green areas and community gathering spaces to improve community connectedness, enhance amenity, and contribute to better stormwater quality. *(Operational and Aspirational)*

**7.7. Actions (What we will do to achieve these goals)**

As part of Council’s Waste Management department operation:

- Provide public litter and recycling bins with the best placement throughout the Boronia MAC to reduce litter and maximise resource recovery as the centre grows.
- Provide internal referral advice, including permit conditions, to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications to:
  - Require waste management assessment be provided with applications to ensure commercial and mixed used properties have adequate and sufficient waste, recyclable, organics, and bulk waste storage space with sufficient capacity for

the proposed use and include future consideration of change of uses.

- Advocate for the design of buildings to address all waste storage locations and collection in a manner that maintains accessibility, activation, safety, and improves amenity.

As part of the Active and Creative Communities Department operation:

- Support greater use of existing open spaces by community groups and activities in non-peak sports times.

As part of the Arts and Cultural Services, Strategic Open Space Planning, and Urban Forest and City Presentation departments operations:

- Plan for artwork and the ability to host outdoor performances when upgrading existing public spaces and parks, creating new spaces at suitable locations.
  - Advocate through internal referral advice to the relevant Knox departments on statutory applications to ensure design does not impede future opportunities.

- Include public or community art in the design and delivery of any new or updated play spaces in accordance with the Knox Public Art Policies.

As part of the Strategic Integrated Stormwater Department operations:

- Integrate water sensitive urban design principles in streetscape improvements, public space upgrades, and new open spaces.

**Big Move Projects**

**Green Spine**

- As part of the design for this project:
  - Create new streetscapes with places for sitting and increased tree canopy, as part of the Green Spine Corridor Big Move Project.

**Boronia Park**

- As part of the master plan for this precinct:
  - Prepare an Issues and Options Paper, in preparation of a future Boronia Park Precinct Masterplan Big Move Project.



---

### Dorset Square

- As part of the concept planning for this precinct:
  - Plan for the creation of a public/civic space as part of the Dorset Square Concept Plan Big Move Project.
  - Investigate the future approach to waste management facilities in Dorset Square.

### Train Station

- As part of the concept planning for this precinct:
  - Advocate for the creation of new forecourt spaces as part of the Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan Big Move Project.

### Knox Planning Scheme

- Implement an amendment to the Knox Planning Scheme to:
  - Reinforce passive surveillance of the public realm from adjoining development.
  - Facilitate new public/civic spaces that retain mature trees between the existing shops and the car parking area in Boronia Village.

- Facilitate improvements to arcade, laneway, and semi-public community space to ensure the spaces feel safe and are utilised more.
- Require adequate and sufficient waste, recyclable, organics, and bulk waste storage space at an adequate location and capacity that will not affect local amenity.

### Optimised value of the public realm

- Investigate local food production opportunities in the redesign of public spaces and open space reserves.

### Expanded network and increased diversity

- Investigate opportunities to create new public open space and urban plazas within the Boronia MAC in accordance with Figure 8 Public Realm Preferred Future Outcomes Plan.

### Streetscapes

- Prepare a Streetscape Master Plan for Boronia MAC that includes:
  - Increased street tree planting
  - Sustainability measures

- Amenity improvements appropriate to the use and function of the footpaths and streetscape
- Balancing Movement and Place functions
- Street parking
- Manage Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Conveniently located, high quality pedestrian infrastructure such as seating, bins, signage, landscaping, public art, security lighting and shade

- Prepare a Lighting Strategy to enhance the amenity and safety of streets, provide appropriate level of lighting for pedestrian routes, and integrate creative lighting installations. The Lighting Strategy will have regard to:
  - Resolving known dark spots
  - Supporting wayfinding and easily identify priority streets
  - Delivering public art installations
  - Achieving Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

**Community wellbeing in Boronia is enhanced through a network of health, education, cultural and recreation services, and facilities that are accessible, adaptable, and sustainable, and respond to the community's needs.**

# 5. Community Wellbeing and Infrastructure

The provision of services and community infrastructure in the Boronia Major Activity Centre (MAC) is fundamental to community wellbeing.

‘Community wellbeing is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfil their potential.’<sup>9</sup>

Community infrastructure is defined as:

‘Infrastructure provided by government or non-government organisations for accommodating a range of community support services, programs, and activities. This includes facilities for education and learning universities and adult learning centres, early years, health and community services), community, arts and culture, sport, recreation and leisure, justice, voluntary and faith and emergency services.’<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> [www.whatworkswellbeing.org](http://www.whatworkswellbeing.org), 2017 (accessed 2019)

<sup>10</sup> DPCD and Growth Areas Authority, *A Guide to Delivering Community Precincts*, 2010

## Key Directions

- A unique local place
- Quality living environments
- Healthy, active, and connected community
- Resilient
- Green place with spaces

## State

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

## Knox

- Knox Community Plan 2021-2031
- Knox Community Facilities Planning Policy 2016
- Knox Key Life Stages Plan 2017-2021
- Knox Community Access and Equity Implementation Plan 2017-2022
- Knox People First - Municipal Disability Leadership Plan

## COMMUNITY WELLBEING and INFRASTRUCTURE

## Background

- Community Engagement
- Community Services and Facilities Review 2018
- Boronia Social Issues Report 2018

---

## 8.1 Elements

### Community wellbeing

Improved community wellbeing is measured by positive improvements to social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions within a community.

In relation to the elements discussed in this chapter, this mean: improved mental health services, improved disability services, reduced crime, increased perceptions of safety, reduced dependency on drugs and alcohol, reduced levels of family violence, and reduced expenditure on electronic gaming.

#### 8.1.1 Mental health

Mental health is a state of well-being which enables an individual to realise their own potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and contribute to their community. About one in five Australians experience difficulties with their mental health at some stage of their lives and some will experience times of homelessness, poverty, social isolation, poor physical health, unemployment, and

stigmatisation. The combination of multiple of these factors significantly affect a person's capacity to care for themselves, maintain employment, or complete their education.

The Boronia, Bayswater and Basin communities experience higher rates of high or very high psychological distress<sup>11</sup>.

The 2021 Census shows that 11% of the population of Boronia have a long-term mental health condition, higher than Greater Melbourne at 8.1%.

#### 8.1.2 Disability

The 2021 Census shows that 6.6% of Boronia's population requires assistance with core daily activities, a slightly higher proportion than Melbourne as whole (5.5%), an increase of 373 people from 2016.

#### 8.1.3 Safety and crime

Community surveys indicate that residents and visitors are concerned about poor physical amenity and antisocial behaviour within the Boronia MAC, leading to lowered perceptions of

safety. Issues relating to drug and alcohol use and concerns, including the look and feel of the Boronia Train Station, bus interchange, and surrounds were commonly raised by respondents.

Crime offences have continued to increase in the suburb of Boronia. The total offence rate for the suburb of Boronia in 2017 was 106 per 1,000 population, increasing from 75.8 in 2013. The Boronia offence rate is consistently higher than the Knox average.

Engagement indicated that Boronia MAC is visited by residents of Boronia and visitors from surrounding suburbs, who are accessing the shops, Train Station, and various social and community services. As a result, the Boronia MAC is a 'melting-pot' used by long-term residents for daily shopping needs, commuters, and young people travelling to and from school during business hours, along with homeless, unemployed, or otherwise clearly disadvantaged individuals. This eclectic mix of people and uses, combined with pockets of vacant or poor performing retail tenancies and an ageing and dated built environment, contribute to the poor sense of safety reported by some residents. In

---

<sup>11</sup> Victorian Population Health Survey 2020 for people over 18



---

contrast, at night the Boronia MAC is lacking in activity, with large areas being poorly lit and with poor visual surveillance.

#### **8.1.4 Drug and alcohol dependency and misuse**

Drug or alcohol dependency and misuse have the potential to cause significant negative health impacts for users and, in some circumstances, may be associated with anti-social and even violent behaviour impacting others. Alcohol consumption in public places within the Boronia MAC has been reported as a concern by residents and is linked to reduced perceptions of safety in this location.

The most recent data on risky alcohol consumption available at the sub-municipal level is Australian Health Survey (AHS) data from 2011-12. The data shows that 3.1% of residents living in Boronia, Bayswater and the Basin consumed alcohol at levels considered to be a high risk to health in the week prior to the survey.

#### **8.1.5 Family violence**

Family violence is a serious but preventable issue; with Knox having one of the highest rates of reported family violence in Melbourne's Outer East for over 20 years. The rate of reported family violence incidents in Knox have increased by 25% in the past five years. Boronia was consistently the

Knox suburb with the highest reported rates of family violence by population, however in 2020-21 dropped to the third highest suburb. This is due to increased reporting in other Knox suburbs, and not a decrease in the number of incidents reported in Boronia.

It is important to recognise that factors contributing to family violence include drug and alcohol use, financial stress, gambling and homelessness. Responding to family violence incidents accounts for 21% of offences managed by police in Knox, a significant impact on law enforcement resources.

#### **8.1.6 Electronic gaming**

Gaming is a legal activity in Victoria and for many, gaming is a source of recreation. However, unlike many other recreational activities, gaming has the potential to generate negative social/economic impacts for the player, their family, friends, and the wider community.

Data on electronic gaming machine expenditure and the incidence of problem gaming in association with electronic gaming machines is not available at the suburb level. With these limitations in mind, venue based spend data indicates that losses within Knox has increased progressively from \$599 per adult in 2016-17 to

\$614 per adult in 2022-23, such that spending levels in Knox represent approximately 4.7% of income of people who use gaming machines. While over this period the number of electronic gaming machines per 1,000 adults in Knox is 6.0, it should be noted that total player loss (expenditure) for 2022/23 was \$78,300,000.00 with Knox ranking 14th, amongst metropolitan municipalities, for total player loss.

### **Community Infrastructure**

#### **8.1.7 Existing community infrastructure**

Council and other organisations, including Government agencies, faith-based organisations, and not-for-profit community organisations currently own, manage, maintain, and fund a wide range of services and facilities in the Boronia MAC to support community wellbeing.

Council-owned facilities located within Boronia MAC include:

- Bellbird Senior Citizens' Centre (Corner of Erica Avenue and Chandler Road, Boronia)
- Boronia Basketball Stadium (Boronia Park)
- Marie Chandler Children and Family Centre (136 Park Crescent, Boronia – Boronia Park)
- Boronia Progress Hall (Boronia Park)

- Infolink building (134 Boronia Road, Boronia – Boronia Park)
- Boronia Library (Boronia Park)
- Knox Leisureworks
- Boronia Park
- Tormore Reserve
- Chandler Park

### 8.1.8 Community groups

There are over 60 different community groups operating within Boronia or with a strong association with Boronia. Their contribution and support for participation in community life creates a highly engaged community. In most cases these groups operate independently and work autonomously to meet their own needs but could benefit from being linked to a larger network.

### 8.2 Issues

The following key community wellbeing and infrastructure issues have been identified through relevant background studies, policy documents and community consultation.

#### 8.2.1 Community services and facilities

- Community facilities are mostly located and concentrated in Boronia due to always having been located there.
- Community services and facilities currently provided are not considered adequate to meet the current demand and have limited capacity to accommodate short-term growth.
- Existing community infrastructures in Boronia are ageing with some facilities no longer fit for purpose.
- Many of the community services and facilities in Boronia operate on an individual basis with different management models and ways to deliver the same service which can lead to overlap or duplication of services.
- Accessibility to facilities can be poor with limited pedestrian access and not always fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). This results in high private vehicle use for access, but this is also affected by poor lighting in car parks and surrounding facilities at night.
- There are limited hire spaces opportunities for community groups, social groups, or individuals for cultural, educational, community activities, or meetings.

- Existing community meeting room spaces are aging and do not always meet appropriate amenity standards (i.e., lack of air conditioning and insulation, poor parking, poor lighting, lack of security), making them less appealing for hire by some user groups, particularly groups catering for older residents or those with restricted mobility.

Specific issues for each key service/life stage include:

#### 8.2.2 Families and children

- Due to the forecast population growth, there will be ongoing demand for programs and services to support families and children. This will be dependent on birth rate fluctuations.
- Not everyone has necessarily access to a vehicle, which can limit access to programs and services. Services and facilities are currently spread across the centre with limited accessibility for pedestrians. An increase in overall accessibility to programs and services will need to consider proximity to public transport and good pedestrian connections to reduce car dependency.

---

### 8.2.3 Young people

- Several issues were identified from feedback received from young people:
  - The lack of space and place to hang out in the Boronia MAC.
  - The intimidating urban environment and its result on perceptions of safety.
  - The negative prospect for future jobs, gaining skills and education.
  - Concerns over health and wellbeing, especially mental health.
  - Access to activities (choices in active and creative activities).
  - Concerns over tolerance and diversity.
  - Their opportunities for participation.

### 8.2.4 Aged and disability

- Membership numbers of traditional model Senior Citizen groups are declining, and members are struggling to maintain management responsibilities.
- Bellbird Senior Citizens Group will continue to meet but the format of the group's activities may change depending on its members.

- Council's Senior Citizens Centres Asset Plan suggests the development of a new multi-purpose community facility like the one located in Carrington Park would be best placed to deliver multiple and diverse activity spaces for Bellbird Senior Citizens' group.
- It will also be important to integrate and adjust Knox Council's disability support services to help people with a disability and older people to live independent and healthy lives in the community in the context of the NDIS.

### 8.2.5 Mental health

- The Boronia, Bayswater and Basin communities experience higher rates of high or very high psychological distress<sup>12</sup>.
- The 2021 Census shows that 11% of the population of Boronia have a long-term mental health condition, higher than Greater Melbourne at 8.1%.

### 8.2.6 Library service needs

- The existing Boronia Library is at 11 Park Crescent, Boronia, (within Boronia Park). The

library is adjacent to the basketball stadium which is planned to be decommissioned and demolished. The Boronia Library will then be left isolated and removed from other community infrastructure with the demolition works affecting the lifespan of the remaining structure. This will necessitate a replacement of the structure with consideration of relocating the library to a more accessible integrated multipurpose community facility.

### 8.2.7 Safety and security

- A key finding from community consultations was the negative perceptions of safety within the Boronia MAC. Areas of concern identified include the Boronia Train Station Precinct and Dorset Square.
- Poor public behaviour and safety was the highest response when the community was asked what they like least about Boronia.
- As part of a Safety Perceptions Survey, 64% of respondents were dissatisfied regarding the feeling of safety in the Boronia MAC.

---

<sup>12</sup> Public Health Information Development Unit, 2019

- The reduced night-time business hours in the centre plays a role with that perception due to the resulting low street activation.

### 8.2.8 Homelessness and Housing

- Under-investment in affordable housing combined rising costs has affected ability for people to access suitable accommodation.
- Housing stress is a measure of how many households in an area may be in financial difficulties and is related to affordability. If many households are in housing stress, it indicates that housing is unaffordable, people may need to live in the area and so are paying this anyway. The latest data is available from 2021, when 60.1% of very low-income households (below 50% of median income) were in mortgage stress, and 79.6% were in rental stress.

### 8.2.9 Cost of living

- Council currently funds the Knox Infolink service, located in the Boronia MAC to provide emergency relief and welfare support to vulnerable persons.
- Engagement with this service indicates that during 2023, demand for food relief increased by 30-40% in line with rising cost of living pressures.

- Council also funds financial counselling through EACH, with demand for this service also increasing during 2022-23.
- Service providers report a growing number of marginalised clients, including rough sleepers, as well as increase in presentations from the 'working poor'. That is, low-income earners who although engaged in employment, cannot meet the cost of necessities.
- Cost of living pressures are also impacting on accessing to health care for vulnerable persons, with the cost of medical appointments and/or medications increasingly out of reach for a growing number of people.

### 8.3 Opportunities

The following community wellbeing and infrastructure opportunities have been identified.

#### 8.3.1 Building on existing investment and relationships

- There is a strong existing foundation of investment by service providers, traders, community groups, and Council to address some of the identified social issues.
- There are also strong existing relationships with opportunities for new partnerships to

ensure that the changing needs of the Boronia community are met.

- Strengthened relationships and partnerships will ensure that investments and services are maximised to meet the community needs. A partnership approach will also ensure that initiatives are not duplicated and are targeted at those most in need.
- There are opportunities to work with the Boronia community to enable them to contribute to shaping the physical and social character of the Boronia MAC.

#### 8.3.2 Co-location, shared, multi-purpose and integrated use of facilities

- There are numerous benefits for the community to be gained from clustering both community and private providers in a central and accessible location that is more pedestrian-friendly and to create a critical mass which that will attract additional services and grow their range within the centre.
- In any planning and design process for new and/or upgraded facilities in Boronia, further consultation should be undertaken with relevant service providers/user groups (both Council and non-Council) to understand their functional needs and the services they



---

provide, and to explore how best these could form part of co-located, integrated multi-purpose facility as part of a community hub.

- A multi-purpose facility would need to incorporate functional requirements of all potential users with flexible spaces that cater for future services and needs as well as the library service. The investigation of other potential services for co-location includes Bellbird Seniors Centre, any youth space requirements, playgroup spaces, family/individual support services, meeting spaces and neighbourhood house services. It can also include opportunities for a digital creative hub that can link art-based and creative industries with services and programs.

### **8.3.3 Strengthening community groups**

- Community groups and organisations play an integral role in providing social cohesion, volunteer opportunities and community services. Council provides a range of community grants and training opportunities for community-based organisations across the municipality.

### **8.3.4 Strengthening community access to events**

- Council has an 'Access Key' guideline developed in collaboration with Access Ability Australia. This guideline is applied for any large Council events. Smaller events do include accessibility consideration as part of the applicable Event Management Plan. There is always scope for improvement and innovation in the accessibility consideration and Council's Events Team continues to work collaboratively with the Disability Inclusion Team.

### **8.3.5 Activation during renewal**

- The renewal of Boronia will bring periods of changes and reconstruction throughout Boronia. These will disrupt movement and community activities. Mechanism to activate spaces will be beneficial to bring the community together and create a sense of connection.

### **8.3.6 Tormore Road neighbourhood focus**

- Several community facilities and services focused on sports and education are in the vicinity of Tormore Road including Boronia West Primary School, Knox Leisureworks and Tormore Reserve. The Reserve contains an

AFL oval, cricket pitches and a playground and is currently home to Boronia Cricket Club and Boronia Football Club.

- A medium to long-term opportunity will be assessing the Tormore Road community facilities and services as there are opportunities for strengthened relationships between them.
- The Reserve provides a direct pedestrian link between the Boronia MAC core, including the Train Station, and the Boronia West Primary School and Knox Leisureworks.



Figure 9 - Community Wellbeing and Infrastructure Preferred Future Outcomes Plan

---

#### 8.4 Preferred Future Outcomes (*what we want by 2040*)

##### Community wellbeing

- Community connectedness and well-being is improved through the provision of community services and facilities.
- The community feels safe and is proud of their locality.

##### Community services and facilities

- Community services and facilities meet community needs.
- Community services and facilities support social connection and foster active and healthy lifestyles.
- Well-planned community infrastructures activate places as part of a network of accessible and welcoming facilities for the whole community.
- Council continues to be the main provider, or the main driver in partnership, of community infrastructure in Boronia.
- Council has partnerships with others to provide community services or joint facilities.
- People who are isolated, marginalised, or excluded from community life have a place with services to support them and they feel

integrated with the community. Those services respond to the Boronia specific social context to deliver relevant actions that prioritise integration and support.

##### Community capacity and engagement

- Community groups are supported and capable.
- Community services and facilities are planned through collaboration and inclusive engagement.

##### Safety

- Perceptions of safety have improved, and the community feels safe.
- The urban environment is maintained and managed to increase safety.

##### Community pride

- Increased community pride is, facilitated by:
  - community-led place-making activities
  - community events.

#### 8.5 Objectives (*Our community wellbeing and infrastructure goals*)

- To provide good quality, sustainable, accessible, and adaptable community

services and facilities that provide for the needs of existing and future populations.

- To strengthen relationships and partnerships to support more effective planning and delivery of community services and facilities.
- To manage existing and new infrastructure assets efficiently and effectively.
- To enhance social connectivity and engagement to create a more inclusive, safe, and cohesive community.
- To strengthen community groups to support community well-being.
- To improve community safety and perceptions of safety.

#### 8.6 Strategies (*how we intend to achieve these community wellbeing and infrastructure goals*)

##### We will:

##### Provision of community services and facilities

- Plan for services delivery and facilities that respond to identified needs and expectations of existing and future populations, considering in particular:
  - Reinforcing services for senior citizens.
  - Providing services and facilities for young people.

- Delivering library services which meet community needs and respond to current trends.
- Support wellbeing and active lifestyles through services and facilities.
- Provide further community spaces.
- Use alternative model approaches for delivery of services and facilities including co-location and multipurpose facilities.

#### Partnerships

- Plan for partnership with other providers to deliver community services and facilities.
- Support established and emerging community groups and build their capacity to be sustainable and provide for the community.
- Facilitate connections between community service groups, organisations, and facilities.
- Strengthen collective and partnership approach to service delivery to address key social issues including mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, problem gaming, family violence across life stages.

#### Community connectedness and engagement

- Strengthen community connectedness.

- Facilitate civic participation and inclusive engagement to increase pride, purpose, participation, and a sense of belonging.

#### Community groups

- Reinforce opportunities for community connections to improve perceptions of safety.

#### 8.7 Actions (*What we will do to achieve these goals*)

##### As part of Council's Connected Community directorate operation:

- Continue to identify funding opportunities to support the ongoing provision of community infrastructure.
- Deliver safety programs in partnership with the community (i.e., arts, positive community messaging) to shift negative perceptions of safety.
- Continue monitor to identify the relationship between packaged liquor outlet density and alcohol-related harm.
- Increase the voice of youth in the implementation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy by referring Council-led projects to the Youth Advisory Committee for input into the planning and decision-making process.

- Maintain an approach where Council organised events are inclusive, accessible, affordable, welcoming, and inclusive to all with positive physical activity and social interaction.
- Continue to support and build the community's capacity to:
  - Enable grass roots actions that enhance connection and resilience.
  - Create and facilitate connections between groups to strengthen a collective approach to their service delivery.
  - Coordinate connections between community organisations and facilities in key locations e.g., Tormore Road.

#### Advocacy

- Advocate for improved mental health services to meet community needs in partnership with key stakeholders.



---

## Big Move Projects

### Multi-purpose Community Facility

1. As part of the investigation and planning work for this project:
  - Plan for new community facilities and investigate the inclusion of a multi-purpose community facility as part of the Boronia Park Precinct Masterplan Big Move Project, the Dorset Square Town Square Big Move Project, or the Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan Big Move Project. The plan to consider the inclusion of:
    - a relocated library
    - senior citizen facilities with a range of (size, hire costs and times) of spaces for casual and regular use by groups currently sub- leasing the Bellbird facility
    - family support services
    - neighbourhood house services
    - early years services and meeting spaces and
    - any new service requirements, including youth services and a potential digital creative hub

- Explore how established community groups can operate with greater interaction as part of a shared new community space, to deliver a more integrated suite of activities and programs to meet the needs of older residents in Boronia.
- Investigate opportunities to partner with private stakeholder to deliver future community facilities within Boronia, whilst ensuring the facilities are sufficiently flexible and can be extended as demand grows over time.

### Boronia Park Masterplan

2. As part of the master plan for this precinct:
  - Evaluate the future purpose, siting, and enhancement of Progress Hall.
  - Investigate the future of 136 Boronia Road (Infolink and St John's Ambulance) in the context of relocation of these services to a new facility.

### Provision of community services and facilities

3. Investigate the need for an ongoing community engagement program within Boronia (key services and community) to understand changing community needs,

impacts on community services and facilities, and support community connectedness.

### Partnerships

4. Partner with key stakeholders in community health, family support services, and community services to address gaps in service provision and develop responses to key social issues in Boronia.
5. Investigate opportunities for shared use of facilities/grounds with local schools and private organisations located in the Boronia MAC, for sports and recreation purposes.
6. Advocate to landowners for the provision of street art to blank walls to avoid, minimise, and deter informal graffiti.

### Community groups

7. Prepare a community group's needs audit to guide Council's support to existing groups/organisations to grow more sustainable, encourage new groups to form around shared interests, or hobbies and understand what actions can be delivered within the remit of Council. Noting that existing community groups may benefit from additional support and future guidance to transition and delivery services as membership wanes over time.

---

### **Community place-making/activation**

8. Advocate for place-making opportunities as an internal stakeholder, or through referral advice, to relevant Knox departments project for the planning, design, and management of public spaces.
9. Advocate and ensure public art is integrated with public spaces as an internal stakeholder and through referral advice, to relevant Knox departments project for the planning, design, and management of public spaces.
10. Investigate opportunities for activation to help maintain community connectedness during the period of renewal transition and reconstruction of Boronia.
11. Trial a community-led place making initiative in the Boronia MAC where residents, traders and community groups are empowered to implement a project that reflects their local needs, character, and identity.
12. Plan place-making activities and engage the Boronia community, including the trading community, to:
  - Deliver community events or pop-up events throughout the year, including events that will help draw street life during the transition period of large rebuild.
  - Support for community events to celebrate diversity and bring people together from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, faiths, and age groups.

## 6. Precinct Plans

Boronia MAC is made up of five distinct precincts, each with its own existing conditions, key challenges, future role, and preferred outcomes (Figure 10).

The purpose of the Precinct Plans is to provide place specific information in relation to implementation of the objectives, strategies and actions based on the five key strategic themes of this strategy as the basis for a structure plan for Boronia.

Preferred future outcomes for each precinct are outlined in relation to:

- Economic development and investment
- Land use and built form (including Strategic Opportunity Sites, where they exist)
- Movement and access
- Public realm
- Community wellbeing and infrastructure.

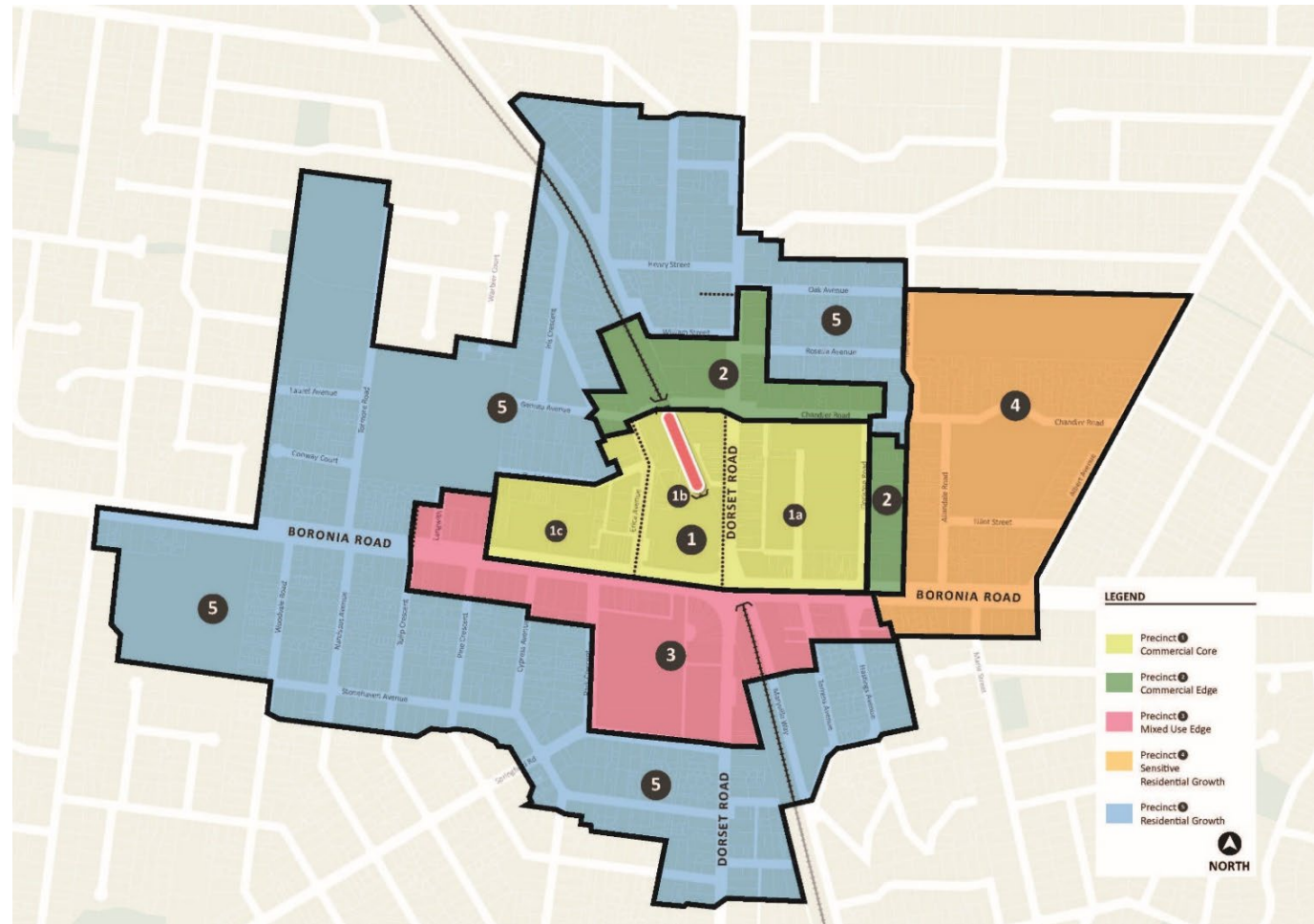


Figure 10 - Boronia Activity Centre

# Precinct 1 – Commercial Core

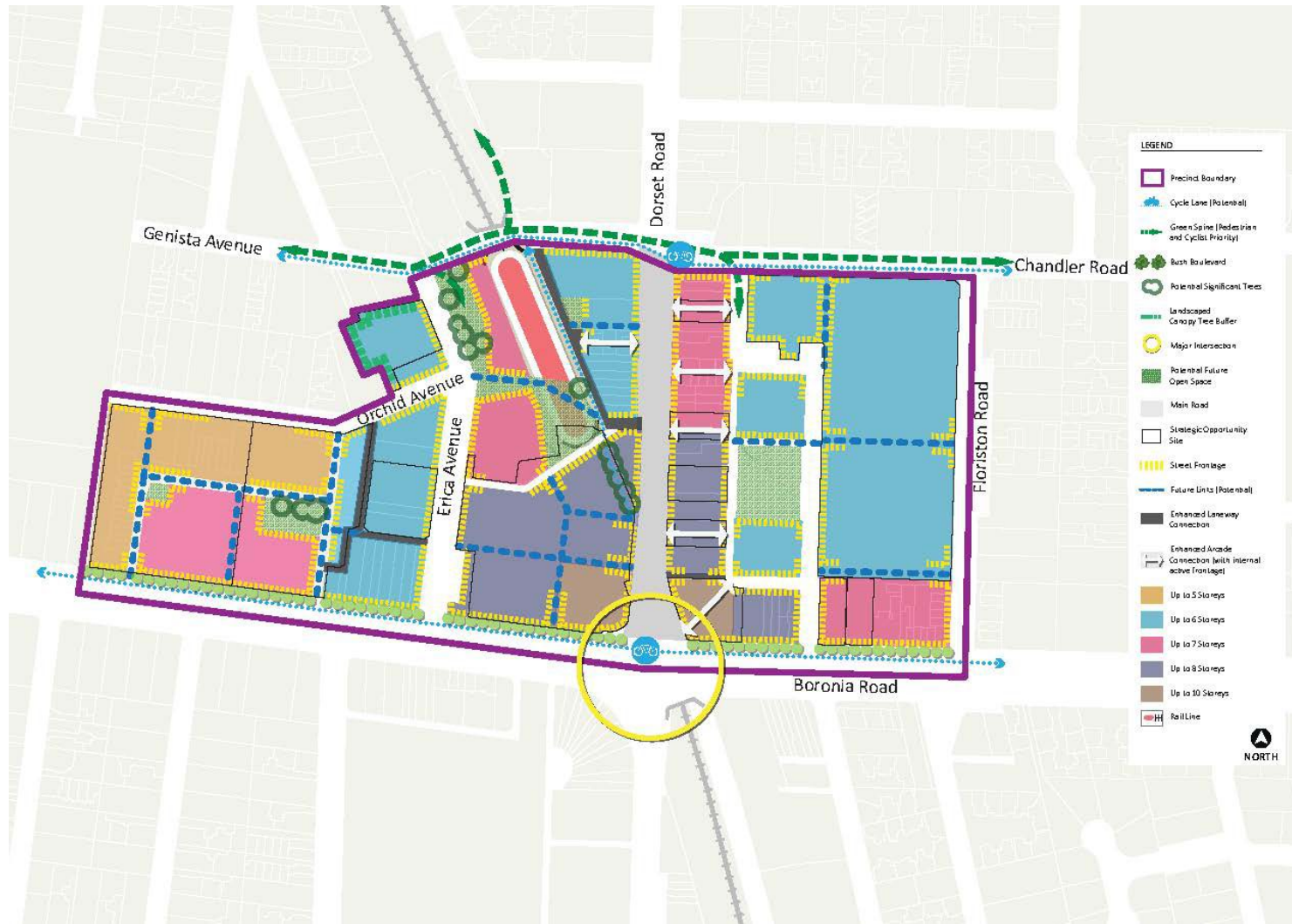


Figure 11 - Precinct 1



---

## 9.1 Precinct 1 – Commercial Core

### 9.1.1 Existing conditions

This precinct is in the core area with 16.1 ha, bounded by Chandler Road, Floriston Road, Boronia Road, Orchid Avenue, and western boundary of 163 Boronia Road. It includes Dorset Square, the train station, the Boronia Junction shopping centre, and extends to include Boronia Village.

This precinct contains mostly commercial, and retail uses and only a few dwellings.

Council owns land (1.4ha) at 257 Dorset Road, Maguire Park, and the Dorset Square at-grade car park. Apart from these land holdings, there are no other Council operated facilities or services delivered from this precinct.

The Train Station, Dorset Square, Dorset Road main street, Erica Avenue, Boronia Junction, and Boronia Village shops are all focal points for renewal and are described as sub-precincts to assist in providing a tailored future direction.

The three sub-precincts are:

- Sub-precinct 1a - Dorset Square
- Sub-precinct 1b – Boronia Station and Boronia Junction shopping centre
- Sub-precinct 1c - Erica Avenue and Boronia Village

#### Sub-precinct 1a – Dorset Square

Established in the 1970s, this retail sub-precinct includes the Boronia Mall shopping centre, Coles supermarket, and Kmart department store. It serves a local catchment that extends to surrounding suburbs and municipalities. These businesses occupy the north and eastern side of the sub-precinct (abutting Chandler and Floriston Roads) and are all fronting Dorset Square. They are served from a loading bay on Chandler Road and an indoor pedestrian connection to Chandler Road via Boronia Mall.

The properties on the western and southern side of the sub-precinct form transversal lots with frontage to both Dorset/Boronia roads and the Square, effectively ‘closing up’ the Square to Dorset Road. The activities front Dorset Square with ground floor retail/food premises, some office spaces in upper storeys, and the Metro Cinema. The Square itself is a Council-owned at-grade car park, with some trees between parking bays.

The central square connects to Dorset Road via a series of retail focused arcades and laneways (Dorset Arcade, Boronia Arcade, ‘Craves’ Lane, A&E Arcade, ‘Cinema’ Lane, Chandler Arcade).

Dorset Road has reduced traffic speeds to 40km/h between Chandler Road and Boronia Road, with pedestrian crossing points to sub-precinct 1b at

the intersections of Boronia Road, and Chandler Road, and south of Lupton Way.

There are two ‘tall’ buildings, at three-storeys high, in this sub-precinct, being 252-254 Dorset Road (the former Vision Australia building), 216 Dorset Road (the local Metro Cinema) which addresses Dorset Square, and there is also the three-levels Coles multi-deck car park, which is accessed from Floriston Road.

The scale and design of the street wall and shop fronts lining Dorset Road retain many of the features valued in a traditional main street that could be revived.

#### Sub-precinct 1b - Boronia Train Station and Boronia Junction shopping centre

The Boronia Train Station and its surrounds form the heart of this sub-precinct. The railway corridor runs in a north/south diagonal alignment, with the station platforms located below grade in an open trench arrangement. The Station is accessed via a central concourse connects Lupton Way (east side) to the bus interchange (west side). The Station area also includes a two-levels commuter parking with additional small at-grade parking areas.

Adjacent to the Train Station, the Boronia Junction shopping centre includes a large format Woolworths supermarket (approx. 3500sqm) with loading bay fronting Erica Avenue. The site also

---

includes a large 2000sqm tenancy previously occupied by a bowling alley and a further 1000sqm of small retail/food tenancies. These premises all face east onto a private forecourt area, turning their back to surrounding streets, and facing an at-grade car park area, comprising a service station, partially sitting over the below-grade train line.

The west side of Dorset Road is characterised by large gaps in the retail streetscape due to the Police Station, 257 Dorset Road (former Youth Hall site), and Boronia Junction car park occupying most of the frontage.

Lupton Way acts as a rear service laneway to Dorset Road properties and provides a pick-up/drop-off point to the train station. Of note, the majority of Lupton Way sits on VicTrack land and is not a Council managed road.

#### Sub-precinct 1C - Erica Avenue and Boronia Village

Erica Avenue is currently in transition. There is limited daytime activity, with a mix of older one and two storey buildings, including several vacant shops/lands (*now demolished to make way for a future Aldi supermarket*) and a Goodyear Tyre business on the corner of Orchid Avenue. This local street is used as a short cut for traffic moving between Dorset Road (north) and Boronia Road to the west. The street is also wider to accommodate large truck and bus turning movements. Dedicated

pedestrian crossings exist at the Boronia Road and Orchid Avenue intersections.

Street frontages on the west side of the Erica Avenue are not consistent but also inconsistent with the east side, which is bounded by the Boronia Junction loading dock and the Train Station access to the commuter car parking structure.

The west side of the street has been upgraded with indented car parking spaces, punctuated with street trees.

The Boronia Village Shopping Centre, including the Dan Murphy's bottle shop (2,000sqm in area) forms the western edge of the main commercial core. The area sits behind, and is detached from, Erica Avenue, covering the area between Boronia Road and Orchid Avenue. The area was identified as suitable for mixed-use development, with residential above ground floor retail, in the Boronia Structure Plan 2006.

There has been little to no change over the past five years, apart from minor upgrade to the Dan Murphy's building (occupying the former Safeway supermarket). The adjoining small shops are arranged in a 'U-shape' surrounding two large at-grade car parks which opens to Boronia Road. The shops are set back almost 80m from Boronia Road.

The car parks are on different level due to the

slope of the area connected via a single ramp near the frontage to Boronia Road. The western-most car park is 5,500sqm with approximately 230 spaces. The parking area at the front of Dan Murphy's is 4,000sqm with approximately 150 spaces, and is impacted by several significant large gum trees which are protected in the Planning Scheme by a Vegetation Protection Overlay. Both car parks are managed by 2-hours' time restrictions and are part of common properties for these shops.

A 7m wide landscaped buffer area runs along the western boundary of the Boronia Village property between Boronia Road and Orchid Avenue. The area comprises mostly 30 small-scale retail tenancies of shops, beauty/grooming care, and food and drink premises.

The area west of the landscape buffer, within Precinct 3 to Langwith Avenue, consists primarily of offices.

The predominance of vehicles in Boronia Village and a lack of convenient pedestrian crossing points over Boronia Road, hampers access and integration with surrounding precincts. The nearest signalised intersections are located at Erica Avenue, or Tormore Road, creating a gap in the natural 'desired line' trajectory for pedestrians. This leads to informal jaywalking by pedestrians looking to shorten the distance to the shops across the 5 lines wide Boronia Road.

---

### 9.1.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Activating and increasing the amenity of car parks, and around the Boronia Train Station, to improve perceptions of safety.
- Reinstating a 'main street' character that activates both sides of Dorset Road, and Erica Avenue.
- Improving the east/west connections between the sub-precincts through the existing arcades, laneways.
- Improving connections to Precincts 2, 3, and 5.
- The absence of a public 'heart' plaza serving as a social and civic space.
- Increasing the quantity and quality of public spaces at the entrance to the Train Station.
- Maintaining sense of address and street activation from properties which front the north side of Boronia Road between Erica Avenue and Floriston Road.
- Improving activation, passive surveillance, and façade presentation to Floriston Road, Chandler Road, and local laneways.
- Reorganising and improving pedestrian crossing points on Dorset Road and Boronia Road.

- Promoting lot consolidation to form efficient redevelopment parcels.
- Overcoming and retrofitting the existing large format, internalised and car-reliant 'mall model' of development and encouraging a more sustainable street-based format.
- Minimising the visual impact of the car parking areas that abut major roads, and in relation to at-grade car parks, encouraging development to site buildings to address Boronia Road.

### 9.1.3 Future role (*what is the outcome we want for the precinct*)

Precinct 1 is forecast to experience a substantial amount of change and become Boronia's high density employment hub, with a vibrant mix of businesses, residential, improved public transport, and community facilities. It will foster a new urban character that is attractive, vibrant, with high-quality public realm providing amenity for both existing workers and future residents.

As a gateway to the Boronia MAC for those using public transport, the Boronia Train Station should present a positive, welcoming appearance and be perceived as a safe place. Mixed-use, higher density development should be concentrated around the Train Station to reconnect the street layout and foster compact building pattern in a finer grain appearance at street level.

### 9.1.4 Preferred approach (*how we intend to achieve the outcome for the precinct*)

#### Big Move Projects

- The Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan informs the future dynamic of this sub-precinct.
- The Dorset Square Town Square Concept Plan informs the future of the Square.
- The Green Spine provides a green northern edge to the retail precinct and improves east-west movements.

#### Economic development and investment

- Small tenancies and titles are consolidated, where necessary, to create redevelopment opportunities and new shop front for retails, or restructured as potential incubator spaces for artists, co-working, creative and social enterprises.

#### Land use and built form

- A character focused on pedestrian and dynamic street-based activities interfacing new multi-storey, mixed-use development redirecting non-active uses at upper levels.
- A diverse mix of buildings, with variety of architectural styles comprising higher levels recessed behind lower podium or street wall.

This variation in modulation and articulation of the built form is accentuated through the treatment of the front façade, the choice of materials and colours at lower and upper levels, and the consideration of the placement of balconies, terraces, and upper levels private open space.

- Buildings provide clear glazing at ground level for activation and upper level to increase passive surveillance and perceptions of safety.
- The arcade network is retained as part of the historic layout of Boronia, making up the unique urban identity of the commercial core.
- A mix of apartment sizes are provided on the upper levels with various, tenure options and number of bedrooms.
- A landmark feature is provided on the corner sites surrounding the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road, supported by taller buildings to accentuate wayfinding and provide a sense of destination.
- In Sub-precinct 1a – Dorset Square:
  - Chandler and Floriston Roads frontages are improved to increase street level activation, amenity, passive surveillance, and improve the interface with Precinct 2.
- In Sub-precinct 1b – Boronia Station and Boronia Junction shopping centre:
  - More residential accommodation is introduced at upper levels to benefit from the proximity to the public transport hub.
- In Sub-precinct 1c – Erica Avenue and Boronia Village:
  - Active frontages along both side of Erica Avenue is provided to consolidate the street role as a 'main street,' improve safety for pedestrians and create a new hub for outdoor dining close to the Boronia station.
  - Also, in Boronia Village, any redevelopment of/or surrounding the existing Dan Murphy's building considers the significance of the arched roof structure and provides an accolade to its role as a visual and architectural icon in creating a unique local identity of this precinct.
  - The Boronia Village/Dan Murphys car parks are redeveloped to a maximum potential of up to seven storeys, while including the replacement of car parking, new public spaces, and providing high-quality pedestrians and cyclists connections.
- The iconic public view from Tormore Reserve to the Dandenong Ranges is retained.
- Buildings integrated upper-level terraces and rooftops to take benefit of views to the Dandenong Ranges.
- The Strategic Opportunity Sites of this precinct provide potential for renewal and the reshaping of Boronia:
  - Boronia Village - 163 Boronia Road
  - Dan Murphys - 159 Boronia Road
  - Boronia Junction – 121-127 Boronia Road
  - 5-11A Erica Avenue
  - 31-39 Erica Avenue
  - 257 Dorset Road
  - Chandler Arcade - 202-210 Dorset Road & 103-109 Boronia Road
  - AEC Arcade - 218-224 Dorset Road
  - 230 Dorset Road
  - 'Craves' Lane - 236-238 Dorset Road
  - 87 Boronia Road
  - 83 Boronia Road
  - Kmart - 50 Dorset Square
  - Boronia Mall
  - Coles supermarket & multi-deck car park



---

### **Movement and access**

- A provision of new mid-block connections is achieved, strengthened by improvements to the amenity of existing pedestrian connections.
- Improved arcades and laneways retained as a no net-loss for pedestrian connectivity.
- A precinct approach to on-street car parking to encourages increased turnover.
- Car parking is rationalised at the rear of the shops into a more efficient arrangement benefiting street activations with pedestrians.
- Car parking in redeveloped sites is relocated in basement, upper levels, or at the rear of the site.
- Car parking is concealed as much as possible as part of the overall building design.
- In Sub-precinct 1c – Erica Avenue and Boronia Village:
  - The western side footpath of Erica Avenue is widened to encourage outdoor dining and other activities that extend into the evening.
  - An active frontage to Orchid Avenue is provided.
  - The Boronia Junction shopping centre embraces Erica Avenue, with a frontage

and direct entrances following the relocation of its loading bay.

- A new pedestrian crossing point is provided across Boronia Road to serve this precinct.
- Laneways and connections are provided to Orchid Avenue and Erica Avenue to benefit pedestrian movements.
- The design of new development responds to practical pedestrian connection between Boronia Road, Orchid Avenue, and Tormore Reserve, including connectivity to a future pedestrian crossing of Boronia Road.

### **Public realm**

- New parklets and small public/civic spaces are provided along the Green Spine, within Dorset Square, along Erica Avenue, and within the train station precinct with their ability to be used as outdoor dining spaces for local cafes and food premises.
- An enhanced streetscaping and tree planting program (including consistent species and spacing with a long-term replacement program) is provided along Dorset Road to assist it achieve a secondary “main street” amenity for the Activity Centre.

- Additional public toilets are provided to respond to the increase in activity in the urban centre.
- New public spaces are created as a result of the redevelopment of car parks to include small pocket plazas allowing people to gather and rest.

### **Community wellbeing and infrastructure**

- Community facilities, including the multi-purpose community facility, are centrally located and accessible.
- Packaged liquor premises not clustered together, and new premises have been discouraged where the sale of packaged liquor is not in conjunction with, or ancillary to, another use.
- Public art is integrated within civic spaces, semi-public spaces, and along laneways and arcades, to enhance streetscape and public interactions with the urban environment.
- Public spaces are designed to accommodate community events.
- Community events are commonly held on both public land and privately- owned open spaces, to enhance urban life and diversity.

# Precinct 2 – Commercial Edge

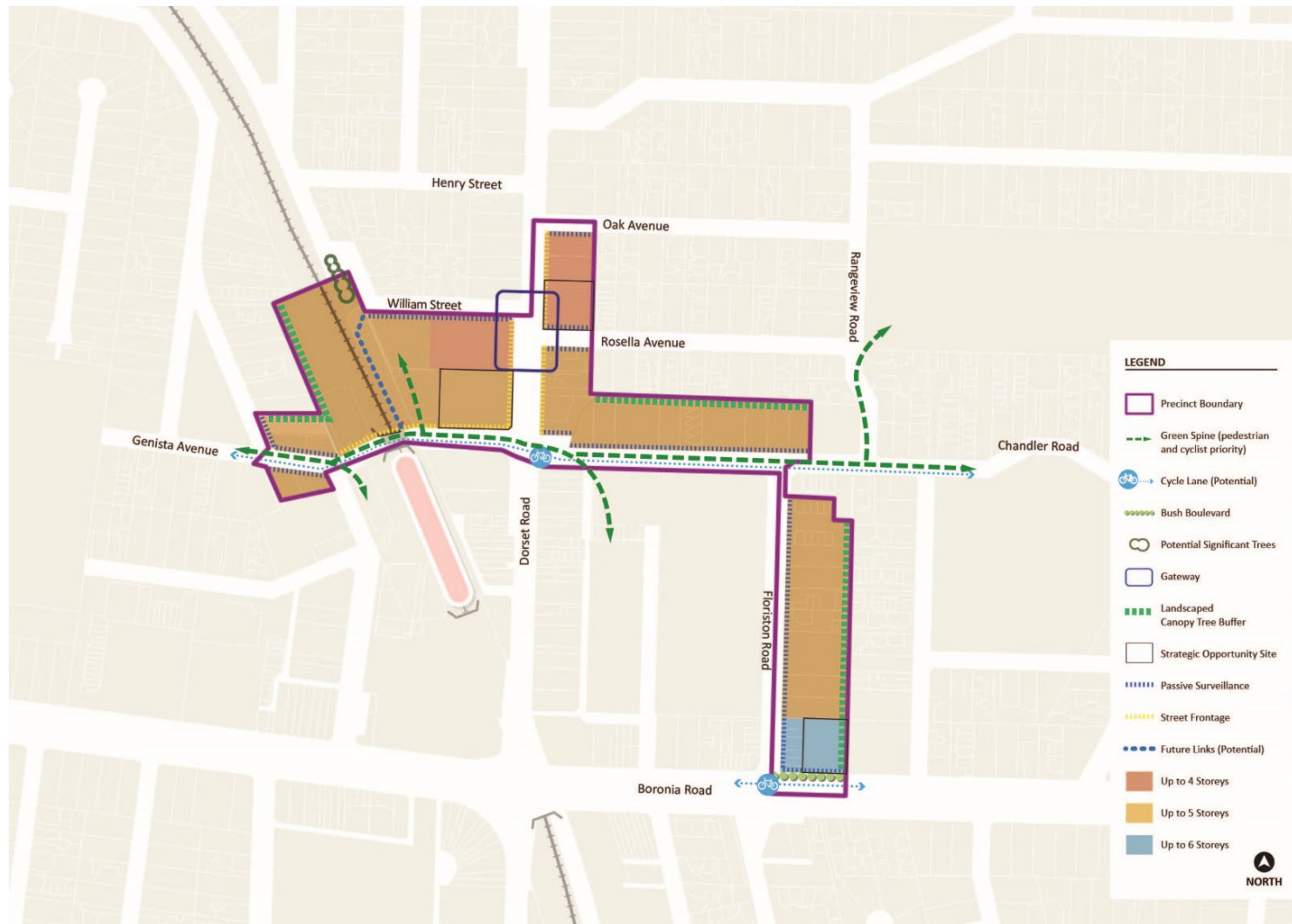


Figure 12 - Precinct 2

---

## 9.2 Precinct 2 – Commercial Edge

### 9.2.1 Existing conditions

This precinct to the north and east of the Commercial Core has an area of about 7.3ha.

This precinct comprises two spatially distinct areas, each with a different business mix and character:

- The Northern edge focused along the north side of Chandler Road.
- The Eastern Edge along the east side of Floriston Road.

#### The Northern Edge

This area primarily runs along Chandler Road to form an edge between the primary retail functions of Precinct 1 and buffer to the adjoining residential area of Precinct 5 to the north. There is a wide variety of businesses fronting these roads, with sporadic residential encroachment and poor pedestrian conditions.

This includes the Dorset Road northern approach also comprising a mixture of residential and offices.

The area west of Dorset Road includes the northern part of the rail corridor and residential properties around the intersection of Genista Avenue, Erica Avenue, and Chandler Road. The

proximity of these properties to the Train Station provides for an increase in pressure for redevelopment.

#### The Eastern Edge

This area includes the properties on the eastern side of Floriston Road, which faces the rear presentation of Kmart and Coles sited on the western side.

### 9.2.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Reducing the demand for car parking.
- Supporting the redevelopment of Chandler Road and Genista Avenue as part of the Green Spine.
- Changing perceptions of safety and increasing casual surveillance along pedestrian routes that lead to the Train Station.
- Balancing demand for housing with potential loss of commercial floor space.
- Retaining sufficient land and floor spaces to meet the forecasted demand for retail and office uses.
- Ensuring diverse frontages and interfaces.

### 9.2.3 Future role (*what is the outcome we want for the precinct*)

Precinct 2 will provide for a mix of uses that activate the streetscape. Taller mixed-use buildings will provide commercial uses at ground level, and residential uses at upper levels.

The precinct will provide a built form scale that transitions from Precinct 1 to the surrounding residential amenity of Precincts 4 and 5.

### 9.2.4 Preferred approach (*how we intend to achieve the outcome for the precinct*)

#### Economic development and investment

- There is no net loss of existing commercial floor space.
- Small tenancies and titles are consolidated to increase opportunities for new shop front or office redevelopment.
- New developments provide commercial opportunities, such as retail or office uses on the ground floor.

#### Land use and built form

- A preferred built form character includes building ranging between 4-6 storeys.

- 
- New development features active frontages to all streets, with landscaped front setbacks, and reduced visual presence of parking.
  - The interface with residential uses on Allandale Road is sensitively managed with increased rear setbacks and the planting of large canopy trees to form a landscape buffer.
  - The Strategic Opportunity Sites of this Precinct provide potential for renewal and the reshaping of Boronia:
    - 280 Dorset Road
    - McDonald's - 267 Dorset Road
    - 65 Boronia Road

#### Movement and Access

- East-West Green Spine enhances movements along Chandler Road.

#### Community wellbeing and infrastructure

- Packaged liquor premises are not clustered in this precinct, and new premises are discouraged where the sale is not in conjunction with, or ancillary to, another use.



# Precinct 3 – Mixed Use Edge



Figure 13 - Precinct 3

---

## 9.3 Precinct 3 – Mixed Use Edge

### 9.3.1 Existing conditions

This linear precinct, with an area of 174.1 ha, includes Boronia Park and properties fronting the south side of Boronia Road.

The Precinct forms the southern edge to the core area and acts as a buffer between Boronia Road and the residential Precinct 5 to the south.

#### Boronia Road

The built form character and uses are highly variable along this corridor with:

- Zero street setback and retail/hospitality businesses in areas between Park Crescent and Hastings Avenue.
- Gradually increasing front setbacks to the west of Park Crescent with more prevalent office use and an emerging health related use cluster to the immediate west of Boronia Park. Overhead power lines also reduce opportunities for street trees in this area.

Knox Council has two well-used community facilities fronting Boronia Road:

- Progress Hall which holds strong historic and cultural significance for the community. It was originally built in the early 20th century and restored after a fire in the early 1990s.

- Knox Infolinks which includes several community services located in a single dwelling scaled building. St. John's Ambulance has a training facility in a separate building at the rear of this facility.

The western edge of the precinct is primarily residential with increasing densities in new residential development.

#### Dorset Road and Boronia Road intersection

The southern approach along Dorset Road is characterised by Boronia Park on one side and small convenience retail, residual car parks, and a newly established apartment building at 198B Dorset Road. The Boronia Returned Services League (RSL) is also located at the southern edge of the precinct.

Boronia Road is over 40m wide with nine traffic lanes at the intersection. This dynamic presents a major challenge to integrating urban character and land uses on all corners. At the south-western corner of the intersection, single storey retail tenancies are sited slightly below the street level occupy the space between the intersection and Boronia Park.

#### Boronia Park

Boronia Park comprises important community infrastructure and Council- owned assets. It provides a focus for recreation/leisure needs for

the eastern part of the municipality.

The Park currently comprises:

- The Marie Chandler Children and Family Centre, located along Park Crescent close to the Springfield Road intersection.
- The Knox Basketball Stadium and adjacent Boronia Community Library, located in the centre of the park.
- The Boronia Radio Controlled Car Club, located at the corner of Dorset Road and Park Crescent, offering space for hobbyists to practice and meet.
- The Stormwater retention basin operated by Melbourne Water, which occupies most of the Dorset Road frontage.

### 9.3.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Ensuring that any development on the south side of Boronia Road provides an activated streetscape to improve pedestrian safety and amenity and achieve a Bush Boulevard/Paths to the Hills outcome.
- Ensuring that any development along Boronia Park integrates and activates with the park.
- Reinvigorating Boronia Park, while accommodating recreation activities,

---

increased stormwater retardation capacity and increased vegetation.

- Reducing the amenity impact of traffic volume along Boronia Road and Dorset Road.
- Improving pedestrian connectivity over Boronia Road and Dorset Road.
- Promoting consolidation to accommodate substantial built form on small titles at the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road.
- Ensuring development along the north side of Boronia Park considers potential stormwater events and retardation.
- Planning the improvements to Boronia Park as a both a community and stormwater management asset after the demolition of the Knox Basketball Stadium.
- Understanding the need and limitation of Council's leasehold on the private car park at 152 to 160 Boronia Road.

### **9.3.3 Future role (*what is the outcome we want for the precinct*)**

Precinct 3 will provide for a mix of uses that activate the streetscape, particularly along Boronia Road and the edge of Boronia Park. This Precinct will include a new cluster focus for health-related facilities.

The Precinct will encourage incremental height from the edge of the Precinct, rising to the Boronia/Dorset Road intersection with residential or office at upper level. The precinct will balance street activation, health uses and conveniences, passive surveillance, and the provision of a Bush Boulevard/Paths to the Hills streetscape outcome along Boronia Road.

### **9.3.4 Preferred approach (*how we intend to achieve the outcome for the precinct*)**

#### **Economic Development**

- The Precinct supports an assortment of offices in smaller premises with a health focus.
- A mix of retail and convenience services the local pedestrian catchment originating south of Boronia Road.
- Cafes, food and drink premises, and similar conveniences will locate on the periphery of Boronia Park, with frontage to the park, to increase activation and create a daytime dynamic between the park and these venues.

#### **Land use and built form**

- A mix of non-residential uses, including convenience retail and conveniences, are located at ground level along arterial roads to serve the surrounding residential

neighbourhoods. The mix of residential uses are kept above ground floor, along arterial roads.

- Front setbacks are responsive to the width of the Boronia Road reserve, and balance activation, passive surveillance and landscaping outcome serving to achieve a Bush Boulevard and Paths to the Hills.
- Health related uses and complementary uses are clustered in the Precinct in accordance with the Precinct 3 Plan.
- Taller development along Boronia Road, acting as a buffer to the residential areas to the south.
- A landmark feature is provided on the corner sites surrounding the intersection of Boronia Road and Dorset Road, supported by taller buildings to accentuate wayfinding and provide a sense of destination. Such taller building could be delivered via consolidation of several titles to form one, or several efficient development parcel. This landmark site could deliver a substantial amount of high-quality apartment-style living, with surveillance to the park and significant views in all directions.
- Built form gradually decreases in height outwards from the intersection of Boronia

---

and Dorset Roads to a maximum 4 storeys by Precinct 4 and 5.

- The Strategic Opportunity Sites of this Precinct provide potential for renewal and the reshaping of Boronia:
  - 112-112A Boronia Road and 2 Torrens Road, former Zagames. This site extends over five titles with frontages to Boronia Road, Torrens Avenue and Maryville Way. Redevelopment activates all roads and laneways via ground floor retail, offices, or function centres, with accommodation above. The site provides pedestrian linkages between Torrens Avenue and Maryville Way.
  - 194-198 Dorset Road, Boronia RSL. The site extends over three titles. The site is consolidated to take benefit of its 3300sqm in size.

#### **Movement and access**

- The southern edge of Boronia Road is upgraded through a combination of building setbacks achieving an urban bush boulevard treatment, wider footpath and connectivity across Boronia Road improves pedestrian safety and amenity.
- Off-street car parks are located underground, or at the rear of properties.

- A new laneway is created along the boundary between the aged care facility and Zagame's car park to increase permeability between Torrens Avenue and Marysville Way and improve access to the train station.
- A new crossing point over Dorset Road to connect Boronia Park/Park Crescent with the eastern side of Dorset Road is investigated.

#### **Public realm**

- Passive surveillance of the public realm is increased, including Boronia Park.
- Boronia Park is enhanced and caters for a mix of leisure and passive recreational activities. The Park will be a green oasis for a sub-regional catchment balancing landscaped park features with retarding basin requirements. The provision of community services into new facilities in the park is investigated.
- Increased tree canopy and activation of the Boronia Road and Dorset Road streetscapes to improve pedestrian safety and amenity.
- Boronia Park titles are consolidated and realigned to facilitate future property management of the site as a parkland, including the formal closure of unformed road reserve running through the parkland.

#### **Community wellbeing and infrastructure**

- If located in Precinct 3, Community facilities, including the multi-purpose community facility, are centrally located and accessible.
- Packaged liquor premises are not clustered in this precinct, and new premises are discouraged where the sale is not in conjunction with, or ancillary to, another use.
- Additional public art is integrated within civic spaces and along laneways and arcades, to enhance streetscape.
- Public spaces are designed to accommodate community events.
- Community events are held on public land and privately owned open spaces, to enhance urban life and diversity.
- Progress Hall - The future purpose, siting, and enhancement of Progress Hall is determined through the Boronia Park Master Plan.
- Infolink and St John's Ambulance - The future of 136 Boronia Road is to be determined through the outcome of the Boronia Park Master Plan.



# Precinct 4 – Sensitive Residential Growth



Figure 14 - Precinct 4

---

## 9.4 Precinct 4 – Sensitive Residential Growth

### 9.4.1 Existing conditions

This 19ha residential precinct forms a buffer between the core and the sensitive Dandenong Foothills area.

Boronia College K-12 and Chandler Park are key focal points for community activity in this precinct. The Precinct is also home to several community groups, including the Guides and Scouts Associations.

The Precinct consists of mostly single and double storey medium density residential development. It is characterised by 1,000sqm lots, many of which have been subdivided for villa units or townhouses, with only a scattering of older houses remaining. It has experienced considerable change over the past five years and further redevelopment opportunities are limited.

A small group of properties fronting Boronia Road, on the south side, are grade separated from the road by a 2m escarpment and can only be accessed via a dedicated slip lane from the east.

As Boronia Road starts to narrow from eight to four lanes, the 40m wide road reserve remains. This road is a barrier for people wanting to cross into the core area either by walking or cycling.

### 9.4.2 Key challenges

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Realising the potential for new neighbourhood focal points, based on the consolidation of activities around existing local destinations, such as Boronia K-12 College and Chandler Park.
- Ensuring that the development scale, bulk, and form transition down to the surrounding Dandenong Foothills area.
- Increasing green spaces around buildings, by minimising hard surfaces and increasing landscaping outcomes.
- Retaining existing large canopy trees and increasing canopy tree coverage to transition to the surrounding Dandenong Foothills area.
- A small group of properties fronting Boronia Road could be impacted as traffic volumes increase and experience reduced amenity and accessibility.

### 9.4.3 Future role (*what is the outcome we want for the precinct*)

Precinct 4 will accommodate incremental residential growth in compact taller development in a heavily landscaped setting with significantly increased tree canopy.

New development will transition to the surrounding low-scale development in the Dandenong Foothills area and will respect identified significant views.

### 9.4.4 Preferred approach (*how we intend to achieve the outcome for the precinct*)

#### Economic development and investment

- The population is within walking distance of the core area, creating a localised demand for goods and services.

#### Land use and built form

- The Precinct remains residential with other activities and conveniences established at a residential scale.
- Low-rise apartment development up to 3 storeys are along Boronia Road and abutting Precinct 2 to take advantage of views to the west. Other areas of Precinct 4 absorb transition and taper down to existing lower scale and height of areas outside the Activity Centre.
- A mix of dwelling typologies, including 3–4 bedrooms to respond to the needs of larger or bigenerational households.
- The interface between residential uses on Allandale Road with Precinct 2 is sensitively

---

managed through increased rear setbacks, to allow sufficient space for planting large canopy trees to form a landscaped buffer. Noting this interface adds to the transition requirements set in Precinct 2.

- New developments have a smaller gross floor footprint, to a maximum 50% of the site, to provide the opportunity for landscaping with large canopy trees.
- The design of new development fronting Boronia Road responds to the adverse conditions created by high traffic volumes, constrained access, and reduced amenity, while still maintaining passive surveillance.

#### **Movement and Access**

- Dedicated cycle lanes are provided along Chandler Road as part of the Green Spine and along Boronia Road.
- The slip lane access to 70 to 82 Boronia Road is designed as a shared space to balance pedestrian amenity and local vehicle movements.

#### **Public Realm**

- Increased pedestrian activity in the public realm is achieved through improved lighting for pedestrians, wider footpaths, and dedicated cycle lanes, and supported by

passive surveillance from adjoining development.

- A net gain in tree canopy coverage is achieved in this precinct through additional planting in front and rear setbacks and intensive street tree planting, to assist the transition between Precinct 4 and the Foothills.
- A Green Spine is delivered alongside Chandler Road and Rangeview Road.

#### **Community wellbeing and infrastructure**

- In Chandler Park, there is increased access and use of existing facilities from improved lighting and wider footpaths.

# Precinct 5 – Residential Growth

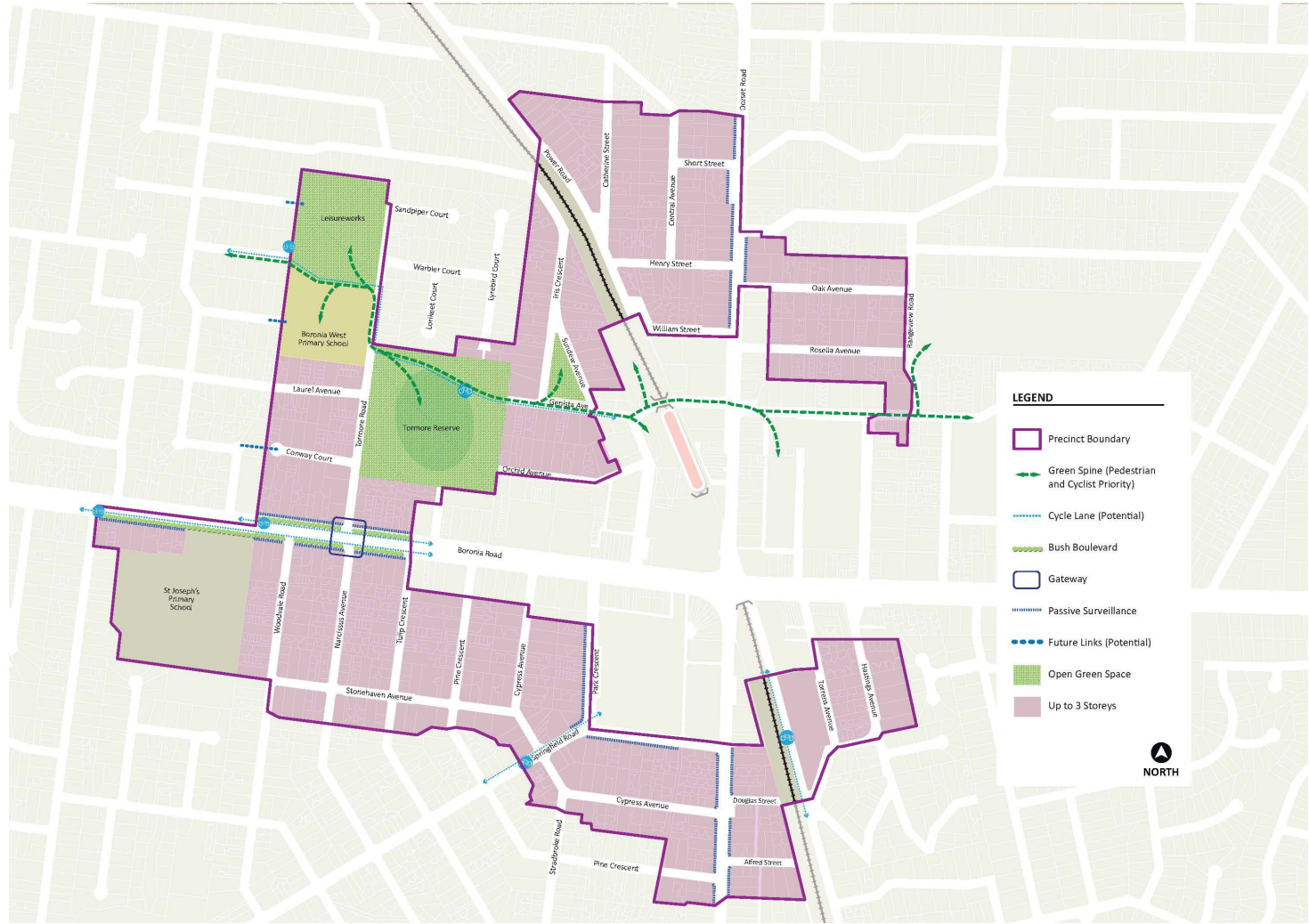


Figure 15 - Precinct 5



---

## 9.5 – Precinct 5 – Residential Growth

### 9.5.1 Existing conditions

This large precinct of approximately 79ha comprises the northern, western, and southern areas of the Boronia MAC.

Development along the eastern edge of Dorset Road is constrained by an existing Public Acquisition Overlay in favour of VicRoads under the Knox Planning Scheme. The Overlay impacts setback requirement for redevelopment due to the proposed road widening.

The northern part of this precinct is within an 800 metres walkable catchment of the Boronia Train Station. Walking and cycling to the Boronia MAC core is facilitated through direct paths along Dorset Road and Power Street.

The rail line forms a barrier to east/west movements, with no formal pedestrian crossing points between Chandler Road and Devenish Road (i.e. at Herbert Road).

Parts of the precinct have experienced substantial change in the form of townhouse redevelopments, particularly in the southern and western side. There is a perception of disconnect and distance between the southern part and the MAC core caused by the barrier created by Boronia Road. Parts of this precinct have a direct interface with the Dandenong Foothills Policy area

to the north and east. Oak Avenue forms a buffer that acts as a transition to the adjoining foothills area of Elsie Street.

This residential precinct is well served by schools, parks, churches, and recreation facilities. This precinct has good amenity provided by access to open spaces and schools. The western part of the Precinct takes benefit of views to the Dandenong Ranges.

#### Genista Park surrounds.

This area will come under increasing pressure for redevelopment due to its proximity to the Boronia Train Station, the commercial core, and large established parks.

The park provides a neighbourhood focal point which could reconnect with the surrounding mix of lower density detached houses and townhouses. The amenity levels vary as some properties back onto the train line. Easy access to shops, services and Train Station makes this a highly desirable location. Genista Park is a Site of Biological Significance which comprises significant canopy trees.

#### Northern and southern areas.

This area has experienced a large amount of residential redevelopment, primarily in the form of townhouses. Part of the sub-precinct located south of Boronia Park is subject to overland flow

from significant storm events, with stormwater run-off using the outlet of the Boronia Park retention basin to flow towards the Blind Creek catchment.

#### Hastings Avenue

This area sits on the eastern slope of Boronia into the foothills area to the east. Land located south of Boronia Road falls from the foothills area towards the rail line. There are a few remaining large lots with detached houses. An existing aged-care facility (Maryville Hostel) occupies a large landholding along Maryville Way and Torrens Avenue.

The narrow road reserves are the only form of public realm in this sub-precinct. Most roads do not include footpaths and the absence of a pedestrian crossing over the rail line prevents access to the west.

#### Knox Leisureworks

The Precinct hosts Council's only aquatic facility, Leisureworks. There is a strong community connection with the Leisureworks facility, which was established in the mid-1970s. This facility acts as a focal point and anchor for the three key facilities located within easy walking distance of each other.

#### Tormore Reserve

Tormore Reserve is another focal point for the

---

Precinct, which has an area of over 5 ha of open space. The Reserve's sports pavilion is well utilised by sporting clubs most of the year. This Reserve, together with the Leisureworks and Primary School, are a walkable distance to the commercial core. This area provides wide vistas to the Dandenong Ranges.

#### St Joseph's Primary School

The St Joseph's parish was established in the mid-1960s and has grown to be a key focal point for the surrounding community ever since. A variety of residential development in the form of townhouses and villa units surrounds the school site. Although the school is currently in a residential zone there are no plans for its expansion or redevelopment at this stage.

The area is a Site of Biological Significance which comprises remnant canopy bushland.

#### **9.5.2 Key challenges**

Key challenges that need to be addressed in this precinct are:

- Creating connections, both visual and pedestrian, between local destinations and the Boronia MAC core area.
- Encouraging lot consolidation to facilitate increased and compact residential density.

- Implementing a compact building footprints to allow for significant landscaping and canopy trees in the context of Rescode provisions.
- Facilitating high quality infill development that offers modern, highly articulated facades, and design that minimises amenity impact to existing dwellings.
- Managing stormwater events and associated overland flows to Boronia Park, within Boronia Park, and towards Blind Creek.
- Providing appropriate connectivity in local streets where there is an absence of footpaths.
- Improving pedestrian connectivity across the precinct given the barrier created by the train line, minimal arterial roads crossing points, established street network of cul-de-sacs, and minimal entry points.
- Delivering a Green Spine connection by creating improved streetscapes and pedestrian environments along Genista Avenue from Chandler Road to Tormore Reserve and further onto Tormore Road.
- Managing vehicle traffic along Genista Park area to reconnect the park with its surrounding, balance safe pedestrian access to the park, and deliver the Green Spine.
- Facilitating vehicle manoeuvres at the end of no-through roads.
- Managing on-street parking and limitations imposed by the street network and the north/south movement barrier created by Boronia Road.
- Strengthening linkages between the Boronia West Primary School, Knox Leisureworks and Tormore Reserve to provide facility services with a neighbourhood focus.
- Improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity with areas outside the Activity Centre.
- Improving the pedestrian environment of the Knox Leisureworks car park to improve safety for children and those using the pool.
- Ensuring home-based businesses will not detrimentally impact local amenity, particularly regarding availability of on-street parking.
- Facilitating access to Leisureworks by public transport, walking and cycling.
- Retaining Conserving remnant native vegetation and canopy trees identified as Sites of Biological Significance.

#### **9.5.3 Future role (*what is the outcome we want for the precinct*)**

Being within an 800m walkable catchment of the Train Station, Precinct 5 will support more

---

intensive residential growth to better utilise and encourage residents' ability to walk or cycle to public transport and the Boronia MAC core.

It will also accommodate high-quality residential apartments up to three storeys in well landscaped surroundings with canopy trees, pedestrian friendly streetscapes. The precinct will be supported by well-maintained community facilities.

#### 9.5.4 Preferred approach (*how we intend to achieve the outcome for the precinct*)

##### **Economic development and investment**

- Provide additional population within walkable distance of the core area to create a localised demand for goods and services.
- Support local convenience (shops and food premises) where it provides services that meets community needs based on local neighbourhood pedestrian catchment, and to occupiers of adjoining public facilities.
- Support home-based businesses that require a planning permit where it demonstrates that it minimises amenity impacts, including impacts through traffic and car parking.

##### **Land use and built form**

- Grow residential density in the northern and southern parts of the Precinct.
- Consolidate lots to increase development potential, and to ensure high quality design responses in favour of apartments over townhouses.
- Provide a transition in scale of development at the northern and southern edges which accounts for the residential development outside the Activity Centre boundary.
- Increase green spaces around buildings, by minimising hard surfaces and increasing landscaping outcomes, particularly south of Boronia Park to facilitate stormwater flows and percolation.
- Require apartment to develop on lots with a minimum width of 22m, to manage overlooking and provide sufficient setbacks for landscaping.
- Facilitate a smaller building gross floor footprint to increase landscaping and canopy trees outcomes, especially along rear boundaries and at sensitive interfaces.
- Provide minimum front setback for canopy trees.
- Provide rear setback of 5m for canopy trees.
- Around Genista Park:

- Provide a direct active frontage to the Park.
- Increase passive surveillance to Orchid Avenue.
- Provide three storeys apartment development along the railway line, to create a noise buffer for properties to the west.
- Incorporate a minimum ground floor to ceiling height of 4 metres along the Green Spine to allow for flexibility of uses over time and potential future conversion.
- In northern and southern areas:
  - Increase residential density particularly where immediately adjacent to Boronia Park and the core area.
  - Minimise hard surfaces to protect surface flows in areas south of Boronia Park and alleviate flood risks from stormwater run-off.
- Land adjoining Hastings Avenue, Torrens Avenue and Maryville Way:
  - Use larger lots as a potential to increase residential density.
  - Maintain the aged care facility into a future vertical built form.

- Provide three storeys apartment buildings along the railway corridor to act as a noise buffer for properties to the east.

### **Movement and access**

- Improve pedestrian and cyclist paths across the railway line, Park Crescent, and Dorset Road.
- Plan for pedestrian links from Iris Crescent to the Warbler Court Estate.
- Improve streetscape treatments along Boronia Road that facilitates walking and cycling to St Joseph’s School and better perceptions of safety.
- Plan for a bus route along Tormore Road to provide mode choice and improved access to Knox Leisureworks.
- Design car parks at the rear of buildings, in an undercroft or basement structure.
- Plan for pedestrian connections to Norwich Street, and Grevillea Avenue in future design configuration of Knox Leisureworks and Boronia West Primary School.
- Plan and investigate a pedestrian connection between Conway Court and Zeising Court.
- Plan for pedestrian linkages from Rankin Road to Boronia Road and Woodvale Road as

part of any future redevelopment of St Joseph’s School or 22 Woodvale Road.

### **Public realm**

- Strengthen Boronia Park role is enhanced as a sub-regional focal natural park environment with significant vegetation increase.
- Upgrade stormwater retardation function of Boronia Park while balancing these with the delivery of improved leisure/recreational options.
- Connect Boronia Park to the Blind Creek trail.
- Require new design to enhance passive surveillance to Boronia Park, Tormore Reserve, Genista Park, and the surrounding streets.
- Increase canopy tree coverage through streetscaping and front setbacks.
- Deliver a green streetscape character, consisting of indigenous street trees, that filters from the Dandenong Foothills and the Bush Boulevard along local streets and the Belgrave train line. A green streetscape character is also provided along Stonehaven Avenue, Springfield Road, and Dorset Road towards Boronia Park, and Iris Crescent towards Genista Park.

- Improve perceptions of safety through lighting and wider pathways linking community facilities and Reserves.

### **Community wellbeing and infrastructure**

- Community facilities are accessible for all-users.
- Integrate public art within public open space.
- Design public spaces to accommodate community events to enhance urban life and diversity.
- Increase activities of Tormore Reserve during the week using the facilities and the park.
- Partner with school facilities to increase access to additional recreation area.
- Upgrade Knox Leisureworks to offer more choices for healthy living and to attract small compatible activities to co-locate within the facility.



# 7. Implementation

## 10. Implementation

### 10.1 Implementation Action Plan

A detailed implementation action plan will follow the finalisation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy. The action plan will outline responsibilities, technical implementation details, priorities, anticipated budgeting, and timing for each of the identified actions in the Strategy.

Implementation of the Strategy will include the ongoing delivery of several projects:

- some of which are already underway within the Boronia MAC create immediate short-term change (“Integration Projects”).
- as well larger projects that will affect more than one precinct and relate to multiple objectives (Big Move Projects) to be implemented at different stages over the next 20-year period.

Each implementation initiative and project will then provide their own series of detailed actions for their delivery.

Given its role as a major land and asset owner, and one of the largest service providers and manager of the public realm within the Boronia MAC, Council will have a major role in the

implementation of the Strategy. However, implementation of the Strategy will also rely heavily on strong partnerships with other government agencies, businesses, community organisations and the broader community, as well as financial capacity.

### 10.2 Statutory Framework

The Boronia Renewal Strategy will be introduced in the Knox Planning Scheme through planning policies, zones, built form controls and overlays to give statutory effect to the aspirations of this Strategy.

### 10.3 Integration Projects

Projects that have been underway throughout the drafting of this Strategy, and which will contribute to the renewal of the Boronia MAC, include:

- ‘Creating a safer Boronia’ (2019) – solar lighting in Tormore Reserve, Orchid Avenue and Erica Avenue connecting to the Boronia Train Station to improve pedestrian pathways lighting.
- ‘Framed by Gender’ public art project (2019) – part of Immerse 2019, featured two co-

designed community arts projects based in the Boronia MAC.

- ‘Play Park 257’ (2019-2022) – temporary activation of Council’s vacant land at 257 Dorset Road following the demolition of the Boronia Youth Hall. The process used community engagement to generate ideas and options to create a temporary activation of the site for the public until a new function is found. The activation has enabled community events to happen throughout the summer, including the ‘Big Flix Festival.’
- ‘Beautifying Boronia’ (2022) - Supported by the Victorian Government, it delivered 3 large-scale murals commissioned on sites in Boronia.
- ‘Boronia Community Breakfast Program’ (2022) - Supported by the Victorian Government, it provided free community breakfast 5 days a week to provide support for vulnerable people in and around Boronia.
- ‘Business facade upgrades grant’ (2022) - Supported by the Victorian Government, it provided opportunity for business owners to apply for a co-contribution grant to improve their shopfront

- ‘Erica Avenue streetscape renewal’ (2023-2024) – Supported by the Victorian Government, the works will enhance accessibility, provide opportunities for outdoor dining, and improve the amenity of the area.

#### 10.4 Big Move Projects

Four Big Move Projects have been identified to deliver tangible outcomes that contribute to realising the long-term vision for the Boronia MAC.

These projects have been nominated to deliver objectives relating to multiple themes and often impact on more than one precinct within the Centre.

These projects will take place over several years and will rely on multiple stakeholders and project partners for their successful delivery. In some cases, further work is required to fully flesh out the project scope and impact.

The identified Big Move Projects, which are described in more detail below are:

1. Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan
2. Boronia Park Precinct Master Plan
3. Dorset Square Town Square Concept

- These three planning activities will also include community infrastructure investigation (including a potential digital creative hub as part of a multi-purpose community centre).

#### 4. Green Spine Corridor

##### 10.4.1 Boronia Train Station Precinct Concept Plan

###### Project description

This Big Move Project provides for a concept plan for the intensification and renewal of the Boronia Train Station Precinct.

The concept plan will outline Council’s expectations for land use and urban design for the area around Boronia Train Station, will outline Council’s expectations and setting a clear direction for investments and the future redevelopment of the Train Station, VicTrack land, or surrounding land.

This project will give the private sector confidence and attract further private investment, which will have flow on economic benefits such as new jobs, expansion of existing businesses, and accommodating expected population growth.

Without the redevelopment of the Train Station

precinct, renewal of the Boronia MAC core area will be very difficult.

###### Background

This Precinct was transformed in the early 1990s from a large at grade intersection with the train line running through the middle, to a grade separated train line that runs below the main roads. This grade separation was the earliest ‘level crossing removal project’ in Metropolitan Melbourne and happened because of some of the most severe road toll events in Victoria, which happened at the intersection of Boronia Road, Chandler Road, and the railway crossing. As a result of this works, Chandler Road and Erica Avenue were connected through a new viaduct which created a “bypass” option between Boronia and Dorset Roads. Apart from the streetscape upgrade works along Erica Avenue undertaken by Knox Council, there has been no other physical work in relation to the Train Station or surrounds.

The Train Station is accessed from Lupton Way to the east and via a bus interchange which abuts Erica Avenue to the west. There is a two-storey level car parking structure, accessed from Erica Avenue that also provides access to the Boronia Shopping Centre car park that extends to Dorset Road.

Located at the very core of the Boronia MAC, this

---

area is characterized by car parking infrastructure and a poor pedestrian environment. This condition is created by the high demand for commuter car parking spaces generated by the large catchment which extends into the foothills area.

This fuels the absence of a 'sense of arrival' for commuters arriving at the Boronia Station. Much of the feedback received from the community and public transport users has highlighted that the area feels unsafe, is unsightly and is difficult to access for pedestrians and cyclists. Although the public transport services are well used, the Train Station does not present a positive gateway entrance or connectivity to the Boronia MAC.

These perceptions constrain redevelopment opportunities on private land surrounding the Station. Managing the movement patterns of all transport modes to improve pedestrians and cyclists' priority will also be important.

### Key considerations

Key considerations for the concept plan will be:

- Creation of a high quality/amenity public realm, including new civic spaces.
- Opportunities for redevelopment and increased private sector investment in

relation to several strategic sites close to the Train Station.

- Opportunities for community facilities or services in this central and highly accessible location.
- Existing lease and sub-lease arrangements on public and private land will impact redevelopment opportunities.
- Managing the high car parking demands created by commuters using public transport.
- The high number of bus movements in and out of the interchange area.
- Freight movements through the area and loading or service areas that interface with the public realm.

### Key Stakeholders

Knox City Council owns land at 257 Dorset Road, the Bellbird Senior Citizens facility (located on VicTrack land) and a small park which directly abuts VicTrack land, as well as managing the local road network and on-street parking areas.

Other adjoining landowners include private landowners, Boronia Junction Shopping Centre, and local businesses, as well as the Department of Transport and Planning, VicTrack, Metro Trains, and the Victoria Police.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

### Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- Activating public spaces to improve safety perceptions.
- Improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and safety.
- Providing for mixed-use, street-based redevelopment (commercial on ground floor with residential above) that can take advantage of the high pedestrian flows to and from the Station and interchange.
- Significantly increasing residential uses near the train station, with consideration of the potential for social housing.
- Providing for a civic space/ forecourt.
- Improving amenity, through means including public art and greening.
- Reducing the negative impact of at-grade parking spaces and shifting towards more efficient and compact use solutions.

- Consolidation of commuter car parks to provide space for new purposes.
- The potential for a multi-purpose community facility (or some of the uses nominate within the facility, e.g., library).

#### 10.4.2 Boronia Park Precinct Masterplan

##### Project description

This Big Move Project is a master planning exercise to set out in detail the future of the Park Precinct for its redevelopment over the next 10 years. This integrated Precinct will provide a mix of public open space for passive recreation, stormwater management, and potential community facilities and potentially including other compatible not-for-profit or commercial uses that could be included.

##### Background

This 4.1ha area of Council-owned land contains many important community facilities and uses, including the library, the Progress Hall, the Marie Chandler Park Crescent Children and Family Centre, and an important retarding basin to name a few.

The existing basketball stadium is to be decommissioned and demolished in the coming years, therefore creating the opportunity to

reconsider the uses, functions, and spaces within Boronia Park. The demolition of the basketball stadium will have a flow-on effect to the integrity and relevance of the library building, which will draw attention to its replacement into a new Multi-Purpose Community Facility that could be in Boronia Park.

A master plan was previously included in the Boronia Structure Plan 2006. This Big Move Project will supersede the masterplan from 2006.

##### Key considerations

Key considerations for the concept plan will be:

- Flood modelling and mapping to determine stormwater retention needs.
- Creation of a high quality/amenity public realm with infrastructure for all ages.
- The future of existing community facilities, community and service providers' needs and opportunities for new community facilities at this location or in Precinct 1.
- Location of Progress Hall and any opportunities for improvement.
- Existing lease and sub-lease arrangements.
- Improved pedestrian and cycling linkages towards and through the park, with better connections to Dorset Road, Boronia Road,

Park Crescent, and with links to the core area, Erica Avenue, the eastern side of Dorset Road, and the Blind Creek trail (via Springfield Road).

- Integration with surrounding urban fabric to increase activation and passive surveillance.
- Consolidation or realignment of titles, including the closure of unformed road reserve to rationalise the formal network through the park.
- Balancing the need for active and passive recreation spaces with car parking supply.

##### Key stakeholders

Knox City Council owns this land and manages the surrounding local road network and car parking areas within it. Community service providers and tenants include:

- Eastern Regional Library
- Boronia Radio Controlled Car Club
- St. John's Ambulance
- Progress Hall users
- Infolink service providers

Other key stakeholders include:

- Department of Transport and Planning (VicRoads), which manages the abutting



---

arterial Boronia and Dorset Roads and the bus network surrounding the site.

- Melbourne Water, which manages the stormwater retention basin within part of Boronia Park.
- Public utility providers that may have infrastructure within or adjoining the park.
- Adjoining commercial owners and occupiers.
- Other adjoining landowners and occupiers.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

### Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- Where possible increased open space and no net loss of open space.
- Enhanced prominence to increase patronage.
- Connection between water and nature.
- Reconfiguration of existing site elements/community infrastructure.
- Titles reviewed and rectified for the site.
- Move from formal recreation to flexible/passive recreation.

- Potential location for multi-purpose community facility.

### 10.4.3 Dorset Square Town Square

#### Project description

This Big Move Project is an investigation of the opportunity to transform the car park into a public place that is comfortable to move through and where people can gather, relax, and enjoy the Boronia MAC. It would also investigate the potential to create a new civic square and be one of the location options for a multi-purpose community facility (potentially including a library service) as part of a mixed-use development redevelopment.

#### Background

Council owns 1.2ha of land known as Dorset Square. It is a car park and was established by two special rate schemes (1967 and 1977) and was recently upgraded by reconfiguring the parking space arrangements and installing a central waste and public toilet facility.

There is also a footpath area (some on private land and some public) that connects the various shops and arcades. The car park is monitored by recently upgraded CCTV cameras directly connected to the Boronia Police Station. Business

around the Square rely heavily on the at-grade parking spaces for their customers.

The car park is sparsely landscaped with mature eucalypts.

Redevelopment of Dorset Square could make a positive impression for the Boronia MAC and change negative perceptions of safety.

There is the prospect of re-organising the car park undercroft or in a basement/multi-level arrangement that is more efficient and allows space to be used for other public purposes.

Activating the Square would enhance night-time activity, especially around the Metro Cinema and encourage other businesses to open for longer hours. A mix of uses within any redevelopment could be an opportunity for Council to generate some income to offset investment and ongoing maintenance costs of the new facilities.

Further tree planting and landscaping, able to withstand heavy use, would reinforce and improve the canopy tree cover while greening the Precinct.

#### Key considerations

Key considerations for the investigation will be:

- The compatible uses and businesses and mix of community services that could be accommodated in any redevelopment.
- How best to manage car parking supply and demand in the area.
- Staging opportunities for redevelopment, commencing with a public square and undercroft car park.
- The timing for the provision of high-speed internet access.
- The availability of existing underutilised buildings to provide temporary space for a Digital Creative Hub.
- Uses evolving over time with changes to demand and technology.
- Waste management around the Square.

### Key Stakeholders

Dorset Square car park is owned by Knox City Council. A range of public authorities, including Melbourne Water, Transport for Victoria etc., as well as community service providers and tenants, such as EACH, and youth organisations within the Boronia MAC will be affected.

Adjoining commercial owners, occupiers, and the body corporate, including:

- Boronia Mall owners, occupiers, and management
- Kmart department store
- Coles supermarket
- Metro Cinema
- Adjoining arcades owners, occupiers, and management

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

### Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- Taking advantage of the existing slope to provide underground/multi-level/undercroft car parking that frees up the land at ground level for activation.
- Improved activation over extended hours, lighting, and visual amenity around the edges of the civic square.
- New civic space(s) which allow for markets, performances and other activities with public toilets, playground and seating, shelter, and urban landscaping.

- Potential location for multi-purpose community facility.
- Potential for public transport/bus stops to bring people closer to shops.
- Improved east-west connections and better use of the arcades between Dorset Square and Dorset Road, Chandler Road, and the Train Station.
- Potential for additional social housing at upper levels of the development.
- Consideration of new management models that include commercial tenancies.
- Greater use of landscaping and water sensitive urban design (WSUD).
- Potential for more efficient provision of car parking spaces with the existing Coles multi-deck structure.
- Commercial waste management that does not affect the amenity of the area.

### 10.4.4 Multi-Purpose Community Facility (MPCF) and potential Digital Art and Creative Hub

#### Project Description

This component is an integral part of the Boronia Park Masterplan, the Train Station Precinct Redevelopment Concept Plan, and the Dorset

---

Square Concept Plan. It will aim at investigating capacity to deliver a hub consolidating community services into one facility and determining a suitable and preferred location within one of these three sites.

This MPCF also includes investigation for the potential to include a Digital Creative Hub as part of it, or also to investigate its potential delivery a separate facility within Dorset Square or other locations.

### Background

Through various consultation sessions, and in particular feedback from young people, it was identified that there are no youth-focused activity options in Boronia, apart from organised/active sports. The demolition of the Boronia Youth Hall has provided a gap in services and meeting point for young people. Additionally, there is a growing trend towards digital leisure, eSports, and non-sports related hobbies where such facility may potentially address a need for them.

The Strategy has also identified opportunities for Creative and Arts-based businesses and social enterprises to act as a vector for renewal. Therefore, this project explores the potential to create a space/place where people with a creative or digital interest can come together for a range of economic, leisure, entertainment, and educational

activities in Boronia Town Centre.

### Key considerations

- The MPCF is to be integrated and visible from the public realm:
  - to ensure it is clearly identifiable and accessible
  - to increase perceptions of safety
- The MPCF helps achieve the aspiration for Boronia.
- The MPCF provides flexible spaces to cater for changing uses and technology over time.
- Leasing and use of underutilised buildings considered in the first instance, to enable a Digital Creative Hub to commence prior to the consideration of a fit-for-purpose structure.
- The opportunities that may arise for the location of the Multi-Purpose Community Facility at any of the 'big move projects' location.

### Key stakeholders

- This project may rely on partnerships with the private sector, tertiary institutions, and Knox Council to create a clear point of difference for Boronia.

- Service providers

### Principles

- Supporting new skills and retraining with a strong economic renewal focus with the potential to integrate arts-based and creative industries.
- Supporting the community to access primary services responding to their needs.
- Ensuring facilities are fit-for-purpose.
- Increasing access and visibility of the Facility.
- Connecting the Facility with the MAC core.

### 10.4.5 Green spine corridor

#### Project description

This Big Move Project aims to create an east-west green spine along the northern side of the commercial core with a shared path and biological connectivity along the route connecting Leisureworks to Albert Avenue/Boronia K-12 College through Tormore Reserve, Genista Avenue, Chandler Road, and Rangeview Road.

#### Background

Attractive, green, and functional connections are an important feature of activity centres, as they improve the amenity of the precinct and

---

encourage active forms of transport, including walking and cycling.

There are several key destinations within the Boronia MAC which could be better linked through improved east-west access, including:

- Knox Leisureworks
- Boronia West Primary School
- Tormore Reserve
- Genista Park
- Boronia Train Station and Interchange
- Boronia Mall
- Chandler Park
- Boronia K-12 College

### Key considerations

Key considerations for the project will be in two parts:

- Green Spine:
  - Introducing a 'Green Spine' between Chandler Park and Tormore Reserve, that includes shared paths and additional street tree planting to improve bio-connectivity between the different parks.
  - Boronia Road 'Bush Boulevard':

- Reducing lanes in Boronia Road to increase the amenity and safety for pedestrians.
  - Improvements to the green/bush boulevard in Boronia Road including by filtering 'connectivity' in the streetscape between the Green Spine and the Bush Boulevard.
  - Improving the north-south connection between Boronia Park and Genista Avenue (along Erica Avenue) to encourage connectivity between Boronia Park and the new Green Spine.
- Applying to both:
    - Providing guidance (streetscape design guidelines) for setbacks and redevelopment of properties along the route.
    - Safety actions and urban design of the public realm – footpaths, parklets, streetscapes, walking and cycling.

### Key stakeholders

Knox City Council manages the local road network and car parking areas where the Green Spine project is proposed. Other key stakeholders include public utility providers, and transport

agencies including Department of Transport and Planning (VicRoads/Public Transport Victoria), and VicTrack.

Given the location of the Green Spine project, the local police station, adjoining schools, community service providers and tenants within open space reserves, and other adjoining landowners and tenants, will be affected.

Internal and external stakeholder working groups will be established to ensure that a wide range of interests and issues can be addressed through the Concept Plan.

### Principles

Key principles which will guide this project include:

- An enhanced 'green' corridor with increased streetscape planting of indigenous street trees.
- Priority to pedestrian and cyclist movement through dedicated crossings and more space for active users.
- Activating public spaces to improve perceptions of safety.
- Passive surveillance and street activation from abutting properties.



- 
- Streetscape and infrastructure design that incorporates improved wayfinding.

### **10.5 Monitoring and Review**

The implementation action plan process will include milestone for reviewing the progress on the implementation of the Boronia Renewal Strategy.

This will include:

- Actions and projects that have been completed or are in progress
- The success of key actions or projects
- Any barriers to implementation

This will allow Council to measure the success of the Strategy, allocated funds as necessary, review whether an action is still relevant, and consider any adjustment of the actions or new opportunities that have arisen to ensure its vision and key directions are being achieved.

# 8. Appendix A – Policy Framework

## 11. Appendix A – Policy Framework

The following is a summary of strategies and policies that support this Strategy.

### 11.1 Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050

#### Principles:

- A distinctive Melbourne
- A globally connected and competitive city
- A city of centres linked to regional Victoria.
- Environmental resilience and sustainability
- Living locally – 20-minute neighbourhoods. (*walkability*)
- Social and economic participation
- Strong and healthy communities
- Infrastructure investment that supports balanced city growth
- Leadership and partnership

The policy framework set in Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 emphasises the need for integrated solutions to respond to population growth in terms of land use planning and the provision of access and movement. As Boronia holds a Major Activity Centre status, Boronia is intended to provide a suburban focal point for services, employment,

housing, public transport, and social interaction.

Its focus on accommodating population growth and the pressures on the transport system this creates, outlines the following concepts:

- Protecting the suburbs by delivering density in defined locations.
- Delivering a pipeline of large scale, city shaping infrastructure and urban renewal projects.
- Better use of existing assets, including increasing efficiency of road-based transport.
- Improving transport/land use integration.
- Creating 20-minute neighbourhoods – in this instance, a place where people have access to local shops, schools, parks, jobs, a range of community services, and key public transport hub within 20-minutes walking from their home.

Plan Melbourne also specifies relevant outcomes and related directions including:

#### Outcome 4

Melbourne is a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenities.

- Create more great public places across Melbourne.

- Strengthen Melbourne’s network of boulevards.

#### Outcome 5

Melbourne is a city of inclusive, vibrant, and healthy neighbourhoods.

- Create neighbourhoods that support safe communities and healthy lifestyles.
- Deliver local parks and green neighbourhoods in collaboration with communities.
- Develop a network of accessible high-quality, local open spaces.
- Support community gardens and productive streetscapes.
- Make Melbourne cooler and greener; and
- Create a network of green spaces that support biodiversity conservation and opportunities to connect with nature.

---

## 11.2 Metropolitan Open Space Network (Victorian Planning Authority)

The VPA has identified six fundamental network planning principles to guide assessment of open space provision to assist in identifying and prioritising potential interventions. These are:

- Equitable distribution
- Access and connectivity
- Quality
- Quantity
- Diversity
- Sustainability

## 11.3 Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 and Knox Council Plan 2021-2025

The Community Plan identifies the vision for Knox and describes what needs to be focused on over a 10-year period. The Council Plan identifies the part Council will play in achieving the vision over a four-year period. It also includes a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Of most relevance to the Boronia MAC are the following initiatives and key directions of the Community Plan:

- Opportunity and innovation
- Neighbourhood, housing, and infrastructure

- Natural environment and sustainability
- Connection, resilience, and wellbeing
- Civic Engagement and integrity

Of most relevance to the Boronia MAC are the following key directions of the Council Plan:

- Facilitate and support the implementation of the Boronia Renewal Program.
- Update Council's flood modelling across Knox.
- Explore opportunities for active cultural tourism through creating a Public Art Trail.

Which includes the relevant following health priorities:

- Physical Activity
- Family Violence
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Climate Change and Health

## 11.4 Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022

The Knox Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022 aims to enhance and maintain our 'green and leafy' image and diverse lifestyle experience in our street network.

This plan was prepared with input from the Knox community at a series of neighbourhood

workshops, and through the Future Parks and Streets Schools Competition.

The Plan describes the many demands on Knox's roads and streets network and the opportunities for them to be further improved to better meet the needs and aspirations of the community.

The Plan provides guidance on how Council can aim to achieve healthy and connected communities, create accessible transport choices, and sustain the nature environment.

## 11.5 Bush Boulevards/Paths to the Hills

The Liveable Streets Plan identifies Boronia Road as a 'Bush Boulevard' and 'Paths to the Hills,' and the goals for which are to:

- Create visually appealing major traffic routes, amenable, and recognisable streets for orientation throughout the municipality.

With the Paths to the Hill having the additional goal to:

- Integrate the roads into the indigenous landscape character of the Dandenong Foothills.

The Bush Boulevard and Paths into the Hills concepts have also been integrated into the Knox Planning Scheme.

---

### **11.6 Knox Green Streets Policy (2019)**

Knox City Council currently manages approximately 67,000 street trees, with varying life expectancies, varying abilities to cope with changing environmental factors, and differing levels of acceptance by the community.

The Knox Green Streets Policy was developed following Council's endorsement of the Knox Liveable Streets Plan (2012-2022) and the review of the Knox Streetscape Policy (2003).

The revision of the Knox Streetscape Policy has been named 'Knox Green Streets Policy' to reflect the importance of street trees and Knox's urban greenery.

The Green Streets Policy guides the implementation of street tree planting and provides guidance for the community in the maintenance of nature strips.

### **11.7 Street Tree Asset Management Plan 2016**

Knox City Council defines its urban forest as being the trees and vegetation on both public and private land, from indigenous bushland to planted native and exotic trees in streets, residential gardens, parks, and road reserves.

The Street Tree Asset Management Plan sets out:

- The recent history of street tree management practices within Knox
- The status of street tree management.
- Council's procedures and practices in managing street trees
- Opportunities to improve street tree management.

Increasing canopy cover is a key goal of this Plan

### **11.8 Sporting Reserve and Facilities Guidelines Policy 2014**

This policy identifies that Council's active sporting reserves are defined in four classifications:

- Regional
- Municipal
- Local
- School

These classifications reflect the standard of competition and accompanying provision of supporting infrastructure. A reserve may fall into more than one classification based on its role, e.g., open space and sport and recreation.

### **11.9 Knox City Council Play Space Plan 2013-2023**

The Play Space Plan provides a theoretical and

practical framework for planning, design, management, and future direction of individual parks and public play spaces across Knox.

The Plan views children's outdoor play as a critically important activity. It recognises the multi-faceted nature of play and the complexities of genuinely making spaces engaging to children, while managing a fragile natural environment, maintaining public safety, and keeping parks beautiful.

This plan views children's activities in the natural environment as so important that active measures need to be taken by Council to facilitate it. Viewed in the context of an urbanising city, children's access to open space, to the natural environment, and to quality play opportunities needs advocacy and protection.

### **11.10 Knox Public Art Policy 2022-2026 and Public Art Implementation Plan 2018-2022**

The Knox Public Art Policy and Implementation Plan set out the guiding framework for the planning and delivery of culturally appropriate artworks in publicly accessible places and spaces across the municipality. The following guiding principles also apply to the future planning for artworks in Boronia:



- Consider work that contributes to a ‘sense of place’ and ‘identity.’
- Consider work that demonstrates the community’s commitment to culture and creativity and expresses confidence about place and the future and is a symbol of civic pride and respect for public places.
- Consider how the work contributes to the activation of public spaces, with a view to creating safe, vibrant, lively, welcoming places that endeavour to reduce crime.
- Consider how the work provides a mechanism to encourage creativity, innovation, and capacity building within the Knox arts community.
- Seek to support local creative people to build their confidence, and their technical and conceptual skills.
- Have a planned approach to gain maximum benefit and to ensure that strategic objectives of placemaking and community engagement are met.
- Consider how the work connects and engages communities, open space and built environments, with a view to building community cohesion and resilience.

### **11.11 City of Knox Principal Pedestrian Network Plan 2017**

The Knox Principal Pedestrian Network Plan was prepared and adopted by Council in 2017 to replace the previous Knox Pedestrian Plan.

The document encourages walking as a form of transport in Knox with the overall intent to build a healthier, more inclusive, and safer city.

The Plan assesses the municipality’s pedestrian network, maps pedestrian movement, and identifies priority routes based on origin and destinations.

The Plan included pedestrian counts recorded around Boronia, with the highest count being around the train station and Chandler Road, and that missing sections of footpaths discourage pedestrian activities in other areas.

### **11.12 City of Knox Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025**

The Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025 was adopted by Council in 2015, it provides a framework for both the development and management of an integrated transport network. The Plan gives a current picture of Knox on responsibilities and data for all modes of transportation. It also sets the municipal vision for

movement and accessibility over a 10-year horizon.

### **11.13 City of Knox Bicycle Plan Review**

The Knox Bicycle Plan was adopted by Council in 2008. The Plan includes the following:

- reviews the progress of bicycle facility implementation
- identifies underlying principles
- considers the community needs
- development programs for bicycle facilities
- encourages the increase in the use of bicycles as a means of transport through Knox

The plan identifies the following strategies and actions relevant to Boronia:

Linking people and spaces by extending the Dandenong Creek Trail from Boronia to the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

A series of specific actions and improvements as result of evaluating specific crash involving cyclists.

Site specific recommendations regarding bicycle facilities at Boronia’s shopping centres, Boronia Park, and Boronia Train Station.

---

### 11.14 City of Knox Parking Policy 2018

The Knox Parking Policy was adopted in 2018. The document guides the decision-making process of Council when considering parking concerns and restrictions, and:

- Provides a consistent and transparent approach to parking management within the municipality
- Prioritises safe and accessible parking for users
- Balances competing parking priorities in a fair manner

The Parking Policy provides guidance for the management of parking in accordance to zones, with Zone A relating to activity centres and Zone B and C relating to adjacent areas within 400 and 800 metres of activity centres.

The Policy also provides a hierarchy for the provision of types of parking (including for all users, e.g. taxi, bicycle) and associated restrictions.

The Policy prioritises the preparation of parking management plans, with the Boronia MAC identified for preparation within Year 1 of the Policy.

### 11.15 Knox Housing Strategy 2015

The Knox Housing Strategy was prepared and adopted in 2015 and is still the guiding document for future residential development.

The Housing Strategy allows for a range of different house types to be developed within the Boronia MAC boundary area on land zoned for residential uses. These are categorised under four residential area types:

- Bush suburban
- Knox Neighbourhood
- Local Living
- Activity Areas

Residential areas within the Boronia MAC boundary come under the category of Local Living (with townhouses, villa units and dual occupancy being the preferred housing type) and a small section included in the Activity Area type (with mixed-use/apartments as the preferred housing type).

### 11.16 Knox Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027

The growing gap between living costs and household incomes is contributing to housing stress. Knox City Council aspires to improve access to affordable housing and ensure there is an

adequate supply of social housing for its residents.

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* recently included a definition of 'affordable housing'. Council utilises the same definition in its Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy and Action Plan have been adopted for the purposes of considering the social housing needs in Knox.

The Action Plan sets out a pathway for Council to explore initiatives and delivery models that will increase the supply of social and affordable housing in Knox, particularly close to public transport.

Preliminary actions include consideration of leveraging Council owned land that could be used as a pilot social housing site to test how existing barriers can be reduced.

Other actions include:

- Promote diverse housing options (including social and affordable housing) as an appropriate outcome of structure plans, Strategic Investigation Sites, and other new residential developments.
- Discuss issues associated with affordable housing in the community engagement process for structure plans and other place based strategic plans for Activity Centres and other sites.

- Negotiate with developers for a voluntary 5% contribution of social housing in private land developments including strategic investigation sites where rezoning is required.
- Identifying strategic sites for inclusion of social housing supply, including sites set out in the Knox Housing Strategy 2015.
- Undertake an audit of surplus and underutilised Council and other publicly owned land within or near designated Activity Centres with a view to identifying a short-list of potential sites for social and affordable housing partnerships.
- Explore how the policy on the disposal of Council land considers social and affordable housing outcomes for sites suitable for residential development.
- Consider opportunities as part of planning applications with a large dwelling yield for applicants to contribute to social and/ or affordable housing outcomes where an additional uplift is being sought and a trade-off could be supported.

#### **11.17 Community Facilities Planning Policy (2016)**

This policy outlines a Community Facility Planning Process that forms the basis of an integrated and

robust process to plan for, assess, prioritise, deliver, and manage Council's community facilities.

The five-stage process has been used to identify the needs of each service and to assist in considering opportunities for multipurpose, co-located or integrated use opportunities when planning for new and/or upgrades of Council community facilities.

The key principles of the Policy are:

- Wellbeing
- Equity and opportunity
- Economic benefit
- Design and sustainability
- Location
- Community safety
- Partnership and alliance

#### **11.18 Key life Stages Plan 2017-2021**

The Key Life Stages Plan was adopted in 2018 and brings together the previous Municipal Early Years, Youth Strategic, and Active Aging Plans.

The Plan focuses on the key life stages of early childhood, youth, and older ages. The Plan aims to deliver an integrated and intergenerational approach to better respond to the needs and

priorities of residents across these various age groups.

# 9. Appendix B – Capacity Analysis

## Estimating Development Capacity (*Hansen Partnership*)

This desktop capacity analysis was undertaken to determine the potential future development floor space yield available under the proposed increase heights. The analysis focused on the 'core' commercial and mixed-use zoned areas of the Boronia MAC, which comprises a total developable area of approximately 22.4ha. It was not undertaken for the residential zoned areas, as most of these areas are already undergoing development to more intense housing forms with limited development sites remaining for the next 20-year period.

The assumptions for the capacity analysis are as follows:

- Several properties or land were excluded from the capacity calculations due to their public nature, existing zoning, and their associated unlikelihood of being redeveloped for commercial or residential purposes. These properties are as follows:
  - Boronia College (K-12)
  - Chandler Park
  - Dorset Square (Council car park)
  - Boronia Park
  - St Joseph's Primary School

- Boronia Train Station
  - Tormore Reserve
  - Boronia West Primary School
  - Knox Leisureworks
  - Genista Reserve
- Net Floor Area (NFA) was calculated at 80% of Gross Floorspace Area (GFA).
  - The average dwelling (apartment) size of 80sqm – being a 2-bedroom product.
  - The provision of car parking is assumed to occur at basement level(s);
  - Four development type scenarios were applied to reflect the likely future land use and development configuration applied to sites or areas. These were as follows:
    - Type A: 50% site coverage – applied to areas with residential and landscape interface treatments, or large strategic sites requiring internal access, open spaces and building separation.
    - Type B: 60% site coverage – applied to areas with either residential or landscape interface treatments.
    - Type C: 70% site coverage – applied to areas in secondary commercial streets not constrained by residential or landscape interface treatments.

- Type D: 80% site coverage – applied to areas in primary commercial streets not constrained by residential or landscape interface treatments.

It identified an approximate overall development GFA of 830,600sqm, including approximately 691,500sqm of residential GFA and 139,100sqm of commercial GFA.

At a development take-up rate of 100%, that equates to a maximum residential capacity of approximately 6,800 dwellings (apartments).

However, based on projected population growth a more conservative development take-up rate of 25% is considered appropriate for Boronia's likely built form change over the next 20-year period. At a 25% take-up rate a capacity of approximately 1,700 dwellings was determined.

Similarly, at a 25% take-up rate, the Boronia MAC has capacity for approximately 34,775sqm of gross commercial floorspace over the next 20-year period.

The residential demand for the Boronia MAC is approximately 1,311 dwellings. This demonstrates that the proposed built form provisions have sufficient capacity to accommodate the projected residential demand.



---

The commercial/retail and office demand for the Boronia MAC is approximately 19,000sqm. This shows that the proposed built-form provisions also have enough capacity to accommodate the projected commercial demand.

**Other factors**

The capacity of the waste and drainage infrastructure for the Boronia MAC has not been included in this assessment.

**Findings**

Hansen Partnership concludes that the proposed new built form controls have more than sufficient capacity to accommodate the Boronia MAC's projected development demand within the next 20-year period at a conservative 25% take-up rate.

## 10. Appendix C – Glossary

<b>Active frontage</b>	Building frontage containing uses that promote activity and interaction with the street and pedestrians.
<b>Activity centre</b>	Mixed use urban area with a concentration of commercial/economic activities, retail, residential and other uses providing a range of goods and community services as well as links to transport networks.
<b>Affordable housing</b>	Where the cost (whether mortgage repayment or rent) of housing is no more than 30 percent of that household's income. Exceeding this mark causes 'housing stress,' particularly in the lower 40 percent of the income distribution scale. It includes social housing.
<b>Amenity</b>	A collection of qualities or features that make spaces attractive for people to be in.
<b>Bush Boulevard</b>	A tree lined street with wide pedestrian spaces connecting key elements of the precinct.
<b>Built form</b>	A combination of features of a building, including its style, façade treatments, height, and site coverage.
<b>Community housing</b>	A type of housing owned or managed by registered housing association, registered housing providers, and community of church-based groups as not-for-profit basis for low-income people, including those suffering from housing stress or eligible for public housing.
<b>Community infrastructure</b>	Assets (which may or may not include a building), that accommodate community services, including health, individual, family and community support, education, arts and culture, information, community development, employment and training, open space, and active and passive recreation opportunities.
<b>Delivery model</b>	A process adopted by implementation partners to combine resources in the most effective sequence to move from vision to finished product.
<b>Digital/Knowledge economy</b>	An economy focused on producing and using knowledge and information, through technological innovation and a highly skilled workforce, to generate economic growth

---

<b>Fine-grained</b>	An urban environment with small-scale spaces, a mix of uses and narrow street frontages and street blocks, to foster diverse activities and walkability.
<b>Framework</b>	A document setting out a vision for a precinct, key elements or principles that support the vision and next steps for implementation.
<b>Heat Island effect</b>	A localised heating effect in urban areas caused by a concentration of hard surfaces such as pavements, walls and roofs that retain heat and radiate it back into the environment.
<b>Housing Stress</b>	Families and individuals in the lower percentile of the income scale who are paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent or mortgage repayments. These are categorised as experiencing housing stress and limited options to secure affordable housing.
<b>Housing types</b> <i>(as referred by the Knox Housing Strategy, adopted by Council on 27 January 2015)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detached dwelling - One dwelling on a lot greater than 300sqm square metres.</li> <li>• Dual occupancy - Two dwellings on a lot or in a duplex form.</li> <li>• Villa units - Three or more dwellings on a lot with no shared walls.</li> <li>• Townhouses - Three or more dwellings on a lot sharing a wall or roof.</li> <li>• Apartments - A dwelling located above the ceiling level or below the floor level of another dwelling and is part of a building containing two or more dwellings.</li> </ul>
<b>Human scale</b>	The proportional relationship of the physical environment (such as buildings, trees, and roads) to human dimensions. Maintaining a human scale means that structures are not perceived as overwhelming at ground level.
<b>Knox Planning Scheme</b>	The legal document containing all the state and local planning policies and controls applying to all land in Knox. It is available online at <a href="http://knox.vic.gov.au">knox.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Large lots</b>	In Knox, large lots are considered 1,000sqm in area and above.

---

<b>Linkages/Walkability</b>	The degree to which an environment supports walking as a transport mode, for instance by providing frequent, safe, and attractive paths that connect common trip origins and destinations.
<b>Master plan</b>	A plan that directs how a single site or land holding or a cluster of related sites will be developed. It may include directions on traffic movements, allocation of spaces, and provision of open space and key facilities. It is usually more detailed than a structure plan.
<b>Medium rise</b>	A building in the order of 5 to 10 storeys in overall height.
<b>Multipurpose community facility (MPCF)</b>	A facility providing a range of flexible, functional spaces to support access to services and participation in a range of active and passive lifestyle activities.
<b>Open space (public)</b>	Publicly owned land freely accessible to the community for primarily outdoor recreation and leisure.
<b>Open space (privately owned)</b>	Privately owned, but publicly accessible, land such as laneways, arcades, plazas and building forecourts.
<b>Overlay</b>	A state standard provision forming part of a suite of provisions in the Victorian Planning Provisions. Each planning scheme includes only those overlays that are required to implement the strategy for its municipal district and commonly include localised content within a schedule, alongside the state provision.
<b>Parkiteer</b>	A bicycle parking facility characterised by a secure and undercover cage structure.
<b>Passive surveillance</b>	Informal observation of street and public spaces, which increases perceptions of safety.
<b>Public Housing</b>	A type of social housing owned and managed by the State government for the primary purpose of meeting social objectives, such as affordable rents (i.e. affordable housing), property management, security of tenure, and good location in relation to employment services.



---

**Public realm**

Incorporates all areas freely accessible to the public, including parks plazas, arcades, streets, and laneways.

**Social housing**

*(a sub-set of the broader 'affordable' housing)*

Non-profit housing owned and managed for the primary purpose of meeting social objectives, such as affordable rents, responsible management, security of tenure and good location in relation to employment services. The term encompasses public housing and includes housing owned or managed by the community. The term social housing includes community housing and public housing.

**Structure plan**

A plan for implementing a framework or vision for a precinct. It may include proposed zoning and building controls, plans for infrastructure provision, proposed development contributions, strategies for addressing issues such as drainage and nominated sites for more detailed master planning.

**Urban renewal**

The process of rebuilding an existing part of a city or town to create new opportunities, unlock potential, accommodate new land uses, and increase residents' satisfaction of the locality, often triggered by a shift in the place's economic base to higher and more intensive land uses and both social and infrastructure improvements.

---

**Acronyms:**

<b>AFL</b>	Australian Football League
<b>AHS</b>	Australian Health Survey
<b>ARI</b>	Average Recurrence Interval
<b>CBD</b>	Central Business District
<b>CCTV</b>	Close circuit television
<b>fDDA</b>	Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
<b>Ha</b>	Hectare
<b>MAC</b>	Major Activity Centre
<b>MPCF</b>	Multi-Purpose Community Facility
<b>NBN</b>	National Broadband Network
<b>RSL</b>	Return Service League
<b>SOS</b>	Strategic Opportunity Site
<b>SQM</b>	Square metres

