

# Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre

STRUCTURE PLAN

FEBRUARY 2020



# DRAFT





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# Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction ..... 4
- 2.0 Context and Key Influences ..... 8
- 3.0 An Overview of the Planning Framework ..... 13
- 4.0 The Vision & Structure Plan Framework ..... 17
- 5.0 Precincts- Objectives, Strategies and Design Guidelines ..... 38
- 6.0 General Design Guidelines ..... 62
- Appendix A: Existing and Proposed Height Differences ..... 68

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Introducing Diamond Creek

Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre (Activity Centre) is a retail, recreation and transport hub situated in the distinct landscape setting of the Diamond Creek Valley and characterised by a semi-rural character. The activity centre is anchored along Main Hurstbridge Road, which is bisected by the Diamond Creek and adjacent floodpains and serves as a spine and major road corridor through the centre.

Key uses within the centre include the Diamond Creek train station, Diamond Creek retail core, Chute Street commercial strip, Elizabeth Street industrial area, Diamond Creek Reserve, Diamond Valley College and Diamond Creek Community Centre.

### 1.2 What is a Structure Plan?

A Structure Plan sets the Vision for the area until 2030 to manage change and growth. Structure Plans are strongly focused on sustainability and planning for change that is environmentally, socially and economically sound.

A Structure Plan brings together the inputs of a wide range of stakeholders, state agencies and service authorities to articulate a vision and future direction that provide both Council and community certainty moving forward.

### 1.3 Aim and Purpose

The Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Draft Structure Plan (Draft Structure Plan) has culminated from a review of the *Diamond Creek twenty20 Major Activity Centre Structure Plan and Leisure Facilities Plan* (September 2006). The context for the Activity Centre has changed since the adoption of the Structure Plan in 2006. The review was required to meet the current and future needs of Diamond Creek. The Draft Structure Plan aims to guide future planning and development in the Activity Centre.

The purpose of the Draft Structure Plan is to set an overall vision for the centre and objectives, strategies and design guidelines focused on:

- land use activities and development;
- built form character;
- landscape and place activation;
- movement and access; and
- community and leisure.

## 1.4 Study Area

The study area was defined by Council when the original structure plan was prepared in 2006. It has remained largely unchanged due to the continued sufficient capacity for development and change.

The study area focuses on the shopping centre of Diamond Creek but also includes the commercial, industrial, residential and open space areas generally within 400m walking distance of the town centre. It is bounded by the Diamond Creek to the north, Challenger Street to the south, Main Street to the west, and Main Hurstbridge Road to the east (Figure 1).

## 1.5 Implementation

The Draft Structure Plan will be implemented over the life of the plan to the year 2030 when another structure plan review will be required.

- Short term: 0-2 years – 2020 to 2022
- Medium term: 3-6 years – 2022 to 2027
- Long term: 7-10 years– 2027 to 2030

## 1.6 Reading This Document

Nillumbik Shire Council has prepared the Draft Structure Plan for the Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre (Activity Centre).

The Draft Structure Plan has been shaped by a number of inputs that include, but are not limited to, rigorous background research analysis, review of the Planning and Local Policy Frameworks, site visits and observations within the study area and discussions and feedback from community engagement forums and meetings with other relevant agencies and stakeholders.

The Draft Structure Plan outlines the Vision for the activity centre and identifies Objectives and Strategies that outline how the Vision will be achieved. The Draft Structure Plan is structured as follows:

Parts 1 – 3 of the document outline the study area and provide existing context and key influences facing the area.

Section 4 identifies a Vision, Objectives, Strategies and framework for the activity centre. The strategies and framework are articulated through five themes:



- Land Use Activities and Development
- Built Form Character
- Landscape and Place Activation
- Movement and Access
- Community and Leisure

Section 5 identifies specific precincts within the Draft Structure Plan study area and objectives and strategies required to achieve the preferred character.

Section 6 provides general design guidelines to be applied to all development proposals.



## LEGEND

-  STUDY AREA
-  TRAIN STATION AND RAIL LINE

## DIAMOND CREEK MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTRE PRECINCTS








-  1 CHUTE STREET COMMERCIAL STRIP
-  2 CREEK-SIDE OPEN SPACES, COMMUNITY CENTRE & RECREATION
-  3 ELIZABETH STREET / STATION STREET
-  4 RETAIL CORE
-  5 EAST OF GEORGE STREET, NORTH OF MAIN HURSTBRIDGE ROAD
-  6 EAST OF GEORGE STREET, SOUTH OF MAIN HURSTBRIDGE ROAD
-  7 SCHOOLS AND RECREATION

Figure 1. Study Area and Sub-Precincts

## 2.0 Context and Key Influences

### 2.1 Strategic Context

Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre (Activity Centre) is located at the fringe of Metropolitan Melbourne, encircled by green wedge to the north, east and south. Its location next to the green wedge reduces its growth rate as compared to major activity centres closer to the CBD.

It is located 25km north west of the Melbourne CBD and 5km from the Eltham and Greensborough Major Activity Centres.

The Activity Centre is accessible via the Hurstbridge rail line, and connected to Eltham Station, Greensborough, Hurstbridge and Mernda via bus services (Figure 2). The Diamond Creek Trail also connects the Activity Centre to Eltham and onwards to the CBD. There are also future plans to connect the trail through to Hurstbridge.

### 2.2 Brief History of Diamond Creek

The area of the Shire of Nillumbik was for centuries home to the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi wurrung speaking people. This is evidenced in a number of archaeological sites across the Shire.

Colonial settlers arrived in the area of Diamond Creek in the 1830's. The township was established after gold was discovered in the area in 1854. It was initially named Nillumbik, which also became the name of the parish. By the time the government proclaimed it as a township in 1866, popular usage of the name Diamond Creek prevailed, and it was officially given this name.

The first bridge across Diamond Creek in this area is near the present Chute Street by the late 1840's. The pattern of early tracks from the 1840's and 1850's created the pattern of roads linking townships like Diamond Creek, Kangaroo Ground and Hurstbridge.

A government township was reserved on the west side of Diamond Creek in the early 1850's. In 1863 the Diamond Reef was discovered on Dr Phipps' land east of the creek. This saw the establishment of a bustling township with a hotel, churches and school dating to the late 1860's and early 1870's.

After the gold rush Diamond Creek was cultivated for orchards and small farms. The town developed a more settled and rural character. By the time of the First World War the town could boast one hotel, a bank, police station, boot-maker's shop, Ryan's butcher shop, a Mechanics Hall and the Cool Stores. The population peaked around 1900 and then declined until the 1960's when new residents began to choose Diamond Creek as a place to live.

The rail line was extended to Diamond Creek by 1912 and further onwards to Hurstbridge to serve the local orchards. Orchards gradually declined facing competition from areas like Doncaster and Nunawading.

A number of houses around Collins Street are evidence of this early history as are the churches, Diamond Creek Primary School and a small number of commercial and community buildings. Bushfires have been part of the history of the town and claimed a number of important buildings.



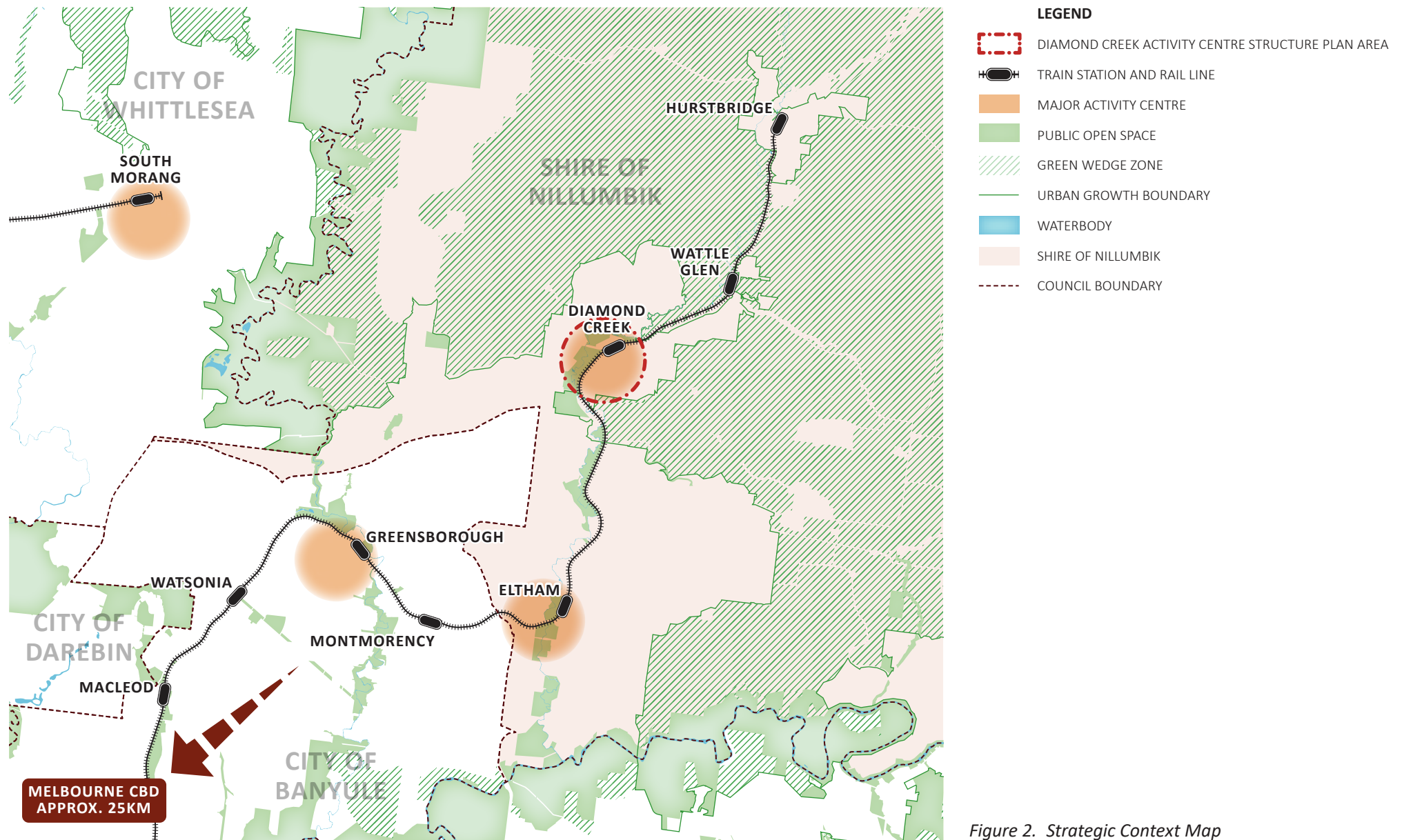


Figure 2. Strategic Context Map

## 2.3 What makes Diamond Creek Distinct?

Diamond Creek's unique style can be described as follows:

- Strong presence of trees and other vegetation.
- Rural and bushland character adding to the charm of Diamond Creek.
- Nestled within the Diamond Creek Valley.
- Architectural style and materials that complement the natural surroundings, vegetation and topography.

Significant elements of the Diamond Creek Activity Centre support the rural village character feel of the surrounding township. Key examples include historical buildings (dating back to the 1800s), natural landscape and native and exotic vegetation in its streetscapes, Diamond Creek Reserve, Nillumbik Park and hinterland beyond.

## 2.4 Key Influences

The main population, demographic and economic projections are based on the report *Nillumbik Activity Centres Land Use & Economic Analysis* (Geografia) and the 2016 Census Results.

The key influences, issues and projections can be summarised as follows:

### Fringe Location

- Low population growth in the Diamond Creek catchment as compared to Greater Melbourne.
- Less expenditure due to much of the Activity Centre catchment falling into Green Wedge zoned areas with very low density development.
- The importance of maintaining the activity centres attractive setting, therefore limiting redevelopment potential.

### Access and Movement

- High rates of car use (and poor public transport access).
- Increasing number of commuters travelling by car (192 persons increase from 2011 to 2016).
- Congestion due to the level crossing and road layouts not designed for high traffic volumes.
- Lack of pedestrian and cyclist amenity.

### The Catchment

- Population projections suggest an additional 28,909 residents in the Shire of Nillumbik by 2036.
- The Diamond Creek catchment has experienced modest population growth with a 4.6% increase from 2011 to 2016.
- High escape expenditure (that is economic activity from residents and local businesses leaking out of the Shire) due to much of the Activity Centre catchment falling into Green Wedge zoned areas with very low density development and much of the catchment areas overlapping with those of neighbouring activity centres.

- Only 57% of all spending in the Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre is by Shire residents, suggesting there is a significant, potential untapped revenue from the rest of the catchment.

### **Ageing population**

- Changing demographic profile from families with higher consumption patterns, to older couples (55+).
- Emerging older population (pre-retirees, retirees and seniors) and the need for smaller household (1-3 persons).
- Increased demand for health and other services.
- Changes in lifestyles, leisure and recreation.

### **Changing housing needs**

- Ageing, smaller households and changing needs such as less maintenance and easier access to services may change the needs or demand for housing.
- Need for a greater diversity in housing stock with the proportion of couples with no children increasing.
- Emerging number of medium and high-density housing (0.8% increase from 2011 to 2016).

### **Housing affordability**

- Diamond Creek's median housing price is \$805,600, keeping pace with Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Diamond Creek's median house rental is high as compared to Metropolitan Melbourne.

### **Employment**

- Employment in Diamond Creek grew by 19% from 2006 to 2016.
- Local jobs are predominantly in the retail sector.
- Diamond Creek is dominated by small businesses.

### **Land Supply**

- Lack of office space and local employment opportunities to suit the high number of professional workers living in the area.
- Commercial rents are reportedly high.
- A potential supply shortage of land and buildings coming onto the market.
- Decreasing number of manufacturing jobs, with increasing number of jobs in construction, health care and social assistance.
- Precincts of land (Precincts 3 and 5) utilised for industry not considered 'highest and best use'.

## 2.5 Community Engagement

ChatterBox Projects were engaged by Nillumbik Shire Council to undertake community engagement to inform the Draft Structure Plan.

Over 500 ideas were gathered throughout the community engagement process via the online and hardcopy surveys. Just over 150 additional opinions, thoughts and ideas were gathered via other engagement tools including the online mapping tool, voting pod, chatboards and big idea drawings.

Overall, respondents felt there was a good sense of community in Diamond Creek. However, they felt the atmosphere of the Town Centre was poor, it wasn't easy to get around and they raised issues around traffic and parking issues. However, the community loved the open space, trees and sporting facilities within the precinct.

The survey asked about people's connection to the Diamond Creek Activity Centre.

Of the 146 respondents:

- 81.5% live in or near Diamond Creek Activity Centre, 58.9% shop and 32.1% play sport within the precinct

- 53.9% visited Diamond Creek Activity Centre daily, 33.3% visited 2-3 times per week, and 6.4% weekly
- Most people visit the Activity Centre to shop (78.7%), visit cafes and restaurants (61.6%) for recreation (61.6%) and to use services (49.3%)
- Most people visit on weekday afternoons (68%), weekend mornings (65%), weekday mornings (59%) and weekend afternoons (59%). There were a lot fewer people visiting the activity centre during the evening (29%)
- 72.5% drive to the Activity Centre, 18.8% walk, 6.5% catch public transport and 1.4% ride

The community were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements about the Diamond Creek Activity Centre. The collated responses from the survey and pop-up consultations are given below:

- 68% agreed that the Activity Centre had a good range of quality shops and services available
- 76% agreed that the Activity Centre has a great sense of community
- 56% agreed that the Activity Centre has a great atmosphere and environment

- 46% said it was easy to get to and get around the Activity Centre
- 42% like the look and feel of the Activity Centre
- 99.3% feel safe during the day and 17.1% feel unsafe at night in the Activity Centre

Of the 104 respondents who shared their 'hidden gem,' 42.4% said the natural environment, trails and tracks, 27.3% said quality retail and dining options, 12.2% said leisure and sporting places and 10.3% said parks and playgrounds.

When asked whether they knew of any areas in the Activity Centre needing attention, the most frequently mentioned locations included the train station/railway crossing, areas around shopping centres, various recreation and leisure spaces, and specific streets. Concerns were mainly around traffic safety and flow, parking, and the appearance of buildings and public spaces.

## 3.0 An Overview of the Planning Framework

The following describes the planning framework of the Draft Structure Plan. The relevant content is summarised as follows.

### 3.1 Plan Melbourne Refresh 2017-2050

Plan Melbourne is a long-term plan to accommodate Melbourne's future growth in population and employment. It sets the vision of Melbourne as a global city of opportunity and choices, guided by a set of principles, directions and policies.

Within the Plan, Diamond Creek is identified as a Major Activity Centre. Relevant principles for the Draft Structure Plan aim to maintain the distinct character through complementary future developments, and to improve accessibility and movement for walking, cycling and public transport to encourage the creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods. Other relevant directions and policies focus on housing intensification in existing neighbourhoods, and pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods.

### 3.2 Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF), and in particular Clause 11.03-1R, aims to create highly accessible activity centres with diverse employment uses supported by higher density housing.

It refers to the importance of building up activity centres as a focus of high quality development, activity and living for the whole community by developing a network of activity centres. In particular it discusses undertaking strategic planning for the use and development of land in, and around activity centres, focusing on increasing housing support and diversity, improving access by walking cycling and public transport and encouraging economic activity and business synergies.

Other relevant policies include:

- Clause 15.01-1S which seeks *“to create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity”*;
- Clause 16.01-1S which seeks *“to promote a housing market that meets community needs”*;
- Clause 17.01-1S which seeks *“to strengthen and diversify the economy”*;
- Clause 17.01-1S - which seeks *“to ensure the availability of industrial land”*;
- Clause 18.01-1S which seeks *“to integrate land use and transport planning”*; and
- Clauses 13.02-1S and 13.03-1S which seek to protect the resilience of existing properties and communities to bushfire and flooding risks.

### 3.3 Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF)

The MSS outlines a vision that conserves the natural environment, historical buildings and sites, while allow for development within designated areas. Future land use and development will enhance the urban and rural environment, particularly the character defined by land form, landscapes and vegetation cover. This is reflected in the municipality's goals, which aims to encourage sustainable development, and retain the semi-rural character, natural and cultural heritage.

Clause 21.05-4 promotes both Diamond Creek and Eltham Major Activity Centres as the main commercial and community activity areas within the Shire. It seeks to concentrate the Shire's retail activities in the centres, ensuring future development is at a scale that responds to the scale of the centre while enhancing the natural and built form.

Similarly, Clause 22.14 'Diamond Creek Activity Centre Policy' encourages the expansion of commercial and community services, and increases to the diversity and amount of housing within the activity centre that is appropriately scaled to respect the surrounding topography.

### 3.4 Zones

The study area is predominantly within the Activity Centre Zone 2 (ACZ2) which seeks to accommodate a mix of land uses including additional higher density housing, whilst retaining the semi-rural character. The ACZ2 was introduced via Amendment C106 (October 2016) and references the following documents:

- *Diamond Creek twenty20 Major Activity Centre Structure Plan and Leisure Facilities Plan (September 2006)*
- *Nillumbik Major Activity Centres Sustainable Transport Study and Strategy, 2010*
- *Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Car Parking Strategy, 2013*
- *Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Design Guidelines Part A and Part B, 2014.*

Other zones within the study area include:

- Road Zone Category 1 (RDZ1);
- Public Use Zone 2 'Education' (PUZ2) and 4 'Transport' (PUZ4);
- Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ); and
- Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ).

### 3.5 Overlays

The study area is affected by various overlays. Site specific Heritage Overlays (HO) apply to the Royal Mail Hotel (HO115), the Former Ryans Butcher Shop and Residence (HO133), the Former Milthorpe Store (HO259), the Diamond Creek Bridge (HO27) and Tree Rows (HO168). The Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) Schedule 6 'Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre' applies highlighting the need to retain significant canopy trees that form part of the distinctive Diamond Creek character. Notably, a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop any substantial tree.

A Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO1) applies along the northern side of Main Hurstbridge Road for future road widening. A Parking Overlay (PO) also applies to commercial uses within the study area.

A Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) applies which identifies land in a flood storage or flood fringe area affected by the 1 in 100 year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority.

The LSIO predominantly impacts open space, recreation and community facilities in the Diamond Creek Reserve with minor encroachments into Precincts 1, 3 and 5. Flood risk and design constraints will need to be assessed by the

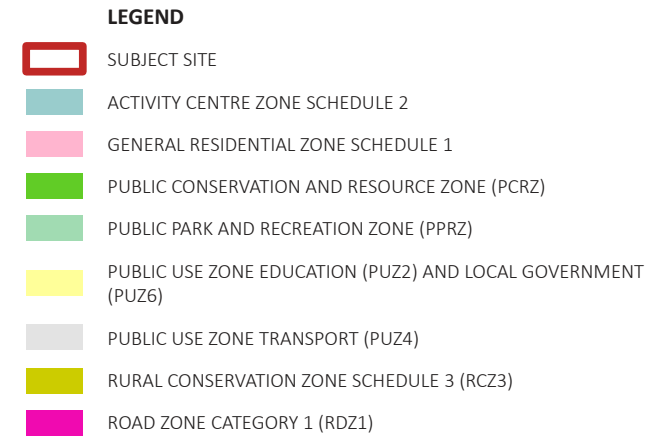
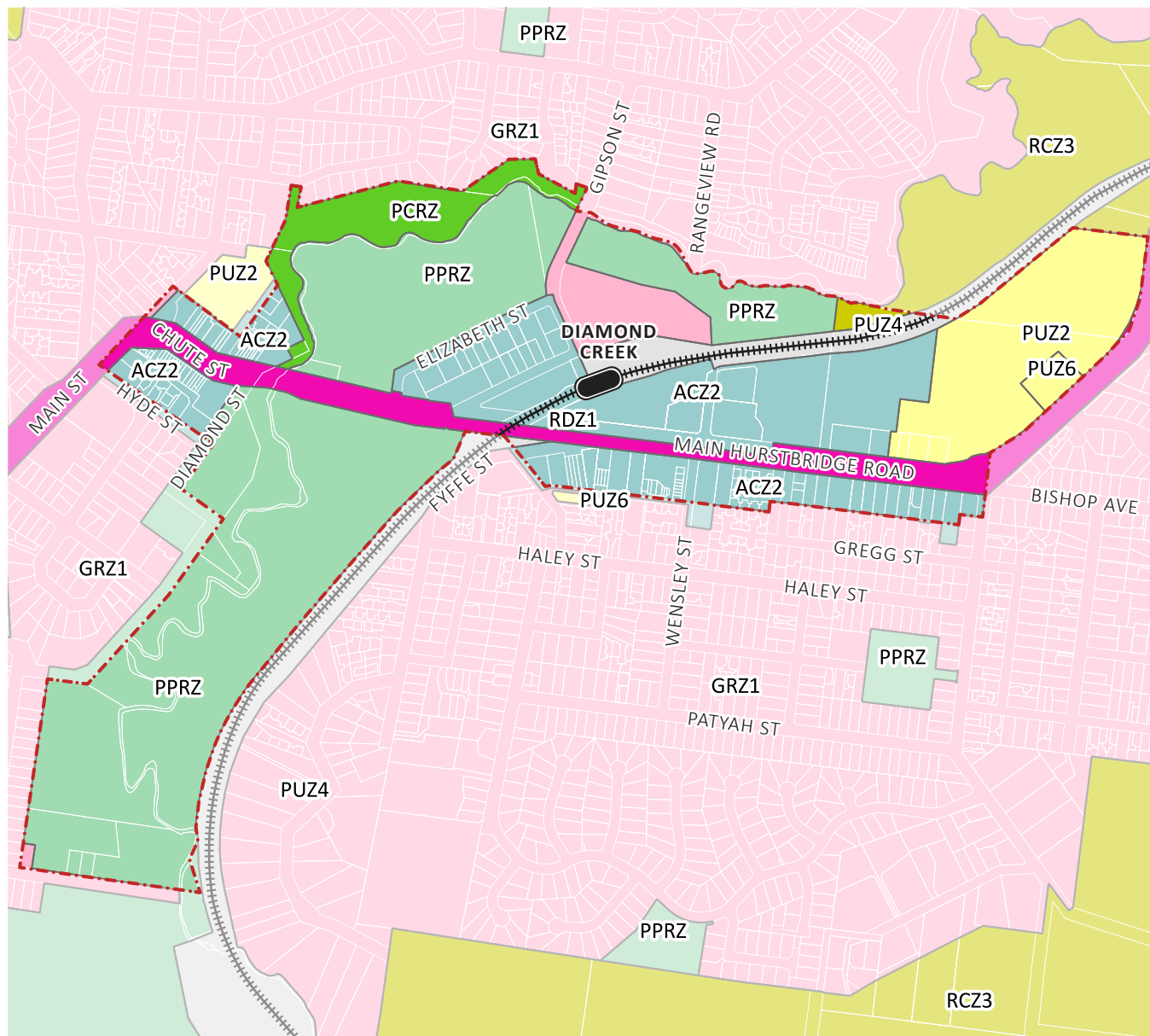


Figure 3. Zones

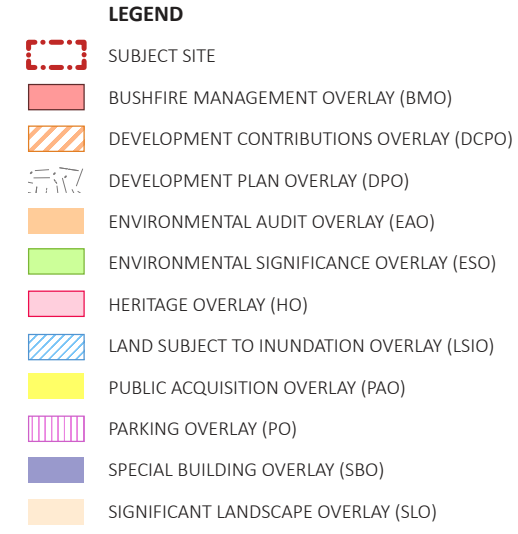
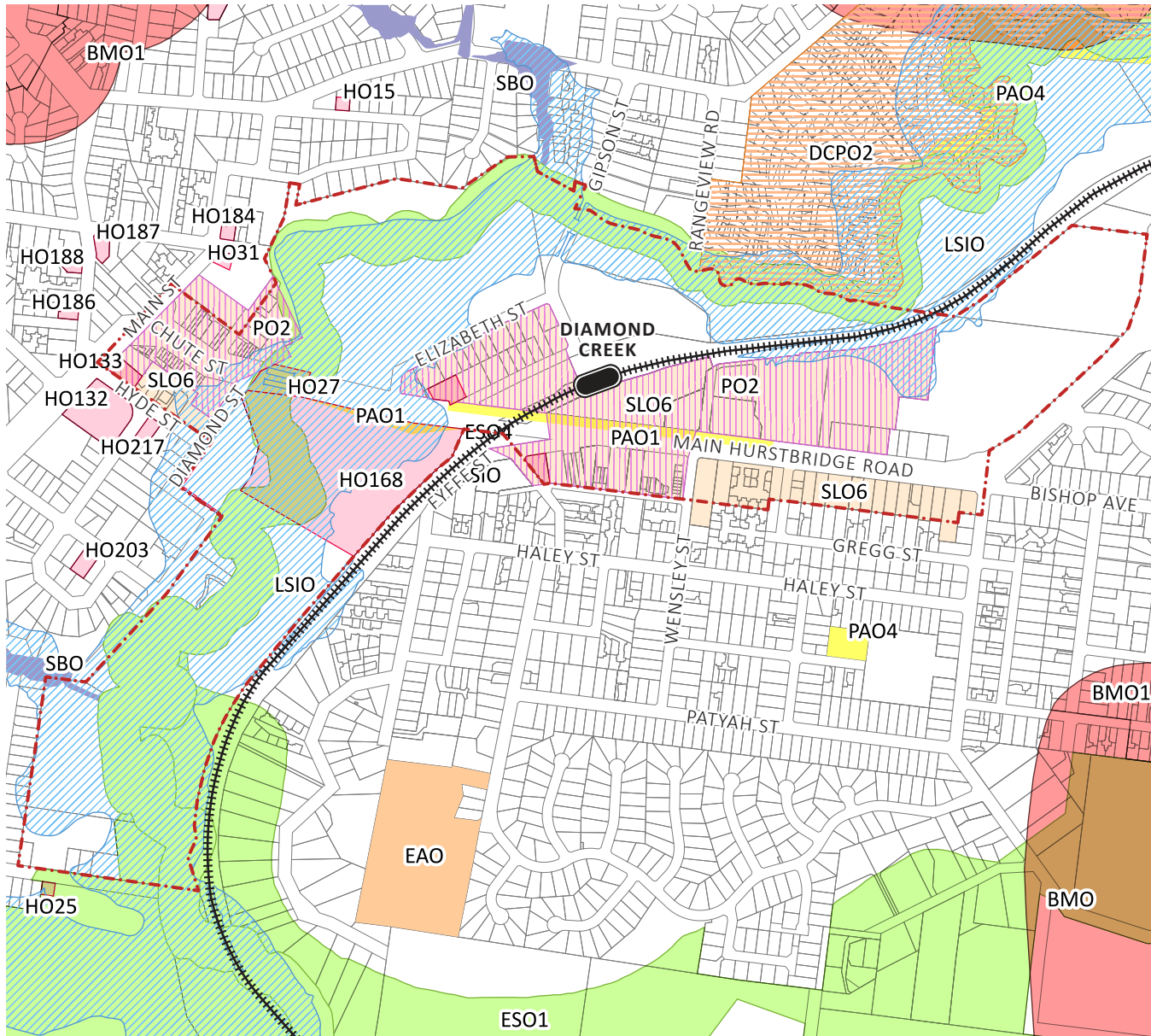


Figure 4. Overlays



## 4.0 The Vision & Structure Plan Framework

This section takes the reader from the Vision to Objectives and Strategies grouped under five themes underpinning this Draft Structure Plan. This is a four-step process as identified below.

1. **Vision** – What Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre will be in 10 years.
2. **Theme** – Planning, transport, economics and urban design themes as they relate to this Draft Structure Plan.
3. **Objective** – Statements about what we want to achieve.
4. **Strategies** – Ways of achieving the objectives.

### 4.1 Vision

The Vision statement underpinning the Draft Structure Plan is as follows:

*The Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre is envisioned as a mixed-use area with a public plaza at its heart, a place where the community can meet, transact business, recreate, learn, play, shop and work.*

*High quality, sustainable and innovative medium density developments will pay homage to its landscape setting and history.*

*Development will respond to and reflect the rural setting of the Diamond Creek Setting, particularly by their being a strong presence of native canopy trees.*

*Diamond Creek will not only build on its diverse array of employment opportunities, it will build its reputation as a boutique and artisanal food production destination.*

*It will be known for its distinctive rural village charm, environmental qualities and safe and walkable street network.*

### 4.2 Themes Objectives and Strategies

The Vision for the Activity Centre is achieved by the realisation of Objectives and Strategies grouped under the five themes of the Draft Structure Plan, which are explained in the following sections.

When brought together they provide the key ingredients of a uniquely semi-rural and economically viable activity centre on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne.

## 4.3 Land Use Activities and Development

### Discussion

The Activity Centre experiences high escape expenditure, with unrealised night time or weekend economic capacity. This combined with the low population growth and functional inefficiencies including challenging terrain, low density, traffic congestion, poor pedestrian amenity and low public transport use, further exacerbate the continued loss of patronage to larger centres.

To create energy and vibrancy in the Activity Centre, changes to the existing land use pattern are proposed. This will not only enable the centre to better service local residents and support local businesses, it will also attract ongoing investment to the centre. The following sections provide an explanation of the key land use changes forecast for the activity centre.

### **Retail**

Future retailing opportunities within the Activity Centre are expected to relate to artisanal food production and hospitality, capitalising on the high amenity setting of Diamond Creek and the affluent residential population.

Further provision of cafes and restaurants would be highly complementary to residential development and the age and socio-economic profile of the local population. By introducing more lively activities in the Activity Centre, Diamond Creek will gain a more safe and vibrant environment both day and night.

Precinct 4 to the south of the rail line is expected to continue its role as a retail location in its current form. With the intensification of sites within the activity centre, there will be new opportunities for office space at ground or first floors of mixed-use development.

### **Office and Mixed Use**

The Activity Centre currently lacks office floorspace or a large employment anchor. Employment is predominantly in retail with industrial businesses in Precincts 3 and 5. The Activity Centre requires a generator of employment and investment.

The land use and economic analysis completed by Geografia suggests a key strategy may be to investigate the potential rezoning of Precincts 3 and 5 to a Commercial 3 Zone (C3Z), which would provide for a range of industrial, commercial, office and other employment generating uses which support the mixed-use function of the area.

Mixed use in Precincts 3 and 5 would breathe life into the centre, allowing small businesses and creative industries to emerge and for Diamond Creek to become a hub of innovation. The C3Z will also ensure that the use mix can be tailored to ensure it complements Precinct 4, rather than competing with it. It also enables the retention of the industrial uses in the precincts in the interim, which are an employment driver in the activity centre.

Rezoning of Precinct 5 C3Z also creates the opportunity for investigation into a potential health or civic anchor. Moving the Shire Offices to Diamond Creek for example, would create a much needed major employment anchor, increase the viability of the shops and services, and bring vitality to the centre.

To achieve the mixed use outcomes explained in the previous paragraphs, Council could also modify the existing ACZ2 which would have a similar effect to the application of a C3Z, while not necessitating a rezoning.

## Housing

More dwellings in and around the Activity Centre will support a lively and functioning centre. The Activity Centre has seen almost no residential densification due in part to a lack of available land, limited demand for housing, difficult topography, sensitive landscapes and community opposition.

A strategy is included that encourages redevelopment at increased residential densities to achieve an increase of 303 more dwellings within walking distance of the town centre by 2036.

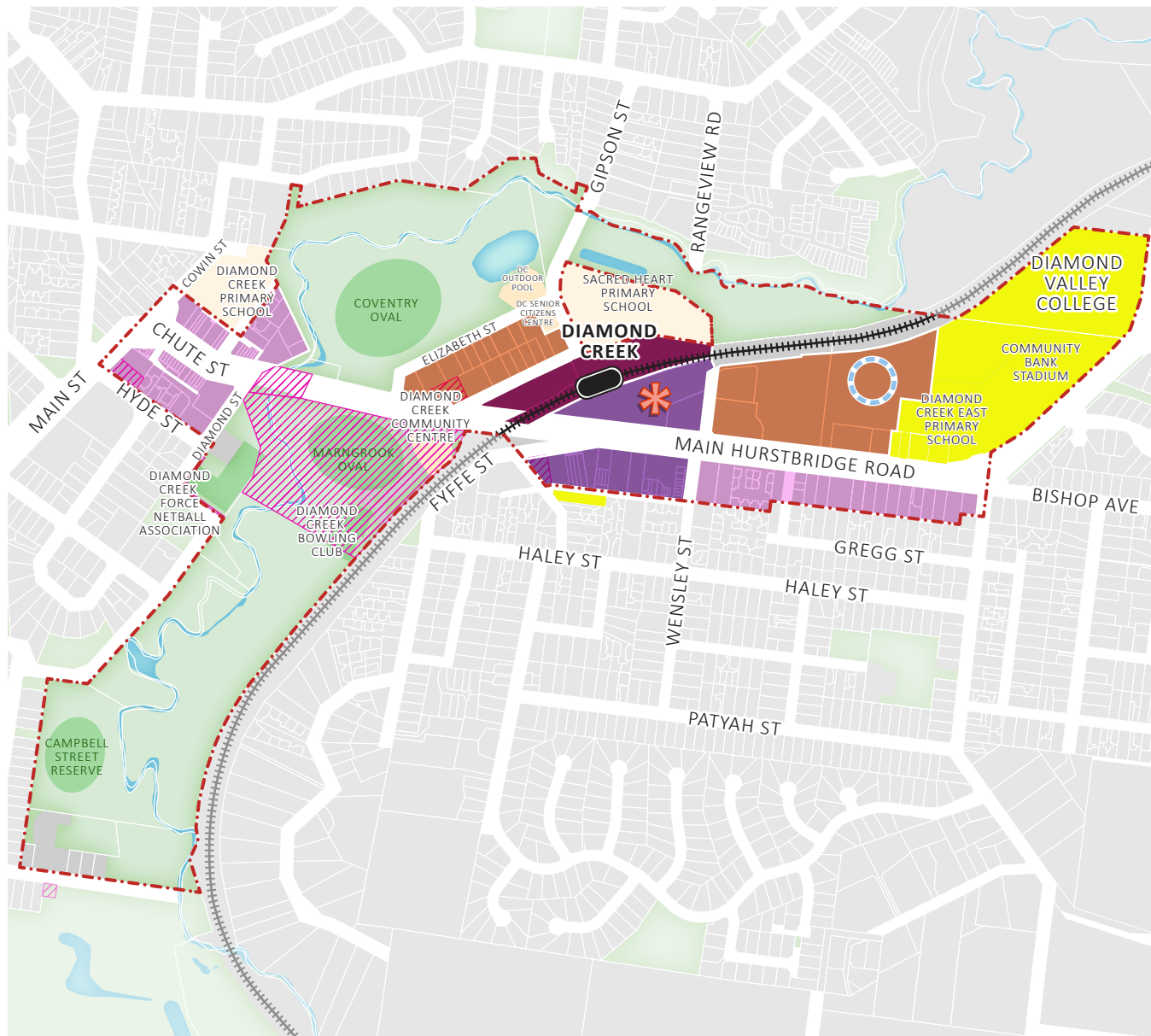
Residential development should be predominantly located in Precincts 4 and 6. The potential use of a C3Z (or modified ACZ2) in Precincts 3 and 5 enables Council the ability to restrict residential development to a percentage of the total floorspace.

## Objectives

- To expand employment floor-space, particularly emergent industries, to meet an increased proportion of projected demand and reduce 'escape expenditure' and travel to nearby centres.
- To support existing industrial uses whilst facilitating other compatible emergent industries to energise the centre.
- To enable an employment anchor in the Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre, such as a civic or health anchor.
- To develop additional higher density housing in the centre to meet projected needs and increase dwelling type diversity and energise the centre.
- To provide accessible and affordable housing options close to public transport.
- To focus retail activity in a compact core east of the railway, on the 'landscaped civic spine' of Main Hurstbridge Road, with a retail node in Chute Street.
- To cluster community and leisure facilities in and around the centre as added attractions for the community, to meet local needs and complement retail and commercial activity.
- To improve access to and integrate retail, commercial and housing development with the railway station and its surrounds.

## Strategies

- Support and further develop Diamond Creek's reputation as a boutique and artisanal food production destination.
- Develop land use provisions that support a diversity of employment opportunities.
- Encourage uses that extend the hours of activity of the activity centre, develop an evening economy and strengthen its function as a place for living and working at the street level.
- Provide the opportunity for a transit-oriented development (TOD) on land to the west of the railway line (Precinct 4) including uses such as commercial and residential.
- Undertake community consultation to review the potential application of C3Z (or a modified ACZ2) in the existing light industrial Precincts 3 and 5 to allow for a diversification of uses from creative industries, small manufactures, start-up businesses to offices, to facilitate business growth and employment opportunities.
- Encourage redevelopment at increased residential densities to provide additional dwellings within walking distance of the town centre.
- Deliver a vertical mix of land uses through facilitating the use of shop tops for office, residential and other commercial uses within the main streets of the Activity Centre.
- Investigate the potential sites for an employment anchor, such as a civic or health facility in the Activity Centre, potentially in Precinct 5.



- LEGEND**
- STUDY AREA
  - TRAIN STATION AND RAIL LINE
  - EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND OVALS
  - WATERBODY
  - EXISTING PUBLIC USE ZONE
  - EXISTING HERITAGE OVERLAY
  - EXISTING COMMUNITY/ EDUCATION FACILITIES
  - OPPORTUNITY FOR A TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) CONSISTING OF COMMERCIAL WITH RESIDENTIAL ABOVE
  - DIVERSIFY EXISTING RETAIL WITH EMERGENT INDUSTRIES (BOUTIQUE, ARTISANAL FOOD PRODUCTION, CAFES, ETC.) WITH OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL AT UPPER LEVELS
  - POTENTIAL APPLICATION OF MODIFIED ACZ TO FACILITATE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SMALL MANUFACTURERS/ START-UP BUSINESSES AND SOME RESIDENTIAL
  - OPPORTUNITY FOR MIXED USE INCLUDING RESIDENTIAL, OFFICE, MEDICAL
  - OPPORTUNITY FOR CIVIC OR HEALTH-RELATED EMPLOYMENT ANCHOR
  - ✱ EXISTING RETAIL ANCHOR

Figure 5. Land Use Activities and Development Framework Plan

## 4.4 Built Form Character

### Discussion

The Study Area is characterised by clusters of built form at 1-2 storeys in scale spread across the Activity Centre. It has a distinct lush landscape setting nestled into Diamond Creek Valley with native trees greening the commercial spine.

Taking into consideration the scenic and environmental qualities and rural township character, it is anticipated future growth is relatively modest compared to other major activity centres that are located closer to the CBD.

It is most likely that the forecast for moderate residential growth can be accommodated through infill development designed to respond to the existing character.

The Draft Structure Plan proposes built form of varied scales that generally align with the urban design provisions within the ACZ2. Only minor changes are proposed to future building heights and setbacks which include:

- Increased application of 5 storeys adjacent to the train station in Precinct 4 to capitalise on the high level of access to public transport and lack of

sensitive interfaces;

- Increased application of 5 storeys in Precinct 3 due to the lack of sensitive interfaces; and
- Increased application of 4 storeys in Precinct 1 to capitalise on creek frontage.

The tallest buildings (5 storeys) are clustered around the train station responding to the high accessibility to public transport.

5 storeys is also proposed in Precinct 3, directly adjacent to the train station and away from sensitive residential interfaces. Future development in Precinct 3 will need to respond to the heritage features of the Diamond Creek Tavern.

The built form character along Main Hurstbridge Road is varied. Commercial buildings on the southern side of Main Hurstbridge Road (generally between Brooke Crescent and Wensley Street) express a finer grain form than what is found on the northern side.

On balance however, extensive front setbacks for car parking dominate the streetscape and create a lack on built form enclosure further emphasised by large road verges. Shopping complexes that are setback from Main-Hurstbridge Road due to car parking in the frontage create

a poor pedestrian environment and a lack of activation.

New built form along Main Hurstbridge Road in Precinct 4 should have a 0-metre setback and provide a consistent street wall, with a setback only to accommodate existing landscaping in the public realm.

Street wall heights should be designed to respect and respond to the existing built form, creating a continuous built form scale with recessive upper levels. Street walls should be no greater than 2 storeys, with upper levels (above the 2nd storey) recessed by at least 3 metres.

Built form in Chute Street is predominantly single storey, fine grain in style (closely spaced, narrow buildings) and built to express a continuous street wall to the public realm. Future built form should respond to the grain, scale and style of the existing character.

Precinct 6 consist of a mix of commercial and residential uses within detached buildings (originally dwellings) with generous side and rear setbacks and 1-2 storeys in height. Future development will need to respond to the existing character with front, side and rear setbacks.

The Built Form Character Framework Plan depicts maximum building heights within each precinct and articulates where an individual design approach is required.

Maintaining reasonable amenity for residential properties adjoining and adjacent to the Activity Centre is also a key consideration. Taller development can adversely affect the amenity of adjacent residential properties through visual bulk, overlooking and overshadowing.

Such impacts are to be reduced by setting back upper levels at the residential interface. Refer to the General Guidelines at Section 6.0 for interface setback requirements.

### **Objectives**

- To retain the semi-rural township character of Diamond Creek by clustering new development and activity in existing key locations that remain visually segregated by open spaces and vegetation.
- To develop a local Diamond Creek architectural style that complements and reflects its natural landscape setting, and ensure new or redeveloped buildings are of high architectural quality appropriate to the character of the centre.
- To design new buildings with well-articulated facades and a fine grain to provide interest at the street level and reinforce the human scale of shopping areas.
- To ensure development retains and enhances the township's character with medium scale buildings, that are respectful to existing buildings, materials that complement the setting and a treed landscape of predominantly local indigenous canopy trees.
- To maintain appropriate levels of solar access to existing and proposed public spaces.
- To protect and enhance the amenity within the Activity Centre and surrounding established residential neighbourhoods.
- To avoid underdevelopment of land within the activity centre.
- To promote sustainable development including water sensitive urban design.
- To establish energy efficient developments that are appropriate to local conditions
- To ensure new development manages off-site amenity.
- To increase activity and passive surveillance in the main retail and mixed-use areas.
- To reduce the visual dominance of car parking and ensure the design of parking and access areas is safe, practical and attractive.
- To ensure that pedestrian routes, streets, footpaths and open spaces interact with and are overlooked by buildings, and for these routes to be continuously accessible.

## Strategies

- Building heights across the activity centre should be no greater than 5 storeys, with 3 storeys adjacent to existing residential hinterland.
- Tallest buildings (5 storeys) are clustered around the train station and within the Elizabeth Precinct, away from sensitive low-scale residential interfaces.
- Redevelopment along Main Hurstbridge Road should be built to the front boundary with car parking either provided in basements or behind the building.
- The street wall height should respond to the existing built form, creating a continuous built form scale with recessive upper levels.
- Heritage fabric should be retained. Upper levels must be setback behind the street wall in line with the heritage fabric retention.
- Redevelopment should respond to the architectural style and materials that complement the natural surroundings, vegetation and topography.
- Redevelopment should respond to the distinct fine grain character in Chute Street and the southern side of Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Redevelopment should respond to the rural village character.
- Buildings should be designed to respond to the slope.
- Buildings front, side and rear setbacks should be responsive to the adjacent character and landscaping.
- Future redevelopment of the Diamond Creek Tavern should respect its heritage features. Built form adjacent should ensure it does not dominate the heritage form.
- Active frontages should be provided along Station Street, Elizabeth Street, Chute Street and Main Hurstbridge Road.



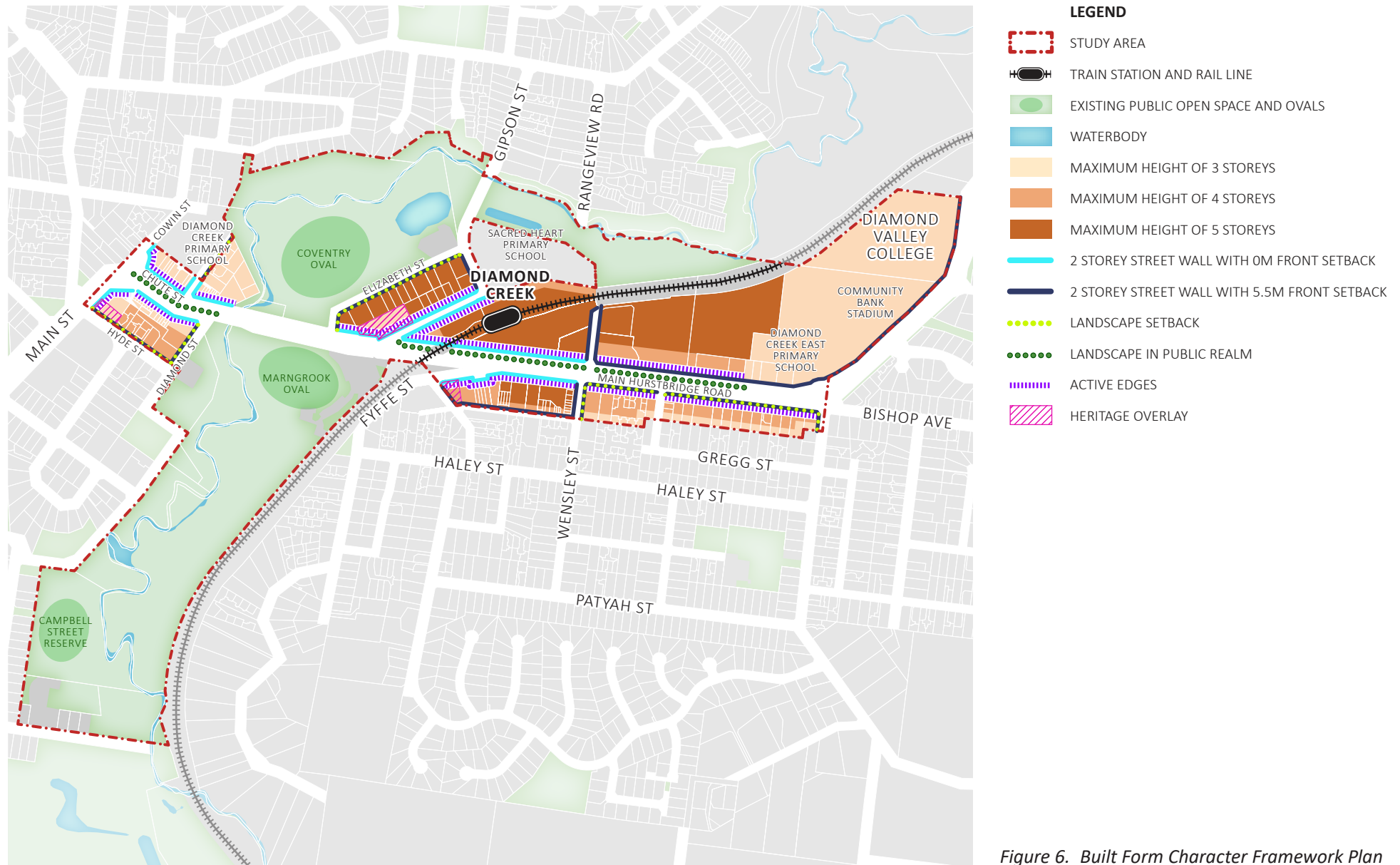


Figure 6. Built Form Character Framework Plan

## 4.5 Movement and Access

### Discussion

Diamond Creek is poorly serviced by public transport, with train services operating infrequently (1 every hour at peak times) from Diamond Creek Train Station. Bus services are provided along Main Hurstbridge Road, Station Street and Gipson Street.

Diamond Creek has low public transport patronage levels with residents driving to the centre. This creates high levels of congestion in the activity centre, further exacerbated by the existing level crossing.

In summary, the key access and movement issues are:

- Poor pedestrian amenity, particularly along Main Hurstbridge Road due to disconnected and narrow footpaths and limited signalised pedestrian crossing points;
- Poor pedestrian safety and connectivity issues due to the rail line splitting the activity centre in half;
- Poor connectivity of the existing Diamond Creek trail across Main Hurstbridge Road;
- Lack of cycling infrastructure including on-road cycle lanes and bike parking facilities;

- Poor pedestrian access and traffic flow at the intersection of Main Hurstbridge Road and Fyffe Street leading to major congestion and safety issues, particularly when the level crossing is down; and
- Traffic congestion due to the level crossing and high car usage levels.

State planned infrastructure will also have on flow impacts for the activity centre. Duplication of the Hurstbridge line is proposed, which will increase the frequency of train services. However, the increased frequency will also increase traffic congestion due to the existing level crossing.

Removal of the level crossing is critical to address severe congestion, connectivity and safety concerns. The Draft Structure Plan includes strategies that advocate for removal of the level crossing. The removal of the level crossing could be achieved by either going underground or the use of a sky rail. However, given the increased technical implications relating to the potential flooding from the creek, a Sky Rail Concept Plan, which identifies the indicative location of a future elevated rail line and new station has been developed at this time for discussion purposes.

Elevating the rail line would not only alleviate traffic

congestion, it would also connect the northern and southern sides of the rail line, Activity Centre and create ample opportunities for public open space under the rail line. A sky rail concept plan is provided at Figure 8. It is supported by examples of potential types of linear public open space that could be provided under the rail line.

As the Diamond Creek level crossing removal is not scheduled to be removed as part of the State Government's removal works, the Draft Structure Plan includes strategies regarding the improvement and implementation of additional pedestrian/ cyclist bridge over the rail line to improve connectivity and legibility between the northern and southern sides of the activity centre and beyond.

In relation to the provision of car parking within Diamond Creek, generally there is capacity except for the commuter car park. However, alternative spaces are available in adjacent public car parks. Based on the current growth projections, additional land for car parking is not considered necessary. However, a re-design or re-optimisation of the existing commuter car park would create increased capacity, improve safety as well as internal car parking circulation

Main Hurstbridge Road has a multi-functional role as the

main activity spine for the activity centre and the main gateway to the Green Wedge part of the Shire, and some of the State's most bushfire vulnerable land.

The Draft Structure Plan must strike a balance between maintaining traffic low, avoiding congestion, whilst creating a pedestrian friendly activity centre, and better connectivity with the northern and southern sides of Main Hurstbridge Road.

Overall, the Draft Structure Plan provides the framework to advocate for key infrastructure items, while also directing upgrades to footpaths and cycle networks to improve pedestrian and cyclist amenity within the activity centre.

### **Objectives**

- To optimise the potential to reduce car dependency within the community by developing a network of local and regional shared paths for recreational and functional use, and by encouraging upgrades to the Hurstbridge line to increase the frequency of public transport services.
- To advocate for removal of the level crossing to create better pedestrian and cyclist connectivity north-south through the centre.
- To improve car park management and design.
- To establish the commercial and retail precincts of the township as 'pedestrian priority areas'.
- To improve access to the centre for all modes of travel, link the precincts of the town physically with clear pedestrian/cycle paths and visually with landscape treatments.
- To expand the range of public transport linking the centre and the role of the railway station as a multi-modal interchange.
- To create better pedestrian and cyclist connectivity across the railway line.
- To encourage traffic calming measures to Main Hurstbridge Road to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity, safety and amenity through existing at grade car parks, and across the railway line.

## Strategies

- Investigate improvements to the intersection of Main Hurstbridge Road and Fyffe Street to reduce congestion and alleviate safety concerns.
- Liaise with the Department of Transport (DoT) to advocate for the removal of the level crossing and potential implementation of a sky rail as per the concept plan provided at Figure 8.
- Investigate the opportunity to make Station Street one way, to lessen conflicts between cars parking and pedestrians and reducing vehicular turning movements, minimising congestion.
- Investigate implementation of indented parking on the western side of Elizabeth Street.
- Redesign or re-optimize existing commuter car park to improve safety as well as internal car park circulation.
- Liaise with DoT to advocate for the implementation of on-road cycle lanes on Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Liaise with Vic Track and DoT to investigate additional pedestrian/ cyclist bridge over rail to improve connectivity and legibility between the northern and southern sides of the activity centre and beyond.
- Liaise with the DoT to improve existing bus stops along Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Investigate the opportunity to provide a raised pedestrian crossing directly east of Fyffe Street, connecting the northern and southern sides of Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Create a clear cycling route from the Train Station to Chute Street and the Diamond Creek Trail.
- Implement proposed bike path connecting the Diamond Creek Trail to Hurstbridge to the north east.
- Implement lighting, paving, and landscaping through existing at grade car parks and across the railway line, ensuring they are safe and inviting spaces.
- Investigate the potential for an underpass connecting the Diamond Creek Trail under Main Hurstbridge Road, connecting the northern and southern open spaces.
- Provide bike and mobility scooter parking at highly frequented facilities such as supermarkets and the train station.
- Reduce the speed limit along Main Hurstbridge Road to 40km/h.
- Implement Gipson Street bridge duplication as specified in DCPO1, to improve traffic flow to the Activity Centre. As part of this, investigate complementary measures to:
  - Improve the amenity of the bridge as an entrance into the centre.
  - Enhance the connectivity the bridge provides for pedestrians/ cyclists in and out of the centre (e.g. clear provision for cyclists and pedestrians on the bridge).
  - Provide a safe and non-congested environment in the Station Street precinct, particularly by considering traffic calming devices, pedestrian crossings, carefully-placed parking, etc.

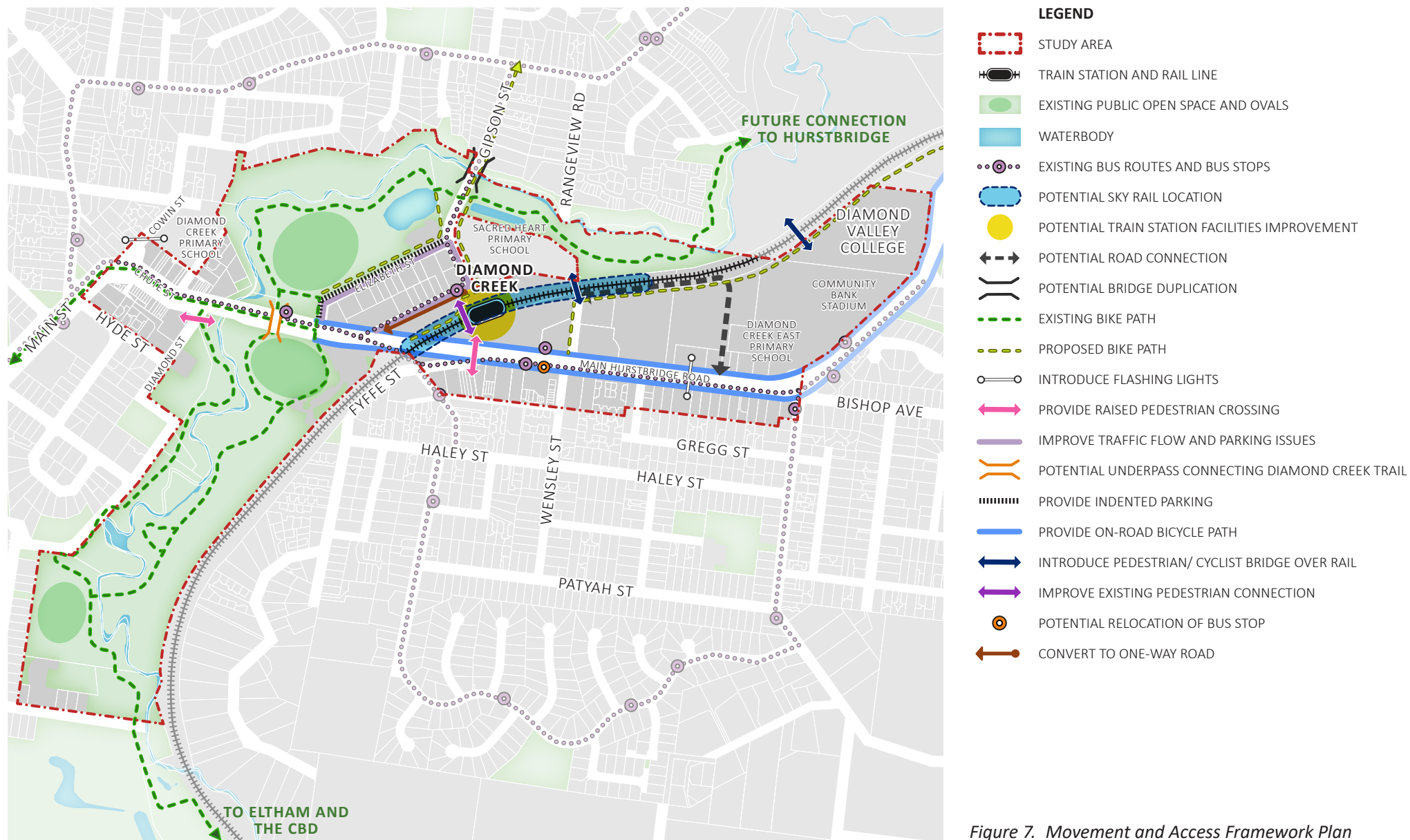


Figure 7. Movement and Access Framework Plan



## LEGEND








-  POTENTIAL LOCATION/EXTENTS OF ELEVATED RAIL LINE
-  POTENTIAL NEW STATION LOCATION
-  POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT
-  ACTIVE EDGES
-  POTENTIAL FOR FORMALISED PEDESTRIAN/ BIKE CONNECTION
-  PLAZA/ SHARED SURFACE
-  TOWN CENTRE HEART
-  OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE BELOW SKY RAIL
-  BIKE PATH

Figure 8. Diamond Creek Sky Rail Concept Plan



Figure 9. Precedent images of linear open spaces and train station (Source 1: <https://svc.com.au/project-items/carnegie-station-linear-park/>; Source 2: <https://landezine-award.com/caulfield-to-dandenong-level-crossing-removal-project/>)

## 4.10 Landscape and Place Activation

### Discussion

The Activity Centre is nestled in the Diamond Creek Valley, with its natural landscape and low-scale buildings creating a rural village character. A key concern for the community is retention of and provision of more landscaping in the Activity Centre.

The commercial components of the Activity Centre are predominantly characterised by 1 to 2 storey buildings with car parking within the front setback. This combined with congestion along Main Hurstbridge Road create a poor pedestrian environment.

Increased presence of vegetation in the public realm will help to improve the pedestrian experience, creating shade and climate control, whilst also blending the built form into the landscape. Other streets that would benefit from landscape improvements include Station Street, Elizabeth Street and Chute Street.

Parts of Main Hurstbridge Road, Chute Street and Elizabeth Street lack public realm amenity, with limited signalised pedestrian crossing points, cycle lanes and footpaths. Key improvements particularly along Main Hurstbridge Road include continuous and widened footpaths.

The Activity Centre is also lacking a public space/ plaza where people can meet, rest and linger. A strategy of the Draft Structure Plan recommends investigating the opportunity for a public space/ plaza to be located adjacent to the train station north of Main Hurstbridge Road as shown at Figure 10.

The land between the rail line, Main Hurstbridge Road and George Street could also be redeveloped to include an internal street adjacent to the public space/ plaza, that creates a new 'heart' to the Activity Centre away from the traffic congestion on Main Hurstbridge Road.

Due to the multi-functional role of Main Hurstbridge Road and the size of the centre and its catchment, it is unlikely that both sides of the road can support the energy and vitality needed.

### Objectives

- To develop more attractive public spaces to enhance social interaction and the image of the centre.
- To incorporate references to European and indigenous heritage in the landscape and use art in public spaces.
- To retain and develop the open spaces within the centre and the links to parkland along the nearby creek floodplain as a key feature of the centre.
- To create a 'landscaped civic spine' along Main Hurstbridge Road as the connecting feature of Diamond Creek.
- To retain and increase vegetation in the public realm.
- To ensure that development sites with front, side or rear setbacks are extensively landscaped with indigenous vegetation.
- To maintain the visual dominance of the well vegetated natural landscape throughout the residential, commercial and open space areas of Diamond Creek.



## Strategies

- Strengthen the landscape character along Main Hurstbridge Road through the provision of mature trees and planting within the streetscape and public realm.
- Investigate the opportunity for a public space/ plaza and the 'heart' of the Activity Centre to be located adjacent to the train station north of Main Hurstbridge Road away from the traffic congestion.
- Prepare an Urban Design Framework (UDF) for Precinct 4 that incorporates a public space/ plaza and the 'heart' of the Activity Centre to the north of Main Hurstbridge Road away from traffic congestion.
- Enhance the public realm with seating, shade trees and space for outdoor eating.
- Implement footpaths along northern side of Station Street and Gipson Street, and between Station Street and the Coles Supermarket on Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Investigate the opportunity for a raised pedestrian crossing directly east of Fyffe Street, connecting the north and south sides of Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Implement improvements to the existing railway pedestrian crossing.
- Investigate the provision of additional pedestrian railway crossings to improve connectivity and legibility between the northern and southern sides of the activity centre and beyond.
- Investigate potential footpath upgrades and widening along Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Investigate improved pedestrian infrastructure at the intersections of Cowin Street, Diamond Street and Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Development should respond to the distinct landscape character in Precinct 5 through maintaining front setbacks and landscaping. The front setback should be a minimum of 5.5m measured from the front property boundary.

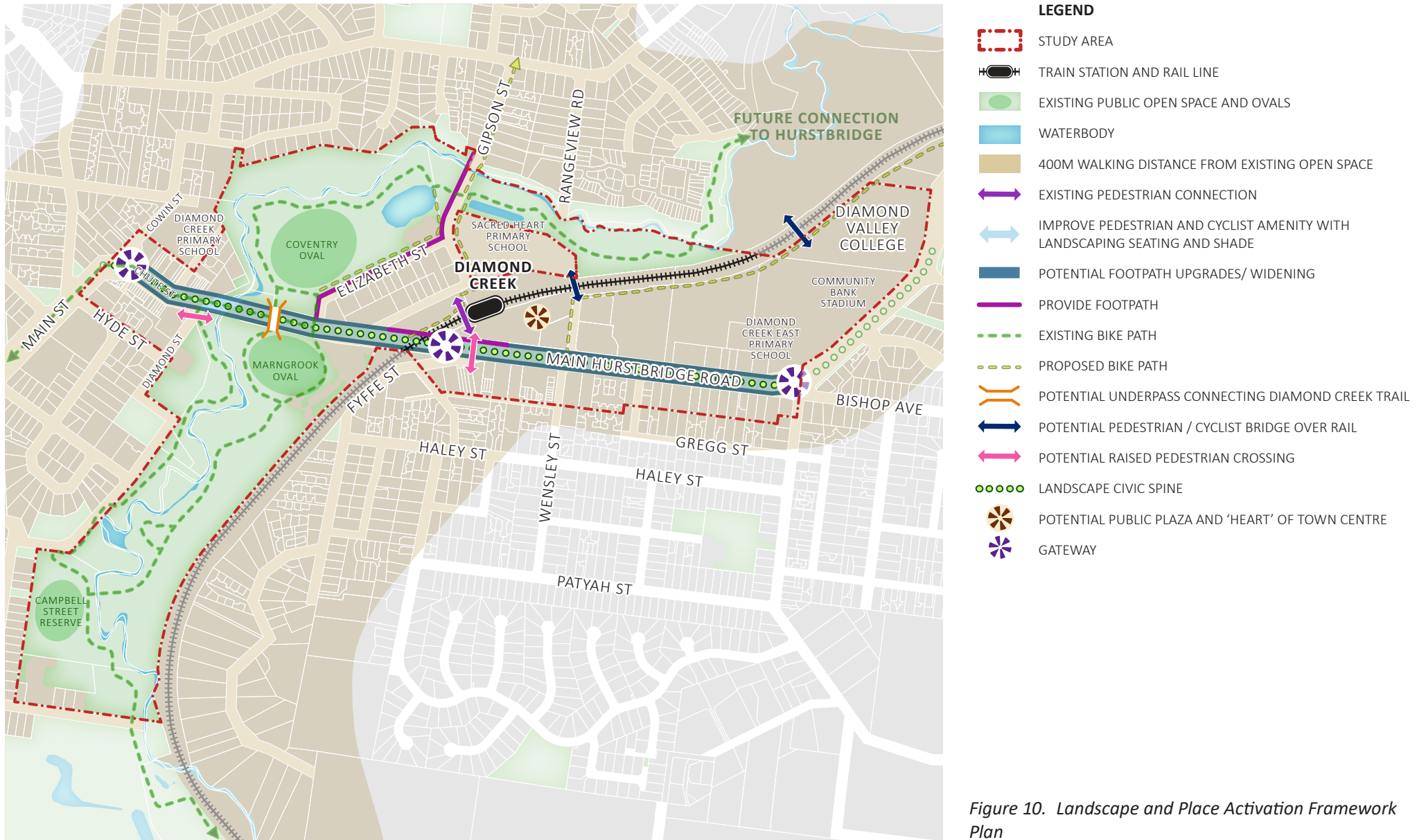


Figure 10. Landscape and Place Activation Framework Plan

## 4.11 Community and Leisure

### Discussion

Diamond Creek is characterised by a network of open space that creates a continuous green corridor through the centre. The creek corridor has naturally created space for an abundance of passive and active recreation activities and community facilities.

### **Passive and Active Recreation Facilities**

The Diamond Creek Trail is highly utilised by residents and connects to Eltham and through to the CBD. The community describes the trail as a hidden gem. An extension to the existing trail through to Hurstbridge is currently being constructed.

The Draft Structure Plan advocates for improvements to the existing trail infrastructure to improve user safety and experience, including more drinking taps and improved lighting.

Diamond Creek's sport facilities are not just used by the local community but serve a regional catchment of schools and sport clubs. In relation to recreation facilities such as sports ovals, pavilions, netball, tennis and bowls facilities, the provision levels are high for the population.

However, many of the existing facilities require updating as they are non-compliant. Consideration also needs to be given to Diamond Creek's aging population, with a greater number of older workers and pre-retirees than the greater Melbourne average (16% versus 12%). Improvements are already underway to upgrade aging infrastructure as well ensuring lifetime play is catered for.

Works recently completed or currently underway include:

- 3 fitness equipment stations recently installed;
- Marngrook Oval Pavilion Development currently under construction;
- Planned demolition and rebuild of Diamond Creek netball pavilion and upgrade of the car park.
- Proposed upgrades to lighting and Diamond Creek ovals;
- Proposed pavilion development for Coventry Oval; and
- Proposed synthetic soccer grounds at Diamond Creek Valley Soccer Club/ Diamond Creek East Primary School.

To cater for the regional catchment a new regional playspace is proposed. The Diamond Creek Regional Playspace is proposed to be situated on the old pony club

site, adjacent to Marngrook Oval, Diamond Creek Bowls Club and off-lead dog park. The playspace is proposed to be nature-themed and cater for all ages and disabilities. It will also include a refurbished W-class tram that will operate as a community café.

The Draft Structure Plan advocates for the above works to ensure the activity centre caters for the recreational needs of existing and future communities.

### **Community Facilities**

Existing community facilities have been assessed to be mostly aging, single-purpose and of varying quality and use. An obvious deficit in the Activity Centre is the lack of a multi-purpose community building. It is understood that the Diamond Creek Community is predominantly utilised as a fitness centre. Community meeting spaces are mainly well-used and offered by the Senior Citizens Building and Living and Learning Building, with a further meeting room at the Community Bank Stadium. However, these facilities are not co-located and unattractive. The forecast doubling of retirement-age residents necessitates the introduction of a disability compliant, multi-purpose facilities.

Based on the above, any community infrastructure will need to be planned and upgraded to meet the activity and inclusion needs of the older population. The need for a multi-purpose community building should be considered. The multi-purpose community building could also include youth friendly community space, community arts and performance space and a library. This could be provided for through redeveloping the Diamond Creek Community Centre.

## Objectives

- To provide for a network of spaces and facilities to meet projected community needs.
- To ensure community and leisure facilities are accessible to everyone, regardless of age or disability.
- To provide a multi-purpose community facility in the Activity Centre.
- To enable the location of a civic building (Council Offices or other) within the Activity Centre.

## Strategies

- Investigate the capacity of the existing Diamond Creek Community Centre to be refurbished to be a multi-purpose community facility that includes a variety of services and spaces for all age groups and potentially a library.
- An Accredited Access Consultant should review upgrades required to sports ovals, pavilions, netball, tennis and bowls facilities to ensure they are accessible to all.
- Advocate for the implementation of the Diamond Creek Regional Play Space and ensure it encompasses facilities for lifetime play.
- Advocate for improvements to the Diamond Creek Train to improve user safety and experience, including more drinking taps and improved lighting.
- Investigate opportunities to create additional meeting spaces adjacent to Coventry Oval and Main Hurstbridge Road.

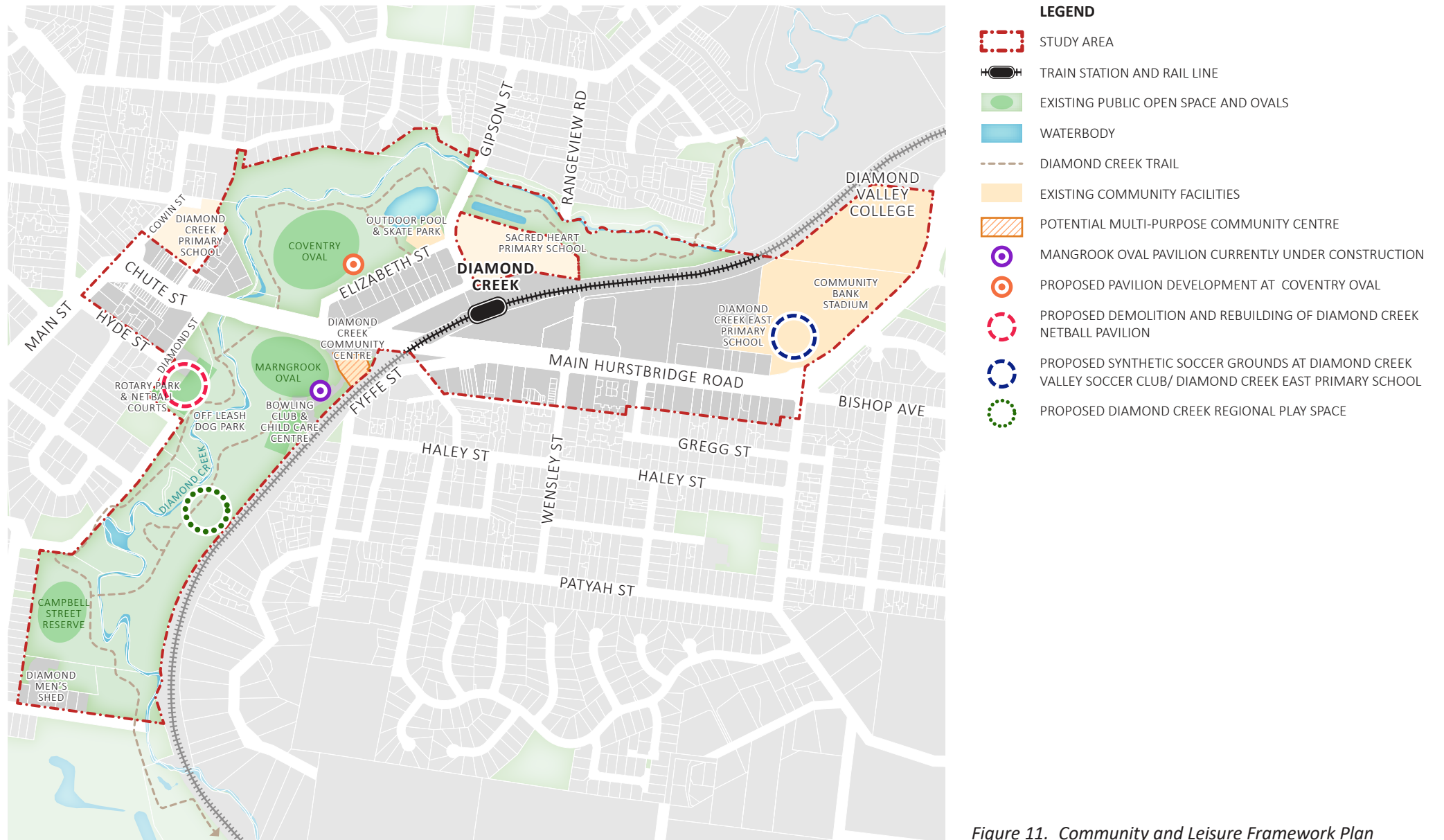


Figure 11. Community and Leisure Framework Plan

## 5.0 Precincts - Objectives, Strategies and Design Guidelines

The activity centre comprises seven precincts as shown at Figure 12. These precincts are each envisaged to have a unique future character that is distinctive yet complementary to one another. Articulated in the following sections is the preferred character, objectives and strategies as they relate to each precinct.

Each section is further supported by design guidelines that relate to specific design responses needed within each precinct.

For general design guidelines in relation to built form heights and setbacks, refer to Section 6.0.

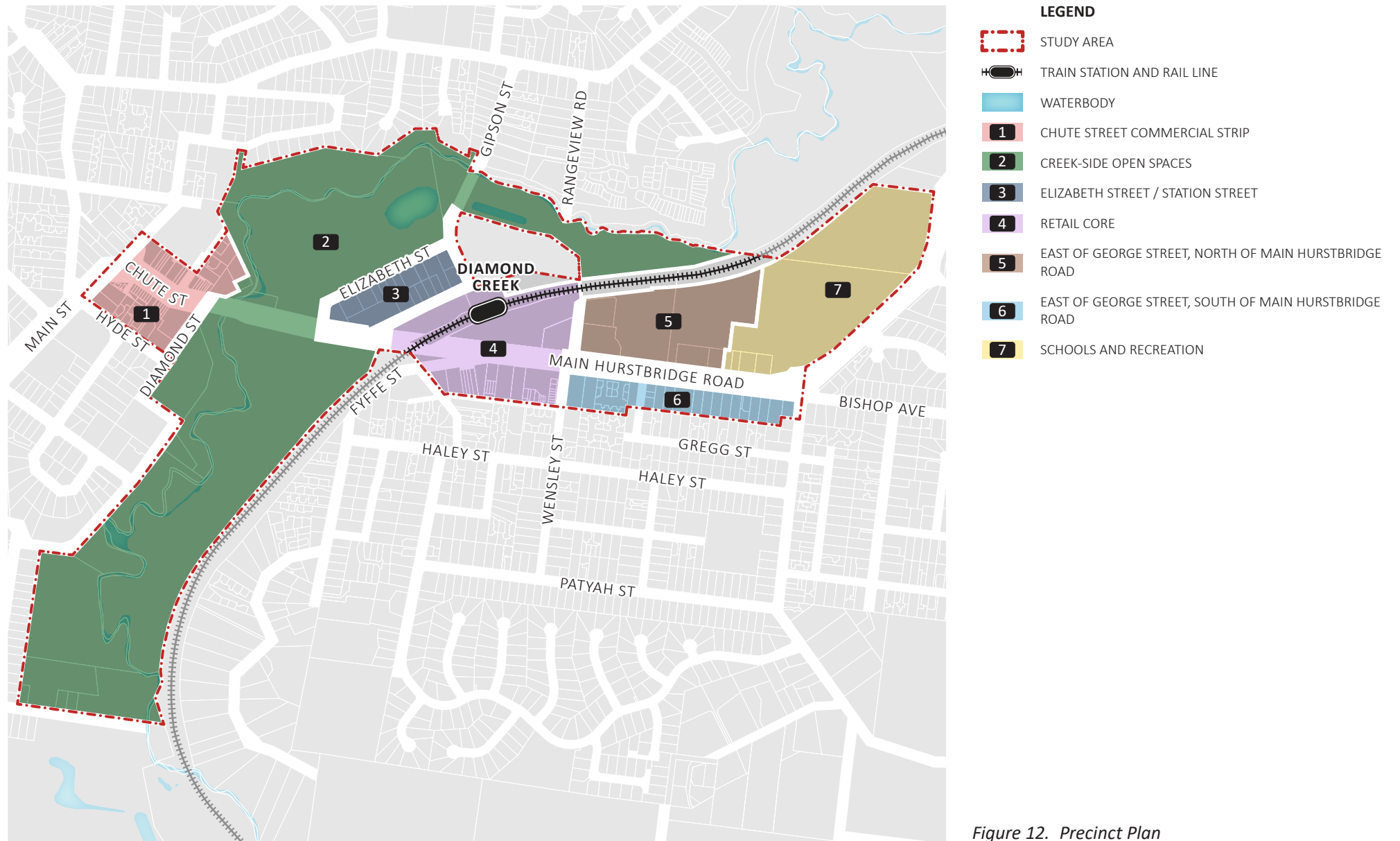


Figure 12. Precinct Plan

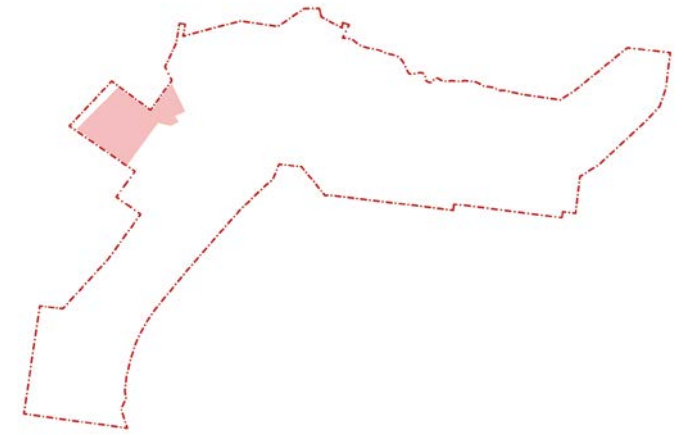
## 5.1 Precinct 1 – Chute Street Commercial Strip

### Preferred character statement

*Chute Street is the gateway to Diamond Creek from the west, where sweeping views of the valley are afforded from the hilltop location. Chute Street has a distinct and highly valued character within Diamond Creek, retaining its original small township atmosphere. New buildings will be moderate scale with a consistent street wall. The range of shop-fronts, cafes, places along the street to stop and sit and established trees will make an attractive pedestrian-oriented environment. Buildings will step down to the corridor of creek-side parkland and offer a pleasant aspect to enjoy this natural setting.*

### Objectives

- To respect the historic role and character of Chute Street as the earliest part of the town centre as a distinguishing feature and attraction for visitors.
- To encourage moderate density mixed use development that is responsive to the existing scale.
- To respond to the distinct fine grain character.
- To encourage buildings to step down the slope providing a link and orientation to the natural settings and leisure opportunities along the creek valley.
- To ensure retail, office and entertainment activities are provided as a secondary node to the retail core (Precinct 4), providing local convenience shopping.
- To protect the amenity of adjoining residential properties.
- To improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and amenity.
- To create a safe, accessible and attractive pedestrian environment activated through a range of shop-fronts, cafes, businesses, places to sit and stop with established trees and other attractions.





### Strategies

- Develop the retail, office and entertainment activities in and around Chute Street for local convenience shopping, a range of food and restaurant outlets and professional and other office based services but little if any retail floor-space expansion.
- Encourage higher density development in and around the Chute Street node.
- Investigate the implementation of on-road cycling lanes on Chute Street.
- Introduce flashing lights at the Cowin Street school crossing to increase visibility.

### Design Guidelines

- Buildings fronting Chute Street should:
  - Be designed with well-articulated facades, roof forms, fenestration, parapet treatments and other detail and materials to provide interest at the street level and reinforce the human scale of Chute Street.
  - Provide active frontages at ground level to provide a safe and lively environment.
  - Provide continuous weather protection (such as cantilevered canopies/verandahs) over footpaths, subject to protecting existing tree canopies.
  - Include a street wall that includes both a fine grain and strong vertical articulation to deliver visual interest.
- Buildings on corner allotments should address both street frontages with shop front windows at street level.
- Buildings should respond to the topography ensuring the front door to the ground floor use is at the same level as the footpath.

- Development on lots directly interfacing with the creek should be designed to address the creek with entries, windows and balconies.
- Development fronting Hyde Street and Inglis Street should adopt consistent setback distances to adjacent buildings and seek to retain any existing vegetation along property boundaries.
- Development on Inglis Street and Hyde Street should respond to the surrounding residential use, scale and intensity.
- Redevelopment adjacent to 69 Main Street should be designed to reflect and respond to its heritage features.

Refer to the General Guidelines at Section 6.0 for interface setback requirements.

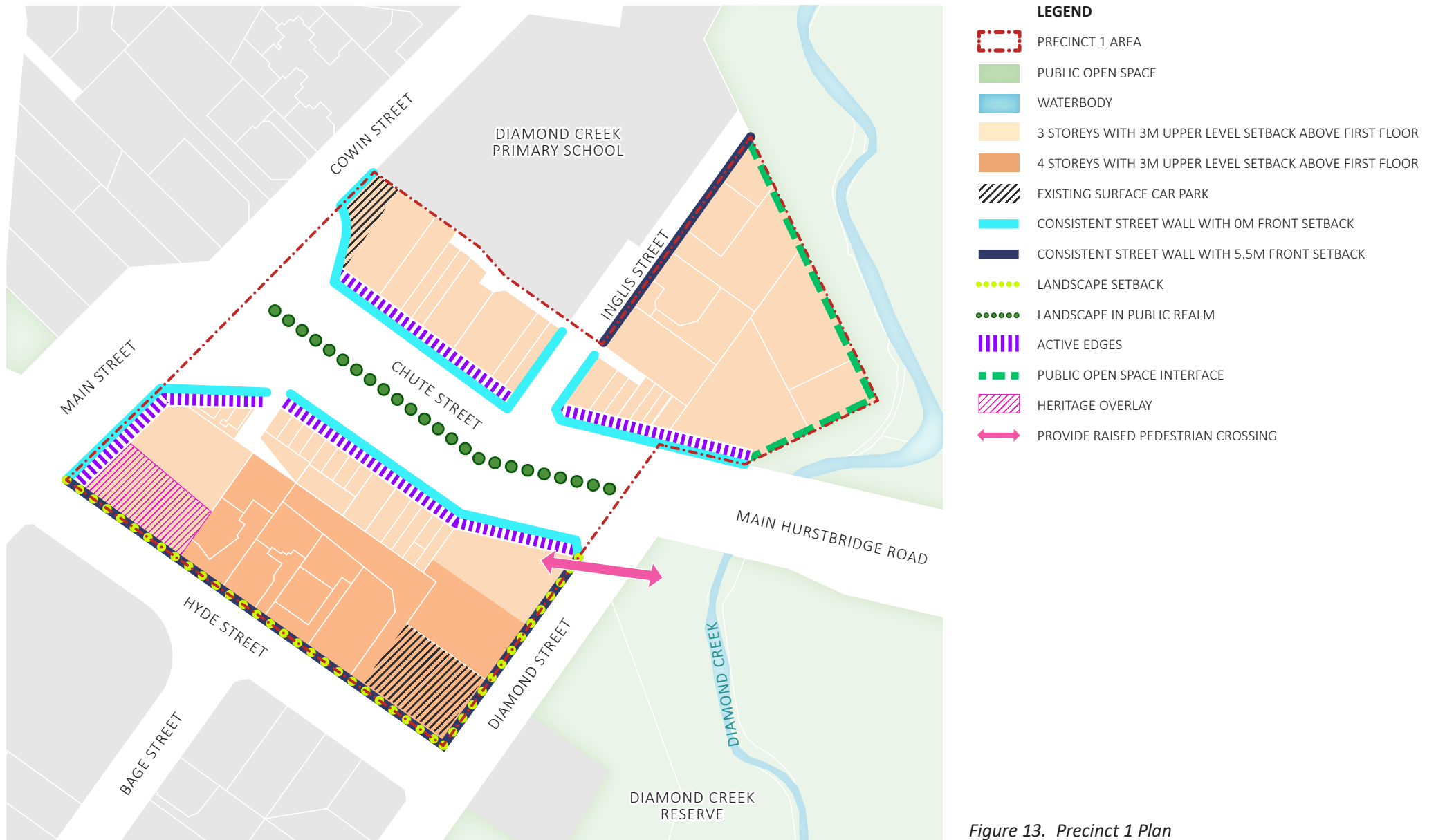


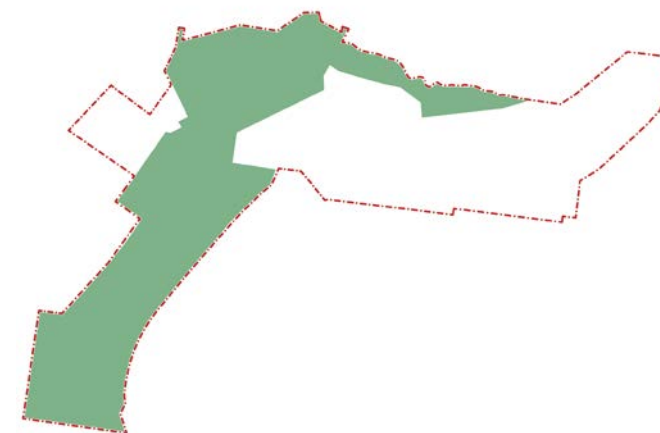
Figure 13. Precinct 1 Plan

## 5.2 Precinct 2: Creek-side Open Spaces

*The creek-side open space corridor is the most significant landscape and recreational feature in the township, and is central to the image and character of Diamond Creek. Located in the physical centre of the town, the corridor will be conveniently accessed from on-road cycle lanes connecting to the Diamond Creek Trail. The corridor will be known for catering for a diverse array of recreational activities including physical exercise, dog walking, picnics and play in spaces that cater for all ages and disabilities. The natural beauty of the creek corridor will extend into adjoining open spaces with native trees, shrubs and grasses dispersed amongst the recreational facilities, while the use of exotic species such as the avenue of elm trees at Marngrook Oval, will continue to provide a link to European settlement in the township.*

### Objectives

- To ensure the extent and nature of development should be limited and directly related to parkland based activities and promote use of the public parkland space.
- To provide a mix of active and passive recreation activities for everyone, regardless of age or disability.
- To provide safe crossing of Main Hurstbridge Road for pedestrians and cyclists.
- To enhance both the functional and recreational access for pedestrians, cyclists and park users, in particular through an improved path network.



## Strategies

- Advocate for reduced speed limits in Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Investigate the capacity of the existing Diamond Creek Community Centre to be refurbished to be a multi-purpose community facility that includes a variety of services and spaces for all age groups and potentially a library.
- Continue to maintain and improve existing recreational and community facilities within the Diamond Creek Valley.
- Review provision of sports ovals, pavilions, netball, tennis and bowls facilities to ensure they are compliant with current standards.
- Investigate the potential for an underpass connecting the Diamond Creek Trail under Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Implement proposed bike path connecting the Diamond Creek Trail to Hurstbridge to the north east.
- Develop a prioritised program for construction of functional and recreational paths as shown on the Figure 14.

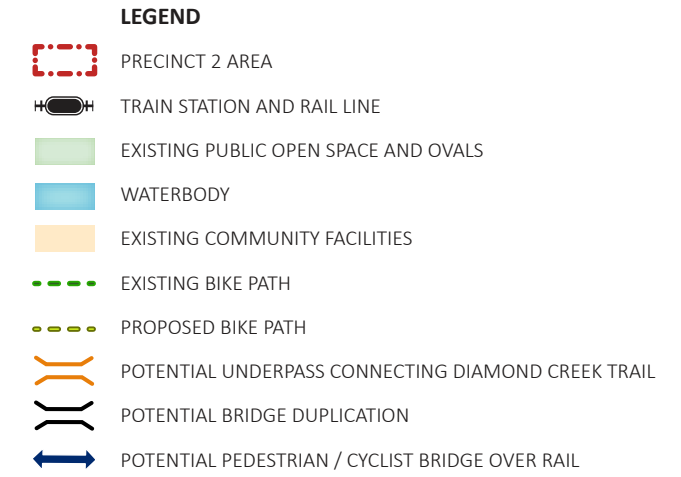


Figure 14. Precinct 2 Plan

## 5.3 Precinct 3: Elizabeth Street/ Station Street

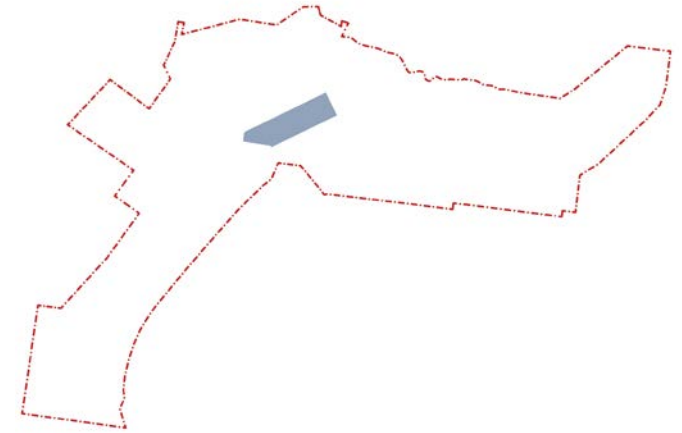
### Preferred Character

*This area will become a truly mixed use precinct, where the existing local trades and services can continue alongside other emerging industries such as start up businesses, small-scale manufacturers and technology oriented start-up businesses, office and creative industries. The emerging economy will help to develop an innovation hub in Diamond Creek. At the same time, a limited amount of residential will be allowed to complement the desired economic outcome of the locality, respond to its location next to the train station, and provide activation, amenity and support new types of live-work development.*

*The buildings will present a cohesive image for the area with consistent setbacks and heights and will be articulated to break up the bulky forms usually seen in service industrial areas. A theme of native vegetation within front setbacks along Elizabeth Street will link this area to the adjoining parklands.*

### Objectives

- To support existing industrial uses whilst facilitating other compatible emergent industries to energise the centre.
- To minimise the impacts of development on adjoining sensitive land uses.
- To encourage high density mixed use development.
- To create a cohesive image for the area and encourage contemporary built form responses which provide interest to the streetscape and contribute to an attractive pedestrian environment.
- To emphasise the Main Hurstbridge Road frontage with buildings which exemplify the overall character and image of Diamond Creek.
- To create an native planting theme within front setbacks along Elizabeth Street which will link this area to the character of adjoining parklands.
- To improve the public realm and minimise conflicts between cars and pedestrians.



## Strategies

- Review zoning and consider application of a Commercial 3 Zone (C3Z) (or modified ACZ2) to facilitate creative industries, small manufacturers, start-up businesses and residential.
- Change the functions along the Main Hurstbridge Road frontage to intensify the land use and increase the amenity along this spine of the activity centre.
- Investigate the opportunity to make Station Street one way, to lessen conflicts between cars parking and pedestrians and reducing vehicular turning movements, minimising congestion.
- Investigate implementation of indented parking and a footpath on the western side of Elizabeth Street.
- Implement Gipson Street bridge duplication as specified in DCPO1, to improve traffic flow to the Activity Centre. As part of this, investigate complementary measures to:
  - Improve the amenity of the bridge as an entrance into the centre.
  - Enhance the connectivity the bridge provides for pedestrians/ cyclists in and out of the centre (e.g. clear provision for cyclists and pedestrians on the bridge).

- Provide a safe and non-congested environment in the Station Street precinct, particularly by considering traffic calming devices, pedestrian crossings, carefully-placed parking, etc.

## Design Guidelines

- Any future redevelopment of the Diamond Creek Tavern should be reflective of its heritage features and mark the entry to the Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre.
- Redevelopment adjacent to the Diamond Creek Tavern should ensure it does not dominate the heritage form.
- Built form should present an attractive and articulated façade to provide visual interest.
- Limit convenience parking areas to front setbacks landscaped to screen parking areas.
- Developments should not provide storage areas within the frontage.
- Front fencing along the street boundary is highly discouraged.

- Buildings should be designed with active frontages (greater than 60% non-reflective glazing) at ground level to provide a safe and lively environment.
- Buildings should present an attractive and articulated façade to provide visual interest to the overall development and offset bulky forms to the rear.

Refer to the General Guidelines at Section 6.0 for interface setback requirements.

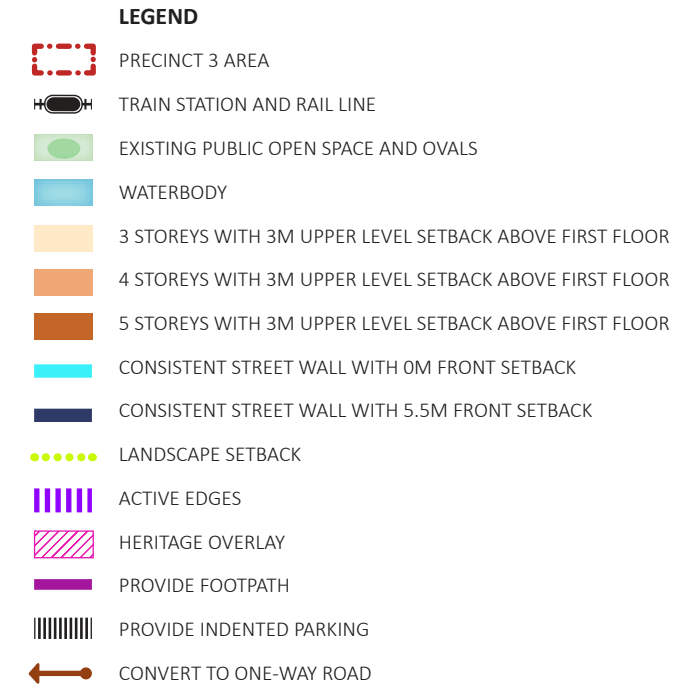
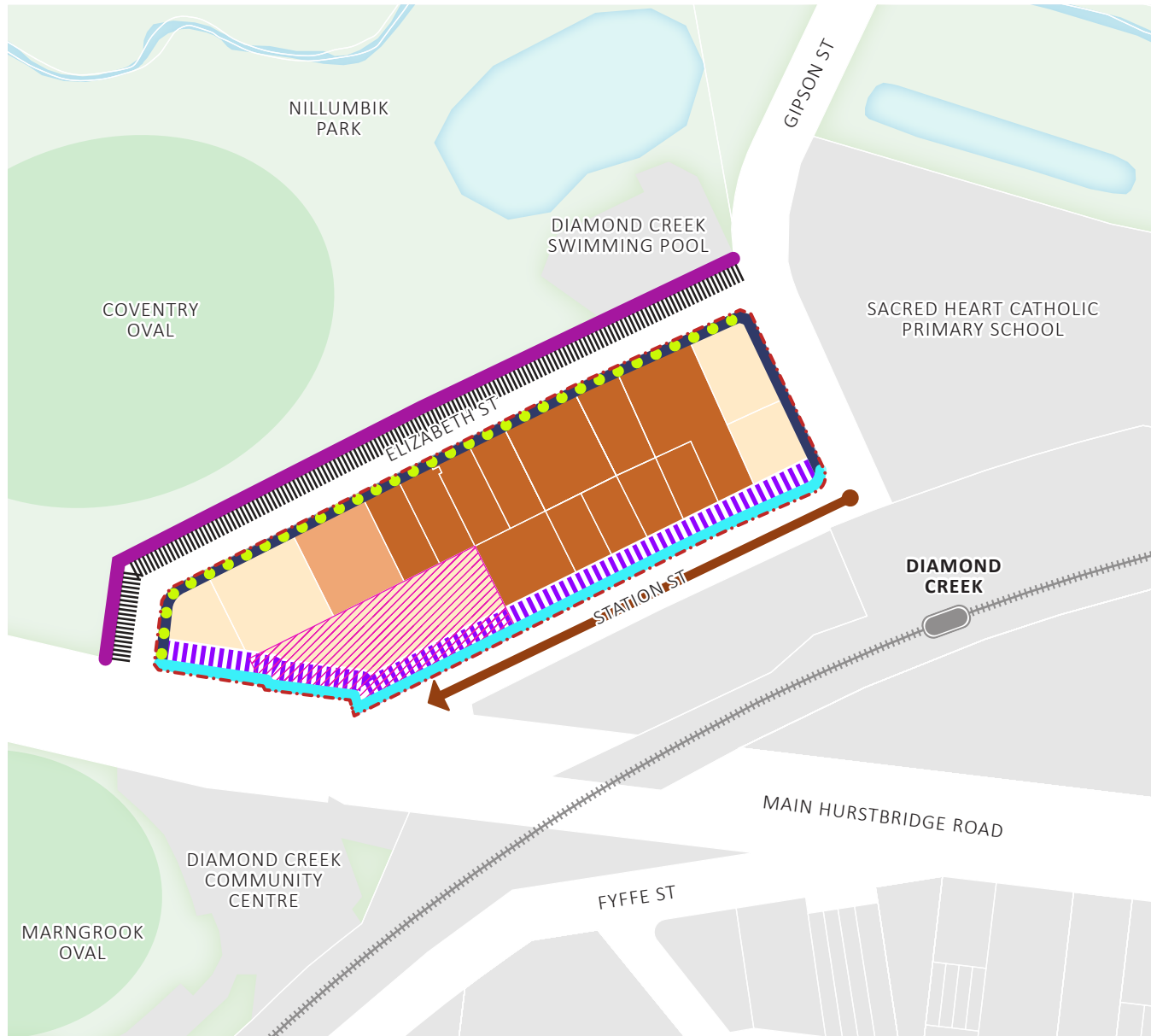


Figure 15. Precinct 3 Plan



## 5.4 Precinct 4: Retail Core

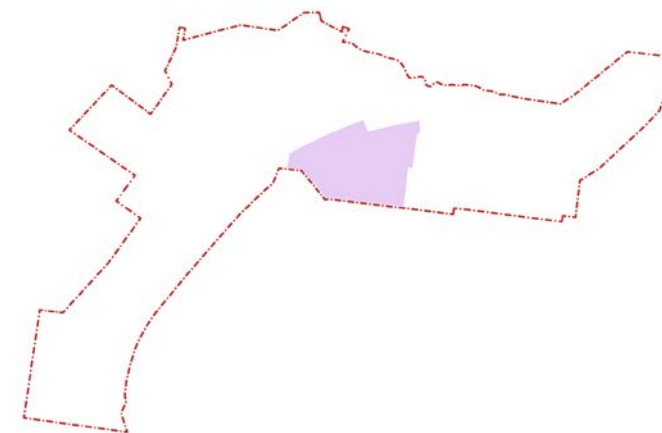
### Preferred Character

*This area will consolidate as the major focus and ‘heart’ of Diamond Creek Activity Centre, comprising a range of uses including shops, offices and housing. The attractive shop fronts and outdoor cafes will create a buzz of activity at the Main Hurstbridge Road frontage. The land between the rail line, Main Hurstbridge Road and George Street should become the focus of activity, with a public space/plaza for people to stop, sit and meet friends. An internal public street with fine grain shops and residential development above will create energy and vitality.*

*The street spaces will be landscaped with native and exotic vegetation and provide attractive links for pedestrians moving between the shops and the station. Buildings will be designed to have active frontages with highly articulated facades. They will maintain the existing low scale of Diamond Creek and provide additional interest at the street level.*

### Objectives

- To support growth in retail floorspace.
- To enable mixed use, accessible development and housing including accessible housing options, shops, offices and housing.
- To promote the creation of a public space/plaza in the centre.
- To create a town centre ‘heart’ away from the traffic congestion on Main Hurstbridge Road.
- To retain the township atmosphere of this precinct while allowing opportunities for increased development (including transit oriented development) on large sites close to the train station.
- To link the various activities of the precinct visually and physically with contemporary building forms, public spaces and an attractive, continuously accessible pedestrian environment.
- To create a ‘landscaped civic spine’ along Main Hurstbridge Road as the connecting feature of Diamond Creek.
- To create a stronger presence of built form and activity along Main Hurstbridge Road.
- To create improved pedestrian connectivity between both sides of Main Hurstbridge Road and the rail line.
- To advocate for the removal of the level crossing and the implementation of a sky rail as per the general concept provided at Figure 8.
- To develop the role of the station as a sustainable transport hub ensuring it is clearly accessible from the retail core.
- To encourage traffic calming measures to Main Hurstbridge Road to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.
- To develop a long-term plan for car parking including designated accessible parking bays to ensure an adequate and sustainable supply.



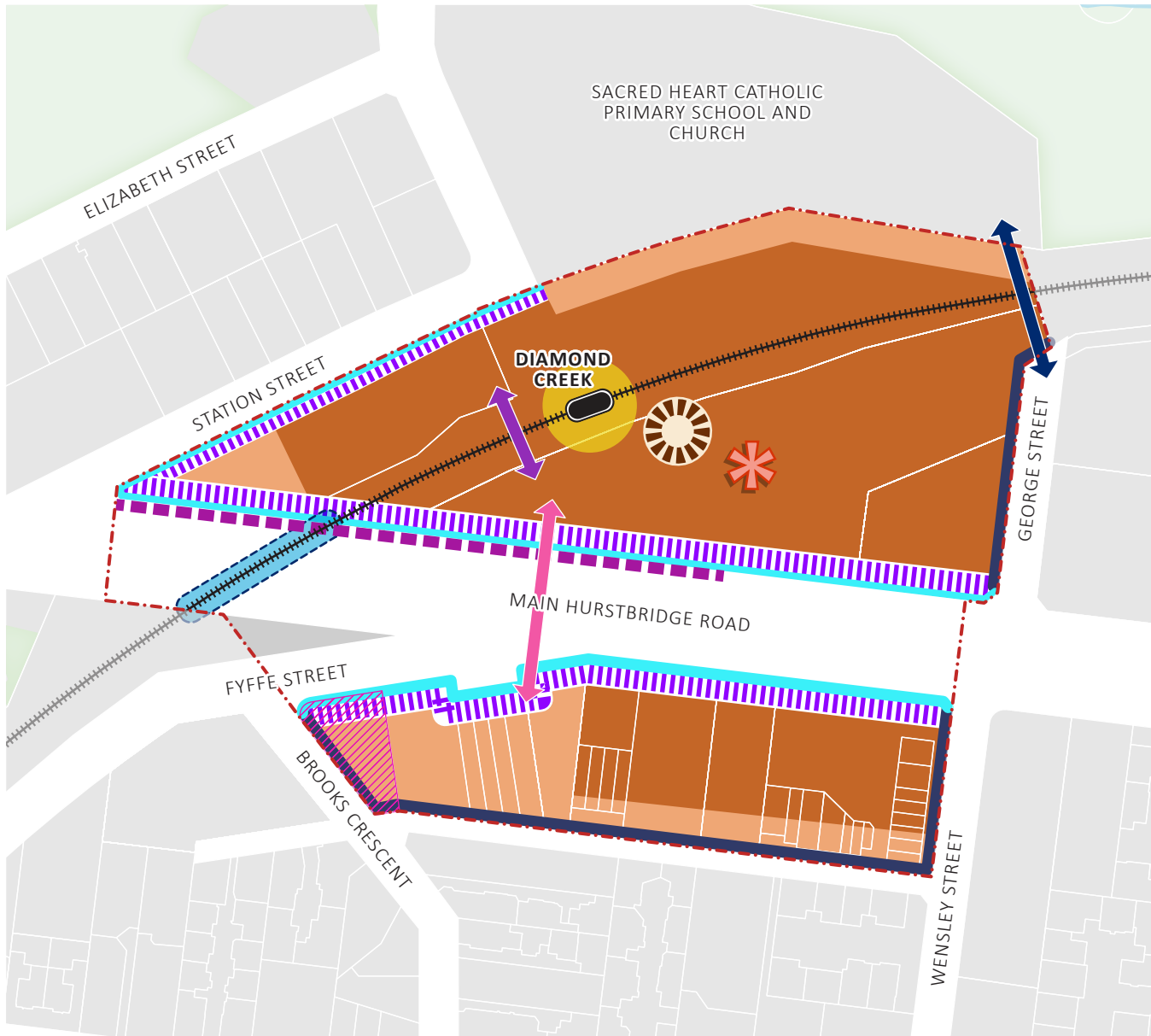
## Strategies

- Develop this precinct as the primary focus for retail activity in the centre.
- Generally contain retail activity within a compact pedestrian friendly core bound by the railway, Brooks Crescent, Waigo Way and Wensley Street/ George Street.
- Provide new retail and office space through more intensive, mixed use redevelopment.
- Deliver a vertical mix of land uses through facilitating the use of shop tops for office, residential and other commercial uses within the main streets of the activity centre.
- Encourage mixed use residential and office buildings north of the railway.
- Provide the opportunity for a transit-oriented development (TOD) on land to the west of the railway line (Vic Track land) including uses such as commercial and residential.
- Encourage progressive upgrades of railway infrastructure and the station to meet anticipated growth in demand for public transport services (including implementation of a potential sky rail).
- Liaise with the DoT to advocate for the removal of the level crossing including confirmation of the preferred outcome.
- Investigate redeveloping at-grade car parks for mixed use development, with replacement and additional car parking (if required) integrated in basement car parking.
- Investigate the opportunity for a raised pedestrian crossing directly east of Fyffe Street, connecting the north and south sides of Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Investigate improvements to station access and visibility, creating an inviting entrance.
- Investigate the provision of additional pedestrian railway crossings to improve connectivity and legibility between the northern and southern sides of the activity centre and beyond.
- Investigate potential footpath upgrades and widening along Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Implement improvements to the existing railway pedestrian crossing.
- Reduce the speed limit along Main Hurstbridge Road to 40km/h.
- Provide bike parking at highly frequented facilities such as supermarkets and the train station.
- Liaise with the DoT to improve existing bus stops along Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Liaise with DoT to advocate for the implementation of on-road cycle lanes on Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Redevelopment should respond to the distinct fine grain character along the southern side of Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Prepare an Urban Design Framework (UDF) that incorporates a public space/ plaza and the 'heart' of the Activity Centre to the north of Main Hurstbridge Road away from traffic congestion.

### Design Guidelines

- Buildings fronting Main Hurstbridge Road should:
  - Be designed with well-articulated facades, roof forms, fenestration, parapet treatments and other detail and materials to provide interest at the street level.
  - Be built to the front boundary, with car parking (including designated accessible parking bays) behind.
  - Provide active frontages at ground level to provide a safe and lively environment.
  - Provide continuous weather protection (such as cantilevered canopies/verandahs) over footpaths.
  - Include a street wall that includes both a fine grain and strong vertical articulation to deliver visual interest.
- Buildings on corner allotments should address both street frontages with shop front windows at street level.
- Design new buildings with the ground floor located responding to the natural ground level (NGL) to promote a strong connection with the public street space and ensure access to all.
- Plant substantial native and exotic trees where appropriate to provide shade in car parks and screen car parking areas.
- Front and side fencing is strongly discouraged.
- The use of roller shutters on shopfront windows and doors at street level is strongly discouraged.
- If required, at-grade or deck car parking is encouraged behind developments with an emphasis on landscaping to minimise visual impact on adjoining residential areas.
- New development at 42 and 44 Main Hurstbridge Road should provide for the retention and improvement of the site as a local landmark building.

Refer to the General Guidelines at Section 6.0 for interface setback requirements.



- LEGEND**
- PRECINCT 4 AREA
  - TRAIN STATION AND RAIL LINE
  - EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
  - WATERBODY
  - 4 STOREYS WITH 3M UPPER LEVEL SETBACK ABOVE FIRST FLOOR
  - 5 STOREYS WITH 3M UPPER LEVEL SETBACK ABOVE FIRST FLOOR
  - CONSISTENT STREET WALL WITH 0M FRONT SETBACK
  - CONSISTENT STREET WALL WITH 5.5M FRONT SETBACK
  - LANDSCAPE IN PUBLIC REALM
  - ACTIVE EDGES
  - HERITAGE OVERLAY
  - POTENTIAL LEVEL CROSSING REMOVAL
  - POTENTIAL TRAIN STATION FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT
  - EXISTING RETAIL ANCHOR
  - POTENTIAL PUBLIC PLAZA
  - IMPROVE EXISTING PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION
  - INTRODUCE PEDESTRIAN/ CYCLIST BRIDGE OVER RAIL
  - PROVIDE RAISED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
  - PROVIDE FOOTPATH

Figure 16. Precinct 4 Plan

## 5.5 Precinct 5: East of George Street, North of Main Hurstbridge Road

### Preferred Character

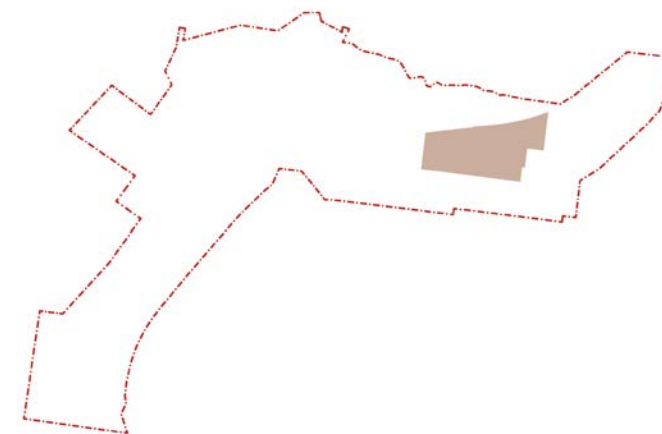
*As the approach to the Diamond Creek town centre from the east, the larger scale civic and commercial buildings, set in well-landscaped surrounds, will retain the rural township character.*

*This area will become a truly mixed use precinct, where the existing industrial uses and bulky goods can continue alongside other start up businesses, small-scale manufacturers and technology oriented start-up businesses, office and creative industries.*

*Re-established native vegetation along this stretch of Main Hurstbridge Road will create a distinct character for the area and make a welcoming statement at the town entrance. In addition, heavily landscaped property frontages will also provide visual continuity.*

### Objectives

- To encourage a range of industrial, commercial, office, civic and other employment generating uses complementing the use mix in Precinct 4.
- To minimise off site effects on adjoining sensitive land uses.
- To maintain the 'rural periphery' and landscape setting of this section of Main Hurstbridge Road.
- To enhance the strong native vegetation theme of this part of Main Hurstbridge Road, as the defining feature of the eastern entrance to the township.
- To encourage an attractive and safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists.



## Strategies

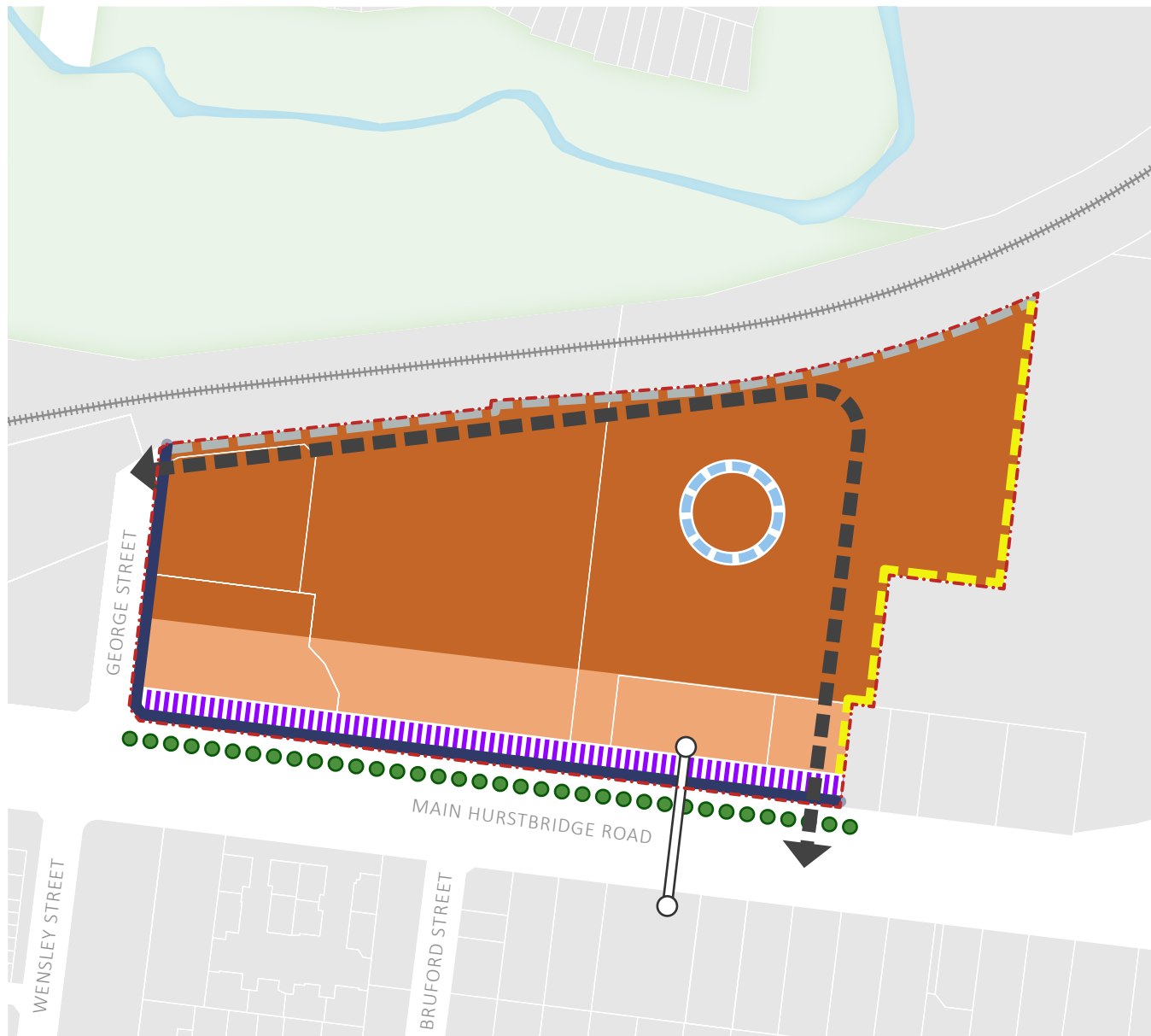
- Undertake community consultation to review the potential application of C3Z (or modified ACZ2) to part of Precinct 5 to allow for a diversification of uses and retention of the existing industrial uses.
- Investigate potential to establish an employment anchor, such as a civic or health anchor.
- Continue to support retail or semi-retail development that requires larger floor spaces, trade supplies or bulky goods.
- Maintain a suitable landscape buffer treatment along the eastern precinct boundary to act as a buffer to adjacent sensitive land uses.
- Retain landscaping along the frontage to Main Hurstbridge Road.
- Investigate potential footpath upgrades and widening along Main Hurstbridge Road, subject to protection of existing trees in the public realm.
- Reduce the speed limit along Main Hurstbridge Road to 40km/h.
- Liaise with DoT to advocate for the implementation of on-road cycle lanes on Main Hurstbridge Road.

## Design Guidelines

- Buildings fronting Main Hurstbridge Road should:
  - Be setback 5.5m from front boundary.
  - Provide active frontages at ground level to provide a safe and lively environment.
  - Be designed with ground floor street frontages with windows with displays and doors at the street level.
- Locate habitable spaces on upper levels along the street frontage, with windows overlooking the street or parklands/railway corridor to create a sense of surveillance.
- Locate storage yards, loading docks and large car-parking areas to the side or rear of the buildings to reduce their visual prominence.
- Locate main building entrance on street frontage so it is visible and easily recognised.
- Larger scale commercial and industrial buildings to be set in well landscaped surrounds to contribute to the rural township character of the centre.

- Provide space in front setbacks for adequate landscaping including indigenous grasses, shrubs and canopy trees and sufficient permeable surface to ensure plant growth.
- Minimise the number of driveway cross-overs to improve footpath safety and accessibility and opportunities for on-street parking.
- All industrial sheds should include a glazed office/display component to provide an interface with the street and to assist in concealing the bulky form behind.
- Front fencing along the street boundary is strongly discouraged.

Refer to the General Guidelines at Section 6.0 for interface setback requirements.



### LEGEND

- PRECINCT 5 AREA
- RAIL LINE
- EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
- WATERBODY
- 4 STOREYS WITH 3M UPPER LEVEL SETBACK ABOVE FIRST FLOOR
- 5 STOREYS WITH 3M UPPER LEVEL SETBACK ABOVE FIRST FLOOR
- CONSISTENT STREET WALL WITH 5.5M FRONT SETBACK
- LANDSCAPE IN PUBLIC REALM
- ||||| ACTIVE EDGES
- RAIL LINE INTERFACE
- INTERFACE WITH PUBLIC USE ZONE EDUCATION (PUZ2)
- ←- - -> POTENTIAL ROAD CONNECTION
- - -○ INTRODUCE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING WITH FLASHING LIGHTS
- OPPORTUNITY FOR ANCHOR, E.G. HEALTH OR CIVIC

Figure 17. Precinct 5 Plan

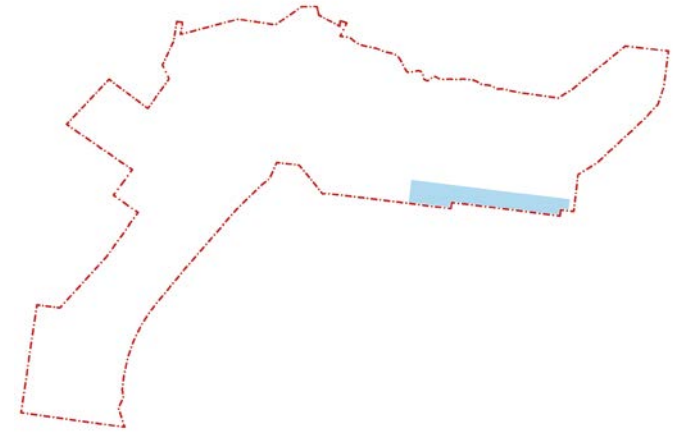
## 5.6 Precinct 6: East of Wesley Street, South of Main Hurstbridge Road

### Preferred Character

*Although there will be mix of land uses in this area, including offices and professional/medical services, the buildings will remain residential in appearance because of their form, heights and setbacks. When viewed from Main Hurstbridge Road, there will be a strong presence of native vegetation including, trees, shrubs and grasses located in the front and rear gardens.*

### Objectives

- To encourage development that integrates with the existing residential character of the area.
- To encourage more intensive development to provide increased floor-space and efficient use of land.
- To encourage new development to present a predominantly residential appearance in respect to form, heights, set-backs streetscape and landscape.
- To create a strong presence of indigenous vegetation on the main road.
- To protect and enhance the amenity within the activity centre and surrounding established residential neighbourhoods.





**Strategies**

- Encourage a mix of activities including higher density housing, office development and medical services along the Main Road frontage.
- Ensure redevelopment responds to the existing low-scale residential character to the south.
- Upgrade streets to provide footpaths along the Main Hurstbridge Road edge and provide protection to pedestrians.

**Design Guidelines**

- Buildings fronting Main Hurstbridge Road should:
  - Provide a 5.5m landscaped front setback.
  - Encourage an active street frontage at ground level.
  - Be designed to provide natural surveillance by addressing the street and overlooking the public realm.
  - Include building articulation to create a visually interesting development.
  - Locate the main building entrance on the street frontage, so that it is visible and easily recognised and provide access paths to building entrances.
- Buildings should be designed with a predominantly residential appearance with front side and rear setbacks to allow for substantial landscaping.

- Buildings should transition in height and scale downwards to the residential hinterland to the south.
- Landscaping in the front, side and rear setbacks should include indigenous grasses, shrubs, substantial trees and sufficient permeable surface to ensure plant growth. Car-parking should be provided in a basement or to the rear of the buildings to reduce their visual prominence.
- The number of driveway cross-overs should be minimised to improve footpath safety and opportunities for on-street parking.

Refer to the General Guidelines at Section 6.0 for interface setback requirements.



### LEGEND

- PRECINCT 6 AREA
- 3 STOREYS WITH 3M UPPER LEVEL SETBACK ABOVE FIRST FLOOR
- 4 STOREYS WITH 3M UPPER LEVEL SETBACK ABOVE FIRST FLOOR
- CONSISTENT STREET WALL WITH 5.5M FRONT SETBACK
- ..... LANDSCAPE SETBACK
- ACTIVE EDGES
- DIRECT RESIDENTIAL INTERFACE
- RESIDENTIAL STREET INTERFACE
- INTRODUCE FLASHING PEDESTRIAN LIGHTS

Figure 18. Precinct 6 Plan

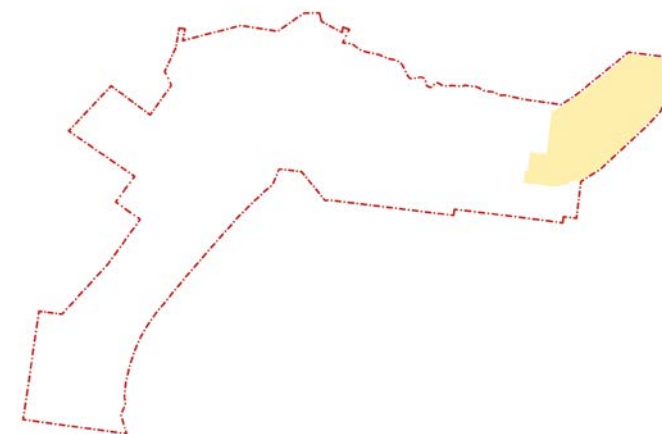
## 5.7 Precinct 7: Schools and Recreation

### Preferred Character

*The recreational and school facilities in this area provide a strong focus for the local community. Buildings will be sited amongst the grounds of the school, in clusters, and designed with articulation on each visible façade. The landscaping on the edge of these sites will reflect and complement the strong native landscaping theme established along Main Hurstbridge Road. This will provide a highly distinct and attractive entrance to the Diamond Creek township from the east.*

### Objectives

- To consolidate and strengthen the range of educational, sporting and community activities.
- To encourage innovative and contemporary design forms that represent the local character of Diamond Creek and contribute to the sense of community in this area.
- To enhance the strong native vegetation theme of this part of Main Hurstbridge Road, as the defining feature of the eastern entrance to the township.
- To improve the access for pedestrians and cyclists in the precinct linking the recreational and school facilities to the north and the town centre in particular.



## Strategies

- Develop access to the precinct to link it with residential area to the north and east and to the town centre, in particular through shared pedestrian/cycle paths over the rail line.
- Plan for additional leisure, performing art and other complementary educational and community activities.
- Strengthen the landscape character along Main Hurstbridge Road through the provision of mature trees and planting within the streetscape and public realm.

## Design Guidelines

- Buildings should present articulated façades to the public realm.
- Buildings should be designed in contemporary architectural styles and include innovative responses that build on the local character of the area and complement the existing buildings.

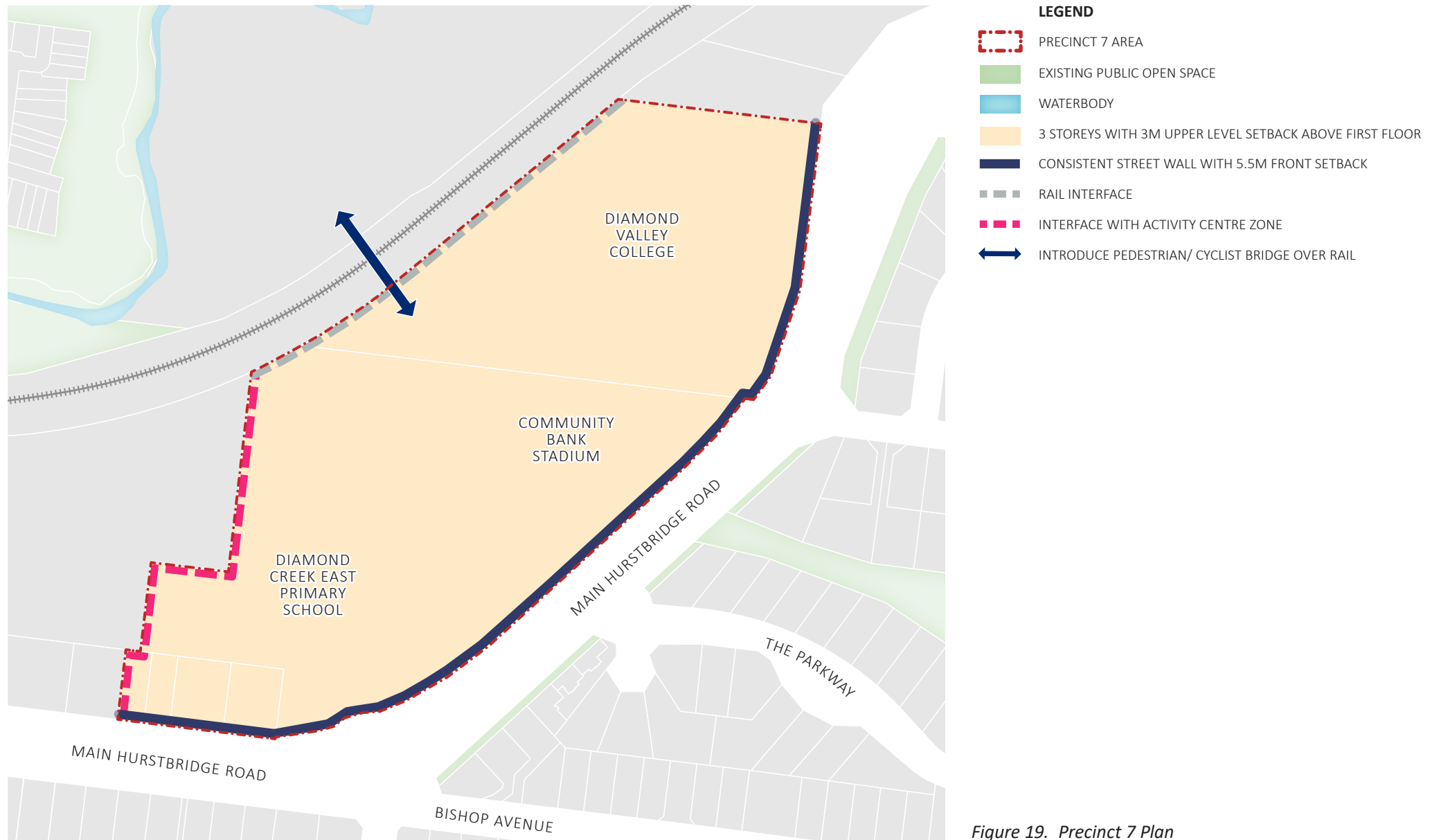


Figure 19. Precinct 7 Plan

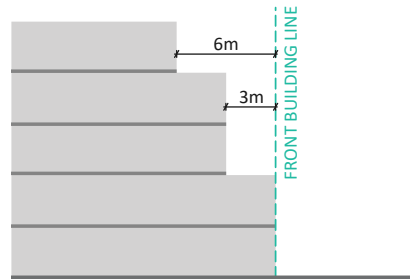
## 6.0 General Design Guidelines

The following built form guidelines provide the design parameters to achieve the Vision for the Draft Structure Plan, whilst also responding to design constraints associated with the public realm, residential interfaces, overshadowing and amenity.

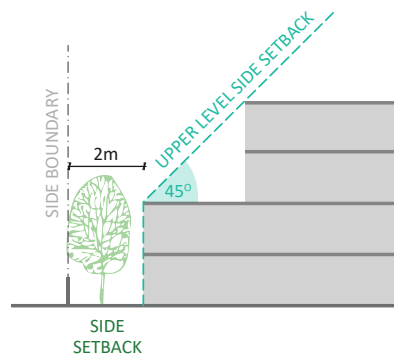
Apply the following design guidelines to development within the activity centre:

1. Building heights should not exceed the height specified in the precinct plans.
2. Development should include a front setback as specified in the precinct plans.

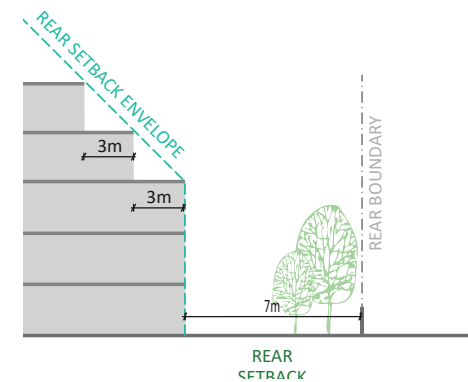
3. Any part of the building above 2 storeys should be:
  - Setback at least 3 metres from the front building line. Above 4 storeys the building should be setback a further 3 metres.



- Setback beyond a 45 degree plane from the sides of the level below (Precinct 6 and properties fronting Inglis Street only).

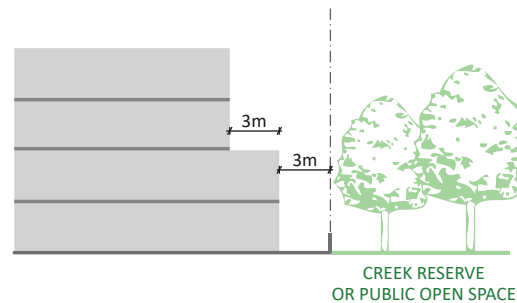


4. Rear setbacks to direct residential zones should be designed to manage visual bulk and overshadowing impacts to adjacent residential properties by:
  - Applying a 7m rear landscape setback; and
  - Apply a 1m setback for every metre of height over 10.9m.



5. Rear setbacks to other zones above the street wall should be:
- 4.5m from the common boundary, where a habitable room window or balcony is proposed;
  - or
  - 3.0m from the common boundary where a commercial or non-habitable window is proposed.

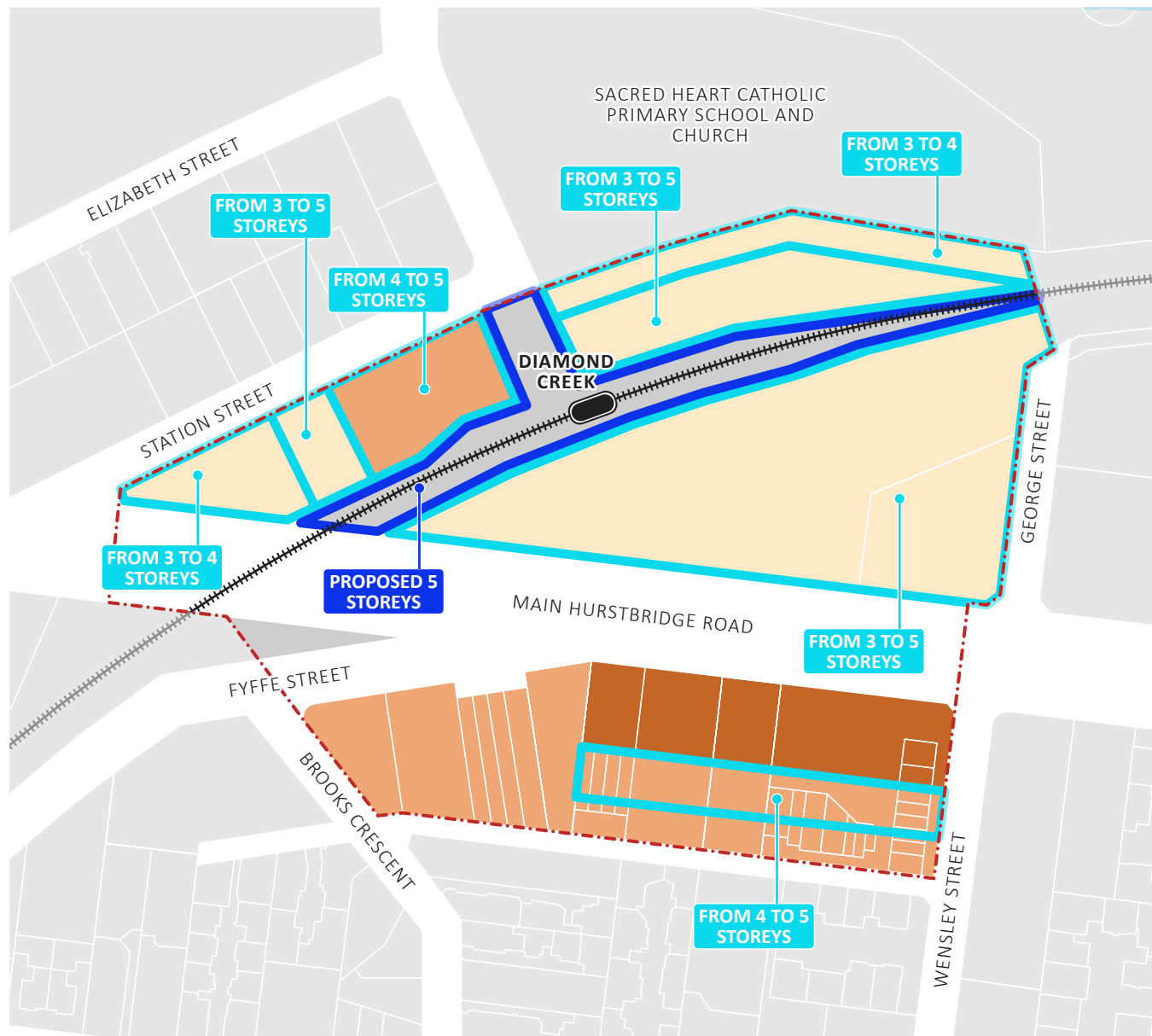
6. Development on lots directly interfacing with Diamond Creek Reserve and open space should:
- Be designed to address the creek reserve with entries, windows and balconies.
  - Provide a 4 metre upper level setback above the street wall to the creek/open space.
  - Include a 3 metre landscaped setback from the property boundary facing the creek.
  - Incorporate a low, visually permeable fence to clearly define the public realm while retaining the potential for visual interaction.



**DRAFT**

**Appendix A:  
Existing and Proposed  
Height Differences**





## Precinct 4: Retail Core

### LEGEND







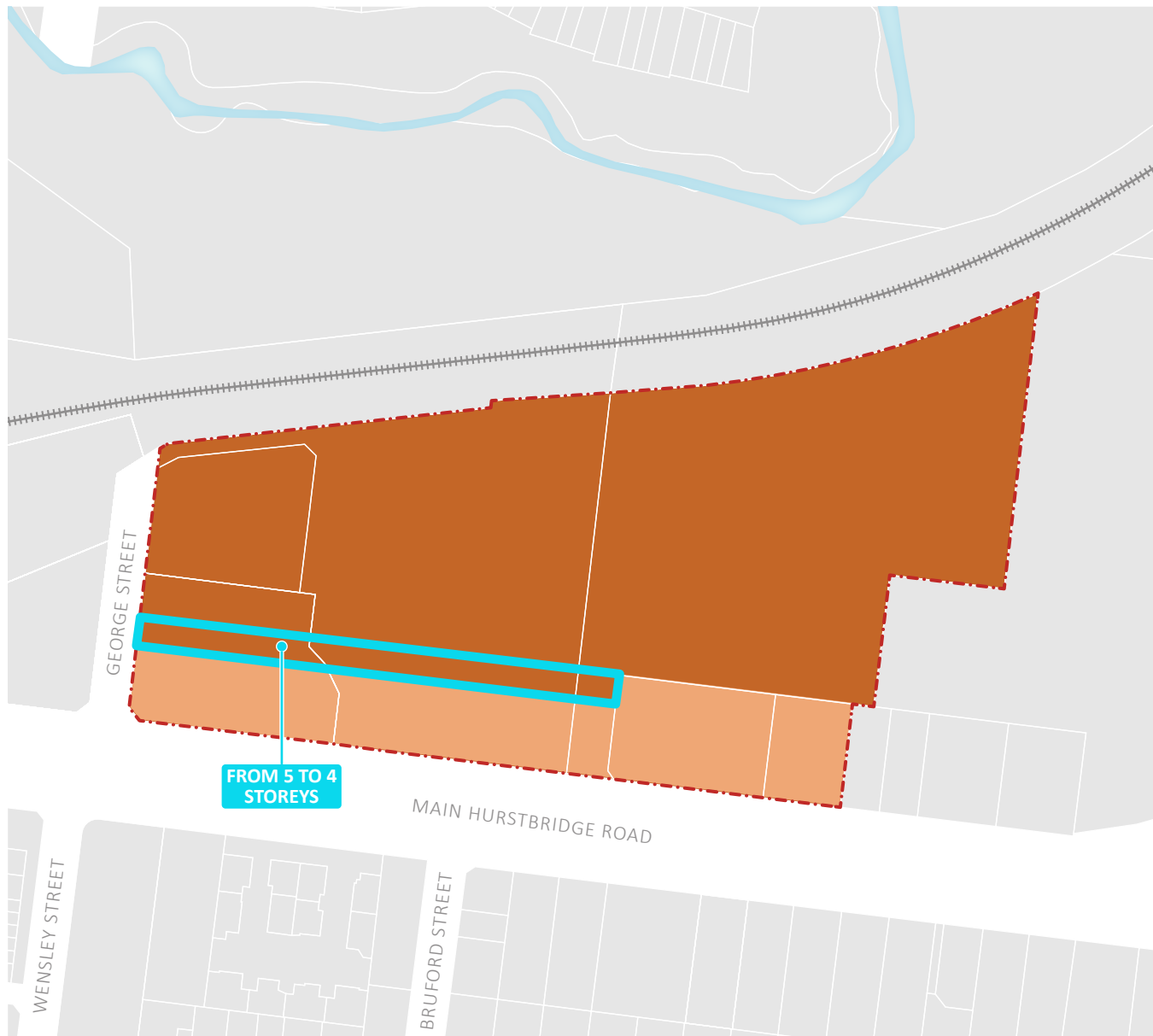
-  PRECINCT 4 AREA
-  TRAIN STATION AND RAIL LINE
-  EXISTING MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 4 STOREYS
-  EXISTING MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 5 STOREYS
-  PROPOSED CHANGE TO EXISTING MAXIMUM HEIGHT LIMIT
-  PROPOSED CHANGE TO NO EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Figure 20. Existing and Proposed Height Differences: Precinct 4



## Precinct 5: East of George Street, North of Main Hurstbridge Road

### LEGEND






-  PRECINCT 5 AREA
-  RAIL LINE
-  EXISTING MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 4 STOREYS
-  EXISTING MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 5 STOREYS
-  PROPOSED CHANGE TO EXISTING MAXIMUM HEIGHT LIMIT

Figure 21. Existing and Proposed Height Differences: Precinct 5

## Precinct 6: East of George Street, South of Main Hurstbridge Road

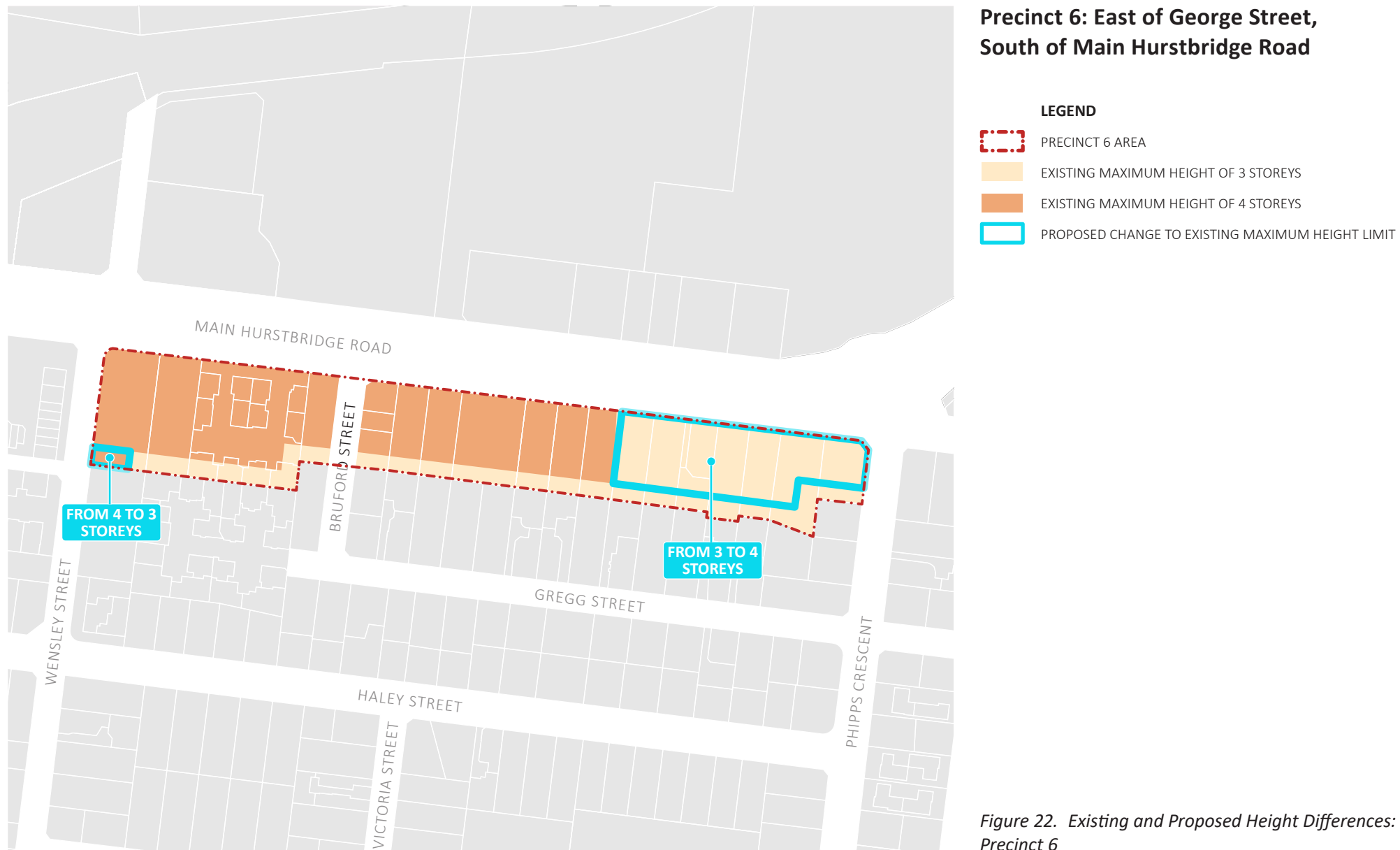


Figure 22. Existing and Proposed Height Differences:  
Precinct 6



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- LEGEND**
-  STUDY AREA
  -  TRAIN STATION AND RAIL LINE
- DIAMOND CREEK MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTRE PRECINCTS**
-  1 CHUTE STREET
  -  2 CREEK-SIDE OPEN SPACES
  -  3 ELIZABETH STREET / STATION STREET
  -  4 RETAIL CORE
  -  5 EAST OF GEORGE STREET, NORTH OF MAIN HURSTBRIDGE ROAD
  -  6 EAST OF GEORGE STREET, SOUTH OF MAIN HURSTBRIDGE ROAD
  -  7 SCHOOLS AND RECREATION

Figure 1. Study Area and Sub-Precincts