

West End Action Plan

November 2017





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This report has been prepared by the Revitalising Central Geelong Partnership in association with Design Urban and Town Matters Pty Ltd.



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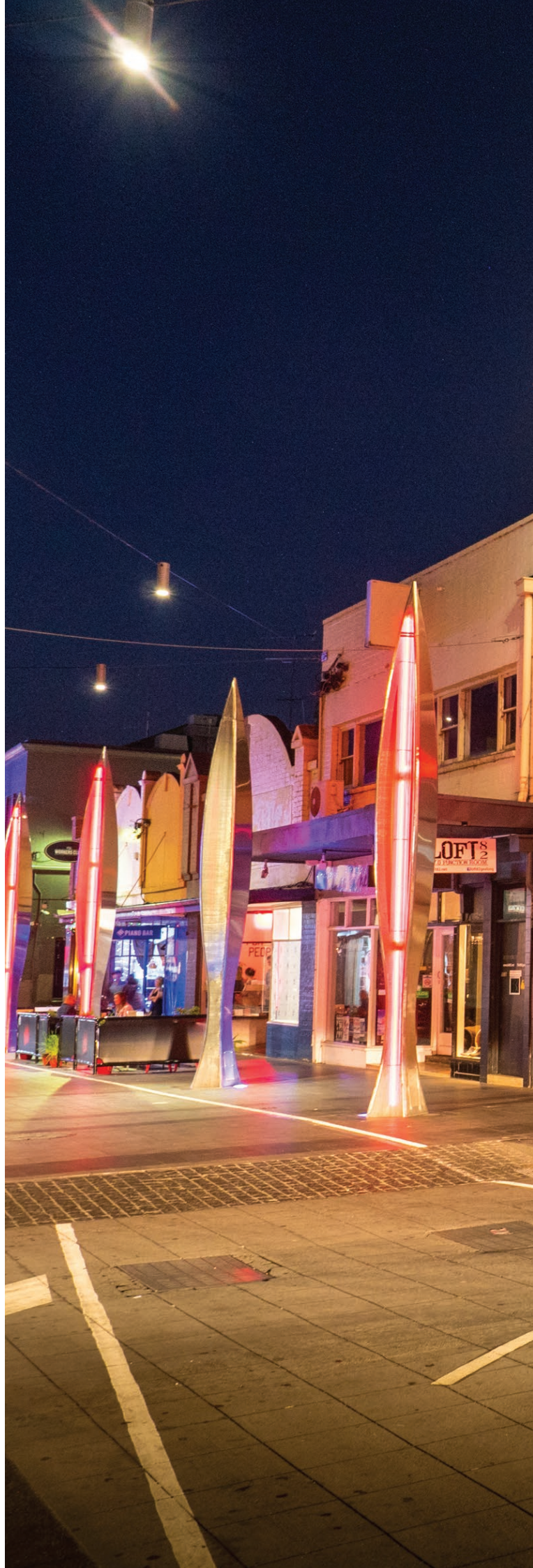
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Mahony
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DENNY'S

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Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan

The City of Greater Geelong and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning are working together as the Revitalising Central Geelong Partnership Team, with strategic and technical advice from the Geelong Authority, to plan and deliver projects identified in the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan.

The Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan is a ten-year plan designed to deliver new jobs, homes and services to revitalise Geelong.

The Action Plan's Smart City initiative proposes a stronger integration and greater diversity of health, education and cultural land uses. To deliver on this outcome, the Action Plan recognises the need for a masterplan to achieve an integrated design outcome for facilities within the cultural precinct.

West End Action Plan

Research into the best communities in the world show they are:

- Connected
- Prosperous
- Creative
- Sustainable
- Designed for people

The West End Action Plan has been developed to guide projects and works within the Malop/ Gheringhap/Ryrie/Moorabool streets block in central Geelong. It will complement other projects that relate to priority renewal areas in central Geelong, including the Green Spine, the Geelong Station, the Arts and Cultural Precinct and Johnstone Park.

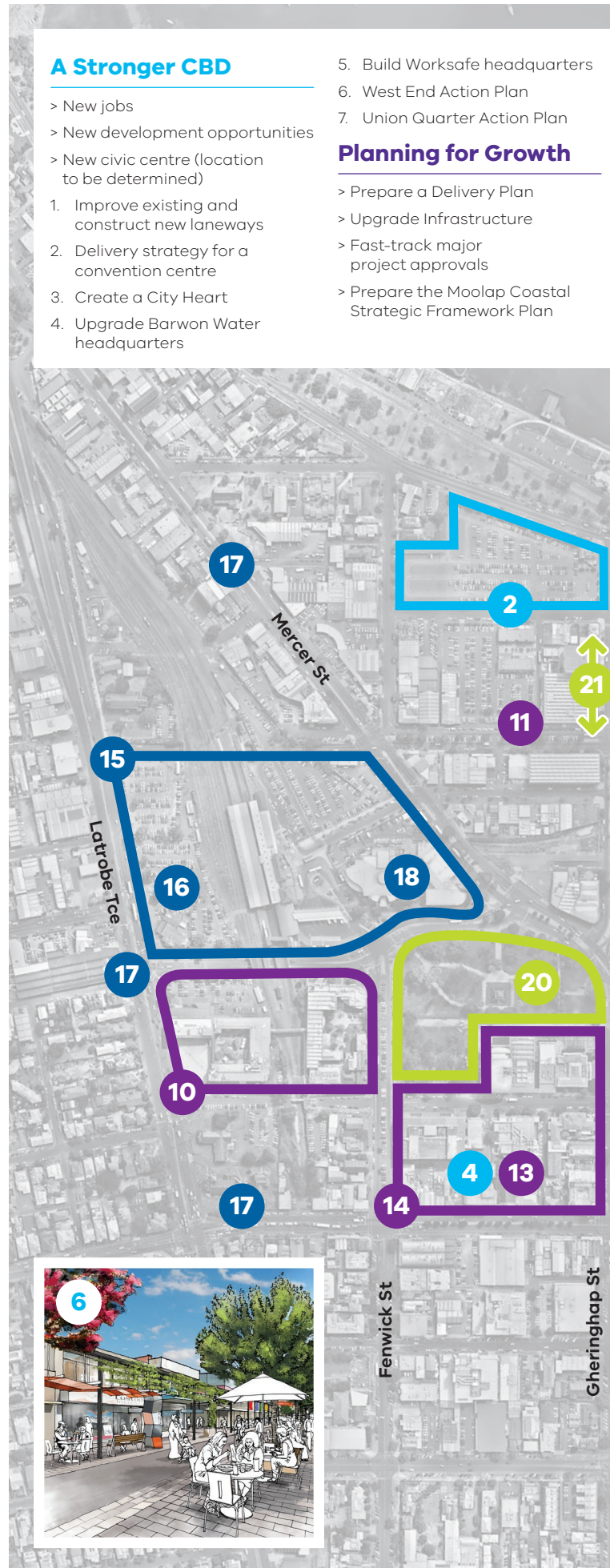
A Stronger CBD

- > New jobs
- > New development opportunities
- > New civic centre (location to be determined)
 1. Improve existing and construct new laneways
 2. Delivery strategy for a convention centre
 3. Create a City Heart
 4. Upgrade Barwon Water headquarters

5. Build Worksafe headquarters
6. West End Action Plan
7. Union Quarter Action Plan

Planning for Growth

- > Prepare a Delivery Plan
- > Upgrade Infrastructure
 - > Fast-track major project approvals
 - > Prepare the Moolap Coastal Strategic Framework Plan



Inhabiting the City

- > Support delivery of city housing
- > Plan for community infrastructure
- > Host events
- 8. Construct the Royal Geelong Yacht Club safe harbour
- 9. Construct upgrade of Kardinia Park stadium

Smart City

- 10. Construct the Geelong Tech School
- 11. Support delivery of student housing
- 12. Plan for expansion of health and education facilities
- 13. Construct upgrade of Geelong Performing Arts Centre
- 14. Plan for cultural precinct

Getting Around

- > Finalise an operating plan for the Transport Network
- > Prepare a city parking strategy
- 15. Revitalise the Geelong Station Precinct
- 16. Develop a commuter parking strategy
- 17. Highlight city arrival points
- 18. Identify long term needs of Department of Justice and Victoria Police

Green Spine

- 19. Construct Green Spine Stage 1 (Moorabool to Yarra)
- 20. Construct an integrated public space and water management project in Johnstone Park
- 21. Plan for improved linkages between the city and waterfront



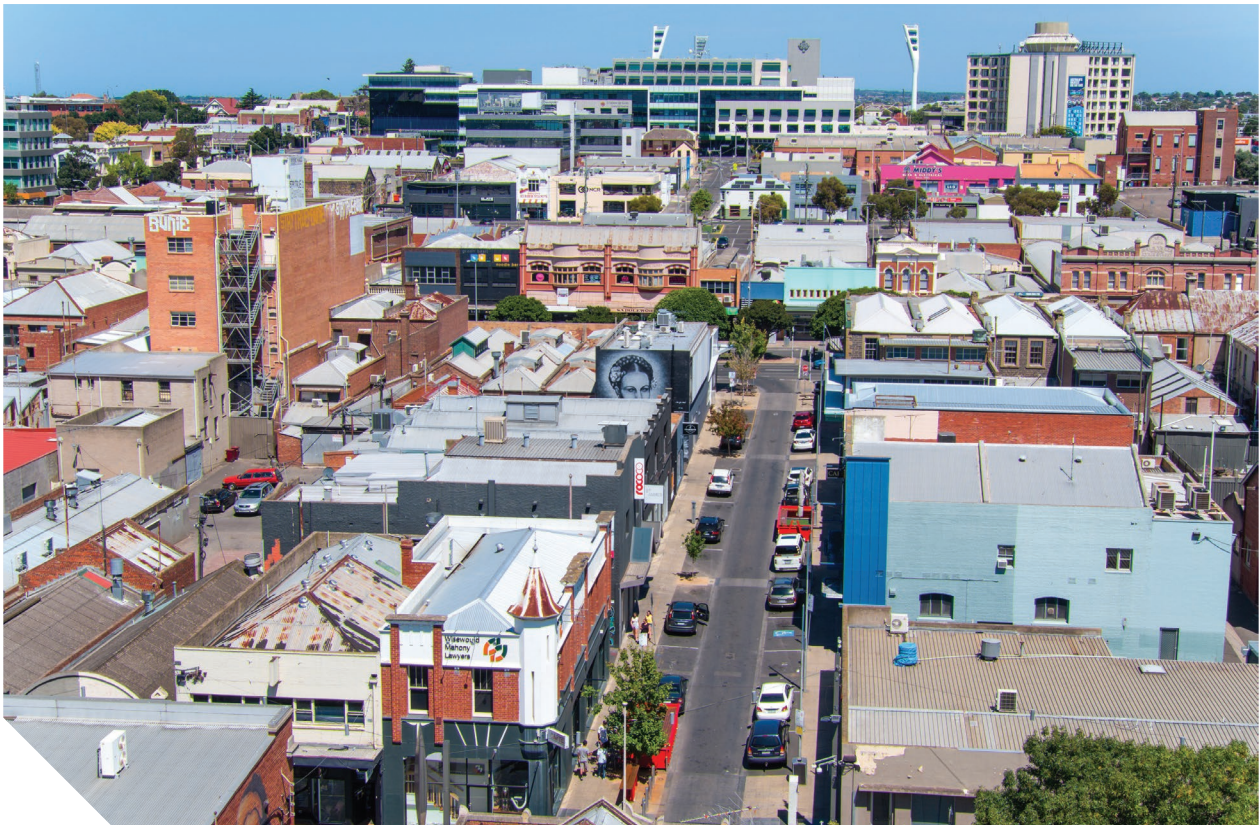
Issues and Opportunities

The West End Action Plan responds to key issues and opportunities for the precinct identified through consultation with stakeholders.

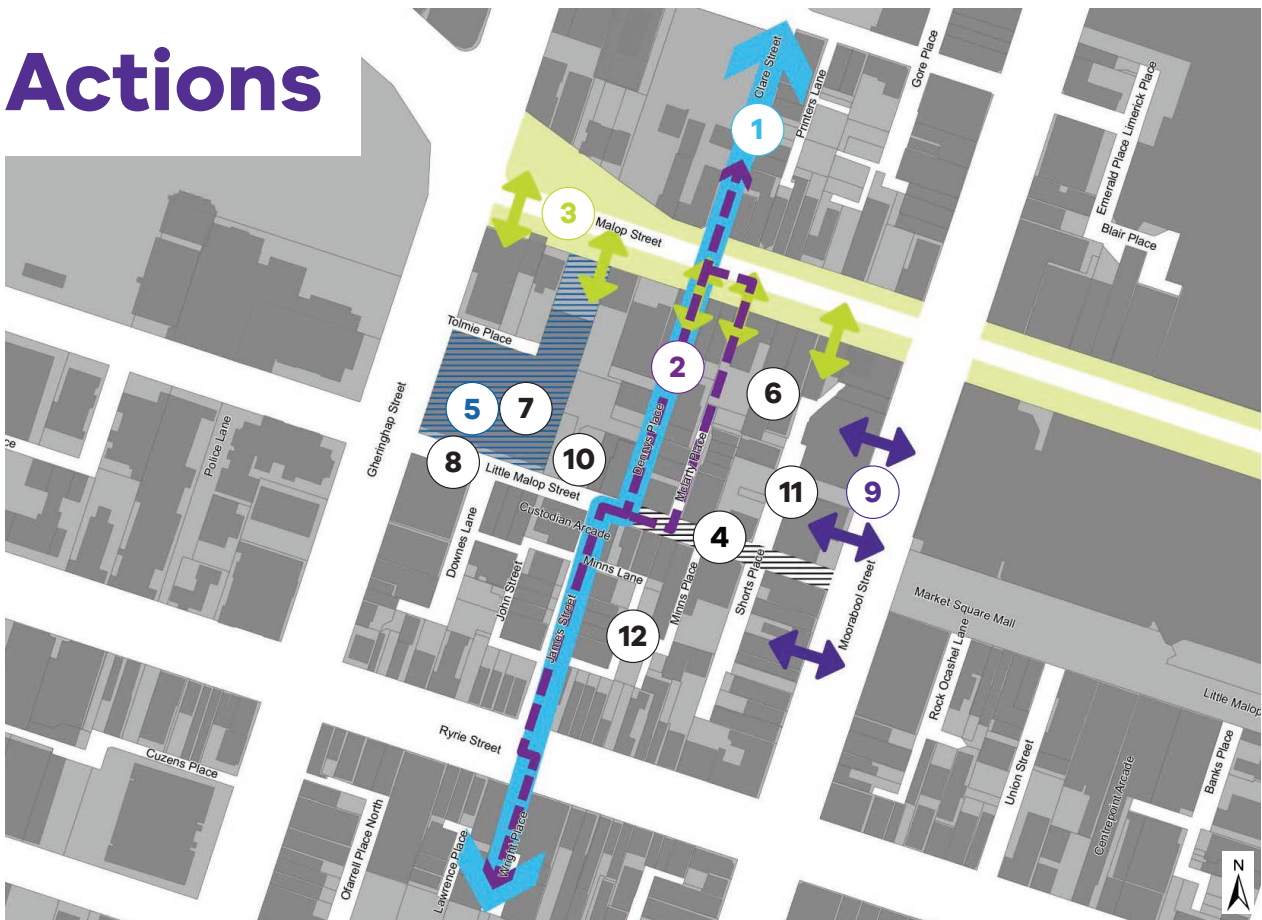
- Investigate opportunities for modified entry/exit at the Civic Centre Car Park, including 24/7 access and pay-as-you-leave capability
- Investigate opportunities to redevelop the Civic Centre Car Park with mixed uses after car parking structures have been built elsewhere
- Investigate creating plaza space closed to traffic
- Investigate opportunities for improved connectivity to the north and waterfront
- Investigate opportunities for resolving issues associated with bus interchange
- Investigate opportunities for limiting traffic access to Little Malop Street to essential vehicles only.

Additional opportunities include:

- Improve the look and feel of laneways
- Encourage more housing
- Protect and celebrate significant heritage buildings and investigate a restoration program
- Encourage green roofs and walls in new developments and incorporate green urban landscape where possible
- Develop an urban art theme that can potentially be integrated with a wayfinding system across the CBD
- Investigate innovative waste management systems.



Actions



1. Link to the waterfront

Provide an efficient connection from the precinct to the waterfront.

2. Make new connections

Link Lt Malop Street to Malop Street by connecting along Denny's Place and/or McLarty Place.

3. Connect to the Green Spine

Provide connections to the Green Spine and support with pedestrian crossings.

4. Create a new plaza

Create a shared zone between Shorts Place and Moorabool Street.

5. Provide parking options

In the short term, investigate the feasibility of 24-hour parking within the Civic Carpark. In the long term, as more parking options become available within the city, consider redeveloping the Civic Carpark site for a mix of public parking, retail and residential uses.

6. Review planning controls

Ensure the planning scheme is aligned with the West End Action Plan. Review the planning controls to protect the fine grain character and street amenity.

7. Increase housing

Support opportunities for new housing to support local business and improve vitality, activity and safety.

8. Support public art

Incorporate art within key public spaces.

9. Improve pedestrian experiences and activity

Activate spaces along Moorabool Street to improve pedestrian experiences and activity and explore options to prioritise pedestrian traffic at pedestrian crossings.

10. 'Greening' the West End

Build on the Laneways project by creating more green space, including green walls, roof gardens and other sustainable design elements.

11. Manage vehicle access

Manage vehicle access associated with new development in a way that prioritises pedestrian movements and street-based activity.

12. Manage waste and recycling

Explore opportunities to consolidate waste storage and disposal associated with existing and new businesses.

The Laneways project

Creating a unique laneway culture for Geelong

A key action of the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan, the Laneways Project is focused on the popular eating and shopping areas of Little Malop Street and adjoining laneways, in the heart of the West End Precinct. Building on private sector investments, the project will deliver enhanced streetscapes with:

- Additional trees and plantings
- Public art
- New paving surfaces
- Street furniture
- Improved lighting

This project will encourage additional business investment and attract more people to dine, shop and explore the unique laneways of the precinct.



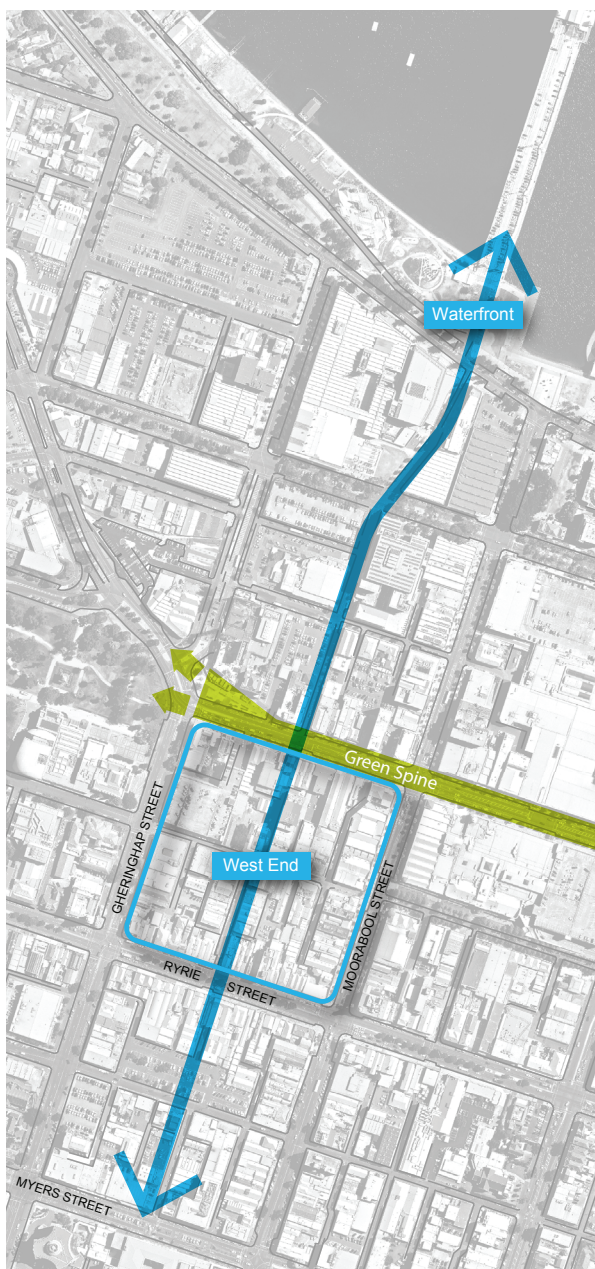


Action 1: Link to the waterfront

A new connection between Little Malop and Malop Streets will greatly improve links between central Geelong and the western end of the Geelong waterfront. This improves commercial feasibility of businesses established along the link.

Next steps

- Develop a wayfinding strategy to connect the West End to the waterfront.
- Create visual cues linking the West End to the waterfront through art, landscaping and lighting.



Action 2: Make new connections

Central Geelong has a clear rectangular grid layout with wide major streets bisected by smaller mid-block streets and service lanes. These smaller streets provide vital connections to properties facing major streets.

While the major street network provides good overall connectivity, the little street system lacks north-south links to operate effectively.

The benefits of providing a direct link between Little Malop and Malop Streets via either Dennys Place and/or McLarty Place are:

- Providing ease of access from Malop Street to food, beverage and retail outlets focused on Little Malop Street and surrounding laneways.
- Creating further reaching pedestrian focused connections between West End and the waterfront to the north and medical precinct to the south.
- Improving options for moving around the city.
- Adding to experiences and vitality of the Green Spine by providing direct connections to it.

For Dennys Place, a connection would be optimised through activation of existing blank walls that face the street.

Next steps

- The 2017/18 Victorian Budget allocates \$2.7 million to deliver priority laneway connections to the Green Spine.

Action 3: Connect to the Green Spine

The Green Spine project will transform Malop Street into a vibrant street and linear park, connecting from Johnstone Park to Eastern Park.

The project will deliver more trees and green spaces to the heart of the city, transforming it into an attractive and inviting place.

Direct connections between the West End and the Green Spine will provide 'hot spots' of potential pedestrian traffic and activity at intersections. This creates opportunities for more street-based activities, including alfresco dining, which improve the overall attractiveness and commercial viability of businesses operating along these connections.

Next steps

- Ensure Green Spine design reflects 'hot spot' locations.
- Ensure visibility from laneways allows for sight lines to Green Spine.

Action 4: Create a new plaza

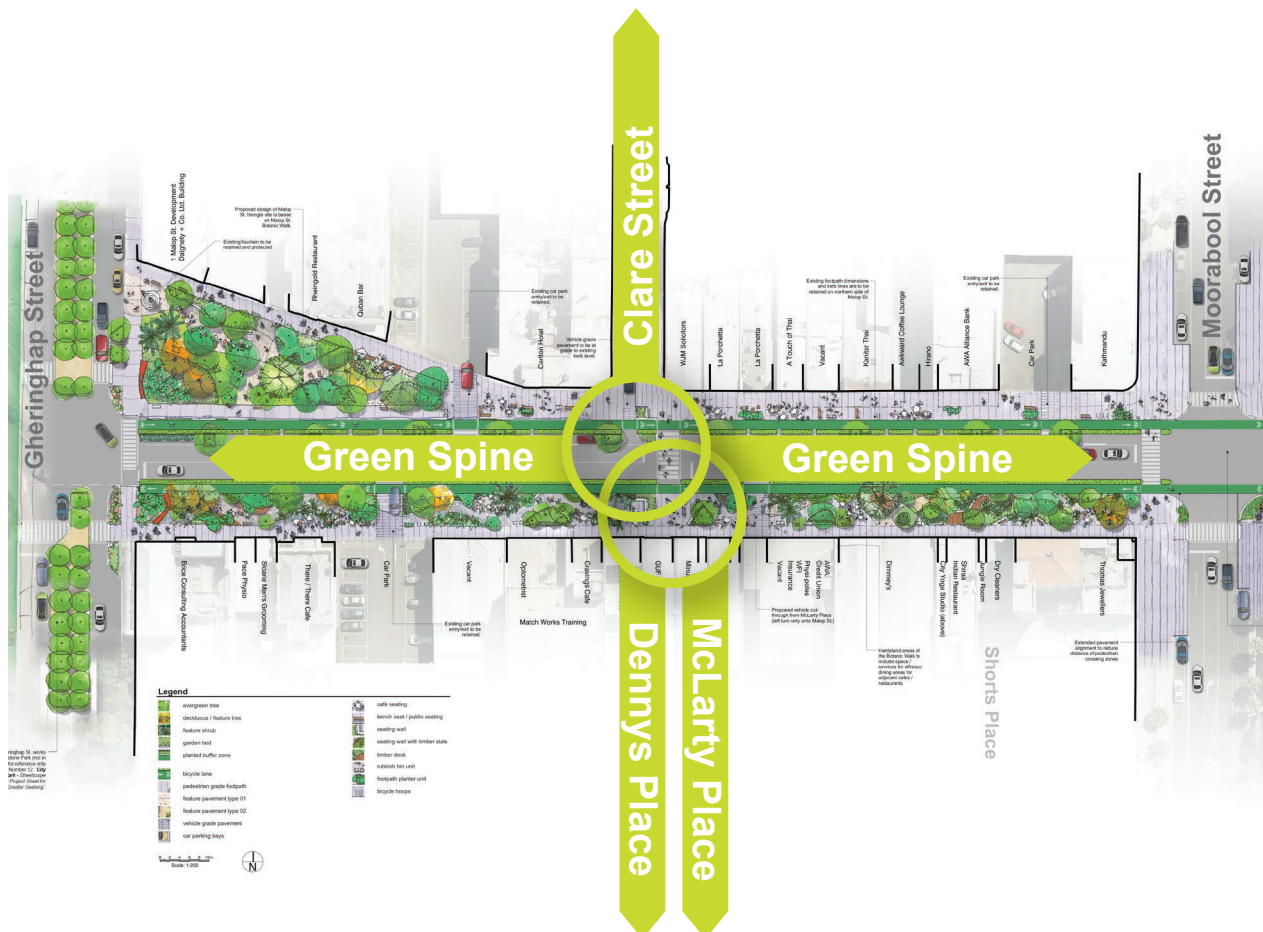
A central space in Little Malop Street between Dennys Place and Moorabool Street will provide a new and distinctive setting for cultural events and alfresco dining.

This plaza will operate as a shared space to enable continued vehicle access to properties along Dennys Place, McLarty Place, Minns Place, and Shorts Place.

Creating additional outlets from the precinct onto Moorabool and Malop Streets would sever pedestrian priority routes at key entrances into the precinct, and is not recommended.

Next steps

- Update the Laneways project to deliver a plaza with high quality surfacing that can be utilised as a shared space.





Action 5: Provide parking options

There is a limited availability of short-term on-street parking in the West End. In addition, longer term parking is available in the Civic Centre Car Park on a “pay and display” basis.

Hours of operation of the Civic Centre Car Park are restricted and local traders have confirmed a preference for hours to be extended to a 24-hour, pay-as-you-leave system. New infrastructure is required to achieve this outcome.

In the longer term, resolution of a city-wide parking strategy, with increased parking options spread across central Geelong, will create an opportunity to develop the Civic Centre Car Park. One option is to transform the site into a high quality, mixed use building, including car parking, that is designed to better integrate with a high amenity precinct.

With improved city parking options, on-street parking within the West End may be reduced to further prioritise spaces for pedestrians.

Next steps

- Explore the business case to extend the operating hours and implement a pay-as-you-leave system at the Civic Centre Car Park.
- Complete the Central Geelong Car Parking Strategy.

Action 6: Review planning controls

Central Geelong has a particular character derived from its historically low rise buildings, wide ‘big’ streets and narrow ‘little’ streets. Recent development is delivering a new urban form, including taller commercial and residential towers. Going forward, it is important that the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme is equipped to manage new use and development in a way that protects the valued character and street amenity of central Geelong.

All land in the West End is included in the Activity Centre Zone (ACZ) Schedule 1, sub-precinct 1A (core retail). The ACZ includes objectives for land use, built form, views, public realm, accessibility and movement, land configuration and urban design.

For the core retail precinct, the ACZ sets a preferred maximum street wall height of 20 metres and a preferred maximum building height of 32 metres. However implementation of these controls may lead to unintended negative impacts on street quality and amenity through lost solar access and out of context built form.

Applying a building height to street width ratio of 1:1 in pedestrian priority ‘little’ streets would assist in maintaining their human-scaled character and opportunities for access to direct sunlight. This would translate to a reduction in preferred street wall height from 20 metres to 10 metres, however would be more in keeping with the proportion achieved by many of the existing heritage and other buildings in the precinct.

In broader, ‘big’ streets (30 metres wide), a building height to street width ratio of 1:2 would allow a more generous street wall height of approximately 15 metres.

These potential changes to the ACZ need to be further explored to confirm their suitability across other precincts in central Geelong.

Next steps

- A comprehensive review of the ACZ will be initiated in 2017.

Action 7: Increase housing

The Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan supports new development that will deliver more housing in central Geelong. More people living in central Geelong will add to the vibrancy of the city, create a safer place and improve economic activity and prosperity.

Action 5 identified that a future redevelopment of the Civic Centre Car Park will provide a significant opportunity for a new mixed use building, comprising ground floor retail spaces with active street fronts, public car parking and new housing.

The precinct contains many other opportunities for new housing that will add to the activation and vibrancy of the precinct.

Next steps

- Explore opportunities for shop top housing above finer grain development and consolidation of larger development sites for apartments.
- Explore opportunities for housing diversity including social housing to encourage continued diversity within the area.

Action 8: Support public art

Murals, sculptures and other forms of public art are an important part of the fabric of central Geelong.

Art can play a key role in creating quality public places, telling local stories and expressing civic pride. The role of art in urban design, place making and spatial activation is also widely recognised for community benefits including increased public safety, an improved sense of community connection, and ownership and care for the civic environment.

Streetscape projects and new developments provide opportunities to add to this catalogue of art works.

The Laneways Project being delivered in 2017 will introduce benches, bike racks, shelter structures, catenary lighting and paving of Little Malop Street. These are opportunities for local artists to be involved to bring a distinctive 'Geelong' character to these elements.

Next steps

- Develop an implementation strategy for roll out of public art within laneways.



Action 9: Improve pedestrian experiences and activity

The location and design of public transport infrastructure in Moorabool Street has a number of negative effects on local traders. The high rate of bus movement has resulted in shops that once opened to Moorabool Street “turning their backs” to the street to manage exhaust fumes and noise.

A Transport and Network Operating Plan is currently being prepared for all modes of transport to make central Geelong a safer, more accessible, and pleasant place. This will include plans for public transport, including bus routes.

More broadly, opportunities to improve public safety in the West End will be examined and implemented alongside city-wide safety initiatives. This includes ensuring public spaces are not only well designed, but are programmed and activated to attract a mix of people.

Next steps

- Complete the Transport Network Operating Plan.
- Investigate reducing the number of buses and time spent idling in the area.
- Investigate on-street activities and functions to improve safety and encourage a mix of people to stay longer in the area and be social.

Action 10: ‘Greening’ the West End

Greening central Geelong has been identified as a priority by stakeholders. This relates to enhanced and increased planting in streets, on walls and on rooftops of buildings, as well as increasing the use of solar power, water capture and re-use opportunities and other environmental solutions.

Future design guidelines for central Geelong should incorporate sustainability standards for all new developments. These can work in conjunction with green initiatives in public realm projects, including tree planting and water capture and management initiatives.

Opportunities for furthering the green roofs/walls initiative, including funding options, are being investigated as part of the Central Geelong Public Open Space Strategy.

Next steps

- As part of the review of the Activity Centre Zone, introduce ‘sustainability standards’ to apply to new development.
- Review opportunities for creating green roof spaces and green walls as part of the Central Geelong Public Open Space Strategy.



Action 11: Manage vehicle access

Building on existing investments, demand for accommodation and business activity is expected to continue to increase in the West End.

To protect the pedestrian focus of little streets and lanes, vehicle access associated with new development needs to be managed in a way that prioritises pedestrian movements and safety.

To maximise opportunities for active street frontages, consideration should be given to meeting car parking demands through off-street developments. Where this is not possible, parking should be consolidated and have minimal footpath crossovers to minimise the impact on pedestrian amenity.

Sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling is to be encouraged through inclusion of high quality start and end of trip facilities in new development (e.g. bicycle parking and showers).

Next steps

- As part of the Central Geelong Car Parking Strategy, encourage:
 - car parking areas that are safe and close to housing
 - garages to be located within a basement/undercroft and the width of the access driveway to be kept to a minimum
 - vehicles to be able to safely exit sites in a forward direction and not compromise pedestrian safety
 - the height of an underground car park ceiling to not exceed one metre above the finished ground floor level
 - garages and car parking structures to be located so that they do not visually dominate the street frontage.

Action 12: Manage waste and recycling

Many laneways in the West End have a large number of commercial bins stored within them. There are currently at least eleven waste and recycling contractors servicing the area from Monday to Friday. This leads to multiple truck movements, street congestion as well as odour problems, dumped rubbish and overflowing bins in the public space.

As part of the upgrading and activation of laneways within the West End, opportunities to consolidate waste storage and disposal are being explored. This will inform an overall resource recovery plan to benefit traders and residents in the precinct and also support the look and feel of the enhanced streetscapes.

Next steps

- Undertake a precinct resource recovery audit and trial to determine specific types and volumes of resources to be recovered from commercial and residential land uses. This will inform the design and implementation of a full waste recovery project to be considered for Central Geelong.



Revitalising Central Geelong

The Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan sets out the Victorian Government's 10 year plan to drive change in Central Geelong. Led by the Minister for Planning, the City of Greater Geelong and the Victorian Government are working together to deliver the plan. Implementation of the Action Plan is overseen by the Revitalising Central Geelong Partnership Team.

The West End Action Plan is one of several projects that are underway. For more information, please visit www.revitalisingcentralgeelong.vic.gov.au

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