

ETHOS URBAN



Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre Concept Plan

Final Report
7 May 2019



Prepared by © ACN Ethos Urban.

CONTACT

Larry Parsons Director LParsons@ethosurban.com +61 3 9419 7226

Reproduction of this document or any part thereof is not permitted without prior written permission of Ethos Urban.

This document has been prepared by:



Larry Parsons 07.05.19

Ethos Urban operates under a Quality Management System that has been certified as complying with ISO 9001:2008. This report has been prepared and reviewed in accordance with that system. If the report is not signed above, it is a preliminary draft.

VERSION NO.	DATE OF ISSUE	REVISION BY	APPROVED BY
1.0 (Final)	07.05.19	-	LP

**ETHOS
URBAN**

ACN 615 087 931 Pty Ltd.
ABN 13 615 087 931 ACN 615 087 931
www.ethosurban.com
Level 8 30 Collins Street
VIC 3000 t +61 3 9419 7226

Contents

0.0	Executive Summary	4
1.0	Introduction	5
2.0	Project Background	7
3.0	Urban Design Review	11
4.0	Planning Controls Review	14
5.0	Transport Review	17
6.0	Infrastructure Review	20
7.0	Economic Assessment	23
8.0	Vision for Watsonia	30
9.0	Design Principles in Response to Vision	31
10.0	Concept Options Analysis	39
11.0	Growth Sequencing	43
12.0	Precinct Concept Plan	48
13.0	Recommendations	58

Executive Summary

Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre will be impacted by the construction of North East Link (NEL) and the vision developed through the 2014 study 'Picture Watsonia' needs updating to ensure opportunities are understood and incorporated. To this end the City of Banyule (Council) and the North East Link Project (NELP) have co-funded this study which is purposely intended as an open investigation of a possible future up until 2035. It is to provide ideas for consideration in the approval of the North East Link (NEL) and Council's longer-term planning of Watsonia. Its recommendations are made by the consultants, with no change at this stage to Council policy nor NELP's reference design.

Watsonia is expected to remain a neighbourhood centre, providing local retail and services in an increasingly pedestrian-friendly village atmosphere. Residential growth is expected to occur around the Watsonia Road 'high street' and the Station, with a greater diversity of housing serving a gradually changing demographic and a future shift to more shared and active transport options.

The main matters requiring consideration in the final NEL design, and the future development of the centre are as follows:

- Locate the rebuilt Watsonia Road access from Greensborough Road (and its associated decking of NEL) as far south as possible to incorporate the southern commercial properties within the 'high street'.
- Locate the Station access decking directly aligned with the powerlines reserve (rather than at Elder Street) to complete the continuous 'green corridor' as a main structuring element and shared trail, potentially establishing local street links from the east to Watsonia Road.
- Engineer the associated roads as tightly as possible to favour pedestrian and development space, with the new Greensborough Road treated as an urban arterial and not part of the freeway.
- Design the multi-deck Station car park and surrounding land to be later embedded within new mixed-use buildings with active frontages and pedestrian-friendly streets.
- Plan for building above Watsonia Road shop tops and for the gradual redevelopment of the eastern side of Watsonia Road to form an active, two-sided 'high street', with framed views to the eastern horizon.
- Seek the upgrade of Watsonia Station to provide a legible, accessible entry structure and new public space decked across the railway cutting under the powerlines, with future local connections providing for buses and drop-off / pick-up.
- Plan for eventual redevelopment of areas to the east of Greensborough Road, now well-connected to the Station, and as a means of activating the powerlines 'green corridor'.
- Seek the replacement of power pylons within Watsonia with slimmer 'monopoles' and relocate these away from the central public areas between Greensborough Road, the Station and the RSL in Morwell Avenue.
- Develop active public spaces at the southern end of Morwell Avenue and between the Library and the Station. These require relocation of parking, the pylons and the roundabout, as well as negotiation with the Church and the closure of Ibbottson Street at Watsonia Road.
- Focus Council works on removing intrusive roundabouts, calming traffic, improving pedestrian amenity in Watsonia Road and planting more trees generally.

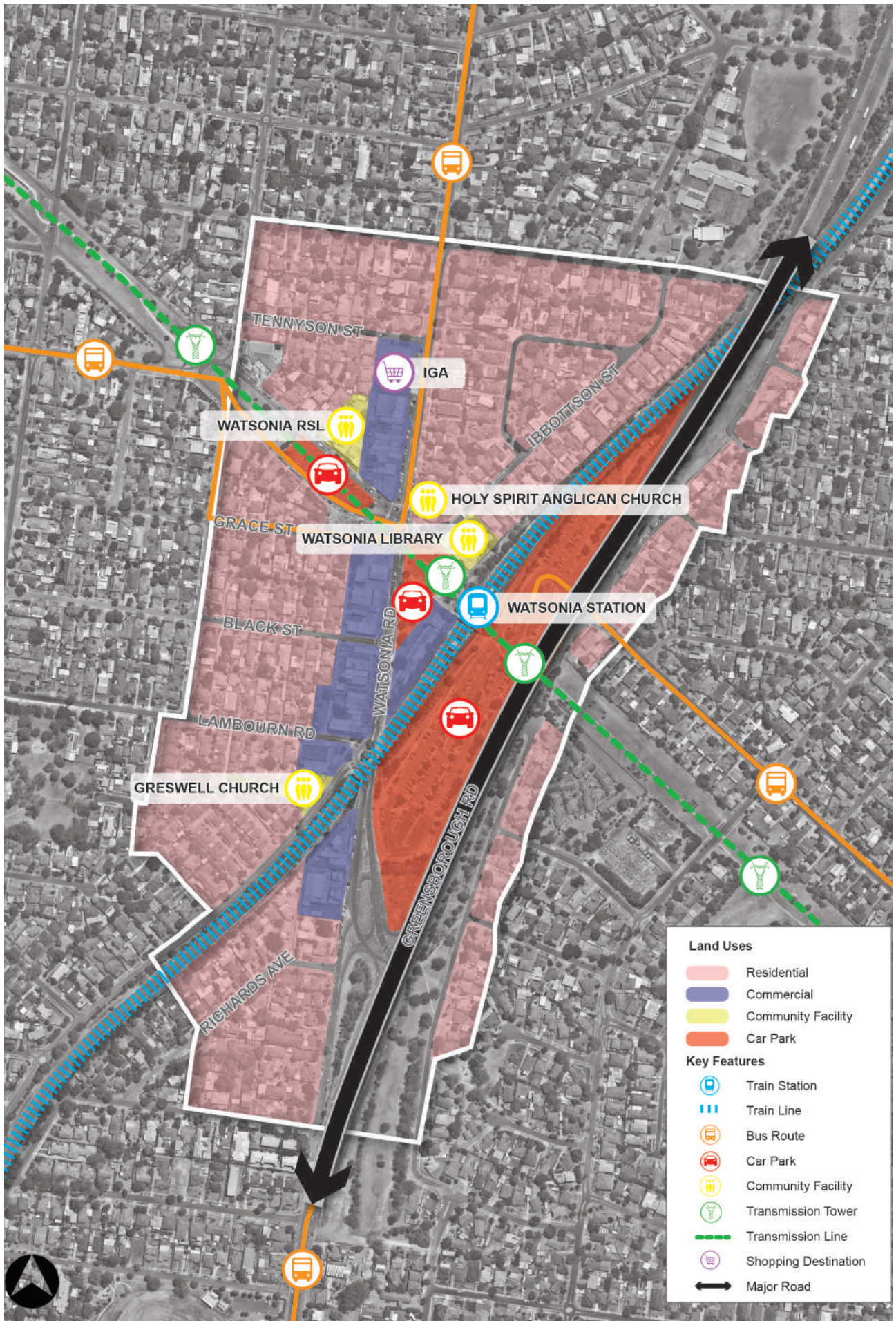
1.0 Introduction



The North East Link (NEL) skirts the Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre. This has prompted a review of the planning of the precinct in order to support a deeper consideration of NEL's potential impacts, both positive and negative. The study, funded jointly by Banyule City Council and the North East Link Project (NELP), is to produce a high-level Precinct Concept Plan for Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre. The work is to respond to proposed opportunities and challenges that may be presented in the context of the North East Link:

- To provide a well-conceived and well-communicated vision and three-dimensional framework for the centre
- To identify key opportunities and enabling infrastructure that may be integrated with the proposed NEL scope of works

As such, the study is not to prepare detailed designs, but rather to explore general development concepts within three timeframes: 2020 (present), 2027 (NELP completion), and 2035 (future). How might the public realm become more amenable and more connected and how might expected built form growth and change support this? The recommendations are informed by joint workshops with Council, NELP and other government agencies, but represent conceptual, forward thinking and are not a formally endorsed position of any of these stakeholders.



01 Existing Context Map

2.0 Project Background



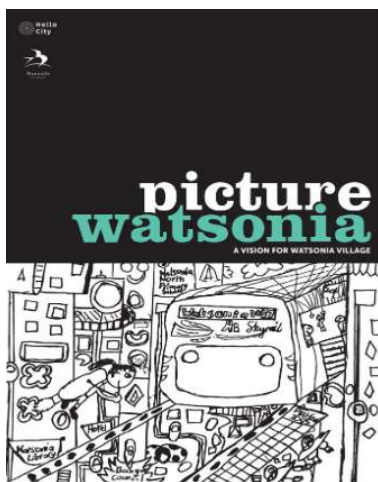
2.1 'Picture Watsonia' Vision

In 2014 Council undertook a comprehensive visioning exercise with the community to identify future directions for the Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre. The outcomes were documented in 'Picture Watsonia' which identifies key challenges:

- Managing growth: recognising that growth is inevitable and has benefits as well as challenges
- Deciding future land uses: coordinating the distinct land owners behind a shared vision
- Creating connections: reducing barriers created by the railway, Greensborough Highway and the power lines
- Balancing pedestrians and cyclists with cars: particularly reviewing intrusive parking and intersection designs
- The pylons: removing the blighting structures in future, or making better use of the land under them

'Picture Watsonia' includes Schematic Concepts which foresee a staged transition to a more connected and lively centre. The proposals are encouragingly forward-thinking and specific for a Vision document:

- Active frontages to both sides of Watsonia Road with higher development set back behind
- Simplified intersections to facilitate pedestrian movement and improved public spaces
- Redevelopment of the station car park with a decked railway line, and including office development
- Creation of public spaces under the power lines, particularly around Watsonia Road and the Station



02 Picture Watsonia 2014 Stage 4 Concept Map

2.2 North East Link Project

North East Link is a proposed new freeway-standard road connection completing the missing link between the M80 Metropolitan Ring Road and the Eastern Freeway. In the vicinity of Watsonia the NEL Reference Design locates the road in an open cutting generally following the alignment of the current Greensborough Highway. There will be no direct access to NEL from Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre with the closest interchanges being at Grimshaw Street 1.4km to the north or Lower Plenty Road over 3km to the south. As such, Greensborough Road is restructured as a district arterial alongside NEL or split either side of it as a one-way system near Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre.

For Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre, this means that vehicle access to Watsonia Road will remain limited to the southern connection to Greensborough Road (to be reconfigured, potentially further north) and from Grimshaw Street in the north. Access to the new station car park is restricted to the Greensborough Road entry near Elder Street and Elder Street, though now potentially crossing NEL on a deck, terminates without providing street access to Watsonia Centre. All of this represents no real change to current vehicle accessibility, although pedestrian and cycle connection at Elder Street, and to a lesser extent the southern connection, should somewhat improve with the proposed grade separation.

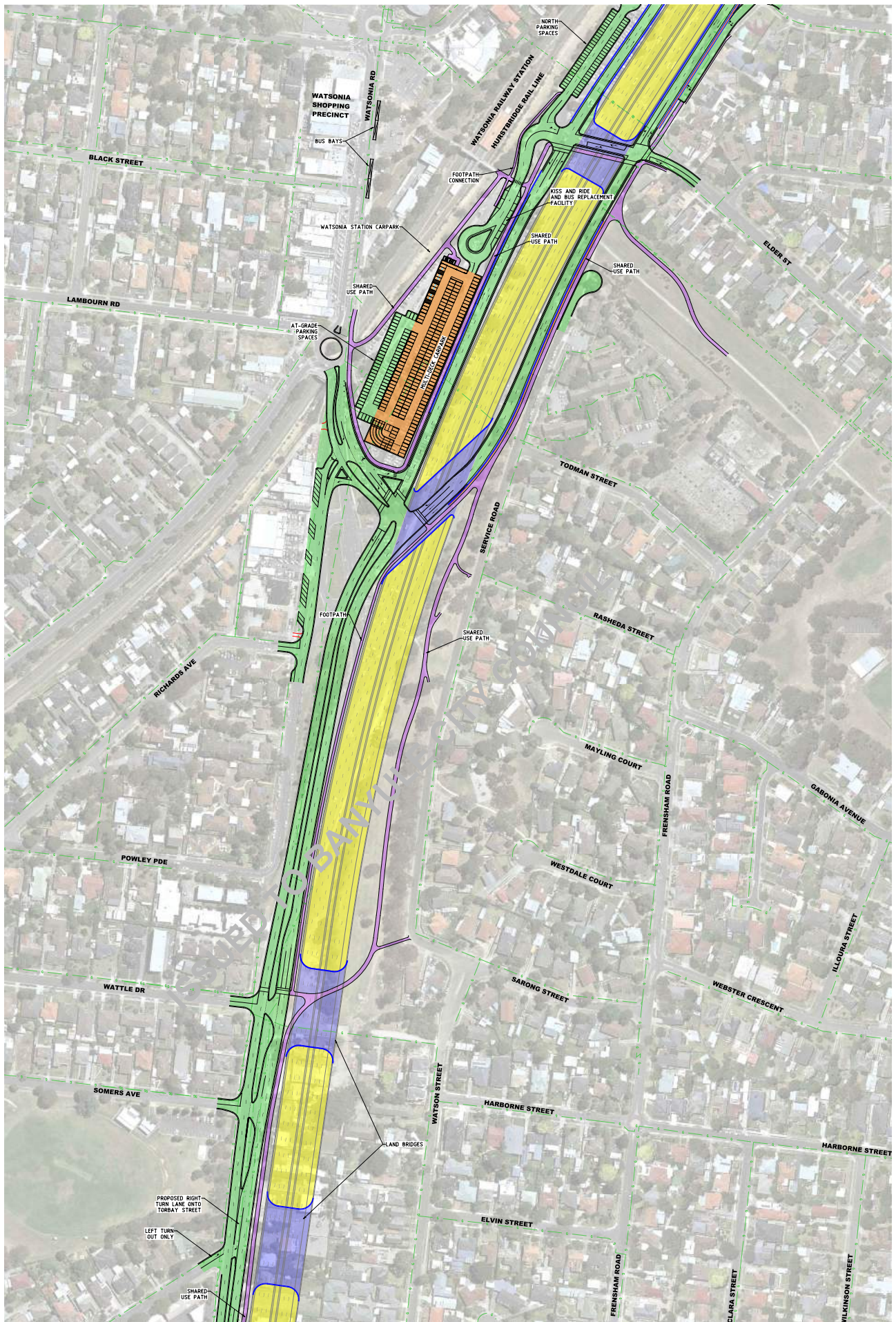
While the Reference Design shows NEL is in a cutting as it passes Watsonia, bridging is limited to short decks, which NELP has indicated should not exceed 60m in length to avoid the need for mechanical ventilation. Therefore, direct interfaces with NEL remain to the east (residential) and the west (station car park) and will require acoustic walls beside the tollway.

The splitting of Greensborough Road (as a district arterial) on either side of the tollway provides for a potential address (if not direct vehicle access) to abutting land but leaves limited physical space for landscaping. As it passes through Watsonia the NEL trench will mostly be bounded by retaining walls rather than landscaped slopes and will therefore have a generally hard urban feel further reinforced by the parallel Greensborough Road carriageways.

Watsonia has recognised growth potential and significant government-controlled land in strategic locations. It is therefore important that NELP does not unduly constrain future development either as built form or public space. This requires flexibility for future access opportunities, which the creation of a local Greensborough Road frontage can support, but also careful consideration of the proposed vehicle entries to Watsonia Road south and the station car park.

Additionally, the shape and location of the land parcels created is critical for their future efficient development and integration. The form of the multi-level car park is admittedly function-driven at this stage, but it should not fragment and sterilise surrounding land. The layout of the southern Watsonia Road access also affects the shape and connection of adjoining land, which should not be seen as left-over space.

In terms of public infrastructure, NEL should consider value capture opportunities. Even if NEL cannot develop adjoining sites and construct all public space and movement connections at this stage, many of which involve third parties, it should foresee potential design requirements to facilitate later implementation.



03 NEL Functional Layout Watsonia

3.0 Urban Design Review

The fundamental weakness of Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre from an urban design perspective is its disconnected structure. Major infrastructure corridors form movement barriers and the one-sided nature of the retail strip discourages a sense of place and integration with the station on the east side.

3.1 Sub-Precincts

Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre is an amenable, village-style centre with a local focus, but at the same time suffers from being relatively dispersed and divided into poorly linked sub-precincts. There are effectively five areas separated from each other by significant infrastructure corridors: the AusNet overhead power lines, the Hurstbridge railway line and the 6-lane Greensborough Road. The strip retail centre along Watsonia Road is separated by roundabouts and segmented into three (north of the power lines, between the lines and the rail bridge, and south of the rail bridge). The Station and its car park form another 'island' and the residential eastern side of Greensborough Road appears to operate relatively separately (Council's December 2018 shopper survey found only 12% of respondents from the east).

3.2 Key Connections

This fractured urban structure places a crucial importance on connection, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, but also for streets as a legible frame for local activity. As noted, the three segments of the retail strip are separated by roundabouts (coinciding with the power lines and the railway), which create a disruption for pedestrians and cyclists, with the on-street cycle lanes terminating at the roundabouts. The rail line itself is only bridged at the Lambourn Road roundabout and via relatively narrow pedestrian bridges at the station and north

at Nell Street (the latter via long switchback ramps). Greensborough Road is similarly only crossable via traffic lights at the Watsonia Road intersection and at Elder Street, or via the above-mentioned pedestrian bridge at Nell Street. None of these crossing points are inviting and are each separated by 400m.

Watsonia Road itself forms something of a barrier to pedestrian movement, in part due to its traffic volume and engineered layout (particularly the roundabouts), but also due to its markedly one-sided activity with all retail (except for the church op shop and the timber yard) being on the western side, limiting incentive to cross and inhibiting integration with the station. While forming a long-distance linear connection, the power lines reserve does not at present enjoy a continuous trail through the centre, which is largely occupied by parking. To the east of Greensborough Road, it is an inhospitable, poorly landscaped space flanked by back fences, noting there is a gas pipeline easement to the north side and a 3m planting height restriction on the rest.

3.3 Public Spaces

Apart from the power lines reserve, public open space within the study area is incidental, almost 'left-over', with no specific role and no real definition. The Watsonia Primary School and associated playing fields are north outside of the study area, and Aminya Reserve is well off to the south-west. 'The station's at-grade car park occupies a huge space but is unattractive with limited planting and few through connections. As this is land VicTrack owned, there is potential for redevelopment.

'Picture Watsonia' noted the need for public space and proposed the use of the power line reserve adjacent to Watsonia Road (at the end of Morwell Avenue) to create a green connecting space by relocating car parking further to the

north-west. This space was envisaged to be complemented by a more formal 'village green' space on the opposite side of Watsonia Road between the Library and the Station, although the presence of the power pylons in this area is visually intrusive and restricts possible planting and uses.

The power lines reserve provides expansive views east and west, and otherwise there is a long-distance view of the Dandenong Ranges from Watsonia Road just south of the timber yard.

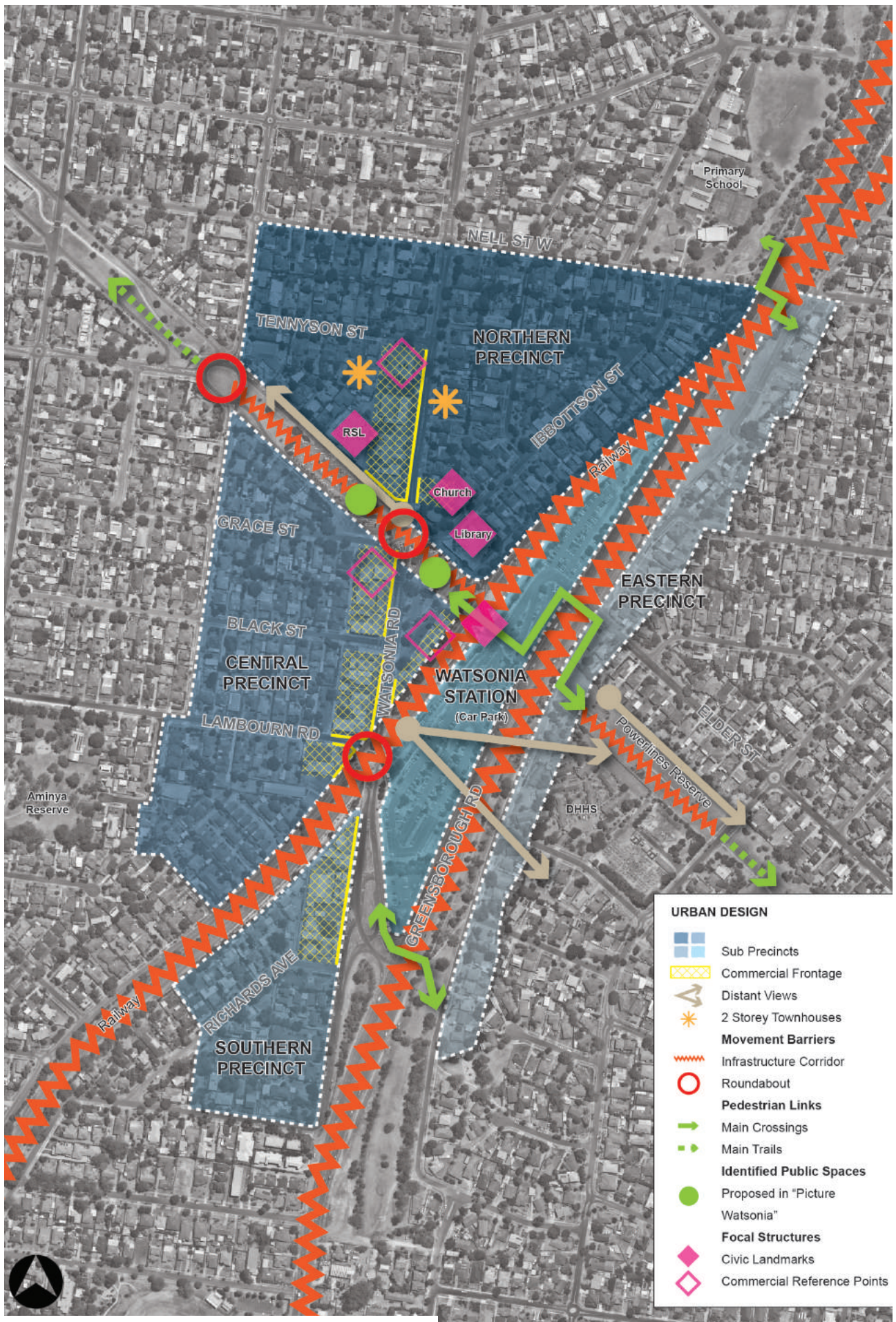
3.4 Built Form Typologies

The retail strip is characterised by individual shops, mostly single-storey, architecturally eclectic and unpretentious, with isolated two-storey 'shop-tops' in a few places. Canopies over the wide footpath provide characteristic weather protection and tables and chairs spill out in places. There is very limited upper level development for offices.

Housing is likewise mostly single-storey with limited examples of two-storey townhouse groups, such as near the IGA supermarket. The proximity to the station, the large lots (often around 600m²) and aged housing stock, create an expectation of future change and increased housing diversity, as already identified in 'Picture Watsonia', however there is no apartment development in the area at present, with one application at 20 Morwell Street.

3.5 Landmarks and Views

The key local landmarks are the RSL, the Watsonia Library and the Anglican Church as well as the Watsonia Station (although hidden in its railway cutting), all of which are clustered around the power lines reserve and its junction with Watsonia Road, the clear heart of Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre. The IGA Supermarket, the BP petrol station and the timber yard are also local reference points, without presenting any architectural merit.



04 Urban Design Review Map

4.0 Planning Controls Review

The primary matters for consideration are the limitations posed by the GRZ zoning in potentially strategic areas close to the centre, and by contrast the lack of built form controls (including height) within the Commercial and Public Use zones.

4.1 General Residential Zone (GRZ1 & GRZ2)

The residential area located north-west of Greensborough Road is zoned GRZ1. The purpose of this zone is to encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth. The maximum allowable building height specified in the zone is 11m or 3 storeys, indicating potential intensification of this residential area, although single dwellings and two-storey townhouses are expected to dominate.

The residential area east of Greensborough Road is zoned GRZ2, which has additional tree planting requirements and density controls of 40% maximum site coverage, in addition to the mandatory garden area provisions of the GRZ. Although the 11m maximum building height still applies, it indicates that this area is less likely to see intense residential growth.

4.2 Commercial Zone (C1Z & C2Z)

The two commercial strips along Watsonia Road, north of Lambourn Road are zoned C1Z. The purpose of the C1Z is to create vibrant mixed-use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses, while allowing for residential uses at densities appropriate to the role and scale of the centre, without specified height or density controls. This implies these strips of commercial land could also accommodate residential uses at upper

levels. Presence at ground level being limited to a 2m – wide entry. Supermarkets require a permit.

The commercial strip south of Devonshire Road is zoned C2Z. The purpose of this zone is to encourage commercial areas for offices, appropriate manufacturing and industries, bulky goods retailing, other retail uses, and associated business and commercial services. Residential uses are prohibited, meaning this area of commercial land can provide for larger and more service-oriented retail, including supermarkets up to 1,800m² NLA (without a use permit).

4.3 Public Use Zone (PUZ4 & PUZ6)

The purpose of the Public Use Zone is to recognise public land use for public utility and community facilities and to provide for associated uses that are consistent with the intent of the public land reservation or purpose. The railway line and the land running parallel to the railway line on the north-west is zoned PUZ4 - Transport. To note is that the 'Rex Paine Timber and Hardware' store is located within the PUZ4.

Located within the PUZ6 – Local Government, is the Watsonia Library and the carpark and public toilet facility located to its south, as well as Watsonia Pre-School. Permits for non-related uses can be considered with the consent of the public land manager.

4.4 Public Park & Recreation Zone (PPRZ)

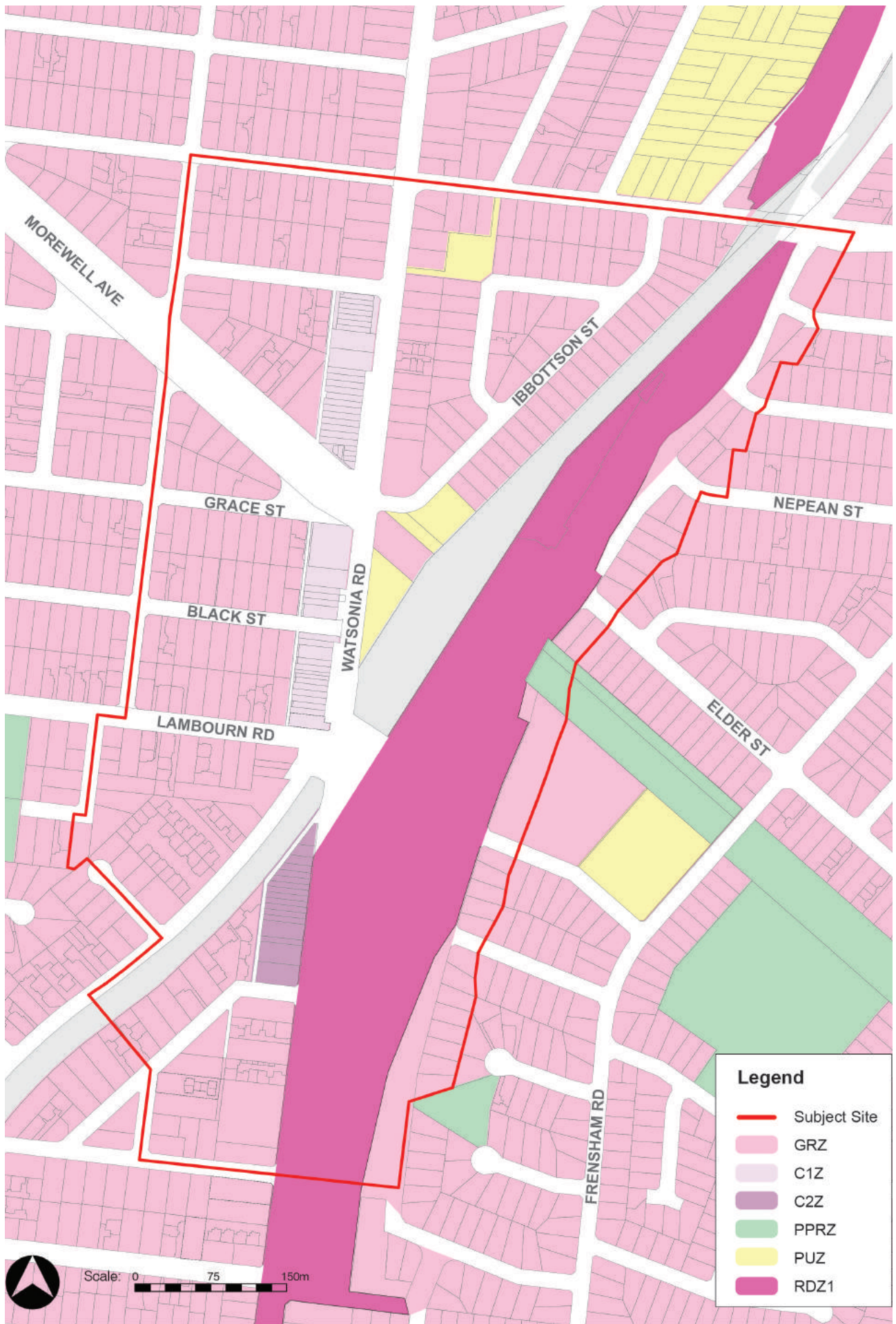
The land located under the transmission lines to the south-east of Greensborough Road is zoned PPRZ. The purpose of this zone is to recognise areas for public recreation and open space and to protect and conserve areas of significance where appropriate. In contrast the transmission lines west of Greensborough Road are zoned GRZ, although not in practice developable as such.

4.5 Road Zone (RDZ1)

The broad Greensborough Road corridor is zoned RDZ1 and requires road manager consent to create vehicle access.

4.6 Overlays

A large majority of the study area is affected by a Vegetation Protection Overlay – Schedule 5 - Substantial Tree Protection Area (VPO5). The purpose of this overlay is to minimise the loss of vegetation to development and to preserve and protect areas of substantial vegetation, particularly those that have wider canopy spread and add to the local identity and character of the area. Small parts of the study area are also affected by an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) and/or a Special Building Overlay (SBO), generally related to flooding.



05 Study Area Planning Zones Map

5.0 Transport Review

5.1 Roads & Traffic

Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre is well connected, with Greensborough Road (which will become the route of NEL) providing good access to Greensborough Major Activity Centre, the M80 Metropolitan Ring Road and the City.

Watsonia Road is a Council Collector Road providing primary access through the centre, carrying in the order of 12,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day. Watsonia Road is intersected with roundabouts by east-west collector roads in Morwell Avenue and Devonshire Road, and by a number of local streets along its length. The alignment of the rail line is such that there is only a single vehicular crossing point, restricting vehicular access from Greensborough Road and residential areas to the east.

The southern intersection arrangement immediately west of the Greensborough Road and Watsonia Road signals is extremely complex in the requirement to provide fully directional access to the Greensborough Road service road to the south and the small car park to the north of the intersection. Further north on Watsonia Road, the current access requirements and the location of the roundabout intersection with Devonshire Road and Lambourn Road above the rail line will restrict any significant improvements, including the provision of a new access to the rail car park.

The five-arm roundabout intersection at Morwell Ave, Grace Street and Ibbottson Street also impacts traffic and pedestrian flow. Council's concept plans show the removal of the roundabout by providing a priority T-intersection with Grace Street and by closing Ibbottson Street to traffic and realigning Morwell Avenue to access Grace Street further west.

5.2 Public Transport

Access to Watsonia Station is provided by a non-DDA compliant ramp off a pedestrian bridge crossing the rail line between Watsonia Road and the station car park. The poor amenity of this access and the lack of a lift to the platform may discourage use by some passengers. The Hurstbridge Line is planned to be upgraded but the project does not currently include a station upgrade.

Watsonia is also accessed via two bus services. The 513 service between Eltham and Glenroy (via Greensborough), provides access from the east via Elder Street, stopping at the Greensborough Road / Watsonia Road intersection and also at Watsonia Station. The 566 service between Lalor and Northland provides access to Watsonia from the west via Morwell Ave and Greenwood Drive and north via Watsonia Road, with stops provided at the Morwell Ave intersection and on Watsonia Road south of Nell Street West. It is understood a review of bus services in the broader area is pending, with consideration of dedicated bus bays on Watsonia Road near the Station.

5.3 Walking & Cycling

Whilst footpaths are provided along both sides of the Watsonia Road retail strip, there is limited access from the south and east. Pedestrian facilities across Greensborough Road are provided only at the Nell Street footbridge and at the Elder Street and Watsonia Road signals, but these crossings are all poor in terms of access and amenity, as are the Greensborough Road bus stops.

The roundabouts along Watsonia Road, complicate pedestrian movement and whilst there is a zebra pedestrian crossing on Watsonia Road near the church and a signalised crossing south of Grace Street, there are no further safe crossing points on Watsonia Road.

Shared paths are currently provided along the power line reserve east of Greensborough Road and west of High Street, however pedestrian connectivity and amenity through the neighbourhood centre between these links is poor. Proposed improvements at Morwell Avenue will improve amenity and connectivity west of the station, however amenity along and across Greensborough Road and through the station car park is substandard with potential safety risks.

The provision for cyclists throughout the neighbourhood centre is very limited, with cycle lanes only provided along a single section of Watsonia Road between the pedestrian crossing south of Morwell Avenue and the Lambourn Road roundabout, where they abruptly terminate, removing any protection for cyclists.

5.4 Car Parking

In addition to on street car parking within and around the study area, there are a number of off-street parking areas; the largest of these being the station car park with approximately 560 all-day spaces. It is understood that this station has a wide catchment as commuter parking is limited at nearby stations, with occupancy rates at Watsonia at 100% on weekdays. The NEL Business Case recommends to provide existing capacity + 60 extra spaces. Additional off-street parking at the library (one and two-hour) and within the Morwell Avenue reserve (one to four-hour) averaged around 60% occupancy with peaks up to 100%. This Morwell Avenue car park is to be extended further west with around 40 extra spaces. Whilst short term on-street car parking occupancy along Watsonia Road was higher at around 79%, parking rates were quite low on the surrounding streets with maximum occupancy rates of around 25%.



06 Transport and Parking Map

6.0 Infrastructure Review

A high-level review of the area's infrastructure reveals the primary constraints on project outcomes posed by AusNet overhead transmission lines and the main APA gas pipeline, whose removal or modification represents extreme cost penalties.

All information of existing utility services assets for this review were obtained using the supplied data from Dial Before You Dig (DBYD) and Near Map only and must be verified and positively identified prior to any future detailed design.

6.1 APA Gas Pipeline

APA is the authority responsible for the provision of Gas supply facilities in the project area. There are different ranges of existing gas main pressure classified, from low pressure that has up to 7kpa capacity to transmission pressure in excess of 515kpa capacity. An existing High-Pressure gas line (a 100 mm diameter pipeline) runs along Morwell Avenue together with an existing Transmission Pressure (a 450mm diameter pipe) which crosses Watsonia Road and Greensborough Bypass. This asset is governed by the Pipelines Act which is challenging due to its lack of clear decision time frames. High Pressure gas lines traverse most of the streets including Watsonia Road and Morwell Avenue (a 300 mm diameter pipeline).

6.2 Ausnet Powerlines

Existing High Voltage Underground Cable runs through Watsonia Road and extends from Tennyson Street to the approach of Richards Avenue. There is also an asset line passes through Lambourne Road and Todman Street from High St towards Fresham Road crossing

Watsonia Road, station carpark reserve and Greensborough Road.

An existing High Voltage Electrical Transmission Assets easement covering Morwell Avenue and intersects Watsonia Road and Greensborough Road. The Existing High Voltage Overhead Lines and 66kV poles mostly run through this east-west reservation where development and planting is restricted. Under its reference design NELP is moving two pylons from the west to the east of Greensborough Road, however any undergrounding of these assets would require significant land take.

Recent works associated with the Westgate Tunnel Project have utilised so-called monopoles instead of the traditional four-legged pylons. Monopoles require more substantial footings but have a neater, slimmer aesthetic, and can have a narrower footprint with greater height, potentially facilitating longer cable spans. Their utilisation at Watsonia may provide significant public realm gains, especially around the Station area.



07 Electricity Pylons

6.3 Sub-Station

A sub-station compound exists outside the study area at the east side of Greensborough Road, located at Todman Street corner Frensham Road.

6.4 VicTrack

Metro Hurstbridge railway line runs parallel to Greensborough Bypass, which passes underneath Watsonia Road. Watsonia railway station is situated between Watsonia Rd and Greensborough Rd. Existing railway service utilities such as high voltage underground, overhead electrical cables, transmission and other assets within rail reserve need to be considered in projecting works close to the track area. The upgrade of the Hurstbridge Railway line between Greensborough and Eltham is expected to upgrade large sections of the line including signalling but there is no upgrade officially planned for Watsonia Station at this stage.

6.5 Melbourne Water

An existing large water supply main ($\geq 300\text{mm}$ diameter) runs through Watsonia Road, through Black St., through High St., through Princes St, and back to Watsonia Road. An abandoned water supply main goes all the way along Watsonia Road.

6.6 NBN

A designed/constructed NBN cable/trench line is located only along Greensborough Bypass, there are pits and manholes are located at the intersection of Watsonia Road and Greensborough Bypass.



08 Electricity Monopole



09 Watsonia Road at Morwell Avenue



10 Existing Service Utility Lines (NOTE: High pressure gas lines and high voltage overhead lines are not shown on the map as these lines run mostly to all the connector streets)

7.0 Economic Assessment

Watsonia has been relatively stable in economic terms with limited growth in recent decades. However, and while Watsonia is expected to retain its neighbourhood centre focus in terms of retail and offices provision, its strategic location close to road and rail infrastructure and its rising house prices indicate potentially more diverse housing growth in the future.

7.1 Retail & Commercial Floorspace Overview

A survey of retail and commercial floorspace in the Watsonia NC was undertaken in February 2019 (refer Table 1.1). In total, the Centre accommodates approximately 10,200m² in shopfront floorspace comprising: occupied retail (8,750m² or 85.8% of total floorspace), office shopfront (1010m² or 9.9%) and vacant shopfront (440m² or 4.3%). In addition to shopfront office floorspace, Watsonia NC also contains 1,020m² in dedicated office floorspace.

The existing level of shopfront floorspace (10,200m²) reflects the Watsonia NC's role as a larger suburban Neighbourhood Centre. The low shopfront vacancy rate of 4.3% indicates the Centre is trading relatively well. Broadly, a shopfront vacancy rate of 5%-7% is considered optimal for strip-based centres, noting that the vacancy level of many strip-based centres is higher due to increased pressures from higher-order centres, changing consumer preferences, new retail formats and online sales.

The majority of retail floorspace (4,780m² or 54.6%) is attributed to the Non-Food category (see Table 1.2). Typical, of suburban Neighbourhood Centres, the retail services category (hair & beauty, dry cleaning etc) is prominent comprising 1,990m² or 22.7% of total retail floorspace. Anchor tenants in the Centre

include an IGA Plus Liquor supermarket (Food Liquor Grocery), Chemist Warehouse (Non-Food) and a Liquorland (FLG).

Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre's Primary Trade Area (PTA) represents the geographic area from which the Centre draws the majority of its retail sales (refer Figure 1.1). The extent of the PTA is informed by a broad range of factors, including the local transport network (roads, footpaths, bike paths etc), geographic barriers, competing centres, and the Watsonia NC's current retail offer.

Table 1 – Occupied & Vacant Floorspace, Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre, 2019

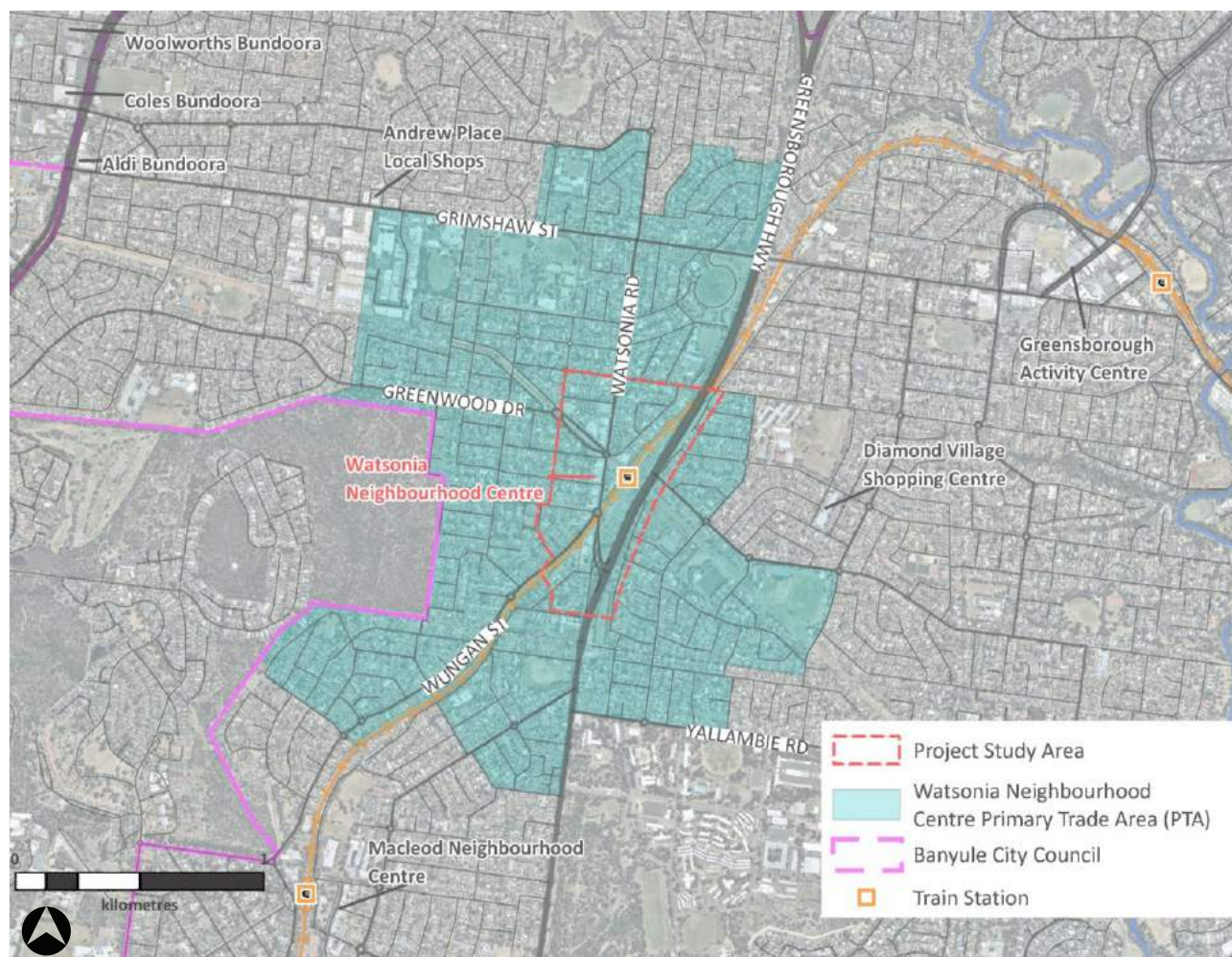
Category	Occupied Retail		Office Shopfront		Total Occupied Shopfront		Vacant Shopfront		Total Shopfront Floorspace	
	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)
Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre	8,750	85.8%	1,010	9.9%	9,760	95.7%	440	4.3%		100%

Source: Ethos Urban
Note: Figures rounded

Table 2 – Occupied Retail Floorspace, Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre, 2019

Category	Food, Liquor & Groceries (FLG)		Food Catering		Non-Food		Total Occupied Retail	
	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)	m ²	Share (%)
Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre	1,480	16.9%	2,490	28.5%	4,780	54.6%	8,750	100%

Source: Ethos Urban
Note: Figures rounded



11 Primary Trade Area - Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre

7.2 Population Growth & Retail Spending

Residential development typically generates population growth which drives retail spending and development. By 2035 the PTA's population is forecast to be approximately 9,520 persons. Average annual population growth between 2020 and 2027 is forecast to be +40 persons per annum (or 0.5% p.a.), increasing to +70 persons per annum (0.8% p.a.) between 2027 and 2035 (Table 1.3). Future population growth will be influenced by the extent to which intensification of housing stock occurs in the PTA, including

opportunities for shop-top and apartment living in the Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre. Population forecasts for the PTA were prepared with reference to id Consulting's latest (2017) estimates for Watsonia.

Retail spending by Watsonia PTA residents (Table 1.4) is forecast to increase to \$160.9m by 2035 (in today's dollars), an increase of +\$33.1m from the 2020 level (\$127.8m). The increase in available retail spending is informed by population growth, as well real growth (non-inflation related growth) in spending of around +1.0% per annum.

Table 3 – Population Trends & Forecast, Watsonia PTA (2010-2035)

	2010	2020	2027	2035
Population No				
Watsonia Primary Trade Area	8,220	8,680	8,960	9,520
Banyule LGA	122,780	133,420	139,980	145,540
Greater Melbourne	4,105,860	5,138,310	5,826,060	6,603,770
Average Annual Growth (%)				
Watsonia Primary Trade Area		+0.5%	+0.5%	+0.8%
Banyule LGA		+0.8%	+0.7%	+0.5%
Greater Melbourne		+2.3%	+1.8%	+1.6%
Average Annual Growth (%)				
Watsonia Primary Catchment		+50	+40	+70
Banyula LGA		+1,060	+940	+700
Greater Melbourne		+103,250	+98,250	+97,210

Source: Ethos Urban with id Consulting & VIF 2016

Table 4 – Total Retail Spending, Watsonia PTA (2010-2035)

Retail Category	2020	2027	2035
FLG	\$52.9m	\$55.7m	\$60.5m
Food Catering	\$16.2m	\$17.3m	\$19.1m
Non-food	\$58.7m	\$67.6m	\$81.4m
Total Retail	\$127.8m	\$140.5m	\$160.9m

Source: Market Info

7.3 Retail Turnover & Market Share Analysis

Watsonia NC's current retail turnover is estimated at \$39.4m equating to \$4,500 in annual sales per square metre of gross leasable floorspace (Table 1.5). An average trading level per square metre of this magnitude is considered to be relatively low and can be attributed to the large proportion of Non-Food retail accommodated by the Centre compared to other categories.

The market share of retail in Watsonia is estimated at 28%; meaning, 28% of total available expenditure by residents in the Watsonia PTA is captured by the Centre.

This low market share reflects the contested nature of Watsonia PTA due to the proximity of other centres including Diamond Village Shopping Centre, Greensborough Activity Centre and Macleod Neighbourhood Centre, refer Figure 1.1.

7.4 Retail & Commercial Floorspace Potential

The opportunity for additional retail floorspace at Watsonia NC has been assessed with reference to the projected increase in total PTA spending as well as supportable average trading levels and market shares. It is estimated that by 2035 Watsonia NC could support +820m² in additional retail floorspace (Table 1.6).

This estimate is based on the assumption that the average trading level will increase from \$4,500/m² in 2019 to \$5,040/m² by 2035, equating to +0.7% average growth per annum in sales for retailers in the centre for the forecast period. By 2035, the Centre's overall market share is forecast to be marginally lower than the 2019 level due to increased spending capture online and by other platforms.

Table 5 – Retail Turnover & Market Shares, Watsonia PTA

Category	FLG	Food Catering	Non-Food	Total
Total Turnover	\$13.7m	\$8.9m	\$16.8m	\$39.4m
Average Trading level	\$9,270/m ²	\$3,560/m ²	\$3,520/m ²	\$4,500/m ²
Total retail sales to Watsonia PTA residents	\$12.3m	\$8.0m	\$15.2m	\$35.5m
Total available retail expenditure	\$52.5m	\$16.0m	\$57.6m	\$126.2m
Market Share	\$127.8m	\$140.5m	\$160.9m	

Source: Ethos Urban and Market Info

By 2035, an opportunity for +200m² in additional total office floorspace (office shopfront and dedicated office) is estimated, assuming the provision of office floorspace remains at around 0.2m² per person (as observed currently). This equates to around two-to-three shopfront offices or one two-storey dedicated office. This estimate should be considered conservative; potentially a larger increase in office floorspace (say +500m²) may eventuate as a result of improved transport connectivity associated with the North East Link Project, upgrades to the rail network and improved amenity associated with better urban design outcomes.

Table 6 – Retail Development Potential, Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre, 2019-2035

Category	Total
Existing Retail Floorspace, 2019	8,750m ²
Retail Sales	
2019	\$39.4m
2035	\$48.2m
Average annual growth	+1.27%
Average Trading Level	
2019	\$4,500/m ²
2035	\$5,040/m ²
Supportable retail floorspace, 2035	9,570/m ²
Retail development potential, 2019-2035	+820m²

Source: Ethos Urban

7.5 Median Density Housing Potential

House price trends can provide an indication of residential market conditions (demand and supply) in a locality, as well as potential triggers in terms of price and timing for the delivery of more intensive housing typologies. Watsonia's current median house price of \$805,500, is considered to be close to a figure that is likely to make higher-density apartment outcomes a viable option for developers. Table 1.7 provides an overview of recent house price trends for Heidelberg and Doncaster, both eastern Melbourne localities where sustainable apartment development has emerged over the past decade.

It is possible, however, that the recent cyclical downturn in the residential market may delay

the transition to apartment development in Watsonia in the near-term (by perhaps 2-5 years). Accordingly, the delivery of shop-top living and medium density apartments should be viewed as a medium and longer-term proposition, with the locality well placed for the delivery of higher density housing when market conditions prove favourable.

It is also possible that planning controls which encouraged higher density forms of development may act as a catalyst for increased development beyond the forecast level. The depth of demand, however, for higher-density residential dwellings in the Watsonia NC is largely untested.

Table 7 – Retail Development Potential, Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre, 2019-2035

Suburb	Median House Price			AAG (No.)	AAG (%)
	2010	2014	2018		
Watsonia	\$505,000	\$550,00	\$805,500	\$37,563	6.0%
Heidelberg	\$815,000	\$831,000	\$1,063,500	\$31,063	3.4%
Doncaster	\$780,000	\$950,000	\$1,275,000	\$61,875	6.3%

AAG = Annual Average Growth

Source: Ethos Urban

7.6 Implications for Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre's Role & Function

The economic forecasts provided are conservative and should be used to assist planning by providing an indication only of potential development opportunities, which may be exceeded.

The Centre is currently considered to be trading relatively well with limited shopfront vacancies and is expected to continue its role as a Neighbourhood Centre within the Banyule hierarchy.

Broadly, the delivery of increased residential density in the Watsonia NC is viewed as a medium-term proposition (5-7+ years). Increased residential densities will support a small to moderate increase in retail floorspace in the order of 800m². Demand for commercial floorspace is also expected to be modest, though additional demand may be generated through amenity improvements and improved transport conditions (to both the road and rail network).

Overtime the Centre's retail offer would be expected to gradually alter in response to demographic-shifts brought on by the establishment of younger families and couples in the area. The recent opening of a higher-end café and modern barber's shop suggests these shifts are beginning to emerge.

The depth of demand for medium-density residential typologies at Watsonia is untested which limits the extent to which residential development opportunities can be forecast, as noted previously. For instance, the availability of a substantial development site (e.g. associated

with the Station Car Park) and supporting planning controls for higher density residential may well induce much greater residential development activity and population growth than the forecasts provided.

In time, residential and commercial development may also exceed forecast levels as a result of urban design initiatives, improved amenity outcomes: A revitalised Centre would almost certainly lead to additional development interest.

With these uncertainties in mind, monitoring of floorspace provision and trading levels in the Centre is highly recommended, with higher than expected population growth being the trigger for review.

8.0 Vision for Watsonia

8.1 Updated Vision Statement

Watsonia develops as a people-friendly neighbourhood centre, without large-scale retail but with a variety of smaller businesses expanding to meet a growing and diversifying local population. The construction of North East Link (NEL) and upgrades to the train station improve accessibility and under-used strategic sites are redeveloped for a wider range of housing options, especially around the station.

Watsonia Road consolidates as a two-sided 'high street' defined by new, medium-scale buildings with gaps to allow occasional views to the eastern horizon. Traffic will be calmed to prioritise active transport, with comfortable and continuous footpath connections all the way from north to south. With tailored

landscaping, the power lines reserve develops as continuous trail and green corridor intersecting with Watsonia Road at new focal public spaces near the station. Elsewhere, significant tree planting will reinforce Watsonia's leafy character and provide greater shade and amenity.

Green bridging over NEL will improve connections to the east with local streets reconnected across Greensborough Road to Watsonia Road. The new station car park will continue to enjoy direct access from Greensborough Road. At the rebuilt accessible station itself, drop-off and pick-up facilities will expand and gradually replace parking due to the growth of 'transport as a service' (future-proof for shared and later autonomous vehicles).

SATURDAY, 16th AUGUST, 1924.
By Public Auction, **SECOND SECTION**
Watsonia Electric Station Estate
WATSONIA

Right opposite Watsonia Railway Station. Locally known as Black's Property.

15 SHOP SITES
of Great Prospective Value

On the land at 3.15 o'clock
in a Sealed Marquee.

523

VIEW OF ELECTRIC TRAIN IN WATSONIA RAILWAY STATION WITH A PERSPECTIVE OF THE
FUTURE OF THE SHOPPING AND VILLA SITES ILLUSTRATED TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT.

This Estate which is Truly Magnificent, is within the eleven mile radius of the City of Melbourne. The Shop Sites are of great Prospective Value
and the Residential Allotment are so Gloriously Elevated that they command a Majestic View of the Ranges to the East and North

Most Exceptionally Easy Terms for Land so Wonderfully Situated

VILLA SITES NO DEPOSIT £1 PER MONTH
INTEREST 10 PER CENT. PER ANNUM. PAYABLE QUARTERLY.

SHOP SITES £5 Deposit £1 PER MONTH
INTEREST 10 PER CENT. PER ANNUM. PAYABLE QUARTERLY.

KNIGHT & HARWOOD, Auctioneer, Property Salesmen
and Subdivisional Experts
315 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE Phone Cent. 10615, 10616

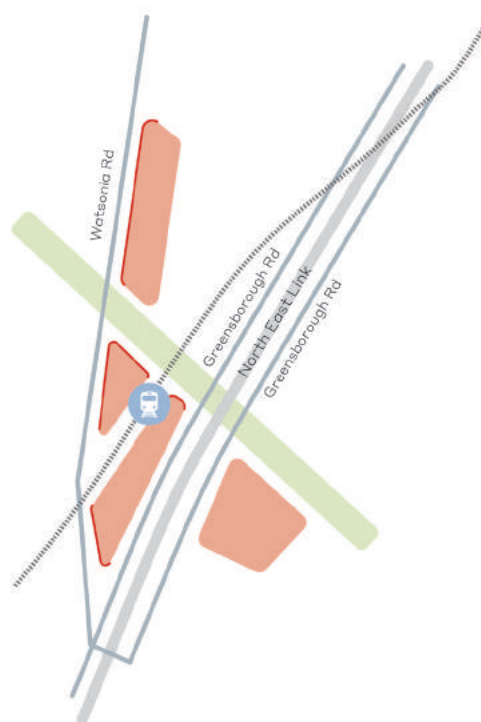
In Conjunction with **C. JESSOP & CO.,** Auctioneer and
Estate Agents
GREENSBOROUGH, Phone Heidelberg 205

Will Sell as above under Instructions from the Owner, Mr. W. Black.

9.0 Design Principles in Response to Vision

9.1 1: Develop Watsonia to the East

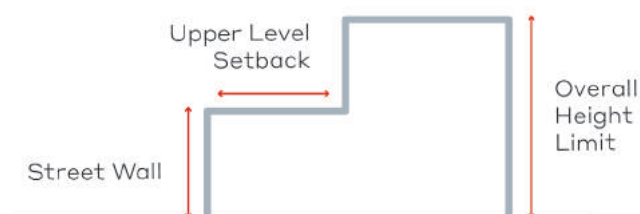
Facilitate future mixed-use development on the east side of Watsonia Road (potentially including the Timber Yard area) and residential development east of the Station (including the Station car park and potentially the DHHS site), including targeted rezoning.



12 Principle 1

9.2 2: Control Built Form Scale

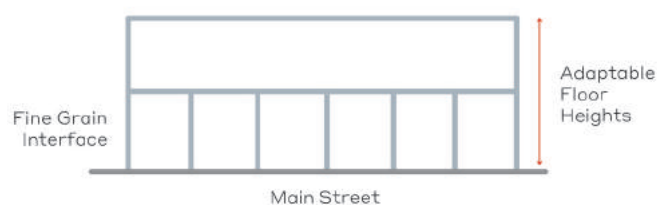
Undertake planning work to establish appropriate building envelopes for new development especially along Watsonia Road, including street wall and upper level heights with associated setbacks.



13 Principle 2

9.3 3: Upgrade and Integrate the Station

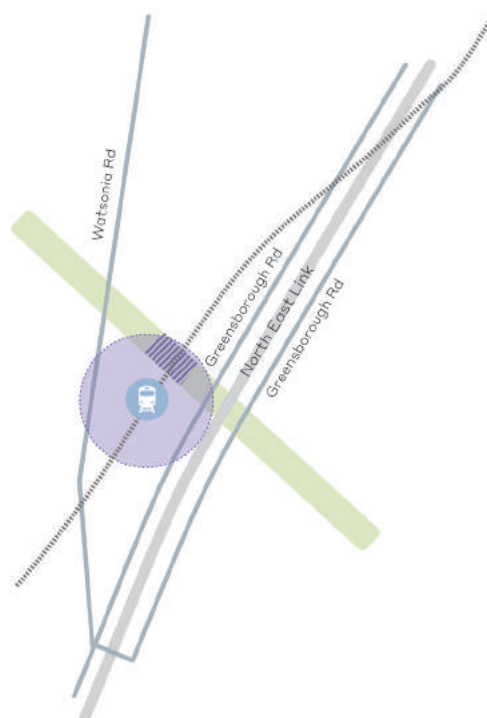
Require all development to provide fine grain, active frontages to main streets and public spaces, especially at ground level, and be adaptable to other uses (high ground floors for commercial use; adequate heights and flat floors in car parks).



14 Principle 3

9.4 4: Upgrade and Integrate the Station

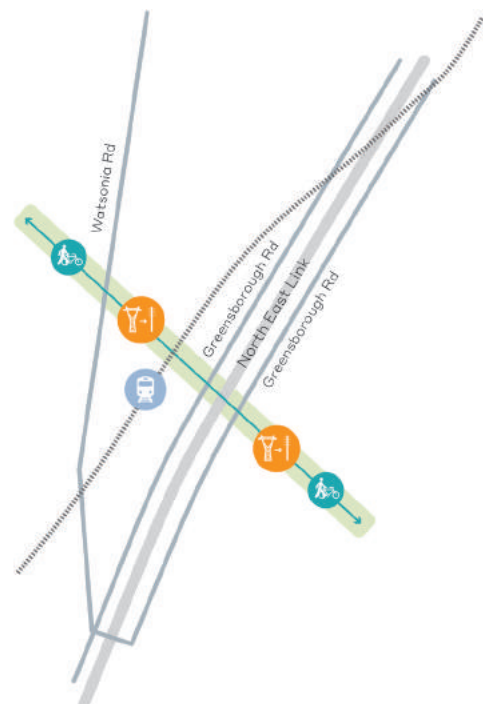
Encourage railway upgrades to improve accessibility and legibility of the Station as a civic focus, with extended decking across the railway over time.



15 Principle 4

9.5 5: Create a Continuous Green Corridor

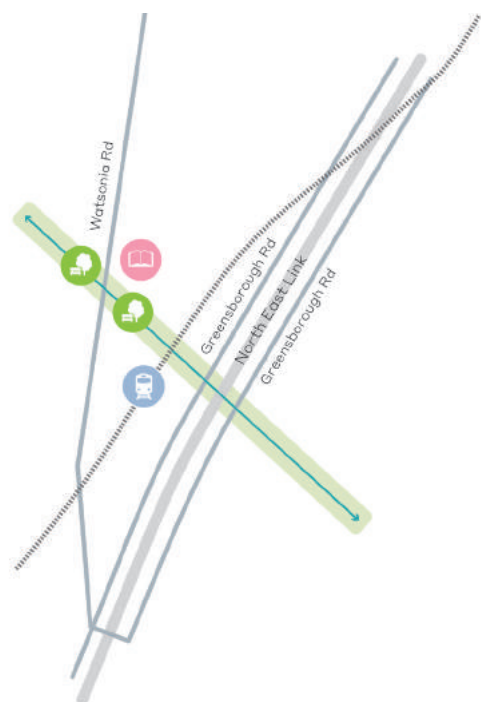
Reinforce the role of the powerlines reserve (with the potential to upgrade pylons to less intrusive 'mono-poles') as a continuous green corridor and long-distance public trail, carried across NEL on broad decking and with future development frontage replacing back fences.



16 Principle 5

9.6 6: Construct Focal Public Spaces

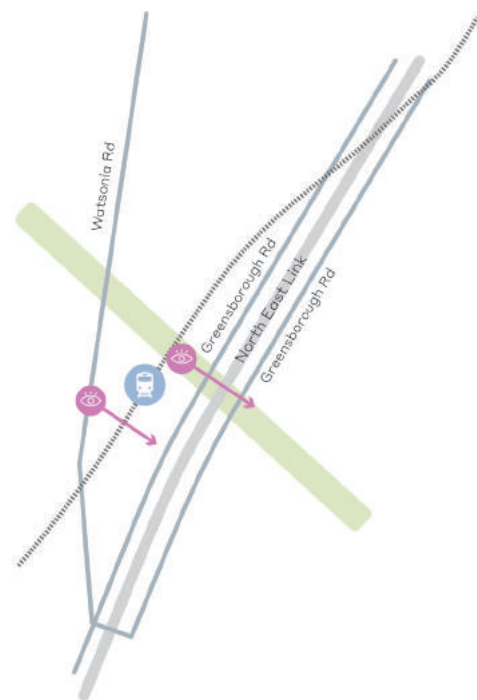
Develop twin public spaces at the crossing of the powerlines reserve and Watsonia Road linking the green corridor and providing community spaces linking the Station and the shopping street.



17 Principle 6

9.7 7: Frame Long Distance Views

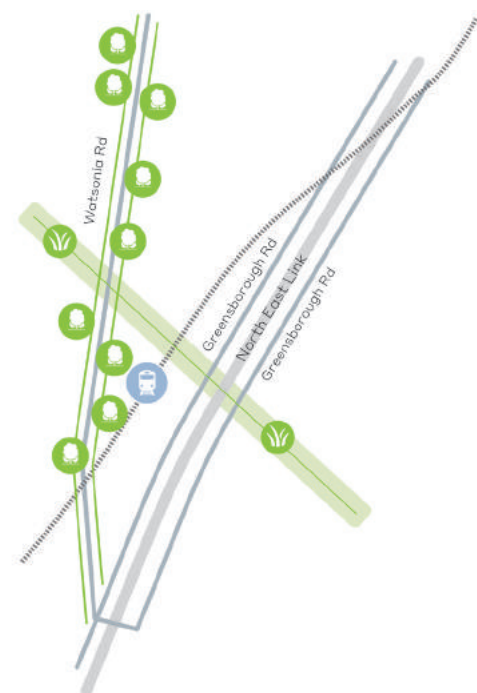
Protect occasional long-distance views to the east (from Watsonia Road central and the Station) by providing gaps between new development.



18 Principle 7

9.8 8: Pursue a 'Greening Watsonia' Strategy

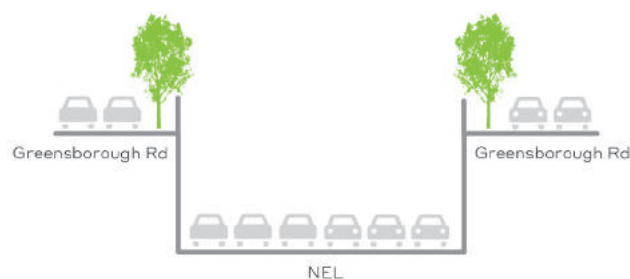
Further green the public realm with canopy tree planting and enhance the powerlines reserve and the proposed land bridges with innovative low-level landscaping.



19 Principle 8

9.9 9: Construct a Recessive North East Link

Integrate NEL infrastructure as a recessive element, generally in a trench with substantial land bridges and screened by planted barriers where space permits.



20 Principle 9

9.10 10: Urbanise Greensborough Road

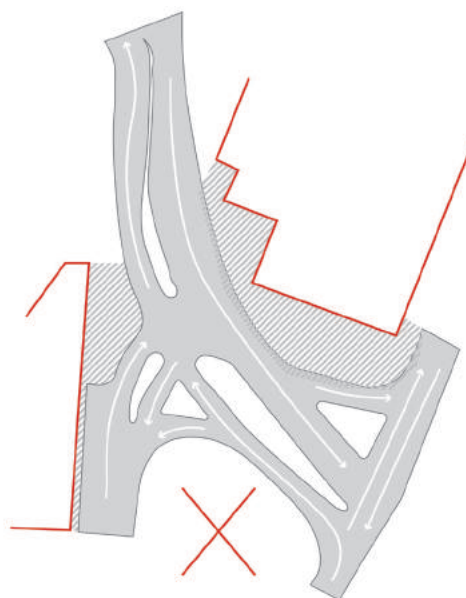
Design Greensborough Road as a district alternative to long-distance NEL, with a more urban character, outside the NEL noise walls and with some local street access (subject to Department of Transport approval)



21 Principle 10

9.11 11: Avoid Over-Engineers Roads

Favour fit-for-purpose designs that make efficient use of road space by avoiding over-engineered solutions that inconvenience pedestrians and cyclists, sterilise developable land and create left-over spaces.



22 Principle 11

9.12 12: Carry Local Streets Across North East Link

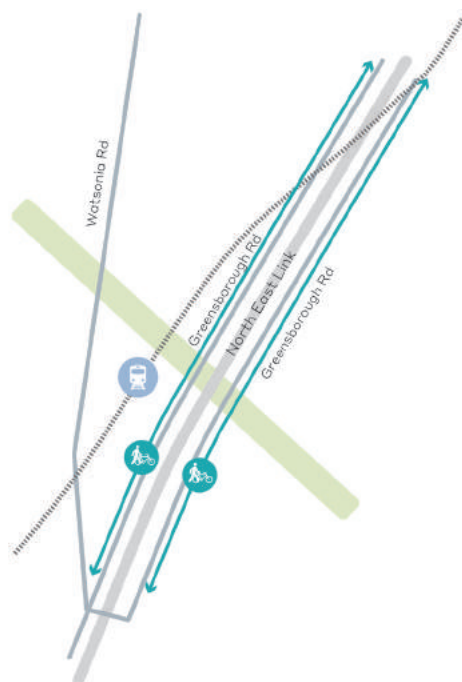
Allow for the extension of local streets across NEL on at-grade decks (as a minimum at the Station and Watsonia Road south entry), integrating safe pedestrian and cycle links.



23 Principle 8

9.13 13: Provide North-South Shared Paths

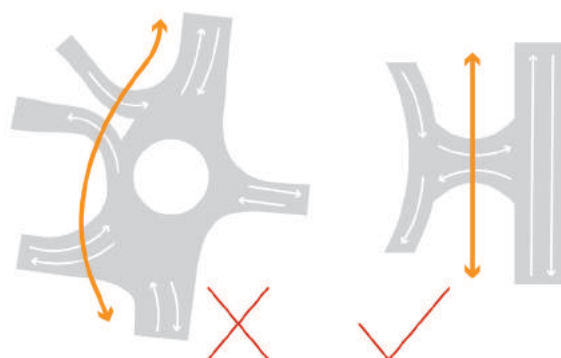
Construct continuous shared paths along both sides of NEL, with overlooking by adjoining development to provide surveillance wherever possible.



24 Principle 13

9.14 14: Prioritise Pedestrians in Watsonia Road

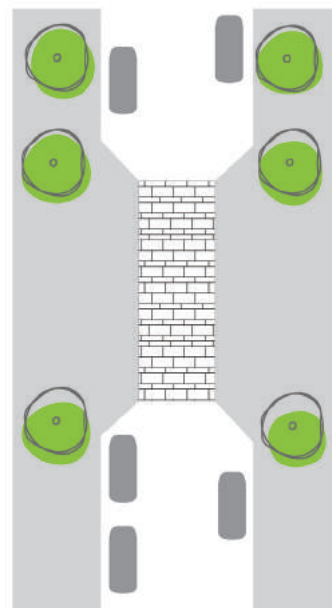
Prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement along the whole of Watsonia Road, including roundabout replacement and safe street crossings, but allow for buses.



25 Principle 14

9.15 15: Calm Traffic on Watsonia Road

Discourage traffic along and across Watsonia Road with visual and functional cues, including narrowing, paving, tree planting, staggered junctions and street closures (Morwell Avenue north and Ibbottson Street south).



26 Principle 13

10.0 Concept Options Analysis



27 Concept A



28 Concept B



29 Concept A



30 Concept B

10.1 Project Process

The project focus is to investigate alternative futures and the impact of infrastructure provision on these. The project is to assume NEL is a 'given' but NEL proposals might be refined to better suit Watsonia's development, access and public realm options. To understand these options and their broad feasibility, targeted stakeholder consultations were undertaken including with Council specialists, NEL representatives and others from Department of Transport, the Office of the Victorian Government Architect and local bodies such as the Watsonia Traders Association and the Anglican Church. These led to the development of four schematic Concept Options by the consultants (Fig.26-29) which were interrogated at a broad Stakeholder Workshop on 19 March 2019. They should not be seen as stand-alone independent options, but rather an amalgam of ideas which were ultimately blended to create a preferred Concept Plan (refer 12.0 below).

10.2 Common Themes (all options)

- Consideration of future rezoning of sites along the eastern side of Watsonia Road with accompanying built form controls to facilitate low to mid-rise mixed-use redevelopment defining a two-sided 'high street'.
- Treatment of the powerlines reserve as a green corridor and positive structuring element within Watsonia.
- Replacement of the traditional power pylons with slimmer 'monopoles' and relocating them away from the central public areas between Watsonia Road, the Station and Greensborough Road, to improve the amenity and usability of focal destination spaces.
- Creation of focal public spaces either side of Watsonia Road where crossed by the powerlines reserve, with the removal of the Morwell Avenue roundabout.
- Reworking of the Lambourn Road / Devonshire Road junction to remove the roundabout on Watsonia Road.
- The options show cross intersections with traffic signals at both roundabout replacements, however the option of staggered junctions was proposed at the workshop to discourage 'rat running'.
- Allowance for future local street connections from the east across Greensborough Road to Watsonia Road (various configurations were studied).
- Integration of the NEL station car park within a structured built form framework providing defined spaces and frontages to public streets.
- Allowance for a second southern access to the NEL car park to complement the proposed northern access near the Station.
- Positioning the rebuilt Watsonia Road access from Greensborough Road as far south as possible, to include the southern commercial properties down to Richards Avenue within the 'high street'.
- Allowing for controlled frontage and some local street access directly from Greensborough Road (various configurations were studied).
- The realigned Greensborough Road must be split either side of NEL north of the Station in order to join with Grimshaw Street at-grade.
- Creation of two decks across NEL within Watsonia Neighbourhood Centre, (one near station and one in south) each as wide as possible (60m) and with soil depth for planting (1m).

10.3 Option A

- Closely follows the NEL Reference Design with Greensborough Road split as a one-way pair either side of NEL, north of the Watsonia Road Junction.
- Retains Elder Street as the east west link across Greensborough Road, and potentially across the railway to Watsonia Road. While being a functional solution limiting work under the powerlines, this configuration displaces the deck northward, interrupting the continuous flow of the powerlines reserve and creating a diagonal road crossing that tends to sterilise adjoining space.

10.4 Option B

- Configures Greensborough Road as a two-way road located west of NEL until the Station, where it splits to either side of NEL. However, the proposed arterial nature of Greensborough Road means its siting in this intervening location would tend to divide the 'high street' from the redeveloped car park.
- The NEL proposed Elder Street link and the dislocated deck north of the powerlines remain as in Option A.

10.5 Option C

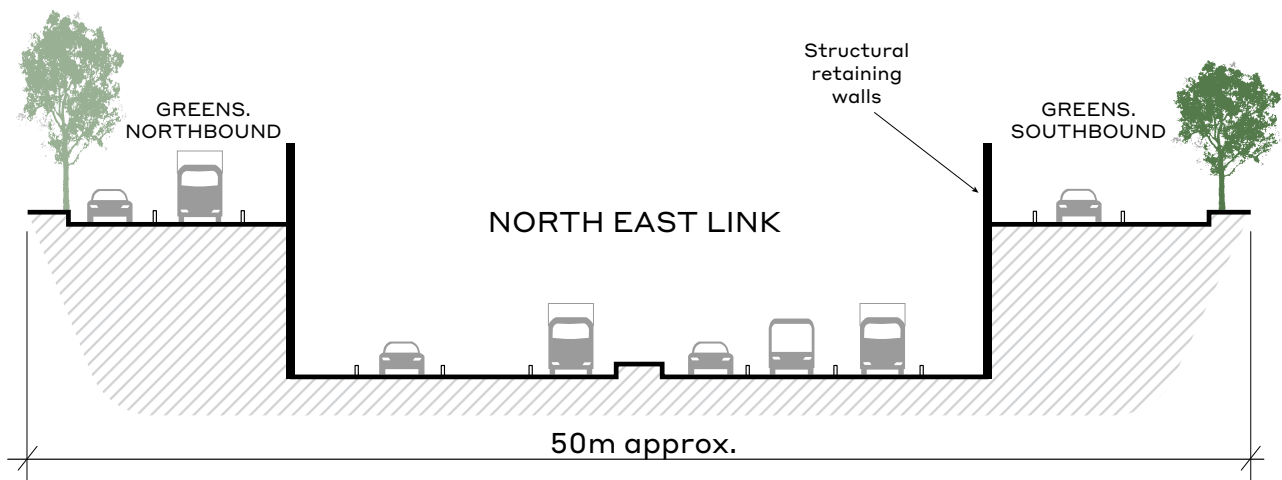
- Configures Greensborough Road as a two-way road directly alongside and immediately west of NEL until the station where it splits to either side of NEL. Less disruptive than Option B', but Greensborough Road still occupies a significant strip of developable land alongside the car park, 'squeezing' development in this area.
- The central NEL deck is now aligned with the powerlines (and the Station), providing a continuous green corridor and the option to extend a new street along its southern edge to provide frontage and a direct link to

Frensham Road by-passing built-up Elder Street.

10.6 Option D

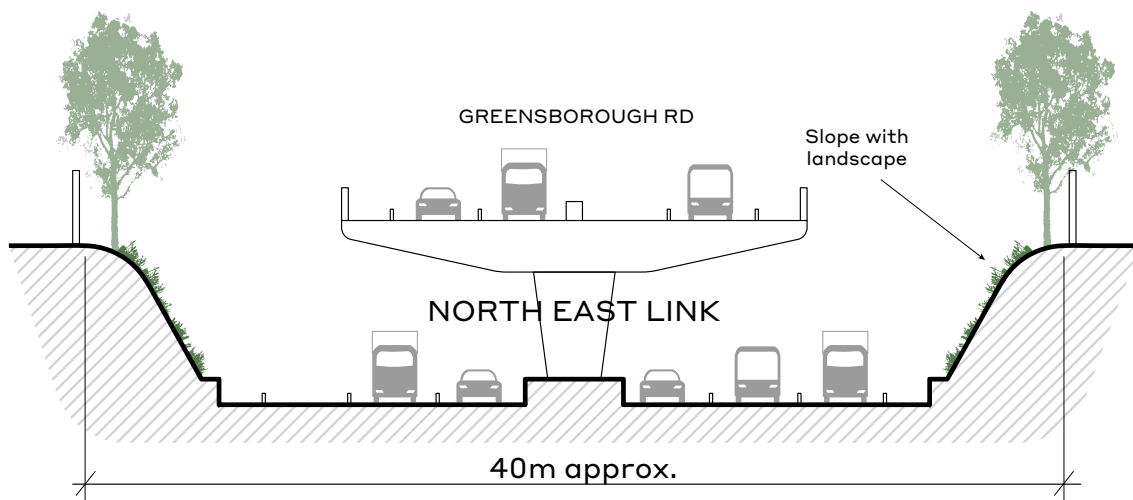
- Is the most revolutionary in proposing that a significant section of Greensborough Road (at least south of the Station) be located in the air space over NEL supported on piers within its expanded central median. There are potential technical issues with levels and extent of roadway cantilever, but also cost savings in terms of space used and the replacement of structural retaining walls with landscaped slopes.
- The NEL deck is continuous under the powerlines (as in Option C) and more importantly the development potential of a well-connected eastern side of NEL is recognised with longer-term redevelopment of the DHHS site and to some extent the south side of Elder Street.

GREENSBOROUGH A



31 Concept A Schematic

GREENSBOROUGH D



32 Concept D Schematic

11.0 Growth Sequencing

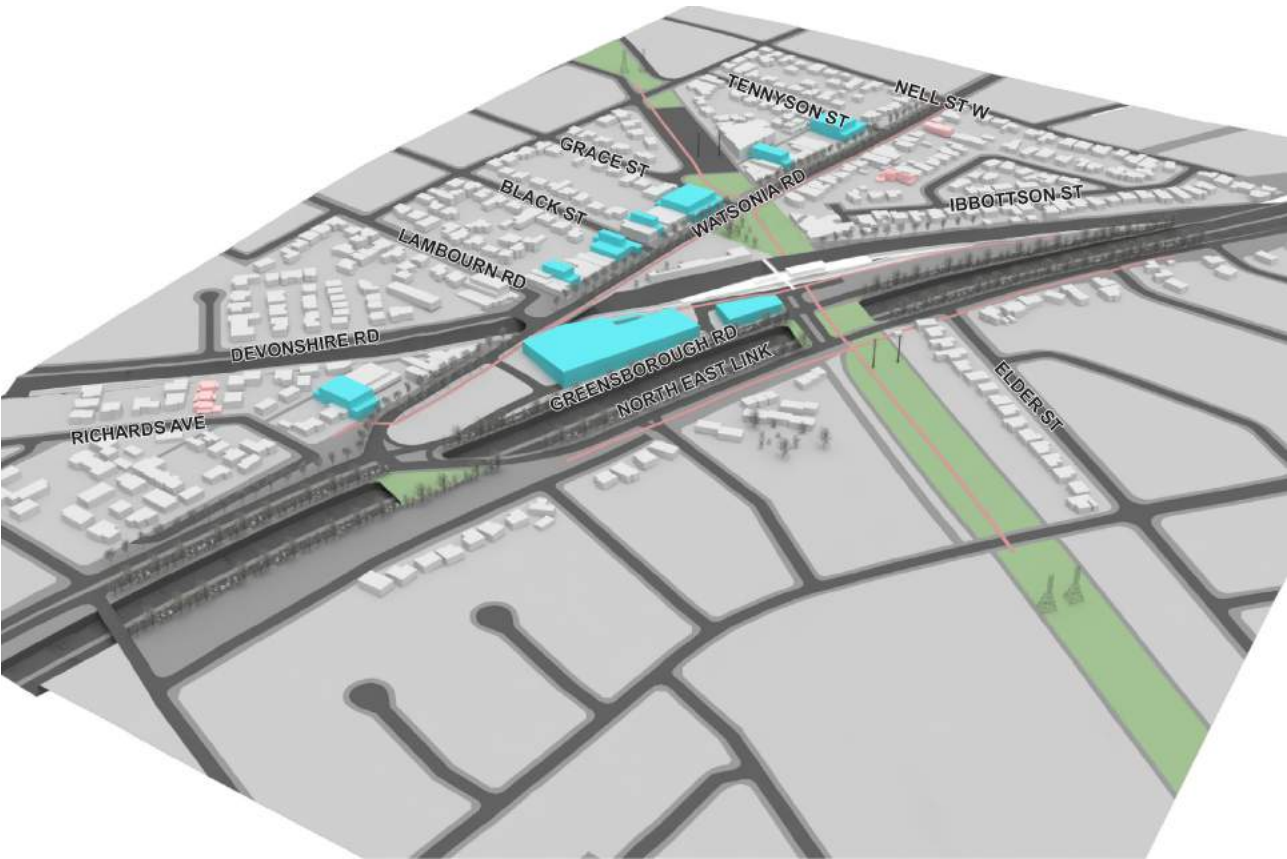
These figures are based on projection of current trends. However, Watsonia house prices, with a median of \$805,500, are now approaching the viability point for apartment development and the future beyond 2027 could see a significant increase in growth in a more diverse residential market. The modelled built form caters for such an increase, with scope for up to double the capacity needed to meet 'business as usual' (up to 740 dwellings rather than the conservative 370 dwellings). The modelling indicates maximum growth at two future points 2027 and 2035.

Table 8 – Expected Growth and Capacity

Expected Growth and Capacity				
	Present	2027	2035 (conservative)*	Physical capacity as modelled
Population	8,680 people	8,960	9,5230	10,400 approx.
Residential		+130 dwellings	+370 dwellings	+540 dwellings
Office	2,030m ²	+100-200m ²	+200-500m ²	+20,000m ² (could be largely ground floor residential, with up to +200 extra dwellings)
Retail	9,190m ²	+380m ²	+820m ²	

*If government land near station is released with favourable planning controls, this figure may dramatically increase

11.1 Watsonia in 2027 (indicative scenario)



34 Watsonia 2027 Perspective from south

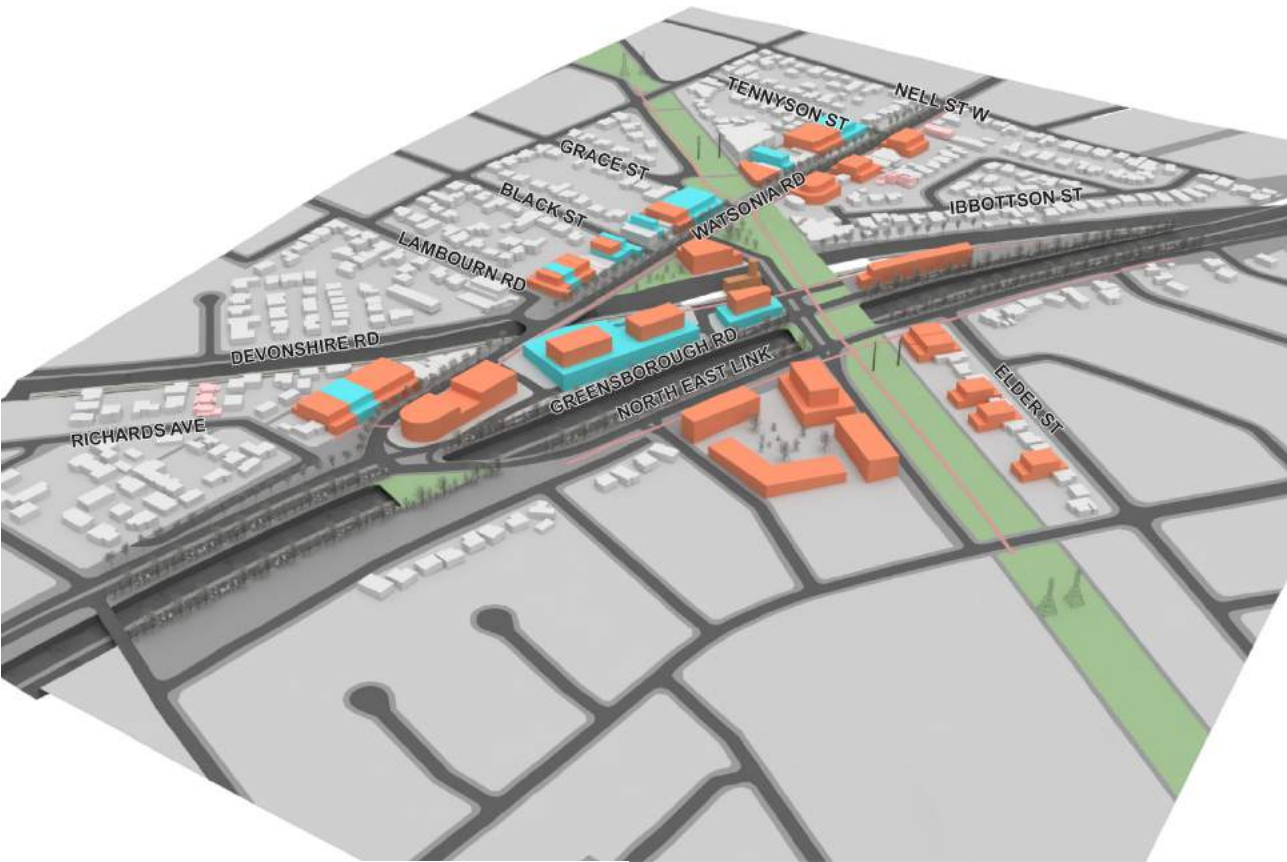


33 Watsonia 2027 Perspective from north

A lot of investment will have gone into infrastructure and planning for future development, but Watsonia will not look that different from today. In 2027, NEL will be recently inaugurated but limited redevelopment will have occurred elsewhere in the centre:

- NEL will take most long distance and freight traffic off a realigned Greensborough Road, which will continue to serve district movement including buses. Buses routes are expected to be re-planned with dedicated on-street bays on Watsonia Road near the Station and in a new turn-around facility north of the NEL-built car park and accessible from Greensborough Road.
- There will be a greened deck over NEL east of the Station with local vehicle access to the car park, but an upgrade of the Station will still be in the planning stage, including possible railway decking.
- The new multi-deck station car park will efficiently serve commuters having replaced like-for-like the existing parking + 60 extra spaces. The land around it will be master-planned and prepared to promote its integration with further mixed-use development, but this will still be pending.
- Some strategic sites within the existing shopping strip will have been redeveloped for upper level apartments or offices. Land on the eastern side of Watsonia Road will have been replanned to facilitate future controlled mixed-use development to form the desired second side to the 'high street', but building will not have started.
- Council proposes to expand the Morwell Street car park to the north and finalise the creation of a new park space at the Watsonia Road end of Morwell Street, replacing the roundabout. Council will negotiate with the Anglican Church to replace the Library car park with a civic plaza and forecourt to the Station, including the relocation of the power pylons further north-west
- The replacement of the pylons with less obtrusive and more distantly-spaced monopoles (although not part of the current NELP scope) will free space under the powerlines and assist Council's landscape upgrade of the green corridor and long-distance trail. When NEL moves the station car park pylons to the east these should be replaced with monopoles, and similar monopoles should be incorporated within the Morwell Street car park to clear the ground plane all the way from NEL to beyond the RSL Club, enabling significant public space improvements in the central heart of Watsonia.

11.2 Watsonia in 2035 (Indicative scenario)



36 Watsonia 2035 Perspective from south



35 Watsonia 2035 Perspective from north

The city, and the world, will have changed greatly by 2035. Melbourne is expected to continue to grow by up to 120,000 people per annum, with a preference for location close to public transport and local facilities. Watsonia meets these requirements and so will also grow:

- With careful planning this growth will support new facilities while retaining the relatively relaxed character of the neighbourhood and the maintenance of open spaces and framed views out to the eastern hills. Capacity for growth, as shown in the modelling, is focused around the Station where there is available land and limited impact on low-scale residential areas.
- Sites around and potentially above the Station car park will develop providing a more active and pedestrian-friendly environment. Due to its new connectivity with the Station, land to the east of NEL and particularly the DHHS site, will be redeveloped to provide housing diversity and an address to the upgraded green corridor. This is shown as an expansion of the study area to the south-east.
- In Watsonia Road itself, upper level development will continue over the shops and new development will begin to infill the eastern side of the 'high street', including the timber yards site.
- Transport will also have evolved with more people taking advantage of 'transport as a service' rather than using their own vehicle. This includes the proliferation of shared services such as Uber Pool and the gradual introduction of autonomous vehicles able to move on to another service rather than parking. Particular impacts will occur around the Station with a growth in drop-off and pick-up replacing parking.
- Catchment growth will support the Station receiving a major upgrade ensuring DDA compliance, a visible above ground entry structure and associated decking of the railway cutting, completing the green corridor under the powerlines as a continuous and integrating community asset.
- The need for integration and accessibility will likely have led to the creation of a new local street from Frensham Road in the east through to Watsonia Road near Morwell Avenue, allowing for easy vehicle drop-off (transport as a service) at the Station and a safer integrated pedestrian and cycle route associated with it.
- Traffic calming measures, with staggered junctions now replacing both roundabouts on Watsonia Road, will favour active transport including the north-south and east-west shared trails. An extensive tree planting program will complete the greening of Watsonia and encourage more people to move on foot and bicycle.

12.0 Precinct Concept Plan

12.1 Concept Map



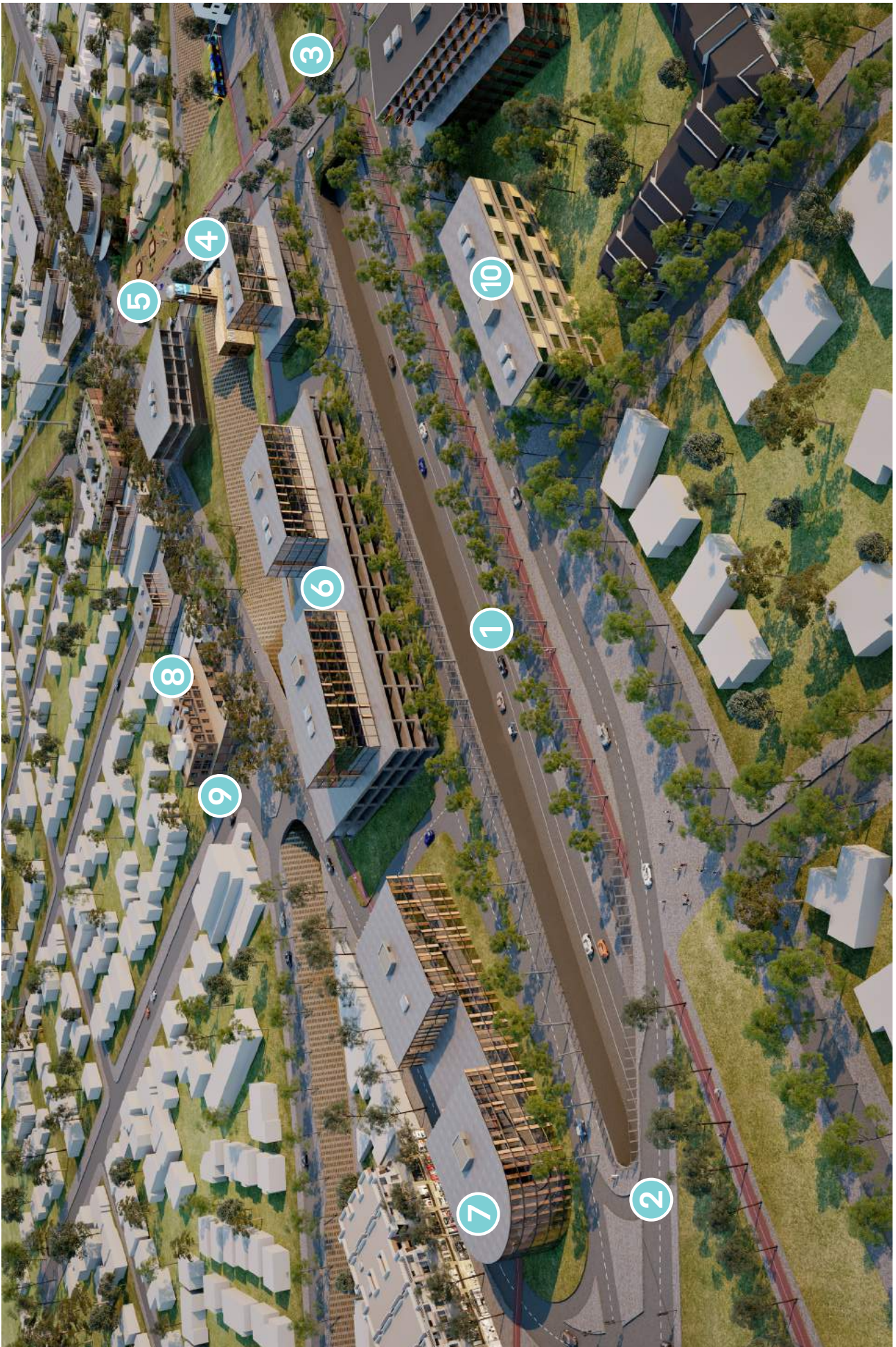
37 Precinct Concept Map

12.2 Concept Renders

Two aerial view have been prepared to indicate how Watsonia might develop by 2035. They are artist's impressions of potential future maximum development and should not be taken as a proposed outcome. They incorporate the recommendations of this report, but these are as yet unconfirmed, with many decisions depending on the work of Council, NELP and other parties.

Figure 38 shows a potential future Watsonia (view from the southern end of Watsonia Road to the north) with:

1. NEL recessed in a walled trench with Greensborough Road split either side, two lanes travelling north and two lanes south, plus continuous trails for cyclists and pedestrians
2. The intersection of Watsonia Road with Greensborough Road moved as far south as possible to incorporate most of the commercial 'high street' and road space is kept tight to promote pedestrian and development space.
3. The decking of NEL following the powerlines reserve to create a continuous 'green corridor' through Watsonia, and a new street access to the Station, eventually continuing across the railway and through to Watsonia Road, in a staggered arrangement to prevent through traffic.
4. An upgraded Station with a legible, accessible entry and the area in front decked to complete the powerlines 'green corridor' and provide high amenity through access.
5. The pylons relocated as monopoles, Ibbottson Street closed at Watsonia Road, and the roundabout removed, enabling the car parks outside the Library and at the end of Morwell Avenue to both be redeveloped as a public plaza and a park.
6. The multi-deck Station car park surrounded by mixed used development forming a defined pedestrian-friendly environment with active frontages.
7. New development defining the eastern side of Watsonia Road over time to produce a two-sided 'high street'.
8. Mostly residential, upper level development infilling gaps and building over shops along Watsonia Road.
9. Removal of the Devonshire Road roundabout and streetscape upgrades to create a more pedestrian-friendly and greener Watsonia Road.
10. The eastern side of Greensborough Road is well connected to the station, enabling more residential development and a landscaped activated 'green corridor' to upgrade and integrate both sides of Watsonia.



38 Indicative View from south

Figure 39 shows a potential future Watsonia (view north from the powerlines reserve towards the southern end of Watsonia Road) with:

1. NEL is recessed in a walled trench with Greensborough Road split either side, two lanes travelling north and two lanes south, plus continuous trails for cyclists and pedestrians.
2. The power pylons within central Watsonia replaced with slimmer monopoles and relocated away from the key public spaces between Greensborough Road, the Station and the RSL in Morwell Avenue.
3. The decking of NEL following the powerlines reserve to create a continuous 'green corridor' through Watsonia, and a new street access to the Station, eventually continuing across the railway and through to Watsonia Road, in a staggered arrangement to prevent through traffic.
4. Car parking relocated further west in Morwell Avenue and the roundabout removed to create a park space along Watsonia Road linking the 'high street' north and south.
5. The pylons relocated as monopoles, Ibbottson Street closed at Watsonia Road, and the roundabout removed, enabling the car parks outside the Library and at the end of Morwell Avenue to both be redeveloped as a public plaza and a park.
6. An upgraded Station with a legible, accessible entry and the area in front will be decked to complete the powerlines 'green corridor' and provide high amenity through access, including for buses, pick-up and drop-off (in a future with more shared transport and even autonomous vehicles).
7. The multi-deck Station car park surrounded by mixed used development forming a defined pedestrian-friendly environment with active frontages.
8. Redevelopment of the timber yards site and surrounds defining the eastern side of the 'high street', ensuring gaps are provided to maintain distant views to the Dandenong Ranges.
9. Mostly residential, upper level development infilling gaps and building over shops along Watsonia Road.
10. The eastern side of Greensborough Road is well connected to the station, enabling more residential development and a landscaped activated 'green corridor' to upgrade and integrate both sides of Watsonia.



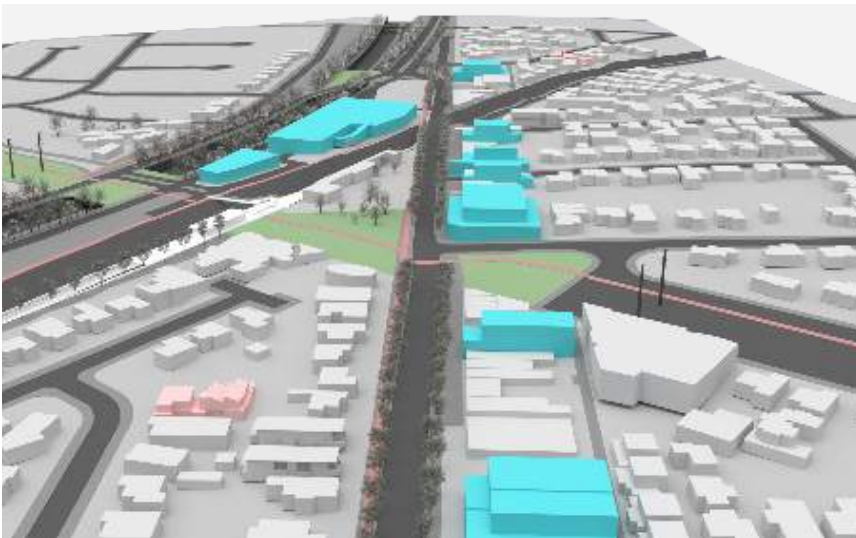
39 Indicative View from south

12.3 View 1 of Watsonia Road looking south from above IGA Supermarket

(Viewpoints marked on 12.1
Concept Map)



40 Existing 2019



41 Scenario 2027



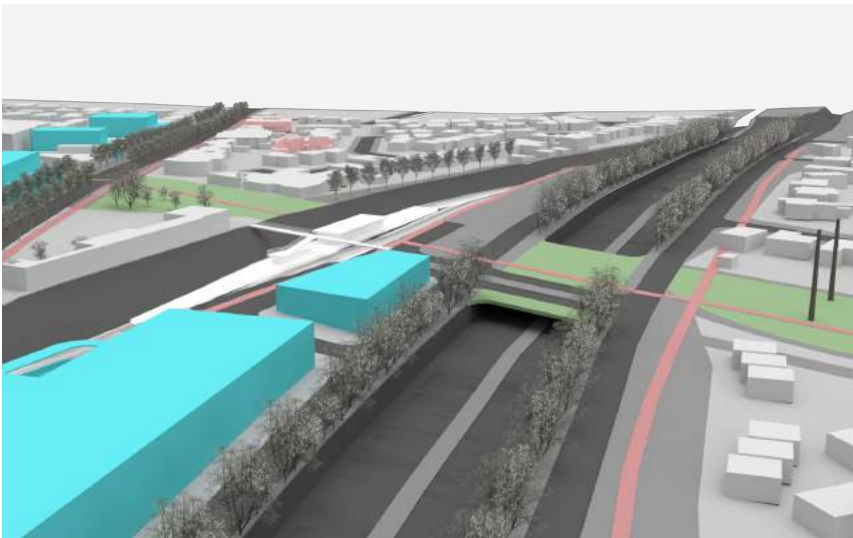
42 Scenario 2035

12.4 View 2 of North East Link looking north across Station

(Viewpoints marked on 12.1 Concept Map)



43 Existing 2019



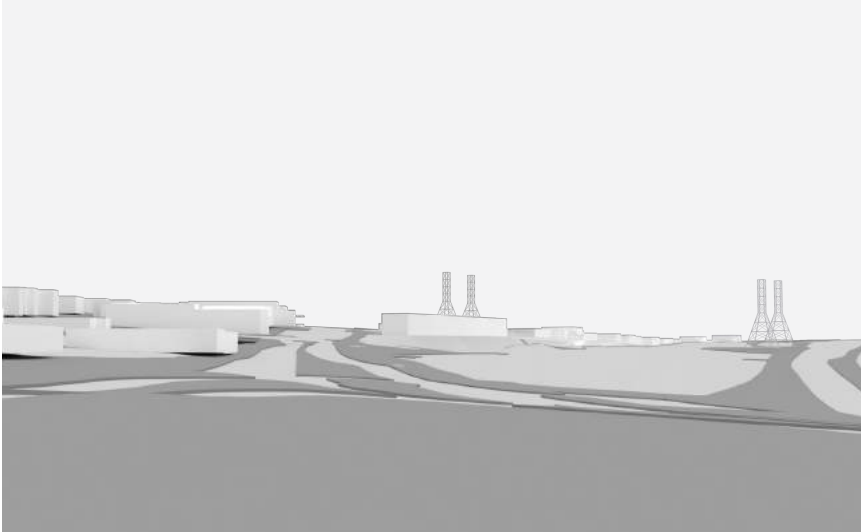
44 Scenario 2027



45 Scenario 2035

12.5 View 3 from Greensborough Road looking north at Watsonia Road Junction

(Viewpoints marked on 12.1
Concept Map)



46 Existing 2019



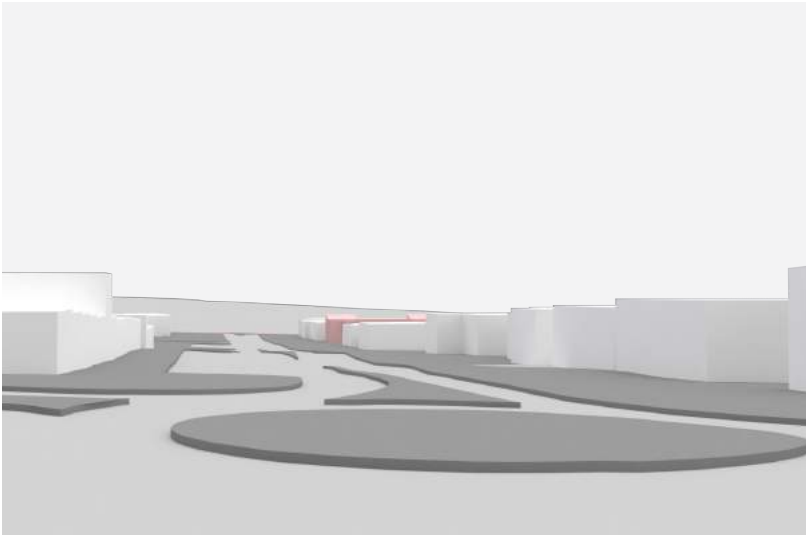
47 Scenario 2027



48 Scenario 2035

12.6 View 4 to north along Watsonia Road from Morwell Avenue

(Viewpoints marked on 12.1 Concept Map)



49 Existing 2019



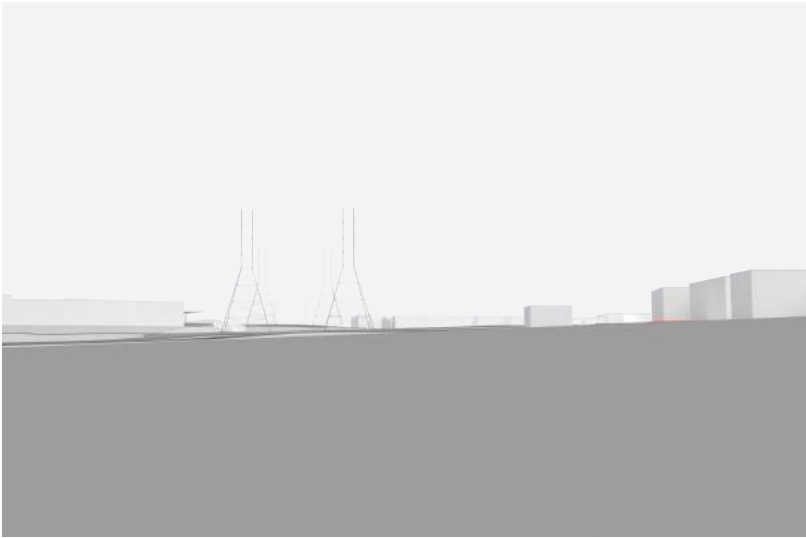
50 Scenario 2027



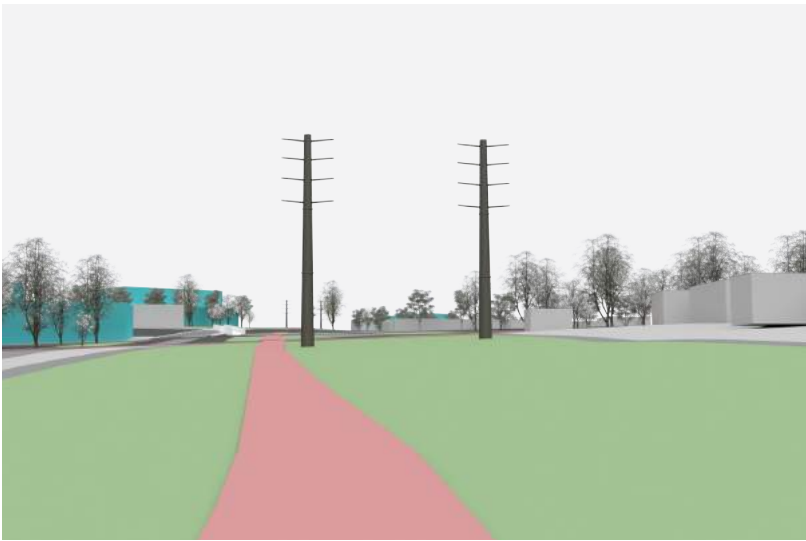
51 Scenario 2035

12.7 View 5 north along Powerlines Reserve towards Station

(Viewpoints marked on 12.1 Concept Map)



52 Existing 2019



53 Scenario 2027



54 Scenario 2035

13.0 Recommendations

13.1 Recommendations for NEL Final Design

- Make efficient use of land by avoiding over-engineered road geometry that inconveniences pedestrians and cyclists, sterilises developable land and produces left-over spaces.
- Locate the Watsonia Road / Greensborough Road junction as far south as possible (towards Richards Avenue) to incorporate the southern commercial strip.
- Replace NEL-impacted power pylons with slender mono-poles (higher with longer cable span) and investigate eliminating the Church car park pylons by replacing with new monopole pairs in the Morwell Street car park beyond the RSL. This would create free public space in the heart of Watsonia as a magnificent project legacy.
- Create maximum width decks (without triggering tunnel requirements) both under the powerlines and at the Greensborough Road / Watsonia Road junction, including a soil depth suitable for small tree planting, to create continuous green connections.
- Treat the diverted Greensborough Road as an urban arterial outside of the NEL acoustic barriers and with frontage buildings, shared trail and local street junctions (pending agreement with VicRoads).
- Ensure space alongside the NEL corridor for linear tree canopy planting, preferably associated with the acoustic barrier.
- Create a new street loop with signalled access off Greensborough Road immediately east of the Station to provide car park access and drop-of/pick-up space, with the potential to extend street access over a future rail deck to Watsonia Road.
- Ensure a visual gap between the new car park structure and any building to its north to maintain a framed view from Watsonia Road central towards the east (Mt Dandenong).
- Confirm that the new Station car park is limited to a semi-basement plus two above ground levels, with the potential to build up to four storeys on top. Add active frontages to the car park along Watsonia Road and allow for a separate building to front and activate the powerlines reserve.

13.2 Recommendations to Other Agencies

Department of Transport and VicTrack

- By 2020: undertake full 'Movement and Place' analysis of Watsonia to establish the role and changes to the street network as an integrated transport and place resource
- By 2027: Prepare excess land around the Station for mixed use development (including the Station car park and Timber Yard sites).
- By 2035: Complete Watsonia Station Upgrade with legible entry building and full DDA access, in association with decking (see below).
- By 2035: Deck over the railway providing a generous Station entry including vehicle access (drop-off / pick-up) and continuous linear space within the powerlines reserve and a street connection from Watsonia Road across NEL to the east.

DHHS Supported by other Government agencies:

- By 2035: Support the renewal of public housing on the DHHS site on the south-east corner of Greensborough Road and the powerlines reserve, to take advantage of its strategic location by then well connected to the Station.

13.3 Recommendations for Planning Scheme Review

- By 2027: Investigate rezoning of land on both sides of Watsonia Road to allow for mixed use redevelopment, with accompanying height and setback controls.
- By 2027: Prepare (with relevant Government

agencies) a master plan for the future rezoning and built form controls for the redevelopment of the existing Station carpark as well as land between the Station and Watsonia Road.

- By 2035: Advocate for relevant Government agencies to prepare a master plan for the future rezoning and built form controls for strategic residential redevelopment of the land adjoining the powerlines reserve to the east of NEL (especially DHHS land).

13.4 Recommendations for Council's Capital Works Agenda

- By 2027: Complete the Council adopted Morwell Avenue parking extension and create a southern end park, including potential removal of the Morwell Avenue roundabout on Watsonia Road.
- By 2027: Negotiate the acquisition of the Church-owned public car park and create a plaza linked to the adjoining Station.
- By 2027: Upgrade the landscaping and long-distance trail in the powerlines reserve, including east of NEL.
- By 2035: Investigate removal of the roundabout at Devonshire Road,
- By 2035: Undertake streetscape upgrades including traffic calming and tree planting, along Watsonia Road (especially the eastern side) from Tennyson Street to Greensborough Road

**ETHOS
URBAN**