

# ARDEN PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

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Prepared for the City of Melbourne  
and the Victorian Planning Authority

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**AECOM**



CITY OF MELBOURNE



## Arden Public Realm and Open Space Strategy

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# CONTENTS

<b>01</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>02</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>03</b>	<b>Arden Vision</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>04</b>	<b>Analysis of Existing Arden</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>05</b>	<b>Benchmark Review</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>06</b>	<b>Apply Learning to Arden</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>07</b>	<b>Arden PROSS Strategy</b>	<b>79</b>



North Melbourne Recreation Reserve



# 01

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Arden's Public Realm and Open Space Strategy (PROSS) aims to provide both a glimpse into, and a roadmap towards creating a precinct that achieves new and ambitious standards in urban renewal and the creation of a high quality, high density, mixed-use urban environment. Through an examination of the existing place, existing open space practices, and an analysis of local and international benchmark precincts, this strategy incorporates both quantitative and qualitative measures and extends them to the whole of the public realm and open space to be created in Arden.

### The Vision

Distilled from the Arden Vision, this strategy seeks to ensure that:

*Arden becomes a new destination for Melbourne, setting the standard for urban renewal and an international innovation precinct that is progressive, innovative and connected locally and globally. With its own civic heart and character, it is renown as a cooler, greener version of the city on the banks of the Moonee Ponds Creek with water ever-present in its neighbourhoods.*



## The key moves

In order to achieve this type and scale of success, the public realm and open spaces of Arden will need to be:

**Seamless** – a continuous network of spaces and corridors that forms a connected public sphere, amplifying the benefits provided by the individual and component parts.

**Integrated** – unlocking the potential of the whole of the Precinct by flexibly and efficiently using all the space available for multiple open space and other purposes across the day, week and year.

**Inclusive** – inviting everyone to share in the Precinct by removing the barriers that discourage or prevent individuals from using spaces due to economic means, physical abilities, or perceptions.

## The plan

Through an examination of local and international benchmark precincts and public realm and open space standards and practices the Strategy has been developed in order to provide for:

- A new Capital City and neighbourhood open space in Arden Central of 1.6 hectares that provides a focus for events and the precinct's identity, as well as the neighbourhood residents and workers,
- A series of open spaces in Arden North that integrate existing unencumbered and restricted open spaces with a new 5.9 hectare stormwater management facility to provide a continuous green space from the Moonee Ponds Creek to Macaulay Road,
- A green link along Munster Terrace in Laurens Street sub-precinct that provides for small, locally-focused spaces and a movement corridor that aids walking access to other open spaces, and
- A network of shady, comfortable and safe green links, key streets and pedestrian-focused streets and lanes that facilitate movement and accommodate some social and recreational informal activity.

## The principles

Through the distillation of the Arden Vision objectives the PROSS will establish a framework for:

01

A distinctive Arden identity

02

A precinct that provides for diverse needs

03

A water-positive precinct

04

A network of public and private spaces

05

A universally accessible precinct

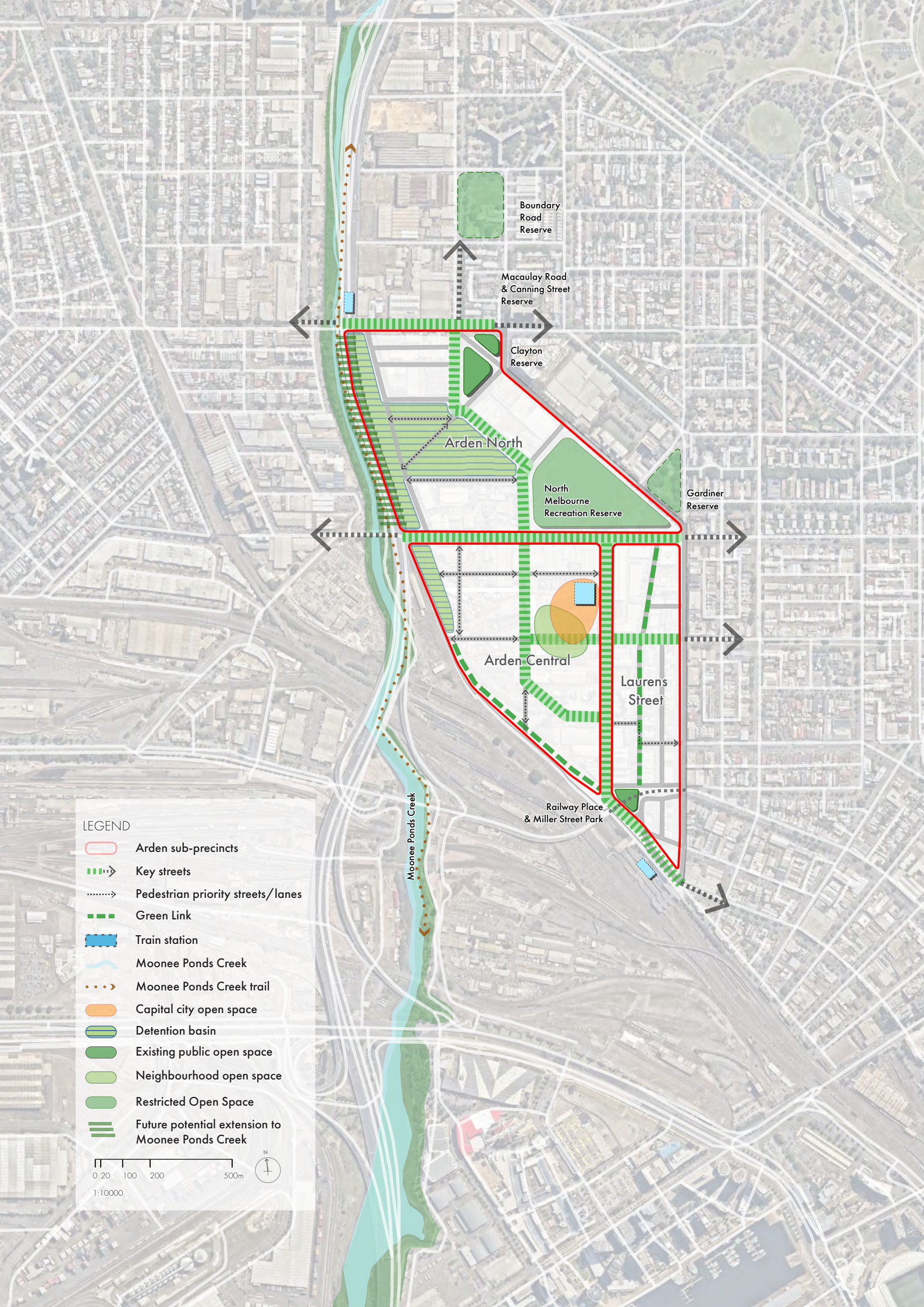
06

A comfortable, green and cool precinct

07

A continuous public realm





LEGEND

- Arden sub-precincts
- Key streets
- Pedestrian priority streets/lanes
- Green Link
- Train station
- Moonee Ponds Creek
- Moonee Ponds Creek trail
- Capital city open space
- Detention basin
- Existing public open space
- Neighbourhood open space
- Restricted Open Space
- Future potential extension to Moonee Ponds Creek





## The sub-precincts

Each sub-precinct within Arden will be afforded specific public realm and open space qualities that directly accommodates for the unique circumstances they each have, including:

### **Arden North**

A community-focused neighbourhood that provides a green, cool setting that draws upon existing open space attributes and green values.

Accommodating a mix of residential and commercial uses that integrate the existing heritage and open spaces of the North Melbourne Recreation Reserve, with a new, expansive stormwater management facility to provide almost 13 hectares of interconnected, green open spaces. This will be available for a range of recreation, biodiversity, stormwater storage and community uses, as well as opportunity for more passive recreational pursuits, and provide for a future direct connection to the Moonee Ponds Creek.

### **Arden Central**

A new, globally-significant hub of innovation, with a seamless, connected public realm. It is centred on a Capital City Open Space that is a destination in its own right and combined with an adjacent Neighbourhood Open Space provide 1.6 hectares of open space.

In addition to the public open space, a further 4.4 hectares of space that can accommodate high levels of pedestrian movement to and from the station, and small scale social and recreational activities. The Capital City open space will be robust and hard-working, with extensive shade and water incorporated into the landscape to create a comfortable, cool and desirable place. It will also exemplify the most extensive integration of private open spaces into a diverse, accessible network of green spaces.

### **Laurens Street**

An already transforming neighbourhood of residential and commercial use that grafts and adapts the long industrial heritage of the Precinct, with Munster Terrace providing a spine of pedestrian movement and passive recreational spaces for the neighbourhood.

It will continue to accommodate the remaining industrial activities while incrementally changing over time to provide for smaller business operations and additional residents. Its public realm and open spaces will be of a local function and character, adapting to and growing from small seeds of space in a similar way to Railway Place and Miller Street Park. Over time it will make better, more efficient and locally-prioritised use of over 5 hectares of public realm that is already available in the neighbourhood. Added to this, will be more rooftop and ancillary space further providing opportunity for greening and recreation.

## **The implementation**

The recommendations of this Strategy will help inform the development of the Arden Precinct Structure Plan, that will enable significant Precinct-wide investment decisions to be made, and inform incremental and individual development direction.

Only together can all of the stakeholders realise the vision for the Precinct, which will continue to evolve as the needs within Arden become more apparent. The ongoing presence of the City of Melbourne and other key asset owners and managers will be required to actively manage what will be a complex, living, urban ecosystem.





Gardiner Reserve, North Melbourne



# 02

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of document

The intent of the Arden PROSS is to inform the open space and public realm objectives and targets for the Arden Precinct Structure Plan being prepared by the City of Melbourne and Victorian Planning Authority.

It is founded on the current Arden Vision, and the objectives recommended by the City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy (2012) as it relates to the Arden Precinct.

The recommendations of this Strategy are intended to substantiate and articulate an overall public realm and open space outcome for Arden which is to be defined in the Arden Precinct Structure Plan and that will require the cooperation of Local and State Government agencies, as well as a range of private developer interests.

### Document structure

This document has been structured in the following way to provide maximum visibility of the rationale for the strategy's development that has been informed by the substantial amount of work that has preceded it.

**Arden Vision** – summarises and distils the key directions and planned outcomes of the Arden Vision that outlines the ambition for the whole Precinct, and how this informs the aims for the public realm and open space network.

**Analysis of Existing Arden** – examines the existing context of Arden and the Precinct itself from both a strategic setting, as well as the physical elements, from the natural setting through the multiple layers of infrastructure and development that contribute to the character and identity of Arden sub-precincts.

**Benchmark Review** – selects and analyses a number of local and international benchmark precincts which are relevant to Arden's future form and identifies key public realm and open space qualities and quantities that help inform the ambition of Arden's public realm and open space.

**Applying Learnings to Arden** – explains the rationale for the evaluation framework for the strategy by both quantitative and qualitative means. This includes an examination of the conventional metrics of open space provision and demonstrates the way this strategy's targets measure up to the benchmark precincts.

Arden PROSS – outlines the vision, key moves, sub-precinct and place outcomes that would provide the type of public realm and open space Arden will need if it is to fulfil its intended role.

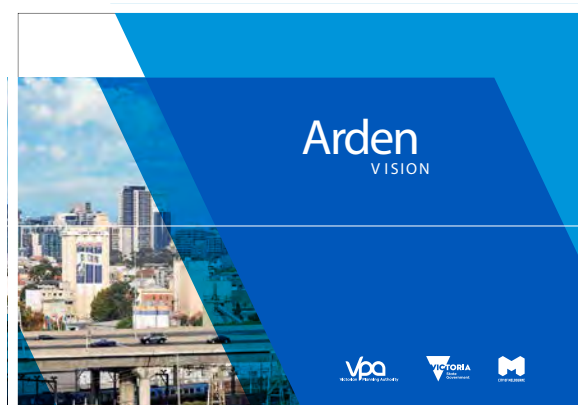


## Background to project

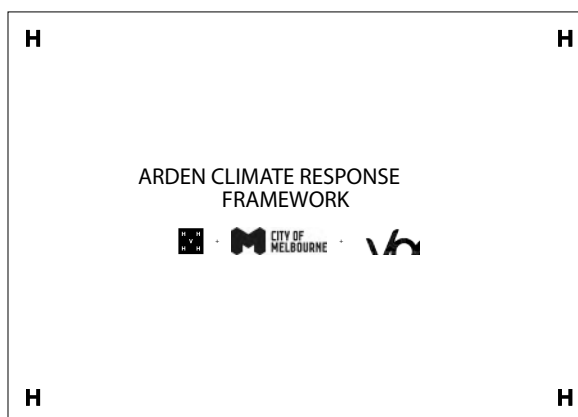
Melbourne's significant growth has reflected the success it has had in attracting investment and talent as one of the world's most liveable, creative and prosperous cities. This has driven substantial levels of urban renewal and redevelopment in central and inner Melbourne, but also necessitated a more substantial level of transport investment by State Government; including Melbourne Metro, which is currently under construction.

The Arden Precinct has been earmarked for significant redevelopment ever since the planning of Melbourne Metro identified the potential for a new railway station in the centre of the Precinct. This has been reflected in the Arden Macaulay Structure Plan (2012) by the City of Melbourne which confirmed Arden Central as the location for 'intensified commercial activity linked to Melbourne Metro'.

The City of Melbourne and the Victorian Planning Authority has continued to work together on the Arden Vision which provided for greater depth and detail on the ambition for Arden, incorporating community and stakeholder inputs. This has provided a foundation for a range of technical reports, including this one, that will contribute to the Arden Precinct Structure Plan, which will provide the planning framework for the redevelopment of the Precinct.



Arden Vision, VPA, 2018



Arden Climate response Framework, VPA, CoM, H.V.H., 2018



Open Space Strategy, CoM, 2012

## Policy context

A substantial number of policy, and precinct-specific studies have provided a broad foundation for the findings and recommendations of this Strategy. These have been grouped in the following way.

**Primary documents** – with significant public realm and open space implications:

- City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy and Technical Report (2012) – provides a municipal-wide analysis of open spaces and identifies open space typology needs for individual neighbourhoods, as well as broader ambitions to maintain open space provision measured per person (resident and worker) across the whole municipality.
- Arden Vision (2019) – outlines the shared vision of the Precinct with a strong emphasis on an innovation-led, job-rich, mixed-use neighbourhood that leverages the unique metropolitan setting that it has with the opening of Melbourne Metro, with a range of directions and detailed planned outcomes for the public realm and open space of Arden identified.

At the time this document was endorsed, the Arden Macaulay Structure Plan was in draft and the population projections were 8,028 workers and 14,000 workers (Open Space Strategy, 2012) as opposed to 15,000 residents and 34,000 workers now (Arden Vision, 2019). For the public realm and open space for Arden, this report recommended:

- A new Capital City Open Space (at least 1.0hectare) at the new train station, and a Small Local Open Space (0.03 to 0.25hectare) to the south of Arden Central (based on the population forecast of the Draft Arden Macaulay Structure Plan at that time).
  - A new Local Open Space (0.26 to 0.9hectare) and upgrades to existing open spaces in Arden North.
  - A new Local Open Space, or two Small Local Open Spaces in the Laurens Street sub-precinct.
  - Public realm connections to the Capital City Trail along Moonee Ponds Creek.
- An urban boulevard along Fogarty Street and Queensberry Street corridors.
  - A Capital City Open Space at Arden Central.
  - A station plaza.
  - Two Local Open Spaces at Arden Central.
  - Improved open space connections along the rail corridor, Victoria, Green, Gracie Street corridors.
  - Open space along the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor.
  - A new permeable street network in Arden Central.
  - Blue-green infrastructure in Arden North.

For the public realm and open space for Arden, this report recommended:



**Policy documents** – with municipal-wide strategic outcomes that include public realm and open space implications:

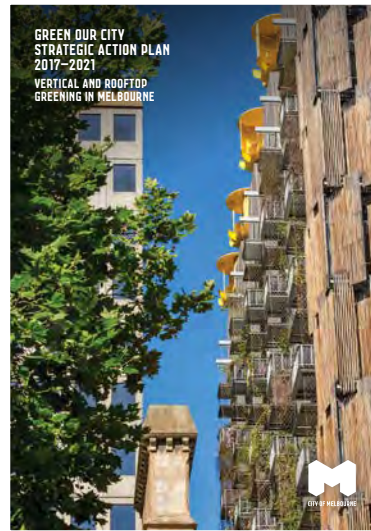
- Urban Forest Strategy 2012-2031 (2012) – identifies the multiple benefits of a greener and shadier urban environment and establishes targets for public realm tree canopy coverage, tree diversity and improved soil and water quality that will sustain a healthy natural ecosystem.
- Transport Strategy 2030 (2019) – identifies the need for greater priority to active transport modes that will increase overall transport capacity in the city, but also bring environmental and social benefits with an emphasis on changes to the way street space is assigned to transport modes.
- Nature in the City Strategy (2017) – identifies the need to focus on the natural environment that sustains the health of the city and in order to improve the health of urban biodiversity and ecology and connect more people with the natural systems that relate to the land and are under threat.
- Green Our City Strategic Action Plan 2017-2021 (2017) – identifies the opportunity for a substantial increase in the urban landscape that can be achieved through the use and integration of green roofs and walls across the city, and the significant opportunity redevelopment precincts provide.
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Refresh (2017) – identifies the need to build Melbourne's resilience to climate change with specific urban renewal actions that emphasise the management of stormwater, and mitigation of urban heat island effect and flooding impacts.
- Amendment C278 Sunlight to Public Spaces - seeks to reduce shadow impacts of surrounding developments on public parks between 10am and 3pm on 21 June by limiting adjacent building heights and increasing built form setbacks.

**Precinct-specific policies and reports** – that provide more background to initiatives and changes planned in and around Arden, with a link to public realm and open space outcomes:

- Arden Macaulay Structure Plan (2012) – establishes the planning framework for redevelopment of Arden's immediate context, including Kensington and North Melbourne to accommodate substantial additional residents and workers with an emphasis on significant growth in Arden Central.
- Moonee Ponds Creek Plan Strategic Opportunities Plan (2019) – identifies the public open space, biodiversity, water management, active transport and cultural heritage opportunities that are available as part of a broader rehabilitation of the waterway as infrastructure development and urban renewal is undertaken along its length.
- Stormwater Management Reports (2018-2019) – a number of stormwater investigations of Arden have been commissioned by the City of Melbourne, City West Water and Melbourne Water that identify the need for substantial stormwater management infrastructure in Arden, including large storage/retarding basins, increased creek-side levees, underground infrastructure, and use of streets for stormwater management.



Transport Strategy, 2019



Green our City Strategic Action Plan, 2017



Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Refresh, CoM, 2017



Nature in The City, 2017



Urban Forest Strategy, 2012

## Definitions of open space and public realm

For the purpose of this strategy, public realm and open space definitions are required to ensure that the analysis and recommendations are clearly understood within a single framework.

Whilst public open space has a well-established set of definitions within the Victorian Planning Provisions, the City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy includes a number of definitions that establish a slightly different framework in order to provide a more complete picture.

For this reason, the following definitions are used in this report which draw upon both documents.

### **Public Realm**

All land accessible to the public is generally referred to as the 'public realm'. The public realm is made up of a range of different space typologies, including open space. Open space is a subset of the public realm and is a broad term that can be used to describe all land that does not contain buildings or structures and is not a thoroughfare or easement.

The Arden PROSS considers the following as elements of the public realm:

### **Public Open Space**

Publicly owned land that is freely accessible to the community and primarily for outdoor recreation and leisure. Public Open Space includes public parks, public gardens, squares and reserves.

### **Unencumbered Public Open Space**

Public open space that is generally free of physical and infrastructure features, or other functions that would limit its development, access or use for outdoor recreation and leisure activities.

### **Restricted Public Open Space**

Public open space that is freely accessible to the community on a restricted or fee paying basis, typically due to organised or club-managed sporting activity.

### **Encumbered Public Open Space**

Publicly owned land set aside for other primary purposes such as conservation, waterways, flood management, heritage and utility and transport infrastructure that can also be made available for community recreation and amenity purposes. Access to and use of these spaces may vary depending on the level of encumbrance that the primary purpose imposes.

### **Green Links**

Publicly accessible space that are narrow and set aside for trails, paths and for conservation. For example, linear parks and shared user paths. These can also be encumbered.

### **Streets and Laneways**

Publicly owned streets and thoroughfares including boulevards, laneways and pedestrian malls.

Private Open Space can further augment access to and the benefits of the public realm and public open space. However, for this report, it remains in addition to and beyond the defined open spaces and public realm recommended in this strategy.

### **Private Open Space**

As per the City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy, Private open space is not part of the public realm. (either on ground level or above) that can be either publicly accessible or restricted to private or communal use for occupants of a development and their visitors.





## Methodology

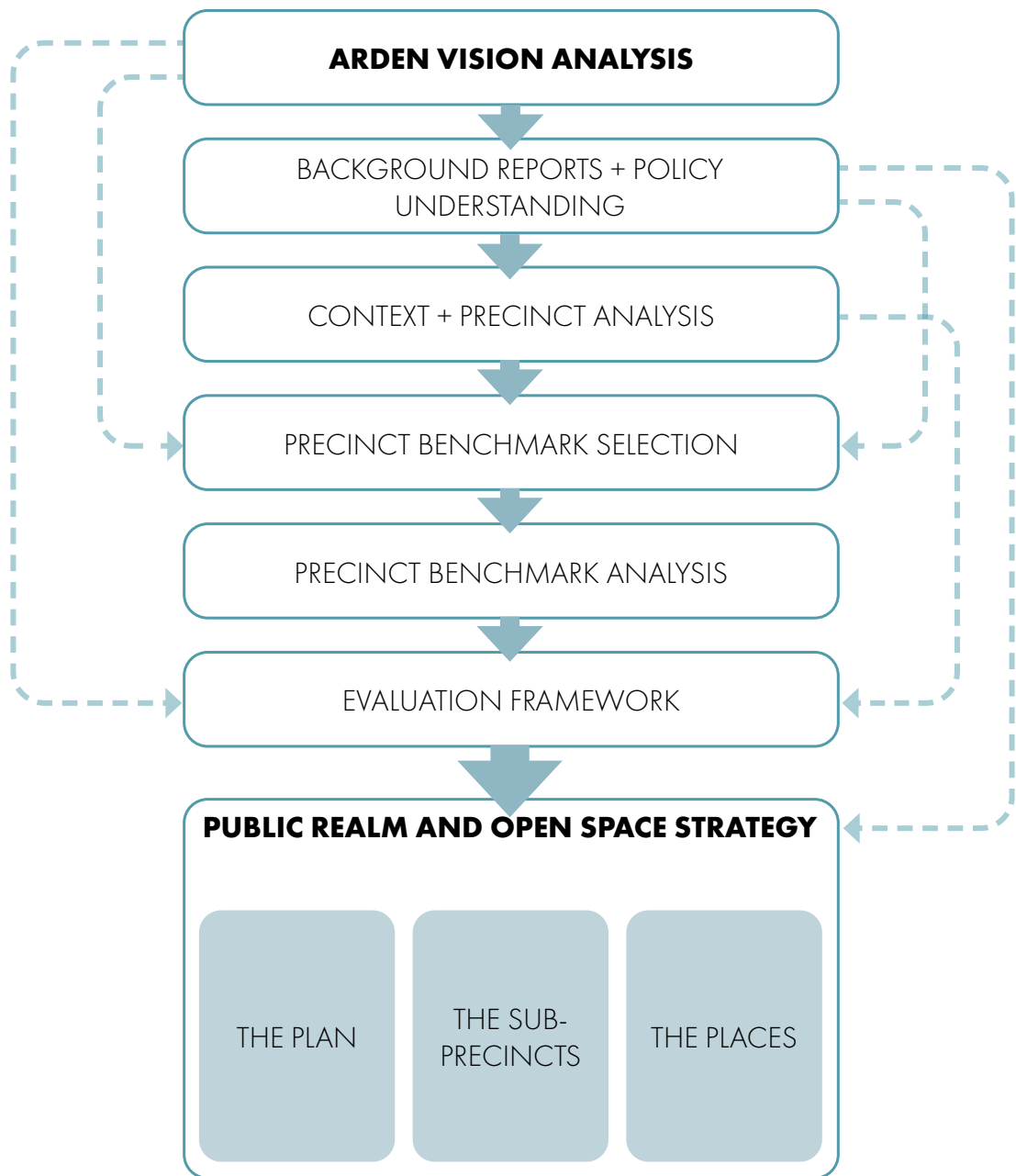
This Strategy has been developed with an emphasis on achieving a new, bold ambition for what will be one of central Melbourne's unique and distinctive neighbourhoods.

Whilst a thorough understanding of the Arden Vision and the background and policy work that has preceded this Strategy was necessary, a significant effort has been attributed to identifying and examining relevant precinct benchmarks for Arden, from which to draw lessons.

The selection of these precincts was informed by the vision, background reports and analysis of the existing characteristics of Arden to ensure that the lessons could viably be applied in the Precinct with a reasonable level of confidence.

The evaluation framework has drawn on these understandings to ensure that the Strategy would address all of the facets of the public realm and drawn on both the qualitative and quantitative learnings, both of which are necessary.

The Strategy itself identifies the Precinct-wide as well as sub-precinct and place-specific recommendations to ensure that the public realm and open space network that is created addresses all of the aspects of the Arden Vision.





# 03

## ARDEN VISION

The redevelopment of Arden has long been anticipated and planned for, with a range of authorities undertaking studies that investigate, analyse and test the substantive issues, opportunities and challenges in developing the Precinct.

The Arden Vision (2018) sets out the ambition for the Precinct and details strategic directions and planned outcomes that have been discussed, shared and agreed by a range of stakeholders and community representatives.

Key statements of that Vision include:

"... the new employment hub will be pivotal to the growth of Victoria's knowledge economy and advancing... a progressive, innovative and connected local and global city. "

"... will have its own civic heart and character... connected to its Aboriginal and industrial heritage... support a diverse resident and worker population... with quality and affordable housing, a thriving network of open spaces, active transport links, and adaptable community facilities, schools and workspaces."

"... a new destination for Melbourne, setting the standard for urban renewal. It will contribute to a future Melbourne that is.. the world's most liveable city....the most forward-looking.

... ideally placed to be an international innovation and technology precinct."

"... at the forefront of sustainable development... an energy efficient district. Water... managed to become a visible feature in the landscape... a cooler, greener version of the city."



## Sub-precinct opportunities

Three distinct sub-precincts have been identified in the Arden Vision. These areas have specific attributes, identities, characters and opportunities for the future of Arden. These three areas will fulfil different roles for their residents and workers, and for the visitors to Arden and Melbourne. Further definition for three sub-precincts in Arden has been developed in the Arden Vision to include:

### Arden North

Arden North is expected to accommodate mixed-use commercial and residential developments and provide community facilities that include and integrate with the existing icons of North Melbourne Recreation Reserve, Recreation Centre and Pool.

### Laurens Street

Laurens Street sub-precinct will accommodate a mix of smaller-scaled residential and commercial uses that integrate with existing industries as it transitions over time, and provide for a vibrant start-up sector that can grow around the strong heritage of buildings and activities.

### Arden Central

The new Arden Station being built as part of the Melbourne Metro tunnel project will form a key catalyst to provide the high-volume activity and connectivity required for a new jobs-focussed precinct. A new metro station is a rare opportunity that offers strong rationale for an area accommodating a mix of commercial, recreational, retail, cultural and residential uses that will act as a hub for metropolitan jobs, education and innovation centred on a new Capital City open space.



## Qualities and quantities

The Arden Vision objectives and planned outcomes identify a range of qualitative and quantitative targets, many of which will directly relate to the public realm and open space outcomes for the Precinct. They can be found across all eight key directions of the vision and will inform the scale and type of public realm and open space that is sought in Arden in order to achieve its aspiration. Of note for this Strategy are the objectives and outcomes of the Arden Vision Key Directions, summarised in Table A.

The Arden Vision sits as an integral part of a greater vision for Melbourne, that is recognised as one of the world's most liveable cities. As its population increases, maintaining and improving the qualities that earn that title will become more difficult as the global competitors emulate achievement that have already been made here.

With Arden being one of Melbourne's newest precincts it holds the potential to become a strong contributor to our overarching identity as a liveable, innovative and creative city that attracts both the most investment and the best talent.



# Table A

Arden Vision Objectives	Arden Vision Planned Outcomes
DIRECTION 1 – TRANSFORMING ARDEN	
At its heart will be a Capital City open space that provides a high-quality place where people meet, play, connect and do business, setting new standards for innovative design of public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Development and intensity of activity catalysed by the station that supports key research, health and education businesses.</li><li>- More than 34,000 jobs.</li><li>- At least 15 hectares of land dedicated to intensive employment and mixed-use activities.</li></ul>
It will be a distinctive place with an identity that builds on existing assets including North Melbourne’s permeable connected neighbourhood, heritage buildings and streetscapes and the Moonee ponds Creek and uses architecture art and design to reinforce its identity as a centre of innovation	
DIRECTION 2 DESIGNING A DISTINCTIVE PLACE	
A high-quality public realm will support investment attraction. It will be consistently delivered over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Significant industrial buildings are protected and reused.</li><li>- Existing community assets such as the North Melbourne Football Club, Recreation Centre and Pool continue to contribute to the precinct’s character</li><li>- Public art and urban design that responds to the cultural heritage, local history and community in the creative design of parks, open spaces, signage and wayfinding.</li></ul>
The diverse economic roles of the precinct will be reinforced by an urban form that accommodates both small and large enterprises and places for living within a fine-grained, permeable and pedestrian-cycle-friendly environment.	
The street network will be stimulating, attractive and safe, providing connections to active transport, open spaces and view to key landmarks.	
Arden assets, such as heritage places, natural features and water will help the urban form to reinforce local identity	
DIRECTION 3 EMBEDDING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE	
It will create diverse and healthy ecosystems that support community wellbeing and wildlife, reconnecting people to natural environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Development that meets or exceeds targets for urban cooling, extending the tree canopy and protecting biodiversity.</li><li>- Sustainable waste and water management systems.</li></ul>
DIRECTION 4 ACCOMMODATING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES	
Arden will house a diverse population across a range of ages and incomes and cater for specific housing needs, including for key workers, creative industry workers, students, families, first home buyers and pensioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A residential population of 15,000.</li><li>- At least 6% of residential development delivered through community housing or shared equity.</li><li>- At least 5 % of private housing to be universally accessible.</li></ul>
DIRECTION 5 PRIORITISING ACTIVE TRANSPORT	
Priority will be given to active and public transport to, from and within the precinct that connect Arden with the CBD, Parkville and the growing western suburbs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mode share for all trips to be:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 60% public transport</li><li>- 30% active transport (walking and cycling)</li><li>- 10% private vehicle</li></ul></li><li>- Pedestrians and cyclists have priority on key streets</li></ul>
Create a network of walkable urban boulevards and streets that will be universally accessible, safe and provide efficient connections throughout the entire precinct.	
DIRECTION 7 CELEBRATING WATER	
The Moonee Ponds Creek corridor will be celebrated as a waterway with recreational, environmental and active transport functions and a valued environmental and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All new development meets recognised best practice water sensitive urban design standards.</li><li>- Recreation spaces, active transport links, flood mitigation and expanded flora and fauna habitats will be delivered through integrated management of the Moonee Ponds Creek.</li></ul>
The City of Melbourne-led Moonee Ponds Creek Plan will identify opportunities to broaden the span of the creek corridor and introduce new open spaces by re-purposing adjacent Victorian Government-owned land	
Blue-green infrastructure (combining open space and flood mitigation) will create a distinctive sense of place around water in the landscape, provide open spaces for recreation and biodiversity, and reduce stormwater and flooding risks.	
DIRECTION 8 CREATING DIVERSE OPEN SPACES	
A generous open space network will connect new and existing neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Green streets and open spaces contribute to the minimum 40% tree canopy target.</li><li>- Open space within 300 metres of all residents and workers.</li><li>- The City of Melbourne minimum requirement of 7.06% of land available for development, in addition to the Capital City open space.</li><li>- Open spaces are designed to combine passive and active opportunities with flood mitigation.</li><li>- Protection of solar access for key open spaces.</li><li>- Garden spaces for local food production.</li></ul>
Open spaces will be diverse in function and size and integrated with walking and cycling links	
A Capital City open space located in Arden Central will be a key feature of Arden’s new identity, along with new neighbourhood parks and green streets	
The Moonee Ponds Creek corridor will be rejuvenated as one of Melbourne’s significant and valued waterways and linear open spaces	
The creek corridor will offer passive and active recreation opportunities	
The Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne will work in partnership to deliver new open spaces	

## Unique attributes

Whilst a diverse range of details will need to be integrated and resolved in order to achieve a high-quality public realm and open space outcome at Arden, the unique attributes include:

A large central site in a single Government ownership providing a relatively 'clean slate' to create unique open space and public realm outcomes.

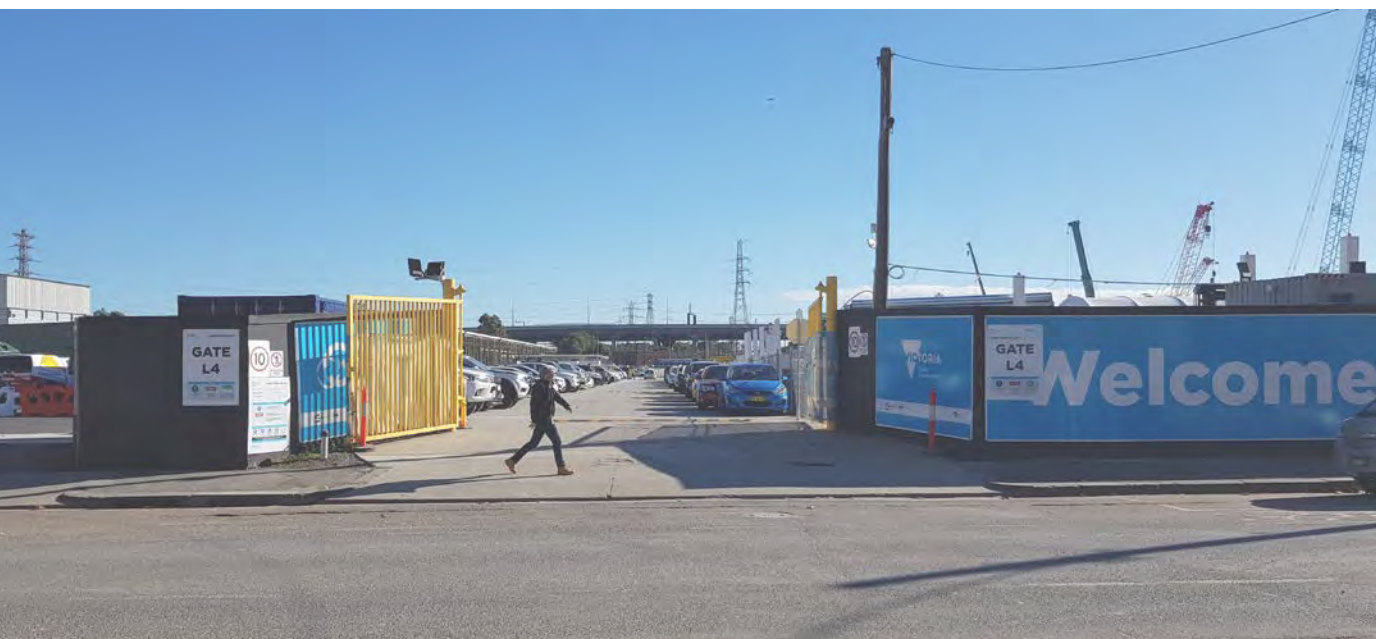
A new, large, diverse community of residents and workers that will both need and be contributors to the local patterns of life in the Precinct.

A new railway station providing vast new sustainable transport opportunities into an area with a somewhat constrained local road network – demanding modal shift.

The need to mitigate significant flooding in the Precinct which will also contribute to the open space character and local micro-climate.

A shared understanding that active and public transport will have to predominate within the Precinct's road network.

The proximity to Moonee Ponds Creek and the opportunity to establish future direct links to it.



Arden Central - New Arden Station Works

## Public realm and open space vision

The Vision for Arden identifies the need for the public realm and open space to be of world class if it is to be successful.

This requires a strategy that considers traditional quantities and distribution of open space provision, but also identifies the qualities and characteristics of open space and public realm that can provide appropriately for the Precinct's roles.

Distilled from the Arden Vision, this strategy seeks to ensure that:

**Arden becomes a new destination for Melbourne, setting the standard for urban renewal and achieving an international innovation precinct that is progressive, innovative and connected locally and globally. With its own civic heart and character, it is renown as a cooler, greener version of the city on the banks of the Moonee Ponds Creek with water ever-present in its neighbourhoods.**





Gardiner Reserve, North Melbourne



# 04

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING ARDEN

Arden has long been part of the industrial area of North Melbourne and developed closely with the needs of the central city. The site's setting, heritage and existing assets and characteristics should inform its future redevelopment if it is to successfully and authentically achieve its future vision.

Existing Open Space in Arden

Open space	Size	Use
1. North Melbourne Recreation Reserve	4.51 ha	1 x football oval (restricted use) 1 x football club Walking track 1 x recreation centre (gym, indoor basketball/netball/ half court) (restricted use) 1 x aquatic centre (restricted use), Multi-purpose sports pitch and flexible lawn
2. Clayton Reserve	0.65 ha	1 x dog off leash area
3. Canning St and Macaulay Rd Reserve	0.25 ha	Flexible lawn
4. Railway Place + Miller Street Park	0.11 ha	1 x skate park 1 x dog off leash area Flexible lawn

## The existing context

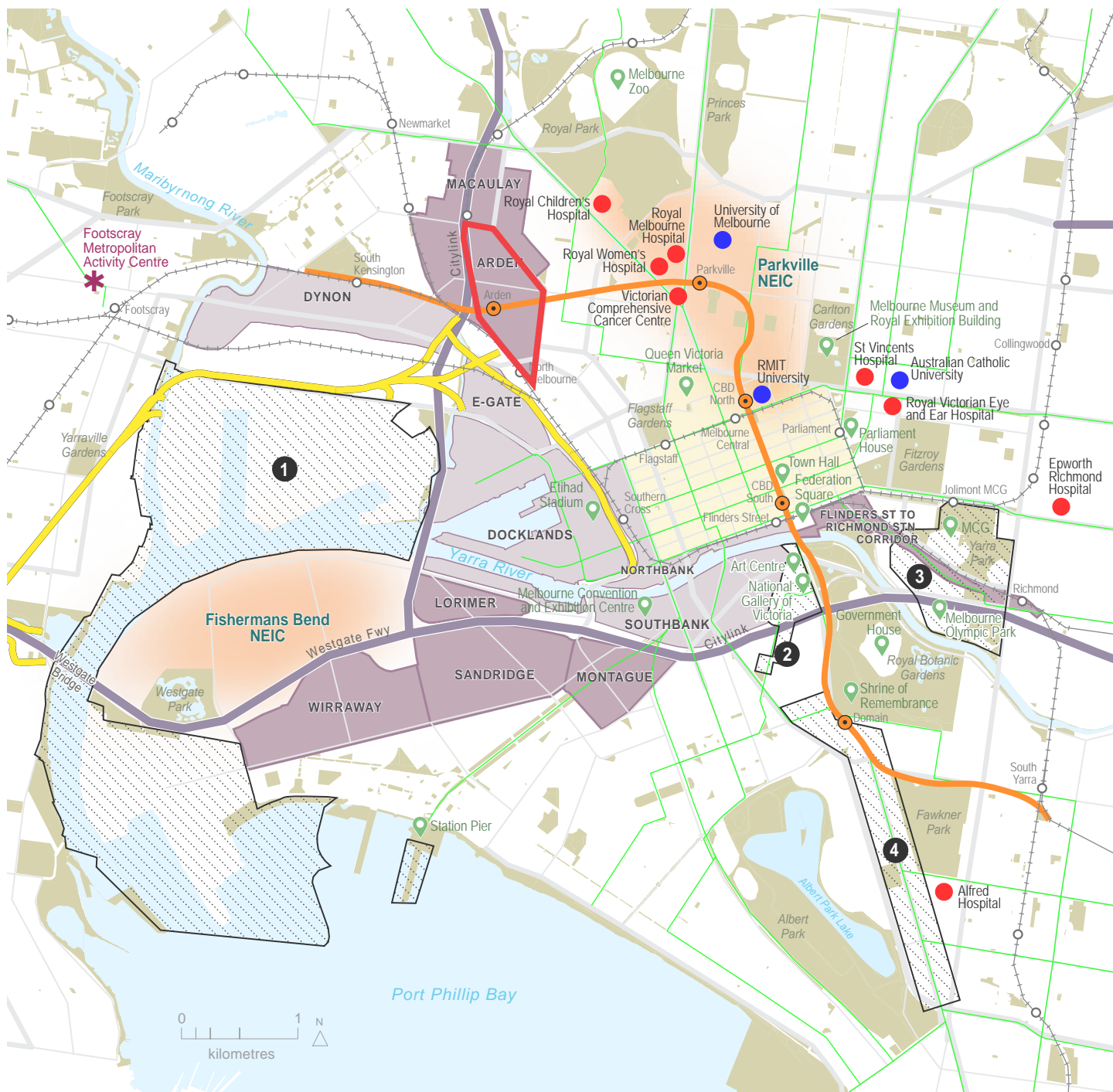
### Urban setting

Arden sits within 1 kilometre of both the Melbourne Central City and the Parkville National Employment and Innovation Cluster, together accommodating some of Australia's leading educational and biomedical institutions. They also accommodate professional services and global firms that attract significant international investment and talent.

Within its immediate vicinity to the east is the well-established residential areas of North Melbourne that accommodate a diverse community in private and public housing across a range of housing types from Victorian terraces to modern high-rise apartments. Land uses have typically followed the contours of the land with industrial uses located in the lower, more flood prone areas along the Moonee Ponds Creek and residential uses beyond that. Areas to the south are predominantly rail-yards that are a testimony to Melbourne's industrial and agricultural economic heritage. Some of this infrastructure has become redundant with likely future changes to make better use of this land.

As Melbourne has grown, areas at the fringe of the Central City have undergone substantial change. Docklands, to Arden's south, has undergone a significant transformation from its port activity roots. However, all of Arden's context has undergone almost continual incremental redevelopment as economic activities and buildings have reached the end of their utility. More recent redevelopment pressure in the whole of the immediate vicinity has prompted the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Planning Authority to undertake more comprehensive and detailed planning for all of Arden Macaulay, City North, as well as Arden.





## Map 4

### Key features in and around Melbourne's central city

Central Business District

National employment and innovation cluster (NEIC)

Major urban renewal precinct (2015 - 2051+)

Priority precinct<sup>(1)</sup>

Other precinct

Health facility

Education facility

Key precinct

1 Port of Melbourne

2 Arts precinct

3 Sports precinct

4 St Kilda Road precinct

Landmark

Public open space

Arden Precinct

Metro Tunnel (rail)

New station

State-significant road corridor

Western Distributor (potential alignment)

Rail network

Train station

Tram network

Road network

Waterway

Waterbody

(1) Priority precincts:

1 Fishermans Bend (Lorimer, Montague, Sandridge, Wirraway)

2 Arden and Macaulay

3 Flinders Street Station to Richmond Station Corridor

Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

## Movement setting

Arden is surrounded by significant rail and road infrastructure that conveys people and freight to, or around Melbourne's Central City. Significant rail, light rail, road, cycling and pedestrian transport infrastructure is located in the immediate vicinity, with Melbourne Metro and West Gate Tunnel further adding substantial new facilities. As a result of the surrounding movement corridors, Arden has few cross-precinct movement corridors and a highly constrained perimeter.

The dense road network of North Melbourne and West Melbourne provides for pedestrian and cycling movement between Arden and the Central City, Parkville and Kensington, however high-volume traffic movements create barriers along sections of Dryburgh Street, Arden Street, Macaulay Road, Dynon Road and Flemington Road. Streets typically don't provide for pedestrian and cycling priority, however Arden Street, Macaulay Road and Flemington Road also provide on-road cycling lanes. The Moonee Ponds Creek Trail provides walking and cycling access as a part of the Capital City Trail, but has little interaction with the Arden precinct in its current configuration.

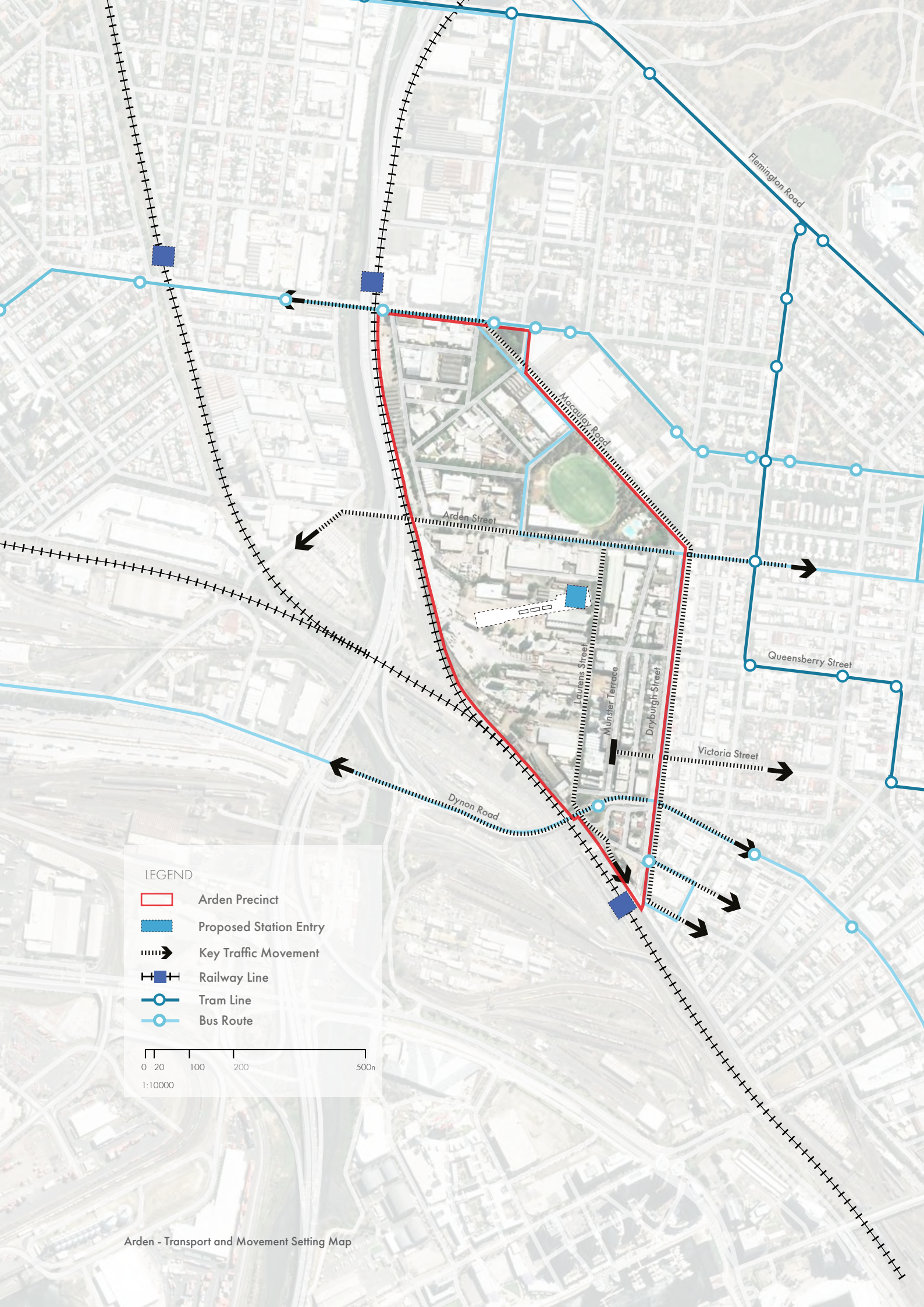
Rail infrastructure to the west of Arden provides access to the metropolitan and regional rail network for the greater western districts of Melbourne. However, it also severs direct access to the Moonee Ponds Creek, and together with the elevated freeway is a significant physical and visual disconnection between Arden, Moonee Ponds Creek and Kensington.

The Route 57 tram line lies 150 metres east of Arden and provides access to the Central City, the Parkville NEIC and the inner western suburbs.

Citylink provides access to the metropolitan freeway network to greater Melbourne districts, however, while imposing a significant visual impact along the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor and the western skyline, it can only be accessed via Dynon Road and Racecourse Road. This forms part of an identifiable sequence of 'gateway' experiences for freeway users from the 'Melbourne International Gateway' (also known as the Cheese Stick) to the Bolte Bridge. The visual impacts are primarily felt when at close proximity to the bridge or from areas of higher elevation such as the Laurens St sub-precinct.

In addition to the existing transport network, Melbourne Metro will add further rail connectivity with direct access to Parkville, the Central City and Pakenham, Cranbourne and Sunbury Lines. The construction of West Gate Tunnel will provide greater road access to western Melbourne and Geelong, but also dedicated cycling routes to Footscray, the Sunshine NEIC and beyond.





LEGEND

- Arden Precinct
- Proposed Station Entry
- Key Traffic Movement
- Railway Line
- Tram Line
- Bus Route

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## Natural and open space setting

Most, if not all of the native vegetation in Arden's vicinity has been removed, with development of the area occurring early in Melbourne's establishment. Moonee Ponds Creek remains visible as a waterway, however it has been significantly changed from its natural form.

A number of large public open spaces lie within 1 kilometre of Arden, including Royal Park to the north, JJ Holland Park to the west and Flagstaff Gardens to the east. These three open spaces combined provide over 218 hectares of open space, (approximately 40% of the total public open space within the City of Melbourne) and accommodate a range of leisure and recreational opportunities which are already heavily used.

The larger surrounding public open spaces can be classified in the following way using the classification identified in the City of Melbourne's Open Space Strategy.

Royal Park provides a range of metropolitan and State-significant facilities including the Melbourne Zoo and the State Netball and Hockey Centre, as well a range of sport fields for football, cricket and baseball and Royal Park Golf Course. Large areas of grassland and woodland provide for passive recreation and biodiversity values. Flemington Road is a substantial barrier to walking access to Royal

Park and many of the recreational facilities are a further 1 km away from the park's nearest edge to Arden.

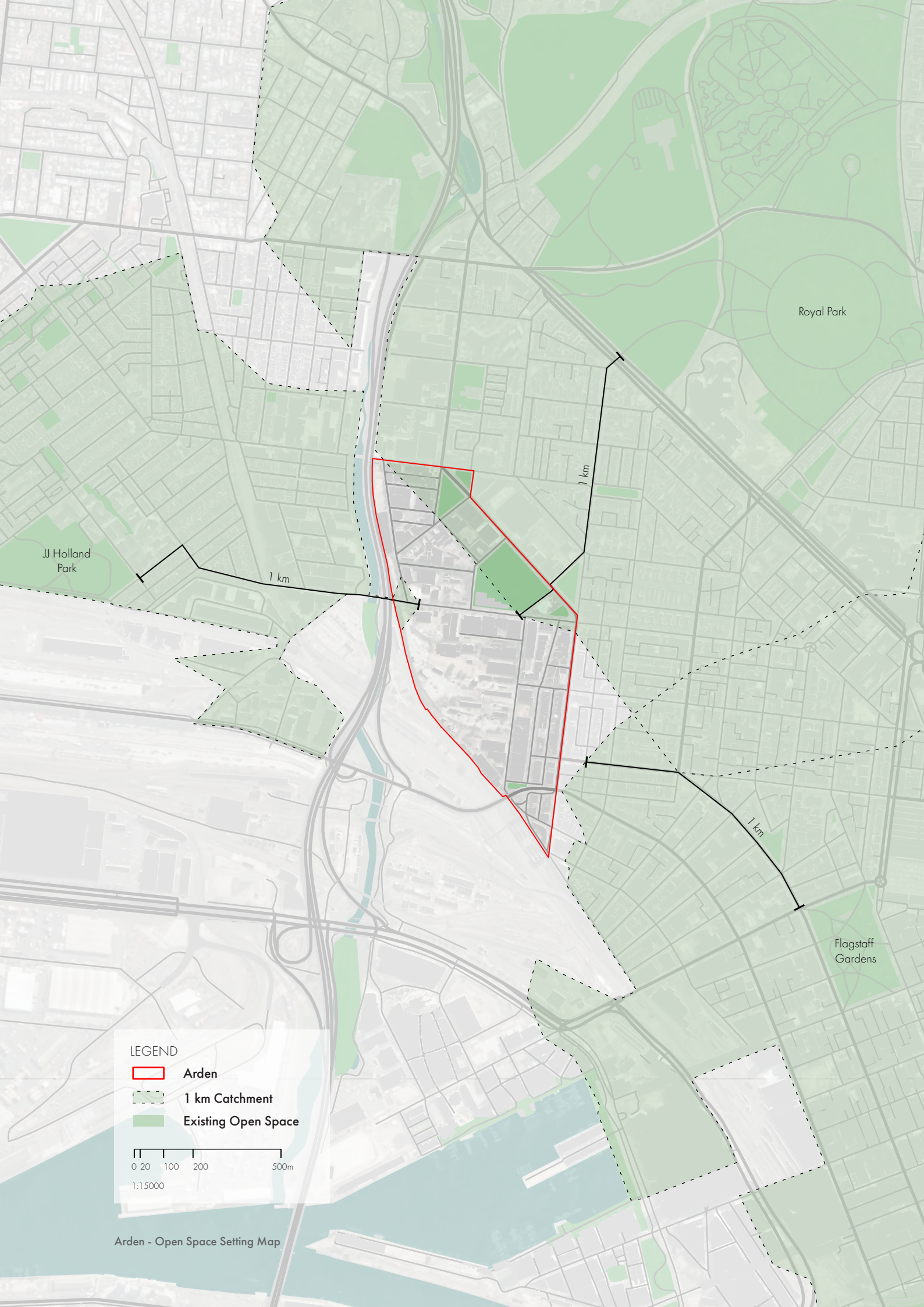
JJ Holland Park and Flagstaff Gardens are much more contained and provide for structured sport and recreation for more of the local community in addition to these, a range of passive recreation and community facilities are provided in both.

In the immediate vicinity of Arden smaller reserves including Gardiner and Hawke and Adderley Street Park and Eades Park provide for smaller, local community passive recreation opportunities such as playgrounds and dog walking. More recently, many of these have been redeveloped to expand into adjacent road reservations to provide more space to the local community.

In addition to the open spaces, the surrounding area was originally laid out in the 1860's establishing the gridded street network with the generous proportions of main streets that were established in central Melbourne. This has provided landscape generosity within parts of the public realm, with many streets such as Dryburgh and Melrose Streets exhibiting wide and well-planted medians. Much of the opportunity for provision of high-quality public realm within the road reservations of the network has not been realised with the current industrial land use and the vehicle access needs of the area.

Existing open spaces in the Arden context

	Classification	Use
Royal Park	State	Nature conservation Recreation Restricted sporting Informal use
JJ Holland Park	Municipal	Sporting Recreation Informal use
Flagstaff Gardens	Regional	Informal use Restricted sporting Recreation
Boundary Road Reserve	Neighbourhood	Recreation Sporting Play



LEGEND

- Arden
- 1 km Catchment
- Existing Open Space

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## The existing precinct

The Arden Precinct reflects much of its immediate context and will become the centre of its immediate neighbourhood setting with the opening of Melbourne Metro. Its existing characteristics will need to inform its future identity and integrate with its surrounds to ensure it successfully remains connected to the networks, activities and life of the community.

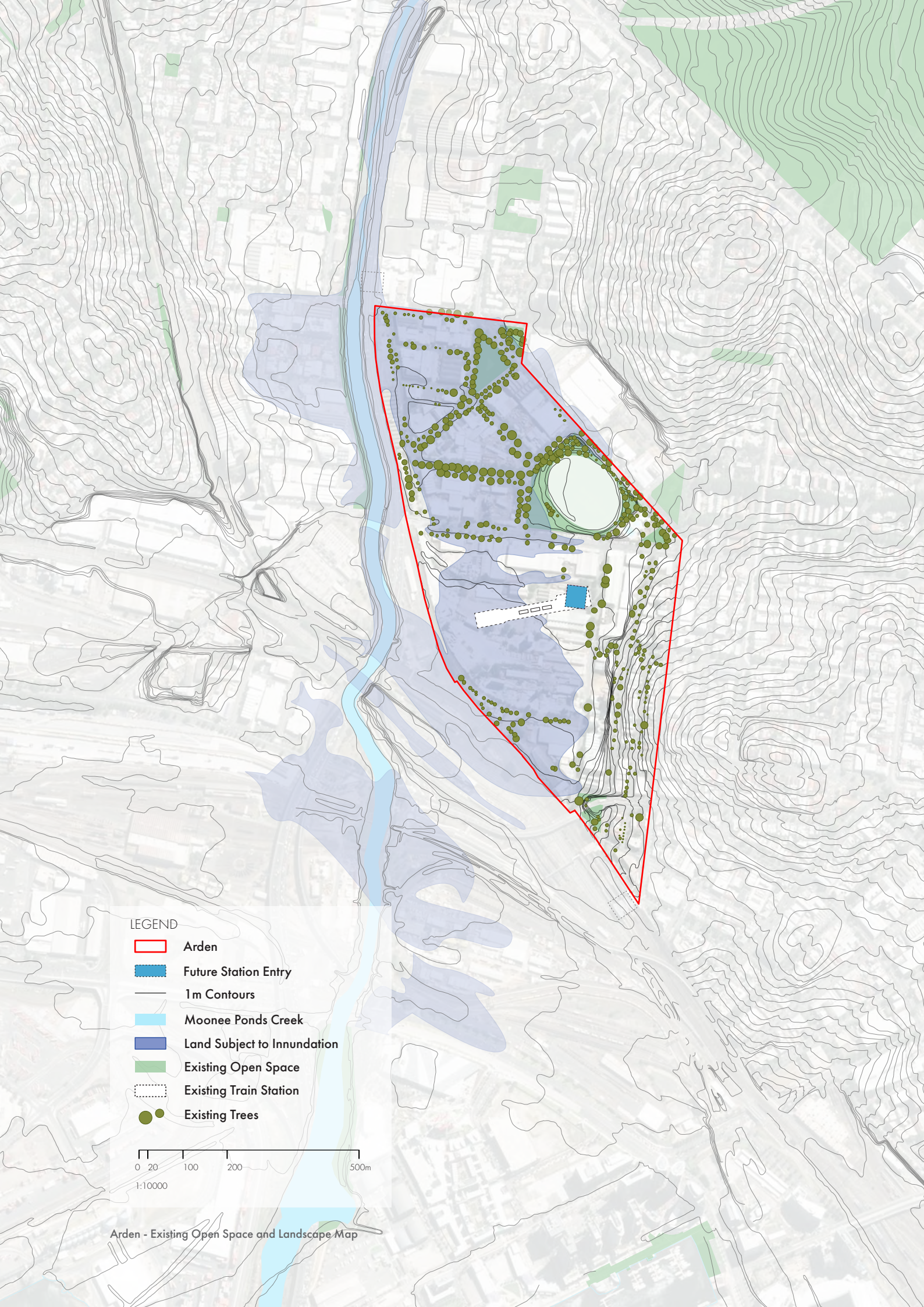
## Nature and open space

The topography of Arden has informed its current pattern of transport networks and land uses with the Moonee Ponds Creek flood plain following the course of that waterway along the western boundary of the Precinct, with a transition to the more elevated surrounds along Munster Terrace and Shiel Street (parallel and beyond Macaulay Road). The steep topographical rise in the Laurens Street sub-precinct is a unique feature which will provides for long sweeping views across the Arden Central site.

This topographical change also highlights the areas that continue to be most exposed to urban and waterway flooding as the Precinct lies at the bottom of a large stormwater catchment.

The native landscape that once existed in this location has been removed and significantly altered, with the most significant landscape now in the form of large, predominately exotic tree species planted along key streets and in open spaces. Notable among these examples are Green, Gracie and Henderson Streets, North Melbourne Recreation Reserve, Clayton Reserve and Gardiner Reserve. Whilst not still pertaining to the site's original ecological qualities, the Arden North sub-precinct has strong topographical, hydrological and vegetative attributes that are shared with the Moonee Ponds Creek.





LEGEND

- Arden
- Future Station Entry
- 1m Contours
- Moonee Ponds Creek
- Land Subject to Inundation
- Existing Open Space
- Existing Train Station
- Existing Trees

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## Managing stormwater

Arden's low elevation, predominant flatness and location makes the area flood-prone. The Moonee Ponds Creek flanks the western border of the site at the bottom of a vast drainage catchment, as this area receives the flows from the greater catchment, it can be very difficult to completely mitigate flooding impacts in the Precinct.

Reducing Arden's risk to flooding will be fundamental to the type of transformation it aspires to undertake, and a range of investigations led by Melbourne Water have examined the scale and type of mitigations that will be needed.

In addition to a range of underwater storage and conveyance infrastructure, of particular significance is the need to accommodate approximately 5.9 hectares of aboveground stormwater retarding basins that would protect private property in Arden and allow stormwater to eventually drain to the Moonee Ponds Creek once its own water level has returned to a safe level.

Traditionally these types of facilities have been designed to exclusively manage stormwater, however, increasingly they are seen as untapped open space resources that are developed to also

provide recreational, native habitat and other open space benefits. Many former 'retarding basins' have also been redeveloped into significant open space destinations and wildlife sanctuaries more recently.

The facility planned for Arden is estimated have only a 1% chance of being fully submerged at any one time and otherwise would be mostly or completely dry with the potential to become a major part of the public realm and open spaces of Arden.

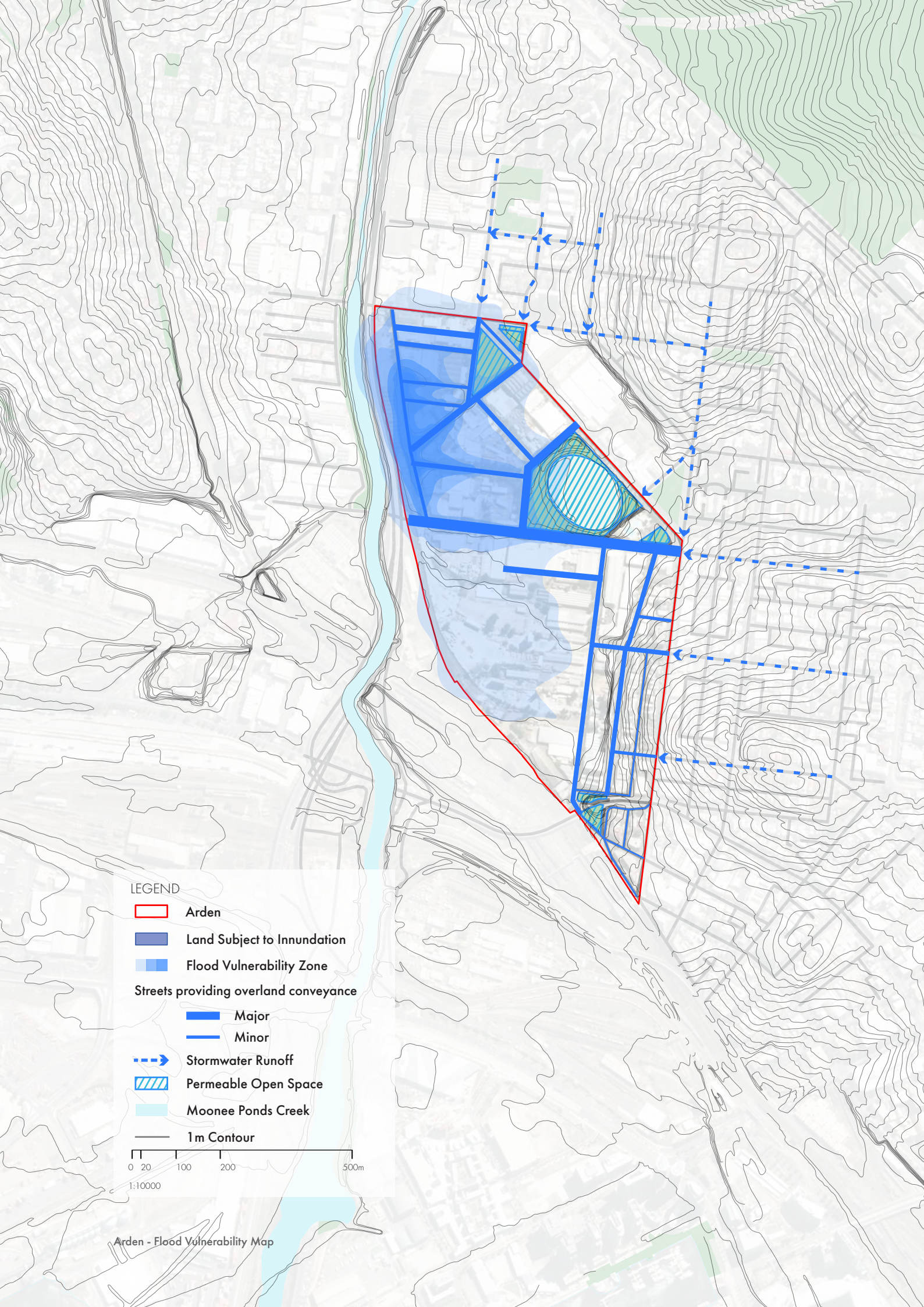
The facility is functionally required to be at the low point of the precinct, which is in the approximate location of Green, Gracie and Langford Streets in the Arden North Sub-Precinct.

Its future form is one that can be shaped to provide a more fully integrated public realm for the whole of Arden.



Karkarook Park, Vic<sup>3</sup>





LEGEND



Arden



Land Subject to Innundation



Flood Vulnerability Zone

Streets providing overland conveyance



Major



Minor



Stormwater Runoff



Permeable Open Space



Moonee Ponds Creek



1m Contour

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## Indigenous and post-settlement history

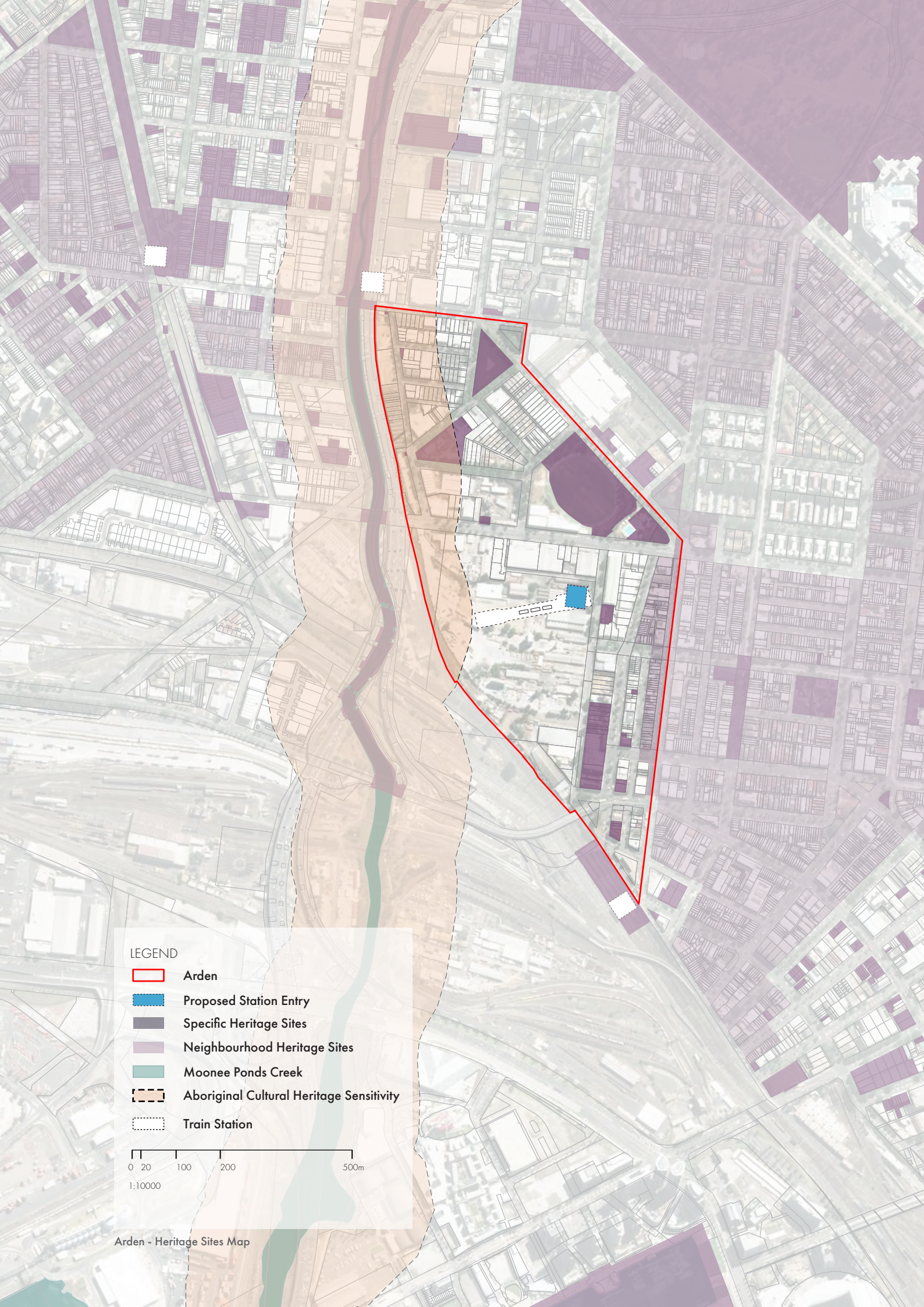
Arden lies within an area that the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung inhabited before the arrival of European settlers, with the Moonee Ponds Creek identified as a corridor which is still likely to contain artefacts given the importance it would have had as a food source.

At the time of writing, a thorough study into the Indigenous history of Arden and the significance of the land and the remnants of cultural heritage was being undertaken by the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Planning Authority. This will further expand on the Indigenous heritage of the land that opportunities that may provide.








Most of the Arden's post-settlement heritage reflects its industrial and working-class past, with specific buildings such as the Weston Milling building on Laurens Street identified as locally significant, as well as the general urban form that exemplifies industrial neighbourhoods from the late 1800's to the mid-20th century.

In addition to built heritage that is valued for the character that it contributes to the Precinct, other identified heritage places are important for their community-orientated role, including the North Melbourne Recreation Reserve from the 1880s and the Lost Dogs Home on Gracie Street, dating back to the 1930s. The significance of these places is related primarily to the social significance they represent to the community ahead of any aesthetic or architectural significance.





LEGEND

-  Arden
-  Proposed Station Entry
-  Specific Heritage Sites
-  Neighbourhood Heritage Sites
-  Moonee Ponds Creek
-  Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity
-  Train Station

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## Urban pattern and movement

North Melbourne and West Melbourne's street blocks were laid out by Robert Hoddle, the surveyor of the district until 1853. Arden's streets therefore reflect much of the original standards that Hoddle followed as part of setting out central Melbourne's 'Hoddle' grid. This includes wide, 30 metre road reservations for main streets and regular street blocks, still evident in the dimensions of the Laurens Street sub-precinct.

Many of the anomalies in the urban structure of the precinct are a result of reconciling the north-south geometry of inner Melbourne and the north-west/south-east movement networks between central Melbourne and the original bridge crossings of the Moonee Ponds Creek.

Macaulay Road, Arden, Queensberry and Victoria Streets provide the primary east-west connections that currently serve a range of pedestrian, cycling, vehicle, parking and landscape arrangements within their respective reservations. Dryburgh Street remains the only example of the north-south grid to Hoddle's original dimensions, with other local streets of a range of dimensions reflecting the transport and access needs of the original commercial, residential or industrial uses.

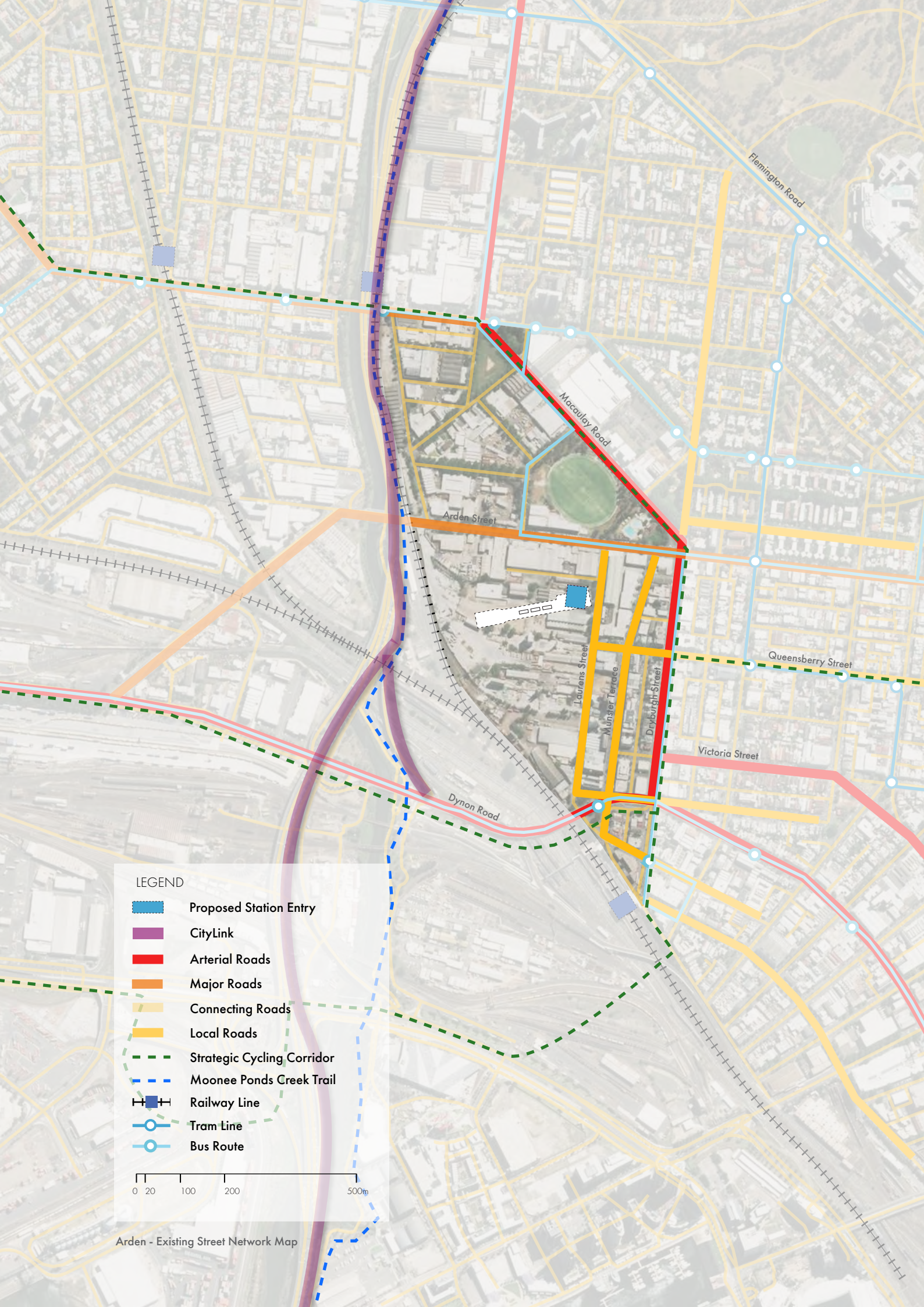
Pedestrian movements within Arden are provided for along all streets, with varying levels of amenity relative to the traffic volumes that streets have been designed to accommodate, with well-treed streets such as Green Street, as well as highly-paved environments such as Munster Terrace. Whilst space is available for pedestrians and cyclists the environment is relatively inhospitable with steep

topography, little or no physical separation of cyclists and motorists, irregular tree planting and uneven surfaces providing little amenity for pedestrians. This reinforces perceptions of vehicular dominance and a lack of transport options.

Dedicated cycling lanes have progressively been introduced to some key routes such as parts of Dryburgh, Laurens, Queensberry and Arden Streets and Macaulay Road, while off-road cycling is provided along the Moonee Ponds Trail (also part of the Capital City Trail). This however remains a hostile environment to cycle in with steep inclines, heavy traffic and unprotected lanes.

Currently, rail services are accessible from North Melbourne station in the south of the Precinct and Macaulay Station immediately to the north, however this will be dramatically improved with the opening of the new Arden Station in the heart of the Precinct as part of Melbourne Metro. This will provide fast, high-quality public transport access to Parkville NEIC and the Central City. Public transport is also available through the Route 57 tram route, east of the Precinct and 402, 216 and 952 bus routes.





LEGEND

- Proposed Station Entry
- CityLink
- Arterial Roads
- Major Roads
- Connecting Roads
- Local Roads
- Strategic Cycling Corridor
- Moonee Ponds Creek Trail
- Railway Line
- Tram Line
- Bus Route

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Arden - Existing Street Network Map

## Activities and uses

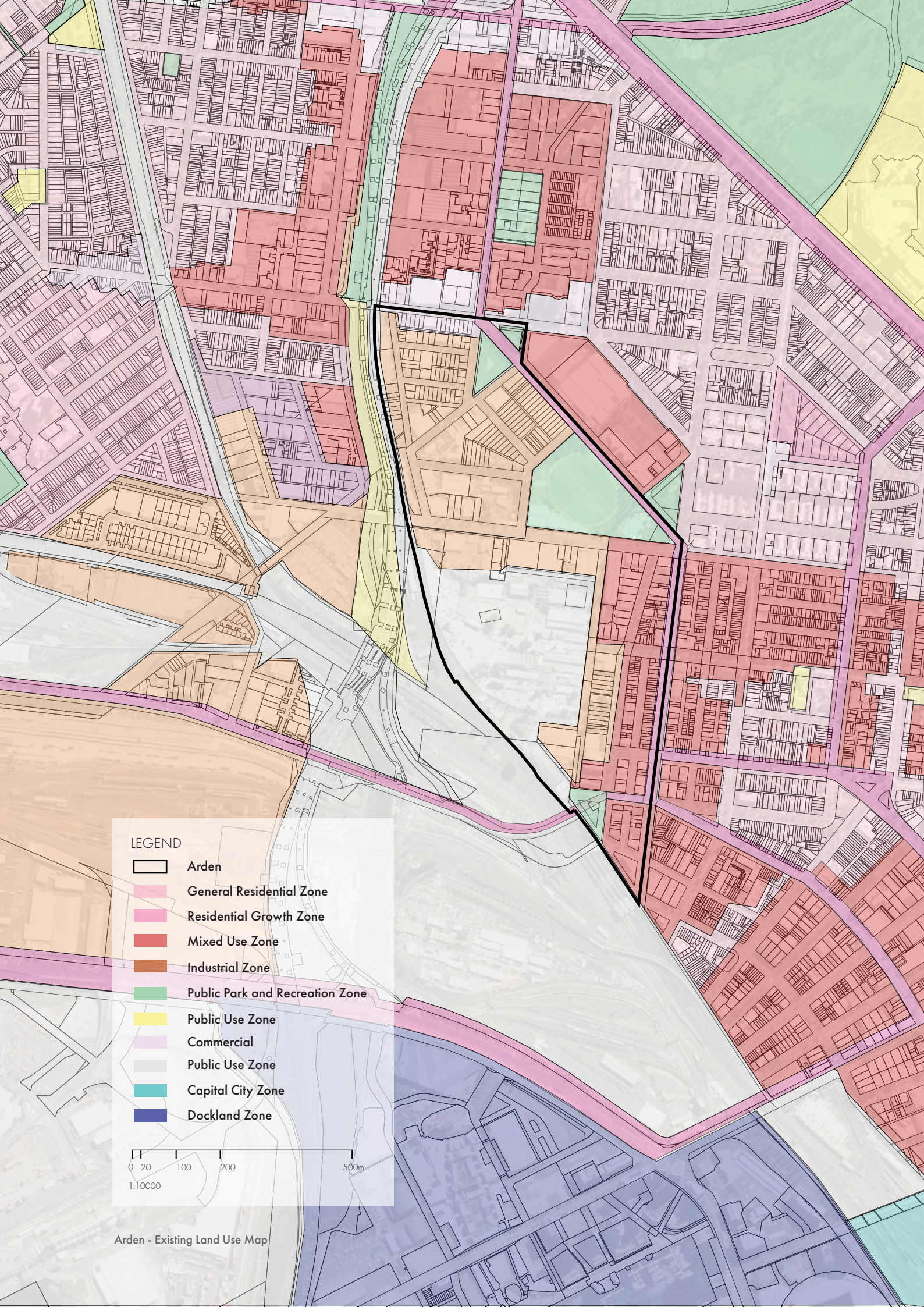
Currently, Arden is a predominantly industrial or post-industrial precinct, evidenced by the Industrial 3 Zone, Commercial 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone (the latter of which is a more recent feature and allows for residential development). The Laurens Street sub-precinct is the only part of Arden that has remnants of some original, low density housing.

Redevelopment in Arden has continued incrementally which has included a range of mixed-use developments including office and residential units of up to 5 storeys in the Laurens Street sub-precinct.












Many industrial activities continue across the precinct, including the Weston Milling site. Other uses and activities of significance include the recreation, community and sport club activities at the North Melbourne Recreation Reserve site, and the Melbourne Lost Dogs Home at Gracie Street.

The large single site in which the new Arden Station is being built formerly accommodated a range of rail-related uses including maintenance which have been relocated, allowing for this site to accommodate a slew of new uses that leverage their proximity to the new station.





LEGEND

-  Arden
-  General Residential Zone
-  Residential Growth Zone
-  Mixed Use Zone
-  Industrial Zone
-  Public Park and Recreation Zone
-  Public Use Zone
-  Commercial
-  Public Use Zone
-  Capital City Zone
-  Dockland Zone

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