City of DAREBIN

the place to live

HIGH STREET PRESTON STREETSCAPE UPGRADE

SAFETY AUDIT

August 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and pays respect to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Council affirms that Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people have lived on this land for millennia, practising their ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

Council respects and recognises all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their values, living culture and practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) audit informs future streetscape improvements for the High Street Preston Streetscape Upgrade Project. It proposes recommendations to enhance both actual and perceived safety that align with the Darebin 2041 Community Vision.

The audit recognises that perceptions of safety can vary from person to person. To capture a broad range of spatial, sensory, accessibility, and social environmental features, it employed multiple methods. The audit was further strengthened by input from Victoria Police and various Council teams.

Key contextual factors influencing safety include isolated nearby laneways, underused car parks, vacant properties, graffiti, and poorly maintained shopfronts. Despite these concerns, the community safety survey - completed by 334 respondents (53% women, 41% men, 2.3% non-binary, and 3% preferring not to say) - indicated that the study area evokes a moderate sense of safety.

The report outlines detailed recommendations, some of which are incorporated into the current executive summary, while others fall outside the project's scope and involve key stakeholders. (See Sections 4 and 5 for a broader range of concerns and recommendations.)

Together, these integrated design and community-based actions aim to revitalise High Street Preston as a safer, more inclusive, and welcoming public space for all users.

1. NATURAL SURVEILLANCE

Concerns
- Cluttered shaded areas
- Inadequate and insufficient seating & gathering spaces

Recommendations
- Consider installing shaded seating
- Consider implementing cooling strategies in seating and resting areas

2. ACCESS CONTROL

Concerns
- Mobility conflicts in footpaths
- Circulation disruptions

Recommendations
- Consider securing high-traffic intersections
- Consider clarifying circulation and separation of paths for different uses

3. TERRITORIALITY

Concerns
- Poorly placed urban furniture

Recommendations
- Consider improving urban features by repositioning them to prioritise user behaviour and mobility.

4. TARGET HARDENING

Concerns
- Overall lighting deficiencies

Recommendations
- Consider improving overall site lighting
- Consider improving lighting in nearby zones

5. ACTIVITY SUPPORT

Concerns
- Limited child-friendly spaces
- Liimited active travel amenities

Recommendations
- Consider supporting family-oriented activity
- Consider incorporating active travel features

6. IMAGE & MAINTENANCE

Concerns
- Poor wayfinding
- Damaged street infrastructure and footpaths
- Lack of cleanliness and rubbish bins

Recommendations
- Consider a wayfinding strategy
- Consider overall street maintenance
- Consider creating accessible paths
- Consider increasing quality and frequency of bins maintenance

2. INTRODUCTION

This safety audit aligns with Darebin's 2041 Community Vision, which prioritises community safety across the municipality.

It assesses safety improvements along High Street, Preston using the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) approach.

2.1 AUDIT PURPOSE AND SCOPE

A Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) audit was carried out along High Street, between Murray Road and Bell Street in Preston, Victoria.

The audit assessed physical, social, sensory, and accessibility aspects within the project area and also considered a surrounding radius of 400 metres to identify nearby hotspots or external risks that could impact safety.

The aim of this audit is to identify both design and non-design strategies to enhance actual and perceived safety. The findings will help shape a future streetscape concept plan, contributing to a broader road rehabilitation project.

Contextual Area within 400m of High Street Project

2.2 CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), pronounced “SEP-TED,” is an internationally recognised methodology (ISO 22341:2021)[1] that informs urban design and public space management strategies. It is aimed at preventing crime, reducing the fear of crime, enhancing public safety, and improving overall health and quality of life.

CPTED has evolved over time, reflecting changes in both societal and urban needs. Initially, during the 1960s to 1990s, CPTED focus was primarily on the physical environment, emphasising features such as lighting, visibility, and territoriality.

From the 1990s to the 2000s, its focus expanded to include the social environment, recognising the role of community engagement and social cohesion in crime prevention. Since 2019, the scope of CPTED has further broadened to address urban resilience, sustainability, and quality of life, integrating these considerations into the overall design of cities.

This expanded approach and recent research[2] shows that CPTED audits can capture a broader range of experiences related to safety in public spaces offering opportunities for a CPTED-integrated built form.

2.3 CPTED PRINCIPLES

CPTED uses seven principles to improve urban safety:

1. Natural surveillance
This principle focuses on designing environments that allow people to naturally observe their surroundings, which increases the likelihood of detecting suspicious activities. By enhancing visibility and providing clear sightlines, individuals in the area can act as “watchers” of the space, deterring criminal activity.

2. Access control
Access control limits entry points to a space and directs movement in ways that reduce opportunities for offenders to approach areas unnoticed. This can be achieved through physical barriers or design features that guide people to desired areas while restricting access to others.

3. Territoriality
Territorial reinforcement encourages a sense of ownership and responsibility among users, fostering a natural desire to protect the space. This can be achieved through design elements that define public and private spaces, enhancing the feeling of control over one’s environment.

4. Image and management/ maintenance
Image and Maintenance refers to how well a space is cared for and the impression it gives to users and potential offenders. A clean, well-maintained environment signals that people are watching and that the space is valued, which can discourage anti-social behaviour and crime.

5. Activity support
Activity Support refers to the intentional design and programming of spaces to encourage regular and appropriate use by the public, which in turn increases natural surveillance and informal social control.

6. Target hardening
Site or target hardening involves the use of physical barriers or security features to prevent or deter criminal activity. These features act as deterrents by making it more difficult for offenders to access or damage a space.

7. Geographic Juxtaposition[3]
Geographic juxtaposition considers how a space interacts with its surroundings and how the design of adjacent areas can influence perceptions of safety. It focuses on reducing isolated or poorly visible areas that may increase fear of crime.

[1] International Organization for Standardization. 2022. “Security and Resilience—Protective Security—Guidelines for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (ISO Standard No. 22341:2022).” https://www.iso.org/standard/50078.html

[2] Arevalo-Garcia, N., Taylor, M., Day, K., & Latifi, M. (2024). Developing a fear-of-crime audit method for university environments using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/17549175.2024.2394202

[3] Cozens, P., Love, T., & Davern, B. (2019). Geographical Juxtaposition: A New Direction in CPTED. Social Sciences, 8(9), 252. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8090252

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 DATA COLLECTION METHODS & ANALYSIS

The CPTED audit used a mix of methods to assess safety. The identified themes provide a comprehensive picture of risks and opportunities for enhancing safety.

CPTED Walks

During the CPTED walks, a guiding CPTED Audit Checklist was used to prompt the selection of design features that affect safety. A camera and an notepad was also used to capture safety impressions. This approach facilitated detailed, qualitative documentation of the site conditions during both day-time and night-time audits. For the night-time walk, four women volunteered and provided feedback on the environment.

- Day Audit: The day-time audit took place on Thursday, 2nd April, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.
- Night Audit: The night-time audit took place on Thursday, 10th April, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Direct Consultation with Community

Feedback on safety aspects of High Street was gathered through two ‘High Street Streetscape Upgrades Project Drop-in Sessions’, held at the following locations:

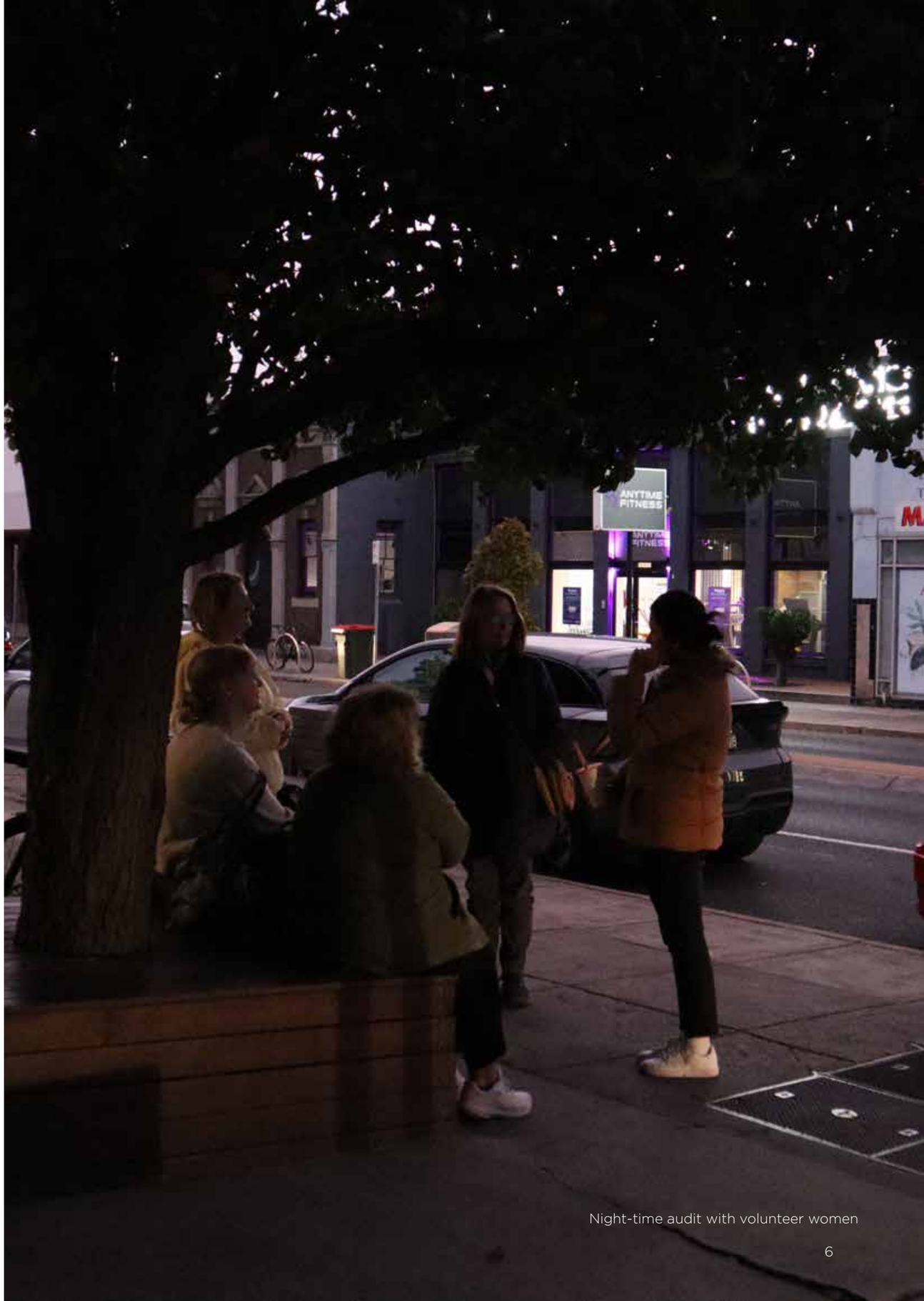
- 421 High Street on Friday, 28th March, from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM.
- Moon Rabbit Café on Monday, 31st March, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Online Survey Feedback

A total of 329 contributions (53% women, 41% men, 2.3% non-binary, and 3% preferring not to say) from community members were captured through the ‘High Street Preston Streetscape Upgrade’ online survey. The survey was open for consultation from 13th March to 6th April 2025 and was hosted on the Council’s website and part of the questions focused on safety.

Analysis

The data collected was analysed using a photo sorting and grouping technique as a qualitative research approach, with CPTED principles serving as the guiding framework. This method was used to identify, analyse, and report themes within the visual data. The outcome of this process was the identification of recurring patterns and trends in design features related to safety. Additional input was provided by expert stakeholders and public life study.



Night-time audit with volunteer women

3.2 CONTEXTUAL CRIMINOGENIC PROFILE

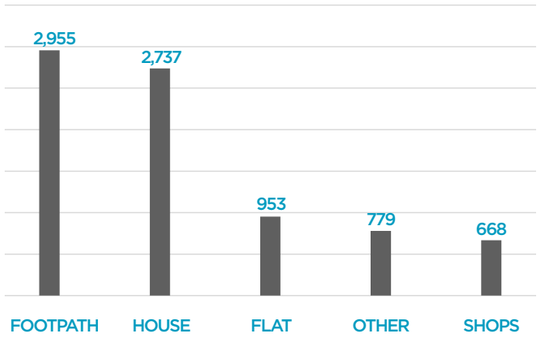
In the year ending December 2024, Darebin recorded a crime incident rate of 8,771 per 100,000 population (an increase of 32.4% from the previous year). The most common offence was theft from motor vehicles, with 2,757 reported incidents. These largely occurred in public spaces such as streets, lanes and footpaths. Preston reported the highest number of incidents, totalling 5,234.[1]

In consultation with Victoria Police, commercial burglaries were identified as a key concern in the study area along High Street between Murray Road and Bell Street, particularly at night. Laneways behind retail shops also emerged as safety concerns.

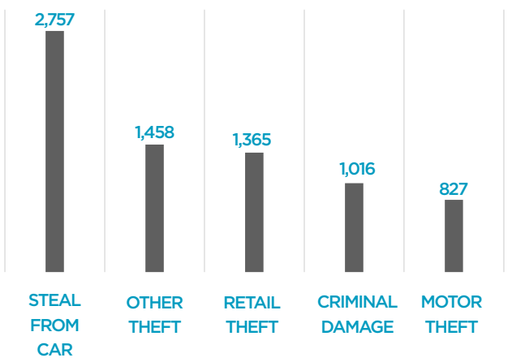
The community survey results revealed that 32% of respondents felt neutral or unsure about their safety on High Street. This suggests the street neither strongly promotes nor undermines perceptions of safety. These findings are explored further in the CPTED section of this report.

Darebin-wide key statistics

Top 5 location types for crime



Top 5 principal offences



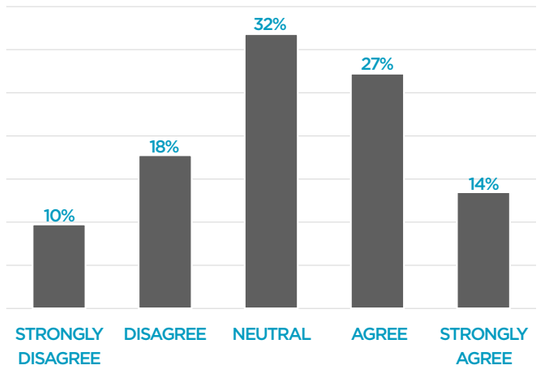
Watch areas nearby High Street

Behind Preston market laneway/carpark

Connector laneway Gower and Preston St

Moderate safety sentiment on High Street

Do I feel safe on High St?



[1] Crime Statistics Agency, 2024. https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/crime-statistics/latest-crime-data-by-area

[2] Arevalo-Garcia, N., Taylor, M., Day, K., & Latifi, M. (2024). Developing a fear-of-crime audit method for university environments using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/17549175.2024.2394202

[3] Cozens, P., Love, T., & Davern, B. (2019). Geographical Juxtaposition: A New Direction in CPTED. Social Sciences, 8(9), 252. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8090252

3.3 SURROUNDING LAND USES

Understanding how nearby land uses interact and impact surrounding character and safety is key to effective design. In Preston, a diverse mix of large-scale uses serves commuters, visitors, traders, and the local community, creating a dynamic environment.

Retail Precincts

Preston Market is a key local landmark offering fresh food, retail, and community spaces. It operates Wednesday to Sunday, with closures on Mondays and Tuesdays. These non-operational periods including night-time can contribute to perceptions of unsafety. Retail activity along High Street is more regular but tends to occur in isolated clusters, and not all businesses are perceived as welcoming.

Transport Hubs

Railway stations (journey to and from) and public transport waiting areas are known for safety concerns, with women often reporting risks like harassment, intimidation, and theft.[1]
Preston Train Station has limited staff presence during non-peak hours and long, isolated access routes (such as those crossing the extensive Preston Market car parks) all of which reduce the sense of safety for commuters at night.

Green and Open Spaces

Two green spaces border the study area. Preston City Oval supports local sports clubs and the area shows signs of litter, possible substance use, and unauthorised occupancy, which threaten safety.
The Level Crossing Removal Project introduced pedestrian and cycling paths, but poor lighting and surveillance raise nighttime safety concerns. The nearby playground is a popular gathering point, though some nearby residents have reported occasional noise disturbances.

Civic Precinct

The Darebin Civic Centre, adjacent to Preston Library and Preston Police Station, hosts Council services that enhance local activity. The library's extended hours provide a potential safety refuge for community members due to their extended operational hours (8pm and 10pm). Its visibility and access to technology also help address digital inclusion and support safety at night time.

[1] Monash University. (2022, August 24). Women's safety on public transport in Melbourne: Best and worst stations rated. https://www.monash.edu/news/articles/womens-safety-on-public-transport-in-melbourne-best-and-worst-stations-rated

Educational Precincts

The area includes childcare centres, primary and secondary schools. Safety concerns around these facilities often relate to pedestrian movement and crossings during school hours.

Car Parks

Several large car parks surround the study area, including those at Preston Market, Preston Station, and local businesses such as Cramer's Hotel and Woolworths Preston. These areas are often underused at night and on non-operational days, creating feelings of isolation and opportunities for crime.

Nearby carparks influencing safety

3.4 SUMMARY

The contextual analysis of Preston's High Street surrounding areas highlights a complex urban environment shaped by varied land uses, transient populations, and inconsistent levels of activity and oversight.

While key assets such as the market, library, and transport hubs contribute to the vibrancy of the precinct, they also present safety challenges, particularly during off-peak times.

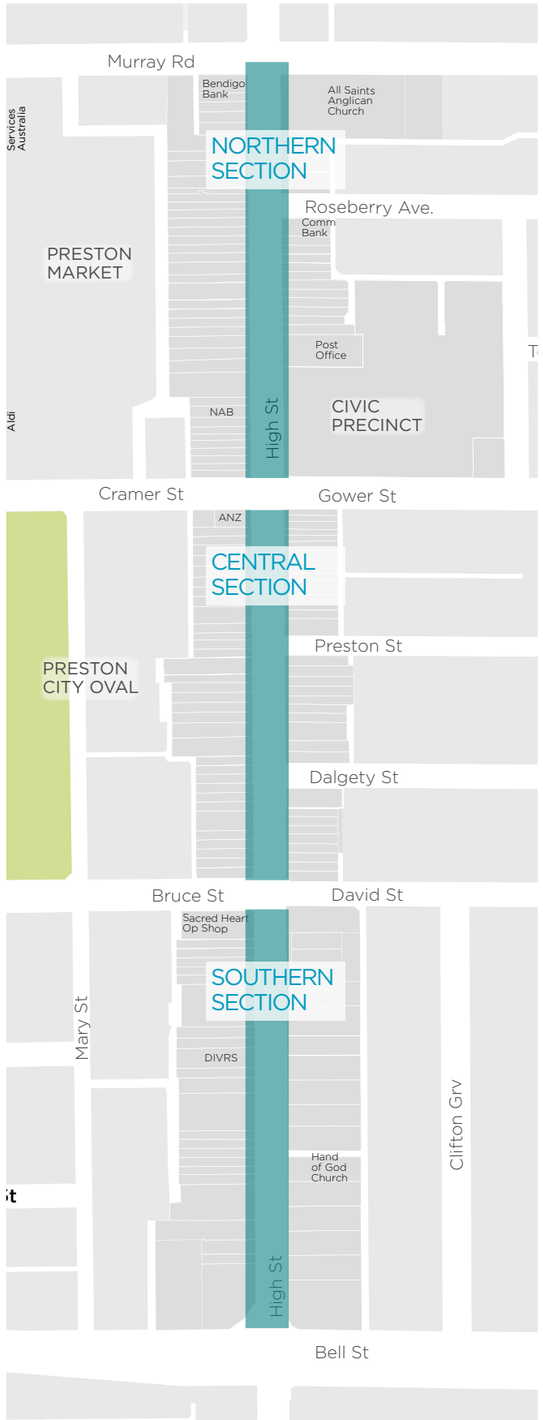
Perceptions of safety, especially among women and night-time pedestrians, are influenced by environmental factors such as isolated laneways, underused car parks, limited lighting and surveillance, and uneven activation of public spaces.

The prevalence of theft, commercial burglary, and safety concerns in public spaces underscores the need for targeted environmental and social interventions. These insights form the foundation for the CPTED findings and recommendations that follow.

4. CPTED FINDINGS

The CPTED audit identified key safety conditions and proposed a series of recommendations for the project and for a broader group of stakeholders.

Wherever possible, these recommendations should be applied in a well-balanced manner and seamlessly integrated into overall street design concepts.



Site Description

The site under analysis spans High Street between Murray Road and Bell Street in Preston, Victoria, covering approximately 772 metres in a north-south direction.

This segment is embedded in a broader urban context with a mix of retail, civic, transport, and residential uses as previously outlined.

The street-scale CPTED analysis highlighted the varying safety conditions along High Street, identifying three distinct segments each with its own specific risks and characteristics.

Northern Section: Murray Road to Gower Street

This part of High Street is relatively active during the day, largely due to its proximity to Preston Market and a cluster of food and retail services with outdoor seating. Pedestrian activity is higher at the Northern section.

However, at night, the vibrancy drops significantly. Only a few businesses remain open, creating a fragmented or siloed activation pattern. This inconsistency can lead to opportunities for public nuisance offences, such as harassment to business patrons, loitering, or aggressive behaviour, which are noted as deterrents to potential customers, particularly where narrow footpaths create conflict zones.

Central Section: Gower Street to David Street

This section offers fewer outdoor amenities and has lower levels of stationary activity with businesses typically drawing people indoors. The absence of consistent public seating and gathering areas limits passive surveillance and reduces visibility on the street.

Though some businesses operate at night, the same siloed activation pattern applies, with active premises situated between dark or vacant properties. This creates visual and physical gaps in surveillance and deters natural observation. Several businesses in this zone were observed to have enhanced security measures (e.g. roller shutters, reinforced glass), reflecting vulnerability to commercial burglary and vandalism.

Southern Section: David Street to Bell Street

This precinct has a more industrial and vacant character, with a noticeable concentration of vacant buildings. It is significantly quieter, with limited pedestrian movement and little to no night-time activity.

There are more areas with potential entrapment zones, especially around the vacant property on the corner of High Street and Bell Street. These conditions not only increase the risk of violent street crime[1], but also make the area attractive for other offences. Vacant properties are especially vulnerable because they are unoccupied and unmonitored, easy to access or hide in, and are often perceived as safe places for illegal activity to go unnoticed.[2]

[1] https://case.edu/socialwork/sites/default/files/2018-10/vacant_distressed_props_comm_health_safety.pdf
[2] https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022427818807965

4.1 NATURAL SURVEILLANCE

This principle focuses on designing environments that allow people to naturally observe their surroundings, which increases the likelihood of detecting suspicious activities.

Observations

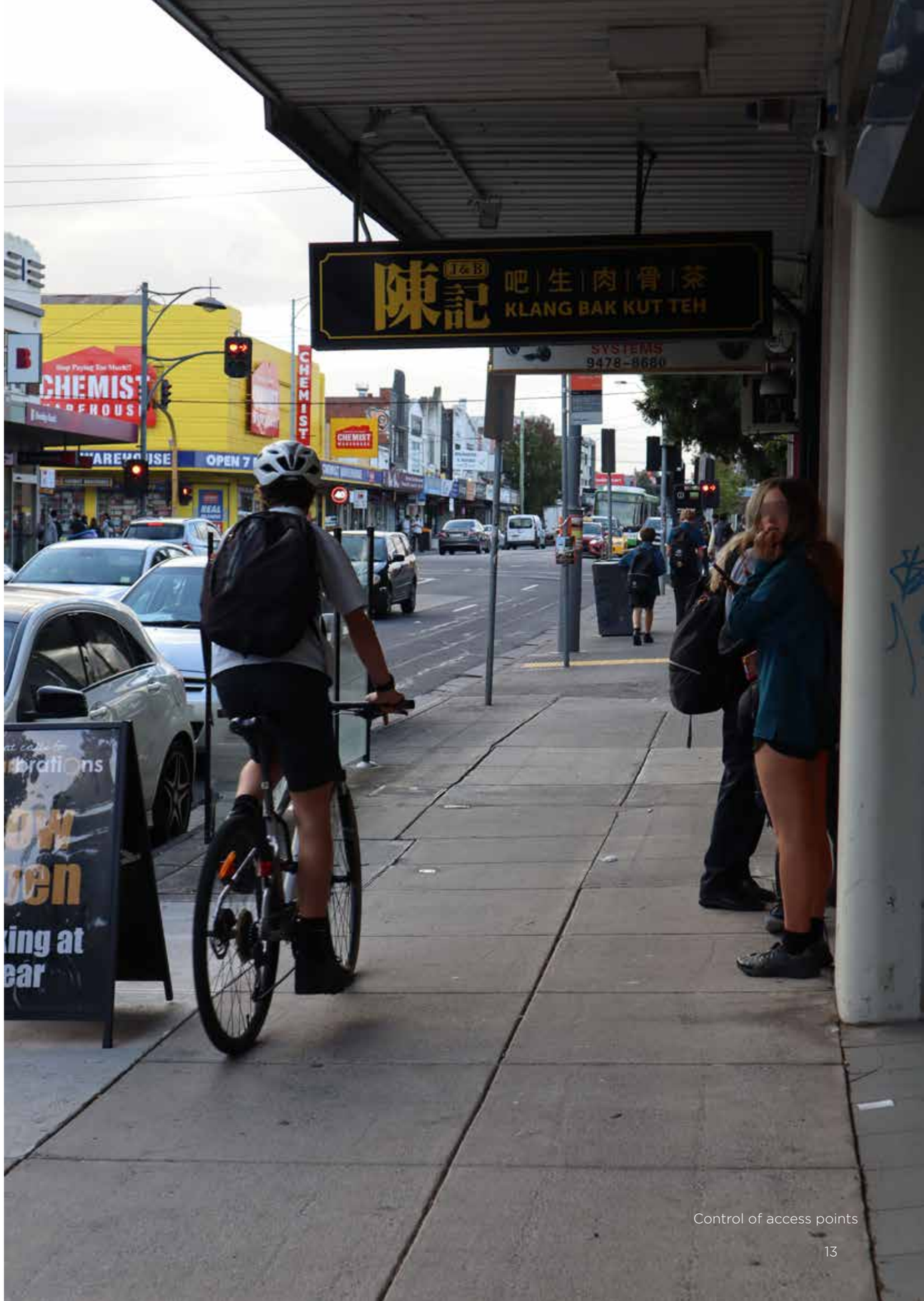
- **Façade setbacks:** Along High Street, irregular building setbacks create recessed pockets that offer hiding spots. Some are large enough to conceal individuals or groups (A).
- **Concealment zones:** Hidden areas, such as the wall adjacent to the post office and laneways behind properties (e.g. Hand of God Church and near the Post office), reduce visibility and create safety concerns (B).
- **Cluttered shaded areas:** Public seating surrounded by dense, low vegetation without adequate spacing reduces sightlines and creates potential hiding spots (C).
- **Inadequate seating:** Existing benches lack shade, weather protection, and wind shielding, making them less usable. As a result, people are unable to stay for extended periods, preventing them from passively engaging with their surroundings (D).
- **Insufficient resting and gathering spaces:** Limited availability for various social activities, such as coffee breaks, meals, and reading. Furthermore, these spaces are dispersed, reducing accessibility and passive surveillance (E).

4.2 ACCESS CONTROL

This principle limits entry points to a space and directs movement in ways that reduce opportunities for offenders or other pedestrians to approach areas unnoticed.

Observations

- **Unprotected pedestrian corners:** High-traffic intersections lack protective features, leaving pedestrians exposed to risks from vehicle crashes or intentional attacks For example, corner High St and Murray Rd (A).
- **Mobility conflicts in footpaths:** Footpaths lack clear separation and signage for pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters, and prams. This creates risks of collisions and confusion in movement (B).
- **Circulation disruptions:** Businesses place external items and sandwich boards that obstruct pedestrian movement, posing increased risks, especially for people with mobility impairments (C).
- **Business divider screens:** Partitions between businesses vary in material (glass, aluminium, movable screens) and transparency. Some screens clash with existing infrastructure or obstruct pedestrian movement (D).
- **Side-street car parks:** Parking bays lacked clear floor markings, disrupting visual continuity across footpaths and reducing pedestrian safety (E).



Control of access points

4.3 TERRITORIALITY

This principle encourages a sense of ownership and responsibility among users, fostering a natural desire to protect the space.

Observations

- **Deteriorated awnings:** Shopfront awnings along High Street vary in condition and style, with many appearing run-down, which detracts from the visual quality (A&B).
- **Poorly placed urban furniture:** Items such as bus stops and phone booths were found in locations that hinder foot traffic or create unintended territorial cues. For example, a bus shelter creates a semi-private zone but blocks pedestrian flow; phone booths facing each other near the Town Hall violate privacy which can lead to verbal altercations (C&D).

Shopfronts defining their territory

4.4 TARGET HARDENING

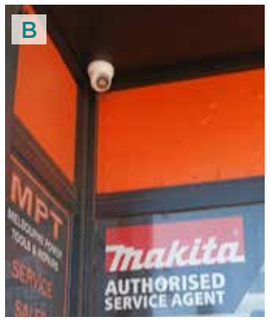
This principle refers to strengthening the physical security of a building or area to deter or delay unauthorised entry or attack.

Observations

- **Overall lighting deficiencies:** Notable dark zones exist, particularly in the northern section, near church at Murray Road and High Street. Lighting is adequate around restaurants but drops sharply in quieter or transitional areas. Poor lighting in side streets from the project area increases concealment risks and discourages pedestrian use (A).
- **Poorly lit construction zones:** Fenced corridors along construction sites (e.g. at corner of High St and Dalgety St.) lack consistent lighting, especially at night. These dim areas increase the risk of crime and contribute to fear of crime[1] (B&C).

[1] Arevalo-Garcia, N. 2022. "Fear-of-Crime Reduction by Environmental Design (FRED) Framework: The Case of an Australian Campus." Swinburne Research Bank. https://researchbank.swinburne.edu.au/items/42ef7e27-ad1d-45e0-99f1-e06ebc549839/1/
[2] Neighborhood Design Center. (2023, October 2). Understanding hostile architecture: The cause and effect of restricting public space. https://ndc-md.org/news-and-stories/understanding-hostile-architecture-the-cause-and-effect-of-restricting

Observations



- **Private security measures:** Many shop owners have installed security cameras for protection of their own businesses, though coverage and visibility vary (A&B).
- **Window security:** A few businesses use heavy fencing, which can give the perception of an overall unsafe environment. When windows/doors are heavily barred, it sends a strong message of fear and exclusion to the public.[2] (C&D). Also, solid shutters, blinds, or metal shades always down, block natural surveillance (people can't see in or out).
- **Vision-blocking roller doors:** Solid shutters eliminate sightlines into and out of properties, limiting opportunities for "eyes on the street." This creates blind zones that increase opportunities for loitering, vandalism, or concealment. When streets appear completely shuttered, it signals abandonment or neglect, especially after hours. This can escalate fear of crime and reduce pedestrian traffic, affecting both safety and local business. Blank surfaces attract graffiti and tagging, further deteriorating the perception of safety and care.

4.5 ACTIVITY SUPPORT

This principle refers to the intentional design and programming of spaces and streetscape to encourage regular and appropriate use by the public.

Observations

- **Fragmented active frontages:** The northern section features restaurants that enhance street activity with lighting and outdoor dining. The central section has lower street engagement, with most activity occurring inside businesses. In the southern section, inactive shopfronts, minimal lighting, and an industrial atmosphere reduce public interaction, particularly after hours (A)
- **Limited child-friendly spaces:** Informal signs of children's play were seen on footpaths (e.g. near the Hand of God Church), without designated play areas with protective buffers from traffic (B).
- **Public bathrooms:** The bathroom locations are poorly marked and difficult to find, hidden within one of the pavilions at Preston Market (C).

Observations

- **Poorly located bike and pram parking:** Bikes, motorcycles, prams and delivery vehicles were often parked informally, obstructing pedestrian paths and posing challenges for people with mobility impairments (A&B).
- **Lack of active travel amenities:** The study area lacks features that support active travel, such as drinking fountains, bicycle repair stations, and secure bike racks.
- **Unpleasant odours:** Smells of urine (northern and south section) and tobacco (mostly in northern section) were detected in concealed areas, near bus stops, and around vacant sites. These odours are often associated with loitering and reduce perceptions of safety[1] (C).
- **Noise pollution:** Heavy vehicles on High Street generated excessive noise, especially during acceleration, which diminished street comfort[1](D).

[1] Arevalo-Garcia, N. 2022. "Fear-of-Crime Reduction by Environmental Design (FRED) Framework: The Case of an Australian Campus." Swinburne Research Bank. https://researchbank.swinburne.edu.au/items/42ef7e27-ad1d-45e0-99f1-e06ebc549839/1/

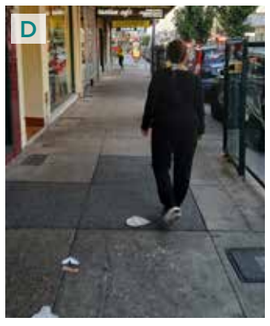
4.6 IMAGE AND MAINTENANCE

This principle refers to how well a space is cared for and the impression it gives to users and potential offenders who are more likely to target neglected areas.

Observations

- **Poor wayfinding:** Signage for 'Preston Central' and 'welcoming signs' were inconsistent, hard to see, and lacked a clear visual identity. The current signs do not have tactile features and are written in English only. These factors make navigation difficult and diminish the sense of place (A&B).
- **Damaged street infrastructure:** Broken or poorly maintained urban elements, including vandalised signage, rubish bins, (blood) stained phone booths, and deteriorated shop divider walls, were common (C&D).
- **Footpath hazards:** Footpaths were narrow (measuring as little as 80 cm) and uneven in some areas, posing safety risks for people using mobility aids, prams or wheelchairs (E).
- **Inconsistent intersection design:** Crossing from one side of the footpath from west to east, as well as within each of the clearways, poses a safety risk. Some raised road sections resembled zebra crossings but lacked clear markings, causing confusion for both pedestrians and drivers. While some pedestrian crossings are controlled by traffic lights, others remain unmarked but still require drivers to give way. Additionally, tactile ground surface indicators (TGSIs) were found to be in poor condition (F).

Observations



- **Graffiti and tagging:** Various graffiti styles were observed, including throw-ups (large, quick, bold lettering), tags (scribbled names), and block letters. While graffiti was present throughout the project site, it was significantly more prevalent on vacant properties. The repeated presence of graffiti across different areas of buildings and at various heights suggests ongoing activity and minimal enforcement (A&B&C). Council receives repeated requests concerning signage graffiti along High St. and St George's Rd.
- **Lack of cleanliness and rubbish bins:** Litter from businesses was observed at the end of the day, particularly around shopfronts, creating an impression of poor upkeep (D&E). The placement of rubbish bins was found to be poorly planned, with long gaps between bins in some areas, making disposal inconvenient.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

NATURAL SURVEILLANCE

This section has two parts: project and stakeholder recommendations.

In cluttered shaded areas consider:

- Maintaining vegetation below 500mm and tree canopies above 2m to ensure clear sightlines.
- Space planting at least 1.5m away from seating areas. Avoid dense shrubbery adjacent to seating; use low level planting instead.[1]
- Choosing trees thoughtfully, considering their seasonal changes, visual appeal, foliage density, and maintenance needs throughout the year.

For seating and gathering spaces consider:

- Temperature shocks are linked to higher crime rates, contributing to an estimated increase of over 72,000 crimes per year across Australia.[2]
- Positioning seats in shaded, well-ventilated areas to ensure usability during heatwaves and heavy rains. These spaces can serve as cool refuges and comfortable rest stops.
- Solar exposure, materials that resist overheating, airflow along with nearby shade structures or greenery to enhance comfort and usability.
- Using canopies and trees around seating to passively cool the area. Ensure seats face active areas for natural observation.

ACCESS CONTROL

Consider securing high-traffic intersections by:

- Installing robust, impact-rated bollards or planter barriers at pedestrian corners.
- Creating raised pedestrian crossings that signal driver awareness of pedestrian priority.
- Designing corner curb extensions (bulb-outs) to slow vehicle turning speeds and shorten pedestrian crossing distances.
- Providing highly visible tactile paving to alert visually impaired users of crossing areas.

Consider clarifying circulation and separation by:

- Separating paths for different user groups using surface treatments, materials, or colour coding.
- Installing ground or overhead signage showing shared path rules (cyclists yield to pedestrians, speed limits).
- Designing wider footpaths (minimum 2.5–3.0m in high-traffic areas) to accommodate mixed users safely.[3]
- Integrating textured surfaces to subtly guide cyclist behaviour along High St.

[1] Queensland Government (2013). Safer Places: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Guidelines for Queensland.
[2] Awaworyi Churchill, S., Smyth, R. and Trinh, T.-A. (2023), Crime, Weather and Climate Change in Australia*. Econ Rec, 99: 84-107. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-493212720
[3] VicRoads (2012). Guidance on Shared Paths and Pedestrian Environments

TERRITORIALITY

Consider urban features improvements by:

- Developing a street furniture masterplan that prioritises pedestrian flow and visibility.
- Ensuring bus stops do not obstruct key pedestrian pathways or create secluded, pseudo-private space.
- Where possible, integrate bus stops with bays to minimise traffic disruption.
- Positioning phone booths side-by-side rather than facing each other to reduce territorial behavior and preserve a sense of openness.

TARGET HARDENING

Consider lighting improvements in the overall site by:

- Using warm, even lighting to balance visibility and ambiance.
- Ensuring consistent lighting levels along High St. without abrupt dark spots, glare and deep shadows.
- Prioritising pedestrian-scale lighting to improve visibility at eye level, particularly near entrances, laneways, seating, and vegetation.
- Allowing a person's features to be recognised at a distance of 10 to 15 metres.
- Conducting a lighting audit focused on pedestrian-scale needs (2.5–4m high poles) rather than just vehicle lighting.

Consider lighting improvements in nearby zones:

- Installing motion-sensitive or solar-powered lights, low-glare, full cut-off LED lights in low-traffic areas to deter antisocial behaviour and improve energy efficiency.

ACTIVITY SUPPORT

Consider supporting family-oriented activity by:

- Establishing small play areas at church entrance courtyards (Northern and Southern sections) and/or wide footpath sections near City Hall's outdoor space. Ensure these zones are safely buffered from traffic using bollards, planter beds, or low fences.
- Integrating playful elements into footpaths (e.g., hopscotch patterns, interactive sculptures) to invite child engagement safely.
- Using traffic calming measures near known child-activity zones (e.g., narrower lanes, raised crossings).
- Integrating child-friendly street furniture with play features.

Consider supporting active travelling by:

- Installing dedicated, well-signposted parking zones for bikes at regular intervals along High St. Where possible, provide shelter to enhance usability and protection from weather conditions.
- Parking areas can accommodate bikes, motorcycles, rollators, and prams.
- Apply tactile paving or barrier planting to subtly discourage informal parking in inappropriate locations.
- Install public drinking fountains with bottle-filling taps along High Street.
- Provide basic bicycle repair stations (air pumps, tools) at strategic points.
- Integrate wayfinding signage for bicycle and walking lanes. For example, use colour-coded active travel routes painted or marked along footpaths and cycleways to guide users to facilities (e.g., "5 min to water station").

IMAGE & MAINTENANCE

Consider a unified wayfinding strategy by:

- Creating a cohesive wayfinding system with consistent fonts, colours, placement and graphic elements that reflect Preston's identity (e.g., Aboriginal Darebin).
- Installing multilingual signage (based on local demographic needs) and universally recognised symbols.
- Incorporating tactile and Braille features on all main directional and welcome signs.
- Positioning signage at accessible heights for wheelchair users and children as per Australian Standards.

Consider improving damaged street infrastructure by:

- Using anti-graffiti coatings on urban infrastructure elements.
- Where possible, include artist-designed utility covers, bins, and booths to enhance beauty and encourage community pride.

Consider continuous accessible path for travel by:

- Expanding footpath widths abd maintaining clear zones (free of poles, furniture) of at least 1.8m wide for accessible movement.[1]
- Introducing slip-resistant surface materials for safety in wet conditions.

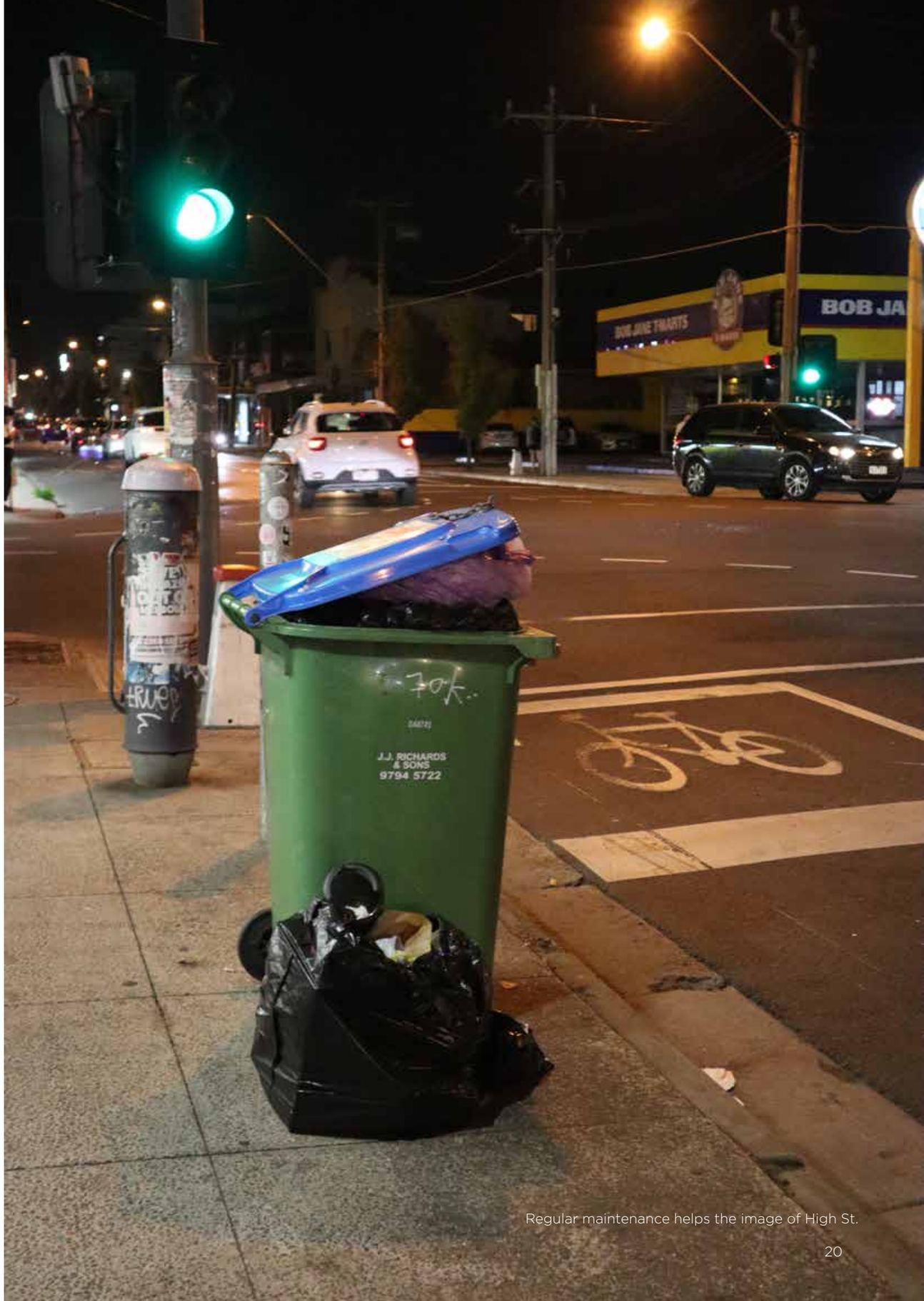
Consider improving intersection design[2]:

- Standardising pedestrian crossings using consistent materials, markings (zebra stripes), and kerb ramps.
- Clearly defining all raised sections as either pedestrian crossings or traffic calming devices (not both).
- Ensuring TGSIs are installed and maintained at all pedestrian crossings, following Australian Standards.
- Installing visual and tactile cues (textured pavement, signage) at both controlled and uncontrolled crossings.

Consider upgrading bins by:

- Installing additional rubbish bins every 30–50 metres in commercial zones and based on foot traffic patterns.[3]

[1] Transport for NSW (2020). Walking Space Guide.
[2] AS/NZS 1428.4.1:2009 – Design for access and mobility – Means to assist the orientation of people with vision impairment.
[3] Keep Australia Beautiful (2022). Community Litter Prevention Toolkit



Regular maintenance helps the image of High St.

5.2 STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective urban safety requires coordinated efforts among multiple stakeholders, fostering collaboration and shared responsibility.

A well-designed streetscape contributes to safety, but true security is strengthened by social cohesion, vigilance, and collective action.

This section presents key stakeholder recommendations to support a safer, more connected community.

Identified Internal Stakeholders	Identified External Stakeholders
Creative culture & Economic Development	High Street Businesses Tenants and property owners
Operations & Waste	Local Business Associations
Open Space	Local Traders Association
Transport	Victoria Police
Youth Services	Darebin relief services
City Design	General Community

Safer and more connected community

Informing Policy

- Consider the integration façade setbacks and concealment zones mitigation via future design guidelines for mixed-use developments

Responding and Monitoring

Respose to graffiti:

- Consider establishing evidence-based approaches to local graffiti for prevention and local expression.
- Consider sharing record-keeping and map graffiti hotspots to establish patterns, collaboratively find solutions, and co-create initiatives between relevant teams.
- Continue applying rapid removal policies within 24–48 hours to prevent "establishment" and deter reoffending.
- Encourage local business partnerships to monitor and report graffiti early.

Response to maintenance of urban infrastructure:

- Continue implementing a regular urban asset inspection and rapid-repair program.
- Consider modifying maintenance routines according to the needs of the season.
- Consider sharing with relevant teams reports from 'Snap, Send, Resolve' and other urban furniture systems to understand reasons behind damage.
- Encourage scheduling business-specific cleaning footpaths times to adjacent premises daily.
- Consider running public campaigns encouraging local pride and upkeep habits.

Education & Partnerships

- Consider education, empowerment, and training for local businesses. For example in de-escalation and conflict management techniques.
- Continue strengthening the collaboration between Victoria Police and the City of Darebin.
- Continue strengthening the collaboration with Darebin's relief services to aid homelessness, mental health, among others.

Activation & Engagement

Vacant properties:

- Consider activating unused spaces with temporary art installations or pop-up events to prevent them from becoming targets for graffiti.
- Consider establishing programs where local businesses take informal care of public elements adjacent to their shops.
- Consider collaborating with property owners to repurpose large vacant areas for pop-up markets, community events, and food truck initiatives.

Shopfront improvement:

- Consider implementing local signage guidelines controlling sign dimensions, fonts, placement height, and illumination type.
- Encourage blade signs (projecting signs perpendicular to shopfronts) placed uniformly across tenancies.
- Consider enforcing maintenance standards requiring businesses to keep awnings in good repair (e.g., repainting, structural safety).
- Consider offering façade improvement grants or incentives for awning repairs and visual upgrades.
- Consider developing a voluntary or mandatory shopfront design code to encourage compatible materials, colour schemes, and themes.
- Consider promoting active uses behind transparent windows to foster "ownership through visibility."
- Consider implementing programs such as seasonal façade competitions, pop-up displays in vacant windows to maintain an active, cared-for appearance even when shops are temporarily closed.
- Encourage security-rated film applications on shop windows that protect without visually "hardening" the street

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