



Darebin Housing Strategy

PART 1: Growth & Need and
PART 2: Character & Design

SUMMARY DOCUMENT



Acknowledgement of country

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

Council acknowledges that Elders past, present and emerging are central to the cohesion, intergenerational wellbeing and ongoing self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They have played and continue to play a pivotal role in maintaining and transmitting culture, history and language.

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

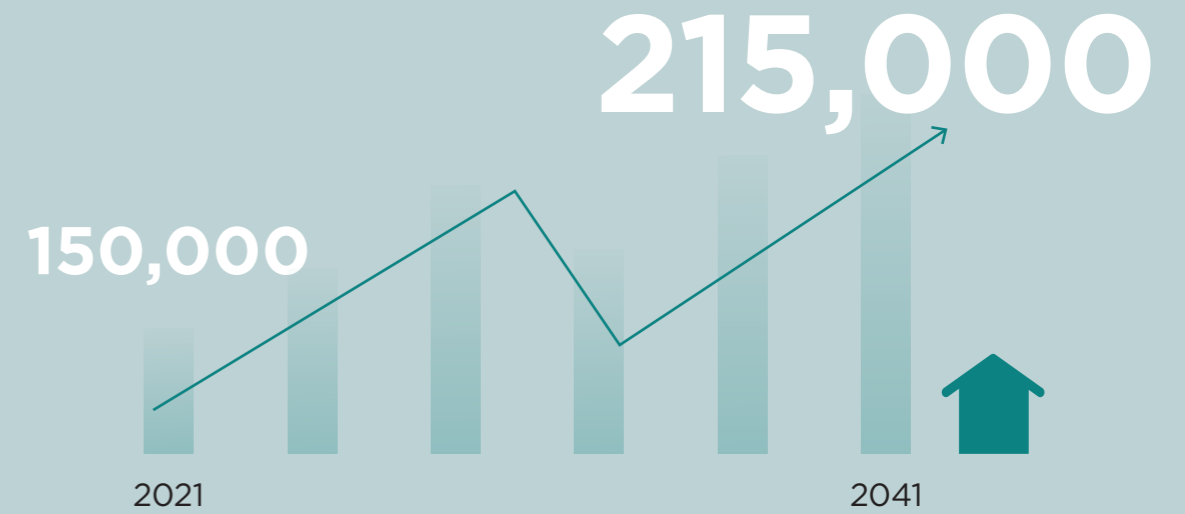
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities have had and continue to play a unique role in the life of the Darebin municipality. Council recognises and values this ongoing contribution and its significant value for our city and Australian society more broadly.

(Extract from Darebin City Council's Statement of commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2019)

Ngarrgma Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung guljin gurringanyinu bik wenerop Darebin dharri Ngarri yana ngarnga bik, baan ba ngarrgu. Gahgook-al nanggiti bambuth, yalingbu ba gama-dji.



In 2021, 150,000 people called Darebin home. In 2041, Darebin's population is forecast to increase by 65,000 residents to 215,000. An additional 28,700 dwellings will likely be required to accommodate these new residents. This is a significant level of change that brings opportunities and challenges for the municipality.



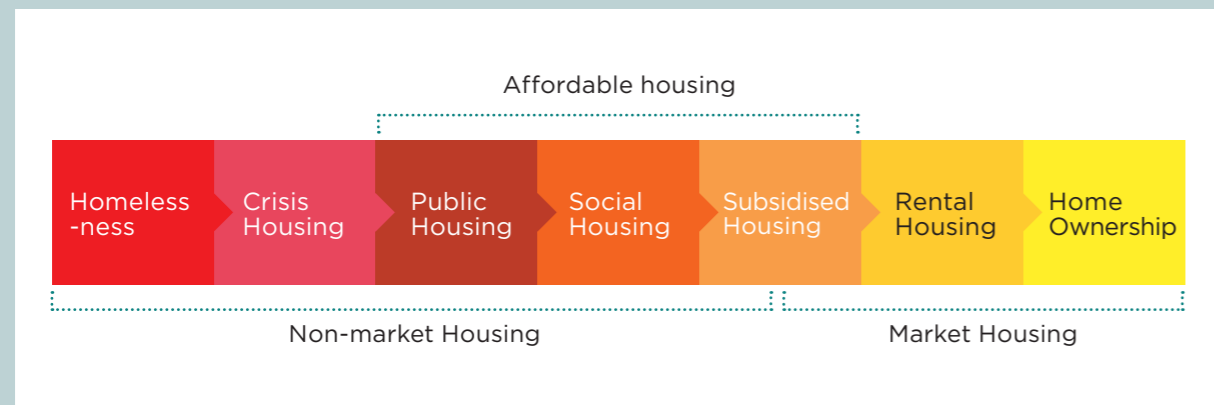
Council plays an important but not unlimited role managing this change. A key way that Council can influence housing outcomes is through the preparation of a Housing Strategy for the municipality.

The Darebin Housing Strategy has been separated into four parts to assist with distinguishing between the different areas of influence Council has over various parts of the 'housing continuum'.

Part 1 and 2 of the strategy largely relate to market housing, rather than non-market housing which will be addressed in separate document forming Part 3 of the strategy.

The greatest influence Council has over market housing is as the authority responsible for the Darebin Planning Scheme, which is the main tool for managing development within the municipality. The document that comprises Parts 1 and 2 of the strategy is therefore a strategic planning document that sets out Council's vision and framework for managing population growth and residential development over a 15-year period.

It sets out the preferred locations for increased housing growth and the type of housing that is required to meet the needs of our diverse and changing community. It will be used to inform and outline further work required to undertake changes to the Darebin Planning Scheme.



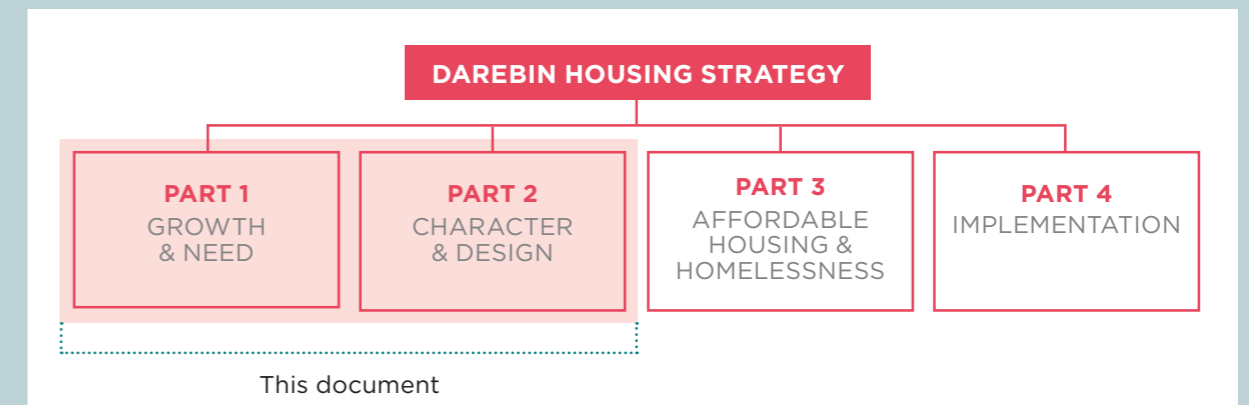
Specifically, the Part 1 and 2 of the strategy defines a vision for future housing in Darebin and provides direction on:

- The preferred location for residential development and the level of change expected across the municipality through a Residential Development Framework (RDF).
- Avenues to support housing diversity to ensure the right types of housing is provided in response to the community's various needs, ages, abilities, and income levels.
- The way new development should be designed to ensure it respects the character of Darebin's existing

neighbourhoods while accommodating change.

- Ways to encourage design excellence and sustainable and climate resilient design in new development.
- Actions Council will be taking to implement the strategy.

The following document provides a summary of the main aspects of the draft Darebin Housing Strategy: Part 1 (Growth & Need) and Part 2 (Character & Design). For further details, please refer to that document.



Population & Housing in Darebin

An accurate understanding of Darebin's current population and household make-up is fundamental for preparing an informed Housing Strategy. Darebin's diverse population has changed as it has

grown over the last 10 years. On average we are older, more likely to live alone in smaller housing and work from home in professional roles. We are also less likely to own our homes outright.

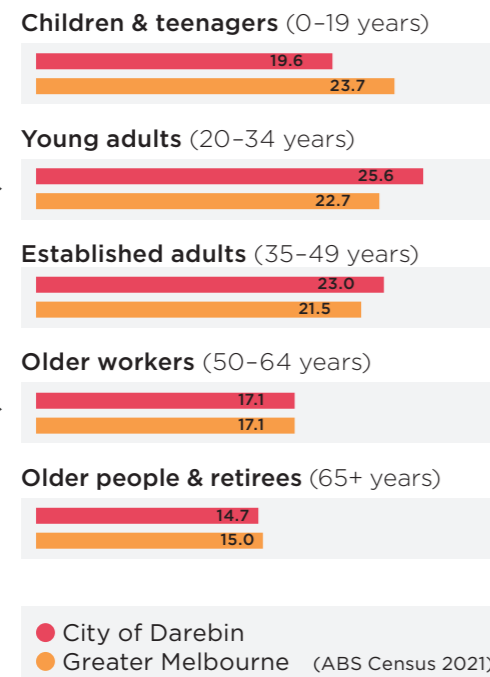
CURRENT POPULATION & HOUSEHOLDS

Darebin's population growth and change has been underpinned by both an ageing population as well as increasing numbers of young adults moving to the municipality. These demographic changes have likely driven decreases in household sizes and an increase in lone person households.

Darebin population growth (2011-2023)



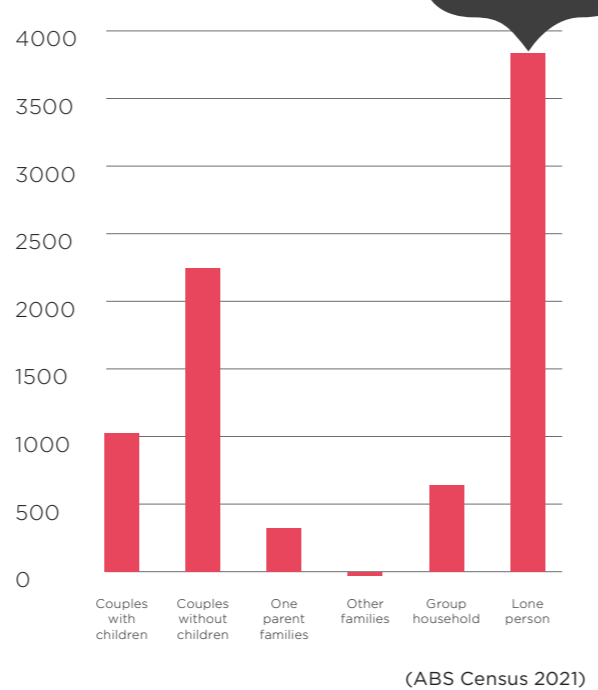
Darebin Age Profile compared to Greater Melbourne



MORE YOUNGER WORKERS

AGEING POPULATION

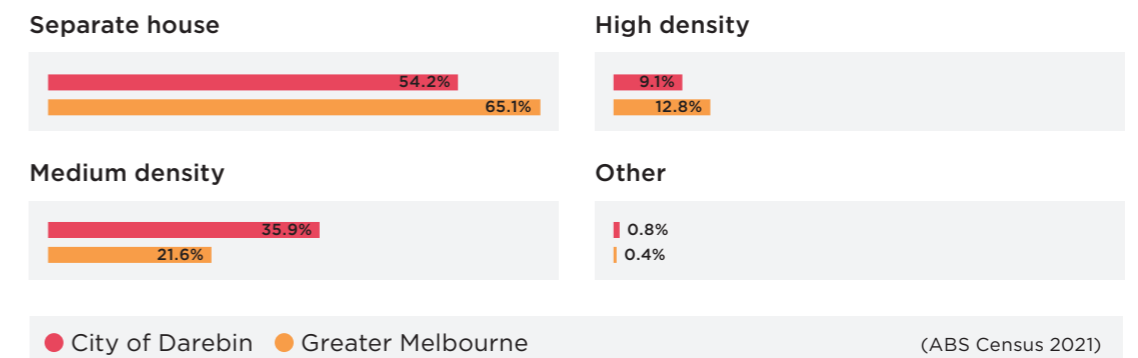
City of Darebin Change in household type 2011-2021



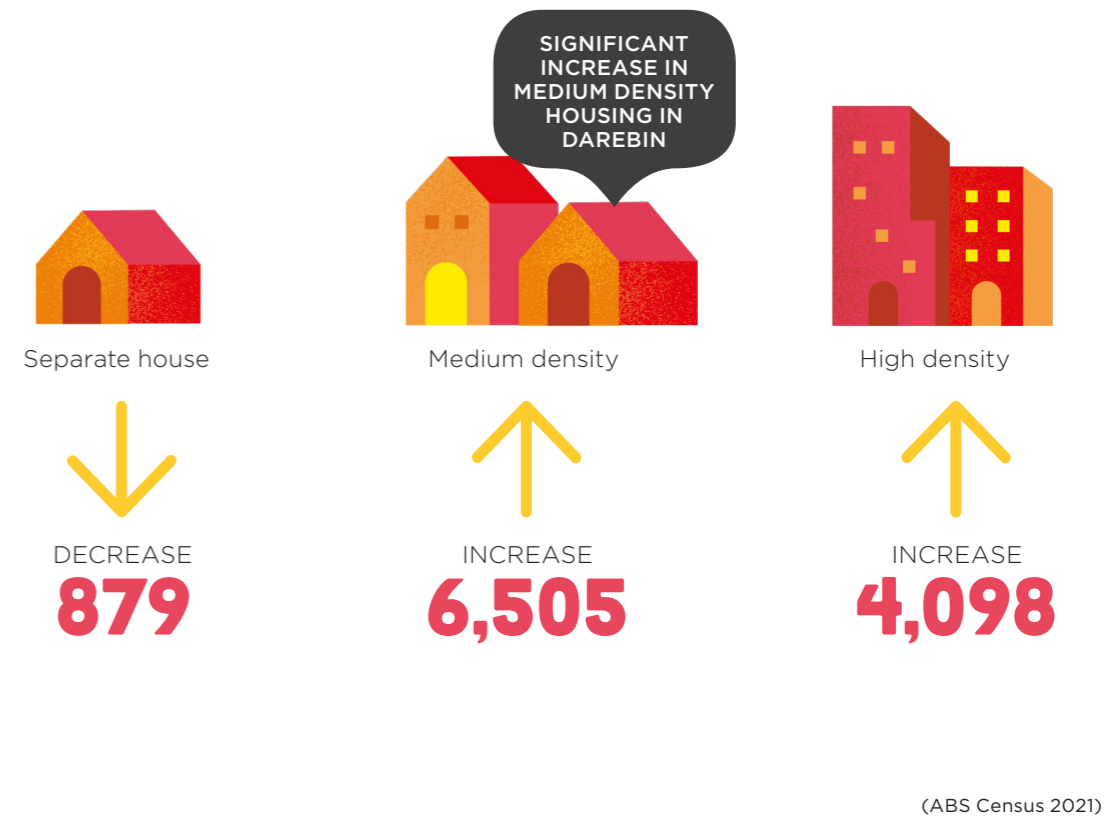
CURRENT HOUSING STOCK

Most housing in Darebin is separate dwellings. However, over the last 10 years a significant number of medium and high-density dwellings have been constructed that have diversified Darebin's housing stock, increasing choice and affordability.

Darebin housing types compared to Greater Melbourne



Change in housing types, Darebin 2011-2021

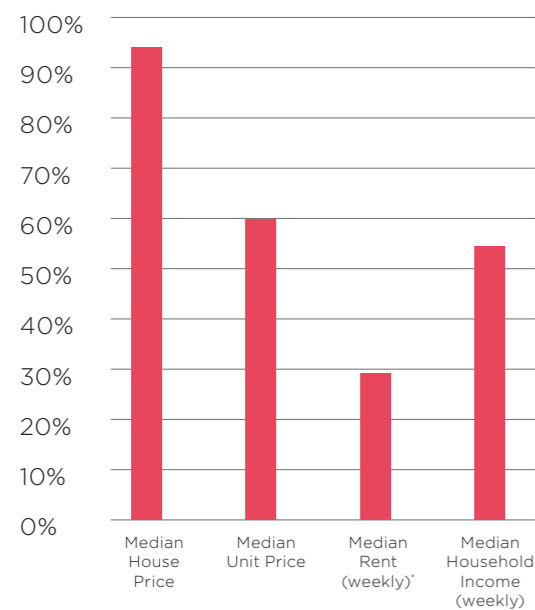


AFFORDABILITY & TENURE

Median house and unit prices have increased at a faster rate than household incomes in Darebin over the last ten years. This is not unique to Darebin but is a systemic challenge across Melbourne. Darebin also has a higher proportion of households renting than the Greater Melbourne average.

Like all of Victoria and Australia, Darebin has a significant shortage of affordable housing dwellings that is expected to increase from 7,000 to 11,000 by 2036.

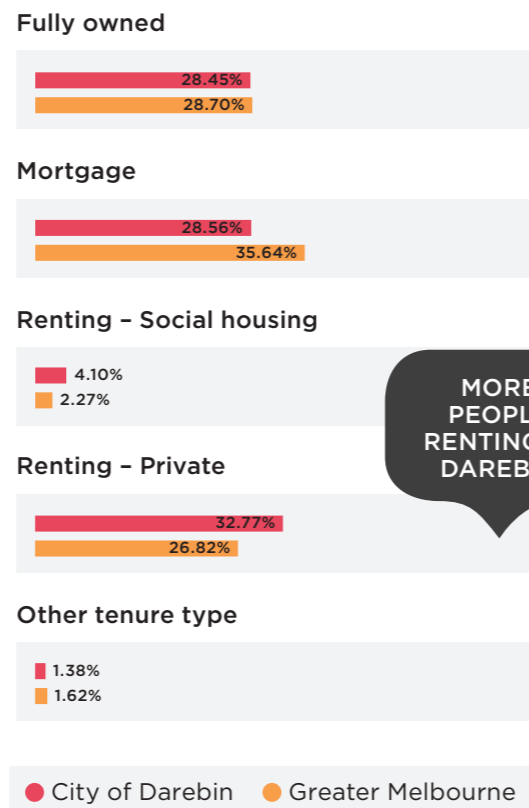
Change in median house and unit price and median weekly household income, Darebin 2011-2021



(ABS Census, 2011 & 2021 and Victorian Property Sales Report, Valuer-General Victoria, 2022)

* Median rent increase does not include recent increases since 2021 that have seen rents increase on average 29% between December 2021 and December 2023 alone.

Darebin housing tenure by households compared to Greater Melbourne



MORE PEOPLE RENTING IN DAREBIN

(ABS Census 2021)

Affordable housing shortage in Darebin:

(ABS Census 2021)

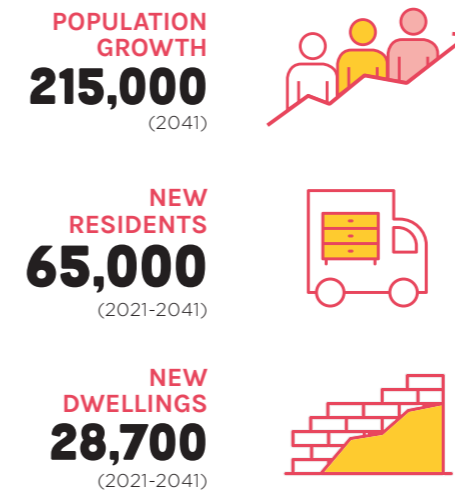
7,000 **2021** → **11,000** **2036**

FORECAST POPULATION & HOUSING GROWTH

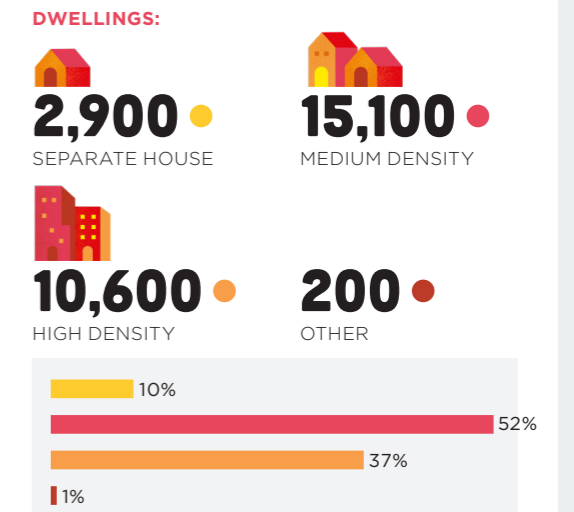
To accommodate population growth to 2041, Darebin will need 28,700 new dwellings. This is a significant level of growth that will need to be accommodated in the form of new medium and high density housing.

While Darebin has the capacity under planning controls to accommodate this level of growth, a range of policy changes are required to improve our housing, to meet the community's changing needs, direct growth in the most accessible areas, and to address our housing challenges.

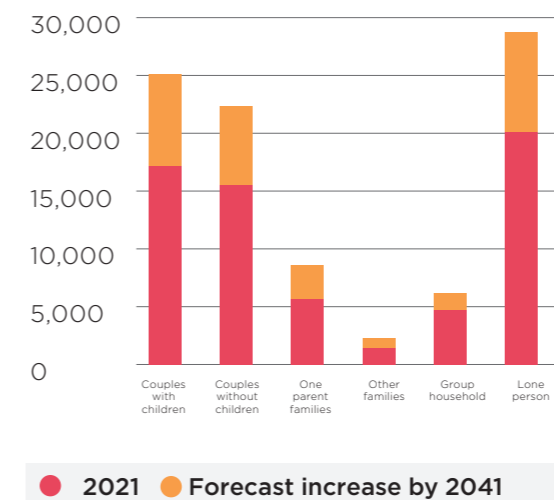
Darebin's forecast population growth (2021-2041)



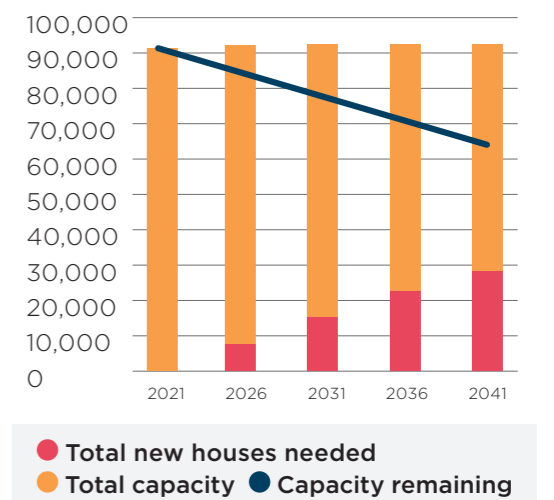
Darebin dwelling demand by type 2021-2041 (SGS, 2023)



Darebin's forecast household type change (2021-2041) (ABS Census 2021)



Darebin housing capacity under current planning controls (SGS, 2021 & 2023)



Housing Challenges

A Housing Strategy needs to understand who we are, how we live, what we value, and how this will likely change in the future. As such, the Housing Strategy identifies a range of housing challenges that Darebin is facing and will need to respond to over coming years.

ACCOMMODATING POPULATION GROWTH

Darebin's population is forecast to grow by 65,000 to 215,000 residents by 2041, requiring the need for 28,700 new dwellings.



DIRECTING DEVELOPMENT TO BETTER LOCATIONS

Continuing to ensure the right housing is provided in the right locations close to jobs, services, and public transport.



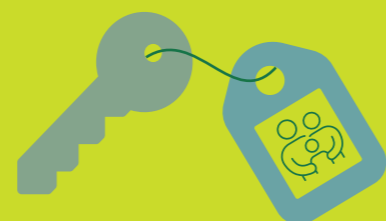
INCREASING INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE PROVISION

Providing new and improved infrastructure, facilities, and services in response to population growth and residential development.



PROVIDING THE RIGHT TYPES AND SIZES OF HOUSING

Ensuring that the new infill development that occurs across the municipality is the right size to accommodate the needs of our community.



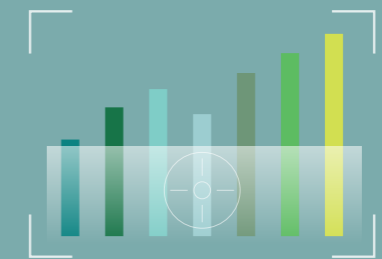
ENSURING HOUSING IS ADAPTABLE AND FUNCTIONAL

Ensuring the housing we build is fit for purpose and responds to the specialised needs of our most vulnerable residents.



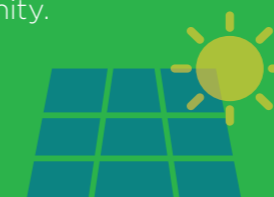
ADDRESSING HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Addressing issues of housing affordability and a lack of affordable housing to help address the current housing crisis.



INCREASING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE OF HOUSING

Ensuring housing is sustainably designed to limit emissions, reduce our impact on the environment and embed climate resilience in the community.



INCREASING THE DESIGN QUALITY OF HOUSING

Designing our housing in a way that achieves design excellence and responds to the community's values.



How the Strategy is Structured

Part 1 and 2 of the strategy considers how Darebin will accommodate projected population growth and residential development to 2041.

It includes the following key elements.

VISION

Defines the overall aspirational goal of the strategy.

5

PRINCIPLES

Are the guiding values of the strategy that underpin the vision.

8

OUTCOMES

Define what the strategy is trying to achieve.

26

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Set out how the outcomes will be achieved.

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ACTIONS

Will be taken to implement and deliver on the strategic directions.

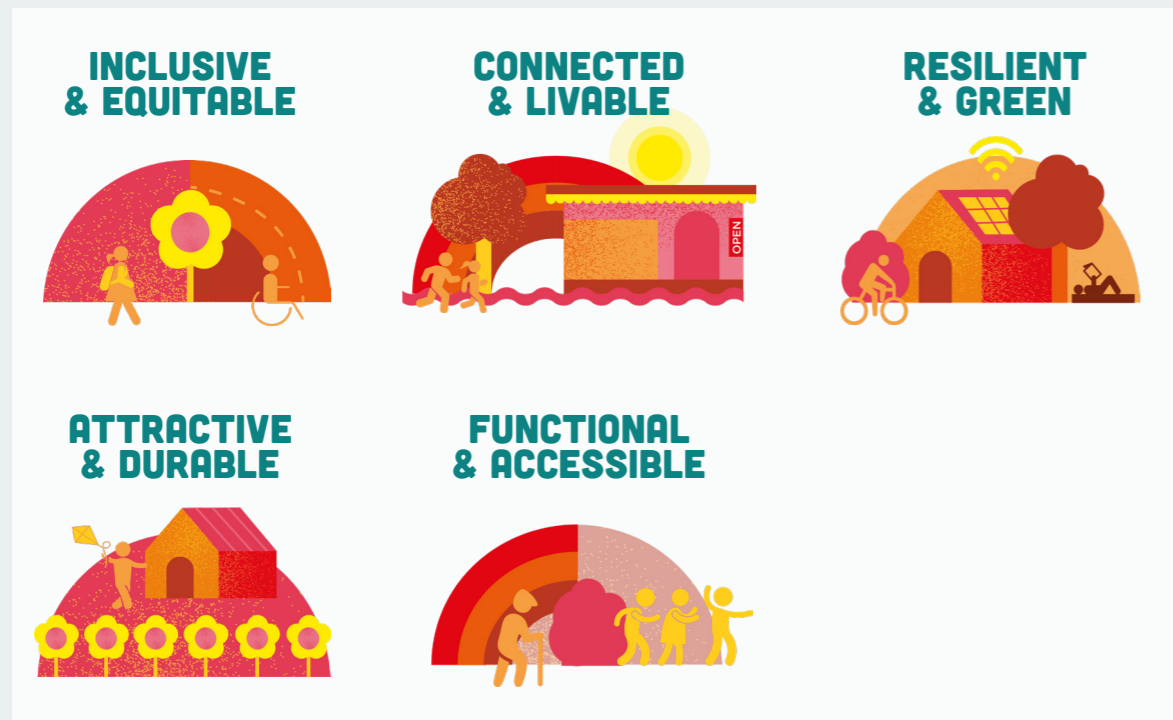
Vision, Principles & Outcomes

Vision Statement

Housing in Darebin will sustainably meet the needs of our diverse and growing community, foster well-connected, liveable and accessible 20 minute neighbourhoods, and enhance the municipality's unique sense of place

Principles

The Vision is underpinned by five guiding principles.



Outcomes

Eight housing outcomes have been defined that will measure the success of the Housing Strategy across four housing pillars: Housing Growth, Housing Need, Housing Character, and Housing Design.

HOUSING GROWTH

OUTCOME 1

Housing growth is directed into the most suitable locations close to services, facilities, and infrastructure to sustainably meet the demands of Darebin's growing population.

OUTCOME 2

Infrastructure and services are planned for and delivered in response to the changing needs of the growing community.

HOUSING CHARACTER

OUTCOME 5

New development respects the valued characteristics of neighbourhoods in a way that balances housing change while supporting the identity and sense of place of the municipality.

OUTCOME 6

New development has enhanced the landscape qualities of our neighbourhoods and contributed towards the urban canopy within the municipality.

HOUSING NEED

OUTCOME 3

Housing diversity is increased in response to the community's equally diverse needs and provides housing choice & affordability close to jobs and services.

OUTCOME 4

The proportion of housing that supports residents throughout the lifecycle and responds to specialised needs has been increased to ensure residents are not displaced.

HOUSING DESIGN

OUTCOME 7

New development achieves design excellence, respects heritage, and supports the well-being of residents to maintain the liveability of our municipality.

OUTCOME 8

New housing is located and designed in a way that seeks to achieve a zero-carbon future and supports community resilience to the impacts of climate change.

HOUSING GROWTH

Where housing growth is located is one of the main influences that planning has on residential development. The location of housing has significant implications for how our city functions and operates. It impacts on service provision and people's access to public and active transport, open space, and employment opportunities. In turn this has

implications on energy use and climate change, social cohesion, and community health and well-being.

It is important that housing growth is managed in a sustainable way by seeking to encourage it in appropriate locations and providing infrastructure and services to support the health and well-being of the community as it grows.

OUTCOME	STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	
1 Housing growth is directed into the most suitable locations close to services, facilities, and infrastructure to sustainably meet the demands of Darebin's growing population.	1.1 Residential development will be directed across the municipality based on a hierarchy of four levels of housing change as outlined in the Residential Development Framework Plan.
INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES & TRANSPORT	
2 Infrastructure and services are planned for and delivered in response to the changing needs of the growing community.	2.1 Monitor housing growth and plan for and deliver development infrastructure, community infrastructure, and open space.
	2.2 Leverage off population growth and seek contributions from new development to help fund identified development, community, and open space infrastructure.
	2.3 Ensure new development is supported by public realm upgrades that improve pedestrian and active transport networks.
	2.4 Consider reduced car parking rates for new development in locations close to public transport and activity centres.
	2.5 Ensure Council services, infrastructure, and facilities support community resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts.

Residential Development Framework

The Residential Development Framework (RDF) sets the policy framework for directing housing growth and development across the municipality. It balances a range of considerations to ensure suitable locations are identified to accommodate housing growth in a prioritised way.

The main objectives of the RDF seek to:

- Ensure residential land can accommodate at least 15 years population growth.
- Focus and prioritise most housing growth in walkable catchments of activity centres and public transport.
- Integrate housing growth and neighbourhood character considerations to determine preferred development outcomes.

- Consider physical characteristics of land such as its capacity to accommodate development, environmental, and landscape values.
- Avoid excessive housing growth in locations with physical constraints or special characteristics.
- Ensure a diverse range of housing typologies can be accommodated that respond to the community's housing needs.

The RDF is based on a hierarchy of four levels of housing change to guide future growth and development. Each housing change area is based on a set of locational criteria and preferred housing outcomes.



Residential Development Framework – Housing Change Areas



Minimal Change Areas

Minimal Change areas are locations containing special characteristics (e.g. Heritage Overlays) or physical constraints (e.g. severe flooding) that limit the amount of change that can comfortably be accommodated.

The lowest level of housing change is expected in Minimal Change areas. Development will maintain the existing character of the area.

HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

Single dwellings, dual occupancies, and multi-unit development (on larger sites).

BUILDING HEIGHTS

Up to 2 storeys.

LIKELY RESIDENTIAL ZONE:

Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)



Incremental Change Areas

Incremental Change areas are typically established suburban locations away from activity centres and public transport. They have poorer walkable access to daily needs than Increased Change areas and will therefore support the second lowest level of change within the municipality.

Housing growth will occur in these locations in the context of the preferred character of the area.

HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

Multi-unit, townhouse and dual occupancy development.

BUILDING HEIGHTS

Up to 2 storeys (with some 3 storeys).

LIKELY RESIDENTIAL ZONE:

Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) and some General Residential Zone (GRZ)



Increased Change Areas

Increased Change areas are established residential areas that are within a reasonable walking catchment of activity centres and public transport.

Housing growth will occur in these locations in the context of the preferred character of the area.

HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

Apartment and townhouse development

BUILDING HEIGHTS

Up to 3 storeys.

LIKELY RESIDENTIAL ZONE:

General Residential Zone (GRZ)



Substantial Change Areas

Substantial Change areas are within or adjoining activity centres or along major public transport corridors. They are residential areas with the greatest level of walkable access to services and public transport. They also contain physical characteristics that make them suitable for more substantial change.

The scale and form of change will vary depending on the context. These areas are likely to result in a new built form character for the area. It is therefore highly important that detailed built form controls are prepared to guide this change.

HOUSING TYPOLOGIES

Apartment and some townhouse development.

BUILDING HEIGHTS

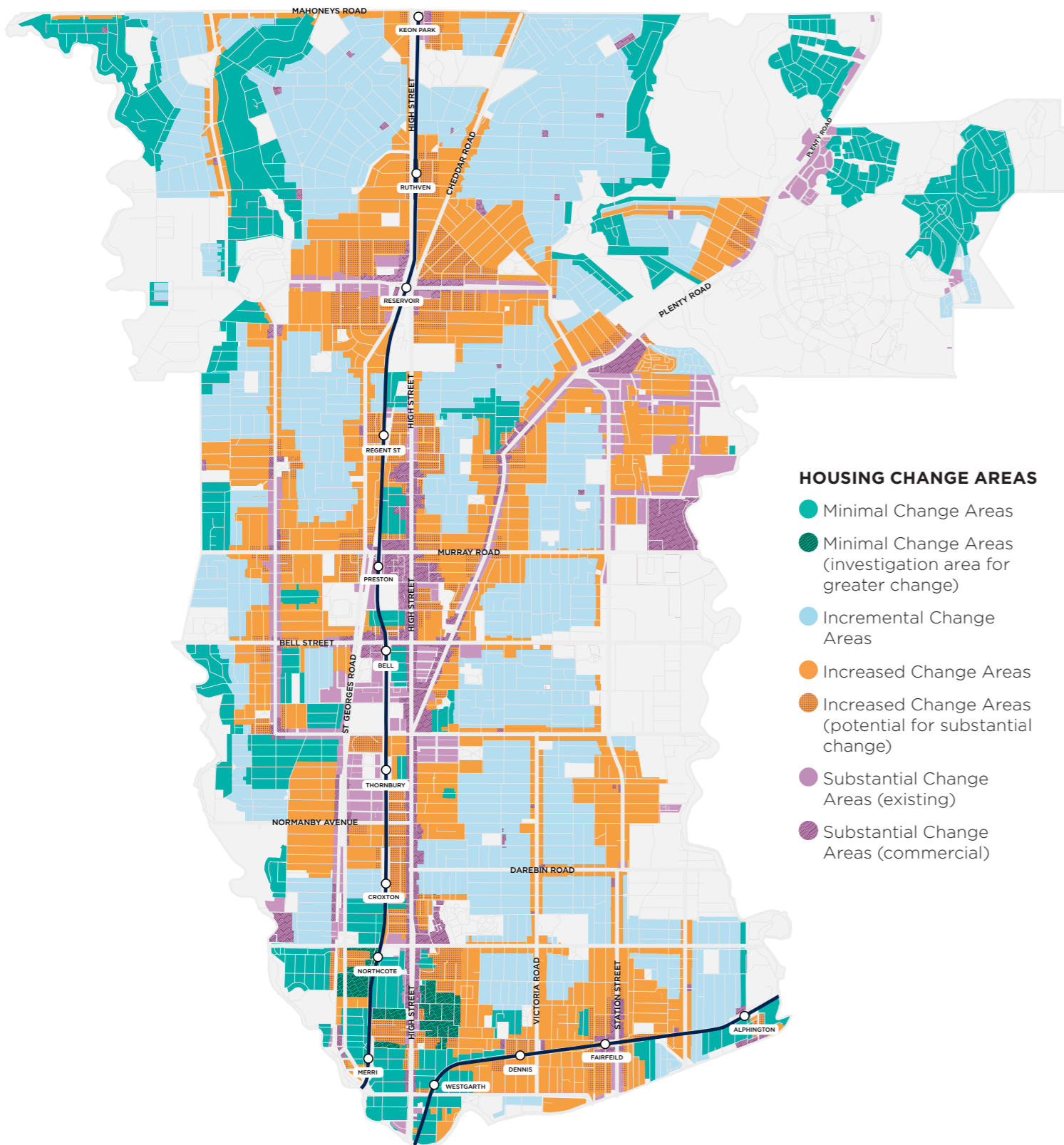
3 to 5 storeys (residential areas) depending on the context.

3 to 10+ storeys (commercial areas) depending on the size, role, and function of the activity centre.

LIKELY RESIDENTIAL ZONE:

Residential Growth Zone (RGZ), General Residential Zone (GRZ), or Mixed Use Zone (MUZ).

Proposed Residential Development Framework



HOUSING NEED

It is important that planning policy seeks to ensure that housing reflects the preferences of current and future demographics in terms of typology, size, cost, design, and location. Housing diversity is important for ensuring that Darebin remains a welcoming place that can house people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

Planning policy and controls have varying levels of influence over housing diversity. The key determinants of housing diversity relate to the type, size, cost, design, tenure, and location of housing. Housing diversity indicators are also influenced by housing for specific groups such as aged care, student accommodation, and supported accommodation, which all have differing requirements compared to standard housing.

Planning policy and controls have

OUTCOME	STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
HOUSING DIVERSITY	
3 Housing diversity is increased in response to the community's equally diverse needs and provides housing choice & affordability close to jobs and services.	3.1 Prioritise the development of a diverse range of medium and high-density housing in accessible locations as guided by the Residential Development Framework (RDF).
	3.2 Encourage the development of a diverse range of housing in accessible locations that offers increased housing choice (in terms of type, size, and tenure) and affordability.
	3.3 Encourage a diversity of dwelling sizes in new development that reflect the needs of the community and ensures residents are not displaced.
	3.4 Support development that includes alternative tenure models that seek to reduce the cost of housing.
	3.5 Ensure the ongoing operating costs of dwellings for future residents is reduced.
ACCESSIBLE & SPECIALISED HOUSING	
4 The proportion of housing that supports residents throughout the lifecycle and responds to specialised needs has been increased to ensure residents are not displaced.	4.1 Seek to ensure that the design of new dwellings is accessible, adaptable, and functional to support residents throughout the life cycle and with limited mobility requirements.
	4.2 Facilitate the delivery of high-quality aged care and specialist disability housing in Substantial Change and Increased Change areas.
	4.3 Support flexible housing designs that provide for adaptable spaces that can evolve through the lifecycle and across multiple generations.
	4.4 Encourage the development of good quality student accommodation in Substantial and Increased Change locations close to tertiary education institutions and along public transport routes that provide connections to these institutes.

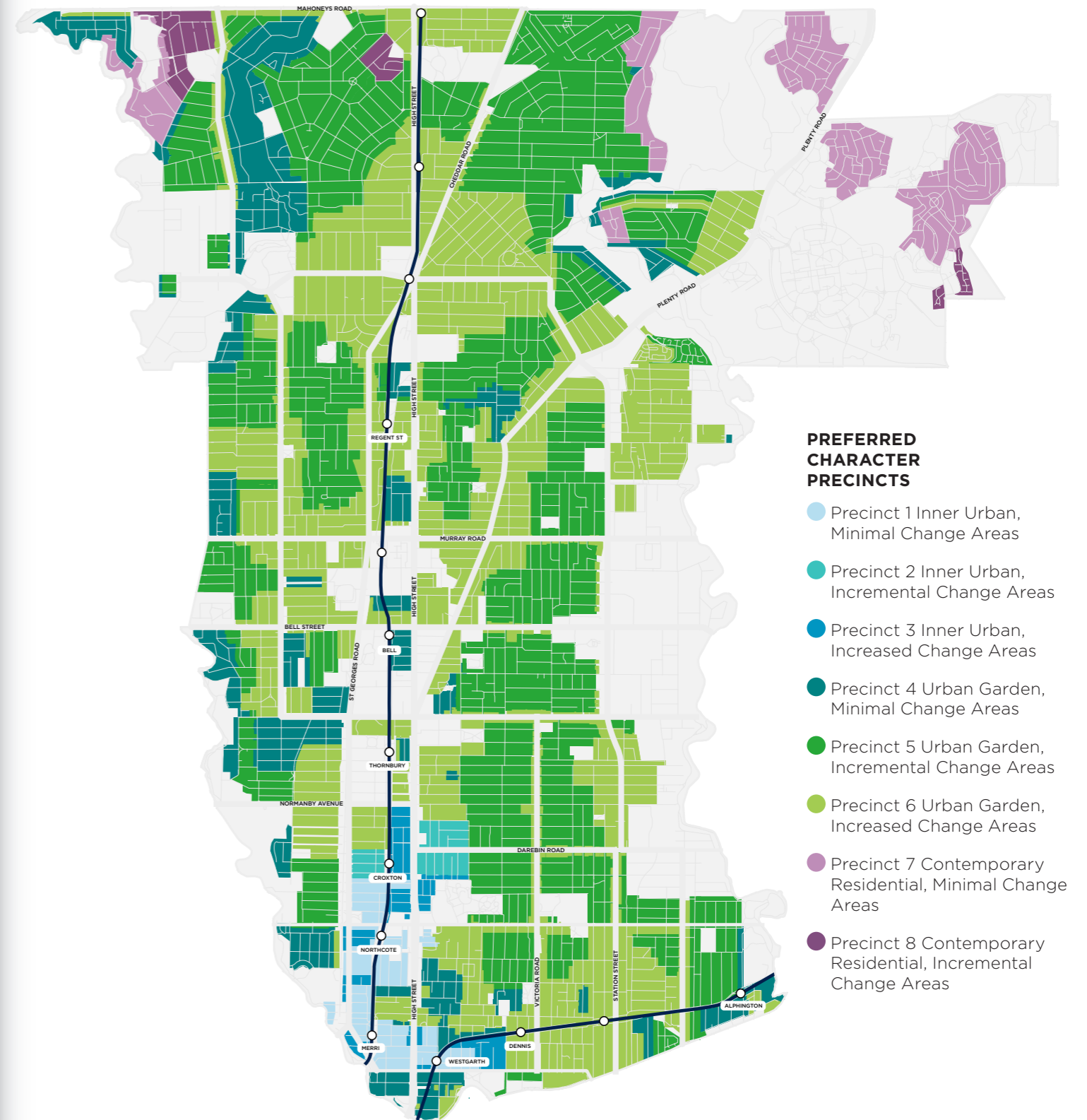
HOUSING CHARACTER

The residential character of Darebin's housing and streets contributes significantly towards the liveability and identity of our neighbourhoods and how they look and feel. Accommodating growth and change at the same time as respecting neighbourhood character is therefore a key challenge that needs to be addressed by the Housing Strategy.

Council's current approach to managing neighbourhood character is informed by the Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study 2007, which is now over 15 years old. Since that time, significant development has occurred within the municipality and the study is no longer fit-for-purpose to respond to the contemporary housing challenges faced by Darebin. A new approach has therefore been prepared as part of this Housing Strategy and outlined in the Preferred Neighbourhood Character Statements and Guidelines (Appendix 1 of the main document).

OUTCOME	STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS
NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER	
5 New development respects the valued characteristics of neighbourhoods in a way that balances housing change while supporting the identity and sense of place of the municipality.	5.1 Manage residential change in established neighbourhoods by supporting contextually appropriate development that is consistent with the Preferred Neighbourhood Character Statements and Guidelines as implemented in the planning scheme.
	5.2 Ensure locations with special or highly consistent character attributes are identified and protected from inappropriate development.
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER	
6 New development has enhanced the landscape qualities of our neighbourhoods and contributed towards the urban canopy within the municipality.	6.1 Ensure new development provides space to accommodate landscaping, including canopy tree planting, to increase canopy coverage across the municipality and reduce the urban heat island effect.

Preferred Character Precincts



HOUSING DESIGN

The design and quality of housing are important aspects for consideration in a Housing Strategy as they have implications for community health and well-being and the built and natural environment. These built form aspects of residential development contribute to the sense of place in our neighbourhoods, residential amenity and liveability, environmental sustainability, and climate resilience.

The Housing Strategy focuses on ways to:

- Improve the design quality and residential amenity of housing in our neighbourhoods.
- Increase the environmental performance of residential development and resilience of our neighbourhoods to the impacts of climate change.

OUTCOME		STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	
DESIGN EXCELLENCE			
7	New development achieves design excellence, respects heritage, and supports the well-being of residents to maintain the liveability of our municipality.	7.1	Facilitate lot consolidation and precinct-level development in existing residential neighbourhoods to improve the form and quality of development and support development of four to five storeys.
		7.2	Facilitate good design outcomes in new development by utilising Darebin's Good Design Guides and refer applicants to the guidelines so that the City of Darebin's design expectations are understood.
		7.3	Ensure residential development provides appropriate levels of internal and external amenity for current and future residents.
		7.4	Ensure residential development design considers storage and collection of waste at the conception stage, and the waste facilities provided in new development caters to the needs of current and future communities.
		7.5	Ensure residential development responds appropriately to areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Significance and large developments are designed with respect for Country in mind.
		7.6	Ensure areas of heritage significance are identified and appropriately protected from inappropriate development.

OUTCOME

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT DESIGN

8	New housing is located and designed in a way that seeks to achieve a zero-carbon future and supports community resilience to the impacts of climate change.	8.1	Facilitate the development of a compact and sustainable and climate resilient urban form through implementation of the Residential Development Framework (RDF) by focusing higher density development close to existing services, facilities, and infrastructure.
		8.2	Promote the need for improved sustainable design requirements to increase the environmental performance and reduce the ongoing operating costs of housing and move towards zero-carbon development.
		8.3	Promote the need for better integration of climate change adaptation considerations into decision-making about the design and location of new residential development to support the resilience of the community.



Action Plan

The Action Plan outlined in Section 9 of the main document provides a five-year work program to implement Part 1 and 2 of the strategy. It includes 35 actions that Council will take to deliver on the strategy.

Each action is provided with a timeframe for delivery, assigned a responsible unit of Council, categorised according to the type of action it represents, and is linked back to the relevant strategic direction. A process for monitoring and reviewing is also defined.

A key mechanism for implementing the aspects of the strategy addressed in this document is undertaking amendments to policies and provisions of the Darebin Planning Scheme.

Please refer to the main document for further information.



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