

Strategic Context

2

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 Location

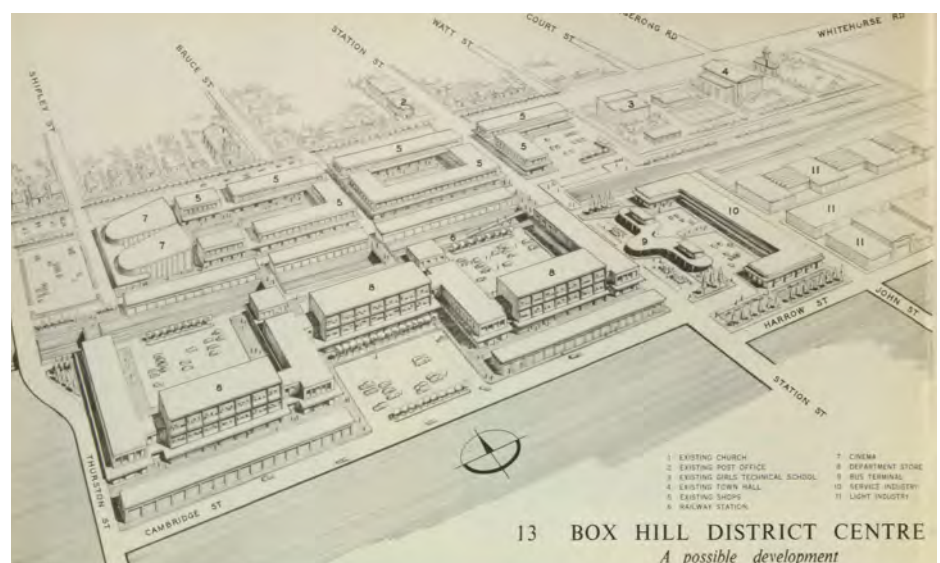
The Wurundjeri– Balluk Tribe are the traditional custodians of the land on which Box Hill is located. The tribe, whose traditional language is Woi Wurrung, is one of the five tribes that make up the Kulin nation. The tribe has historical links with the wider area now known as the City of Whitehorse extending over 40,000 years. Whitehorse City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional owners of the land which is now called Whitehorse, the Wurundjeri people and their elders past and present.

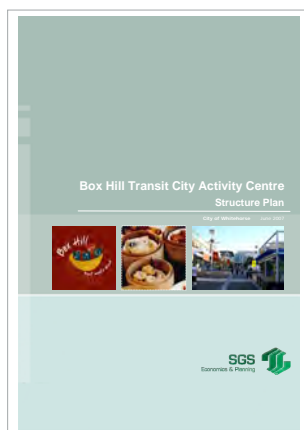
Box Hill is located approximately 14km east of Melbourne’s Central Business District (CBD). Box Hill is located in what is considered Melbourne’s ‘middle ring’ with a gateway role in connecting the outer region with inner Melbourne. The centre is located at an important location on the Lilydale and Belgrave rail line, Whitehorse Road and at the terminus of the 109 tram route.

Box Hill’s origins are completely dependent on transport and it being a focal point for economic activity and transfer of goods and services. This role has strengthened over time, though been less relevant over the last 50 years of automobile dependence. As traffic congestion increases we are now at a tipping point where Box Hill’s locational strengths could again be a key driver of growth.

Box Hill has consistently been considered a strategic centre in Melbourne metropolitan planning policy since its designation as a District Business Centre in the 1954 Metropolitan Planning Scheme, see Figure 2.1. This has continued through to the current iteration of the metropolitan plan, *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*. In each plan, the important regional role of the centre for the provision of employment, services and increased development has been reiterated.

Figure 2.1 A illustrative view of a ‘possible development’ of Box Hill District Centre in the 1954 Metropolitan Planning Scheme.





2.1.2 Box Hill Transit City Activity Centre Structure Plan 2007

The 2007 *Structure Plan* was written in the context of Melbourne 2030, with the aim of guiding the early stages of Box Hill's transformation into a higher-density transit oriented urban centre. There was explicit and general recognition, supported by Council, that Box Hill had the potential to support substantial growth in the transition from a suburban centre to an urban centre. The structure plan set out a framework for development with actions for both the public and private sectors in delivering the necessary amenity improvements that support the change.

The vision set out within the structure plan is as follows:

“Box Hill will be sustainable, safe and accessible to all. It will be a distinctive, vibrant, diverse, inclusive, participatory, caring and healthy community where you live, work and enjoy – day and night.”

Importantly, the vision is also composed of six constituent sub-points:

- Box Hill will be a place where people can live, work, shop and access social networks and personal services.
- Box Hill will be a focus for regional health care, educational and community services.
- Box Hill will support a diverse, inclusive, participatory, caring and healthy community.
- Box Hill will be a distinctive, vibrant and enjoyable place – day and night.
- Box Hill will be sustainable.
- Box Hill will be accessible to all.

The 2007 Structure Plan identified the varied role of various parts of the centre towards this overall vision. The preferred land uses were set out in terms of the following activity precincts, see Table 2.1 and Figure 2.2.

Table 2.1 Activity Precincts and preferred land use outcomes | 2007 Structure Plan

	Desired Outcomes
Precinct A Box Hill Transport and Retail Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Intense mixtures of activity over extended hours to create the central focus for Box Hill. — Retail sustained throughout the precinct, complemented by entertainment, commercial and other uses e.g. hotel and conference facilities. — A vital streetscape environment that will encourage additional investment in retail activity.
Precinct B Prospect Street Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Consolidation as the primary office precinct in the region.
Precinct C Civic and Eastern TAFE Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Consolidation of council services, meeting spaces, and cultural, community and educational facilities in the precinct.
Precinct D Hospital and Western TAFE Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Growth and enhancement of educational and medical institutions and support for related businesses. — Property consolidation to facilitate redevelopment and creation of public accessways through the precinct. — Development addressed to Nelson Road to create a pedestrian-friendly street.
Precinct E Box Hill Gardens Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Provision for significant residential growth, in an area with good access to transport services and Box Hill Gardens. — Development of small scale offices, community services and retail to activate ground levels.
Precinct F Southern and Eastern Precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Accommodation of growth in the local supply of office space. — Continuation of the precinct's role in supporting some retail activity. — Office and retail activities that respond to prominent Whitehorse Road and Station Street frontages. — Mixed uses including higher density residential as a buffer to established residential precincts.
Precinct G Box Hill Gardens & Kingsley Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Convenient access to high quality public open space and recreational opportunities within the Activity Centre.
Precinct H Residential Precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The areas' residential role protected. — Medium density residential development encouraged. — Encroachment of medical facilities north of Thames Street prohibited.

Source: 2007 Structure Plan, Section 5.1 Land Uses, p.54-55

Built form controls were described in parallel to the activity precincts, using a specific arrangement of built form precincts. In summary, the controls applying to each was set up as follows, see Table 2.2 and Figure 2.3.

Table 2.2 Built Form Precincts and built form outcomes | *2007 Structure Plan*

	Desired Outcomes
Precinct A Peripheral Residential Precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The area's residential amenity protected. — Modest increases in density.
Precinct B Low-rise Higher-density Residential Precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Attractive residential streetscapes enhanced by private gardens. — A transitional building scale between residential areas at the edge of the Activity Centre and high-density redevelopment areas. — Increased residential development densities. — High standards of privacy and amenity in new developments and adjoining sites. — The amenity (including access to sunlight) of Key Public Spaces protected.
Precinct C Traditional Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Pedestrian-friendly streets and lanes lined by attractive buildings, given a sense of vitality and safety by active building frontages. — The precinct's built form character retained and heritage buildings protected. — Retail activity sustained throughout the precinct and complemented by shop-top commercial and mixed use. — The amenity (including access to sunlight) of Key Public Spaces protected.
Precinct D Mid-rise Commercial and Mixed Use Precincts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Attractive pedestrian friendly streets lined by buildings and given a sense of vitality and safety through their activation by adjoining uses. — A transitional scale between low-rise development near the periphery of the Activity Centre and high-density redevelopment areas. — Increased land use densities. — The amenity (including access to sunlight) of Key Public Spaces protected.
Precinct E Town Hall Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Attractive pedestrian friendly streets and open spaces given formal definition by buildings and a sense of vitality and safety through their activation by adjoining uses. — Consolidation of civic and educational facilities in the precinct. — Civic buildings given visual emphasis and the significance of heritage buildings and associated open spaces protected.
Precinct F Major Development Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — A fine grain of attractive pedestrian-friendly streets, lanes and arcades lined by buildings and given a sense of vitality and safety through their activation by adjoining uses. — Significantly increased land use densities close to the railway station, and in the area between the station, hospitals and TAFE. — The amenity (including access to sunlight) of streetscapes and Key Public Spaces protected. — Synergies between public parklands and uses at their edges, and enhanced community safety in parkland. — Amenity in surrounding low rise precincts protected.
Key Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Convenient access to public open space and recreation opportunities in the Activity Centre. — Protection and enhancement of open spaces' character. — An effective increase in useable open space through removal of encumbrances and design improvements.

Source: *2007 Structure Plan, Section 5.2 Built Form, p.59-62*

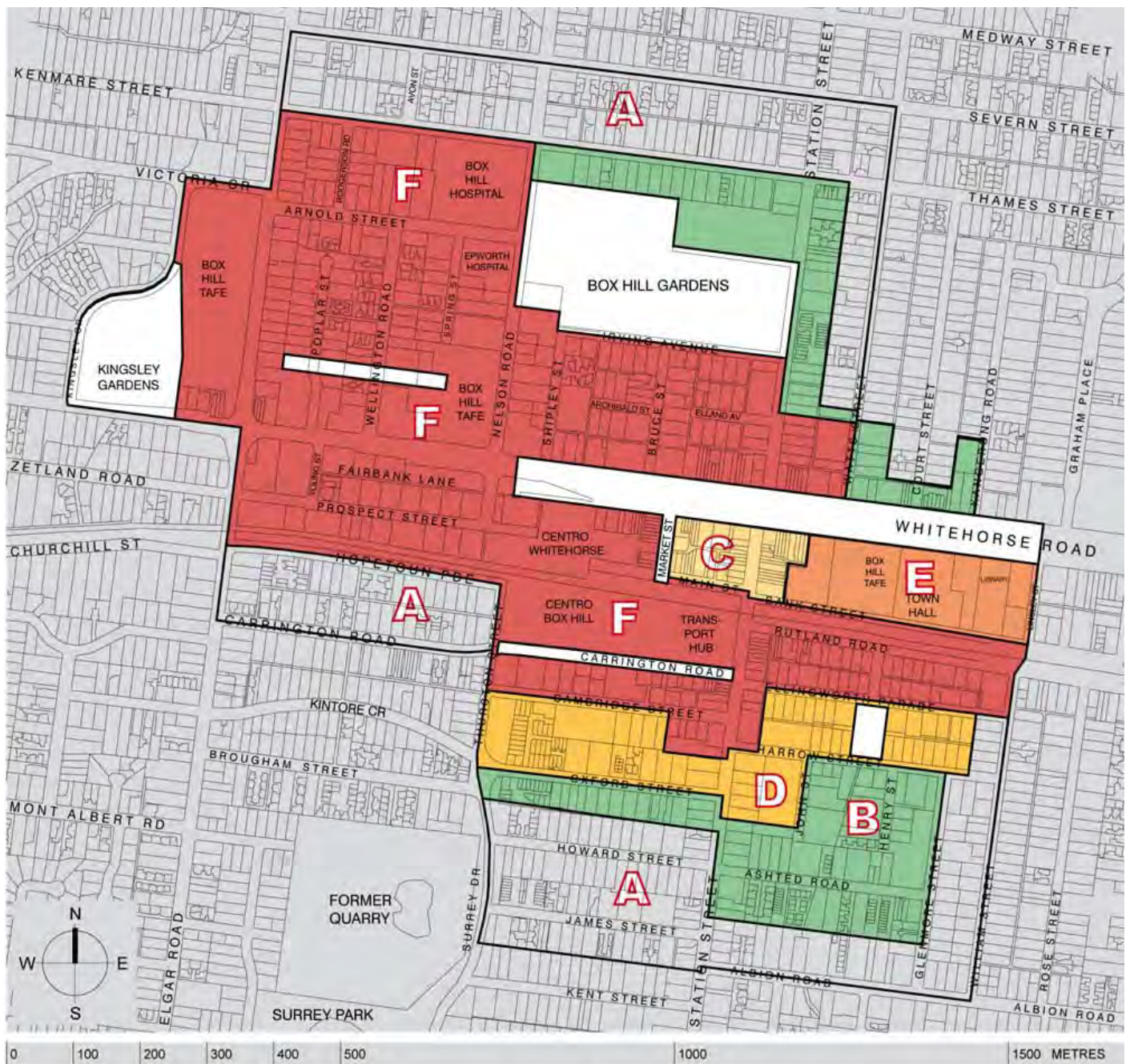


Figure 2.3 'Built Form Precincts' |
 Reproduced from the 2007 *Structure Plan*, pg.17

2.1.3 Key Changes in the Broader Strategic Planning Context Since 2007

In the time since the adoption of the *2007 Structure Plan*, there have been substantial changes in the broader strategic planning context that need to be considered in relation to their impact on the future planning for the Box Hill.

- Metropolitan planning for Melbourne has extended significantly in this time. In high-level terms, *Melbourne 2030* had a relatively greater emphasis on centre hierarchies derived from retail floor space and encouraging residential intensification within transit rich locations. *Plan Melbourne* extended the residential and retail planning by introducing a relatively stronger focus on the importance of supporting employment opportunities, health and community services and integrating transport planning into the consideration of the overall metropolitan form.
 - The shift in emphasis within metropolitan planning has coincided with an increased focus on jobs and economic development across government. The important economic and social role of the health and education sectors has been emphasised through increased recognition and new investment in major facilities. The particular importance of distributing these services across the whole city has become an important consideration for state government, both for their role in providing key services closer to where people live and also for distributing employment opportunities more broadly. Investment decisions for major transport infrastructure have also increasingly been considered in metropolitan terms.
 - The Victorian zoning regime has undergone significant reform since 2007. Of particular relevance is the removal of the Priority Development Zone (PDZ) which was a feature of the *2007 Structure Plan*. In addition to this, reforms to residential zones introduced mandatory and discretionary height controls. In Box Hill, the previous Residential 1 Zone (R1Z) was largely replaced by the reformed Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) with a discretionary maximum building height of 13.5m (nominally 4 storeys). Commercial zones were also reformed and simplified with the purpose of providing greater flexibility and growth opportunities.
- This allows for a broader range of as-of-right land uses including allowing for accommodation and retail uses within commercial zones.
- Increasing house prices and greater numbers of apartment development have led to increased scrutiny of the role of planning schemes in facilitating both affordable housing and acceptable levels of internal amenity within higher density parts of the city. The *Better Apartment Standards* have influenced development typologies through the need for improved solar access and ventilation. More recently, affordable housing has been legislated as a specific objective of planning in Victoria, allowing for greater support for this housing sector to be implemented within planning schemes.
 - Activity centres across Melbourne have been a focus for contestation and divergent views amongst the wider community on acceptable development outcomes. A significant proportion of larger development applications have been subject to VCAT review, increasing costs and uncertainty both for applicants and the affected community members. During 2018, DELWP (Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning) prepared new guidance and practice notes from the *Activity Centre Pilot Program* to clarify preferred planning approaches for activity centres, for example on the appropriate use of mandatory and discretionary heights to give greater planning certainty and guidance about preferred built form outcomes.
 - Other municipalities across Melbourne have begun to investigate and implement new planning tools that provide stronger guidance on preferred outcomes while allowing a managed level of flexibility to respond to individual circumstances. Tools such as Floor Area Ratios (FAR) and dwelling density controls have been successfully implemented by the City of Melbourne and Port Phillip to facilitate substantial change but constrain excessive intensification. These tools have also successfully been extended to include mechanisms to incentivise community benefits from intensive development through density bonus schemes. There are transferable lessons from other municipalities and interstate examples that could be applied to Box Hill.



2.2 Metropolitan and Regional Strategic Planning and Policy Context



2.2.1 *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 outlines a vision for Melbourne as a global city of opportunity and choice. This vision also establishes a clearly defined city structure of the central city connect by a network of National Employment and Innovation Clusters (NEIC) and Metropolitan Activity Centres (MAC) with each leveraging particular competitive advantages towards attracting investment, and promoting innovation and employment growth for a growing population, see Figure 2.4. In addition, this vision is supported by a principle of 'living locally' through the creation of 20-minute neighbourhoods where people can access the majority of their everyday needs within a 20-minute walk, cycle or public transport trip. This vision is underpinned by directions that seek to improve the transport network to bring jobs closer to where people live and deliver higher quality and higher density housing closer to jobs and public transport such as MACs, clusters and train stations. At a micro-scale, the plan outlines the role of good urban design in the creation of transit-oriented and walkable neighbourhoods with great public places to support 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Box Hill is one of nine existing Metropolitan Activity Centres designated in *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*.

This reaffirms Box Hill's role as a metropolitan centre of regional significance with the purpose of providing diversity of jobs, activities, and housing for the eastern region. As a Metropolitan Activity Centre, the Box Hill has a major role in delivery of higher-order services, including health and education, governmental and justice services in addition to major retail and commercial opportunities for the region. Planning for the future of Box Hill will need to consider particular strategic drivers of change, key competitive strengths such as health and education employment and the role of the Box Hill in accommodating growth in population, jobs and infrastructure while improving the public realm and connectivity for a regional catchment.

While Box Hill is not designated in *Plan Melbourne* as a NEIC, it shares many of the characteristics of a cluster with its excellent public transport links and pre-existing strengths in health and education with Box Hill Hospital, Epworth Eastern and Box Hill Institute. Strategically, it is located between two identified NEICs; the La Trobe NEIC with La Trobe University, Northland and Heidelberg; and the Monash NEIC with Monash Health, Monash University and the forthcoming Victorian Heart Hospital. Notably, MACs differ from NEICs in their dual function in providing both opportunities for substantial housing growth while also supporting growth in employment and services.



Figure 2.4 Box Hill's location in Metropolitan Melbourne

Legend

- Urban Growth Boundary
- Green Wedge land
- Metropolitan Activity Centre
- National employment and innovation cluster (NEIC)
- Rail network
- State-significant road corridor
- North East Link Project
- West Gate Tunnel Project



2.2.2 Health and Education Precincts

Health and education has long been one of Melbourne's underlying strengths. The Box Hill Hospital and Box Hill Institute (BHI) Precinct is identified in *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* as a Health and Education Precinct for further services and jobs growth. Beyond the core purpose of providing higher-order health and education services, these precincts are generally supported by ancillary retail, commercial and accommodation services which provide further opportunities for employment.

Box Hill Hospital is the largest hospital in the Eastern Health network, admitting more than 48,000 patients annually and growing, and has recently undergone major redevelopment, increasing by 200 beds.

Monash University has recently partnered with Eastern Health for a new Eastern Clinical Trials and Research Centre at Box Hill Hospital which will accommodate over 600 highly skilled staff. In addition, the hospital has on-going research and training partnerships with Deakin University (Eastern Health Partnership), Monash University and La Trobe University.

Epworth Eastern, a private hospital located adjacent to Box Hill Hospital, is currently at capacity and redevelopment is expected to begin in 2019 in partnership with council, Salvation Army and BHI. This demand for hospital beds across the eastern metropolitan region was primarily driven by overall population growth which is expected to continue. In evidence to the Amendment C175 Planning Panel,

Epworth Eastern provided future projections which show that 705 additional beds would be required from 2013/2014 levels across the eastern region. A large proportion of this number is likely to be located in Box Hill.

BHI is one of Victoria's largest Vocational Education and Training providers with up to 60,000 students enrolled annually. Recently, the BHI has sought to grow through diversification by partnering with local, national and global enterprise partnerships. This can be demonstrated by a recent partnership with Epworth Eastern for the delivery of a new nurse training facility for the institute alongside the expansion of the hospital. This demonstrates the potential of health and education partnerships and synergies to facilitate further growth in knowledge-intensive jobs and productivity.

Box Hill is easily accessible from other major education institutions. Deakin University (Burwood campus) is located approximately 3.5 kilometres from Box Hill Central station but can be reached within 15-20 minutes by bus and 15 minutes by bicycle. While Deakin University is the nearest university by proximity, across much of the day Swinburne University can be reached within a quicker travel time despite being 8 kilometres away due to access by train services rather than less frequent buses. This concentration of access to institutions supports the importance of Box Hill for student housing.



2.2.3 Metropolitan Partnerships – Eastern Metro Region (2018)

Box Hill is located in the Eastern Metropolitan Region which comprises of six local government areas in the region; Whitehorse, Monash, Knox, Maroondah, Manningham and Yarra Ranges. In 2018, the State Government established Metropolitan Partnerships as advisory groups to improve local community engagement, including youth groups, and co-ordination between levels of government in the identification of key priorities for each region. A key outcome of these partnerships is the delivery of five year implementation plans that explicitly identify funding and investment actions related to jobs, services and infrastructure – relevant to Box Hill is the Eastern Metro Region Five Year Plan. Box Hill is one of two Metropolitan Activity Centres in the Eastern Metro Region along with Ringwood and is expected to accommodate much of the region's anticipated population growth over the next five years as well as driving growth in employment in health. Recent investments through Eastern Metropolitan Partnerships include the partially completed Box Hill to Ringwood shared-use path along the rail corridor. Still in its early stages, the Eastern Metro Partnerships represents an opportunity for improved community ownership and co-ordination of funding and delivery of key projects and priorities between Box Hill and its regional partners.



2.2.4 Infrastructure Victoria 30 Year Strategy (2016)

Infrastructure Victoria (IV) was established in 2015 as an independent statutory authority to provide advice for the long-term planning of infrastructure in Victoria. In 2016, IV delivered Victoria's first 30-year infrastructure strategy which identified the need to improve access to middle and outer metropolitan activity centres and more broadly the need to improve accessibility for people with mobility challenges. However, IV will update the 30-year strategy in 2019/2020 to account for changes in circumstances and announced projects such as the proposed Suburban Rail Loop and the Airport Rail Link project. At present, the plan contains two key recommendations that are relevant to Box Hill.

- The Box Hill Transit Interchange (BHTI) is identified in the plan as a priority interchange due for upgrade to facilitate faster and easier passenger transfers, including for those with mobility challenges, to support and strengthen Melbourne's multi-modal public transport network.
- The plan repeats *Plan Melbourne's* overarching goal of encouraging growth in business activity, services and higher density housing in major employment centres to enable more people to live closer to jobs and identifies NEICs and MACs as areas of emphasis.

2.2.5 Regional Transport Networks

Box Hill has its prominence today thanks to its historical transport context. The ongoing prominence of Box Hill relies on efficient and effective transport that can cater for the number of people who want to live, work, recreate in, and pass-through, Box Hill.

Box Hill's transport network has evolved from the 1800's when Whitehorse Road and later the train lines to Gembrook, Healesville and Warburton connected fertile agricultural land east of Melbourne to the urban area. Much of the Box Hill region was fully developed with residential sub-urban development by the 1960's.

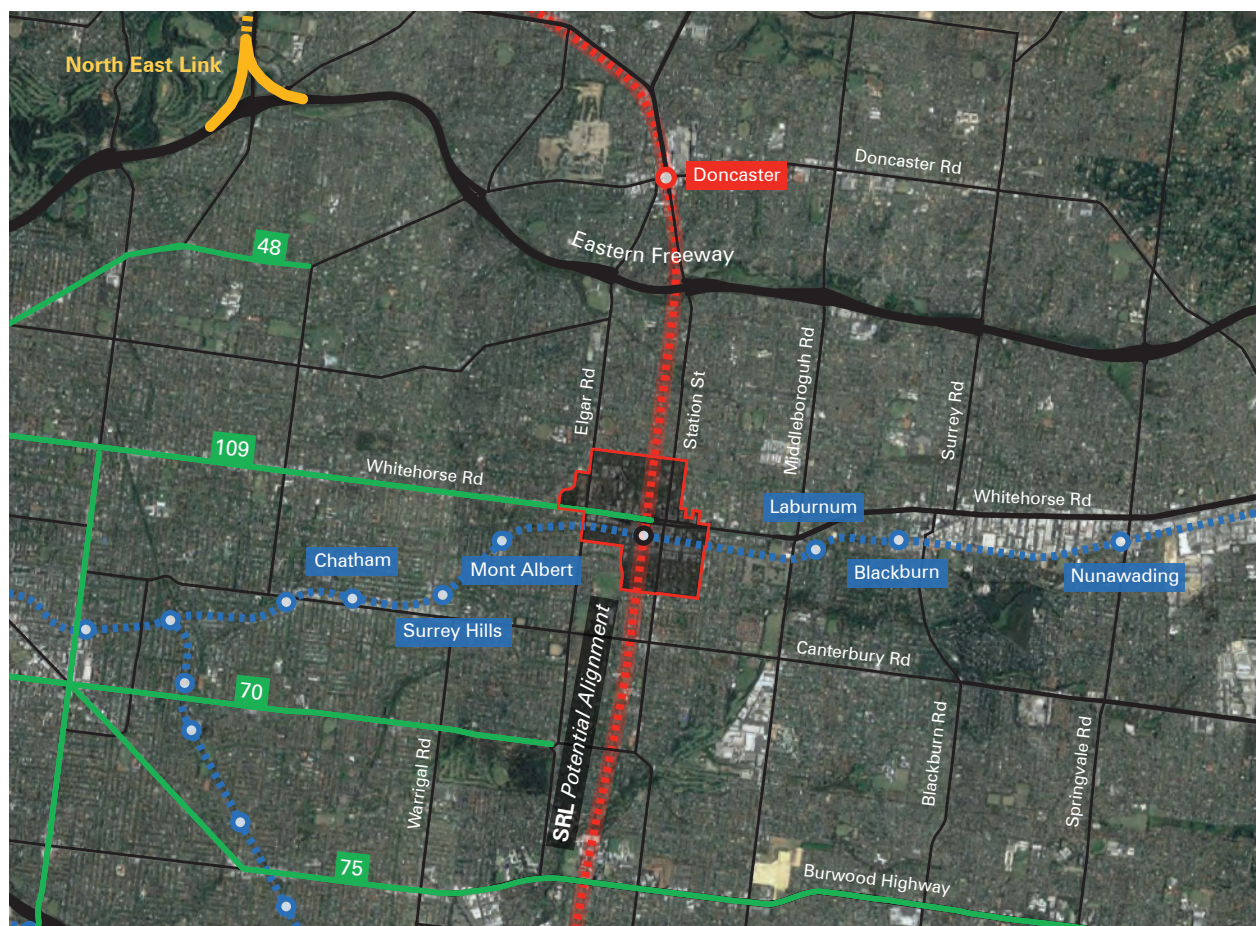
Over the last 50 years the amount of space dedicated to transport has barely increased (the addition of the Eastern Freeway being the main change).

Since 1960 the transport network in Box Hill has had to cater for higher volumes of movement within an essentially static amount of space.

This will also be the ongoing approach to the coming 50 years, as more people seek to live, work and play in Box Hill, but the space dedicated to transport will barely increase. Some large peripheral projects including North East Link and Suburban Rail Loop will increase the capacity of regional connections; however they will not increase the capacity for local travel around Box Hill CBD (the area that is subject to the Structure Plan).

The number of people visiting and passing through Box Hill has grown significantly over the past 35 years. To date, the transport network has barely evolved to meet the current and future challenges.

Figure 2.5 Transport in the region including proposed major transport projects



2.2.6 Major Transport Projects

Recently, Melbourne has experienced significant investment in transport infrastructure with \$38 billion of transport projects currently in construction including the Melbourne Metro Tunnel, West Gate Tunnel and the Level Crossing Removal Project with many further projects in planning and investigation stages. Relevant to Box Hill and the Eastern Metro Region is the North East Link (NEL) and the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) project.

North East Link

The North East Link project proposes to connect the Metropolitan Ring Road (M80) with the Eastern Freeway (M3) with the later upgraded to incorporate a dedicated separated busway from Doncaster to the city. The NEL will have a marginal impact in terms of the catchment for people accessing Box Hill but is likely to have a significant impact on levels of through traffic on arterial roads through Box Hill. Elgar Road and Station Street are anticipated to absorb some of this increase in through traffic resulting from a wider Eastern Freeway and a three lane wide bottleneck at the Mullum Mullum Tunnels. NEL documents shows that the project will increase the level of traffic congestion on north south arterial roads through Box Hill. As a result, Council will need to work with the community to find ways to discourage through traffic through Box Hill and improve pedestrian amenity in the CBD.

In the *2007 Structure Plan*, there was an expectation that the Middleborough Road level crossing removal would ease traffic congestion in Station Street. With large road projects such as NEL there is a significant risk that the project creates more traffic (induced demand). If this happens there will be pressure to retain and extend clearways in Elgar Road and Station Street to enable through traffic easy passage through the Box Hill CBD.

Suburban Rail Loop

The Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) project seeks to transform Melbourne's public transport network by providing a 90 kilometre partially underground rail loop connecting activity centres, including three MACs (Box Hill, Broadmeadows and Sunshine) and four of six NEICs. SRL would facilitate a shift in the railway network structure from one that is focussed on radial travel to Melbourne CBD to a polycentric orbital network structure that improves connectivity between Melbourne's middle-ring activity centres and NEICs. Both *Plan Melbourne* and Infrastructure Victoria's 30-year Infrastructure Strategy highlight the need to facilities jobs growth in MACs and other major employment centres outside of the CBD. In this respect, SRL will have a significant impact on regional catchment across the corridor, reducing the transit travel times from the distant regional catchment. For Box Hill, this would likely increase the ability of office space to attract tenants as travel times decrease and Box Hill's employee catchment increases.

The project is at early stages of planning and is expected to be delivered in four phases, Box Hill lies at the centre of the first and second planned phases: Cheltenham to Box Hill (south-east) and Box Hill to Melbourne Airport. The south-east section has been identified as priority and work may commence by end of 2022. The new Box Hill Station is anticipated to be underground. At this stage, it is not clear how the new station will relate with the Box Hill Transit Interchange.

2.3 Local Strategic Planning and Policy Context

2.3.1 Council Vision 2013

In the *Council Vision 2013-2023*, Whitehorse City Council has set 5 strategic directions that guide the long term planning and delivery of its policies and operations, based on the aspirations of Councillors, staff and the wider community. The directions are:

- 1 Support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community.
- 2 Maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a liveable and sustainable city.
- 3 Protect and enhance our open spaces and natural environments.
- 4 Strategic leadership and open and accessible government.
- 5 Support a healthy local economy

These directions have been used to inform the *Council Plan 2017-2021* and incorporated into the Whitehorse Planning Scheme Municipal Strategic Statement.

2.3.2 Box Hill Transit City Activity Centre Structure Plan 2007

Prepared by SGS for Whitehorse City Council in response to Melbourne 2030, the *2007 Structure Plan* sought to build on earlier transport and urban design work to provide direction for development of Box Hill into a high density, pedestrian friendly urban centre connected to public transport, help reduce urban sprawl and reduce dependency on private motor transport.

The *2007 Structure Plan* sought to address the following issues to ensure the objectives of Melbourne 2030 were achieved:

- Providing clarity as to the expectations of appropriate development within the Activity Centre, to facilitate the development process.
- Improving infrastructure and services to enable intensive development and support new activities within the public realm – transforming a place created to support ‘suburban’ activity into one that supports ‘urban’ activity.
- Managing transitions between existing low-density uses that will remain for the foreseeable future and areas of high density new development, and managing the evolution over time of a new character in areas where existing low density uses will sit amongst high density development over a transitional period.

The *2007 Structure Plan* addresses these issues by providing:

- A Vision for Box Hill (as set out in 2.1.2 of this report)
- A framework for development (as set out in 2.1.2 of this report) addressing:
 - Public spaces including parks, plazas and pedestrian streets
 - Access – circulation network for pedestrians, bicycles, public transport, road traffic and car parking
 - Land use and activities
 - Built form

- Objectives Strategies and actions for each of the above components of the Structure Plan
- Development Control Guidelines to achieve desired outcomes for
 - Land uses – Activity Precincts
 - Built form Precincts
- Managing Change (Implementation actions)

2.3.3 Whitehorse Housing Strategy 2014

This study was completed in 2014, utilising future population projections based on the 2011 Census. The strategic approach outlined in the document highlights the importance of location, diversity, affordability and design in planning for future housing growth. Specifically, the strategy highlights a range of key challenges relevant to Box Hill, including:

- Encouraging housing within established activity centres and in areas with good access to public transport.
- Encouraging a broader range of housing types to meet differing needs from across the population, including the specialist needs of an aging community and of the high proportion of students within Box Hill
- Increasing the supply of affordable housing
- Encouraging higher quality design responses for more intensive development, including better integration of landscape opportunities into developments to deliver higher quality local urban character.

All of the residential areas within the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre boundary are identified as a substantial change area and either the Residential Growth Zone or Mixed Use Zone has been applied. This designation supports higher density development up to four storeys and increased residential densities in order to maximise the benefit derived from proximity to transport and services. The objectives of this strategy include facilitating the emergence of a new urban character over time in areas identified for growth and increasing the diversity of housing provision (considering tenure, housing size and type of housing).

2.3.4 Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011

The Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 creates a framework which considers the different modes of transport available to the Whitehorse community and provides direction to facilitate travel options and networks that are sustainable, convenient, accessible and safe. The Council has recognised the need for safe, sustainable and active modes of transport to benefit the community by making positive difference to the health and environment. Hence, this strategy promotes the use of sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

The strategy addresses the key issues raised by stakeholders, which developed the strategic goals of:

- Improving linkage between different transport modes
- Minimising the impact of transport on the environment
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Creating safe environment for residents and commuters
- Promoting economic development and social connectedness.

The strategy was formed on the basis of four strategic objectives which address the transport to be controlled or influenced by the Council. It aims to encourage walking; maintain and improve the cycling network; encourage shift towards public transport; and provide safe and efficient movement of vehicles.

The strategy has proposed a review to be undertaken every year. Box Hill has experienced significant growth in recent years, increasing the need for attention to detail when creating places for people. As a result, the Council is currently undertaking a review of the Integrated Transport Strategy specifically for Box Hill and its immediate context.

2.3.5 Whitehorse Cycling Strategy 2016

The Whitehorse Cycling Strategy 2016 sits under the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 and the Road Management Plan 2015. The Whitehorse Cycling Strategy 2016 aspires to create a well-connected network of attractive, safe and inviting low stress streets and paths for the cyclists yet respects all the users. Through this strategy the Council promotes five directions which support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community; maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a liveable and sustainable city; protect and enhance our open spaces and natural environments; strategic leadership and open and accessible government; and support a healthy local economy.

This is a very important strategy to help the Council achieve its vision 2013-2023 to be a healthy, vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community supported by strong leadership and community partnerships. The strategy demonstrates a well adopted network in some parts of the Box Hill CBD. However, with the increasing vehicular movement on the arterial roads and growth in the CBD even more infrastructure will be required. The Cycling Strategy includes some mention of riding a bicycle for transport but does not provide detailed recommendations related to accessing Box Hill by bicycle and the improvements required.

2.3.6 Box Hill Car Parking Strategy 2014

The Box Hill Car Parking Strategy 2014 was developed to evaluate the demand and supply of the car parking within the CBD. The strategy aims to establish existing car parking characteristics; to identify shortfalls in existing car parking and develops strategy to address the identified shortfalls; to identify future demand for parking; to establish the tools to manage existing and future parking demands; and to determine strategies relevant to the Box Hill Central Activities Area. The strategy proposes 38 strategic recommendations to better cater for community needs.

The Box Hill Car Parking Strategy identifies the supply for car parking is approximately 1.5 times more than the demand for car parking during the peak hours of the weekday; and approximately 2.5 times higher than the demand during peak hours on a weekend.

Most of the recommendations are relevant, although some do not go far enough to take full advantage of the transport situation in Box Hill. Subsequently there was an implementation report completed in 2018 which specifically investigated 15 of the 38 recommendations.

Car parking is a significant issue for Box Hill, it is abundant, yet perceptions around lack of parking are holding back visitation and economic activity. A key change to the management of parking resources is required.

2.3.7 Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2007

The Whitehorse Public Open Space Strategy (WOSS) was prepared in 2007 to set out a cohesive vision of the future needs and character of public open space areas to ensure adequate and diverse public open space for a growing population. The strategy establishes an open space hierarchy and identifies the distribution of open space within that hierarchy to identify issues and locates shortfalls in particular public open space typologies and sets out recommendations for council to implement. It outlines a range of key outcomes that remain relevant for Box Hill, including; improving access to and linkages between open spaces; building upon the diversity of open space types; enhance biodiversity, eco-corridors; and to improve environmental sustainability practices in management and maintenance practices.

For Box Hill, a key recommendation of the WOSS for the preparation of a masterplan for Box Hill Gardens. The masterplan was adopted in February 2011 and supported the successful implementation of recent upgrades such as the Box Hill Gardens Multipurpose Area (2014 by NMBW & ASPECT Studios) and Box Hill Gardens Play Space (2018).

The strategy establishes a funding framework for the implementation of these recommendations in the context of continued population growth. The WOSS was the key document supporting the adoption of Amendment C99 in February 2010 which introduced a requirement of a minimum 4% public open space contribution for all subdivisions (Clause 53.01) and also provides scope for greater than 4% contribution for strategic sites, subject to the negotiation of a Development Plan.