

# CHAPTER 07 LIVEABILITY

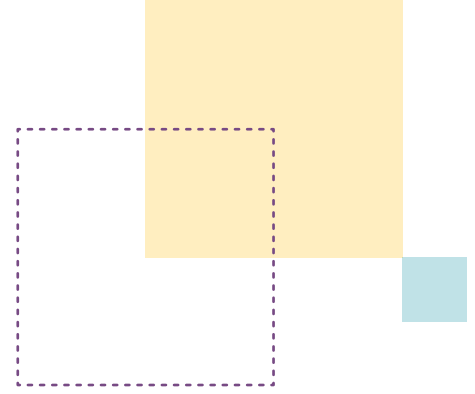


Plan Melbourne Outcome 4:  
Melbourne is a distinctive and  
liveable city with quality design  
and amenity

'Liveability' is about the things that enhance people's quality of life. For many years Melbourne has been regarded as one of the world's most liveable cities due to its social and economic stability, diverse communities, distinctive heritage, high level of amenity, and the opportunities it provides for a rich social and cultural life.



Photo credit: Tim Bell Studio



Plan Melbourne aims to maintain and extend the city’s liveability by celebrating its culture, diversity and distinctiveness. The challenge ahead is to design and plan for a future city that protects the best aspects of the natural and built environment, supports social and cultural diversity, and creates a strong sense of place.

The Inner South East Metro Region is characterised by heritage buildings, tree-lined streetscapes, high amenity neighbourhoods, popular retail and entertainment spines and culturally diverse activity centres. Port Phillip Bay, the Yarra River (Birrarung) environs and other waterways are significant natural assets with high Aboriginal cultural heritage values. This plan seeks to ensure the region retains and enhances these important aspects of its liveability, while continuing to support a growing population.

## State of play

### Landscapes and biodiversity

Inner South East Metro Region benefits from significant natural features that contribute to its ambience and desirability as a place to live. Water is a defining feature of the region. Its southern boundary includes 17 kilometres of coastal foreshore along Port Phillip Bay within the City of Bayside, while the Yarra River forms the northern boundary in Boroondara and Stonnington LGAs. The key landscapes and biodiversity areas of the region are described in **Table 8**.

The region’s coastline and waterways have been heavily impacted by European settlement and urbanisation. There is a strong community and government commitment to their ongoing rehabilitation and significant potential to work with the region’s Traditional Owners to achieve this outcome.

**TABLE 8. Key landscape and biodiversity areas in the Inner South East Metro Region**

LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY AREA	SIGNIFICANCE, PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT
<b>Port Phillip Bay coastline</b>	The Port Phillip Bay coastline of the Inner South East Metro Region extends from Brighton Beach to Beaumaris, within the Bayside LGA. The coastline provides a range of functions: recreational sailing and boating; a major open space corridor including playgrounds and recreation areas; an important cycling and pedestrian corridor; a place for festivals and events. A considerable amount of native vegetation exists along the foreshore which has regional ecological significance. The coastline also features stands of exotic trees, formal parks and open lawns.
<b>Waterways</b>	The Yarra River winds its way through Kew, Hawthorn, Toorak and South Yarra before reaching central Melbourne. The Yarra River corridor is identified in Plan Melbourne as one of the city’s most significant networks of water’s edge parklands. Other major waterways in the region are the Koonung Koonung Creek, Gardiners Creek, Scotchmans Creek and Elster Creek. Waterways provide vital open space and habitat connections throughout the region and offer a natural break from the urban environment.
<b>Yarra Bend Park and Studley Park</b>	Yarra Bend Park and Studley Park contain the largest areas of natural bushland in the region, supporting an extensive tree canopy and providing a haven for urban wildlife. They include a network of shared trails, sports grounds and other types of recreational activity.
<b>Habitat areas</b>	The region provides for a diversity of significant habitats. This includes inland bushland/heathland reserves such as Long Hollow Reserve, Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary and Highett Grassy Woodland (located on the CSIRO site). Its extensive golf courses support significant stands of native and exotic trees. All LGAs in the region promote the strengthening of the urban forest through planting within established gardens and streets.

## Aboriginal cultural heritage

The lands that now make up the Inner South East Metro Region feature places and waterways of cultural significance and continuing connection for Traditional Owners.

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, represented by the Wurrundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, are the recognised Traditional Owners of the northern part of the Inner South East Metro Region. The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation are the recognised Traditional Owners of the southern part of the region. As Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs), they both have responsibilities to protect cultural heritage assets under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Recognised locations of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity are shown in **Figure 15**. Support should be provided to Traditional Owners to protect and manage these cultural heritage sites, cultural landscapes and waterways.

The *Yarra River Protection (Willip-gin Birrarung Murrn) Act 2017* declared the river corridor, and many hundreds of parcels of public land it flows through, as 'one living, integrated natural entity' for protection and improvement. Key strategic work in the region includes the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation's *Nhanbu narrun ba ngargunin twarn Birrarung (Ancient Spirit and Lore of the Yarra)* water policy.

## Heritage and visitor places

The Inner South East Metro Region was one of the earlier settled areas of Melbourne. This is reflected in the diversity of architectural styles in the region, including mansions and workers cottages of the Victorian, Edwardian and interwar years.

Heritage protection is provided to many individual properties, streets and precincts within the region and these places are integral to its character and identity today. There are over 170 places of state heritage significance within the region that are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, as shown on **Map 6**. These include civic buildings, railway stations, schools, religious buildings and a wide range of domestic architecture. Rippon Lea Estate, Como House and Labassa are outstanding examples of 19th century architecture and are among the many properties of state heritage significance.

Rail and tram services provided an essential connection to the network of neighbourhood and shopping strips located in close proximity to such services. These 'villages' enabled residents to access employment and services locally, a precursor to Plan Melbourne's aspirational '20-minute neighbourhoods'. Access to these 'villages' was enhanced by a grid of arterial roads, with commercial use focused on the main roads. Street tree planting was also a feature of this earlier development, with many European trees planted along major roads, in parklands and in residential gardens. The resultant tree canopy is a defining feature of the Inner South East Metro Region.

The region features several cultural precincts and a strong visual and performing arts program, enabled by a network of regional and community facilities such as Monash University Museum of Art, the Bayside Arts and Cultural Centre, Chapel off Chapel and Hawthorn Arts Centre. These venues are supported by a variety of cultural, literary and community festivals, providing opportunities for community expression and participation. The proposed Elsternwick Cultural Precinct will provide for the expansion of the Jewish Holocaust Centre, relocation of the Jewish Museum, upgrades to the Kadimah Jewish Cultural Centre and National Library, and establishment of the new Jewish Cultural and Arts Precinct. Streetscape works will help define this cultural precinct.

Other community and tourism assets of the region include the Bayside Arts and Cultural Centre, Hawthorn Arts Centre, Brighton bathing boxes, Prahran Market, the sand belt golf courses and Chadstone Shopping Centre.

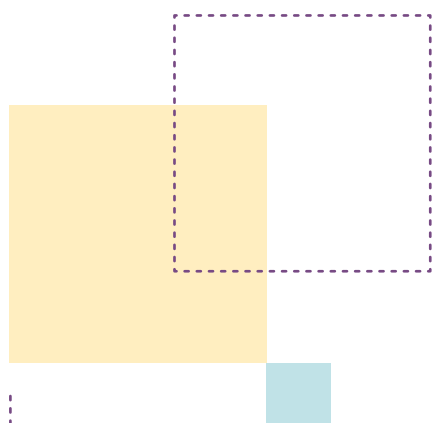
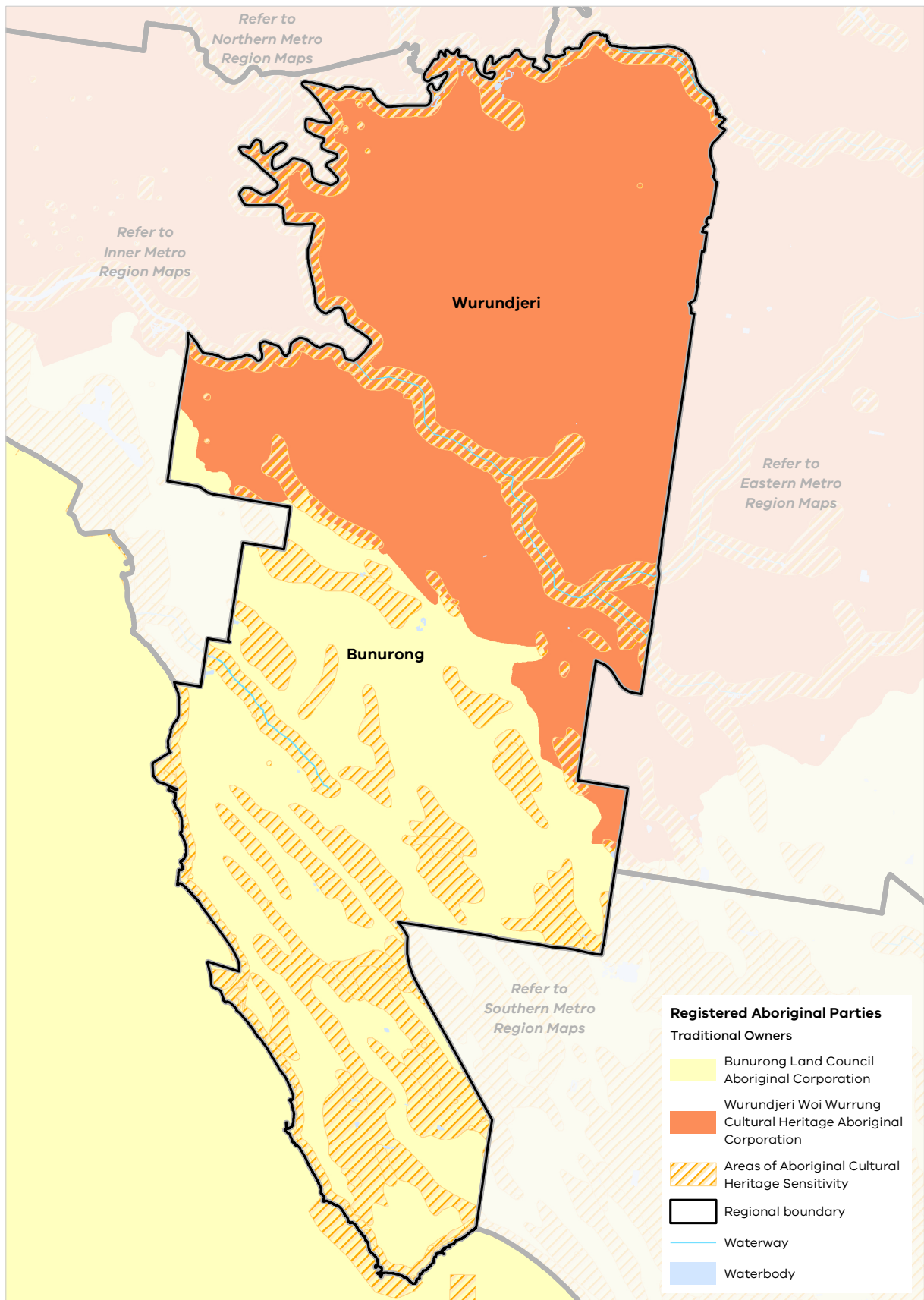




FIGURE 15. Inner South East Metro Region Aboriginal cultural heritage





## Open space and regional trails

The Inner South East Metro Region's open spaces, river corridors and foreshore provide places for a diverse range of recreation and leisure experiences, and an opportunity to connect with others and to nature.

The Inner South East Metro Region provides for an average of 24 square metres of public open space per person, less than the metropolitan Melbourne average of 57.5 square metres (Figure 16). Boroondara provides for approximately 35.6 square metres, Bayside 32.3 square metres, Stonnington 14 square metres and Glen Eira 11.7 square metres of open space per person (Figure 16). Open space per person is shown across metropolitan Melbourne is shown in Figure 17.

While there is a shortfall of open space within the region compared to the metro average, significant open spaces exist in close proximity to the region, including the Royal Botanic Gardens, Albert Park and Fawkner Park. Ensuring good connections to these spaces by walking or cycling is essential.

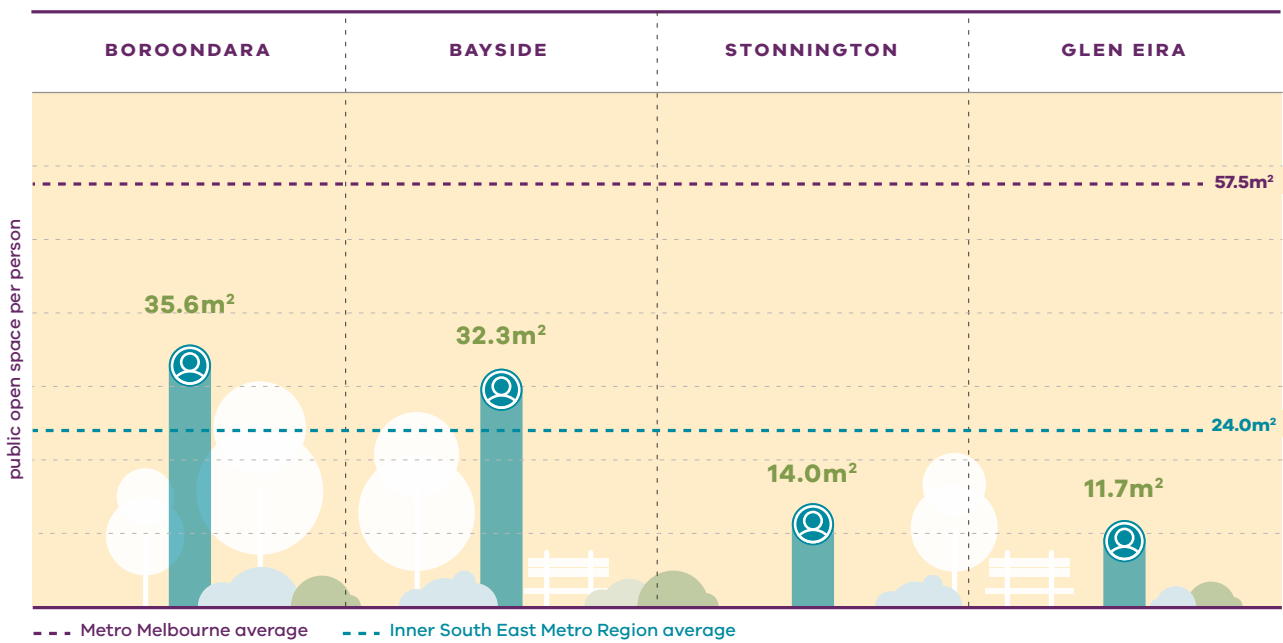
The quantity of open space is only one measure of provision. The function, mix, quality, accessibility and proximity of open space also need to be considered in planning for the future.

The region provides for an extensive network of interconnected trails used by both pedestrians and cyclists for commuting to neighbouring regions and for recreation. This includes Boroondara's Outer Circle Trail/Anniversary Trail which is a shared pedestrian and cycling path that runs from the Main Yarra Trail to Hughesdale in the south. Other trail networks follow creeks, the bay, former railway easements and the Eastern Freeway. Bike paths within Glen Eira are predominantly on-road.

Key off-road cycling routes that form connections in the region include:

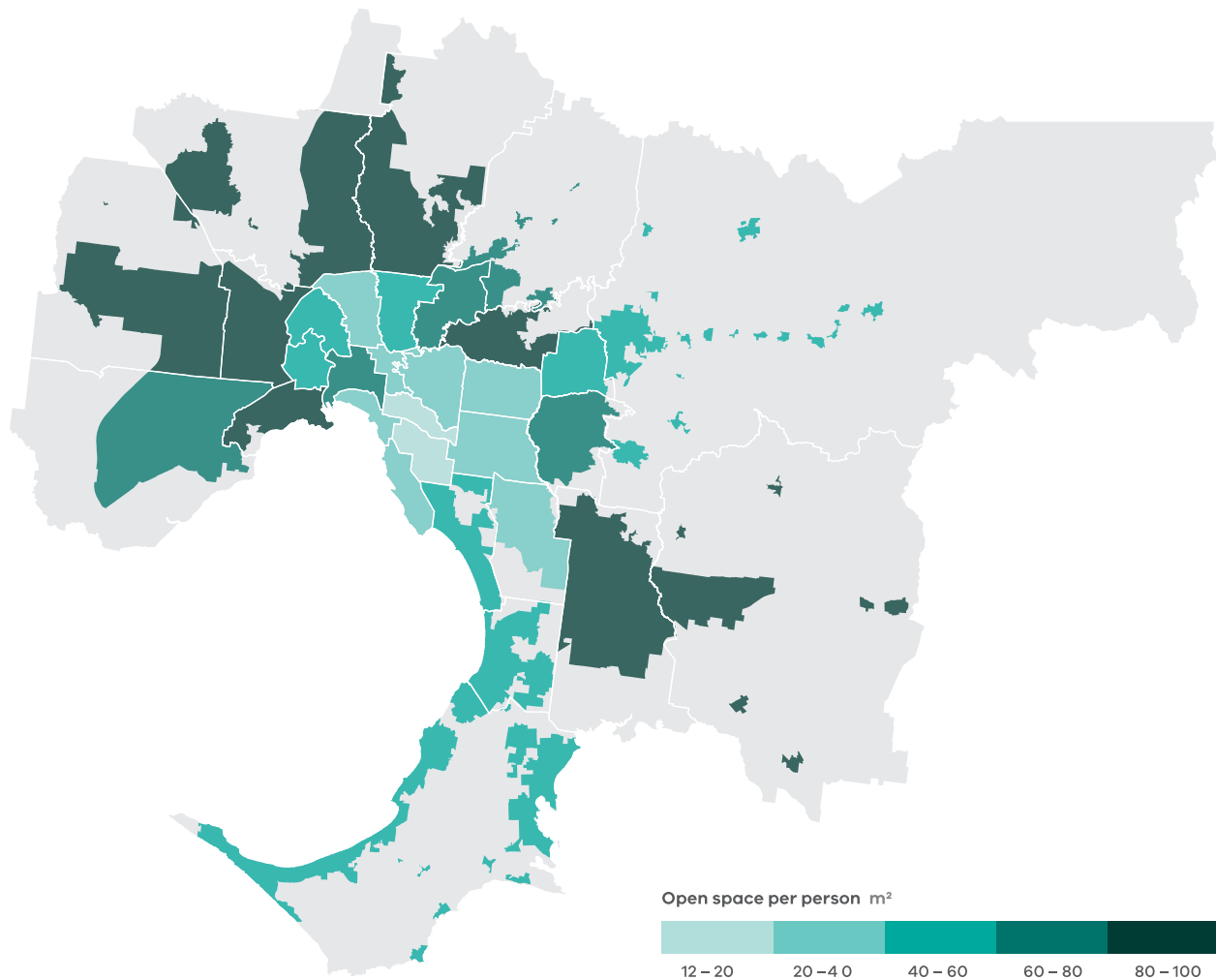
- Djerring Trail – Caulfield to Dandenong shared path
- Gardiners Creek Trail – Burnley to Blackburn
- Koonung Trail – Bulleen to Donvale along Koonung Koonung Creek and the Eastern Freeway
- Rosstown Rail Trail – Hughesdale to Elsternwick along the former railway easement
- The Bay Trail – Port Melbourne to Mordialloc
- Main Yarra Trail – Southbank to Templestowe.

**FIGURE 16.** Open space per person for Inner South East Metro Region LGAs



Source: Victorian Planning Authority (2017) *Metropolitan Open Space Network: Provision and Distribution*, State of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

**FIGURE 17.** Open space per person for metropolitan LGAs



**Source:** Data from the Victorian Planning Authority Metropolitan Open Space Network portal, 2016

**Note:** only areas within the UGB were calculated and mapped in this figure. Areas outside the UGB are shown in grey.

## Regional strengths

- There are opportunities for Traditional Owners to play a greater role in the protection and management of the region's landscapes and biodiversity.
- There is a well-established network of open spaces and recreational trails, and opportunities exist to expand this network and fill in gaps.
- The region's waterways and coastline present opportunities to be improved as the spines of an integrated open space and biodiversity network.

## Regional challenges

- Areas of heritage, landscape and biodiversity value must be protected from the impacts of development.
- Additional open space is required to meet the needs of the growing population but there is a scarcity of available land.



Photo credit: Tim Bell Studio

## Directions and strategies

The directions identified to achieve the 2050 vision for the Inner South East Metro Region in terms of liveability and Outcome 4 of Plan Melbourne are:

<b>Direction 13</b>	Protect and enhance the region's landscapes, waterways, coastline and biodiversity
<b>Direction 14</b>	Strengthen the network of open spaces and trail connections across the Inner South East Metro Region
<b>Direction 15</b>	Create a legacy of great civic places

Each direction is implemented through regionally-specific strategies identified in this land use framework plan.

Map 6 shows how liveability will be enhanced across the Inner South East Metro Region by 2050 as a result of these directions and strategies, together with Plan Melbourne and other strategies and initiatives as outlined in Appendix 01.



MAP 6. Inner South East Metro Region liveability 2050

**Precincts and Activity Centres**

- Major activity centre
- \* Victorian Heritage Register Site
- Community/tourism site

**Transport**

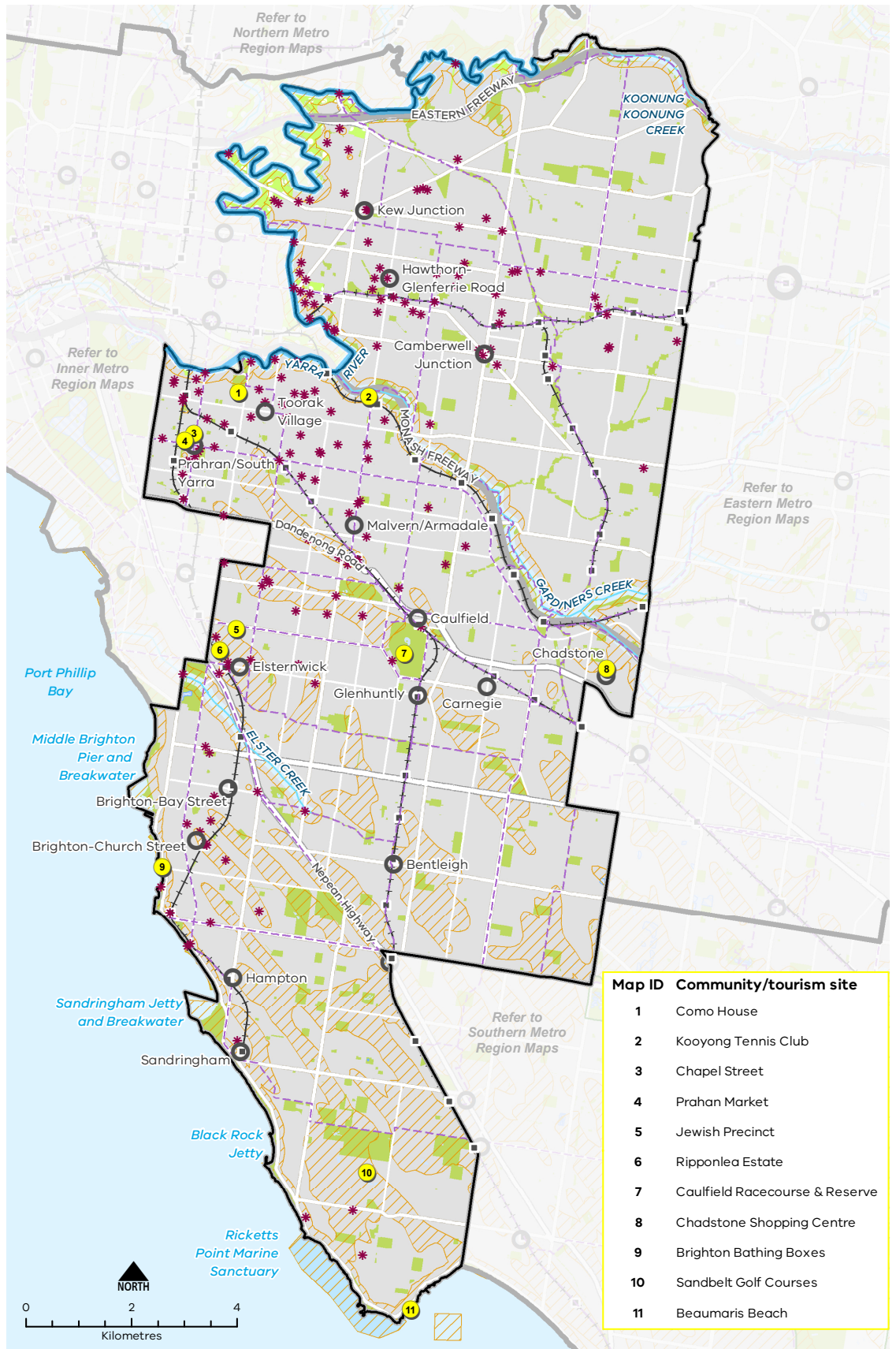
- ▬ State-significant road corridor
- ▬ Road network
- Train station
- ▬ Rail network
- - - Strategic Cycling Corridor

**Environment**

- Public open space
- Marine/coastal national parks and reserves
- Yarra River land
- ▨ Wetlands
- ▬ Water's edge parkland
- ▬ Waterway and waterway corridor
- Waterbody
- ▨ Areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity

**Land use/Administration**

- ▭ Regional boundary
- ▭ Urban area



Map ID	Community/tourism site
1	Como House
2	Kooyong Tennis Club
3	Chapel Street
4	Prahan Market
5	Jewish Precinct
6	Ripponlea Estate
7	Caulfield Racecourse & Reserve
8	Chadstone Shopping Centre
9	Brighton Bathing Boxes
10	Sandbelt Golf Courses
11	Beaumaris Beach



**DIRECTION 13.****Protect and enhance the region's landscapes, waterways, coastline and biodiversity**

As the Inner South East Metro Region continues to develop it will be important to protect and enhance the health of the region's waterways, coastline and habitat areas.

Linking biodiversity corridors within and between regions, and across public and private land, will enable better habitat connections for urban wildlife. Collaboration with Traditional Owners at a regional and metropolitan level will be necessary to connect and enhance biodiversity assets.

Implementation of the Wurunderji Woi Wurrung *Ancient Spirit and Lore of the Yarra* and the *Yarra Strategic Plan* will ensure long-term protection of the Yarra River, including actions to improve its overall environmental health, enhance community access to and use of the river and adjoining parklands, improve development interfaces with the river, and recognise cultural and heritage values.

The *Healthy Waterways Strategy* (Yarra catchment), has identified the need to protect the values of waterways and wetlands in the region, including identifying priority areas for revegetation and enhanced stormwater management.

These strategies set out a regional approach to protecting urban biodiversity that will have broader liveability and sustainability benefits.

**STRATEGY 37.** Ensure the siting and design of new buildings and infrastructure on public and private land protects and enhances the region's significant landscape features and biodiversity assets.

**STRATEGY 38.** Protect and enhance waterways, waterway corridors and the Port Phillip Bay coastline for their contribution to biodiversity, liveability and open space.

**STRATEGY 39.** Working with Traditional Owners, support ongoing improvements to the region's major waterways of the Yarra River and Koonung Koonung, Gardiners, Scotchmans and Elster creeks as key habitat links within the region.

**DIRECTION 14.****Strengthen the network of open spaces and trail connections across the Inner South East Metro Region**

Plan Melbourne envisages a network of accessible, attractive and connected local areas where linear parklands, river corridors, coastline and associated shared trail networks form critical regional assets. Within the Inner South East Metro Region this includes the parkland associated with the Yarra River, the Koonung Koonung, Gardiners and Elster creeks, and 17 kilometres of coastal foreshore along Port Phillip Bay.

Given the high value of land within the Inner South-East Metro Region, it is generally accepted that a significant increase in the amount of public open space will be difficult to achieve. An innovative approach to optimising use of existing open space or acquiring new open space is therefore required. This will include high-quality maintenance of existing parks, upgrading facilities to meet current needs and investigating using different types of spaces for broader public use, such as school or university grounds, golf courses, easements or cemeteries, at times and in ways that do not jeopardise their primary purpose.

Other options to create new public space include repurposing surplus public land, reclaiming road space, using rooftop space or the contribution of open space within large redevelopment sites or urban renewal precincts. In many instances, new open spaces within the region will be of a small scale and may also be privately owned or managed. It is essential that new open spaces are created in a meaningful way, with high design and amenity standards as a contribution to the broader open space network. Opportunities should be prioritised to use new open space to improve pedestrian access and recreational trail connections, link existing open spaces or open a site frontage to a waterway or parkland.

The metropolitan open space strategy *Open Space for Everyone: Open Space Strategy for Metropolitan Melbourne 2020* sets out a vision for Melbourne as a city with a valued network of open spaces accessible to all, connected at the local and landscape scales. It focuses on innovation and adaptability in providing for a diversity of open spaces to meet the needs of the community, while protecting existing open space assets. Initiatives identified in the strategy for the Inner South East Metro Region include the designation of the Greater

Yarra Urban Parklands along the Yarra River corridor and improved access and public recreation opportunities within the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve. It also introduces the Suburban Parks program which will see the creation of new or upgraded smaller open spaces, which are integral to the open space network of the region.

- STRATEGY 40.** Strengthen the role played by linear parks to connect residents to other destinations within the region such as activity centres, schools and recreation facilities.
- STRATEGY 41.** Support improvements and access to existing open space assets such as Caulfield Racecourse Reserve to provide a range of recreation opportunities to cater for continued population growth.
- STRATEGY 42.** Encourage utilisation of public land or large land holdings such as school grounds, golf courses or rail reservations for open space, recreation activities or trail connections by providing community access at times and in ways that do not jeopardise their primary purpose.
- STRATEGY 43.** Include the provision of new, high-quality open space as a part of major redevelopment proposals and urban renewal sites.



Photo credit: Tim Bell Studio



**DIRECTION 15.****Create a legacy of great civic places**

The region's rich cultural heritage provides a strong legacy for creating distinctive places which foster community pride and a sense of place. This includes celebrating and reinforcing Aboriginal cultural values within the urban and natural environment. It also includes preservation and adaptation of the region's post-European settlement heritage.

The creation of a new architectural legacy through excellence of design will reinforce a strong sense of place and identity. The value of ensuring high design quality, preserving the region's heritage and protecting its landscapes must be recognised and balanced with increasing development pressures.

Maintaining the green character of streets and boulevards with well-established street trees will contribute to amenity across the region. Designing streets to harvest stormwater will assist in strengthening the tree canopy and lower storey vegetation. The strategic underground placement of powerlines in key locations will also enhance the streetscape character and tree canopy.

The design of new development and public places must make a positive contribution to the region's valued character. This is reflected in the urban design strategies of each municipality, which aim to achieve outcomes such as ensuring buildings are an appropriate scale for the context, preserving sunlight access to public streets and spaces, minimising the impact of car parking and making a positive aesthetic contribution to the streetscape.

Following the rollout of extended outdoor dining across the region, there are future opportunities for permanent replacement of laneways, road spaces and on-street parking spaces for public use (including more permanent outdoor dining) and landscaping. This has the potential to increase footpath capacity and amenity, support retail and social vibrancy and enhance urban greening.

**STRATEGY 44.** Identify, enhance and protect buildings and public spaces that have high civic or public value, and which contribute to people's understanding, interaction and enjoyment of the region.

**STRATEGY 45.** Upgrade key pedestrian streets to foster their civic and community role and to create high amenity, active and greened streetscapes for all forms of transport.

**STRATEGY 46.** Engage with Aboriginal communities to incorporate cultural heritage, design and stories into the built and natural environment.

**STRATEGY 47.** Reflect the different layers and aspects of the region's history in the design of new buildings, public spaces, infrastructure and public artwork.

**ACTIONS –  
Liveability**

**ACTION 8.** Prepare a regional urban biodiversity strategy to protect existing habitat corridors, increase their interconnectivity and guide investment, including identifying physical gaps in key habitat corridors. Consider land use solutions that enable interconnected biodiversity corridors.

**ACTION 9.** Identify public land holdings that could be used for open space and/or trail connections. Provide and initiate a streamlined approach to making them publicly accessible.



Photo credit: Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions / SDP Media