

# Revitalising Gladesville Town Centre and Victoria Road

## Master Plan Report



Ryde City Council  
Hunter's Hill Council  
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## Executive Summary

Gladesville was once a vital traditional main street Town Centre. Like many other town centres along major road corridors, in just five decades Gladesville has regressed from being a memorable place to becoming a degraded commercial strip. What will it be like in 25 years time?

Chapter 1 discusses the need to take control of the situation and attempt to use growth in a positive manner to improve Gladesville in building form, placemaking, social and economic terms.

It proposes a precinct based approach where different policies and strategies will be appropriate for different precincts.

Chapter 2 discusses the process so far, working with two Councils, community groups, Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders to attempt to integrate everyone's views.

There has been a pause in this process to carry out Heritage Analysis and to refine the Masterplan in this context.

Chapter 3 discusses Gladesville past and present and the various forces which have devalued Victoria Road and the Gladesville Centre. It discusses ways in which mobility can be expressed other than by traffic volumes and carrying capacities. It looks towards a more context sensitive road design.

This chapter goes on to discuss the major issues for the four precincts i.e. Monash Road, North Gladesville, the Town Centre and South Gladesville.

Chapter 4 discusses common elements and design principles to improve and enhance Victoria Road, to make it a safe, comfortable and walkable centre, sensitive to its environmental context.

This chapter discusses links with the past and draws policy and principles from the Heritage Analysis as input to the Masterplan. This relates principally to buildings which should be conserved wherever possible; to the two storey street front buildings through the Town Centre; setbacks; the possible location, type and size of new development in this context; and to building types and forms. Significant and contributory buildings are identified. Significant buildings should be conserved as a priority, contributory buildings should desirably be conserved and integrated into any new development activity.

The distribution of land uses are also discussed in the context of restructuring the Town in a more sustainable and attractive fashion by concentrating commercial retail uses in the Town Centre and to a lesser degree at Monash Road and providing a higher degree of residential use in North and South Gladesville but with a level of transition adjacent to commercial areas.

This chapter discusses building height in some detail and the need to provide taller buildings in some locations in order to generate investment and redevelopment opportunities.

A three to four storey base height is proposed with taller buildings in some specific locations where real public benefits can be gained (public places, pedestrian areas, consolidated public parking areas, improved access, etc).

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Chapter four also discusses:

- The benefits and opportunities associated with enhancing the pedestrian environment throughout the study area and making a more walkable environment
- The capacity to improve local street connectivity and thus improve vehicle circulation through and around the Town without significantly impacting on residential areas
- Improved access to sites and parking management principally by extending and integrating the system of rear lanes to remove driveway crossings and pedestrian/vehicle conflict on Victoria Road and to access parking behind or under Victoria Road fronting sites
- Undergrounding of power lines and planting of substantial canopy street trees
- Mechanisms to deal with usually unattractive "roadside" uses which are by nature pedestrian unfriendly
- Mechanisms to improve architectural standards

This section introduces the Masterplan as a roof plan sketch of how it might look in 50 years time should all sites develop according to the general principles proposed.

Chapter 5 proposes the re-activation of the Monash Road retail and commercial centre at ground level and commercial/residential above to 3-4 stories.

This will require the creation of a rear lane system for servicing and parking

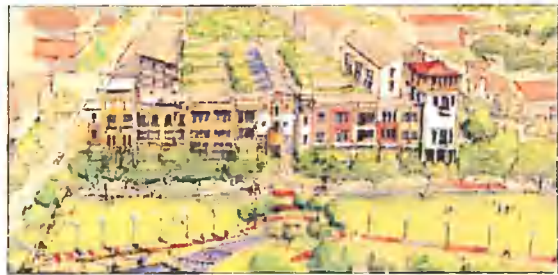
access, improved street planting and a variety of mixed use/residential buildings of 4-5 stories depending on location with active frontages to Monash Road and Victoria Road. Desirably a new road would be created on the north-east side of Victoria Road between Eltham St and Ryde Road to improve access and circulation.

Chapter 6 proposes major structural alterations to North Gladesville whereby the car oriented retail will be largely replaced over time with 3-5 storey residential developments set back from the street and with a double row of exotic trees greening and softening the corridor. Some small mixed use commercial and retail areas can be permitted on corners and in areas of transition provided this does not interfere with the overarching landscaped avenue principle.

Rear lanes will require extension or creation to facilitate access and off-street parking.

Chapter 7 discusses the Town Centre and its future potential and sets out strategies for success, including celebrating the past, walkability, placemaking, improved parking distribution and access, improved retail management and the notion of public/private partnerships in model projects which can demonstrate the benefits of redevelopment to the community.

These include a new Town Park at the intersection of Coulter Street and Lindsley Street, an enhanced Trim Place (already begun), connected Town Squares Plazas, a Clock Square at Meriton Street and a Civic Square at



Town Park



Trim Place



The 100% Model Projects

Civic Square



Town Square



Clock Square

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Pittwater Road.

Chapter 8 discusses mechanisms for improving South Gladesville, the front door to Gladesville from the city. This area is generally fairly low key with low rise residential and some heritage buildings on the north side and a mix of 3 storey residential apartments (walk-ups) and roadside retail on the south.

Enhancements should include improved avenue planting, encouragement of residential use up to Junction Street with mixed use on the corner and transitional into the Town Centre. Buildings should be to 3-4 storeys on the fringe to 5-6 on identified sites and locations where impacts would be low. Setbacks should vary from 5m to the city side down to 0m once street edge transitional mixed use can be supported (around Pearson Street).

The Masterplan proposes:

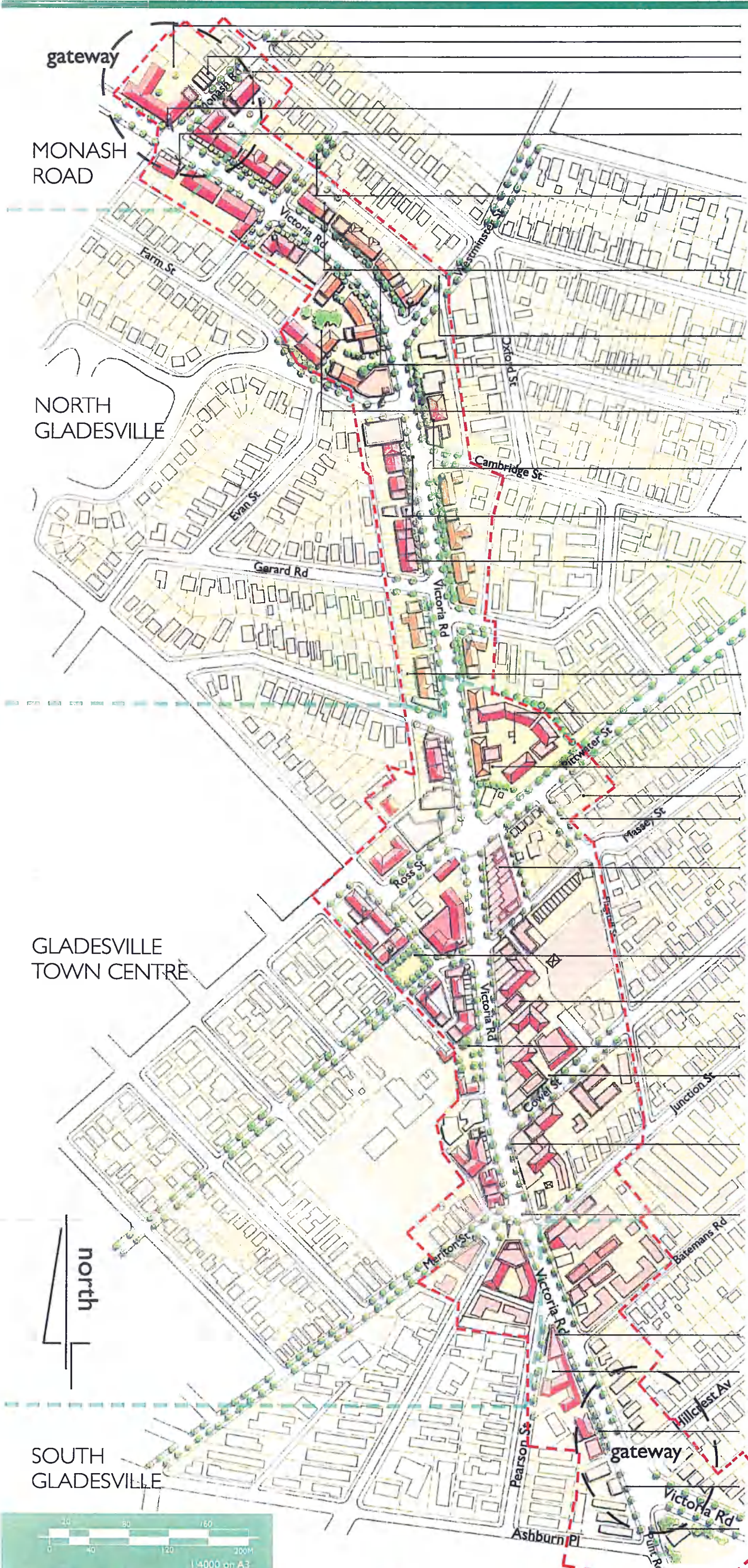
- An interconnected series of pedestrian places which energise Victoria Road by generating higher levels of better connected retail and commercial activity within the centre
- Improved quantity and location of communal parking areas

Chapter 9 discusses implementation, the means of making the Masterplan a reality. It proposes that:

- Amendments be made to the LEP's to reflect the land uses promoted in the Masterplan
- A new DCP should be prepared for Gladesville Centre as a whole which reflects the content of this Masterplan
- Both Councils jointly seek State Government financial support for implementation of the Masterplan
- The promotion of the plan amongst the community and the development/investment sector
- The preparation of a public domain strategy to complement the objectives of the Masterplan
- The preparation of implementation matrices which can be used internally to project manage the implementation on a project by project basis
- The establishment of a Gladesville working group of stakeholders charged with oversight of the implementation of the Masterplan
- The development of a series of "model projects" being significant public/private partnerships, spread along the corridor which can be readily achieved and publicly demonstrate the benefits of the Masterplan
- The need for State Government authority cooperation to be sought through DIPNR
- The exploration of possible incentives to stimulate investment and good development







- Potential Gateway site**
- Provide street trees and on-street parking**
- Maintained and Improved Existing Buildings**
- Provide Additional Retail Parking** in rear court
- Redevelop Monash Road Intersection** with mixed-use development including corner features
- Retain shopfront** within stepped back residential development
- Extend 'The Avenue'** to improve connections along lane
- Re-configure convenience restaurant** into pedestrian friendly format
- Add rear lanes** to improve circulation
- Create quality residential 3-4 storey garden apartments** to green Victoria Road
- Re-develop Primrose Hill site** with thru-site pedestrian link which aligns with the intersection of Westminister Road
- Potential small scale infill development** on church land
- Long term opportunity for formal tree planting** along Victoria Road
- Retain heritage items** and adaptively re-use
- Mixed use transition area** from Gerard Street South
- Opportunity for "Model Project"** to investigate opportunities for public private joint venture
- Integrate community facilities** to create a public space which integrates with the church
- Potential Project site**
- Extend Flagstaff Street and improve circulation**, retaining historic fire station
- Activate Massey Lane** on the church axis, retaining Wilson's butcher and other notable shop-fronts
- Create a small town park** fronted by retail uses and the RSL Club, with quality apartments providing natural surveillance
- Improve connections between Gladesville Plaza and Victoria Road** by creating pedestrian plazas
- Activate Trim Place** and improve interface with school
- Create a pedestrian walk connecting Cowell Street to the Plaza** which shops also front onto with residential apartments above
- Street tree planting** at regular intervals
- Celebrate historic entry to the town centre** by creating Clock Square and explore opportunity to reveal original Gladesville Hotel
- Important intersection** worthy of notable building
- Opportunity for mixed-use development**
- Garden Apartments** to replace existing vehicle orientated uses
- Long term opportunity for formal planting** along Victoria Road
- Improve landscape entry and exit** from town

↑ to Ryde

↓ to Sydney

# Gladesville Town Centre Master Plan

ANNAND ALCOCK URBAN DESIGN

to Ryde

to Sydney

### Building Heights Bonus

Maximum base height limit is 3 storeys, except Town Centre, which is 4 storeys.

Height Bonus of 2 storeys may be granted where a development provides public benefit in the form of:

Rear lane providing access to other properties;

- Improvements to pedestrian footpath (awnings, verandahs, footpath widening and street trees);
- Creation of public space with part of the site;
- Provision of carparking on part of designated site;
- Provision of exceptional quality buildings on landmark site and;
- Adaptive reuse and refurbishment of heritage buildings and structures.

### Proposed Maximum Building Heights

-  2 story
-  3 story
-  4 story
-  5-6 story only with bonus.



gateway

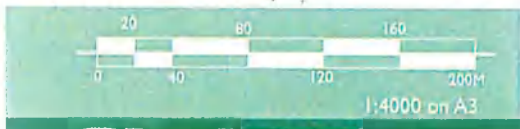
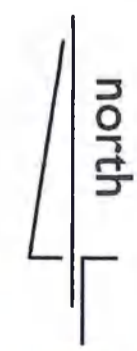
MONASH ROAD

NORTH GLADESVILLE

GLADESVILLE TOWN CENTRE

SOUTH GLADESVILLE

gateway



# What Will Victoria Road Become?



**G**ladesville was once a vital traditional main street Town Centre. Like many other town centres along major road corridors, in just five decades Gladesville has regressed from being a memorable place to becoming just another commercial strip. What will it be like in 25 years time? Will it still be an economically viable town centre and a desirable place to live and work if it continues down this path? This is unclear. What is clear is that Gladesville Town Centre and Victoria Road are both changing. The question is what will they become?

## 1.1 Who Cares About Victoria Road?

Victoria Road is the public face of eight suburbs, Gladesville Town Centre, and is the front door to Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils. Given its geographic position and history, it should be one of the most interesting places in the district.



But where the best should be, Victoria Road is now the kind of corridor that investors and shoppers prefer to avoid. A vehicle orientated strip characterised by increasingly bland development, which appears to be orientated more towards the stranger speeding through than local residents and town people. Just where Gladesville Town Centre begins is difficult to discern.

In short, a unique location is becoming Anywhere, Australia.



However, with the restructuring of the regional movement network, comes serious questioning of the status-quo approach. What should Victoria Road and the places that exist along it be in 25 years time?

It is now time to decide if Gladesville should continue along its current path or whether there is a better way for growth to occur.

## 1.2 Two Sides To Growth

Based on the unmistakable evidence of poor quality recent development, the impression of some community members that growth automatically makes things worse is understandable. Who can blame them for this reaction? Almost all postwar development has been built without regard to the quality of place or town-building traditions which once existed. This has given rise to the reactive conclusion amongst some locals that all future growth will be bad. Therefore, a lot of energy has been focused on stopping development, rather than arriving at creative solutions for growth to occur responsibly. This approach is not sustainable.

At the same time, many business people advocate the need for significant redevelopment in Gladesville Town Centre and along Victoria Road. Valid reasons include economic vitality, competitive advantage, respect of property owners rights, and demands for new and expanding businesses. However, there is often a failure to distinguish between one type of growth and another.

The sometimes varied aspirations of the two local governments (Ryde City Council and Hunter's Hill Council), which control either side of Victoria Road has also sent a confusing message about the area's future. If at times the opinions of the decision makers has been divided, it is not surprising that the community at large has become divided on the future of the area. We are now at an historic time when both councils are prepared indeed committed, to work together.

Given that development continues to occur despite all obstacles, however, it is clear that "pro-growth versus no-growth" is a false choice, and nobody wins!

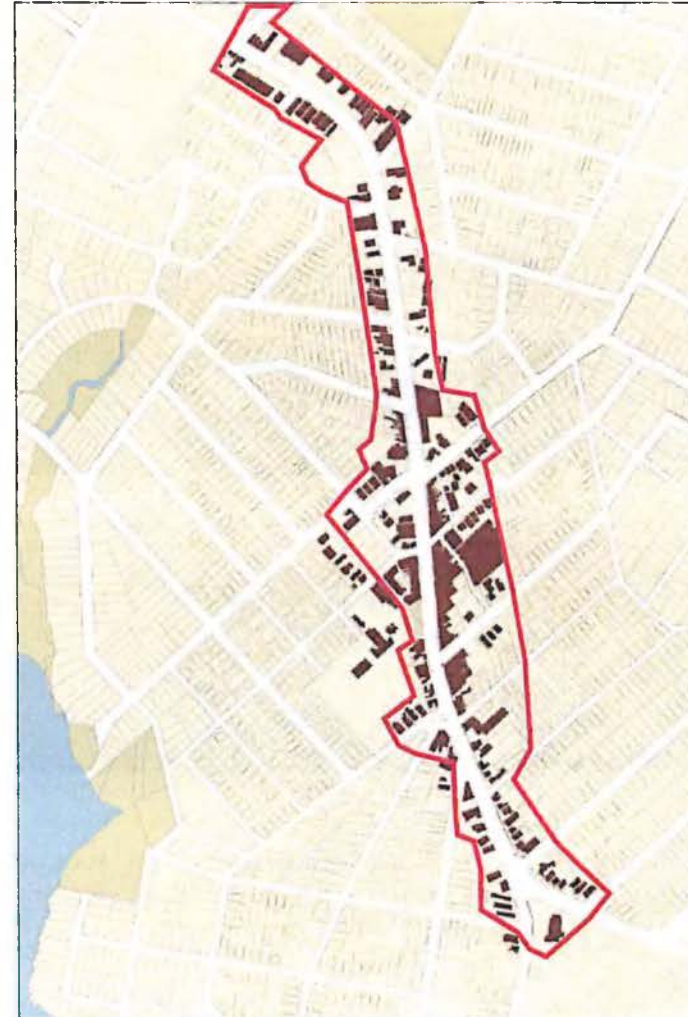


*62% of local shoppers find nothing or "very little" that they like in the Victoria Road shopping strip....People shop there because of its convenience.  
Shopper questionnaire. 2000.*

### 1.3 A Better Approach: Good Growth

There is a third alternative - growth based on establishing a unified vision for the area, and then ensuring that every action from today builds towards that vision. This Master Plan report adopts this approach.

Without compromising the important mobility function of Victoria Road, there is no reason why it cannot be transformed into a great street. A street which becomes the "signature road" of Gladesville, and forms the basis for tying together, revitalising and maturing a number of areas along its length, particularly Gladesville Town Centre.



The Master Plan Study Area

## 1.4 Different Areas, Different Strategies

The Gladesville Town Centre Master Plan is therefore put forward as an innovative, integrating effort at an historic point of co-operation between Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils.

With the two Councils working together, it provides a bold vision of where the area could be in 25 years time and serves as a map of how to get there. It provides strategies to accommodate future growth in Gladesville Town Centre and along Victoria Road, in a manner which restores a *sense of place* to both the town and corridor.

It is a tool to ensure developers, investors, business owners, public officials and community members are all moving in the same direction.

Many of the ideas presented in the master plan will not happen overnight. Change will occur incrementally responding to market demand, and public-private co-operation.

What is important is that the Master Plan provides a framework for sustainable growth towards the community's vision for the area. It will ensure that each new development builds towards the vision, and in this sense, make Gladesville a more complete and enduring place.

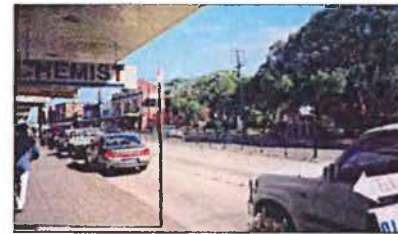
The essence of this report is a set of general urban design principles followed by specific strategies tailored to improve the four areas along Victoria Road. The four areas are:



Monash Road: Re-activate local shops



North Gladesville: Transform the strip



Town Centre: Return to main street



South Gladesville: Improve front doo





Implementation techniques for making the ideas a reality conclude the report.

## 1.5 Methodology

This master plan report is focused upon urban design outcomes that include;

- Community engagement via workshops and public feedback
- Historic and heritage analysis, conservation and adaptive reuse
- Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and amenity
- Developing appropriate urban design forms and land use activities to encourage the rejuvenating of Victoria Road
- Access management and provision for parking
- Place making, landscaping and streetscape presentation
- Sustainability through selective land use i.e. commercial retail activity in the town centre and higher degree of residential in the areas to the north and south
- Strategies for achieving the above range of design outcomes

The master plan responds to the concept of context sensitive road design. Therefore the report divides the length of the Road into 4 discrete areas. These areas are from north to south;

-  **Monash Rd** - Small scale, retail & commercial activities plus residential.
-  **North Gladesville** - Predominantly residential but with a small component of retail and/or commercial office at street level perhaps relating to intersections or sub nodal points.
-  **Town Centre** - Mixed use with a variety of retail and commercial at street level and with commercial and residential above.
-  **South Gladesville** - Predominantly residential but with a limited amount of retail and commercial at street level.

Each of these precincts present a unique set of redevelopment opportunities. These are detailed in the latter section of the report.



*Interspersed throughout this document are information boxes as described in the yellow toned background and have their own respective sub headings e.g. "Balancing Mobility and Accessibility". The purpose of these information boxes is to highlight specific issues that are of relevance to the realisation of the master plan.*





## The Process So Far

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Any sustainable vision for a place is best shaped hand in hand with the people who live, work and invest there. That's why extensive community involvement has been undertaken to create the Master Plan plan for Gladesville. In early 2003, Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Council's working together selected the urban design and town planning consultants to lead the project. Over the course of four months, community members were informed of the project, gathered to discuss their aspirations and ideas for the future, workshopped these ideas and provided detailed feedback on opportunities. The input of the community and direction of the two Councils provided the direction for the Master Plan. This process continues.....

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## 2.1 A Historic First Step

The elected leaders of Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Council's have taken a critical first step in bridging the gap that has often divided residents and business people, and stifled proposals for investors in the area.

By deciding to work together to create a unified vision for both sides of Victoria Road, the two Council's have recognised what has been obvious to many in the community for some time. If the quality of the town centre and Victoria Road is to be substantially improved, then it is necessary to adopt an inclusive approach which goes beyond administrative boundaries. It is for this reason, that a key legacy of this process must be the development of a single, equitable set of rules which will be adopted and implemented by both Councils and applied to both sides of Victoria Road.

## 2.2 Work Begins

With the go-ahead to undertake the project in March 2003, the Council's consultants compiled base information from a variety of existing sources to rapidly gain an understanding of Gladesville and the relevance of past work. This included discussions with the professional staff of each Council to distil the key issues for consideration.

Most importantly, numerous walking tours were undertaken by the project team to experience first-hand, and on a "human-scale", the opportunities and constraints of the study area from

a pedestrian viewpoint. Landform, character areas, building types, land uses, the pedestrian experience, vehicle access and parking, architectural quality, building heritage, public places, and other townscape features were investigated. The next chapter provides a synthesis of this background work.

## 2.3 The Kick - Off Meeting

In early 2003 at Gladesville RSL Club, the consultant team was introduced to both sets of Councillors and the Chamber of Commerce. Interest was high and more than 40 local business people attended.

A short presentation was given highlighting some of the key issues facing the area and potential improvements to generate discussion. Many issues were raised, particularly the need for more parking, and addressing the division of the town by Victoria Road.

The overwhelming message from the business community at this early stage of the project, however, was that something had to be done if the Town Centre was to remain competitive with other places over the long term. In the words of one applauded person..... "It's time to bring back Gladesville!"

## 2.4 The Visioning Brochure

To inspire thoughts about the future, outline the process, and raise initial ideas for community testing, a Visioning Brochure was prepared. It was hand delivered widely throughout the community, available from Gladesville Library and the two Councils, as well as from the internet. Exhibition panels were also displayed at Gladesville Library which elaborated upon the brochure.

Most importantly, the brochure included a "Have Your Say" Feedback sheet. This sheet provided people with the opportunity to say if they supported some of the ideas suggested for improving Gladesville, the range of building heights they would be willing to accept to help deliver these ideas, and an opportunity for comments.

## 2.5 Community Workshops

The next step was to hear from the wider resident and business community. Over the course of three workshops in May 2003, more than 100 people gathered in Gladesville Library. The Councils advertised the workshops in the Visioning Brochure and local newspapers.

After a brief presentation by Council's consultants, which focused on some of the key opportunities for the area, potential special places, and economic reality which must underpin ideas, people gathered in small groups to discuss their vision for the future. People were encouraged to explore creative solutions to issues which arose, rather than becoming fixated on problems. Table representatives presented back to the larger group. Recurring themes and key ideas emerged.

**Yellow boxes are to be read as 'additional supporting discussion' to the main body of the document.**

### *The Key Ideas From The Workshops*

*From the three separate workshops, a number of recurring themes or key ideas emerged:*

- 1. Improve the overall visual appearance of the Victoria Road corridor.*
- 2. Redirect commercial and retail investment back into the town centre.*
- 3. Create different strategies for different areas, including height strategies.*
- 4. Create new public spaces, green the area and improve the public domain.*
- 5. Maintain amenity of existing neighbourhoods adjacent to Victoria Road.*
- 6. Shape development along the ridgeline to create a varied skyline.*
- 7. Improve walkability within the town centre.*
- 8. Improve cycling and walking to parklands and the water's edge.*
- 9. Improve parking within the town centre.*
- 10. Underground or tunnel traffic under Victoria Road.*
- 11. Ensure an economic reality underpins the process.*
- 12. Place power lines underground.*

*These ideas informed this master plan report, and are discussed in detail in chapter 4 - 8.*

## Community Workshops (Con't)

Overall, the citizenry response to the question of "What do you want Gladesville Town Centre and Victoria Road to be in 25 years time?" was very positive. The foremost message was that "growth" could again be a good thing, and bring many benefits to the area. Although many individual issues were raised relating to the sensitive relationship of new to existing development, there was a consensus that these issues are addressable, rather than being vision stopping.



### What You Told Us

*"...Why is this study only looking at 6 storeys. It could be higher in the town centre..."*

*"...Business in Gladesville is dead. There is no long term future in it..."*

*"...Building heights above 1-2 storeys will mean more residents in a smaller area causing greater traffic congestion on Victoria Road..."*

*"...Just do it! Restaurant strip or forum like Leichhardt did [and] shrink the area of development. It is too long a sector of Victoria Road for pedestrians..."*

*"...I'd love to hear what the RTA has to say about this..."*

*"...It was great to see the emphasis on pedestrians...[a place] where people can wander and browse free of traffic impacts..."*

*"...Excellent proposals. Increase incentives to stop at Gladesville rather than just drive through..."*

*"...More parking to be provided..."*

*"...Stop putting hurdles in the way of current property owners...pedestrians should not be put above the fact that they need a reason to come..."*

*"...The area needs more greenery..."*

## 2.6 Public Feedback

Over 100 feedback forms were received from the public. The overwhelming majority of the feedback forms support the key ideas which underpin the master plan, as well as a mixture of building heights. The results of the feedback forms related to building heights are summarised opposite.

## 2.7 On-Going Consultation

To ensure that the refinement of the master plan remained on track with community aspirations and adequately addressed relevant issues, a Reference Group was established. The group included resident, business and landholder representatives, as well as representatives from key organisations and some Councillors. Key organisations represented included the Chamber of Commerce, Cowell Street Resident Group and Residents for Appropriate Development (RAD). Other organisations represented included the RTA, Police, Gladesville Public School and local historic society. A total of four meetings took place with the group where the evolution of the master plan was presented and discussed.

Throughout this process, the majority of the Reference Group expressed support for the master plan, particularly the Gladesville Local Chamber of Commerce. In addition, following an extensive afternoon site tour, both the Cowell Street Resident Group and RAD expressed in-principle support for the master plan provided appropriate guidance is provided for heritage, building height and improved parking within the town centre. The master plan provides detailed guidance on these issues.

### Community Feedback

Feedback forms received from the community commented on the key ideas which underpin the master plan:

- 62% of responses thought improving the pedestrian experience was a good idea;
- 64% of responses thought improving key open spaces was a good idea;
- 61% of responses thought creating new public spaces was a good idea;
- 61% of responses thought creating a new town square was a good idea;
- 52% of responses thought creating a small town park was a good idea;
- 51% of responses thought re-establishing rear lanes was a good idea;
- 51% of responses thought the potential widening of footpaths was a good idea.

## 2.8 Background Studies Financial Studies

In order to establish basic development feasibilities, a brief review of land values and development costs was carried out by Morris Consultants. This study indicated that redevelopment would not be feasible at building heights less than 3 stories generally and would probably require in excess of 5 stories in tightly held areas requiring site amalgamation in the Town Centre.

### Heritage Analysis

A detailed Heritage analysis carried out by Paul Davis Pty Ltd identified 'significant' and 'contributory' buildings and put forward strategies for conserving important buildings and working within heritage constraints particularly in the Town Centre. This work has been largely integrated into this master plan and provided significant input into policies and strategies for the restructuring and redevelopment of the corridor (see chapter 3 for more details).



# Gladesville Past and Present

3



The word "growth" once had positive connotations for the people of Gladesville: better shops, better education, better jobs, better homes, a better quality of life. But mention the word today and you are likely to hear about traffic congestion, poor development, bitumen over landscape and developer greed. How did it come to pass that a town proud of 100 years of growth, should have so radically changed its outlook? How did the Great Northern Road become Victoria Road, but lose its greatness? The reason is that the contemporary methods by which Gladesville "grows" have changed. To plan for a better future, it is first necessary to know where Gladesville has come from and where it is today.

### 3.1 How Did It All Begin?

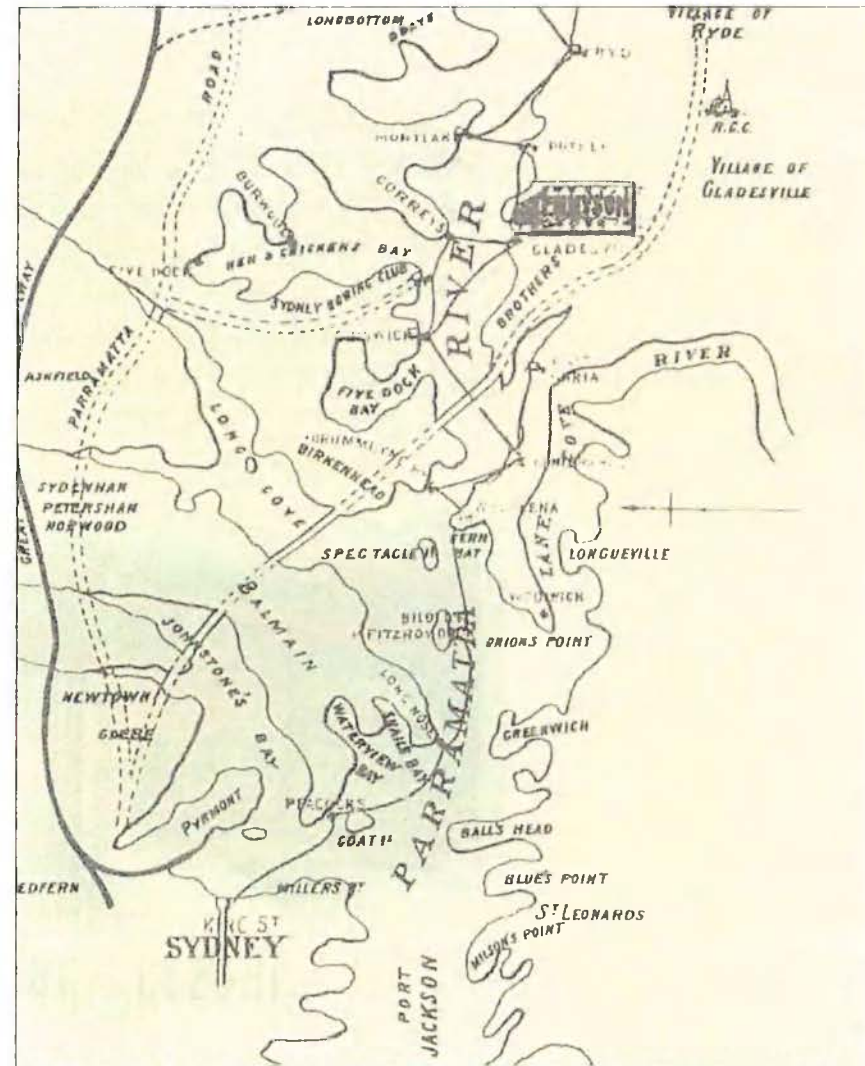
The construction of Bedlam Ferry Point in 1832 and the Great North Road, provided the catalyst for founding the township of Gladesville. Over the coming decades the town grew rapidly with improved accessibility due to a number of key developments. These included the first Gladesville Bridge in 1881, the Iron Cove Bridge in 1882 and Pittwater Road in 1884. With this infrastructure in place, the building of the township remained steady through to the 1930s. At its heyday, the town included three cinemas, a tram line, six churches, three local pubs, thriving shops and 1000 local students at Gladesville School.



Today, the legacy of this impressive period of town building is still clearly evident. Notable buildings such as Gladesville School, the Bayview Tavern, Christ Church, St. Andrews Church, and several sandstone cottages on Victoria Road are identifiable landmarks. Other landmarks, such as the original Gladesville Hotel on the corner of Victoria Road and Junction Street remain hidden.



Similarly, the design quality and durability of many notable shopfronts, such as Wilson's butchery, is still apparent. Buildings addressed the street, were well proportioned and detailed, provided parapets to create an interesting skyline, and genuine awnings providing pedestrian shelter. Business founders stamped the date of opening onto their building with pride.





### 3.2 The Great Northern Road Loses Its Greatness

After a period of relatively little development, the consequence of two world wars and great depression, the growth of Gladesville township regained momentum from the 1950's.

Unlike the previous era where "growth" had positive connotations for Gladesville: better accessibility, better shops, better facilities, better education, a better quality of life, it now became increasingly negative.

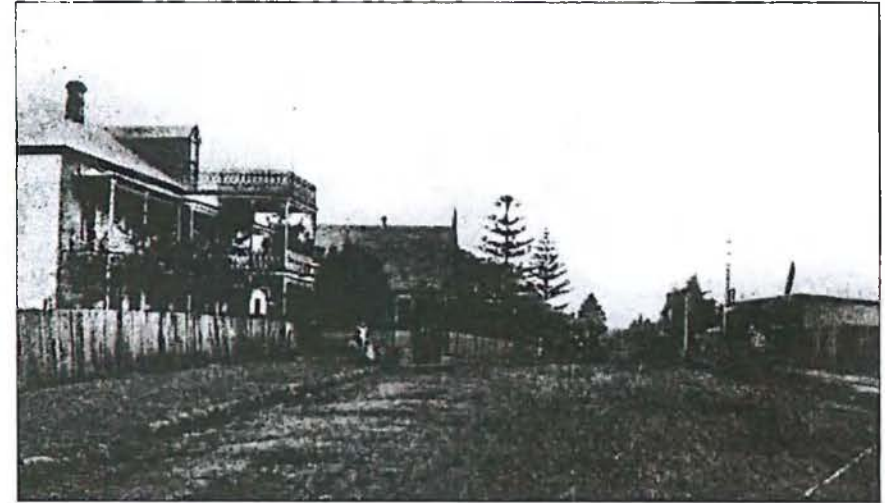
The widening of Victoria Road to improve its carrying capacity occurred. The opening of Macquarie Centre, Birkenhead Point and Top Ryde shopping centres began to steal trade from the town centre. The onset of retail cannibalism had begun. At the same time, an increasingly complex planning system separating land uses and permitting increasingly bland strip development further undermined both the visual quality of Victoria Road, and the economic integrity of the town centre.

In short, a reactive cycle of planning controls, increasingly bad habits amongst private developers, and a vehicle oriented mindset had been put in place. The situation has been declining in subtle steps, stroke by stroke, year after year to today. This cycle must be broken if Gladesville Town Centre and Victoria Road are to be improved.

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*During the 30's and 40's the shops remained open on Friday nights. There was a real carnival feeling on these nights with streamers and chocolate wheels and the band from Ryde playing...In all it was a very happy and sociable time. J.W. Milne. Gladesville's Sesqui Centenary.*

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### 3.3 Balancing Mobility and Accessibility

Transportation is a critical component of Victoria Road. But transportation is not an end in itself. It is simply the means by which people connect between home, working, shopping, community and other leisure activities.

A "livable transportation" system serves the entire population, including walkers, cyclists and public transport users. It promotes context sensitive design, so that the roadway supports and encourages a range of users and uses. It is a system that balances accessibility and mobility. *Accessibility* being the ease by which people can move from one destination to the next, such as one shop to another. *Mobility* being the efficient movement of people and vehicles across great distances.

In the case of Gladesville, however, Victoria Road clearly does not function in this balanced manner. Mobility has been prioritised over accessibility with negative consequences. Traffic behaves more like it is travelling along a highway, rather than passing through a town. The quality of development attracted to this environment is continually degraded. The ability of the town to capture passing trade is declining, and walking is hardly a realistic consideration.

At the same time, the actual ability of Victoria Road to operate as a long term arterial "work-horse" for this part of the region is doubtful. The past road widening and current clearway conditions have not genuinely improved its mobility function. There are now three lanes of congestion instead of two, the average peak hour vehicle speed is only 25km/h, and it is now quicker to cycle than drive to the City by seven minutes in peak hour.

Clearly, it is time to recognise that attempting to prolong the mobility function of the road by simplistically focusing on moving cars, is neither fair to the town or sustainable for the region.

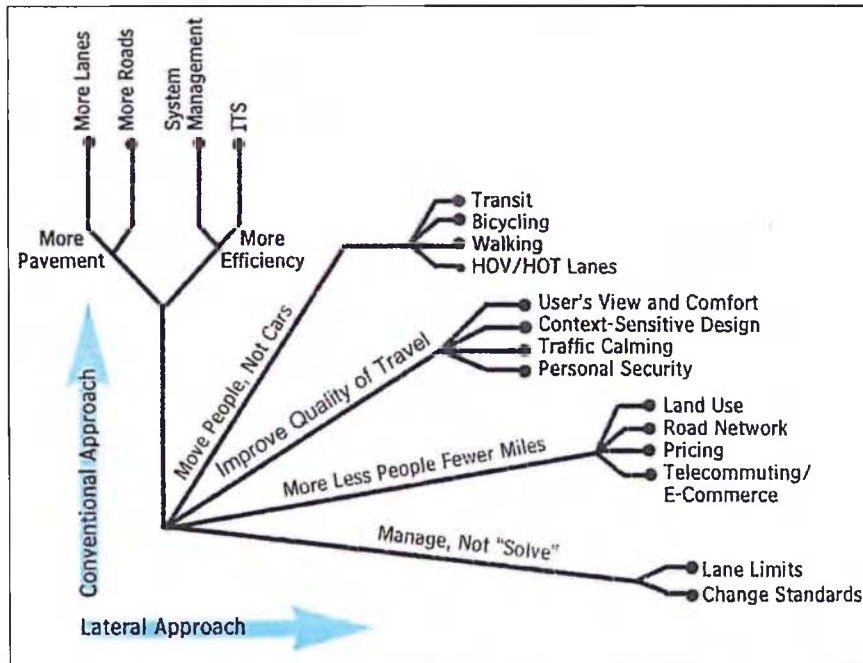
If genuine improvements are to be made to improving the function of Victoria Road, then the current engineering focus on mobility and the reactive planning cycle of development must be abandoned for a more deliberate, proactive one.

By expanding the toolbox of transportation planning to include a more lateral approach, four long term action strategies emerge.

- Focus on moving people, not cars
- Improve the quality of travel time
- Move more people, fewer kilometres
- Manage, not "solve" congestion

By combining these strategies the mobility and accessibility needs of not only drivers, but all of the community, can be accommodated in a way that improves everybody's quality of life.

Within this context, the remainder of this chapter examines the overall context and key issues, then looks at the key qualities of the four different character areas which exist along Victoria Road. Distinguishing physical features which tangibly inform future opportunities are clearly highlighted.



Balancing Mobility and Accessibility: Toolbox of Transportation Planning



A balanced transportation system provides for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, as well as cars.

### Balancing Mobility and Accessibility: Success Stories

Across America, the Congress For The New Urbanism initiative, "Civilising Downtown Highways" has successfully challenged the seemingly inflexible position of highway departments. Designs and policies are being implemented to calm traffic along highways as they pass through town centres. Through collaboration, communities are creating walkable, business friendly streets. Key projects include:



before



after

Martin Luther King Jnr Boulevard, Portland

US1 Corridor, North Palm Beach County, Florida



before

Old San Carlos Boulevard, Town of Fort Myers Beach, Florida



after

Tamiami Trail, Collier County, Florida

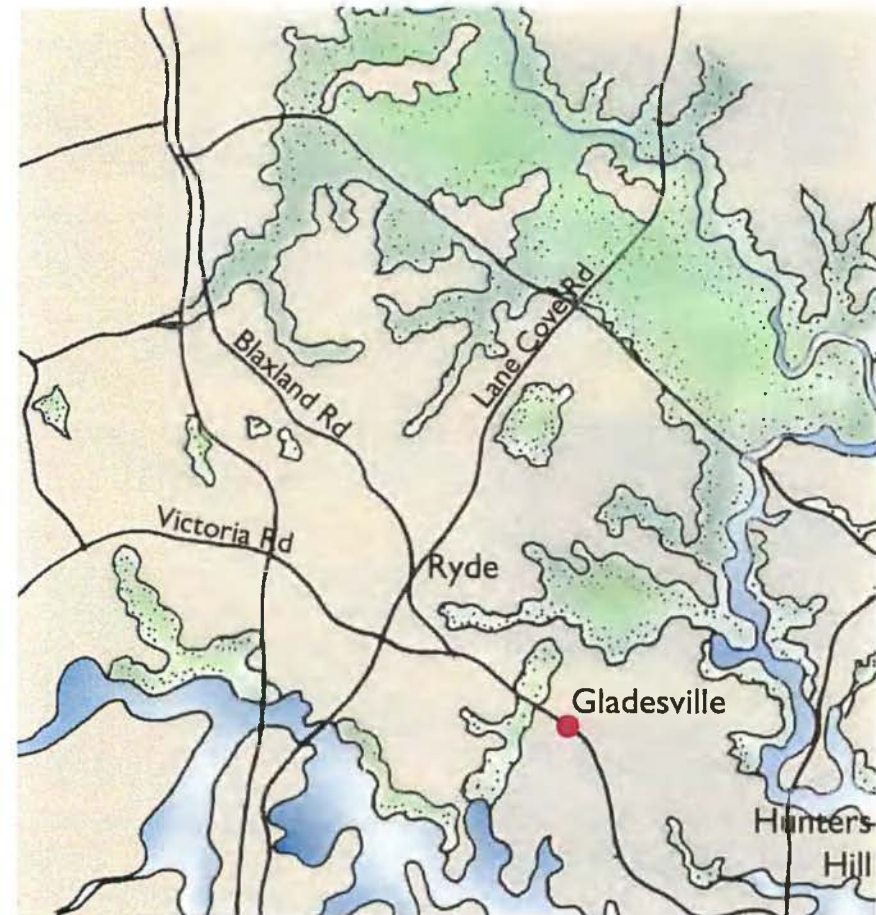
North Roan Avenue, Johnson City

### 3.4 Strategic Planning Context

The extensive work undertaken in the Urban Villages Study (1996) and Gladesville Shopping Centre Environmental Enhancement Plan (1999) provides a positive foundation for the master plan. The work locates Gladesville Town Centre within a string of urban villages and provides objectives for the creation of an urban village. The objectives include:

- Meets community aspirations
- Contains a mix of uses
- Is vibrant, sustainable and attractive to people
- Balances pedestrians and motorists
- Provides a range of housing choice for all income levels
- Conserves and provides links to the past
- Promotes appropriate redevelopment
- Is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable
- Instills a sense of pride in locals and attracts visitors

The master plan is consistent with, and builds upon, these objectives. The master plan provides detailed design guidance for the study area as a whole and its specific precincts. In conjunction with the rewriting of relevant planning controls, the master plan provides the framework to achieve the goal of Gladesville Town Centre performing as an urban village.



Gladesville forms an important gateway into Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils

### 3.5 The Key Issues

Gladesville is recognised as a good place to live, with people attracted to its leafy neighbourhood streets and lifestyle opportunities. But is the character and quality of Gladesville and Victoria Road appropriate to the community needs? This page visually summarises key issues affecting Gladesville today.



Rise of The Commercial Strip



Declining Pedestrian Experience



Main Street As Highway/Poor Pedestrian Experience



Breakdown In Street Shopping



Forgettable Townscape



Poor Access and Parking & Visual Bight



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### 3.5 The Key Issues (Con't.)

Key issues relating to the revitalisation of Victoria Road Gladesville include:





- Context sensitive Road Design which will permit a more active, attractive and walkable pedestrian environment on Victoria Road;
- Conservation and enhancement of existing buildings particularly 'significant' and 'contributory' buildings as identified in heritage analysis;
- Creation and enhancement of placemaking opportunities which will assist with revitalisation and activation of the pedestrian experience;
- Restructuring of both the centre and the corridor generally which will improve parking, access and commercial viability;
- Mechanisms to improve the quality of urban design, streetscape and architecture to enhance the visual amenity of the area;
- Increases in residential development along and with the corridor to assist with increasing 'local' users of the centre and the corridor;
- The need to create a desirable investment climate to encourage new business and development particularly into the town centre and;
- Improve and enhance the public domain to make the centre and the corridor more attractive;

In this context, the study was divided into four (4) precincts each with different character and predominant land use. These precincts are identified and mapped below and are:

- Monash Road Precinct;
- North Gladesville Precinct;
- Town Centre Precinct and;
- South Gladesville Precinct.

These precincts are discussed in some detail in the following pages.

### The Master Plan identifies four distinct character areas along Victoria Road

-  **Monash Rd** - Small scale, retail & commercial activities plus residential.
-  **North Gladesville** - Predominantly residential but with a small component of retail community uses and/or commercial office at street level perhaps relating to intersections on sub nodal points.
-  **Town Centre** - Mixed use with a variety of retail commercial and community uses at street level and with commercial and residential above.
-  **South Gladesville** - Predominantly residential but with a limited amount of retail, commercial and community uses at street level.



### 3.6 Monash Road

The Monash Road precinct begins at the intersection of Monash Road and Victoria Road. It extends along Monash Road to its intersection with Eltham and College Streets.

The character of the precinct is varied. Remnant shopfronts from an earlier period, at the intersection of Monash Road and Victoria Road, suggest a once thriving local centre. Today, however, these shopfronts appear tired. The character and configuration of Monash Road is markedly different from Victoria Road. Six traffic lanes have been reduced to four traffic lanes providing for a more intimate pedestrian experience. However, without on-street parking vehicles approaching still dominate the character of the place. Along Monash Road itself, both the built form and uses vary, ranging from notable shopfronts through to larger commercial and semi-industrial uses. Other recent vehicle orientated additions to Monash Road, such as visible surface parking lots, are eroding the spatial qualities of the street.

The key challenge for the future of Monash Road is to re-establish its function as a local centre which provides daily conveniences to nearby workers and residents. The realisation of the challenge will largely depend on the ability to create a public domain of exceptional quality.



Existing Character





Monash Road precinct

- Review this area in transition
- Grouping of notable shopfronts
- Parking and storage areas associated with light industrial does not contribute to creation of a pedestrian friendly place.
- Surface parking lot detracts from integrity of streetscape
- Possible "Gateway" to Gladesville
- Existing shopfronts signal arrival to a small place at the intersection with Monash Road

### 3.7 North Gladesville

North Gladesville extends from Gerard and Stansell Streets on Victoria Road to Primrose Hill. This stretch of land was an ideal location for industrial uses which provided a clear break in the character of Victoria Road between the local centre of Monash Road, and more mature town centre of Gladesville.

As many of these industrial uses are coming to an end of their business life, they are being replaced by nondescript, vehicle orientated commercial and retail uses. They include fast food chains, convenience petrol stations and tilt-up storage sheds. Such uses, however, with their low slung building type set behind parking lots or with extensive blank walls are not welcome neighbours. A pattern of car dependent strip development is established.

By lowering the quality of the public domain, walkability is also reduced. The commercial/retail requirement to provide exclusive parking to accommodate the "stop-park-stop-park" shopper behaviour this type of environment generates. Clearly, this is neither a desirable nor sustainable pattern of development along this stretch of Victoria Road.

The key challenge for the future of North Gladesville is to re-establish a character break between the two centres, and ensuring that new commercial and retail investment is directed back into these centres. The large amalgamation of the Primrose Hill timber yard provides a key opportunity for a pioneering project to set the future direction of this area for the better.



Existing Character



Industrial uses being replaced by drive-thru fast food convenience stores and business park style buildings with large setbacks from Victoria Road

High point along ridge and visually prominent corner

Primrose Hill re-development site (subject to separate consideration)

Vacant lot on church land

Land falls steeply away from Victoria Road

Modern buildings with large setbacks from Victoria Road with parking out front do not create a pedestrian friendly street

North Gladesville precinct

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## 3.8 The Town Centre

Gladesville Town Centre is identifiable by its historic gateways. They include Christ Church and St. Andrew's Church from the north, and the historic Clock Tower and original Gladesville Hotel (currently hidden) from the south. The significance of these historic gateways, however, is not fully realised in the townscape today.

Beyond the obvious challenge of improving pedestrian, and thus retail, connections across Victoria Road, the greatest challenge facing the town centre is to revitalise street based shopping and social activity in a broader public setting. Beyond public domain and parking improvements, this will require the restructuring of the town to capitalise upon the energy existing within Gladesville Shopping Plaza.

With its opening, Gladesville Shopping Plaza refocused the retail energy of the town and has provided a retail anchor. Although drawing people to Gladesville who would have otherwise gone to another centre, the internalised and utilitarian delivery of goods and services within a 'box' has not delivered an improvement in the overall economic and social performance of the town as a whole.

With its poor pedestrian connection to Victoria Road, it has not enhanced the energy levels of the public domain and promoted community interaction by doing so, but rather depleted it.

The role of the town centre, however, should be much broader than merely retail activity. A mature town provides a public setting, using streets and spaces as community infrastructure, for socialising, community

events, varied shopping, eating and drinking, reading the paper, and walking the dog. It is supported by a mixed use framework of buildings which integrate seamlessly into the public domain. It creates a sense of place and identity, which is strengthened by each new development.

Within this context, it should be noted that the current structuring of the two major parking areas (the structured parking of the Plaza and Cowell Street car park), within or immediately adjacent the Plaza in its current configuration is also detrimental to main street retailers. This arrangement allows potential customers to enter the shopping centre without ever passing by a street based shop.

Notwithstanding these current issues, the Plaza has an important role to play in revitalising the town centre. It will serve as an anchor to the town, adding a draw power and advertising presence that will benefit other businesses. A key challenge will be to determine how the connection between the Plaza and town as a whole can be improved, so that the energy it contains benefits the public domain. Improving walkability between destinations, such as the shops, Gladesville School and Gladesville Library will then enhance the social and economic performance of the town.



The "pink box" is not a desirable precedent for higher development forms

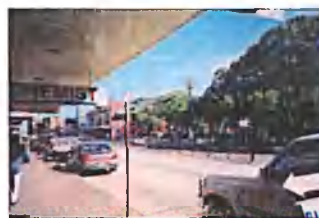
The two churches provide a historic gateway opportunity which has not been fully realised

Poor pedestrian connection between Gladesville Plaza and Victoria Road  
Land falls steeply away from Victoria Road

Rear connection of RSL with Victoria Road

Trim Place improvements will enhance function as a meeting place.  
Physical integration of the school remains problematic.

The Town Centre



Existing Character

### 3.9 South Gladesville

South Gladesville extends from the convergence of Victoria Road and Punt Road to the edge of Gladesville Town Centre.

Its role is important for two reasons. It is the front door into the broader Gladesville and Hunter's Hill area, and it is the main approach from the south into the Gladesville Town Centre proper. This role has largely been fulfilled in the past by it being a predominately residential entry frame within a landscape setting. A number of sandstone heritage cottages provide a link to the past and add a richness to the character of South Gladesville.

However, the encroachment of vehicle orientated uses and other commercial and retail uses into South Gladesville, combined with excessive signage, is undermining this role. It is becoming increasingly difficult to identify where the town centre begins. This is also eroding the overall entry character into the area.

The key challenge for the future of South Gladesville is to improve its function as the "front door" into the area as a whole, and main approach to the town centre.



Existing Character



Variety of heritage buildings and landscape

Vehicle orientated strip development, predominately on the eastern side of Victoria Road is detracting from the entry character to Gladesville and Hunter's Hill

South Gladesville precinct





# Rethinking The Future of Victoria Road

4



If the future growth of Gladesville along Victoria Road is to be for the better, then it is necessary to rethink and change the elements which have underpinned recent development. There exist a number of common elements or design principles which provide a sound basis for this change. Many of these qualities centre around the pedestrian and the capacity to create interesting, comfortable, and safe places for people - a walkable centre. Solutions to the problems of Victoria Road go beyond design, but many of the challenges facing Gladesville can be met with simple design solutions. It is these basic design standards which provide a basis for Victoria Road enhancement.

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## 4.1 Links To The Past

Retaining links to the past is extremely important. It provides an understanding of where an area has come from, helps create an authentic sense of place, and for the town centre provides a genuine marketing advantage over generic shopping centre designs.

As part of the master plan process, existing buildings of "high significance" and "contributory buildings" were identified within the study area. Buildings of "high significance" include all buildings of exceptional heritage value which should desirably be retained. Examples include Christ Church and St. Andrews Church (see maps on following two pages).

A "Heritage Assessment and Guidelines Report" has been conducted by Paul Davies Pty Limited on Councils behalf. The recommendations of the "Heritage Assessment" have been carefully considered and incorporated into this Master Plan.

The purpose of the report was to identify potential heritage and contributory items and a general development framework.

The report recommends that identified heritage items or contributory buildings should be retained particularly as seen from the street and where appropriate sufficient curtilage or setting be retained.

Future management should consider whole buildings even if in separate ownerships to avoid disparate changes in colours, treatments, signage etc., and significant buildings should whenever possible be presented in their rustic form. Recent inappropriate additions should be removed whenever possible.

### Recommended Policies

- Conserve the scale of the linear street wall to Victoria Road and retain significant buildings whenever possible.
- Retain the predominately two storey form along the street.
- Maintain the current two story linear form of the shopping precinct.
- Maintain existing subdivision form set at an angle to the street.
- New major developments should be set back from the street frontage and should not include removal of heritage items or contributory buildings if at all possible.
- New setback development forms could include:
  - Forms with varying height, alignments, styles;
  - Development that relates to current lot boundaries;
  - Designs that use sympathetic materials;
  - Forms derived from the typology of the street (use of parapets, vertical windows, prominence of solid form etc.);
  - Patterns continuing oblique lot orientation.
- Setbacks can be varied but should aim to minimise visual impact from across the road.
- Existing pedestrian links and lanes should be retained where possible.
- Suitable curtilage should be provided around 2 Massey street and 10 Cowell Street.
- Future development should reinforce corner locations.



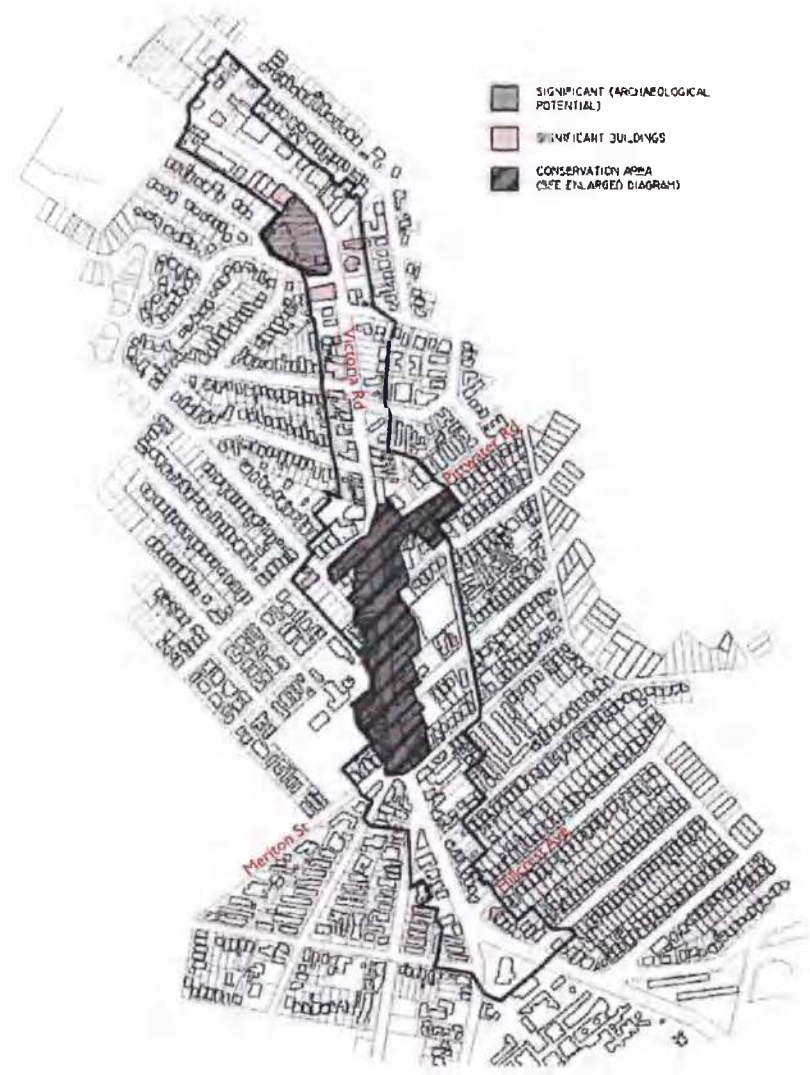
no 153 Victoria Road no 183 Victoria Road



Christ Anglican Church St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



Representative examples of buildings of Significance.  
See Heritage Report for more detailed review.



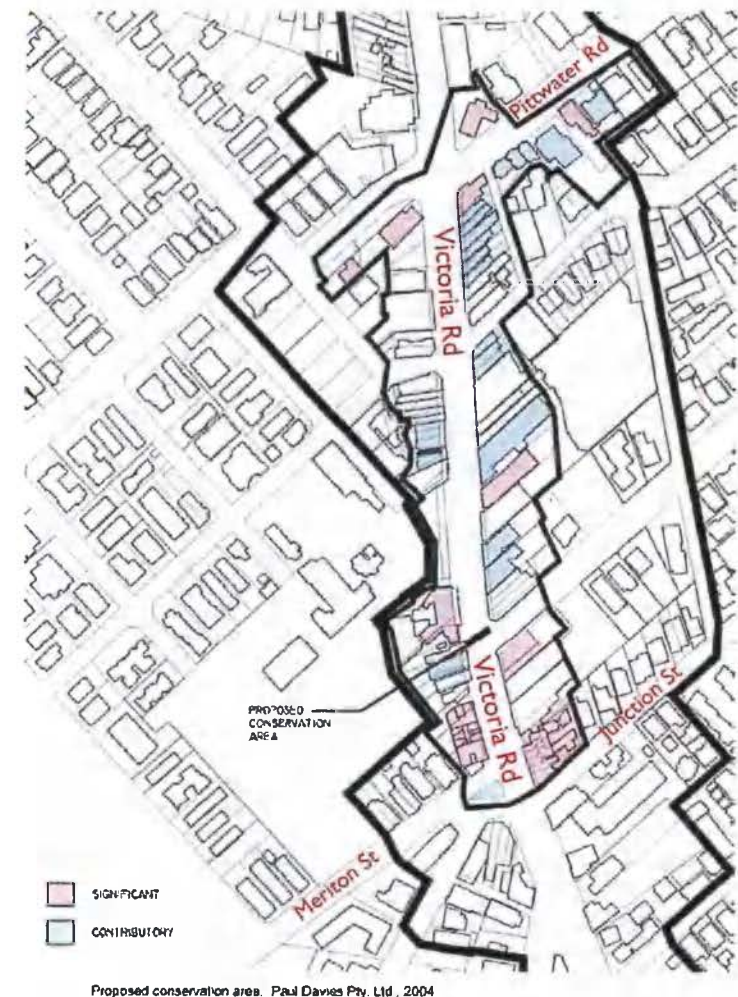
Proposed heritage items Paul Davies Pty. Ltd., 2004

## 4.1 Links To The Past (Con't.)

Contributory buildings include buildings which contribute positively to the townscape of the area. It is recommended in the first instance that buildings with contributory significance be generally retained. If on a site-by-site specific basis it is justified that for structural or economic reasons it is unviable to maintain the building, or grouping of buildings, they can be replaced provided the new buildings provide an equivalent or better contribution to the townscape i.e., that new buildings are also "contributory". Further, the removal of a contributory building may be justified if part of a larger proposal where the benefits brought to the area, such as the creation of a major public space, far outweigh the removal of the contributory item. A qualified heritage architect / urban designer is required to provide this justification for individual development applications.

In terms of redevelopment over or behind existing contributory shops, the new structure should be stepped back from the existing facade by the maximum amount possible. Ideally, the step back would be 10m for deeper lots (>35m) reduced to 5m for shallower lots (<35m).

The design of all new development should sympathetically relate to existing in terms of facade fenestration, proportioning, use of colour, materials and building elements.





no. 158-160 Victoria Road



no. 184-190 Victoria Road



no. 209-213 Victoria Road



no. 225-227 Victoria Road



no. 236-240 Victoria Road

no. 272-274 Victoria Road



no. 237A-239 Victoria Road



no. 253-259 Victoria Road



no. 267-275 Victoria Road



no. 158 Victoria Road



no. 223 Victoria Road



no. 239A Victoria Road



no. 251 Victoria Road



no. 215 Victoria Road

Representative examples of buildings of contributory significance located in Town Centre Precinct

## 4.2 The Right Uses In The Right Location

The future of the Victoria Road corridor through Gladesville can follow a number of paths. The four main options include:

The **Business As Usual** approach would continue the recent pattern of development. Commercial strip development would continue unimpeded along Victoria Road, eventually replacing all industrial uses and other small businesses which have been in a state of decline. Poor quality commercial development set behind parking lots would detract from commercial investment back into the town centre. The sense of where the town centre actually begins and ends would be further eroded.



The **Traffic First** approach would lead to the removal of all parking along Victoria Road to effectively create another full-time travel lane. In effect, creating a highway through a town centre, which would prove most detrimental to the long term viability of businesses and walkability. Only vehicle orientated businesses targeting the stranger driving by would survive under this condition, whilst the value of properties and other uses would go into a state of decline.



The **Blanket Mixed Use** approach would propose a continuous ribbon of "mixed use" development along the corridor, with commercial on the ground floor addressing the street and residential above. Although this approach is currently advocated by many planners because it addresses many of the physical design deficiencies of the business as usual approach, the early warning signs from other places, such as Canterbury Road and Parramatta Road, suggest this may not be the most suitable path. It still detracts from retail and commercial investment within the traditional town centre, the take-up of commercial floor space is slow, and the quality of uses which are attracted to highly visible locations (such as second hand mobile phone and plastic furniture stores) are questionable in terms of the image they generate.



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*Most corridors have been over-zoned for retail. Organisations such as the Urban Land Institute (ULI) now recognise that commercial zoning in strip corridors without end points has become outmoded and economically unsupportable practice. ULI now recommends focusing retail into clustered nodes and transitioning remaining corridor segments into a mix of uses, with an emphasis on housing.*





*Congress for the New Urbanism*

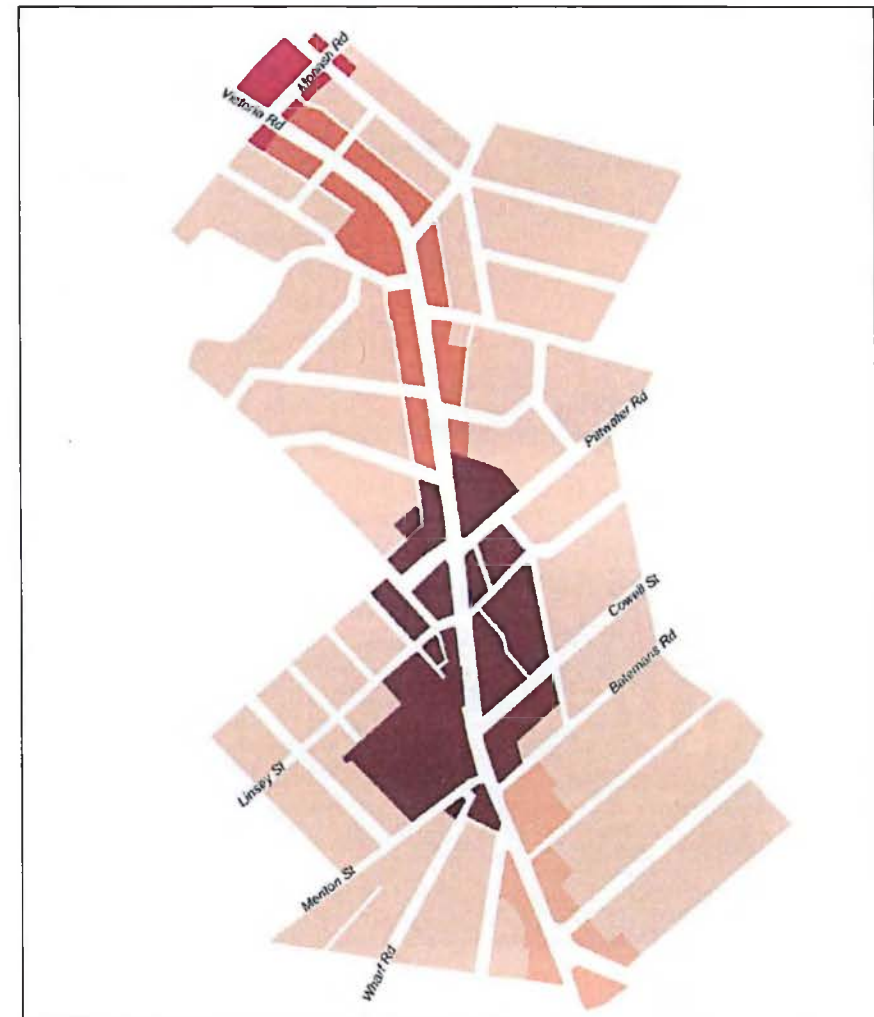
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## 4.2 The Right Uses In The Right Location (Con't)

Finally, the **People First** approach is the approach that will improve both the long term social and economic performance of the town centre. It will improve the overall sense of place along Victoria Road, help to generate quality development, without marginalising the current mobility function of Victoria Road. It seeks to balance transportation requirements, whilst encouraging an appropriate mix of uses in appropriate locations.

Under this approach, the ideal future development of the Victoria Road corridor would be to create a node of highest intensity genuinely mixed use at the town centre, and a lower level intensity of mixed uses at Monash Road as a local or village centre. The remaining stretches in between should then predominately be built as residential to re-focus commercial and retail investment back into these pedestrian oriented centres. This approach will create identifiable edges to these places, and create densely planted "green breaks" along the corridor between. However, a limited amount of commercial floor space should be allowed in the edge transition zones, which will provide cheaper rent for start-up businesses. This approach will require some changes to existing land use zones.

-  **Monash Rd** - Small scale, retail & commercial activities plus residential.
-  **North Gladesville** - Predominantly residential but with a small component of retail and/or commercial office at street level perhaps relating to intersections on sub nodal points.
-  **Town Centre** - Mixed use with a variety of retail and commercial at street level and with commercial and residential above.
-  **South Gladesville** - Predominantly residential but with a limited amount of retail and commercial at street level.



### 4.3 Building Placement and Height

Streets and public spaces should be thought of as three dimensional public rooms where the buildings serve as the walls. Building location and height are vital elements for determining the quality of these public rooms. When buildings are set far back from the street and are too low related to the width of the street, the spatial definition of the street, comfort of the pedestrian experience and image of the place dissolves.

At present, a maximum height of 3 storeys applies to most properties in the Gladesville study area. The current problem with this building height limit, however, is that redevelopment is not always economically viable and thus potential for change and improvement is inhibited.

By increasing the permitted building height to 3 to 4 stories, with higher buildings in *certain circumstances and with special conditions*, and by bringing buildings towards the street with parking set behind, the incentive for obtaining better development would be enhanced. Development which improves the quality of the public domain, and social and economic performance of Gladesville should be sought and facilitated.

When discussing the issue of height with workshop participants, it was widely recognised that increasing building height could bring many benefits to the town centre and Victoria Road. Notwithstanding and understandably however, four concerns were raised regarding taller buildings, all of which can be addressed on a site specific basis.



Even with contemporary architecture and mature landscaping, a parking lot in front of the building does not create a pedestrian friendly street.



Bringing the building towards the street with parking set behind or on-street creates a pedestrian friendly street with a strong sense of place.



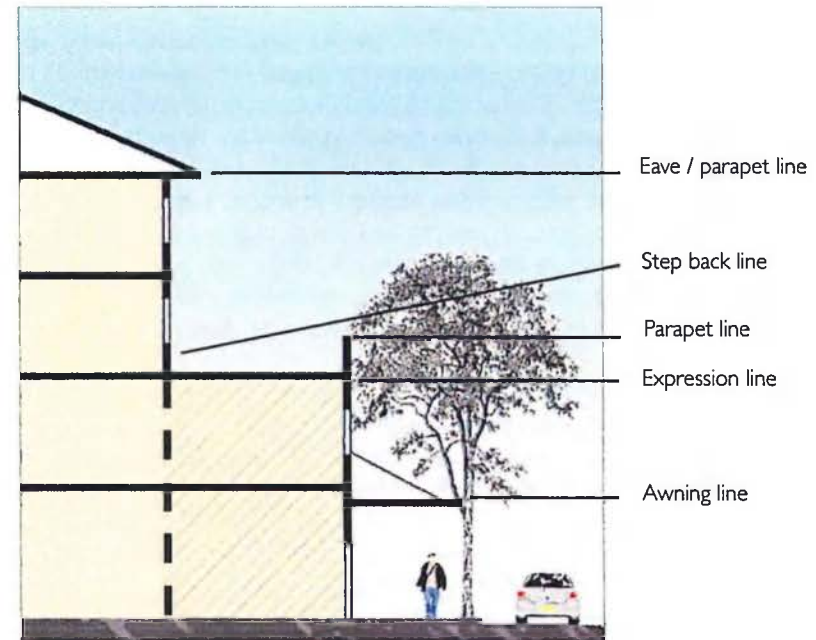
### Why Start At Three To Four Storeys?

The proposed increases to building height have taken a wide range of issues into account, including economic viability for investors.

A base height of four storeys along the study area is the minimum threshold at which the area would start to attract investment under current market conditions. A comprehensive range of factors were considered to arrive at this assessment, including land value, taxes, construction costs, and sale and rental prices specific to the area. Further increases in height would then be necessary to realistically achieve some of the key public domain improvements discussed in this and the following chapters.

Without this increase in height, the master plan would not be underpinned by an economic reality. The majority of its ideas and public domain improvements would become difficult, if not impossible, to deliver. Further, the only type of development which could be foreseeably attracted are more drive-thru chains and other car dependent uses.

First, there is concern about maintaining a human scale to the area. A number of design techniques exist for incorporating taller buildings, whilst maintaining a human scale. In the Town Centre and Monash Road, new development can be setback behind existing buildings, allowing the retention of notable shopfronts where desired, and the existing rhythm to the street. In other areas, taller buildings should include a sizable "step back" at the third storey level and a strong cornice or 'expression line' to create the visual perception of a smaller building. Street edge retail



Building height elements to integrate taller buildings whilst retaining a human scale within the town centre.



Higher levels are recessed to maintain human scale of street scene.

### 4.3 Building Placement and Height (Con't.)

Street edge retail buildings should also provide an awning over the footpath to further focus the pedestrians view to the street level and display windows of shops.

Second, there is concern of the visual impact of development along the Victoria Road ridgeline when viewed from afar. It is true that some taller buildings at high points along the ridge will be visible from a considerable distance. But this can be a good thing and create a strong image. The key to achieving this will be to ensure development does not read as a long horizontal slab. Techniques for achieving this include the vertical proportioning of building elements, provision of gaps, the narrowing of building modulation, the breakdown and splitting of building massing, terracing, colour and materials and, varied roof features, which can be coded in the DCP.

#### *The Height Value to Residential Neighbourhoods*

*Some residents of neighbourhoods behind Victoria Road have raised concern that higher development along Victoria Road will be unsightly, and will lower the values of their properties. This is not an unreasonable concern given the truly poor quality of the only higher building in the area - the pink box at the corner of Pittwater Road.*

*Concerns exist that an ugly tall building is more noticeable than an ugly low building, and with faith lost in current planning controls to deliver better quality development, residents believe restricting height at one to two storeys will protect their residential investment. However, this is a misguided notion.*

*By restricting development to one to two storeys, the only development which will occur along Victoria Road in the future is more strip chains. This is evident by the push of fast food restaurants into the industrial area.*

*An accumulation of this form of development replacing the industrial uses as they come to the end of their life cycle would make for a truly ugly, placeless environment, which is also the front door to these residential neighbourhoods. The presence of such uses would also lower nearby property values.*

*Instead, by permitting an increase in height with strict controls, new residential development would become an attractive option. Rather than the front door to residential neighbourhoods being a totem pole fast food sign on Victoria Road, it could be quality residential apartments, which also afforded public domain improvements, and creation of a positive neighbourhood entry image where one does not currently exist. The choice of housing stock within the neighbourhood would thus also be improved. This would undoubtedly take future pressure off the neighbourhoods behind Victoria Road to accommodate higher density development - a pressure which may well be forced upon all Councils by the State Government in the future whether they like it or not.*



By following the building height elements principles, town centre buildings ranging from 2 to 6 storeys can exist without destroying the pedestrian scale of the town.

By following the building height element principles, residential apartment buildings ranging from 3 to 5 storeys within a landscape setting create a quality public domain.

### 4.3 Building Placement and Height (Con't.)

Third, there is concern that taller buildings will affect adjoining residential properties in terms of solar access, and character of the residential neighbourhoods. Any new development will be required to carefully consider its neighbours in terms of solar access and privacy. Again, the use of terracing and split massing will be employed to ensure appropriate solar access and built form is maintained to neighbouring properties.

Fourth, there is a concern that taller development will generate undesirable traffic and parking impacts, particularly on residential streets off Victoria Road. If taller buildings are permitted, they will typically be required to provide vehicle access to on-site residential parking via the establishment of side streets and rear lanes just off Victoria Road. This will reduce the need for new residents to the area to drive through existing residential streets.

In short, higher density, taller development should only be permitted where it is "self solving" with regard to the concerns raised, with taller buildings only permitted where there is a genuine public benefit, such as the creation of a new public space or other improvement.

When considering the issue of height, it is important to realise that without an incentive to develop, there are few players who will spend real money on improving either the public or private domain of Gladesville.

#### *Building Height Bonus*

*The maximum base height limit throughout the study area is three storeys, except for the town centre which is four storeys. This is the base height at which development becomes economically viable.*

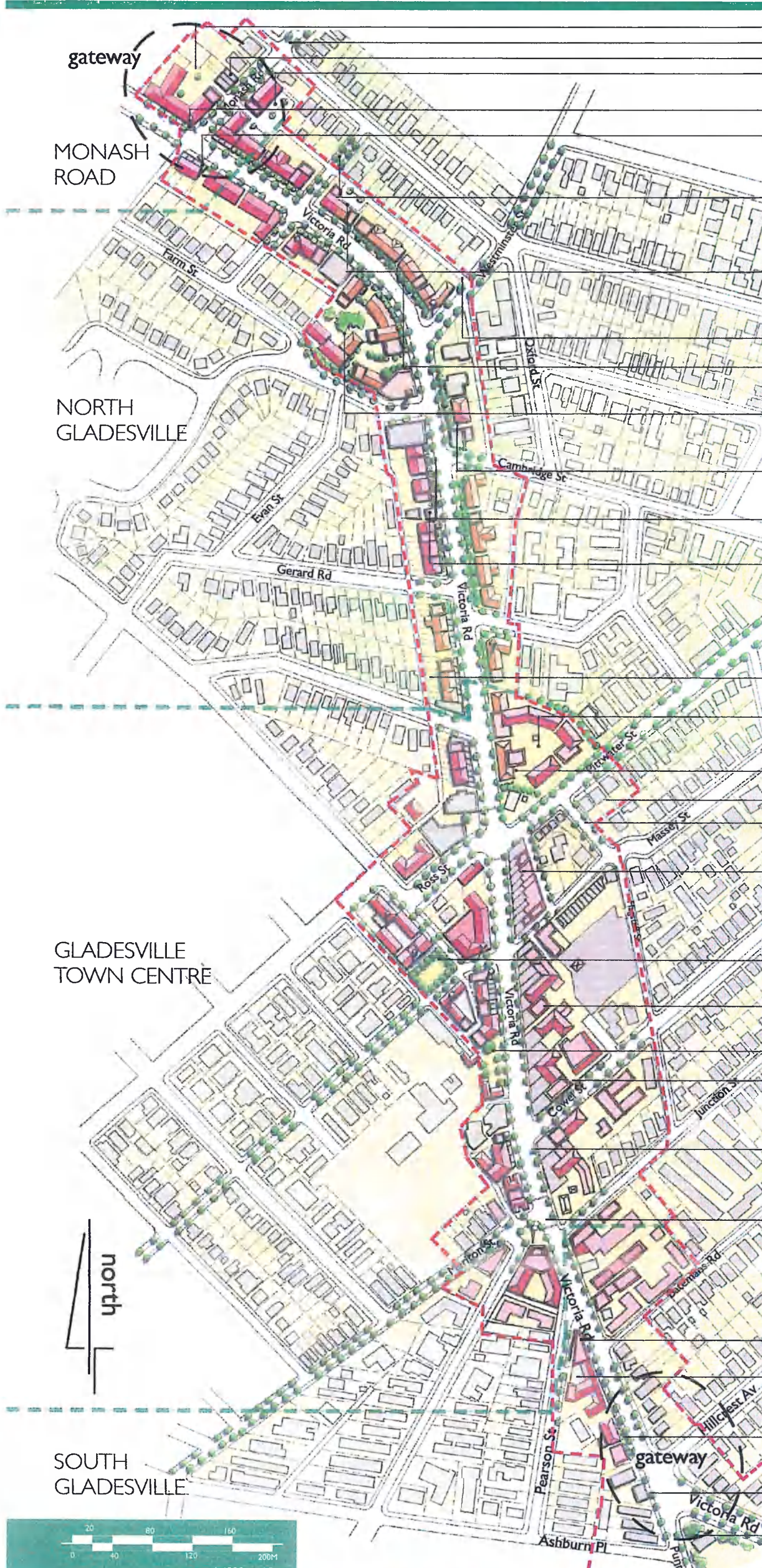
*In certain circumstances and with special conditions of development imposed on a site specific basis, a height bonus of up to two storeys may be granted where a development provides a meaningful public benefit.*

*Benefits may take the form of:*

- A rear lane functioning as an accessway to other properties within the block;*
- Improvements of substance to the pedestrian footpath (awnings, verandahs, identified footpath widenings and street trees);*
- Provision of part of the site for the creation of a designated public space;*
- Provision of meaningful public carparking on part of a designated site;*
- Provision of exceptional quality buildings on a designated landmark site;*
- Adaptive reuse and refurbishment of genuine heritage buildings and structures which may exist on a site.*

*Bonuses should only occur when all other aspects of the development are considered exemplary.*

*This means that building heights will range from 3-5 stories generally (with appropriate setbacks) up to 4-6 stories in the Town Centre (with appropriate setbacks)*



- Potential Gateway site**
- Provide street trees and on-street parking**
- Maintained and Improved Existing Buildings**
- Provide Additional Retail Parking** in rear court
- Redevelop Monash Road Intersection** with mixed-use development including corner features
- Retain shopfront** within stepped back residential development
- Extend 'The Avenue'** to improve connections along lane
- Re-configure convenience restaurant** into pedestrian friendly format
- Add rear lanes** to improve circulation
- Create quality residential 3-4 storey garden apartments** to green Victoria Road
- Re-develop Primrose Hill site** with thru-site pedestrian link which aligns with the intersection of Westminister Road
- Potential small scale infill development** on church land
- Long term opportunity for formal tree planting** along Victoria Road
- Retain heritage items** and adaptively re-use
- Mixed use transition area** from Gerard Street South
- Opportunity for "Model Project"** to investigate opportunities for public private joint venture
- Integrate community facilities** to create a public space which integrates with the church
- Potential Project site**
- Extend Flagstaff Street and improve circulation**, retaining historic fire station
- Activate Massey Lane** on the church axis, retaining Wilson's butcher and other notable shop-fronts
- Create a small town park** fronted by retail uses and the RSL Club, with quality apartments providing natural surveillance
- Improve connections between Gladesville Plaza and Victoria Road** by creating pedestrian plazas
- Activate Trim Place** and improve interface with school
- Create a pedestrian walk connecting Cowell Street to the Plaza** which shops also front onto with residential apartments above
- Street tree planting** at regular intervals
- Celebrate historic entry to the town centre** by creating Clock Square and explore opportunity to reveal original Gladesville Hotel
- Important intersection** worthy of notable building
- Opportunity for mixed-use development**
- Garden Apartments** to replace existing vehicle orientated uses
- Long term opportunity for formal planting** along Victoria Road
- Improve landscape entry and exit** from town

↑ to Ryde

↓ to Sydney

# Gladesville Town Centre Master Plan

ANNAND ALCOCK URBAN DESIGN

Proposed maximum building heights plan is inserted on the previous page. This plan suggests possible maximum heights for the various sites along Victoria Road.



Typical Monash Road street section - base height 3 storeys



Typical North and South Gladesville street section - base height 3 storeys



Typical Gladesville Town Centre street section - base height 4 storeys

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## 4.4 Pedestrian Friendly Streets

Beyond the right uses in the right location and properly scaled streets, other details are necessary to generate pedestrian friendly streets. Meaningful destinations, safety, interest and comfort are the four basic parameters. Having people on the street is beneficial because it provides another customer base for shops without adding a tremendous amount of traffic to the roads, and people actually attract other people.

Pedestrians require *meaningful destinations* that are easily accessible on foot, to essentially create a pedestrian circuit where it is more convenient and pleasant to walk rather than drive. Such destinations include local shops, quality public spaces, schools and other community facilities.

Pedestrians need to feel *safe* from crime, and from vehicles passing on the road, particularly along Victoria Road. Separating the footpath from the moving vehicle lane is a key factor for promoting the feeling of safety. On-street parking and street trees provide the simplest barrier.

Feeling safe is also a matter of lighting, buildings fronting the street with many doors and windows providing "eyes on the street", and the ability to see into shopfronts. Blank walls and security shutters do not communicate the idea that "this place is safe".

An *interesting setting* is crucial to attracting pedestrians and to keep people walking, particularly to encourage people to make purchases at street based stores. A continuous row of interesting shops and restaurants for instance, would create a pedestrian strip which "buzzes" throughout the day and night.

The design of buildings also needs to be visually interesting and to convey the notion of human activity. Nothing interests humans more than other humans, and architecture that fails to express the presence of humans is unsatisfying to the pedestrian. When the message is that "cars live here", instead of "people live here", pedestrian activity will cease. The simple measures which can be undertaken to improve architectural quality are discussed later in this chapter.

The final key consideration is *comfort*. On hot summer days, walking without shade is not a viable option for most people. Mature shade trees solve this problem providing shade over footpaths, whilst continuous awnings and verandahs in retail areas provide additional protection from rain and allow street life to continue relatively unimpeded.

These simple ideas provide a basis for improving walkability throughout Gladesville Town Centre, along Victoria Road and beyond. Just how a network of meaningful pedestrian destinations can be tied together across Victoria Road within Gladesville Town Centre is explained opposite and discussed further in Chapter 6.



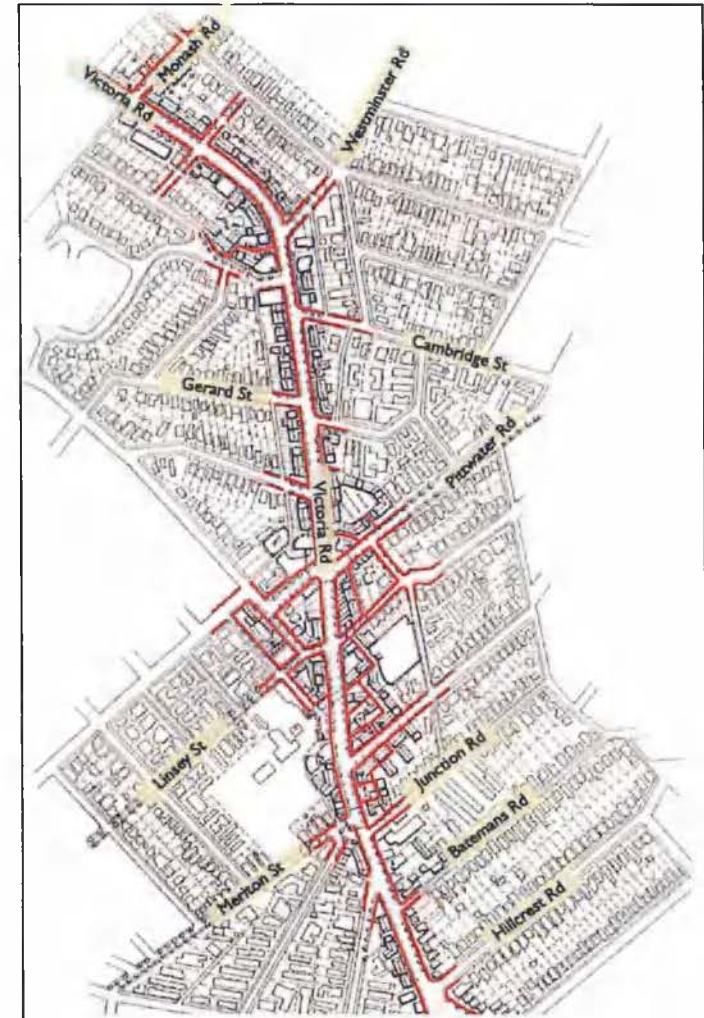
## Key Pedestrian Routes

Certain streets and paths within Gladesville Town Centre, Victoria Road and in the broader area establish a continuous pedestrian network. Major parklands, shops, community facilities, schools and other meaningful destinations are connected.

These key routes must maintain the highest standards of spatial definition and pedestrian interest. An uninterrupted quality pedestrian experience is achievable over the long term.

With these key pedestrian routes recognised by Councils, they become a practical tool for improving Gladesville as a whole. Funding for improvements can be targeted more accurately to maximise public benefit to the greatest number of people. Further, buildings will be required to provide "eyes on the street" and other safety measures to ensure these routes constantly feel safe.

The plan opposite highlights the key pedestrian routes of Gladesville.





## The Details of a Pedestrian Friendly Retail Street

Buildings should generally abut the footpath when the ground floor contains retail and / or office uses.

Continuous awnings and / or verandahs provide shelter to pedestrians from the elements.

Doorways and transparent windows face the street to provide natural surveillance and "eyes on the street".

Merchandise is easier to sell when pedestrians and drivers can see it, and get to it from the street.

Footpaths should ideally be at least 3m to 5m wide. Simple, durable paving does not distract from the shopping experience.



Canopy street trees should be planted at regular intervals, providing greenery and shade.

On-street car parking provides "shop-side" parking opportunities, and buffers pedestrians from drivers. Additional parking is provided behind the building.

Planted hedges provide additional buffer to pedestrians on heavily trafficked streets.

Simple, durable furnishings complement the shopping experience, rather than being visually distracting.

## The Details of a Pedestrian Friendly Residential Street

Canopy street trees should be planted at regular intervals, providing greenery and shade.

On-street parking provides visitor parking opportunities, and buffers pedestrians from drivers.

Front fence defines semi-private front courtyard, but does not create a "wall to the street"



Many windows and individual apartment entries activate the street and provide visual interest

Private landscaping adds to the greening of the street and its pedestrian amenity

## 4.5 Better Local Connections

A number of new street connections were recommended by workshop participants to improve access and circulation within and around the study area. Urban design investigations have confirmed that the realisation of these connections would improve accessibility throughout the area. The connections include:

1. Extend Flagstaff Street to connect through to Pittwater Road. This extension would improve traffic circulation within the town centre, reduce the necessity for town traffic to travel through residential streets to access Victoria Road, and improve walkability.
2. Provide a new street connecting Victoria Road to Eltham Street, which aligns with The Avenue. This new street would break up an overly long block, improve connections between each side of Victoria Road, and improve walkability between residential neighbourhoods divided by Victoria Road.
3. Extend Morrison Road to the south-west to ultimately connect to Victoria Road. This would substantially improve access to the town centre for locals, and improve circulation generally.

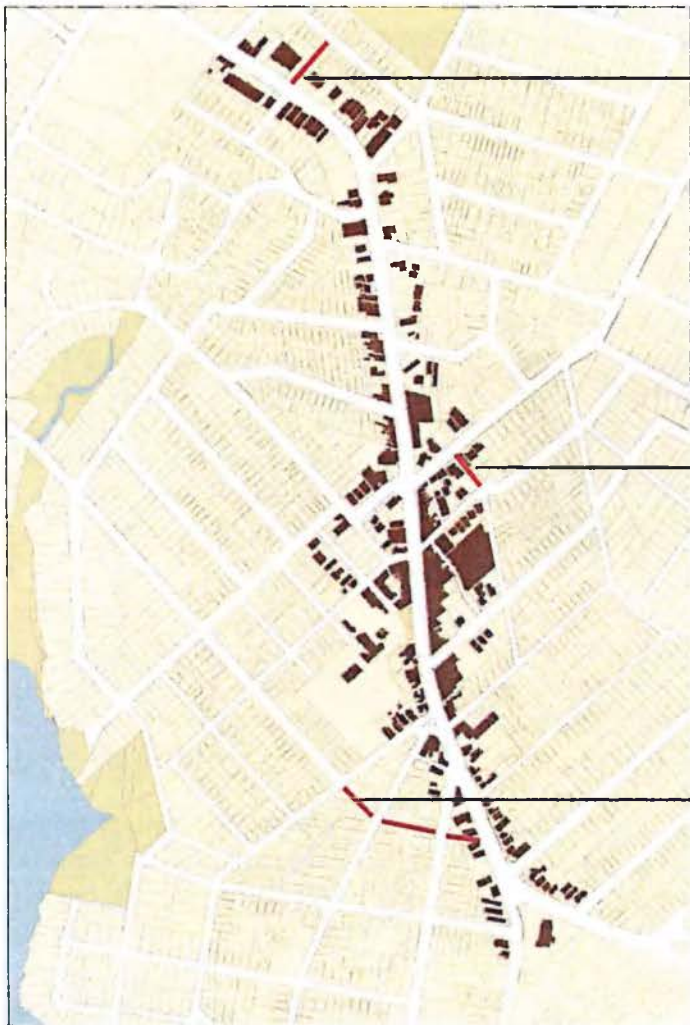
It is recognised that the realisation of these street connections will be difficult to achieve, with multiple land ownerships, existing private investments of substance, and significant financing issues. The identification of these potential new streets should not be interpreted as a buy out plan. It will be a long term strategy, and should be investigated as part of a future traffic study.

Their potential realisation should be investigated as re-development opportunities arise, and methods for paying for new streets are evaluated. The location of these streets can be varied to accommodate unforeseen variations in private property ownership and to respect property lines where ever possible.

To improve accessibility within the town centre itself, it is recommended that as new uses and investment occurs, a detail review of the one way network of streets occurs. At present, although the one way streets are keeping town traffic out of residential streets to an extent, driving around the town centre is an extremely confusing, disorientatating and an inconvenient experience. The aim of this study should be to remove as many one-way streets as possible, without putting new traffic onto residential streets.



A detailed traffic study should review the existing network of one way streets around the town centre which reduce accessibility.



Proposed The Avenue extension

Proposed Flagstaff Street extension

Proposed Morrison Road extension

Long Term Street Connections (Subject to Future Detailed Traffic Study)

## 4.6 Access Management and Parking

Access management refers to the way vehicles enter a property. Traditionally, this occurred via a rear lane located at the rear of properties providing access to servicing areas and parking. Rear lanes are a key feature of many successful commercial centres.

This is not the case in Gladesville today. Out of the 19 street blocks which define the Victoria Road study area, only four rear lanes remain. The negative consequence of so few rear lanes is now clearly evident along Victoria Road, with multiple points of pedestrian and vehicle conflict along the Road.

There has been a substantial decline in the quality of the pedestrian experience. Footpath, awning and landscape continuity are fragmented due to driveway crossings. Further, parking is often located in front of buildings, setback from the street with an associated reduction in the sense of pedestrian safety through “eyes on the street” and street definition.



The absence of rear lanes has also undoubtedly affected local businesses due to the heavy traffic and clearway conditions which exist along Victoria Road. Entering and leaving a business off Victoria Road by vehicle is a nerve racking experience. Under these conditions, it has been virtually impossible for businesses to offer passing trade convenient parking, which is a vital ingredient of commercial success.

The re-establishment of rear lanes through public / private co-operation, and the co-ordination of businesses and property owners as redevelopment occurs, will be a key component of providing an appropriate framework for future development and public domain improvements.

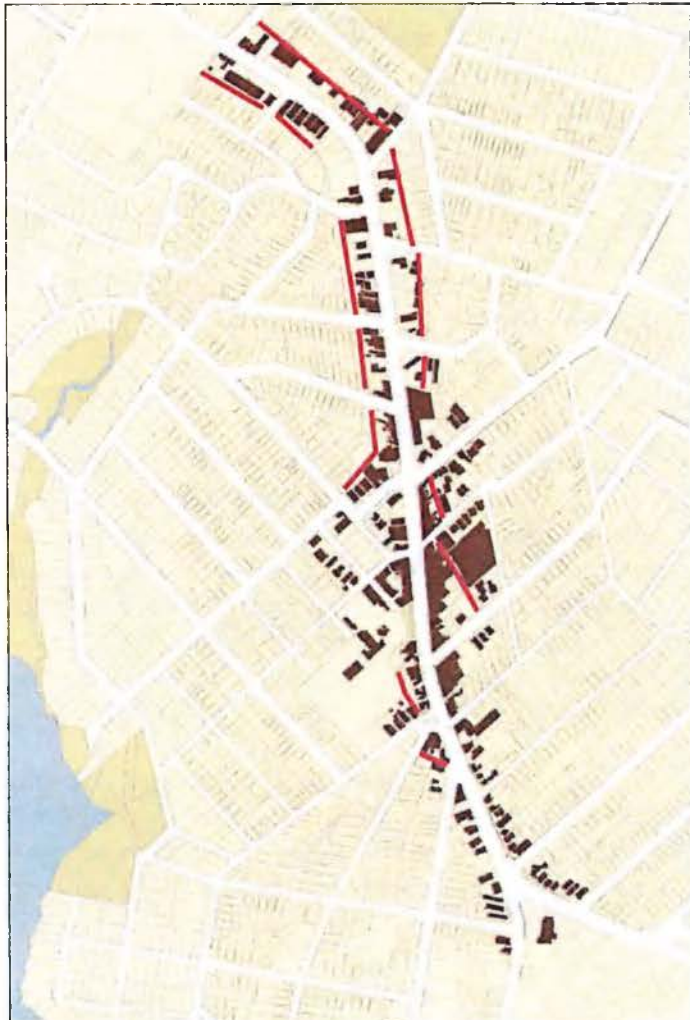
Note: With central medians in place and no right turns along Victoria Road, one needs a left turn loop to locate and stop at any particular destination. This loop is rarely present in the existing street system and thus it is proposed that the left loop system be established whenever possible by creation of rear lanes along the back of Victoria Road.

Removal of footpath crossings to Victoria Road will allow continuous improvements to footpaths and landscaping. It will also allow the creation of a “build-to-line”, rather than “building set back” so that buildings address the street and shape it, with parking located under or at the rear and accessed from the rear. With the footpath perceived as a community asset, confidence in delivering quality development will be improved.

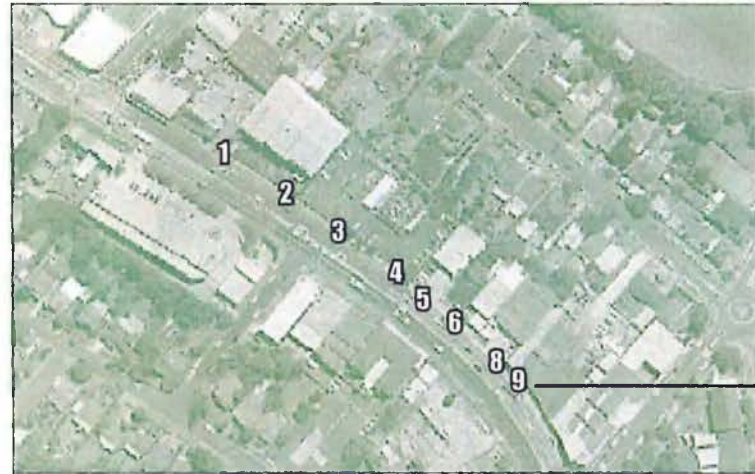


The following diagram shows the proposed location of new rear lanes.

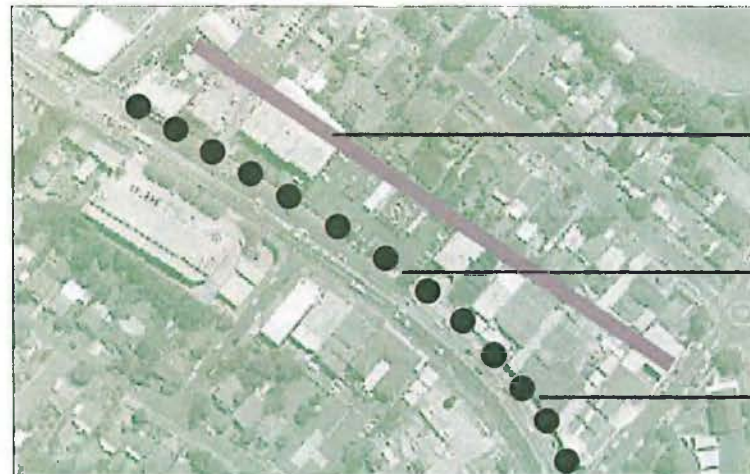
Rear lanes and parking mews provide access to parking set behind the building.



Location of Possible Rear Lanes (Subject to Detailed Analysis)



Example block: No access management with 9 points of potential conflict



Example block: Access management removes potential conflict and allows improvements, such as street trees and continuous footpath

## 4.7 Street Trees and Power Lines

A lasting image of Victoria Road is a never ending expanse of hot bitumen dominated by cars moving at speeds which better reflect a raceway than traffic behaving appropriately through a town centre. To improve the character of Victoria Road, the highest priority for overall public domain improvements should be the planting of street trees.

The benefits of street trees are many. Trees provide shade and cooling for pedestrian comfort, and their green colour is psychologically restful. In addition, by being planted in an orderly row between a vehicle lane and pedestrian footpath, trees actually encourage pedestrian activity by providing both a physical and psychological barrier between pedestrians and cars. Further, by providing canopies which extend over the vehicle lane, a combination of dappled light, and the vertical rhythm of trunks, forshortens the perceivable length of bitumen and encourages drivers to slow down. This in turn improves pedestrian safety. The shade cools the bitumen and improves the microclimate.

In terms of tree type and placement, there are two simple rules which should ideally be followed along Victoria Road.

The first is that a robust deciduous tree species, such as the Plane Tree, is more appropriate than an evergreen native within a heavily trafficked environment. Deciduous trees should form the basis of the town's future landscape strategy. Deciduous trees shed and refresh their canopy on a yearly basis. However, native trees with their oil based canopy become clogged with pollution and struggle to grow. Further, deciduous trees typically grow quicker and with a more dense leaf pattern, thereby

providing a higher level of shade to the pedestrian, which is a desired characteristic. Of course, deciduous trees provide shade in summer when it is needed, whilst permitting increased sunlight penetration in winter.

The second rule is that street trees should be planted in an orderly row with consistent spacing of approximately 8m. This spacing, once started along Victoria Road, should be continuous and not be radically altered to accommodate every "special circumstance" which may arise. It is Victoria Road and its transformation into a *street of significance* overtime that should be the emphasis of design treatment, not isolated items along the way.

If money is spent greening Victoria Road, it would be undersirable over the long term for such a grand improvement to be undermined by unsightly overhead powerlines. All avenues for funding should be explored to eventually remove powerlines from Victoria Road. Alternatives include undergrounding, bundled cabling running along the tops of awnings and attached to building facades. In the interim, however, the planting of street trees should be commenced even though power lines may exist.



A street tree success storey for Tamworth Town Centre. Approximately 5 years ago these two pictures would have looked the same. The photo to the right shows the first phase of the town's tree planting strategy reaching maturity.

## Trees and Overhead Power Lines

Overhead utility lines and possible conflicts with street trees have concerned utility companies for the past 30 years. The companies have generally discouraged the use of large shade trees on urban streets where there are power lines. This does not seem justified.

In many towns large trees and utility lines co-exist in close proximity with the wires running through the crown, close to the main tree trunk. The open nature of most deciduous tree crowns pose very few points of potential conflict between wires and falling branches. Healthy, closely spaced street trees growing almost centered on the utility lines offer the least risk and most benefit.

This should form the basis of short term action with the ultimate goal being facade/awning building on mostly desirable, undergrounding of all overhead wire.



Existing character of Victoria Road is dominated by bitumen and vehicles - a hostile pedestrian environment.



Maturing street trees break down the dominance of both bitumen and vehicles - walking becomes a more attractive option <replace without median tree image>.



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## 4.8 Special Details

So far in discussing the basic design standards, the use of brick footpaths, festival banners, bandstands, decorative bollards and mosaic bins (the “Five B’s”) has not been advocated. Whilst there is nothing wrong with any of the Five B’s, they alone can do little to genuinely improve the social and economic performance of Gladesville Town Centre and the Victoria Road corridor. This is evident by the fact that such quick fix solutions now decorate numerous town centres and places that are still struggling.

With this acknowledged, the following points should be followed as the Five B’s and other public domain furnishings, such as light poles and signage, are developed for Gladesville.

**Footpaths** when repaved, should follow a simple design such as concrete or bitumen with simple banding of a durable material. Excessive stamping, “faux heritage” look or snail trail artwork will not reflect authenticity and will quickly look tired. There may be opportunities for higher quality paving associated with model projects, but this should be subject to rigorous cost / benefit analysis.

**Street furniture** including benches, waste receptacles, news stands, lights and planters are all important elements for the street and careful attention should be paid to all of these. Lighting should be orientated towards the pedestrian, and low enough so that it does not interfere with mature trees. If power lines are removed, some Councils within town centres are having success with co-ordinated drop lights attached to the underside of awnings. All lighting should be white lighting, which in the

evening does not transform the colours of people, buildings and trees, but rather reveals their intrinsic character and beauty. Furthermore, and particularly in the town centre, the wattage of standard lighting should not exceed 50 watts, which creates atmosphere of security, safety and serenity, and allows spectacular contrasts by floodlighting landmark buildings, feature trees and water features in public spaces, and the like.

**Maintenance** is vitally important. No matter how much money is spent on details, if it is not well maintained, it will not last. A maintenance program should be co-ordinated by both Councils to ensure a high standard is consistent on both sides of Victoria Road.

**Signs** for businesses should be constructed and located so that they are clear and easy to read, but do not detract from the building itself. Signs should be flat against the facade or projecting from the facade. Signs should be externally lit, with the individual letters and symbols internally lit. The maximum gross area of a buildings signage should not exceed 10% of the street front facade. Appropriate sign locations and sizes should be regulated in the DCP.

**Public Art** installments should be commissioned for key public spaces within the town centre. The artist should draw upon the area’s history and community for inspiration. Installments should be located close to, but not interrupt, pedestrian desire lines through the public space. A ‘Public Domain Strategy’ should be formulated by both Councils to deal with the above issues.



Street furniture precedents

Lighting precedents

Signage precedents

Public art precedents

## 4.9 Keep The Chain, Lose The Blight

Petrol stations, restaurant chains and the like have had a place along Victoria Road for a long time. They are a part of the business community.

However, there is a significant problem with these businesses in terms of creating quality places. It stems not from their use per se, but rather the standard design format and site configuration of this building type. The building is typically well setback from the street and floats in the centre of the site surrounded by parking. (See typical vehicle dominated examples opposite). The building itself is a relatively cheaply constructed single storey structure which only has a street presence through a large neon sign.

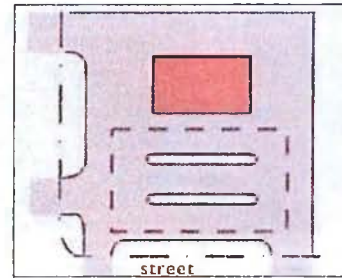
Although economically successful within itself, these building types are unwelcome neighbours for other businesses and nearby residents. This in turn creates a cycle of attracting only similar businesses, and a downward spiral of the quality of the public domain and image of the area. The emergence of this cycle is clearly evident along Victoria Road.

Desirably, these uses will relocate into mixed use buildings, on the ground floor with commercial or residential above, however if such existing uses wish to continue, but want to upgrade to a new building, then the relationship of the building type and parking to the street should be reversed. The building should be brought towards the street edge, and parking, petrol pumps and the like put behind it. The impact of these businesses on pedestrian activity and surrounding uses should be minimised. (see preferred multi-mode friendly column opposite)

In short, if these existing businesses want to redevelop and continue to operate in Gladesville in the future, they should be made to contribute to the overall improvement of the area.

Vehicle Dominated

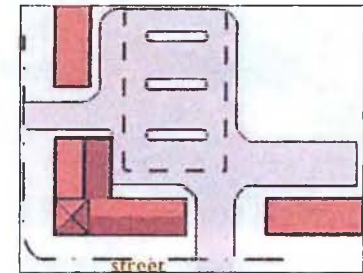
Typical



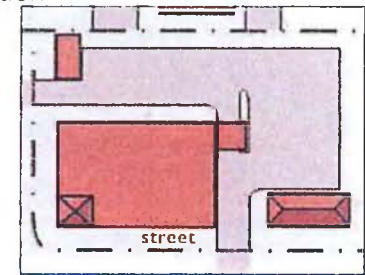
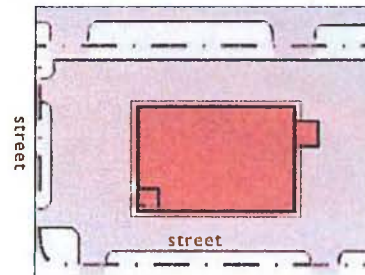
Versus

Multi-Mode Pedestrian Friendly

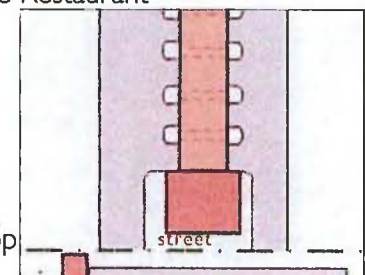
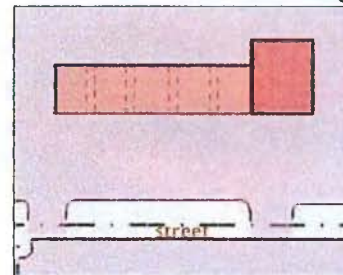
Preferred



Petrol Station



Convenience Restaurant



Workshop



Typical convenience restaurant format



Multi-mode pedestrian friendly restaurant format with street frontage

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## 4.10 Improved Architectural Standards

The decreasing quality of recent development along Victoria Road makes it clear that guidance should be given to improve architectural standards. This does not mean emphasising a particular "style", but rather more straightforward guidance to promote re-usable buildings, encourage harmony amongst buildings, and discourage tackiness by setting simple requirements ensuring quality of construction and appropriateness of materials. Beyond the recommendations provided under Building Placement and Height, additional recommendations should include:

- Prepare a list of pre-approved materials, finishes and configurations, covering: building walls; garden walls and fences; arches, piers, columns, verandahs, awnings, balconies; roofs and gutters; doors, windows, and skylights; and general requirements.
- To allow for flexibility in uses, establish a minimum floor-to-floor height for the ground floor of 4m.
- To encourage a better skyline, make flat roofs permissible, but only where accessible as roof terraces from other habitable spaces. The finishing of the wall plane should be defined by a strong expression line. Otherwise, roofs should be a combination of simple hips and gables finished with eaves.
- Encourage authentic construction, materials. and detailing.
- In core areas, reinforce the existing town scale of Victoria Road. Require new buildings (where existing shop fronts do not warrant retention) to provide a properly configured parapet with expressed cornice and a sizeable "step back" at the third storey level.
- Require all other buildings to have a sizable "step back" at the fourth storey level and a strong cornice or 'expression line'. The purpose of the expression line is to provide more opportunities for shadow and light changes on the facade.
- Require that window shutters be operable and sized for their openings.
- Ensure buildings do not read as a long horizontal slab when viewed from a distance. Buildings should be comprised of vertical modulations, breaking down the massing of rear elevations through terracing and articulation, and provide varied roof features. Buildings should appear to step with the topography. Air-conditioning plants and the like are not to be visible from a distance, and should not be visible from public spaces.
- Require upper-storey windows to be proportioned no wider than they are tall.
- Control the size, form and materials of balconies and verandahs to maintain the integrity of the street wall.
- Establish a pre-approved set of paint colours, lighting types, and signage specifications.

Such provisions should be included in the DCP for Victoria Road.

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It is important when working with the two Councils and the community, that guidelines are clear and consistently implemented. Variances may only be granted on the basis of architectural merit. The proposed architectural guidelines do not mean that other options are never to be permitted, simply that compliant projects may be preferred.

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## 4.11 The Master Plan

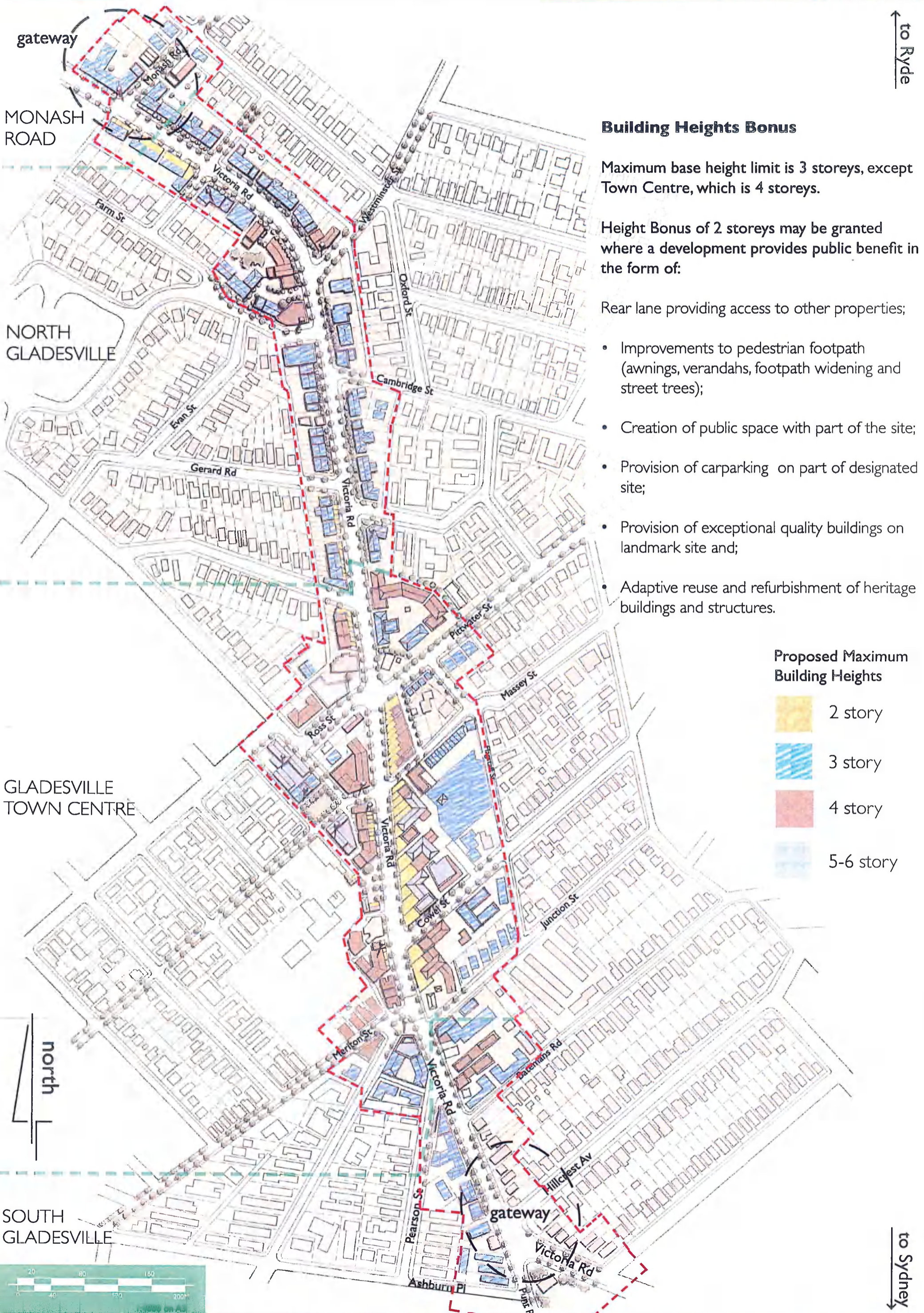
The physical plan applies these principles applied to Gladesville Town Centre and the Victoria Road corridor. The plan illustrates what a long term future aerial view of the area may look like.

Plans such as this one are a little different to plans for new areas where nothing yet exists. Many of the positive changes in Gladesville Town Centre and the Victoria Road corridor will be in the hands of private developers and investors. The plan envisages a combination of public and private energies to enhance the area.

In terms of timing, it is impossible to predict which property owners will decide to make improvements and when they will do it. There are simply too many factors and variables. However, once this plan is in place, positive changes will begin to occur over the short, medium and long term. The model projects discussed in the next chapters for instance, could reasonably be expected to occur in the medium term, whilst the extension of Morrison Road for instance, is clearly a long term project with many complexities to overcome for its realisation.

What this plan does provide is the basis for “smart growth” where every step taken from today is building towards the vision of Gladesville as a better place.

to Ryde



### Building Heights Bonus

Maximum base height limit is 3 storeys, except Town Centre, which is 4 storeys.

Height Bonus of 2 storeys may be granted where a development provides public benefit in the form of:

Rear lane providing access to other properties;

- Improvements to pedestrian footpath (awnings, verandahs, footpath widening and street trees);
- Creation of public space with part of the site;
- Provision of carparking on part of designated site;
- Provision of exceptional quality buildings on landmark site and;
- Adaptive reuse and refurbishment of heritage buildings and structures.

### Proposed Maximum Building Heights

-  2 story
-  3 story
-  4 story
-  5-6 story

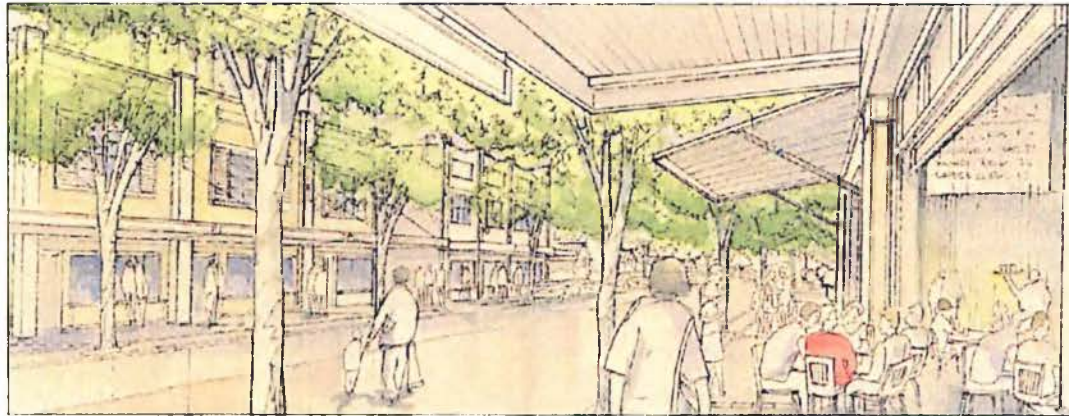
GLADESVILLE TOWN CENTRE

SOUTH GLADESVILLE

to Sydney



# Monash Road: Re-activate Local Shops



After years of strip development and the visual decline of Victoria Road, the once-thriving local centre of Monash Road is little more than a shell of notable, yet rundown, buildings. A variety of uses are struggling for existence, and the area is unattractive visually and economically. Without competing against Gladesville Town Centre, Monash Road shops can be reactivated and expanded.

In the future Monash Road Princt can provide a mix of local and convenience services to local residents and business people. Build generally to front alignment with retail/ commercial at street level and residential and/or commercial to a height of approximately 3 storeys.

Monash Road should seek to provide wide well landscaped footpaths to foster an outdoor dining culture.

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## 5.1 Future Goals

- Re-activate Monash Road local shops to create a mixed use local centre, providing daily convenience to local residents and workers.
- Limit the size of the centre so that it does not compete against Gladesville Town Centre, but is still able to be economically successful in its own right.
- Create a highly attractive, pedestrian friendly "main street" atmosphere along Victoria Road and turning the corner into Monash Road.

### Strategies for Success

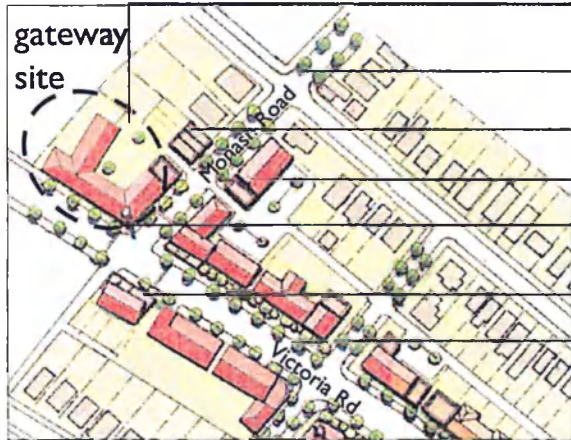
- Note the potential for a gateway development on the northeast corner of Monash Rd
- Re-furbish existing shopfronts to create a positive gateway image.
- Ensure that any proposed development of the land on which the existing shops are located, retains the shopfronts. They should still clearly read as the key feature of this important street intersection.
- Permit new mixed use development to turn the corner into Monash Road to take up the extent of the industrial zoning. Long term opportunity for this to extend to the intersection of College Street and Eltham Street. Smaller scale home office uses desirable in this part.
- Limit the size of individual shops to below 120m<sup>2</sup>. This removes the capacity of Monash Road local shops to compete with Gladesville Town Centre, but still provides a local centre with substantial commercial flexibility able to develop organically over time.
- Ensure mixed use development is comprised of robust flexible building types.
- Conserve wherever possible significant and contributory buildings as identified in heritage study.

- Investigate opportunity for a "gateway" development on the N-E corner of Monash Road and Victoria Road. This site should be further investigated as a "key site" or "model project". "Gateway" development should be of exceptional architectural quality and could with council consent contain a taller corner element and could perhaps be 5-6 floors high.
- Reduce the requirement for new development to provide commercial/retail carparking spaces on site. Instead, this section of Monash Road should adopt a main street configuration, with commercial and retail parking provided on-street. Retail and commercial parking should also be provided at the rear of the buildings and accessed from the new rear lane. This recognises the shared parking nature of this type of centre. Development should become viable at three/four storeys in this location although a taller building of exceptional quality could be considered as part of a gateway development.
- Create Opportunities for gateway features that signal the entry into "Gladesville". This might include significant taller buildings (5-6 stories) with towers adjacent to the road which physically symbolises the gateway to Gladesville.

These strategies are illustrated in the adjoining diagrams.

### Benefits

The major benefits will be the rebirth of a local centre which provides local residents and business people with daily conveniences, without the need to drive. By permitting mixed use development to extend to a limited length along Monash Road, an intimate "main street" grouping of shops can be established with a high quality pedestrian amenity.



Illustrative Master Plan

Possible gateway site

Street trees and on-street parking provided

Existing buildings can be maintained and improved

Additional retail parking provided in rear parking court

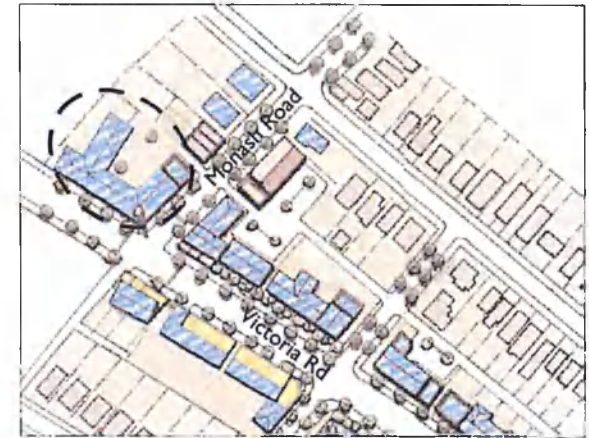
New mixed use building with corner feature anchors Monash Rd intersection. This building has potential to be a "gateway" site

Retain shopfront with new residential development stepped back

Extension of The Avenue will improve circulation along lane

Proposed Maximum Building Heights

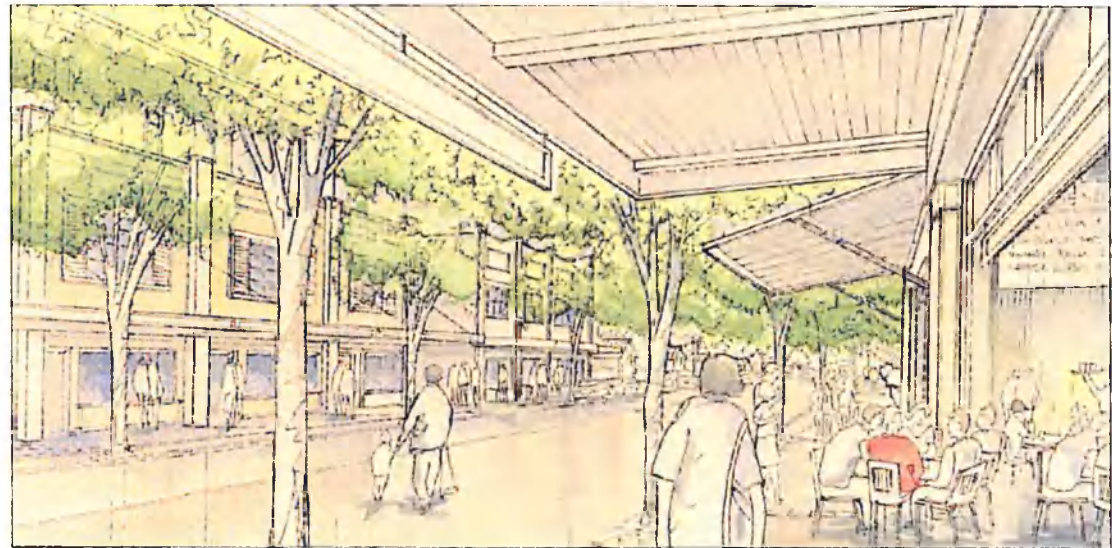
2 story
  3 story
  4 story
  5-6 story



Illustrative Heights Plan



Proposed street section for Monash Road with building step back at third storey



View looking along Monash Road towards College Street. It shows the intended future character of Monash Road as a grouping of local shops providing daily conveniences to local residents and workers. The relationship of buildings to the street and landscaping creates a "main street:" atmosphere.



# North Gladesville: Transform The Strip

6



The industrial uses which have existed along Victoria Road are nearing the end of their life as a viable business along this part of the corridor. This was made clear by many industrial landholders and business owners during the workshops. What will replace them? At present, the only viable uses are road oriented retail / service uses. An accumulation of such uses, however, is creating an ugly environment and will lower nearby property values. It is not considered a 'smart' way to grow.

A better approach would be to change this area into a lushly planted quality residential address transforming the image of Victoria Road into a great street, which redirects commercial investment back into the town centre where it is needed. Create a densely planted "green" avenue through this part of Victoria Road with footpath and private tree planting providing an attractive outlook for predominantly residential development of 3-4 stories setback from the Victoria Road and with the possibility of some retail / commercial development at street level.

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## 6.1 Future Goals

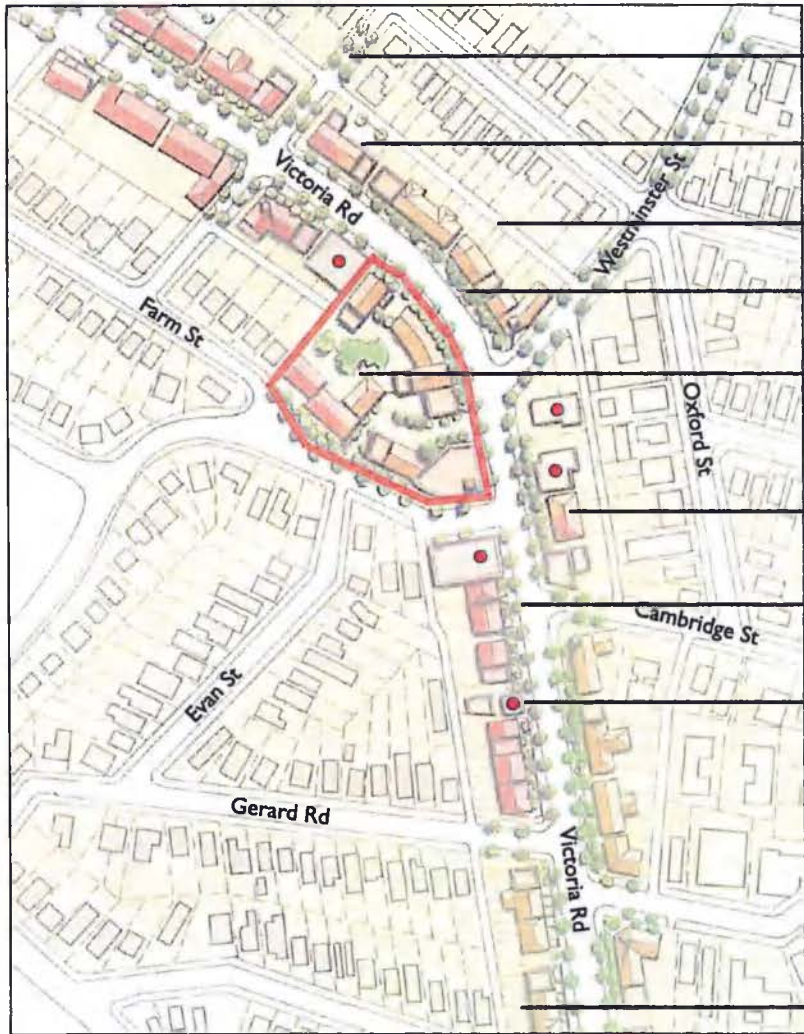
- Transform Victoria Road from a bland commercial strip into a memorable green boulevard over time.
- Improve the development potential of land and increasing real estate value, by replacing strip format development with better quality development.
- Direct commercial and retail investment back into Gladesville Town Centre, by targeting residential as the preferred development type in location.
- Improve gateways into existing residential neighbourhoods, and long term preservation of the amenity of these neighbourhoods in all respects.

### Strategies for Success

- Over time convert from a vehicle orientated street section to a pedestrian orientated street section. This will create a better definition of Victoria Road, improve the sense of place, add substantial greenery, and make walking a more attractive option.
- Change the zoning and development controls to make residential development the most attractive form of investment. A continuous ribbon of mixed use development should not be permitted, nor should new strip format developments.
- A limited amount of mixed use development should be permitted within the transition areas from the two centres. This is to retain cheaper commercial floor space for start-up businesses as the centres mature. The transition zone from the Gladesville Town Centre includes

the blocks between Pittwater Road to Stansell Street and Gerard Street. The transition zone from Primrose Hill Local Centre includes the blocks between Monash Road to the alignment of The Avenue.

- Conserve wherever possible significant and contributory buildings as identified in heritage study.
- Make new residential development setback 5m from the front property line to create a landscaped garden setting. This will contribute to the greening of Victoria Road, and provide an improved outlook for residents. Careful consideration must be given to the design of the front fence to ensure it does not present as an unsightly blank wall.
- Make new mixed use development in transition zones build to 5m of the front property line. If it has a retail frontage ensure a seamless continuation of the footpath treatment from gutter to shopfront. Use this space to create a formal landscape organised as a double row of trees to signal approach to the town centre, and further greening of Victoria Road.
- Ensure new development turns corner sites in an attractive and appropriate manner.
- Vigorously pursue the RTA to permit some right hand turns off Victoria Road along existing residential streets to access their home. Until this occurs, however, access to the Primrose Hill site should still be provided off Osgathorpe Road, as it will not unreasonably increase traffic flows on existing residential streets.



Extend the Avenue to improve connections between neighbourhoods

Potential re-configuration of convenience restaurant into multi-modal format

Add rear lanes to improve circulation

Three to four storey garden apartments green Victoria Road and create a quality residential address, rather than a continuation of vehicle orientated development

Primrose Hill re-development site shown with thru-site pedestrian link which aligns with the intersection of Westminster Road. (Subject of separate considerations)

Potential small scale infill development on church land

Long term opportunity for formal tree planting along Victoria Road

Retain heritage items

Mixed use transition area from Gerard Street South



Existing landscape



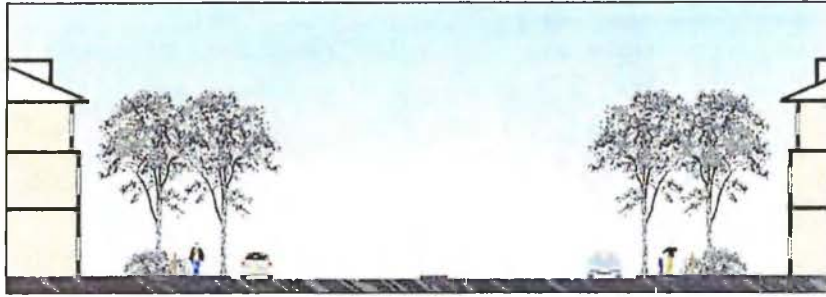
Character precedents



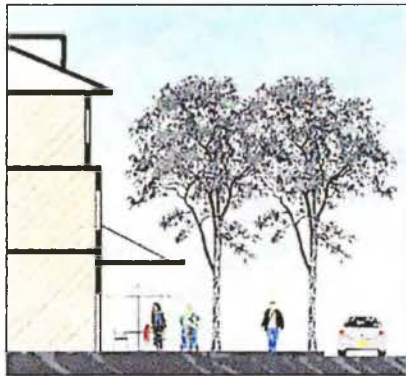
Medium term potential



Long term potential

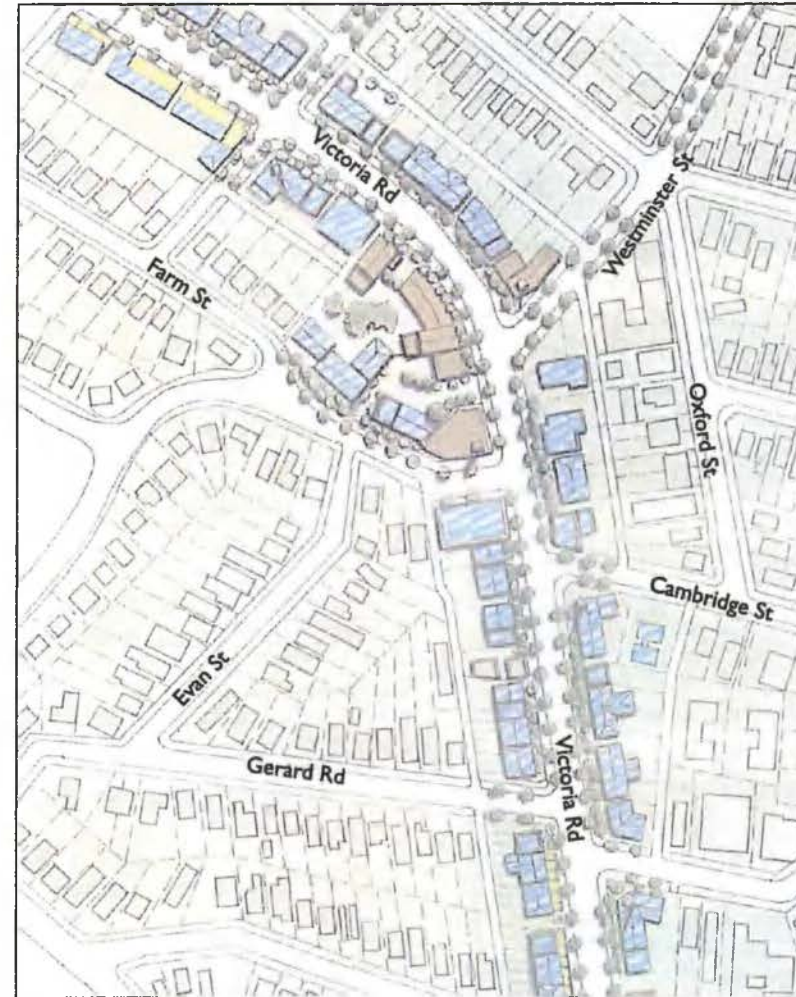


Proposed typical street section for North Gladesville. The street section establishes a "build-to-line" to the front property boundary of 5m. This allows the creation of a landscaped courtyard with mature tree plantings. Street trees are also planted at regular intervals to transform Victoria Road over time into a green avenue.



This drawing illustrates how the typical street section for North Gladesville can accommodate some commercial / retail at street level.

The front fence and hedge is removed. The footpath is continued across to meet the building flush. An awning is attached to the facade. With shrub landscaping removed, the street trees are identifiable as a formal double row. The width of the footpath has effectively been increased by 5m providing an improved pedestrian amenity.



Proposed Maximum Building Heights







Plant street trees at regular intervals

Plant supplementary trees within apartment courtyard to create a dense canopy which will green Victoria Road.

Garden apartments built to 5m from the property line front Victoria Road and are more attractive than surface parking lots.

Main building entry has an address to Victoria Road.

Low front fence defines the property boundary and provides a transition from the public domain to semi-public landscape courtyard.

Improve footpath.

Future character of typical Residential Precinct



# The Town Centre: A Return To Main Street

7



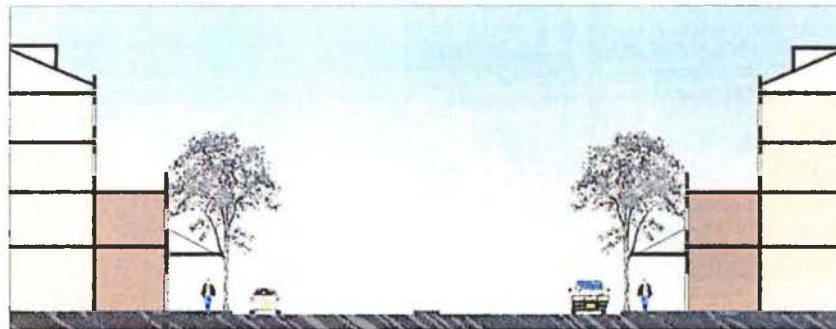
Gladesville Town Centre as it exists today functions more like a ribbon shopping strip divided by Victoria Road than a genuine mixed use town centre. There are a few opportunities for activities to occur in a truly public setting, important civic uses are disconnected from retail uses, economic vitality has been declining, and few people actually live in the town centre itself. Over time, however, Gladesville Town Centre can evolve into a mature mixed use town centre. A town centre which is more memorable, complete, integrated into its surrounds, and more socially and economically successful than it is today.

## 7.1 Future Goals

- Transform from a poorly functioning strip shopping centre into a genuine mixed use town centre.
- Revitalise the economic activity of the centre.
- Improve the overall image and marketability of the town centre to attract new businesses and customers.
- Conserve existing built form character of the centre by maintaining a predominantly 2-3 story height limit for Victoria Road.
- Create a street based shopping experience and active street life by creating meaningful pedestrian destinations, and a safe, comfortable and interesting public domain.
- Re-inforce and celebrate the historic gateways into town.
- Ensure new buildings contribute to the character of the town.
- Create a "park-once environment", by creating a balance of uses that share parking.
- Motivate property owners to work with council, to attract new business and investment back to Gladesville.



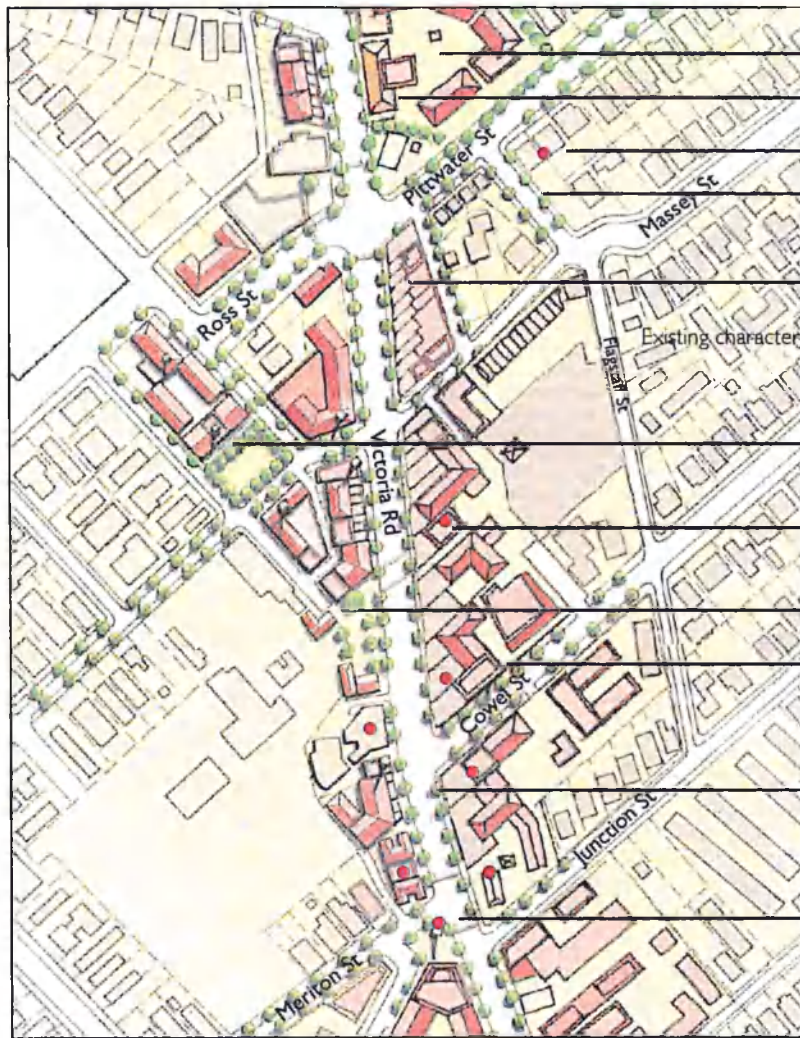
Existing character



Proposed typical street section for Gladesville Town Centre. Note how new development "steps back" at the third storey level, which will help to maintain the existing scale of the town centre when viewed from Victoria Road.



A view looking from Linsley Street across Victoria Road illustrates the long term goal for the town centre. A return to a "main street" based shopping experience. It demonstrates the potential for future development to build upon the town building tradition which existed in Gladesville to create a centre with a strong sense of place. A centre which is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.



Illustrative plan

- Special project: Investigate opportunities for public private joint venture which can serve as a demonstration "model project"
- Integrate community facilities to create a public space which integrates with the church.
- Future project
- Opportunity to extend Flagstaff Street and improve circulation. Retain historic fire station building.
- Activate Massey Lane which is on the church axis. Retain Wilson's butcher and other notable shopfronts
- Existing character
- Create a small town park fronted by retail uses and the RSL Club, with quality apartments providing natural surveillance.
- Improve connections between Gladesville Plaza and Victoria Road by creating a town square.
- Activate Trim Place and improve interface with school.
- Create a pedestrian walk connecting Cowell Street to the Plaza which shops also front onto with residential apartments above.
- Street tree planting at regular intervals
- Celebrate historic entry to the town centre by creating Clock Square. Explore opportunity to reveal original Gladesville Hotel.



Proposed Maximum Building Heights

- 2 story
- 3 story
- 4 story
- 5-6 story

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## 7.2 Strategies For Success

### Celebrating the Past

The Heritage Assessment prepared for both Councils by Paul Davis Pty Ltd Architects and Heritage Consultants provides a framework for building on the remnant fabric from the Gladesville Centres past. It identifies significant and contributory buildings and proposes a Conservation Area around the Town Core. (See Town Centre Precinct). This is a valuable base information on which to build this masterplan.

Every effort should be made to conserve and restore items of identified heritage significance. Careful consideration should be given to development outcomes before removal of contributory buildings should be considered. However, identification of significant and contributory buildings and a desire to conserve them will do very little towards rejuvenating the centre. What is needed, is a restructuring and some redevelopment incentives, to assist with 'placemaking', improved amenity and improved economic performance. Without these the Centre will continue to decline.

Thus, whilst the heritage impact is a significant impact to the planning framework it should not be absolute, particularly bearing in mind that many of the contributory buildings are of little significance in themselves and could well be replaced by buildings of better architectural quality which are equally "contributory" to the townscape.

Likewise the designation of the Town Core as a "Conservation Area" should not be seen as an absolute restriction on development but rather as a very important input to the design parameters for the core. That is, this is an area of Heritage significance — make sure that heritage aspects

of the area are well considered in any redevelopment proposals and that any heritage impacts are well justified by an acknowledged expert in the field. Thus, we may take the qualities and character forming elements from the past and use them to inform and enhance the future.

### Walkability and Place-making

The 'Pedestrian Network' plan below highlights in a finer grain the major pedestrian network of Gladesville Town Centre. This network must maintain the highest standards of spatial definition to create an uninterrupted quality pedestrian experience and promote walking. All of the design standards of Chapter 4, particularly pedestrian friendly streets, should be applied to this network.

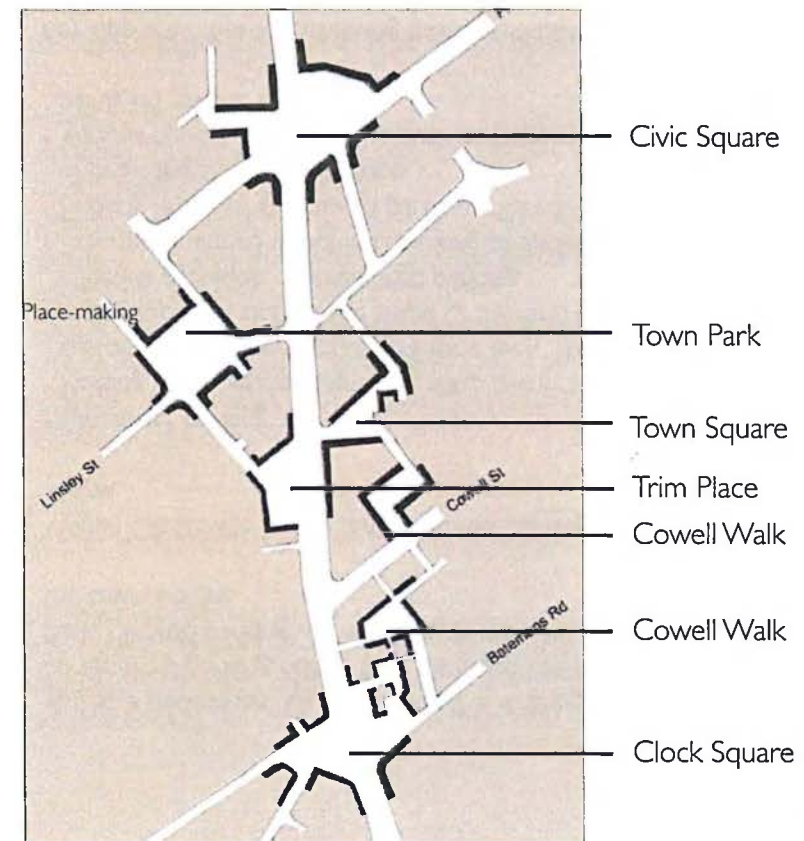
Complementing this network, a series of special places is proposed to provide meaningful destinations just off Victoria Road, as are improved connections between the varied parts of the town centre, and improvements to the overall sense of place and marketability of the town centre. The special places are Clock Tower Square, Trim Place, Market Lane, Gladesville Town Park, Cowell Walk, Gladesville Town Square and Church Square.

The connections between this network and Victoria Road are vital to maintaining walkability, and joining both sides of the town together for shoppers and shop owners. The following strategies, explained in order of likely effectiveness and implementability, are recommended. The strategies are:

- Adjust and co-ordinate the phasing of existing signalised intersections on Victoria Road (four in total) to take into account pedestrians using the town centre. Phase the Pittwater Road and Junction Street traffic lights, so that through traffic is stopped at these points together. The phasing of lights between these two intersections should then be adjusted to trap "caught traffic" and permit the movement of local town traffic to access Victoria Road. Traffic will behave more like it is travelling through a town, and pedestrians will take greater confidence in opportunistic crossings. The median barrier which divides the town should be removed. The aim is to reduce pedestrian crossing time from the current average of 30 seconds to 15 seconds.
- Establish a new signalised pedestrian crossing aligned to connect the proposed Town Square and Trim Place. This crossing should work with the above phasing. If this crossing is not obtainable for some reason, there are two more expensive alternatives. The first is the creation of an overhead pedestrian bridge. The form of this bridge should not be engineering dominated, but rather form an imageable part of the town's building fabric. The second is a high quality, safe, underground pedestrian link.

These strategies should form the basis of a short to medium plan for negotiating with the RTA. In explaining these strategies, only one new signalised pedestrian connection across Victoria Road has been advocated. But it is a key connection vital for better integrating the two sides of town. Energy and expenditure should be focused on achieving this connection, which would be a substantial win for the town, rather than fighting for a "wish-list" of improvements.

Notwithstanding, none of these strategies preclude the investigation of other strategies, such as the tunnelling of Victoria Road or other streets, if the right conditions exist in the future.



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## 7.3 Strategies For Success

### “Park-Once” Parking

At present, designated public car parking is available at the Plaza, Coulter Street, Cowell Street, the John Wilson Car Park, and off Hepburn Avenue and to a limited degree on Victoria Rd itself (subject to tidal clearway considerations). Approximately 250 car spaces in total. However, both the Chamber of Commerce and workshop participants clearly stated that improved parking is required to make Gladesville Town Centre an attractive place to shop.

Whilst this statement is certainly true at present, as Gladesville matures into a genuine mixed-use town centre with a high quality public domain, the weight of this statement may be called into question. Many successful, mature town centres have, in theory, a shortage of parking, yet remain highly desirable places to visit with a booming local economy. In short, consumers support “place values” over “convenience values”.

Taking this into account, the fact that a suite of other strategies will be dramatically improving the quality of the town centre's sense of place, and the limited availability of land in the centre, the recommended parking strategy for Gladesville Town Centre can best be described as “Park-Once” or integrated parking strategy.

The Park-Once strategy means that those who drive to Gladesville Town Centre, should park in a safe central location and enjoy the rest of their

visit as a pedestrian. Underpinning this strategy is the sharing of retail and commercial parking, rather than exclusive use parking on a site specific basis. Shared parking will also help to ease local traffic congestion within the town centre.

Within Gladesville Town Centre, shared parking can take many different forms:

- On-street parking
- Parking lots operated jointly by shop owners of a block for their customers (and perhaps others for a fee). This recognises that as redevelopment occurs, the slope of the land lends itself to a cost effective provision of structured parking.
- Privately financed structured parking provided to the public for a fee.
- Publicly financed structured parking, offered for free or below the cost of providing the parking space.
- Various hybrids of the above, such as parking spaces partly on public and partly on private land.

Key opportunities for achieving the shared parking strategy are illustrated on the following diagram.



Whilst all of these opportunities should vigorously be pursued, the existing Coulter Street car park is considered an ideal location for a structure parking station packaged as part of a mixed use redevelopment on this site. The reasons for this site being prioritised are:

- It would substantially add to the stock of public parking in the town.
- It is positioned to best satisfy the strategic separation of origins and destinations explained under Retail Management (the next strategy).
- It is positioned below the ridge and would have a minimal height impact on the town centre as a whole.
- It is the most achievable over the short to medium term.

Although too many variables exist to state with definitive accuracy the exact number of car spaces created, this strategy will build upon the stock of designated public parking spaces, and ensure they function better. However, a reasonable estimate if the identified model projects are delivered, is that an additional 250 - 300 public parking spaces could be created.

Whilst the community was adamant that parking should remain free, the provision of such structured parking could require a fee in the long term. By providing parking free in the first instance, as a loss leader to improve the overall performance of the town, a fee could be introduced once the marketability of the town has increased to the point that people are willing to pay for convenient parking to experience Gladesville Town Centre. Free parking can still be provided for short stay parking.



Key locations and opportunities for structured parking

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## 7.4 Strategies For Success

### Retail Management

In order for Gladesville town centre to compete against other nearby centres over the long term, and capitalise upon its improved "place values", it must be run with the same level of sophistication as its competition. The following strategies should be considered:

- Create a *central management agency* for the Gladesville Town Centre. Whilst the level of power would have to be carefully considered and agreed by many parties, it could permit the co-ordination of opening hours, security, maintenance, shopfront design, through to the location and mix of stores. Without a level of centralised management, the following strategies are extremely difficult to achieve.
- Improved *joint advertising and merchandising*. Shoppers are attracted to shopping centres where incentives to shop are provided through coordinated sales, festival days, celebrity appearances and the like. In reality, however, a town centre with a quality public domain is better positioned to compete against shopping centres in terms of festival orientated marketing, or town events, for all. A potential event could be the themed market day / evening operating in the improved Trim Place, school grounds and Couiter Lane. For example, on one Friday evening a month throughout summer, all restaurants open

a market stall to promote their business, which people enjoy whilst listening to jazz. Ideally, these events would be developed and delivered through the creation of a new full-time specialist position - the Gladesville Town Centre Co-ordinator

- *Anchor tenants* are important for bringing shoppers from a distance, maintenance of economic vitality, and longevity of smaller specialist shops. This is clearly understood by shopping centres who are prepared to offer incentives and subsidies to secure such tenants to locate within the town centre in the future. Similarly, the existing anchor tenant, Gladesville Plaza should be encouraged to improve its operations as the town matures. This means the town centre as a whole operating competitively within the economic reality of a marketplace.
- If future anchors are enticed, it is important that the *strategic relation of the anchor to parking* is properly handled. The reason for this is evident if a shopping centre is examined. All shopping centres strategically relate anchor stores and parking so that people are made to walk past smaller stores clustered between. For the impulse buyer, the temptation of these smaller shops is almost unavoidable. However, many town centres which attracted anchors, particularly entertainment orientated anchors have made the anchor place all parking on-site, thereby robbing street based shops of potential customers. Although a 1000 people may visit a cinema in the course of an evening, street life is dead because people

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can go from car to theatre without ever entering the public domain. Any new anchor enticed to Gladesville Town Centre should encourage parking provision to be transferred to one of the designated parking structures, which also acknowledges the provision for shared parking. In short, a strategic separation of origins and destinations should occur:

- *Pro-active leasing and retail mix* is also vital for long term retail success. When a shopping centre first opens, a vacant shop is not simply leased to the first applicant who comes along. Rather, central management carefully determines what type of shop would be best for the retail mix of the centre in that location, and then pursues it often with incentives. Shops are arranged according to a long term merchandising. Mutually supportive stores are clustered to form places, such as the the fashion strip or food hall. Translated to Gladesville Town Centre, improved central management would desirably monitor shop mix and actively seek to fill vacancies as they arise. This is considered a better way to improve the overall economic performance of the town, rather than relying on a patchwork of ownership interests.
- To improve the attractiveness of window shopping, and likelihood of the impulse purchase, *retail continuity* is extremely important. People will stop walking if they become bored. It is for this reason that shopping centres place post offices, banks, travel agenets and the like towards the outside of the centre. They are simply and not of interest to the

average shopper, who has no intention of making an impulse stop at one of these uses. Whilst these uses do have a place in Gladesville Town Centre, they should be dispersed so as not to interrupt retail continuity for more than the shortest stretch.

All of these strategies require some level of centralised retail management. Although this approach may be questioned by some who believe in natural diversity, an absence of management is actually causing Gladesville Town Centre to become homogeneous in terms of the services it offers. Variety, and the long term success of the town centre, will to a large degree be achieved not through natural selection, but rather by careful programming.

## Designing Larger Footprint “Anchor” Buildings

Future anchor tenants attracted to Gladesville Town Centre have the potential to improve both the economic and social performance of the town. However, an ordinary large footprint or “box” design with blank walls onto key pedestrian frontages is no longer appropriate. Instead, larger footprint anchor tenants (above 1,000m<sup>2</sup>) should only be permitted where they are:

- Designed to encourage pedestrian activity in the public domain, reinforce the urban character of the town centre, and contribute to the connected system of walkable street frontages.
- Designed to only include the core anchor use within the box itself. A “sleeve” or liner of smaller shopfronts then attach itself to the outside of the box to provide associated commercial floorspace which trades onto the street.
- Subject to intense design scrutiny on a site specific, case-by-case basis, where all anchor stores proposing larger footprint buildings can demonstrate by substantial and competent evidence that they are not only realising the above point, but have taken all avenues to resolve any potential negative impacts on the surrounding area.

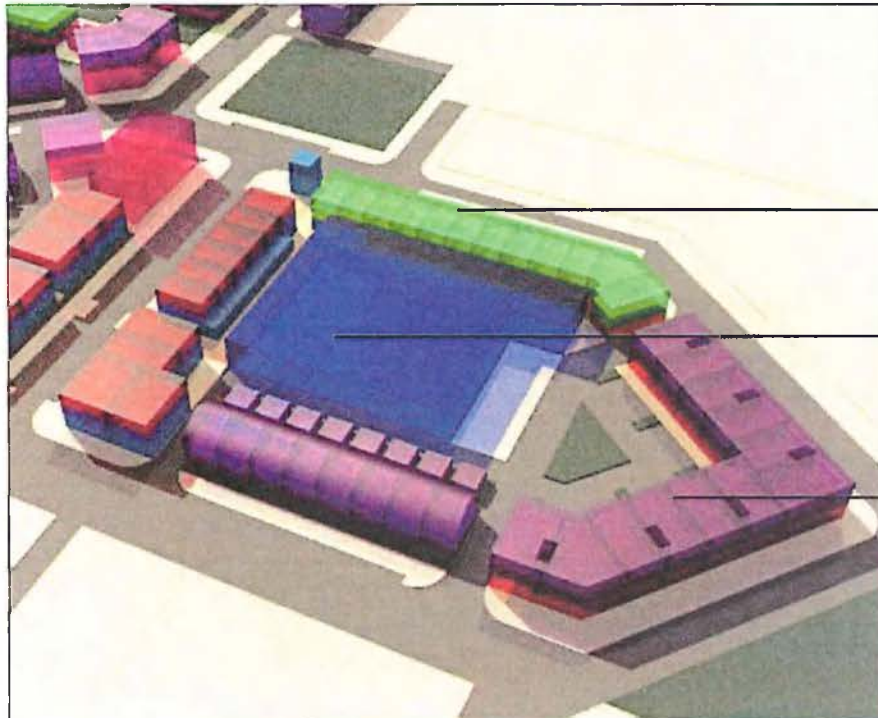
The easiest way to accommodate a larger footprint anchor tenant in the town centre where block sizes are relatively fixed is two-fold. Attract a downsized footprint which acknowledges an “urban” rather than “suburban”

situation development model. Alternatively, permit a larger floor area, but divide the “box” over two levels to create a smaller footprint building.

For example, a standard proposal for a cinema would be over one level with the ticket booth, candy bar, and increasingly upper-market cafe all internalised into the box. Under the proposed standards, however, the cinema should be split over two levels. The theatres should be located on the second floor, whilst the ticket booth is on the ground floor trading directly onto a footpath or public space. The candy bar and cafe are now placed in the “sleeve”, and also trade onto the street. Additional floorspace within the sleeve now becomes attractive for other mutually compatible uses, such as bookstore, restaurant and music shop. Street life is further encouraged and a hub of activity which makes the town a pleasant place well into the evening is created.

As already discussed, the necessity for such anchor tenants to provide on-site parking is not necessary. Instead, parking requirements should be transferred to one of the designated public parking structures, strategically separating pedestrian origins and destinations within the town. By doing this, the viability of other street based shops will be improved through an increased customer base.

The diagrams illustrate further the principles for designing accommodating larger footprint anchor buildings in Gladesville Town Centre. These principles also apply to the design of parking structures.



Liner building sleeving an anchor tenant "box"

The anchor tenant "box"

Liner building sleeving a surface car park



The new town of Subiaco, Western Australia, demonstrates the principle of "sleeving" larger footplate buildings. The street is activated by a cafe and other shops with residential apartments above. An arcade with smaller retail shopfronts provides a link through to a supermarket which is located mid-block.

The above diagram is an aerial view of a block of development. It shows a larger anchor tenant (the "blue box") floor plate building sleeved by liner buildings. The liner buildings contain a mix of retail and commercial at street level with residential and commercial uses above. The liner buildings ensure the activation and creation of a quality public domain by concealing the blank walls of the box.

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## 7.5 Strategies For Success

### 100% Model Projects

To grasp the potential of Gladesville Town Centre, and set in place an immediate process of action, we need places where people can go and see it. Residents, businesses and investors need their confidence restored.

The “100% Models” idea is to choose an area within Gladesville Town Centre (however small), then *totally* transform it to create as dramatic and visible impact as possible. Instead of spreading precious funding across large areas, councils should concentrate on these “model projects” in the first instance. In all likelihood, no single project will meet all of these goals below, but the more the better.

The remainder of this chapter describes the model projects within Gladesville Town Centre, which could reasonably happen in the medium term. They have been selected based on the criteria explained opposite. They are considered to have a catalytic potential for revitalising the town centre.

### *How To Identify a Perfect 100% Model Project*

- *It produces a “postcard” outdoor environment of exceptional character, excudes safety and optimism, and stands out in marked contrast to bland development.*
- *It combines adaptive re-use of existing structures of worth with new buildings and improved public spaces.*
- *It completes a new public space or existing public space.*
- *It includes a substantial residential component of non-traditional dwelling types, attracting people who have the discretionary income to live and spend in the area.*
- *It suggests what the larger area will be like as revitalisation spreads, and inspires private investment.*



Town Park



Trim Place



The 100% Model Projects

Civic Square



Town Square



Clock Square

## 7.6 Improving Trim Place

Trim Place is the only existing public space of substance within the town centre. It has recently been substantially enhanced and has improved its relationship with the public school. In order for the space to reach its full potential, another important issue must be addressed - the edges of the space.

At present, there are no active edges to the space, but rather blank walls. Without an active edge to linger around, there is little reason for people to stop and stay within the space for any extended period of time. A number of strategies exist to improve upon this situation.

### Strategies

- “Sleeve” the blank wall of the pub with a low pavillion building, which could sell coffee and the like, and activate the southern edge of the space;
- Promote the long term opportunity for the existing hardware building (or a new building) to open onto and activate, the northern edge of the space as land use changes over time;
- With the increasing difficulty of volunteers committing to running the school canteen, this use could be privatised. A small pavillion canteen could trade into the school yard at lunch times, and into the space for the rest of the day and weekends. This would improve the viability of such a business and help to activate the space.;

These strategies are illustrated in the adjoining principle diagram and perspective rendering.

### Benefits

Improved usability of the existing public space in town. The activating of the edges provides a reason to be there.



Illustrative plan

Potential market lane at certain times.

Potential for existing or new building to open out onto space activating northern edge.

Formalise trees to define space.

Improve interface to school.

Low pavillion building “sleeving” blank wall of hotel. Potential privatised school canteen / cafe which opens out onto space.





Existing character

A view looking towards Gladesville Hotel; street furnishings and paving have been upgraded. A low pavilion building sleeves the blank wall of the hotel activating the space. Tables and chairs are set back from Victoria Road providing opportunity for outdoor dining. A formalised entry and improved boundary definition improves physical and visual connections between the town and school.



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## 7.7 Formalising Clock Tower Square

The historic clock tower and adjoining buildings form the southern gateway proper to Gladesville Town Centre. However, the presence and symbolism of the gateway is lost for a number of reasons. The clock tower sits divorced from people in a traffic island. This traffic island forms part of an inefficient and space consumptive intersection where Meriton Street, Wharf Road and Victoria Road converge. The buildings which front the clock tower are appearing tired and are not fulfilling their significant gateway role at present. Further, on the opposite side of Victoria Road, the old sandstone Gladesville Pub is hidden behind a tacky 1920's facade.

By following stated strategies to address these issues, this space can be formalised into a memorable gateway square, which continues to function as an improved meeting place for locals.

### Strategies

- Considering removing left turn slip lane off Victoria Road onto Meriton Street to create an enlarged public space which incorporates the clock tower. Consolidate the left turn lane with the other vehicle lanes further north;
- Resolve the change in grade through the public space by creating a primary stepped terrace area to shelter users from traffic on Victoria Road. Use lighting, trees and a landscaped arbor to further shelter users and provide greenery and shade.

- Relocate the clock tower to the north-eastern corner of the space to increase its visibility along Victoria Road, and improve the spatial definition of the space.
- Provide an incentive for the old Gladesville Pub to be restored and presented as part of this historic gateway experience to town. Create a pedestrian walk through a mixed use courtyard set behind Victoria Road to Cowell Street.
- Encourage the refurbishment of the existing building on the northern side of Meriton Street - a landmark site, through improved development opportunities, particularly if a rear lane right-of-way is provided to unlock the rest of this block.
- Ensure any redevelopment on the parcel of land bounded by Victoria Road, Pearson Lane and Wharf Road is a worthy landmark building. It is critical that this building addresses the space properly at ground level. Ideally, a two storey wrap around posted verandah would be provided.
- Encourage active uses, such as restaurants and cafes, to locate around and animate the space throughout the day and night.

These strategies are illustrated in the adjoining principle diagram and perspective rendering.

### Benefits

The southern gateway to the town centre will be more memorable, and due to its visibility, will contribute in transforming the overall image of the town centre. For locals and visitors, a “left over” space used as a meeting place will become a more usable and meaningful meeting place.



Illustrative plan

- Potential refurbishment of existing building .
- Mixed use courtyard walk to Cowell Street.
- Explore opportunity and viability of revealing original Gladesville Hotel.
- Re-configure intersection and create enlarged public space - Clock Square.
- Opportunity for landmark building which signifies entry to town centre and activates Clock Square.



Existing character



A view looking towards Meriton Street; the left turn lane has been moved further north creating a terraced square with trees, lighting and arbor enclosing the space. A cafe and other uses activate that space making it a local meeting place.

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## 7.8 A Small Town Park

The Coulter Street car park provides valuable vehicle parking to this side of town, but little else. It is not attractive, it is a poor address for the Gladesville RSL Club and residential apartments that front it. With the backs of buildings from Victoria Road fronting onto it there is little natural surveillance or sense of safety.

If the car park is redeveloped, whilst building upon the current stock of public parking, there is no reason why a small town park or green could not be provided, which fronts onto Linsely Street, for public use. With this asset in place, there would be an incentive for the buildings along Victoria Road to also address this space, and the RSL Club to further invest in its facilities given its improved address in town.

### Strategies

- Provide a small, genuinely public, town park as part of a 'mixed use' development package on the car park site. It should front onto Linsely Street, run the width of that frontage and be a minimum of 15m deep. The provision of this park would justify height bonuses.
- Ensure that the ground floor of the mixed use development which fronts onto the park is an active retail frontage. Ideally, there should be a 3-5m paved zone in front of this frontage, then a 3 step grade change down into the park.
- Build upon the stock of public parking on the site, and develop a shared parking strategy. Ideally, parking would be underground. If this is not financially viable, however, a structured car park with development on top is also acceptable provided it is "sleeved" along

Linsely Street and Western Street. This is to create a quality pedestrian experience from Pittwater Road, through to the Club and up into Trim Place.

- Vehicle access to parking is to be provided off either Coulter Street or Ross Street, and should be set well back from the park.
- Ensure that the redevelopment of the car park provides an appropriate "feature" building element to terminate the view from Jordan Street into this precinct, and establish a visual relationship between this part of town and the church precinct.
- Provide a development incentive for buildings along Victoria Road which back onto the park to be redeveloped. The purpose is for these buildings to also address the park and complete its eastern edge.
- If the RSL Club redevelops, ensure that it addresses the park in a proper manner. In addition, ensure that its facade treatment to Coulter Lane is acceptable to pedestrians, and servicing requirements would not preclude the use of this lane as an informal market place connecting Trim Place to the town park at certain times .
- Develop a landscape strategy for the town park which can be extended down Linsely Street and assists in tying the town to Glade Bay.

These strategies are illustrated in the adjoining principle diagram and perspective rendering.

## Benefits

A much needed green public space will be provided within the heart of the town centre. Its location just off Victoria Road will ensure it is comfortable to use. It will be a place to relax and have lunch where toddlers can play out of the way of traffic. Its also provides a meaningful pedestrian destination from Trim Place, and facilitates the creation of a high quality secondary pedestrian network on this side of town.



Existing character



Illustrative plan

Retain historic facade and ensure new development terminates vista.

Apartments and retail front park and streets.

Apartments and retail front park and streets.

Improve public parking provided in structure taking advantage of slope.

Create a formal town park.

Opportunity to refurbish or redevelop RSL Club taking advantage of park frontage as a quality address.



A view looking over the roof of the RSL Club towards the new town park framed by retail uses and overlooked by residential apartments. Public parking is provided in structure.

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## 7.9 A New Town Square

The opening of Gladesville Village Plaza has had many benefits for the town centre. It has refocused retail energy and provided the town with a strong 'anchor', drawing people who would have otherwise gone to another centre, such as Top Ryde. It also has a strong advertising presence that can potentially benefit many businesses.

However, its single entry point to a poorly designed arcade connecting through to Victoria Road, has not enhanced the energy of the public domain or promoted community interaction. A key challenge to the successful revitalisation of a street based shopping experience is how all of those people that visit the Plaza can also be lured outside to Victoria Road.

With the recent amalgamation of some of the key properties which front Victoria Road, including the Glade arcade, a significant opportunity exists to improve the connection between Victoria Road and the Plaza, and create a new "signature" public space for the town - *Gladesville Town Square*.

Although it is recognised that the packaging of this idea will be a complex and lengthy process, it should be pursued vigorously because if realised, the flow on benefits throughout the town centre would be substantial.

### Strategies

- Widen the pedestrian connection between Victoria Road and the Plaza to create a public space whose size, shape, proportion and design equates to a town square. Specific guidance must be provided in the design controls. This should be further developed as a special project in consultation with owner.
- Provide height bonuses to the investor who is providing the town with this civic infrastructure to ensure it is economically viable. It is estimated that this may require heights of up to 6-8 storeys in certain areas of this block.
- Ensure that this additional height is set back as far as possible in the block and notable building facades retained, to preserve the human scale of Victoria Road and adjoining streets. In addition, this massing should be arranged so that the square itself is of a human scale, and receives as much solar access as possible.
- Taking advantage of slope, co-ordinate additional structured parking underneath the town square, and indeed across the length of this block, to increase the stock of public parking available in the town centre. A shared parking strategy should be formulated. The delivery of such a parking strategy would warrant height bonuses.
- Provide a car free mid-block pedestrian walk between the town square and Cowell Street which is comprised of a network of well proportioned public spaces and a mixture of shopping opportunities.

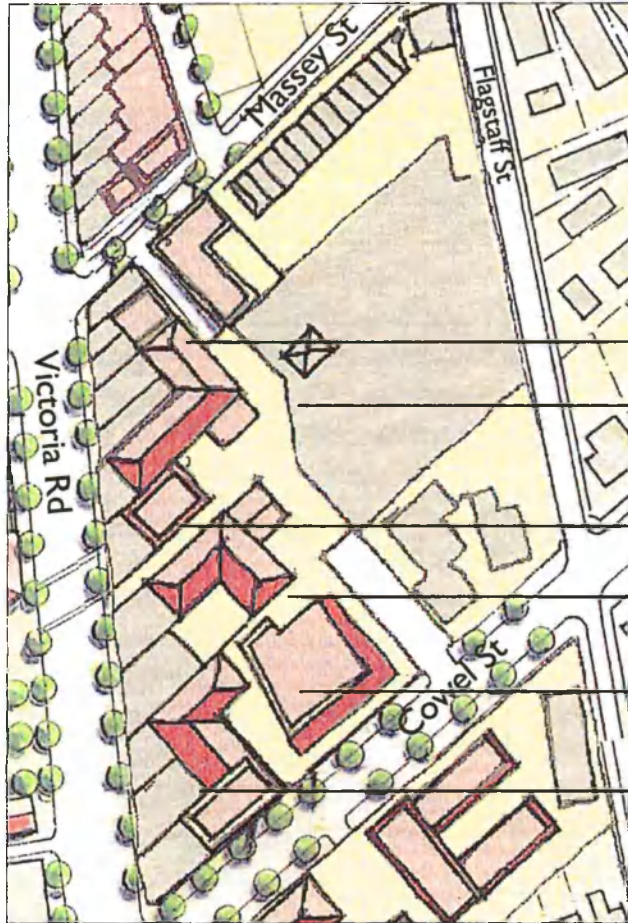
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- Unify the ground level of the space through the use of awnings, which will also provide continuous pedestrian shelter from the Plaza through to Victoria Road.
  - Encourage active uses, such as restaurants and cafes, to locate around and animate the square throughout the day and night. The square will be a highly desirable location for new businesses who will trade off its amenity and capitalise upon the economic values of place.
  - Employ a package of sophisticated design techniques, such as the apparent closure of space through forced perspective, the strategic location of pavilion structures and landscaping, to ensure the presence of Victoria Road fades into the background.
  - If a proposal to deliver the town square includes a larger floorplate use for reasons of economic viability, it should be "sleeved" with smaller shopfronts which will animate the square, and its entrance strategically located to minimise disruption to the activation of the square's edges.
  - Gladesville Plaza should be encouraged to develop a second storey towards the western edge of its box, which can connect over the lane directly into this new network of spaces and provide a more seamless connection between the Plaza and public domain.

These strategies are illustrated in the adjoining principle diagram and perspective rendering.

### **Benefits**

A new signature public space for the town will be created, and will improve the overall marketability of the town. The pedestrian connection between the Plaza and Victoria Road will be dramatically improved, and a variety of business, socialising and living opportunities close too, but far enough removed from traffic, will be created. The flow on effect will benefit all street based businesses in the town centre. The stock of public parking will also be improved.

## A New Town Square (Con't.)



Illustrative plan

Higher buildings setback deep within the block achieving density and further activating the centre.

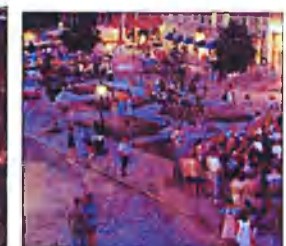
Improved pedestrian connection to Plaza. Potentially at same level as Victoria Road.

Town Square links the Plaza to Victoria Road.

Cowell Walk provides a retail pedestrian walk between Cowell Street and the Plaza.

Structured public parking can be provided underneath Cowell Walk and the Town Square taking advantage of slope.

Shops can open onto both Victoria Road and Cowell Walk. Shop walk throughs will help to draw people passed merchandise and onto Victoria Road.

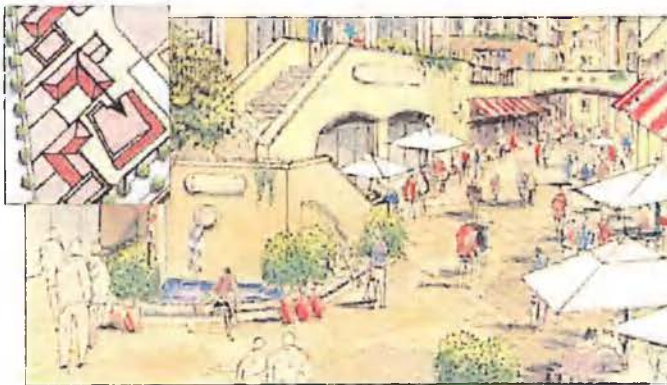


Character precedents





A view looking across the Town Square from the Plaza towards Victoria Road. Buildings step down to two storeys at Victoria Road. It is lined with cafes, restaurants and other shops. It is the social heart of the town centre and provides a retail framework for the economic revitalisation of shops along Victoria Road.



A view looking along Cowell Walk from the Town Square. Rather than walking through a loading dock and car park, new buildings define a vibrant retail work. Shops along Victoria Road can open out onto the walk. People living within apartments above ensure it is always lively.

## Creating New Town Squares: Success Stories

Across both Australia and America, town centres are rediscovering the social and economic value of providing town squares to activate the public domain, attract people, and revitalise street based shopping experiences.



An example of local relevance is the Italian Forum, Leichhardt. It has provided a new major public gathering place for Leichhardt Town Centre. It has also created a logical place for restaurants and cafes to cluster, attracting people throughout the day and night.



Although the proposed town square for Gladesville Town Centre is smaller in scale, many of the design principles are applicable. In particular, higher buildings were introduced to help fund the development of the space, whilst retaining the existing physical character of Norton Street.

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## 7.10 Civic Square

There exist a unique physical relationship between Christ Church and St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, across the intersection of Pittwater Road and Victoria Road. It forms the historic northern gateway into Gladesville Town Centre. The setting of the churches should also be an integral part of daily town life.

Whilst this is clearly the case for Christ Church (which is located on the town side of Pittwater Road) with its heritage grounds which provide a setting for a day care centre, this is not the case for St. Andrews. Despite, its proximity to the Wilson car park, it has a sense of detachment from the life of the town. Similarly, the Gladesville Library and Child Care Centre also suffer from this sense of detachment from the town. In addition, the existing shopfronts north of St. Andrews are appearing tired and do not create a visually appealing frame to the Church or to the town.

If all of this land was to be treated in a comprehensive manner, which would require a public / private partnership, significant benefits could be achieved for the town. The library and child care centre could be re-located closer to St. Andrew's and the town itself. The interface between these uses and the church could be managed via the creation of a small Civic Square, which would provide a new social setting for the church. At the same time, new mixed use redevelopment could replace the existing shopfronts to the north and provide public parking within structure.

Although it is recognised that the packaging of this idea will be a complex and lengthy process, it should be pursued vigorously because if realised, the flow on benefits throughout the town centre would be innumerable.

### Strategies

- Re-locate Gladesville library and the child care centre closer to the St. Andrews Church. Ensure the library and child care centre has a civic presence to Pittwater Water and has a street address.
- Manage the interface between the relocated uses and existing church through the creation of a small Civic Square.
- Encourage the library to open onto and help activate the square.
- Ensure new development does not adversely impact on the relationship of the silhouette of the church and its backdrop.
- Replace public car parking within structure. Ensure it does not create any blank walls to the public domain. Strategically locate entrances from car parking so that people are drawn past shops.
- Improve pedestrian links between car parking, Victoria Road and Pittwater Road.
- Refurbish or replace existing shops with mixed use development which activates Victoria Road.
- Locate taller residential apartments deep with the site so as to not impact visually upon the Church.

The realisation of these strategies will require detailed design work which is beyond the scope of this document. As such, a specific master plan should be prepared for this area in the future.

### Benefits

Improved integration of St. Andrews Church and community facilities into the town centre.



- Refurbish or replace existing shops with new mixed use development. Strategically locate entrances from structured parking so people are drawn past shops.
- Higher apartment buildings setback deep within the block away from the Church.
- Structured public parking can be provided across the block.
- Improve pedestrian links between car parking, Victoria Road and Pittwater Road.
- Relocate library and community facilities closer to Church. Create a small Civic Square which provides an interface between these uses.
- Ensure the height and bulk of new development maintains the silhouette of the Church against the skyline.

Illustrative plan



All new buildings will have to ensure that they maintain the silhouette of the Church against the skyline when viewed from the opposite side of Victoria Road.



## South Gladesville: Improve The Front Door

8



For the local coming home or first time visitor to Gladesville, the front door is underwhelming. As Victoria Road sweeps past its intersection with Punt Road and begins to bend, the welcome statement is a oversized petrol station, tacky drive-thru bottle shop, and an array of bargain basement and discount stores. A statement which sends the clear message that this is an ailing commercial strip, not a town centre. Why would you stop? But it does not have to be this way. The front door to Gladesville, and indeed Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils, can be improved and the approach to a town centre on a hill celebrated.

Seeks to upgrade this area with residential and mixed use development generally of 3-4 stories but building to 5-6 stories as we approach the Town Centre. Seeks to establish a green "Avenue" as with North Gladesville. Seeks the conservation and restoration of heritage items.

## 8.1 Future Goals

- Transform the front door of Gladesville into a memorable green boulevard over time.
- Direct commercial and retail investment back into Gladesville Town Centre, by targeting residential as the preferred development type.
- Improve gateways into Gladesville and existing residential neighbourhoods, and long term preservation of the amenity of these neighbourhoods in all respects.

### Strategies for Success

- Over time convert from a strip street section to an avenue street section. This will create a better definition of Victoria Road, improve the sense of place, add substantial greenery, and make walking a more attractive option.
- Change the zoning and development controls to make residential development the most attractive form of investment. A continuous ribbon of mixed use development is not permitted, nor are new strip format developments.
- A limited amount of mixed use development could be permitted within the transition areas from the the town centre. The transition area exists along Victoria Road from the alignment of Junction Street to the alignment of Batemans Road.
- Conserve wherever possible significant and contributory buildings as identified in heritage study.
- Make new mixed use development in transition zones build to 5m of the front property line. If it has a retail frontage ensure a seamless continuation of the footpath treatment from gutter to shopfront. Use

this space to create a formal landscape to signal approach to the town centre, and further greening of Victoria Road.

- Ensure new development turns corner sites properly.
- Implement general design standards explained in Chapter 4.

These strategies are further explained in the accompanying illustrations.

### Benefits

Improved visual quality to housing along Victoria Road. Improved image of the place as a whole through creation of an interesting and varied skyline when viewed from a distance. Improved approach to Gladesville Town Centre. Improved arrival experience into Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Council areas.





- Some opportunities for apartments tucked behind heritage cottages on deep lots.
- Important intersection worthy of notable building.
- Opportunity for mixed use development.
- Replace vehicle orientated uses with garden apartments over time.
- Long term opportunity for formal planting along Victoria Road.
- Improve landscape entry to and exit from town.

Illustrative plan

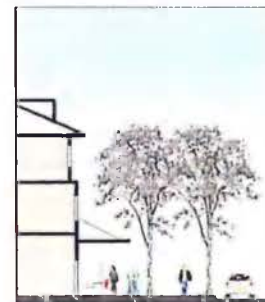


Proposed Maximum Building Heights

2 story
  3 story
  4 story
  5-6 story

This drawing illustrates how the typical street section for South Gladesville can be changed over time from residential to retail once the town centre is mature.

The front fence and hedge is removed. The footpath is continued across to meet the building flush. An awning is attached to the facade. With shrub landscaping removed, the street trees are identifiable as a formal double row. The width of the footpath has effectively been increased by 5m providing an improved pedestrian amenity.



Proposed street section for South Gladesville





## The Next Steps: Implementation

9



The Gladesville Town Centre and Victoria Road Master Plan illustrates the principles and techniques so that future development will have an improved physical character and provide a better performing town centre for businesses and residents. The success of any Master Plan depends upon its ability to be implemented in an economically and socially acceptable fashion, within a designated time frame. The final chapter of this report identifies the key steps for making it a reality.

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## 9.1 Replace existing planning controls with new ones based on the Master Plan

A new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) should be prepared as quickly as possible following official adoption of the Master Plan. The new planning documents should be graphic, easy-to-use and precise. The intent is to provide an implementation framework where developers who follow the new rules can be guaranteed relatively quick approvals, whilst surprises for existing residents are minimised. The formulation of the new planning documents should be focused on attracting the type of development to the study area specified in the master plan, rather than merely being a reactive document which focuses on what the area doesn't want.

## 9.2 Promote the Master Plan, LEP and DCP

Jointly, Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils need to:

- Seek State Government support for implementing the Master Plan (both administrative and financial);
- Obtain press coverage of the Master Plan, LEP and DCP, as well as any new projects completed under the Plan;
- Spread the message that the Plan specifies the desired pattern of development and how these improvements are beneficial to the community;
- Parade the images of the first built "Model Project" in local newspapers, at public meetings and the like;
- Promote the Plan so that it will take on a life of its own and continue to work for the City long after changes occur in government staff and elected officials;

## 9.3 Develop a detailed series of implementation matrices

The purpose of the matrices is to strategically focus each recommendation of the Plan not only in terms of how much the recommendation might cost and who should carry it out, but also in terms of the relative importance of each recommendation within the context of the overall Master Plan. The matrices, and accomplishments, can then be rolled over on yearly basis within each of the Council's budgeting programs.

## 9.4 Establish the Gladesville Town Centre and Victoria Road Working Group

An on-going working relationship must be created among the four primary constituents of the Master Plan: Ryde City Council, Hunter's Hill Council, the business community and residents immediately adjoining the study area. Without substantial and co-ordinated buy-in from these parties, the Master Plan will not succeed. As part of this, it is recommended that Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils investigate mechanisms for funding the creation of a full-time specialist position skilled in place management and town centre revitalisation to take charge of the group. The brief for this position should also include the role of "cultural animateur" for the town centre, requiring the programming and organising of events.

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## 9.5 Create a Model Project in partnership with the private sector

Ryde City Council and Hunter's Hill Councils should actively seek out and form a partnership with the private sector to develop as early as possible one or more of the identified model projects within the town centre. Built results that are economically viable and accepted by the community as good physical design will instil community confidence in the Master Plan, LEP and DCP to deliver genuine improvements to the area. The model project should be undertaken with the aim of it achieving a prestigious industry award and financial success. The participation of the State Government should be sought including DIPNR, RTA, Department of Transport, Department of Education etc. to demonstrate the implementation of the "Metropolitan Strategy".

## 9.6 Provide incentives to bring investors back to the area

Explore opportunities to provide incentives for development which clearly follows the Master Plan, LEP and DCP. Time and money are excellent incentives. Ideas include:

- Offer a streamlined approval process and reduced fees for development which clearly follows the rules.
- Grant height bonuses without red tape for development which clearly brings the public domain benefits identified in the Plan.

These will be fully articulated in the DCP.

## 9.7 Create a Victoria Road Public Domain Strategy

Engage landscape consultants to create a 'Public Domain Strategy' for the whole study area emphasising:

- The Gladesville Town Centre, landscape, pavement and street furniture.
- Avenue and street landscaping for the whole of Victoria Road within the study area.
- Landscape treatment for special places and 100% model projects.
- Other contextual street planting.