



Prepared by
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With Brand Positioning and Communications Strategy
by Emery Studio

For City of Stonnington

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Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra

Public Realm/Streetscape
Masterplan

emerystudio

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— City of —
STONNINGTON

Acknowledgements

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

South Yarra's once hidden industrial area, known as the Forrest Hill Precinct, is undergoing an extraordinary transformation into a mini cosmopolitan city.

Generally known as the mecca of food and fashion in Melbourne, South Yarra is abundant with European style and charm and a place where many of Melbourne's top restaurants and retail fashion houses call home.

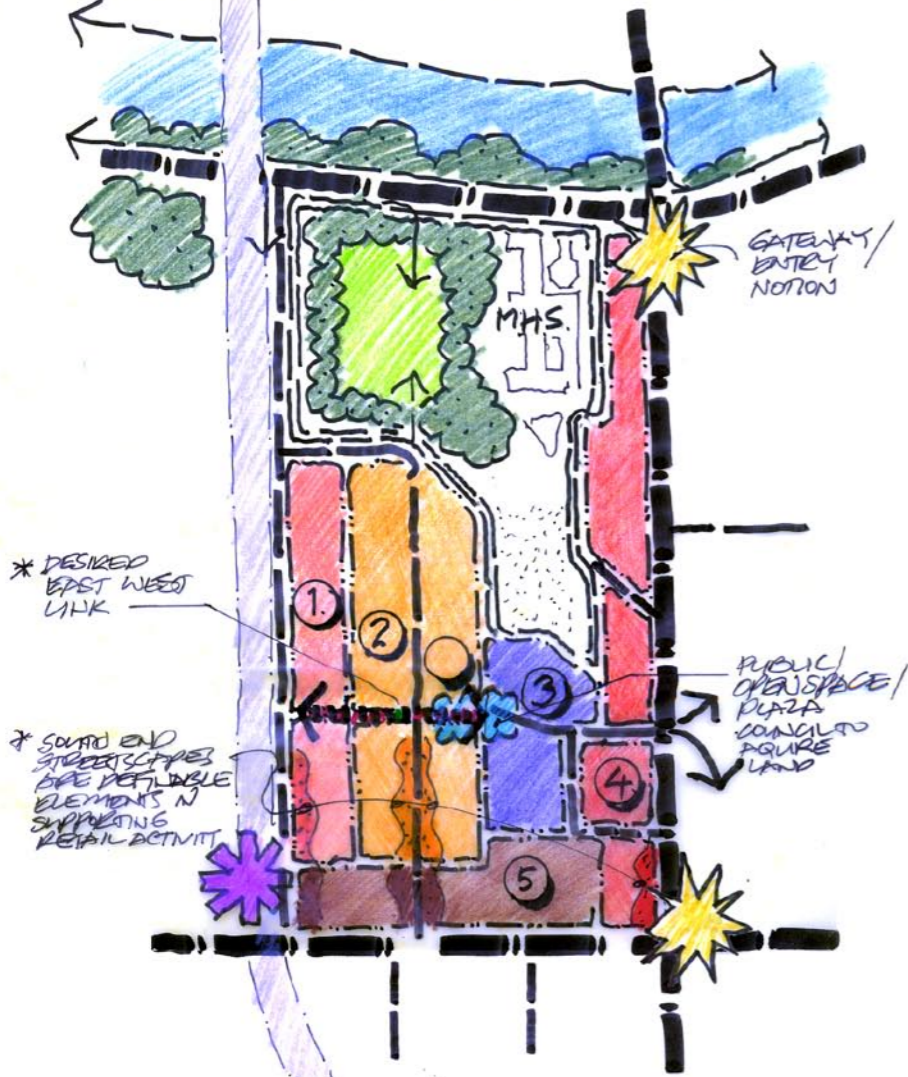
In a new initiative to expand this dynamic inner city suburb, a group of esteemed developers are transforming the precinct to provide a modern urban escape for residents and visitors to the area.

City of Stonnington has recognised this trend and intends to lead the process by formalising a vision for the precinct.

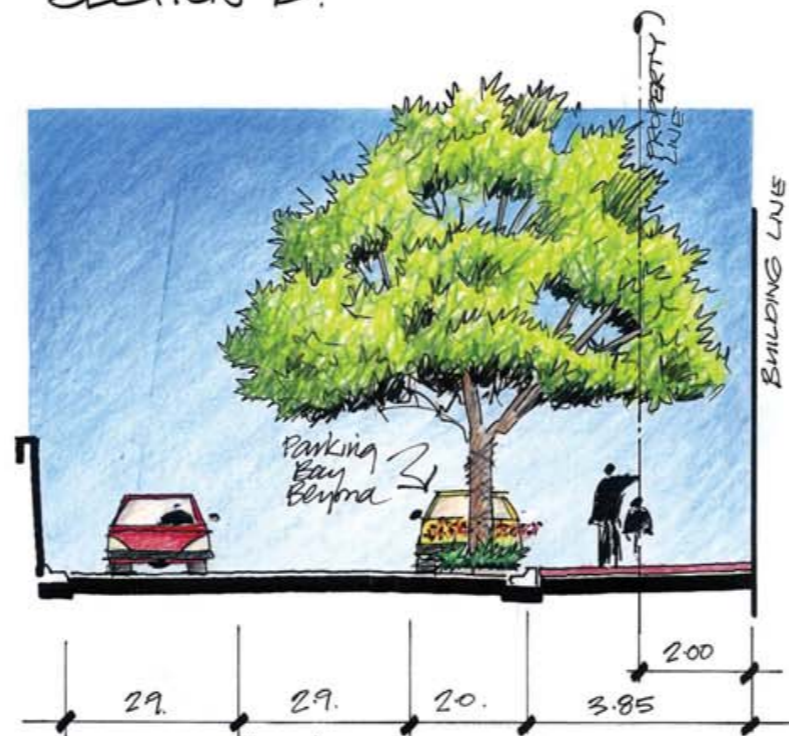
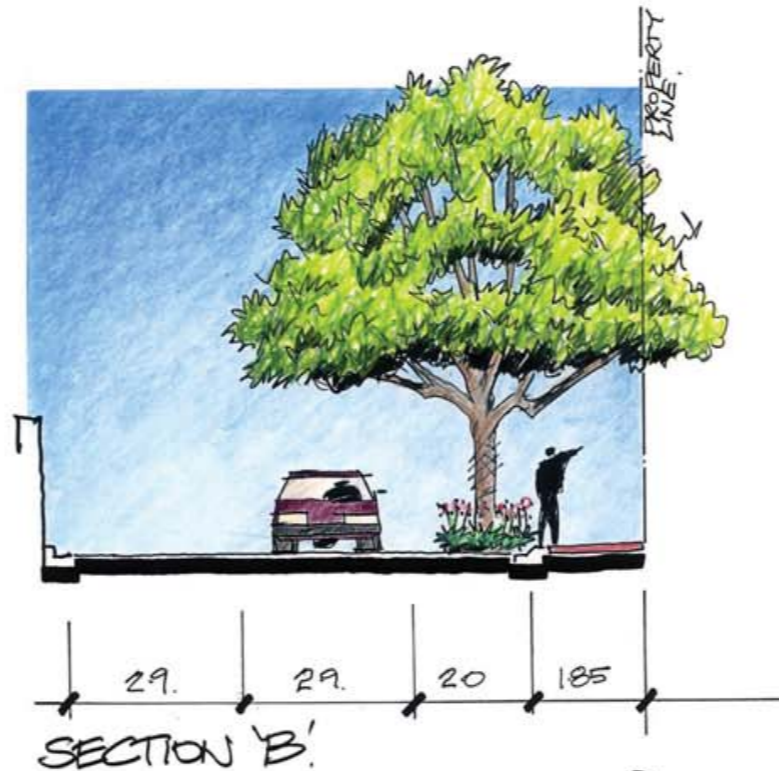
Emerystudio "defining" the Precinct June 2007

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- DEVELOP AS 'URBAN VILLAGE', A DISCRETE BUT INTERRELATED PART OF OVERALL PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY CENTER
- ADOPT USES THAT COMPLEMENT, RATHER THAN COMPETE
- HIGHER DENSITY PRECINCT: PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY THEMES/CHARACTERS: CONTEMPORARY & INNOVATIVE
- PUBLIC REALM TO BE 'CONSISTANT' OVER FOREST HILL
- SAFE ATTRACTIVE STREETSCAPES: CONNECTIVITY & PERMEABILITY



1. YARRA ST PRECINCT. ± 20 STOREY.
 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PROXIMITY TO STATION.
 SAFE WELL DEFINED PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT.
 SAFE EAST WEST LINKAGE.
2. CLAREMONT PRECINCT.
 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PROXIMITY TO STATION.
 PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY CHARACTER.
 CONNECTIVITY AT MID BLOCK - NOTE OPEN SPACE PLAZA.
 VARIETY OF SETBACKS.
3. DAILY ST. ± 8 STOREY.
 RESPECT HERITAGE OF STREETS - ADVANTAGE OF PROXIMITY STATION.
 ACTIVE ET FRONTAGES.
 SAFE PED CONNECTIVITY THROUGH CAR PARK TO CLAREMONT.
4. WEST SIDE CHAPEL. ± 13 STOREY.
 HIGH QUALITY PED ENVIRONMENT AT STREET LEVEL AS PART OF NEW DEVELOPMENT. NOTE BUS 2 ZONE NORTH OF RUMOURA - LARGER RETAIL FORMAT & COMMERCIAL.
5. TOORAK ROAD. ± 7 STOREY.
 HIGH QUALITY PED ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT RETAIL.
 CONSIDER HORTICULTURE.



Yarra Street sections

1.2 Background

The existing Forrest Hill Precinct of South Yarra, accommodates a mix of land uses. These includes office, industry (service industry), retail, entertainment, residential and education uses. The Precinct is adjacent to the South Yarra train station.

The Precinct includes a number of sites where redevelopment is imminent, and as such is undergoing substantial change, with office, residential and mixed use replacing the former industrial landscape. This opportunity has been recognised by developers who have submitted applications for apartment residential, office and retail developments, and this trend is set to increase.

The likely future level of redevelopment in the Precinct will necessitate Council undertaking public realm and infrastructure works to ensure an appropriate sense of place and consistent urban character is developed together with an effective and safe functionality in the area.

Council has prepared a structure plan for the Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra, which in part calls for a new public open space and an east-west pedestrian link, and streetscape improvements.

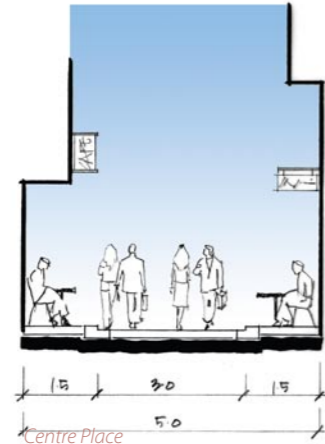
Tract Consultants, urban designers and landscape architects were commissioned by a private developer to develop public realm designs of arcade links as part of the mixed use commercial redevelopment of the site. Tract researched and summarised the Council structure plan as it relates to the public realm/open space upgrade of Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra, in order to inform the detailed designs proposals.

A subsequent presentation to Stonnington officials (Mayor, CEO and departmental managers) highlighted major opportunities for public realm upgrade as part of individual development proposals for a number of sites then at development application stage.

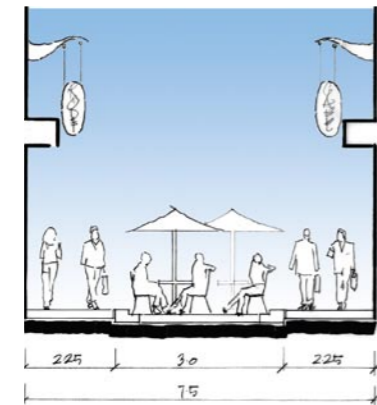
Council subsequently commissioned Tract Consultants in 2005 to initiate a process toward formalising a 'vision' for the development of the public realm of the future Forrest Hill, South Yarra, as an overall precinct open space master plan.



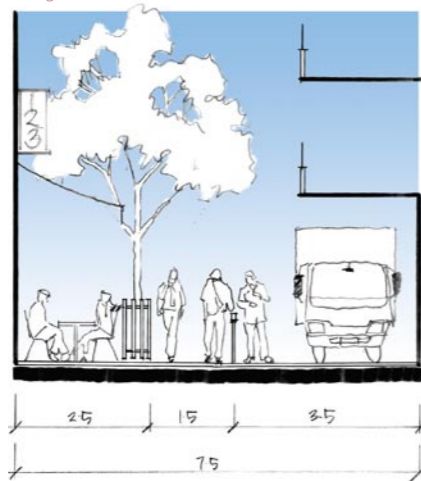
Block Place



Centre Place



Degraes Street



Hardware Lane



Arcade laneway precedence study by Tract on behalf of private developer

1.3 Study Purpose

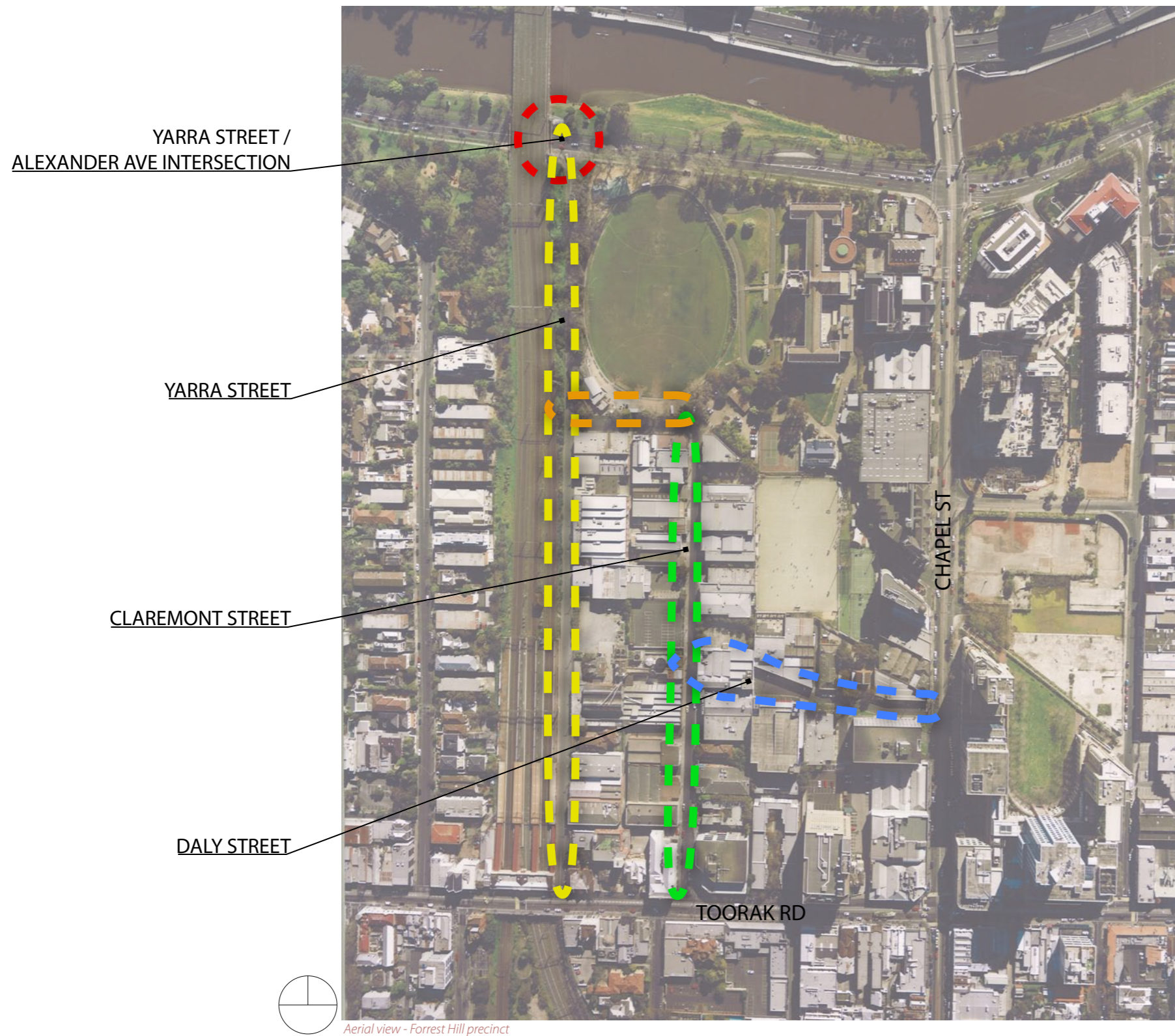
The Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra masterplan process is intended;

- To involve and seek community stakeholder support and ownership of open space public realm design concepts.
- To assist the City of Stonnington in formulating an appropriate vision for the Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra as a cosmopolitan and vibrant mixed use precinct particularly as reflected in the public realm themes and characters.
- To provide the City of Stonnington with an informed public realm design direction on which to base detailed designs, style guides on which to assess development proposals as part of the precinct redevelopment, particularly as they may affect the public realm generally.
- To assist and aid the development of an appropriate development contribution scheme for the area.
- To assist in gaining State Government funding grants for the area.

1.4 The Study Area

Refer Section 2 Page 6 for the aerial plan details. The main public realm opportunities within the precinct include

- Yarra Street
- Claremont Street
- Daly Street/Almeida Crescent, including open spaces.



Aerial view - Forrest Hill precinct

2 Site Appreciation

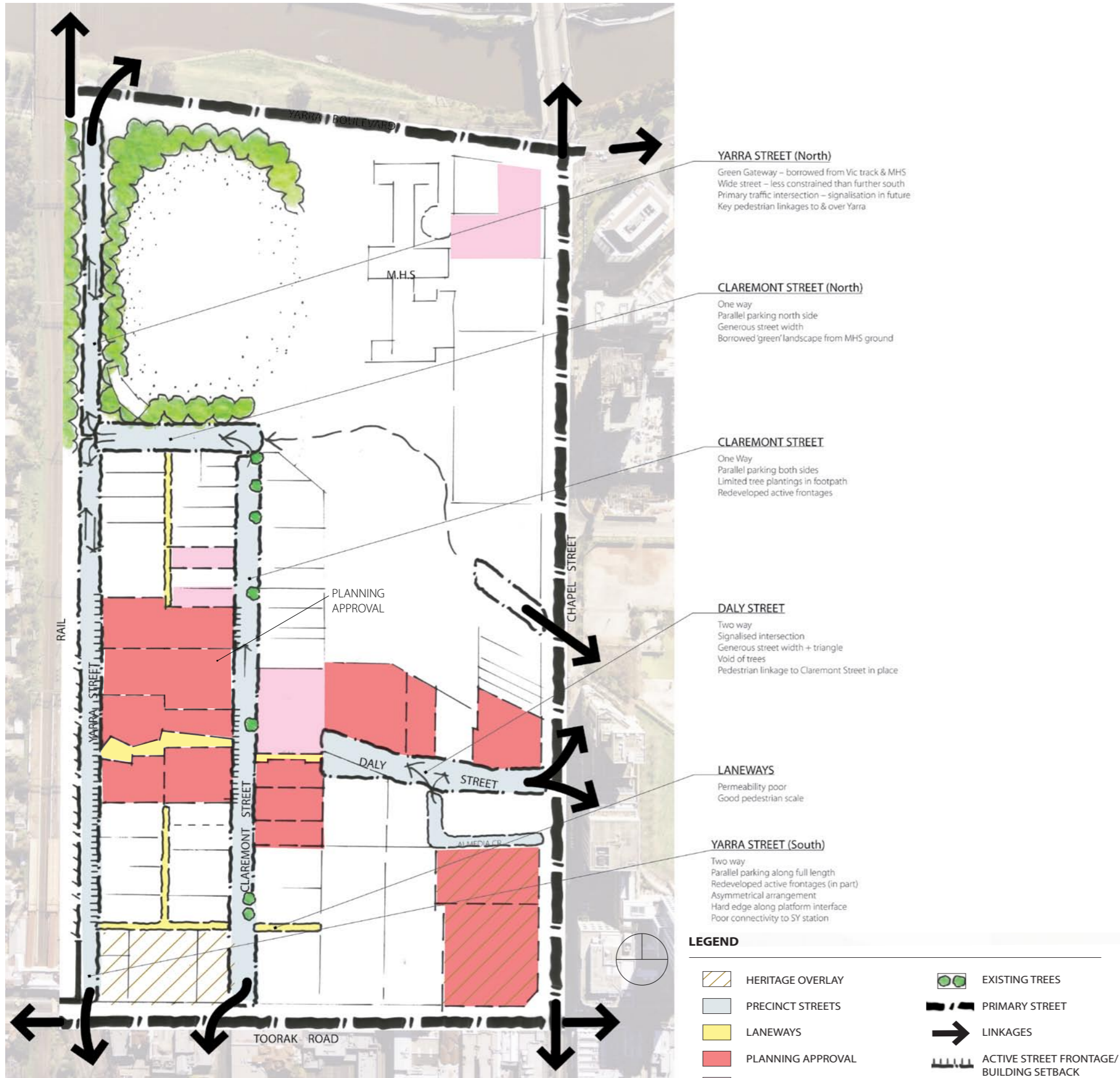
2.1 Site Attributes

The Forrest Hill precinct, South Yarra, is strategically located on the West side of Chapel St, at the Northern gateway into the City of Stonnington (South Yarra) and is bound by Chapel Street, Toorak Road, the railway line and Alexandra Avenue.

The site falls moderately to the Yarra River to the north providing excellent vistas into the site from Toorak Road whilst optimising solar penetration, and providing relatively flat grades to any east west connections.

The existing building stock is mostly industrial early to mid 20th century. The land subdivision pattern, is typical of the era and is configured as a north south orthogonal street grid of around 14 m to 17 m road reservations. Situated in the North Ward of Stonnington, any precinct redevelopment must consider the contextual relationship with the wide ranging neighbourhood retail precedents of Stonnington, including Toorak Village, Chapel Street (South Yarra and Prahran) High Street, Armadale and the Commercial Road precinct.

The current street layout provides spatially challenged footpaths and open spaces – however offers the wonderful opportunity of a Melbourne “laneway” style of connected and permeable pedestrian focused public realm.



Site Analysis

2.2 Circulation Patterns

The existing vehicular circulation pattern is mostly two way, with a one way situation northward in Claremont Street and westward in Almeida Crescent.

Pedestrian circulation is typified by standard footpaths to all roads, with limited informal access through Melbourne High School

No formal dedicated cycling pathway(s) have been established, however potential exists for a connection to the Yarra trail existing on both sides of the Yarra, as part of the existing Cremorne rail bridge.

2.3 Heritage Overlay

Apart from a relatively small section of the precinct at the South West corner in Toorak Road and Melbourne High School site, the remainder of the precinct has no heritage restrictions that would unduly restrict an innovative public realm development

2.4 Streetscapes

The industrial character and minimal road reservation width has largely resisted the inclusion of street tree plantings. The exceptions are

- 1) Claremont Street, with its wider reservation has a few ad hoc plantings of Ash ranging in various states of health and form.
- 2) Yarra Street at the northern end is strongly influenced by the exotic, mature Elms around the perimeter of Melbourne High School, as well as the native backdrop to the west of the railway easement.

2.5 Proposed Urban Renewal

A significant portion of the precinct is subject to imminent redevelopment, with planning approval issued or pending.

It is significant to note a concentration of imminent development sites correspond with the east west Daly Street Link (refer diagram) which suggests an obvious first stage public realm upgrade.

2.6 Summary

The impending redevelopment of over 30% of the Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra, combined with (unusually) minimal constraints of heritage and tree planting present a “clean canvas” opportunity to develop an innovative and comprehensive public realm, providing an urban renewal precinct character unique to Melbourne.

3 Design Definition

3.1 Precinct Positioning

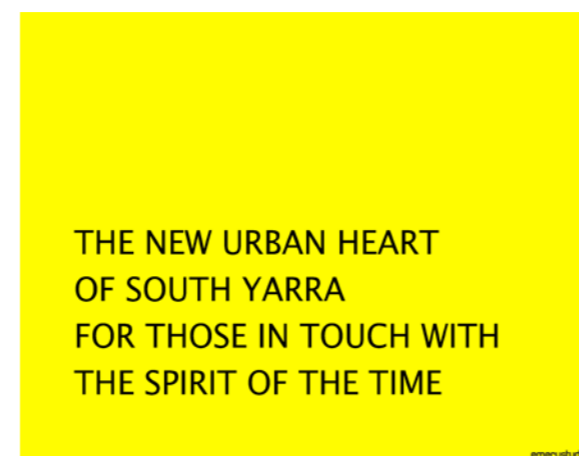
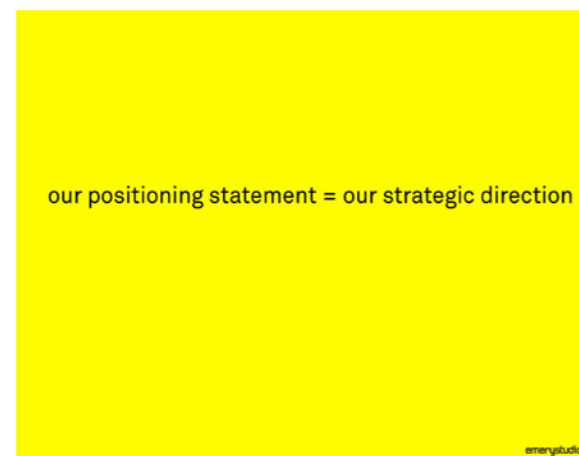
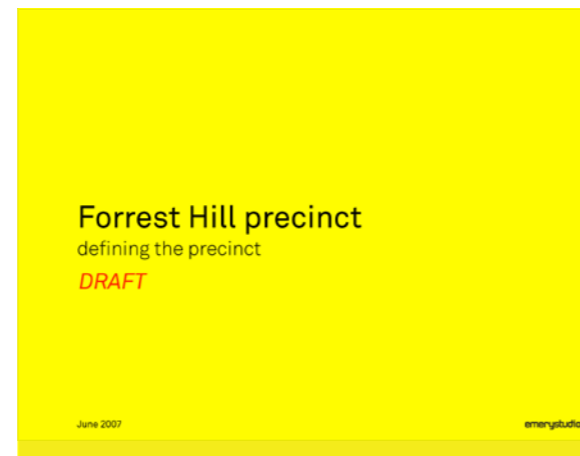
A "Positioning Workshop" with precinct stakeholders including key Stonnington Council officers was facilitated by Emery Studio in March 2007. The purpose of the Workshop was to agree to an overarching "position" for the Forrest Hill Precinct, South Yarra, by identifying a set of values and principles which will be the single unifying platform for informing all design and marketing for future development, both public sector and private.

Issues "workshopped" as a group included;

- Agree brand positioning and naming strategy for the precinct
- Identify target audiences and their needs
- Define the 'glue' that binds the precinct together as a destination
- Define urban/ customer experience
- Define precinct wide design principles/ design language of urban elements.
- Define the scale of the place (urban, regional, local, human)

The primary target audience was defined under the various product offerings as:

- mixed use (residential/office)
- mature, successful (baby boomer investors)
- young professionals
- X and Y gen "itinerants"
- Serviced apartments/accommodation
- Interstate, international and local business
- Boutique short stay accommodation





Thematic Public Realm Benchmarks toward a 'contemporary' theme and character.

3.1 Precinct Positioning (continued)

The target demographic is defined as

- Intelligent and smart
- Inspirational
- Attracted to finesse, excellence in design; and
- Savvy

Their needs and wants from a "place" include ;

- 'wow' factor
- Diverse mix of activities
- Contemporary environment
- South Yarra location
- Lifestyle; more informal way of doing business
- Bringing together business and lifestyle
- Convenience (transport, supermarkets, markets)
- Blue chip value
- Amenity
- Shopping: the retail experience
- Cultural activities such as galleries and theatres
- Recreation: Yarra River, Botanic Gardens, gyms, health clubs, bicycle paths
- Balance of day / night activity
- Of the time

3.2 Strengths/ Weaknesses

What are the strengths of the precinct?

- South Yarra location
- Diverse trendy scene
- Individuality and diverse design character
- Transport connections
- Easy access to sports precinct
- Design quality
- New precinct
- Affordable
- Intimate scale
- The character of the retail mix and the influence of Duttons

What are the weaknesses of the precinct?

- Overlooking railway line
- Potential graffiti
- Vehicle traffic; getting in and out of precinct
- Limited parking
- Residential offer in a precinct with an industrial character
- Difficult vehicular traffic entries to the precinct
- Connectivity / adjacencies
- A lack of character in the early marketing phase
- Negative presence of factory outlets