CENTRAL MELBOURNE
DESIGN GUIDE

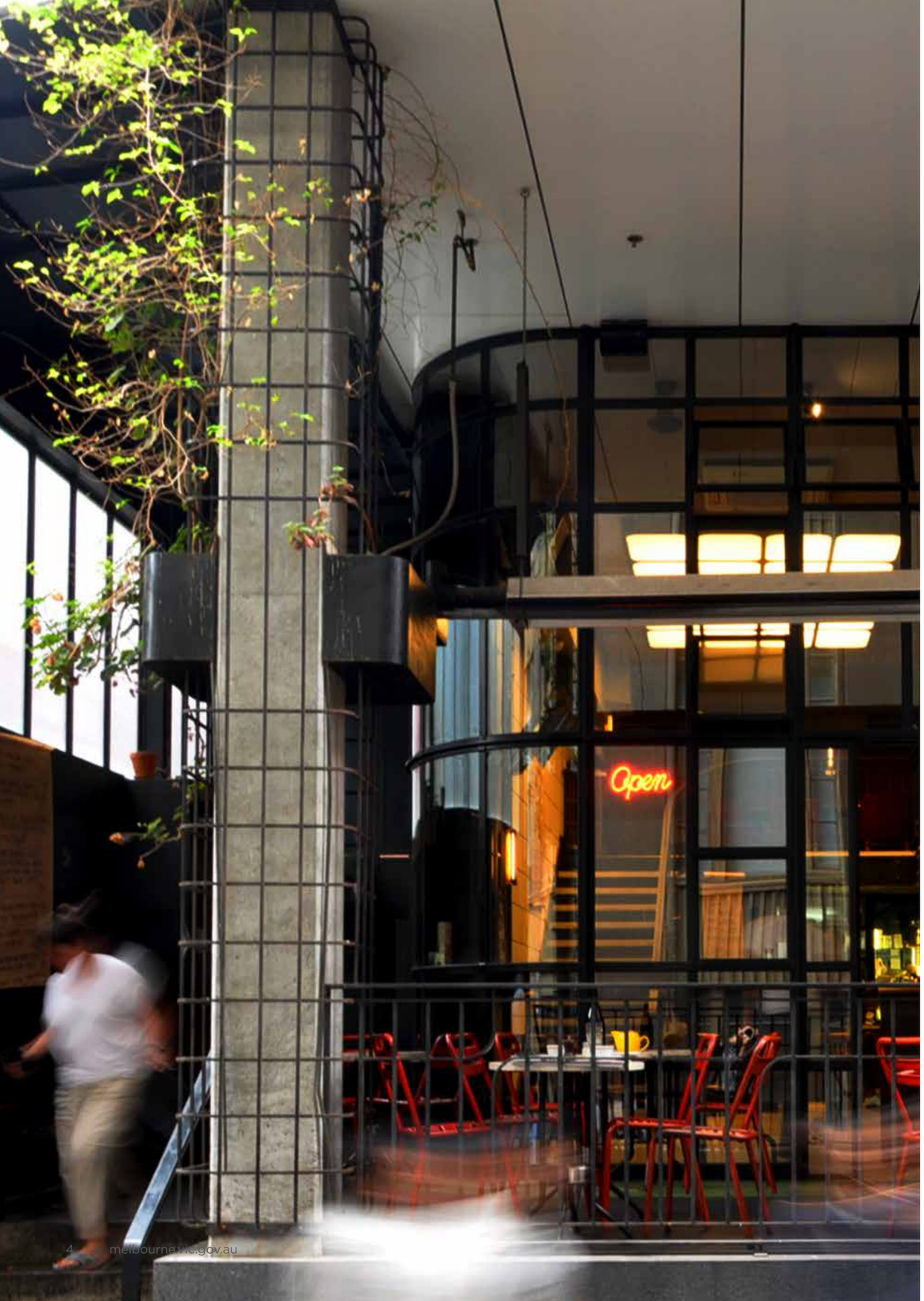
CITY OF MELBOURNE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) people of the Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

CONTENTS

April 2021



MESSAGE FROM THE CITY OF MELBOURNE

Central Melbourne Design Guide

Melbourne's built environment, parks and gardens give our city its distinctive character and liveability. As our city grows rapidly, the City of Melbourne's commitment to high quality urban design and respect for heritage is ever more critical.

The elegance of our Gold Rush-era buildings, the vigour of contemporary design, the bustle of laneways and shopping strips – all stamp Melbourne as a city open to the new while cherishing its past.

The Central Melbourne Design Guide recognises that all these attributes come under pressure amid a rising population and increased density. Some of our recent development has unfortunately not always served the city well at street level. We want to reinforce the importance of a city for people, with great design and ground level appeal. This might mean paying more attention to concealing parking and services at street level or focusing on human scale architectural elements. Let's explore how rich and inviting building materials can uplift design right across the city.

This guide will be a valuable source of advice for residents, developers, architects and all who have an interest in Melbourne's built form. While not intended as a strict checklist, the guide aims to promote innovation and site-specific design responses.

Good design matters and we invite you to help shape a city for people well into the future.

Sally Capp
Lord Mayor

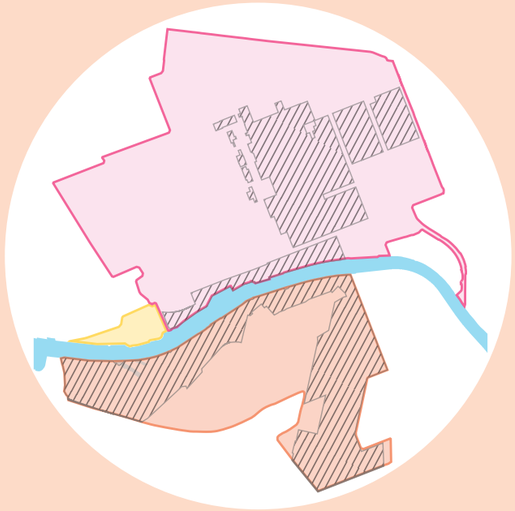
Cr Nicholas Reece
Planning Portfolio Chair

INTRODUCTION

The Central Melbourne Design Guide (The Guide) has been prepared by the City of Melbourne to support the use and interpretation of the Urban Design in the Central City and Southbank Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 (DDO1) within the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The Guide is intended to facilitate the delivery of high design quality for developments in the Central City and Southbank.

Both the DDO1 and The Guide aim to influence the development of private land within the Central City and Southbank by focusing on the key components of design that contribute to lively and successful streets and places. A particular emphasis is placed on how buildings respond to their specific context, and contribute to the City's vibrancy, economy and urban quality for decades to come.

The Guide uses illustrations and photos to visually communicate the desired outcomes of the Design Objectives, Design Outcomes and Design Requirements of the DDO1 with additional images of outcomes that should be avoided. The intent of the easy to use, and simple graphic format of this document is to make the DDO1 clearer and more accessible to a diverse audience, including the community, developers, designers and planners.



DDO1 Areas

- Central City
- Southbank
- North Wharf
- Special Character Areas
- Land affected by C308

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The Central Melbourne Design Guide provides a resource to aid pre-application and application discussions between applicants and development planners. It also aims to assist urban designers in the preparation of clear and consistent design advice, as well as planning professionals with the assessment of development proposals.

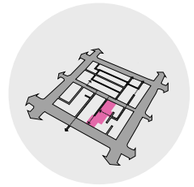
Importantly this Guide is not intended to prescribe template outcomes or erode the diversity of possible design approaches. The Guide instead establishes a clear vision and framework within which project proponents and their selected design practices can innovate. The implementation and day to day use of the Guide will continue to be supported by robust Design Review processes.

The Guide mirrors the DDO1 structure, with Objectives, Outcomes and Requirements ordered into a series of six themes. The themes are structured in order of scale from the neighbourhood or precinct, down to the scale of building interfaces and design detail. The structure is as follows:

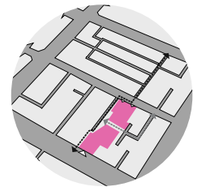
- Urban structure **[US]**
- Site Layout **[SL]**
- Building Mass **[BM]**
- Building Program **[BP]**
- Public Interface **[PI]**
- Design Detail **[DD]**

In addition to Design Outcomes and Requirements, each of the six themes contain helpful 'Tips' at the conclusion of the chapter articulating images of outcomes the City is seeking to avoid. These images, with supporting captions are designed to highlight outcomes that could undermine the quality of the public realm.

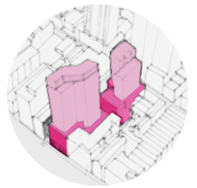
BIG



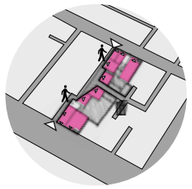
Urban Structure



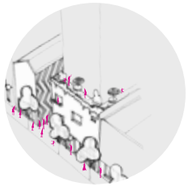
Site Layout



Building Mass



Building Program



Public Interface

SMALL

Design Detail

GOOD DESIGN MATTERS

Melbourne's attractiveness to businesses, residents and visitors is in large part derived from the design of its buildings, streets, and open spaces. Design is about much more than appearance and impacts upon the function, amenity and contribution of a project to public life. Cities that invest in high quality design entice people, investment and enjoy subsequent economic prosperity.

The City of Melbourne has developed a strong reputation for urban quality through ongoing investment in the procurement of capital works projects of high design quality. Equally important is the City's influence through the planning framework on setting expectations of the quality of private development and ensuring adequate design detail is provided to secure outcomes through to delivery.

The DDO1, in conjunction with the Central Melbourne Design Guide sets minimum standards and raises expectations of design quality. However these provisions operate in conjunction with the following processes:

- Expert design review, undertaken by a team of architects, landscape architects and urban designers, working closely with Development Planners.
- A rigorous, collaborative planning and design process from the earliest stages of concept design, through to detailed design and delivery following planning permission.

The City of Melbourne Design Excellence Program highlights special cases where 'design excellence' (defined as '*The highest standard of architectural, urban and landscape design')* may be required on strategic sites. Where Design Excellence is to be achieved, this should be supported by an agreed external process of validation, including:

- An appropriately procured Design Competition Process, or
- Design Review by the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) at both concept and detailed design stage.

Selecting a Design Team

The quality of a design outcome is greatly influenced by the choice of design team and the establishment of a project brief with a high level of design ambition. The use of experienced Architects and Landscape Architects with appropriate professional accreditation is an important first step. Professional accreditation demonstrates the required extent of professional training and industry standards which uphold the quality of these professionals and protects consumers.

In the selection of a suitably qualified design team, it is important for project proponents to adopt a Quality Based Selection process which provides a methodology for selecting a team based on a range of criteria without undue loading given to any one criterion such as cost. Further information is provided in the OVGA guide 'Government as Smart Client' (2013).

A helpful place to search for a design team is through industry awards such as the Australian Institute of Architects and Australian Institute of Landscape Architects Awards, which provides a peer reviewed validation of demonstrated design quality. It is also critical to visit completed projects by the design team to understand the delivery of concept through to detail.

Some larger projects may warrant the engagement of multiple design practices for various components of the building, such as seen in the Queen Victoria Development, the Urban Workshop Development, as well as the RMIT New Academic Street. The collaboration of experienced, large practices with strong capability on complex building programs, with emerging design practices has yielded consistently positive outcomes both for project proponents and the City.

Good Design in the Planning Process

Good design requires commitment at every stage in the design process, from site acquisition, through concept development to detailed delivery.

Valuation and site acquisition

The allocation of a sufficient, realistic budget is critical at the project feasibility stage to ensure that a quality design outcome can be achieved.

Strong design brief underpinned by a contribution to place

When preparing a design brief, the primary functional needs should be balanced with a detailed understanding of the local context and what is needed to deliver a high quality, active and engaging public realm.

Pre-application discussion with a preliminary concept

Early engagement with Council at the concept stage, prior to significant investment in the design, can increase confidence in the project from all parties and ensure a collaborative rather than combative planning process.

Design negotiation following technical referrals and public notification

Once all technical matters have been assessed and public notification has occurred, the planner will then be in a position to make a recommendation.

Any outstanding design matters that have been raised through community submissions or technical referrals will need to be resolved at this stage.

If any further changes are required, these can be negotiated through Amended Plans. If changes are required through Permit Conditions then carefully worded requirements can assist in securing a quality design outcome.

Submission of plans to satisfy permit conditions and amendments

Invariably buildings evolve following planning permission as documentation progresses or a contractor is brought on board.

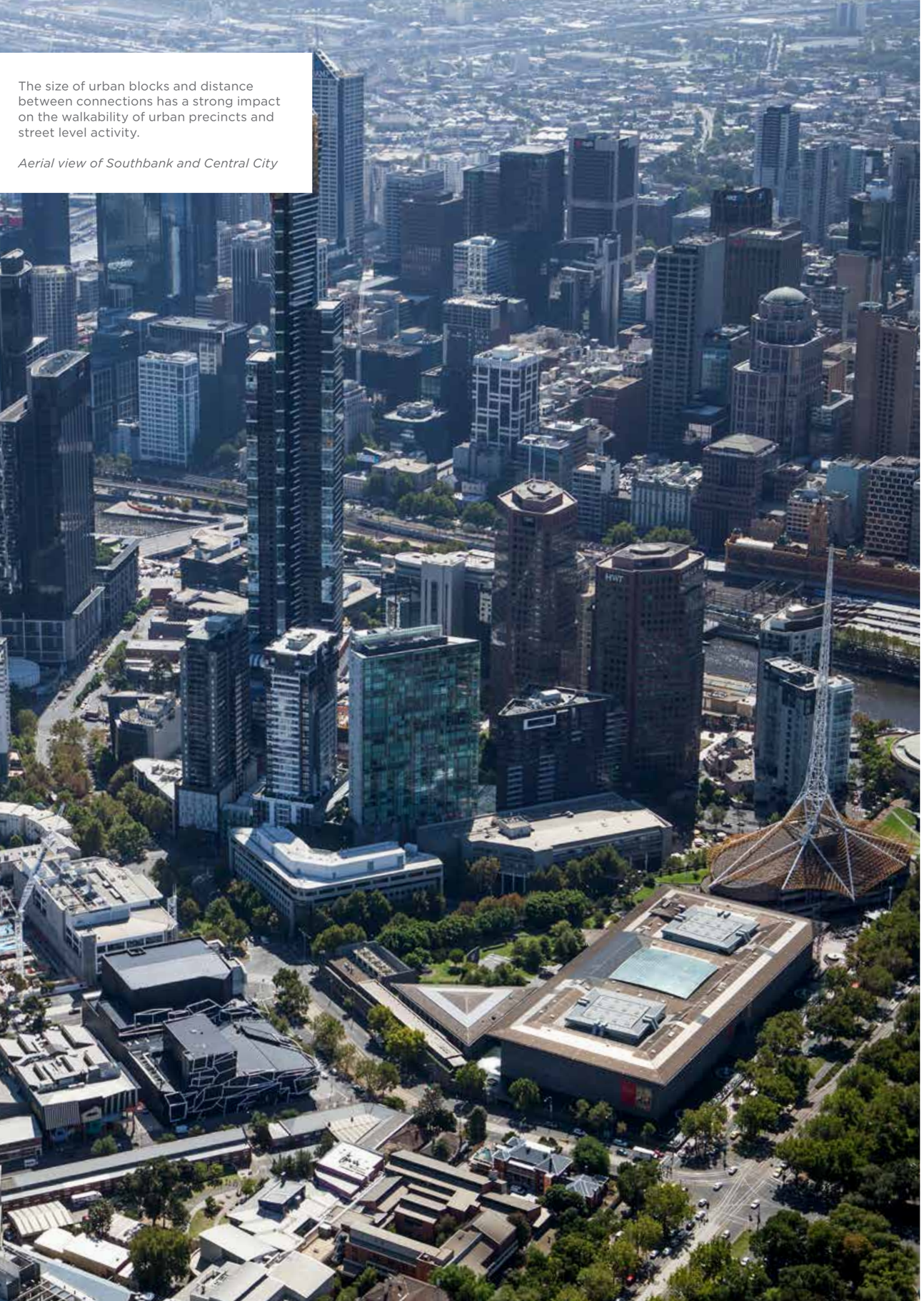
Design development and documentation, (where an approved concept is translated into detailed instructions) is a critical stage in the process. It is this stage where the design quality promised at planning permit approval stage needs to be secured.

Permit Conditions can assist, by requiring retention of the original design team beyond the initial planning approval to ensure continuity and design integrity. Further, Permit Conditions can be used to require more refined detail drawings of building facades and the public realm interface. This can allow further time for the design team to refine the initial concept with the certainty of a planning approval already in place.

Auditing and Enforcement

Careful checking of completed buildings is important to ensure that critical components of Design Quality are realised in accordance with the approved planning drawings and to evaluate and learn from built outcomes.

Where it becomes apparent that buildings have not been delivered in accordance with approved plans, enforcement can be a key mechanism to address any shortfalls or require further rectification work.



The size of urban blocks and distance between connections has a strong impact on the walkability of urban precincts and street level activity.

Aerial view of Southbank and Central City

URBAN STRUCTURE

Introduction

Urban Structure relates to the network of main streets, streets, laneways and open spaces which define the size and shape of urban blocks.

Does the development promote walkable precincts?

Design Outcomes

An **urban block structure** that:

- Is sufficiently fine grained to support walking as the primary mode of transport.

A **pedestrian network** that:

- Reduces walking distances.
- Completes existing connections and laneways.
- Retains and improves existing connections.
- Provides partial connections which can be completed when adjacent site development occurs.

Pedestrian connections that are:

- High quality.
- Safe and attractive.
- Accessible by people of all abilities.
- Easily identified and legible.
- Designed to enable stationary activities.

Provide a fine grained urban block structure to support walking

Design Requirements

[US-1] Where the average urban block length is greater than 100 metres, development should provide a new through-block pedestrian connection. In Southbank these pedestrian connections should be provided as laneways.*

[US-2] Within 200 metres of a rail station, more frequent pedestrian connections should be provided to manage high pedestrian volumes.

[US-3] Where possible pedestrian connections should be located less than 70 metres from the next intersection or pedestrian connection.

[US-4] Development with an abuttal to two or more streets or laneways should provide a pedestrian connection between those abuttals where this improves the walkability of the urban block.

* Note: Urban blocks with an average length of more than 100 metres are identified on Map 1 in the appendix.

Proposed development

Proposed pedestrian connection

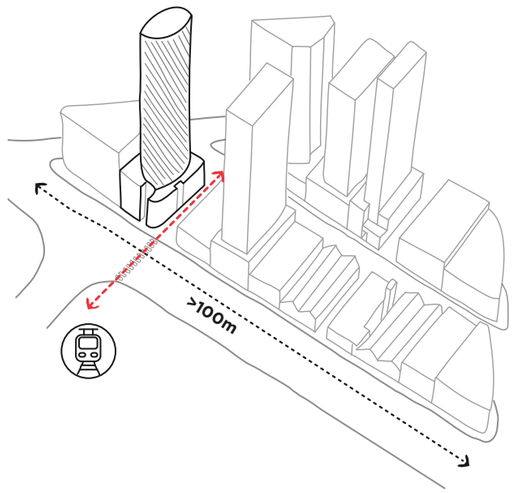


Figure 1 Where large block lengths exist, and within 200m of a rail station, new connections enable a more efficient network for pedestrian movement contributing to the reduction of congestion.

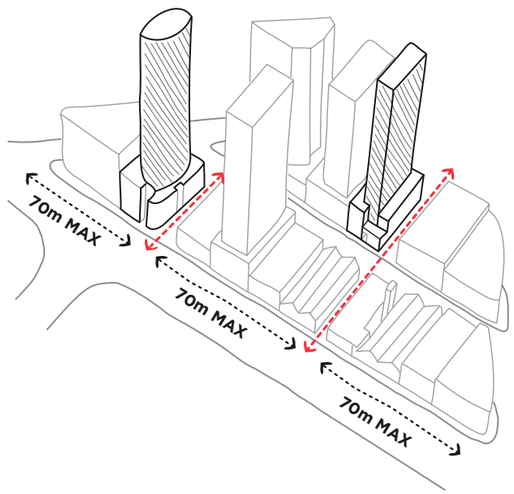


Figure 2 Providing pedestrian connections at maximum intervals of 70m significantly improves the walkability of the urban block structure.

Melbourne's laneway network provides convenient, attractive and safe connections where pedestrians are prioritised, while contributing to the alleviation of congestion in areas with high concentrations of activity.

Centre Place

Retain, improve, and complete connections

Design Requirements

[US-5] Where a development could deliver part of a pedestrian connection that is able to reduce the average urban block length to less than 100 metres, but does not extend the full depth of the block, the development should include a connection that can be completed when a connection is provided through an adjoining site.

[US-6] Where a development has the potential to achieve a through-block connection by extending an existing or proposed connection on an adjoining site, the development should provide for the completion of the through-block connection.

[US-7] Development should maintain and improve the quality of existing pedestrian connections and arcades.

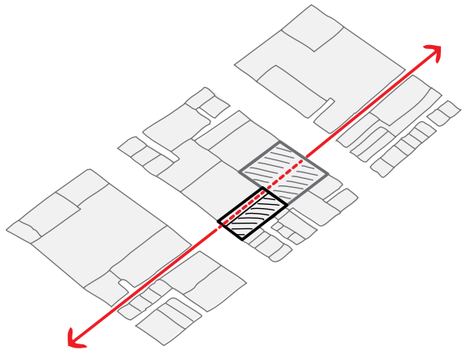


Figure 3 The proposed development provides a new connection that can be completed when the adjoining site to the north is redeveloped in the future in order to improve precinct connectivity.

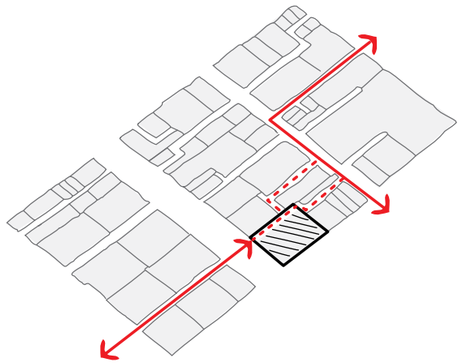


Figure 4 The proposed development provides a new connection to extend an existing network. This allows for a legible and continuous walking connection within the urban block structure.

Proposed development

Future development

Proposed pedestrian connections

Existing pedestrian connections

This open to sky laneway completes an existing network by connecting to an adjacent internal mall.

Driver Lane

Design safe and attractive laneways

Design Requirements

[US-8] Pedestrian connections that reduce (or when completed will reduce) an average urban block length to less than 100 metres should be:

- Open 24 hours a day.
- Open to the sky and a through-building connection.

[US-9] Pedestrian connections should be:

- Direct, attractive, well-lit and provide a line of sight from one end to the other.
- Safe and free of entrapment spaces and areas with limited passive surveillance.
- Publicly accessible at ground level and appropriately secured by legal agreement.
- Lined by active frontages.

[US-10] Laneways should be:

- At least six metres wide.
- Laneways may be less than six metres wide where, either:
- The laneway is the same width or wider than an existing laneway that it continues.
- The laneway does not provide for vehicle access.

Figure 5 High quality pedestrian connections adopt a width that is sufficient for both movement and stopping spaces, and incorporate active frontages at ground and upper levels to provide a sense of activity, vibrancy and safety.

The new laneways within the QV development incorporate legible open to sky connections in addition to covered arcades to provide choice in the movement network.

Queen Victoria Development

Enable stationary activities in arcades

Design Requirements

[US-11] Arcades should:

- Adopt vertical proportions with a height greater than the width.
- Be a minimum of two storeys in height.
- Incorporate high quality exterior grade materials and finishes to all surfaces including paving, walls, ceilings and lighting.
- Have highly legible entries including any doors or gates.

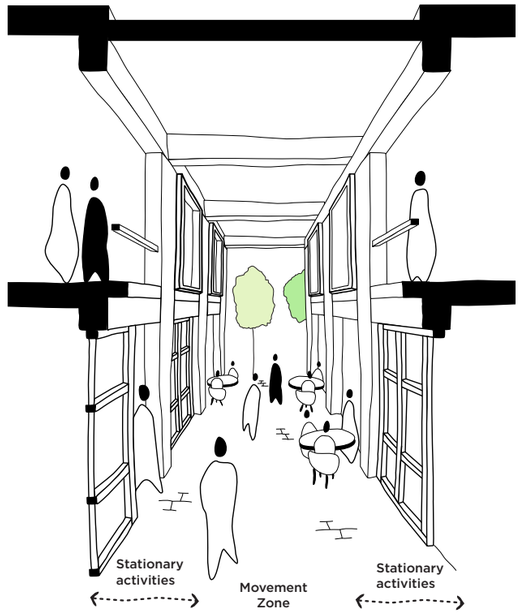
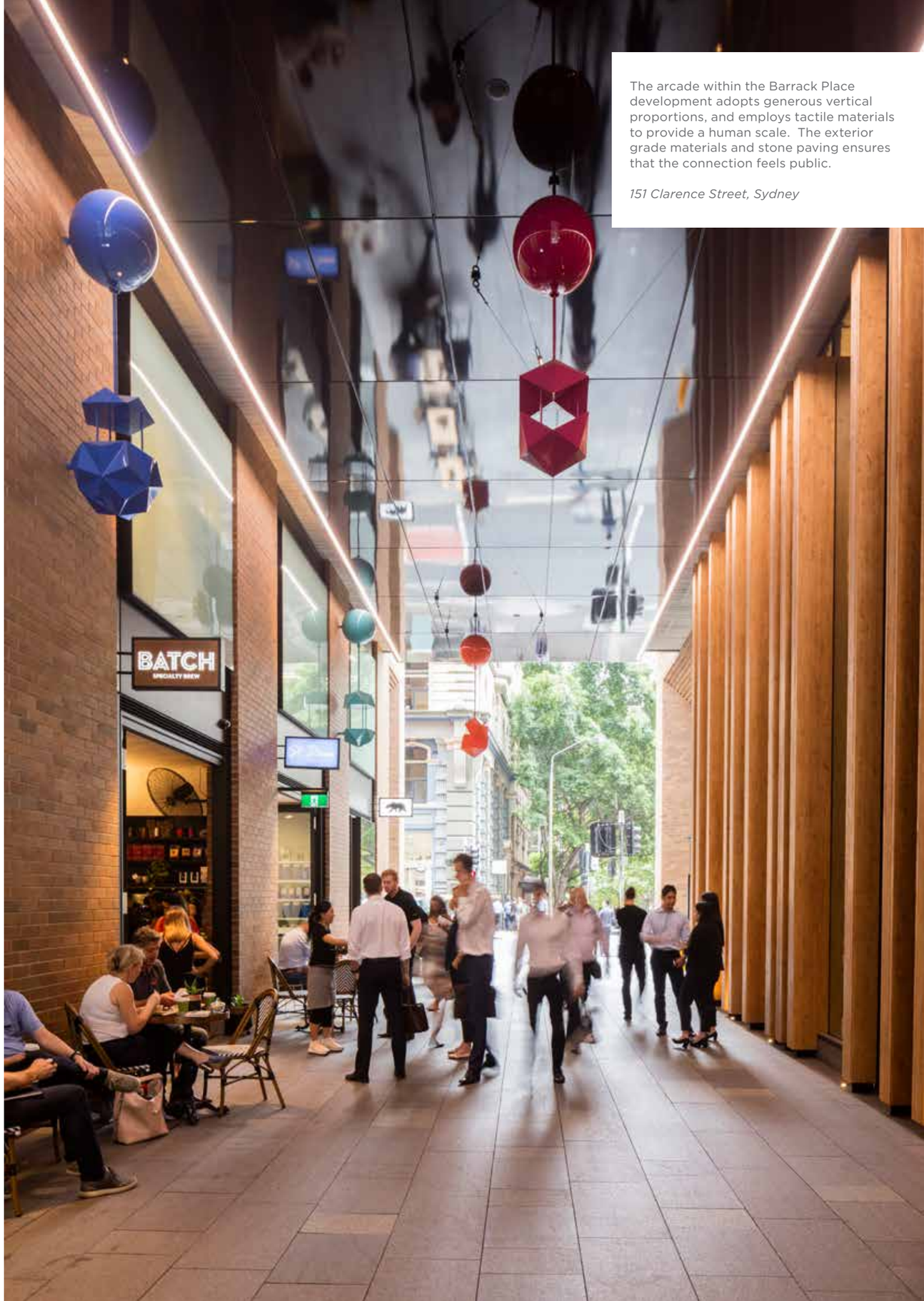


Figure 6 High quality arcades adopt vertical proportions with a width that is sufficient for both movement and stationary activity. Incorporating active frontages at ground and upper levels provide a sense of activity, vibrancy, and safety.



The arcade within the Barrack Place development adopts generous vertical proportions, and employs tactile materials to provide a human scale. The exterior grade materials and stone paving ensures that the connection feels public.

151 Clarence Street, Sydney

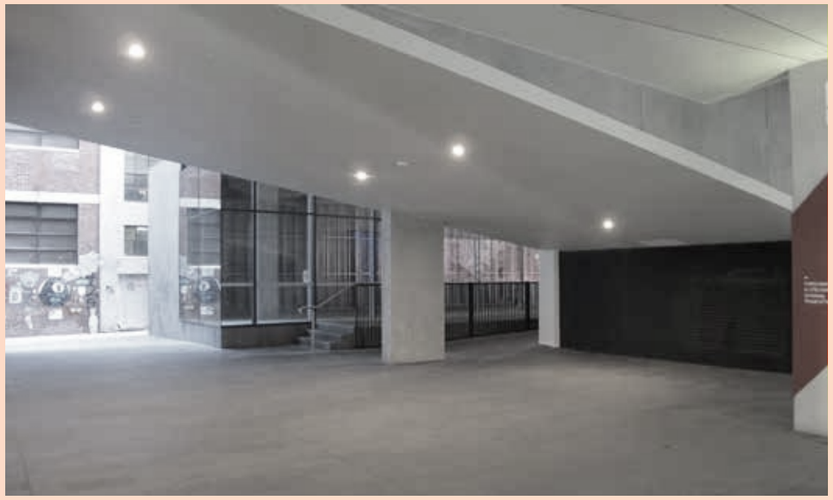
Tips: design outcomes to avoid

Figure 7 Blank walls along a public connection reduce the safety and usability of the space

Figure 8 The entry to the arcade is difficult to distinguish from adjoining tenancies. This reduces the legibility and likelihood of the public using the arcade.

Figure 9 Connections without a clear line of sight from end to end can reduce legibility and safety.

Figure 10 Deep alcoves resulting from a parking ramp overhead negatively impact the usability and safety of this space.



The site plan should reinforce a high quality and well defined public realm with vehicle entries located away from main street frontages.

567 Collins Street, Cox Architecture
Image: Cox Architecture

SITE LAYOUT

Introduction

Site layout refers to the arrangement of buildings and spaces, including the position of entries, building services and circulation cores and how these elements respond to and reinforce the character of streets and laneways.

Design Outcomes

Site layout that:

- Reinforces the valued characteristics of streets and laneways.
- Delivers a well-defined public realm.

Plazas that:

- Are accessible to people of all abilities.
- Are safe and attractive.
- Deliver opportunities for stationary activity.
- Alleviate pedestrian congestion.

Vehicle entries that:

- Do not create traffic conflict.
- Do not undermine the attractiveness or safety of the pedestrian experience.

Colonnades that:

- Are safe and attractive.
- Are accessible to people of all abilities.

Does the configuration of ground level spaces and entrances contribute to the use, safety, and character of the streets and laneways?

Deliver a well-defined public realm

Design Requirements

[SL-1] Building should be aligned to the street at ground level unless they provide for a plaza.

[SL-2] Development should avoid narrow publicly accessible alcoves and recesses that lack a clear public purpose.

[SL-3] Development should avoid entrapment areas and areas with limited passive surveillance.

[SL-4] Development should cater for anticipated pedestrian volumes.

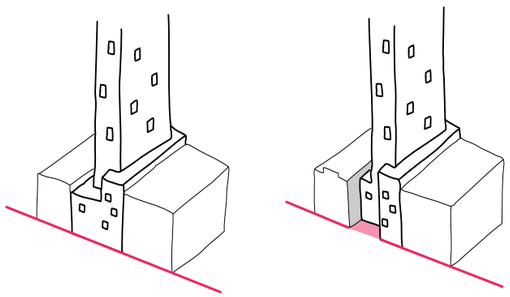


Figure 11 The proposed development (left) aligns to the street to provide a continuous and well-defined street edge. Setbacks can be appropriate if they accommodate a well defined publicly accessible open space.

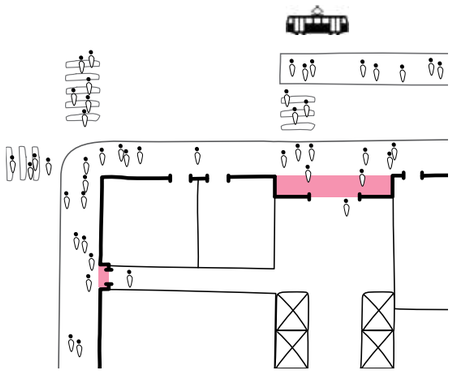
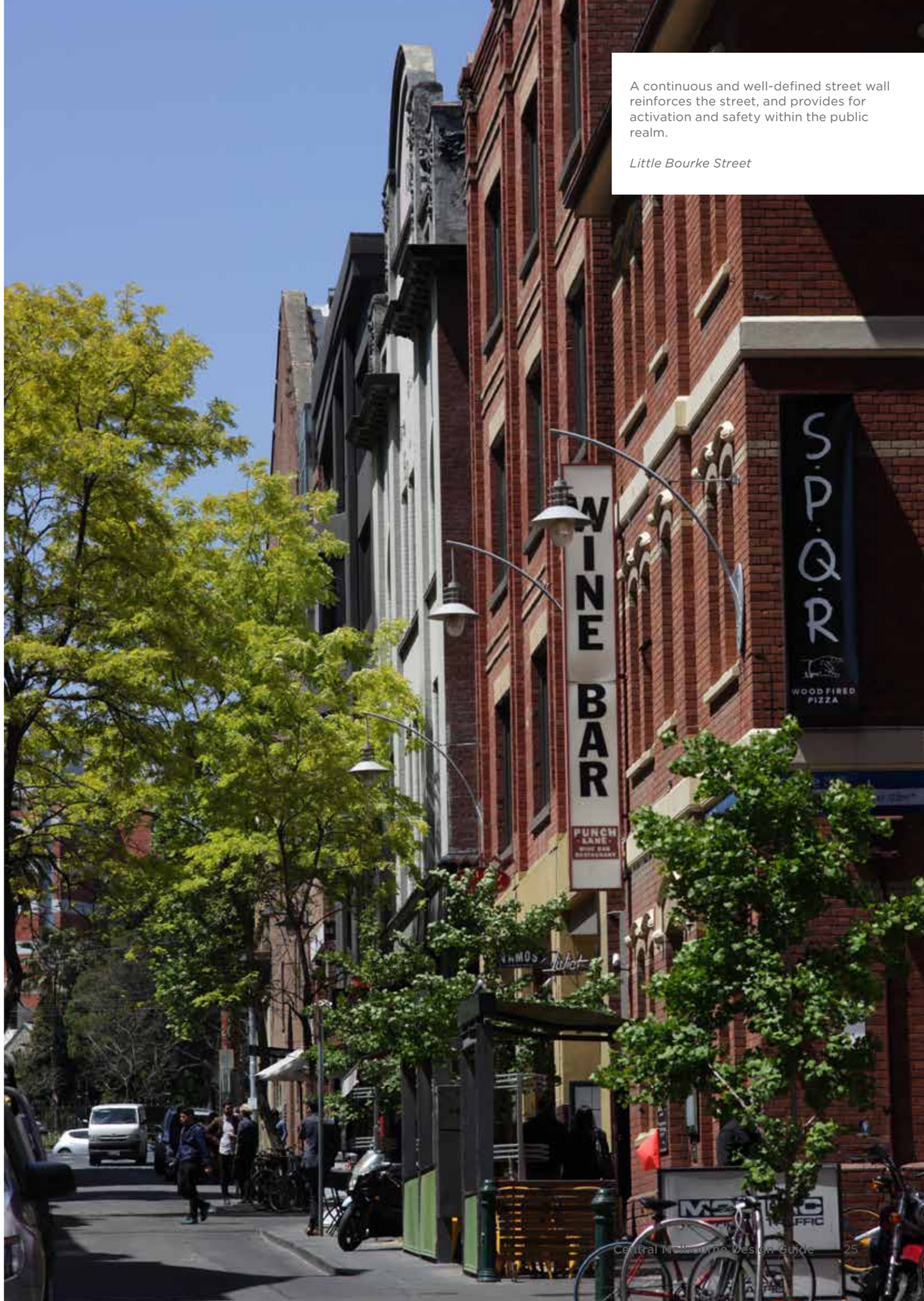


Figure 12 Minor setbacks at building entries can help manage pedestrian volumes on busy streets. These setbacks should be limited in depth and of sufficient width to avoid the creation of entrapment space.



A continuous and well-defined street wall reinforces the street, and provides for activation and safety within the public realm.

Little Bourke Street

Provide safe and attractive plazas

Design Requirements

[SL-5] Plazas should:

- Be open to the sky.
- Be accessible to people of all abilities.
- Provide opportunities for stationary activity.
- Be lined with active frontages.
- Incorporate soft and hard landscaping elements.
- Have access to sunlight.

[SL-6] Development should retain at least 50 per cent of any existing publicly accessible private plaza where:

- It is oriented to a main street or street.
- It helps reduce pedestrian congestion.
- A high quality space with opportunities for stationary activity can be achieved.

[SL-7] Where a plaza contributes to the significance of a heritage place, retention of more than 50 per cent of the plaza may be required to conserve the heritage values of the place.

Proposed re-development (building footprint)

Plaza

Refurbished plaza

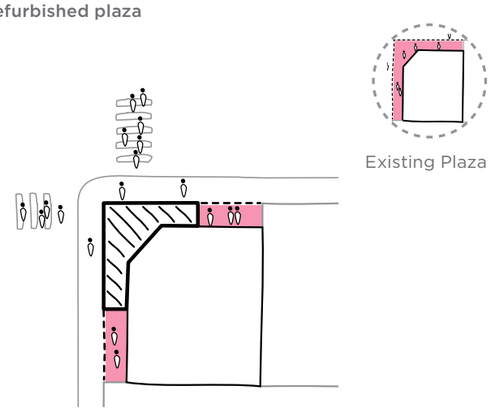


Figure 13 In the case of a refurbished plaza, a contemporary infill podium is positioned to provide a well-defined street corner. At least 50% of the existing plaza is retained as two smaller refurbished plazas.

Redevelopment with plaza

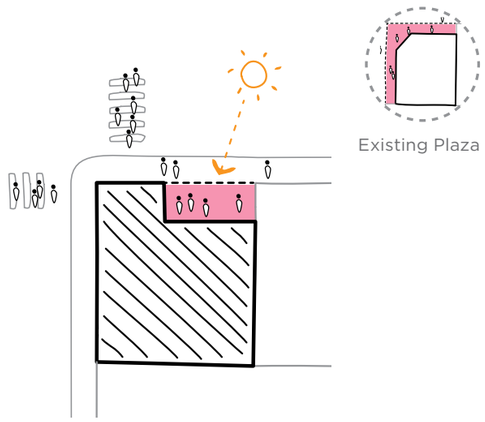
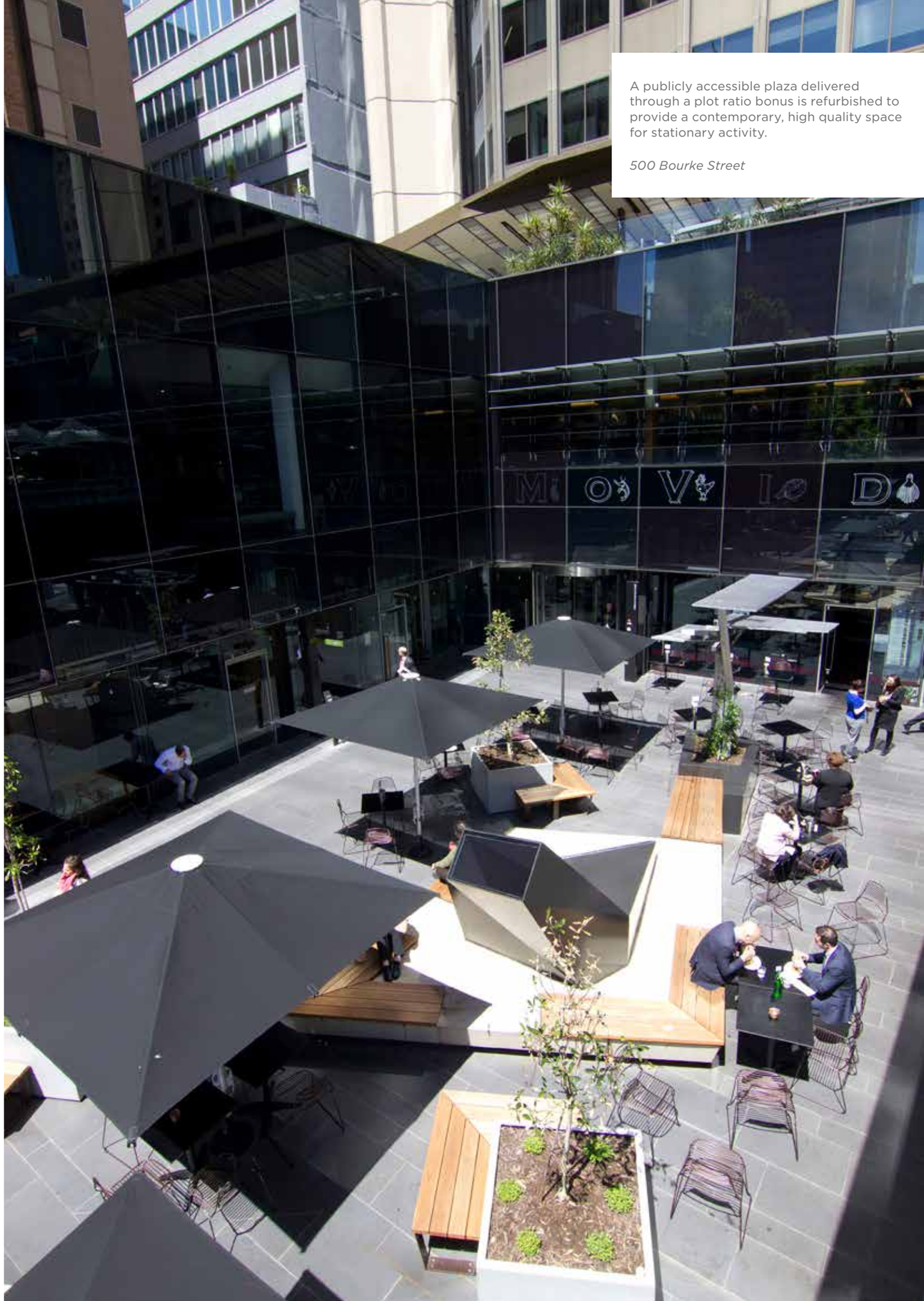


Figure 14 In the case of a site redevelopment, the new plaza of at least 50% of the original area is positioned to the north to maximise sunlight amenity.



A publicly accessible plaza delivered through a plot ratio bonus is refurbished to provide a contemporary, high quality space for stationary activity.

500 Bourke Street

Minimise the impact of vehicle entries on pedestrian experience

Design Requirements

[SL-8] Vehicle access and loading bays:

- Should not be located on main streets.
- Should not be constructed on a traffic conflict frontage or in a lane leading off a traffic conflict frontage shown on Map 2.

[SL-9] The location and width of car park entries should minimise the impacts on the pedestrian network.

[SL-10] In the Retail Core Area – Schedule 2 to the Capital City Zone must not be constructed on a traffic conflict frontage shown on Map 2, or in a lane leading off a traffic conflict frontage.

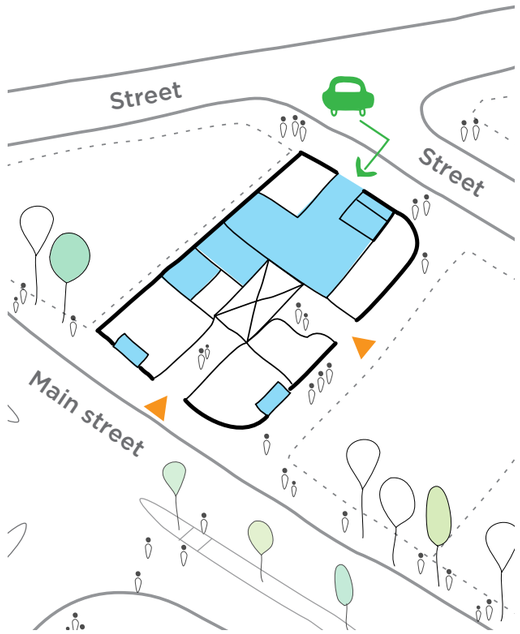


Figure 15 The position of vehicle entries, services, and building entries should respond to street hierarchy. In this example, a consolidated entry off a secondary street provides for loading and vehicle entry.

Car park entry

Building services

Building entries

This large commercial development with multiple street frontages maintains a continuous pedestrian experience along Collins Street, free of loading or vehicle access.

101 Collins Street

Design safe and attractive colonnades

Design Requirements

[SL-11] Colonnades should:

- Adopt vertical proportions with a height greater than the width.
- Incorporate high quality design detail to all publicly visible planes and surfaces.
- Provide ground level spaces that are accessible to people of all abilities.
- Have a clear public purpose.
- Be well-lit and provide clear lines of sight from one end to another.
- Be safe and free of entrapment spaces and areas with limited passive surveillance.

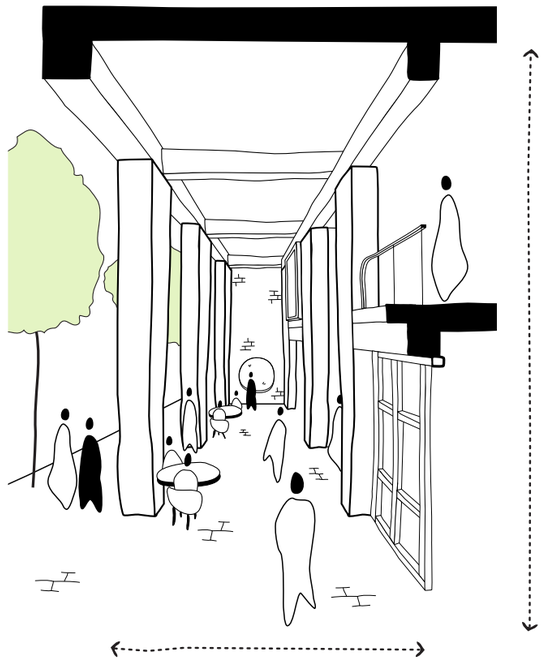


Figure 16 The colonnade height is twice its depth, ensuring excellent daylight levels and a strong visual connection to the public realm. Columns are designed to avoid obstructing views to ground floor tenancies from the public realm.

On a narrow street with limited opportunity for outdoor seating, a vertically proportioned and well lit colonnade provides for activation through cafe seating.

Little Hero Apartments

Tips: design outcomes to avoid

Figure 17 A building setback without a clear public purpose disrupts the continuity of the street and reduces pedestrian comfort.

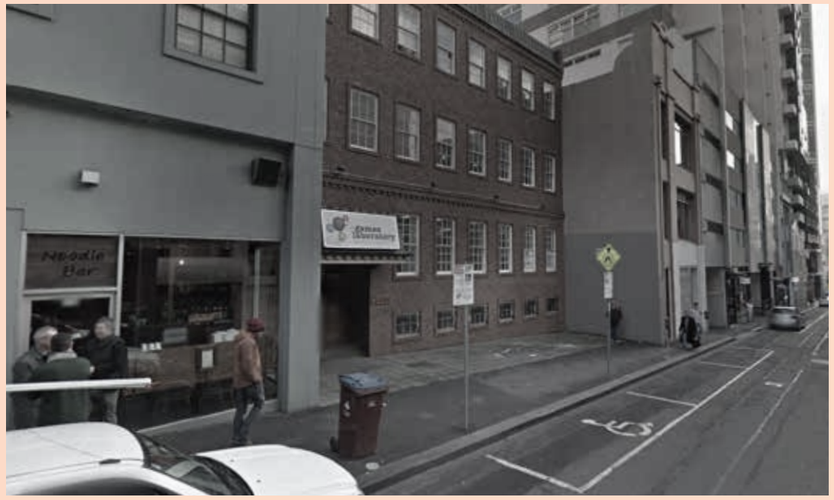
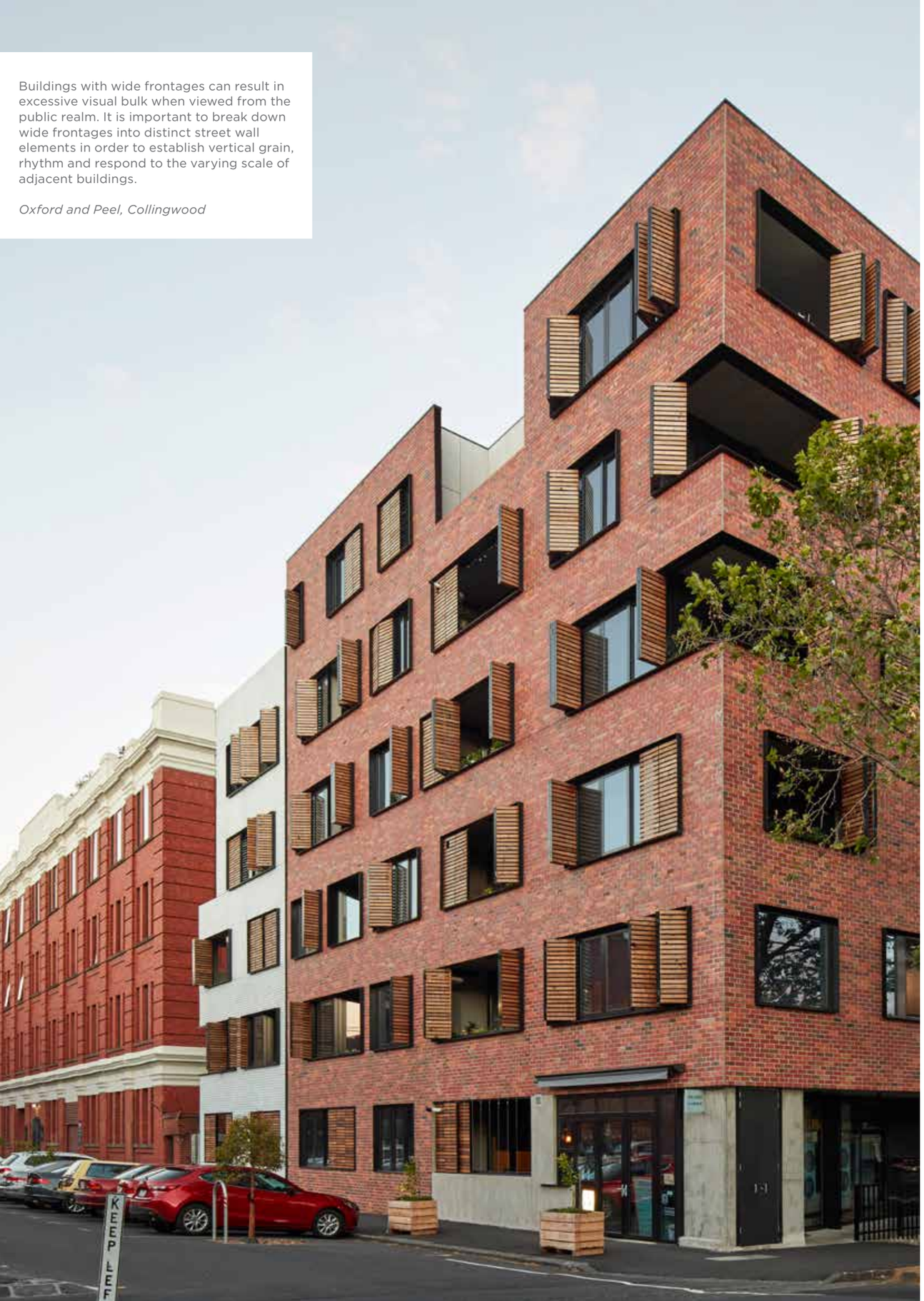


Figure 18 The redevelopment of this former plaza results in small leftover spaces which are not suitable for stationary activity.

Figure 19 A broad vehicle entry on a main street negatively impacts the pedestrian realm.

Figure 20 Low height colonnades with broad columns at the street edge can limit views through to the building interior and negatively impact upon the attractiveness and success of retail spaces.



Buildings with wide frontages can result in excessive visual bulk when viewed from the public realm. It is important to break down wide frontages into distinct street wall elements in order to establish vertical grain, rhythm and respond to the varying scale of adjacent buildings.

Oxford and Peel, Collingwood

BUILDING MASS

Introduction

Building mass relates to the three dimensional form of a building, including its scale, height, proportions and composition.

Design Outcomes

Building mass that:

- Distinguishes between different buildings where a development comprises multiple buildings.
- Respects the height, scale and proportions of adjoining heritage places or buildings within a Special Character Area.
- Reinforces the fine grain and visual interest of streetscapes.
- Maintains a diverse and interesting skyline through the design of roof profiles.

Street walls that:

- Adopt a variety of streetwall heights to reinforce the traditional fine grain, vertical rhythm and visual interest of streetscapes.
- Provide aesthetic interest to the public realm.
- Frame comfortable and attractive streets.

Does the building mass respond to the surrounding context and the pedestrian experience?

Provide visual diversity in development comprising multiple buildings

Design Requirements

[BM-1] Development should adopt a diversity of forms, typologies and architectural language, within a cohesive design framework, on large site where a development comprises multiple buildings.

[BM-2] Development should employ multiple architectural firms, where a development comprises multiple buildings.

Figure 21 The integration of a variety of streetwall heights and built form typologies can ensure the appearance of a successful precinct built organically over time. The use of multiple design practices working together can greatly assist in achieving this outcome.

A lead urban design practice in this project co-ordinated a diverse range of practices to deliver a complex, diverse and successful urban environment as part of a single coherent development.

New Academic Street, RMIT

Reinforce the fine grain and vertical rhythm of the streetscapes

Design Requirements

[BM-3] Street wall heights should be lower along laneways and streets less than 10 metres wide.

[BM-4] Buildings with a street frontage greater than 25 metres in length should be broken into smaller vertical sections, with a range of parapet heights and rebates of sufficient depth to provide modulation in the street façade.

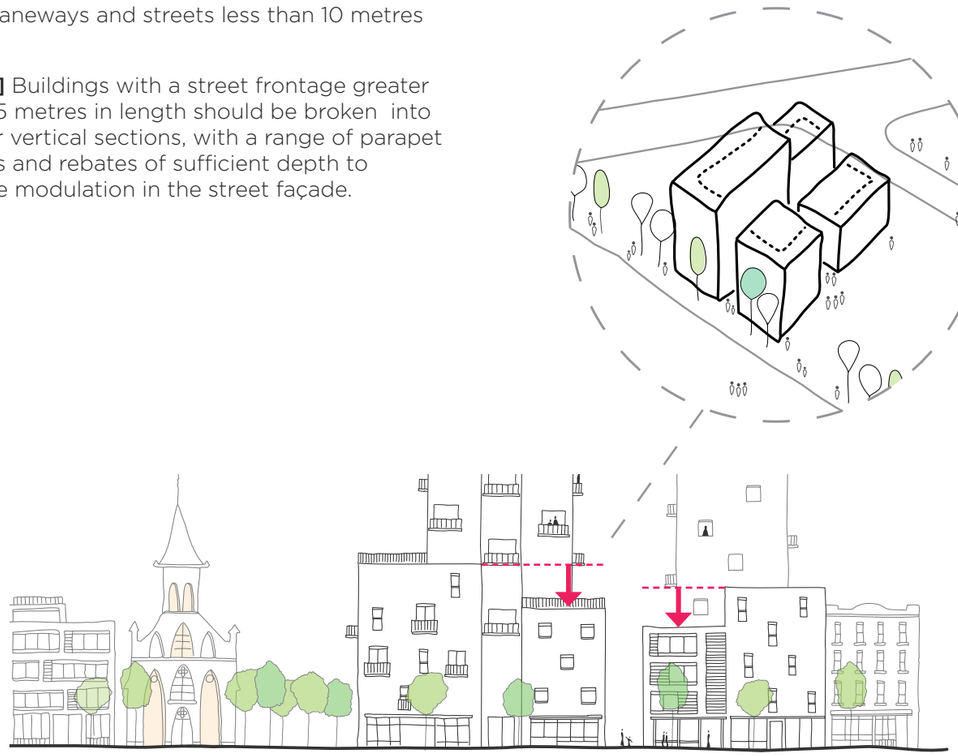


Figure 22 The building mass is broken down into smaller parts to minimise the impact of a large building on the public realm, and contribute a human scaled building mass. A lower street wall is adopted along the laneway interface where the width of the laneway is less than 10m.

In response to the height of adjoining heritage buildings, the streetwall is divided into vertically proportioned elements of different parapet heights.

161 Clarence Street

Respect adjoining heritage places and Special Character Area

Design Requirements

[BM-4] Development should reinforce the ground floor and street wall as the dominant component within the Special Character Area through visually recessive upper level built form.

[BM-5] Street wall heights, upper level setbacks and building separation should respond to the scale of adjacent heritage buildings.

[BM-6] Transitions in height, scale or prominence to a heritage place should avoid relying solely on surface treatments or decorative effects.

Figure 23 Within Special Character Areas, built form is predominantly low or mid-rise in scale with a strong emphasis on the streetwall as the dominant massing element. New forms within or adjacent to the Special Character Area should respect this dominant built form pattern by providing generous setbacks to upper level form.

A new infill street wall responds directly to the height of the adjacent heritage building, while maintaining significant setbacks to the tower beyond.

Rialto Towers Podium Redevelopment

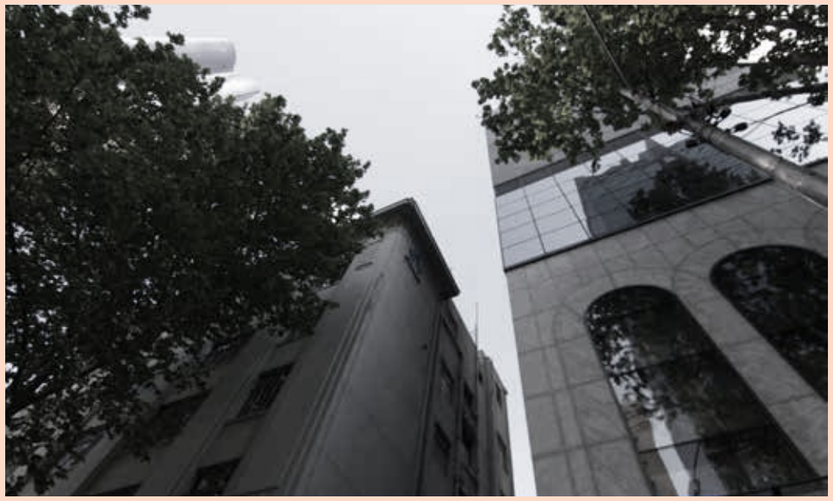
Tips: design outcomes to avoid

Figure 24 This continuous reflective glass frontage extends over 60m in length or one third of a block in the Hoddle Grid. The flatness and length of the facade erodes the characteristic grain, rhythm and visual interest of the streetscape.

Figure 25 A series of four towers adopt an identical design language and stepped massing profile, resulting in a visually monotonous appearance.

Figure 26 The dramatic scale shift between the heritage form and the new tower results in a poor streetscape relationship.

Figure 27 The building on the right incorporates surface effects in an attempt to respond to the adjacent heritage scale, however appears flat and unsuccessful when viewed from within the street.



RMIT Building 80's balcony projection successfully expresses its internal common area program in order to provide visual interaction with the public realm of Swanston Street.

RMIT Building 80

BUILDING PROGRAM

Introduction

Building program relates to the position and configuration of internal spaces to a building. This is a key urban design consideration due to the direct relationship of internal areas to the public realm.

Design Outcomes

Does the position of active uses, services, and parking ensure a high quality public realm?

A **building program** that:

- Delivers safe and high quality interfaces between the public and private realm.
- Maximises activation of the public realm.
- Can accommodate a range of tenancy sizes, including smaller tenancies in the lower levels of the building.
- Allows for adaptation to other uses over time.
- Delivers internal common areas or podium-rooftop spaces that maximise passive surveillance and interaction with the public realm.
- Promotes a strong physical and visual relationship between any community uses within the building and the street.

Building services that:

- Minimise impacts on the public realm.
- Maximise the quality and activation of the public realm.
- Do not dominate the pedestrian experience and are designed as an integrated design element.
- Provide waste collection facilities as an integrated part of the building design.

Car parking that:

- Minimises the impact of car parking on the public realm.

Maximise activation of public realm

Design Requirements

[BP-1] Development should position active uses to address the public realm.

[BP-2] Development should:

- Maximise the number of pedestrian building entries.
- Avoid long expanses of frontage without a building entry.

[BP-3] Large floorplate tenancies should be sleeved with smaller tenancies at ground level at a boundary to a street, laneway or pedestrian connection.

[BP-4] Ground floor tenancies should be configured so that they do not rely upon queuing within the public realm, except where this occurs on a pedestrian only laneway where this is the established character.

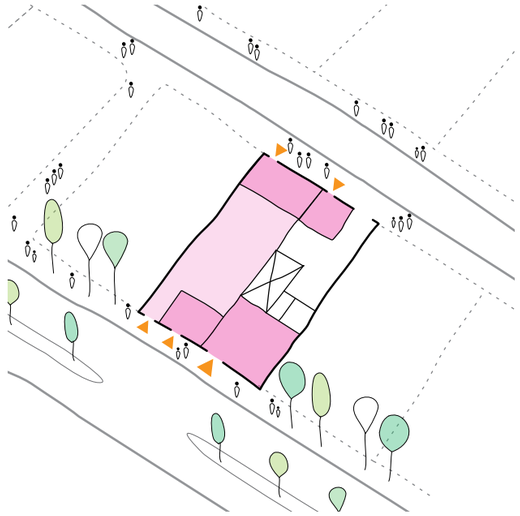
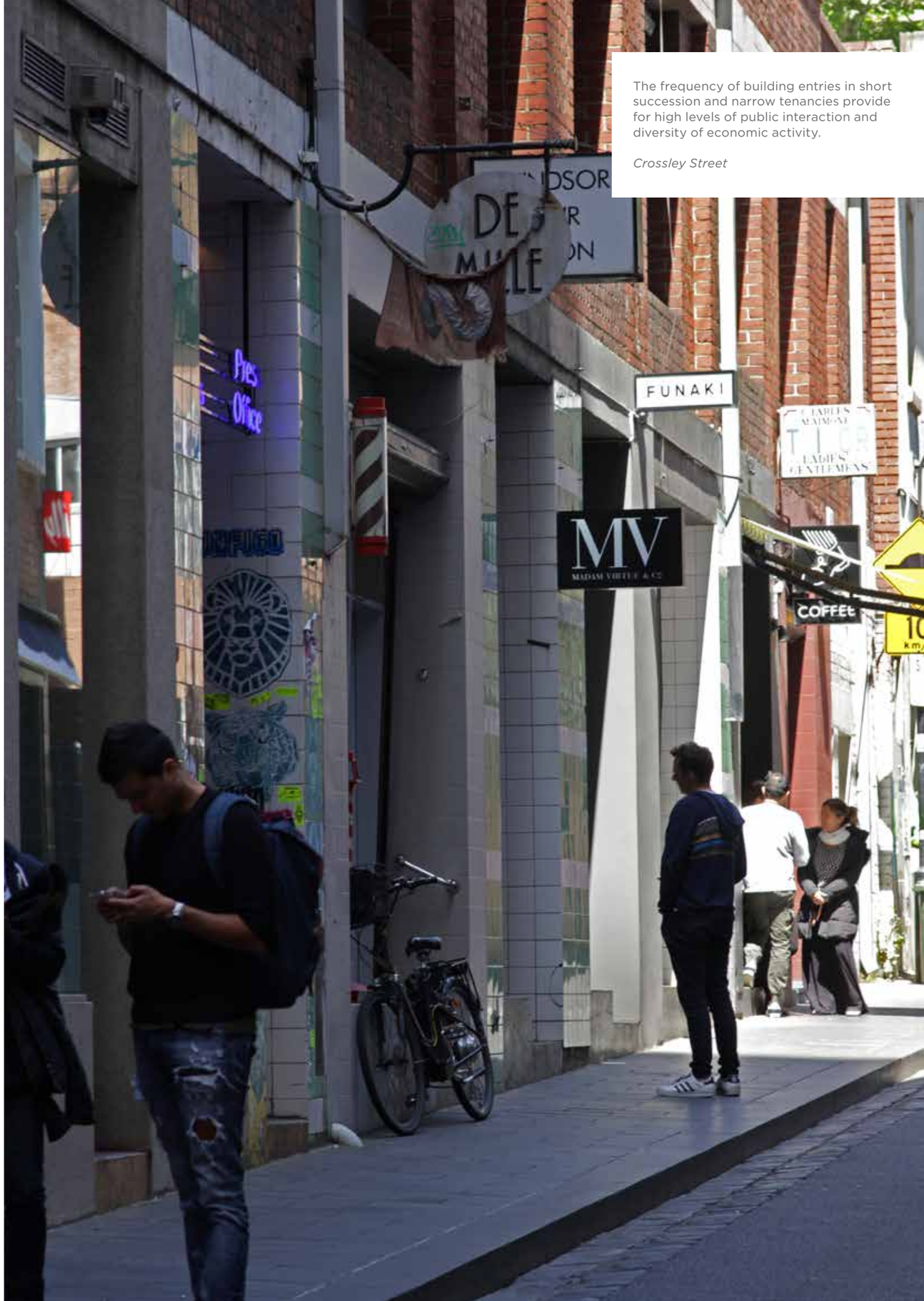


Figure 28 This development provides numerous building entries to both street frontages. The large tenancy (light pink) is sleeved by smaller tenancies to maintain a fine grain pedestrian environment.



The frequency of building entries in short succession and narrow tenancies provide for high levels of public interaction and diversity of economic activity.

Crossley Street

Provide generous ceiling heights that allow for adaptation over time

Design Requirements

[BP-5] Floor to ceiling heights should be a minimum of:

- 4.0 metres at ground level.
- 3.8 metres for levels two and three.
- 3.5 metres above level three and up to 20 metres.

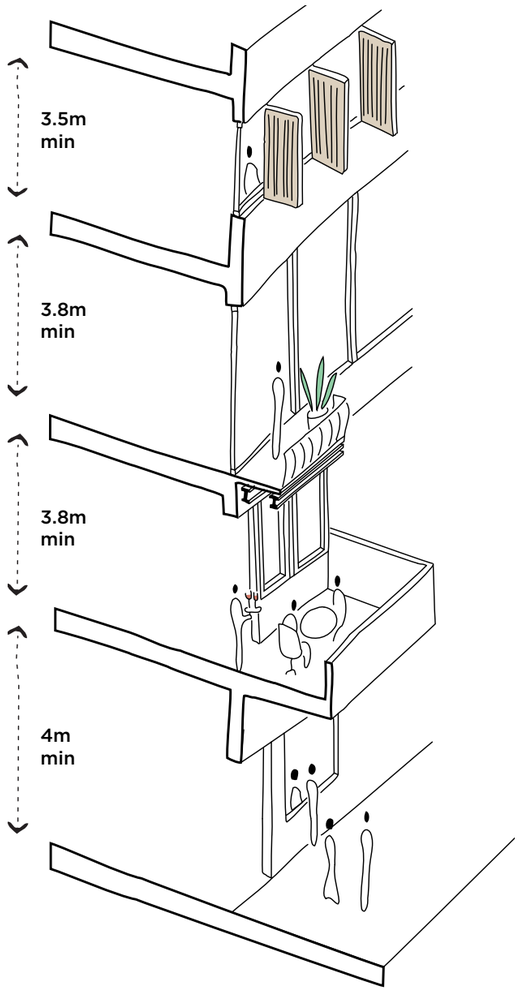


Figure 29 Generous ceiling heights are provided on the lower levels of the building to allow uses to adapt over time.

Generous floor to ceiling heights at the ground floor allow for retail flexibility, while upper floor uses can accommodate either retail or office uses over time.

420 George Street, Sydney

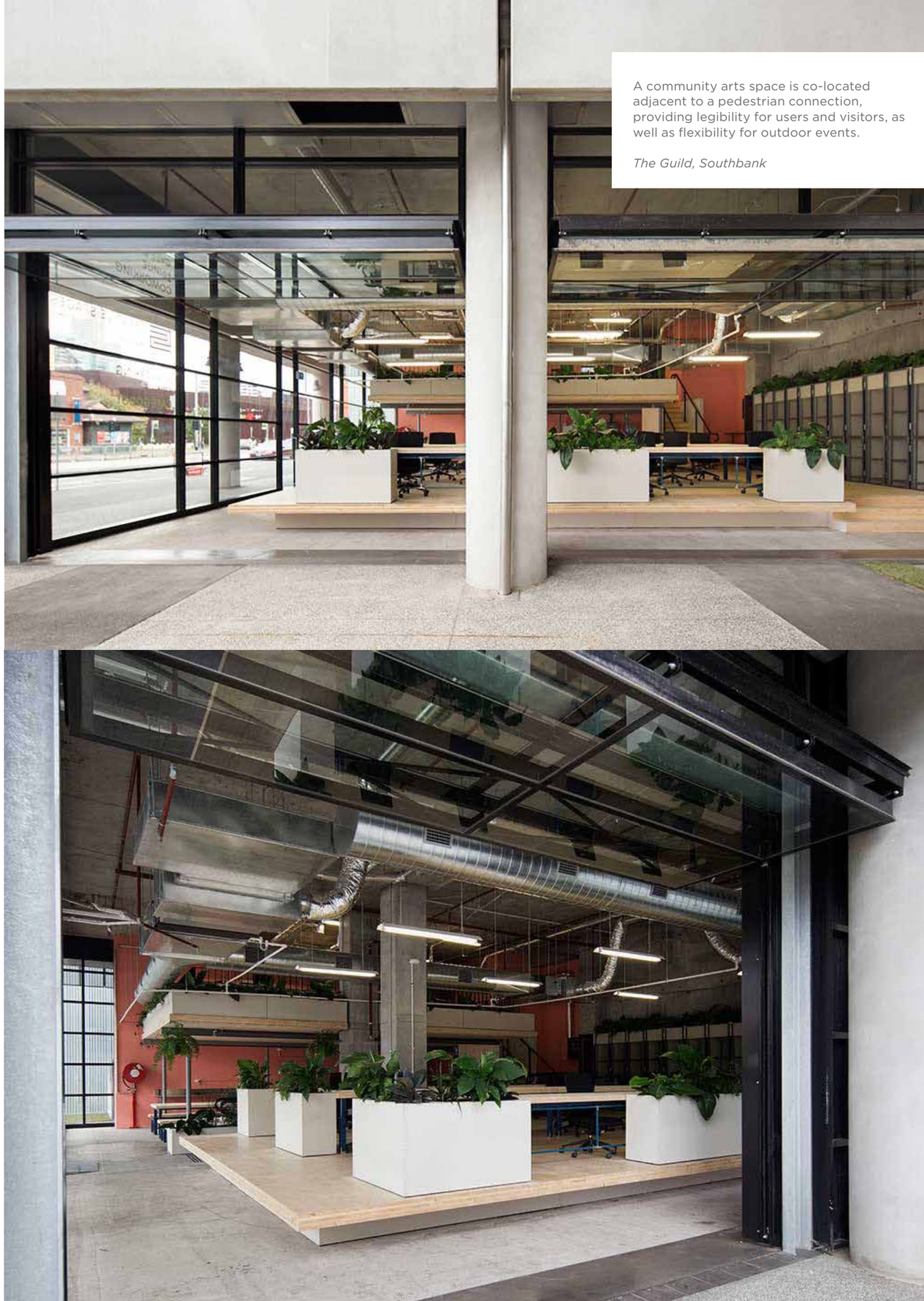
Provide a strong relationship between community uses and the public realm

Design Requirements

[BP-6] Any new community uses should be located in the lower levels of a building so that they have a direct visual and physical connection to the public realm.

[BP-7] Any community uses internal to a building should be co-located with adjacent public space or pedestrian connections.

Figure 30 Development positions public uses adjacent to a plaza. The incorporation of operable openings allow for activities to spill over into the plaza.



A community arts space is co-located adjacent to a pedestrian connection, providing legibility for users and visitors, as well as flexibility for outdoor events.

The Guild, Southbank

Minimise the impact of services on public realm

Design Requirements

[BP-8] Ground floor building services, including waste, loading and parking access:

- Should be minimised.
- Must occupy less than 40 per cent of the ground floor area of the site area. ***Mandatory**

[BP-9] Internal waste collection areas should be sleeved.

[BP-10] Services, loading and waste areas should be located away from streets and public spaces, or within basements or upper levels.

[BP-11] Service cabinets should be located internally with loading, waste or parking areas where possible.

[BP-11] The location and access for waste should comply with the requirements specified in the relevant City of Melbourne waste management guidelines.

Building services

Note: Building service calculations do not include lobby and circulation areas.

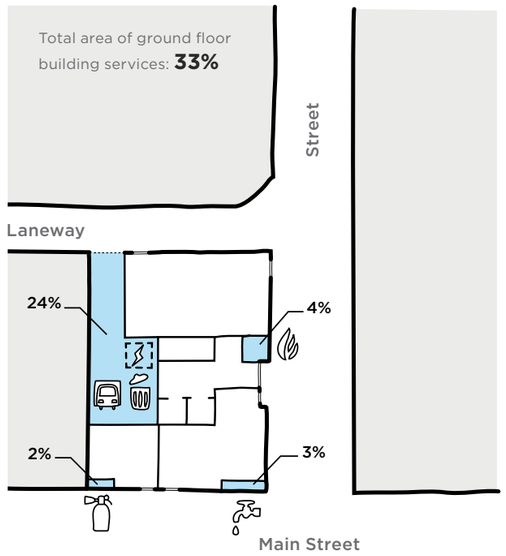


Figure 31 Ground floor services account for less than 40% of site coverage. Parking and loading lanes are consolidated to one access point at the rear, while service cabinets are either integrated internally or distributed along the street edge between active uses.

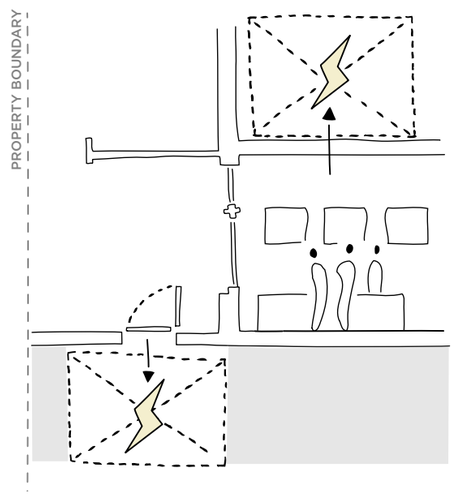
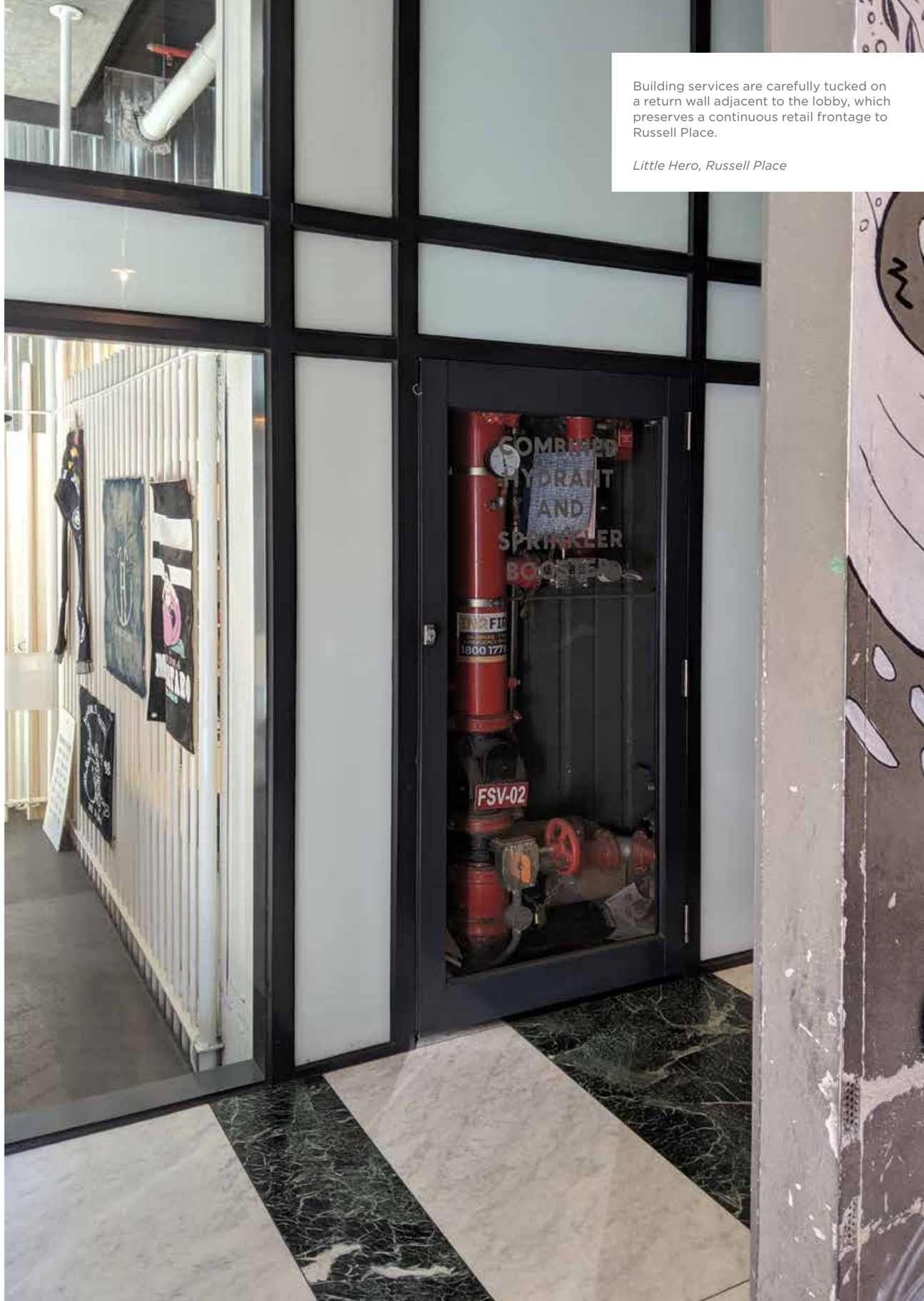


Figure 32 The re-location of a substation above or below ground reduces the building services footprint on the ground floor allowing for design flexibility and greater activation.



Building services are carefully tucked on a return wall adjacent to the lobby, which preserves a continuous retail frontage to Russell Place.

Little Hero, Russell Place

Provide building services as an integrated design element

Design Requirements

[BP-12] Undercroft spaces for waste or loading should not adversely impact safety and continuity of the public realm.

[BP-13] Access doors to any waste, parking or loading area should:

- Be positioned no more than 500 millimetres from the street edge.
- Be designed as an integrated element of the building.

[BP-14] Rooftop plant, services and antennae should be integrated into the overall building form.

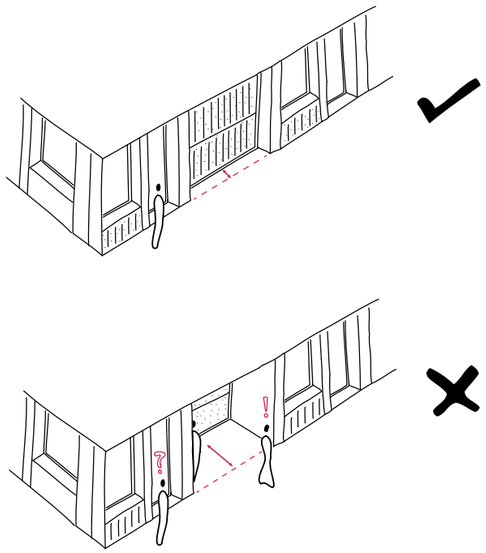


Figure 33 Deep recesses within the facade create entrapment spaces and should be avoided. Shallow recesses of 500mm or less provide street definition and avoid entrapment spaces.

A garage door positioned near to the street boundary maintains a consistent building alignment and avoids a deep recess and entrapment space.

EQ Tower, A'Beckett Street

Minimise impact of car parking on public realm

Design Requirements

[BP-15] Car park ramps should be capable of removal for future adaptation.

[BP-16] In the Hoddle Grid, all car parking must be located in a basement unless it is part of a development that removes existing open to sky at grade car parking. ***Mandatory**

[BP-18] Avoid car parking entries on small sites, where they impact on the activation and safety of the public realm.

[BP-19] Above ground car parking:

- Must be located on the first floor or above. ***Mandatory**
- Must be sleeved to streets. ***Mandatory**
- Should have a floor to ceiling heights of at least 3.2 metres.

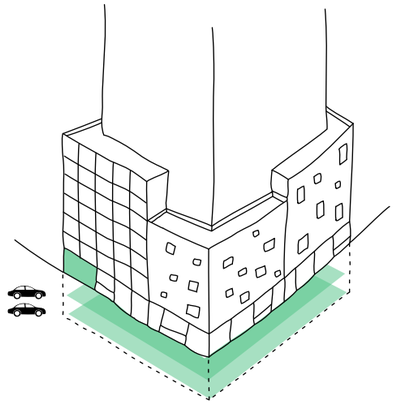


Figure 34 Car parking in the Hoddle Grid must be located in a basement to prevent negative impacts on the public realm.

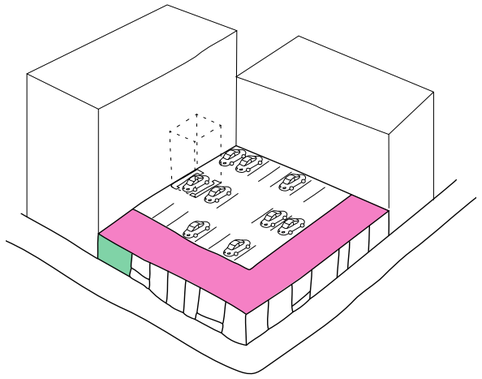


Figure 35 Above ground parking in Southbank or North Wharf must be sleeved with active uses in order to ensure active and engaging upper level interface that visually connects to the street.

A parking structure with flat floorplates and adequate floor to floor height allows for future adaptation.

QV8

An example of an existing car park structure converted into apartments by Breathe Architecture and Grocon.

QV8

Tips: design outcomes to avoid

Figure 36 A carpark reliant on ramped floor plates is more difficult to adapt in the future.

Figure 37 On a narrow frontage this parking structure takes up almost half of the street frontage, negatively impacting upon the quality and safety of the pedestrian realm.

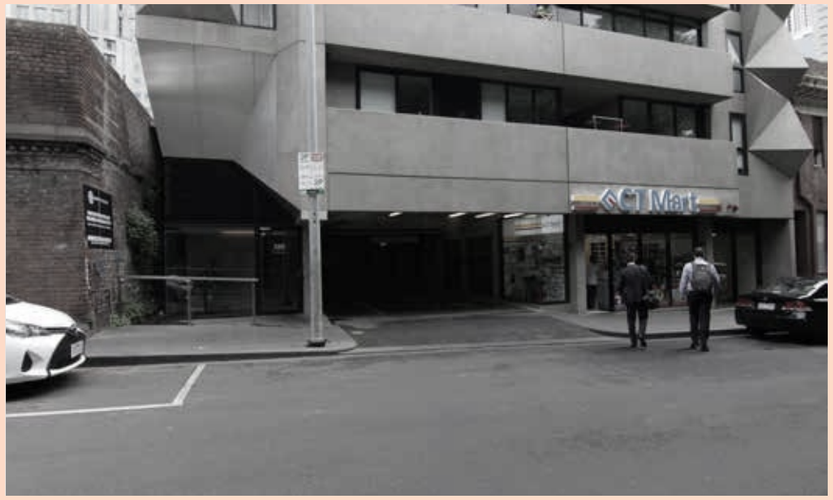
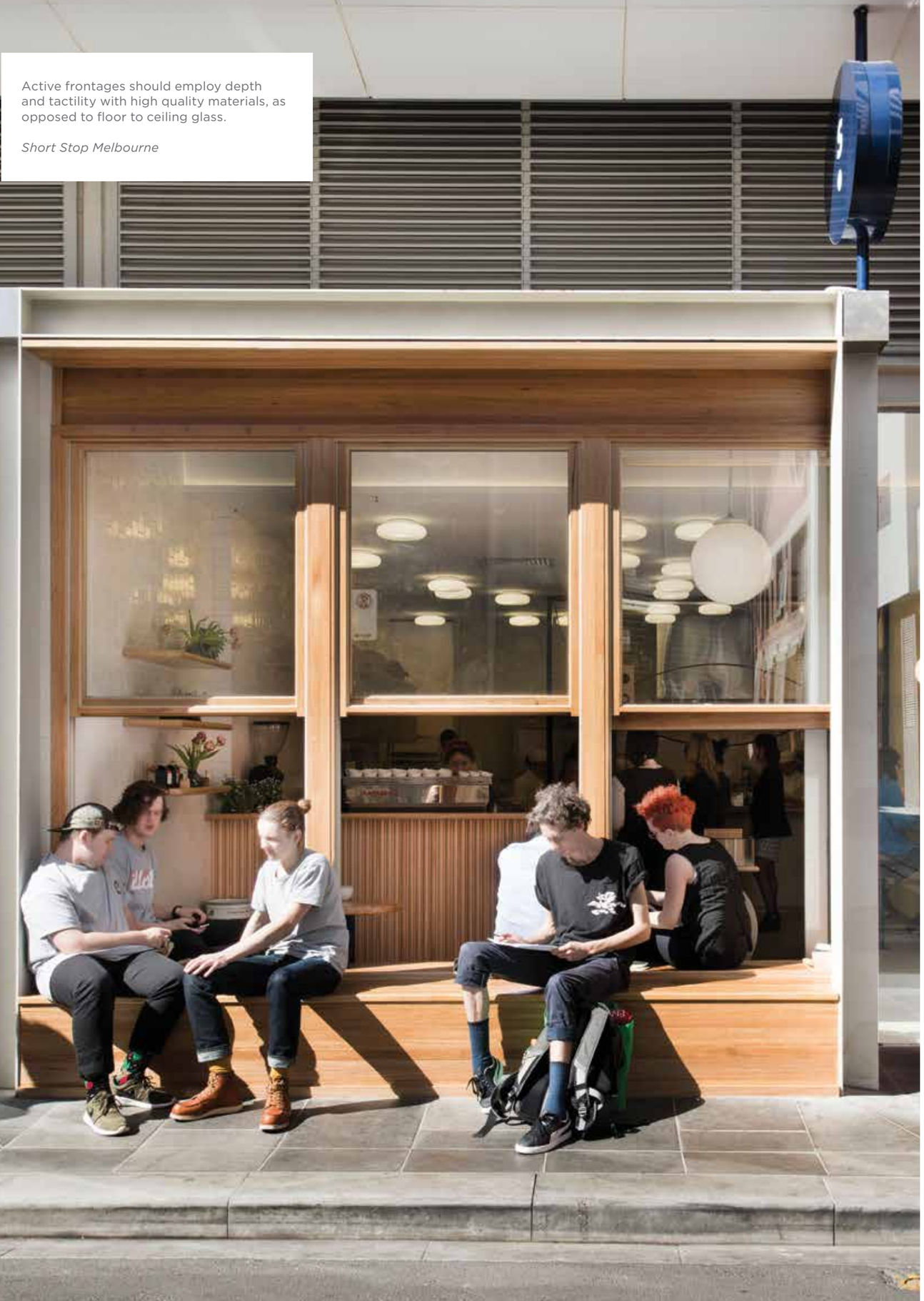


Figure 38 A deep setback to the carpark access door results in an undesirable space which feels unsafe at night and impacts the continuity of the pedestrian realm.

Figure 39 Large supermarket or department stores often require shelving, product display or signage against the facade to resolve the layout challenges of a long expanse of street frontage.



Active frontages should employ depth and tactility with high quality materials, as opposed to floor to ceiling glass.

Short Stop Melbourne

PUBLIC INTERFACES

Introduction

Public interfaces relates to the boundary between a building and the public realm in main streets, streets, laneways and open spaces.

Design Outcome

Public interfaces that:

- Contribute to the use, activity, safety and interest of the public realm.
- Provide continuity of ground floor activity along streets and laneways.
- Allow unobstructed views through openings into the ground floor of buildings.

Facade projections and **balconies** that:

- Do not adversely impact the levels of daylight or views to the sky from a street or laneway.
- Do not obstruct the service functions of a street or laneway through adequate clearance heights.
- Add activity the public realm.
- Form part of a cohesive architectural response to the public realm.

Does the development promote safe and lively public spaces?

Weather protection that:

- Delivers pedestrian comfort in the public realm and protection from rain, wind and summer sun.
- Uses canopies that are functional, of high quality design, and contribute to the human scale of the street.

Provide continuity of ground floor activity along streets and laneways

Design Requirements

[PI-1] Development in:

- General Development Areas and laneways in Special Character Areas, should meet the following ground level frontages requirement.
- Streets in Special Character Areas, must meet the following ground level frontages requirement. ***Mandatory**
- At least 80 per cent of the combined length of the ground level interfaces of a building to streets and laneways are an entry or window.
- This measurement excludes:
  - Stall-risers to a height of 700mm.
  - Pilasters.
  - Window and door frames.
  - Windows that have clear glazing without stickers or paint that obscures views.
- The ground floor frontage requirement does not apply to the development of a building in a heritage overlay or heritage graded building. Development of a heritage building should maintain or increase compliance with the following ground level interface requirement.

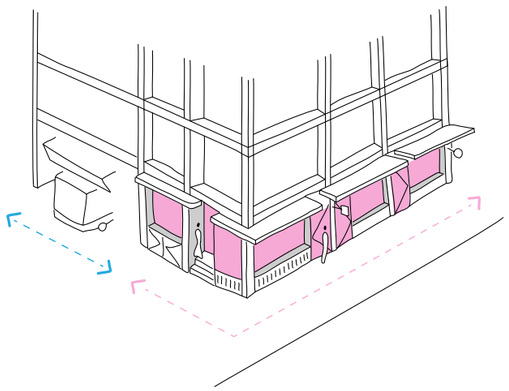


Figure 40 80% of the ground level frontage to both streets comprises building entries or windows. The 80% calculation includes the surface area of the combined ground floor elevations.

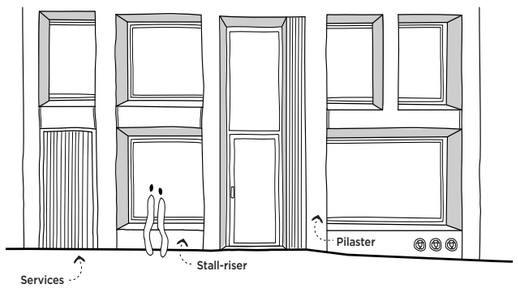


Figure 41 Stall-risers, pilasters, door and window frames provide depth, thickness, and tactility contribute to high quality street interfaces. These architectural elements are intentionally excluded from the 80% calculation in order to encourage their adoption.

Entry or window

Length of active frontages

Length of service frontages

Terracotta clad pilasters extend to the ground level, with clearly defined fine grain shop fronts set within a cohesive design framework. These provide thickness, depth and tactility at the public realm interface.

ACA Building

Allow unobstructed views through openings

Design Requirements

[PI-2] Security grills or mesh should:

- Be transparent.
- Not block views into tenancies at night.
- Be mounted internally to the shop windows.

[PI-3] Avoid tinted, opaque or high reflectivity glass which obscures views between the public realm and building interior.

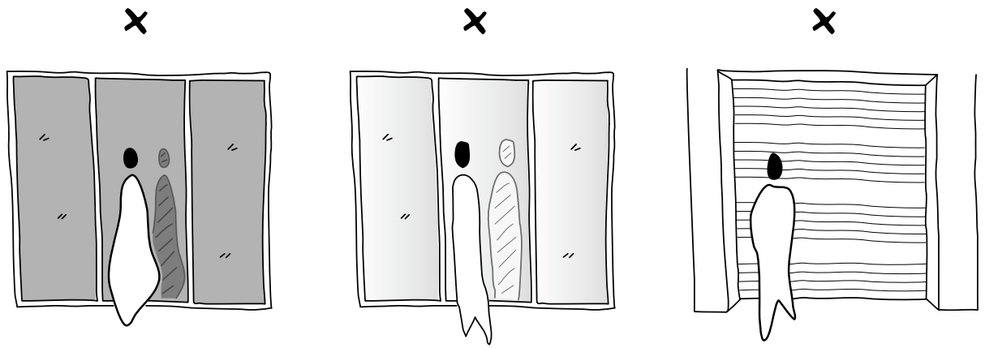
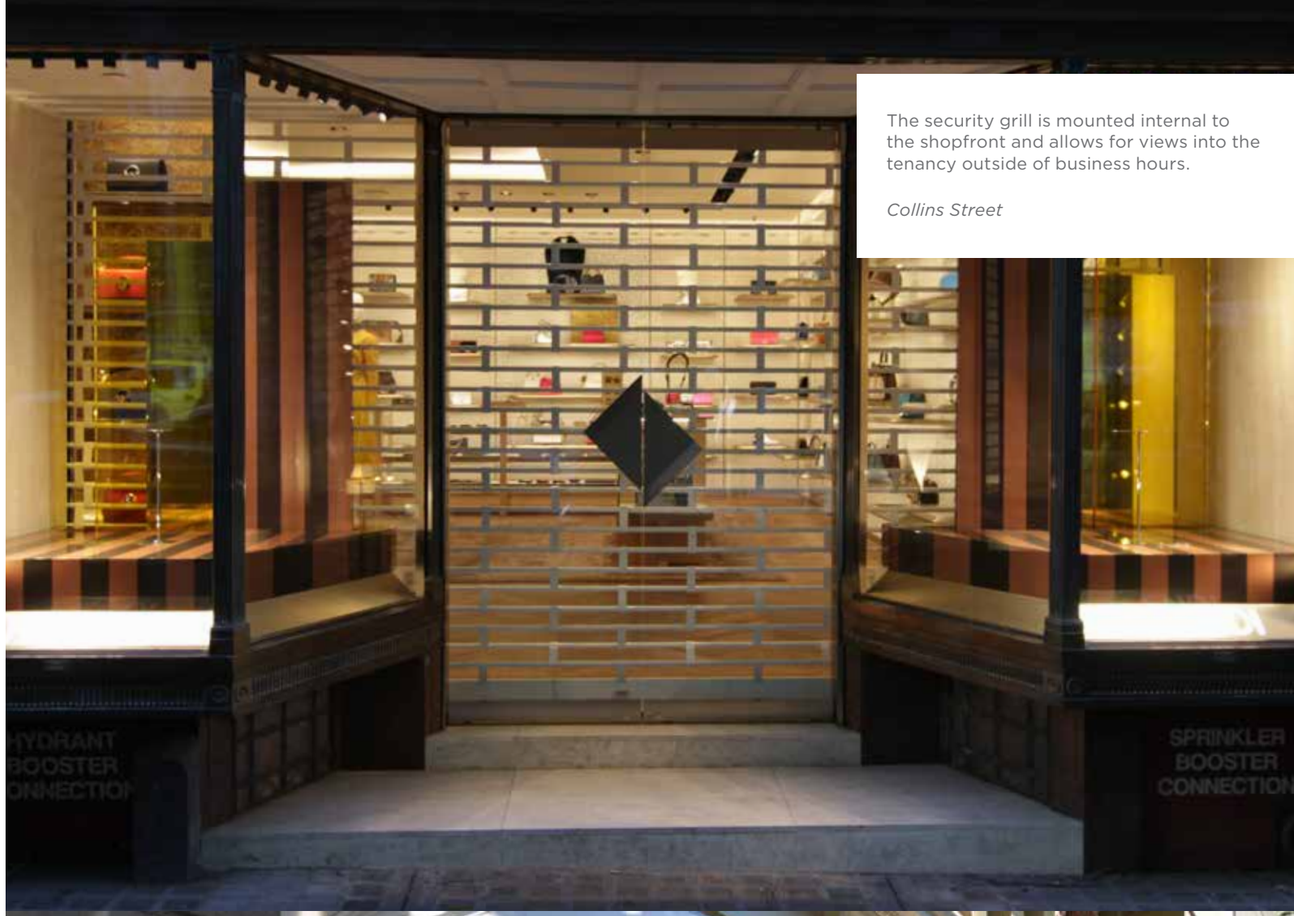


Figure 42 The uses of tinted (left) and reflective (middle) glass limit meaningful opportunities for ground floor program to engage with the street. Solid security grills (right) block views into tenancies at night and present poorly to the public realm while reducing perceptions of pedestrian safety.



The security grill is mounted internal to the shopfront and allows for views into the tenancy outside of business hours.

Collins Street

Clear glazing allows direct views to and from the shop interior to the public realm.

Collins Street

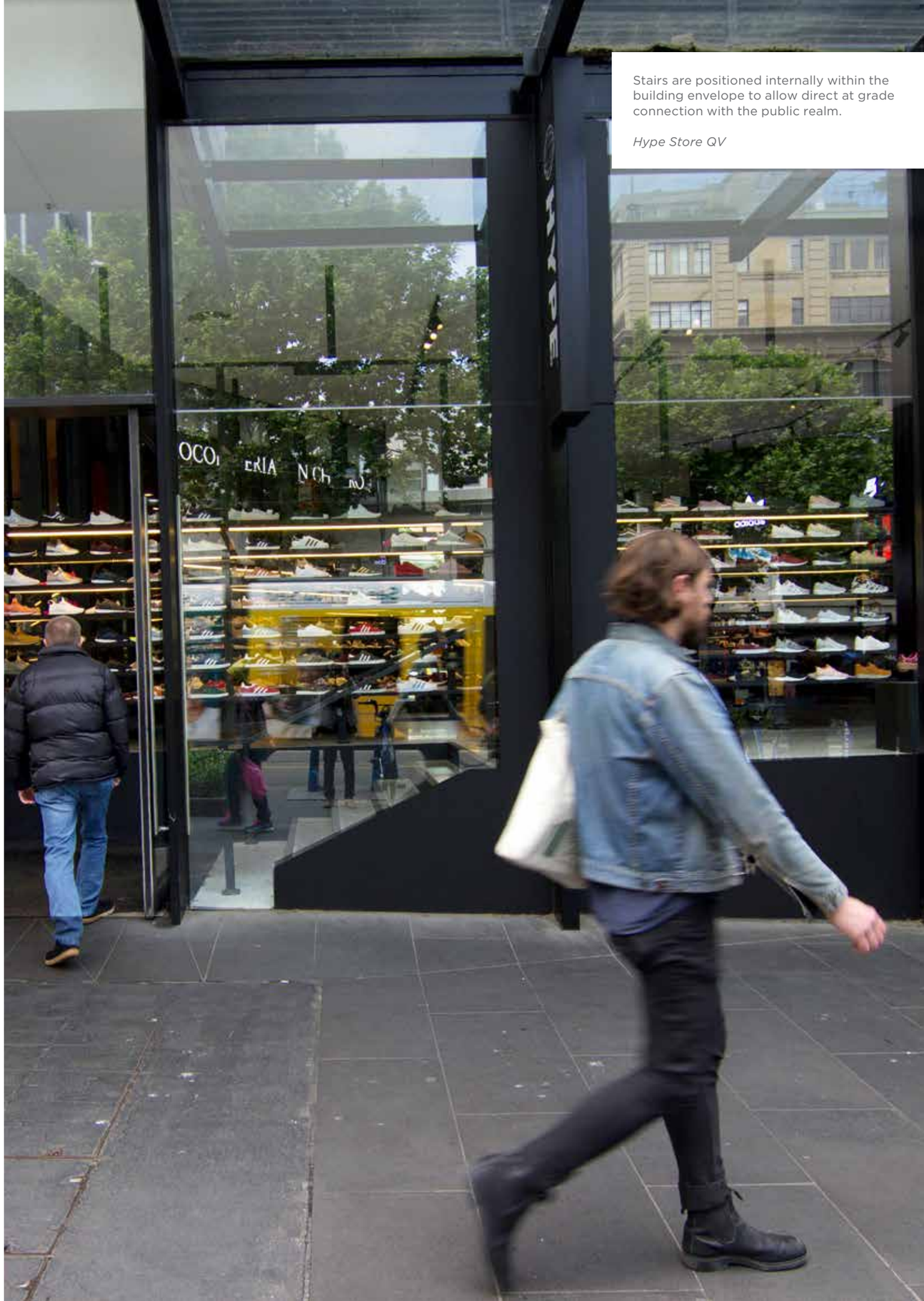
Maintain active frontages in flood prone areas

Design Requirements

[PI-4] In flood prone areas or on sloping sites, a direct connection should be established at grade to usable space within ground level tenancies, with level transitions contained within the building envelope.

[PI-5] In flood prone areas, transitions in floor levels should not rely on external stairs, ramps or platform lifts which disconnect interior spaces from the public realm.

Figure 43 A variety of opportunities exist to ensure good street activation in flood prone areas. These include internal transitions in floor levels to building entries and tenancies, as well as some elevated active areas against the street boundary with softening vegetation at the public realm interface.



Stairs are positioned internally within the building envelope to allow direct at grade connection with the public realm.

Hype Store QV

Provide projections that add interest to the public realm

Design Requirements

[PI-6] Upper level projections and canopies should allow for the growth of existing and planned street trees.

[PI-7] Upper level projections such as Juliet balconies, adjustable screens or windows, cornices or other architectural features may project into streets or laneways:

- On main streets up to 600 mm.
- On streets and laneways up to 300 mm.

[PI-8] On main streets, balconies associated with an active commercial use may project up to 1.6 metres from the facade or 800 mm from the back of kerb.

[PI-9] Balcony projections should be at least 5 metres above any public space measured from ground level.

[PI-10] Development should not include enclosed balconies or habitable floor space projecting over the public realm.

[PI-11] Ensure that public realm projections (excluding canopies) at the upper levels do not extend the full width of a building frontage.

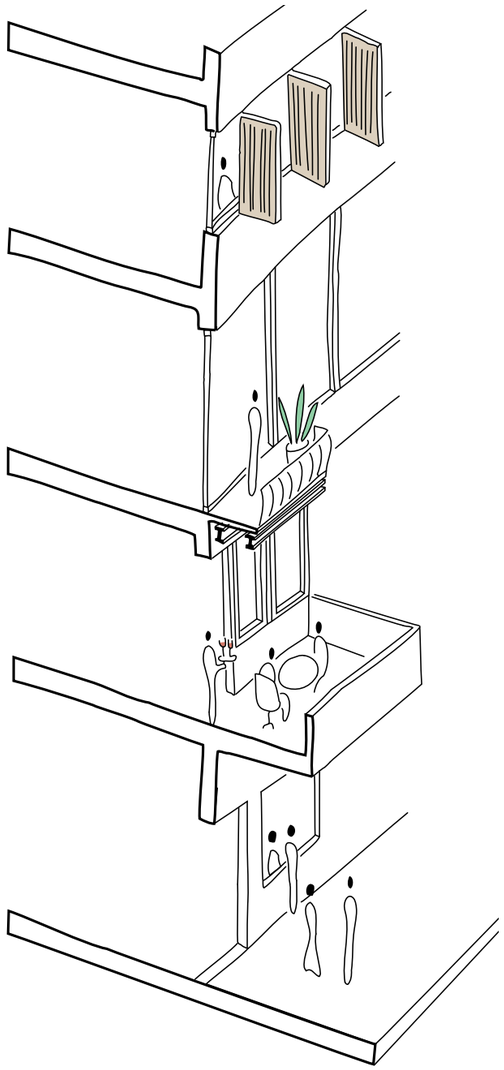
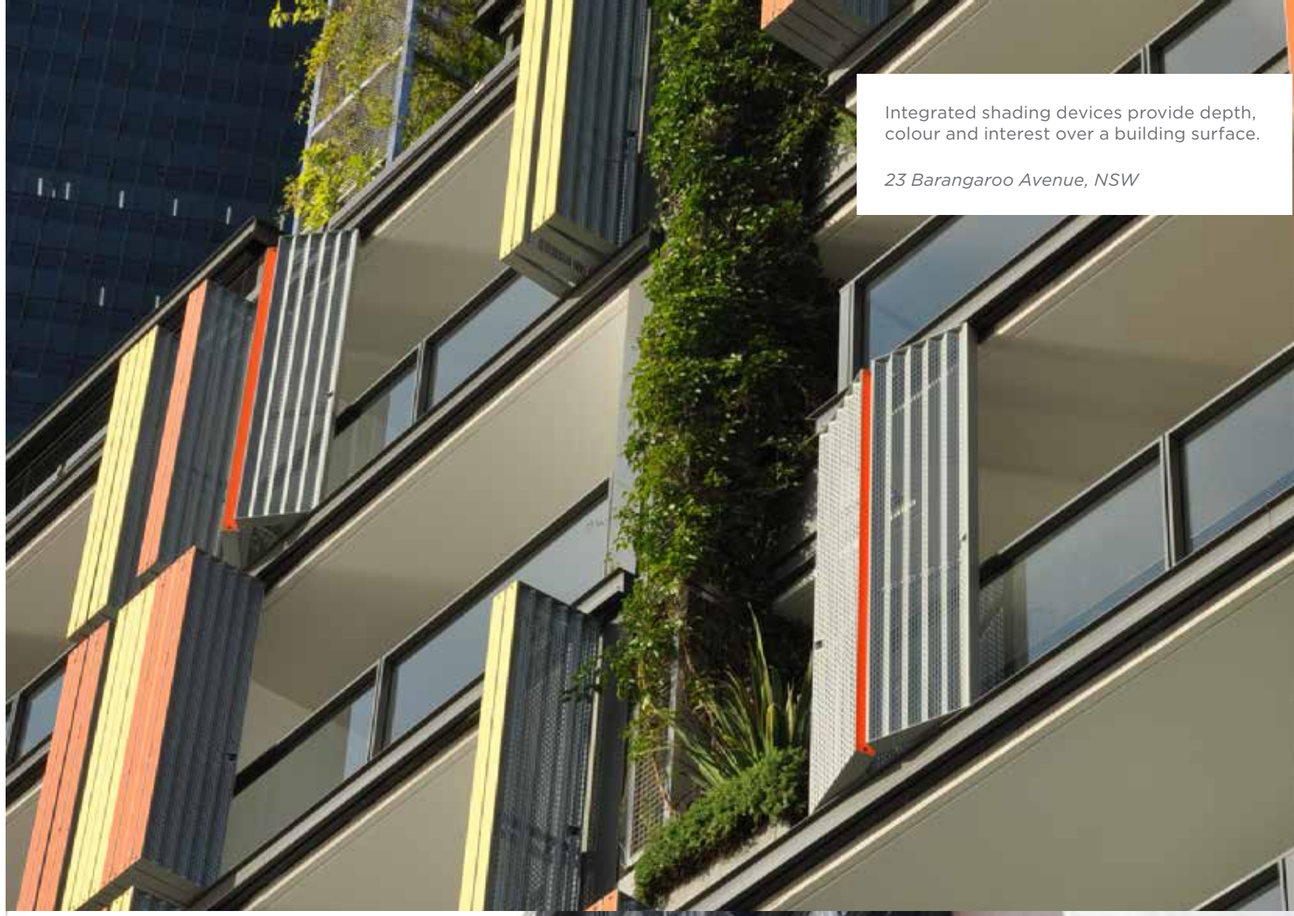
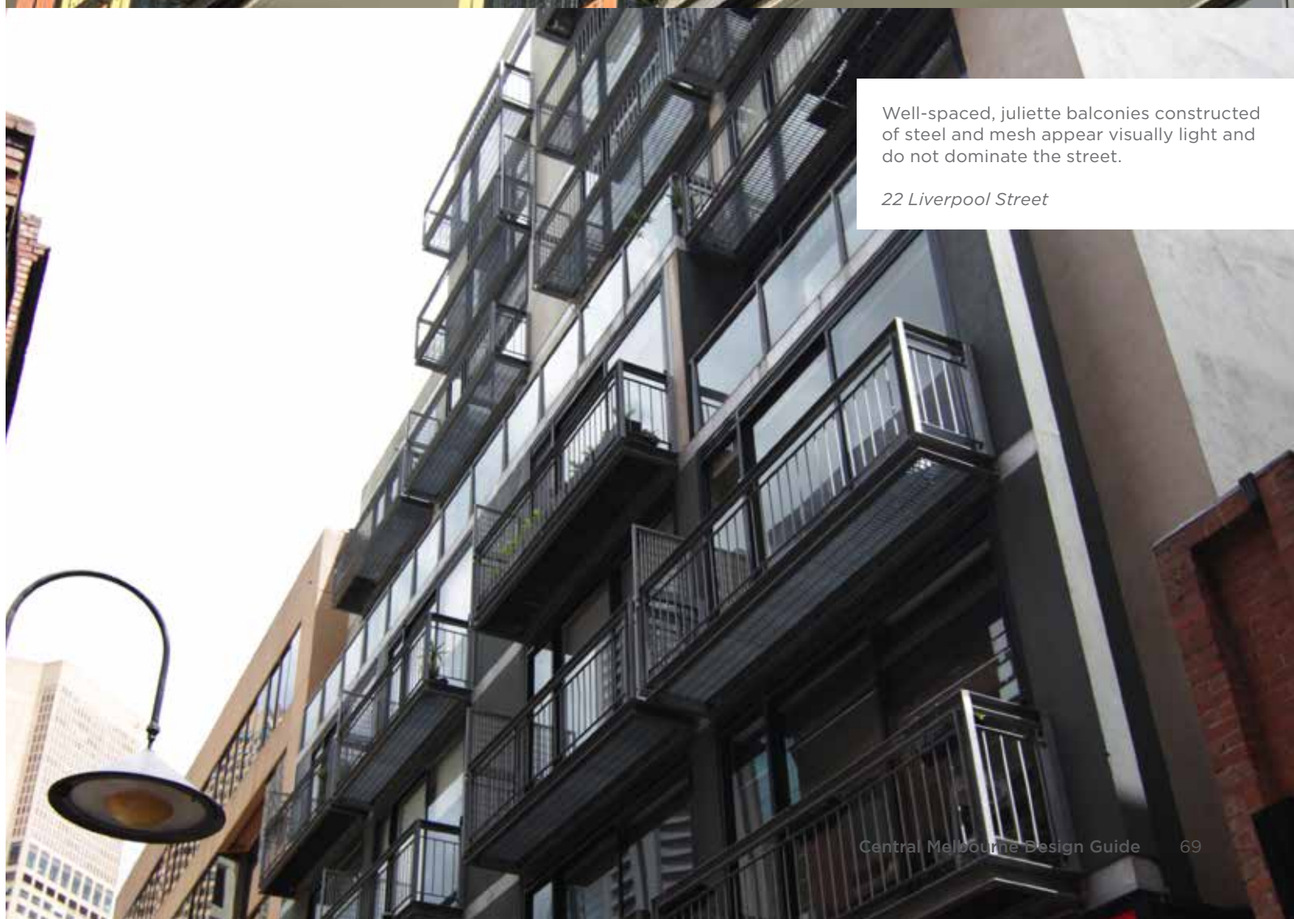


Figure 44 Minor projections such as operable screens, cornices and juliette balconies can add to the life of streets and promote surveillance from upper levels.



Integrated shading devices provide depth, colour and interest over a building surface.

23 Barangaroo Avenue, NSW



Well-spaced, juliette balconies constructed of steel and mesh appear visually light and do not dominate the street.

22 Liverpool Street

Provide continuous weather protection

Design Requirements

[PI-12] Development should include continuous weather protection along main streets except where a heritage place warrants an alternative approach.

[PI-13] Weather protection canopies should:

- Be between 3.5 metres and 5 metres above ground measured to the underside of the soffit.
- Provide for exposure to winter sun and shelter from summer sun.
- Not enclose more than one third of the width of a laneway.
- Display a high design standard including material selection in the appearance of the soffit and fascia.

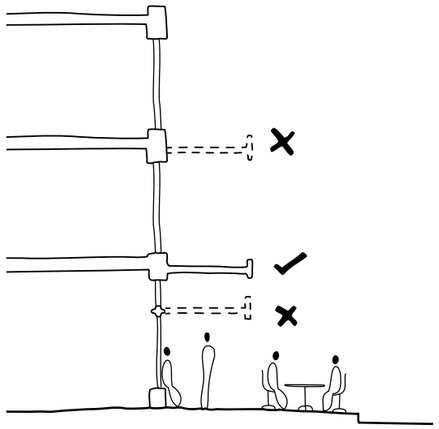


Figure 45 The canopy is positioned to integrate with the facade design while providing protection from the wind and rain. Entry canopies may be up to 5m above ground to provide legibility of key entries.

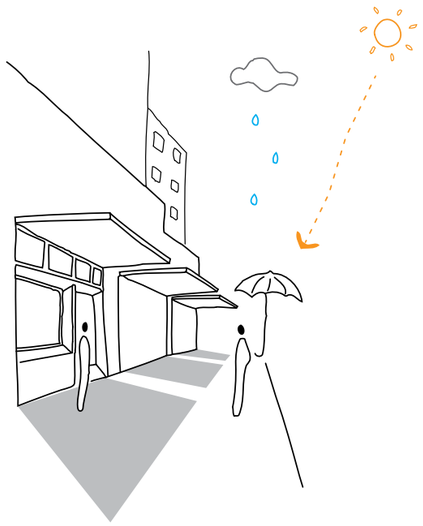
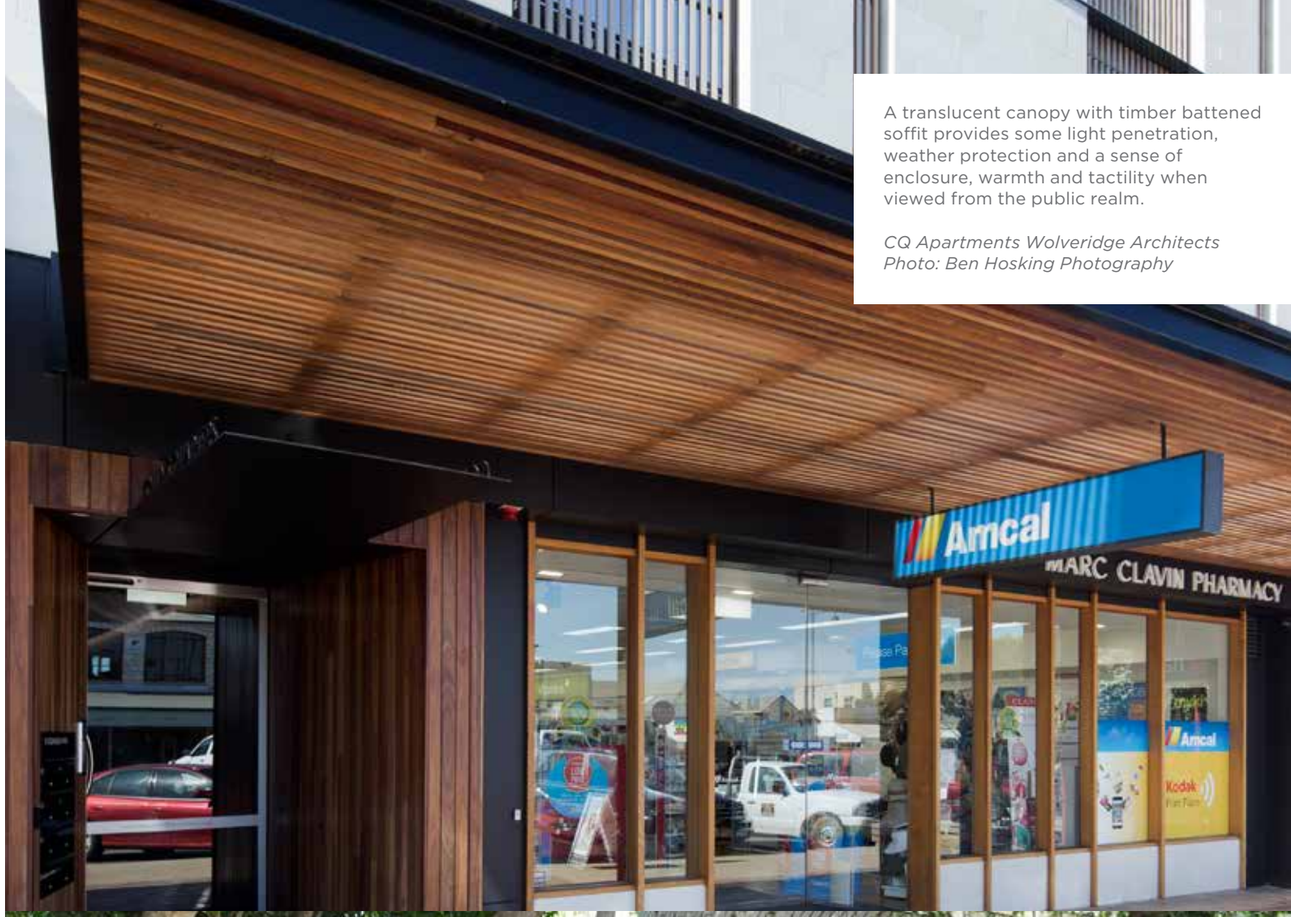


Figure 46 The canopies are designed to respond to the rhythm of shop fronts, while providing continuous protection from inclement weather.



A translucent canopy with timber battened soffit provides some light penetration, weather protection and a sense of enclosure, warmth and tactility when viewed from the public realm.

CQ Apartments Wolveridge Architects
Photo: Ben Hosking Photography

A cantilevered concrete canopy provides for shade and weather protection while allowing light to the shop front through a small offset from the facade.

James Street Precinct

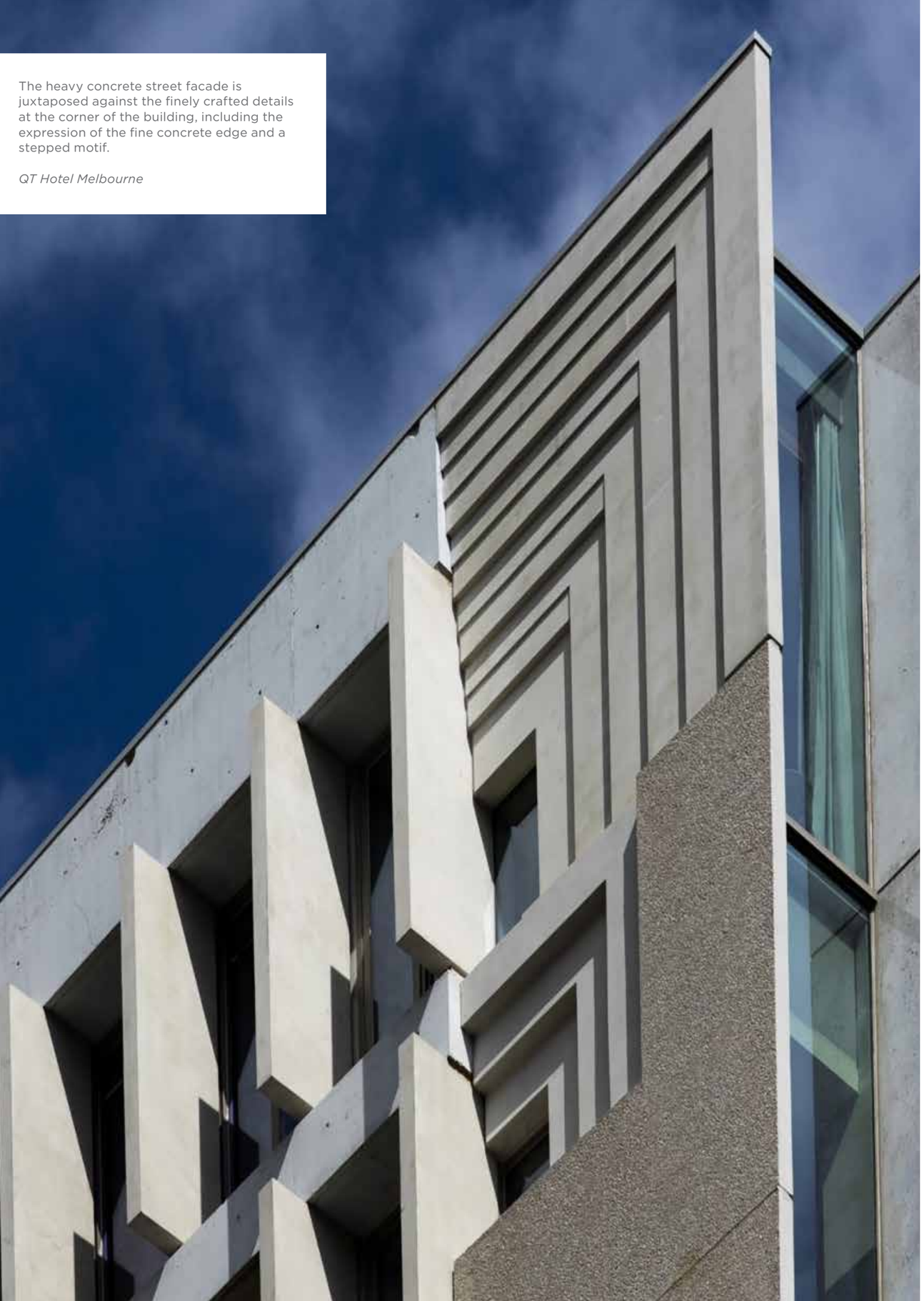
Tips: design outcomes to avoid

Figure 47 Platform lifts should be avoided within the public realm, where they gather litter and result in unsafe spaces.

Figure 48 Solid metal shutters present poorly to the public realm when closed and are prone to graffiti and damage.

Figure 49 Canopies that cover the majority of a laneway reduce the sense of openness and publicness, while obscuring any visual connection to upper levels.

Figure 50 Enclosed projections over this laneway shift the perceived building alignment by projecting the full mass forward of adjacent heritage buildings.



The heavy concrete street facade is juxtaposed against the finely crafted details at the corner of the building, including the expression of the fine concrete edge and a stepped motif.

QT Hotel Melbourne

DESIGN DETAIL

Introduction

Design detail refers to the resolution of a contextually responsive building exterior that contributes to the quality of the public realm through its architectural expression, materials and finishes.

Do the details on the elevations and interfaces respond to the human scale?

Design Outcome

Exterior design that:

- Establishes a positive relationship between the appearance of new development and the valued characteristics of its context.
- Is visually interesting when viewed up close and from a distance.
- Responds to the distance at which the building is viewed and experienced from the public realm in the selection, scale and quality of design elements
- Incorporates sufficient design detail in the lower levels of a building to deliver a visually rich and engaging pedestrian experience.
- Delivers high quality design on all visible sides of a building including rooftops, where visible from the public realm.
- At the ground level interface, provides visual connection between the public realm and interior spaces.

Provide depth and detail to all visible facades

Design Requirements

[DD-1] Facades should provide for depth and a balance of light and shadow on the street wall and upper levels through the use of balconies, integrated shading, rebates or expression of structural elements.

[DD-2] Street wall facades should avoid a predominately glazed appearance.

[DD-3] Street wall facades should establish a balance of transparency and solidity.

[DD-4] Facades should avoid the use of surfaces which cause unacceptable glare to the public realm.

[DD-5] Materials should be durable, robust and low maintenance in the higher parts of a building.

[DD-6] Blank walls that are visible from the public realm should be designed as an integrated component of the building composition.

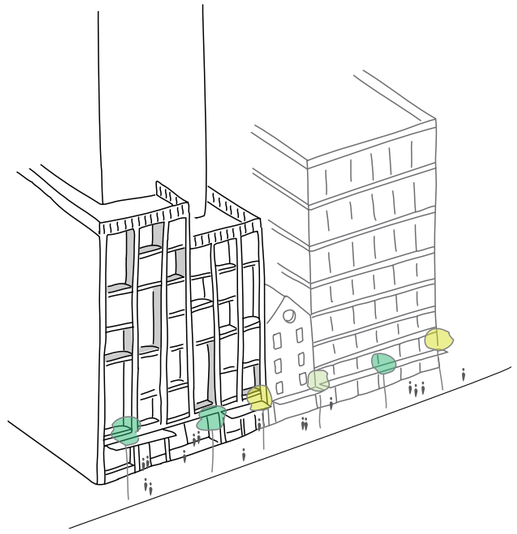


Figure 51 The street wall facade utilises variation in scale, expressed slab edges and blade walls in order to provide modulation and depth. This breaks down the form into smaller human scale details.

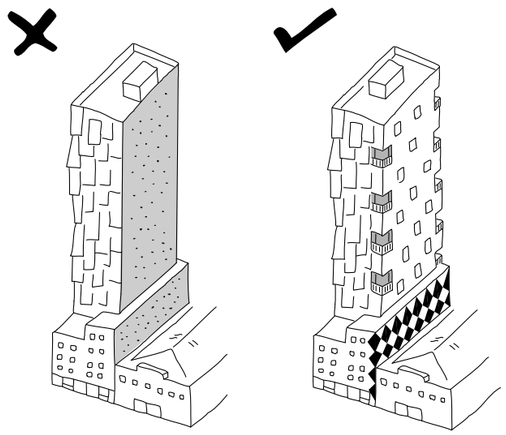


Figure 52 The tower component of the building is designed as a three dimensional form with careful consideration of corners and without a blank wall that is visible from the public realm.

The lower levels incorporate a finer, high level of detail, while the upper streetwall employs heavy concrete fins which provide depth and rhythm.

QT Hotel Melbourne

Adopt high quality, visually rich details in lower levels

Design Requirements

[DD-7] Materials should be natural, tactile and visually interesting at the lower levels near the public interface to reinforce a human scale.

[DD-8] Ground level interfaces including shopfronts should provide thickness, depth and articulation and avoid long expanses of floor to ceiling glazing.

Figure 53 Design detail at the ground and lower levels of a building has the greatest impact on the attractiveness of the public realm. Building entries, lobbies and shop fronts offer an opportunity for rich design detail and require careful consideration in the design process.

More robust materials such as concrete are employed for upper levels, while fine steel detailing, glazed tiles and timber provide tactility and visual interest at the public realm interface.

Alex Hotel Perth

Adopt high quality finishes to service cabinets

Design Requirements

[DD-9] Materials and finishes such as painted concrete or ventilation louvres should be avoided at the lower levels where they undermine the visually rich, tactile quality of streets and laneways.

[DD-11] Service cabinets should not visually dominate street frontages and should use high quality materials.

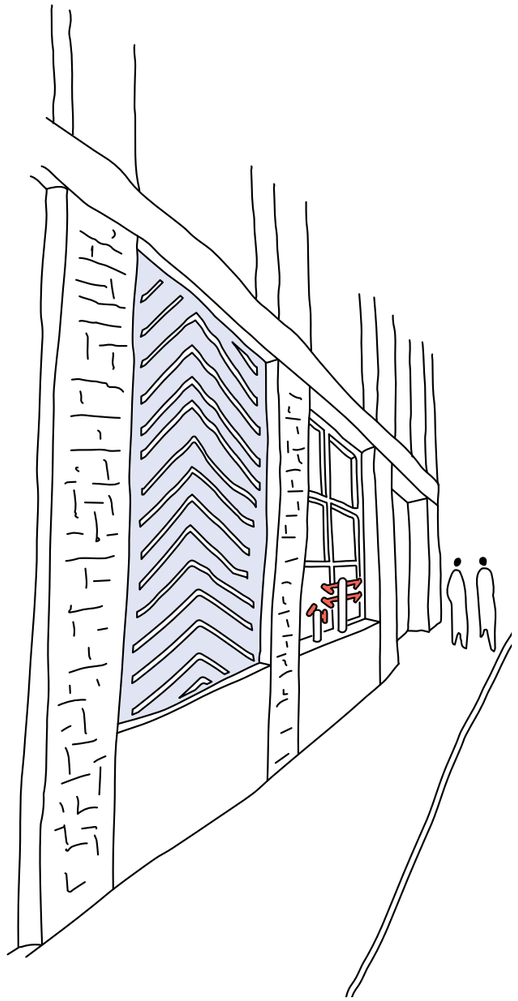


Figure 54 Where service elements are unavoidable such as air intake or exhaust louvres at the public realm interface, these elements can be designed as integrated components of the facade in order to add visual richness and tactility. Exposed service components (red) can also add visual interest to an street or laneway environment.

The exposure of service elements such as fire hydrants can remove the need for unsightly service cabinet doors, and enhance activation through enabling greater visual connection into the tenancy.

Nightingale V1.0

Service cabinets can be designed as integrated, visually interesting elements of the street facade if given sufficient attention

Santos Building, Brisbane

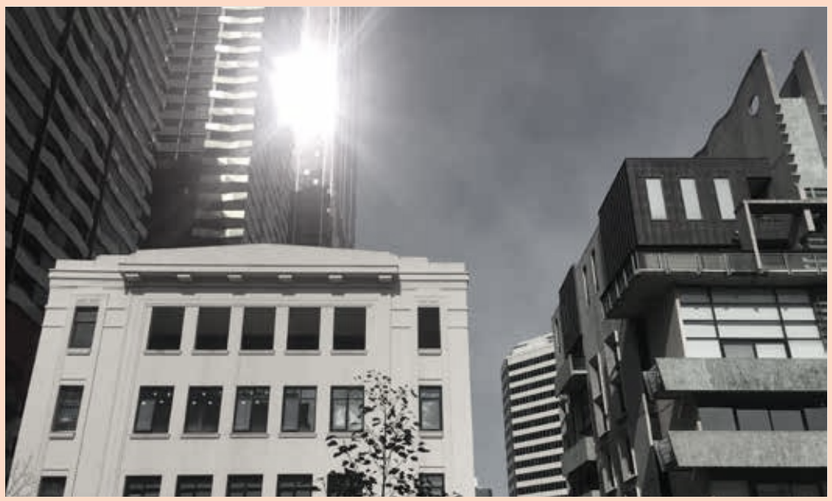
Tips: design outcomes to avoid

Figure 55 The design of the lower levels of this building are indistinguishable from the upper tower levels with limited detail, depth or visual interest to the public realm.

Figure 56 The glass facade of this tall building does not provide for depth, shadow or interest over its surface and fails to establish a scale relationship with the public realm.

Figure 57 The use of painted concrete, roller doors and large format louvres negatively impacts the quality of this heritage lane.

Figure 58 This faceted, highly reflective glass facade without any projecting fins or recesses maximises the intensity of glare to the public realm.



APPENDIX

Definitions

For the purpose of this schedule:

- **Average urban block length** means the average of opposite sides of an urban block measured between laneways, streets or safe and convenient 24 hour pedestrian connections that connects the two opposite sides.
- **Building services** includes areas used for the purposes of loading, waste management, and electrical, communications, gas, water and fire prevention infrastructure.
- **Laneway** means a road reserve of a public highway 9 metres or less wide.
- **Main street** means a road reserve of a public highway more than 20 metres wide.
- **Pedestrian connection** means pedestrian only laneways (covered or open), arcades, through building connections and atria.
- **Publicly accessible private plaza** means an open to the sky privately owned space provided and maintained by the property owner for public use.
- **Sleeve** means to position active uses between large floorplate tenancies, carpark or service areas and the public realm to achieve an active and safe street edge.
- **Stationary activity** means activities by pedestrians that involve extended stays within a space, such as sitting and eating, rather than walking through.
- **Street** means a road reserve of a public highway more than 9 metres wide. It includes a Main street.

Map 1 Urban Structure

PHOTO CREDITS

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Page 16

*151 Clarence Street, Barack Place (*Investa Property Group*)*

Design team: Architectus
Photo credit: Brett Boardman

Page 34

Oxford and Peel Apartments

Design team: Jackson Clements Burrows Architects
Photo credit: Peter Clarke

Page 37

RMIT New Academic Street

Design teams: Lyons, NMBW Architecture Studio, Harrison and White, MvS Architectsand Maddison Architects.
Photo credit: Peter Bennetts

Page 51

Creative Spaces: The Guild Co-working

Design team: Archier Architects
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QV8 Apartments (Grocon)

Design team: Breathe Architecture
Photo credit: Breathe Architecture

Page 60

Short Stop Melbourne

Design team: Foolscap Studio
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QT Hotel Melbourne

Design team: Candalepas Associates
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Alex Hotel Perth

Design team: Spaceagency
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Nightingale V1.0

Design team: Breathe Architecture
Photo credit: Bonnie Herring

Page 87

Garden Building, RMIT

Design team: NMBW Architecture
Photo credit: Peter Bennetts

The New Academic Street, RMIT, designed by multiple architects and landscape architects is the recipient of a number of design awards and is an example of design excellence, validated through an independent, peer reviewed process.

RMIT NAS: Garden Building

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