

RMIT's Living Places Plan

Guiding Our Future
in Place

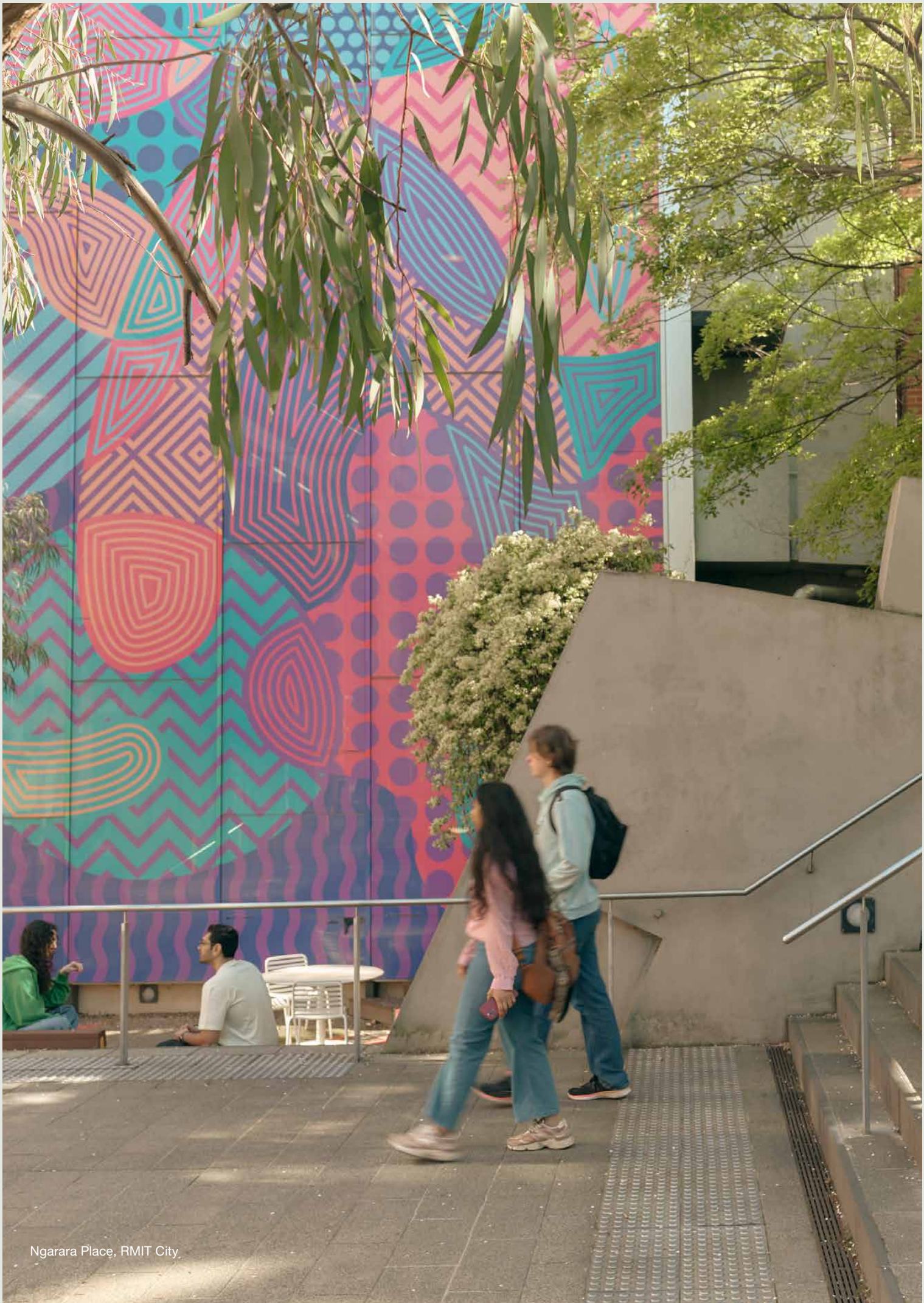


● Acknowledgement of Country

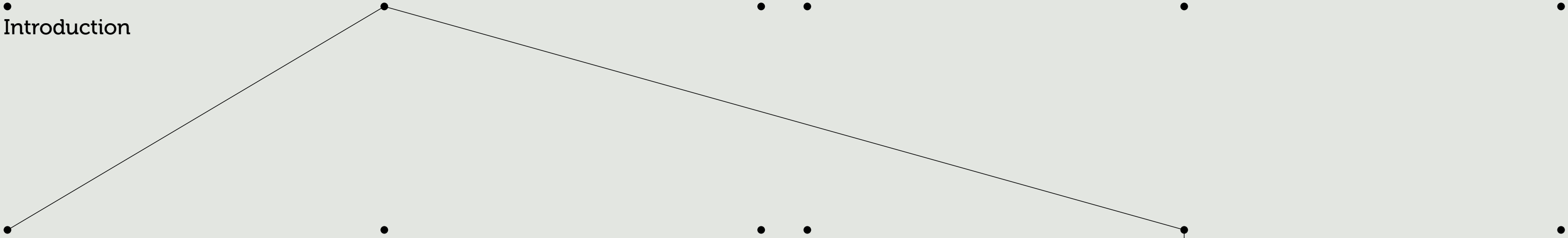
● RMIT University acknowledges the people of the Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung language groups of the eastern Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands we conduct the business of the University. RMIT respectfully acknowledges their Ancestors and Elders, past and present. RMIT also acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the lands and waterways across Australia where we conduct our business.

RMIT's Living Places Plan is committed to Responsible Practice by honouring Traditional Owners and by embedding their principles, perspectives, culture, and practices into our place management, to create an inclusive and respectful environment that benefits our communities.

Cover Image: Bowen Street, RMIT City



Ngarara Place, RMIT City



Foreword

RMIT has grown from the original Melbourne campus that remains our iconic centre, into a global network of interconnected locations – all the while retaining our identity as a distinctly urban university. We are genuinely embedded in our local communities and well-positioned to evolve with them and expand our positive engagement far and wide.

The development of the Living Places Plan was informed by an extensive consultation process. A wide network of working groups, community partners, University leaders, students, staff and researchers, emphasised the importance of the city to RMIT’s position at the epicentre of Melbourne’s innovation, learning and teaching environment.

Guided by our *Knowledge with Action* strategy and *Place and Community Framework*, the Living Places Plan sets out a comprehensive vision to optimise our Australian locations from the heart of Melbourne, creating an inclusive, innovative and sustainable future guided by regenerative principles.

It translates RMIT’s strategic directions into a robust programmatic framework, serving as a solid foundation for decision making. Importantly, it is a living document and we will remain agile, responsive and adaptable to meet the needs of our community.

RMIT’s physical campuses exist to serve our communities, so it’s essential that we respond to each unique environment and be permeable in design. Our

Living Places Plan will ensure we identify, fund and deliver the right future development opportunities, support prioritised precinct activation initiatives, and use sound research and data at every step.

To elevate RMIT’s significant property portfolio, we must continually examine the strategic benefits of our locations alongside their associated costs and resources. Responsible decision-making which balances the needs of today and tomorrow will ensure our portfolio meets the quality of experience necessary to enable our people and communities to adapt and thrive.

This, our first version of RMIT’s Living Places Plan, is intentionally Melbourne focused. As we embed this plan, we will work to extend its aspirations to our places and spaces further afield, working collaboratively with our regional and international locations to translate wider goals to their unique context.

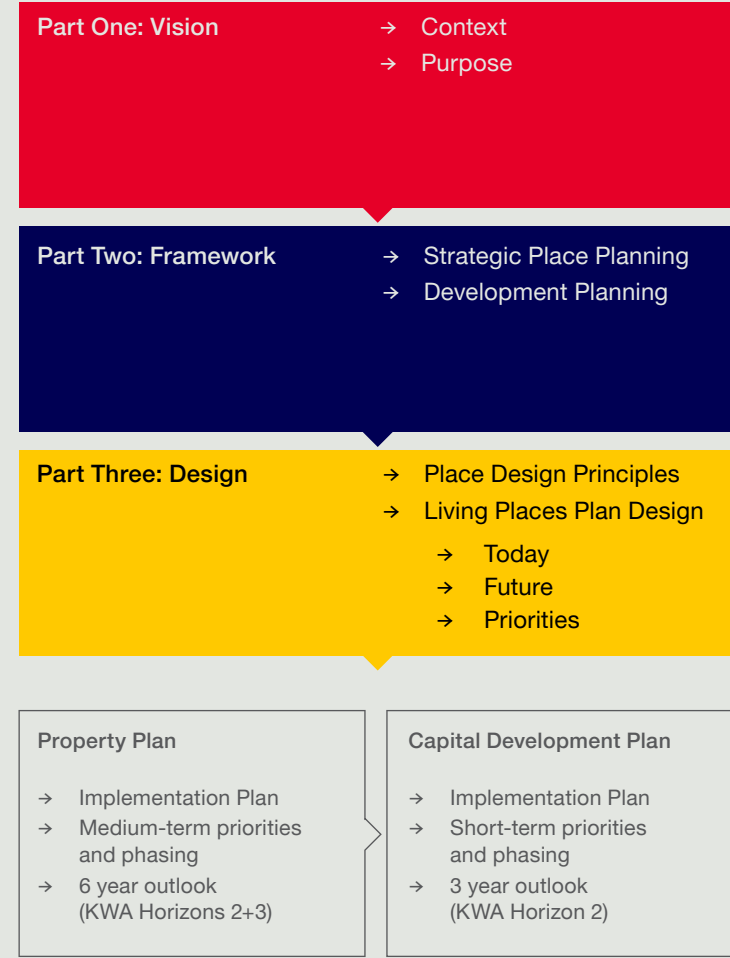
Wherever we operate, RMIT commits to being deeply connected to the community of that place and to operating in its best interests. This is just part of the way we contribute as a university fit for the times and I endorse this Living Places Plan as an important step towards inspiring an inclusive, innovative, and regeneratively sustainable future.



Professor Alec Cameron
Vice-Chancellor and President

RMIT's Living Places Plan is an important step towards inspiring an inclusive, innovative, and regeneratively sustainable future.

Living Places Plan Version 01, December 2025 Structural Overview



● RMIT's physical campuses exist to serve our communities, so it's essential that we respond to each unique environment and be permeable in design.

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Part One Vision

Swanston Street, Melbourne

● Our Vision confirms the ambition for RMIT's future places – recognising the University's evolution, identifying its intrinsic relationship to place, and laying out the foundational goals that seek to benefit the RMIT community and wider Melbourne.



RMIT and Melbourne

RMIT can be said to be *in* the city, *of* the city, and increasingly, *for* the city.

RMIT is first and foremost a university that provides a unique kind of education, a connection to industry, and a practical focus – but it also shapes its home city through significant land holdings spread across the city centre, Bundoora, and Brunswick.

Since the first classes were held in Building 1 in 1887, RMIT has expanded as demand for applied skills and innovation has grown and evolved. The University, its staff and students established fertile relationships and collaborative civic partnerships, positioning RMIT at the intersection of policy and place. The University’s thinking has now filtered deeply into the ‘soft infrastructure’ of the city, and its approach to diverse and collaborative urbanism is echoed within local and state governments.

Today, many of Melbourne’s most remarkable and innovative buildings have been commissioned by and built for RMIT, creating such a distinct visual signature that the University is indivisible from the identity of Melbourne itself. RMIT can be said to be *in* the city, *of* the city, and increasingly, *for* the city as its staff, academics and students help to connect the complex environments that will shape the quality and sustainability of life for future generations.

RMIT’s Living Places Plan is a vehicle for continuing the reciprocal relationship between the University and the city, ensuring that RMIT’s places remain nimble and responsive to changes in education, research and civic life.



Building 22, RMIT City

Past, Present and Future Place

RMIT has expanded from the Working Men’s College into a leading dual-sector university with global reach. As the University’s footprint has grown over time, its impact upon place has increased. This is particularly true in Metropolitan Melbourne where RMIT’s City, Brunswick and Bundoora campuses have not only been shaped by the city, but have also shaped the city around them by virtue of their scale and capacity to agglomerate learning and industry. RMIT’s Living Places Plan focuses on the future of our Australian campuses and sites, while recognising that they are built on the land of First Nations peoples. Future plans will be shaped with the guidance of Traditional Owners and local communities, reflecting and celebrating their ongoing connection to Country.



1837

Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung people carry out deep learning and shared knowledge for tens of thousands of years prior to colonisation, on the land where RMIT campuses now sit.

After a number of years of colonial settlement, the township of Melbourne is officially named.

1856

State Library of Victoria opens – Australia’s oldest public library, created in the interest of free access to information and knowledge by the Melbourne community.

1859

The original Victorian Trades Hall is opened, built by workers as an organising place for the labour movement in Melbourne and a place to educate workers and their families.

1887

Founded by Francis Ormond and named the Working Men’s College, RMIT’s first form aimed to provide vocational education in art, science, and technology to the working men and women of Melbourne.

1924

Capitol Theatre opens – the first extravagant ‘picture palace’ built in Victoria, later purchased by RMIT in 1999 and extensively refurbished.

1933

The Working Men’s College merges with West Melbourne Technical School, changing its name to Melbourne Technical School and expanding the educational offering.

1950

Once a city laneway, an Act of Parliament allows for Bowen Street to be closed off and incorporated into RMIT’s grounds.

1960

After earning royal patronage in 1954 and becoming the Royal Melbourne Technical College, RMIT changes its name to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology – its new title reflecting its broadened academic scope.

1968

RMIT’s student gallery is opened with an inaugural exhibition by John Brack – the site was refurbished in 1996 and remains a key place of exhibition within the City campus.

1979

RMIT amalgamates with the Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy – a home economics and domestic science college for women.

1992

RMIT achieves university status and merges with the existing Phillip Institute of Technology, becoming RMIT’s Bundoora West campus.

RMIT purchases the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works’ northern regional headquarters in Bundoora, and in 1995 it is opened as the University’s Bundoora East campus.

RMIT establishes a flight training school in Point Cook, one of the oldest continuing operating airfields in the world – and the birthplace of the Royal Australian Airforce (RAAF).

RMIT purchases the former Carlton & United Brewery site at the top of Swanston Street in Melbourne and redevelops part of the site as the RMIT Design Hub, opening in 2012.

Following a merge with Melbourne Institute of Textiles, RMIT Brunswick opens, with new development in 2000 expanding its potential to support fashion, textiles and industrial design.

After being invited by the Vietnamese government to establish the country’s first foreign-owned university, RMIT Vietnam opens in Ho Chi Minh in 2001 – a second campus in Hanoi opening in 2004.

RMIT sets up the Koorie Education Unit, the Indigenous Access Scheme in 2006 and the Indigenous Specialisation for all undergraduate students in 2009.

RMIT officially opens the Keelbundoora Scarred Tree and Heritage Trail – initiated by RMIT Student Services and the Ngarara Willim Centre to educate the community and celebrate Wurundjeri heritage.

RMIT Europe opens in Barcelona, Spain.

RMIT, City of Melbourne and University of Melbourne co-found the Melbourne Innovation Districts partnership as the basis for an evolving commitment to place-based innovation in Melbourne’s City North.

RMIT Bundoora’s Walert House student accommodation opens.

RMIT’s New Academic Street project seeks to redefine how the University’s facilities engage with the city.

RMIT and Victorian State Government commence collaboration on a joint vision for RMIT City North as a social innovation precinct.

Bundoora’s Trades Innovation Centre opens – a purpose-built epicentre of practical learning, designed to address the state’s growing demand for skilled tradespeople.

The vision and goals for the Living Places Plan are co-created with the RMIT community.

1993



Building 1, RMIT City

1994

1998

1999

2001



Design Hub, RMIT City

2006

2008



Storey Hall, RMIT City

2013

2015

2016



Building 220, RMIT Bundoora

2017

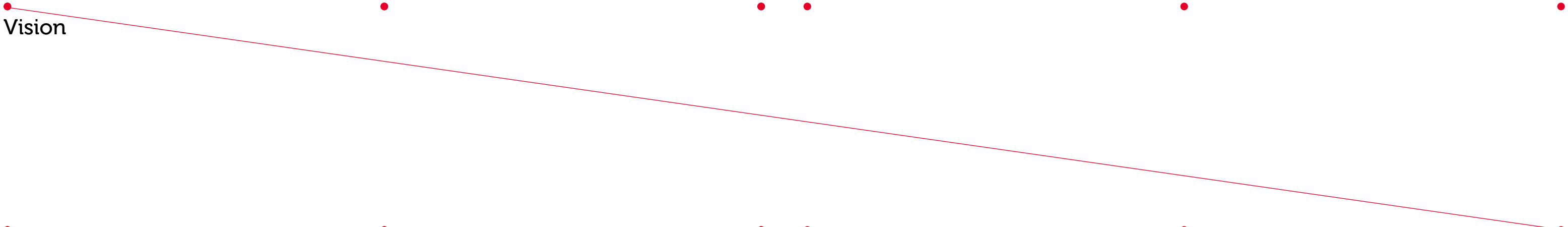
2022

2024



The Capitol, RMIT City

2025



Primary Change Drivers

Today’s context of rapid change and transformation brings specific challenges to the tertiary education sector. The Living Places Plan has been shaped to support planning, design and development in uncertain times, responding to contemporary drivers of change that include:

Sector Uncertainty
Reforms associated with the Australian Government's Australian Universities Accord, along with the introduction of international and domestic student caps, have far-reaching impacts on student projections and demand – yet could be subject to change.

Transport Infrastructure Investments
Major projects such as Melbourne's Metro Tunnel, North East Link and the Level Crossing Removal bring enhanced connectivity to RMIT places.

Affordability Challenges
Australia’s ongoing housing crisis combined with cost of living pressures puts new emphasis on affordability and has potential to create further barriers to participation – not only in campus life but higher education more broadly.

Evolving Landscapes
Advancements in technology and evolving economic landscapes are blurring boundaries between formal education, professional development, training and skills – impacting on the form and structure of education programs.

Digital Advancements
The rapid rise of AI and associated digital technologies are driving shifts in pedagogy and research focus areas, while creating new requirements for infrastructure and facilities.

Increased Capital Costs and Ageing Infrastructure
Significant escalations in construction costs, combined with ageing infrastructure and under-utilised assets heightens the need to optimise property use and ensure investment is closely aligned to strategy.

Sustainability and Climate Resilience
A transition to a carbon-neutral economy is paramount and requires strategic investment in infrastructure, innovation and workforce skills.

The In-Person Experience
While digital delivery has reframed the role of the campus for some activities, the in-person experience remains highly valued by the RMIT community. Creating vibrant, attractive places demands innovative approaches to programming.

Creative Ecologies under pressure
Shifts in funding allocations and receding philanthropic support is polarising our creative communities leaving some arts organisation in desperate need of support and new types of partnerships.

Places for Common Growth

Our places anchor precincts that connect disciplines, industry and community partners to enrich innovation ecosystems and support economic development.

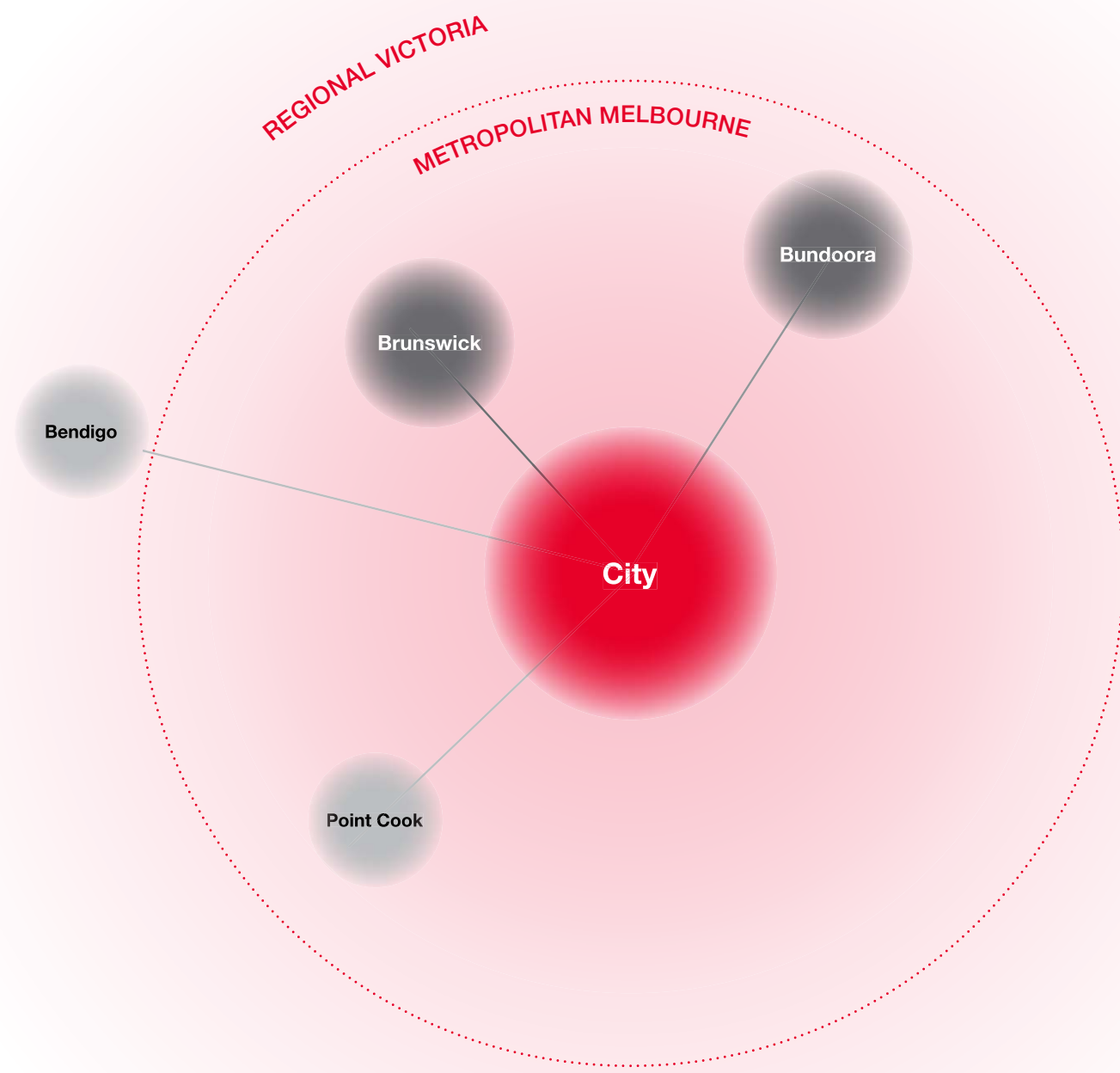
Our places and locations are part of the distinct RMIT experience and are central to our ability to generate positive impact. The Living Places Plan unites our civic duty with our development approach by exploring how we can invite engagement and foster a sense of local identity through the use of the physical environments we inhabit and activate. In doing this, our campuses and sites anchor local economies, and communities and forge links across industries, recognising that each of our locations has its own distinct local context, culture and capabilities.

RMIT remains committed to serving the communities in which it operates. Investment in infrastructure is a key opportunity to create ‘living labs’ that support collaborative learning, research, and social impact. RMIT can bring together educators, researchers, industry, and community partners to solve social challenges together. Celebrating the contribution, knowledge systems and sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples remains central to this goal.

RMIT’s key city locations are at the heart of long-term urban renewal and development. RMIT works with cities, governments, industry and community partners to develop shared visions and common frameworks for the future growth and vitality of our cities.

Campus environments, physical and virtual, are permeable, interactive and welcoming to diverse communities, supporting wellbeing, safety and inclusion. They are testbeds and platforms for the skills, communities and industry partnerships of the future. They enable and connect active communities of lifelong learners, innovative researchers and partners.

We develop distinctive clusters of disciplines, industry networks, creative ecosystems and placemaking partnerships to realise their long-term potential. We support RMIT people with digital systems and networked models of learning, teaching and working across our locations.



● Principal Campus ● Specialist Campus ● Specialist Site

Precincts, Partnerships, Ecosystems

Across our urban campus locations, RMIT plays an active role in creating, shaping and connecting precincts and districts that matter to the achievement of our mission, values and ambition.

Cities are constantly changing and as our world becomes more urbanised, and cities are shaped and integrated through networked infrastructure, our role in developing ecosystems of knowledge, activity and creativity also grows more important.

Urban precincts are key locations where people and activities come together without the artificial separation of title, transport type, or institution, to participate in activities and exchange that have shared value. Precincts are often associated with specific but varied activities, such as markets, student life, health, culture and specialised technologies.

RMIT, an institution dedicated to growing knowledge skills and capability, is proactive about renewing precincts, partnerships and ecosystems that increase opportunity for our community and develop platforms for common growth.

Working to achieve the *Knowledge with Action* ambitions of leading in smart and sustainable cities, emerging technologies, social innovation and Asia Pacific collaboration, and the place typologies of

specialised campus and site, RMIT’s approach to precincts focuses on opportunities to:

- Strengthen shared precinct identities and grow complementary activities that reinforce community commitment to them.
- Develop fit-for-purpose district partnerships to connect RMIT campuses and capabilities with the surrounding area and grow workforce, urban planning and activation pathways.
- Extend innovation and lifelong learning ecosystems through shared programming, activation, clustering of interdisciplinary activities and community participation.

Knowledge with Action is designed with a nine-year view, segmented into three-year horizons. In our second horizon, our focus for the Melbourne precinct will concentrate on two areas:

- Continuing our commitment to social innovation and regenerative priorities in City North.
- Strengthening our health innovation offer and connections at Bundoora.

Our priorities for international precincts and ecosystems include:

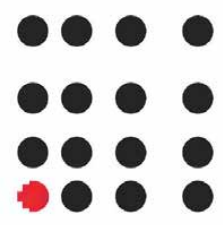
- RMIT Vietnam’s campus development in Hanoi.
- Working to strengthen RMIT Europe’s relationships with 22@ Innovation District in Barcelona.

How Ecosystems Develop In Place



1. Signal and Steer

Embrace our leadership role in the community, drawing on an attuned sense of local opportunities – in Melbourne and abroad.



2. Attract and Assemble

Rally diverse partners around shared local goals.

Contribute to the culture, conditions and infrastructure that enable government, industry, community and the education sector to come together.



3. Cluster and Co-locate

Collectively explore opportunities and bring new ideas into focus.

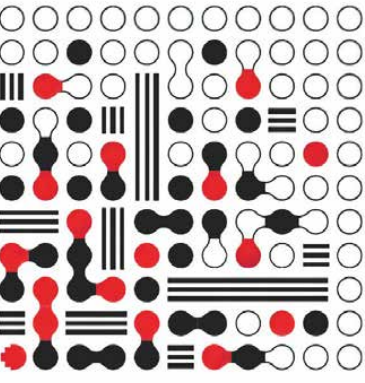
Strategically co-locate (both digitally and physically) to support and accelerate joint initiatives.



4. Coinvest and Collaborate

Facilitate agreements and investment in new (and renewed) shared infrastructure, platforms and projects.

Amplify the ecosystem's ability to work together, grow, and ultimately deliver local impact.



5. Impact and Influence

Deliver wider value and inclusive benefit to communities.

Mobilise the ecosystem to scale upwards and outwards – delivering system-level change and strengthening community resilience.

Our Vision and Goals

RMIT's Living Places Plan Vision:

To inspire an inclusive, innovative, and regeneratively sustainable future from the heart of Melbourne.

The rapidly-changing needs of society sit in constant and deepening tension with the slow-moving world of property. Buildings can very quickly become unfit for purpose, places can lose their appeal and, with that, their productive potential is diminished.

For the University, this poses an ongoing challenge to ensure our property and infrastructure stay responsive and relevant. In light of this, the Living Places Plan's principal function is to assist the University in prioritising and directing resources where they're most impactful.

While the Living Places Plan is responsive to change, it is also grounded in a clear project vision and goals that provide coordinates for navigating the course over the medium- to long-term.

The Living Places Plan achieves this by ensuring that future RMIT property initiatives – however large or small – share the same vision and goals.

RMIT's Living Places Plan Goals:

Country, Place and Identity

Celebrate First Peoples' culture in the University's evolving place-based identities, embedding Indigenous knowledges in how we care for Country and shape our places through bold design and the embrace of local and global communities.

Community, Connection and Experience

Create inclusive, welcoming and safe places that compel students, staff, partners, and the community to engage in vibrant, in-person university life.

Applied Innovation and Knowledge

Embed the University's applied knowledge traditions to create, and learn from, the next generation of place ecosystems and environments for learning and research - supporting local cultures of expertise and creativity both within and beyond RMIT.

Sustainability and Regenerative Futures

Embolden the University value of sustainability by ensuring that the Living Places Plan is agile, resilient, future reaching and regenerative in the fullest sense: of places, people, and cultures.

● Bringing Strategy and Places to Life

● Related Strategic Documents



● As Melbourne grows to become Australia’s largest city, RMIT’s role and responsibility as an agent of positive urban change is heightened, as is the imperative to provide skills, learning and knowledge to improve the lives and futures of people in a fast-changing society.

● RMIT's *Knowledge with Action* strategy focuses on using our knowledge, skills and capabilities to make a difference in the world. The Living Places Plan brings this strategy to life by introducing an innovative, holistic approach to property and place planning – providing not only a solid foundation for RMIT’s Property Plan and Capital Development programs, but helping to support and prioritise precinct activation initiatives, programming and partnerships that bring new life and learning opportunities to RMIT.

- ← The Living Places Plan considers the following:
- RMIT Act
 - Knowledge with Action
 - Place and Community Framework
 - RMIT’s Education Plan
 - RMIT’s Decadal Aspirations
 - IDEA Framework
 - Community Indigenous Engagement Framework (Draft)

● Core Aims

● Ensure that the University’s property embodies RMIT’s values of inclusion, imagination, integrity, courage, passion and impact and impact in the built form and management of our physical places.

● Clearly align the use and development of property with RMIT’s keystone strategies and plans – in particular our commitment to a ‘place-based approach’ outlined in the *Place and Community Framework*, where a set of six principles describe high-level commitments RMIT makes to help focus our activities in-place.

● Create compelling places that drive ‘in-person’ attendance and productivity as a central aspect to the signature pedagogy: Active, Applied, Authentic.

● Provide clarity for coherent decision-making about property across the entire portfolio, ensuring space and development planning processes are data-driven and evidence based.

● Bring our places to life through the right combination of learning, teaching, research and industry engagement that makes them recognisable as part of RMIT and increases RMIT’s competitive advantages as a university.

● Living Places

● RMIT's Living Places fuse the ebb and flow of campus life with the energy of the city.

Our in-person experiences in place are a source of connection, strengthening our communities and forging a sense of belonging and identity on many levels. Recognising that places are alive and imbued with meaning, our Living Places Plan signals a more experience-oriented approach to property development, combining traditional campus planning and design with placemaking, way-showing, activation and programming to focus on the creation of a distinctly 'RMIT experience'.

● RMIT's Living Places Plan understands the multiple roles our places perform, and the many ways they can and do contribute to the lives of those who study, work and use the facilities and services they offer. Not only do our places play host to the academic life of the institution, they serve the wider community, enriching the cultural life of the city by inviting participation and engagement. Balancing these multiple roles requires dedicated effort to plan, program and activate our campuses and sites – seamlessly supporting traditionally busy times such as open days and orientation weeks, while finding opportunities to bring them to life during quieter periods in the academic calendar.

We will encourage greater participation in our places – not simply visitation, but quality experiences that spark meaningful connections, creating conversations and knowledge to be shared. We will also recognise that many people experience barriers to full participation in place – and we aim to reduce those barriers to create welcoming, safe and inclusive environments for everyone.



Ngarara Place, RMIT City

Part Two: Framework

Guiding Our Future
in Place

Design Hub, RMIT City

This Framework outlines planning and decision-making systems that will translate the strategic vision into tangible place-making programs and maximise the collective impact of all estate investments.

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Guiding Future Development in Place

● The Framework of RMIT's Living Places Plan provides an overview of the University's approach to investing in our places for the future.

This Framework will guide capital planning, partnership, investment, and associated governance to ensure the successful implementation of the Living Places Plan's Vision (Part One). It outlines the strategic intent and decision-making process for developing our infrastructure and places. This Framework (Part Two) is designed to guide the Living Places Plan's Design (Part Three) and future place investment proposals including RMIT's short- and medium-term programs of work (including the Property Plan and the Capital Development Plan).

● The Framework comprises two key chapters to guide a university-wide approach to investment:

- **1. Strategic Place Planning**
Translation of strategic objectives into spatial requirements and place-based experiences.
- **2. Development Planning**
A structured approach for clear governance and informed decision-making for capital investment.



Building 224, RMIT Bundoora

Realising Our Vision

RMIT's Living Places Plan gives purpose to the many and varied activities that guide the future of the places and spaces that make up the University's estate.

From maintenance to major developments, our work to care for and curate the unique combination of learning environments, specialist facilities, public realm and much more is guided by our commitment to realising our vision across our places.

The Living Places Plan adopts a set of goals that provide direction to how each initiative, large and small, can contribute to the realisation of our vision.

This Framework sets the parameters for our work in place, introducing and defining measurable criteria that will ensure our wide-ranging initiatives can be aligned to our vision.

The Framework also provides the structure that can enable data-informed decisions, strategically-aligned prioritisation and the equitable allocation of resources across our diverse estate.

With a focus on embedding the measureable goals of the Living Places Plan in RMIT's short- and medium-term programs of work (the Property Plan and the Capital Development Plan), we will maximise the collective impact of our investments in place.

To inspire an inclusive, innovative, and regeneratively sustainable future from the heart of Melbourne.



MPavilion, RMIT Brunswick

Goals and Directions

Country, Place and Identity

- Celebrate First Peoples' culture in the University's evolving place-based identities, embedding Indigenous knowledges in how we care for Country and shape our places through bold design and the embrace of local and global communities.
- 1.1 Acknowledge that RMIT business is conducted on unceded lands and uphold our commitment to Responsible Practice by creating culturally safe and culturally visible physical environments where First Peoples feel welcome, find a sense of belonging and thrive.
 - 1.2 Collaboratively design RMIT's places with Traditional Custodians and RMIT's Indigenous Governance Structure in a way that enables the process to be self-determined and the outcomes to tangibly improve the health and wellbeing of Country, the celebrations of First Peoples cultural expression and economic opportunity for First Peoples businesses.
 - 1.3 Express bold, progressive design – and conserve our built heritage – to contribute to design and cultural discourse and create distinctive places.
 - 1.4 Make RMIT's specialised design, technology and enterprise activities visible and encourage participation through creating places that are integrated, permeable and engaged with our surrounding communities.
 - 1.5 Connect the global RMIT community through visible references and common character across locations, partnerships and initiatives.

Community, Connection and Experience

- Create inclusive, welcoming and safe places that compel students, staff, partners, and the community to engage in vibrant, in-person university life.
- 2.1 Invest in places that enable people to thrive holistically by exceeding expectations for safety, accessibility, comfort, amenity and connectivity.
 - 2.2 Be open and inclusive, welcoming lifelong engagement in campus life and encouraging active and in-person experiences to create a sense of belonging.
 - 2.3 Co-create experiences with diverse RMIT communities so everyone can enjoy the campuses in their own way, particularly elevating Indigenous voices.
 - 2.4 Consolidate activities to create maximum impact through intensity of use and opportunities for connection, including through shared-use models.
 - 2.5 Use a legible hierarchy of spaces for ease of navigation and to balance open access with layers of security.

Applied Innovation and Knowledge

- Embed the University's applied knowledge traditions to create, and learn from, the next generation of place ecosystems and environments for learning and research - supporting local cultures of expertise and creativity both within and beyond RMIT.
- 3.1 Provide impactful learning environments, ensuring a diverse mix of settings to support RMIT's signature pedagogy, and lifelong learning, enabling physical and digital connectivity.
 - 3.2 Provide world-class, fit-for-purpose, physical and digital infrastructure that enables our people to embark on diverse pathways to research impact.
 - 3.3 Maximise flexibility by making spaces multipurpose, interdisciplinary and adaptable where possible.
 - 3.4 Cluster activities by interdisciplinary capabilities to support research excellence, applied learning and industry engagement ecosystems.
 - 3.5 Create opportunities for interdisciplinary and industry exposure, interaction and collaboration through connected common spaces.

Sustainability and Regenerative Futures

- Embolden the University value of sustainability by ensuring that the Living Places Plan is agile, resilient, future reaching and regenerative in the fullest sense: of places, people, and cultures.
- 4.1 Advance sustainability principles for place-based planning and design, utilising a regenerative approach to climate-resilient solutions, the care and repair of living systems and connected community experiences.
 - 4.2 Prioritise holistic, precinct-based infrastructure and operational strategies which reduce carbon impacts, creating positive environments that support the mutual flourishing of people, place and planet.
 - 4.3 Elevate and advance circular economy systems and the co-design of innovative methods that value and conserve resources, exploring adaptive reuse of existing materials and buildings as part of anticipatory infrastructures for sustainable and regenerative futures.
 - 4.4 Protect, repair and regenerate ecological value to promote healthy functioning ecosystems, increase biodiversity and connect people to nature, grounded in place, culture and Indigenous custodianship.
 - 4.5 Leverage the campus as a 'living lab' to provide rich sites for learning, research and community engagement, creating transformational change grounded in a commitment to developing leading sustainable and regenerative design policy, principles and practices.

Understanding RMIT Today



Part Two: Framework

RMIT City

Our Community

Principally, the Living Places Plan is a commitment to engagement with First Peoples to co-create places of inclusion and respect that benefit our community.

RMIT's responsibility to serve our community is embedded in our institutional DNA: from the *RMIT Act* to our commitment to Responsible Practice, to our strategy and guiding plans. *Knowledge with Action* makes clear that the heart of RMIT's strategy is an open, diverse and collaborative community. This responsibility is brought to life through the Living Places Plan's commitment to engage with our communities for our places. This will include not just what our places are, but how the future is determined – inviting participation in design, planning and the ongoing life of our campuses and sites.

For RMIT, the community includes many individuals, entities and organisations. As we seek to develop lifelong relationships with learners, we recognise that people's relationships with place changes over time. We also acknowledge the significant role that our places can, and do, play in the creation of communities, promoting a sense of belonging and identity.

Our campuses are open and accessible to everyone, yet offer a sense of belonging to the communities of learners, educators, researchers and professionals as they participate in their collective RMIT experience. Our campuses and sites also provide points of connection to industry and thought leaders, creating opportunities for innovation ecosystems to grow and for ideas to be exchanged.

RMIT exists to serve the interests of the entire community. We create the environments that will shape future generations.

The RMIT Community

The Living Places Plan is a commitment to ongoing engagement with the RMIT community to evolve the plans for our future places.



Students
Diverse lifelong learners across sectors, delivery modes and regions, including domestic and international students enrolled in vocational education, higher education, higher degree by research, apprenticeships and traineeships.



Staff
All academics, educators, teachers, researchers and professional staff.



Partners
Institutional, government and community partners, including the not-for-profit sector.



Visitors and Community
Location communities and the general public; engaged with thinking and creating.



Alumni
Networks of colleagues, mentors and industry professionals.

Our Scale and Structure

RMIT is a dual-sector university with a strong international reputation for excellence in education, applied research, and engagement with government, industry and communities. RMIT specialises in practical, industry-based learning, emphasising the importance of putting theory into practice through applied skills and knowledge.

Today RMIT offers courses of study across four academic colleges and sixteen academic schools, supported by seven administrative portfolios and led by our Vice-Chancellor and senior executives. Our learning, teaching and research programs are continually evolving so that students, staff and graduates are equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

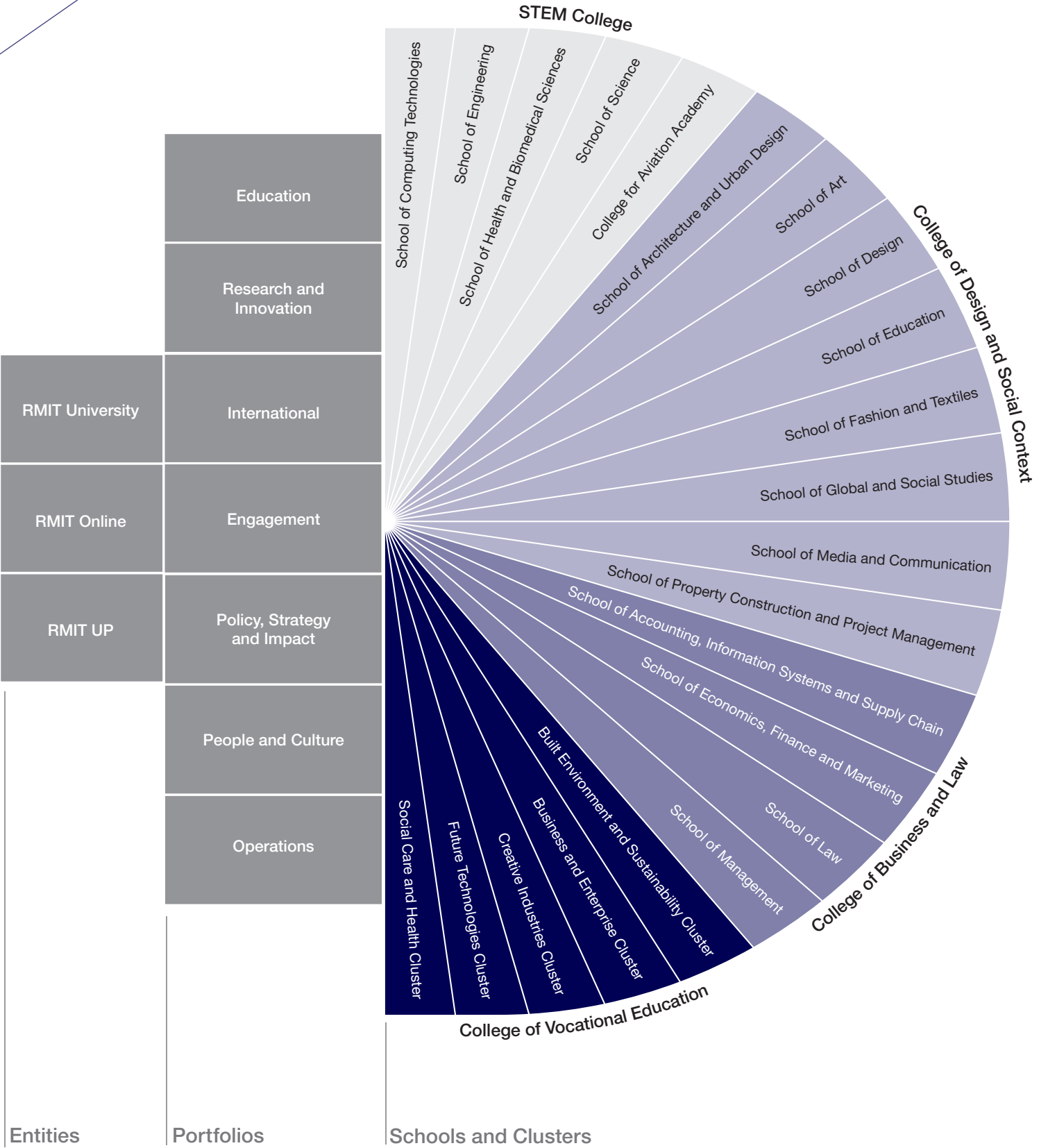
RMIT is a world leader in Art and Design, Architecture and Built Environment, Education, Engineering, Development, Computer Science and Information Systems, Business and Management, and Communication and Media Studies.

RMIT Today

RMIT's community in Australia comprises approximately:

Students EFTSL	Students HC	Staff FTE	Staff HC	Land Size	Building GFA	Building Density
53,000	74,000	6,100	10,700	67ha	474,000m ²	8.9m ² /EFTSL

*Data sources dated December 2024



Colleges, Schools and Clusters



CoBL College of Business and Law

RMIT is known for excellence in business and law education, providing high quality, industry responsive programs and research relevant to the national and global marketplace.

The College of Business and Law is one of the largest business schools in the Asia Pacific region and delivers industry-engaged education and applied research that spark ambition and new perspectives.

Schools

- School of Accounting, Information Systems and Supply Chain
- School of Economics, Finance and Marketing
- School of Law
- School of Management



CoVE College of Vocational Education

The College of Vocational Education focuses on offering students exceptional learning experiences through supporting our staff to deliver quality teaching and learning.

Guided by a student-centred approach, the College is future focused and one that:

1. Empowers high performing educators to deliver exceptional learning experiences.
2. Delivers on our core vision and purpose.
3. Builds upon and grows blended learning capabilities.
4. Delivers impact through smart transformation that creates long-term change.

Industry Clusters

The CoVE is made up of five industry clusters located across our three Melbourne campuses.

Our discipline clusters strengthen our multi-sector advantage, while fostering deep collaboration between disciplines. These discipline clusters are:

- Built Environment and Sustainability
- Business and Enterprise
- Creative Industries
- Future Technologies
- Social Care and Health



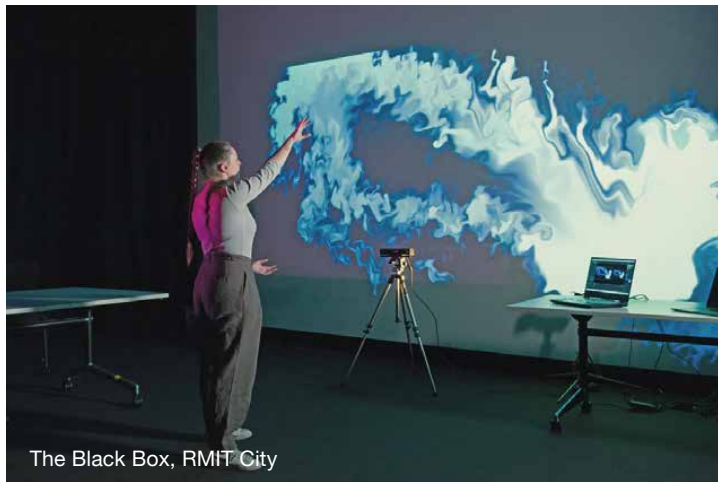
Understanding RMIT Today



Design Hub, RMIT City

DSC
College of Design and Social Context

RMIT's College of Design and Social Context is a world leader in creative and practical study in the fields of design, technology and society. DSC encompasses a wide variety of disciplines of the Built Environment, Education, Media and Communication, Global and Social Studies and across all fields of art and design. It is this breadth of expertise and the shared commitment to addressing the most urgent challenges and opportunities of our time through interdisciplinary collaboration that gives the College its unique identity. Its work makes substantive contributions to regenerating cities, places and the planet; advancing a just society; and exploring the nexus of design, digital and technology.



The Black Box, RMIT City

Schools

The College of DSC offers programs in:

- School of Architecture and Urban Design
- School of Art
- School of Design
- School of Education
- School of Fashion and Textiles
- School of Global, Urban and Social Studies
- School of Media and Communication
- School of Property, Construction and Project Management



Digital Human Bioscience Facilities, RMIT Bundoora

STEM
STEM College

The STEM College holds a leading position and expertise in the science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health and medical sciences (STEM) fields.

STEM College offers higher education programs across all STEM disciplines at the Bachelor, Master and PhD levels, and ensures our students experience an education that is work-aligned and life-changing. The College is renowned for its exemplary research in many STEM areas including advanced manufacturing and design, computing technologies, health innovation and translational medicine, nano materials and devices and sustainable systems. Industry is at the heart of what STEM does. It ensures research has real world impact, and our students are truly work ready.

Schools

There are four schools in the STEM College, offering programs that range from certificates through to PhDs:

- School of Computing Technologies
- School of Engineering
- School of Health and Biomedical Sciences
- School of Science



Virtual Experiences Lab, RMIT City

Entities and

RMIT UP provides pathway programs for entry to RMIT University.

RMIT Online offers a world-class education experience, co-designed with industry leaders and delivered online.

People and Culture

Provides strategic, people-centered, proactive and effective solutions and services for all staff, supporting them through the employee lifecycle, creating a vibrant, inclusive and empowering workplace – where people can thrive in a culture aligned with the RMIT values.

Education

Leads RMIT's learning and teaching strategy, drives academic quality, and delivers services that enhance the student experience, support success across diverse learning pathways, and build educator capability.

Engagement

Manages and protects RMIT's international brand and reputation, leads global marketing and student recruitment, connects with alumni and philanthropic communities, and supports the delivery of RMIT's strategic agenda.

University Secretariat and Academic Registrar's Group

Supports the Vice-Chancellor and President in all aspects of their work, provides specialist strategic advice, oversees University governance and student administration, and delivers a range of other services to support student administration, learning, teaching and research.

Portfolios

Policy, Strategy and Impact

Develops and supports RMIT's overall strategy, building partnerships and initiatives to advance the University's impact.

Research and Innovation

Supports RMIT researchers and HDR candidates to achieve excellent research and research translation outcomes through strategic support and services.

International

Advances RMIT's international strategy across Asia Pacific, with a focus on Southeast Asia, through global partnerships, our network of innovation hubs and regional thought leadership and expertise.

Operations

Provides enterprise-wide technology, property, and professional support services, enabling learning, research, engagement activities and delivering exceptional experiences for students and staff.

Strategic Place Planning

CoVE Staff Hub, RMIT City

Planning for Our Future in Place

Strategic place planning is a critical approach to delivering RMIT’s future aspirations. It enables a view to the future of learning, research and work environments – with connections to industry and the broader community, alongside high-quality, place-based experiences for students and staff, balanced with an optimal property portfolio.

A cohesive, consistent and considered approach to place and space planning ensures that short-term decisions and long-term aspirations support the strategic ambitions of the University, and its Colleges, Schools and Portfolios.

The Living Places Plan's Framework establishes a university-wide approach to translating strategic objectives into spatial requirements and place-based experiences across its Australian locations.

Strategic place planning guides the criteria to evaluate place initiatives aligned with the Living Places Plan's goals and directions, including:

- Aligning University projections (‘demand’) and property response (‘supply’) using agreed data sources.
- Adopting a consistent planning methodology across College and Portfolio initiatives.
- Guiding future-focused approaches to planning the University's estate, spaces and locations.
- Identifying qualitative and quantitative performance indicators reflective of RMIT’s strategic place-based ambitions.



Asia Hub, RMIT City

Macro Planning for Places

An overview of the University's places 'macro planning' enables RMIT to establish university-wide planning principles that translate its population into place and guide the quality of its place transformation.

Macro planning establishes quantitative performance indicators for the University that are guided by planning density targets. Drawing on its history of efficient estate management, RMIT's future-focused macro planning targets are informed by sector benchmarks and the University's population trends to establish a quantifiable performance ambition for its places.

This will guide the overall planning of the University estate in concert with the place-based experience factors outlined in the Living Places Plan goals.

To implement the Living Places Plan Framework, RMIT's 'Shape and Size' data projections form the foundation of the University's planning for the future – guiding the alignment of forecast student population shifts, academic activities, and space requirements over time.

A demand-driven approach allows RMIT to forecast how people will use assets and spaces in the future, so that the right level of infrastructure can be delivered at the right time.

Alongside qualitative ambitions, the detailed data forecasts for student and staff populations within Colleges, Schools and Clusters, and Portfolios inform the University's capacity planning in further detail.

Over time, we will evolve and transform our locations into destinations through the application of place typologies.

Each campus and site serves to meet the Living Places Plan goals through providing distinctive experiences and responsible infrastructure in strategic locations.

Factors for decision-making include the ability to deliver our unique pedagogies across Higher Education and Vocational Education, proximity to industry and the potential to attract students, researchers and staff.

Each campus and site serves to meet the Living Places Plan goals by providing distinctive experiences and responsible infrastructure in strategic locations.



Building 223, RMIT Bundoora

Evolving RMIT's Places

Place typologies are a way to define the role and focus of our activities at key locations. As we continue to strengthen the role and reach of our Principal Campus, we will work with the RMIT community to focus our offers at our metropolitan locations, creating destinations that showcase distinct capabilities to pursue priorities and support specialist research infrastructure.

Place Typologies

Principal Campus

A principal campus encompasses more than a collection of buildings; it is a place that embodies a university's identity and expresses its values. In RMIT's case, libraries, public spaces, venues, galleries and event spaces join applied learning and translational research areas to create a distinctive and inviting part of Melbourne's central city.

Specialist Campus

Home to an internationally recognised centre for excellence in at least one field, a specialist campus is a vibrant destination connected to, and energising, surrounding precincts.

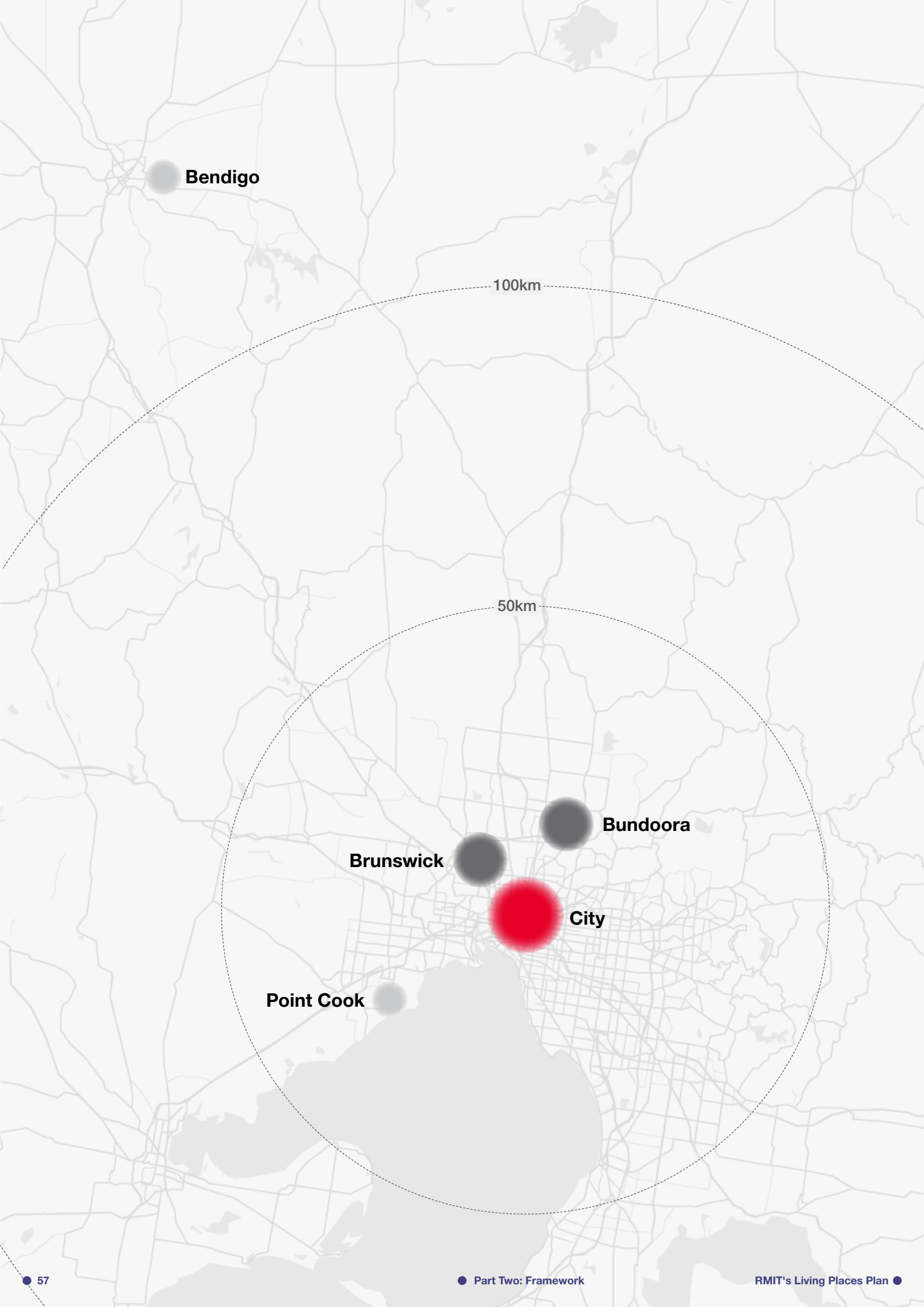
Specialist campuses attract industry and partner organisations, encouraging communities of practice to form through in-person activities and collaboration.

A specialist campus hosts programs that are not duplicated elsewhere, offering competitive advantage.

Specialist Site

A host to activities that are not suited to locate within our principal or specialist campuses but are required to support University strategy in learning, teaching, research and/or industry engagement.

Committing to participate in place at specialist sites involves a thorough examination of the benefits to the institution and RMIT community.



Strategic Space Typologies

RMIT's campuses are made up of a rich variety of spaces to enable the breadth of University activities to occur in place.

RMIT's spaces have continued to evolve throughout RMIT's history, always striving to create the next generation of university environments for learning, teaching and research activities alongside place-based university experiences.

Aligned with the University's strategic vision as articulated in *Knowledge with Action*, RMIT's next generation of spaces prioritise learning, research, community and civic partnerships.

The Living Places Plan incorporates a Strategic Place Planning Framework that defines strategic space planning typologies to enable RMIT's strategic objectives to be translated into spatial requirements, and establishes a shared, common language, a University-wide planning methodology and demonstrable alignment.

Our campuses and specialist sites are porous, interactive environments that cater to the diverse needs of the RMIT community while inviting public participation.

RMIT's Strategic Space Planning Typologies

Future Directions



Pharmacy Dispensary, RMIT Bundoora

Learning and Teaching Spaces

Spaces that primarily support formal and informal learning and study activities.

- Shift the mix of general and specialist spaces towards more multipurpose, inter-disciplinary, flexible, adaptable and shared spaces (for both learning and research) that catalyse connection.



Building 223, RMIT Bundoora

Research Spaces

Spaces that primarily support specialist research activities. Typically, a specialist function, equipment and/or operating mode.

- Increase the representation of research in place.



Bowen Street, RMIT City

Campus and Civic Amenity

A wide range of spaces critical to delivering a vibrant, connected, on-campus experience.

- Prioritise the location of campus amenity within the public realm for improved accessibility and enhanced student, staff and visitor experiences.



Building 106, RMIT City

Workspace

Spaces to support academic, higher degree research and professional work. The full suite of work settings designed for the diversity of work modes.

- Optimise the workspace footprint, improving workspace quality and choices to enhance staff experience and collaboration.



Bowen Street Press, RMIT City

Industry Spaces

Spaces to support engagement and collaboration with industry partners including co-location and shared spaces; and leasing to third parties.

- Increase the representation of industry collaboration in place.



New Academic Street, RMIT City

Operational and Circulation Spaces

Spaces for circulation and movement, operations and maintenance, IT and support services.

- Optimise the operational space footprint reflective of University expectations for safety, quality and character.

Physical Digital Integration

● As a place-based institution with global networks, the in-person experience of our places and spaces – which the Living Places Plan celebrates at the core of RMIT's vision – remains highly valued by the RMIT community, supported by seamless experiences across digital and physical environments.

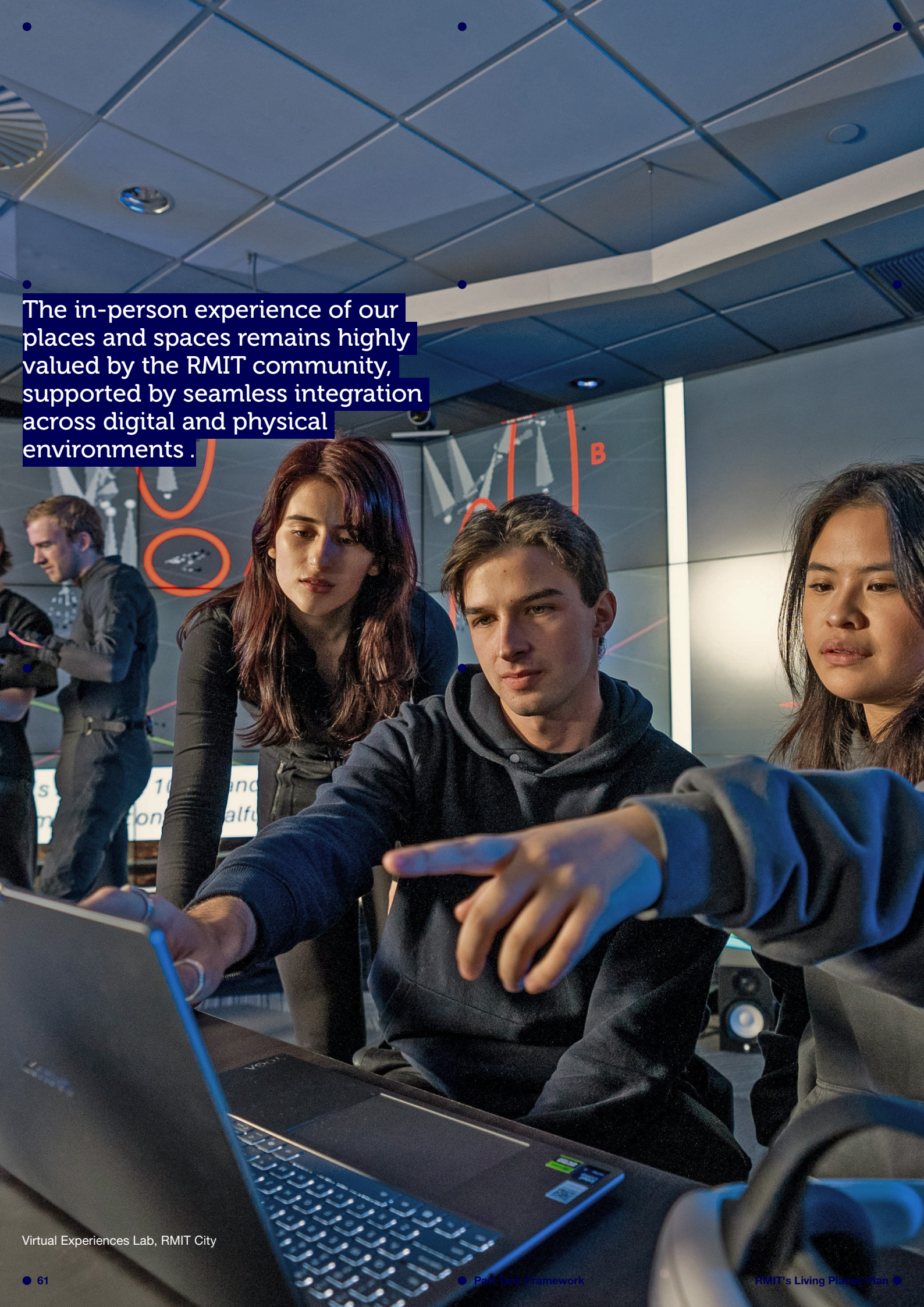
RMIT's places are connected networks that integrate world-class environments, combining our applied knowledge traditions, with the latest technology advancements in a rapidly evolving digital age.

Our physical and digital environments are continuing to evolve together as the University innovatively enables

● and enhances the connected experiences that build the learning, teaching, research and industry networks, communities and connection at the heart of the goals of the Living Places Plan.

An integrated approach to the creation of engaging physical and digital experiences forms the foundation to implementing the Living Places Plan. It guides how we apply the Plan's goals and directions to how we conceive of and design the next generation of University environments, to ensure our spaces and systems work together to create seamless experiences in-place and to support the connections across our community.

● The in-person experience of our places and spaces remains highly valued by the RMIT community, supported by seamless integration across digital and physical environments. ●



Virtual Experiences Lab, RMIT City

Interdisciplinary Capabilities in Place

Imagining a future-focused ecosystem of capabilities to inform the strategic arrangement of our places is a core element of the Living Places Plan. It looks beyond the organisational structure of today to envision a future of enhanced interdisciplinary connections.

Drawing from the *Place and Community Framework*, the Living Places Plan finds tangible ways to extend innovation and lifelong learning ecosystems by translating strategic aspirations into a range of spaces and places that encourage connection and collaboration.

The Living Places Plan provides the physical place platforms for shared activities and common growth with a focus on opportunities to:

- Enable informal connections through a considered network of shared and overlapping interstitial spaces.
- Facilitate interactions in shared, accessible environments.
- Encourage capability collaborations, clustered around specialist infrastructure anchors.
- Augment digital experiences and connections in all our places and spaces.

The Living Places Plan looks beyond the organisational structure of today to envision a future of enhanced interdisciplinary connections.



Makerspace, RMIT Brunswick



Development Planning

Bowen Street, RMIT City

Prioritising Investment in Place

In order to support the implementation of the University's aspirations, the Living Places Plan's Framework provides a structured approach to decision-making for capital investment. It aims to:

- Define the governance approach to oversee and sustain the ongoing implementation of the Living Places Plan.
- Supports the implementation of the University's aspirations by guiding the prioritisation of RMIT's investment.
- Establish the evaluation criteria to inform the capital investment decisions in alignment with RMIT's strategic ambitions.
- Detail the methodology and supporting processes to enable the long-term implementation of the Living Places Plan.
- Outline measurable performance indicators enabling the successful implementation of the Living Places Plan to be monitored against strategic ambitions over time.



Desired Outcomes

Clear and Consistent Process	Establish a uniform approach for raising, developing, evaluating, and communicating initiatives, to ensure clear roles, responsibilities, and structured engagement across RMIT.
Efficient and Timely Decision-Making	Streamline governance and thresholds to enable timely, well-defined decision pathways in a competitive sector.
Risk Minimisation and Value Maximisation	Embed early risk assessment and strategic analysis to minimise issues, optimise resources, and maximise long-term academic, research, and community value.
Collaborative Approach	Promote cross-functional teamwork, continuous improvement, and alignment with strategic and operational priorities.
Transparent Prioritisation	Use clear, published criteria for initiative prioritisation and resource allocation, building trust and accountability.
Connected Investment	Avoid narrow focus and isolated decisions by aligning initiatives with university-wide strategy, ensuring cohesive and efficient campus development.
Strategic Alignment	Link capital planning with academic, research, and institutional strategy to support RMIT's long-term vision.
Prepared for Success	Provide tools, processes and timelines for early-stage planning to ensure initiatives are evidence-based, strategically aligned, and well-considered from inception.

Gateway Framework

The Living Places Plan Framework sets a priority focus on strategic alignment and prioritisation at the earliest stages of exploring ideas for our estate, to guide investment decisions and inform key programs of work and activities in support of the Living Places Plan vision and goals.

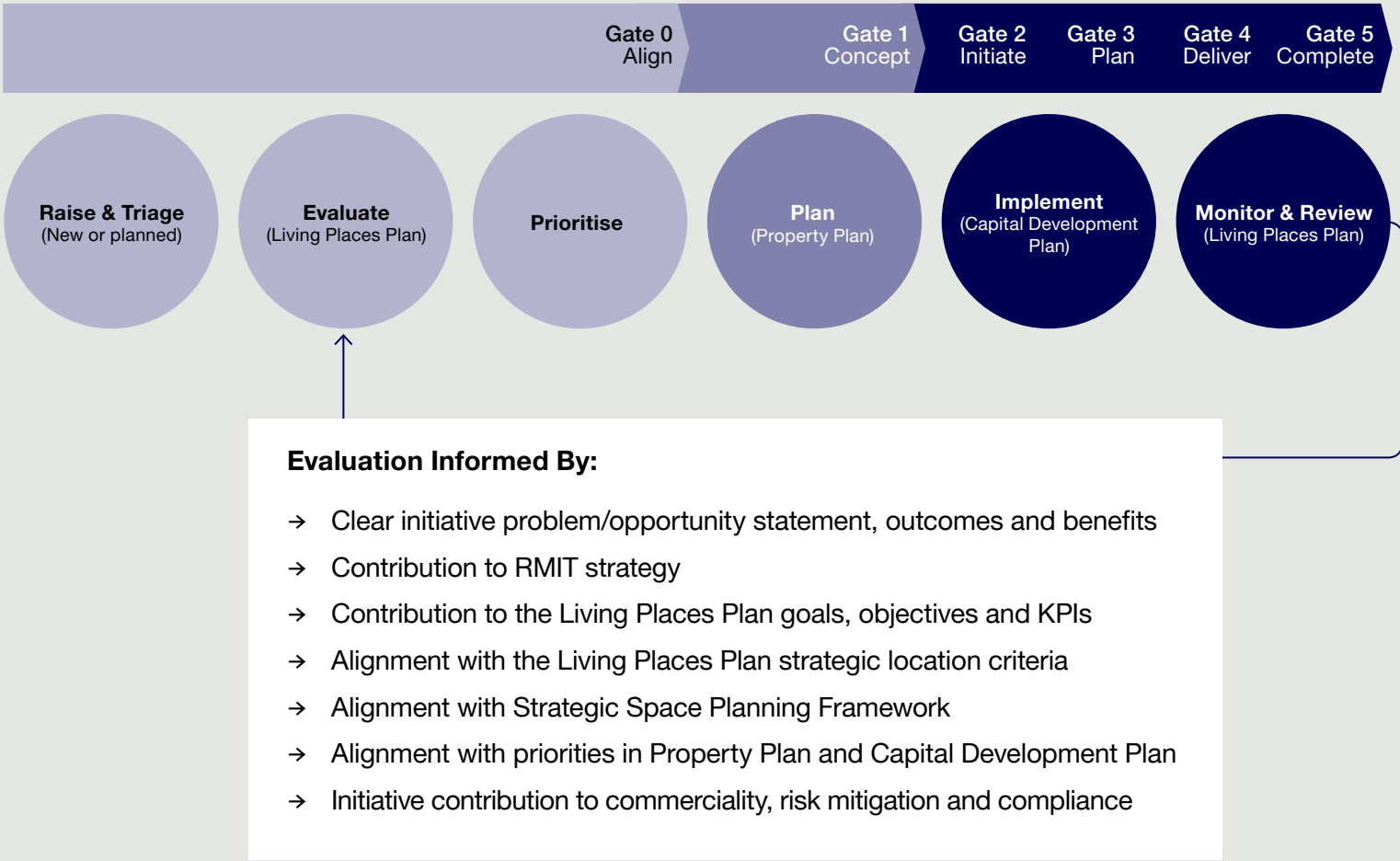
'Gate 0' is introduced as an expansion of RMIT's Gateway Framework process, bringing clarity and alignment to our University-wide processes. It sets the strategic aspirations for place-based initiatives and informs their implementation in the planning, design, delivery and review activities throughout the project lifecycle.

The success of the Living Places Plan will include the collective performance of the various programs of work and activities towards implementing the Living Places Plan's vision and goals. Programs of work and individual initiatives contribute to the measurements that are monitored and calibrated, ensuring the Living Places Plan goals continue to guide the transformation of our estate over time for the benefit of our community.

The Living Places Plan goals continue to guide the transformation of the University's places over time – for the benefit of our community.

Strategic Prioritisation of Investment

RMIT's Gateway Framework has guided the delivery of capital works programs from concept to operation over the past decade. The Living Places Plan enables the expansion of the Gateway Framework to align strategic objectives and prioritisation at the earliest stages of new ideas and initiatives.



Development Planning

Gateway is a governance framework and structured process for delivery of capital works projects at RMIT. It examines and confirms critical decision points from inception through to benefits evaluation. Comprising of 0-5 Gates, the framework articulates key activities, milestones and RMIT's expectations for project delivery.

	← Origination →		← Conversion →		← Delivery →	
Gates	0 Align	1 Initiate	2 Brief	3 Plan	4 Deliver	5 Complete
Key Control Document	→ Initiative tiering → Alignment assessment of initiative needs and outcomes → Initiative prioritisation	→ Investment Case	→ Project Brief → Governance, Communication and Engagement Plan	→ Final Investment Case → Delivery Plan	→ Operational Handover Part A	→ Project Completion Report → Operational Handover Part D
Objective	Operates as the front door for submission of property-focused initiatives. Assess alignment of submission against: → RMIT Strategy. → Living Places Plan goals, objectives, location criteria and Strategic Place Planning. → Property Plan and Capital Development Plan priorities. → Contribution to commerciality, risk mitigation and compliance.	To complete a strategic assessment of the initiative and obtain approval of: → Prioritisation and reserved funding on the Investment Slate, high-level summary, schedule, benefits and outcomes, commitment of Property Services resourcing.	To define the scope necessary to inform the design phases – including location, space type, and occupancy – in order to support the delivery of the Investment Case, clarify project governance, and identify key stakeholders for consultation and engagement.	Confirm the project's readiness to proceed through the completion of a Feasibility Study or Schematic Design, presenting options and a recommended approach to support the Investment Case. This includes outlining the proposed project structure and securing approval for: → The release of whole-of-life funding required to deliver the project.	Advance through Design Development, Contract Documentation, Procurement, and Construction, followed by verification that: → The project has been completed in accordance with RMIT requirements, with formal acceptance confirmed by Facilities and Asset Management.	Verify the final state of the project against the approved Investment Case whilst progressing through the Defects Liability Period to: → Formally register the project as complete and archive associated documentation.
Endorsements	→ Sponsor → Property Services	→ Sponsor → Property Services → Finance → Policy, Strategy and Impact	→ Property Services → Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and VP	→ Sponsor → Property Services → Finance → Policy, Strategy and Impact	→ Security → ITS	→ Property Services → Finance
Approval Form	Strategic Investment Committee	Strategic Investment Committee	Property Governance Group	Strategic Investment Committee	Operational Handover Group	Property Governance Group
Delegation of Authority Requirement	Executive Director Property Services (EDPS)	Refer Delegation of Authority Schedule 1 – Financial and Contractual Delegations	Sponsor	Refer Delegation of Authority Schedule 1 – Financial and Contractual Delegations	Senior Manager, Asset Management	Sponsor

Development Planning

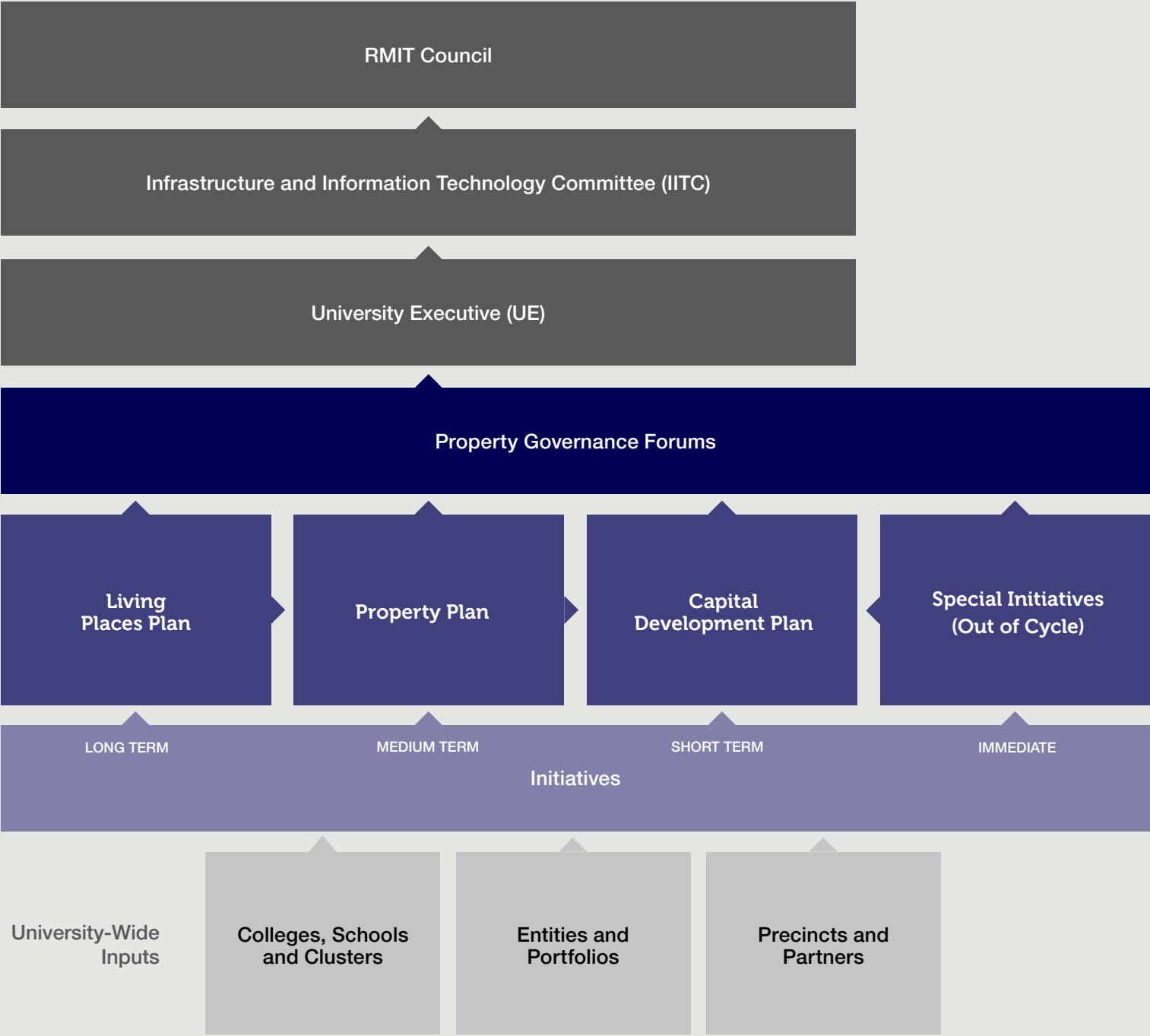
As a public university, RMIT’s strong governance structure ensures that decision-making reflects the University’s values. The Living Places Plan’s Framework works within the wider RMIT governance structure, led by Council, to embed a clear and equitable governance approach for place-based decision-making.

The Living Places Plan strengthens our governance of place investment and decisions alongside an engagement approach that commits to Responsible Practice and partnering with our community.

With the introduction of Gate 0, the Living Places Plan expands the governance approach of the Gateway Framework to the earliest stages of place-based initiatives and investment, enabling effective decision-making informed by data-based evidence, strategic alignment and collaboration.

This approach will ensure that the Living Places Plan vision and goals can be realised over time, across a range of programs of work and projects in alignment with the aspirations of the RMIT community.

Governance Framework





Part Three: Design

Multifaith and Wellbeing Centre, RMIT City



RMIT's Place Design Principles

Overview

Principles

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RMIT's Living Places Plan Design

City

RMIT City
Today

RMIT City
Future

RMIT City
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Priorities

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Bundoora

RMIT Bundoora
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The Design describes how the Vision and Framework can be actively applied to create inclusive, regenerative, and purposeful places in the City, Brunswick, and Bundoora – through design principles and priorities that embed RMIT's commitment to sustainability, heritage, and First Peoples' culture.



A Guide to Designing Our Places

While the Living Places Plan's Vision (Part One) outlines the University's overarching direction, and the Plan's Framework (Part Two) includes guides to capital planning, investment and associated governance, the Plan's Design (Part Three) identifies future development and renewal opportunities at our key Melbourne locations.

Part Three: Design establishes:

- The context for the design of our RMIT campuses, including the Living Places Plan's overarching vision, goals and RMIT communities.
- Place Design Principles.
- Specific plans that show these principles applied to City, Brunswick, and Bundoora.



Building 515, RMIT Brunswick



Part Three: Design

RMIT's Place Design Principles

Bowen Street, RMIT City

Overview

RMIT's Place Design Principles summarise the strategic design intent and guide the design and development of the campuses over time, in order to:

- Align with the Living Places Plan's vision and goals – including the University's commitment to First Peoples, enriching the community experience, strengthening our connection with the city, and encouraging participation in campus life.
- Support RMIT's future learning, teaching, research and workspace needs by providing a flexible framework that can adapt to changing growth and demands.
- Reflect our commitment to leading sustainability and regeneration efforts, prioritising the adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

The RMIT Place Design Principles align campus design with the Living Places Plan Goals and broader RMIT strategies, creating great places for our students and our community.

The Living Places Plan Goals and Place Design Principles



RMIT's Place Design Principles



Ngarara Place, RMIT City



Wurrunggi Biik: Law of the Land, RMIT City



Bowen Street, RMIT City



Building 22, RMIT City

Responsibility for Country

- Co-design and embed engagement processes with Traditional Custodians and RMIT's Indigenous Governance Structure to enable self-determination, cultural safety, respect for cultural authority, truth telling, greater visibility of Traditional Custodians within RMIT's places.
- Understand and repair the health and wellbeing of Country across RMIT places through the tangible improvements of Indigenous ecologies, habitats, waterways at both project and campus wide scales, and in doing so enable cultural practices such as Caring for Country, Ceremony, First Peoples technologies and cultural making.
- Celebrate First Peoples, Knowledge and cultural expression by making visible the spirit of place through the stories, living histories, practices and cultural heritage of Traditional Custodians and the contemporary stories, lived experiences and practices of local Indigenous Communities.
- Ensure the process and delivery of RMIT's places are culturally grounded, welcoming and respectful to First Peoples and provide economic opportunities for Indigenous-led businesses in the procurement and management of RMIT's places.

A Clear Sense of Arrival and Identity

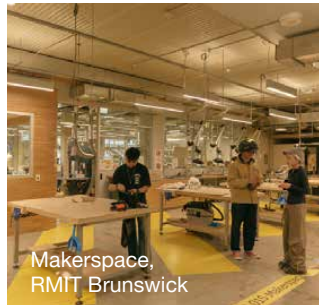
- Signal arrival to an RMIT place with clearly identified, open and welcoming thresholds that express RMIT's identity.
- Create intuitive arrival pathways with direct connections to the surrounding city, emphasising sustainable transport options.
- Articulate clear entryways and journeys through buildings to support intuitive circulation.
- Incorporate strategic landmarks for ease of orientation and navigation, and as expressions of the RMIT identity.



Dye Garden, RMIT Brunswick

Connected to the Community

- Integrate RMIT with its surroundings so that it is experienced as part of the broader city.
- Deliver a highly permeable ground plane with active building frontages that engage with street life.
- Create an open, accessible and welcoming experience for anyone who visits our campuses, including students, staff, partners and the wider community.
- Deliver public spaces that can showcase RMIT's activities and invite the city in.
- Partner with council and community to reinforce our campuses as active, vibrant, pedestrian-first precincts that contribute to, and can be used by, the wider city.
- Dedicate on-campus spaces for industry partners and startups, supporting research, development and commercialisation through strategic colocation.



An Intuitive Network of Spaces and Capabilities

- Ensure natural and intuitive wayfinding by creating clear, consolidated circulation paths and connection points, and utilising clear signage.
 - Emphasise a system of interconnected nodes, with a natural point of shared arrival for every precinct, building, floor and workspace.
 - Utilise this system of navigation and connection across the campus, vertically in section, as well as horizontally in plan.
 - Work with a hierarchy of circulation to create layers of accessibility and security, including open/public, shared/invited, and secure/private.
- Zone spaces and activities within buildings to create adjacencies and relationships that support effective learning and teaching experiences.
 - Transform existing learning spaces for contemporary pedagogies.
 - Develop flexible, fit-for-purpose spaces for learning, teaching and research.
 - Ensure technology enables the constant integration of physical places with online experience.

Engaging with Heritage and Adaptive Reuse

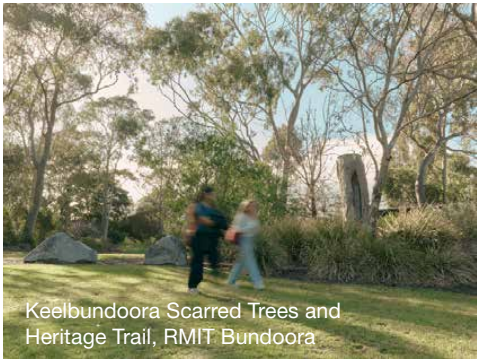
- Prioritise adaptive reuse of existing buildings over new development – embedding Retrofit Assessment principles as standard towards carbon positive construction on all projects.
- Identify creative reuse opportunities.
- Align built form characteristics with appropriate educational and research uses.
- Open up the facades of heritage buildings where practicable, especially to allow connections that activate the ground floor.
- Prioritise our significant built heritage elements, protecting, highlighting and re-engaging with them for future generations.

Natural Centres of Campus Life

- Concentrate shared services and amenities in central destinations to amplify campus life.
- Ensure a pedestrian-first, people-focused experience of place.
- Enhance and activate student spaces and ground plane building interfaces to engage buildings with active public realm.
- Provide a diverse range of programmable spaces for gathering and recreation.
- Incorporate a series of learning hubs that support formal and informal connections to encourage transdisciplinary collaboration.
- Utilise natural centres of activity as a component of distinct, interconnected precincts of learning, teaching and research spaces based upon RMIT capabilities.
- Connect these central destinations to other distributed RMIT locations to reinforce a wider network of RMIT places.



Building 516, RMIT Brunswick



Keelbundoora Scarred Trees and Heritage Trail, RMIT Bundoora



Ngarara Place, RMIT City



Apple Foundation Program, RMIT City



Building 516, RMIT Brunswick

A System of Green and Landscaped Spaces

- Embed our campuses within natural environments, through a diverse range of landscaped spaces and planted areas.
- Actively improve biodiversity, incorporate seasonal awareness and natural environment.
- Incorporate ample shelter, shade and seating.
- Deliver spaces that support informal use and a sense of ownership for RMIT students as part of their campus experience.
- Provide extensive tree canopy to mitigate harsh winds, reduce urban heat island effects and create comfortable environments for people to move through.
- Ensure plant selection is climate resilient and integrates indigenous plant species.
- Deliver spaces with event overlays to enable diverse RMIT and community activation.

Regenerative Futures

- Prioritise and integrate wholistic best practice sustainable design and operations initiatives.
- All new construction and major refurbishment should demonstrate net positive carbon outcomes across the full material lifecycle. Implement circular economy through design.
- Consolidate shared plant and clean energy infrastructure systems on a precinct basis to maximise efficiency across the campus. Including food, ecology and water as productive infrastructure.
- Deliver future-proofed systems designed for evolution and adaptation at every scale. Products designed for reconfigurability and longevity should be specified as standard
- Adopt Regenerative Futures as a spatial and programmatic cluster with a presence on each campus shaping adjacencies, industry co-location and community engagement.

Design Excellence and Quality of Experience

- Focus every campus initiative, at every scale, on creating a quality human experience.
- Design for difference and inclusion of a range of different bodyminds.
- Use strategic processes and design rigour to build the RMIT brand and identity through an ongoing legacy of highest quality project outcomes.
- Champion design excellence through partnerships with industry leading collaborators and partners.



Part Three: Design

RMIT's Living Places Plan Design

Swanston Academic Building, RMIT City

RMIT City Today

The RMIT campus experience is co-created with the city, as lines between public space and the University are blurred.

RMIT’s principal campus is embedded in the life of the city, a strong presence that has evolved since its beginnings as Building 1 in 1887.

Over years, our remit has expanded and the institution has extended – growing from a single building in the 19th century to span close to 10 hectares of 21st century Melbourne in the heart of a vastly expanded metropolis.

Our footprint brings significant opportunity along with great responsibility. While our institution was established when Traditional Custodians of the lands were not recognised or respected, times have changed. We now demonstrate our commitment to Responsible Practice through how we care for our places.

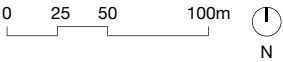
Throughout significant change, RMIT has remained true to its original role and purpose – bringing education in the form of industry-relevant technical skills to working people, augmented with a commitment to unite learning, knowledge and community.

From the outset, our location was crucial to the successful achievement of our goals. Our location in the central city, a short distance from industry, was a deliberate decision. RMIT’s accessibility – not hidden behind fences – brings education to the people.

As a major part of the centre of Melbourne, RMIT City Campus encourages learners to apply their skills to real-world situations. RMIT’s City Campus enables people to experience and experiment with their future.

The City North zone, now designated as RMIT's Social Innovation Precinct, has a distinct identity as a place where technology, community, higher and vocational education come together on equal terms with industry to create solutions for everyone.

For an integrated urban campus like RMIT City, traditional campus planning inevitably fuses with city-shaping considerations. The RMIT City Campus experience is co-created with the city, as lines between public space and the University are blurred, and we strive to welcome people in – yet endeavour to create places where our communities can feel they truly belong.



RMIT City Future

The City campus will remain RMIT's Principal Campus, evolving alongside the University's growth, innovation, and future needs.

Through the City North Social Innovation Precinct, there are opportunities north of Victoria Street to develop new, long-life, loose-fit buildings suited to flexible and contemporary learning and teaching, research and workspaces, around a revitalised public realm that will enhance RMIT's contribution to Melbourne's City North and broader Parkville precincts.

The precinct renewal, in turn, creates the possibility of adapting, refurbishing and better utilising existing buildings in the core campus, using them in ways that are better suited to their older building types. This then invites improved activation and engagement with the public realm through the centre of the campus.

Seamless connection to the surrounding city remains a central priority, guiding the development of spaces that invite the community in, foster collaboration, and reflect RMIT's ongoing partnership with the City of Melbourne.

Significant potential exists to create more naturally landscaped spaces throughout the campus. And key sites, or existing heritage spaces, can form new presence in the city.

The opening of the new State Library Station further expands RMIT's City campus accessibility, creating new arrival points and better connecting the campus to Melbourne's city.



Key

- Train station
- Tram stop

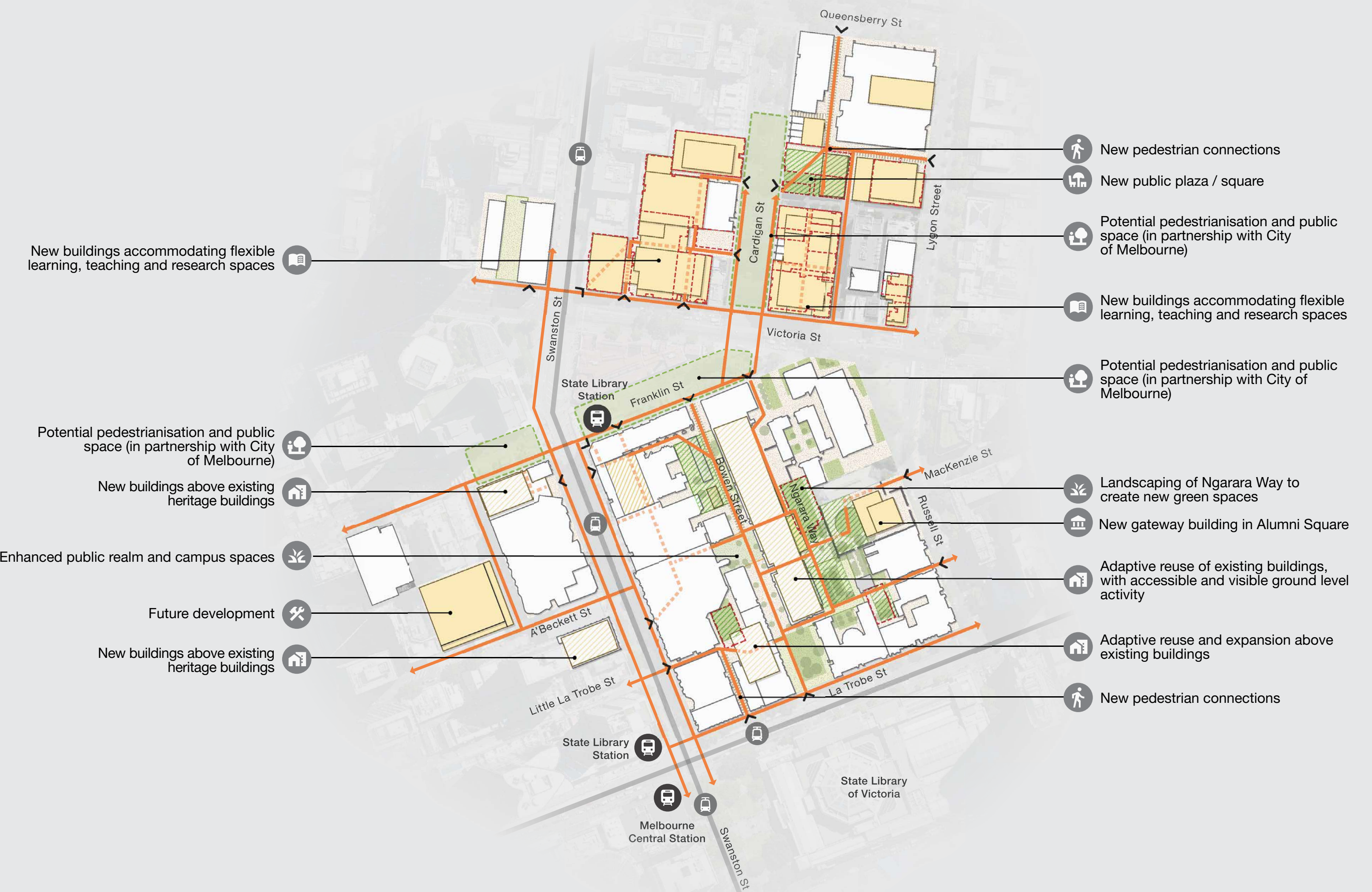
Buildings

- Existing buildings
- Retrofit assessment
- Proposed buildings
- Refurbishment/addition

- Public realm upgrade opportunity with City of Melbourne

Places and spaces

- Primary pedestrian links - external
- Primary pedestrian links - internal
- Key entrances
- Plaza
- Urban space
- Green space



RMIT City Development Priorities

The implementation of RMIT's Living Places Plan will occur within a flexible approach to prioritising development initiatives to respond to RMIT's evolving needs.

This plan identifies major areas of strategic focus, in a broad order of priority that may adjust over time via the normal property plan process, in relation to RMIT's investment horizons.

These focus areas include an emphasis on adaptive reuse of existing buildings and public realm, as well as new buildings.

In addition, ongoing campus renewal work will continue via the annual works program, which forms part of the Capital Development Plan.

At RMIT City, the prioritisation of development will include:

Short-Term Priorities:

- Identify opportunities for new building developments on strategically located sites, to align with demand for highly flexible learning and teaching spaces.
- Refurbishment and adaptive reuse of existing buildings to upgrade flexible learning, teaching and research spaces in the core of the campus.
- Upgrade and improve public realm, shared spaces and student amenity with accessible, inclusive natural and landscaped public spaces.

Medium-Term Priorities:

- Ongoing adaptive reuse of buildings and spaces made available by relocations to new developments.
- Focus on active student amenity and informal learning spaces around key campus centres.
- Support for the creation of campus precincts or learning, teaching and research arranged by RMIT capabilities.

Long-Term Priorities:

- Anticipation of longer-term development opportunities on major sites.

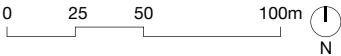


Key

- Train station
- Tram stop
- Retrofit assessment

- Development Priorities**
- A - Short-term priorities
 - B - Medium-term priorities
 - C - Long-term priorities
 - D - Potential future development opportunities

- Public Realm Priorities**
- Priority A
 - Priority B
 - Priority C



RMIT Brunswick Today

The place we now know as RMIT Brunswick is part of the traditional land of the Wurundjeri, who occupied this area, which they named Iramoo for many thousands of years.

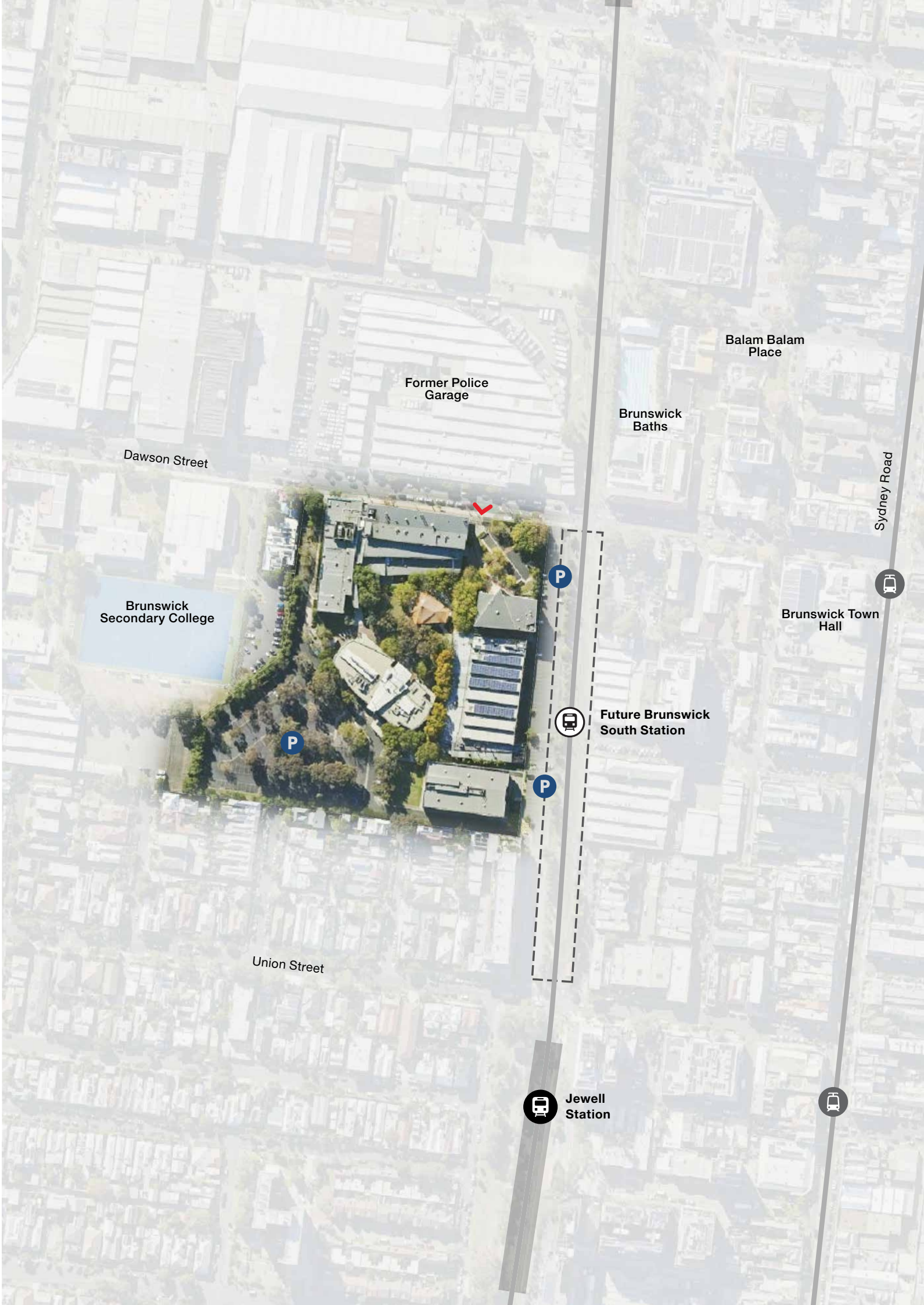
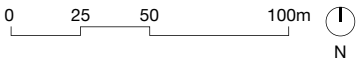
The suburb of Brunswick was surveyed in 1839. By the 1850s, as Sydney Road became the main route to the goldfields and Sydney, early settlement and farmland was joined by hotels and other businesses catering to travellers. The establishment of clay quarries and associated brickworks in the 1840s, followed by major bluestone quarries in the 1860s set the scene for stone production and pottery industries to flourish. Textile manufacturing, including rope and cordage production, became important local industries by the late 19th century.

RMIT Brunswick was originally developed as the James Miller and Co. rope works in 1909, the largest of a number of rope and cordage manufacturers that located in Brunswick in the early 20th century. Following the closure of the Millers ropeworks factory in the 1970s, the site was purchased by the Victorian Department of Education.

Use of the site shifted from industry to playing host to vocational education in various forms: the Melbourne College of Printing and Graphic Arts commenced teaching at RMIT Brunswick in the late 1980s, with the Melbourne College of Textiles relocating to Brunswick in 1990, a move that involved a staged renewal of the site.

Institutional amalgamation in the late 1990s reframed the site as an RMIT campus, initially focused on vocational education, later broadened to reflect RMIT as a dual sector university, with learning, teaching and research activities in design, fashion and textiles expanding the offer.

Formerly part of the rope factory, Building 512 is a rare surviving relic of Brunswick’s local industrial past. Today’s use for textiles, fashion design and research connects and builds on the local heritage of manufacturing, linking contemporary practices in materials technology, design and garment making. RMIT Brunswick’s existing facilities and proximity to local makers and creative studios point to the future possibilities for evolution as a specialist campus.



RMIT Brunswick Future

RMIT Brunswick sits in a rapidly changing area, with rising residential density and the new Brunswick South Station set for completion by 2030. These shifts will reshape the precinct, requiring a proactive response. The future of RMIT Brunswick will enhance its proximity to community and industry partners. It will be better physically connected to its surrounding community, and provide the opportunity and space for industry engagement or partnerships.

The campus will remain relatively low in density and will be repositioned through improved activation to make greater use of the site.

The Brunswick campus will be positioned as a ‘specialist campus’ that further develops fashion-related programs. Activation initiatives will increase utilisation, strengthen connections with community and industry partners, and enhance the student experience.

Development will focus on enhancing connection to the new train station and surrounding community, and activating the campus heart around its central courtyard.

Longer term development potential exists in the southern portion of the campus.



Key

Train station	Buildings	Development opportunity	Places and spaces
Tram stop	Existing buildings	Indicative potential buildings	Primary pedestrian links - external
	Retrofit assessment		Primary pedestrian links - internal
	Proposed buildings		Key entrances
	Refurbishment/addition		Station plaza/forecourt
			Plaza
			Urban space
			Green space



RMIT Brunswick Development Priorities

The implementation of RMIT's Living Places Plan will occur within a flexible approach to prioritising development initiatives to respond to RMIT's evolving needs.

This plan identifies major areas of strategic focus, in a broad order of priority that may adjust over time via the normal property plan process, in relation to RMIT's investment horizons.

These focus areas include an emphasis on adaptive reuse of existing buildings and public realm, as well as new buildings.

In addition, ongoing campus renewal work will continue via the annual works program, which forms part of the Capital Development Plan.

At RMIT Brunswick, the prioritisation of development will include:

Short-Term Priorities:

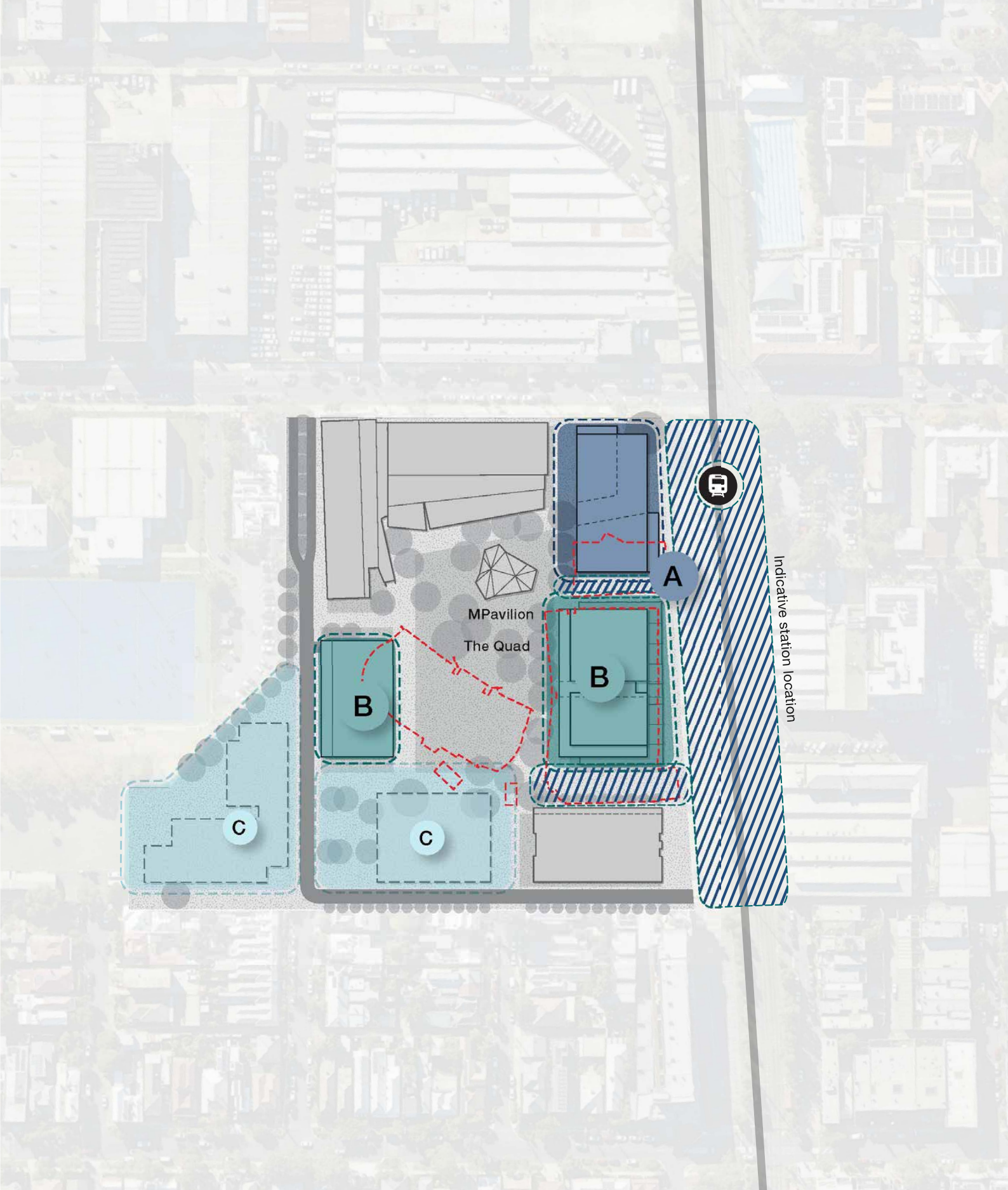
- Creation of a new 'gateway' campus amenity building creating a new 'front-door' for the campus connecting to the new station and surrounding community.
- Maximise pedestrian connections to the eastern side of campus, and ongoing improvements in public realm, shared spaces and student amenity with accessible, inclusive natural and landscaped public spaces.

Medium-Term Priorities:

- Removal of the existing library and campus amenity building, freeing spaces for future development.
- Refurbishment and adaptive reuse of existing buildings to upgrade flexible learning, teaching and research spaces.

Long-Term Priorities:

- Anticipation of longer-term future development opportunities on the southern side of campus.



Key

- Train station
- Tram stop
- Retrofit assessment

- Development Priorities**
- A - Short-term priorities
 - B - Medium-term priorities
 - C - Long-term priorities

- Public Realm Priorities**
- Priority A

RMIT Bundoora Today

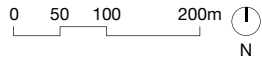
At RMIT Bundoora, the Keelbundoora Scarred Trees are rare and fragile reminders of the resource harvesting techniques practised by hundreds of generations of Australia's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The tree scars tell us a great deal about the Wurundjeri clan, the Traditional Owners of the lands in and around Melbourne. Keelbundoora is named after a Wurundjeri clan ancestor. As a child in 1835 he was present at the signing of the Batman Treaty, which marked European colonists' arrival. Keelbundoora's descendants helped create the heritage trail that invites the wider community to discover and connect with country.

Located 18km north east of RMIT's City Campus, RMIT Bundoora was originally developed as the Preston Institute of Technology (PIT) in the early 1970s.

In 1982, PIT amalgamated with State College of Victoria (Coburg) to form the Phillip Institute of Technology. Ten years later, this institution merged with RMIT, and the PIT campus became part of the RMIT estate. This was a pivotal time for RMIT as an institution, with this amalgamation part of its elevation to university status to become one of the most significant dual-sector universities in Australia.

RMIT's activities in Bundoora also take place on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri, with this place of learning holding special cultural significance as the site of the Keelbundoora Scarred Trees.

Today, RMIT's Bundoora campus is well positioned to respond to rising demand for social, healthcare and wellbeing workforces in Melbourne's northern growth corridor. As RMIT's second-largest campus, it already hosts health programs, research, and sports facilities. Activation exists to increase utilisation, strengthen connections with community and industry partners, and enhance the student experience.



RMIT Bundoora Future

Bundoora is the second largest campus within the RMIT Estate and is home to many health-related programs and research, sports facilities and staff workspaces.

There is opportunity to consolidate activity and revitalise Bundoora through place-based strategies that enhance built form, public spaces, entry points and connections with industry and community to boost critical mass.

A key potential lies in expanding RMIT’s partnerships with health systems and hospital developments in the north. The campus is located in the heart of Melbourne’s Northern Growth Corridor which is being transformed by population growth creating demand for social, healthcare and wellbeing workforces.

Responding to this demand may include the potential to expand RMIT’s partnership with the Northern Health Precinct (located 7km northwest of the campus) or to further develop health related programs on the campus at Bundoora.

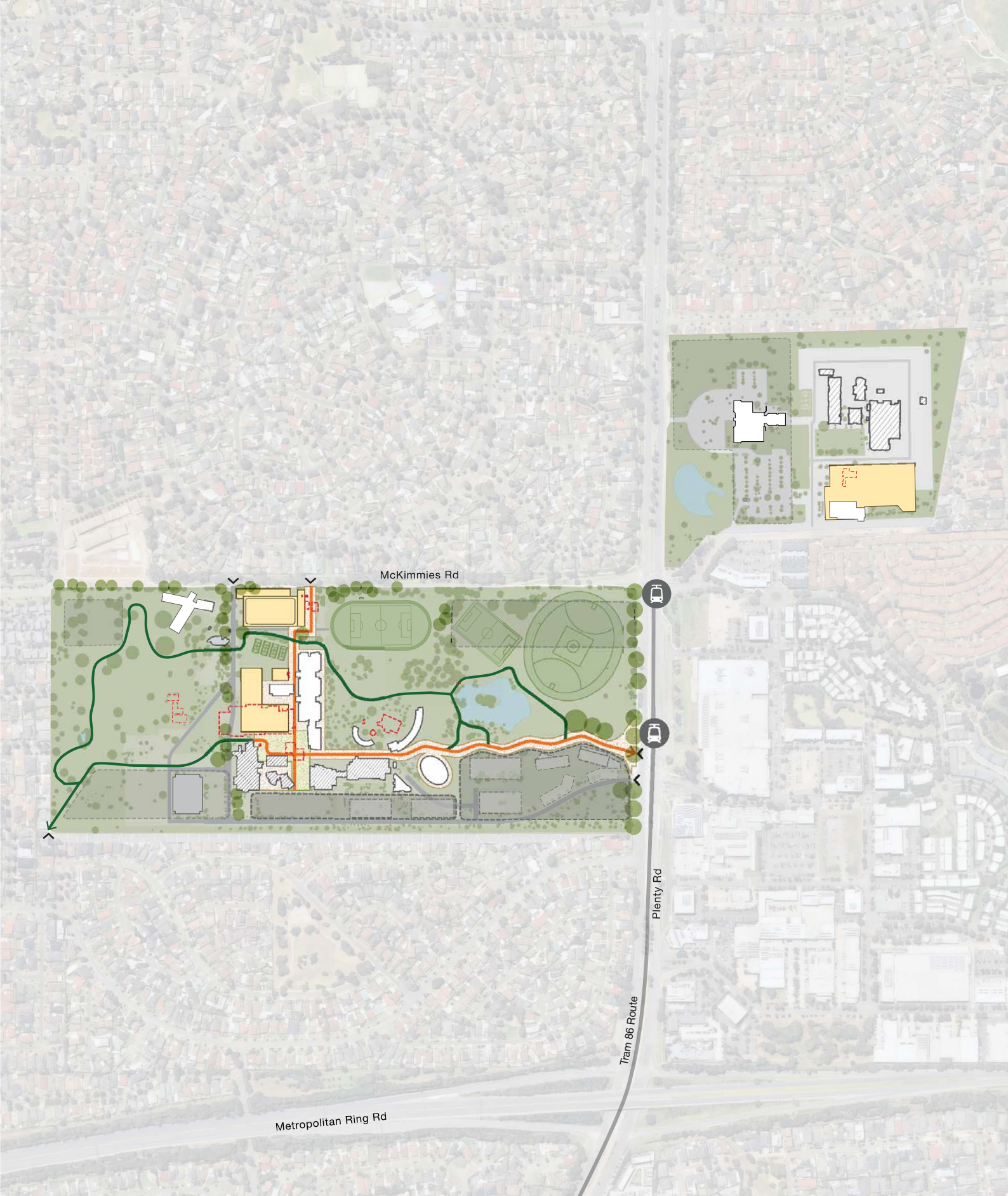
Campus development will consolidate around the existing core of the campus, optimising existing buildings, and connecting new development to the centre of campus activity and amenity.

New development will extend both eastwards along the pedestrian spine connecting to the primary arrival and connection at Plenty Road, and north to connect the core to sports facilities to the northern boundary.

The centre of the campus will retain an open landscape running east-west across the campus, including retention of the Keelbundoora Scarred Trees and Heritage Trail.

Long-term further development opportunity exists in the south-west and north-west corners, and north-east corner of the campus.

The Bundoora campus east is considered a ‘specialist campus’ with future development that builds upon current focus on engineering and trades related programs, and opportunities for associated partnerships.



Key

- Train station
- Tram stop

Buildings

- Existing buildings
- Retrofit assessment
- Proposed buildings
- Refurbishment/addition

- Development opportunity
- Indicative potential buildings

Places and spaces

- Keelbundoora Trail
- Primary pedestrian links
- Key entrances
- Urban space
- Plaza
- Green space

RMIT Bundoora Future



RMIT Bundoora Development Priorities

The implementation of RMIT's Living Places Plan will occur within a flexible approach to prioritising development initiatives to respond to RMIT's evolving needs.

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These focus areas include an emphasis on adaptive reuse of existing buildings and public realm, as well as new buildings.

In addition, ongoing campus renewal work will continue via the annual works program, which forms part of the Capital Development Plan.

At RMIT Bundoora, the prioritisation of development will include:

Short-Term Priorities:

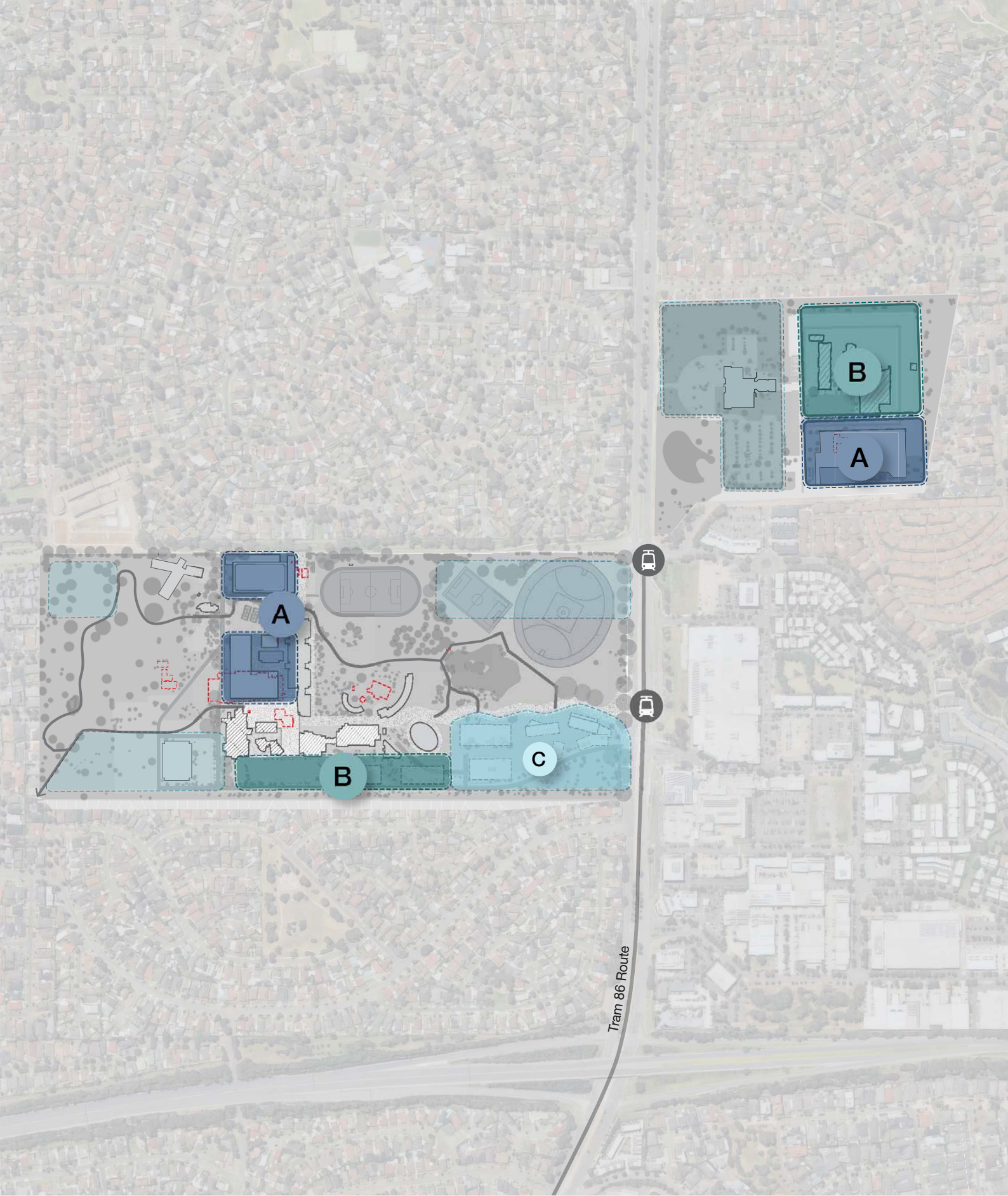
- New sports and amenity building to the north of the campus core, allowing re-development of the existing gym location for new flexible teaching and learning spaces.
- Adaptive reuse and consolidation of learning and teaching spaces in the campus core.
- Continued improvements to public realm and student amenity spaces.
- Emphasis and protection of the Keelbundoora Scarred Trees and Heritage Trail and central landscape elements.
- Expansion of Trades Innovation Centre Bundoora campus east.

Medium-Term Priorities:

- Additional development immediately adjacent and connected to the campus core extending east towards Plenty Road entry.
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings on east campus.

Long-Term Priorities:

- Potential future long-term developments.



Key

- Train station
- Tram stop
- Retrofit assessment

- Development Priorities**
- A - Short-term priorities
 - B - Medium-term priorities
 - C - Long-term priorities
 - D - Potential future development opportunities

- Public Realm Priorities**
- Priority A

Implementing the Living Places Plan

RMIT's Living Places Plan creates a framework for the design and delivery of place-based programs of work that can evolve and respond as required, while maintaining a focus on our broader strategy.

The Living Places Plan is the foundation for RMIT's Property Plan and Capital Development Program, and it is through these processes that the goals of the Living Places Plan will be brought to life.

Beyond the Living Places Plan, there is an ongoing and supporting approach by which RMIT will apply and further operationalise these core goals, principles and designs over time.

In addition to the Living Places Plan and associated Property Plans and Capital Development Plans, our goals will be achieved via:

- 1. Living Places Plan Governance and Engagement:** processes for ongoing dialogue and participation in the prioritisation, establishment and development of initiatives within the Living Places Plan.
- 2. Strategic Project Processes:** renewed guidelines and processes for project engagement that emphasise the strategic planning and project briefing stages of project initiatives to maximise their value, alignment and performance.
- 3. Technical Design Studies:** detailed technical studies and project feasibility processes incorporating all design and technical due diligence as part of project initiation and implementation stages.



Media Hub, RMIT City

To Be Continued

The Living Places Plan defines RMIT's places as we think about the role we play in attracting people – students, workers, researchers, and the community.

Continued thinking on this subject means asking: in what way are our places perceived as a destination? How can we encourage a greater sense of vitality and community life in our places? Do they offer learning opportunities that can't be found anywhere else? Are they somewhere people will want to spend time? What combination of programs, research and industry will come together to create a unique identity for our campuses? What are the core ingredients of a campus? What are our opportunities to embody RMIT strategy and address regeneration, renewal and resilience as critical needs of our time?

These questions will be answered through the Living Places Plan's evolution with each new cohort, each shift in the city and each emerging need.

RMIT's Living Places Plan will evolve through ongoing input from our community. If you have questions, suggestions or ideas, please visit:

rmit.edu.au/living-places-plan

Building 80, RMIT City

**RMIT's Living
Places Plan
is a vital part
of our future
in place.**