Background

In February 2017 the Level Crossing Removal Authority announced the removal of the level crossings at Park Road and Charman Road, Cheltenham by lowering the railway line under the road and construction of a new station. Recognising the potential benefits and impacts on the strategic vision for Cheltenham, a review of the Cheltenham Structure Plan was undertaken to enable a whole of centre approach to the significant contextual change.

Acknowledging the level crossing removal project straddles the municipal boundary between Bayside City Council and Kingston City Council, the review took a holistic approach, recognising the importance of connecting local communities to key open spaces and the retail core.

Development opportunities have been identified above the ‘decked’ platforms within the railway precinct at the interface with Cheltenham Park. Noting the considerable length of the park interface it is important for any future form to be broken down into buildable parts without imposing a ‘walled’ condition to the park. View line tests and solar access considerations have tested the recommended setbacks and building heights. Furthermore the sensitivity of the Cheltenham Park interface has required careful considerations of precinct objectives and guidelines to ensure any new development complements the regionally significant green open space.

This document is intended to illustrate the outcomes sought within the Cheltenham Structure Plan Review including precedent projects, illustration of the interface vision and additional objectives and guidelines that could build on the LXRA Urban Design Guidelines.
Precedents

Building architecture should aim to use natural materials and tones, mixed material palettes, a breakup of mass and depth, integration of garden areas and connected balcony spaces.
Vision

- Encourage the use of natural/tactile material in facade design
- Future 8 storey building form
- Future 4 storey podium
- Opportunity for integrated landscaping in facade design
- Potential ‘Roof top’ open space
- Ensure future development present ‘Front of House’ to Cheltenham Park contributing to casual surveillance to the public space
- Direct pedestrian access to future development off shared user path
- Future shared user path along Cheltenham Park
New pedestrian access between Cheltenham Park and railway walk with view to existing Scout Hall

Existing Scout Hall

Rail void

New Cheltenham Station with access off railway walk and shared user path

Potential mid rise mixed use development along Charman Road

New landmark opportunity above Cheltenham station
LXRA Design Guidelines
Cheltenham Integrated Development Design Guidelines

To provide for a development response that addresses the sensitive interface of Cheltenham Park, further objectives and guidelines have been suggested for inclusion in the LXRA Integrated Development Design Guidelines which are shown in the blue text below. This new content builds on the work undertaken through the Cheltenham Structure Plan Review with a focus on ensuring that future built form, landscaping and detailed design outcomes are complementary to the landscape character of Cheltenham Park.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

1. **Positively contribute to the emerging character of Cheltenham**
   Buildings are to respond to the existing and emerging urban form and character of Cheltenham that is sympathetic to the ‘high street’ environment of Charman Road and the public space interface with Cheltenham Park while establishing a high-quality benchmark for its more urban future identity.

2. **Enhance the wayfinding, legibility and ease of pedestrian movement throughout the station precinct.**
   Ensure that building locations, built form and public realm design establish a highly legible station precinct and enable ease of navigation for pedestrians to Cheltenham station and the Cheltenham activity Centre.

3. **Contribute to a sense of safety across the precinct.**
   Ensure the form, articulation and detailed design of new buildings adjacent to Cheltenham Park reference and respond to the landscape character and sensitivity of the interface.

4. **Extend the vibrancy and uses of activity centre into the station precinct**
   Accommodate and development of retail, residential and community uses within the station precinct that complement the current offering of the activity centre and sustainably grow its size and diversity.

5. **Balance activation of Cheltenham Park with the need to protect and enhance this sensitive interface**
   Ensure the form, articulation and detailed design of new buildings adjacent to Cheltenham Park reference and respond to the landscape character and sensitivity of the interface.

**GUIDELINES**

- Locate and design the station building and any other built form and manage the perceived ground levels of the station precinct to maintain view lines from Railway Walk and Charman Road through to Cheltenham Park.
- The integration and consolidation of the council car park site with the station precinct should be explored for additional activity centre parking, development opportunities, and improved integration of built form and public spaces.
- Create a series of high quality buildings that contribute to the diversity of building types, architectural forms and land uses within the activity centre.
- Maximise pedestrian access across the rail corridor and maintain as a minimum pedestrian access:
  - Along both sides of Park Road,
  - At the (future) second station entrance,
  - At the station entrance, and
  - Along both sides of Charman Road.
- Ensure that pedestrian connectivity, visibility and safety between transport mode facilities are not compromised through the location and detailing of building forms at this important station and transport interchange.
- Maintain the continuity of the shared use path along the interface with Cheltenham Park and integrate its location, height, and interface with buildings as a positive and activated frontage that minimises conflicts between shared use path users and building occupants and visitors.
- Maximise ground floor active uses such as retail and office uses in locations that connect transport modes and will experience large volumes of pedestrian traffic.
• Minimise the number of vehicle access points to buildings and avoid vehicle crossings and entrances:
  – At the station forecourt, and
  – Along the shared use path.
• Reduce the visual impacts of buildings on Cheltenham Park by:
  – Creating a series of separate buildings and avoiding the creation of a continuous wall of development,
  – Creating a podium height of no greater than 4 storeys along the park interface, and
  – Articulating podiums vertically to reduce the scale of the length and width of buildings to a more human scale.
  – Ensure new development above the podium is set back no less than 5 metres
• Avoid overshadowing on usable areas of Cheltenham Park and the new station forecourt by taller built forms when measured at 22 Sept between 10am and 2pm, and minimise overshadowing on other parts of open spaces.
• Maintain the Station Road view corridor to Cheltenham Park, across the rail corridor by avoid new taller built form in this location.
• Ensure future development presents frontages and residential address to Cheltenham Park including active uses and direct access at ground level with outlook from windows and balconies at upper levels to activate and encourage passive surveillance opportunities of the path and open spaces.
• Design building facades to achieve excellence in architectural quality which are well articulated with details and materials to provide visual interest supported by fenestrations that are well ordered.
• Encourage the use of traditional residential building materials, with natural and tactile materials for new development along the Cheltenham Park interface which reinforce the human scale.
To enable a positive design response to the context of the Cheltenham Park interface, numerous strategies and guidelines have been included in the structure plan review.

3.1 LAND USE & BUILT FORM STRATEGIES

Key initiatives include:

- Minimise overshadowing impact at the equinox onto the public realm at:
  - Existing and future open spaces (ie. Cheltenham Park); and
  - Footpaths along commercial streets and future shared zone.
- Frame key view line to Cheltenham Park from Station Road
- Encourage the establishment of appropriate urban grain (building width) to avoid excessive visual bulk and minimise negative amenity impact on public realm

3.3 OPEN SPACE & PUBLIC REALM STRATEGIES

Key initiatives include:

Maximise opportunities for additional landscaping on private and public land at street level, within the podium roof, along station infrastructure (rail trench) and building façades with frontage to commercial streets, or priority pedestrian space

4.2 PRECINCT E - STATION PRECINCT

Updated Precinct Vision

The western station precinct fringed by Cheltenham Park and the traditional Charman Road spine is a key Transit Oriented Development opportunity with the potential to activate and enliven land that has formerly served as the ‘back of house’.

It can serve as the new ‘western’ frontage to the Centre, with a park side address and a punctuated skyline profile when viewed on approach.

It supports medium rise form above a new Station complex and a network of pedestrian friendly pocket parks, spaces and laneways.

Precinct Objectives

5. To establish a visually interesting and dynamic skyline when viewed from the western approach, which will be visible from both Park Road and within public open space within Bayside.

8. To preserve and enhance key viewlines from Charman Road and Station Road to the heritage station building (east siding) and Cheltenham Park.

10. To create a more favourable ‘people friendly’ quality to the precinct through redevelopment that supports a permeable network of pedestrian linkages, with active frontages and address.

11. To provide for a north-south regional shared path/bike link along the western boundary of the precinct adjacent to Cheltenham Park.

14. To improve accessibility to the Cheltenham Park and Pioneer Cemetery.

15. To improve passive surveillance of public spaces.

Precinct Guidelines

- Encourage active uses at ground level and at upper levels within podium forms which are adjacent to public open spaces, the station forecourt plaza and along key vehicle and pedestrian linkages to improve surveillance for both day time and night time users
- Development within the precinct should be arranged as a ‘suite of forms’, rather than a single development envelope
- Carefully respond to topography across the site to ensure direct connection between public transport nodes, open space, shared zone and the ground level of buildings
- Ensure vehicle parking is managed and contained within a basement, or podium format concealed by active and attractive uses where possible, or quality facade treatment where it interfaces with public frontage, including the provision of vertical gardens where appropriate
- Encourage the utilisation of roofing to provide communal gathering space, urban landscape and high-quality outlook (when viewed from upper level dwellings)
LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED

Land Use
• To encourage active ground floor uses to activate street frontages along main roads, shared zones, and key pedestrian and cycle linkages.

Built Form
• To encourage innovative and contemporary architecture and urban design treatments, including at gateway and landmark locations identified in the Framework Plan.
• To ensure built form maximises the use of articulation and materiality, minimises overshadowing and provides for high quality architecture to the highest environmental standards.
• To maintain appropriate levels of solar access to existing and proposed open spaces and the public realm.

Public realm
• To ensure public spaces are not unreasonably impacted by overshadowing.
• To ensure public spaces are provided with adequate surveillance through active adjacent uses and passive surveillance.

Open space and landscaping
• To maximise opportunities for landscaping and public art in horizontal and vertical planes.

PRECINCT 5 – RAILWAY PRECINCT

Precinct objectives
• To create a ‘people friendly’ quality through redevelopment that supports a permeable network of pedestrian linkages, pedestrian plazas, public spaces and shared zones with active frontages and address.

Precinct guidelines
• Establish a clear hierarchy of uses within key development sites, with activation concentrated at the lower levels, or in the case of a podium form within the whole of the street wall podium levels.
• Arrange development within Precinct 5 as a suite of distinct forms, rather than as a single development envelope.
• Avoid unreasonable visual bulk of new development when viewed from the public realm by ensuring appropriate scale, form and articulation.

• Ensure new development above the rail trench provides for separation between built form above podium level allowing for visual breaks and views through Precinct 5 into Cheltenham Park.
• Protect and reveal key view lines to the heritage station and to Cheltenham Park from Charman Road and from Station Road.
• Ensure that the design and massing of new development, including landmark and gateway buildings, adjacent to existing or planned public open space seeks to minimise the impact of wind and overshadowing in order to ensure a high level of user amenity within the public realm.
• Minimise overshadowing of existing and planned open space between 11am and 2pm on the equinox.
• Ensure the layout of development within Precinct 5 provides visual and physical permeability via careful arrangement of built form, pedestrian paths, bicycle connections, shared zones, and open spaces at ground and upper levels.
• Ensure that new development strengthens the landscape character of Cheltenham Park by incorporating complementary landscaping (on structure and at natural grade) along the interfaces of Railway Walk, The Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery, Cheltenham Park and the new pedestrian plaza and open space area.