

# Rail Futures Institute Inc.

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Mr Stuart Moseley C.E.O.  
Victorian Planning Authority  
Level 25, 35 Collins Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

e-mail: [amendments@vpa.vic.gov.au](mailto:amendments@vpa.vic.gov.au)

**RE: RAIL FUTURES INSTITUTE SUBMISSION - Amendment C407melb - ARDEN  
STRUCTURE PLAN ETC.**

Dear Mr Moseley,

The Rail Futures Institute is pleased to make this submission to proposed Amendment C407melb to the Melbourne Planning Scheme, which proposes to implement the Arden Structure Plan.

(We refer you to our previous detailed submission dated 06/08/2020 to the Draft Arden Structure Plan version of mid-2020.)

**Rail Futures wishes to make further detailed submissions to an Independent Panel or Standing Advisory Committee as part of the amendment process. We estimate a time slot of approximately two hours to present our submissions.**

**1. Firm commitments for Arden's public transport network are needed now, NOT in the future**

***Essentially, we say that there is no clear plan and no firm commitment to extend the public transport network (most importantly the tram network) into and through the Arden Precinct; and that that without this the objectives of the Structure Plan will not be realised and the Precinct will fail to achieve the vision and expectations.***

***It is essential that a firm commitment is made now to providing public transport links to and through the Arden precinct, especially with the fast approaching completion of the Metro Rail Tunnel and its station at Arden.***

Building a major activity centre and intensive mixed-use development around the new Arden station on the Melbourne Metro (MM1) line is a worthy concept, but this is insufficient on its own and will not work properly unless a supporting tram and road-based public transport network is

provided to “knit” the precinct into the wider inner Melbourne region. Arden Station alone cannot provide a public transport solution.

The Precinct cannot operate as an “isolated island disconnected from its wider context”. People arriving at Arden station need to make connections to other destinations; and likewise people living and working in Arden will want to travel to destinations other than those directly along the MM1 line.

Rail Futures believes appropriate extensions to the tram system are the ideal mode for additional public transport to and through the precinct. This needs to be planned and progressed starting now, because in just two or three years extensive development will be occurring in the Precinct and certainty is needed for all stakeholders to be assured about public transport. Planning for delivery of an extended tram network needs to begin now, not at some unspecified point in the future, to provide the necessary lead times.

The wording of Objective 15 in the Structure Plan regarding public transport is vague, uncertain and inadequate and contains no real commitment.

By contrast, Planning for the Fishermans Bend urban renewal area is more definitive about public transport, (e.g. the Fishermans Bend Integrated Transport Plan 2017).

For Arden, there is no indication of how the provision of high-capacity public transport will be timed with or triggered to meet the development staging across the precinct. The risk of delaying this until some vague future is the significant disruption that will be inflicted on these new communities. There is no indication of likely cross-sectional design of the key roads that are designed for these corridors.

Detailed planning and commitment to public transport services in and around Arden is also mandated by the Transport Integration Act 2010, which requires land use planning and transport planning to be integrated. The exhibited structure plan is not integrated in that regard - it is a land use plan with only vague references to public transport.

## **2. The planning and land use objectives for Arden will not be realised without a quality public transport network**

The plan seeks to establish the Arden precinct as a major contributor to a knowledge-based economy, reinforcing Melbourne as a centre for knowledge and innovation. This forms the entire context to future planning for the precinct.

The provision of effective public transport connections to and within the precinct along with the intended land uses are key to the success of this vision. If land use planning is not integrated with effective public transport connections, this focus on innovation and knowledge will fail and lead to detrimental impacts, such as extensive car dependency.

The plan seeks to foster mixed uses throughout the entire area. It allocates the largest percentage to large-scale institutional uses which seek to foster innovation mixed with retailing, followed by the area set aside for traditional mixed uses. Even the residential zone will allow mixed uses.

This emphasis on mixed uses will generate substantial inflows of workers and service users, tourists, residents, shoppers and other visitors. This 44.6 hectare site is a substantial area which

will generate large people and traffic movements, eventually catering for 34,000 jobs and 15,000 residents. The plan seeks to reserve two-thirds of its development for employment uses and one-third for residential uses.

High quality public transport connections will be essential to avoid large scale road car movements, congestion and associated detrimental impacts. The area currently has inadequate internal public transport connections. Without substantial improvement, the land uses will generate substantial road traffic making it impossible to achieve the mode-share target of 60 per cent public transport, 30 per cent walking and cycling, and 10 per cent private vehicle use within, to and from the precinct. The objective of establishing this area as a 20-minute neighbourhood will be unachievable.

The plan recognizes the importance of amenity and quality of place as important economic factors linked to innovation. Interesting, new and innovative uses will not locate in areas which are not attractive and do not work well.

The plan recognizes that “zoning needs to manage conflicting land uses and activities to ensure that this mix of uses creates the platform for innovation and activation and liveable places and spaces”. Yet almost all the site will allow development from 8-14 storeys to 30-40 storeys with a small area from 3-6 and 6-8 storeys. Such a range in building categories ignores the inevitable result that development will gravitate upward to the highest levels. This emphasis on high-rise is inconsistent with the objective to achieve a high-quality built environment. It will also inevitably lead to high vehicle movements to high-rise building car parks and an environment which is alienating and car dominated.

This built form model contradicts the intentions of Objective 18 to minimise car parking and vehicle movements and conflict with pedestrian movements and other active transport.

The plan in its present form is another lost opportunity for Melbourne to establish a new high quality mixed use, innovative built environment on the principles of low to medium rise urban form that have been employed so successfully in Europe and the United States. It will simply repeat many of the mistakes so amply demonstrated in other inner urban infill areas such as Docklands and Southbank.

Planning controls will seek an affordable housing contribution of at least six per cent as the precinct plan seeks to “support a diverse population across a range of ages and incomes and cater for specific housing needs”. This proportion is totally inadequate and will not achieve its stated objective. It is one of the lowest proportions in the developed world and should be raised to at least 20 per cent as a mandated affordable housing target.

### **3. The Need for Integrated Public Transport and Land Use Planning**

Our principal concern is that while the structure plan contains detailed commendable land use planning, there is no corresponding integrated transport plan for the area. Apart from the Arden Metro Station itself, the structure plan contains no detail of new or extended public transport services, other than general references to providing road space for potential high-capacity public transport and with no implementation schedule or date.

We consider the lack of detail in the Arden Structure Plan a significant shortcoming, as public transport and land use planning are inseparable and need to be a “joined up” process.

Further, the Arden Plan stating that it is *“too early to commit to a particular mode”*, seems inconsistent with elements of the *West Melbourne Structure Plan* which does specify particular modes through extension of Smart Bus Routes 905-908 to Arden *“via a Spencer Street central corridor”*, later replaced by a tram service to Arden.

The Arden and West Melbourne structure plans need to be consistent; and the Arden plan needs more detail on integration with other modes as well as linkages to other parts of Melbourne.

It will not be possible to achieve key aspects of the Structure Plan vision and objectives without a concerted investment in public transport. Notably:

- The structure plan Vision includes targets for all trips to Arden to be 60% public transport, 30% walking and cycling and just 10% private vehicles.
- *“Arden’s ambition is to deliver world class transport-oriented development that maximizes public and active transport use by providing a connected local transport network that promotes sustainable transport choices and moves away from on-site car parking, making it easier for people to choose not to own a car.”*
- The Transport Vision is that *“Arden will provide direct and efficient connections in and around the precinct through safe and attractive public areas. This will include active and public transport networks that will complement the new Arden Station.”*
- The plan states that *“Transport planning for the precinct is focused on delivering great streets for walking and cycling...a public realm prioritized for pedestrians, with limited opportunities for private vehicle circulation.”*

Detailed planning for public transport connections in the Arden precinct needs to occur now, in tandem with land use planning, not postponed into the future. Public transport services into and around the precinct need to be planned and scheduled in advance and delivered in parallel with development, especially if the stated objective of 10% car usage is to be achieved.

#### **4. Specific Tram Network Proposals for Arden**

Rail Futures Institute (RFI) is concerned at the “glacial” progress and apparent lack of urgency within the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) and Department of Transport (DoT) in finalising the Arden Structure Plan, inclusive of public transport connections that will complement and strengthen the role of Arden station. RFI also believes that tram is an appropriate mode for the precinct and will be for many years to come, linking as it will and adding important connectivity to significant parts of Melbourne’s iconic tram network in an environmentally sustainable way. Also relevant is that the older part of Melbourne’s existing tram fleet will be replaced by new vehicles during the coming decade.

The Metro tunnel with its new station at ARDEN in the Arden precinct is expected to open in 2025 and it is imperative that basic tram connections be in place at that time linking both North Melbourne and Arden stations and also the existing CBD tram network.

We propose a staged Tram Extension Program as shown in the diagrams on pages 6 & 7:

### **Stage 1 by late 2025**

- Extension from the Remand Centre via Spencer Street, Abbotsford Street and Adderley Street to NORTH MELBOURNE station at Railway Place, continuing from Railway Place via Laurens Street and terminating at ARDEN station at Arden Street.
- This extended trackage would then be served by existing Route 5 Malvern trams altered to operate from Anzac Station via Park, Clarendon and Spencer Streets through the new trackage via North Melbourne station to terminate at Arden Station.
- This routing also requires 300m of infill track in Park Street, South Melbourne and an additional curve pair at Park and Clarendon Streets (South Melbourne). This is understood to be part of Metro Tunnel supporting works still to be constructed.

### **Stage 2 by late 2026**

- New trackage linking from Abbotsford Street at Arden Street via Arden Street to Arden Station and terminating at Fogarty Street.
- 750m infill track in Victoria Street between Latrobe and Swanston Streets with cross connection with existing tracks at both Swanston and Elizabeth Streets.
- A new curve pair at Victoria Street and Church Streets (North Richmond).
- Existing Route 78 tram to then be extended from North Richmond via Victoria Street, Victoria Parade, St Vincent's Plaza, Victoria Market and the new trackage to terminate at Fogarty Street in the Arden Precinct.

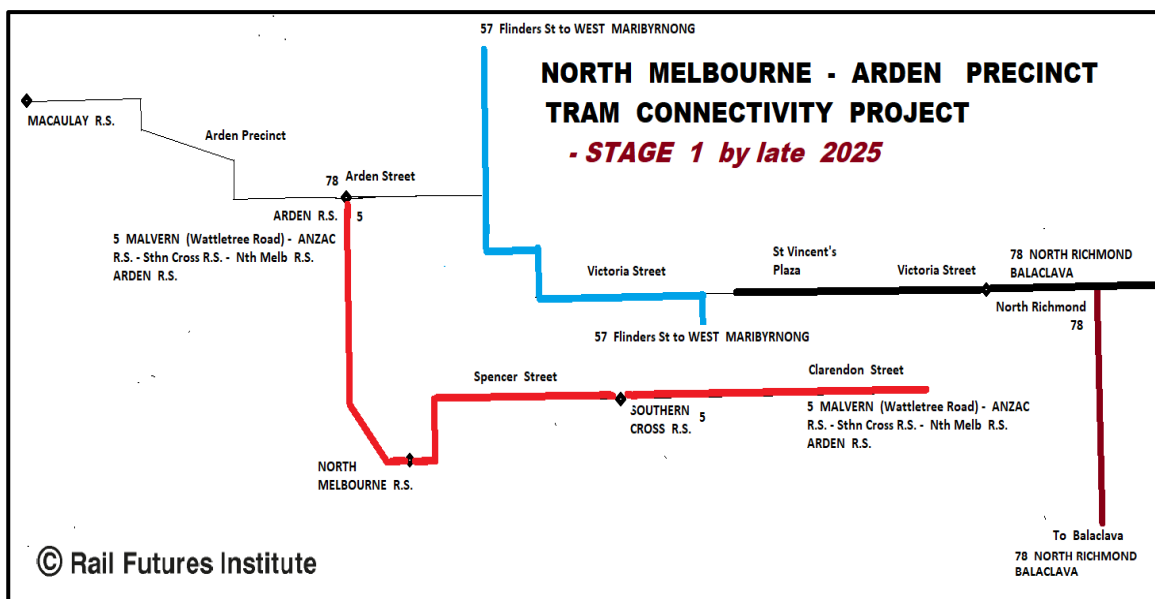
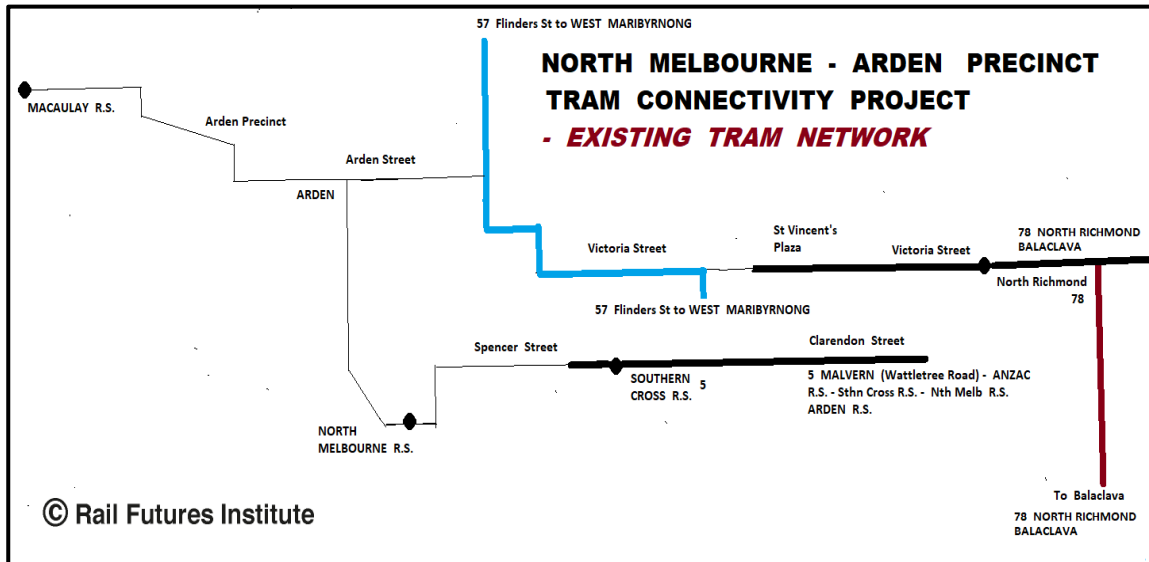
### **Stage 3 by late 2028**

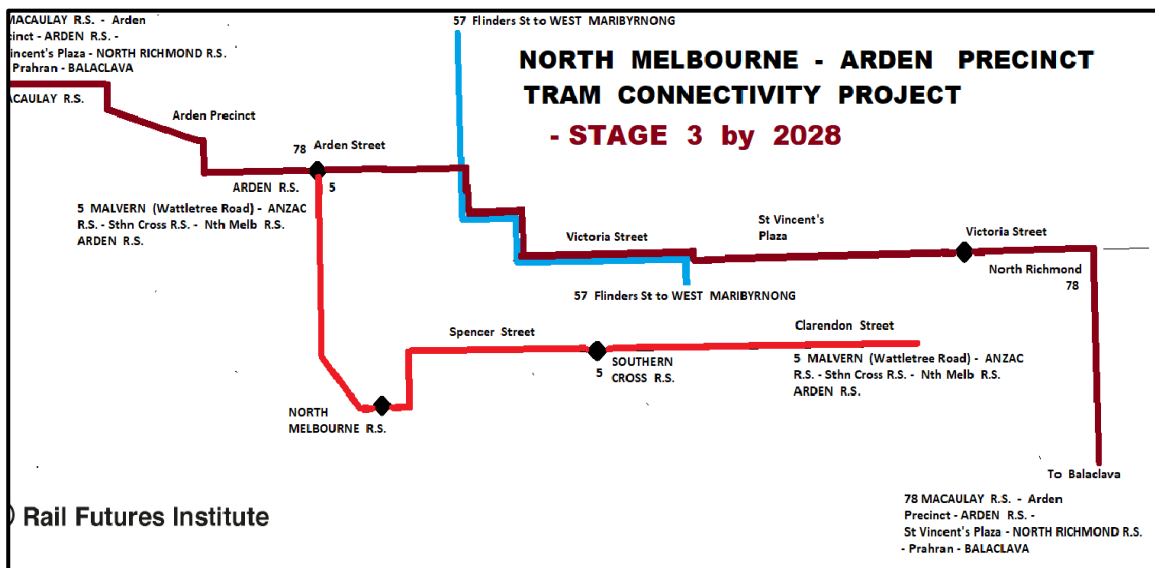
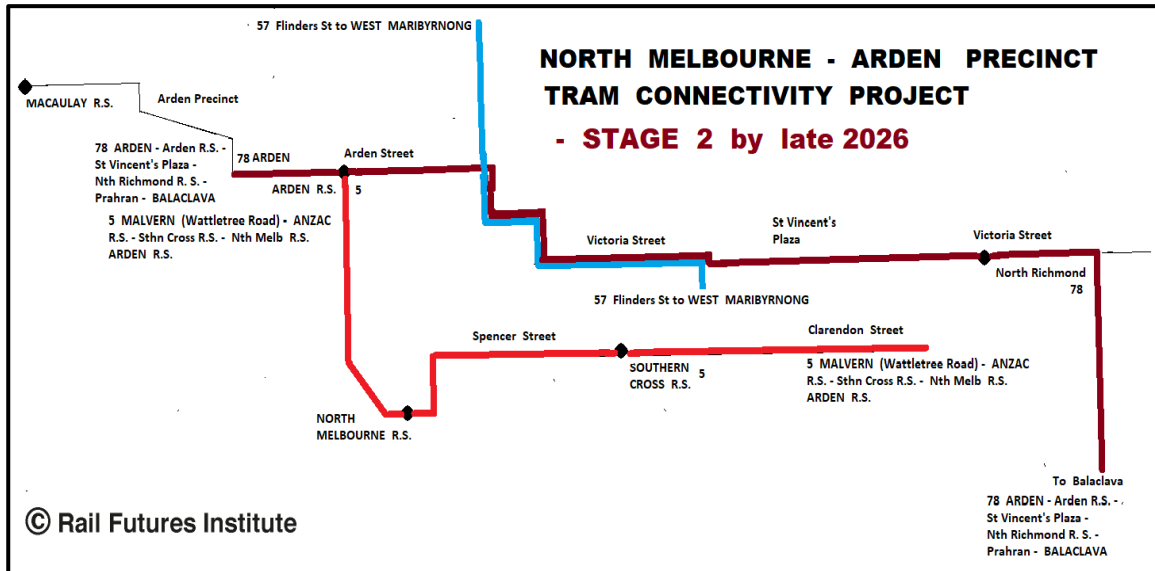
- Extend trackage via Fogarty Street, Henderson Street, Boundary Road and Macaulay Road to Macaulay Station. This extension would be served by extending Route 78 to a new terminus at Macaulay Station.
- It is highly desirable to transition progressively to a grid network of public transport services by extending existing tram routes as appropriate to terminate at Key Activity Centres and rail interchanges.

### **Public Transport Outcomes**

- High-capacity tram services linking the West Melbourne and Arden Precincts through the southern and northern CBD peripheries via Spencer and Victoria Streets, respectively.
- Tram connectivity to/from North Melbourne, Arden and Macaulay stations.
- Direct tram connectivity between North Melbourne and Arden stations allowing convenient high frequency passenger interchange between two different Metro rail line groups, facilitating many new public transport journeys.
- Fully meets the objectives set out in the Arden structure plan of minimising car journeys and maximising journeys by turn up and go public transport services.
- By extending existing Tram Route 78 via St Vincents Plaza and Victoria Market deep into the Arden Precinct, multiple desirable outcomes are met in:
  - Filling an existing need for a direct tram link from North Richmond station to/from the job rich employment areas at Cremorne / South Yarra.

- Introducing a new East – West tram route across the north of the CBD linking Cremorne / South Yarra and North Richmond via St Vincent’s Plaza, RMIT University, Victoria Market and North Melbourne deep into the Arden Precinct.
- Connecting the extended tram Route 78 with no less than fifteen (15) other tram routes between North Richmond and the Arden precinct, offering hundreds of new travel opportunities for public transport users through the progressive development of an inner metropolitan grid network of public transport services.





## 5. Conclusion

We thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to the strategy for this very important new precinct in Melbourne. We trust our submission is helpful and will be fully considered.

We look forward to enlarging on our submission and network proposals at a Panel or Advisory Committee hearing.

**Yours sincerely,**

**John Hearsch**

**President, Rail Futures Institute (Inc)**