



Planning Policy Manual – Part 1

Section 6.8
William Street Station Precinct



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CONTENTS

SECTION	TITLE	PAGE
1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	Background	3
1.2	Project Area.....	4
1.3	Objectives.....	4
2.0	TOWN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	5
2.1	Metropolitan Region Scheme	5
2.2	City of Perth City Planning Scheme No. 2	5
3.0	URBAN DESIGN VISION FOR THE SITE.....	5
4.0	DESIGN GUIDELINES	7
4.1	Building Form	7
4.2	Height.....	7
4.3	Building Articulation.....	8
4.4	Heritage.....	8
4.5	Pedestrian Movement.....	8
4.6	Vehicle Access and Parking.....	9
4.7	Development Options	9
4.8	Surrounding Influences.....	10

1.0 INTRODUCTION

These guidelines have been prepared by the City Rail Development Committee of the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) in consultation with officers from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, New MetroRail and the local government.

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this urban design advice will assist in the development of a modern, functional and viable transport node as well as a design that is consistent with the civic, cultural and heritage values of the area.

The WAPC undertook public consultation from 29 September 2003 to 14 November 2003, and finally adopted the guidelines in January 2004.

The incorporation of these guidelines as policy under the City Planning Scheme will enable the local government to have regard to the guidelines in the determination of future planning applications over the subject site.

Wherever possible these guidelines reflect those adopted by the WAPC.

1.1 Background

The State Government's proposal to extend Perth Central Station by the construction of new platforms below ground immediately to the east of William Street between the Murray Street Mall and the Horseshoe Bridge will see the new platforms being located within the retail core and abutting Forrest Place - the city's primary civic square and the Murray Street Mall – a major retail environment.

Once the rail infrastructure is completed, the land above the new William Street Station will be available for new development, thereby presenting a unique opportunity to redevelop the area in conjunction with the rail development.

The precinct was previously fully developed, containing a number of buildings that were initially constructed in the early part of the twentieth century, generally prior to World War 1.

The construction of the new station infrastructure will provide the catalyst for the redevelopment of the land above and adjacent to the new platforms including the integration of commercial development, to revitalise this degraded area of the city.

The comprehensive redevelopment of the William Street precinct will present the opportunity to integrate the development with the station function, the retail core, the civic square and the heritage values either side of both Wellington and William Streets and to create interesting elements which contribute to a lively, colourful and stimulating environment.

1.2 Project Area

In broad terms, the Central Perth rail Project area extends from the Narrows Bridge through to the Horseshoe Bridge along the alignment of William Street. These guidelines however apply exclusively to the land east of William Street between Murray Street Mall, Wellington Street and Forrest Place. (See Figure 1). This area is identified as the William Street Station Precinct.

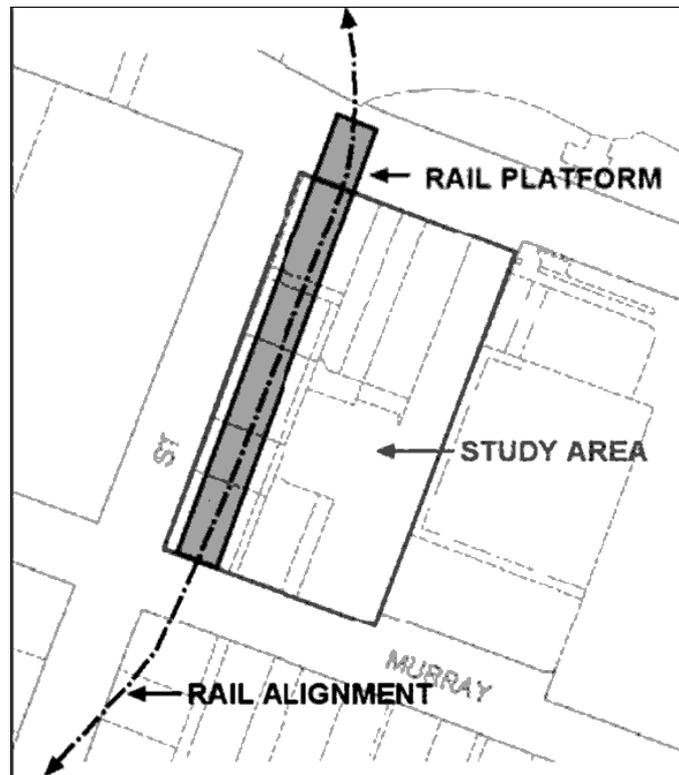


Figure 1: Area covered by the William Street Station Precinct Guidelines

1.3 Objectives

These guidelines form the basis of a broad planning framework for future development by promoting the following objectives:-

- Integration of future development with the William Street platforms development.
- Protection, integration and enhancement of existing structures of heritage value.
- The use of contemporary architecture that is complimentary and responsive to the scale, bulk and character of the immediate locality.
- Provision of safe and convenient pedestrian access between the new rail platforms, existing Perth Station and the city environment.
- Provision of safe convenient vehicular access to/from the site.
- Provision of adequate on-site parking.
- Development to meet market needs.

2.0 TOWN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This section is a summary of the various town planning and urban design considerations.

2.1 Metropolitan Region Scheme

The subject land is appropriately zoned Central City Area under the Metropolitan Region Scheme (MRS) permitting uses such as major retail, commercial and office facilities as well as employment, civic, business and residential uses.

While the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) is responsible for determining applications for public works, the local government is responsible for development control on this zoned land.

2.2 City of Perth City Planning Scheme No. 2

The William Street Station Precinct falls within the broader Citiplace Precinct identified in the City Planning Scheme 2 (CPS 2). In respect of the Citiplace Precinct, the Statement of Intent outlines that the Precinct will be enhanced as the retail focus of the State providing a range of retail and related services more extensive than elsewhere in the metropolitan region. It will provide for a metropolitan and State-wide market as well as for the convenience of the city centre workforce.

The Precinct will offer a wide range of general and specialised retail uses as well as a mix of other uses such as entertainment, commercial, medical, service industry, residential and minor offices. Uses at street and pedestrian level will mainly be shops, restaurants (including cafes), taverns and other similar uses that have attractive shop fronts and provide activity, interest and direct customer service.

In respect of the William Street Station Precinct, the Statement outlines that the area will remain the retail focus and that further retail and similar uses will be encouraged in this pedestrian priority area.

3.0 URBAN DESIGN VISION FOR THE SITE

The site should be redeveloped to incorporate a multi-levelled, mixed use facility that is comprehensively integrated with the existing heritage buildings both internal and external to the site. The building on the corner of Murray Street and William Street should provide a distinctive corner statement.

The key streetscapes directly impacted by the redevelopment are those of Murray, Wellington and William Streets. These are streets that have a human scale, a quality that is important.

William Street forms a strong north-south pedestrian and vehicular link. The new station will add considerably to this movement, and accordingly, the redevelopment of the site will need to directly engage the pedestrian at street level and visually at the upper levels.

The design of the entrances to the station and their ability to be easily recognised as such will be critical to the long term success and viability of the overall development. The Murray Street façade is, therefore, the most important publicly visible element of the project. This should be a landmark building. The new building adjacent to the Commonwealth Bank presents an opportunity to emphasise the heritage values of the bank through the sensitive use of contemporary architecture on its eastern boundary.

Wellington Street will be given a new lease of life as the possibility of lowering the rail through west of Perth Station will enable direct pedestrian access along the length of William Street through to Northbridge. Wellington Street will be more visible and with planned intersection and streetscape improvements, should become a more frequented pedestrian route.

Internally it is expected that the development will link a number of existing and proposed facilities and buildings including the new rail platforms with Perth Station, the existing heritage buildings and the Post Office. The safety and security of pedestrians in these environments is paramount.

The load bearing capacity of the tunnels and station box is limited to buildings of a low rise nature and any development in excess of this will require separate support. The exact specifications and requirements for buildings within the precinct can be obtained through discussions with the New MetroRail design team.

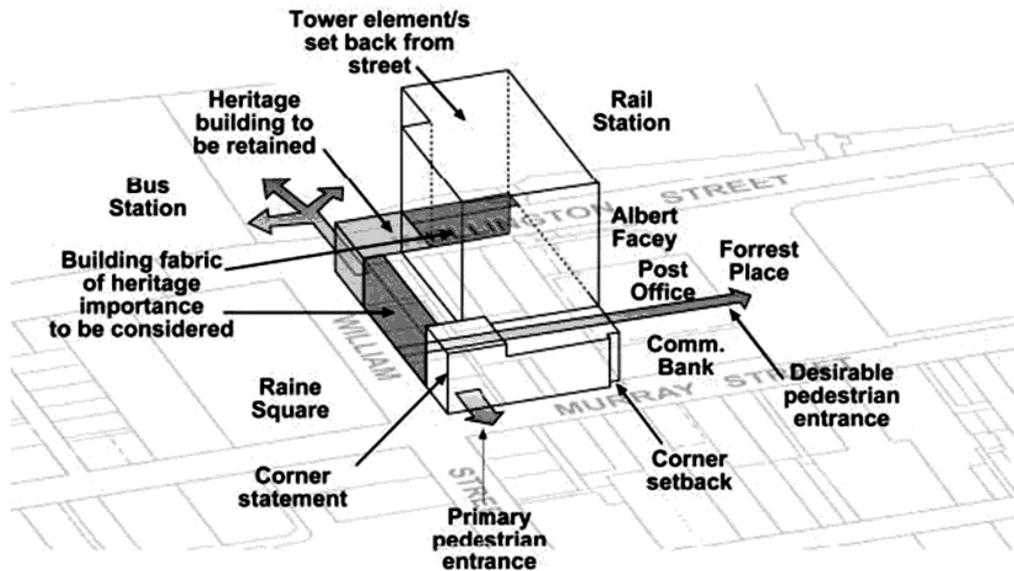


Figure 2: Represents the basic building envelope for the site

4.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following section details the key design issues that should be addressed by the William Street Precinct development. The intent statements and their respective recommendations aim to ensure that the resultant development is of a high urban design standard and forms the centre-piece for the revitalisation of this area of the city.

4.1 Building Form

Design Intent

Achieving a strong relationship between the William Street Station development, its surrounds and the broader Murray Street Mall precinct will be critical to its success. It is important that the development relates well to the street and adjacent buildings, has landmark qualities, provides interest, clear way finding, activity and shelter for pedestrians as they approach, enter, leave or pass by the development.

Recommendations

The building on the corner of Murray Street and William Street should be designed to reflect its primary use as a station entry point.

The development should be a multi-level facility incorporating a mix of related activities including entertainment, commercial, medical, residential (particularly short stay accommodation), office and service industry.

Conserving the existing human scale environment and other civic values of the area is a priority.

The development's entry points should be clearly defined and be considered within a hierarchy of entrances.

The development should provide a network of safe, attractive and clearly identified pedestrian paths and spaces.

Uses established away from the principal pedestrian network could be more varied and include a range of supportive uses such as medical, education and service industry as well as residential and office activity.

The building facades should incorporate interesting elements which contribute to a lively, colourful and stimulating environment.

4.2 Height

Design Intent

Building heights in the vicinity vary from 3 storey heritage buildings to 10 storey older style commercial buildings. The redevelopment of the subject site should reflect the prevailing building heights whilst ensuring the maximum solar access feasible to Murray Street Mall.

Recommendations

Some buildings fronting Wellington Street and William Street will be retained. Those being replaced will be of complementary height and contemporary design to harmonise with the scale and form of the surrounding buildings, including those on the other side of William Street.

The buildings fronting Murray Street will generally be low rise reflecting the traditional height and scale of the adjacent streetscape and allowing sun penetration into the mall in winter.

It is envisaged that behind the facades along the street frontages, a future multi-storey building, or buildings, would be set back from the street frontages and developed in conjunction with the adjacent buildings fronting Forrest Place.

4.3 Building Articulation

Design Intent

Building exteriors should respond to the qualities of the location and adjacent buildings as well as reflecting the nature of the use and processes that are conducted within.

Recommendations

The architectural rhythms of the existing heritage buildings should be respected by new development.

The primary function of the development (albeit at the lower levels), as a rail station, should be reflected in the building's architecture.

Development on the street frontage abutting the Commonwealth Bank should be sympathetic to the building's scale and detail.

Active frontages and protection from the elements are required to all street frontages.

The development's entry points should be clearly defined and be considered within a hierarchy of entrances.

Integration of Public Art into the development should be included.

4.4 Heritage

Notwithstanding the general condition of the majority of the buildings in the precinct, some have been identified as having some heritage value and may require conservation either as a whole or at least in respect of their facades.

Design Intent

Some of the buildings fronting William Street and Wellington Street are of particular heritage significance. There is a significant opportunity to utilise the buildings in a way that will provide the development with an added dimension and integration with the existing urban form.

Recommendations

Their treatment, adaptive re-use and incorporation into the overall development should be undertaken in accordance with their respective Conservation Plans.

Re-use of the buildings as entrances to the overall development should be considered.

4.5 Pedestrian Movement

Design Intent

The development must accommodate the movement of pedestrians from one rail platform to another, the bus station and, where appropriate, from one building to another on the site as well as integrate with the surrounding pedestrian movement patterns.

Recommendations

Pedestrians must, as a minimum, be able to arrive and leave the site in the direction of the Bus Station, the central rail platforms and Murray Street Mall.

Wherever possible, all major pedestrian movements should be at street level with the Murray Street Mall being the primary pedestrian route.

Links with William Street, Wellington Street, the Post Office (through to Forrest Place), Albert Facey House and between one building to another within the site are encouraged, however, pedestrian safety and security is of utmost importance and must not be compromised.

The design of the development should ensure that floor space adjacent to the main pedestrian routes capitalises on this passing traffic.

The design of Murray Street Mall adjacent to the new station entrance should be considered in the context of the site's redevelopment.

4.6 Vehicle Access and Parking

Design Intent

To ensure movement of vehicles to and from the site's service areas and tenant parking occurs in an efficient and unobtrusive manner.

Recommendations

Vehicle access should remain at-grade from Wellington Street and/or William Street, preferably via single, one way crossovers on each street.

Cross easement access from Albert Facey House and/or the Post Office is also encouraged at the lower level.

Primary vehicle access from Murray Street Mall will not be permitted other than for limited service access to ground floor retail.

Adequate managed parking spaces should be provided to meet the needs of the new development on the site.

Parking and service area access requirements for the site should be accommodated in a consolidated, below ground facility.

4.7 Development Options

It is important to consider the option of creating several small lots, with the potential to introduce several developers and with it the greater likelihood of a variety in built form, or to creating fewer larger lots, which would more readily facilitate a comprehensive, integrated development.

Design Intent

To ensure the final built form has the characteristics of incremental growth and the benefits of comprehensive integrated development.

Recommendations

Rationalise internal boundaries prior to any redevelopment.

Prior to any development, consideration should be given to establishing access rights from Albert Facey House and/or the Post office in advance.

4.8 Surrounding Influences

There are a number of external design influences that require consideration. These vary from the local government's intention to upgrade the surrounding streets to the proposed lowering of the Fremantle rail line enabling the connection of Northbridge to the city centre.

Design Intent

To take into account the various external design influences as they may affect the development over time.

Recommendations

The eventual redevelopment of the Post Office will provide an opportunity to directly connect the development site with Forrest Place.

The upgrading of the Murray Street Mall provides a significant opportunity to ensure its design compliments the new rail station's primary new access to the Mall.

The sinking of the Fremantle line will assist in connecting Northbridge with the City through the development of a significant pedestrian walk or plaza. Accordingly, the views of this area from the upper floors of the development will be significantly improved.

The potential redevelopment of the Bus Station within a new integrated facility will also assist in the improvement of views in this direction.

William and Wellington streetscapes are to be upgraded to provide wider footpaths and opportunities for street tree planting. Both vehicle and pedestrian access points should be considered in light of these proposals.