

# Urban renewal strategies

## 4.0 Introduction

Urban areas can experience rapid transformation. This may be due to changing social preferences, strategic planning imperatives or economic forces.

Urban renewal areas include:

- \* conventional residential neighbourhoods experiencing the introduction of denser forms of housing;
- \* public housing estates requiring upgraded housing and a 'normalised' environment;
- \* traditional town *centres* into which taller mixed-use buildings are being inserted;
- \* stand-alone shopping centres and first-generation business parks becoming more diverse and intense;
- \* declining town centres requiring revitalisation;
- \* redundant port or industrial land identified for change to higher-order employment or mixed-use outcomes.

Without an overarching plan or strategy, there is a danger that individual redevelopments in an urban renewal area will miss opportunities to contribute to a distinct and successful new place.

This chapter explains how to prepare or assess urban design strategies and plans to guide the transformation of urban renewal areas. It begins with the process of formulating a vision for the future of the area. Then it identifies the types of analysis needed to inform a successful strategy. This is followed by guidance on how each of the physical ingredients of urban places can be improved or established to suit the new purpose of the area. Finally, advice is provided on estimating the resulting development capacity of the area, engaging stakeholders in the preparation of a renewal strategy and implementation.

Urban renewal is highly unpredictable due to the multiplicity of physical conditions, economic forces and agents of change, and the length of time over which it usually occurs. As a result, urban renewal strategies should provide flexible frameworks for development, able to adapt to changing circumstances, rather than rigid blueprints.

### Montague

The design principles in this chapter are illustrated by the plan for Montague, an industrial area in South Melbourne, Australia, intended for mixed-use, higher-density renewal. The plan for the renewal area was designed by David Lock Associates and Port Phillip City Council.