

2.4 Views and transitions

In this report, views are typically either axial views (those views following an axis, typically a view along a road or street), or vistas (those that are broader and more open, such as from lookouts).

The major roads of the metropolitan area are aligned on a mostly rectangular grid, especially the long north-south arterial roads, and as a consequence the major axial views in the metropolitan area are typically long views to the hills. The figure below demonstrates the numerous axes from arterial roads to the hills, and identifies several points on the ridgelines, which terminate more than one axis. Two points in the hills are especially potent, apparently terminating three axes: Mount Osmond, and a ridge between Main South Road and Flagstaff Road, approximately one kilometre south of their junction.

Because of the typically short east-west arterial roads, long views to the sea from arterial roads are rare. The only long distance view to the sea along an arterial road where the sea is a major part of the view is Cross Road. Local views to the sea are available from several other arterial roads, such as Beach Road at Christies Beach. Grand Junction Road provides a view to the sea from its eastern parts, but only as a minor element on the horizon.

Figure 28: Axial views: views from arterial roads within the Adelaide Plains that terminate beyond the plains

Because of the largely rectangular grid of arterial roads, opportunities for buildings or other structures to terminate major public axial views are rare, and the uptake of these opportunities in metropolitan Adelaide rarer still. Very few of these terminal points, either potentially or actually, are of metropolitan significance. Examples of potential termination points of metropolitan significance include Gepps Cross, where the scale of the existing buildings is too small for the large space, and the Glenelg end of Anzac Highway, where the Holdfast Shores building is not aligned to address the axis.

Numerous locations in the hills provide public vistas over the large parts of the metropolitan area. Figure 29 below identifies these. Some, such as Windy Point, provide a strong sense of proximity, while others are more removed. Currently, many of these vistas can only be seen while travelling along a road, with little or no opportunity to stop to appreciate them.

Figure 29: Lookouts: significant public viewpoints overlooking the metropolitan area

Transition spaces are those where the user experiences a significant change in physical form in moving through space. The quality of the experience is dependent on the type of changes in the physical form, the scale of the forms, and the duration of the lead-up, the transition itself, and the follow-on.

The foothills and the roads that traverse them, offer the most intense transitions in the metropolitan area, with an obvious contrast between the natural landscape of the mostly undeveloped hills and the flat, ordered urban area on the fringe of the Adelaide Plains.

Figure 30: Transitions: places of the metropolitan area offering major transition experiences

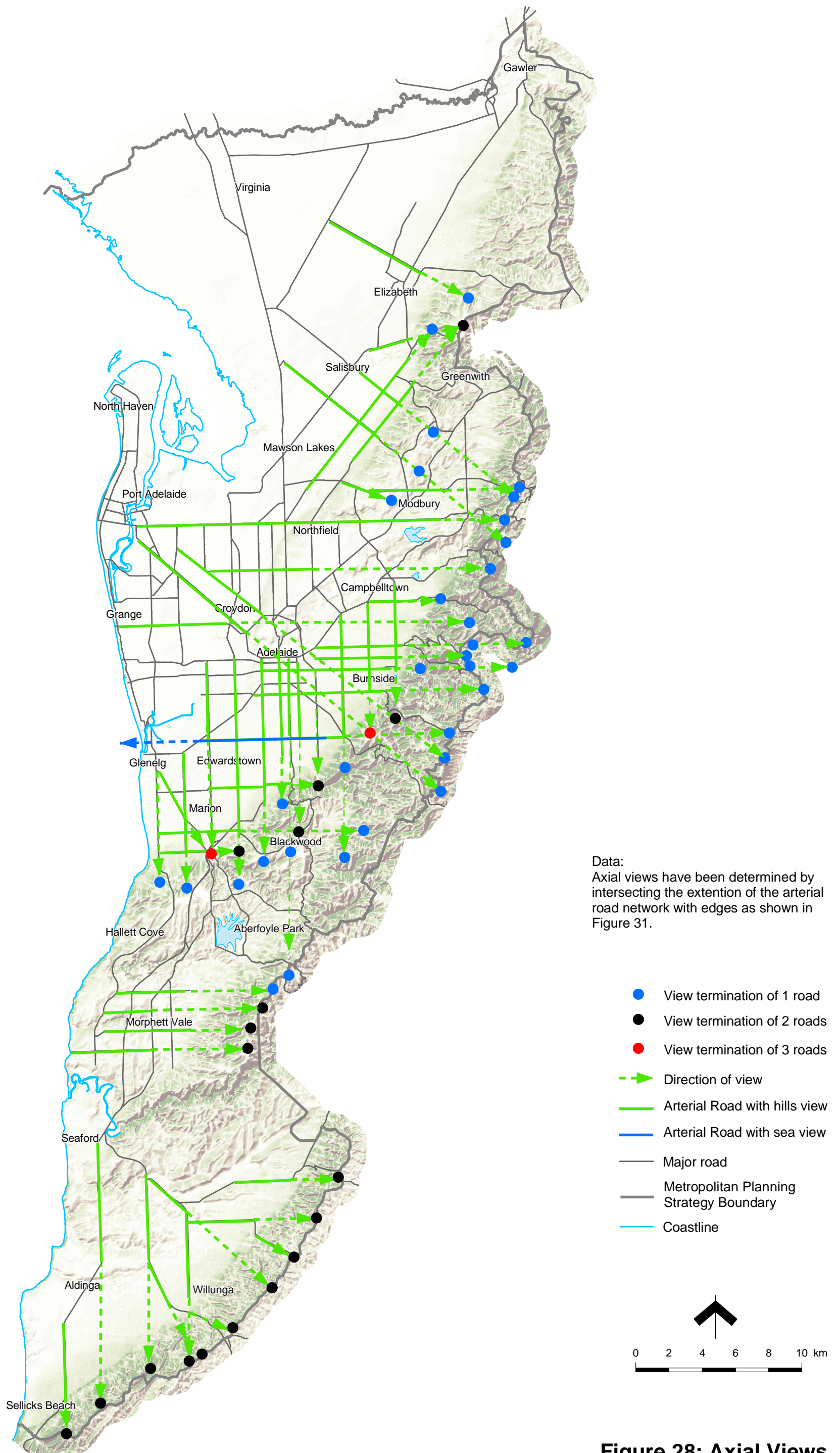


Figure 28: Axial Views



Figure 29: Lookouts

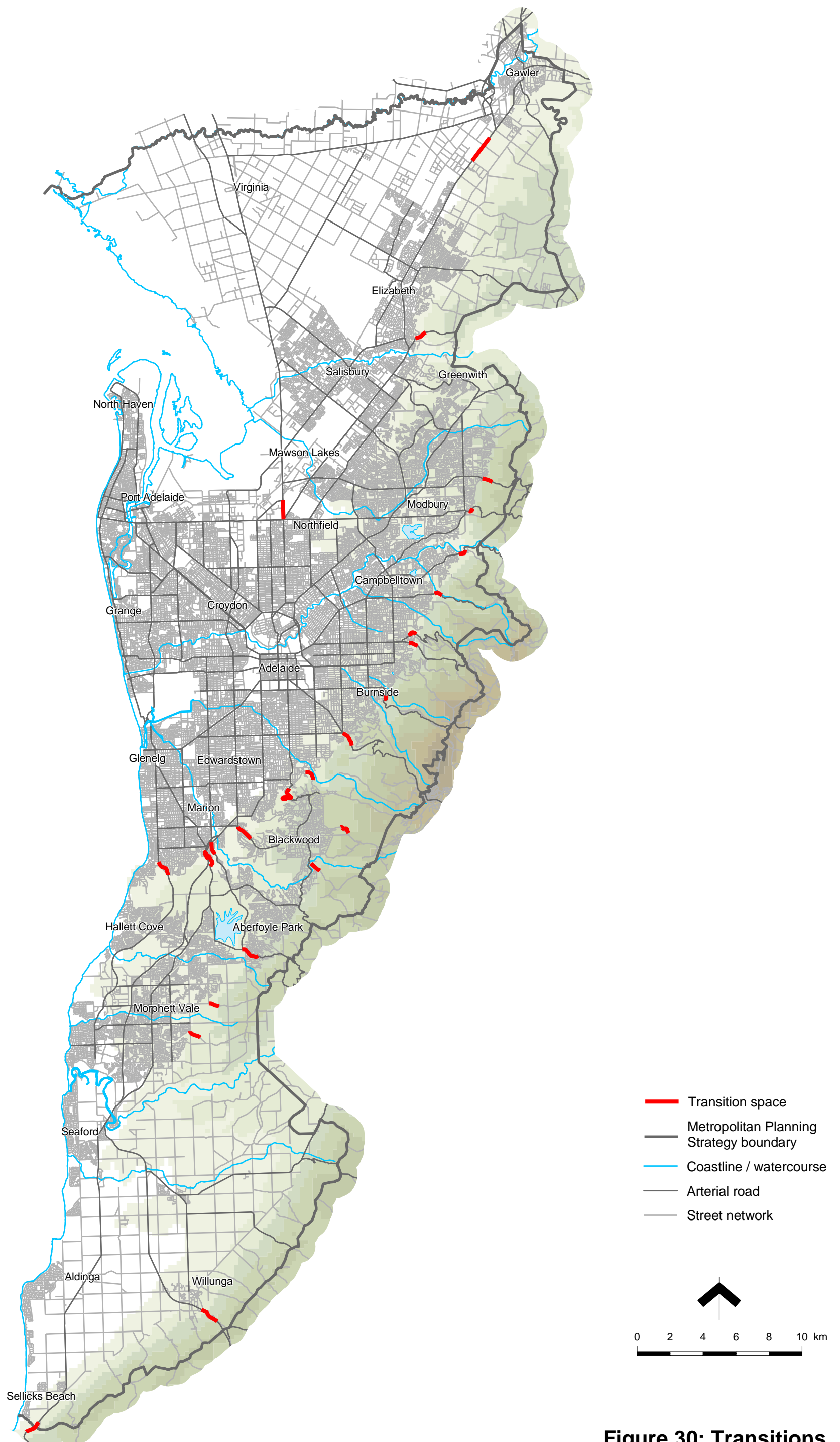


Figure 30: Transitions

2.5 Likely future changes

In the next few years certain projects will reshape parts of the metropolitan area, and certain existing trends are likely to continue to shape it into the foreseeable future. These are the subjects of this section.

Port River Expressway

The Port River Expressway, the third river crossing as part of this, and the Montague Road extension between Port Wakefield Road and the Salisbury Highway are likely to be constructed within a decade. This will provide an east-west connection between the hills and the coast parallel to and immediately north of Grand Junction Road.

Port Waterfront

This \$1 billion development of derelict land beside the Port River will provide approximately 2000 dwellings and four thousand new residents.

Continued redevelopment of Glenelg

The redevelopment of Glenelg - as evidenced by Holdfast Shores, Liberty Towers, the Grand Hotel, and Jimmy Melrose Park - is likely to continue, with upgrades to further public spaces and other new apartment buildings.

Increased development pressure on the Hills Face

Pressure for urban development of the Hills Face will intensify, as land values on the plains rise and the population increases. At the same time, however, public pressure will increase for the Hills Face to remain as a 'natural' backdrop to the metropolitan area with high conservation and recreation values.

Increased cost of water

Increased cost of water will lead to more water-efficient urban development, including more on-site retention and detention, the selection of more drought-tolerant plant species in public and private gardens, and the reduction in the size of private gardens.

Increased demand for coastal living

Increased demand on the urban coast as a residential and leisure time location will see a rise in property values and increased pressure for development.

Increased interest in restoring local ecologies

The continued reduction in the numbers of native plants and animals, combined with public interest and some restoration success stories is likely to increase demand for the restoration of the representative endemic ecosystems of the Adelaide Plains, with the creation of a network of restored ecosystems to ensure long-term survival.

Redevelopment of flood-prone urban areas

The accurate mapping of urban areas at risk from infrequent but significant flooding may lead to the comprehensive redevelopment of parts of these areas, especially areas adjacent to the waterway.

Tighter control in bushfire-prone areas

The accurate mapping of urban areas at risk from high-severity bushfires may lead to an increase in the statutory restrictions on the type and siting of buildings in these areas.

Improved energy efficiency of buildings

The sharp hike in electricity prices in 2003 may encourage the development of new buildings that provide more moderate internal temperatures with less mechanical assistance.

Smaller households, larger dwellings

The ageing of the population and the decrease in household size is already leading to an increased demand for smaller yards and less space per household. However, the increase in affluence absolutely, as well as relatively as the average age increases, is leading to a demand for more internal space per person. The ongoing decrease in household size is increasing the demand for dwellings faster than the slow population growth alone would suggest. Increases in average dwelling size will translate to higher building densities, as the built footprint occupies a larger proportion of the allotment.

Population growth?

Population is predicted to increase until approximately 2030, and then slowly decline. However, the rate of population growth is difficult to accurately predict, being heavily influenced by immigration rather than natural increase. If immigration is low, there is likely to be a reduced demand for large houses on the urban fringe, and increased demand for smaller inner suburban dwellings. On the other hand, if immigration is high, there is likely to be increased demand for both fringe and inner suburban locations.

Increased urban regeneration

The urban containment boundary will create increased pressure for infill and urban regeneration. For economic, social and environmental reasons, government policies are likely to favour concentrated urban regeneration rather than scattered infill, with incentives for the comprehensive redevelopment on older areas, especially centres and brownfield sites. The process of infrastructure provision can be expected to change accordingly.

More niche markets, a broadening of housing types

Another broad trend is the increasing diversification of housing markets: one housing product no longer fits all. This may lead to more diversity in housing and building types throughout the metropolitan area, especially town centres.

Higher quality town centre public realm

The rise of passive recreation, including the café culture, with its increased outdoor uses, is leading to demands for higher quality public environment in town centres. This is likely to result in a greater sense of place and community.

Demand for more roads and traffic engineering to counter congestion

The expectation of continued high personal mobility, combined with extra traffic from increased density and greater affluence, is likely to generate demand from the car-using majority for further traffic engineering to relieve increased congestion, with attendant negative impacts on urban spaces and public transport.

More diverse and adaptable public spaces

Differing ethnic and cultural expressions will create a demand for more varied and adaptable public spaces.

2.6 An overview of Adelaide's character

The following elements are prevalent across most if not all of the metropolitan area, help to define its character, and are likely to remain in the foreseeable future. These elements contribute to establishing a typical 'look and feel' for the metropolitan area. Although most elements are neither unique to Adelaide nor especially distinctive, collectively they establish an identifiable character for the metropolitan area. The elements are:

- the largely flat topography
- the strong sunlight
- the backdrop of the hills
- the relative absence of waterways
- the low density of the suburbs
- an arterial road network that is largely a 'right angle' or 'grid iron' pattern
- low traffic volumes by world standards, leading to extremely easy accessibility by private motor vehicle throughout the metropolitan area
- the lack of spatial enclosure of urban spaces
- a green canopy over the metropolitan area, created by public and private tree planting
- fewer street trees and lawn medians and verges compared to all other major Australian cities, due to the more arid environment
- freestanding single storey houses
- masonry for external walls, with weatherboards and other lightweight cladding being less common
- the distinctive yet intrusive Stobie poles, used for the overhead distribution of electrical cabling.



Figure 31: Elements of metropolitan Adelaide's character



Figure 32: The Stobie pole: distinctively South Australian

2.7 A comparison of Adelaide's structure and character

In its physical structure and character, the metropolitan area is similar to other large Australian cities in that:

- it has a high-rise and high density commercial centre
- the centre is surrounded by a very large area of low density suburbs
- the typical dwelling is a freestanding single storey house
- it is located on the coast
- it has large areas of single land use
- cars are the predominant mode of passenger transport
- much of the urban area is car dependant.

The metropolitan area is different from other large Australian cities in the following aspects:

- the central city is set inland half way between the coast and the hills, remote from a navigable water course
- it has a formal central city street grid segregated from the remainder of the metropolitan area by a ring of parklands
- it has a very regular street grid, with most streets and roads intersecting each other at 90 degrees
- the metropolitan area is clearly bounded by the hills on the east and south
- the hills are visible from most arterial roads
- it has only one motorway within the metropolitan area.

