

# 11 Extension of the Active Frontage Overlay: Review of Elizabeth Street between Brisbane Street and Warwick Street.

## 11.1 Background

The Active Frontage Overlay was introduced into the Central Business Zone of the *Hobart Interim Planning Scheme 2015* (HIPS 2015) to control building design and uses at ground floor to ensure interest and engagement for passing pedestrians in key city streets. The activation of streetscapes for pedestrians is supported by the Zone Purpose Statements, specifically:

22.1.1.6 *To encourage intense activity at pedestrian levels with shop windows offering interest and activity to pedestrians.*

The following area is designated as being within the Active Frontage Overlay (see Figure 11).

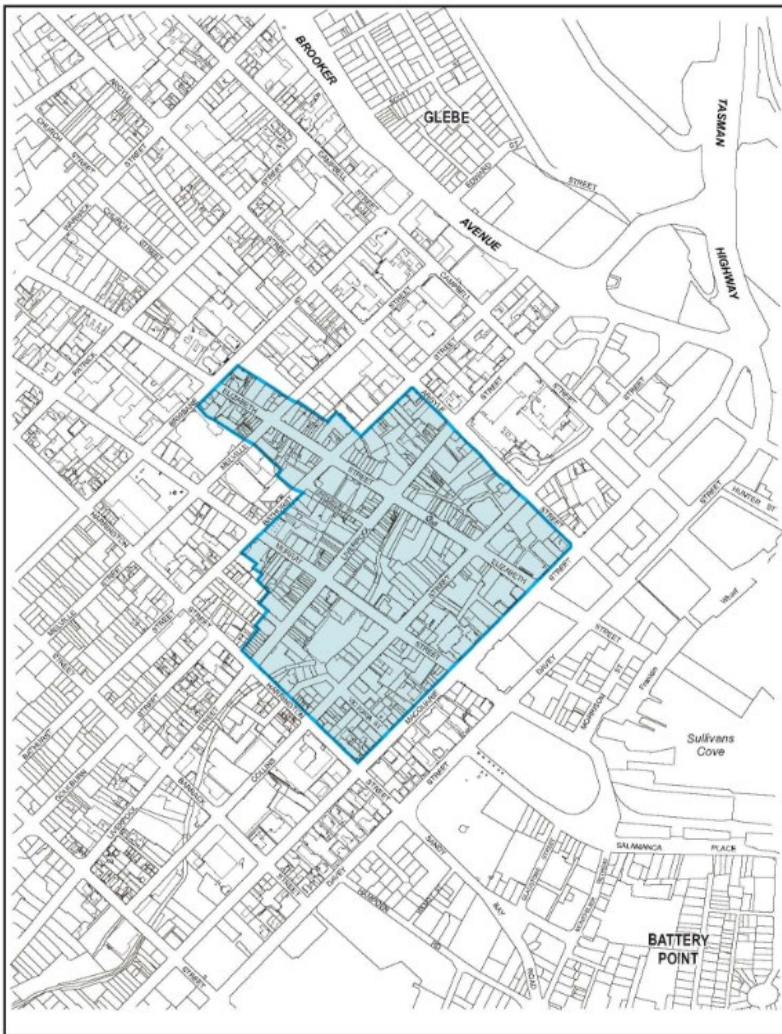


Figure 11 Active Frontage Overlay under the HIPS 2015

The Active Frontage Overlay will also form part of the controls for the Central Business Zone Specific Area Plan (SAP) under the Hobart Local Provisions Schedule (Hobart LPS). Use and development within this overlay is subject to an additional layer of controls.

Qualifications in the Central Business Zone Use Table restrict the operation of some uses at ground floor level within the Active Frontage Overlay. These uses are:

- Bulky goods sales
- Educational and occasional care
- Research and development
- Tourist operation
- Hospital services
- Storage

Uses that are prohibited in general within the Active Frontage Overlay are:

- Equipment and machinery sales and hire
- Vehicle fuel sales and service

In terms of development, the permitted standards under the SAP require that new or altered buildings within the overlay must ensure at least 80% of the surface area of ground level frontages to be clear glazing and door openings. Awnings are also required.

## 11.2 Assessment of Active Frontage Overlay extension

A study area along Elizabeth Street from Brisbane Street to Warwick Street is considered for inclusion in the Active Frontage Overlay (see Figure I2).

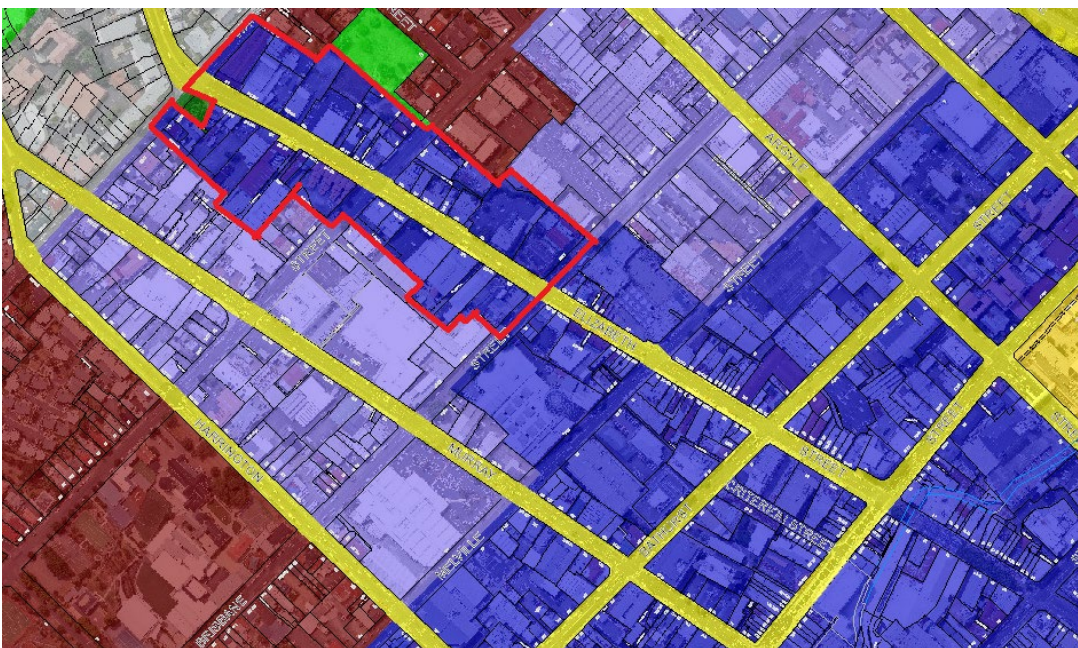


Figure I2 Study area (outlined in red) – Elizabeth Street from Brisbane Street to Warwick Street, within the Central Business Zone

This area is considered for inclusion in the overlay due to its importance as a link between the CBD and the North Hobart retail strip which is well frequented by pedestrians and cyclists. It is part of a wider identified Integrated Transit Corridor identified in the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS) which links the city to the Northern suburbs of Hobart. In addition to this, the study area is identified as part of a program of revitalisation works for local retail areas, following from the report 'A Plan for Hobart's Local Retail Precinct', endorsed by Council in December 2015. The first project to arise from this report (works to the Lenah Valley retail area) has been completed, and work is underway on the revitalisation of the New Town retail precinct. The third area to be considered is the study area along Elizabeth Street, which is an area in need of revitalisation.

An extension of the Active Frontage Overlay is considered for this section of Elizabeth Street to ensure that future development along this corridor is small-scale and engaging for pedestrians and cyclists into the future.

Current uses within the study area include the following:

- General Retail and Hire
- Community meeting and entertainment
- Business and professional services
- Residential
- Visitor Accommodation
- Bulky goods sales
- Utilities
- Manufacturing and processing
- Food services
- Hotel industry

There are no uses in the area currently that have overall prohibited status under the Active Frontage Overlay provisions, however there are 2 Bulky goods sales uses at ground floor level (Forty Winks at 174 Elizabeth Street and The Blackwood Shop at 247 Elizabeth Street). While Bulky goods sales is generally a permitted use in the Central Business Zone, the qualification prohibits this use at ground floor level within the Active Frontage Overlay (except for access). As such, the two existing bulky goods sales shops, which are currently a permitted use in the area, would become 'non-conforming' uses if the Active Frontage Overlay were to be applied. Despite this, the continuing operation of these tenancies would not be affected by the application of an overlay, and even if the tenancies were to change hands the use rights would persist until such time as they are vacant for 2 years or changed to another use. Therefore, the application of the overlay is not seen to be a significant impediment to these uses if they wish to continue. It would, however, encourage more active uses if the current tenants were to move on.

There are some key sites within the study area that have the potential for redevelopment. There is currently a significant hotel/residential/mixed use development proposed for 234-250 Elizabeth Street, which is a site of 4 land parcels that is owned by Fragrance. The other notable section of the study area with significant capacity for redevelopment is the south-western side of Elizabeth Street between Brisbane and Patrick Streets. Only one of the 6 parcels of land in this section is heritage listed (160 Elizabeth Street, at the corner of Brisbane Street, which contains Roxburgh House). The remaining titles all have large, poorly activated frontages and are operating as offices or bulky goods sales, which are not optimal uses for encouraging street-level interaction. In this stretch, there is also a large carparking area, which is set below the Elizabeth Street ground level. A workshop/warehouse building on the opposite side of the street (189 Elizabeth Street) which is potentially currently vacant) has a blank frontage wall and would also provide a development opportunity.

If these sites were to be redeveloped, the application of the Active Frontage Overlay will encourage uses and building design that is more accommodating of street level activation. A significant opportunity would be lost if these sites are redeveloped with large, low-interaction frontages and uses.

### **11.3 Conclusion**

Elizabeth Street between Brisbane Street and Warwick Street is an important link between the CBD and North Hobart, and further to the Northern suburbs of Hobart. Its future as an active linkage route is indicated by the recognition of Elizabeth Street as an Integrated Transit Corridor under the STRLUS. There are a number of properties in the area that currently do not contribute actively to the street and provide a disjointed experience for pedestrians but have significant scope for redevelopment. Any such redevelopment should be guided towards providing increased activation and visual interest to pedestrians and cyclists. This is particularly relevant given the intention to invest Council funds in improving the streetscape in this area. Two existing uses in the area would become 'non-conforming' under the Active Frontage Overlay qualifications. However, as they would retain existing use rights, the application of the overlay is not considered to be unduly restrictive to these long standing uses if they continue as they are. It is appropriate that if they were to cease operating, uses with more capacity to activate and invigorate the area are encouraged. As such, it is considered that the Active Frontage Overlay should be extended along section of Elizabeth Street between Brisbane and Warwick Streets under the Central Business Zone SAP.