City North/QVM Precinct.

The CBD north of LaTrobe St features a number of historic laneways and low-rise pre-war industrial and retail buildings surrounding them. Many of these structures are under threat from development, and several have already disappeared. Laneways of particular interest in this area include the network around Little La Trobe St., which links RMIT to the cafes and eateries of Elizabeth St, and a number of un-named lanes near the Queen Victoria Market. The lanes near Elizabeth St. and buildings abutting them form an historic area which could become a new heritage precinct in the future. Many of the lanes in this area are not mentioned under existing laneway policy.
1. Little La Trobe Street (Class 2)
Little La Trobe St. provides a link between the RMIT education precinct and Elizabeth St and is lined with a number of Victorian era and inter-war industrial buildings which contain cafes, an art supply shop, car repairs, and converted apartments. Most of the historic fabric here is D graded, except an Edwardian factory (top left image).

It is clear that the industrial heritage of the street should be protected, given that there is significant potential for adaptive re-use and revitalisation along the length of Lt. La Trobe St. This area has recently been targeted for high rise development and Lt. La Trobe St. along with Literature Lane provides one of the last chances to preserve intact human-scale heritage character in this precinct.
2. Literature Lane (Not mentioned in current policy)
Literature Lane forms a D shape behind and running off Lt LaTrobe St. Strong pre-war laneway character, including some stone fragments from previous buildings, mis-matched brick and other laneway quirks, some heritage building rears facing the lane are more intact than their main street facades. Three structures in this laneway already have heritage overlays including a warehouse built in 1854. This is one of Melbourne’s best lesser-known lanes. This previously un-named lane was honoured in 2012 with a new name celebrating Melbourne’s status as a UNESCO city of literature. Very intact bluestone paving throughout.
3. Unnamed lane off Lt La Trobe. (Not mentioned in current policy)

This un-named laneway originally mirrored Literature lane on the other side of Lt. LaTrobe St but was largely subsumed by development in the 1970s. At its western end, partial bluestone paving survives, and un-graded buildings displaying heritage signage associated with a workshop (now adapted into a modern residence) can be seen. The lane hits a dead at the 1970s building which subsumed most of its length and re-appears to the east with more intact bluestone paving and additional heritage buildings. This is also a noteworthy street art precinct. Interestingly, the recent sale of the 1970s building as a future development site provides a unique opportunity for the City of Melbourne to negotiate the re-establishment of this lost lanescape, mirroring ‘Literature Lane’ to the north.
4. Unnamed lane behind Elizabeth St Victorian and Art Deco shops
Another unnamed lane with unique and uneven bluestone paving, and a classic Victorian ‘Mary Poppins’ lanescape of chimneys and rears of brick buildings on both sides. At the end is a brick substation, with a courtyard garden and a neo-Georgian appearance (1930’s, and un-graded).
The Victorian era and Art Deco buildings at the mouth of the laneway on Elizabeth St are all currently D-graded and form an intact streetscape, home to bars, restaurants and shops. This lane contains extremely significant heritage fabric and is one of the last places in the CBD where the historic backs of small-scale Victorian era buildings can still be seen.
5. Unnamed lane south off Franklin st, west of Elizabeth

This lane consists of modern paving but is surrounded by walls with strong heritage character. The rear of a heritage listed modernist bank, and historic backs of mid-Victorian shops and the iconic Royal Saxon Hotel are found here. These could all vanish if a proposed 50 storey tower is approved which would demolish the shops (rear in top left photo) and the rear of the Gold Rush era Royal Saxon Hotel, that can be seen from the lane. On the western side of the lane is an un-graded Victorian stone and brick building.
6. unnamed lane off Franklin st, east of Elizabeth

A lane with no original paving, but an example of how the backs of heritage buildings can exhibit as much intact character as their better known street frontages.
7. unnamed lane north off Franklin, west of Elizabeth

This lane contains heritage brick frontages along all sides, including the brick wall of an inter-war building which retains much of it’s historic integrity, while its street façade has been modernised. Another inter-war building makes an ‘L’-shape around the Victorian era structure (E graded) on the corner to provide artist studios on the laneway. Concrete paved, but with bluestone gutter and kerb.
8. unnamed laneway network behind Franklin st/Queen st

(Not mentioned in current policy)

This is one of the most interesting, but least known laneway networks in the city. It is partly covered by the Queen Victoria Market Heritage Precinct and makes a ‘D’-shape around a Victorian era building converted to apartments, then a ‘dogleg’ into Queen Street and the markets beyond. An un-graded but intact Edwardian warehouse has exclusive frontage to the lane, and has in the past been used as a temporary art space. From here another curve reveals a bluestone lane surrounded by historic brick and stone structures. A cut away, rounded corner is visible to allow horse and cart to clear the corner here. The laneway then heads back out into Franklin Street via a narrow passage which arrives at Queen Street via a section of broad bluestone paving edged by heritage structures.

The first section from Franklin St is concrete, but areas of bluestone are visible beneath. It is possible an entire bluestone pavement is concealed beneath overlain concrete here. As the lane winds around, extensive bluestone paving makes its appearance.
9. unnamed, north off Franklin (not mentioned in current policy)

A short but very wide bluestone laneway with a 1920’s apartment conversion on one side (D-graded) and vacant lot on the other side (soon to be Fulton Lane Apartments). It is not known how the new development will interact with this bluestone lane.
10. **Anthony Street (Class 2)**
A total of six Edwardian and Inter-war factories, all converted to apartments, line both sides of this lane. While many of the lane’s buildings are somewhat altered, they still maintain period character and materials that are important to the lanescape. Concrete paving, with re-laid bluestone guttering.
11. Electric Place (Class 3)

Electric Place starts off as a concrete driveway from Franklin St with unusual brickwork within buildings on the western side. After the lane curves, much more heritage character is revealed with original bluestone paving, and early 20th century brick walls and modern street art on both sides. The lane arrives at A’Beckett St. between an altered Edwardian building (although the lane frontage is more intact than the street facade) and a 1930’s Moderne building, now part of LaTrobe University (currently D graded).
12. Singers Lane (Class 3)

Forms a T shape and connects LaTrobe St and Wills. Art Deco and Victorian era rears of buildings are visible fronting on from Willis St. The William and La Trobe St sides are now dominated by modern, mostly blank walls, but the bluestone character of the lane itself remains with extensive original paving present.