

7. Pillar 3 - Valuing Preferred Neighbourhood Character

We have an unique urban character that will be enhanced and protected for current and future generations. We enhance our unique, leafy green character in both the public and private realms.

Objectives

NC1	To ensure new residential development supports local identity and sense of place
NC2	To balance neighbourhood character objectives with scale of housing change and diverse housing need
NC3	To support the enhancement of urban canopy in the private realm
NC4	To strengthen the application of neighbourhood character in the Banyule Planning Scheme

RATIONALE

Banyule has a unique character that is valued by its community. It is vital that when housing growth brings change to an area, it does so in a positive way, working with and building on the valued attributes of an area to ensure they are retained. Banyule enjoys having a range of unique landscapes and neighbourhood character areas throughout the municipality that hold exceptional landscape, cultural and local value. New housing should always enhance rather than detract from these valued neighbourhood characteristics where they are identified to ensure that what makes these places special is not lost.

Various parts of Banyule will need to accommodate change due to population growth and the community's evolving housing needs. A Neighbourhood Character Strategy will identify the important aspects of how each neighbourhood will respect its valued character, while supporting this change. Poorly designed development can erode the preferred neighbourhood character and a community's sense of place. Neighbourhood character guidance for areas of increased housing change is essential to ensuring new development enhances local character while providing for housing change.

Vegetation is a fundamental contributor to Neighbourhood Character in Banyule. The retention of existing vegetation appropriate for the area, be that indigenous, native or exotic, and the planting of new vegetation has a significant impact on the character of Banyule. In addition, Banyule's *Urban Forest Strategy (2023)* aims to achieve a minimum canopy cover of 30% by 2050 for all suburbs and no net loss in suburbs already exceeding that level. Achieving this target will require action in both the public and private realm. The Neighbourhood Character Strategy has the opportunity to make a significant contribution to achieving these goals by encouraging the retention of established canopy trees and ensuring an adequate number and sufficient area of space is provided for the planting of new canopy trees and understorey vegetation to maturity.





Objective NC1

To ensure new residential development supports local identity and sense of place

STRATEGIES



- Ensure Banyule's Neighbourhood Character Strategy is up to date and responsive to changes affecting residential areas.
- Ensure new housing responds sympathetically to the characteristics of the preferred local character identified in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.
- Enhance opportunities to improve private and public interfaces by applying the Public Realm Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy.

ACTIONS



- Review and prepare an updated Neighbourhood Character Strategy, including Banyule's Neighbourhood Character Precincts.
- Update the Banyule Planning Scheme with revised Neighbourhood Character Strategy Precincts.
- Prepare new Neighbourhood Character brochures and upload on Council's website.
- Implement the design principles of the Public Realm Strategy as it relates to residential street typologies.
- Include street trees in the landscaping design guidance for neighbourhood character precincts.

Objectives NC2

To balance neighbourhood character objectives with housing change and diverse housing needs

STRATEGIES



- Support the adoption of differing housing typologies where preferred future local characteristics warrants alternative approaches (eg. Split level dwellings in topographically steep areas).
- Provide specific guidance on meeting neighbourhood character objectives in 'Incremental change areas' and 'Increased change areas' as identified in this Housing Strategy, to ensure neighbourhood character is not compromised.
- Support innovative approaches to increasing density while meeting neighbourhood character objectives.

ACTIONS



- Prepare sub-precincts with refined guidance on achieving preferred neighbourhood character in 'Incremental change areas' and 'Increased change areas'.
- Explore innovative approaches to achieving neighbourhood character objectives through the Medium and High Density Built Form and Landscaping Design Guidelines.



Objective NC3

To support the enhancement of urban canopy in the private realm

STRATEGIES



- Ensure that individual developments are considering the cumulative impact of incremental change over time on vegetation and biodiversity and contributing to 30% canopy cover in the area.
- Encourage new developments to retain existing high retention value trees on private land as part of the design of the development.
- Support the goals of the *Urban Forest Strategy (2023)* through improved landscape and tree planting outcomes in private development through landscape plans and consistent enforcement.

ACTIONS



- Progress a Banyule's Vegetation Controls Review and Planning Scheme Amendment.
- Investigate opportunities to support residents planting canopy trees on their properties, including a species guide.
- Prepare Nature Strip Planting guidelines to assist biodiversity and vegetation retention on nature strips.
- Investigate a Banyule Tree Advice Resource through Banyule's website, including an option to alert Council of illegal tree removals.
- Undertake inspections over longer time frames to ensure landscaping permit conditions have been met including planting of large canopy trees.
- Investigate stronger enforcement measures where the approved tree species have been replaced or removed.
- Undertake a review of the existing tree planting ratios for each neighbourhood character precinct.
- Monitor if new developments are achieving urban canopy targets through a canopy cover assessment method.

Objective NC4

To strengthen the application of neighbourhood character in the Banyule Planning Scheme

STRATEGIES



- Ensure that the Neighbourhood Character Strategy allows for some housing diversity.
- Explore other mechanisms in the planning scheme that could be used to strengthen the application of the updated Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

ACTIONS



- Consider variations to ResCode through the inclusion of neighbourhood character objectives in Banyule Planning Scheme zone schedules.
- Investigate the application of the Neighbourhood Character Overlay in some neighbourhood character precincts in Banyule to better identify special neighbourhood characteristics.
- Explore the use of new or revised built form and environmental overlay controls to reinforce preferred future neighbourhood character outcomes.

