







7.2. Bush Woodland 1

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

The Bush Woodland 1 (BW1) precinct is located in south-eastern Banyule covering sections of Lower Plenty and Viewbank.

Bush Woodland 1 is characterised by a rural and farmland landscape quality due to the meandering country roads over rolling hills and the Yarra River floodplain. Parks and reserves surround much of the precinct's border. Land in the precinct is undulating to hilly.

The precinct includes open woodland of remnant indigenous vegetation including River Red Gums, with pockets of more dense vegetation. There are areas of cleared or partly cleared former farmland and several stands of exotics, usually Pines, provide dense windbreaks.

Dwellings are low and detached and often not highly visible from the street, if at all. Their architectural styles usually originate from the Post-War period to the early 21st Century.

Front gardens are generally informal farmland gardens with large expanses of lawn and pockets of trees and vegetation both native and exotic. Front fences are usually post and rail or post and wire with occasional entrance gates to larger properties.

Driveways are long and generally paved with garages often out of sight or incorporated into the building design Footpaths and formal nature strips are generally absent.



BW1 EXISTING KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Architectural style	• Post-War to the early 21st Century
Subdivision pattern	• Curvilinear responding to topography
Topography and ridgelines	• Land is undulating to hilly
Dwelling type	• Detached single dwellings
Materials and form	• Brick or render with red or grey tiled roofs • Older dwellings tend to feature warm tones • Newer dwellings are grey or white or warmer tones if replicating older architectural styles
Setbacks	• Buildings are frequently centrally placed
Height	• 1 – 2 storeys, and generally not highly visible from the street, if at all.
Vehicle storage and access	• Garages are generally out of sight or incorporated into the building design • Driveways are long and generally paved
Garden styles	• Informal farmland gardens with large expanses of lawn and pockets of trees and vegetation both native and exotic
Vegetation Cover	• Open woodland of remnant indigenous vegetation including River Red Gums, with pockets of more dense vegetation • Several stands of exotics, usually Pines, provide dense windbreaks
Front fencing	• Usually post and rail or post and wire fencing • Occasional entrance gates to larger properties
Public realm	• Generally informal remnant vegetation and no formal planting • Footpaths and formal nature strips generally absent • Where provided, kerbs and channels are concrete rollover type

KEY THREATS IN BW1

- Removal of remaining indigenous vegetation on public and private land.
- Decreased planting of indigenous or native trees and understorey vegetation and increased use of non-native vegetation.
- Excavation for dwelling sites, driveways or garages, rather than building to follow the topography.
- Formal urban style street works including footpaths, nature strips and formal street planting.
- Fencing other than rural style wire or post and rail.



BW1 PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

Dwellings in the Bush Woodland 1 precinct will contribute to the retention of a rural landscape setting in rolling hills and the Yarra River flood plain with dwellings subordinate to the landscape. Development is designed within the landscape sitting and is well setback from the road. Site layouts provide for generous spacing around dwellings allowing for tree planting and canopy growth. The excavation of sites is minimised and buildings designed to follow the topography of the land. Trees and shrubs are present in the front setback to improve the vegetated setting.

Indigenous and native canopy trees are retained and protected. The planting of indigenous and native trees and plants wherever possible will be prioritised. The scenic and environmental qualities of ridgelines, the informal planting of street trees, and the views of trees on private property from the street are protected and enhanced.

Driveways are softened with curves and vegetation and constructed with permeable surfaces such as gravel or toppings. One single width crossover provides more opportunity for planting in the public and private realms, essential for the informal nature of the setting. The front fences are post and rail or wire fencing or hedges and hedgerows adding to the rural style. The existing informal street treatments including street trees, footpaths and nature strips are retained.

Bush Woodland 1 is in a **minimal** housing change area. There will be limited housing growth as the area is subject to the Rural Conservation Zone. New dwellings will reflect the existing neighbourhood character and be carefully integrated into the character of the area.

BW1 OBJECTIVES

All areas

- To ensure buildings and extensions do not dominate the rolling rural landscape through the use of horizontal building forms that do not project above ridgelines.
- To minimise the visibility of buildings in the landscape through careful siting and utilising natural materials and colours.
- To ensure new development is screened with vegetation.
- To ensure dwellings are setback considerable distances from the road and allow enough space around dwellings for planting.
- To maintain the informal character through rural style fencing such as post and wire, hedges or post and rail and pervious driveways.

City wide

- To ensure that developments on or near ridgelines retain existing trees, sit below the tree canopies, minimise excavation, and enable further tree planting to form a continuous canopy, so that the scenic quality is maintained and enhanced.
- To ensure development adjacent to parks and open spaces provides an active façade to improve safety and engagement with the public realm.
- To ensure development adjoining or adjacent to a heritage place is respectful of the significance, character, scale, setbacks, and form of the heritage place

BUSH WOODLAND 1 DESIGN GUIDELINES

Change Area	Design Response
Building Form and Materials	
All areas	• Design development to reflect the existing building height of up to two storeys. • Design dwellings using horizontal building forms. • Provide well-articulated building forms to reduce building bulk and provide visual interest. • Recess second storey portions of buildings from ground level wall surfaces, incorporate within roof spaces where possible and minimise in height. • Ensure new buildings and extensions are designed to be secondary to the landscape setting. • Use wall and roof materials and finishes of earthy or bushy tones. • Design site services, including utility meters and mailboxes, to be integrated within the design of the development and co-located where possible to minimise their visual impact on the street. • Locate and screen household services, including air conditioning units, hot water systems, rainwater tanks, solar panels, storage sheds and bin storage areas to minimise their visual impact on the street and adjoining properties. • Design and site new buildings at or near ridgelines so that cut and fill is minimised and the building sits below the height of trees along the ridgeline. • Use muted colours and tones, and non-reflective materials in new buildings at or near ridgelines.
Siting and Setbacks	
All areas	• Design buildings and access to follow the contours of the site or step down the site avoiding major excavation works to accommodate dwellings or outbuildings. • Provide generous setbacks to all boundaries and screen with vegetation to obscure views of the development from the street and adjoining properties. • Group all buildings on the site together. • Design and site development on hill faces and upper slopes to sit below the predominant tree canopy and follow the natural topography of the land to minimise the need for cut and fill.

Change Area	Design Response
Landscaping	
All areas	• Site and design buildings to protect existing vegetation and incorporate space for the planting of indigenous and native trees, shrubs and understorey plants. • Retain existing indigenous and native canopy trees, wherever possible. If this cannot be achieved, or a tree is considered appropriate for removal, the site should provide adequate space for offset planting of indigenous or native trees that will grow to a mature height similar to the mature height of the tree to be removed. • Ensure landscaping is an integral part of any new development utilising native and indigenous canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Plant trees in clumps or in an informal open woodland arrangement. • Minimise large areas of lawn within front setbacks by incorporating landscaping that comprises a mix of native or indigenous canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Use curved garden beds within front setbacks to enable better softening of hard surface areas and opportunities for tree planting. • Use appropriate tree species and carefully selected planting locations to avoid canopy or root conflicts with overhead wires, easements and existing trees. • Provide a new street tree if there is no street tree within the frontage of a dwelling. • Retain trees and vegetation in new development at or near ridgelines that contributes to the landscape. New native or indigenous trees should otherwise be planted on or near the ridgeline to form a continuous canopy.
Vehicle Storage and Access	
All areas	• Locate carports, garages, and all uncovered parking spaces behind the line of the dwelling or integrated with the dwelling design. • Provide landscaping such as large shrubs and trees in the front setback to discourage car parking in the front yard. • Provide only one (1) new or existing single width vehicle crossover. • Locate and design any new vehicle crossovers to not affect existing street trees or on street parking, considering the rhythm and spacing of vehicle crossovers along the street. • More than one (1) single width vehicle crossover, or a double width crossover, should only be considered where tree protection and planting is enabled in front setbacks, nature strips provide for street trees, on street parking is protected, pedestrian and traffic safety is maintained, and stormwater and infrastructure are not adversely affected. • Construct driveways using permeable surfaces, such as gravel or toppings, and follow the contours of the site with curves and bends for landscaping at varying heights.

Change Area	Design Response
Front Fences	
All areas	• Construct post and rail or wire front fences or no front fence.
Public Open Space & Heritage	
All areas	• Provide an active façade, including doors, windows or balconies adjacent or adjoining public open space or shared use paths to encourage activation with the public realm. • Encourage the use of low or open style fencing adjoining public open space or shared use paths to allow for passive surveillance and engagement with the public realm.
	Buildings on lots adjoining or adjacent a heritage place should: • Complement the height, scale and setbacks of the heritage building • Not visually dominate the heritage place • Not obscure vistas and view lines to significant buildings