21.13 AREAS OF LOW DENSITY DEVELOPMENT AND AREAS OF LANDSCAPE OR ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE

21.13-1 Overview

Areas of low density development, and areas of landscape and environmental significance have either been fully developed or substantially subdivided. This has resulted in the loss of vegetation and intrusion into the natural landform.

These areas comprise diverse topography, ranging from the rolling hills of Wonga Park, dissected by creeks and drainage lines, to the more undulating landform around Templestowe and Donvale, to the steep slopes dissected by prominent ridgelines and deep gullies of the Warrandyte and Park Orchards area. In many instances these areas have the most environmental constraints, particularly because the land is very steep. These areas are significant in the municipality as they offer an alternative lifestyle choice for people who are seeking a more spacious and attractive environmental setting.

Increasing pressures for intensity of development requires management. Overall design and siting of new buildings and developments, the subdivision pattern and controls over existing vegetation cover will reflect the intrinsic qualities and attributes of these areas. Development should be based on a site responsive approach, and where appropriate, supported by an environmental and land capability analysis.

It is important that the special landscape and environmental qualities of these areas are properly managed to ensure that the distinctive features of these areas are protected and enhanced.

21.13-2 Key issues, objectives, strategies and implementation

The key issues relating to areas of low density development and areas of landscape or environmental significance together with the objectives, strategies and implementation measures are set out below.

Key issue 1

- Environmental and land capability constraints combined with limited potential to increase physical and community infrastructure to support further development.

Objectives

- To recognise that increased densities and residential development in low density residential areas are constrained by land capability, environmental values, physical and community infrastructure.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- Consolidate new housing in urban residential areas in locations that are well serviced by public transport and activity centres.

Implementation

This strategy will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

Zones and overlays

Further strategic work

- Preparing a residential development strategy and identifying implementation opportunities through the planning scheme.

Other actions

Key issue 2

- Ensuring that the environmental significance, visual and landscape character of environmental residential areas including the Warrandyte Township, parts of Templestowe and Donvale/Doncaster East are maintained and enhanced.

Objectives

- To manage the increasing intensity of development in sensitive environmental residential areas.
- To ensure that land is used or developed in a way that is compatible with the character of the area, its landscape qualities, pattern of vegetation and environmental values.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- Recognise and respond to areas with special environmental character and physical constraints to development.
- Retain the predominance of single dwellings on allotments and discourage other forms of inappropriate residential development in environmental residential areas.
- Protect and enhance the bushland setting, low density character, landscape quality and flora and fauna habitat of Warrandyte and parts of Templestowe by requiring sensitive, site responsive development and prohibiting the development of land for more than one dwelling in Warrandyte and the Domain subdivision, Templestowe.
- Protect and enhance the low density character, landscape quality and pine trees of Donvale/Doncaster East by requiring sensitive, site responsive development.
- Ensure that development in urban areas with recognised landscape and environmental values (including the Hillcrest Area in Mitcham and Pine Ridge in Donvale) is designed to minimise the impact on vegetation and protect landscape character and heritage values.
- Minimise and use a site responsive approach to earthworks and preserve and enhance natural drainage lines.
- Ensure that buildings are set back reasonable distances from the property boundary to provide for landscaping.
- Encourage buildings that retain an inconspicuous profile and do not dominate the landscape.
- Encourage a reasonable proportion of a site to be free of buildings and available for tree planting, landscaping and open space.
- Encourage the protection, planting and maintenance of indigenous trees.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Using local policy to ensure high environmental quality and development that is designed and landscaped to minimise the physical and visual impacts of development on the site and surrounds. *(Design and development policy, Clause 22.01)*
- Using local policy to protect and enhance indigenous vegetation and fauna populations. (*Indigenous flora and fauna policy, Clause 22.02)*
- Requiring developments to have a high standard of design that is sensitive and responsive to the area's visual, heritage and environmental values.

Zones and overlays

- Applying the Residential 1 Zone in conjunction with the Design and Development Overlay.
- Applying the Design and Development Overlay in Warrandyte, Templestowe and Donvale/Doncaster East.
- Applying the Environmental Significance Overlay.
- Applying the Significant Landscape Overlay.
- Applying the Vegetation Protection and Significant Landscape Overlays to protect visual and environmental values in areas with recognised vegetation and environmental values, including the Hillcrest Area, Mitcham.
- Applying the Heritage Overlay to protect the heritage values of pine trees at Pine Ridge, Donvale.

Further strategic work

- Preparing a residential development strategy and identifying implementation opportunities through the planning scheme.
- Completing the draft Neighbourhood Character Study (1999), for the environmental residential areas and identifying implementation opportunities through the planning scheme.

Other actions

- Protecting and enhancing the longevity of individual trees, groups of trees or larger planted landscapes, including the use of strategic planting programs using suitable species, where this does not pose a threat of environmental weed invasion.

Key issue 3

- Managing the increasing intensity of development in low density residential areas.

Objectives

- To ensure that the character, landscape or environmental significance of low density areas in Park Orchards, Wonga Park, parts of Templestowe and Donvale is maintained and enhanced.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- Protect, preserve and enhance the Middle Yarra and its environmental and landscape values.
- Protect and enhance the low density character, pattern of vegetation, landscape quality and viewlines in low density residential areas by ensuring that the potential visual and landscape impacts of buildings and works and vegetation removal are able to be assessed.
- Retain the predominance of single dwellings and discourage other forms of inappropriate residential development in low density areas and areas with landscape or environmental significance.
- Discourage the use and development of land for a second dwelling except where a second dwelling is attached by roof, walls and floor.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Requiring the use and development of land for a second dwelling to be attached to the existing dwelling.

Zones and overlays

- Applying the Low Density Residential Zone together with a Significant Landscape Overlay to ensure that the potential impacts of buildings and works and vegetation removal are able to be assessed.
- Applying the Vegetation Protection Overlay.

Further strategic work

Other actions

Key issue 4

- Design and construction of development in areas with topographical constraints and areas of low density development, landscape character, visual and environmental significance.

Objectives

- To achieve developments which are site responsive and which complement the topography and landscape character of an area.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- Ensure subdivision and building design is site responsive.
- Ensure that the implementation of development proposals provide for replanting with indigenous species that complement the area's landscape and environmental qualities.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Requiring a site analysis plan of the site and surrounds showing the existing topographic and visual features and how a proposal responds to environmental and landscape features for all relevant planning proposals.
- Requiring development applications to have regard to the Site Design Guide for Residential Development on Bushland Fringes in the City of Manningham (1995) by minimising vegetation loss, earthworks and by maximising opportunities for solar access.
- Requiring development proposals to clearly demonstrate responsiveness to environmental and landscape features.
- Applying building envelopes as part of subdivision approvals to protect existing indigenous vegetation, viewlines and to minimise the extent of earthworks, and use a Section 173 Agreement to reinforce the on-going nature of such a requirement.
- Requiring development proposals to provide for replanting with indigenous species where appropriate.

Zones and overlays

Further strategic work

Other actions

- Having regard to Solar Access for Lots – Solar Access Guidelines for Designers of Residential Subdivisions (1998) and Guidelines for Building an Energy Efficient Home – A Practical Guide to Building and Renovating (1998) to reduce the demand on non-renewable energy resources and achieve a more ecologically sustainable development.

Key issue 5

- Managing the interface between established urban and low density areas and areas of landscape and environmental significance.

Objectives

- To minimise the impact of use and development of land in the Residential 1 Zone on land in low density residential areas.

Strategies

Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- Identify areas where use of land and development pressures in the Residential 1 Zone alter the character and amenity of land in low density residential areas.

Implementation

This strategy will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

Zones and overlays

Further strategic work

- Conducting a study to identify areas where development pressures in the Residential 1 Zone alter the character and amenity of land in low density residential areas and make recommendations about planning techniques to address the impacts of the pressures.

Other actions