

02.03

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18/11/2022
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STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**02.03-1**

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Settlement**Activity centres**

Banyule has three major activity centres at Greensborough, Heidelberg and Ivanhoe, together with 11 neighbourhood activity centres, as shown on the Strategic Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.

These diverse centres provide important retail, personal, professional and business services to the community, and collectively are important generators of employment and economic activity within the municipality and wider region.

However, the viability and physical appearance of the larger strip shopping centres needs improvement, while the future retail role of many smaller local centres is limited with premises often used for office and service business purposes. Residential use or redevelopment may be appropriate in activity centres where commercial viability cannot readily be influenced.

Council's strategic directions for activity centres are to:

- Direct growth in housing, commercial activity and community facilities to Banyule's major activity centres.
- Support a diversity of activity centres that offer a range of retail, business, entertainment, community and tourist-related goods, services and employment.
- Enhance the layout, local character, function and viability of neighbourhood activity centres, particularly larger strip shopping centres.
- Support the alternative use or redevelopment of activity centres that no longer perform a viable retail or service function, including for residential use.

Greensborough Major Activity Centre

Greensborough Major Activity Centre is located in the heart of the suburb of Greensborough, generally bounded by the railway line to the north-east, Para Road to the north-west, and Henry Street and Warwick Road to the south. It is positioned within the green setting of the Plenty River valley, with a unique topography that allows views over the valley from many locations within the centre.

It is a regional activity centre with a broad range of services, residential uses, transport options and amenities, including:

- A major enclosed shopping centre at Greensborough Plaza.
- A shopping strip along Main Street and Grimshaw Street.
- Commercial development on Flintoff Street.
- Some medium–low density residential properties south of Grimshaw Street.
- Greensborough Railway Station on Para Road.

Council's strategic directions for the Greensborough Major Activity Centre are to:

- Expand and enhance the range of residential, leisure, recreational, retail, health and wellbeing, and commercial opportunities.
- Reinforce the activity centre as the main shopping, business and entertainment centre serving the north-east region of metropolitan Melbourne.

Heidelberg Major Activity Centre

Heidelberg Major Activity Centre is set within an undulating and vegetated urban landscape, with mature trees on ridgelines and in streets. Its core has a convenience shopping role, supplemented by emerging cultural and entertainment opportunities that need to be realised. A number of small- and medium-sized restricted retail premises to the west serve a regional catchment, while a wide range of health care and professional services complement the Austin and Warringal hospitals near the core, and Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital further to the west. Regional office, administrative and community uses are clustered at the eastern end of the centre.

Heidelberg has a rich cultural heritage that is celebrated with a range of entertainment facilities, events and activities based on the artistic traditions of the Heidelberg School. These activities have helped establish a vibrant public realm in the activity centre, where footpath trading, public art, landscaping and well-designed and accessible streets are highly regarded.

A network of civic spaces around Burgundy Street, together with regional parklands and recreational spaces along the Yarra River corridor, need to be better connected to the activity centre and the several well established residential neighbourhoods surrounding the centre's core.

Council's strategic directions for the Heidelberg Major Activity Centre are to:

- Support new development that does not constrain the floor space growth potential envisaged by the *Heidelberg Structure Plan*.
- Encourage development that is complementary to the cultural heritage attributes of the area.
- Identify opportunities for public realm improvements.
- Facilitate an accessible and connected transport network that prioritises pedestrian movement.
- Support change that enhances liveability, sustainability, social activity, the environment and local economic growth.

Ivanhoe Major Activity Centre

Ivanhoe Major Activity Centre is located 9 kilometres north-east of the Melbourne CBD. The area is defined by its distinctive views, historic buildings, prominent trees, topography and the curving, undulating nature of Lower Heidelberg Road and Upper Heidelberg Road. It is home to numerous shops, a flagship town hall in the civic precinct and a skyline of steeples, towers and trees.

More diverse housing choices will enable residents to live closer to the heart of Ivanhoe and support a range of food, retailing, recreation, entertainment and ancillary services to enliven the area and local economy, while respecting its character.

Council's strategic directions for the Ivanhoe Major Activity Centre are to:

- Maintain the activity centre as an economically viable and socially vibrant centre by allowing for future housing and commercial growth, along with a greater range of social, cultural, recreational and entertainment activities and public spaces.
- Encourage development that reflects the local identity of Ivanhoe and respects known heritage qualities.
- Encourage development that responds to the topography of the area, and retains long-range views to the Dandenong Ranges, the Melbourne CBD and the surrounding landscape from the public realm.

02.03-2

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Environmental and landscape values

With the exception of relatively flat land in the Heidelberg West area and the flat alluvial floodplains adjacent to the Yarra and Plenty Rivers, the majority of Banyule's quite strongly dissected topography ranges from gently to steeply undulating.

There are substantial areas of indigenous vegetation, particularly in the east and north-east of the municipality. The established vegetation and remnant habitats of the Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek corridors are significant features of Banyule's environment and landscape.

The vegetation of the southern and western parts of the municipality is now largely characterised by exotic trees and shrubs, although some replanting of indigenous species is now taking place. The municipality includes several sites of state, regional and local botanical, zoological and habitat significance.

Significant Trees, Substantial Trees and other vegetation throughout all neighbourhoods, including activity centres, make a contribution to landscape character, habitat links and biodiversity. They also contribute to greenhouse gas absorption, water sensitive design, and the shading of buildings and spaces to manage the urban heat island effect.

Council's strategic directions for environmental and landscape values are to:

- Minimise the impacts from development, traffic and pollution that threaten Banyule's unique environmental assets.
- Rehabilitate and enhance remnant habitats, particularly of threatened indigenous species.
- Promote the survival of threatened indigenous species by linking areas of natural habitat, consistent with the Natural Environment Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.
- Rehabilitate the natural habitats along the Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek to provide adequate buffers from development.
- Retain and plant Significant Trees, Substantial Trees and other vegetation to protect and enhance Banyule's landscape character, habitat links and biodiversity, contribute to water-sensitive design, and to manage the urban heat island effect.

02.03-3

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Environmental risks and amenity**Bushfire and flood risk**

Fire prevention measures are necessary in some areas of Banyule in the vicinity of the Plenty River Gorge that have a high to very high fire hazard rating. Most of the municipality has a low to moderate fire hazard rating.

Several areas in Banyule are subject to flood risk or have experienced drainage problems that need to be taken into account when planning for future development and redevelopment.

Council's strategic direction for bushfire and flood risk is to:

- Mitigate the impacts of bushfire and flooding on the use and development of land by ensuring these risks are identified and able to be managed.

Non-residential uses in residential areas

Residential character and amenity are key contributors to the quality of life in Banyule, such that threats to residential character and amenity need to be managed. While non-residential uses in residential areas can provide services to the local community, non-residential uses and associated development can also impact on the character and amenity of those areas and undermine the role of activity centres.

It is important that non-residential uses and development are responsive to their residential setting and do not adversely affect the character and amenity of the residential areas in which they are proposed to be located.

Council's strategic directions for non-residential uses in residential areas are to:

- Support non-residential uses that serve the needs of the local community and complement the surrounding area.
- Direct non-residential uses to locations that are convenient to intended users.
- Minimise any adverse effects on the amenity and character of residential areas from non-residential uses and associated development.

02.03-4

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Built environment and heritage

Neighbourhood character

Various parts of Banyule will need to accommodate change due to population growth and the community's evolving housing needs. This requires the development of a preferred neighbourhood character that supports significant change in some parts of the municipality and limited change in other parts.

Poorly designed development, including subdivision, can erode the preferred neighbourhood character and a community's sense of place.

Significant Trees, Substantial Trees and other vegetation make a contribution to the desired future character of residential neighbourhoods, the identity of activity centres and to streetscapes.

Council's strategic directions for neighbourhood character are to:

- Encourage development that contributes to the preferred character of residential neighbourhoods in a manner that supports varying degrees of housing change.
- Retain and plant Significant Trees, Substantial Trees and other vegetation to protect and improve neighbourhood character and streetscapes.

Safer design

Crime and the fear of crime can be reduced by the proper design and use of the built environment. This is especially important when designing for uses and developments in a vulnerable setting, such as along access routes or in locations that are isolated, concealed, or generate a poor public perception of safety.

Council's strategic direction for safer design is to:

- Create an attractive, well maintained built environment that minimises opportunities for crime and inappropriate behaviour to increase actual and perceived personal safety, and to encourage the use of public spaces.

Environmentally sustainable development

Significant environmental benefits can be achieved through the planning process by requiring environmentally sustainable design and construction methods to be incorporated into buildings.

Council's strategic direction for environmentally sustainable development is to:

- Encourage development that delivers more environmentally sustainable design and construction.

Heritage

Heritage places, including buildings and structures, areas or groups of buildings (heritage precincts), archaeological sites, trees, landscapes, and Aboriginal sites, places and objects, require improved understanding and protection.

Banyule has a significant Aboriginal heritage. Aboriginal heritage features include scar trees and archaeological sites, mainly associated with watercourses. The municipality also has a significant post-contact heritage associated with the painters of the Heidelberg School, and architects and urban landscapers including Walter Burley Griffin, Alistair Knox, Edna Walling and Ellis Stones. Specific heritage features include buildings of national, state and local importance, and significant landscapes and precincts that warrant protection.

Conserving Banyule's heritage places can lead to a substantial reduction in building, demolition and new construction waste, and the conservation of embodied energy in the existing building.

Council's strategic directions for heritage are to:

- Conserve and enhance buildings, places and precincts that contribute to Banyule's cultural heritage.
- Support and encourage opportunities to improve the environmental performance of heritage buildings.

02.03-5

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Housing

Housing supply

Banyule has a limited variety of housing types. While most dwellings are separate houses on a lot, the proportion of medium and higher density dwellings is increasing (Census of Population and Housing 2016).

In recent years, most growth has occurred in the number of medium density dwellings (Census of Population and Housing 2016). This indicates a demand for smaller sized homes and a decrease in demand for separate houses. Higher density housing has been constructed in a number of locations across the municipality, with no particular concentrations occurring.

Dwelling densities in Banyule are low, with the lowest densities in the north-east of the municipality. There is also a concentration of large-lot, low density development in the Lower Plenty area in the south-east of the municipality.

Good quality design outcomes are needed to show the benefit of shop-top, townhouse and apartment living lifestyles and mixed use living environments, along with more adaptable housing to meet the needs of all residents, including those with impaired mobility and specific housing needs. Increasing housing diversity and adapting design to meet the needs of the broader community can also help to redress long term social and economic costs.

Council's strategic directions for housing supply are to:

- Direct housing growth to locations in or close to activity centres and the Principal Public Transport Network, and to strategic redevelopment sites, to satisfy housing demand.
- Promote more affordable housing, including in the private rental market, crisis accommodation, student accommodation and public housing, that addresses the needs of those seeking to reside in Banyule.
- Increase the diversity of housing types and the provision of more adaptable housing that meets the special needs of the broader community, including older persons with impaired mobility and those from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Support the use and development of surplus non-residential land for residential purposes where it can contribute to the preferred neighbourhood character of the area and to housing diversity.

Residential Areas Framework

The Residential Areas Framework addresses the issues affecting the municipality as a result of increasing population, and changes to household size and structure, including impacts on neighbourhood character. The ability to protect and enhance valued neighbourhood character across Banyule depends on directing new housing to areas that are able to accommodate greater densities and increased diversity.

The vision for each residential area identified in Table 1 is based on its proximity to shops, services and transport, as well as its walkability, neighbourhood character, and heritage and landscape qualities.

Table 1: Residential Areas Framework

Residential area	Vision
<p>Diversity</p> <p>These areas typically have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Within the business core of an activity centre. ▪ Comprise an urban renewal area, or residential properties along streets that immediately surround the business core of an activity centre. 	<p>Diversity Areas will provide for shop-top and apartment living in higher density mixed use and residential developments. These areas include strategic redevelopment sites that provide for higher density housing.</p> <p>Development will make a positive contribution to the identity of the activity centre and the preferred character of surrounding residential neighbourhoods.</p> <p>In these areas people live close to train stations, transport interchanges, shops, services and nodes of employment. These areas include higher density and some medium density housing opportunities.</p> <p>Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework Diversity Areas</p> <p>Postcode 3081 is renewing. Properties along main roads, along the creekside area at interfaces with parks, and close to the Bell Street Mall Neighbourhood Activity Centre and Olympic Village, are well located to support increased density on consolidated lots.</p>
<p>Accessible</p> <p>These areas typically have the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Within convenient walking distance to the business core of an activity centre. ▪ Within convenient walking distance to the highest priority sections of the Principal Public Transport Network, where higher frequency and quality of public transport services are in operation. 	<p>Accessible Areas will provide townhouse and other medium density living and some dispersed single dwellings. Some opportunities for higher density housing will also exist. These areas include strategic redevelopment sites that provide for medium density and a higher density housing component.</p> <p>Development must make a positive contribution to the preferred neighbourhood character, including opportunities for tree protection and planting.</p> <p>These areas also include:</p> <p>Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework Hinterland Area</p> <p>The Postcode 3081 Hinterland Area will provide well designed redevelopment opportunities for medium density dwellings within a treed landscape setting. Public housing sites will provide well designed redevelopment opportunities. A preferred neighbourhood character will support development opportunities at Bell Street Mall Neighbourhood Activity Centre, public housing sites and larger properties.</p>

Residential area	Vision
	<p>East of the Plenty River (around the business core of neighbourhood activity centres)</p> <p>The residential area east of the Plenty River will continue to be characterised by tall trees, undulating landscapes and two-storey dwellings that sit below the tree canopy. Townhouse and unit development will protect and enhance the vegetated character of the area.</p>
<p>Incremental</p> <p>These areas are typically located further away from activity centres and the Principal Public Transport Network, where there is less convenient pedestrian access.</p>	<p>Incremental Areas will provide for well designed single and medium density dwellings. As an exception, there will be limited opportunities for higher density housing at well located, large strategic redevelopment sites only. Typical attributes of a strategic redevelopment site in this area are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fronting an arterial road that forms part of the Principal Public Transport Network. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within 5-minute walking distance (approximately 400 metres) to a supermarket. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Within 5-minute walking distance (approximately 400 metres) of a regional employment or education facility, such as a large public hospital, technology park, university or TAFE. ■ Large enough to make a significant contribution to a diversity of housing types in the area and space for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Buildings and open spaces that provide a transition between abutting dwellings and any taller on-site building component. – Landscaping, including the planting of substantial trees, at streetscapes, boundaries and between buildings. <p>Development must make a positive contribution to the preferred neighbourhood character, including opportunities for tree protection and planting.</p>
<p>Limited Incremental</p> <p>These areas are located east of the Plenty River. They are characterised by tall trees, undulating topography and two-storey dwellings that sit below the tree canopy.</p>	<p>Limited Incremental Areas will provide for sensitively designed single dwellings and some dispersed medium density dwellings that respect the valued attributes of the existing neighbourhood character, with an emphasis on protecting trees and creating new opportunities for vegetation.</p>
<p>Limited</p> <p>These areas typically have one of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Heritage attributes, including subdivisions that have recognised heritage significance. 	<p>Limited Areas will support single dwellings with some limited opportunity for medium density housing, if designed to respect and be sensitive to the valued attributes of the existing neighbourhood character.</p>

Residential area	Vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental attributes, such as significant landscapes, significant vegetation or higher flood risk. ▪ Distinctive neighbourhood character attributes for single dwellings. In these locations land may be affected by single dwelling covenants or other legal agreements that limit additional dwellings. 	
<p>Low Density Residential</p> <p>These areas are found in the Low Density Residential Zone.</p>	<p>Low Density Residential Areas will provide well dispersed housing that contributes to the diversity of the housing stock in Banyule, and continue to contribute to the aesthetic and environmental attributes of the Yarra River corridor.</p>

Council’s strategic direction for the Residential Areas Framework is to:

- Support residential development in accordance with the Residential Areas Framework described in Table 1 and shown on Plan 3 in Clause 02.04 and the Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework Plan in Clause 15.01-1-5L that identify varying degrees of housing change across the municipality’s residential neighbourhoods, strategic redevelopment sites and activity centres.

Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework

The Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework includes the suburbs of Heidelberg West, Heidelberg Heights and Bellfield, and extends to the Darebin Creek to the west. It forms part of the Latrobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster, where housing renewal and improved diversity is needed to support expanded job opportunities and employment growth.

Council’s strategic direction for the Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework is to:

- Facilitate the urban renewal of the area by encouraging innovative and affordable medium and high density housing, including cohousing, that results in a socially cohesive community and attractive, treed streetscapes.

Respond sensitively to existing and surrounding neighbourhood character.

02.03-6
Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Economic development

Employment

Compared to the Greater Melbourne region, Banyule has a higher percentage of persons employed as professionals, and a smaller percentage of persons employed as machinery operators and labourers (Census of Population and Housing 2016).

Most jobs are filled locally, while the remainder are filled by residents from neighbouring municipalities and from the northern and north-western suburbs (Census of Population and Housing 2016). Most of the workforce is employed within Banyule, the City of Melbourne and surrounding north-eastern municipalities (Census of Population and Housing 2016). Unemployment rates vary across the municipality, being generally lower in the east and north and higher in the west (Census of Population and Housing 2016).

The emerging La Trobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster straddles Banyule and the City of Darebin, incorporating La Trobe University, the Heidelberg West Industrial Area and the Heidelberg Major Activity Centre.

Council’s strategic direction for employment is to:

- Enhance the existing role of activity centres in the municipality and facilitate the emerging role of the Latrobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster, supporting their growth as economic and employment hubs.

Industrial development

Banyule has three major industrial precincts:

- Heidelberg West Industrial Area (forms part of the La Trobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster).
- Para Road Industrial Area (Greensborough/Briar Hill).
- Grimshaw Street Industrial Area (Bundoora).

The three precincts are also important generators of employment and economic activity within the municipality and the wider region.

Changes in employment patterns are affecting land use and development planning. The decline in manufacturing employment needs to be offset by growth in other industrial sectors.

Banyule's industrial areas face various challenges, with some areas experiencing traffic and parking problems, not relating well to nearby residential areas, or being visually unattractive, while other areas are supporting a broader business mix.

The environmental impacts of the Heidelberg West and Para Road Industrial Areas on the Darebin Creek and Plenty River, respectively, are of concern.

Council's strategic directions for industrial development are to:

- Support a diversity of industrial use and development that maximises employment opportunities.
- Restrict industry from detrimentally affecting the amenity and environment of the municipality, particularly the environs of the Plenty River and Darebin Creek.

Tourist facilities

Banyule's natural, built form and environmental qualities make it an attractive tourist destination. However, some of the infrastructure needed to attract and support tourist activity, in particular accommodation, convention and meeting facilities, is relatively undeveloped.

Council's strategic direction for tourist facilities is to:

- Support a range of infrastructure and facilities to encourage tourism activity and optimise access to tourist facilities.

02.03-7

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Transport

As a middle suburban municipality, many of Banyule's roads perform a regional function, including linking nearby residential areas in the North Growth Corridor with inner suburban places of employment, the airport, and the industrial areas of south-east Melbourne. However, with residents having a high dependency on private vehicles, many of these arterial roads are congested. Expected population growth will increase travel demand and freight movements within and across the Banyule road network, with consequent adverse amenity and environmental effects.

Banyule's established transport infrastructure continues to age, such that the maintenance and renewal of this infrastructure must be a central consideration when planning for development and redevelopment.

Banyule is serviced by nine railway stations along the Hurstbridge railway line, the Plenty Road tram route, orbital SmartBus routes and other bus routes. While many of these contribute to the Principal Public Transport Network, there are differences in the frequency and quality of the services, with equitable access to public transport across the municipality also an issue.

BANYULE PLANNING SCHEME

Banyule's ageing population will result in a growing number of residents relying on non-car travel modes to maintain their mobility and social well-being.

Council's strategic directions for transport are to:

- Reduce residents' reliance on private vehicle transport by facilitating a safe, efficient and effective integrated transport network that caters for all abilities.
- Support land use and development that will facilitate sustainable modes of transport and reduce the distances residents need to travel.
- Reduce the detrimental effects of transport on amenity and the natural environment.

02.03-8

Historic
18/11/2022
C162bany

Infrastructure

Community facilities

Banyule has a wide range of community services and facilities. These include educational, health and leisure facilities, and facilities for specific groups, such as the aged and people with disabilities.

The Austin and Mercy Hospitals, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and Warringal Private Hospital form the basis of a large and diverse health sector that provides services and employment to the Banyule community. Given Banyule's projected demographic profile, there is likely to be increased demand for aged and medical services in the years ahead.

The Austin Hospital has undergone redevelopment that has impacted on the amenity of the area, especially relating to parking and associated uses.

Council's strategic directions for community facilities are to:

- Support a wide range of cultural, health, educational and institutional uses that are responsive to the existing and likely future needs of the community.
- Minimise any negative impacts of cultural, health, educational and institutional facilities on the amenity of the surrounding area.

Open space and recreation

The waterway systems within Banyule provide significant areas of public open space that are used for active and passive recreation, and to protect the natural environment. The areas along the Yarra and Plenty Rivers and Darebin Creek are particularly important, forming part of a larger regional network of open space and recreational opportunities. Banyule also boasts other significant parks and reserves not directly related to the waterways.

Council's strategic direction for open space and recreation is to:

- Provide recreational and leisure facilities that meet the community's needs and expectations, without causing detriment to the natural environment.