

21.06 HOUSING

08-12-
/2011-2012
C444C108

21.06-1 Overview

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/02/2012
C432108

There are three issues to address in a strategic sense with respect to housing. The first is an appropriate and sustainable distribution of housing in the municipality to meet the needs of future residents. The second is the degree to which new development should respond to the character of existing residential areas. The third issue is the compatibility of residential and non-residential uses and how the interface between the two is managed.

A Housing Study has been prepared to ensure that future housing stock is able to respond positively to the population and social trends that will shape the future housing needs within the City. The Housing Study, February 2003 is a reference document for the Planning Scheme. Additional dwellings are desirable in Whitehorse City to provide housing choice to meet changing housing needs and to enable the City to contribute to reducing Melbourne's outward growth. The diverse character of the municipality and the highly sensitive local environments dictate that not all areas can accommodate change. The Housing Strategy identified three categories of change in the municipality being:

- Minimal change
- Natural change
- Substantial change

Areas of minimal change are those areas which have recognised heritage, environmental and landscape significance. For instance the Blackburn residential area is constantly subjected to strong development pressures. There is an ongoing need to ensure the environmental quality of this area is preserved and enhanced through sensitive redevelopment. The density of development in that part of Terrara Road that has environmental and infrastructure constraints needs to be maintained at low levels. The southern end of Glenburnie Road has been identified as an area of significance. Part of the Walker Estate, Yarran Dheran, Collina Dell, Somers Trail, Menin Road and Vermont areas also fit into this category. The areas of substantial change and the strategic redevelopment sites are anticipated to accommodate in the order of 40 percent of the additional dwelling stock, subject to the completion of detailed Structure Plans. The remainder is anticipated to be evenly distributed throughout the municipality, in the form of modest infill development. New development in substantial change areas and strategic redevelopment sites should consider the provision of affordable housing, and ensure that the housing design contributes to safer communities.

Areas of substantial change have been identified in the Housing Study and such areas are nominated as being capable of accommodating increased residential densities. In addition there are a number of identified "strategic redevelopment sites" nominated plus opportunities within the Box Hill Central Activities District and other mixed use precincts around existing commercial nodes. The Box Hill Central Activities District will be especially important to meet the emerging needs of smaller households near transport, commercial and community facilities. The use of structure plans and provision of suitable transport and other infrastructure to provide for appropriate development in the activity centres is addressed at Clause 21.07 Economic Development and at Clause 21.08 Infrastructure. All other residential areas in the City are nominated as areas of natural change where more modest change is likely to occur.

A Neighbourhood Character Study has also been prepared for Council which is to be included as a Reference document in the Planning Scheme. This report found that "vegetation character is generally the most significant determinant of neighbourhood character" in the City. Upper canopy trees are an integral part of the character of many residential areas, ranging from the exotic trees that dominate areas such as Mont Albert and Box Hill North, to the native vegetation that characterises many areas of Blackburn, Mitcham and Vermont. Tree preservation and regeneration is therefore of vital

importance if the character of residential areas is to be maintained and enhanced. Council agrees with the concern within the community that poorly designed residential development is eroding the character and quality of some residential areas. Based on the Neighbourhood Character Study, the Residential Development Policy at Clause 22.03 identifies the three categories of change, Minimal, Substantial and Natural and within these areas identifies neighbourhood character precincts as follows:

- Garden Suburban Area.
- Bush Suburban Area.
- Bush Environment.
- The policy also identifies large strategic sites.

Council will use these three areas of change and the identified character areas to supplement 'ResCode' to encourage high quality development design that is responsive to the site constraints and opportunities whilst making a positive contribution to neighbourhood character.

Finally, there is intermittent pressure for non-residential uses in residential areas such as clubs, hotels, medical facilities, churches, child care facilities and student accommodation facilities. It is essential that these activities and any new buildings associated with ~~these uses~~ them are designed in a way that integrates these uses and their built form into their residential environments and that there is no detriment to the community or the surrounding residential amenity. Conversely, it is essential that residential activity in non-residential areas be mindful of a lower expectation of amenity protection than in a residential area.

Council's **Housing Strategy** is based on the principle that future higher density residential growth is to be directed at those areas, including within activity centres, which are best able to sustain substantial change; and that all other growth is to be determined by appropriate design responses to the prevailing neighbourhood and environmental characteristics and constraints.

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17/08/2006
C50 (Part 1)

Key issues

- Housing needs.
- Housing density.
- Location of higher density housing.
- Neighbourhood character.
- Non-residential uses.

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Objectives

- To maintain and enhance the character of the City's residential areas and ensure that non-residential uses are appropriately managed.
- To provide for a wide range of housing types to meet the changing needs of the population.
- To ensure that higher density housing is directed to specific areas, including activity centres, with excellent public transport and shopping access and is integrated with existing residential areas in a form consistent with the character of neighbourhoods.

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24/02/
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Strategies

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- Identifying housing areas suitable for substantial, natural and minimal change.

- Encouraging higher density housing development in identified areas, including activity centres, transport nodes and a range of commercial and community facilities.
- Undertaking structure plans to provide appropriate frameworks for the development of the Central Activities District and Major Activity Centres.
- Identifying areas of special character as being of minimal change to ensure that appropriate controls are in place to protect and enhance them.
- Ensuring that residential development provides adequate open space relative to the size of the dwellings and the types of households that are likely to occupy them.
- Require adequate areas of open space to provide for planting of upper canopy trees.
- Identifying areas where tree protection is essential to retain the character of the area.
- Facilitating appropriate non-residential uses in residential areas subject to reasonable community impact and amenity safeguards.
- Ensuring that residential uses in non-residential areas do not jeopardise the conduct of existing operations.

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Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Zones and overlays

- Applying the Residential 2 Zone, Comprehensive Development Zone or Priority Development Zone, as appropriate to substantial change areas and strategic redevelopment sites.
- Applying the Residential 1 Zone to all other residential areas.
- Applying the Mixed Use Zone to those shopping centres requiring renewal.
- Applying a, Significant Landscape Overlay or Neighbourhood Character Overlay to the significant areas, which can only support minimal change and to nominated large sites.
- Applying an Environmental Significance Overlay to land at 131-173 Central Road, Nunawading.
- Applying an Environmental Significance Overlay to land at 15 Virgillia Street, Blackburn North
- Applying a Heritage Overlay to buildings, structures and natural features of historical significance.

Policy and the exercise of discretion

- Ensuring that all development applications comply with the Residential Development Policy at Clause 22.03.
- Ensure all applications in the natural change areas are assessed in accordance with the Residential Development Policy at Clause 22.03.
- Ensuring that all non residential use and development applications within a residential zone comply with the Non-Residential Uses in Residential Areas Policy at Clause 22.05.
- Ensuring that all new applications for gaming machines or gaming venues comply with the Gaming Policy at Clause 22.18.

- Requiring that landscape buffers between commercial parking areas and abutting residential properties be of suitable size and dimensions to provide for a range of screening vegetation and upper canopy trees.
- Use local planning policy to manage student accommodation in accordance with the Student Accommodation Policy at Clause 22.16.

21.06-6 Reference documents

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Housing Study – City of Whitehorse – Feb, 2003

Whitehorse Neighbourhood Character Study 2002/2003

Blackburn Lake Surrounds Study, 2002

Guidelines for Areas of Special Significance and Beauty.

Box Hill Transit City Activity Centre Structure Plan June 2007

KLM City Of Whitehorse, Neighbourhood Character Study Review Of Areas 14 and 16 February 2004

Walker Estate Special Character Area Urban Character Study, May 1999

Review of Neighbourhood Character Implementation Recommendations, Part 2 Review Areas, July 2004

131 Central Road, Nunawading: Vegetation Assessment by Stephen Mueck, Biosis (November 2007)

Flora, fauna and habitat hectare assessment of 15 Virgillia Street Blackburn North Victoria, Biosis Research, April 2008

Burwood Heights Activity Centre Structure Plan, June 2006

Review of Three Precincts in Character Areas 16 & 18, May 2008

Burwood Village Neighbourhood Activity Framework Plan, May 2008

City of Whitehorse Responsible Gambling Policy, 2011