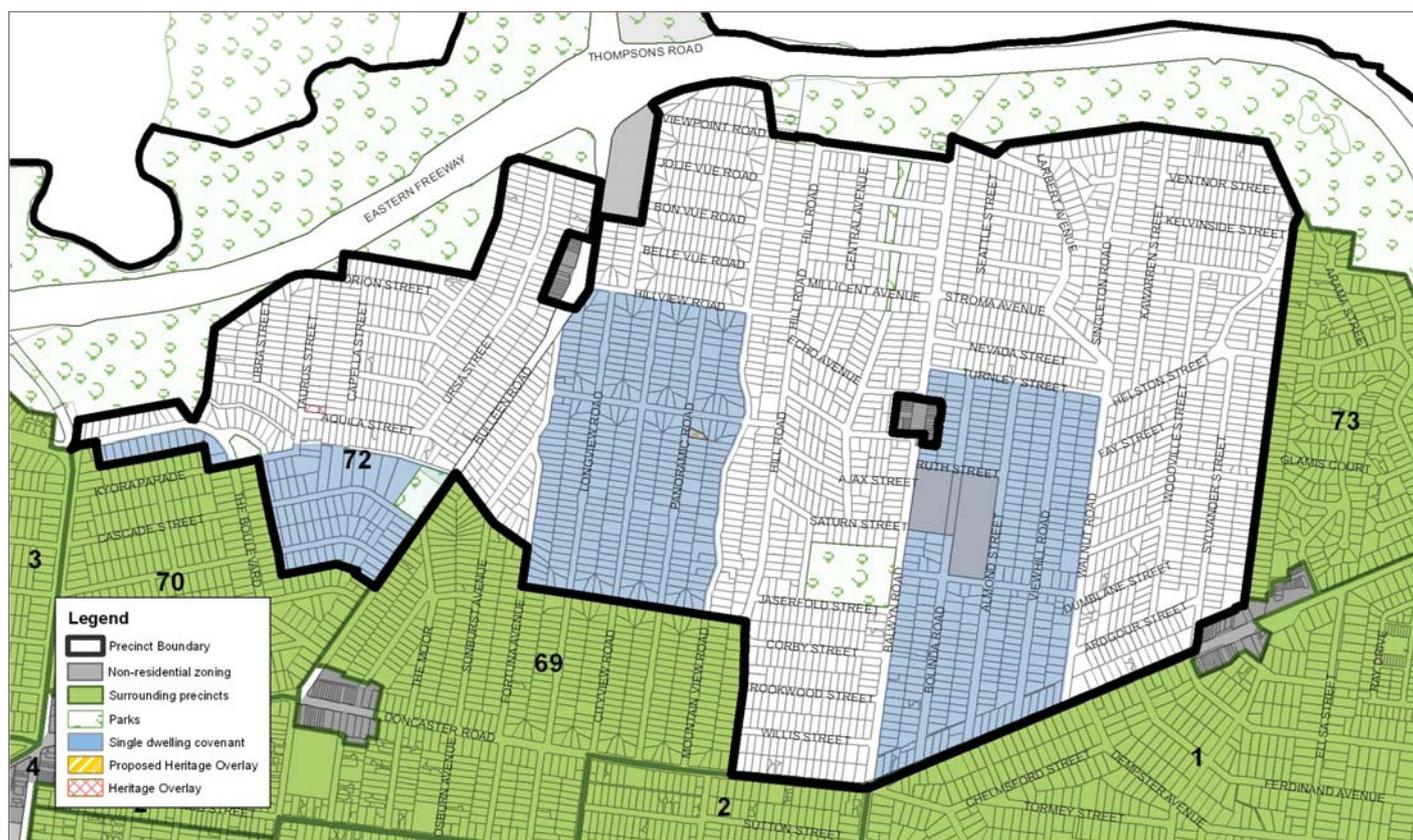


# Precinct Statement

Adopted 24 September 2012, updated October 2013



## DESCRIPTION

Precinct 72 is a large precinct located in North Balwyn on hilly topography. There are a number of large parks and recreational areas within and adjoining the precinct, including Leigh and Cascade Parks, and Koonung Creek Reserve to the north.

The precinct generally developed from south to north during the late interwar and post-war eras through to the 1960s and 70s. The character of the area is now slowly transforming as the precinct's older building stock is replaced with new dwellings. A large proportion of the precinct is covered by single dwelling covenants.

Most dwellings are one or two storeys, often on split levels due to the topography of the area. The dominant building material is face and rendered brick, with many of the newer houses exhibiting period reproduction detailing. Modernist houses with flat roofs are scattered throughout.

The precinct has a detached character, however some garages and side walls are set on the boundary. The dominant front setbacks are approximately 9m. Front gardens are medium to large in size and are generally well vegetated.

Car parking structures are generally visible from the street with garages often integrated within the design of dwellings. Lot frontages are generally wide, at up to 20m.

Most front fences are of a low to medium height, with the exception of higher fences along highly trafficked roads.

The street trees present a mix of evergreen and deciduous and, in some areas, they are numerous in number. Rear gardens are generally spacious and contain a mix of shrubs and canopy trees.

The regular subdivision pattern, generous rear gardens, consistent wide streets, lot frontages and front setbacks and the area's detached, single dwelling character creates a spacious, suburban feel.

# Design Guidelines

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Mixture of housing from the post war era to now;
- Detached, 1 and 2 storey dwellings;
- Wide lot frontages;
- Undulating topography;
- Large front setbacks;
- Generous, well vegetated front gardens;
- Low to medium front fence heights;
- Large rear gardens;
- Increasing presence of new houses;
- Increasing presence of period reproduction design; and
- Pitched roofs.

## PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

To enhance the consistency and character of streetscapes. To maintain the spacious, 1 and 2 storey suburban feel of the area and the garden setting of dwellings.

This will be achieved by:

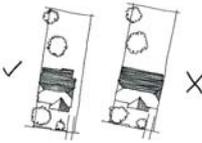
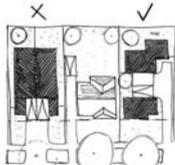
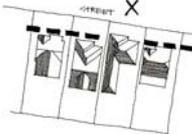
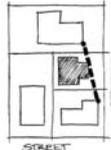
- Encouraging the retention of large trees and landscaped gardens;
- Ensuring sufficient space is retained in front and rear gardens to accommodate large trees;
- Ensuring buildings are sufficiently setback from front and side boundaries to retain the existing open, garden character and detached streetscape rhythm;
- Giving preference to units set one behind the other as opposed to side by side, attached townhouses;
- Ensuring townhouse and attached development are of a high quality and respect the prevailing detached character of the streetscape;
- Ensuring new developments and additions respect the predominant buildings scale and forms of the streetscape;
- Encourage site responsive design and development that follows the contour of the land
- Ensuring car parking structures do not dominate the streetscape;
- Maximising soft landscaping and minimising areas of hard surfaces; and
- Encouraging low or open style front fences.

## THREATS/ISSUES

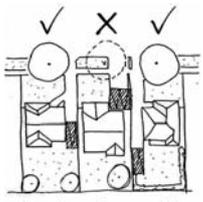
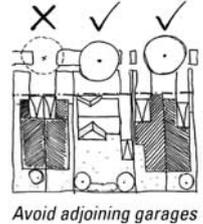
- Boundary to boundary development;
- Buildings that appear bulky and 'box' like;
- Two or three storey developments that dominate the street;
- Lack of soft landscaping / vegetation;
- High front fences that disrupt the rhythm of the street;
- Removal / loss of large trees;
- Period reproduction building design where this is not characteristic;
- Lack of garden space for plantings;
- Wide garages that dominate the façade of dwellings and car parking structures in front setbacks that obscure views of the dwelling behind; and
- Medium and high density development that disrupts the rhythm of the streetscape.

# Design Guidelines

## TABLE OF ELEMENTS

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID	ILLUSTRATION
VEGETATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain and enhance the landscaped setting of dwellings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure front gardens incorporate soft landscaping that complements the streetscape.</li> <li>Ensure the retention of large trees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of large trees.</li> <li>Front gardens dominated by hard surfaces.</li> <li>Loss of front gardens.</li> </ul>	 <p><i>Encourage landscaped gardens</i></p>
SITING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain and enhance the existing streetscape rhythm and sense of spaciousness.</li> <li>To maintain the existing spacious backyard character and enhance the area's leafy feel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure buildings are setback no less than the average distance of the front setback of adjoining properties on either side or 9m, whichever is less.</li> <li>Ensure buildings are setback from at least one side boundary in accordance with the prevailing streetscape spacing.</li> <li>Ensure buildings are sufficiently setback from rear boundaries to maintain the open, backyard character of the immediate area where this exists</li> <li>Provide a secluded private open space with a minimum dimension of 4 metres to enable the planting and retention of large trees.</li> <li>Give preference to units set one behind the other as opposed to side by side town houses.</li> <li>Ensure new development on a corner site is adequately setback to provide a transition between the adjoining buildings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dwellings set too far forward.</li> <li>Boundary to boundary development.</li> <li>Dwellings built too close to their rear boundary with other residential properties.</li> </ul>	 <p><i>Side setbacks</i></p>  <p><i>Siting of units</i></p>  <p><i>Front setbacks</i></p>  <p><i>Siting on corner sites</i></p>
BUILDING MATERIALS AND DESIGN DETAILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure building materials complement the character of the streetscape.</li> <li>To enhance façade articulation and visual interest.</li> <li>To minimise period reproduction design.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use building materials that integrate with the streetscape character.</li> <li>Ensure use of contemporary design in preference to period reproduction styles.</li> <li>Break buildings into separate elements and use eaves, overhangs and other design details to articulate the façade.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bland design such as sheer or plain rendered facades.</li> <li>Period reproduction design where not characteristic of the streetscape.</li> </ul>	 <p><i>Avoid bland design</i></p>

# Design Guidelines

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID	ILLUSTRATION
BUILDING HEIGHT AND FORM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain the existing one and two storey scale and pitched roof character of the precinct.</li> <li>To ensure buildings do not dominate the streetscape or disrupt the existing streetscape rhythm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure buildings are composed of facades that are no more than two storeys high to the street.</li> <li>Ensure buildings incorporate roof forms that integrate with the pitched roofs in the street.</li> <li>Ensure development follows the contours of the land and steps down in accordance with the slope of the site.</li> <li>Ensure attached side by side development is designed to read as one dwelling within the streetscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three storey facades to the street.</li> <li>Flat or curved roofs.</li> <li>Large bulky buildings or extensions that dominate the streetscape.</li> <li>Symmetrical presentation of side by side townhouses.</li> </ul>	   
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain the predominant low front fence heights.</li> <li>To maintain views of front gardens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure front fences are no more than 1.5m or the average fence height of the four properties on either side (whichever is less).</li> <li>Front fences along declared main roads (RD1Z) may be up to 2m in height where this is consistent with the prevailing fence height on the neighbouring properties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High solid front fences.</li> </ul>	 
CAR PARKING STRUCTURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To minimise the loss of front gardens and the dominance of car parking structures.</li> <li>To ensure basement garages do not increase the visual bulk of buildings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure car parking structures, including entrances to basements, are setback at least 1m behind the dwelling facade and are designed to minimise their prominence.</li> <li>Ensure basements project no more than 0.5m above natural ground level, unless the finished floor level of abutting properties is greater than 0.5m.</li> <li>Where possible, locate the entry to basement garages to the side or rear of dwellings so they are not visible from the street.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Driveways and car parking structures that dominate front setbacks or obscure views of the dwelling.</li> <li>Wide garages and carports that dominate the front facade.</li> <li>Adjoining garage doors facing the street in side-by-side townhouses.</li> <li>Basement ramps that commence at the street frontage.</li> <li>Basement garages that result in buildings with a 2.5 to 3 storey appearance from the street.</li> <li>Driveways, basements and ramps that cover the extent of the site.</li> </ul>	  

# General Information

## ABOUT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STUDY

This Precinct Statement was completed in 2012. The methodology involved a review of the Residential Urban Character Study from 1996 as well as substantial community consultation and fieldwork. As a result of this review the City's residential areas have been divided into 75 precincts.

The common characteristics of each area in terms of building scale, setbacks, building style and form and the area's landscape character were taken into account when determining the boundaries of each precinct.

The resulting Neighbourhood Precinct Character Statements describe the existing character of each precinct as well as the precinct's preferred future character.

Those characteristics most valued by the community were reflected in the preferred character statements. The accompanying design guidelines table provides direction for new buildings which ensure future development assists in achieving the area's preferred character.

The Boroondara Neighbourhood Character Study is based on an analysis of existing neighbourhood character and does not take into account other planning policy objectives such as housing capacity, access to services and sustainability.

## HOW THE PRECINCT STATEMENTS WILL BE USED

The Precinct Statements will be used when assessing planning permit applications in residential zones. In instances where no planning permit is required (e.g. for single dwellings on lots over 500m<sup>2</sup>), the Precinct Statements will be used when assessing report and consent applications to vary the siting requirements of the Building Regulations.

New development proposals will be assessed against the directions contained in the "objective", "design response" and "avoid" columns in the design guidelines Table of Elements. Proposals will need to demonstrate how they meet the objectives in the table if they do not meet the relevant "design response" or "avoid" criteria.

With the exception of the guidelines relating to rear garden character, the view from the street will be used to assess consistency with the design guidelines. Existing development that does not comply with the design guidelines should not be used as a precedent when designing new buildings or building extensions.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

The Precinct Statements will be used in conjunction with other policies and guidelines in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

Where a conflict occurs between the Precinct Statements and an existing Design and Development Overlay or Council's Heritage

Policy, the provisions of the Design and Development Overlay or Council's Heritage Policy will take precedence.

# Glossary

## CHARACTER ELEMENTS IN DESIGN GUIDELINES TABLE OF ELEMENTS

- **Building Height and Form** – refers to building height (as measured from natural ground level), roof form and the massing of building elements.
- **Building Materials and Design Details** – refers to external building materials, façade articulation and design elements such as verandahs, awnings, window configurations and eaves.
- **Car Parking Structures** – refers to the presence and location of on-site car parking structures such as garages, carports, driveways and uncovered car spaces.
- **Front Boundary Treatment** – refers to the presence, height and style of front fences.
- **Lot Frontage** – refers to the width of lots.
- **Siting** – refers to front setbacks, side setbacks and the area's rear garden character.
- **Vegetation** – refers to the trees and landscaping on the site.

## GENERAL TERMS

- **'Box'-like** – refers to a building with proportions and detailing that give the building a box-like appearance. Typical characteristics include sheer two storey walls, no or narrow eaves, a symmetrical, un-articulated front facade and a low pitched or flat roof form with parapet detailing.
- **Historic Buildings** – refers to early buildings that date from the establishment of the area or that are important to the area's history.
- **Heritage Buildings** – refers to historic buildings that are subject to statutory protection through a Heritage Overlay or the Victorian Heritage Register.
- **Period Reproduction Design** – refers to design that incorporates mock heritage detailing such as Mock-Georgian and Mock-French Provincial elements.
- **Front Setback** – The distance between the front property boundary and the dwelling, categorised as:
  - **Small:** 0 to 5 metres
  - **Medium:** 5 to 9 metres
  - **Large:** 9+ metres
- **Front Fence Height:**
  - **Low:** 0.5 to 1.2m high
  - **Medium:** 1.2m - 1.5m high
  - **High:** over 1.5m high
- **Roof Forms:**
  - **Flat** – refers to a roof with a gradient of 10 degrees or less.
  - **Pitched** – refers to a roof with two slopes that meet at a central ridge.
- **Multi-Unit Dwellings:**
  - **Flats / Apartment Buildings** – refers to several dwellings contained in a multi-storey structure.
  - **Town Houses** – refers to dwellings of 2 or more storeys that have their own entrance and private yard, but which adjoin another dwelling.
  - **Villas** – refers to groups of dwellings which have their own entrance and private yard, which may or may not adjoin another dwelling, but which generally share common areas such as driveways and car parking.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

**Understanding Planning Terms Information Sheet**, City of Boroondara, (search for this title at <http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au>).

**What house is that? A Guide to Victoria's Housing Styles**, Heritage Victoria, (search for this title at <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/heritage>).

**ResCode provisions**, Clause 54 and 55 of the Boroondara Planning Scheme at <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/boroondara/home.html>.