

NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA 10 WICKLOW RIDGELINE

Vision for the character of Maroondah

Maroondah provides a living environment enjoyed for its variety of housing types and its strong landscape setting of heavily vegetated hills, vales and ridgelines. The residential areas contribute to this setting through public reserves, private gardens and trees, which envelop the City in a 'green blanket'.

The Wicklow Ridgeline Neighbourhood Area is a bushy hilltop neighbourhood overlooking Croydon. This elevated neighbourhood forms a significant backdrop to views from Mount Dandenong Road, Maroondah Highway and central Croydon and its treed canopy is visible from many other parts of the municipality. It is a central part of the established core residential area of Maroondah dominated by Post War era architectural styles and established gardens and trees.

Community values

The community of Wicklow Ridgeline Neighbourhood Area values:

- trees and bird life;
- large blocks, open spaces and non-urban feel;
- convenience to facilities (public transport, shops, schools, parks, sporting facilities);
- mixture of native and deciduous trees; and
- interesting mixture of architectural styles within streetscapes.

The community of Wicklow Ridgeline Neighbourhood Area aspires to:

- ensure lots are not visually dominated by housing;
- encourage new developments to be sensitive to established character;
- protect the wooded ridgeline character; and
- avoid visual pollution by powerlines and advertising signage.

Existing character elements

- Undulating to hilly topography, which forms part of the main ridge through Maroondah, with good views to the Dandenong Ranges from the elevated areas.
- Architectural style is predominantly Post War era, 1950s and 1960s, with smaller pockets of 1970s, 1980s and 1990s dwellings and houses dating back to late 1920s in and around Alto Avenue.
- Dwellings are generally single storey in the flatter parts and split-level in the hilly areas.
- Materials include a mix of weatherboard and brick veneer, with some small areas of only weatherboard and brick. All roofing is tiled.
- Lot sizes are medium to large ranging from around 700m² – 2000m².
- Front setbacks vary from average, at around 6m - 7m and large, at around 8m - 12m on the generous lots. Side

setbacks generally accord with front setbacks being small to average from both side boundaries and average from both side boundaries on the generous lots.

- Gardens are established and mixed species with both native and exotic canopy species, shrubs and lawns.
- Frontages are often open or with low wire fences in the north east while low fences are found in the south west end of the area. Vegetative screening is common in the hillier and more established parts.
- Street layout is regular with upstanding curbs, nature strips and footpaths.
- Street trees are a mix of natives and exotics of varying age and spacing. Some native remnants occur. Both remnant and exotic trees visually dominate many streets.

Preferred future character

The Wicklow Ridgeline Neighbourhood Area will continue to be characterised by low scale building forms and pockets of older timber homes. These will be set in established gardens with an extensive tree canopy cover and established street trees. Buildings in elevated and visible areas of the neighbourhood will remain largely screened by vegetation and the sense of informality, intimacy and enclosure in many streets will remain through the protection of large trees and informal road verges and absent or unobtrusive front fencing.

The preferred future character will be achieved by:

- encouraging complementary building forms in the older pockets of the neighbourhood, which are derived from the existing housing stock;
- maintaining the current setback patterns, allowing space to sustain vegetation;
- ensuring new developments, particularly on hill faces and upper slopes, are not highly visible from a distance and maintain a vegetation-dominated backdrop when viewed from within and outside the neighbourhood;
- ensuring development on steep slopes is designed with the topography, avoiding excessive excavation and removal of vegetation;
- ensuring the retention of existing vegetation, particularly canopy trees;
- ensuring the front setbacks are not dominated by car parking structures; and
- encouraging low front fences, open frontages or vegetation at the front boundary.

Design guidelines

Objective	Design Response	Avoid
To encourage complementary building forms in the older pockets of the neighbourhood, which are derived from the existing housing stock.	<p>Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties.</p> <p>Use low scale building forms, tucked into the landscape.</p> <p>Consider the incorporation of timber and other non-masonry materials that complement the predominant use of timber in the area.</p>	<p>Buildings that exceed by more than one storey the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties.</p> <p>Vertically dominant, highly visible buildings.</p> <p>Exclusive use of 'heavy' materials and design detailing in older, exclusively weatherboard pockets.</p>
To maintain the current setback patterns, allowing space to sustain vegetation.	<p>The front setback should be no less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.</p> <p>Dwellings should be set back from both side boundaries.</p>	<p>Dwellings sited too close to the boundaries to sustain vegetation.</p> <p>Dwellings set too far forward.</p>
To ensure that new developments, particularly on hill faces and upper slopes, are not highly visible from a distance and maintain a vegetation-dominated backdrop when viewed from within and outside the neighbourhood.	<p>Keep development below the established or future mature tree canopy height.</p> <p>Use darker building materials that are less prominent visually, particularly for upper levels and roofs of buildings located on prominent ridges or hill faces.</p>	<p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy.</p> <p>Light coloured surfaces and highly reflective materials, particularly on roofs.</p>
To ensure that development on steep slopes is designed with the topography, avoiding excessive excavation and removal of vegetation.	<p>Minimise the visual impact and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the site.</p> <p>Minimise building footprint and articulate buildings into separate elements.</p>	<p>Excessive cut and fill.</p> <p>Visually dominant, sheer and unarticulated elevations.</p> <p>Loss of vegetated backdrop.</p>
To ensure the retention of existing vegetation, particularly canopy trees.	<p>Retain established vegetation and provide for the planting of new canopy trees wherever possible.</p> <p>Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that includes utilisation of substantial canopy trees wherever possible.</p>	<p>Loss of vegetation, particularly canopy trees.</p>
To ensure that front setbacks are not dominated by car parking structures.	<p>Locate garages, carports and car parking areas behind the front façade of the dwelling.</p> <p>With the exception of driveways, minimise impervious surfacing in front garden areas.</p> <p>Provide only one vehicular crossover per frontage.</p>	<p>Front setbacks dominated by car parking structures and hard surfacing.</p> <p>Gun barrel driveways.</p> <p>Loss of street trees due to cross over construction.</p>
To encourage low front fences, open frontages or vegetation at the front boundary.	<p>Provide no front fence where this predominates in the street, or vegetation instead of fencing.</p> <p>Provide a low and open style front fence in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Residential 1 Zone.</p>	<p>Loss of open or vegetated frontages.</p> <p>High, solid front fencing.</p>

