

NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA 16 HEATHMONT GARDENS

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 Heathmont Gardens Neighbourhood Area is an established residential area with leafy character set in hilly topography above the Heathmont Gardens. Native vegetation is a strong feature in streets and parks, including along the Heathmont Gardens. Low scale housing with well-landscaped gardens, established street trees and wide, grassy nature strips strengthens the sense of greenery in the area and contributes to the vegetative 'blanket' of the City.

Community values

The community of Heathmont Gardens Neighbourhood Area values:

- tree-lined streets;
- its trees and the green canopy they generate for the area;
- well-kept gardens and houses that blend in with the neighbourhood; and
- proximity to shopping precincts.

The community of Heathmont Gardens Neighbourhood Area aspires to:

- encourage footpaths mainly on through roads; and
- encourage fewer cluster developments.

Existing character elements

- Topography varies significantly from flat at the eastern and western ends, to hilly where the neighbourhood rises above the Heathmont Gardens.
- Architectural styles are mixed, including Post War era 1950s, 1960s, 1970s-1980s and 1980s-1990s infill.
- Dwellings are generally single storey with some examples of double storey dwellings throughout.
- Materials are a mix of weatherboard and brick veneer with tile roofs.
- Lot sizes range from around 500m² – 1200m².
- Front setbacks are average, at around 6m - 7m. Side setbacks are average and small from both side boundaries.
- Gardens are established, mixed in species, frequently with native canopy trees. There are some bushier gardens through the central part of the area.

- Frontages are mostly open, with vegetative screening in parts.
- Road layout resembles a grid in parts with more cul de sacs in the northern section.
- Mixed exotic and native street trees of varying sizes and spacing.

Preferred future character

Green, leafy streets will dominate the Heathmont Gardens Neighbourhood Area. The low scale housing will not protrude above the established tree canopy. Native trees will be a consistent theme in streets and gardens, building on the natural character of the Heathmont Gardens parklands. The large street trees and plantings in private gardens will continue to add a sense of 'green enclosure' to the streetscapes.

The preferred future character will be achieved by:

- encouraging a low scale building form nestled into the landscape;
- ensuring development on sloping land is designed with the topography, avoiding excessive excavation and removal of vegetation;
- strengthening corridors of native trees in streets and gardens;
- ensuring setbacks reflect the established pattern and provide space for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation;
- ensuring development in the vicinity of Heathmont Gardens responds to and complements the landscape character of the area; and
- encouraging the use of planting at frontages, as an alternative to front fencing.

Design guidelines

| Objective | Design Response | Avoid |
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| To encourage a low scale building form nestled into the landscape. | <p>Keep development below the established or future mature tree canopy height.</p> <p>Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties.</p> | <p>Buildings that protrude above the tree canopy.</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> |
| To ensure that development on sloping land 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 strengthen corridors of native trees in streets and gardens. | <p>Retain established vegetation and provide for the planting of new canopy trees wherever possible.</p> <p>Provide only one vehicular crossover per frontage to minimise loss of street trees.</p> | <p>Loss of vegetation, particularly canopy trees.</p> |
| To ensure that setbacks reflect the established pattern and provide space for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation. | <p>Dwellings should be set back from both side boundaries.</p> <p>The front setback of dwellings should be no less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.</p> | <p>Dwellings sited too close to the boundaries to allow for the planting of substantial vegetation.</p> <p>Dwelling set too far forward.</p> |
| To ensure that development in the vicinity of Heathmont Gardens responds to and complements the landscape character of the area. | <p>Use materials and colours that complement those occurring naturally in the area.</p> <p>Low or transparent back boundary fencing is encouraged for sites directly abutting the Heathmont Gardens parkland.</p> <p>Design new development to increase natural surveillance of the creek corridor by incorporating elements such as windows and decks overlooking the parkland.</p> | <p>Large areas of 'artificial' colour or highly reflective surfaces.</p> <p>High, solid fencing preventing natural surveillance of the creek parkland.</p> |
| To encourage the use of planting at frontages, as an alternative to front fencing. | <p>Provide no front fence where this predominates in the street, or vegetation at frontages.</p> | <p>Loss of open or vegetated frontages.</p> |