

NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA 5 CROYDON HILLS

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 Croydon Hills Neighbourhood Areas are extensive areas of open residential development with a 'garden court' layout. They are characterised by open, winding streets and newer housing. The spacious nature of the neighbourhoods contribute to the transition between the residential 'core' of Maroondah and the open rural landscapes outside the municipality to the north and west. There is a strong relationship with the vegetation and topography of the region through views to surrounding hillsides and ridgelines. Hillier parts are visible from nearby areas, although public and private gardens are still establishing in parts.

Community values

The community of Croydon Hills Character Area values:

- views to natural skyline of tree canopies and proximity to rural landscapes;
- the presence of indigenous flora;
- contoured, curved streets on hills;
- lack of fences and presence of wide nature strips;
- proximity to good paths, walking tracks, parks and recreational facilities; and
- large blocks and lower density housing.

The community of Croydon Hills Character Area aspires to:

- better planning of off-street and on-street parking;
- tighter controls regarding tree planting;
- protect the high density of flora; and
- discourage development that conflicts with local character.

Existing character elements

- The areas lie on gently sloping to hilly topography that offers views to rural landscapes and vegetated hillsides outside the municipality to the north and west.
- Architectural styles are predominantly reproduction, built between the 1980s and the present.
- There is a mix of single and double storey dwellings.
- Dwellings are consistently brick veneer with tile roofing.
- Front setbacks vary from average to large. Side setbacks also vary, ranging from small to average setbacks from both boundaries to average setbacks from both boundaries.
- Lot sizes are generally 500 m² - 900m² with several larger lots of around 1200m², particularly in the northern parts of the area.

- Gardens west of Wonga Road range from simple to shrubby, with predominantly exotic species. East of Wonga Road, gardens are bushy, with remnant canopy trees and shrubs.
- Front fences are frequently absent.
- Street layout is modern, curvilinear with numerous cul de sacs and a mix of upstanding and roll-over gutters.
- Street trees are commonly native or absent, with some larger remnants in the north eastern corner.

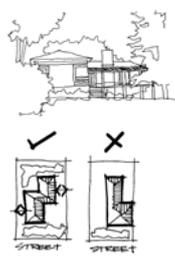
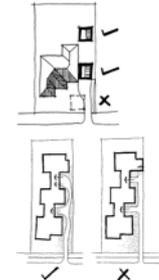
Preferred future character

The Croydon Hills Neighbourhood Areas will remain defined by their wide streets and spacious layout on gently undulating topography. The presence of vegetation will be the unifying feature in neighbourhoods of varying housing styles and forms and will result in a series of 'green corridors' linking areas of open space. Built form will be balanced by equal amounts of vegetation and hill faces and ridges being softened by tree canopies. The areas will have strong links to the surrounding landscape through an increase of indigenous and/or native tree planting in both the public and private domains. New development will be designed with the topography and will step down the slopes, resulting in an area less dominated by sheer building forms. Frontage treatments will remain low and open, with buildings set back from the front boundary to maintain a sense of spaciousness in the streets.

The preferred future character will be achieved by:

- ensuring development is designed and sited with the topography to avoid excessive cut and fill and unnecessary vegetation removal;
- 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 buildings are setback from all boundaries a sufficient distance to sustain substantial vegetation including canopy trees;
- encouraging the use of indigenous and/or native plants in private gardens;
- ensuring car parking areas and impervious surfaces do not dominate the streetscape; and
- encouraging low and open front fences.

Design guidelines

Objective	Design Response	Avoid
To ensure that development is designed and sited with the topography to avoid excessive cut and fill and unnecessary vegetation removal.	<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 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 buildings are setback from all boundaries a sufficient distance to sustain substantial vegetation including canopy trees.	<p>Site buildings to minimise the loss of existing vegetation and to provide for the planting of new vegetation including canopy trees.</p> <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>Loss of vegetation, including understorey.</p> <p>Site clearing.</p> <p>Dwellings sited too close to the boundaries to allow for the planting of substantial vegetation.</p> <p>Dwellings set too far forward.</p> 
To encourage the use of indigenous and/or native plants in private gardens.	<p>Retain established trees and provide for the planting of new indigenous and/or native canopy trees wherever possible.</p> <p>Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that includes utilisation of appropriate indigenous and /or native species.</p>	<p>Loss of canopy trees, particularly indigenous and/or native species.</p> 
To ensure that car parking areas and impervious surfaces do not dominate the streetscape.	<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 and open front fences.	<p>Provide no front fence where this predominates in the street.</p> <p>Provide a low and open style front fence in accordance with Residential 1 Zone Schedule.</p>	<p>Loss of open frontages.</p> <p>High, solid front fencing.</p> 