



Banyule
CITY COUNCIL

RESIDENTIAL VEHICLE CROSSING POLICY 2012

VERSION CONTROL		
Version	Date	Comment
1	12 May 2012	Initial version
2	18 March 2013	Updated version
3	21 October 2013	Neighbourhood Character Precincts & map updated to be consistent with new Neighbourhood Character Policy in Clause 22.02 of the Banyule Planning Scheme.

Banyule City Council

Residential Vehicle Crossing Policy

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Residential Vehicle Crossing Policy (this Policy) is used by Council to consider proposals for new and modified vehicle crossings that give road access for residential development.

In June 2013 Council introduced a new Residential Neighbourhood Character Policy at Clause 22.02 of the Banyule Planning Scheme, with reference to Council's Residential Vehicle Crossing Policy. As a consequence of this, applicants must consider Council's Residential Vehicle Crossing Policy and are encouraged to achieve outcomes that are consistent with it.

This Policy also supports any future changes to residential zones in the Banyule Planning Scheme. This includes any new zones for residential land use that may supersede or expand upon those mentioned above.

This Policy is also intended for Council's responsibilities under other legislation. This is primarily through the *Road Management Act 2004*.

The work done to create this Policy is positioning Council to have a consistent approach for new and modified vehicle crossings for residential development.

2. INTRODUCTION

In Banyule, landscaping, vegetation and trees make a prominent contribution to preferred streetscapes and neighbourhood character. Incremental increase of inappropriately sited, designed and constructed vehicle crossings, including double width crossings, can have a significant impact on these preferences.

The incremental loss of street trees, reduced nature strips and changes to their rhythm along streets is associated with the incremental increase and size of vehicle crossings along Banyule's residential streets. Banyule needs to manage these incremental impacts, so it can effectively provide for the preferred treed character of streetscapes and neighbourhoods. In addition, implications for on-street parking, pedestrian safety, traffic safety, stormwater and infrastructure impacts also need to be considered.

2.1. Powers

The power to consent to the construction of vehicle crossings is conferred on Council under the provisions of the *Road Management Act 2004*, and under Part 6 of the Banyule City Council General Local Law (Local Law 1 2005).

The Road Management Act 2004 is the primary legislation under which Banyule City Council issues Crossing Permits. This is done by providing Memorandum of Consent, which is the written consent granted by Banyule City Council, in response to a request for consent.

It also enables consistency for planning permit proposals that are done under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and through the provisions of the Banyule Planning Scheme.

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2.2. Process

Any application for a vehicle crossing must be in writing. If the proposal is being pursued through a planning permit application then assessment will be done in accordance with the *Neighbourhood Character Local Policy* in clause 22 of the Banyule Planning Scheme. If the proposal is not being pursued through a planning permit application then a crossing application must be submitted.

Crossing applications will have regard to this Policy, and any related Policies and Guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to the:

- The Banyule Planning Scheme, particularly, the Neighbourhood Character Policy and Overlays for heritage, vegetation protection, environmental significance, landscape significance and design for development.
- Site access requirements of Victorian Building Regulations 2006.
- Any other related policies and guidelines.

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Banyule City Council has a City Plan 2013 – 2017 with a framework. This framework includes a theme for Banyule as a place, for sustainable amenity and built environment. Key directions for this include:

- Maintain and improve Banyule as a great place to live
- Strengthen local activity and employment areas
- Support thriving commercial and retail activity
- Enhance Banyule’s public and open spaces
- Support sustainable transport

The intent of Council’s City Plan is furthered by the Strategic Framework given at clause 21.02-2 of the Banyule Planning Scheme. This framework includes five key elements that are reflected by the structure of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS). These are:

- Cultural Heritage
- Land Use (Housing, Commercial, Industrial and Community Facilities)
- Natural Environment
- Built Environment
- Transport and Infrastructure

The framework plan at clause 21.02, also shown in Figure 1, shows those parts of the City with noted environmental or landscape significance. These might include areas with historic, hilly, river valley or environmental attributes. Whilst there is noted significance shown by the framework plan, a more complete picture for the issues facing Banyule’s residential areas is reflected in clause 21.06 ‘Built Environment’. Collectively these issues illustrate that a high quality built environment, contribution of vegetation across neighbourhoods and the design of development is important for all of Banyule’s neighbourhoods. This is supported by Council’s 2009 Housing Strategy and 2012

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Neighbourhood Character Strategy. Figure 2 shows the relationship between the key strategies, plans and the planning scheme.

A consequence of Council's strategic direction for its neighbourhoods is the need to provide clarity around the siting and design of residential vehicle crossings across the City. The intent of this Policy is to give this clarity in a manner that integrates Council's frameworks for the City.

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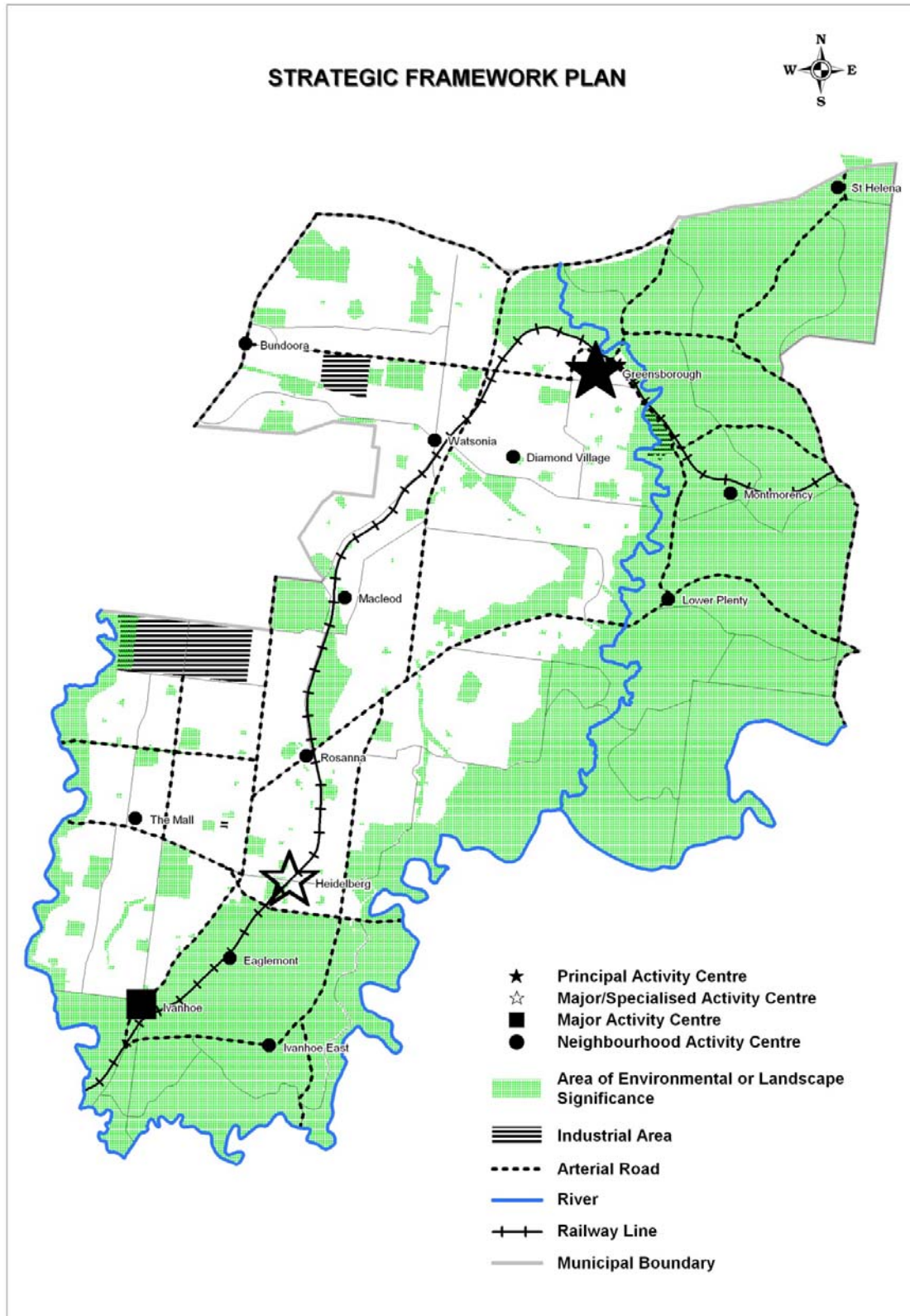


Figure 1: Strategic Framework Plan at clause 21.02 of the Banyule Planning Scheme

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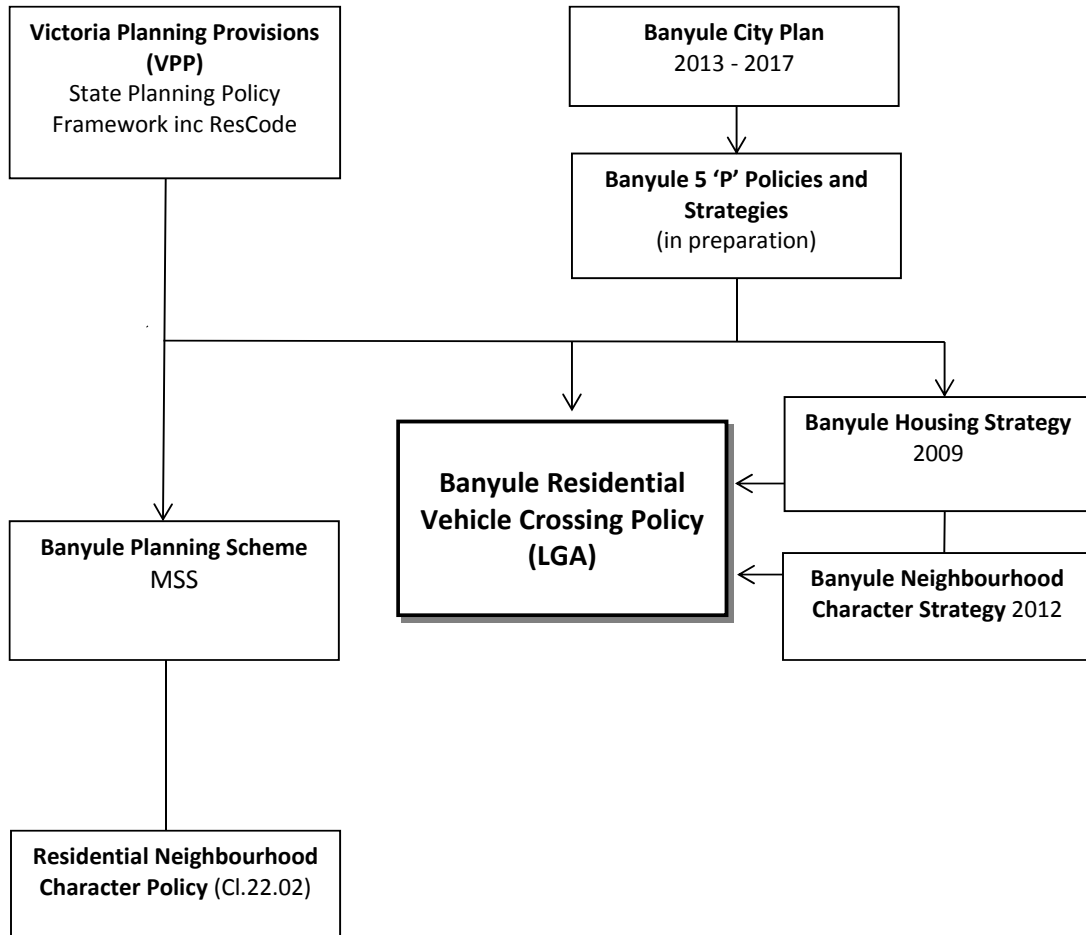


Figure 2: Strategic context

3.1. Policy Architecture

This Policy’s architecture (or structure) enables informed decision making. Initially, policy direction is informed by a suite of principles. These principles have been used to translate Banyule’s frameworks into Policy Objectives that respond to the diversity of Banyule’s residential areas. Because of this diversity, which is reflected by the Strategic Framework Plan in Figure 1, the Policy Objectives are given further clarity through Policy Statements and Policy Siting Criteria.

Collectively, the objectives, statements and siting criteria give effect to the preferred design and siting outcomes for residential vehicle crossings in Banyule’s diverse neighbourhoods. These outcomes are given further clarity through Policy Decision Guidelines. Finally, because discretion needs to be exercised when managing complexity and unique circumstances, this Policy acknowledges the need for Policy Discretion. This policy structure is illustrated by the following diagram:

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4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1. Provide for desired streetscapes that support the preferred future character of neighbourhoods

Roads are normally in the middle of residential streetscapes. They are the public, shared spaces that are used by people to access their homes and move to other places. In Banyule residential streetscapes are generally centred on constructed roads, with nature strips and street trees alongside. Repeated household surveys done by Council illustrate that local residents put high value on the green, treed environment in their neighbourhoods.

The pattern of nature strips across all of Banyule has supported a rhythm of spaced vehicle crossings along streets, between residential properties. These crossings support housing growth that uses these crossings, thereby protecting the pattern and size of nature strip so that street trees can grow and more planted in the future. This preferred outcome supports green, leafy setting along Banyule’s streetscapes and in its neighbourhoods.

In some instances, housing change has inappropriately affected nature strips and street trees. In particular double width crossings are beginning to affect some streetscapes. Street tree removal, smaller nature strips and lost opportunities for replacement planting are affecting the environmental and aesthetic quality of some streets.

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Figure 3: Multiple and double width vehicle crossings in a short distance

This incremental impact can be better managed through more considered siting, design and construction of vehicle crossings.



Figure 4: Protected trees in streetscapes

Many neighbourhoods are on sloping land, where there are ridgelines and valleys. This topography means that street trees are often visible, not only along streets but also in the backdrops within and across neighbourhoods as well. In other neighbourhoods street trees are not only prominent along streets they also appear above and between dwellings and give a green, leafy skyline.

Nature strips along residential streets are an important community asset. They not only support existing street trees, other vegetation and landscaping, but also give opportunities for more planting and landscaping in the future.

Council's past strategic planning for neighbourhood character, given in a 1999 Strategy and reflected in the Banyule Planning Scheme, as well as an ongoing review of this work that is described in a 2012 Neighbourhood Character Strategy, has established and confirmed the importance trees and landscaping to the preferred future character of all neighbourhoods in Banyule.

Minimising additional vehicle crossings, particularly double width crossings, will help to support green, leafy streetscapes and a preferred future character of Banyule's neighbourhoods where trees also give green, leafy backdrops and skylines.

4.2. Enable tree protection and planting in front setbacks

The front setback, between a home and its front fence, is a privately owned space that is important to the appearance of streetscapes and neighbourhoods. It is where previous tree planting and opportunities for more trees can help to consolidate a green, treed character. Consequently tree protection and planting in front setbacks makes a significant contribution to streetscapes and neighbourhoods. Minimising additional vehicle crossings and associated driveways will help to support opportunities for tree retention and planting in front setbacks.

4.3. Protect nature strips and provide for street trees

Street trees and nature strips make an important contribution to the appearance of streets and the character of neighbourhoods. Protecting nature strips will help to support the retention of existing street trees and opportunities for additional tree planting.

Minimising additional vehicle crossings and their driveways will help to:

- Protect nature strips for more tree planting opportunities
- Avoid effects on the health, form, structure, size, stability or future growth of street trees
- Protect and provide for more street tree planting as prominent features along streets and for neighbourhoods.

Street trees and nature strips are highly regarded community and Council assets. Street tree removal and nature strip reduction is not preferred. When these happen there is an impact on streetscapes and neighbourhood character.

Tree removal, even if offset by new tree planting, also has an impact because new street trees require notable time before they can grow to make the same contribution as a removed tree. This timeframe can mean that many residents will never see a young sapling reach tree maturity.

Any tree removal that is associated with a new or modified vehicle crossing will require a contribution towards new street tree planting and maintenance. This contribution will reflect the removal, replacement and amenity values of the affected street tree and nature strip.

Minimising additional vehicle crossings will reduce risks on nature strips, impacts on street trees and the need for a contribution towards new street trees.

4.4. Protect the amount of on-street parking

On-street car parking is an important community resource. It needs to be protected. This helps to support population change and housing growth in residential areas.

On-street parking also supports local economic development and benefits for public transport, particularly for Banyule's activity centres and main transport routes. In Banyule, public car parking at train stations and transport hubs is often fully occupied. This puts increasing pressure on the need to protect and provide for efficient on-street car parking where competition for space is highest.

4.5. Protect pedestrian safety along public footpaths

Pedestrian safety along footpaths is important because these are the primary public access paths for people of all abilities and ages to connect with their neighbours, community, local facilities and services. More driveways and vehicle crossings can affect pedestrian safety along public footpaths. Minimising additional vehicle crossings will help to protect existing pedestrian safety and manage the number of pedestrian and vehicle conflicts that may otherwise occur.

4.6. Protect traffic safety along roads

Traffic safety is affected by vehicles that are entering or exiting a road at vehicle crossings. An increase in vehicle crossings may increase risks for safety by affecting traffic flow and vehicle movements along a road. Minimising additional crossings will help to retain known and predictable locations for vehicles entering or exiting the road. This will benefit people in vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

4.7. Minimise adverse stormwater and infrastructure impacts

Additional crossings and driveways that are impervious can cause increased stormwater runoff. Incremental increases in impervious areas in local drainage catchments will affect the performance of the local drainage system.

Additional crossings can also affect the performance and structural integrity of drainage pits and other infrastructure above, along or under roads. Minimising additional vehicle crossings will help to overcome adverse impacts on stormwater runoff and infrastructure.

4.8. Support well-designed development

A good development outcome is one that positively responds to the existing site context and contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character. Crossings that are inappropriately sited or unnecessarily wide (including those shared with abutting crossings) are not preferred.

Crossings and their associated driveways influence critical design elements such as scale, mass, orientation and setbacks of a building, as well as landscaping opportunities and retention of valued trees. Providing clear guidance upfront on the frequency, siting and width of crossings enables a considered and high quality design response to be achieved. This can give clearer effect to well-designed development that provides for appropriate housing growth.

5. POLICY OBJECTIVES

It is policy for the following overarching objectives to inform decision making:

- To support the rhythm of trees, nature strips and well-spaced vehicle crossings in the streetscape to support the preferred future character of neighbourhoods.
- To protect the valued character and size of nature strips by continuing to protect and provide for street trees.
- To minimise loss of on-street parking.
- To continue to protect pedestrian safety along public footpaths, as well as traffic safety, in the siting of any new vehicle crossing.
- To minimise any adverse impacts on stormwater and other infrastructure in the siting of new vehicle crossings.

6. POLICY STATEMENTS

It is policy that the following statements will give effect to the above objectives:

- Provide for one single width vehicle crossing and associated driveway for each residential development, unless the development meets the Siting Criteria in Section 6.
- Where practicable, position vehicle crossings away from valued street trees.
- Position vehicle crossings to take account of the rhythm and spacing of the majority of vehicle crossings along the street.
- Position vehicle crossings and their associated driveways to maintain valued on-site trees and allow further planting opportunities in the front setback and between driveways and side boundary fences.
- Provide for appropriately designed and constructed residential vehicle crossings.

7. POLICY SITING CRITERIA

It is policy that the following siting criteria will give effect to the above statements. These criteria will help inform the appropriate number and width of vehicle crossings:

- For a single dwelling, an additional single width vehicle crossing is generally acceptable if the existing front boundary is equal to or greater than 20 metres in width.
- For a site with more than one dwelling, additional single width vehicle crossings is generally acceptable, if the:

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- Width of the existing front boundary is equal to or greater than 20 metres within neighbourhood character precincts GC1, GC2 (South), GC2 (North) [west of Greensborough Bypass] , GC2 (West), GC3, GS1, GS2 and GS3.
- Width of the existing front boundary is equal to or greater than 22 metres for neighbourhood character precincts GS4, GS5, GC2 (North) [east of Greensborough Bypass], GC2 (East) east of, SB (West), SB, BG (East), BG (West) and BG (South).
- Property is on a corner and a new dwelling is proposed to front the side street.
- Property has two street frontages (not including a laneway), a dwelling is proposed to face each frontage, and one vehicle crossing is proposed on each frontage.

Note: Refer to Figure 4 for the location of neighbourhood character precincts.

- In Neighbourhood Character Precincts BW1 or BW2, more than one single width crossing is generally acceptable if all the Policy Objectives (in Section 5) can be achieved to the satisfaction of Council.
- Double width vehicle crossings will only be considered if required as a condition on a planning permit that has not lapsed, except in special circumstances.
- Proposals that do not meet these criteria may still meet the objectives of the policy.

Note: The above criteria will be used when assessing any proposal. Other than for low density properties, it is anticipated that very few instances will exist when these criteria will not be relied upon to determine the appropriate quantity and size of any residential vehicle crossings.

8. POLICY DECISION GUIDELINES

It is policy that the following decision guidelines will give effect to final decision making that is informed by the above objectives, statements and siting criteria. These decision guidelines give clarity to various design matters associated with the final siting and detailed design of any crossing.

- Any vehicle crossing should be at least 9 metres from the corner property boundary at any street intersection.
- Where there is a second frontage to a laneway, the preferred location for vehicle access and egress is the laneway, as long as this location is secure, manoeuvrable and safe for vehicle movement.
- The minimum preferred distance along a street between vehicle crossings is 8 metres.
- The response of the Roads Corporation, where the development is services by a Road Zone – Category 1.

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- Whether the existing vehicle crossing remains the preferred location and if a suitable second frontage exists, such as a laneway.
- Whether a new vehicle crossing provides adequate separation between it and an existing street tree to protect the trees roots and canopy and to minimise the risk of the crossing being affected by future tree growth.
- Where a new crossing is proposed near to an existing crossing for a neighbouring property, a landscape strip of at least 1 metre width must be provided for the entire length of the driveway - between the dwelling and the property boundary. This strip must be planted out to the satisfaction of Council.
- Where there is a loss of on-street car parking, whether the availability of public parking in the area and the amount of on-site car parking facilitated by the proposed crossing is adequate.
- Whether the location of a proposed vehicle crossing involves the alteration or removal of any street tree, street furniture, electricity pole, drainage pit or other Council and/or Public Authority asset and whether approval of the relevant authority for such removal has been achieved.
- Where siting criteria indicates that a second crossing is generally acceptable, consider whether:
 - Additional planting will be provided in the front setback or nature strip to offset the visual impact of the crossing on the nature strip.
 - Opportunities for future street tree planting are available.
 - The number and location of the proposed crossings for a development reflect the number and location of crossings for the majority of existing developments in the street.
 - Whether there is already more than one existing legal crossing.
 - A safety or traffic improvement is to be gained.
 - A site layout or design improvement is to be gained that supports the preferred neighbourhood character of the precinct. This includes protecting street trees, and enabling opportunities for future planting of trees in front setbacks.
- Where siting criteria indicates that more than one crossing is generally acceptable for properties at street corners or properties with two street frontages, whether the following have been considered:
 - The number and orientation of proposed dwellings to both street frontages.
 - The width of each street frontage.
- Where siting criteria indicates that a double width crossing is generally acceptable, consider whether:

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- Additional planting will be provided in the front setback or nature strip to offset the visual impact of the crossing on the nature strip.
- Opportunities for future street tree planting are available.
- A site layout or design improvement is to be gained that supports the preferred neighbourhood character of the precinct. This includes protecting street trees, and enabling opportunities for future planting of trees in front setbacks.
- Availability of on-site parking and public parking in the local area.
- A safety or traffic improvement is to be gained.
- When an existing vehicle crossing becomes redundant, it should be removed and works done to establish a treed nature strip that is in keeping with the streetscape. This includes the reinstatement of kerb, channel, footpath and nature strip at the owner's responsibility and cost to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- In circumstances where approval is granted for two (2) or more vehicle crossings or a double width crossing, Council may require the contribution of at least one (1) additional street tree. In some circumstances additional trees on the development site may be required. The preferred location for an additional on-site tree will be in the front setback area. Where removal or replacement of a street tree is approved all costs for doing so must be borne by the applicant.
- When a proposal relies on more than one (1) existing crossing, whether each existing crossing has been given previous approval.
- Whether final design and construction has been done consistently with Banyule City Council's guidelines and specifications.

9. POLICY DISCRETION

It is policy to exercise the following discretion when a proposal does not comply with this policy's objectives and siting criteria. In such instances, matters to be taken into account for discretion are:

- This Policy.
- The Banyule Planning Scheme, including any Local Planning Policy for Vehicle Crossings, Neighbourhood Character, Cultural Heritage and Overlays. Overlays may exist for heritage, vegetation protection, environmental significance, landscape significance, design for development, land subject to flooding and special building overlay in urban catchments.
- Site access requirements of Victorian Building Regulations 2006.
- Any other related policies and guidelines.

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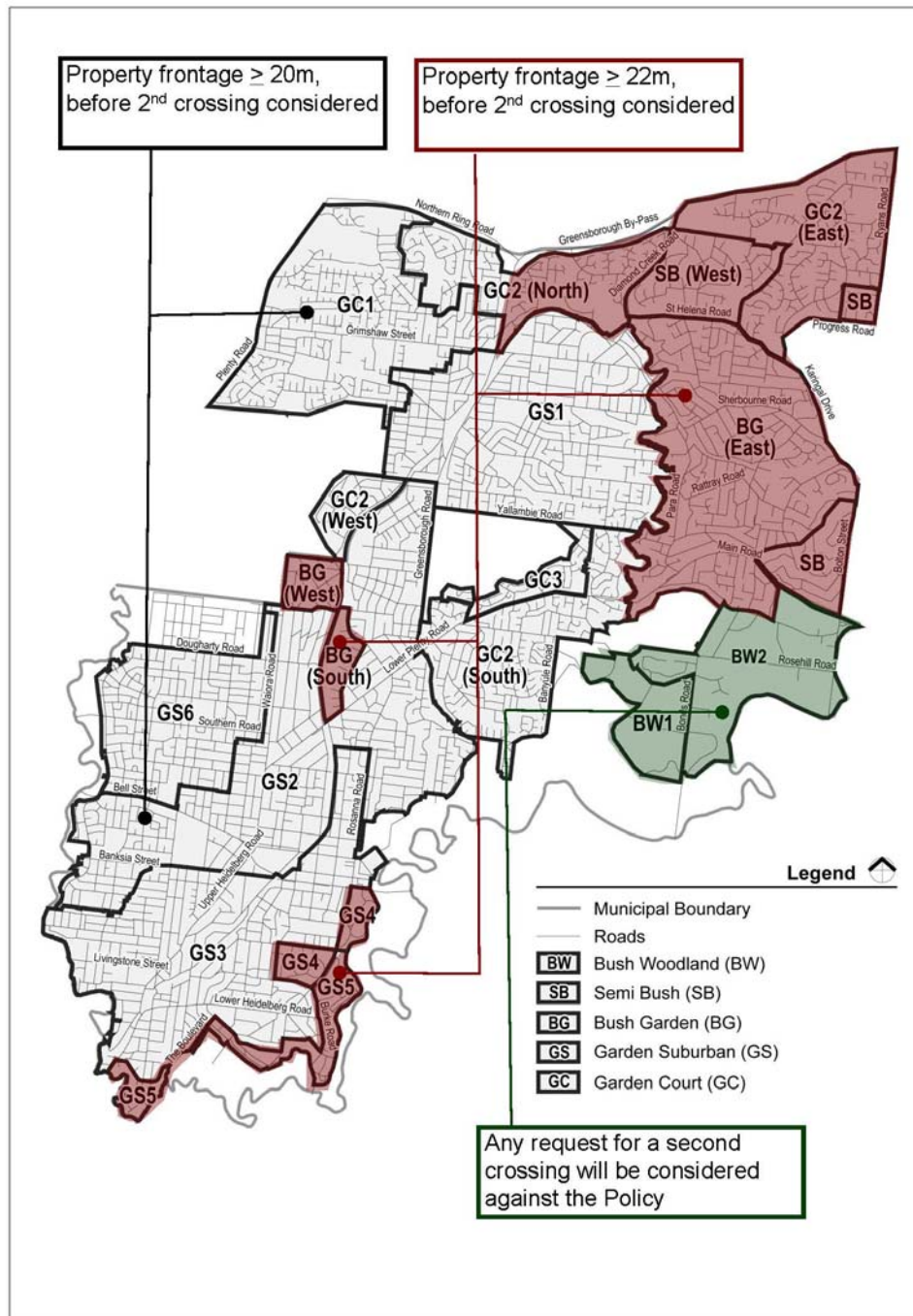


Figure 4: Neighbourhood Character Precincts, Clause 22.02 of the Banyule Planning Scheme, May 2012

APPENDIX A

Definitions

Application means an application for a planning permit under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and/or an application for a Memorandum of Consent under the *Road Management Act 2004* as the context allows.

Arterial Road means an arterial road declared by VicRoads.

Crossover Permit means a permit issued under the *Road Management Act 2004*.

Driveway means the land and works that give a physical means of access or egress for vehicles, within a residential property to the property's boundary with any road. The meaning of a driveway includes accessways, where referred to in the Banyule Planning Scheme.

Frontage means the road alignment at the front of a lot. If a lot abuts two or more roads, the frontage is the alignment to which the building, or proposed building, faces.

Memorandum of Consent means the written consent granted by Banyule City Council, in response to a request for consent.

Local or Municipal Road means a road under the care and management of Banyule City Council, in its capacity as the coordinating road authority. In residential areas, it is usually the public land or road reserve that exists between properties that face each other along a road. It is commonly occupied by footpaths, nature strips, street trees, other vegetation, landscaping, road pavements and vehicle crossings between properties and the formed road in a carriageway.

Planning Permit means a permit issued under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Public Road means a public road included on Council's Register of Public Roads as amended from time to time.

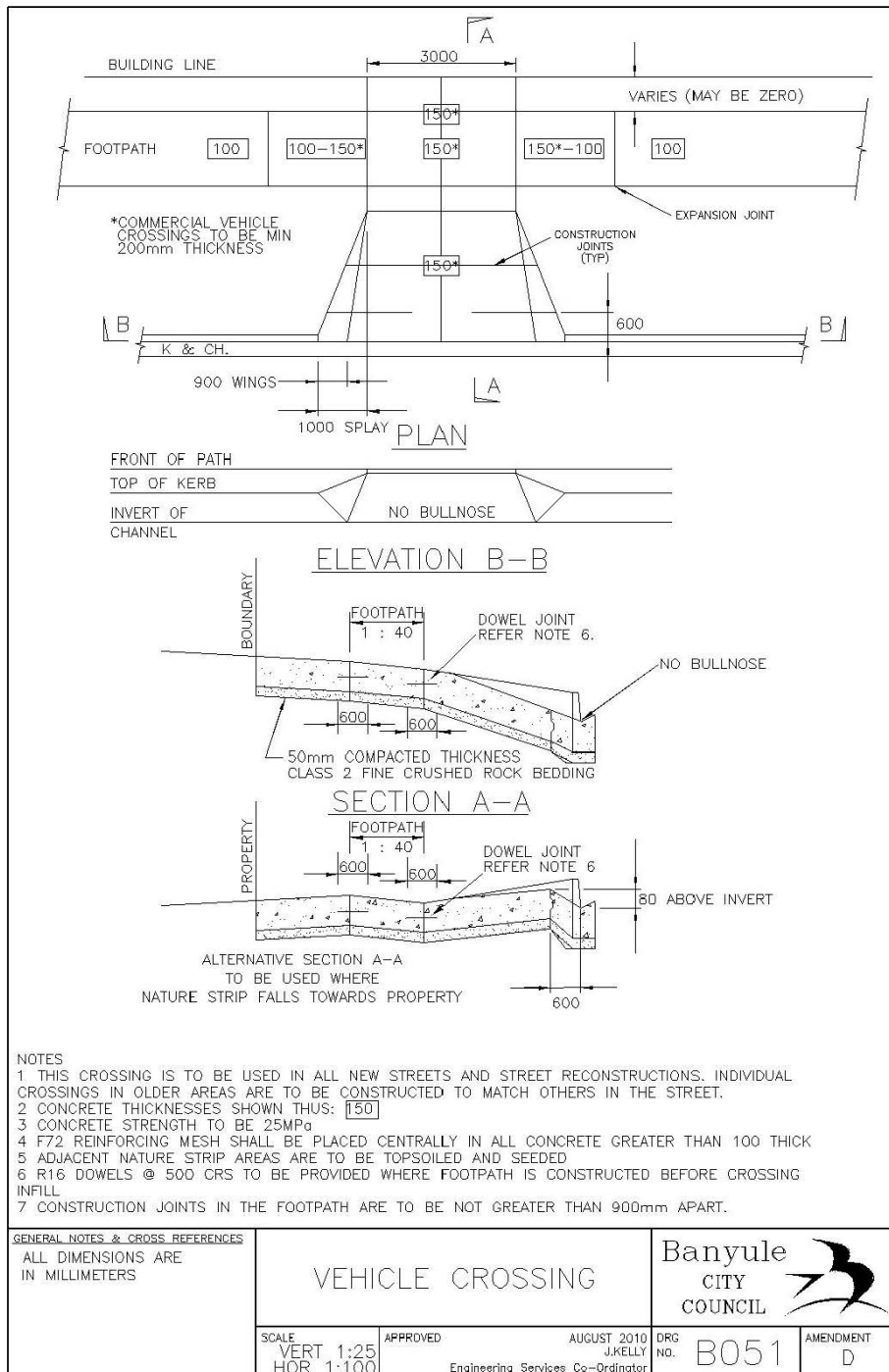
Sideage means the road alignment at the side of a lot, to which the building on the lot, or proposed building, has its side or rear wall aligned with.

Vehicle crossing, crossing or crossover means the land and works that give a physical means of access or egress for vehicles, between a property used for residential purposes and any local road. It includes any associated works to support this access or egress, including changes to existing conditions to support a new or modified crossing that is between a property boundary and connecting to a formed road.

APPENDIX B

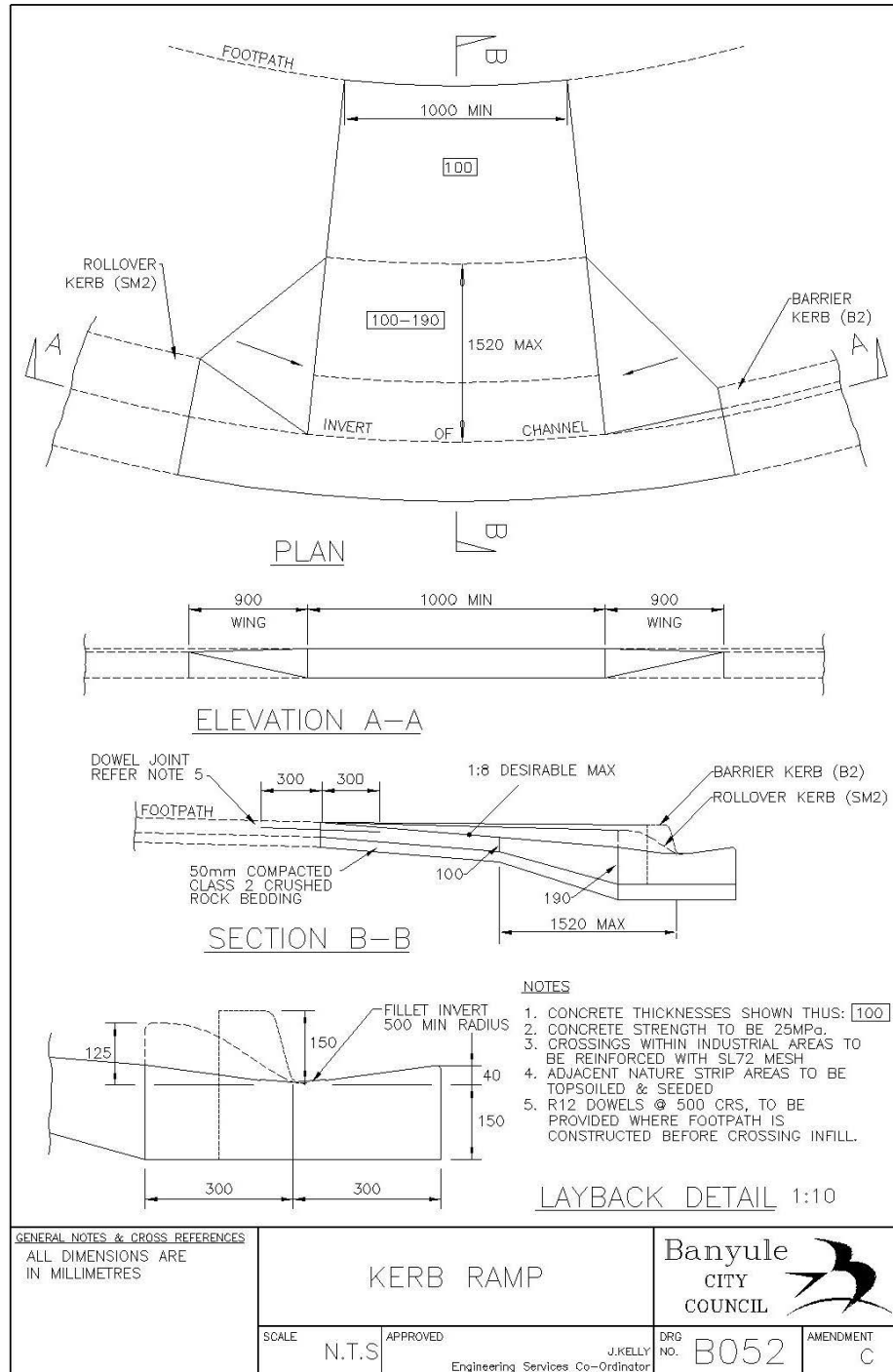
Standard Drawings for Crossings

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Source: Banyule City Council, Engineering Services, Standard Drawings

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Source: Banyule City Council, Engineering Services, Standard Drawings