



Banyule
CITY COUNCIL

Banyule City Council Student Accommodation Guidelines August 2010



1. PURPOSE

To guide development outcomes for Student Accommodation proposals that are consistent with Council's Housing Strategy Goals and relevant Objectives within the Planning Scheme's Municipal Strategic Statement.

2. POLICY CONTEXT FOR THE GUIDELINES

Outcomes for Student Accommodation will be furthered by guidelines that are informed by the policy context given in Council's Housing Strategy, specifically the Housing Framework and the Banyule Planning Scheme.

3. BACKGROUND

Tertiary and advanced education makes a significant contribution to the future skill set of the Australian workforce and the local community. The skilling of the future workforce is enabled by providing land use and development opportunities for students to live in locations where their household running costs are reduced.

The ability of a student to independently access such locations is restricted as limited income affects their ability to independently rent or purchase a home. Consequently economic and social benefit is derived by enabling students to cohabit, so as to share on-site facilities and services in a form of co-housing that helps to reduce housing costs.

Well located student housing provides a substantial benefit to reducing household running costs, by reducing reliance of motor vehicles to access education, shops, services and local facilities.

Various other factors influence student housing needs and opportunities, these are:

1. Government Policy
2. Registered Student Housing Programs
3. Unregistered venues which accommodate students
4. Location of educational facilities to Banyule

More information on these influences is given in Appendix 1.

4. OBJECTIVES

The guiding objectives are:

- To identify preferred, accessible locations for Student Accommodation proposals in Banyule that is consistent with Banyule's Housing Framework and the Student Accommodation Guidelines Map in Appendix 2.
- To consider the affect of Student Accommodation on residential amenity and the desired future character of the neighbourhood.
- To support well-designed built form and landscape outcomes for Student Accommodation proposals.
- To support Student Accommodation that delivers good on-site amenity and services for students.
- To provide for adequate provision of on-site car and bicycle parking for Student Accommodation and considering appropriate reduction to the standard car parking requirements in the Banyule Planning Scheme only for those proposals that have convenient walking or public transport access to educational facilities, shops and local services.
- To provide for Student Accommodation facilities that have appropriate on-going management and maintenance practices that provides for ongoing land use that continues to achieve all of the above objectives.

5. APPLICATION OF THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines apply to purpose-built Student Accommodation proposals, or mixed-use proposals that include a purpose-built component for students, where a Planning Permit is required via a Section 2 use within the Residential 1 Zone or another zone that affects land that is in a preferred location.

If a Student Accommodation proposal is approved, it is expectation that the development will continue to be used for Student Accommodation purposes. As a consequence, rooms cannot be subdivided or made available for general private residential use.

In any instance where a proponent seeks flexibility for non-student use, the proposal must be designed and constructed in a manner that is consistent with Planning Scheme provisions for a multi-dwelling development.

6. PREFERRED LOCATIONS FOR STUDENT ACCOMODATION

The preferred locations within Banyule are:

- Within 400 metres walking distance of an activity centre, which is serviced by the operating PPPTN in Banyule.
- Within 800 metres walking distance of an education facility, which provides tertiary or technical education.
- At properties with frontage onto the operating PPTN that are within 400 metres walking distance of local shops that provide some convenience food shopping.
- Within 400 metres walking distance of an operating PPTN bus or tram stop that also provides connecting bus and bicycle routes to tertiary or technical education.

Activity centres, tertiary and technical institutions, the PPTN and connecting bus and bicycle routes are identified in Appendix 2 on the map titled 'Student Accommodation Guidelines'.

7. DESIRED FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

The built form and landscape design objectives for any Student Accommodation proposal must be consistent with Council's Neighbourhood Character Policy in the Banyule Planning Scheme.

8. BUILDING DESIGN

Building scale, bulk and overall design must be of a high quality and architectural standard that is responsive to the context of the relevant site. This includes having regard to and being consistent with the Residential Neighbourhood Character Policy (Clause 22.02), ResCode (Clause 55) and Clause 19.03.

The specific context of each situation will dictate which guidelines are most appropriate for assessment purposes. Where sites are located within residential zones, greater consideration of off-site amenity, height, setbacks and coverage standards of Clause 55 and neighbourhood character will generally be necessary.

The provision of landscaping buffers along interfaces with abutting residential uses is an important consideration to ensure adequate space is provided for substantial tree planting. Car parking should be located at the side or rear of the property and should not dominate the development or street frontage.

9. ON-SITE AMENITY

Purpose built student accommodation buildings should provide for a variety of room sizes and types. This includes rooms that are self contained, have communal facilities, and have both private and common rooms or common areas. All external open spaces, whether private or shared should be of a sufficient size to ensure that they can be used for recreation and other needs.

Room sizes are to be consistent with the regulations to the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* which stipulates that, to minimise overcrowding the following minimum room sizes must be adopted:

- 1 person 7.5m² - 12.0m²
- 2 persons 12.1m² - 16.0m²
- 3 persons 16.1m²

In general consideration should be given to amenities within lodgings including:

- A study area with a desk and table with seating provision.
- A robe /drawer unit for storage of clothing and personal items.
- Internet and TV connection and power points.
- The provision of direct natural light and ventilation to living areas and bedrooms in the form of windows that can easily open.
- Provision of rooms and shared facilities that could be utilised by a person with limited mobility.

- A schedule outlining the floor area for each dwelling, the internal and external communal space.
- All forms of natural light should be from external walls and not from internal windows to corridors.

Consideration must also be given to communal facilities such as bathrooms and laundries.

Where not shown on the plans, the above minimum requirements would be sought as a condition on any approval.

To ensure sufficient living requirements are met the provision of a minimum of 1 kitchen, bathroom and toilet per 6 beds is appropriate. This number can be varied if rooms are to be self contained.

Relevant aspects for Common Space are:

- Despite lodging rooms being self contained, the provision of internal and external common space is considered to be important to encourage social interaction. This should include shared kitchen, dining, media (tv/dvd) and outdoor space.
- It is important that any application identifies the anticipated population of the use (i.e. how many lodgings may be available to couples).
- As a guide, up to 3 sq. metres of indoor and outdoor communal space should be provided per student.

10. CAR AND BICYCLE PARKING

10.1 Car Parking

Car parking spaces are to be designed in accordance with either the Banyule Planning Scheme (Clause 52.06) or Australian Standards. Where covered parking is proposed, it should be in accordance with Clause 55 of the Banyule Planning Scheme.

Car parking provision must be made for occupants, staff and visitors. The management of parking spaces must consider and accommodate any delivery or emergency vehicles. Parking rates should be provided at 0.5 spaces per student

These rates may be reduced where sites are located within close proximity to activity centres, public transport or an educational institution. The application must indicate the total number of rooms as well as the maximum number of students anticipated.

Consideration should also be given to the provision of shared vehicles provided by the operator or a third party.

There will be no issuing of parking permits or 'rights' to a parking permit within nearby streets made available for occupants of student accommodation.

10.2 Bicycle Parking

Bicycle parking spaces are to be designed in accordance with Clause 52.34 of the Banyule Planning Scheme. Provision of bicycle parking is to be provided as follows:

- A minimum of three (3) sheltered and secured bicycle space should be provided for each five (5) students.
- The spaces should be easily accessible and in a lit area.
- Visitor bicycle spaces should also be provided at a rate of 0.1 per student.

11. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals will be assessed using documents stated under "Assessment Documents" in Section 13.

Proposals must be accompanied by plans and reports that outline:

- The type of accommodation proposed.
- The total number of students to be accommodated within the development.
- Discussion of availability and demand of student accommodation.
- Provision of private and open space as well as internal communal space.
- Level of accessibility.
- A traffic and parking impact report which includes references to student accommodation in similar locations with similar characteristics.

- A draft response to the requirements of the site management plan as set out below.
- Clause 19.03, 22.02, 22.03 and 55 Assessment (as relevant).
- An assessment against the Design Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2004) for development of four or more storeys.
- Any other relevant reports or information.

The following outlines a range of matters and other information that is needed and will be considered in the assessment of an application for Student Accommodation.

11.1 On going Site Management

As a permit condition on any approval granted, a requirement for a site management plan is likely to be incorporated. Such a plan will have on-going requirements and must provide for:

11.2 Supervision

- Resident and /or guest behaviour, activities and noise, visitors and parties and the extent to which external areas may be used at night; generally this aspect of the plans should ensure minimal noise outside the building (including on balconies) after 10pm. This must include contact details for management outside business hours if not available on-site.
- Resolution process for disputes between students.

11.3 Maintenance

- Servicing and cleaning of the apartments.
- Maintenance of the grounds and upkeep of the buildings.
- The storage/collection of garbage in accordance with an approved Waste Management Plan.

11.4 Operation

- The maximum number of students to reside on the premises at any one time.

- On site car parking for exclusively use of students residing in the subject premises and shall not be leased, sold or used for any other purpose.
- Provision of date to the Responsible Authority on a yearly basis as to the number of students that own vehicles.
- Permanent display of the Management Plan in a common area.
- A standard lease for the student lodgings.
- A means of proof of the student status of residents.
- Employment of a suitably qualified manager or lead tenant who is accommodated on-site.
- The nature of the management of the complex and the contact details of the manager/lead tenant.
- The means by which car spaces are to be allocated and a register that documents allocation of these spaces.
- Critical Incident Management and Emergency and Evacuation Procedures.
- Management procedures over holiday periods.
- Security of building and grounds.
- Management of clothes drying facilities to ensure that no laundry drying occurs on the balconies of the units.
- A Green Travel Plan which sets out provisions and schemes which will encourage students to utilise modes of transport other than by way of private vehicle.

11.5 Information

- Provision for contact details to be displayed so they are clearly visible to any person outside the site for response 24 hours a day and seven days a week.
- Provision and display of information on:
 - ◇ Local public transport and walking routes, so as to encourage sustainable modes of transport, as an alternative to motor vehicle use. Relevant information includes: information on facilities within walking distance, local public transport timetables, outlets for purchase of Met tickets and car share services.

- ◇ Commercial and publicly accessible facilities, such as a local gym.
- ◇ Community and education services, such as health, counselling and cultural services.

11.6 Potential Clauses for Inclusion in a Section 173 Agreement

- Private waste collection (standard)
- Any dispensations for on-site car parking for the student accommodation will not be transferable for any proposed alternative use and any subsequent use will be assessed in accordance with planning scheme car parking requirements.
- The requirements of the Site Management Plan as approved by the Responsible Authority are enforced.
- The development shall be for the exclusive use of students enrolled full or part time at a tertiary institution and is to be vacated by any relevant student within four months of that student's completion of such studies.
- All rooms shall be managed by a single management entity and shall not be leased or otherwise managed other than under the control of that management entity.
- The car ownership for resident students must be no greater than the number of car spaces available on the site.

11.7 Future Alternate Use

It is important to have regard to a building approved for a Student Accommodation use in the event that it ceases to be used for its approved purpose. If the use ceases for a 2 year period the use permit would expire and the use of the site would default to private residential use. It is therefore considered appropriate to require a Section 173 agreement between the owner of the land and Council which could impose the following requirements on the land owner which sets out the appropriate considerations for alternative future use of the site for accommodation including:

- The provision of car parking spaces.
- Open space requirements.
- Internal layout and provision of living space.
- Any other relevant matter.

12. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A Building Permit is required to changes to the class of the building and advice should be sought from Banyule's Building Department or a Private Building Surveyor as part of the design process. Building requirements will include and are not limited to:

- Walls between bedrooms will require a Fire Resistance Level.
- Smoke detectors need to be included within each bedroom.
- Emergency lights and illuminated exit signs are required to be provided.
- Natural ventilation must be provided to bedrooms.
- Internal domestic sprinkler systems are now mandatory.

In relation to the required health registration for a rooming house the following is noted:

- Cleaning of communal kitchens would need to be the responsibility of the management entity and not tenants.
- Health registration would be required following planning and building approval.

Depending on the scale of the accommodation, it is also likely that waste will need to be collected by a private contractor. This needs to be factored into the design as well as on-going waste management practices need to be thought through and adopted.

13. ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Relevant assessment information is contained in the Banyule Planning Scheme. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Clause 19.03 (Design and built form)
- Residential Neighbourhood Character Policy (Clause 22.02)
- Safer Design Policy (Clause 22.03)
- Housing Policy (Clause 22.06)
- Car Parking Provisions (Clause 52.06)
- Bicycle Parking Provisions (Clause 52.34)
- ResCode (Clause 55)

Relevant assessment information for specific locations and design outcomes also includes:

- The Design Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2004), *for considering design implications for developments of four or more storeys.*
- Activity Centre Design Guidelines (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2004), *for considering land use and design implications for developments within activity centres.*
- Greensborough Structure Plan (Banyule City Council, 2004), *for considering land use and design implications for developments within the Greensborough Principal Activity Centre.*
- Heidelberg Precinct Structure Plan (Banyule City Council, 2010), *for considering land use and design implications for developments within the Heidelberg Specialised and Major Activity Centre.*
- Bell Street Mall Urban Design Framework and Masterplan (Banyule City Council, 2009), *for land use and design implications for developments within the Bell Street Mall Neighbourhood Activity Centre.*

14. REVIEW TIMELINE

These guidelines will be reviewed within 2 years or upon the introduction of any updated housing or neighbourhood character policy direction that is included into the Banyule Planning Scheme.

Appendix 1 – Background Information

Government Policy

The State and Federal Governments continue to promote and attract international students to full fee paying courses, however little has been done to accommodate this increase in students with respect to the local, regional and international demand on housing.

The international student sector is Australia's third-largest export and Victoria has almost a third of the international student higher education market, with 57,049 international student enrolments out of 179,136 nationally, according to August data from the federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Registered Student Housing

Student Housing Australia, Melbourne's largest off-campus student home placement group, reports that the 2200 student accommodation rooms it manages in 40 buildings in Melbourne and Canberra are virtually full and La Trobe University's Bundoora campus has 4% vacancy rates for its 1600-room on-campus colleges according to the to The Age, 10 October 2009.

Unregistered Venues

Linked directly with this issue, is the growing trend of unregistered rooming and boarding houses which has become a prominent topic for not only Banyule but other municipalities. Inspections carried out to date and discussions with occupants of a number of the rooming/boarding houses within Banyule has revealed that many of the occupants of the accommodation are in fact students attending LaTrobe University.

These shared housing arrangements have often resulted in high numbers of occupants/students living in less than desirable houses with numerous complaints lodged with both Council and Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV).

Location of educational facilities for the Banyule community

There are limited purpose built and operated student accommodation facilities within Banyule at present. It is anticipated that this trend will change and this type of accommodation will become more prominent.

Banyule is home to one tertiary institution, the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) Heidelberg Campus, as well as the Austin and Mercy Hospitals which provide education to the medical services industry.

Close to Banyule is the Bundoora campus of LaTrobe University, RMIT's Bundoora campus and the NMIT Preston Campus. Other facilities that can be easily accessed from Banyule include those within or close to central Melbourne. These include RMIT and Melbourne University. Reference to these facilities is shown by the Maps in Appendix 2. All of these facilities can be readily accessed by public transport.

In addition to the above, close to 8,000 residents of Banyule are studying at Tafe or University Level, based on the 2006 Census data.

Appendix 2 – Banyule Student Accommodation Guidelines Map

Banyule Student Accommodation Guidelines

