

# Housing Strategy



## Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

## Diversity Statement

Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone; principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.



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# Mayor's Foreword



Access to good housing is a basic human right. More than bodily shelter, good housing connects people to their community, provides access to jobs and services and creates opportunities to engage in civic life. It should be comfortable and sustainable, with easy access to transport, schools, recreation facilities and green spaces.

Council plays a pivotal role in housing and must work with state and federal governments to get the policy settings right and ensure everyone has access to housing that suits their needs and allows them to be part of their community. Banyule has shown we can do it through projects such as the Bellfield community housing development.

In this Housing Strategy, we review the history and current state of housing in Banyule and look to the future needs of our diverse community. We consider how Banyule households are changing and how we can protect our heritage and nature spaces while meeting the challenges of the future. We look at how good design and town planning can promote community cohesion and help us achieve our climate action goals.

The research, evidence and debate that underpins this strategy sets us up for success in delivering the right housing solutions for our community. Thank you to my fellow councillors and the Banyule Council staff who worked on it with us. The Housing Strategy supports our work in other areas, such as Banyule's Urban Forest Strategy and Integrated Transport Plan, to name just two.

Connecting with our community and listening to what they told us was a vital step in getting this strategy right. We consulted widely in different ways and over a long period to make sure everyone got a chance to have their say on what they value about housing and neighbourhoods in Banyule, what should change and how the future looks to them. I want to thank everyone who completed a survey, attended an information session, or took part in a workshop. Adding your voice and experience is democracy in action.

A well designed and implemented Housing Strategy will preserve the character of our neighbourhoods, protect our natural environment, and provide enough housing for everyone. We believe we can achieve this together.

# Wurundjeri Foreward

As the Traditional Owners of the area, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have a deep connection to the lands within the City of Banyule.

The lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people encompass the entire local government area known as Banyule, which is known as 'big hill' in traditional Woi-wurrung language. First Nations people have a deep connection to the land, its waterways and its diverse flora and fauna.

We the Wurundjeri people take their name from the Woi-wurrung language word 'wurun' meaning the Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) which is common along 'Birrarrung' (Yarra River), and 'djeri', the grub which is found in or near the tree.

This strategy acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of this land and respects the vast knowledge we hold in caring for Country. It outlines its commitment to working with First Nations people and supporting them to have greater access to affordable housing in Banyule.

We know First Nations people are over-represented among social housing clients and they experience higher rates of tenancy exits than other clients. Repeated calls for help by First Nations families highlight the need to do things differently when working with First Nations households living in social housing. There is a clear need to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to break the cycle of disadvantage experienced by many.

We are pleased Banyule Council have engaged with us in producing this document and have shown respect and understanding for our culture.



# Definitions

Term or abbreviation	Definition
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Quality and fit for purpose housing which is priced at a level which is affordable relative to the income of its occupants and still allows these households to meet their other essential living costs. Relative affordability is defined in the <i>Planning and Environment Act (1987)</i> as less than 30% of household disposable income spent on rent or mortgage.
<b>Community Housing</b>	Not-for-profit registered housing associations and providers develop, manage and own low-cost housing across Victoria. These entities are regulated and funded by state and federal governments. There are a variety of associations and providers active in Banyule including Launch Housing and Common Equity Housing.
<b>Greyfield</b>	Residential areas where homes are aging, yet land values remain high.
<b>Greyfield renewal</b>	Consolidation of subdivided lots, and development of the new, larger lot, which can handle mid-and higher scale housing better with improved off-site effects, compared to redevelopment of single lots into medium density housing.
<b>Housing Affordability</b>	<p>The relationship between the cost of housing (prices, mortgage payments or rents) and household incomes.</p> <p>Housing affordability is measured with respect to the very low, low and moderate income thresholds as defined by the <i>Planning and Environment Act (1987)</i>. The income ranges correspond to each of these thresholds are updated annually by State Government.</p> <p>The income ranges for 2021 have been used in this Strategy to provide consistency with the timing of Census data used:</p>

<b>Term or abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Housing Stress</b>	<p>A household is said to be experiencing housing stress if it is spending more than 30% of its disposable income on housing costs. This is usually only applied to households which fall within the bottom 40% of average income range. This is because higher income households can spend a higher portion of income on housing, with less chance of it causing problems.</p> <p>This is only a general definition of housing stress. Many other factors can create housing stress, such as overcrowding of dwellings (e.g. a five person family in a 2-bed dwelling), variable living costs (e.g. a person with a disability may have higher cost of living and therefore can only afford 20% of their income on housing), and many other factors.</p>
<b>Inclusionary Zoning</b>	Inclusionary zoning is an intervention by government that either mandates or creates incentives, so that a proportion of a residential development project includes a number of affordable housing dwellings.
<b>Gig Economy</b>	Gig Economy work refers to work that matches supply and demand for short term tasks, projects or jobs. Workers in the Gig Economy are paid per unit of work delivered, rather than ongoing employment contracts.
<b>Public Housing</b>	Social housing which is owned and managed by government bodies.
<b>Small second homes</b>	An additional self-contained dwelling developed on the same land as the principal dwelling.
<b>Social housing</b>	An umbrella term that includes both public housing and community housing, for either purchase or rent. It generally indicates housing that involves some degree of subsidy.
<b>Special purpose and non-government housing providers</b>	Superannuation enterprises, private developers, industry sectors, religious groups, charitable organisations, and community trusts also provide affordable housing. These entities typically partner with community housing associations and providers in the delivery and management of housing– for instance, a community housing provider might manage a housing facility on behalf of a charitable trust.
<b>Up-Zoning</b>	An informal planning term used to describe changes to which zone or planning control is applied to land, in order to increase the amount of development allowed in the future, including attributes such as height, bulk, or floor area ratios.
<b>Vacancy rates</b>	The number of rental properties available for lease.

# Executive Summary



Banyule City Council's *Community Vision 2041* seeks to ensure:

**We are a city with diverse, affordable and sustainable housing solutions that meet the needs of our diverse community.**

*Banyule Community Vision 2041*

Given Banyule's housing capacity is suitable for the projected demand, this Housing Strategy is focused on ensuring we are developing the right kinds of housing, in the right locations, while also future proofing our capacity.

Safe, stable, and affordable housing was established as a human right in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is crucial to physical and mental health, quality of life, education access, and economic outcomes.

For Banyule to best support a healthy, connected and resilient community we need a robust, equitable and dynamic approach to housing both for current and for future generations.

Our existing housing plans and policies have successfully guided the last decade of housing growth by promoting development in targeted locations, while minimising the impact of development in other more sensitive areas. Banyule and Greater Melbourne, however, will continue to change and so this Strategy provides a long term plan which reflects the housing needs of our current and future community. It responds to the challenges of a growing housing and affordability crisis, our aging population, and escalating impact of climate change. Our housing vision is:

**Banyule will contain housing options for all life stages, preferences, abilities and incomes. New development will be sustainable, well-designed, and responsive to our unique leafy green neighbourhoods.**

Most of our new housing will be directed to areas with good access to public transport and services. A lower scale of housing development will be maintained in areas with significant biodiversity, heritage value or neighbourhood character. All housing development will enhance our vegetation cover and present a pleasant interface with the street.





# 1. Introduction

A Housing Strategy is a Council's long-term plan to manage future housing growth and change to best meet the ongoing needs of the community. It shows the locations for new residential development and identifies how new development can be managed to protect valued and unique attributes of the municipality and its neighbourhoods.

The Housing Strategy informs how Council applies the zones and overlays in its residential areas, which guide the location and intensity of new housing development. A housing strategy should, amongst other things:

- Plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15-year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur.
- Outline the strategies and actions to accommodate the projected population and household needs.
- Ensure a range of diverse housing opportunities are available across the municipality to meet the needs of the current and future population and provide choice for changing demands.
- Balance the need to protect valued landscapes and neighbourhood character with the need to ensure housing growth and diversity.

Fundamental to the review and the preparation of a new housing strategy is a review of neighbourhood character. The overarching aim of the Housing Strategy is to plan for housing growth that contributes to the existing or preferred neighbourhood character. This means that while we are planning for housing, Council must also revisit its existing *Neighbourhood Character Strategy (2012)*.

This Housing Strategy also demonstrates to the Victorian Government that we have a land capacity to meet housing needs through to 2051, while also putting Banyule in a position to best advocate for the views and needs of our current and future communities.

## Why do we need to review the Housing Strategy?

State Planning Policy requires Council to ensure at least a 15 year supply of housing. To meet this requirement, we update our housing strategy every 10-15 years to consider and plan for changes in the municipality. This includes changes to population and households, the natural and built environment, accessibility to infrastructure and services, and housing affordability. It also seeks to support land use and development that will facilitate sustainable modes of transport and reduce residents' distances to travel.

For many of our residents, natural landscapes and abundant tree canopy defines residential life in Banyule. Careful and foresighted planning is helping to protect the City's landscapes for the enjoyment of current and future generations. Living close to nature is increasingly recognised for its contribution to wellbeing and good mental health.



Banyule is also home to state significant health and education infrastructure and major transport infrastructure. Our current planning policy seeks to promote accessible and sustainable lifestyles by promoting housing growth and new diverse housing near jobs and services. Thanks to the success of our long-term planning for growth, more and more of our residents live in and around our major service, employment and shopping districts including the Greensborough, Heidelberg and Ivanhoe Major Activity Centres.

Our Housing Strategy must be reviewed periodically to ensure ongoing success and remain up to date. Population figures, housing preference trends, State and Federal policy context, and many more factors change over time. These factors add up and can cause an existing strategy to become out of date. We are reviewing the *Housing Strategy (2009)* and *Neighbourhood Character Strategy (2012)* now, so that the Strategy and land use policy continue to be effective.

The overriding objective in this process is to ensure we are best placed to respond to the needs of our existing and future community. This requires identifying those elements of our existing planning that should be:

- **Retained** – many elements of our policy framework are delivering on their objectives and might be retained, for instance, our commitment to our activity centres as our leading housing change areas.
- **Expanded and strengthened** – there are new challenges that require enhanced responses, for instance, this might entail reviewing housing directions for our Neighbourhood Centres or adjusting existing design standards for medium and high-density housing.
- **Added** – there are new challenges that require new thinking and responses including housing affordability.





## BANYULE HOUSING STRATEGY 2009

The previous Banyule *Housing Strategy* was adopted in 2009 and set out to manage the City's population and housing growth to 2030. Its vision was:

**By 2030, a greater portion of Banyule's housing is close to good public transport, shops and services. Most new housing is around activity centres, where the community can easily walk or cycle to vital services and access public transport.**

When assessed against development outcomes, The *Housing Strategy (2009)* has been highly effective in directing new development. Specifically:

- *Accessible and Diversity Areas* – Heidelberg, Heidelberg West and Ivanhoe have added significant numbers of new residential apartments, primarily within activity centres and main transport corridors close to transport infrastructure and services as per the objectives of the Strategy.
- *Incremental Change Areas* – Medium density dwellings have been developed throughout the municipality with higher numbers developed in diversity areas around Heidelberg and Heidelberg West.
- *Limited Change Areas* – Locations subject to limited change have seen minimal net additional housing development.

The priority actions of the *Housing Strategy (2009)* have been acted upon through:

- Structure Planning for our three major activity centres – Ivanhoe, Greensborough, and Heidelberg.
- An updated Neighbourhood Character Strategy to support a permanent local policy in the Banyule Planning Scheme.
- The introduction of a local policy on Environmentally Sustainable Development.
- The development of Banyule's Liveable Housing Design Guidelines.

## Where does the Strategy apply?

This Housing Strategy provides guidance for appropriate mix of housing types in the right locations within our existing residential areas. The Strategy does not propose to rezone any non-residential land to residential, instead it focuses on how to best use our land which is already zoned for residential use. The map on this page shows the areas where this strategy applies and the existing residential zones.

There are also some residential areas in the Major Activity Centres (MACs): Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, and Greensborough. While the MAC residential areas have been considered as part of the capacity modelling and figures, the areas have been removed from where the Housing Strategy applies, as they each have their own MAC Strategy which provides a finer grain planning process.

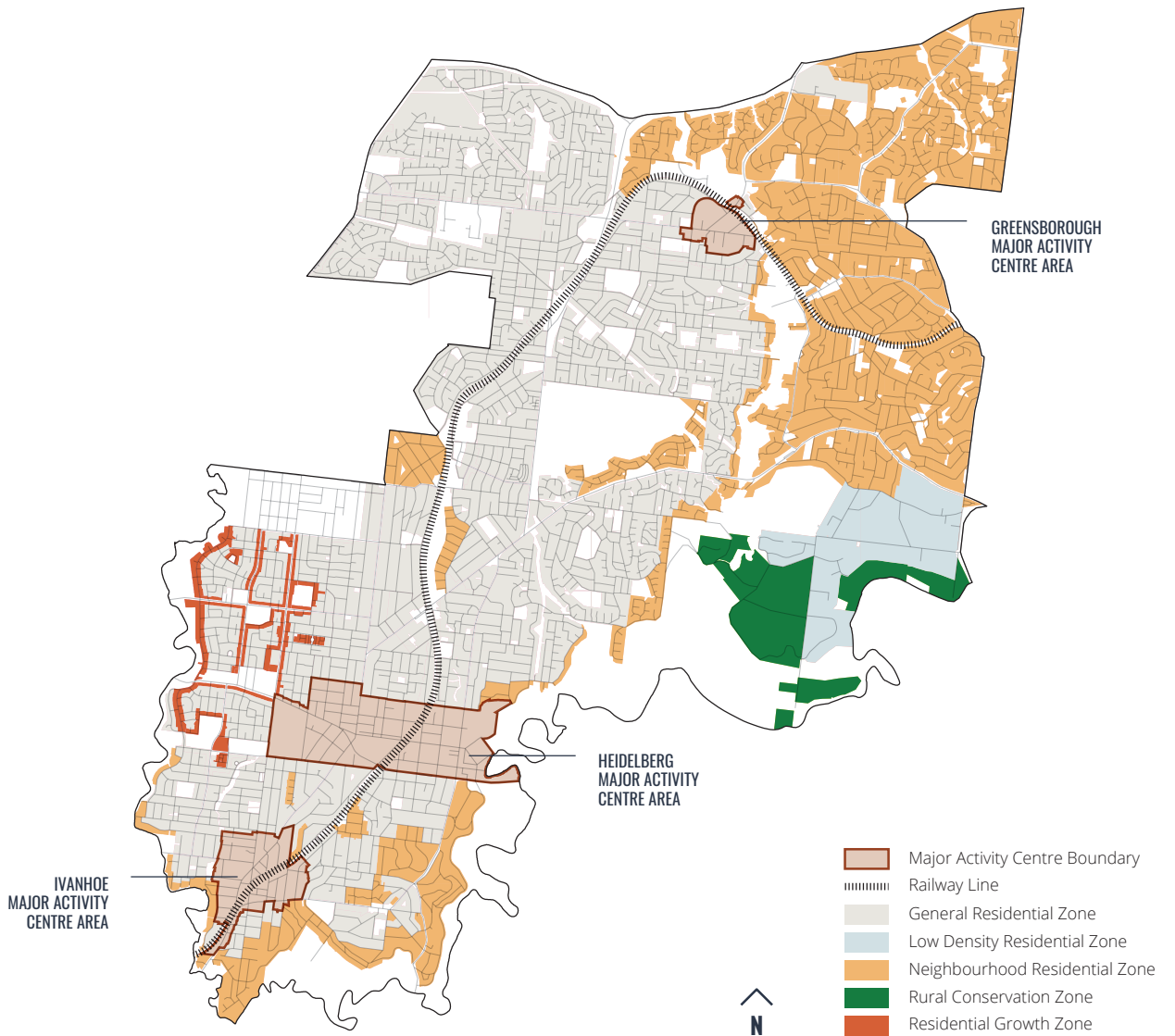


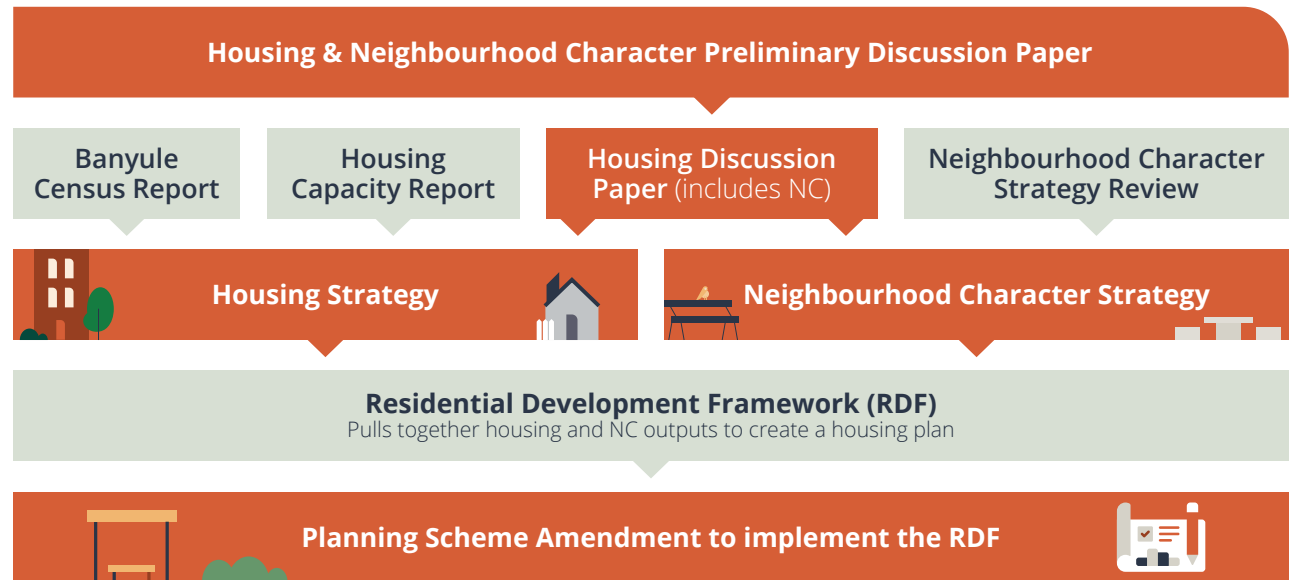
Figure 1: Where this Strategy applies and current zones

## How has the Strategy been prepared?

The housing and neighbourhood character review process needs to work through often complex strategic choices. The aim is to balance our various priorities to equip Banyule with a integrated approach to housing development. Priorities such as

- The preservation of valued character and landscapes
- Effectively responding to population growth and demographic change
- Responding to housing development trends
- Supporting the productivity of our community
- Managing the renewal and redevelopment of older housing areas
- Ensuring housing outcomes achieve high standards of design.

These priorities have been determined through community consultation, 2021 Census data, a housing capacity analysis, population trends and projections, and guided by State Government policy.



- Includes consultation
- Technical work

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has developed and refined this Strategy through extensive community engagement, with three rounds of consultation.

Discussion with the Banyule community began in 2022 with a Preliminary Discussion Paper and survey. The Preliminary Discussion Paper introduced the community to the project and discussed some of the policy changes at State level which affect our housing discussion since the Strategies were last adopted. The survey asked the community for their opinions about housing and neighbourhood character in Banyule, to help guide our priorities throughout the process.



In 2023, the project was taken to the community for the second time with a Housing Discussion Paper. The Housing Discussion Paper pulled together the feedback to the Preliminary Housing Discussion Paper, peer review of other Council Strategies and policy, population and housing data analysis, findings from a Housing Capacity Report (Charter Keck Cramer, 2023) and Banyule Census Data Analysis (Charter Keck Cramer, 2022). The Housing Discussion Paper presented a number of options for how to manage Banyule's residential development into the future and consultation asked the community to comment on those options.

New draft Housing Strategy and draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy were then prepared, using the community feedback to the Housing Discussion Paper. The draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy also had technical input from the Neighbourhood Character Strategy Review Report (Plan2Place, 2023).

Third round of community consultation on the draft Strategies ran from 12 April to 26 May 2024.

The purpose of the engagement was:

- To enable a wide range of people across the Banyule community to understand the draft Strategies
- To test that we heard correctly from the community through previous engagement (Housing Discussion Paper, 2023 and Preliminary Discussion Paper in 2022)
- To understand the level of support and feedback received on the draft Strategies

People were invited to participate through a range of styles:

- Shaping Banyule page including summaries of the draft Strategies
- 2 Information sessions at Ivanhoe and Greensborough
- 8 pop-up sessions at different locations across Banyule, including an intercept survey
- Online or hard copy survey
- One-on-one meetings
- Email submissions



## WHAT WE HEARD

Across the municipality, the community acknowledged the need for more housing across Banyule and Melbourne. There were also strong themes of environmental protection, with an emphasis on retaining existing vegetation. prepared, using the community feedback to the Housing Discussion Paper. The draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy also had technical input from the Neighbourhood Character Strategy Review Report (Plan2Place, 2023).



### Housing Strategy

For the Housing Strategy, supporters appreciated that it addressed housing affordability/supply issues and struck a balance between density and character. Key concerns raised were that increased housing density can impact on neighbourhood character, create stress for supporting infrastructure, and associated environmental impacts and loss of vegetation. Some people also worried that the social and affordable housing impact would not be significant enough to help the growing cost of living crisis.

In response to feedback, measured changes were made to the Housing Change Map, stronger and more information about Council's role in social and affordable housing, and additional supporting information about how better infrastructure and design outcomes.

### Neighbourhood Character Strategy

For the Neighbourhood Character Strategy, supporters felt it balanced maintaining valued character with some change, protected the environment, and enabled housing diversity. Concerns about the draft Strategy centered around it not adequately preserving existing character, concern about impacts of development on specific character precincts, rapid loss of vegetation, and a desire for requirements to be clearer and more accessible for the average person to understand.

Updates were made throughout the draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy have been made relating to revision of wording/statements to make the intent clearer. Also, as part of the implementation of the project, Council will be testing landscaping and tree planning requirements which can support enhanced landscaping and vegetation.





## Banyule's residential strategies and documents

There are three key local strategic documents being prepared through this process which will inform residential development in Banyule. Each have their own purpose:

- Banyule Housing Strategy
- Banyule Medium and High Density Built Form and Landscape Design Guide
- Banyule Neighbourhood Character Strategy

Each document plays a specialised, high level strategic role in guiding future residential development in Banyule. Together, the objectives and strategic directions of these documents aim to guide residential development through appropriately locating various built form housing typologies, setting a standard for good design, and applying specific requirements for responsive built form and landscape outcomes across Banyule.

The purpose of each document as they differentiate from each other can be described as:

**Banyule Housing Strategy** outlines the broad strategic directions for the location of residential growth and development, including housing diversity and density in appropriate locations. Accordingly, this document supports a range of residential typologies at various densities which then influences the design potential of a development.

For example, this document supports higher-density residential development around public transport and activity centres urban infrastructure. Built from typologies that deliver on this objective include

townhouses and apartments which set an expectation for typologies of a particular built form scale.

**Banyule Medium and High-Density Built Form and Landscape Design Guide**<sup>1</sup> sets out the overarching expectations for good residential design in Banyule. The document outlines objectives, design elements and principles that apply to medium and high-density residential development including the best-practice approach to built form and landscape design and its broad application to various building typologies.

For example, the document considers Site Design as a category of built form design then sets out related design elements under this category such as 'orientation'. The document then outlines overarching design principles and how they are generally applied to a development to support good design.

**Banyule Neighbourhood Character Strategy** considers the diverse residential character settings that exist within Banyule. The document defines neighbourhood character areas by analysing existing design elements and sets out preferred future neighbourhood character and design requirements to support specific built form and landscape outcomes which achieve the preferred character.

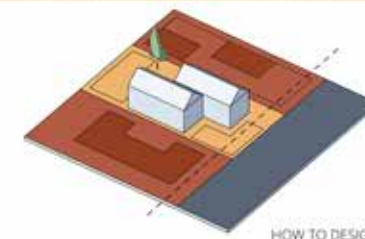
For example, a Garden Suburban Area includes areas identified through the Housing Strategy as both minimal and incremental change areas. Accordingly, the neighbourhood character area will detail specific design requirements that support preferred neighbourhood character objectives in each housing change scenario. It includes tree planting ratios, built form setback distances and site coverage percentages that relate specifically to that character area and the achievement of the preferred future character.



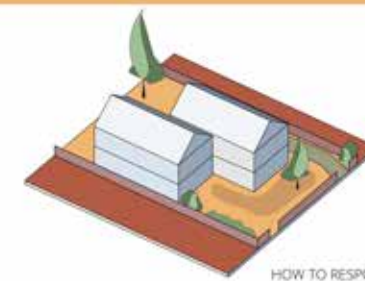
HOUSING STRATEGY



BUILT FORM AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDE



NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STRATEGY



<sup>1</sup> Currently being prepared and will be finalised by the time this Housing Strategy is adopted.

## 2. Banyule Housing Context

The story of living in Banyule is written in our landscapes and suburbs. Our municipality is on the homelands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung of the Kulin nation. From post contact, the land has been fundamentally changed by patterns of immigration and settlement, and driven by boom cycles and speculative developments, transport, and population growth. Then, as now, local and state planning policies have an important role in how we respond to changing economic, social and environmental conditions that shape how and where we live.

This chapter presents the data and community feedback that informs the Strategy.

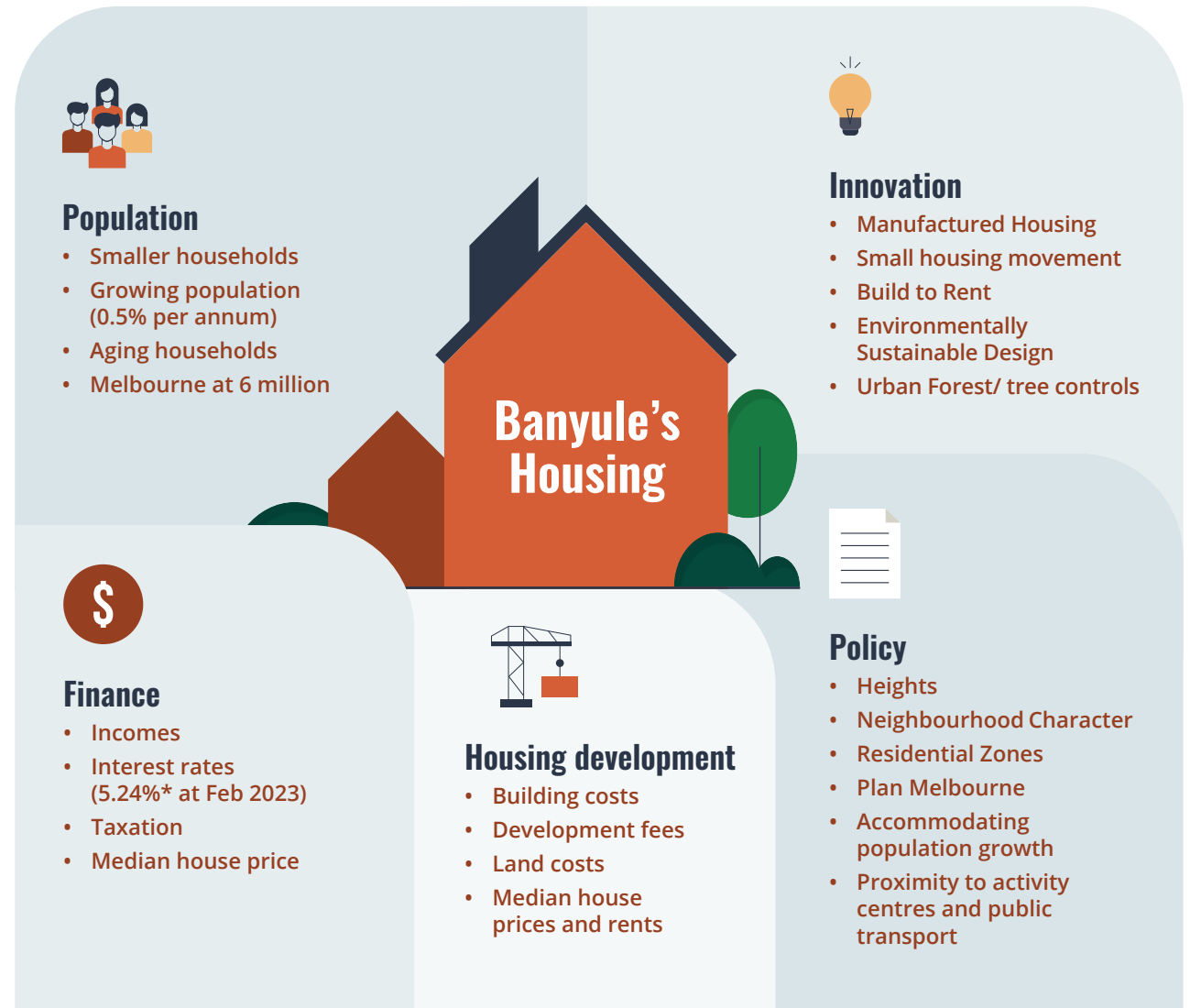
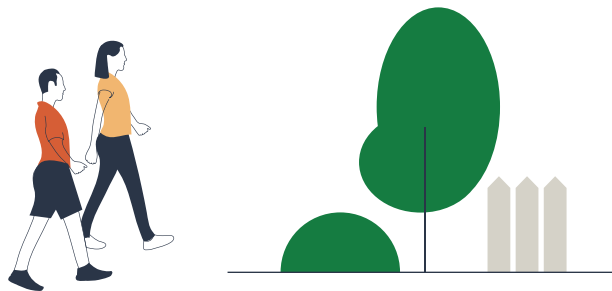


Figure 2: The different factors that influence housing in Banyule

## Who lives in Banyule?

The Banyule community has been growing and is projected to continue growing by at least 16,000 residents and 8000 households by 2036.

Prior to 2020, Banyule's population grew at 0.7% or 920 new residents per year. In 2020 and 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic however, the population declined, as students and some workers migrated away from Melbourne. 2022 onwards has seen the population bounce back to be in line with the previously projected figures as in-person learning, and in-office work returned.

Banyule's population is ageing. Overall, the median age in Banyule is 40, slightly older than that of Greater Melbourne whose median age is 36 years of age. There is variation within Banyule, notably in the West Precinct (Heidelberg West, Bellfield and Heidelberg Heights) where the median age is lower at 35. This precinct also has the highest projected population increase forecast. It will be important to consider how to prepare for and manage this demographic variation within Banyule.

Broadly in Banyule, the over 65 cohort is growing faster than younger cohorts resulting in the overall ageing of the population. The groups of young adults and children are still growing, but not to the same pace as our older generations grow. In fact, over the 2016 to 2021 period, the number of teenagers and young adults living in the municipality declined.

Households are also becoming smaller. Recent population figures show a significant growth in smaller lone person and couple without children households; over the 2016 to 2021 period couples without children households grew by 1,188 households and lone person households by 1,338 households (Greater Melbourne grew by +54,403 and +75,138 respectively). As the amount of single bedroom and studio apartment housing increases, it follows that the number of smaller households in Banyule will also grow, however, the development of apartments also reflects demand for this form of dwelling in our City and in the broader northern region.

2021



**127,376**

Source: ABS ERP



**47,668**

Households



**16,408**

Couples with Children



**12,318**

Couples without Children



**11,904**

Lone Person Households



**1,484**

Group Households



**5,046**

One Parent Family

## Banyule’s existing housing

The addition of high and medium density housing to our activity centres and transport corridors has changed the form and type of housing available in Banyule. Consistent with the diversity aspiration of the 2009 Strategy, there are now more apartments and units in our municipality which make up an increasing proportion of our housing stock.

For the 2016 to 2021 period, Banyule added an annual average of 620 net new dwellings mainly in new townhouses and apartments. A further 800 new apartments are projected to be added to our housing stock by 2025.

The impact of the past decade of housing change is most evident in Ivanhoe and Heidelberg where medium and high-density dwellings now constitute almost 40% of the local dwelling stock. New smaller dwellings are helping attract young adults to Banyule and boosting our health care, professional and public service workforce. In 2021, young adults aged between 20 and 34 years of age made up over 27% of Heidelberg West’s population, which is unique for our municipality and strongly correlates to the prevalence of high and medium density dwelling options. New housing options are also helping our older age groups downsize with the number of older households living in apartments in Ivanhoe also growing.

High and medium density development is not the only form of housing change. The demolition, redevelopment, alteration, and renovation of existing single detached dwellings is also a major form of change. For the 2016 to 2021 period, there were over 1400 dwellings demolished in Banyule, although a high number of these demolitions (potentially 500 demolitions) were to support public housing renewal in Heidelberg West.

### OCCUPANCY RATES

One of the health indicators of a housing system is the ‘vacancy rate’ and the ‘unoccupied private dwellings’ rate.

‘Vacancy rates’ refer to the number of rental properties available for lease. Banyule’s total vacancy rate was 1.4% of total dwellings at the start of 2023. A vacancy rate of 1.4% is quite low and indicates there are not enough rental properties available.

‘Unoccupied private dwellings’ describes the number of dwellings that were unoccupied on Census night. On Census night in 2021, Banyule had 3,941 unoccupied dwellings which is 7.6% of housing stock. 7.6% appears to be consistent over the last few Censuses for Banyule and is lower than Victoria’s rate (11.1%) and Australia’s rate (10.1%).

### Banyule Unoccupied Dwellings by Type

Tenure Type	Unoccupied Dwellings	%
Separate House	2233	57%
Townhouse	823	21%
Flat or Apartment	866	22%
Other (Caravan, Cabin, Tent, House attached to a shop)	13	0%
Not stated	0	0%
Not Applicable	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3935</b>	

## Housing Stock (2021)



**36,194**  
Separate Houses

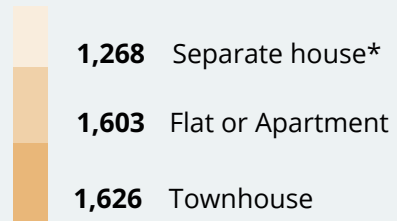


**7,750**  
Townhouses



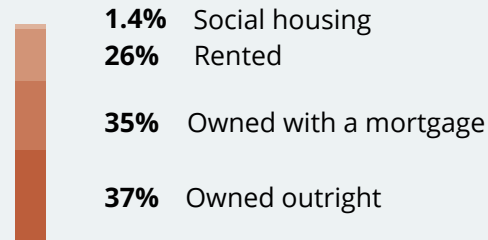
**3,635**  
Flat or Apartment

## Dwelling Completions (2016-21)



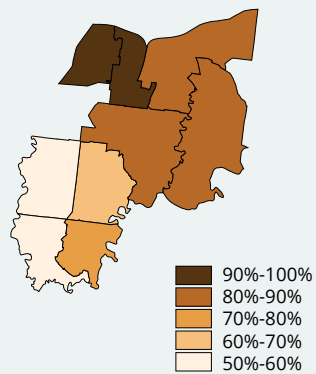
\*includes replacement dwellings

## Tenure

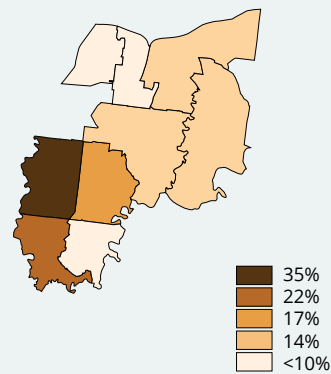


## Housing Distribution

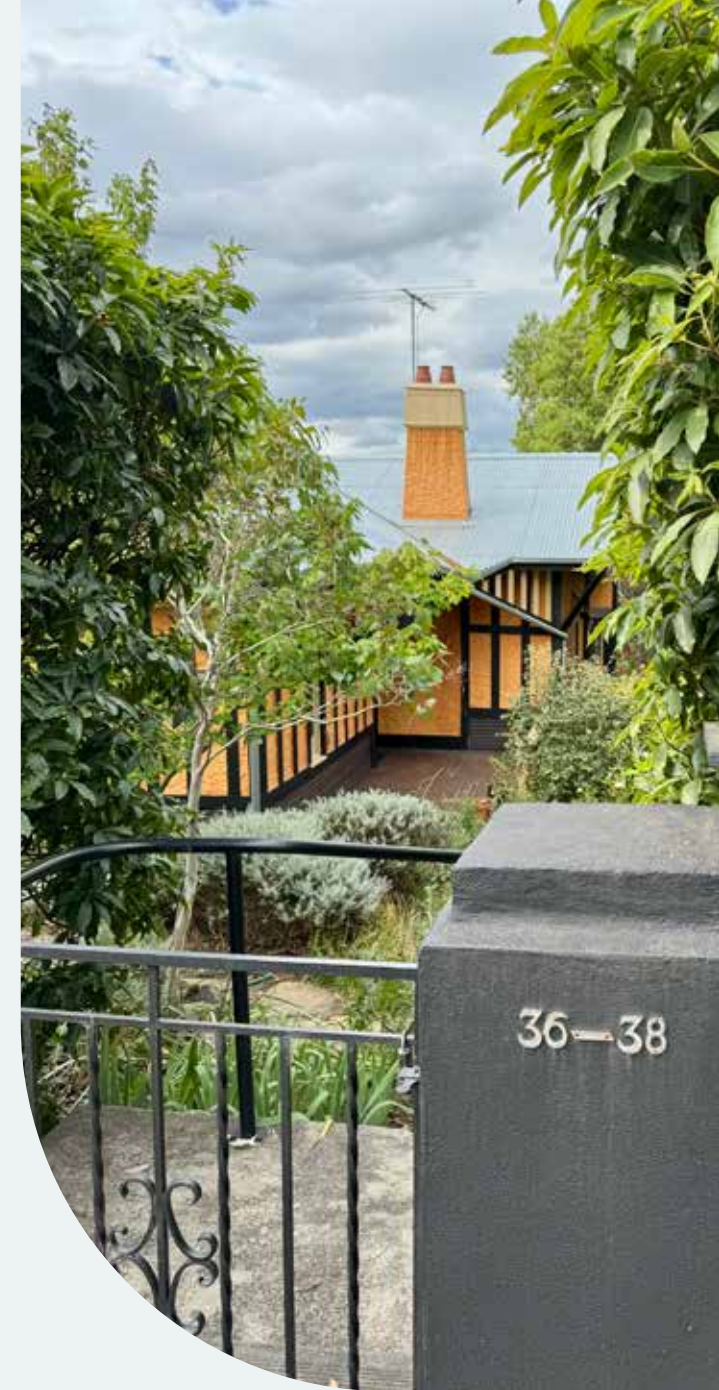
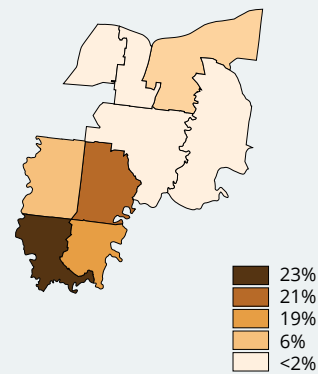
### Separate House



### Townhouses



### Flat or Apartment



## Our future communities and housing needs

Our future population will be shaped by how we plan for the future including the form, location and type of dwellings we will support.

Current population forecasts anticipate a continuity of recent trends including:

- **Ageing** – Our municipality will continue to age with an increasing proportion of mature families, empty nesters and retirees making up our population.
- **Young adults** – The municipality is expected to remain a major destination for young adults with residents aged 20 to 29 years of age projected to continue to grow. La Trobe University and the City's substantive hospital infrastructure are anticipated to be major attractors for students and health workers.
- **Households** – Couples with children will continue to be the most prevalent household type. However, couples without children and lone person households are projected to continue to grow substantially making up the largest share of household growth.

Our changing population has implications for our housing policy:

- Demand for smaller dwellings from students and growing numbers of smaller households will only increase.
- The sale, renewal of dwellings and accompanying downsizer demand will continue to grow as our population ages.

We can help renew our population by doing more to retain young households through appropriate and affordable housing. As a municipality that attracts large numbers of young adults (as students and key workers), these individuals and households will help enrich and sustain our communities.

To inform this Housing Strategy, a housing capacity analysis was undertaken which identified the development potential in Banyule's residential land. The analysis found that the land zoning as at February 2023 allowed for up to 53,250 net additional dwellings, which is, in theory, sufficient capacity for Banyule's future housing needs. However, we also need to make sure we create the right kinds of housing. The analysis found that Banyule should boost supply of medium density housing to better meet the projected needs of the community.

## Social and affordable housing need

Whilst we recognise that the primary responsibility for provision of social and affordable housing is with Federal and State Government, Banyule has an important role in enabling, advocating for, and improving the supply, quality and access to social and affordable housing.

**Affordable housing is housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low- and moderate-income households.**

**A household is at risk of housing stress when housing costs such as mortgage repayments or rent are more than 30% of the household disposable income.**

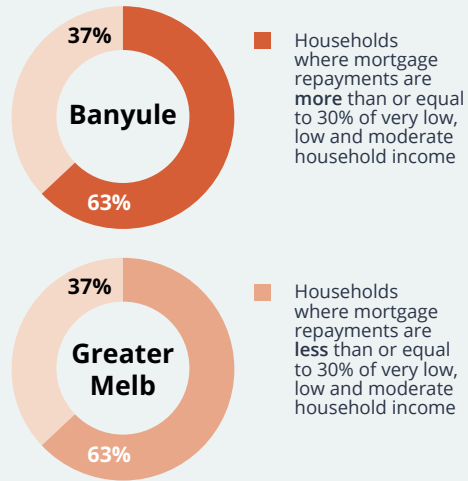
A household is said to be experiencing housing stress if the occupant is spending over 30% of their disposable income on housing. This is a broad definition applied to home ownership, rental, and other forms of housing tenure. An individual experiences rental or mortgage stress if they must forgo basic goods, services and necessities to pay for their housing. This is only a general definition of housing stress. Many other factors can create housing stress, such as overcrowding of dwellings (e.g. a five person family in a 2-bed dwelling), variable living costs (e.g. a person with a disability may have higher cost of living and therefore can only afford 20% of their income on housing), and many other factors.

The last twelve months of successive interest rate rises, and cost of living pressures has further compounded the housing stress currently being experienced in our community.

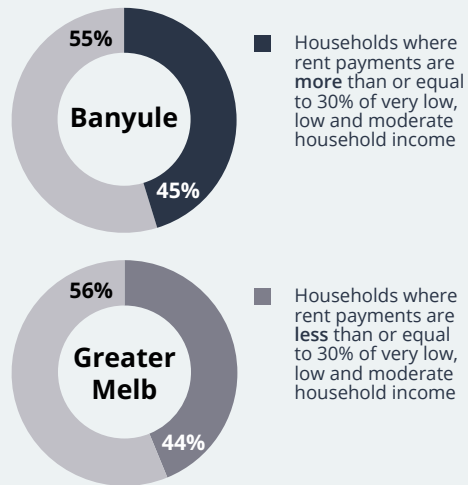
In the 2022-23 financial year, only 3.4% of new rental properties were affordable to low-income earners in Banyule.

Banyule has previously acknowledged the urgency of increasing the supply of social and affordable housing through an Interim Social and Affordable Housing Policy (2023) which was in place to guide Council's decision making and advocacy for more housing until this Housing Strategy was adopted. This Housing Strategy supersedes the Interim Policy and absorbs its role of informing about

## House Mortgage Stress



## Rental Stress



Banyule’s social and affordable housing need, and positioning Council to effectively support and advocate for more social and affordable housing in the municipality.

## Homelessness and Hardship

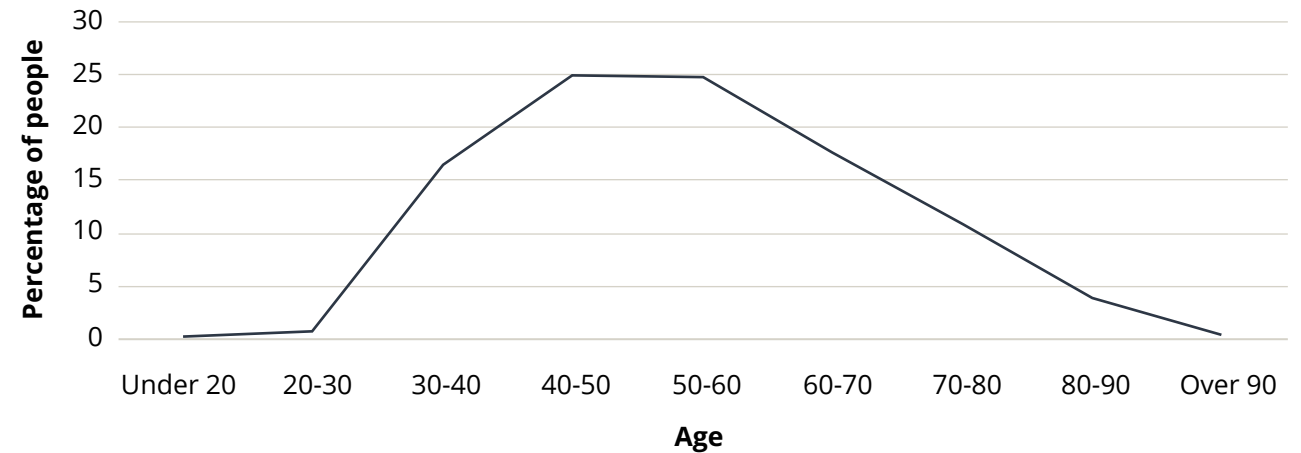
The rising cost of house prices and rentals is a major contributor to the risk of homelessness. Between June 2021 and June 2022 1,183 people were assisted by specialist homelessness services in Banyule. Whilst it is challenging to get an accurate count through the census, the recent 2021 data provided an estimate of 538 homeless people in Banyule on census night. This was an increase of nearly 40% from 2016 census data where 326 homeless. Whilst the numbers will always fluctuate, homelessness services in the area are seeing an increase in homelessness and those living in marginal housing.

In Victoria, women that have experienced family and domestic violence are the biggest client group seeking assistance from homelessness services. In 2020-21 financial year, 36.6% of these women were not able to be provided accommodation. A lack of access to housing results in 7,690 Victorian woman a year returning to domestic violence perpetrators due to having nowhere else to live, and 9,120 women becoming homeless after leaving their homes due to domestic and family violence.

Banyule’s homelessness and hardship data shows that 57% of people accessing related services are female. About half of the people accessing services are aged between 40 and 60 years old.

Meanwhile, public housing data in Banyule shows that there is very high demand for public housing in the people under 20 age bracket. The next highest demand is in the females over 65 age bracket.

## Age of people accessing homelessness and hardship services



## Policy Context

The scale, location, form, and function of our housing is the outcome of an intricate combination of policy, market, personal, financial, and development influences.

Banyule City Council is the Planning Authority for all housing in Banyule, which is an important but not absolute influence on the City's housing outcomes. Council's planning responsibilities compel the City to both facilitate and guide housing outcomes throughout Banyule to the benefit of the existing and future community, while also responding to broader metropolitan challenges and state government directions.

There are a multitude of Federal, State, regional and local policies and strategies which influence Banyule's housing. This section gives an overview of the policy framework this strategy has been prepared in.

### FEDERAL POLICY

Federal policy influences Australian housing outcomes in several ways, through immigration levels, tax provisions and as a provider of social housing. Council can advocate to other tiers of government for affordable housing, social housing and improvements to infrastructure to support residential areas.

The Federal Government has also established the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) and the National Housing Accord. These two initiatives, delivered by Housing Australia, aim to improve housing outcomes for Australians and will

collectively support the delivery of 20,000 new social and 20,000 new affordable homes across Australia over five years.

### STATE POLICY

#### ***Plan Melbourne 2017-2050***

At the State level Melbourne's growth is guided by *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*. The Plan sets the strategic direction for metropolitan Melbourne's land use planning, including housing policy, and its directions are included in the Planning Policy Framework of all Victorian Planning Schemes. Banyule's future housing strategy needs to support the land use and development priorities identified in Plan Melbourne such as directing more housing closer to jobs, services and transport. The Victorian Government is reviewing and updating the Plan to become a state-wide strategy. This is anticipated to be released at the end of 2024.

#### ***Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034***

The other major policy driver from the Victorian Government is the *Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034*. Released in September 2023, the Statement outlines an ambitious agenda of reforms to how the State Government proposes to address housing needs in Victoria. This includes increased Ministerial powers to expedite major residential developments, establish housing targets, directing 70% of new homes to established areas and reforms to the Victorian planning system..

The implementation of such extensive housing reform, whilst still to be fully understood, will have an impact on Banyule. Having a current Housing Strategy that reflects the values and diverse needs of our local population will put us in a strong position to negotiate and advocate for better housing outcomes.

The Victorian Government's Big Housing Build, delivered by Homes Victoria, has also built 123 homes in Banyule and another 210 homes are currently underway.

#### ***Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework***

The framework – titled *Mana-na worn-tyeen maartakoort: Every Aboriginal Person Has a Home* – sets out a blueprint to improve Aboriginal housing outcomes in a generation. The framework is the first self-determined strategic policy direction led and developed by the Victorian Aboriginal community and seeks to move from crisis management of Aboriginal housing to achieve housing equity with a new perspective. It finds that an additional 27,000 additional Aboriginal households are needed by 2036.

### LOCAL POLICY

#### ***Banyule Community Vision***

Banyule's *Community Vision 2041 (October 2021)* places a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of the current and emerging community. It captures the aspiration for Banyule to be a city with diverse, affordable and sustainable housing that meets the mixed needs of a diverse community.



## **Banyule Council Plan**

*Banyule's Council Plan 2021-2025* is Council's key strategic document and outlines our priorities and focus for the next four years. This Plan aligns with Banyule's Community Vision and demonstrates how we will strive towards that vision, focus our efforts and measure our progress. Key themes include: inclusive and connected community, sustainable environment, well-built city, community assets and facilities, thriving local community and trusted and supportive leadership.

## **Urban Forest Strategy**

Banyule's Urban Forest Strategy (2023) outlines Banyule's vision for the long term future for the urban forest and provides strategic management actions to get there over the short and medium term.

## **Banyule Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2035**

The Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2035 provides an overall framework to address transport issues, and create a more accessible, safe, liveable and sustainable community. The Plan includes a vision for land use and development: "Land use and development in Banyule will support sustainable transport and reduce distance travelled."

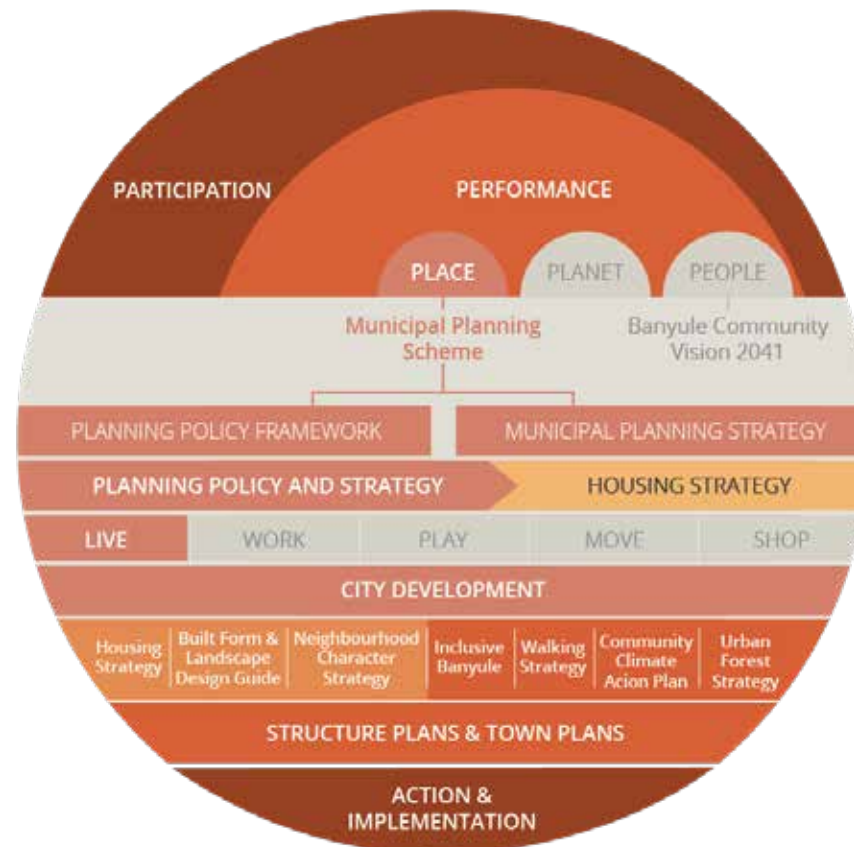
## **Banyule Planning Scheme**

The Banyule Planning Scheme is a statutory document that provides the State and local policy and provisions that control land use and guide development in the municipality. It does this through the Planning Policy Framework and the application of zones and overlays to meet its strategic planning objectives.

The Planning Policy Framework requires Banyule Council to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15-year period and provide

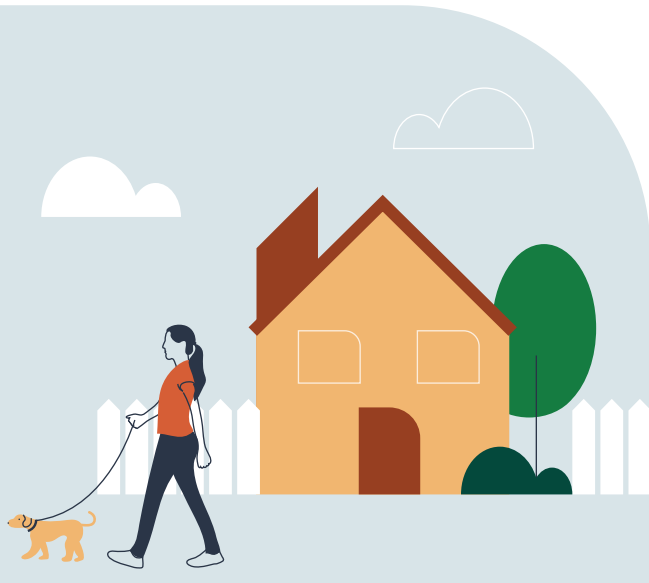
clear direction on locations where growth should occur.

In general, the Planning Scheme only requires a planning permit for developments of two or more dwellings. Single dwelling developments generally do not require a planning permit on lots greater than 300sqm. However, in some cases overlays may trigger a permit for a single dwelling, such as the Heritage Overlay. For this reason, the Housing Strategy can generally only impact subdivision and development of two or more dwellings.



# 3. Opportunities and Constraints

This Housing Strategy balances the priorities of the community, State and local policy directions while seeking to promote better outcomes for our communities and neighbourhoods in line with research and best practice across the world. This chapter discusses the range of opportunities and constraints we consider in planning for the future of Banyule’s housing.



The type, design, and location of housing play pivotal roles in shaping an individual’s well-being. Proximity to essential services, green open spaces, and social amenities can enhance the overall quality of life. For example, if someone can easily walk to access daily needs, such as milk, they are more likely to forego a car trip, exercise and interact with other community members in the process. Further, the physical attributes of a dwelling, such as its size, layout, and amenities, directly impact the comfort and functionality of daily life.

Adequate space and proper design can contribute to a sense of security, privacy, and satisfaction, fostering a positive environment for residents. Conversely, cramped or poorly designed spaces may lead to stress, discomfort, and hinder overall well-being. Features like natural light, ventilation, and accessibility also play crucial roles, as they influence mood, sleep quality, and overall physical health.

Well located and designed housing doesn’t just help at an individual level. Fit for purpose, well-located, and well-designed housing can profoundly contribute to fostering a sense of community. When housing is designed to meet the needs of its residents and is located in areas with accessible communal spaces, it creates a conducive environment for social interaction and connection. Thoughtful planning, such as the inclusion of shared recreational areas, community centres, and green spaces, encourages residents to engage

with one another, building a sense of belonging. Well-designed housing layouts that facilitate casual encounters and neighbourly interactions can strengthen social ties, leading to a more cohesive and supportive community.

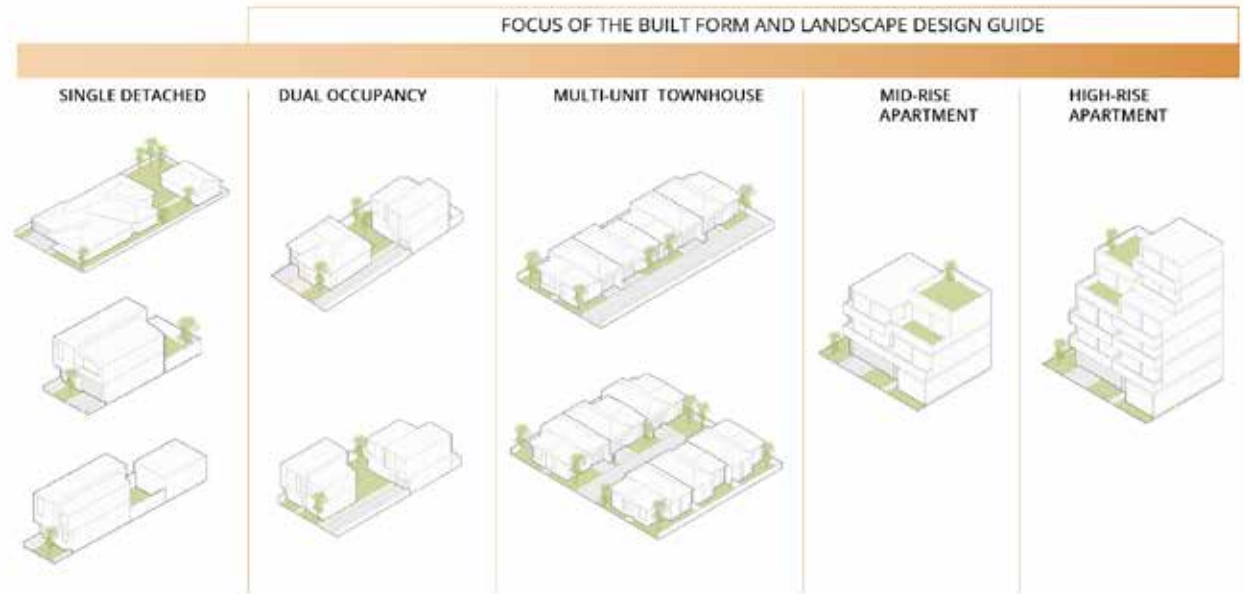
Housing that is fit for purpose and strategically located can attract a diverse group of residents, further enriching the community with a variety of perspectives, skills, and backgrounds. In this way, housing becomes a catalyst for the development of a vibrant and interconnected community. Thoughtful planning, such as the inclusion of shared recreational areas, community centers, green spaces and sustainable transport routes encourage residents to engage with one another.

## Housing choice

People and households have different housing needs throughout their lives. Life stages, personal income, differences in physical or mental abilities and current commitments/preferences, all impact housing preference. Housing diversity is required to meet the needs of our current and future community. Housing diversity refers to:

- **Housing typology** – Ensuring there are options available in different types of homes including detached dwellings, dual occupancy, multi-unit, townhouse, mid-rise and high-rise apartments.

- **Housing scale** – Housing scale refers to the density of housing. Some housing typologies are by default higher housing scale, such as high-rise apartment buildings. Single detached dwellings on the other hand are low scale housing. Some housing typologies can be designed at different housing scale, for example, a townhouse development at a high scale might be larger or take up more land, while a townhouse development at low scale might have greater setbacks and less dwellings.
- **Housing delivery and tenure** – The Australian housing system is geared towards traditional housing delivery methods of market rental, mortgage, and owned properties. Social housing is also delivered through State Government processes. These are all an important part of diverse delivery and tenure, but alternative methods of tenure and delivery can also include systems such as rent to buy, build to rent and delivery of more affordable housing.
- **Housing layout** – Housing options are fit-for-purpose or adaptable for a wide range of people. A multi-dwelling development should show that there is variety of internal layouts across the development, including variety in the number of bedrooms, inclusion of accessibly designed dwellings available for people of varying abilities, a mix of single and multi-level living, and options for small or larger multi-generational households.



### THE 'MISSING MIDDLE'

To date, Banyule has been good at providing separate detached housing, and, since the implementation of the 2009 Housing Strategy, increased its supply of high-rise apartment buildings in Ivanhoe and Heidelberg. There has also been some re-development of properties into townhouses, units, and dual occupancy, however not to the same degree. This has resulted in limited housing choice available in the middle of the density scale.

Limited mid-density housing typology choice affects those households looking to downsize. We have heard through consultation that many of our older residents would like to continue living in their neighbourhoods, but there are not enough suitable homes in the right locations.



## INNOVATIVE HOUSING DELIVERY AND TENURE MODELS

'Business as usual' responses to housing growth will be inadequate to achieve the broader housing, social and environmental goals that Banyule is seeking to achieve. With mounting pressures, supporting innovation in housing design will be a key part of successfully addressing these challenges. Innovation will be required to deliver an affordable, diverse housing supply of sustainable, energy efficient homes that appropriately respond to their context.

The existing development models are suitable in a limited variety of contexts and do not address the full range of issues being faced in Banyule. Housing models such as collective and build-to-rent and rent-to-own are increasingly common in Australia providing an alternative to the increasingly difficult pathway to home ownership.

The demand for diverse housing options is also driven by changing demographics and lifestyle preferences. An ageing population, increasing single-person households, and the rise of gig economy workers have adjusted the traditional notions of homeownership and long-term financial commitment it requires. Innovative housing delivery and tenure solutions can cater to these shifting demographics, offering housing arrangements that are more adaptable to individual needs.

Housing typologies such as 1-bedroom houses provide housing options for individuals and couples other than apartments that fit sensitively into suburban contexts. As land values price people out of areas where essential infrastructure such as hospitals are located, key worker and affordable housing plays a key role in ensuring people continue to be able to live close to where they work or study. The Victorian Government's recent initiative to encourage one- or two-bedroom small second homes, commonly known as a granny flat, may help open up this type of housing to the community.

Expanding housing delivery and tenure options is essential for creating a housing market that is not only financially accessible but also responsive to the evolving socio-economic landscape and diverse preferences of today's population. Council can assist innovative housing delivery and tenure options by making sure to be open and ready to consider different kinds of applications, as well as encouraging innovative ideas when there is a residential component to Council's divestment sites tender process (when Council is selling land).

Provision of housing is only one part of the equation. Good design is not an optional extra but an essential part of good housing. Examples of innovative housing models that deliver high quality design and sustainability outcomes while addressing social and housing affordability challenges are seen across Australia.

### Real examples of innovative housing

Top photo: Build-to-rent in Kensington.

Middle photo: co-housing development in Northcote.

Bottom photo: Key worker housing in Canberra

## SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Banyule's housing affordability is in decline, leading to housing stress for many. Housing affordability is now a national, state and metropolitan issue as well as an issue for our community.

Banyule is a relatively affluent municipality when compared with Greater Melbourne. The gross median household income in 2021 was \$2,027 per week, 6.6% higher than the Greater Melbourne median of \$1,901 per week. While our incomes have steadily grown over the past two decades, they haven't grown at the same rate as our house prices which, up until recently, grew by an average of 7.4% year-on-year. The widening discrepancy between incomes and housing prices means our 'very low', 'low' and 'medium' income earners are increasingly priced out of home ownership. Rental conditions have also become more challenging.

The ongoing escalation in the cost of housing entails wide ranging social and economic impacts. For our long-standing homeowners, sustained house price growth resulted in major growth in household wealth. Full home ownership is highly prevalent in our community with 39% of detached housing currently owned without a mortgage.

For our home owning households, ongoing price appreciation has resulted in an ongoing increase in housing wealth, which later in life often enables a range of financial benefits and new housing choices including opportunities to downsize, to sell and fund retirement and to sell and pass on wealth to dependents. Ivanhoe Major Activity Centre, for instance, is emerging as a downsizer destination, while there is also evidence of older households migrating to coastal destinations from our city.

As prices have grown, the housing wealth gap between young and older households has widened. Household wealth for households in their 50s is now on average over 230% higher than households in their 30s. Younger adults more frequently live with their parents than a generation ago as affordability seemingly delays the commencement of their housing journey.

While home owning households have generally benefited from price growth, our younger residents and 'very low', 'low' and 'moderate' income households now face very challenging housing market conditions.

These households can be comprised of key workers, in caring roles or hospitality and retail workers who provide essential services and contribute to our vibrant activity centres

Our 'low' and 'very low' income households are generally not able to afford to purchase in the municipality. Households generally need to earn \$166,000 per annum to afford the local median detached house price as at 2022 and \$114,000 per annum to afford the local median unit price as at 2022.

This means that only 'moderate' and 'high income' households are generally able to purchase in Banyule unless households have access to inherited wealth, which is an increasingly important pathway to home ownership. Even for moderate income households, purchasing is challenging. A family on the upper band of 'moderate' incomes at \$132,000 per annum for instance, is technically able to afford a dwelling of approximately \$840,000. This, however, is below the lower quartile median price for separate

houses in Banyule which was \$875,000 in 2021.

'Moderate income' households therefore need to choose between available 2- and 3-bedroom units and apartments in Banyule or migrate to more affordable housing markets such as Whittlesea, where single detached dwellings are more affordable. When this happens, however, we lose young families and young adults and their associated influence and benefits for our community.

Both State and Federal Government are expanding affordable housing funding, while new entities and models of affordable housing delivery are also emerging. We as a community need to be ready to be a part of this, to ensure our low-income households are receiving support. The more prepared we are to interact with this topic, the better outcomes we can get for our municipality.

Given the large portion of the community affected by the housing affordability crisis, we must also take action at a local level. Council's adopted *Interim Social and Affordable Housing Policy (2023)* has been absorbed into this Housing Strategy. Council will continue to advocate for State and Federal reform, such as inclusionary zoning. Inclusionary zoning either mandates or creates incentives, so that a proportion of a residential development includes affordable housing.

There are also mechanisms to explore in the planning scheme to secure additional affordable housing. An industry standard of 10% contribution of social or affordable housing in well located areas where higher scale housing is encouraged. Ways in which the contribution can be best delivered will need to be prepared in collaboration



with housing providers. Council will not accept monetary contributions as part of this process.

## HOUSING AND FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Banyule. There is also a large Aboriginal community which comprises of members from nations and clans across Australia. We recognise the composition of Aboriginal communities in Banyule is multifaceted.

Banyule City Council acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were the First Peoples of this land and have strived to retain their culture and identity through the period of European settlement for over 200 years. Victorian Aboriginal people face severe housing disadvantage and are 14 times more likely to experience homelessness than non-Aboriginal Victorians.

The Productivity Commission's December 2020 report into *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage*, identifies that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People continue to experience complex historical disadvantage. This includes, lower education and training levels, lower incomes, and the compounding disadvantage of dispossession of their land. In 2020 the Federal Government released the *Closing the Gap Report*, in order to call all governments to commit to achieving equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 2023, Government released the accompanying, *Closing the Gap Implementation Report*, which committed that by 2031 there would be an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in

appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing from 81 to 88 per cent, and that all Aboriginal households in or near to a town receive essential services that meet or exceed the same standard as applies generally within the town.

Banyule City Council is committed to reconciliation and working in partnership with local Aboriginal organisations to ensure culturally designed housing is available and appropriately located with access to a range of services for Aboriginal people within the municipality. At the 2021 Census, there were approximately 871 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Banyule or 0.7% of the total population, which is the same portion as Greater Melbourne.

The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework notes: 'Aboriginal households are generally more open and often likely to care for elders or be kinship carers and cater for large extended and mobile families. This strength should be acknowledged and supported in considering housing requirements'. Across Victoria, it is expected that the Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population will grow from 57,782 in 2016 to 95,149 in 2036 and will require an additional 5,085 Aboriginal Housing units by 2036.

Affordable housing should be developed in partnership with the Aboriginal community to support the specific cultural and kinship needs of Aboriginal households. Once developed, the housing should be owned and managed by Aboriginal-led community housing organisations.

## Well located housing

State Government policy states that new housing should be located in areas which have good access to public transport, and shops which, at a minimum, provide for daily needs like fruits and vegetables. This approach is aligned with the principles of creating more sustainable, livable, and pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods. By designing neighborhoods so that housing is within a walkable distance of amenities like public transport stops, schools, parks, shops, and other essential services, it promotes active transportation, reduces dependence on cars, and enhances the overall well-being of residents. In turn, easy access to shops, services and public transport enables residents to shop locally more easily, creating a stronger local market.

5-minute and 10-minute “walkability catchments” are used to define a walkable distance. As a base, a 5-minute walk is measured at 400m, and a 10-minute walk is measured at 800m. These are considered reasonable distances for individuals to walk comfortably to access various amenities and services. These catchment distances are based on research indicating that people are more likely to choose walking as a mode of transportation when destinations are conveniently located within a comfortable walking distance for most people.



### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Train stations and strategic bus or tram routes are mapped by the State Government, known as the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN). The maps below identify the PPTN public transport stops including train stations, tram stops and high frequency bus stops, and show a 400m and 800m buffer, along with the actual walkability via street access.

### ACTIVITY CENTRES AND SERVICES

Activity centres across Banyule and near the border in neighbouring Councils have been assessed for their ability to deliver daily shopping needs. The below mapped activity centres have, or have the ability to accommodate such shops, and show a 400m and 800m buffer, along with the actual walkability via street access.

### EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF GROWTH

Banyule's *Housing Strategy (2009)* identifies that housing growth should be directed to the Major Activity Centres (MACs) of Ivanhoe, Heidelberg and Greensborough. These locations continue to be supported by this *Housing Strategy (2024)*.

There are other locations in Banyule, outside the MACs, which have good access to public transport, services and shops such as Watsonia, Rosanna and Bundoora. A measured approach to housing growth in more well-served places across the municipality will help ease the pressure for development on the southern MACs in Banyule (Ivanhoe and Heidelberg). The level of housing growth should be measured and applied to protect what the community value about the area.

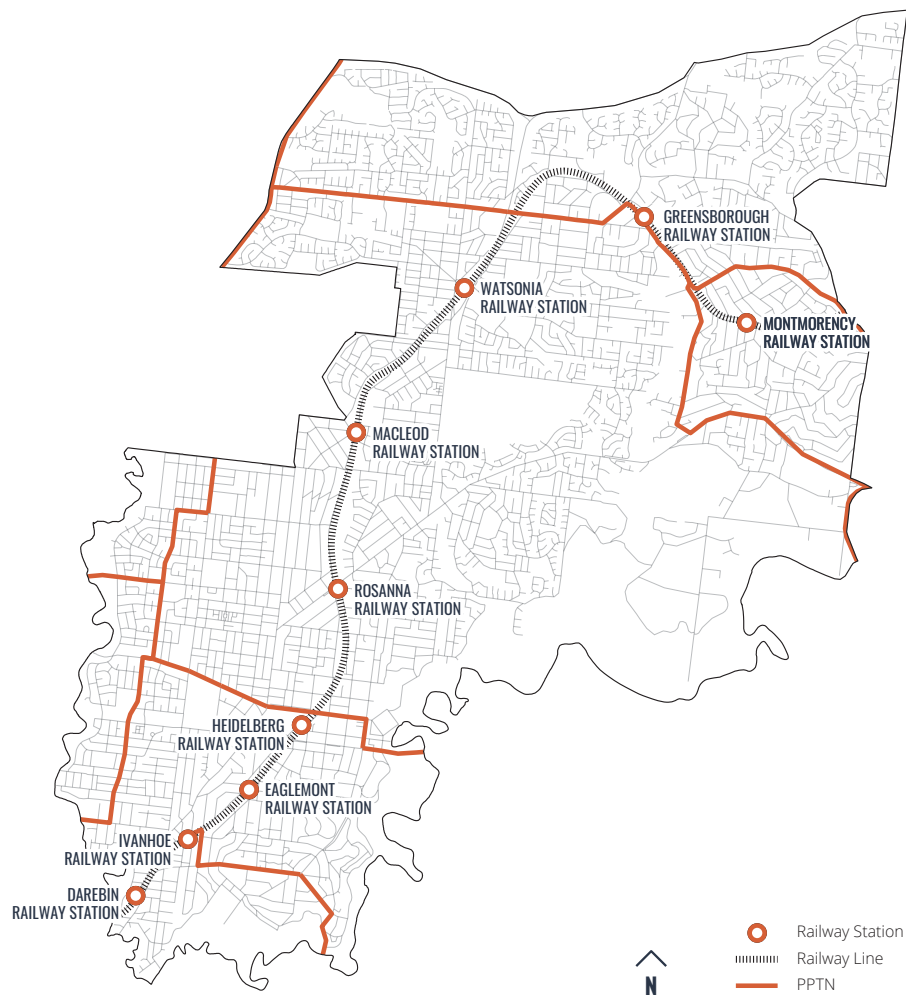


Figure 3: Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN)

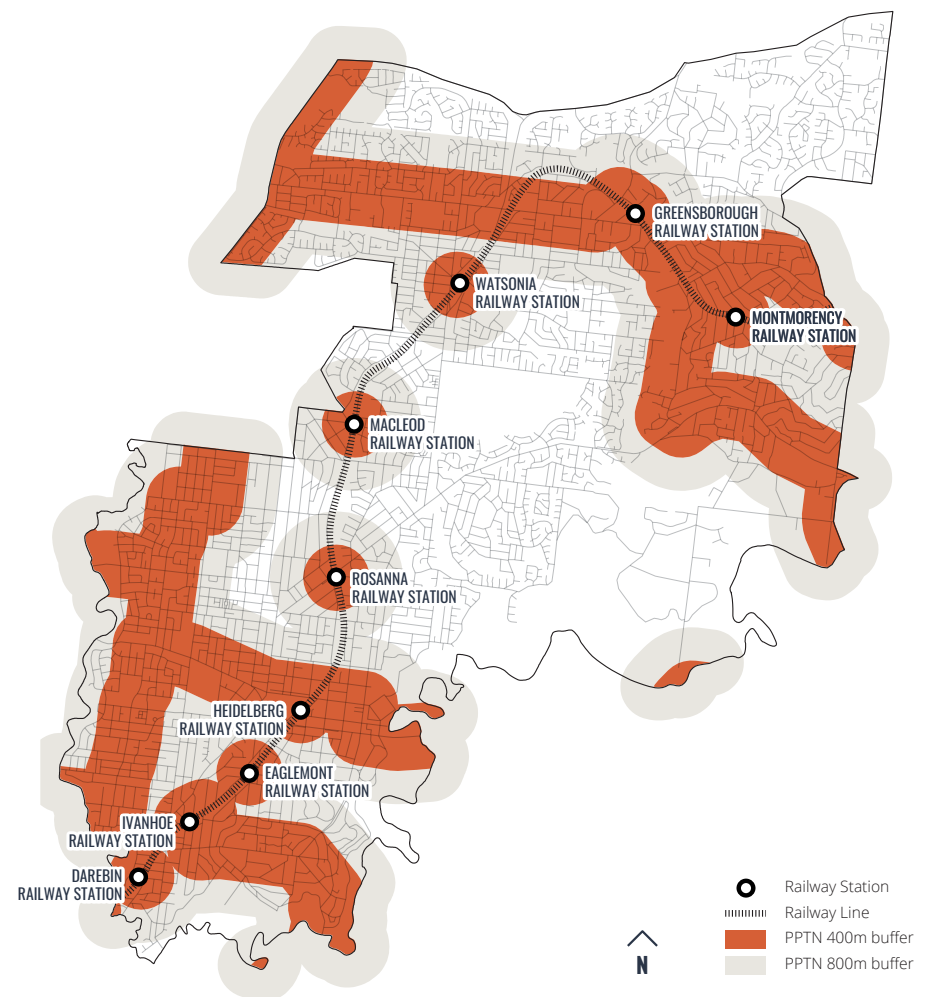


Figure 4: Walkability buffers from PPTN



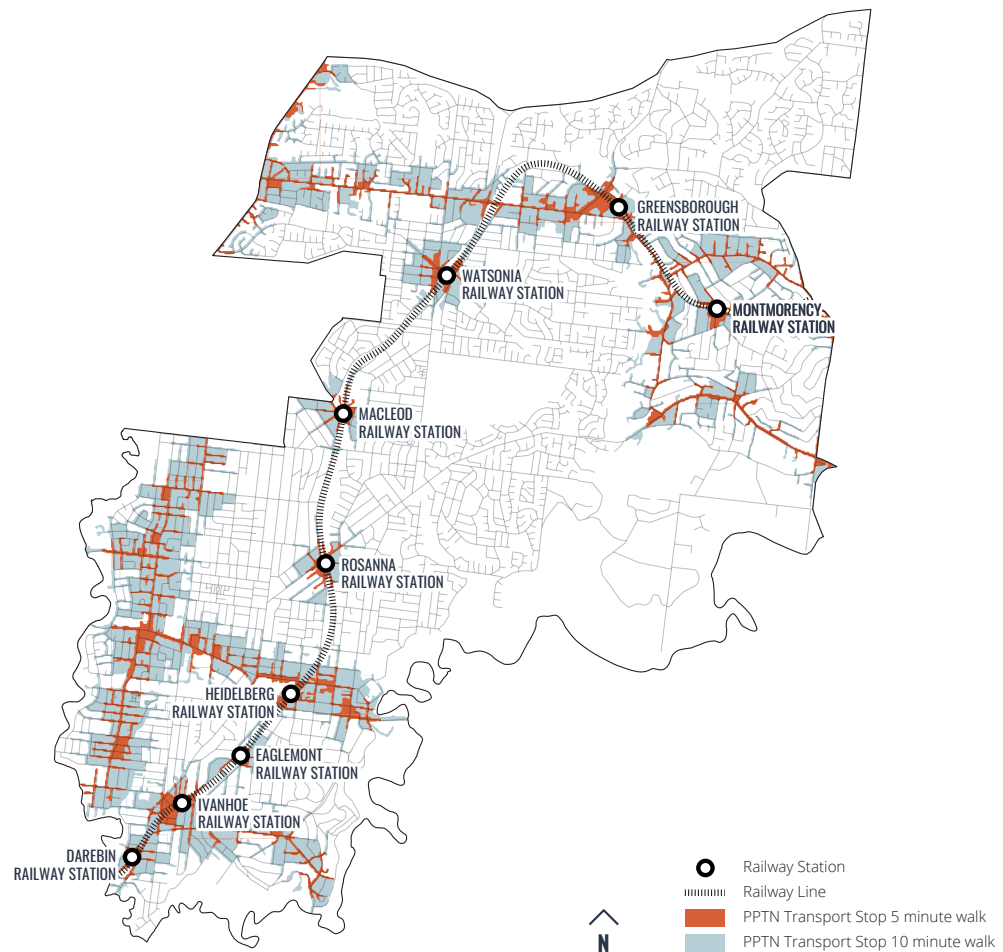


Figure 5: Walkability modelling from PPTN train, tram and bus stops

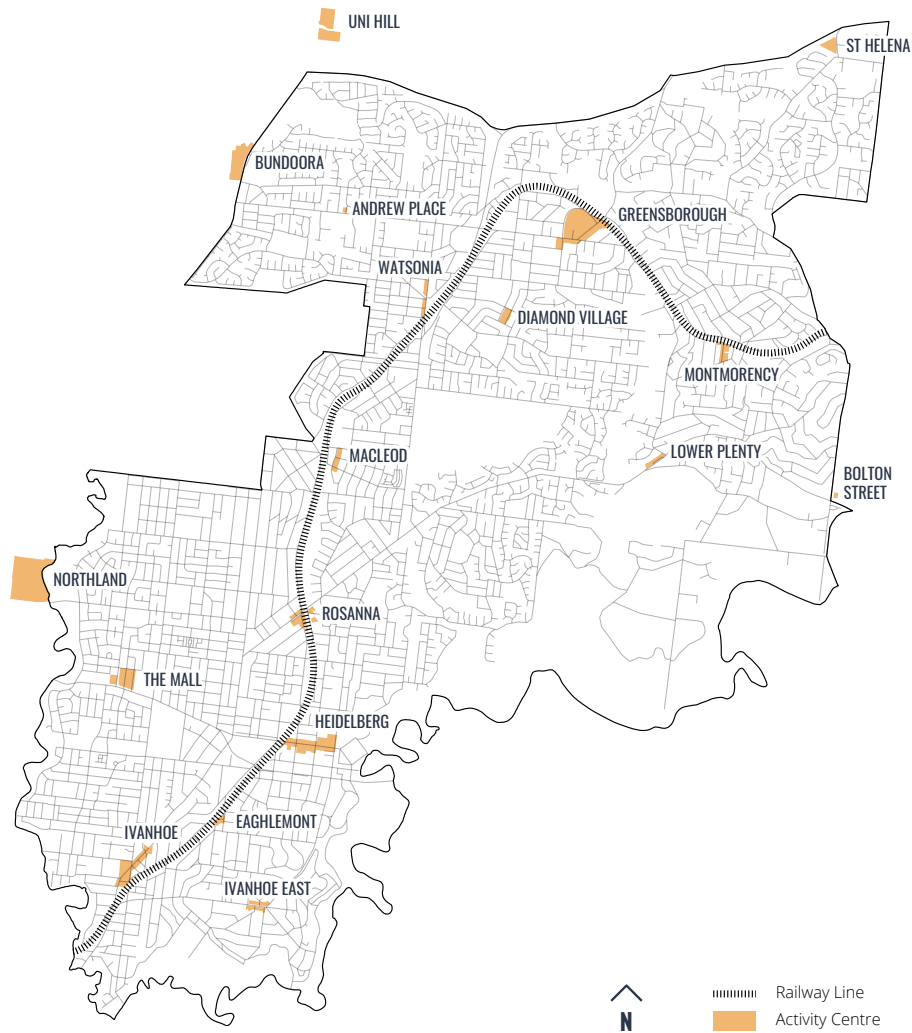


Figure 6: Activity centres

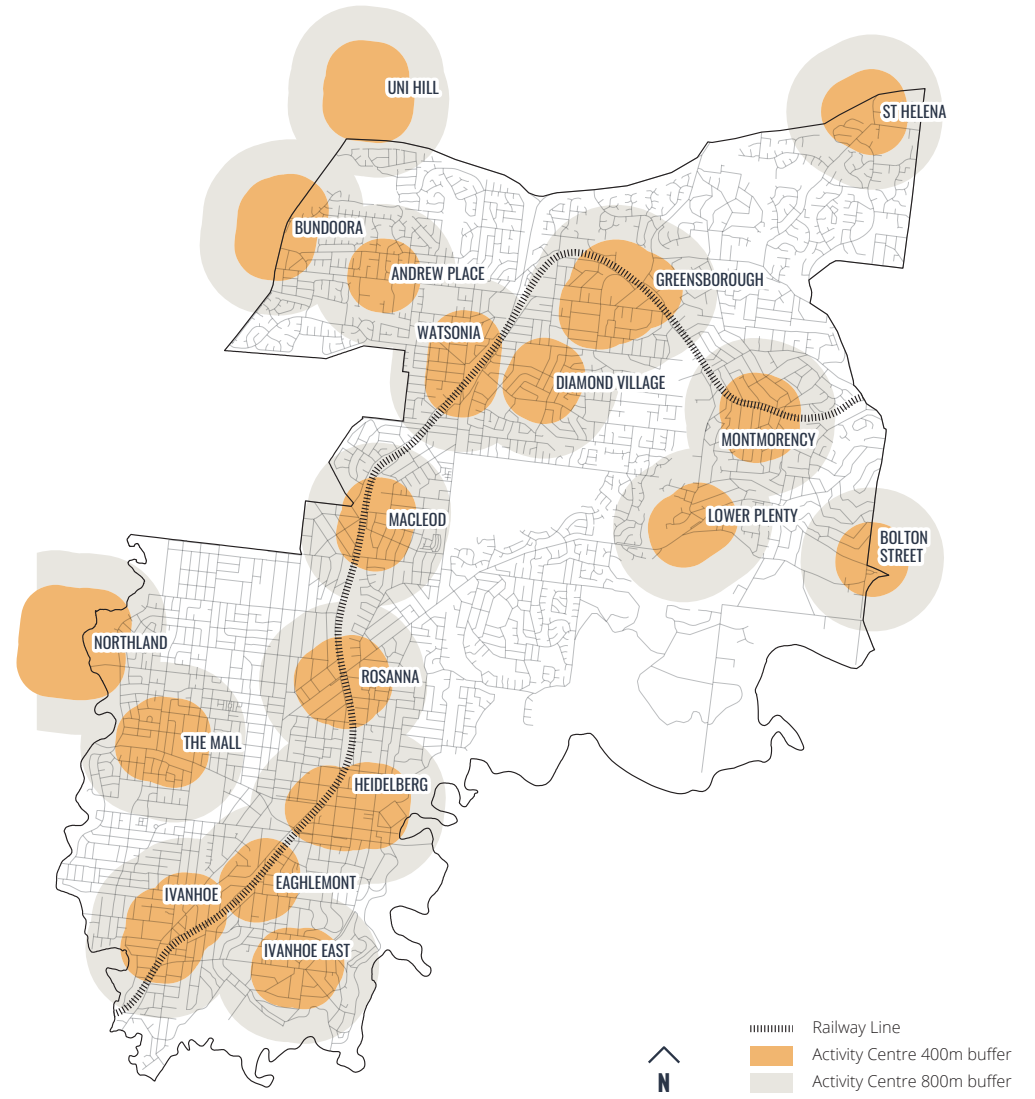


Figure 7: Walkability buffers from activity centres

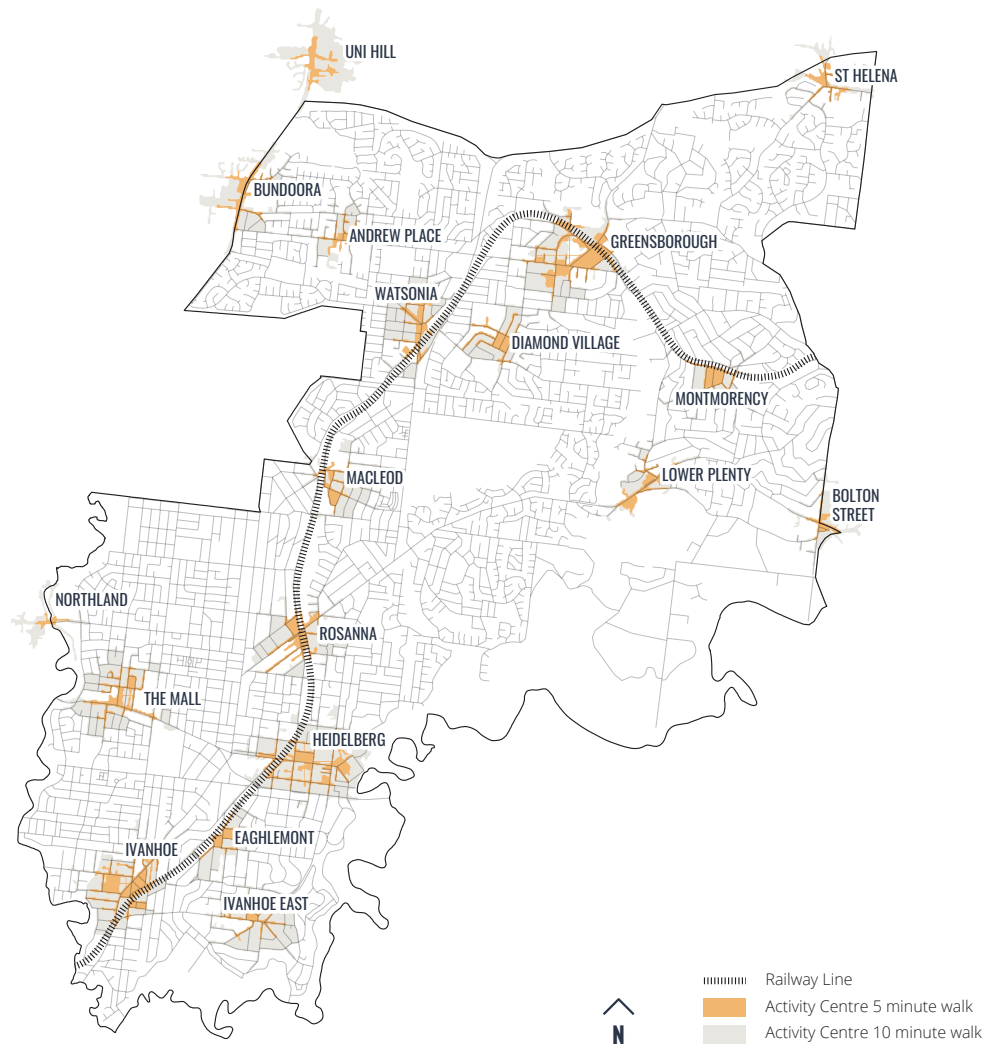


Figure 8: Walkability modelling from activity centres



## OPEN SPACE

*Open spaces are not proposed to be changed to residential uses through this Strategy.*

Banyule is generally well provided for in relation to public open space. The corridors formed by the Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek which all flow through the municipality have played a significant role in placing Banyule in this position. However, the distribution of open space is inconsistent and in some areas of Banyule, access to open space could be improved.

The east part of Banyule (Lower Plenty, Viewbank and Yallambie) includes over 300 hectares of open space, while the north-east (Montmorency, Briar Hill, St Helena and Eltham North) has 60 hectares, the north-west (Bundoora, Watsonia and Watsonia North) has 61 hectares and the middle suburbs of Banyule (Heidelberg, Rosanna and Macleod), the most populated in Banyule, has 98 hectares. The southern area (Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe East and Eaglemont) has 199 hectares of open space, large tracts of which are along the Darebin Creek and Yarra River Corridors.

Banyule's *Public Open Space Plan 2016-31* (POSP) identifies areas across Banyule most in need of public open space. When several metrics are considered, there are currently 26 different areas across the municipality that have been identified as needing increased access to open space and their priority considers population, urban heat data, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) index and other relevant data.

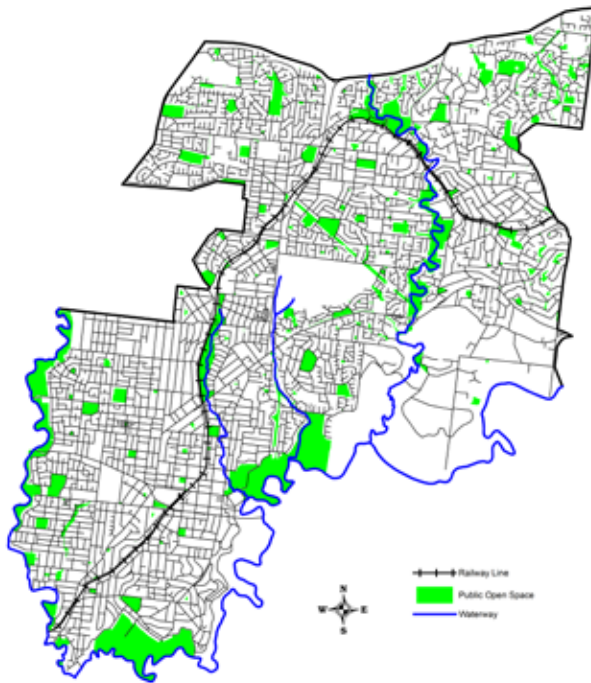
As our housing landscape develops, and housing scale is increased in some areas, our open space provision must cater to the community. The most proactive tool available to increase the amount and quality of Banyule's open space is via the Public Open Space Levy (the Levy). The Levy is a contribution to future public open space required to be paid as part of subdivision of land, either in land or equivalent financial value. Currently, the Banyule Planning Scheme includes a levy of 5% contribution for residential land. This rate has been insufficient to meet the future open space needs set out in the POSP. A review of the Levy and contribution rate is required to ensure our open space network meets the needs of the community.

## BIODIVERSITY

Banyule is fortunate to have many important conservation reserves, wildlife corridors and green open spaces that support our local flora and fauna. Our community feel connected to these places and care about how they are managed and protected. Our plan for housing must carefully consider any impacts on biodiversity.

Biodiversity can be impacted at many stages of the development process: such as through clearing more vegetation than is needed, building homes which take up the majority of a site, and planting trees and vegetation which is not suitable and is therefore removed shortly after the home is occupied.

The map identifies potential significant areas of biodiversity in Banyule. Areas have been selected based on historic and current documentation (conservation plans, habitat mapping, significant



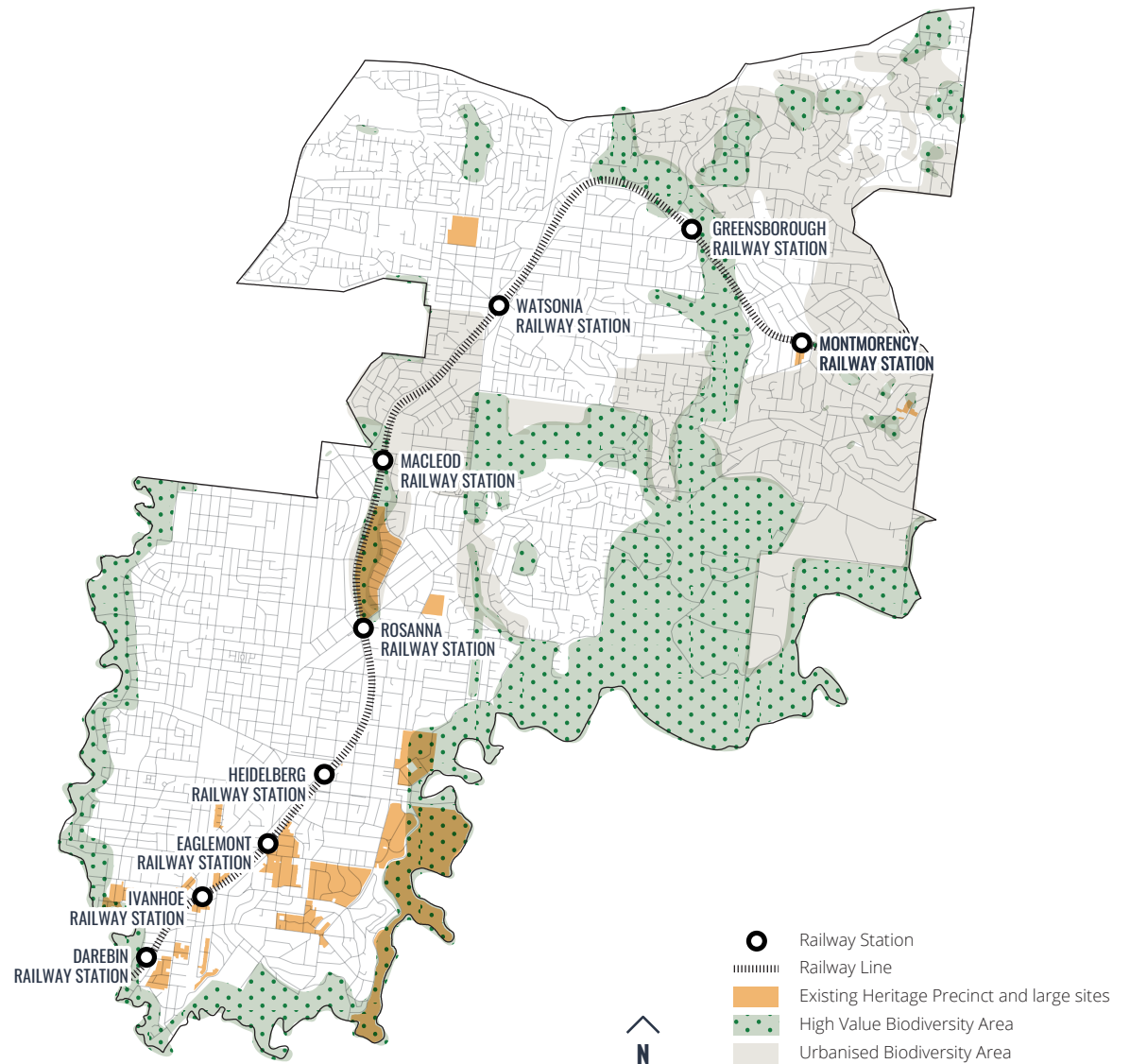
**Figure 9: Public Open Space**

species occurrence) for areas of high level indigenous faunal and floral occurrence (highlighted in green). These areas are mostly around wildlife corridors and fragmented conservation reserves where significant species (both state and federally listed) occur. These are high value biodiversity areas, in both developed areas and more natural creek-side or parkland areas which should be given a higher level of protection from development.

The other areas (highlighted in orange) are areas which are urbanised that have existing biodiversity contributing assets (existing established indigenous trees and other vegetation) which are important to consider for connection potential to more intact wildlife corridors and reserves. Development in these areas should be careful not to impact existing biodiversity and consider ways to strengthen wildlife corridors.

Development can still occur in both the green and orange areas, with careful consideration about the impact on biodiversity. Many of the identified areas are already under the protection of existing Banyule Planning Scheme overlays, such as Vegetation Protection Overlay, Environmental Significance Overlay and Significant Landscape Overlay. A review of the overlays could ensure that biodiversity being supported strongly through existing tree retention and landscaping plans that use local indigenous species.

In Heidelberg West and Bellfield, there is a section of high value biodiversity which intersects with Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) areas. The RGZ identifies areas that are appropriate for higher scale housing. In these locations, the high value biodiversity should be protected and the RGZ changes to Neighbourhood Residential Zone, which identifies areas suitable for lower scale housing.



**Figure 10: Heritage precincts and biodiversity areas**

## HERITAGE VALUES

Heritage differs from neighbourhood character. Heritage is about the conservation of culturally significant places. Neighbourhood character is about how the area looks and feels, and qualities that make it distinct from other areas. All areas have a history, not all areas are historically significant. Heritage significance is determined by recognized criteria set by the Commonwealth, State and local agencies which specialize in heritage matters.

Banyule has a newly adopted *Heritage Strategy 2024-2034 (2024)* which provides high level direction to guide Council's heritage program of work over the next 10 years. It focuses on identification, protection, management and promotion of Banyule's heritage assets.

There are 11 areas that are currently considered as a heritage precinct or large heritage sites. The scale of housing identified for these precincts should be restricted in line with the objectives of heritage protection, and identified as a minimal change area. Through the Heritage Strategy 2024-2034 implementation, new heritage precincts and large site may be identified and should be reflected in the the Housing Strategy as minimal change areas.

## RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

A 'restrictive covenant' is an agreement typically recorded on the Certificate of Title between landowners to restrict the use or development of land for a perceived benefit. One type of covenant restricts development on residential lots to a

single dwelling. The restriction remains in place even if the Planning Scheme allows or encourages multi-unit developments.

The issue of these restrictive covenants has been considered by the Residential Zones Standing Advisory Committee (2014) and various Planning Panels. Their conclusion is that strategic planning objectives should be the main driver for applying the residential zones in an area, independent of covenants. The Housing Strategy takes into consideration the advice whilst recognising that restrictive covenants may compromise those objectives in some areas.

## OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Increased population and density will put further pressure on Council's delivery of essential services and asset management. It is important that infrastructure, including for transport and community, keeps pace with our growing population.

A Development Contributions Plan (DCP) identifies Council's future capital expenditure and strategic investment priorities and recognises that funding for these projects must (at least in part) come from new residential development. It acknowledges that new residential development can add stress on the existing infrastructure, and therefore should contribute to upgrades which can accommodate the population growth. A review of Banyule's DCP is required and this Housing Strategy will provide input in terms of the location of new housing.

We must also continue to advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure that existing and future state-led infrastructure projects (e.g. the North East link and Suburban Rail Link) deliver the best possible outcomes for our community, especially if we are to meet the State's housing density requirements. This includes an integrated and efficient transport system and supporting infrastructure that better connects community to sustainable and active transport options.

## FIRE AND FLOOD RISK

The planning and building systems regulate land use and development to ensure bushfire and flooding risk are considered and managed. When planning for housing growth, state planning policy relating to bushfire risk requires that priority is given to protection of human life over all other policy considerations.

In Banyule, areas of higher fire risk are zoned Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) through which housing growth is limited. Housing growth is directed away from these low density residential areas and they will remain LDRZ.

Higher flood risk areas are mostly located in open space areas. Higher flood risk is managed through the Special Building Overlay (SBO), which provides direction on how development can occur. Residential properties affected by the SBO are often in high value biodiversity areas and this strategy recommends minimal housing growth in these areas.

## Good design and amenity

Good design is a critical ingredient for the successful delivery of housing and the enjoyment of a neighbourhood. Good design provides not only better places for people to live but creates safer, more vibrant, more inviting communities. Embedding a commitment to good design throughout our strategies and policies will elevate the quality of Banyule's built environment and filter down to our processes and guidance materials.

As ways of living have changed, we realise that housing needs to be designed with a range of considerations in mind, from layouts that are functional and easy to understand, to scale and forms that respond contextually to the places we love and use materials that are more sustainable, durable and efficient. Today we know more about how good design ensures homes that are enjoyable and comfortable to live in, but also, supports health and wellbeing, security, and improves productivity for the individual. At a community level, quality design contributes to a society that is healthy, inclusive, equitable and economically productive, and provides for neighbourhoods with a sense of place and identity.

## WELL DESIGNED HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING

Much of the resistance to housing change is centred around a concern about the impacts of higher scale development. However, a higher scale development (compared to single detached dwellings), when done well, can create vibrant, safe places that are cherished by the community. The transformation brings investment in the area as well as the improvement and expansion of public infrastructure. When it is done poorly, change is seen as a negative which is bringing no or limited public benefit. In these scenarios, public perceptions can often see change as a 'free-for-all' where development occurs in a haphazard fashion, without a clear collective vision and with their arrival bringing no obvious benefits to the existing community.

Elevating good design outcomes in mid- and higher density housing developments is best approached as a program which approaches change in a range of ways:

1. Supporting an organisational culture that is committed to good design.
2. Providing transparent process and expectations for how good design will be valued and achieved.
3. Celebrating high quality outcomes of good design.

Supporting good design within Banyule requires providing additional training to planners and other relevant staff on what good design is, and how to achieve it. There is also the opportunity to better utilise existing, though not well known, resources. The State Government provides some design assistance through the Office of the

Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) and the Design Advisory Service (DAS). These services are especially useful in seeking design advice early in the design process from the Victorian Government Architect on major residential or mixed-use development projects. Both the developer and Council officers can access the service.

Externally, if developers and permit applicants are aware up front of the design expectations, it is more likely to be included at the earliest stage of the process, rather than as an afterthought later in the process. Additional resources which clearly define what Council's expectations are can help achieve this. Banyule is in the process of creating a design guide for the public realm (currently referred to as the *Draft Public Realm Strategy*). A similar document can be created for the private realm, focusing on mid- and higher density residential developments. Once the Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Strategy documents have been updated, a mid- and higher density development design guide will be created to fill in the gaps.

Council could also support better design outcomes by running good design forums. The good design forum would be open to the development industry and community members who want to better understand Council design requirements for planning permit applications. It could also be an opportunity to celebrate good design outcomes achieved.

## SOCIAL CONNECTION

Positive social connection is important to individual wellbeing, generating social values and increasing trust and cooperation within communities. The way housing is designed can have big impact on the number of opportunities a household has to connect with their community, and a badly designed home can increase loneliness, social isolation and have significant negative health consequences (such as increased risk of cardiovascular disease or depression).

The need for social connection was emphasised through the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic exposed the vital role that social connections play in mitigating feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and stress. The shared experience of navigating the pandemic together highlighted the significance of community support, emphasising that social connections are not just niceties but essential components of our collective ability to endure and overcome challenges.

The built form of both our public spaces and the interface with private property has a significant influence on social connection – the building and landscaping can either facilitate informal social connection or remove the possibility of casual encounters. High walls and hedges, blank facades, garage doors, security shutters and bedrooms facing streets with closed curtains, all remove the possibility for informal social connection.

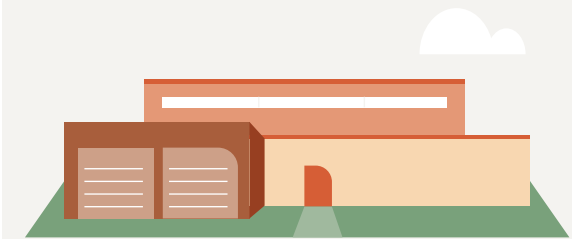
Conversely, there are specific design aspects of housing that can increase possibility of informal social connection:

- **Low or no fences** – While high fences can create a sense of privacy and isolation, low or no fences can allow for visual connectivity and easy interaction between neighbours. A low fence can create the sense of a boundary and sub-consciously increases sense of security, without impacting on the ability to see what's happening on the street or inhibiting casual interactions.
- **Verandah/porch that is a useable size** – The presence of a useable outdoor space increases the chance that a person spends time outside, and therefore increases the opportunities for informal interactions.
- **Living (public) rooms facing the street** – A private room like a bedroom facing the street means that the occupant is more likely to have their blinds closed. On the other hand, living rooms and kitchens provide an opportunity for windows which are more likely to be used and the occupants can know what's happening in their street. The ability to see the street from a house is known to increase the occupants' feeling of safety.
- **Use of vegetation and eaves** – While living room windows facing the street leads to a positive connection between occupant and the street, if the windows are too bare, it could lead to the occupant retreating e.g. with blinds. Landscaping and eaves provide a level of privacy without taking away the connection opportunity.

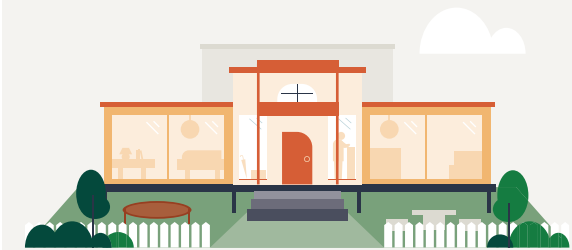
- **Minimising presence of driveways and garages facing the street** – Creates a more pedestrian friendly environment and creates a more aesthetically pleasing streetscape so that people are more willing to walk in their neighbourhoods.

All of these components of the public-private interface can contribute to a better social connectivity and form a positive interaction between the public and private realms.

### Example: A home that reduces the possibility of social connection



### Example: A home which enables social connection





## CLIMATE CHANGE

Banyule, like many other municipalities in Australia and throughout the world, is at risk of the impacts of climate change. In 2019, Council declared a climate emergency in response to declining environmental conditions in Banyule. Council is also a member of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) which advocates for planning reform for environmentally sustainable built environments.

Council has obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* under Section 9(2)(c) to provide for the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipality, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks.

Whilst responding to the impacts of climate change cannot be addressed by the Housing Strategy alone, there are ways in which the Strategy can contribute to more environmentally sustainable design outcomes in Banyule. For instance:

- Encouraging the retention and planting of canopy trees and understory planting to improve shade and temperature control and minimise the urban heat island effect.
- Encouraging the use of eaves to improve the regulation of internal temperatures.
- Encouraging the use of lighter coloured wall and roof materials over darker colours that absorb more heat.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Housing that is not appropriately designed to take into consideration the climate emergency will perform poorly environmentally and waste resources in the long term. Through thoughtful design we can ensure that our housing is contributing to long-term sustainability in Banyule and providing home environments that can cope with a changing climate and the changing demands of life.

The construction industry (and by association the housing industry), is a significant contributor to Australia's overall greenhouse gas emissions, contributing 18.1% of Australia's carbon footprint. Meanwhile, development often sees a reduction in existing tree canopy cover as development trends lead to increased site coverage from larger homes. There is a critical need to ensure that the housing growth Banyule experiences over the coming decades delivers more sustainable homes that perform well in the changing Australian environment and have a more positive impact on the environment.

Improved building performance and efficiency is critical to achieving this. The vast majority of Australia's building stock was constructed prior to the introduction of national minimum energy efficiency requirements which were first introduced into the National building code in 2005. More than 1 in 4 Australian households experience energy poverty, in part due to the poor thermal performance of housing. Often the performance of buildings can be significantly increased through passive design elements rather than active with thoughtful building orientation and site planning.



With Australian houses being some of the world's largest, more compact housing typologies that retain larger areas of land for permeable surfaces are vital to supporting the growth of the urban canopy and reducing stormwater impacts on rivers and infrastructure.

Sustainability has long been a priority in Banyule. At the direction of the *Housing Strategy (2009)*, Banyule, along with five other Councils, was one the first Councils to prepare an Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy. The ESD Policy was embedded into the Banyule Planning Scheme in 2015 and was a part of a wider plan for addressing sustainability in housing development, including best practice standards, the Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS), and fact sheets covering 10 key sustainable design components.

The BESS is an assessment tool which helps permit applicants and Council understand how the development can best achieve sustainability outcomes at the planning permit stage. A BESS report can be attached to a permit application to demonstrate how the proposed development addresses the ESD Policy.

As technology and knowledge advances, the standard for best practice sustainability response must advance as well. In 2022, Banyule joined a group of Councils seeking to further elevate sustainability requirements in the Planning Scheme. The proposed new policy would require new developments to:

- Produce net zero carbon emissions.
- Reduce household bills by making buildings more energy efficient.
- Provide a healthier and more comfortable environment for building occupants.
- Better manage water quality, use and collection.
- Protect and enhance greening and biodiversity.
- Be more resilient to changing climate impacts.

We must continue to update and improve the sustainability of our new and existing residential areas.



## SUSTAINABILITY REQUIREMENTS OUTSIDE PLANNING

The sustainability requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA) aim to improve the environmental performance of new housing. The universal application of the Code to all new housing development means that its influence is more extensive than the Banyule Planning Scheme, the latter of which, can only control development when a planning permit is required.

The disadvantage of relying solely upon the Building Code is that it does not necessitate the consideration of environmental sustainability at the site analysis stage of development. Neither does it apply holistically to a multi-dwelling development. It is further noted that the BCA focus is on energy efficiency and thermal performance requirements and other areas of sustainability are not well represented. As such, there remain opportunities

for the planning system to make a positive contribution to regulating better environmental performance outcomes.

The National Construction Code (NCC) was adopted by the states and territories in May 2023. It sets out requirements for the design and construction of buildings in Australia. It also sets minimum requirements for the energy efficiency of new homes, which aim to make homes cheaper to run, more comfortable to live in and more resilient to extreme weather.

In practice, the new energy efficiency requirements of the NCC can be difficult and expensive to achieve through building envelope performance alone. Siting and solar access has a significant impact on energy efficiency and there are opportunities to address this early in planning subdivisions and site layouts to ensure requirements can be achieved without undue financial burden on development.



**Figure 11:** Left: Infill development on individual suburban lots: note the duplication of driveways resulting in reduced open space, increased impervious surfaces and limited flexibility in dwelling siting. Right: Infill development on two-lot consolidation: Greater flexibility is provided to explore more innovative landscape planning and access arrangements, improved landscape outcomes with no loss in dwelling yield.

## INFILL REDEVELOPMENT

Banyule is an established urban municipality. As a result, many of the locations identified where future housing growth will take place will require the transformation and renewal of the area over time. These new houses will not be delivered as part of a greenfield development but will need to be inserted into an existing context and community.

The development of infill, mid-scale housing within established areas is the redevelopment of single dwelling lots into two or more dwellings. While higher scale development such as apartments is becoming increasingly more common in and around activity centres within the municipality, development in infill areas will support a large amount of Banyule's anticipated housing growth.

The challenge presented by mid-scale infill development is that it is often seen as piecemeal

and opportunistic, lacking a clear strategic direction that major activity centres enjoy. Communities are unclear on the overall vision for their local area and design quality often varies calling into question consistency in the planning decisions. Establishing a clearer framework for how infill redevelopment should be undertaken, the expectations on design outcomes and the preferred typologies will provide an opportunity to regenerate our suburbs through a scale of change that is more strategic, sensitive, and sustainable.

## GREYFIELD RENEWAL

Greyfields are residential areas where homes are aging, yet land values remain high. The existing subdivision pattern can be a key limiting factor in the delivery of housing typologies appropriate to the level of change envisaged within a neighbourhood. Many suburban lots are deep but relatively narrow. Higher density typologies

can struggle to be achieved without significantly impacting the amenity of adjacent properties in terms of overshadowing and overlooking.

Greyfield renewal is the process of lot consolidation and development of the new, larger lot which can handle mid-and higher scale housing better with improved off-site effects. Greyfield renewal opens up opportunities for improved development and design outcomes including more flexible approaches to site layout, access/ crossovers and increased opportunities for canopy coverage on site. Incentivising lot consolidation as a key pathway to unlocking housing typology and scale is important in helping deliver the right types of housing in the right places.

Banyule has residential areas which could be suitable for Greyfield renewal in Heidelberg West and Bundoora. There may be additional areas which are suitable and further work is required to identify these areas.

## ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

Accessible housing is a term used to describe housing which is built to an 'accessible' standard, meaning its design is easy to move through, adaptable, and visitable to people of all abilities and life stages. This can include features such as step free entries to dwellings, wide corridors and doorways, slip-resistant flooring and accessible toilets and bathrooms.

Banyule's population is ageing. Our housing preferences are also leaning towards single person homes. Many older people have shared that they would like to continue to live in their current neighbourhoods when considering downsizing, but there are limited options for their needs. We have an opportunity to increase the supply of accessible housing in Banyule to accommodate the changing needs of our community.

Accessible housing design features need to be incorporated into the design and development of new housing, to minimise the requirement and cost associated with renovating and retrofitting existing dwelling stock.

The National Building Codes have mandatory accessible design standards. Many new homes must incorporate design features for people with mobility issues, such as step free entry and easy access bathrooms.

Banyule also has a 'Livable Housing Design Guidelines' document which aims to explain accessible design expectations in Banyule. There is opportunity to update this document and promote it more broadly through Banyule's development industry.

## RETROFITTING

Retrofitting and adaptive reuse of ageing buildings should also be encouraged where appropriate. Adaptation rather than demolition of existing buildings can provide a significant contribution to sustainability and support the retention of heritage and local character, through clever utilisation of the existing fabric. Reuse of existing buildings can also result in substantial development cost savings. While retention of a building should be supported, not all buildings are suitable for retrofitting to housing. It is important that the resulting housing is 'fit-for-purpose', suitable for contemporary housing needs and future proof in terms of building performance and efficiency.

There are many examples of unused office spaces or warehouses being retrofitted for residential uses. However, another version of retrofitting is when a large house is turned into two or more dwellings, within the same large house and existing building footprint. This provides opportunity to deliver housing diversity without losing valued aspects like neighbourhood character and vegetation.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

With populations set to increase over coming years our waste services will also need to increase to meet the growing community, including collection household, commercial and construction waste. Kerbside collections are also impacted by different dwelling types, on-street car parking and objects/planting on the nature strip. New residential developments need to ensure appropriate consideration of waste management requirements.

An emerging issue for higher density developments in Banyule is how we best plan for safe and clean waste management. Waste management must be considered as early as possible in the design process and systems should maximise source separation and recovery of recyclables and organics. Waste systems should also be designed to minimise amenity impacts and improve the liveability of apartments.



## Neighbourhood character

The Neighbourhood Character Strategy depicts the preferred future physical and environmental state of each neighbourhood character area. Banyule's *Neighbourhood Character Strategy (2012)* has been reviewed in tandem with this Housing Strategy. The aim of this process is to ensure there is balance between housing growth and diversity, while respecting a neighbourhood's identity.

The existing *Neighbourhood Character Strategy (2012)* has been largely successful in maintaining valued neighbourhood character or direction on preferred future neighbourhood character. The review refreshed the existing strategy, making sure it is still relevant and able to assist with matters that proceed to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and better reinforce local identity.

Across all of Banyule, communities value the leafy, green and native vegetation in their neighbourhoods. As outlined in the *Urban Forest Strategy (2023)*, Banyule is aiming for 30% canopy cover in all suburbs. The Neighbourhood Character Strategy review can assist in identifying areas which need more canopy cover to reach 30% coverage, through identifying additional tree planting as part of the preferred future neighbourhood character.

There is, however, a risk of neighbourhood character being used as a form of density control, by defaulting to single dwelling outcomes, when no provisions are made for how housing diversity can be done well in a neighbourhood character area. A balance is required between achieving appropriate housing outcomes from a neighbourhood character perspective and encouraging housing types that meet future community needs. Where there is a change to housing typologies, it is important that additional guidance is given on how the preferred future neighbourhood character can be achieved.

## VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPING

While acknowledging that Banyule must provide more housing, this must be carefully balanced with protection and enhancement of significant vegetation and biodiversity. Banyule enjoys leafy and native vegetation, especially trees which provide good canopy cover. Enhancing Banyule's vegetation benefits a neighbourhood by creating a pleasing landscape, increases resilience of wildlife, and creates shaded spaces for people to enjoy

A key threat to Banyule's neighbourhood character is the loss of its established vegetation. This often occurs when existing houses are demolished and replaced with larger development such as a larger house or multi dwelling development, which leave minimal area for the retention or planting of canopy trees.

Banyule's *Urban Forest Strategy (2023)* aims to achieve a minimum canopy cover of 30% by 2050 for all suburbs and no net loss in suburbs already exceeding that level. Achieving this target will require

action in both the public realm and private property. The need to accommodate a greater density of housing in Banyule's residential areas, whilst also contributing to the urban canopy may result in changes to the form and scale of development in these areas. Residential development can be designed in a way to better accommodate vegetation and achieve better landscaping outcomes. For instance, a taller building which occupies a smaller area of the site may take precedence over other forms of development as this type of development will provide better permeable area for the planting and ongoing growth of canopy trees and understorey vegetation.

## DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

Where there is a significant neighbourhood character area, and that neighbourhood character is at risk from higher density development, a lower scale of housing will be maintained in this Housing Strategy as areas for minimal housing change. The draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy has identified an area in East Ivanhoe which abuts the Yarra River which should be maintained at a lower density housing.

# 4. Housing Vision

Banyule will contain housing options for all life stages, preferences, abilities, and incomes, which is sustainable, well designed, and responsive to our unique, leafy green neighbourhoods.

Most of our new housing development will be directed to areas with good access to public transport and services. A lower scale of housing development will be maintained in areas with significant biodiversity, heritage value or neighbourhood character. All housing development will enhance our vegetation cover and present a pleasant interface with the street.



## Our Pillars

Our plan for housing is founded on three strategic pillars, which together direct the location and form of all new housing development in Banyule.

### DRIVING HOUSING FOR ALL



We have an evidence driven and community supported plan for housing, which accommodates all the life stages, preferences, abilities and incomes in our communities.

We will have diverse housing across the municipality ranging from higher scale housing near public transport and services, a purposeful transition of mid-scale housing types through to mid- and lower scale housing in areas which do not have good access to public transport and services. Lower scale housing will be located where there is significant biodiversity, bushfire or flooding risk, heritage value or significant neighbourhood character value.

### ELEVATING GOOD DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY



Our homes will contribute to quality of life by accommodating the needs of the occupant, while creating a positive interface between the home and the street.

We will have well designed homes which are sustainable, accessible and high quality, regardless of typology, tenure or affordability.

### VALUING PREFERRED NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER



We have an unique urban character that will be enhanced and protected for current and future generations. We enhance our unique, leafy green character in both the public and private realms.

## HOW TO READ STRATEGIC DIRECTION CHAPTERS 5-7

### OBJECTIVES



There are four Objectives for each pillar. These define the goals of each pillar.

### STRATEGIES



Under each Objective is a list of Strategies. Strategies define what needs to happen to achieve the strategic directions.

### ACTIONS



Actions state the steps we need to take to achieve the Strategies.



# 5. Pillar 1 - Driving Housing for All

We have an evidence driven and community supported plan for housing, which accommodates all the life stages, preferences, abilities and incomes in our communities.

We will have diverse housing across the municipality ranging from higher scale housing near public transport and services, a purposeful transition of mid-scale housing types through to mid- and lower scale housing in areas which do not have good access to public transport and services. Lower scale housing will be located where there is significant biodiversity, bushfire or flooding risk, heritage value or significant neighbourhood character value.



## Objectives

<b>H1</b>	To direct a diverse range of housing scale, density and typologies to appropriate locations
<b>H2</b>	To facilitate housing that meets the current and long term needs of the community
<b>H3</b>	To reduce housing inequity
<b>H4</b>	To expand the range of housing delivery and tenure types

## RATIONALE

Our housing should be delivering the types of housing that will support our communities in the long term, catering for a wide range of needs and socio-economic backgrounds that will ensure that Banyule is an inclusive and welcoming place to live into the future. As housing affordability reaches crisis levels within Australia, it is increasingly difficult for residents to find housing that is appropriate to their situation. In situations, where housing diversity is insufficient this can have detrimental impacts on the economic and social bonds of community, forcing residents

to move away from friends and family in search of more appropriate housing. With Australia broadly experiencing an ageing population and diminishing household size, more innovative and diverse approaches to housing should be encouraged beyond the dominant market offering of three-four bedroom 'family' dwellings and one-two bedroom apartments. Typologies such as those outlined in the Issues and Opportunities section of this Strategy offer examples of pathways for more diverse housing options.

To achieve this, Council will need to advocate and engage the industry to help encourage innovation in Banyule. In areas where significant public housing is located, there will also be opportunities to advocate to State Government on the future of these land holdings. Ensuring that redevelopment of these sites contributes to housing diversity and the co-location of services will also be important.

At the building scale, housing adaptability and accessibility is seen as key to improving the diversity of housing stock. Maximising the number of accessible dwellings in developments will help future-proof housing stock for an ageing population, while flexible dwelling layouts should be explored in developments, particularly build-to-rent, where opportunity exists to facilitate internal rearrangement in the future to meet the needs of new residents with a minimum of disruption.



# Objective H1

## To direct a diverse range of housing scale, density and typologies to appropriate locations

### STRATEGIES



- Implement housing change areas, which enable:
  - Higher scale housing located in areas adjacent to high frequency public transport and daily shopping needs.
  - Lower scale housing located in areas which does not have good access to public transport or daily shopping needs.
  - Lower scale housing in areas which have significant heritage or biodiversity value.
  - Mid-scale housing in locations which are nearby high frequency public transport or daily shopping needs.
  - A deliberate transition area of mid-density housing between higher and lower scale housing areas.
- Allow for housing growth which supports the viability of small and medium activity centres.
- Ensure the Housing Strategy remains relevant as State Government policy and strategy changes.

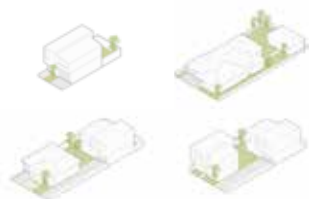
### ACTIONS



- Prepare a Residential Development Framework that brings together a framework for Banyule's residential areas including the Housing Strategy, Neighbourhood Character Strategy, Medium and High Density Design Guidelines, and any other relevant Council strategy and policy.
- Update the Banyule Planning Scheme to give effect to the Residential Development Framework.
- Prepare plans for all large and medium neighbourhood activity centres that further the objectives of more housing close to retail, commercial and civic centres, and public transport networks.
- Review the Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework to align with the findings of the Housing Strategy.
- Monitor change to policy at State Government, especially regarding housing targets.



# Housing Change Areas



## Minimal Change Areas

In areas where minimal change applies there will be limited housing growth due to significant heritage or biodiversity values. New residential development will be retained at a maximum of two storeys and predominantly single detached dwellings.

Most of these areas have already been protected by heritage and environmental overlays. However, due to vulnerability to overdevelopment, the areas will be zoned **Neighbourhood Residential Zone**.

Minimal change will also apply to existing Low Density Residential Zone areas. These areas often have highly valued vegetation, but also provide a diversity of lot sizes in Banyule. There is no change proposed to these areas.



## Incremental Change Areas

In areas where incremental change applies, there is limited access to public transport, activity centres, jobs and open space. New development will provide modest infill opportunities and will contribute to housing diversity. Incremental change areas will support a range of well-designed, low and mid-scale density housing such as single dwellings, dual occupancy, and lower scale townhouse or multi-unit developments up to three storeys. Although the character of these areas will continue to evolve over time, new development will still respect existing characteristics that are relevant to the specific neighbourhood character types.

These areas will be zoned **Neighbourhood Residential Zone** or **General Residential Zone**.



## Increased Change Areas

Areas identified with good access to activity centres, high frequency public transport, jobs or open space will be located in the increased change area. Increased change areas will provide a greater level of infill development, where units and townhouses will be encouraged, as well as some low scale apartment buildings. These areas may provide greyfield renewal opportunities. The character of these areas is expected to change over time, however new development will still consider the neighbourhood character objectives.

These areas will be zoned **General Residential Zone**.



## Substantial Change Areas

Substantial change areas have excellent accessibility to high frequency public transport or activity centres and will experience the most significant levels of housing change. The objective for these areas is to encourage higher scale housing forms that contribute to Banyule's housing diversity and choice. Housing typologies will include higher scale density townhouses, apartment buildings, shop-top development and other mixed use developments (e.g. office space with apartments).

In character areas where substantial change applies, new development will contribute to an emerging and evolving future character. While neighbourhood character objectives and garden area requirements will not apply in substantial change areas, Council is currently preparing Medium and Higher Density Landscape and Design Guidelines to ensure new development will be well designed, incorporate landscaping where possible and contribute positively to the public realm through building siting, materials and visual separation.

These locations will be zoned **Residential Growth Zone**, **Mixed Use Zone** or **Activity Centre Zone**.

# Housing Change Area Map

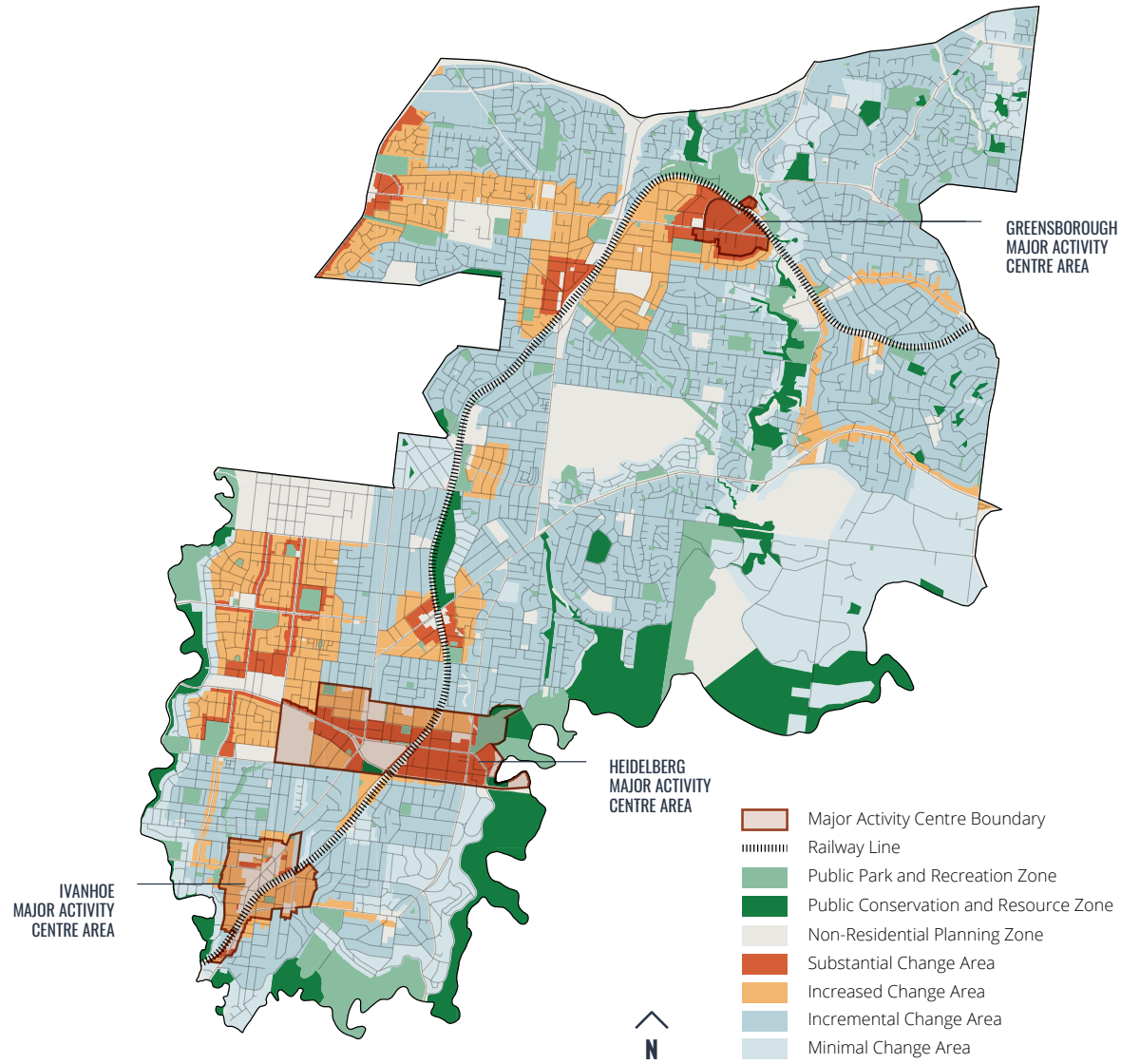


Figure 12: Housing change areas map



## Objective H2

# To facilitate housing that meets the current and long term needs of the community

### STRATEGIES



- Increase supply of accessible housing for different abilities and the ageing population, by increasing awareness both internally and externally about the principles of Accessible Design.
- Increase supply of flexible housing design that allows for adaptations to support changing needs of the resident over time.
- Increase supply of family orientated apartment buildings, with 3 bedrooms and family friendly communal open space.
- Increase supply of lower to mid- scale housing which is appropriate for single and couple households.

### ACTIONS



- Review and update Banyule's Liveable Housing Design Guidelines.
- Provide regular training for internal teams involved in residential planning permit applications, to identify and advise opportunities for improved Universal Design outcomes.
- Promote accessible/flexible design principles in Banyule's development community, planning permit information sessions, and any other opportunities.
- Include housing diversity requirements in the Banyule Planning Scheme for large residential developments.
- Advocate for renewal of public housing sites in Banyule which provides diverse housing options and represent best practice accessible and flexible design standards.

# Objective H3

## To reduce housing inequity

### STRATEGIES



- Increase access to high quality housing options for all income levels and backgrounds.
- Increase housing supply for key workers in Banyule.
- Increase affordable housing within and around major Activity Centres, employment areas and areas that have access to good public transport.
- Work with community housing providers to capitalise on the opportunities available through the National Housing Accord.
- Work with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to support First Nations people residing in Banyule determine their own housing future and secure appropriate, affordable housing that will strengthen community and cultural ties.
- Ensure good design principles and accessible design principles are applied to social and affordable housing projects.
- Increase wellbeing of social housing residents by co-locating social housing with relevant services.

### ACTIONS



- Investigate a mandatory affordable housing requirement in the Banyule Planning Scheme, through a contribution requirement of up to 10% social or affordable housing contributions for significant developments or when land is up zoned.
- Work with housing providers and State Government to develop a guide for when and how affordable housing contributions can be delivered.
- Advocate for the introduction of state-wide mandatory inclusionary zoning to increase the supply of affordable housing provision being provided as part of new private developments.
- Advocate to State and Federal Government for further action to increase or upgrade social and affordable housing in Banyule, especially on State and Federal government surplus land or through major infrastructure projects, which achieves best practise outcomes for public health and responds to Council's design and character aspirations.
- Work with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to support First Nations people residing in Banyule determine their own housing future and secure appropriate, affordable housing that will strengthen community and cultural ties.
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to improve access to housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Banyule.
- Collaborate with Community Housing providers to secure funding through the National Housing Accord.
- Increase engagement with services that support social housing residents through early stages of social housing development to ensure the services are ready for changes in demand for their services and provide opportunity to co-locate with new social housing.
- In the case where existing support services are unable to support a change in demand, collaborate and advocate to State Government for further support for social housing residents.
- Investigate opportunities to collaborate with or advocate for youth refuge facilities and youth accommodation to increase services to at risk youth.



## Objective H4

### To expand the range of housing delivery and tenure types

#### STRATEGIES



- Identify and resolve barriers to delivering diverse housing delivery and tenure such as build-to-rent, rent-to-buy and cohousing developments.
- Support short term accommodation and crisis accommodation being located in Banyule.
- Support innovative housing delivery models on Council divestment sites.

#### ACTIONS



- Review and monitor Banyule's policy and strategy to make sure it allows for innovative housing delivery, design and tenure types.
- Review and monitor Banyule's policy and strategy to make sure it allows for short term crisis accommodation.
- Investigate ways to encourage more build-to-rent, rent-to-buy and cohousing models in new residential developments.
- Investigate ways to encourage innovating housing delivery or tenure on Council divestment sites.

# 6. Pillar 2 - Elevating Good Design and Sustainability

Our homes will contribute to quality of life by accommodating the needs of the occupant, while creating a positive interface between the home and the street.

We will have well designed homes which are sustainable, accessible and high quality, regardless of typology, tenure or affordability.



## Objectives

<b>D1</b>	To establish clear governance frameworks that celebrate design excellence
<b>D2</b>	To ensure that mid and higher scale housing development delivers high quality design outcomes
<b>D3</b>	To ensure communities benefit directly from development in their neighbourhoods
<b>D4</b>	To deliver housing that supports long term sustainability and increased canopy cover

## RATIONALE

Raising the bar on design quality does not happen at once. It is vital that the elevation of good design is sought through the Housing Strategy and is supported by providing the appropriate mechanisms and tools that empower the community, developers and Council officers to make better design decisions.

The successful delivery of high quality design outcomes requires a robust dialogue between stakeholders at all stages of the process to ensure that expectations are shared. Council will need to lead by example in this regard, showing the way forward through implementing initiatives like a Design Excellence Program where good design outcomes can be celebrated and rewarded. Good design often involves innovation which introduces new ideas. Greater collaboration between design professionals and Council officers through design review processes and the use of the Banyule Medium and High-Density Built Form and Landscape Design Guide or similar guiding policy will help provide support for innovation in the delivery of housing.

Ensuring that urban transformation and housing growth occurs in a way that demonstrates that higher density can be done well is critical to long-term support for the Housing Strategy. If not done well, development could erode public trust and the social mandate to deliver further housing when the design outcomes fail to meet expectations. On large sites, where the scope for transformation is significant, masterplan processes are critical to ensuring the community has confidence in the transformation of the area over time and developers understand the expectations for development in the area.



It is also important to demonstrate what the public benefits of change will be if housing growth is to be received more positively by the community. This means more than ensuring that the building 'looks good'. It is about ensuring that the community is confident that, as new housing is built, and more residents move in, that the supporting infrastructure is fit for purpose for the expanding population. It is also about revitalising streets through increased foot traffic and activity, providing local parks of a standard that can support more people, managing parking

well and considering and planning for community, transport and essential services where they need to be upgraded. This requires effective planning led by Council to update and identify appropriate development and public open space contributions schemes to ensure that developers are paying their fair share of the future infrastructure. It also requires improved participatory planning processes to ensure that communities feel they are involved in the ongoing conversation about housing development in local neighbourhoods.

Banyule is strongly supportive of improving sustainability outcomes in our built environment and has outlined a clear goal to become carbon neutral community by 2040 as detailed in the Banyule Community Climate Action Plan. The Urban Forest Strategy also outlines a goal to achieve 30% canopy cover across all suburbs by 2050 which will require a substantial increase in tree planting across both public and private realm. These goals enjoy strong support from the community and their success is intrinsically linked to the quality of future housing development.



# Objective D1

## To establish clear governance frameworks that celebrate design excellence

### STRATEGIES



- Improve dialogue and collaboration with housing developers who work or want to work in Banyule to improve understanding of design benefits and development expectations within the municipality.
- Improve understanding of good design across Council teams as relevant.
- Embed good design into the Banyule Planning Scheme through effective and clear integration into local policy, planning controls and strategies.
- Utilise government and independent design review panels such as the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) and the Design Advisory Service (DAS) to provide support in the delivery of design excellence on significant housing developments.

### ACTIONS



- Review and update the way that Council's planning process achieves good design in planning permit applications to allow for improved decision making.
- Embed good design into the Banyule Planning Scheme through effective and clear integration into local policy, planning controls and strategies.
- Establish a Design Excellence Program to advocate and champion improved design outcomes across the municipality.
- Establish participatory design processes for major public projects to involve the community in the transformation of their own neighbourhood.
- Investigate the opportunity for community groups to be involved in helping communicate expectations around future transformation and facilitate community led outcomes.





## Objective D2

# To ensure that mid and higher scale housing development delivers high quality design outcomes

### STRATEGIES



- Provide guidance on how good design principles can be implemented in higher density development across the municipality.
- Ensure that good design outcomes are a non-negotiable, and not considered as a bargaining chip in achieving other key goals such as housing affordability, diversity, or building height.
- Support innovation in the delivery of new housing models that address critical housing issues, explore incentives to improve design outcomes on greyfield renewal and promote land consolidation in medium and high change areas.
- Ensure that high density development considers waste management systems and service infrastructure early in the design process.

### ACTIONS



- Prepare a Banyule Medium and High-Density Built Form and Landscape Design Guide which shows how a development can achieve a wide range of design objectives.
- Provide regular internal urban design training to Development Planners to improve capabilities to negotiate good design outcomes.
- Offer information sessions to Banyule's development industry and potential planning permit applicants, to educate about Banyule's good design expectations.
- Investigate greyfield renewal model for precinct based approach to housing change in Bundoora and Heidelberg West.
- Prepare Banyule Waste Management Standards for multi-unit developments which shows how a development can best incorporate waste management infrastructure.

# Objective D3

## To ensure communities benefit directly from development in their neighbourhoods

### STRATEGIES



- Ensure that public infrastructure requirements are identified and delivered to the communities where future housing growth is planned.
- Ensure that housing development contributes to the quality of public open space.
- Ensure that the development levies collected through the contribution models are being fully utilised for maximum community benefit.
- Investigate sites which are suitable for greyfield renewal.
- Encourage the community to participate in the design processes for their neighbourhoods.

### ACTIONS



- Undertake a review of existing and planned future infrastructure (e.g., drainage, waste services, open space, transport, community infrastructure) to identify where upgrades and/or expansion of infrastructure is required to appropriately support housing growth.
- Collaborate with other Councils and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) to advocate to State Government for improved public transport infrastructure and services, and more financial support for local governments to provide the essential services necessitated by housing growth.
- Update and implement Development Contributions Plan to ensure the appropriate infrastructure to support housing growth is adequately funded.
- Investigate possible areas in Banyule which are suitable for a Greyfield renewal project.
- Review the existing Open Space Levy rate and update the planning scheme to ensure that new developments are directly contributing to the provision of quality public open space in areas where future housing growth is planned.
- - Consider community support services and space provided for community facilities within or walkable proximity from developments which include social and affordable housing.

# Objective D4

## To deliver housing that supports long-term sustainability and increased canopy cover

### STRATEGIES



- Strengthen sustainability standards and policies through the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE).
- Seek ways to make residential development in Banyule more sustainable through the planning permit applications process.
- Ensure future planning scheme amendments continue to embed and improve sustainability standards into the Planning Scheme, particularly in relation to building efficiency, performance, landscape and tree canopy outcomes.
- Ensure any master planning processes for significant sites or areas within the municipality embed sustainability within the masterplan and consider how the objectives of key sustainability strategies, such as the Urban Forest Strategy are to be achieved through the planned development.
- Deliver housing that integrates well with the identified Public Realm typology of its context and leverages opportunities for WSUD and strengthening of public realm landscapes.
- Support precinct sustainability measures such as community batteries and other community scale infrastructure as part of major redevelopments and master planned communities.
- Support innovation in sustainable design outcomes including the use of new sustainable materials and technology in housing development.

### ACTIONS



- Continue Banyule's involvement with the CASBE led planning scheme amendment to introduce an updated ESD policy.
- Continue to review planning permit applications against the ESD Policy to check that it is appropriately addressed and identify areas of improvement to negotiate stronger ESD outcomes.
- Continue to undertake ESD inspections on site of development to improve knowledge in the development industry and improve ESD outcomes during construction.
- Implement the *Urban Forest Strategy 2023* to increase or maintain canopy cover of 30% across all of Banyule via various implementation stages of the Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Strategy.
- Provide regular internal training to Development Planners for reviewing ESD measures and initiatives in planning applications and improve capabilities to negotiate stronger ESD outcomes.
- Review the effectiveness of Banyule's ESD compliance program and implement improvements to maximise implementation.

# 7. Pillar 3 - Valuing Preferred Neighbourhood Character

We have an unique urban character that will be enhanced and protected for current and future generations. We enhance our unique, leafy green character in both the public and private realms.

## Objectives

<b>NC1</b>	To ensure new residential development supports local identity and sense of place
<b>NC2</b>	To balance neighbourhood character objectives with scale of housing change and diverse housing need
<b>NC3</b>	To support the enhancement of urban canopy in the private realm
<b>NC4</b>	To strengthen the application of neighbourhood character in the Banyule Planning Scheme

## RATIONALE

Banyule has a unique character that is valued by its community. It is vital that when housing growth brings change to an area, it does so in a positive way, working with and building on the valued attributes of an area to ensure they are retained. Banyule enjoys having a range of unique landscapes and neighbourhood character areas throughout the municipality that hold exceptional landscape, cultural and local value. New housing should always enhance rather than detract from these valued neighbourhood characteristics where they are identified to ensure that what makes these places special is not lost.

Various parts of Banyule will need to accommodate change due to population growth and the community's evolving housing needs. A Neighbourhood Character Strategy will identify the important aspects of how each neighbourhood will respect its valued character, while supporting this change. Poorly designed development can erode the preferred neighbourhood character and a community's sense of place. Neighbourhood character guidance for areas of increased housing change is essential to ensuring new development enhances local character while providing for housing change.

Vegetation is a fundamental contributor to Neighbourhood Character in Banyule. The retention of existing vegetation appropriate for the area, be that indigenous, native or exotic, and the planting of new vegetation has a significant impact on the character of Banyule. In addition, Banyule's *Urban Forest Strategy (2023)* aims to achieve a minimum canopy cover of 30% by 2050 for all suburbs and no net loss in suburbs already exceeding that level. Achieving this target will require action in both the public and private realm. The Neighbourhood Character Strategy has the opportunity to make a significant contribution to achieving these goals by encouraging the retention of established canopy trees and ensuring an adequate number and sufficient area of space is provided for the planting of new canopy trees and understorey vegetation to maturity.





# Objective NC1

## To ensure new residential development supports local identity and sense of place

### STRATEGIES



- Ensure Banyule's Neighbourhood Character Strategy is up to date and responsive to changes affecting residential areas.
- Ensure new housing responds sympathetically to the characteristics of the preferred local character identified in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.
- Enhance opportunities to improve private and public interfaces by applying the Public Realm Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy.

### ACTIONS



- Review and prepare an updated Neighbourhood Character Strategy, including Banyule's Neighbourhood Character Precincts.
- Update the Banyule Planning Scheme with revised Neighbourhood Character Strategy Precincts.
- Prepare new Neighbourhood Character brochures and upload on Council's website.
- Implement the design principles of the Public Realm Strategy as it relates to residential street typologies.
- Include street trees in the landscaping design guidance for neighbourhood character precincts.

# Objectives NC2

## To balance neighbourhood character objectives with housing change and diverse housing needs

### STRATEGIES



- Support the adoption of differing housing typologies where preferred future local characteristics warrants alternative approaches (eg. Split level dwellings in topographically steep areas).
- Provide specific guidance on meeting neighbourhood character objectives in 'Incremental change areas' and 'Increased change areas' as identified in this Housing Strategy, to ensure neighbourhood character is not compromised.
- Support innovative approaches to increasing density while meeting neighbourhood character objectives.

### ACTIONS



- Prepare sub-precincts with refined guidance on achieving preferred neighbourhood character in 'Incremental change areas' and 'Increased change areas'.
- Explore innovative approaches to achieving neighbourhood character objectives through the Medium and High Density Built Form and Landscaping Design Guidelines.



# Objective NC3

## To support the enhancement of urban canopy in the private realm

### STRATEGIES



- Ensure that individual developments are considering the cumulative impact of incremental change over time on vegetation and biodiversity and contributing to 30% canopy cover in the area.
- Encourage new developments to retain existing high retention value trees on private land as part of the design of the development.
- Support the goals of the *Urban Forest Strategy (2023)* through improved landscape and tree planting outcomes in private development through landscape plans and consistent enforcement.

### ACTIONS



- Progress a Banyule's Vegetation Controls Review and Planning Scheme Amendment.
- Investigate opportunities to support residents planting canopy trees on their properties, including a species guide.
- Prepare Nature Strip Planting guidelines to assist biodiversity and vegetation retention on nature strips.
- Investigate a Banyule Tree Advice Resource through Banyule's website, including an option to alert Council of illegal tree removals.
- Undertake inspections over longer time frames to ensure landscaping permit conditions have been met including planting of large canopy trees.
- Investigate stronger enforcement measures where the approved tree species have been replaced or removed.
- Undertake a review of the existing tree planting ratios for each neighbourhood character precinct.
- Monitor if new developments are achieving urban canopy targets through a canopy cover assessment method.



# Objective NC4

## To strengthen the application of neighbourhood character in the Banyule Planning Scheme

### STRATEGIES



- Ensure that the Neighbourhood Character Strategy allows for some housing diversity.
- Explore other mechanisms in the planning scheme that could be used to strengthen the application of the updated Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

### ACTIONS



- Consider variations to ResCode through the inclusion of neighbourhood character objectives in Banyule Planning Scheme zone schedules.
- Investigate appropriate locations for the application of the NCO that ensures new buildings and works meet the NC objectives of the area, and, that architectural styles, by way of older dwellings contributing to the NC of the area, are retained.
- Explore the use of new or revised built form and environmental overlay controls to reinforce preferred future neighbourhood character outcomes.





## 8. Implementation Program

The adoption of a new Housing Strategy for Banyule is just the beginning. To realise the vision for housing, an ongoing commitment to implementation is necessary. This Strategy provides a stronger platform to drive positive housing change. To succeed, it must be done in a coordinated and integrated way; one that provides for and empowers our community, strengthens our internal capabilities, and raises the standard for design and sustainability.

The table below sets out the actions required to achieve each strategy. Some actions extend to several strategies (such as the planning scheme amendment, or design guidance) or will require a coordinated approach with other government departments to deliver. It also outlines the timeframe and lead unit responsible for delivery.

### Updating the Banyule Planning Scheme


The first and most immediate action upon adoption of the Housing Strategy is to prepare and exhibit an amendment to the Banyule Planning Scheme. The amendment is required to formally implement the adopted Housing Strategy, including updated housing, design and neighbourhood character policy, an updated Residential Areas Framework plan, and updated residential zones and schedules, that give effect to the hierarchy of change areas. Ensuring the planning settings are correctly applied is complex and therefore subject to a thorough and independent statutory planning process.


Updating the Banyule Planning Scheme is included as an action in the Action Plan.

# Action Plan


The following table sets out the strategies and actions with indicative timeframes, budget and allocation of responsibility for implementation.



Timeframe for actions	Budget estimate
• <b>Short</b> - to be completed within 1-3 years	<b>\$</b> within existing team budgets
• <b>Medium</b> - to be completed within 3-7 years	<b>\$\$</b> \$5-\$50K
• <b>Long</b> - to be completed within 7-10 years	<b>\$\$\$</b> \$50K-\$100K
• <b>Ongoing</b>	


Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Driving Housing for All</b>				
<b>H1 To direct a diverse range of housing scale and typologies to appropriate locations</b>	Prepare a Residential Development Framework that brings together a framework for Banyule's residential areas including the Housing Strategy, Neighbourhood Character Strategy, Medium and High Density Design Guidelines, and any other relevant Council strategy and policy.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Update the Banyule Planning Scheme to give effect to the Residential Development Framework.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Prepare plans for all large and medium neighbourhood activity centres that further the objectives of more housing close to retail, commercial and civic centres, and public transport networks.	Long	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Review the Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework to align with the findings of the Housing Strategy.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Monitor change to policy at State Government, especially regarding housing targets.	Medium	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design

Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Driving Housing for All</b>				
<b>H2 – To facilitate housing that meets the current and long-term needs of the community</b>	Review and update Banyule’s Liveable Housing Design Guidelines.	Medium	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Provide regular training for internal teams involved in residential planning permit applications, to identify and advise opportunities for improved Universal Design outcomes.	Ongoing	\$	Development Planning
	Promote accessible/flexible design principles in Banyule’s development community, planning permit information sessions, and any other opportunities.	Medium	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Development Planning
	Include housing diversity requirements in the Banyule Planning Scheme for large residential developments	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Advocate for renewal of public housing sites in Banyule which provides diverse housing options and represent best practice accessible and flexible design standards.	Ongoing	\$	Advocacy Lead


<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead Unit</b>
<b>H3 – To reduce housing inequity</b>	Investigate a mandatory affordable housing requirement in the Banyule Planning Scheme, through a contribution requirement of up to 10% social or affordable housing contributions for significant developments or when land is up zoned.	Short	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Work with housing providers to develop a guide for how affordable housing contributions can be delivered.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Resilient & Connected Communities
	Advocate for the introduction of state-wide mandatory inclusionary zoning to increase the supply of affordable housing provision being provided as part of new private developments.	Ongoing	\$	Strategic Properties & Projects Advocacy Lead
	Advocate to State and Federal Government for further action to increase or upgrade social and affordable housing in Banyule, especially on State and Federal government surplus land or through major infrastructure projects, which achieves best practise outcomes for public health and responds to Council's design and character aspirations.	Ongoing	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Advocacy Lead



Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Driving Housing for All</b>				
<b>H3 – To reduce housing inequity</b>	Work with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to support First Nations people residing in Banyule determine their own housing future and secure appropriate, affordable housing that will strengthen community and cultural ties.	Ongoing	\$	Inclusive & Creative Communities Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Aboriginal Housing Victoria to improve access to housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Banyule.	Ongoing	\$	Inclusive & Creative Communities
	Collaborate with Community Housing providers to secure funding through the National Housing Accord.	Long	\$\$	Advocacy, Communication, Engagement & Performance
	Increase engagement with services that support social housing residents through early stages of social housing development to ensure the services are ready for changes in demand for their services and provide opportunity to co-locate with new social housing.	Ongoing	\$	Strategic Properties & Projects Development Planning
	In the case where existing support services are unable to support a change in demand, collaborate and advocate to State Government for further support for social housing residents.	Ongoing	\$	Advocacy Lead
	Investigate opportunities to collaborate with or advocate for youth refuge facilities and youth accommodation to increase services to at risk youth.	Ongoing	\$	Inclusive & Creative Communities


Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Driving Housing for All</b>				
<b>H4 – To expand the range of housing delivery and tenure types</b>	Review and monitor Banyule’s policy and strategy to make sure it allows for innovative housing delivery, design and tenure types.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Review and monitor Banyule’s policy and strategy to make sure it allows for short term crisis accommodation	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Resilient & Connected Communities
	Investigate ways to encourage more ‘build to rent’, and ‘rent to buy’ models in new residential developments.	Medium	\$	Development Planning
	Investigate ways to encourage innovating housing delivery or tenure on Council divestment sites.	Short to medium	\$	Strategic Properties & Projects
 <b>Elevating Good Design and Sustainability</b>				
<b>D1 – To establish clear governance frameworks that celebrate design excellence</b>	Review and update the way that Council’s planning process achieves good design in planning permit applications to allow for improved decision making.	Medium	\$	Development Planning Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Embed good design into the Banyule Planning Scheme through effective and clear integration into local policy, planning controls and strategies	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Establish a Design Excellence Programme to advocate and champion improved design outcomes across the municipality.	Medium	\$\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Advocacy, Communication, Engagement & Performance


Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Elevating Good Design and Sustainability</b>				
<b>D1 – To establish clear governance frameworks that celebrate design excellence</b>	Establish participatory design processes for major public projects to involve the community the transformation of their own neighbourhood.	Medium	\$	Advocacy, Communication, Engagement & Performance Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Investigate the opportunity for community groups to be involved in helping communicate expectations around future transformation and facilitate community led outcomes.	Ongoing	\$	Advocacy, Communication, Engagement & Performance Strategic Planning & Urban Design
<b>D2 – To ensure that mid and higher scale housing development delivers high quality design outcomes</b>	Prepare a Medium and High-Density Built Form and Landscape Design Guide which shows how a development can achieve a wide range of design objectives.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Development Planning
	Provide regular internal urban design training to Development Planners to improve capabilities to negotiate good design outcomes.	Medium	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Development Planning
	Offer information sessions to Banyule's development industry and potential planning permit applicants, to educate about Banyule's good design expectations	Medium	\$\$	Development Planning
	Investigate greyfield renewal model for precinct based approach to housing change in Bundoora and Heidelberg West..	Long	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design



Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Elevating Good Design and Sustainability</b>				
<b>D2 – To ensure that mid and higher scale housing development delivers high quality design outcomes</b>	Prepare Banyule Waste Management Standards for multi-unit developments	Medium	\$\$	Waste Management Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Undertake a review of existing and planned future infrastructure (e.g. drainage, waste services, open space, transport) to identify where upgrades and/or expansion of infrastructure is required to appropriately support housing growth.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design City Assets
<b>D3 – To ensure communities benefit directly from development in their neighbourhoods</b>	Collaborate with other Councils and MAV to advocate to State Government improved public transport infrastructure and services, and more financial support for local governments to provide the essential services necessitated by housing growth.	Ongoing	\$	Advocacy, Communication, Engagement & Performance
	Update and implement Development Contributions Plan to ensure the appropriate infrastructure to support housing growth is adequately funded.	Short	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Investigate possible areas in Banyule which are suitable for a Greyfield renewal project.	Medium	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Review the existing Open Space Levy rate and update the planning scheme to ensure that new developments are directly contributing to the provision of quality public open space in areas where future housing growth is planned.	Short	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design Open Space Planning & Design
	Consider community support services and space provided for community facilities within or walkable proximity from developments which include social and affordable housing.	Ongoing	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design

Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Elevating Good Design and Sustainability</b>				
<b>D4 – To deliver housing that supports long term sustainability and increased canopy cover</b>	Continue Banyule’s involvement with the CASBE led planning scheme amendment to introduce an updated ESD policy.	Ongoing	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Continue to review planning permit applications against the ESD Policy to check that it is appropriately addressed and identify areas of improvement to negotiate stronger ESD outcomes.	Ongoing	\$	Development Planning
	Continue to undertake ESD inspections on site of development to improve knowledge in the development industry and improve ESD outcomes during construction.	Ongoing	\$	Development Planning
	Implement the <i>Urban Forest Strategy 2023</i> to increase or maintain canopy cover of 30% across all of Banyule via various implementation stages of the Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Strategy.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Provide regular internal training to Development Planners for reviewing ESD measures and initiatives in planning applications and improve capabilities to negotiate stronger ESD outcomes.	Medium	\$\$	Development Planning
	Review the effectiveness of Banyule’s ESD compliance program and implement improvements to maximise implementation.	Medium	\$	Development Planning
	 <b>Valuing Preferred Neighbourhood Character</b>			
<b>NC1 – To ensure new residential development supports local identity and sense of place</b>	Review and prepare an updated Neighbourhood Character Strategy, including Banyule’s Neighbourhood Character Precincts.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Update the Banyule Planning Scheme, with revised Neighbourhood Character Strategy Precincts.	Short	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design

Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Valuing Preferred Neighbourhood Character</b>				
<b>NC1 – To ensure new residential development supports local identity and sense of place</b>	Implement the design principles of the Public Realm Strategy as it relates to residential street typologies.	Medium	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Prepare new neighbourhood character brochures and make them available on the Banyule website.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design; Advocacy, Communication, Engagement & Performance
	Include street trees in the landscaping design guidance for neighbourhood character precincts.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
<b>NC2 – To balance neighborhood character objectives with housing change and diverse housing need</b>	Prepare neighbourhood character sub-precincts with refined guidance on achieving preferred neighbourhood character in incremental and increased housing change areas.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Explore innovative approaches to achieving neighbourhood character objectives through the Medium and High Density Built Form and Landscaping Design Guidelines.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
<b>NC3 – To support the enhancement of urban canopy in the private realm</b>	Progress the second stage of Banyule's Vegetation Controls Review and Planning Scheme Amendment.	Medium	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Investigate opportunities to support residents planting canopy trees on their properties, including a species guide.	Medium	\$	Urban Forestry Development Planning

Strategic Direction	Action	Timeframe	Budget	Lead Unit
 <b>Valuing Preferred Neighbourhood Character</b>				
<b>NC3 – To support the enhancement of urban canopy in the private realm</b>	Prepare Nature Strip Planting guidelines	Medium	\$\$	Environment Urban Forestry
	Investigate a Banyule Tree Advice Resource through Banyule’s website, including an option to alert Council of illegal tree removals.	Medium	\$	Development Planning Urban Forestry
	Undertake inspections over longer time frames to ensure landscaping permit conditions have been met including planting of large canopy trees.	Ongoing	\$\$	Development Planning
	Investigate stronger enforcement measures where the approved tree species has been replaced or removed.	Medium	\$	Development Planning
	Monitor if new developments are achieving urban canopy targets through a canopy cover assessment method	Short	\$\$\$	Urban Forestry Development Planning
<b>NC4 – To strengthen the application of neighbourhood character in the Banyule Planning Scheme</b>	Consider variations to ResCode through the inclusion of neighbourhood character objectives in Banyule Planning Scheme zone schedules.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Investigate appropriate locations for the application of the NCO that ensures new buildings and works meet the NC objectives of the area, and, that architectural styles, by way of older dwellings contributing to the NC of the area, are retained.	Medium	\$\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design
	Explore the use of new or revised built form and environmental overlay controls to reinforce preferred neighbourhood character outcomes.	Short	\$	Strategic Planning & Urban Design

# Monitoring & Review

Monitoring of the actions outlined in the Housing Strategy is an essential part of its implementation. This should involve assessing the effectiveness of local planning policy and planning scheme provisions as well as watching for shifts in demographic and economic patterns that influence housing.

It will also ensure that the Strategy remains flexible and adaptive to changing State and Federal policy and funding initiatives.

- An interim review of the Housing Strategy will be in 2029.
- The next full review & update of the Housing Strategy will be in 2034.





**Banyule**

City Council