

**REDACTED VERSION OF ALL GENERAL SUBMISSIONS TO THE FIRST
ROUND OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE NILLUMBIK NEIGHBOURHOOD
CHARACTER STRATEGY**

**TABLE A: LIST OF SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED AND PROVIDED IN THIS
DOCUMENT**

No	Received from	Comment
1	[REDACTED]	Individual
2	Wattle Glen Residents' Association	Community Group
3	Roads and Roadside Ecology Northern Nillumbik (RARE)	Community Group
4	[REDACTED]	Individual At [REDACTED] request the submission replaces her earlier survey response.
5	Hurstbridge Community Voice	Community Group
6	Warrandyte Community Association	Community Group
7	[REDACTED]	Individual
8	[REDACTED]	Individual
9	Wildlife Advocates of Nillumbik (WAN)	Community Group
10	Eltham Community Action Group (ECAG)	Community Group
11	[REDACTED]	Individual
12	[REDACTED]	Individual
13	Clean Energy Nillumbik (CEN)	Community Group
14	[REDACTED]	Individual
15	Stringybark Community Nursery	Community Group
16	[REDACTED]	Individual Provided as an email following a presentation on the Strategy to an ESAC meeting. [REDACTED] confirmed in a subsequent email that he would like this recorded as a submission.
17	[REDACTED]	Individual
18	Nillumbik Mudbrick Association	Community Group
19	[REDACTED]	Individual
	Additional information from [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] submitted additional information in support of her survey response (documented as survey response No. 20638)

Submission 1 - [REDACTED]

The concept of neighbourhood character can only be considered once the concept of neighbourhood is defined. Your current neighbourhoods are randomly grouped, large areas that may or may not have things in common. A neighbourhood is "the immediate environment; surroundings; vicinity". (definition from Dictionary.com.) This implies that a neighbourhood is a smaller area of a couple of streets that intersect, not half a town.

My neighbourhood consists of Valley Court and Edinburgh Street in Diamond Creek. Edinburgh Street is a one lane, unfinished, dirt road. Valley Court is a one lane, finished, no-through road that is about 120m long. Surrounding Edinburgh Street and Valley Court is the Diamond Creek Cemetery, Saw Pit Gully reserve and creek, and the main roundabout in/out of Diamond Creek where Ryans Road meets Diamond Creek Road.

This area has a rural feel to it which is very different to the surrounding areas. The land is divided into large blocks with mostly single-story houses and large areas of green, open space. The smallest property on Valley Court is 690 m². Everybody who lives on Valley Court and the several houses on Edinburgh Street all know each other. This is a neighbourhood. And it is special. The reason people live here is because of the peace and quiet we have, the open spaces on our property and the fact that we aren't living on top of each other. This neighbourhood is not suburban.

Things that need to be considered are:

Why do people move to or continue to live in Nillumbik? It isn't because it is suburban. People move here because of the nature and space. People who just want suburbia move to the southeastern, eastern, western or northwestern parts of Melbourne where they have small blocks taken up by large houses.

Is there sufficient parking for residents and visitors? The current requirement for 1 visitor space per 5 units may work well on the wide, through road with lots of on street parking, but it doesn't work at all in a neighbourhood that has no on street parking and is a dead-end road, or an unsealed road. People will park on council nature strips. My neighbourhood has no on-street parking. This makes it unsuitable for multi-unit developments. If there were an emergency where we had to leave our houses, it would be very slow going with the narrow, one lane road and dirt road.

What is the housing density? When you have a neighbourhood that has 1 house per large block, inviting development that will cover 1 block with so many units as to double the number of houses on the street does not respect the neighbourhood character. My neighbourhood is special and different to other parts of Diamond Creek. It is an older part of town with a rural feel to it. This should be respected not trampled upon.

What is the building height? When all or most of the existing houses are single story, adding a development of double story units does not respect the neighbourhood character. My neighbourhood is mostly single storey houses. Adding 1 double storey house to the neighbourhood would fit in as the blocks are large. However, a multi-unit development of double storey units does not fit in a rural setting. You wouldn't be approving that in St Andrews, so why approve it in my little corner of Diamond Creek?

What are the natural surrounds? Are there trees (although it doesn't have to be a tree-lined street)? Is the area hilly? Is there any other unique natural feature such as a waterway, park or reserve? Do the houses have gardens? Allowing all the trees on a single block of land to be cut down so a multi-unit development can be built does not respect the neighbourhood character. Every property in my neighbourhood (except 1) has either multiple tall trees or a garden with many

plants. This is the what the neighbourhood looks like. Very green. Houses are not front and centre. They are back amongst the greenery or surrounded by greenery. This is why we live here.

The other items of neighbourhood character that the council includes are not as important in my neighbourhood. I also don't believe they are necessarily that important in other neighbourhoods. I'm all in favour of diversity of housing and have no problem with modern houses mixing in with traditional houses as long as no house or development overtakes the rest of the neighbourhood. Setbacks don't always apply as there may be reasons some houses are set back differently. For example, on Edinburgh Street, the houses near the bottom of the hill are set way back from the road because the middle of their properties are below the flood level. However, further up the hill houses are closer to the street. It makes no difference on that street. Streetscape needs to be how the street looks from everywhere, not just in front of the house. If a street curves or is a court, there are different views depending on where you are standing. The view may also be different from houses if the street is a hill or the houses are built on hills.

There are some areas that are special and should not be developed to the point that they become something else. People move to these areas because of the special nature of the neighbourhood. I have lived next door to my neighbour for 29 years. Any development should be in line with what already exists. In my neighbourhood, we are all ok with detached, one-storey units on a property because that would fit in with the rest of the neighbourhood. Attached, 2-storey units don't.

The Council needs to get rid of the current Neighbourhood Character Precincts as they do not accurately reflect all neighbourhoods. Because of this, some development is taking place where it shouldn't. Don't destroy Nillumbik.

WATTLE GLEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

(Incorporation No. A OO 26090 Z))

ESTABLISHED 9th February 1968

PLANNING FOR

*PEOPLE *RECREATION * ENVIRONMENT *SPORTING *WELFARE *ROADS

4/05/2022

Neighbourhood Character Strategy Project Submission

For the Nillumbik Planning Scheme where it pertains to Neighbourhood Character for residential areas of Wattle Glen we currently have the following.

Neighbourhood character

15.01-5S Neighbourhood Character - page 127

Landscape

42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay – page 437

Residential Zone

32.09 Neighbourhood Residential Zone – page 272

Natural environment

42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay - page 425

Wattle Glen Township Strategy amended 2005

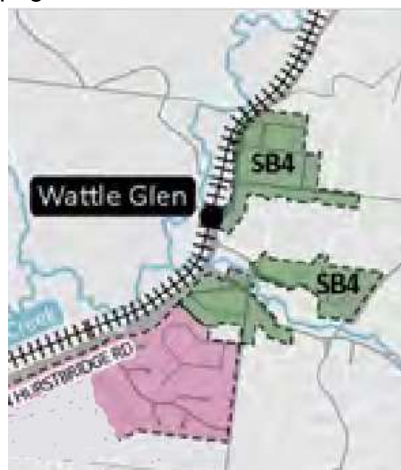
Reference document: Recommendations 'Settlement and Housing' - page 9

Neighbourhood Character for Wattle Glen

According to Nillumbik Planning Scheme currently we have:

- a. WG Residential south of Warrington Cres (including Sunnyside Cres and Kamarooka Estate) is GC4 – Garden-Court – shaded in pink below
- b. Residential WG north of this is SB4 – Semi-bush 4 – shaded in Green

Map below from Planning Scheme page 134



For the recent (December 2021) submissions and workshop comments of Council's **Wattle Glen Public Realm Project** (WGPRP) officers indicated in their report that the overall responses indicated that residents loved their treed township and want it to stay that way. On the map above the green **Semi-Bush** (SB4) epitomises these comments and WGRA would not want any new report or Council decision that weakens this area's assessment. It would also be hoped that when the planning officers of the WGPRP refer to the ***"distinctive character, such as the hilly landscape, the level of indigenous vegetation, the presence of significant environmental features ... and the locality's strong connection to the Nillumbik Green Wedge"*** that these aspects will be strengthened and extended to more of the Wattle residential area.

As to the pink **Garden Court** (GC4) part above, this was decided when the Kamarooka Estate development was still in its infancy – so it was probably difficult to decide the areas eventual neighbourhood character and this GC4 also covers the adjacent Diamond Creek township assessment. For this Wattle Glen area (Sunnyside Cres and Kamarooka estate) it would be well worth reviewing this classification as, per above paragraph, as there is now far more tree cover including the not so common Eucalyptus Blakeyi self seeding throughout in the nature strips and backyards.

Significant Landscape Overlay for Wattle Glen

According to Nillumbik Planning Scheme map (see copy below)

- a. WG Residential Kamarooka Estate is not covered by an SLO
- b. All of the rest of residential WG (The vast majority) is covered by a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO2) as per below map.



Significant Landscape (SLO2), which covers all of Wattle Glen residential area except for the newer Kamarooka Estate area, provides protection for indigenous vegetation which gives Wattle Glen its' much appreciated and dominating visual township aspect.

In the Nillumbik Planning Scheme this SLO2 states:

"Landscape character objective to be achieved

**To provide for housing in a residential location in a bushland setting.*

**To provide for sensitive siting of buildings and works, access and earthworks and by the restoration of native vegetation where considered appropriate.*

**To provide for conservation and enhancement of the environmental values of the area.*

**To ensure that the development of land and the removal of native vegetation are not detrimental to the natural environment and character of the area."*

**To minimise the threats to the natural environment through the unnecessary removal of vegetation in these areas.*

With these objectives SLO2 has a huge relevance to the Neighbourhood Character for this large part of Wattle Glen and these aspects should be respected and encouraged in any future Neighbourhood character deliberations.

Our Association's main concern is that when assessing applications for new or enlarging dwellings is the lack of officer recognition of the value of indigenous trees, vegetation, dwelling colour and fencing (it is supposed to be post and wire) when the application calls for a bigger dwellings on now often smaller blocks – perhaps the issue here is that the council planning department are not adequately briefing new officers on the green nature of Nillumbik townships and the importance of the Significant Landscape Overlay for residential areas as in most of Wattle Glen township.

NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENTIAL ZONE for Wattle Glen

According to Nillumbik Planning Scheme map (see copy below)

- c. WG Residential Kamarooka Estate is zoned General Residential Zone (GRZ1)
- d. All of the rest of residential WG is Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ1)
- e.



The State Government introduced the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ1) into the Planning Scheme for the above part of Wattle Glen. This zoning gives strong guidance for new dwellings visually fitting in with the concept of neighbourhood. It covers aspects such as the minimum lot size, the maximum building height and the maximum amount of the lot area that a new dwelling is allowed to cover. Whilst this zone is as good as we can currently expect it would be good for this new introduction of Neighbourhood Character could look at ways of improving the “neighbourhood” aspect.

The pink General Residential Zone (GRZ) part of Wattle Glen, is again the Kamarooka Estate. It is the same zone as the adjacent Diamond Creek Township GRZ. However, with all blocks in Kamarooka Estate now having a residential dwelling there is an argument that this part of Wattle Glen should also have its own version of NRZ as there is a clear boundary between this estate and the Diamond Creek township.

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY

In Wattle Glen the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO1) includes residential properties along the Watery Gully Creek valley in parts of Clarke Ave, Park Ave and Valley Rd, Wattle Glen.

See two maps below.



While an Environmental Significant Overlays (ESO1) is usually used for rural areas this overlay adds to the vegetation protection for Wattle Glen residential properties that drain directly into the Watery Gully Creek. Thus the ESO1 has positive effect on the water quality of Watery Gully Creek which flows through the centre of the Wattle Glen residential area. This in turn contributes to the rural feel of the Wattle Glen residential Neighbourhood Character.

Wattle Glen Township Strategy - amended 2005

Being the current Nillumbik Council Township Strategy for Wattle Glen makes strong statements in support of the Victorian planning scheme including a strong statement that “Council not support the rezoning of any land outside of the UGB for further residential Development” - (recommendation 25)



Further, included in the section on “Settlement and Housing” there are strong recommendations pertaining to Neighbourhood Character including:

- That no additional residential development is supported on land with a slope of 20% or greater (Rec 26, Page 9)
- That no residential development be considered on land in close proximity to creeks and major drainage lines and which is subject to overland flooding. (Rec 27, page 9)
- All threatened vegetation communities should be protected Rec 28, page 9)
- /all vegetation communities shown coloured yellow, orange or red as shown Map 19 and thus having a botanical significance of 3 or more should be protected and should not be considered for further residential development (Rec 29, page 9 and map 19 page 122)

Concluding remarks

1. It would be great if this Neighbourhood Character Strategy could help bring all of Wattle Glen residential areas together as a neighbourhood and encourage the protections we already have to be appreciated, widened and improved where possible.

2. It is our understanding that Nillumbik Council does have a streetscape tree planting program; and for the Wattle Glen township, this should be used to help provide a combined visual neighbourhood character, but using indigenous trees, not just native trees, to be consistent with the community council planting on Peppers Paddock and with Melbourne Water planting along the Watery Gully Creek that goes through the middle of Wattle Glen township.

3. The majority of land in Wattle Glen is rural-zoned Green Wedge land; and the Urban Growth Boundary passes through Wattle Glen township. For years, the *Wattle Glen Residents' Association* has been

promoting the notion of 'living in harmony with nature' as well as 'Wattle Glen as a Gateway to the Green Wedge' as part of our role and identity. Therefore, this should be incorporated into any descriptors of our Neighbourhood Character for the residential areas.

4. Unfortunately, we currently have huge environment-destroying developments occurring at the railway station area, in the centre of Wattle Glen. To prevent these carparking and substation developments destroying our Neighbourhood Character, we need Nillumbik Council to use its influence, and insist on consistency with the aims of the adjacent SLO2. Ideally that involves vegetation rehabilitation using indigenous plant stock around new structures and carparks; creative rehabilitation of at least the three smaller gullies (on map below, nos. 1, 2 & 3) near the station; only using wildlife friendly fencing; and aim to have the area meld in with Peppers Paddock, which is within a stone's throw of the new station works. For this to happen on this and all public land, we need better communication between public landowners and council's (land use) planning and environment department.

As outlined and numbered in red colour on the below map, the railway land west of Main Hurstbridge Road in the Wattle Glen area, contains four gully areas. To nurture our neighbourhood character "Gateway to the Green Wedge" along Heidelberg-Kinglake Rd these gullies need rehabilitation with indigenous plants and, given these gullies appear to be a Melbourne Water responsibility when works finish, Council needs to liaise with Melbourne Water to ensure this happens.



5. By the way, to help with Neighbourhood Character of residential areas generally, we would also like to see the promotion and greater incorporation of a 'green rather than a grey infrastructure' design approach to any new local public infrastructure including water (storm water and waterways) management. This we believe is possible as it would be very consistent with our current "semi bush" Council designation for much of the Wattle Glen residential area.

6. Wattle Glen is not only home to many people but also to much wildlife - the latter indeed, very much in the urban areas as well. Raising awareness about local wildlife and their needs (eg. their habitat and movement corridors), is an ongoing commitment. Ergo, the need to affirm indigenous vegetation is important: to strengthen the integrity (and consistency) of landscape values (SLOs), of the Green Wedge and Gateway values, of the habitat of indigenous wildlife, and possible ESOs (Environmental Significant Overlay) where that applies on residential land.

7. Much of the residential areas in Wattle Glen abut the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and hence the rural land; therefore the residential land use impacts on the adjacent Green Wedge. The land use

happening on residential land should be considered and the impact on wildlife minimised. Eg. wildlife habitat, and the ability of local wildlife to traverse land (including between residential and rural zoned land), should be encouraged. In theory the current Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO2) in Wattle Glen supports this Neighbourhood Character aspect with it requiring only “post and wire” rural fencing, however just recently council officers appear to have approved a six foot high cyclone fence as meeting the ‘post and wire’ criterion – not only a SLO breach, but impassable for most wildlife.

8. Another significant feature about Wattle Glen's identity and character are the increasing recreational trails converging in our township (Diamond Creek Regional Trail, Green Wedge Regional Trail and Council's Pretty Hill Trail). We expect them, as well as being local (urban) walking trails, to offer significant opportunities in the future as they get to join together. Thus land-use planning should be sympathetic in this aspiration and the trails be recognised, both as alternatives to road use, but also as connectors within Wattle Glen and as connectors to the wider Nillumbik network. In fact, with development of these trails they should be recognised as part of the Neighbourhood Character of our township and part of its endearing landscape.

9. In considering Nillumbik communities like Wattle Glen where the residential area abuts the Urban Growth Boundary, officers should consider Nillumbik Shires own publication for residential housing:

SDAPP

Sustainable Design Assessment

in the Planning Process

10 Key Sustainable Building Categories

Three quotes:

“This fact sheet will explain ways to improve our urban ecosystem through the incorporation of vegetation through landscaping for both new and existing developments.”

“Select plants that are indigenous as they will best suit your local climate and soil. Research what plants will attract native birds and insects”

“In addition to creating larger areas of habitat in local parks and reserves, sustainable gardening around dwellings and buildings can contribute to increasing habitat value and urban ecology.”

Well worth considering all these ideas when considering Wattle Glen Neighbourhood Character.



**RARE Northern Nillumbik
(Roads and Roadside Ecology
Northern Nillumbik)**

Submission to the Nillumbik Council Neighbourhood character strategy

RARE NN

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RARE Nillumbik Roads and Roadside Ecology, Northern Nillumbik is a community group focused on, as our name suggests, roads and roadside ecology of northern Nillumbik. The areas that we cover are the more rural wards of Nillumbik Council; Bunjil, Sugarloaf, Blue Lake and Ellis. We were founded in 2017 and have worked to address speed limits on roads, roadside conservation and the wildlife road toll.

RARE represents local community members living in the northern council ward areas of Nillumbik. We have an email list of 65 people and over 140 people follow our facebook group page. RARE has hosted several community events including a meeting with Council and VicRoads representative to address the wildlife road toll, and a meeting to communicate the impacts of the Yan Yean Rd Stage 2 development. We have made submissions to Council on the Green Wedge Management Plan and to the State Government on the Yan Yean Rd Stage 2. RARE has worked with other environment groups to establish the ongoing Save The Six campaign to save six ancient River Red Gums on Yan Yean Rd from removal.

Roads and roadsides are the 'front of house' for residents and visitors, they are places we spend time in and come to associate with our home.

The neighbourhood character is influenced strongly by our roads, roadsides and the visual aspect from them. The current neighbourhood character statements recognise the integral part roads play in our neighbourhood character with clear guides on street planting, footpaths, road verges and roadway treatments. For this reason, RARE believes that it is important to consider roads, roadsides and views form these in the Neighbourhood character strategy.

The numbered survey questions are followed each area. As a general addition though, RARE recommends the following is applicable to all towns of northern Nillumbik and be inserted into all of the neighbourhood character strategies. These additions compliment the character of each area and would be expected inclusions given the recent Climate Emergency Declaration by Nillumbik Council, and increased residential use of neighbourhood areas for work-from-home and recreation in the Covid era.

6(ALL) How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

RARE recommends that – for Hurstbridge, St Andrews, Panton Hill, Diamond Creek, Yarrambat and Plenty, the following be added to the neighbourhood character statement

- Roads are an integral part of the neighbourhood character. While the roads in the towns of northern Nillumbik allow movement, they are also places where we walk, run, ride, meet and engage with neighbours. We appreciate the beauty of the neighbourhood as near our homes in our travel from work or school. We associate our roads as part of our place. Roads of northern Nillumbik need to be registered in the VicRoads Movement and Place framework as being places of local and neighbourhood significance. Such classification will ensure that VicRoads take into account the place characteristics of our roads rather than regarding them as purely for movement in decision making about speeds, and environment.
- Under 'Roadway Treatment' add the design objective: "to reduce traffic speed on Council roads". This objective currently is included in the

should be for all council roads, not just those in the Garden Court Precincts as seen in the current neighbourhood character statements.

- For all new Council funded or part funded developments; the embodied carbon (carbon footprint of the development's construction and materials) be minimised and be included in Council emissions statistics. This includes all council developments including such developments as buildings, lighting structures, footpaths, landscaping etc
- Developments should be designed to minimise carbon emissions in use, improve air and water quality, reduce urban heat island effect, and demonstrate how the impact on biodiversity has been minimised. No development be allowed in Flood Inundation Zones areas to retain the healthy biodiverse creek and creekside environment
- Removal of native flora and habitat for fauna should be avoided in order to retain the tree lined, shady character, and wildlife presence which is a part of the neighbourhood character. Any proposals that relate to tree removal for hazard be accompanied by an independent arborist assessment.
- Encroachment into tree structural zones and more than 10 % of tree protection zones by development be regarded as tree removal and be avoided. This is in compliance with the current planning schedule clause 52.17 which regards such encroachment as consequential or assumed loss and requires a permit.
- Roadside burning and clearing be avoided due to the significant importance of the Nillumbik roadsides on neighbourhood character in regards to both the flora itself as well as the wildlife it sustains. Disturbance in such narrow areas causes significant edge effect with weeds encroaching after the vegetation is destroyed. Weeds such as tall exotic grasses on roadsides then add to the community fire concern – leading to mowing as a solution and loss of bushland character
- Dead trees are retained and any required pruning is minimised with hollows, parts of lateral branches that will form hollows in time, and bird and mammal perches retained
- Roadside weeds are controlled without damage to native flora or fauna. To retain the flora and fauna attributes of the area which are part of the character of all areas of northern Nillumbik, herbicide should not be applied to roadsides. Some exceptions for isolated spot spraying could be considered
- All trees that are large (i.e. have reached Large Old Tree size for the ecological vegetation community) should be heritage listed or have a heritage overlay placed on them

- For all areas covered in our submission, RARE recommends that the neighbourhood character strategy should be extended to also cover development in Public Park and Recreation Zones, and Multi Use Zones. The character of the PPRZ and MUZ are critical to the character of the area. These areas are often dominant in a visual sense from residential areas so are part of the views experienced in residential zones. They are often a part of the experience in accessing residential zones and are often important parts of residents and visitors experience of the neighbourhood, so should have the same character strategy as the residential and township zones.

Individual area responses:

1. Which neighbourhood

Hurstbridge

2. Which part of Hurstbridge:

We comment on the **whole area**

3. Five words or less:

Hurstbridge to us is a place where **community lives in the environment**

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Rare likes:

Built form

Setbacks

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation

Street Layout

Topography

Views

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

Hurstbridge is unique in the way a substantial sized community and commercial centre can thrive within a relatively intact and healthy environment. Indigenous plants and native fauna are dominant and not separated from community, trees which have died also seen as part of the natural environment and retained. Ancient trees stand right within the centre of the busy shopping strip and attract flocks of native birds, platypus thrive in the creek running through the centre of town, kangaroos move into the recreational areas as people move inside for the night. Threatened species are seen here. Trees with natural understory line the roads with minimal cleared verges

6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

Views of the Diamond Creek corridor are being impacted by the diamond creek trail. Revegetation is required to screen the view of the concrete path from the Heidelberg – Kinglake Rd. The shady character of the Creekside has been eroded by tree loss and pruning for this trail and should be restored by canopy tree planting

RARE supports for Hurstbridge all of the general additions recommended in **6(ALL)** above

RARE supports the retention of all of the elements in the current precinct BG3 guidelines with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads

RARE supports the retention of all of the elements in the current precinct SB4 guidelines - with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads'

RARE supports the retention of all of the current residential design guidelines

- We note that the Public Park and Recreation Zone is a dominant feature of Hurstbridge, this area runs the length of Hurstbridge township and features in most views from the town. The creekside wildlife corridor contributes to the abundance of wildlife in the area. These areas are essential elements of the character and should be protected from inappropriate modification by Council by inclusion in the character strategy.
- Encroachment into tree structural zones and more than 10 % of tree protection zones has caused significant tree loss in Hurstbridge. Valuable large old trees on roadsides in Hurstbridge have been killed by root damage such as the Yellow box on Arthurs Creek Rd near 'Burkes tree' killed by Melbourne Water works in the root zone; the ancient Yellow Box and Eucalyptus Blakelyi west of Lot 1 Graysharps Rd killed by Council footpath construction in the root zones; and the 2 Yellow Gums outside 816 Kinglake – Heidelberg Rd killed by Council's unnecessary mechanical ripping of root zones before the planting of shrubs. The recent landscape works around the war memorial on the corner of Anzac Rd has killed the remnant River Red Gum near the works.

1. Which neighbourhood

St Andrews

2. Which part:

We comment on the **whole area**

3. Five words or less:

St Andrews to us is **precious wildlife, trees and beauty**

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

Built form

Setbacks

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation

Street Layout

Topography

Views

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

St Andrews is dominated by natural bush vegetation and aesthetic; the built form is significantly screened. Built form has natural elements such as mud brick, wood and natural colours. Infrastructure is natural such as dirt or gravel paths and car parking areas. The small area of bitumen parking, is not consistent with the town character.

6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

RARE supports the retention of all of the elements in the current precinct S guidelines with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads'

RARE supports the retention of all of the current residential design guidelines

RARE supports for St Andrews all of the general additions recommended in **6(ALL)** above

1. Which neighbourhood

Panton Hill

2. Which part:

We comment on the **whole area**

3. Five words or less:

Panton Hill is an active community surrounded by reserves

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

Built form

Setbacks

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation

Street Layout

Topography

Views

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

Panton Hill is a place where community is always out – in the natural bush reserves or on the oval. The joy and beauty of these reserves dominate the character of the town.

6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

RARE supports the retention of all of the elements in the current precinct S guidelines with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads'

1. Which neighbourhood

Plenty

2. Which part:

We comment on the **whole area**

3. Five words or less:

Established community beside the gorge

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

Built form (except for the fire station)

Setbacks

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation, although removal of old trees and indigenous ground flora becoming an issue

Street Layout (with exception of the divide that Yan Yean Rd has created)

Topography

Views (with the exception of the Fire Station and Yan Yean Rd)

5. **Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?**

Large blocks with large old trees. Proximity to the Plenty Gorge, and Blue Lake

6. **How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?**

RARE supports the creation of a neighbourhood character strategy that includes all of the elements in the current precinct S guidelines for Panton Hill and St Andrews with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads'

1. **Which neighbourhood**

Yarrambat

2. **Which part:**

We comment on the **whole area**

3. **Five words or less:**

Space for recreation and trees

4. **What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply**

Built form

Setbacks

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation, although removal of old trees and indigenous ground flora will be an issue with Yan Yean Rd stage 2

Topography

Views

5. **Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?**

Large blocks. Old trees line the roads and there are large well used recreation areas which are shared with the wider community. Threatened bird species visit and attract twitchers from afar. Kangaroos are nearly always seen and make a picture in the paddocks on misty mornings. Recreational fishing is popular in the Yarrambat Lake (Yarrambat Casting Pool)

6. **How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?**

RARE supports the creation of a neighbourhood character strategy that includes all of the elements in the current precinct S guidelines for Panton Hill and St Andrews with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads'

More consideration needs to be given to restricting the vegetation removal

proposed by the Yan Yean Rd development which will dramatically change the character of the area.

Old trees such as the 6 ancient River Red Gums in the paddocks of 900 Yan Yean Rd should be considered for heritage registration and protection. These ancient trees are proposed to be destroyed for the Yan Yean Rd interchange. The Yan Yean Rd development should be redesigned to minimise the footprint in Rural Conservation Zone Land and Public Park and Recreation Zone land.

1. Which neighbourhood

Diamond Creek

2. Which part of Hurstbridge:

Heidelberg – Kinglake Rd and all residential areas, recreational zones and mixed-use zones

3. Five words or less:

Local meeting place

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Rare likes:

Built form

Setbacks

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation

Topography

Views

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

The remnant River Red Gums

The views to the Diamond Creek riparian area

**6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?
No building be allowed**

RARE supports the retention of all of the elements in the current precinct guidelines : GC2*, GC3, GC4, GC5, HNR dc north research**, and the Residential design guidelines

*except the comment that the key characteristic is low gardens predominantly exotic – this appears to have changed – there is now a predominance of canopy trees and native gardens with natural indigenous vegetation along aqueduct road which should be prioritised for retention. This roadside needs significant vegetation classification and signage to be erected to preserve this remnant understory.

** with the addition to 'roadway treatments' of 'to reduce traffic speed on Council maintained roads

RARE support for Diamond Creek, the additions recommended in **6(ALL)** above

Views to the Diamond Creek corridor have been impacted by the development on the hillside west of the creek. The separation of townships in Nillumbik is part of the character of the area and should be considered here

Neighbourhood character submission

[REDACTED]

Revised (the survey I completed 2 weeks ago had errors in it) Please replace the survey with this submission

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Neighbourhood Character Strategy (NCS)

1. Which neighbourhood (see study area map) would you like to comment on? (please select one) You will have the opportunity to comment on another area below)

Hurstbridge

2. If you would like to comment on a particular street or area in this neighbourhood, please tell us the name of the relevant street(s) or road(s) here

all

3. Tell us, in five words or less, how you would describe the character of this neighbourhood now? (Think how the buildings/homes, the street, landscape look and feel)

Connected to history

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

- Setbacks (how far buildings/ homes are set back from the street)
- Vegetation (like gardens, trees, plants, bush)
- Street layout (street configuration, subdivision pattern)
- Streetscape (how the street/road looks)

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

The town plan for Hurstbridge is unusual – residents from both sides of the creek look towards this beautiful central area and can readily access it for passive and active recreation.

Most parts of town would experience more wildlife than in most suburbs of Melbourne.

Very few main shopping strips would have ancient trees shading the shops and paths. It is close to a 20 minute town

House gardens blend into one another with a consistent theme of indigenous plants

Most views of the town are dominated by eucalypt canopy rather than roofs

Most streets have wide natural nature strips with porous tracks – with pedestrians and children on bikes using dirt tracks in the grass

The town is separated from other towns by rural zones

6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

The Public Park and Recreation zoned areas need to be included in the neighbourhood character strategy

Retain all elements of the current neighbourhood character statements BG3 and SB4 with the inclusion (as seen in the GC statements) of the road treatment design objective to reduce traffic speeds.

Retain all elements of the current residential design guidelines

The traditional custodians of the area and their culture should be consulted in regards to place naming and any developments on public land.

Retain all overlays

Add heritage overlays to all trees at or over the Large Old Tree size for the ecological vegetation class in which the tree is located

Protect views of the town from the recreational / wildlife (the green space along the Diamond Creek) area by not allowing permits for canopy tree removal or lopping where removals allow built form to intrude into the canopy cover. Tree removals or lopping for safety when verified by an independent arborist excluded from this requirement

Protect views of the recreational / wildlife area (the green space along the Diamond Creek) from the shopping and residential areas by not allowing permits for canopy tree removal or lopping where removals allow built form to intrude into the canopy cover. Tree removals or lopping for safety when verified by an independent arborist excluded from this requirement

All Council developments should be required to comply with neighbourhood character – including paving, buildings, signs, fences, retaining walls, curbs, water sensitive design etc. This would encompass ensuring that the development improves the area's biodiversity, natural appeal and clean air and reduces the area's embodied and ongoing carbon emissions and pollution

Advise new residents of tree removal laws and penalties for removing trees without a permit where required

Ensure Council abide by cl 52.17 of the Planning Scheme and all overlays in regards to tree removal including tree root encroachment

Ensure maintenance of the PPRZ area does not destroy the character – eg mowing is destroying natural regeneration and thus over time reducing vegetation cover and biodiversity

Improve transparency in the development approval process by making applications public, including all council development proposals

7. Would you like to comment on another neighbourhood?

Yes

8. Which neighbourhood (see study area map) would you like to comment on?

Diamond Creek

9. If you would like to comment on a particular street or area in this neighbourhood, please tell us the name of the relevant street(s) or road(s) here

Heidelberg - Kinglake Rd, and the town plan in general

10. Tell us, in five words or less, how you would describe the character of this neighbourhood now? (Think how the buildings/ homes, the street, landscape look and feel)

Remnant River Red Gum dominated

11. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

- Vegetation (like gardens, trees, plants, bush)

12. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

The remnant River Red Gums

Separation of residential area from that of neighbouring towns by zoning

The recreation and habitat area following the Diamond Creek in part of the town

Bitumen rather than concrete footpaths

13. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

More indigenous vegetation

A minimum amount of area required for landscaping that can screen developments and reduce the visual and heat impact of developments including car parks

Permits that include landscaping should require a permit to remove said landscaping, eg the Mitre 10 car park eucalypts trees have been removed, and the plant species dramatically changed. The vegetation between the petrol station and the road has been removed

No development in Land Subject to Inundation Overlay areas

Permit requirement for tree root encroachment to be enforced – eg The current development in the Main Rd near the Ambulance will no doubt kill the remnant river red gums adjoining it due to encroachment into the structural root zone and more than 10% of the tree protection zone.

14. Do you have any final feedback or ideas about neighbourhood character that you would like considered?

Please review your answers below and submit your responses on confirmation.

Neighbourhood Character Strategy (NCS)

1. Which neighbourhood (see study area map) would you like to comment on? (please select one) You will have the opportunity to comment on another area below)

Hurstbridge

2. If you would like to comment on a particular street or area in this neighbourhood, please tell us the name of the relevant street(s) or road(s) here

Heidelberg - Kinglake Rd, and the town plan and character in general

3. Tell us, in five words or less, how you would describe the character of this neighbourhood now? (Think how the buildings/homes, the street, landscape look and feel)

Eucalypt covered rural town

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

- Setbacks (how far buildings/ homes are set back from the street)
- Vegetation (like gardens, trees, plants, bush)
- Street layout (street configuration, subdivision pattern)
- Streetscape (how the street/road looks)

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

Healthy creek with associated riparian vegetation area that forms the 'spine' of the town. This is a wide and continuous green area from the north to the south of the town and provides an important wildlife corridor and passive and active recreation area for residents and visitors

The green 'spine' of the town is well used and close to properties on both sides of town

The large old native trees

Native vegetation in front gardens

Setbacks to allow for these gardens and for street trees to thrive (for residential sites in the street)

Low density housing

Wide nature strips

Bitumen rather than concrete paths in township and porous (gravel, granitic, or dirt) paths in recreation areas

Areas that have natural appeal and have no built form

Canopy cover over the residential area as well as over the creek area. The views into the residential parts of town from the recreational area and town centre are dominated by tree canopies

Separation of residential area from that of neighbouring towns by zoning

6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

Consideration of traditional custodians of the area in place naming, use of native plants, restoration of environment and historical communications

All development applications should be freely available to community for assessment.

No canopy tree removal should be allowed without a permit (native or other).

Consideration of sustainability in decision making for approval of all development permits (including municipal and state government developments). This would

encompass ensuring that the development improves the area's biodiversity, and reduces the area's embodied and ongoing carbon emissions

Ensure that the current planning scheme requirement for permits for tree root zone encroachment for native trees – is enforced.

(Note that The current planning scheme *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* requires applicants to identify all native vegetation loss, including consequential and assumed loss of native vegetation (Section 2.3.3 of the Guidelines). Assumed loss includes encroachment into the Tree Protection Zone or Structural Root Zone, as specified in AS4970-2009.)

Retain all of the elements and boundaries in the current neighbourhood character statement with the addition of the value and retention of the wide green habitat and recreation 'spine' of the town

Enhancement of the habitat of the creek corridor by widening the area of riparian vegetation on either side of the creek

Retention of the natural appeal of areas that currently are not dominated by built form

Consideration of the canopy cover of the town when assessing development permits

7. Would you like to comment on another neighbourhood?

no

8. Which neighbourhood (see study area map) would you like to comment on?

9. If you would like to comment on a particular street or area in this neighbourhood, please tell us the name of the relevant street(s) or road(s) here

10. Tell us, in five words or less, how you would describe the character of this neighbourhood now? (Think how the buildings/ homes, the street, landscape look and feel)

11. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

12. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

13. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

14. Do you have any final feedback or ideas about neighbourhood character that you would like considered?

In person community meetings are required for this kind of process to get a more representational view

The restriction of the strategy to just areas zoned GRZ, NRZ, MUZ, LDRZ, TZ should be reconsidered. The character of Hurstbridge is dominated by the character of the central recreation/ wildlife area, it is what we see as we approach and what we view from most areas of town. It affects our enjoyment of open space, our clean air, the temperature we experience, and the wildlife of the area. The character of this area is being dramatically impacted by the addition of built form, changing the ground slopes and levels, filling the creek overflow area, adding concrete paths, adding inappropriately styled furniture, removal of natural regeneration, trimming of trees and shrubs to a 'council- aesthetic'.

The recreation / wildlife area character needs protection with inclusion in the neighbourhood character strategy. Natural materials should be used for any furniture or paths. Indigenous plants should be used. Natural regeneration should be allowed, no removal or lopping of canopy trees except for independent arborist verified safety reasons, the riparian area should be protected from intrusion of lighting, noise and weeds.

Buildings planned for the recreation area will dramatically change the character of the area if not part of the strategy. These buildings need to follow the same character strategy as for the residential area, with wide enough setbacks for screening, and protection of canopy trees to that ensure the built form does not intrude into the views into this recreational area from the town.

About You

15. First Name [REDACTED] **for**

Hurstbridge Community Voice – [REDACTED]

16. Last Name

17. Email [REDACTED]

18. Gender

19. Age

20. What is your connection to Nillumbik?

Local community group

21. What township/locality do you live in? Cottles Bridge and Hurstbridge

22. I identify as ..

23. How did you hear about this consultation?

Facebook

[Previous](#)

SUBMISSION FROM THE WARRANDYTE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
TO
THE NILLUMBIK COUNCIL
REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STRATEGY

Restrict the content of your submission to the scope of matters relevant to the project and current engagement, including the following matters:

o How would you define the neighbourhood character of North Warrandyte?

Our submission is in relation to the Low Density Residential Zone of North Warrandyte.

We define its neighbourhood character as a low-density housing within a native bushland environment.

o What do you like about the neighbourhood character North Warrandyte?

Character Attributes & Architectural Style, form and layout

Built structures have low visual impact and blend in with the environment,

Era of buildings

Mixed

Existing building quality

Some existing buildings are unique, most are high quality, many are significant or architecturally interesting, e.g. Robin Boyd houses, the Danila Vassilieff house, and Alistair Knox houses. A few artists shacks and studios remain, for example Deborah Halpern, Gus McLaren.

Primary materials: Everything including mud brick, single brick, timber, solid brick,

Roof form: flat or pitched

Roof material: some clay tiles, and flat or pitched colorbond steel,

Scale of existing development:

Dominant residential form: Single dwellings on allotments mostly ½ acre to two acres in size, though there are a few older ¼ acre subdivisions

Dominant residential typology: mix of single level, split level because of steep topography, and some two-storey

Setbacks and Siting: most are setback from the front and sides as blocks are relatively large, and most people do not want to be too close to their neighbours. By having side setbacks, neighbours can avoid unsightly and costly fencing, and it allows movement of native animals.

Consistency of setbacks: most are setback

Dominance of parking structures: most houses have a carport or garage/ garages. This is because the blocks are relatively large and can accommodate parking structures, the roads are narrow and do not allow parking, and being a treed area, there is a risk of tree damage if cars are not garaged.

Front fencing and Footpaths: Front fencing is variable. Front fencing has increased, in part due to the increase in dog ownership. Houses where the native bush has been cleared tend to have fences in order to provide the privacy that native bush once allowed. We prefer no fencing in front yards to maintain the character of the area.

Front fence height: Preference is for low fences if there are any

Front fence type: currently variable, from post and wire to high cement block or stone walls. We advocate no front fences on boundary in order to keep bush environment.

Footpath presence; it varies and is often just on one side of the street. Generally there is a winding gravel path on side streets, but main roads have asphalt paths in places.

Vegetation. Most blocks have native vegetation, and there is considerable roadside native vegetation.

Public and private landscaping: there are a few formally landscaped blocks but most are natural, or have enhanced native bush, that is owners have used a native landscape design.

Private garden type. We prefer the retention of the native landscape. However, we also support built or enhanced native gardens, that harmonise with the bush environment. We do not support the exotic gardens for example, palm trees, cactus, Agapanthas and weed species (for example Pittosporum and Cootamundra Wattle).

Street tree types: mostly it is native vegetation and trees in the streets. We would like to see more understory in streets, as they provide good screening, and habitat for birds and small animals.

View-lines and Topography

North Warrandyte has beautiful view-lines to the Dandenongs, Kangaroo Ground, the Green Wedge and city, as there are many ridgelines. We discourage the higher form of houses, built to get view-lines, as this often destroys everyone else's natural views. We oppose bulky form buildings where the aim is to enhance view-lines to owner but have the consequence of destroying view-lines from the streetscape.

Road Network: There are two main roads and the rest are meandering lanes and small roads.

Road layout: Roads largely have been designed to achieve gentle grades by routing along contours, for example The Boulevard.

Road surface: Mostly informal sealed roads, still some dirt roads.

Drainage: currently there are mainly table or open channel (OUD) drains. Many of the discharge points are not properly connected up so you get erosion. We recommend improvements here, but not kerb and channel.

O What contributes to the neighbourhood character of Nth Warrandyte?

Having primarily native vegetation on the roadside and on properties. The predominance of gentle to steep hills. North Warrandyte is not flat. It is a hilly terrain, and this contributes to the gullies and vistas which open up as you drive through.

Absence of intrusive built form. The consistency of low density character. No commercial areas.

North Warrandyte does not have any parks, which means that as there are no places for families to meet or congregate. There are no shops or formal commercial businesses or centre. There is only one small park in Weerona Way, built when the street was developed.

However, North Warrandyte has a number of State Parks (Glynns Road and Norman Reserve) and riverside walks. This adds to the character and makes it very attractive for locals and people from adjacent suburbs. It also has very special wildflower reserves (e.g. Professor's Hill). All of this creates a beautiful riverine environment, which is reflected in the character. Many houses are sited or designed to take advantage of this.

North Warrandyte abuts the Yarra River and also has a number of beautiful gullies and creeks, (e.g. Stoney Creek and Pigeon Bank). Because of the meandering flow of the river, most residents can easily access the River within 5-10 minutes walks from their houses. This is central to the neighbourhood character of North Warrandyte.

o How could new development be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood character in North Warrandyte?

Encouraging developments that blend with the environment, rather than making an architectural statement. We want to houses that are sympathetic to the environment and the landscape.

Limiting the built form on the block with a building envelope, suitable for the size and dimensions of the block. Scale the building to the size of the block, having regard to the size, dimensions and gradient of the block. The built form envelope should include the residence, sheds, gardens, pool and other ancillary buildings.

This needs to be given effect through the use of a defined building envelope.

Our preference is that fences on the front boundary should not be permitted. Where fencing is required to contain an animal or small children, it should run from the side of the residence to the side boundary.

We need guidelines regarding the scale of ancillary structures that are appropriate to residential use. We are not against people having a hobby facility, but when a structure becomes commercial in size it is clearly not ancillary to residential use and can often be surreptitiously used for commercial or business purposes which undermine the residential zoning. Just because allotments in North Warrandyte are larger than a typical suburb does not mean that they can be filled with storage sheds and commercial workshops. It is not appropriate because of traffic movements, inappropriate land use, the inevitable destruction of a bush block and the impact on the amenity of other residents. We need to restrict the area of disturbance on a property and ensure that land uses are truly residential.

Any new planning controls will need to be implemented and enforced..

Submission re. Neighbourhood Character Strategy

submitter – [REDACTED] 8 May 2022

What determines neighbourhood character?

The video by Jessica Farrugia and Lindsay Fraser covers it very well.

For me the vegetation is the primary component of the neighbourhoods I feel at home in. Then the buildings (houses) - whether they fit into the environment (complement it) or jar (seek to dominate). A different and distinctive house can work but it needs to be well designed and located, not just a volume builder house plonked on a block of land.

Neighbourhood Character precincts vs reality

I live in an area of Eltham that is zoned as NRZ1 with overlays SLO2 and ESO1. The Neighbourhood Character precinct is Semi Bush - SB3.

In my experience with planning decisions and VCAT determinations for my immediate neighbourhood the NRZ zoning trumps the overlays and neighbourhood character comes a distant last.

If I look at the existing SB3 guidelines, which in general seem fine, and then compare them to many (most?) properties in my extended neighbourhood the mismatch is staggering. It's as if the SB3 guidelines don't exist.

So, there can be a good Neighbourhood Character Strategy but unless it's given weight in the planning process (and enforced?) it's just a nice aspirational statement, divorced from reality.

Vegetation – canopy trees vs understorey

The tall canopy trees are fairly well protected and the Neighbourhood Character precincts state tree density objectives. However the understorey (shrubs), groundcover and grasses are not as well specified.

Within the SB3 precinct I regularly see housing developments occur where the remnant large trees are protected and kept but the first thing that happens is the builder clears the block of the understorey (and, of course, the groundcover and grasses).

When the house is completed the builder or home owner then landscapes the block or progressively plants a garden – and what is planted maybe indigenous, native or exotic vegetation. Plants described in the booklet Common Weeds of Nillumbik are not uncommon.

It seems to me that arborists are the main professionals consulted regarding vegetation issues by planners. And the arborists concentrate on trees rather than shrubs. Ecologists, while more alert to the smaller plant species, seem to be consulted on wildlife, particularly endangered wildlife, issues.

Furthermore, arborists, in my opinion, seem to have a 'park garden' view of trees in terms of how they rate them and come up with low, medium or high retention values.

For example, in several neighbourhood subdivision planning disputes that I have been involved in, the consultant arborists have rated about 50% of the trees as low retention value and so unsuitable for retention. In one case the predominant species (38 of 85 trees) was *Eucalyptus gonicalyx* (Long leaved Box or Bundy). *All* of these trees were rated low retention value. However this eucalypt is indigenous to the local area and is a typical species in the site's EVC 47 Valley Grassy Forest and the neighbouring EVC22 Grassy Dry Forest. These are not pretty park trees but they were growing as typical examples of their species.

Neighbourhood character depends on the understorey as well as the tall trees. As an example, until 10 years ago I lived in Montmorency (for 30 years). Visitors commented on and were attracted by the trees and vegetation. With the increased housing density occurring there now (and perhaps a changing demographic) the vegetation, in particular the shrubs etc. making up the understorey, is changing dramatically and soon it will only be the remnant canopy trees that maintain any semblance to the previous neighbourhood character.

Vegetation and wildlife

While the primary visual character of neighbourhoods (and my personal focus) is vegetation, it needs to be recognised that vegetation is not just there to look nice. The right vegetation supports a wide range of fauna - from the most obvious such as birds to small marsupials, frogs, reptiles and insects.

Indeed there appears to be no mention at all of wildlife in the existing Neighbourhood Character statements. For me the birds, at least, are an important part of the neighbourhood character – imagine a neighbourhood without birds!

The role of vegetation in relation to wildlife is now being addressed in the Nillumbik Gardens for Wildlife program. This program is voluntary on the part of residents and involves developing better gardens for wildlife. I'd like to see some of this program's goals moved to the planning stage - so that habitat is protected right from the start.

Summary

- for me, the vegetation is the primary factor in the neighbourhood character
- understorey plants need to be better defined and protected
- arborists focus on trees rather than understorey plants and arborists have a 'park garden' view of trees rather than matching species to the local EVC
- a neighbourhood character description should mention wildlife, in particular birdlife
- the role of vegetation in supporting local wildlife needs to be recognised
- I would like to see Neighbourhood Character guidelines have more influence on planning decisions, and perhaps see some follow through to maintain the preferred character.

Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Strategy

Preamble: a brief description

Nillumbik Shire is a wide, extensive and richly varied region, located between Greater Melbourne and the open countryside of the Yarra Valley. Its extensive rural terrain contains small farms, grassland and pasture, vineyards and forests. There are many long-established towns containing food and retail shops, professional service centres and small industrial plants. Around these towns and villages there are large areas of medium-density domestic housing.

It is a land of rolling hills, forests of stringybark and she-oak trees, rivers and creeks, white swamp gums and horizons of distant mountains. It is a region of great physical beauty and it provides relatively easy access to metropolitan Melbourne.

It is an area of transition between the open countryside and the vast urban sprawl of Melbourne's commuter suburbs.

The area was once occupied by the large Wurundjeri-Willam clan long before European settlement began in the late 1830s. There are tracks, recovered tools and artifacts and inherited memories of First Nation's ancestors who once lived here.

From the early days, many artists - painters, potters and writers - gravitated to this region, joining the farmers, graziers, builders and craftsmen and women.

Taken together, these creative and productive people gave the region a distinctive character as a place where work was honored for its intrinsic value, building and design were never reducible to mere utility or decoration and community activities were valued as projects in the development of community spirit and well being and not to be confused with simple socializing.

It has always been a region which attracted active, reflective and inventive citizens and was never regarded as merely one of scores of dormitory suburbs built to serve the needs of the metropolis.

Strategy for the Region Today

I do not presume to understand the nexus of recommendations and obligations which governs the Council's regulations. The remarks which follow are my personal observations and suggestions, designed to protect some of the distinctive characteristics of the region which I admire and believe to be worthy of protection and continuing application to new developments.

Nillumbik has continued to attract a growing population and this growth has brought inevitable pressures to conform to standard suburban norms in the most populated areas. The economic and political pressures which exist in Victoria today seem to be leading here to a growing conformity with suburban development in built-up areas everywhere around Melbourne.

In many of Melbourne's suburbs, developments feature individual houses which are either almost uniform in design or so strikingly different as if to deliberately encourage differentiation or competitiveness. These characteristics seem at odds with the character of Nillumbik.

In many parts of Nillumbik there are fine houses and sensitive developments. The following list identifies some of their qualities:

- The designs recognize and respond to the natural and built environment. In most cases, the designs appear to seek an organic relationship with that environment.
- Most dwellings are surrounded by carefully placed trees and shrubs and segregated, if at all, by minimal fencing, discouraging strident distinctions between one house and the neighbouring houses.
- Where space permits, adjacent houses are juxtaposed to avoid the appearance of uniform serried rows.
- In sloping blocks, the siting and the building heights utilize the gradient to soften the visual impact of the building.

- Buildings are frequently designed with local materials and colour palettes which harmonize with the surrounding environment.
- Most residents appear to favour garden designs which avoid severe boundaries between garden beds, lawns and pathways, preferring soft demarcations. Such gardens appear to have evolved rather than having been imposed.

Conclusions

Taken together these characteristics I have identified refer exclusively to domestic dwellings. The design of commercial properties and most other occupational buildings (schools, etc) seem indistinguishable from such facilities in other parts of the state.

These characteristics suggest that residents in Nillumbik shire believe that they are fortunate to live in a very special place, a region with distinctive qualities that they value and wish to sustain.

In its nearly 200-year history of European settlement, the Nillumbik region has undergone great changes. There is some awareness and knowledge of the lives of the early settlers and some of the characteristics I have listed may be regarded as coming in a direct line from their formative experiences in building communities.

Contemporary residents in Nillumbik find the natural environment inspiring and wish to live in harmony with it. Equally, they wish to live in cooperation with their neighbours, rather than in competition.



Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Strategy

Wildlife Advocates of Nillumbik Submission

Who We Are

Wildlife Advocates Nillumbik is a community group that works to improve the safety and protection of native wildlife. Our organisation includes members with specialist knowledge of wildlife rescue, wildlife care, treatment of infectious wildlife diseases, impacts of habitat loss and impacts of climate change. WAN has held one public meeting and participated in others. Our members predominantly live in semi-rural areas of Bunjil and Sugarloaf but with support from other areas both rural and within the Urban Growth Boundary.

Our input will focus on front boundary treatment and fencing, wildlife protection, roads and roadsides with an aim to improving the safety and liveability for people and wildlife.

WAN ask that for more rural areas such as – Lower Hurstbridge, Wattle Glen, St Andrews, Panton Hill, Diamond Creek North, Yarrambat and Plenty, the following be added or considered in writing the neighbourhood character statement:

- Removal of native flora and habitat for fauna should be avoided.
- Boundary treatment and fencing is wildlife friendly i.e. wildlife can move through it easily.
- Roads/Wildlife Protection: Hazard signage should be more impactful; we would recommend the type of signage below that clearly states the actual danger. Located in the most effective areas based on wildlife trauma statistics from Council and VicRoads. There is a potential to include Wildlife Vic/local rescuers experience if possible (Macedon Ranges Council consult local rescue groups) :



- More hazard preventive measures along roadsides in rural areas such as tunnels, over passes and wildlife bridges. As Manningham have done locally. Bridges have also been used in NSW and SA.
- Consideration to be given to virtual fencing in high risk, rural areas - as Manningham, Phillip Island, Casey and Surf Coast have done.
- Roadside burning and clearing be avoided due to the sensitive nature of roadside ecology, and significant edge area over which weeds can encroach after the vegetation is destroyed.
- Dead trees are retained and any required pruning is minimised with hollows, parts of lateral branches that will form hollows in time, and bird and mammal perched retained. Careful pruning of structurally sound dead trees can also help keep people safe while simultaneously preventing erosion of a tree being cut out or falling over with top heavy dead growth.
- Roadside weeds are controlled without damage to native flora or fauna such as hand pulling or steam treatment. To retain the flora and fauna attributes of the area which are part of the character of all areas of northern Nillumbik, herbicide should not be applied to roadsides. Some exceptions for isolated spot spraying could be considered.
- All trees that are large (i.e. have reached Large old tree size for the ecological vegetation community) should be heritage listed

Specifically

St ANDREWS:

- **Which part:**
Road networks
- **Five words or less:**
St Andrews to us is **precious wildlife, trees and beauty**
- **What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply**

Built form
Setbacks
Heights of buildings and homes
Vegetation
Street Layout
Topography
Views
- **Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?**
St Andrews is dominated by natural bush vegetation and aesthetic; the built form is significantly screened. Built form has natural elements such as mud brick, wood and natural colours. Infrastructure is natural such as dirt or gravel paths and car parking areas. The small area of bitumen parking, is not consistent with the town character but at least it is reasonably screened by indigenous vegetation.
- **How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?**
WAN supports the retention of all elements in the current precinct S guidelines

PANTON HILL

- **Which neighbourhood**
Panton Hill
- **Which part:**
We comment on the **whole area**
- **Five words or less:**
Panton Hill is **an active community surrounded by reserves**
- **What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply**

Built form
Setbacks
Heights of buildings and homes
Vegetation
Street Layout
Topography
Views
- **Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?**
Panton Hill is a place where community is always out – in the natural bush reserves or on the oval. The joy and beauty of these reserves dominate the character of the town.
- **How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?**
WAN supports the retention of all of the elements in the current precinct S guidelines

Neighbourhood Character Survey...May 2022
Eltham Community Action Group

Areas of Interest...Eltham Central, Eltham South, Eltham East/Woodridge, Eltham North/Harcourt Hill

Existing Character

The main feature setting Eltham aside from other areas of Melbourne is its canopy cover of indigenous eucalypts.

From the strongly worded statements from residents at the time of the Fitzsimons Lane Roundabout removal we know how passionately Eltham people feel about the eucalypt tree canopy. To very many it denotes 'home.'

There is nothing that causes more angst in the community than the loss of trees ..and loss of open space.

The defining feature of all Eltham precincts is trees..particularly our indigenous eucalypts

- All areas of Eltham have similar characteristics, albeit in differing degrees.
- All are treed /leafy, hilly.
- The low profile nature of the built form where the colours and materials blend with and respect the natural environment gives a feeling of informality is prevalent.
- The canopy of indigenous eucalypts being the main type of vegetation gives the hillsides a soft and blue-grey appearance.
- Dwellings, for the most part, are well set back from the street with gardens that at least partially screen the built form.

What do we like about the existing character?

The Tick the Box categories listed are:

- Built form (how buildings/homes look)
- Setbacks (how far buildings/ homes are set back from the street)
- Heights of buildings and homes
- Vegetation (like gardens, trees, plants, bush)
- Street layout (street configuration, subdivision pattern)
- Topography (mountains, hills, creeks etc)
- Views.

As these categories are broad and to tick a box, or not, can give an incorrect impression, hence ECAG has not completed that part of the survey.

All of the above categories are important in making up the neighbourhood character and they differ from one area of Eltham to another only in degree.

All areas have builds that do not fit the existing and preferred character for one reason or another. For example, regarding 'Street Layout', multi dwellings that have been designed around a long gun barrel driveway would be one area we could find unsatisfactory, but the narrower streets that follow the contours are very appealing.

Specific features making the area unique

- The dominance of a canopy of indigenous eucalypts
- Hilly topography
- Blue-grey vista of eucalypt covered hillsides
- Diamond Creek and adjacent parkland
- Dwellings set in gardens, often of native and indigenous plants
- Dwellings partly screened by vegetation
- Dwellings setback from the street and neighbouring dwellings that enables the planting of trees and shrubs to soften and screen, provide food and cover for birds, insects, lizards
- Dwellings not aiming to dominate the landscape
- Colour schemes that blend with the environment
- Native birds
- Lack of front fences

How could new development be designed to enhance neighbourhood character?

- Respect for the existing and preferred character and environment particularly with regards to height, setbacks, colours, size, density, gardens, materials, canopy trees especially eucalypts.
- Retain existing canopy trees.
- Provide room for meaningful landscaping including canopy trees. Provide enough room that trees will be sustainable and safe in the location where the landscape plan has located them.
- Native gardens.
- Generous setbacks, front, rear and sides, to allow for planting between properties.
- Encourage innovative designs that respond creatively to the actual site and neighbourhood character, rather than accepting the standard box like two storey, 4 bedroom design seemingly designed for maximum fit on a block, that is seen all over Melbourne.
- Follow up compliance with permit conditions especially landscape plans. Neighbours have usually not seen endorsed landscape plans so are unaware of what should be planted and would be reluctant to contact council.

Central Eltham, Eltham East including Woodridge, Eltham South, Eltham North including Harcourt Hill

Eltham North

Differences in character include more hilly terrain, less formalised road reserves and footpaths, street layout less formal and often meandering or curved, some unmade roads,

more indigenous eucalypt canopy and lower storey vegetation, larger blocks (apart from Eltham South).

Eltham East and Woodridge

More heavily treed than Eltham Central but more 'formal' than Eltham North. Dwellings very well screened. Most are native gardens. Houses mainly of the same era.

Harcourt Hill

Less formal. More narrow curved roads. Unmade roads. Very treed. Historic and heritage buildings. Many mud brick buildings.

Eltham South

Larger blocks. Dwellings usually hidden by vegetation and well set back. More mudbrick houses.

Eltham Central

Although seeing more change than the other areas, the same concerns and characteristics apply. New builds have eucalypts planted and front gardens. More established dwellings retain their well set back location within treed gardens. Some developments and planning applications however display a worrying disregard for the context of a treed area.

Also..

Eltham is not part of a growth corridor. While the government expects some population growth, their expectation of our provision of extra housing is not high. (shown by data available during the Nillumbik Housing Strategy consultation)

We are in the fortunate position therefore of being able to clearly state our preferred Neighbourhood Character and plan any increase in housing to fit within those parameters.

We are told that we need to cater for the ageing population and provide diversity in housing. That is not happening.

Of the 3 development application on advertising this month in Eltham, nine bedrooms will become thirty one if the plans are approved. Apart from the trees that have gone already or will go there will no room for meaningful replacement planting. This increase in multi large dwellings on the one block is putting extreme pressure on our Neighbourhood Character.

All of the planned nine dwellings for the 3 sites are two storey. Most are four bedrooms, the others are three. Most have a bathroom for each bedroom ie 3 or 4 bathrooms. Most have at least two living areas, some three.

These are not homes for Eltham residents wanting to downsize or retire in place.

This is not providing diversity in housing.

We are 'sold' as the leafy, treed suburb ...so we need strong statements and policy to keep us that way.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the formation of this extremely important policy document. ECAG looks forward to further involvement in the next consultation stage.

Neighbourhood Character Survey, May 2022...

The following points relate to the specific numbered points on the survey.

Eltham

2. Eltham could be divided into Eltham South, Central Eltham and Eltham East/Woodridge.

All have varying degrees of the same characteristics so to make statements about specific details in a general way is problematic.

3. Having said that however, the overall Existing Character of Eltham could be described as:

Treed, mainly with a canopy of blue-grey eucalyptus,

Leafy,

Informal,

Low profile.. houses sitting within the tree canopy in well vegetated gardens (often bushy and native) The dwellings do not aim to dominate.

Natural...housing blending with and respecting the environment,

Hilly.

A feeling of spaciousness

The defining feature of the Eltham Neighbourhood Character is the eucalypt tree canopy.

4. What do you like about the character?

The points given are very broad categories. I could say I like them all if I think about the aspects of each category that I like and how they influence the general character that I have described in this doc, but obviously there are differences in all eg heights, built form of some new builds, lack of vegetation so to tick a box can be misleading and read as blanket approval..or disapproval.

5. Specific features making the area unique.

Trees, particularly eucalypts, topography ..hilly, including views of distant tree covered hills, gardens..often native, generous setbacks, dwellings not aiming to dominate, colour schemes blending with environment, screening vegetation, dominance of mature, indigenous, eucalypt canopy, mud brick buildings, waterways and natural adjacent environment/parklands.

6. How could new development be designed to enhance neighbourhood character?

Respect the existing and preferred character especially with relation to height, materials, size, colours, setbacks, gardens, canopy trees.

More room on site for substantial and meaningful planting including indigenous canopy trees.

Retention of existing canopy trees.

Native gardens.

Generous setbacks, on four sides, to allow for above.

Encourage innovation that suits the locale and particular site rather than the stock standard latest double storey 4 bedroom dwelling that is designed to fit the maximum number on any site and can be found all over Melbourne.

Permit conditions, especially compliance with landscape plans, needs to be systematically and vigorously followed up by officers. Neighbours are usually not aware of any endorsed plans and reluctant to contact council.

Council policy needs to be strong enough that developers see the need to adhere to the neighbourhood character policy, not think they can get away with ignoring it.

7- 13 Eltham North

The above points are also applicable to Eltham North.

Differences in character include more hilly terrain, less formalised road reserves and footpaths, street layout less formal and often meandering or curved, some unmade roads, more indigenous eucalypt canopy and lower storey vegetation, larger blocks than other areas (apart from Eltham South).

8. Also

We are not a growth corridor. The government's expectation of population growth in Nillumbik, and our provision of extra housing is not high. (NB data available during the Nillumbik Housing Strategy consultation)

We therefore should be able to state our preferred Neighbourhood Character strongly and unequivocally and plan any increase in housing to fit within those parameters

Housing diversity and provision of housing for Nillumbik's ageing population (which is what we are told we have) is not represented in the planning applications before council.

Most applications are for 3 or 4 four bedroom double storey dwellings per block. These are not for retirees/empty nesters/downsizers or young couple's first house.

The needed diversity spoken of should be further investigated.

These developments are very quickly, by removal of mature, canopy trees and the lack of space left for sustainable replacement planting, destroying the neighbourhood character the community values and that draws people to Eltham. The only people these developments benefit are the developers.

I may be contacted on [REDACTED] if you would like to discuss any of the above.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION TO NILLUMBİK COUNCIL NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STRATEGY MAY 2022



Neighbourhoods show who we are. They reflect our values, our creativity, and our lived priorities.... or so they should!

Increasingly, Nillumbik's neighbourhoods are losing their character, losing the qualities that distinguished them from other suburbs.

Instead of continuing a respected tradition of being sensitive to the environment and caring for it as top priority, Nillumbik is steadily destroying the very elements that are the foundation of its wonderful reputation as a conservation Shire, with the Green Wedge as its strategic focus.

As stated in recent Council documents: *'...a range of processes are contributing to an incremental decline of biodiversity and functionality of ecosystems here and across Victoria — including climate change, clearing, altered fire regimes, the presence and spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens, soil compaction, erosion, and altered water quality and flows.'*

Any long-term resident with awareness for the environment will report overall decline, with significant and widespread loss in tree canopy and understorey leading to the demise of our fauna – from bees, butterflies and planarian worms to echidnas, gliders and eagles. This is evident in rural and urban settings, including townships.

Is this how we want our neighbourhoods to be? Is this the trajectory we want to continue along?

The new Neighbourhood Character Strategy MUST outline ways that the community – as individuals, groups, and Council itself (including Officers and Councillors) – will proactively protect and reinvigorate indigenous flora and fauna, our waterways and soils.

Every decision made in Strategy development and Planning throughout the Shire, must be assessed through a rigorous system with the health and reinvigoration of biodiversity at the centre.

What we are currently doing is death by a thousand cuts.

The images here show some of the incredible life that also calls this area home. We have a responsibility to honour each of them, to ensure we do not keep destroying their home, which is also our own.

Nillumbik must return to being a place where insects are flourishing because of abundant food. We know how incredibly important insects are to ecosystems, and how we rely on them to survive.

The Neighbourhood Character Strategy must ensure habitat connectivity occurs throughout the Shire, on a much larger scale than what is currently in place. That is, habitat that continues across vast areas, is biodiverse, therefore resilient, and is present in our every day – from indigenous grasses and herbs, to small shrubs, bushes and giant trees. This would be evident throughout the Shire in its thriving backyards and township areas with buzzing gardens, to paddocks that are teeming with indigenous vegetation beneath giant trees, providing food and shelter for the beautiful creatures of the area... and people would really know and love them, every single day.

















8 May 2022

Strategic Planning Officers
Nillumbik Shire Council
PO Box 476
Greensborough VIC 3088

Dear Neighbourhood Character Review staff,

CEN and the Neighbourhood Character Study

I am writing on behalf of Clean Energy Nillumbik (CEN) to submit feedback for the Neighbourhood Character Study review.

CEN is a volunteer-based organisation whose goal is to reduce carbon emissions through advocacy, public education, bulk buys, and other practical programs.

We encourage Council to investigate how neighbourhood character can contribute directly to the reduction of carbon emissions.

Neighbourhood character and energy use

Whilst current Council guidelines already consider 'Sustainability and environmental factors' in their own right, we believe that future guidelines will benefit from sustainability and environmental factors being integrated across all aspects of the guidelines, including aesthetics, certain building forms and styles, and construction materials.

By fully embedding specific carbon-reduction actions into the Study and its guidelines, the Shire will significantly reduce the carbon footprint of every new building development in the Shire.

[REDACTED]
A0099910Z
[REDACTED]

Clean Energy Nillumbik supports the vital role that character plays in our residential environments and dwellings, daily lives and sense of community. We also value the way in which many aspects of Nillumbik's neighbourhood character already contribute functionally to reducing energy use in residential areas. For example, CEN strongly supports promoting protection of our natural environments and indigenous vegetation, not only for aesthetic and habitat values but also for air quality and climate moderation of temperature extremes. This is particularly relevant for built-up areas such as Eltham and Diamond Creek.

The attached table outlines some of our comments and feedback for the Study, with suggestions for how carbon footprints can be reduced. This table is not intended to be comprehensive but, rather, reflects a broad approach where *all* design choices for neighbourhood character can contribute to reduced energy use and develop greater housing and environmental sustainability for future longevity of our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. As the Nillumbik Shire Council has recently declared a climate emergency, we hope that our thoughts and ideas can contribute positively to a powerful strategic direction of the future sustainability of our communities.

We would welcome the opportunity to be involved further in your development of the new Study, and look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours sincerely,



Clean Energy Nillumbik



A0099910Z



Table 1: CEN responses to existing Neighbourhood Character Study Guidelines

Existing guidelines	CEN submission	Rationale
Vegetation retention and landscaping		
<i>“Retain trees that form part of a continuous canopy beyond your property, and plant large trees in a position where they will add to a continuous canopy</i>	Encourage large trees to be planted in a position where they will add to a continuous canopy AND retain appropriate solar access for north-facing windows.	Increasing north-facing solar access to dwellings can reduce energy use for active heating in cold weather.
<i>cultivated or kitchen gardens”.</i>	Provision could be made for locating cultivated or kitchen gardens where there is adequate solar access, including when viewed from the street.	Food gardens can reduce energy costs for households and reduce reliance on energy-intensive industrial/commercial food productions systems
<i>“Use indigenous plants to screen and soften buildings, driveways and tanks, to define outdoor spaces and reestablish disturbed areas”</i>	Consideration should be given to use of deciduous trees where solar access is a priority – eg adjacent to north-facing windows.	Deciduous trees can significantly moderate temperatures and dwelling microclimates by providing summer shade and winter solar access
<i>“Use landscaping materials such as gravel that blend with the colour, tone and texture of the bush. When designing landscape details, such as steps, retaining walls etc. consider them in relation to the scale of the bush”.</i>	Encourage use of lighter-coloured gravels and landscaping materials, especially adjacent to dwellings. Avoid black and dark brown coloured or dyed mulches.	Light-coloured landscaping gravels can increase reflected light into dwellings (thus reducing artificial lighting needs, and moderate outdoor summer temperatures. Avoiding black and dark brown coloured dyed mulches can moderate outdoor summer temperatures and limit chemical additives in outdoor environments.
Design Details and building		

Existing guidelines	CEN submission	Rationale
<i>materials</i>		
<i>"Use verandas and pergolas to reduce the mass of the building..."</i>	Use verandas and pergolas ... where they improve summer shading and maintain adequate winter solar access	Locating verandas appropriately for summer shade and winter solar access will reduce unnecessary artificial lighting, and moderate temperature/ reduce energy use.
<i>"Appropriate paint and finishing colours are earth and bush tones, silver/grey, blue grey and black".</i>	Black and dark colours should only be used where they will not increase summer temperatures in the home. For example, these colours should not be considered for roofing.	Avoiding black and dark colour construction materials, especially for roofing, will reduce the need for active energy use air-conditioning in homes.
<i>"Select materials for outbuildings such as carports, sheds and garages which complement the main dwelling."</i>	Make provision for solar panels to be considered an acceptable building material. Allow solar panels to be mounted on dwelling and carport roofs, designed sympathetically where visible from the street.	Accommodating solar panels as an aesthetically acceptable material will facilitate greater capacity for residential solar power generation.
<i>(Garden Court) "Incorporate mono-pitch, split gable, or hip roof forms."</i>	Encourage roof forms that will provide optimal summer and winter comfort through passive design forms rather than purely on historical precedent for a neighbourhood precinct (eg the split gable roofs that typify Woodridge Estate in Eltham can increase the need for active home heating and cooling).	Preferences for aesthetic forms will benefit from being assessed in relation to their suitability for future climates and precinct microclimates in Nillumbik, rather than simply in the context of historical precedent (ie. existing character elements may not be the most "liveable" in the future).
<i>"Suitable materials include</i>	Allow use of darker colours	Preferences for aesthetic



Existing guidelines	CEN submission	Rationale
<i>earth toned brick, and roofs of terracotta, brown or grey coloured tiles, Colourbond or painted Zinalume"</i>	only where they will not increase summer temperatures in the home. For example, these colours should not be considered for roofing. Can the Shire please consider the energy-costs of preferencing certain materials, for example, production of terracotta tiles vs steel roofing.	forms need to be assessed in relation to their suitability for future climates and precinct microclimates in Nillumbik, rather than simply in the context of historical precedent (ie. existing character elements may not be the most "livable").
Sustainability and environment factors		
<i>"Maximise windows to the north with appropriate eaves overhangs to provide winter sun and summer shade."</i>	Indicate a specific dimension range for northern eave overhangs for year-round solar benefit.	So many new developments still do not have appropriate north-facing eaves under the existing guidelines.
<i>"Use verandas, eaves overhangs or pergolas to shade walls and windows."</i>	... to shade walls and windows for optimal summer shade and winter solar access.	Consideration of solar access to be a priority in all design.
Street tree planting		
<i>"Retain and replant indigenous canopy trees within the street space in an informal layout." "Retain and enhance the street tree planting with both native Australian and indigenous street trees."</i>	In some situations, deciduous trees may be suitable, for example on the south side of streets in order to provide summer shade and winter solar access for north-facing dwellings and windows.	Consideration of solar access to be a priority in all design.
Roadway treatments		
<i>"(Eltham Central) Include additional space for avenue street tree planting with street reconstruction".</i>	Consider mixed species street tree planting where this will improve summer shade and winter solar access – e.g. deciduous species in front of north-facing dwellings/ windows.	Deciduous trees can significantly moderate temperatures and dwelling microclimates by providing summer shade and winter solar access



Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Strategy

I live in Eltham, very close to both Zig Zag Road and Leane Drive.

The houses in this area are set back from the road, and the properties have big backyards.

Most houses are single storey or split-level due to the topography in the area, with some double storey dwellings.

The roofs are typically pitched, either tiled or corrugated iron, and most of the houses are brick with the odd mud brick.

The view from many different vantage points in the area is that of trees and vegetation. It is difficult to see how many houses are in the local area because of the vast spread of established vegetation. The local streets wind through the area, most likely due to the many hills, making it very different to the grid pattern found in many suburban areas.

In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in birdlife and other wildlife in our local area. We have resident kookaburras, tawny frogmouths, and rainbow lorikeets, (just to name a few of the many regulars to our property) and in the last few years have had seasonal visits from Gang Gang Cockatoos. A Powerful Owl has been spotted nearby, a species that is threatened in Nillumbik. We have had visits from an echidna in the last two years, something that had not happened in the 12 years prior that we have been living in the area. We have many resident lizards and possums who call the trees in our yard home.

The current Neighbourhood Character, with houses set back from the roads, and large backyards with lots of established trees and gardens, provides much needed homes and corridors for the abundant wildlife in the area. These corridors haven't been in place since the area was originally developed, they have evolved over time as the trees and gardens in the area have become established and then the wildlife has slowly returned.

The character of this area will not be enhanced by future development, as any development will reduce the existing wildlife corridors, and reduce the wildlife in the area due to the removal of well established trees and vegetation. Any development in the area should not reduce the front and backyard open spaces as these make this area unique. Developing will take away what makes this area so special.

People choosing to live in this part of Eltham, do so because of the natural environment that surrounds us. If we wanted to live in a built environment, we would be living elsewhere, like Doncaster.

Individuals and developers who buy in Eltham, and choose to develop/subdivide their properties, do so knowing that money can be made - the Green Wedge has much appeal. Most do not choose to live in the area long term, selling and moving on with little regard to the damage they do to the natural environment and wildlife corridors when they remove established trees and vegetation.

This part of Eltham is more than a 2km walk from Eltham Central, so any extra development not only removes established vegetation but leads to more traffic in the area as it is quite a distance from the train station, and there are a lot of hills to navigate to get to any bus stops. More traffic in the local area, along with smaller corridors for wildlife, would be a disaster for our wildlife, and would reduce the appeal the area currently has, changing it in a negative way in the long-term.

The current character of the area is what gives it its appeal, it would be devastating to lose what we have, especially with the climate crisis that is now upon us!



April 23 2022

Dear [REDACTED]/Strategic Planning,

Thank you for your recent email regarding Strategic Planning in St Andrews. I am currently in WA and cannot attend the session in St Andrews.

Stringybark Community Nursery is a not-for-profit, volunteer run community organisation established in 2010, following the Black Saturday bushfires. It resulted in discussions arising from NERWG, a collaborative natural environment recovery group including Landcare, Council, Melbourne Water, Parks Vic and others. We originally supplied free plants for landowners following the disaster to assist with revegetation of their properties. Other initiatives were aimed at developing propagation and plant ID skills in the community, bringing community members together. We are based in St Andrews, the only available location at the time, on a site provided by St Andrews PS adjacent to their multipurpose room. At the time of our establishment, members of Strathewen, Arthurs Creek and Christmas Hills Landcare groups were also involved.

We received funding from FRRR to build a small shed and erect fencing. Contributions were made by various organisations and individuals for shelving, tanks and watering systems. The founding members were myself, Dini Shepherd and Gayle Corr, OAM, now sadly deceased. We have made significant contributions to the natural environment since 2010. Indeed, in the years 2016-2019 we supplied more than 30,000 plants to local landowners from a wide area, including St Andrews, Hurstbridge, Cottles Bridge, Nutfield, Arthurs Creek, Strathewen, Yarrambat and Eltham. Since around 2016 we started to charge \$1 per tube to cover our costs as we receive no ongoing funding from any sources. We still provide plants free of charge to various community groups. We average around 16-20 volunteer hours per week. Everyone who comes through the Nursery appreciates the rural feel of St Andrews and similar townships and may work hard to protect and enhance their natural environment.

Stringybark is situated at the rear of Wadambuk St Andrews Community Centre and Men's Shed at St Andrews, with whom we collaborate closely. The former organisation auspices us as we are not incorporated. I was involved closely with the planning and development of both these community organisations post-bushfire. Stringybark Nursery is tucked away from the streetscape and we have used woodland grey to paint our shed. It is a low structure and not visible from the main road.

St Andrews is, always has been and hopefully will remain a non-urban environment. We do not want exotic trees, pavements or street furniture. We do not want street lights, traffic lights or other urban features. We do not want our rural roads to be zoned at 100kph and used as race tracks; not do we wish to confront huge 10 tonne trucks with trailers on a daily basis on our rural roads. All these issues affect residents of St Andrews, both in the township and surrounding areas. Whilst I am aware that there is a template for submissions, I feel that the use of templates prevents residents from being able to articulate their views fully.

Sadly, personally I have lost confidence in the ability of staff from the Planning Department at Nillumbik to listen to the views and opinions of residents in this and other areas of the Shire.

Nillumbik's Planning Department recently granted a permit for the construction of a large brick shed only eight metres from the road in an RCZ3 zoned area. The property already has a shed of the same size; is only 11 acres in total area and is already in breach of Council Local Laws. This will be the sixth structure to be built on the property. Planning did not really listen to our concerns, did not effect mediation, nor take into account the views of Friends of Nillumbik or The Green Wedge Protection Group, all of whom were concerned that a precedent was being set. Eventually the matter ended up at VCAT where the issue of over-development and use of the shed in an RCZ3 zone was completely ignored by the member in question.

It would appear that Planning Department staff cannot protect the rural landscape, even with RCZs and other overlays. What hope is there then in retaining the rural feel of our townships? Further, enforcement of local and planning laws has been inadequate, with Council's own enforcement officer's views ignored. There would seem little point in introducing another suite of planning strategies unless these issues are addressed. Sadly, I feel there is little point in asking for my/our opinion on planning for the township when it seems that properties in RCZ areas cannot be protected and prevented from morphing into suburbia, or used as dumping grounds for building materials, shipping containers and vehicles, with sheds used as illegal second dwellings.

Regards,



Stringybark Community Nursery

Cc Friends of Nillumbik; Green Wedge Protection Group; Cllr B Ramcharan; Mr John Brennan, Wadambuk St Andrews Community Centre.

Hi [REDACTED]

It was really appreciated your recent presentation to ESAC.

Your presentation clearly showed the many facets of determining future directions for neighbourhood character. I can see that physical aspects such as set backs and roof type can be addressed and are well understood by both planners and the community. People may not agree with the decisions but they are clear what it is about.

I can now understand that how neighbourhood character assessment may be applied by statutory planners to subdivision and new dwelling construction that trigger a planning permit application in urban residential zones.

So I appreciate my response may have been a bit myopic as I am concentrating on the issue of the urban tree canopy which I think is a much more difficult part of the neighbourhood character assessment process.

The issue in Eltham, for example, is protecting the existing tree canopy and that can be addressed through the SLO but in our area I have a local example where all the canopy trees were removed to make way for a large double storied residential dwelling. No new canopy trees are being planted.

The other really crucial issue is that under both the residential zoning and ResCode there is no requirement for a garden space that would support planting a canopy tree.

I think both the zoning and ResCode could be addressed to require definition of a garden bed suitable for supporting a canopy tree. I realise this is a state level planning issue and of course it won't be easy but without it the tree canopy that is lost in development will not be able to be replaced.

I don't share the pessimism about tackling such an issue as some others have shown. For two reasons. Firstly the requirements for water sensitive urban design have been successfully incorporated in ResCode and I think biodiversity sensitive urban design could also be achieved along the same lines. However the incorporation of water sensitive urban design was made easier by the allowance of structures such as decks that are a natural extension of the indoor/outdoor housing design. Space for garden beds does not allow for any such uses. The other reason is that the item is increasingly gaining traction as demonstrated by the any articles about the issue of urban heat islands in residential areas.

The last point I would like to make is that the point made by others at the ESAC meeting about public open space being an important part of neighbourhood character is really important especially given increased housing density such as townhouses and apartments that lack any private open space of the traditional detached dwellings.

I wonder if you could send me a copies of your presentation slides showing a diagrammatic presentation of the different aspects of neighbourhood character assessment and the map showing the urban areas of Nillumbik Shire.

Regards



Need to revise ResCode

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Neighbourhood Character Strategy Project - Survey - [REDACTED]
Date: Sunday, 8 May 2022 8:50:55 PM

To whom it concerns,

The on-line survey did not accept my answers. So I have reproduced them hereunder.

[REDACTED]

<https://participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/neighbourhood-character-strategy>

1. Which neighbourhood (see study area map) would you like to comment on? (please select one)
You will have the opportunity to comment on another area below)

- Wattle Glen

2. If you would like to comment on a particular street or area in this neighbourhood, please tell us the name of the relevant street(s) or road(s) here

- In Wattle Glen, the residential area north of Peppers Paddock and the Watery Gully Creek, up to Sylvan Road, including my own street, Clarke & Park Ave. This entire area has still got very strong connection to the Green Wedge to its north and east.
- Clarke & Park Ave have strong connections with the Watery Gully Creek to its south.
- The original subdivision and street configurations in Clarke & Park Ave leaves things to be desired, especially in terms of the streets being too narrow and storm water management - though we do not want "urban" guttering but a 'green infrastructure' design approach to these problems.

3. Tell us, in five words or less, how you would describe the character of this neighbourhood now? (Think how the buildings/homes, the street, landscape look and feel)

- Semi-bush; treed; undulating; nestled; birds

4. What do you like about the character of this neighbourhood? Tick all that apply

Setbacks (how far buildings/ homes are set back from the street)

Heights of buildings and homes

Vegetation (like gardens, trees, plants, bush)

Street layout (street configuration, subdivision pattern)

Topography (mountains, hills, creeks etc)

Views

Streetscape (how the street/road looks)

5. Are there any specific features that make this neighbourhood different or unique?

- Wattle Glen is not only home to many people but also to much wildlife - the latter indeed, very much in the urban areas as well.

Even though a 'residential' street, when one turns into Clarke (& Park) Ave, one is very likely to see ducks, galahs, sulphur-crested cockatoos, correlas, kangaroos.

- A sense/awareness of living in nature; 'nestling into the landscape'; the wildlife (birds, echidnas, blue tongues, etc). The trees and landscape values (eg. the treed distant views to surrounding hills). The setbacks; minimal fencing; privacy. Close connection to the Green Wedge and areas of significant wildlife.
- The majority of land in Wattle Glen is rural-zoned and Green Wedge land; and the Urban Growth Boundary passes through Wattle Glen.

For years, the *Wattle Glen Residents' Association* has been promoting 'Wattle Glen as a Gateway to the Green Wedge' as part of our township's role and identity, as well as the notion of 'living in harmony with nature'.

- When we moved into the area (1989) it was quiet. Not so any more - traffic noise has hugely increased.
- The *Wattle Glen Township Strategy* recommendation 'that building on **slopes in excess of a 20 degree gradient** should be discouraged' needs to be upheld.
- **Views** very important, especially from the main approaches into the township: north and south entrances along Main Hurstbridge Road; east entrance along Wattle Glen-Kangaroo Ground Road; south entrance along Reynolds Rd.
- The view is very important as I travel up and down my street - I am very appreciative of the natural environment.

6. How could new development in this neighbourhood be designed to enhance or improve the neighbourhood's character?

- Aim for **buildings to 'nestle into the landscape'** rather than 'being imposed on top of the landscape'; and maintain setbacks, to help promote the 'nestling in' objective of SLOs; so that front gardens help privacy, as well as provide habitat for wildlife.
- Unfortunately, **unnecessary compromises to neighbourhood character** have occurred in recent times - eg. (the bulk and stark, white colours) at [REDACTED] the 2nd storey development can be seen from afar, and new 2m tall fencing bordering the Green Wedge) [REDACTED]; keeping fingers crossed to see what gets build at [REDACTED]
- Encourage **efficient building design** in terms of space and bulk, energy and water; and a small as possible ecological footprint in all that we do. Eg.

- Space: To contain scale (footprint) and bulk of new housing and extensions, optimise the functioning of the building within a small as possible size/space.
- Energy (eg. optimise orientation and passive solar).
- Promote opportunities to **integrate the rural environment into residential areas**. Raising awareness about, and the integration of **local wildlife and their needs** (eg. their habitat and corridors), is an ongoing commitment.
- Much of the residential areas in Wattle Glen straddle rural land; therefore the impact (at the interface) on nearby rural land of land use happening on residential land should be considered and minimised.

Eg. (especially vis-a-vis the ever-increasing threats to biodiversity) strengthening of wildlife habitat, and the ability of local wild life to traverse land (including between residential and rural zoned land) should be encouraged; and **habitat connectivity** should become a more prominent decision making criteria in planning applications.

- Any building or extension ought to pay proper regard and **facilitate the needs of wildlife**.
- Rather than ending up with a 'dog's breakfast', encourage **consistent, wildlife-friendly fencing**.

Eg. When it comes time to replace or install fencing, it should be encouraged that they are a 'post and wire' construction, and 'see through', and to create privacy via screening vegetation planting; and of a height that enables wildlife to pass.

- To be consistent with the community and Council planting on nearby "Peppers Paddock" public open space, and Nillumbik's 'conservation and protect Green Wedge and biodiversity' ethos, **encourage indigenous vegetation**: to help promote a more consistent/cohesive and stronger neighbourhood character and landscape values; to best promote indigenous (rather than exotic) wildlife; to minimise maintenance and water use (compared to exotic vegetation); is most suitable to conserving Australian/Nillumbik soil types; to reduce the bushfire risk (as indig veg carries lower biomass compared to exotic veg).
- The requirements of the **Bushfire Management Overlay** impact severely on local landscape values and wildlife. A better, fairer (to wildlife) and more sustainable balance needs to be struck; and greater awareness of latest bushfire risk management research needs to be incorporated.
- Much of Wattle Glen is in bushfire prone area. **Laying underground overhead powerlines** would significantly reduce fire risk; plus it would improve the visual appeal of streetscapes.

The yearly/regular tree lopping around powerlines, public liabilities, etc must cost SP Ausnet/State Government a bomb. Advocate for a long term cost and benefit analysis of the laying underground of powerlines in (& prioritising bushfire prone) urban areas.

- There exist plenty opportunity to incorporate and demonstrate the **"Urban Ecology" and a 'green infrastructure' design approach** to our storm water and street scapes, especially in relation to sealing unmade streets such as Clarke and Park Ave.

- As per Council's "Urban Ecology" publication [https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/environment/green-living/imap_08_urban_ecology_nillumbik_high_res.pdf]:

Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) Principles recognise the importance of maintaining and **increasing the health of our urban ecosystems** to improve living conditions for ourselves as well as for fauna.

ESD advocates:

- sustainable habitat garden ... and the use of indigenous plants
- improving Urban Ecology via eg. Stormwater Management

"There is much we can do in our metropolitan areas to overcome the loss of natural processes and improve liveability for people, flora and fauna. One of the easiest actions involves decreasing the areas of hard or impervious surfaces and at the same time increasing vegetation and landscaping."

- By combining **indigenous street planting** (especially along lower Clarke Ave) and a **'green infrastructure' design approach**, integrate **road sealing** (to reduce dust problem and storm water pollutants runoff into the creek), **a new footpath, excellent storm water management**, and wildlife needs. The positive impacts of these measures on our streetscape and neighbourhood character, health and safety, water quality, and our natural environment/biodiversity would be huge.

7. Would you like to comment on another **neighbourhood**?

8. Do you have any final feedback or ideas about **neighbourhood** character that you would like considered? Note: there is a 300 word limit

- Promote the notion of "living in harmony with nature".
- Generally, encourage greater awareness of our natural environment; of the great biodiversity that we do have; of the opportunities it offers; our responsibility to look after it (for future generations); of energy and water use (including storm water and waterways); that water is a very scarce resource in Australia.

- Another significant feature about Wattle Glen's identity are the various recreational trails converging in our township. We expect them, as well as possible local (urban) walking trails, to offer significant opportunities in the future (aspiration); thus land-use planning should be sympathetic in this aspiration.
- By integrating the "urban Ecology" and a 'green infrastructure' design approach to local building, (public) infrastructure and water (storm water and waterways) management, Wattle Glen offers great opportunities to demonstrate excellent design in streetscape and local and urban trails, and management of storm water and waterways, and to improve connectivity within our township.
- Consider investigating an 'Environmental Significant Overlay' in residential areas based on Melbourne Water's "stream order network" and related setbacks [<https://www.melbournewater.com.au/sites/default/files/Waterway-corridors-Greenfield-development-guidelines.pdf>]:
- Unfortunately, major State government 'Level Crossing Removal Projects' have had devastating impacts on Wattle Glen's township character at high profile sites along Main Hurstbridge Road.

We need Nillumbik Council to use its influence, and insist on consistency with the aims of the adjacent SLO2; and to get three gullies around the railway station and at the Wilson-Main Hurstbridge Roads' intersection rehabilitated.

For this to happen on this and all public land, we need better communication between public landowners and council's (land use) planning and environment department.

Submission 18

5 May 2022

Nillumbik Shire Council

Strategic Planning



Hello 

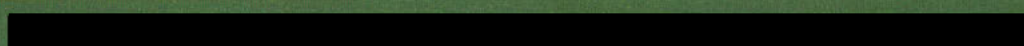
Thank you for receiving our submission on the future neighbourhood character guidelines for Nillumbik shire. As the only industry group in Nillumbik specifically dedicated to building and construction, we feel that we have a lot to offer in the realm of neighbourhood character, relating to residential built form. The Nillumbik Mudbrick Association (NMA) is an active, volunteer, not-for-profit group with approximately 300 members, dedicated to the promotion of the character of the Nillumbik shire through the preservation and promotion of Mudbrick. Many of our members and committee are Architects, Engineers, Builders, and tradespersons actively working in and around Nillumbik.

In essence the Mudbrick construction that took began in the late 1930's and early 1940's created the foundation of the character of Eltham and Nillumbik that we still enjoy today. Although the phrase 'neighbourhood character' is a modern construct, it was largely Mudbrick that indeed first helped to define it.

Please consider the following thoughts on the various aspects that are synonymous with Neighbourhood character Planning.

Building Bulk

Although any materials can be utilised to construct block-like buildings with sheer walls and high flat roofs, you will find in most instances mudbrick designs



are far from that. Although this largely is in the hands of the architect or designer one thing is for certain; that the undulating and textured walls of a mudbrick house, The rough sawn timbers and the earthy tones of the render of the mud walls present a much softer appearance than many modern or manufactured products. We are not advocating boring architecture in the shire, more observing that mudbrick walls can soften the appearance of any built form.

Vegetation

Whilst we believe that mudbricks are suitable for use in most settings, It must be acknowledged that the use of mudbricks is particularly harmonious in a bush environment typical to the early days when mudbrick buildings were introduced to Nillumbik. They complement indigenous vegetation. This is also why mudbricks are aligned to the current neighbourhood character of Nillumbik which boasts a proliferation of indigenous vegetation, both rural and urban.

Set-Backs

As for any type of home we would encourage generous set backs so as to accommodate a well-planned indigenous vegetation zone, and provide privacy for the home owner and softening of built form for the casual observer.

Textures & Tones

We acknowledge that textures and tones are intrinsic to creating a good response to neighbourhood character. However, we would suggest that this character is best captured through genuine mudbrick surface rather than the modern attempts, including flat cement sheets with stippled paint applied. This is often referred to as 'render' when modern units are constructed however is not comparable to the soft and natural look and feel of mudbrick. Particularly when complimented with rough sawn, rustic timber which is so commonly used with mudbrick construction. The light cream and tan tones, through to

the richer browns which are commonly associated with mudbrick building are most complementary to creating the preferred neighbour character for Nillumbik.

Muted tones are also helpful in softening the roof line of any building. These types of muted tones, including blacks, greys, and browns, are most suited to a mudbrick construction.

Articulation

Articulation is very important in creating a preferred visual amenity in the shire, this can be achieved by a number of design techniques; Pitched roofs (steeper the better), stepping the upper story or stories back from the ground floor, having steps in the front façade, and the addition of verandas or pergolas.

In the case of mudbrick houses there is an added benefit created by the thickness of the mudbrick wall, which requires window and door frames rebated back from the front face of the mudbrick thereby creating articulation at every opening. Plus the aforementioned Textures and tones

Building Heights

Building height is most commonly a problem when there is a lack of articulation, set back and the right tones and textures of the walls. A tall building can be softened by a pitch roof whereby the top story, be it the second or third story, can be accommodated largely within the roof pitch. We would encourage pitch roofs for any residential setting as it provides this amenity. A tall Mudbrick house (possibly three storeys), that has the advantages of the upper storey in the pitched roof, and the other previously mentioned aspects, could be quite acceptable

We don't prefer whether a house is one, two or three story provided the elements we have discussed are appropriately incorporated into the plans.

We hope that you find our submission of assistance. If you agree that the reasons mentioned would help in the preservation of Neighbourhood Character in the Shire and provide some direction for developing the emerging neighbourhood character, we would be delighted. It makes a great deal of sense for the Shire to actively look for opportunities to encourage the use of Mudbrick. To maintain the living history of the Shire, and most importantly for this project you are undertaking, to ensure that the preferred future Nillumbik neighbourhood character is enhanced.

Kind Regards,

Nillumbik Mud Brick Association

From: [REDACTED]
 Subject: Neighbourhood Character Strategy
 Date: Saturday, 14 May 2022 11:05:26 PM

Hi,

I would like to put in a submission for consideration. Unfortunately I have not been able to read any preliminary documents to guide my thoughts. However, I wanted to make the following simple point.

When considering neighbourhood character please don't be restrained by what Engineers claim are national standard that MUST be adhered to. An example of this is the need for concrete gutters on all roads, or minimum road widths, etc. Planners and landscape designers must have the ability to listen to what the community wants and what would make a sustainable solution to any proposed development or construction. In the case of a local road, there may be pressure to have a minimum width or a certain tree clearance. This pressure must be resisted.

I have been in Eltham Shire and Nillumbik Shire long enough to see major projects literally ruin neighbourhood character because of these "engineering essentials". On the other hand I have seen extremely successful outcomes where community push-back has resisted this pressure and fabulous outcomes have eventuated.

An example is Valley Road in Wattle Glen where it was demanded that we have a road x metres wide with concrete gutters. It was be wide enough for cars to pass at speed and to look like any other "suburban" street. Fortunately, residents in the street fought this and the outcome has been great. Yes, cars have to wait to pass but this makes for a friendly greeting and slower traffic. (The push-back may have been successful because we were paying 90% of the construction costs!)

Even good Engineers themselves can come up with appropriate solutions. Flat Rock road was constructed in the 1980s. The original plan was to be straight, bulldoze the trees and have a very wide bitumen road. Fortunately the Shire Engineer fought this and produced a narrow, windy road going around trees made of a "country seal", not bitumen. It cost less than half the original estimated price and has been a very successful thoroughfare in keeping with neighbourhood character for over 40 years.

Unfortunately not many engineers are like this. Apparently "national standards" were applied to the road between Panton Hill and Kangaroo Ground. In response to some (undisclosed) data on accident numbers, national standards required the construction of ugly, inappropriate metal guard rails and highly reflective signage along most of it's length. Not only do we have taxpayers money spent on a problem that could not be proven to exist, but the solution destroyed the neighbourhood character of the entire length of road.

Yan Yean Road north of Sutherland Homes is another example of total disregard of neighbourhood character. This was designed by VicRoad Engineers driven by standards and who obviously did not understand the importance of listening to residents (whose requests were ignored) and the whole idea of neighbourhood character.

Another deplorable example is what the Level Crossing Authority is doing to the centre of Wattle Glen. Despite on-going efforts by the community they are going ahead with the construction of a car park in the worst location when a better alternative is available. Even

when we don't oppose things and try to be helpful by providing a viable alternative the Engineers responsible fall back on "standards" and reject our ideas.

Please do all you can to put the voice of residents and neighbourhood character at the forefront of all infrastructure development.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER STRATEGY SURVEY

Photos supporting my completed survey - [REDACTED]

As I walk along the footpaths of Main Road, I appreciate the tree canopy for many reasons.

The trees provide shade during the summer, they provide habitat for the many birds and creatures and help to reduce the temperature in the valley.

These trees most importantly absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere along this busy road.

NO 1 & 3 Photograph shows trees planted by the Shire of Nillumbik along the nature strip

NO 2 Photograph is the nature strip in front of many units and the planted trees have been removed.

