

Nillumbik Shire Council Neighbourhood Character Strategy

DRAFT

Prepared for Nillumbik Shire Council
August 2022

Acknowledgement of Country

Nillumbik Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the Country on which Nillumbik Shire is located, and we value the significance of the Wurundjeri people's history as essential to the unique character of the Shire. We pay tribute to all First Nations People living in Nillumbik Shire, give respect to Elders past, present and future, and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

We respect the enduring strength of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and acknowledge the ongoing impacts of past trauma and injustices from European invasion, massacres and genocide committed against First Nations People. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people hold a deep and ongoing connection to this place. We value the distinctive place of our First Nations People in both Nillumbik Shire and Australia's identity; from their cultural heritage and care of the land and waterways, to their ongoing contributions in many fields including academia, agriculture, art, economics, law, sport and politics.

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Definition of Terms

Table 1 - Definition of Terms

Activity Centres	Retail, service and employment hubs that are usually well serviced by public transport. They range in size from local neighbourhood strip shops to major regional shopping malls and centres.
Building	Definition from Section 3AA of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 A building includes - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a structure and part of a building or a structure; and • fences, walls, out-buildings, service installations and other appurtenances of a building.
Character Area	Areas with a common preferred character.
Character Type	Broad areas, where the desired character is the same. In these areas, the existing neighbourhood character and era of residential development are usually similar.
Contemporary Architecture	Contemporary architecture essentially refers to the current style of architecture. For example, a house built this year according to current trends would be considered contemporary architecture.
Contemporary Infill Development	A new development within a streetscape of older buildings.
Detached Dwelling	A detached building comprising one dwelling on a site that is held exclusively with that dwelling and has a frontage to a public road (also includes townhouses).
Dwelling	A building or part of a building used as a self-contained residence, which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a kitchen sink; • food preparation facilities; • a bath or shower; and • a closet pan and wash basin. It includes out-buildings and works normal to a dwelling.
Gable Roof	A roof that connects to the wall of the building with a vertical end.
Hipped Roof	A roof that connects to the wall of the building with an angled end.
Kerb and channel	The gutter that is created to direct stormwater into the drain, constructed of concrete or bluestone. This type of kerb is known as an 'upstanding kerb'.
Modern Architecture	Modern architecture is a style of building that emphasizes function and a streamlined form over ornamentation. This design aesthetic is a departure from more elaborate and decorated homes like Queen Anne, Victorian, or Gothic Revival styles. Modern architecture usually involves sharp, clean lines.

Table 1 - Definition of Terms

Neighbourhood Character	The interplay between development, vegetation and topography in the public and private domains that distinguishes one residential area from another.
Overlays	Planning scheme controls that apply to specific areas to address a particular issue such as environmental, landscape, heritage and flooding. These requirements operate in addition to those provided by the land's zoning.
Pitched Roof	A roof that is not flat. Generally, roofs will have an angle of pitch from 20-40°.
Planning Policy Framework (PPF)	Comprises general principles for land use and development in Victoria contained in the planning scheme. It sets visions, objectives, strategies and decision guidelines that must be taken into consideration by local Councils when making a planning decision.
Precinct Profile	Provide a summary of unique character areas with associated character objectives and design guidelines to provide guidance to future development.
Preferred character statement	Policy statement that articulates an area's desired future character.
Render finish	Textured concrete that is applied over brickwork to walls or fences.
Semi-detached Dwelling	A dwelling that shares a common wall with another dwelling.

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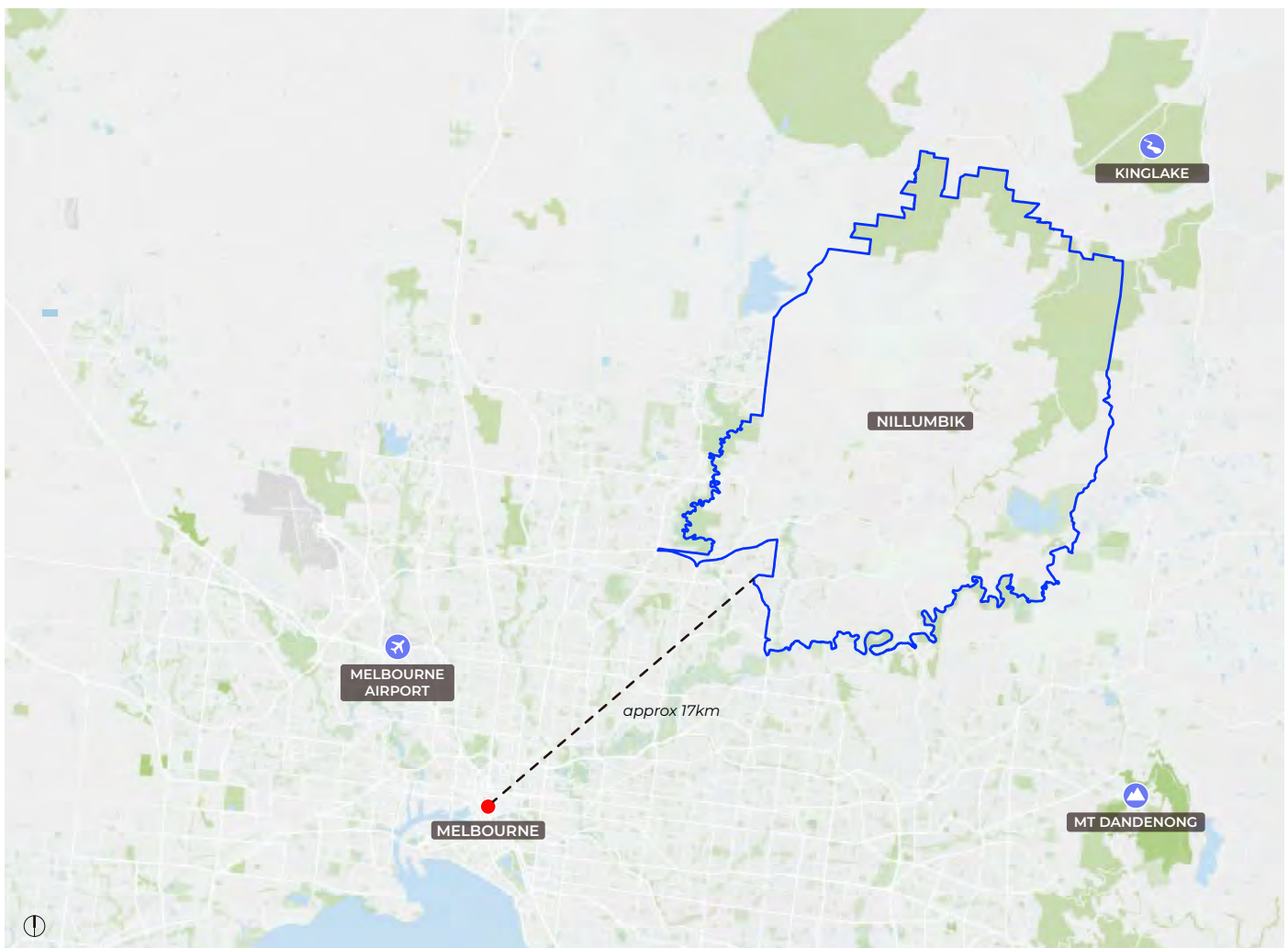
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Nillumbik Shire is renowned as the Green Wedge Shire, highly valued for its diverse environments and natural assets, with townships characterised by steep ridges and sloping hills, rivers and creeks, residential areas nestled within dense bush vegetation and semi rural landscapes.

Accordingly, this Nillumbik Shire Council Neighbourhood Character Strategy is being undertaken to update and accurately reflect valued and existing characteristics and to establish the preferred neighbourhood character for the Shire.



01 Nillumbik Shire within Metropolitan Melbourne

Project Overview

Ethos Urban has been engaged by Nillumbik Shire Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Character Strategy for the municipality. The Strategy will update and accurately reflect Nillumbik Shire's existing and preferred neighbourhood character and outline how new development should appropriately respond and contribute to the valued characteristics of the Shire's established residential areas.

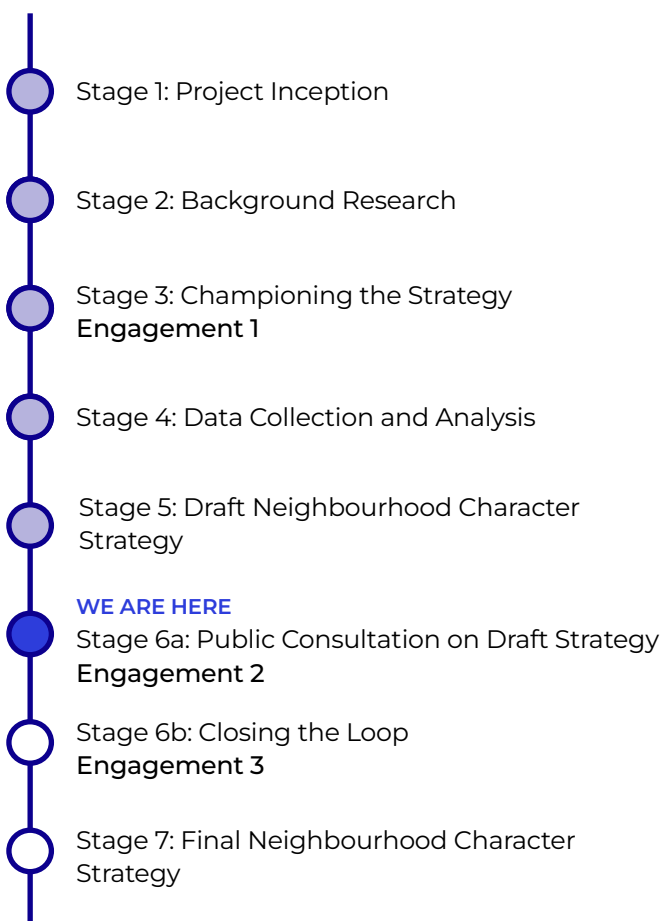
The objectives of this project are to:

- Provide an assessment of current neighbourhood character conditions and conduct a review of relevant documents, including the current Neighbourhood Character Study and Precinct Guidelines from 2001 (amended in 2003).
- Undertake community and stakeholder consultation at various stages to better understand existing character values, inform preferred character outcomes and determine residential design guidelines for Nillumbik Shire.
- Undertake site visits to identify the attributes and boundaries of the identified neighbourhood character precinct areas.
- Finalise preferred character statements and residential design guidelines for all character areas.

The revised Neighbourhood Character Strategy and Design Guidelines will be implemented through an amendment to the Nillumbik Shire Planning Scheme, and will provide increased clarity regarding character identification and enhancement of valued attributes.

Project Stages

This project will be undertaken over the following stages:



1.2 Purpose of this Strategy

Purpose of this Strategy

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy provides, for each character area, a statement of preferred character and character attributes, threats to the character and design guidelines for future development of residential areas in Nillumbik Shire (as defined in Section 1.3).

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy will also provide recommendations for implementation and next steps (to be completed as part of the final stage of this project).

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy provides the following:

- Definition of Neighbourhood Character
- Outline of methodology
- Overview of Policy and Statutory Context
- Overview of existing strategies and background information
- Summary of community consultation
- Identification and summary of the key issues and threats of character in Nillumbik Shire
- Proposed Precinct Profiles of each Neighbourhood Character Area, including:
 - Character Area description
 - Key Attributes
 - Preferred Character Statement
 - Character Objectives
 - Character Area Maps
 - Photos
 - Design Guidelines

Why is the current strategy being undertaken?

Council recognises that the existing Neighbourhood Character Study and Precinct Guidelines from 2001 (amended in 2003) are dated and a new Strategy is required, particularly to recognise developments in the over-arching policy framework.

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy will identify trends in new development that may have had an impact on existing character in the years since the original study was undertaken. The Strategy carefully considers character boundaries and identify residential areas that may require further protection in the Nillumbik Shire Planning Scheme. The identified character types and precincts will be used to develop preferred character objectives and design guidelines. Ultimately, a suite of planning controls will give effect to the preferred character statements and associated design guidelines, based on identified future character attributes and housing growth targets.

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy will be one of a series of documents, including a future Housing Strategy, that are required before preparing an overarching Residential Development Framework (RDF) for the Shire. An RDF will provide a means to balance the outputs of a Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Strategy to holistically plan for housing change over a 15 year period; an obligation under State Planning Policy.

Ultimately, the Neighbourhood Character Strategy, Housing Strategy and Residential Development Framework will enable the Shire to meet future housing growth and demographic trends, while still ensuring new development reflects preferred character across the Shire.

1.3 Study Area

The study area for the Neighbourhood Character Strategy includes residential land in the following zones:

- General Residential Zone (GRZ)
- Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)
- Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)
- Township Zone (TZ)

Localities that are covered by the study area include:

- Diamond Creek
- Eltham
- Eltham North
- Greensborough
- Hurstbridge
- North Warrandyte
- Panton Hill
- Plenty
- Research
- St Andrews
- Wattle Glen
- Yarrambat

Some localities are split across the Urban Growth Boundary and Green Wedge, including Wattle Glen, Panton Hill, St Andrews, Hurstbridge, North Warrandyte, Diamond Creek, Plenty, Research and Yarrambat. As noted above, only the residentially zoned land within these localities are included within the Strategy's study area.

The majority of Nillumbik Shire's population is located in urbanised and rural township areas within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). These localities include: Greensborough, Diamond Creek, Wattle Glen, Hurstbridge, Panton Hill, Plenty, St Andrews, Eltham North, Eltham, Research and North Warrandyte.

The remaining land is situated outside of the UGB in the Nillumbik Shire Green Wedge. The green wedge supports a range of land uses including conservation, rural residential, agriculture, and recreational uses. The Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) supports development and uses of land which are consistent with the conservation of environmental, landscape and cultural values of the area.

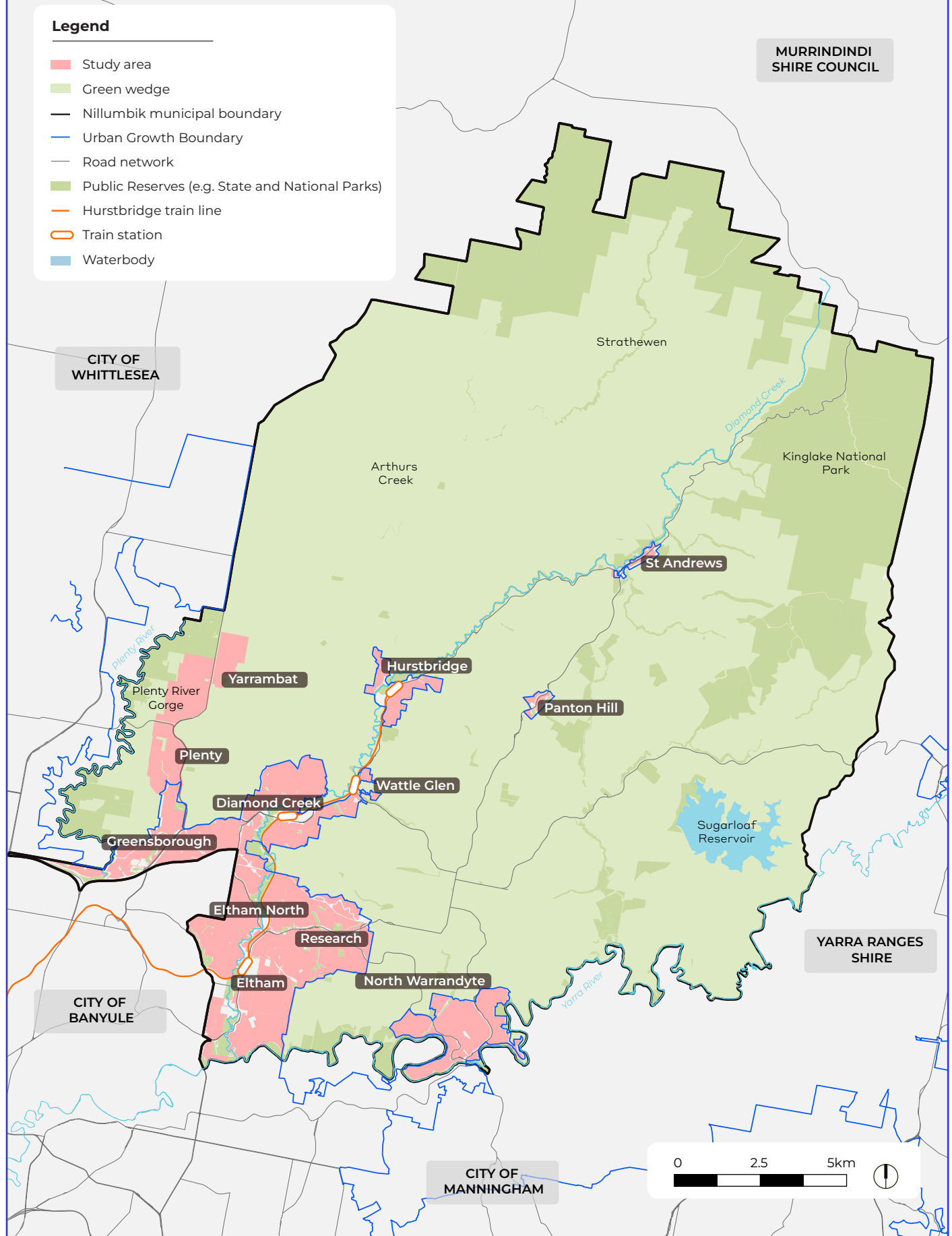
The Hurstbridge Rail Line services stations at Diamond Creek, Eltham, Wattle Glen and Hurstbridge. Upgrades to the Hurstbridge Rail line are currently underway, and will duplicate the rail track between Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen, to allow for more frequent services. There are several bus networks throughout the existing urban area, however the extent of the bus network is limited. The Metropolitan Ring Road and proposed North East Link in the broader region will improve connectivity to other parts of Melbourne.

Topography is a significant feature across the municipality, ranging from gentle undulating slopes to very steep areas along creek and ridgelines. The topography enables distant views of ranges, valleys and metropolitan Melbourne. The Shire area is recognised as having high bushfire risk, due to the combination of vegetation, topography and climate.

Nillumbik Shire contains extensive areas of open space. These areas are concentrated along major rivers and creek systems. The Diamond Creek bisects several localities in the study area and the Plenty River forms part of the western boundary of the Shire. Both waterbodies provide strategic habitat links for flora and fauna. The Yarra River forms most of the southern boundary of the Shire and has a significant relationship with residential areas in North Warrandyte and Eltham South. There are also a number of shared trails that transect the municipality, including the Diamond Creek Trail and Aqueduct Trail.

Note: Major Activity Centres (MACs) are outside of the study area, as is any urban area which is not in a residential zone. This includes Precinct 2 (residential interface) of the Eltham MAC. For details regarding this area, see the *Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan*, July 2020. In addition, further information regarding the Diamond Creek MAC can be found in the *Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Structure Plan*, July 2020.

Study Area



02 Study Area map

Historical Context

Local Indigenous History

For thousands of years, Nillumbik Shire has been inhabited by the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi-wurrung speaking people, and this land remains their home and contributes to their cultural identity to this day. The Woi-wurrung people are a part of the Kulin Nation, who are the traditional owners of the land surrounding the northern parts of Melbourne.

Nillumbik Shire is situated within the clan boundary of the Wurundjeri-willam. The Wurundjeri people call the region 'Nillumbik', which is known to mean the shallow earth. It was later used by the Europeans who settled in the area.

Post Contact History

Historically, the region was used for a combination of agriculture, gold mining and farming and the development of the infrastructure and catchments for Melbourne's water supply, parts of which are in the Shire (Maroondah Aqueduct and Sugarloaf Reservoir)¹. Examples of agricultural land uses included orchards in Arthur's Creek which served as one of Melbourne's first fruit suppliers. Gold was first discovered in the area in 1854, and was a draw-card for colonial settlers to establish in the region. Former gold rush localities include Panton Hill, Research, St Andrews and Diamond Creek².

Development Patterns

The pattern of residential development in Nillumbik Shire is centred around the Hurstbridge railway line. The rail line was extended from Eltham to Hurstbridge in 1912, to serve the local orchards in the region.

Urban areas have experienced significant residential intensification compared to the surrounding rural areas, which still accommodate conservation or agricultural uses in the green wedge. Large lots in urban areas that are in close proximity to train stations, and activity centres have been progressively subdivided and consolidated into smaller lots for conventional residential uses. Compared to urban areas, lot sizes in Nillumbik's Green Wedge are typically larger in keeping with the rural setting and are protected from inappropriate subdivision by the Green Wedge Zones. However, many small and constrained lots nevertheless exist in the Green Wedge as a result of historical subdivisions.



03 Land of the Wurundjeri-willam clan



04 Apple orchard farmers in the region



05 Diamond Creek today

¹ <https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Explore/About-the-Shire/Local-history>

² <https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Develop/Planning-for-Nillumbik's-future/Major-Activity-Centres/Eltham-Major-Activity-Centre>

Nillumbik Shire Snapshot

- Nillumbik Shire has an area of 432 square kilometres and the southern boundary is approximately 17 kilometres north-east of Melbourne Central Business District (CBD).
- The current population is 65,219 persons, with a population density of around 151 persons per square kilometre.
- Detached dwellings are the predominant form of housing in Nillumbik Shire, comprising 93% of the total housing stock.
- The large open spaces and waterways provide habitats for native flora and fauna, and are highly valued natural assets to residents of both the local community and the wider metropolitan Melbourne area.
- There are substantial areas of State and National parkland within the Shire, particularly within its periphery, such as Kinglake National Park and One Tree Hill Reserve.
- The following attributes reflect residential development patterns in Nillumbik Shire:
 - The entire Nillumbik green wedge comprises 91% of the total land area in the Shire and supports use of land for conservation, farmland and other appropriate non-urban uses.
 - The Urban Growth Boundary clearly delineates urban areas and rural townships from rural areas and the boundary has an interface with many localities in the study area.
 - Nillumbik Shire contains high levels of vegetation in the private and public realm. Additionally, residential and rural areas throughout Nillumbik Shire are situated within various and unique landscape settings. These landscape settings are typically characterised by dry forests and woodlands, wet and damp forests, cleared rural land, scattered trees, and waterways.



65,219 current residents

*Population id Resident Population - 2020



8.3% (70,314) projected population growth between 2020 - 2036

*Victoria in Future 2019



4,200 projected dwellings required by 2036

*Victoria in Future 2019



17km north-east of Melbourne CBD



06 Dwelling within vegetated landscape - Eltham North

1.4 What is Neighbourhood Character?

The definition of neighbourhood character is drawn from Planning Practice Note 43 Understanding Neighbourhood Character, and has been adapted to reflect the local context of Nillumbik Shire.

Neighbourhood Character in Nillumbik Shire

Neighbourhood character is what visually differentiates a neighbourhood from another, and is the measure of a local identity. It encompasses the way a neighbourhood looks and feels. It is created by a combination of landscape, vegetation, the built environment, history and culture, and how they interact.

Local character is distinctive. It influences the sense of belonging a person feels to that place, the way people respond to ambience, how it influences their mood, their emotional response, and the stories that come out of their relationship with that place.

Neighbourhood character contains many different facets. It is important to understand character in a holistic way, which involves examining the relationship between people and the social, environmental and economic characteristics of place. Local character should guide how to manage a changing urban environment so that any changes are sympathetic to the valued characteristics and ultimately shape a preferred character for an area in the future.

Neighbourhood character is underpinned by the following core concepts:

- Character is a combination of the public and private realms and how they relate to one another.
- Every property, public place or piece of infrastructure makes a contribution, whether great or small.
- It is the cumulative impact of all these contributions that establishes neighbourhood character.
- The key to understanding character is being able to describe how the features of an area come together to give that area its own particular character.
- All areas have a character in the same way that all people have a personality. In some areas the character may be more obvious, more unusual, or more attractive, but no area can be described as having no character.
- The understanding of the key components of neighbourhood character ultimately informs the definition of statements of preferred character for the future.



07 Mudbrick dwelling within heavily vegetated landscape - Eltham

For Nillumbik Shire's residential areas, the key attributes that have been examined in order to evaluate neighbourhood character are drawn from Planning Practice Note 43 (PPN43), and include:

- Built Form
- Setbacks and Siting
- Fencing
- Gardens
- Nature Strips
- Footpaths
- Viewlines and Topography
- Road Network

Neighbourhood character and amenity

Amenity concerns aspects such as pleasantness, ambience and liveability of an area. Neighbourhood character is about sense of place and community value. Regardless of the character of an area there are standards of residential amenity that apply to all residential development.

These basic amenity standards include overlooking, overshadowing and solar access. Sometimes, these amenity standards can have an effect on neighbourhood character, but as a general principle, neighbourhood character and amenity should be treated separately.

Neighbourhood character and heritage

In defining neighbourhood character, it is important to understand the differences between neighbourhood character and places of heritage significance that are generally recognised in the planning scheme.

While all areas have a history, not all areas are of heritage significance. Heritage significance is determined by recognised criteria set by Commonwealth, State and local agencies, with reference to the Burra Charter. In Victoria, heritage places and areas are recognised by application of the Heritage Overlay in planning schemes or inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register. Cultural heritage is largely embodied in the underlying values and the broader physical context of a building or place. It is important to manage and retain this fabric and setting to retain the cultural significance of a place. Heritage significance can't be improved, but the fabric of a place can be improved, restored or reinterpreted.

In many areas building style is important to setting the character of the area. This includes not just typical form and massing, but may also include architectural details, materials and colours. Buildings do not need to be old or historically significant to have a character that is important to people's understanding and enjoyment of an area.

** It should also be noted that issues related to traffic, on-street parking, traffic connectivity and the movements of cars are not relevant to the assessment of neighbourhood character as defined in Planning Practice 43 Understanding Neighbourhood Character.*



08 Rural residential dwelling - Yarrambat

1.5 Methodology

Desktop Analysis & Background Review

The desktop analysis produced character area boundaries and enabled a general understanding of the study area. The previous study (2003) was referred to in determining character area boundaries. The desktop analysis included all land within the General Residential Zone (GRZ), Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ), Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ), Mixed Use Zone (MUZ) and Township Zone (TZ).

Site Survey

Meetings were held with Council's planners to discuss existing issues, areas of concerns and threats to character. A street by street site survey was conducted to ground truth the preliminary neighbourhood character areas, which resulted in further refinement of boundaries.

The methodology for the site survey included:

- A review of the previous neighbourhood character area boundaries.
- A site survey to verify desktop analysis of preliminary character areas.
- An assessment of areas based on the general attributes of private and public realms: built form and layout of the different areas; overall streetscape qualities; vegetation and landscape quality and the era of development.
- Photos for each area and character type.
- Identification of the characteristics and neighbourhood character impacts of new and infill development.
- Identification of more specific character precincts within each character type.

Engagement

Championing the strategy - Engagement 1

The first stage of engagement was conducted in late March to early May 2022 (6 weeks). The purpose of this engagement was to determine the key values held by the community about their local neighbourhoods.

This initial stage primarily sought to inform the community about the project, educate the community about neighbourhood character, the Strategy and the process, as well as hear what the community had to say.

Various engagement methods included:

- A Virtual walking tour video;
- Webpage with FAQ function;
- Council Community Advisory Committee meetings x 4 (Environment and Sustainability, Inclusion and Access, Positive Ageing, Youth Council).
- Email and written submissions;
- Online and hard copy survey;
- Information in Nillumbik Shire News/e-News and other relevant Council newsletters;
- Regular social media posts on Council's social media platforms as well as paid social media advertisements;
- Place-based pop-ups x 3 (Hurstbridge, Diamond Creek, Eltham).

Consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy - Engagement 2

The second stage of engagement is scheduled to be conducted from late August to early October 2022. The purpose of the stage is to seek feedback on this Strategy and test findings of previous engagement with the community. This stage is expected to include a variety of engagement activities, such as different types of information sessions, on-line and hard copy survey, an updated Participate Nillumbik page as the online consultation platform, including use of an interactive mapping tool.

Close the loop - Engagement 3

The third stage of engagement will be conducted in early-mid 2023. The purpose of this stage is to ensure all community feedback relevant to the draft strategy has been captured.

Neighbourhood Character Strategy

Following the first stage of consultation, the Draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy has been prepared, and reflects the findings of the Background Report and the site survey as well as values identified by the community and Council (This will be the subject of the stage 2 community consultation).

The Strategy will then be finalised to reflect the findings of the second and third stages of community consultation.

2.0 Planning Context

2.1 Planning Policy Framework

Overview

This section provides an outline of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) for Nillumbik Shire and outlines the implications for the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

The PPF seeks to guide future development within Nillumbik Shire, including specific policies relating to built form, vegetation and neighbourhood character.

Local planning policies, contain specific neighbourhood character objectives, strategies and design guidelines that give statutory effect to the findings of the previous Neighbourhood Character Study and Design Guidelines.

This new Neighbourhood Character Strategy will synthesise the existing policy context, ensuring that preferred character objectives and design guidelines are appropriate and align with both State and Local planning directives.

Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) provides context for planning decision making. Planning objectives are fostered through appropriate land use and development policies and practices, which integrate relevant environmental, social and economic factors.

The PPF recognises the importance of neighbourhood character and contextual design. It states that neighbourhood character should be protected and recognised.

The PPF includes both Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs) and Local Planning Provisions (LPPs) which provide general objectives and specific local directions respectively.

The VPPs relevant to this Strategy include:

- **11.01-1S Settlement:** Seeks to deliver housing that facilitates access to jobs, services, infrastructure and community facilities. A key component of this Clause is to promote and capitalise on opportunities for urban renewal and infill redevelopment. New residential development should be planned around existing or future activity centres to maximise accessibility to facilities and services.
- **12.01-2S Native Vegetation Management:** Seeks to ensure that native vegetation is not unnecessarily removed or destroyed.
- **12.05-2S Landscapes:** Seeks to protect and enhance significant landscapes and open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.
- **13.02-1S Bushfire Planning:** Seeks to strengthen the resilience of human settlements and communities. Importantly, this policy outlines the need to give priority to the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.
- **15.01-1S Urban Design:** Seeks to create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity. Design responses should respond to local contextual features including, character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.



09 Dwelling within heavily vegetated landscape - Eltham

- **16.01-1S Housing Supply:** Seeks to provide well-located, integrated and diverse housing that meets community needs. Design responses for new housing in established urban areas should focus on providing higher density housing development on sites that are proximal to jobs, services and public transport.

Further objectives, strategies and guidelines that are specific to the Nillumbik Shire are included within LPPs. Those that are of most relevance to this Strategy include:

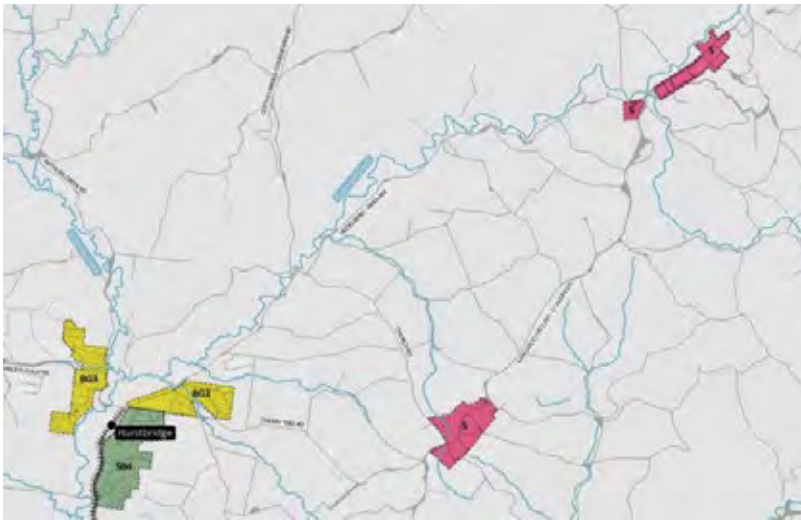
- **11.01-1L-01 Settlement in Nillumbik Shire:** Includes strategies that aim to contain residential use and development within existing urban areas, townships and low density residential areas.
- **12.05-2L Rural Landscapes in Nillumbik Shire:** Encourages uses, buildings and works to maintain or enhance the landscape character of the locality, including significant views.
- **13.02-1L Bushfire Management in Nillumbik Shire:** Applies to land affected by the Bushfire Management Overlay or located in a Bushfire Prone Area, and limits sensitive uses such as dwellings. The Clause also ensures that building siting and landscaping is designed to minimise fire risk.
- **15.01-2L-01 Building Design in Nillumbik Shire:** Includes strategies to maintain township entrances, encourage accessibility in building design and to encourage muted tones and alternative building materials in developments.
- **15.01-2L-02 Medium Density Housing Design:** Applies to land in the General Residential and Neighbourhood Residential Zones and encourages development that is designed to enhance amenity, environmental significance and heritage places.

- **15.01-5L Neighbourhood Character - Nillumbik Shire:** Provides a localised approach to implementing neighbourhood character objectives in Nillumbik Shire, as identified in 'The Neighbourhood Character Study: Residential Design Guidelines 2001 (Planisphere and John Curtis Pty Ltd, amended 2003)'. Precinct objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to residentially zoned land (except for the Mixed Use Zone), across the following character area types:

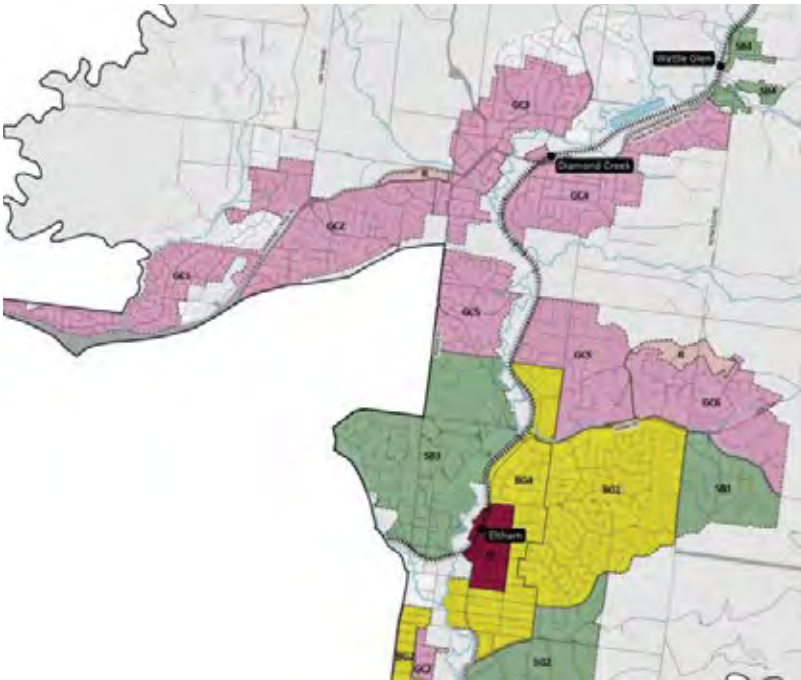
- Garden Court (precincts 1 - 6)
- Bush Garden (precincts 1 -4)
- Semi Bush (precincts 1 -4)
- Bush
- Eltham Central
- Rural
- Settlement

This policy for residential development seeks to respect the existing character of a precinct area. In addition to meeting precinct-specific guidelines, there are objectives and strategies that apply to all precincts. These are in accordance with the Nillumbik Shire Residential Design Guidelines, and account for various elements of the private and public realms, including vegetation retention and landscaping, topography, building siting, and height and building form.

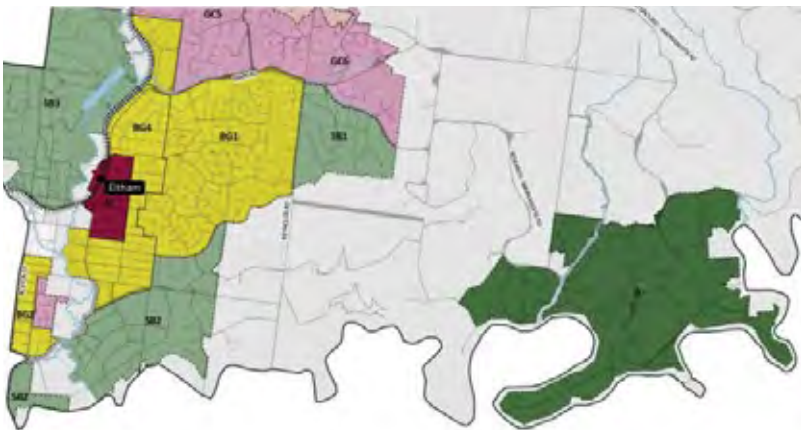
As identified in, 'The Neighbourhood Character Study: Residential Design Guidelines 2001 (Planisphere and John Curtis Pty Ltd, amended 2003)', the Existing Neighbourhood Character Precinct maps and precinct objects are identified at Figures 10-12 and Table 2.



10 Neighbourhood Character Precincts - Map 1



11 Neighbourhood Character Precincts - Map 2



12 Neighbourhood Character Precincts - Map 3

Note*: Figures 10-12 are an extract from the existing Neighbourhood Character Study, 2001: Residential Design Guidelines, and depict the spatial boundaries of Nillumbik Shire's Neighbourhood Character Precincts.

Legend

ⓘ NOT TO SCALE

— Road Network

— Creeks

⚡ Railway Line and Stations

Character Precincts

- Bush (B)
- Semi-Bush (SB)
- Bush Garden (BG)
- Rural (R)
- Garden Court (GC)
- Eltham Central (EC)
- Settlement (S)

Neighbourhood Character Precincts 2001 (amended 2003)

Table 2 outlines the existing Neighbourhood Character Precincts of Nillumbik Shire identified in The Neighbourhood Character Study: Residential Design Guidelines 2001 (Planisphere and John Curtis Pty Ltd, amended 2003)¹, and details the objectives associate with each.

Precincts	Localities	Precinct Objectives
Garden Court Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greensborough Diamond Creek Eltham Eltham North Research Plenty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the dominance of the landform and surrounding vegetation. To maintain the existing mix of native and non-native vegetation including canopy trees and understorey.
Bush Garden Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eltham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the dominance of indigenous vegetation where development is sited to minimise disruption to the precinct's rolling and hilly topography. To maintain the significant native and indigenous tree canopy.
Semi Bush Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurstbridge Wattle Glen Research Eltham North 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the appearance of development that is partly obscured from view by the topography or tree canopy. To maintain the precinct's rolling and hilly topography and its bushy vegetation character with significant indigenous or native canopy trees.
Bush Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Warrandyte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the appearance of development that is sited and designed to form part of the continuous bushland that characterises the area. To maintain significant indigenous vegetation with substantial trees and the precinct's rolling topography that slopes down to the Yarra River.
Eltham Central Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eltham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the dominance of canopy trees and the existing mix of native and non-native vegetation, including the understorey.
Rural Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Diamond Creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the dominance of the rural landscape and its flat to rolling topography.
Settlement Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panton Hills St Andrews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the dominance of the flat to hilly landform and vegetation where buildings are sited and coloured to blend into the landscape. To maintain a bushy, rural feel, with significant indigenous canopy that is almost closed in parts.

Table 2 – Nillumbik Shire Neighbourhood Character Precincts

2.2 Zones and Overlays

Overview

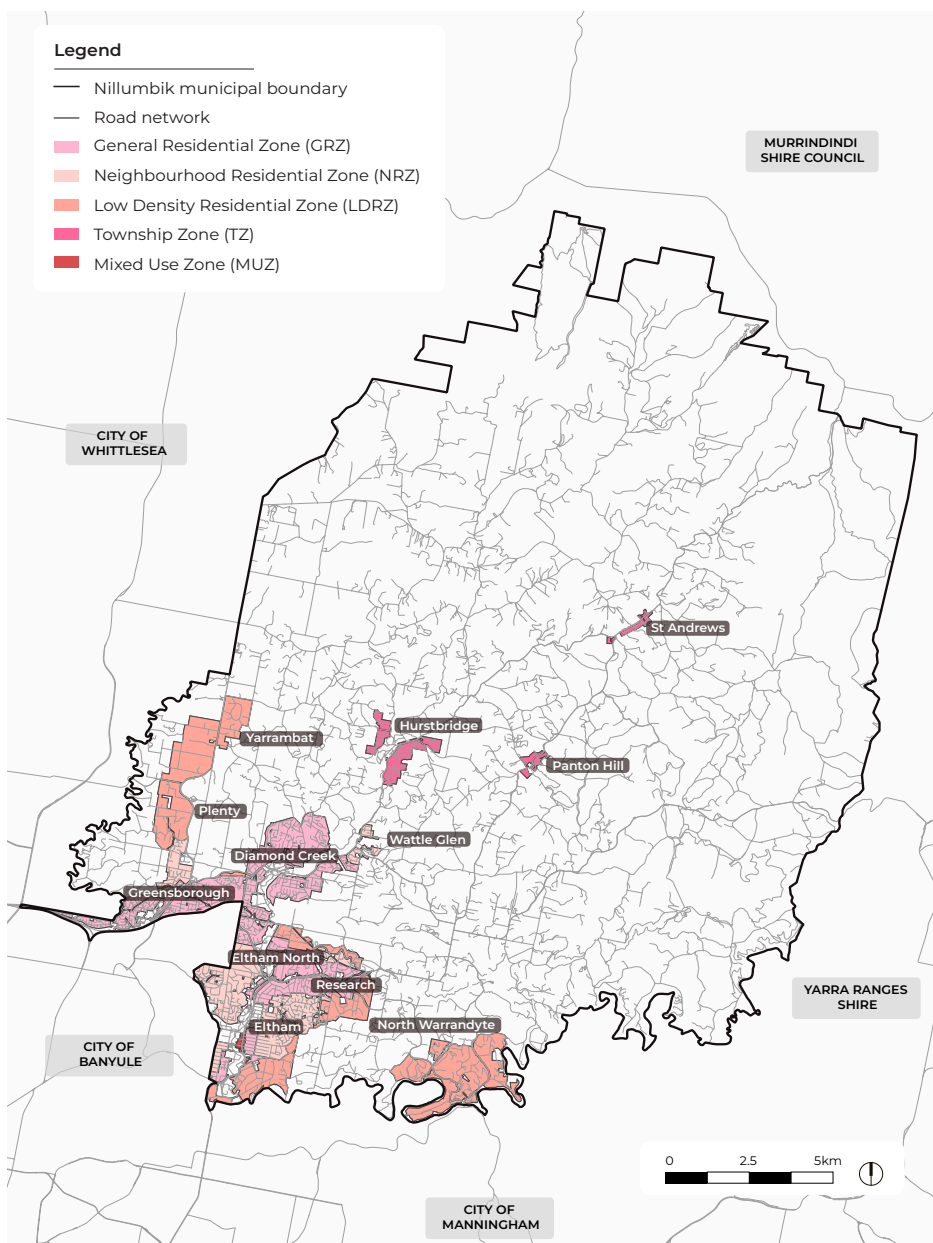
This section provides an outline of the zones and overlays that affect Nillumbik Shire and outlines the associated implications for the Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

Local variations to zone schedules and overlays provide existing controls to guide appropriate built form outcomes, retain existing vegetation and enhance significant landscapes.

Planning Scheme Zones

Residential Zones

- General Residential Zone (GRZ)
- Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)
- Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)
- Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)
- Township Zone (TZ)



13 Residential Zones

Planning Scheme Zones

Residential Zones

General Residential Zone (GRZ)

The GRZ applies to Diamond Creek, Eltham, Research and Greensborough.

The purpose of the GRZ is "to encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport".

The GRZ allows for building heights of up to 11 metres and must not exceed 3 storeys at any point.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)

The NRZ applies to pockets of residential development in Diamond Creek, Eltham, Wattle Glen, Plenty and Research.

The purpose of the NRZ is to "recognise areas of predominantly single and double storey residential development".

The NRZ allows for building heights of up to 9 metres and must not exceed 2 storeys at any point. The zone schedule does not specify local controls for Nillumbik Shire.

Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)

The LDRZ applies to residential land in Research, Diamond Creek, North Warrandyte, Eltham, Plenty and Yarrambat.

The purpose of the LDRZ is to provide for low-density residential development on lots which, in the absence of reticulated sewerage, can treat and retain all wastewater.

The LDRZ does not regulate building heights.

Township Zone (TZ)

The TZ applies to land in Hurstbridge, Panton Hill and St Andrews.

The purpose of the TZ is to "provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns".

The TZ allows for building heights that comply with the requirements set out in Clause 54 and Clause 55. The zone schedule does not specify local controls.

Mixed Use Zone (MUZ)

The MUZ applies to portion of land in Eltham along Main Road.

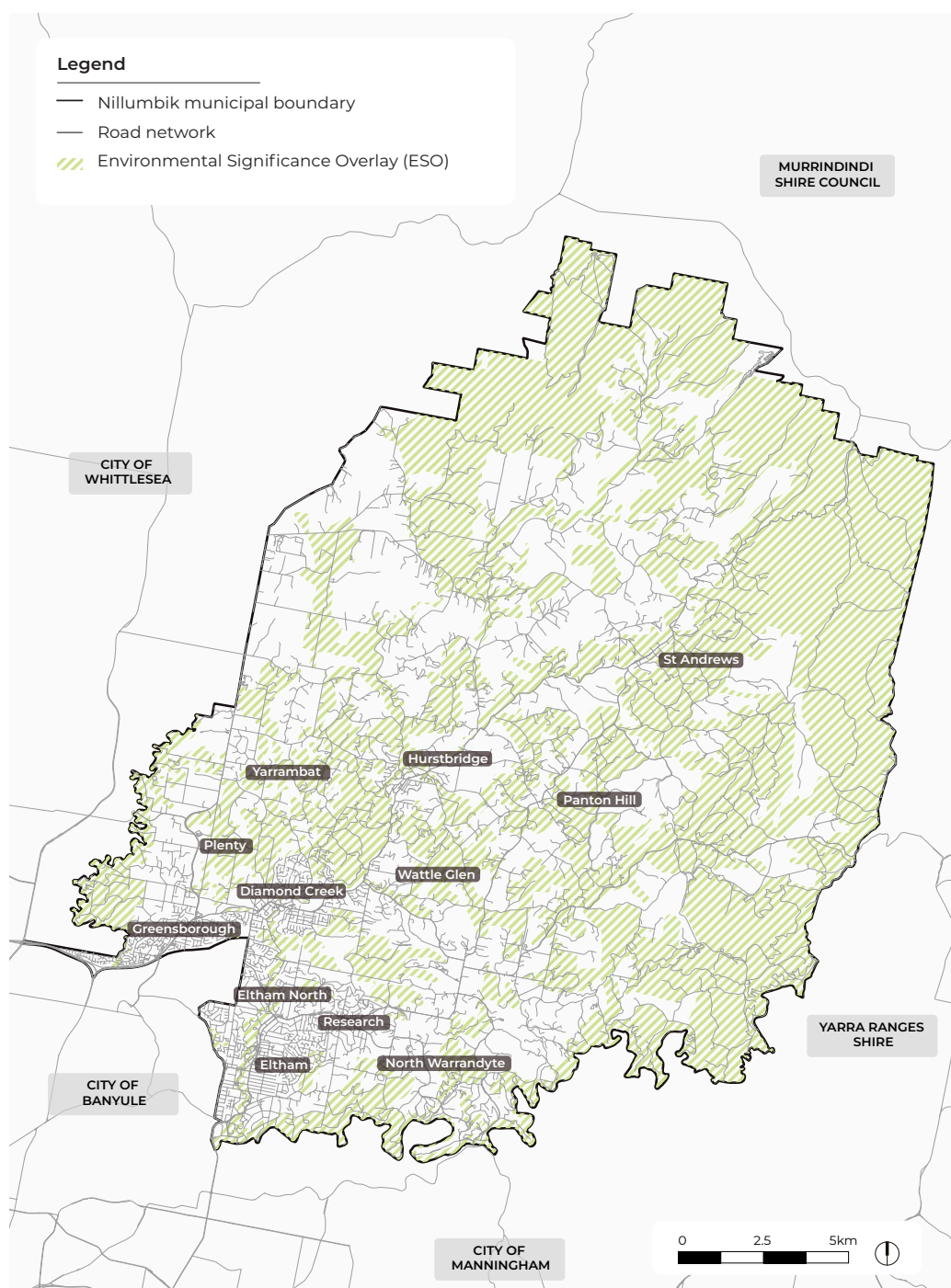
The purpose of the MUZ is to "provide for a range of residential, commercial, industrial and other uses which complement the mixed-use function of the locality".

The MUZ does not regulate building heights.

Planning Scheme Overlays

Land Management Overlays

- **Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO):** Identifies areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints and ensures that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

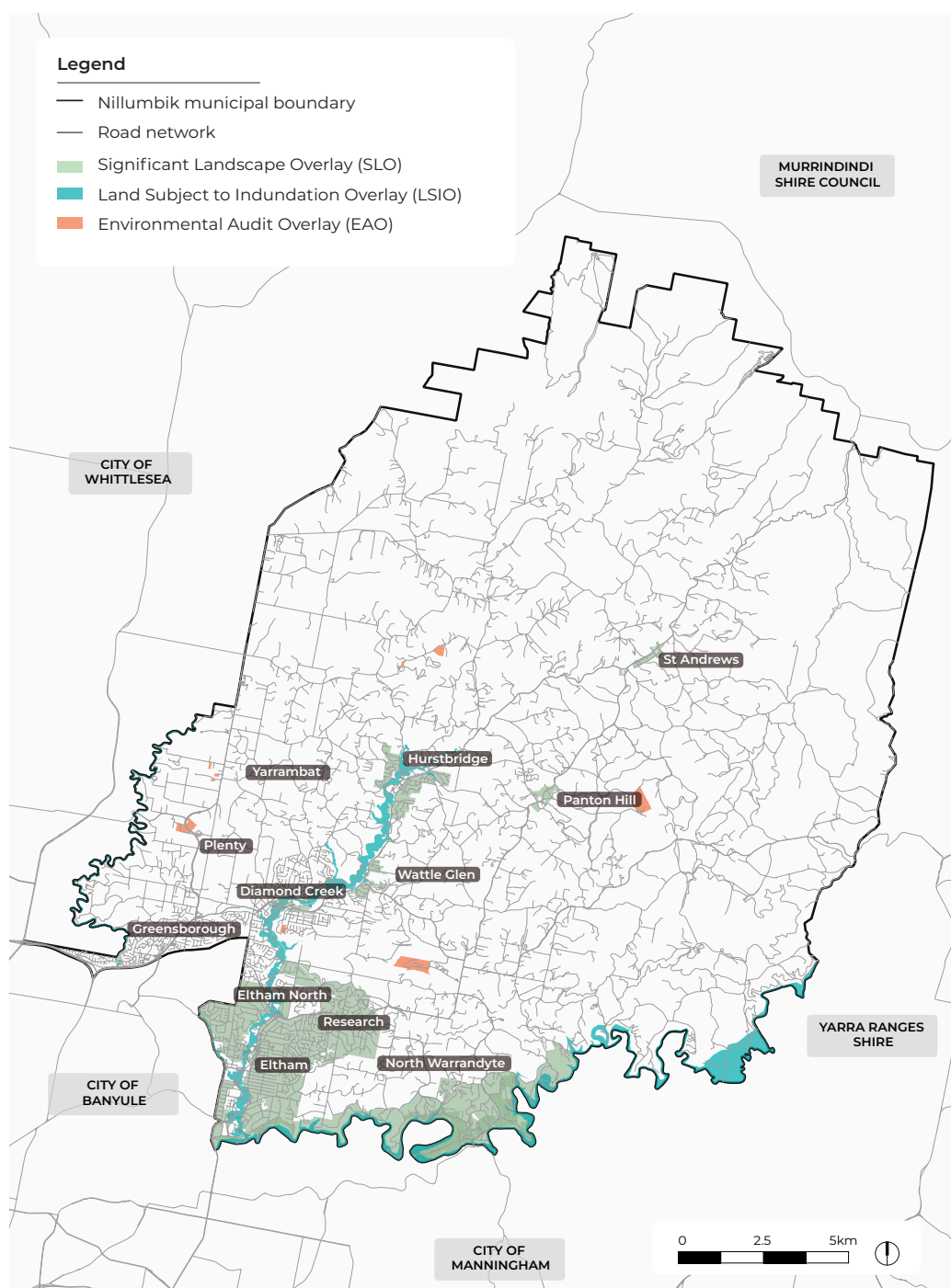


14 Environmental Significance Overlay

Planning Scheme Overlays

Land Management Overlays

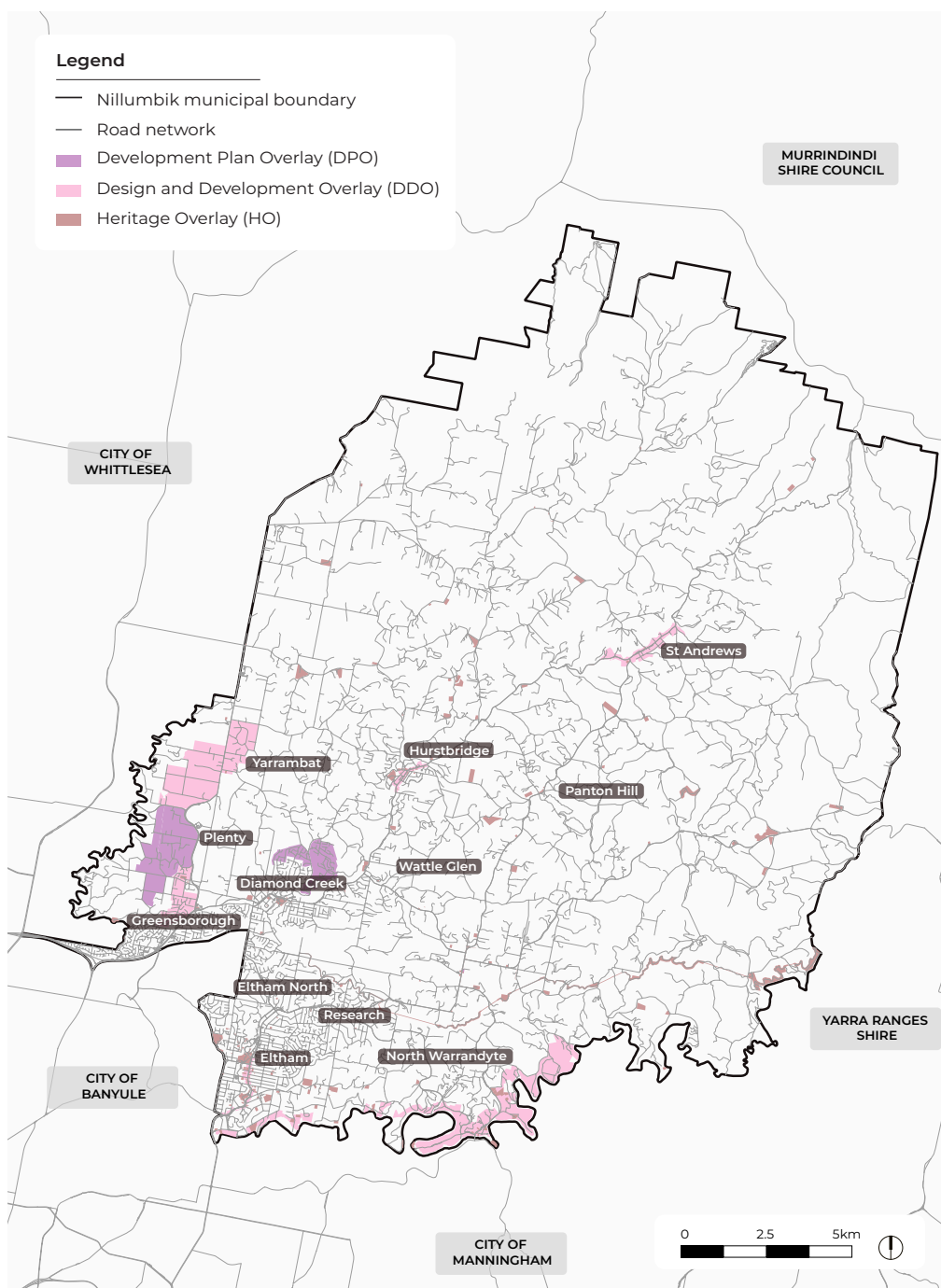
- **Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO):** Identifies significant landscapes and seeks to conserve and enhance their character.
- **Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO):** Identifies flood prone areas and requires development to maintain the free passage of flowing flood water.
- **Environment Audit Overlay (EAO):** Ensures that potentially contaminated land is suitable for a use which could be significantly adversely affected by any contamination.



Planning Scheme Overlays

Heritage and Built Form Overlays

- **Heritage Overlay (HO):** Seeks to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.
- **Design and Development Overlay (DDO):** Identifies areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.
- **Development Plan Overlay (DPO):** Requires the preparation of a development plan for the purposes of identifying areas which require the form and conditions of future use and development to be illustrated and outlined in an associated plan before the use or development can be permitted.

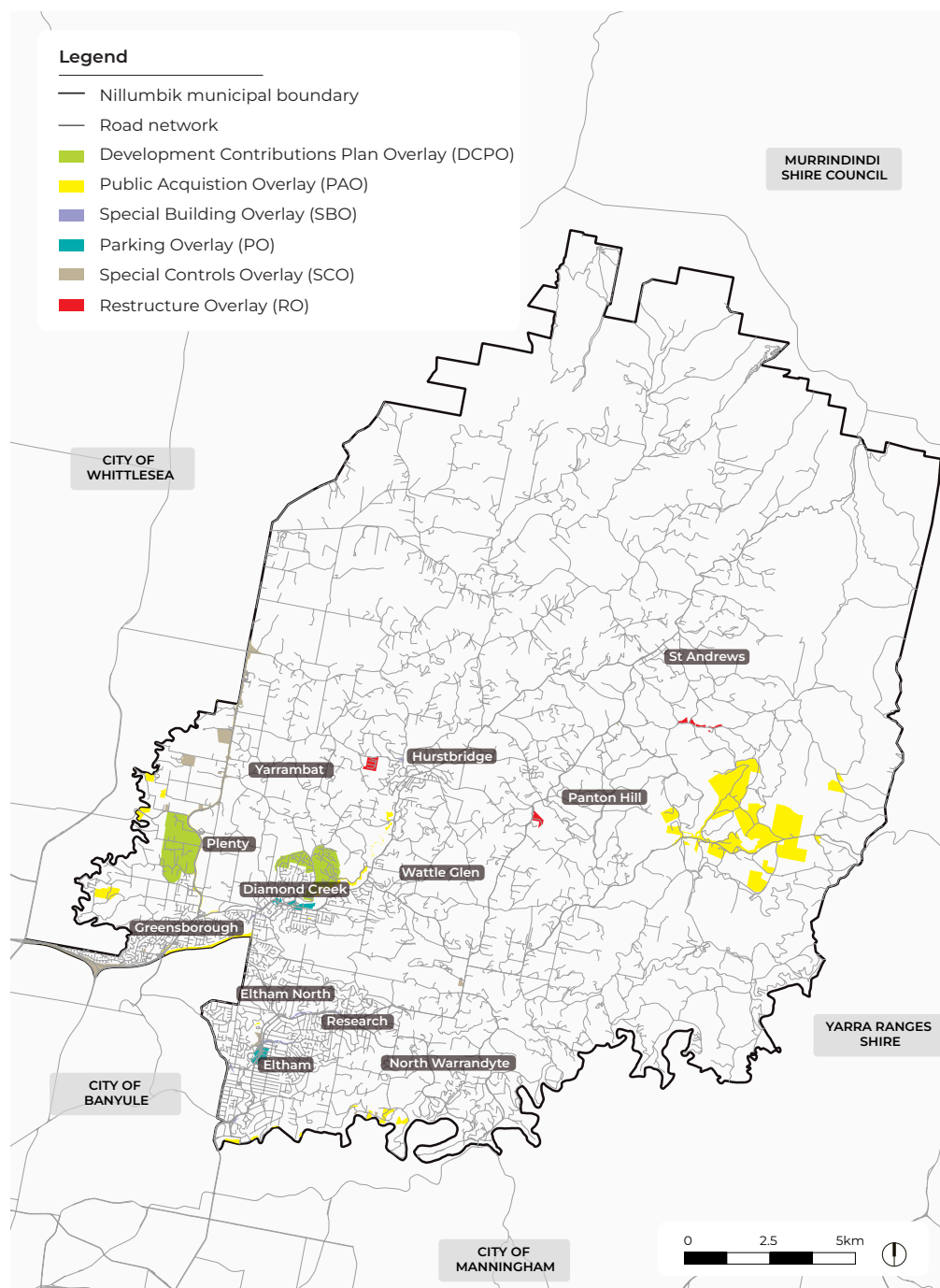


16 Heritage and Built Form Overlays

Planning Scheme Overlays

Other Overlays

- **Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO):** Identifies land which is proposed to be acquired by a Minister, public authority or municipal council.
- **Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO):** Identifies areas which require the preparation of a development contributions plan for the purpose of levying contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities before development can commence.
- **Special Building Overlay (SBO):** Identifies land in urban areas liable to inundation by overland flows from the urban drainage system as determined by, or in consultation with, the floodplain management authority.



2.3 Neighbourhood Character Policy

Key Changes to Neighbourhood Character

The framework for assessing neighbourhood character, as set out by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) continues to evolve. This influences the way neighbourhood character is assessed and implemented into Victorian planning schemes. Since the Neighbourhood Character Study and Precinct Guidelines for Nillumbik Shire was implemented in 2001 (amended in 2003), there have been several changes to local and state government policy.

The key changes affecting neighbourhood character, consist of a new methodology for assessing neighbourhood character, updates to the statutory framework and the assessment of neighbourhood character through ResCode.

Neighbourhood Character Assessment

The definition and assessment of neighbourhood character has been updated in Planning Practice Note 43. A qualitative assessment is used to assist with identifying features and characteristics of the neighbourhood character of an area. The assessment takes into account elements of the public and private realms which has informed the assessment of the existing neighbourhood character, as well as the development of preferred character statements and design guidelines in Section 5 of this Strategy.

Updates to Victorian Planning Provisions

In 2013, Amendment V8 introduced new residential zones into the Victorian Planning Provisions. The new zones support a range of housing densities and cater to changing needs of households and allow for local variations to residential development in the form of residential zone schedules to protect local neighbourhood character.

Planning Practice Note 90 highlights the interrelationship between a Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Strategy. It introduced the concepts of minimal, incremental and substantial change areas, when planning for housing change. The identification of character types and precincts in this Neighbourhood Character Strategy will also inform and guide the location of likely housing change areas.

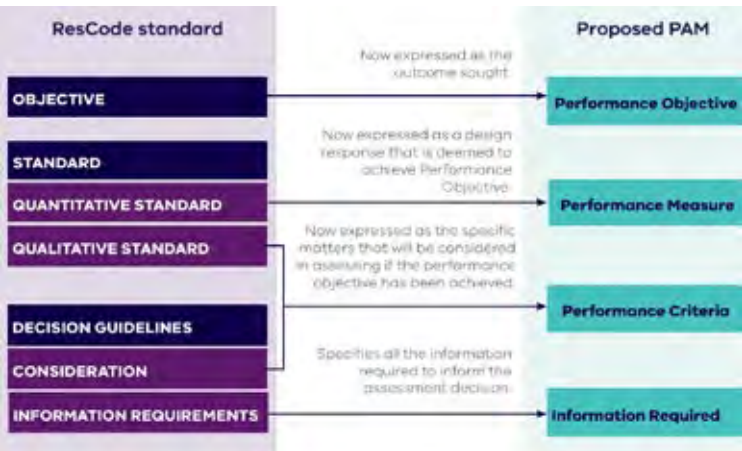
Assessment of Neighbourhood Character through ResCode

The operation of assessment provisions in ResCode are currently undergoing a process of reform under the State Government. Clauses 54 and 55 provide Council with a template to assess applications for residential development that require a planning permit. Updates to ResCode include the introduction of a new standard for assessing neighbourhood character.

Proposed ResCode Reforms

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) have recently consulted with stakeholders including councils in relation to the improvement and performance of the existing ResCode assessment at Clause 54 and Clause 55 of the Victorian Planning Provisions.

Key changes include the introduction of a Performance Assessment Module (PAM) which features the components outlined in Figure 12. Notably, providing a head of power for zone schedules to specify performance measures for Neighbourhood Character (A1 & B1) and Detailed Design (A19 & B31) is proposed. It is not yet clear or been determined how performance measures should be written for these standards.



18 Proposed ResCode Changes (DELWP, 2021)

Planning Practice Notes

This section summarises the relevant Planning Practice Notes (PPN). The PPNs define what is meant by neighbourhood character and inform the neighbourhood character methodology outlined in Section 7 of this Strategy.

Practice Note 43 - Understanding Neighbourhood Character (DELWP, 2018)

Planning Practice Note 43 provides guidance for applicants, the community and councils about:

- Understanding what is meant by neighbourhood character; and
- Preparing or assessing a permit application for a residential development.

The PPN43 details the key attributes that cumulatively contribute to character. Importantly, PPN43 establishes that neighbourhood character is considered to be the cumulative impact of attributes in both the public and private realms. It is the relationship between these attributes, and how they physically appear on the ground, that is the most important consideration for neighbourhood character.

Practice Note 90 – Planning for Housing (DELWP, 2019)

Planning Practice Note 90 provides information and guidance about how to plan for housing growth and protect neighbourhood character.

Key points relevant to this Strategy include:

- Respecting character does not mean preventing change. In simple terms, respect for the character of a neighbourhood means that development should be designed in response to its context.

This Strategy will identify qualities of the public and private realm that contribute to neighbourhood character in Nillumbik Shire.

Practice Note 91 – Using Residential Zones (DELWP, 2019)

Planning Practice Note 91 provides information and guidance about the use of residential zones in addition to the local policies and overlays to implement strategic work and how best to make use of the key features of the residential zones.

Key points relevant to this Strategy include:

- Rather than specifying preferred neighbourhood character statements in local planning policy, objectives can be specified in a schedule to a residential zone to implement the preferred neighbourhood character.

Key findings of this Strategy will consider how the existing zone schedules can be better utilised to protect and enhance neighbourhood character in Nillumbik Shire.



19 Residential streetscape - Diamond Creek

2.4 Strategic Documents

Key Findings

A review of relevant policies and strategies has been undertaken. Notably, the purpose and scope of this Neighbourhood Character Strategy limits its ability to be used to implement the Climate Action Plan. Findings from this review relevant to neighbourhood character and future development opportunities within Nillumbik Shire have been grouped by theme.

Reviewed Documents

State/Regional

- Plan Melbourne 2050 (2017)
- Draft Northern Metro Land Use Framework Plan (2021)

Municipal

- Neighbourhood Character Study: Residential Design Guidelines, 2001 (Planisphere and John Curtis Pty Ltd, amended 2003)
- Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan (2019)
- Nillumbik Shire Council Plan (2021)
- Nillumbik Community Vision (2021)
- Nillumbik Community Engagement Policy - Our People, Our Place, Our Future (2021)
- Nillumbik Climate Action Plan (2022)

Local

- Diamond Creek Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2020)
- Eltham Major Activity Centre Structure Plan (2020)

Housing

- Typically some localities in the south of Nillumbik Shire that are within the Urban Growth Boundary have the greatest amount of housing capacity, which is mostly designated infill development.
- There is a need to accommodate an increasingly ageing population and a trend for fewer people in each dwelling in Nillumbik Shire. Accommodating housing growth expectations is a challenge for Nillumbik Shire considering the constraints of the Shire, including topography, rising bushfire risk, environmental attributes, extensive areas of Green Wedge etc.

- The provision of medium density dwellings, at variety of price points, can help promote affordable housing and housing diversity.
- A significant portion of land in Nillumbik Shire is designated green wedge which has and will continue to have limited capacity for housing growth. This land is outside of the study area of this strategy.
- Housing growth is expected in areas with high amenity and service provision such as the Diamond Creek and Eltham Major Activity Centres that have good access and have the capacity to support a range of future land uses.

Vegetation and Landscaping

- Nillumbik Shire's current tree canopy is extensive and the distribution of species varies across the Shire. In some areas there is extensive coverage of indigenous canopy vegetation, whilst other areas feature a broader mix of indigenous, native and non-native trees. Tree canopy forms part of heavily vegetated surrounding landscapes and residential lots, as well as formal gardens, informally planted gardens and low-level gardens.
- The extensive coverage of canopy trees across Nillumbik Shire is highly valued by the community, and the retention and restoration of canopy trees is considered to be a high priority objective.

Community Values

In reference to the Nillumbik Shire Community Engagement Policy (2021), the top three community values identified for housing are; the protection of local history and heritage; eco-friendly design; and ageing in place.

- The community are concerned about locating new urban development in areas exposed to natural and urban hazards. The community identify bushfire risk as a key constraint in Nillumbik Shire.
- The community desire greater investment in eco-friendly design to adapt to the impacts of climate change. There is strong support for environmentally sustainable design (ESD) to minimise climate change impacts.
- Access to services and public transport infrastructure is a priority for residents in Nillumbik Shire.

3.0 Engagement

3.1 Previous Engagement

Our People, Our Place, Our Future

Nillumbik Shire consulted with local residents in March 2021, to capture their views and priorities on a range of issues that will inform the development of future strategic planning work. Council utilised a variety of platforms to engage with a diverse cross-section of the community, reaching over 2,000 people.

Key findings of the consultation related to:

- Inclusion, health, employment and resilience
- Environments, housing, open space and sustainability
- Future values

Findings of most significance to this Neighbourhood Character Strategy are outlined in this section.



20 Nillumbik Shire Council - Our People, Our Place, Our Future



HOUSING

In relation to housing, the top three issues identified by residents include the protection of local history and heritage, eco-friendly design and ageing in place.

Residents value heritage assets in the community and wish to maximise the heritage values of such places. Residents acknowledge the impacts of climate change and identify opportunities for mitigating the effects of climate change through eco-friendly design. Residents also raised concern towards the lack of diverse housing choices to support ageing in place.

Council also sought input on the future design of residential development in Nillumbik Shire. Over-development was cited as a concern for residents in Nillumbik Shire. Residents value the Green Wedge in Nillumbik Shire and support appropriate and responsible housing development in Nillumbik Shire's urban areas. Other considerations for housing include the delivery of housing in locations that are close to public transport, and the provision of affordable housing.

"Increase housing diversity in the Shire"

- Community Workshop Participant

"In a society that has so many aged people (over 60) take more time to understand their needs"

- Survey Respondent

"More medium density housing close to shops and train stations and a stop to housing development of bush land"

- Survey Respondent

*Quotes from the Nillumbik Shire Community
(Our People, Our Place, Our Future)*



OPEN SPACE & SUSTAINABILITY

Engagement identified that public open spaces play a critical role in local communities. While these spaces are not within the scope of this Strategy it is useful to note that the findings emphasised the importance that the community places on open spaces and vegetation and its contribution to the urban setting.

The existing, high coverage of canopy trees across the Shire is of particular importance to the community. Residential allotments contribute significantly to the Shire's canopy coverage and the continued retention and restoration of canopy trees will be crucial to enhancing neighbourhood character in Nillumbik Shire.

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy will support the retention and enhancement of the Shire's vegetated setting, contributing to the preservation of one of the community's most valued assets.



21 Local residents at Council-led consultation pop-up

"The very special Green Wedge environment we are privileged to live in and which can never be replaced."
- Community Workshop Participant

"Trees, trees and more trees"
- Community Pop-up Participant

*Quotes from the Nillumbik Shire Community
(Our People, Our Place, Our Future)*

3.2 Summary of Engagement: Phase 1

Championing the Strategy - Engagement 1

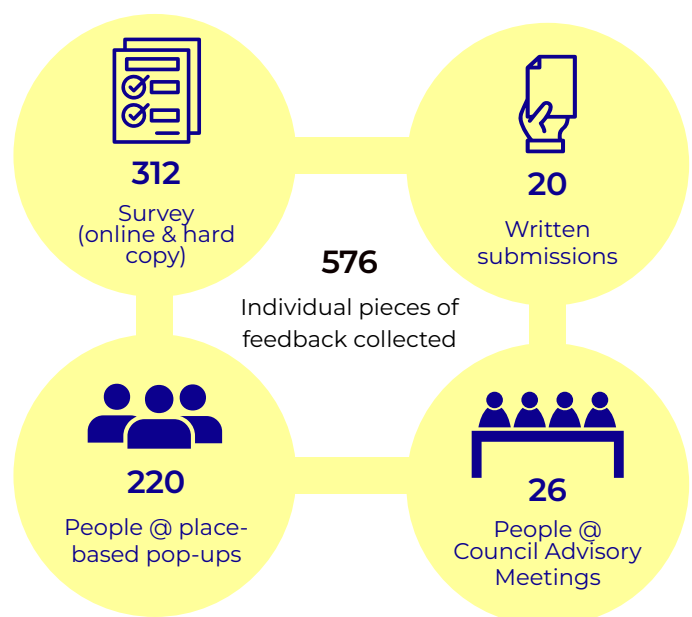
This section provides a summary of Phase 1 community engagement process, 'Championing the Strategy'. This first phase of engagement was open to the community for 6 weeks, from the 28th of March to the 8th of May 2022.

The purpose of this phase was to understand the key values held by the Nillumbik Shire community about their local neighbourhoods, and to educate the community about the role of neighbourhood character, the Strategy and the strategic process.

Activities and materials were designed and delivered by Council and Chatterbox Projects in collaboration with Ethos Urban, and included:

- A Virtual walking tour video;
- Webpage with FAQ function;
- Council Community Advisory Committee meetings x 4 (Environment and Sustainability, Inclusion an Access, Positive Ageing, Youth Council).
- Email and written submissions;
- Online and hard copy survey;
- Information in Nillumbik Shire News/e-News and other relevant Council newsletters;
- Regular social media posts on Council's social media platforms as well as paid social media advertisements;
- Posters and postcards placed at libraries, Council's customer service areas, schools and other community
- Facilities and high-traffic local destinations (e.g. post offices and shops);
- Direct notification to relevant community groups;
- Promotion on community newsletters, such as school newsletters; and
- Place-based pop-ups x 3 (Hurstbridge, Diamond Creek, Eltham).

Note: For further detail, refer to the Nillumbik Shire Neighbourhood Character Strategy Stage 1 Consultation Findings Report.



Key Findings

When looking at community feedback about neighbourhood character across the whole of Nillumbik Shire, some clear themes emerged.

What character attribute do you value most in your neighbourhood?

96%
Vegetation



74%
Topography



72%
Setbacks



72%
Views



Other strong themes that emerged relating to character attributes that the community value the most across Nillumbik Shire included:

- larger blocks and a sense of openness or open spaces;
- low density and low heights;
- heritage, historical, older look and feel of buildings and houses;
- use of natural materials so dwellings blend into the natural environment; and
- rural, country, township, village feel.

"Love the green wedge - less infill and more room for wildlife."

"A village feeling"

"No high rises - keep it green"

"Love our views"

"No front fences"

*Quotes from the Nillumbik Shire Community
(Neighbourhood Character Strategy Stage 1 Consultation Findings Report).*



22 Hurstbridge place-based pop-up

Locality Summaries

The following table provides an overview of the feedback received for each locality. It highlights what the community like and value about these neighbourhoods/areas, and also includes their suggestions for how development should be designed to enhance and improve neighbourhood character.

Locality	What do people value?	How can neighbourhood character be improved?
Eltham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, trees, canopy trees • the views • topography (hills and waterways) • larger setbacks and blocks • low heights • older and diverse housing types (including mud brick) • use of natural building materials • rural style paths/ roads • rural, country, township feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect trees, canopy trees, corridors and vegetation • new developments to include new vegetation and gardens • development to respect current architecture/ green leafy character • integrate homes into the landscape and use natural materials • retain low or no fencing • minimise subdivisions • keep larger blocks and setbacks • prioritise low rise/ single storey and low density
Hurstbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, trees, habitat • topography • larger setbacks and blocks • mix of landscapes – rural, village, grazing, equine and open space • the views (tree canopy) • low heights and single dwellings • historical/ heritage buildings • use of natural materials (mud brick, wood) • minimal fencing • informal paths • rural, country, township feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect trees, canopy trees • new developments to be respectful of existing small town feel • retain low density, low heights, large blocks, rural hobby farms and grazing land • preserve heritage features • limit subdivisions • use natural materials
Eltham North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, trees, canopy trees • topography (hills) • larger setbacks and blocks • the views • low heights and single dwellings • older and diverse housing types (including mud brick, wood, stone) • use of natural building materials • minimal fencing • rural, country, township feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect trees, canopy trees, large gardens and habitat • new developments to include new vegetation and trees • integrate development into surrounding landscape • limit subdivisions • keep larger blocks and setbacks • prioritise low rise/ single storey and low density

Table 5 – Locality consultation summaries

Diamond Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, trees • the views • topography • larger setbacks and blocks • large spaces/ open space • low heights • older homes • rural, country, village feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect trees and vegetation • new developments to include new vegetation • retain old homes • minimise subdivisions • keep larger blocks and setbacks • prioritise low rise/ single storey
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Wattle Glen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, green wedge, trees, bushland • the views • topography • larger setbacks and blocks • lower heights (not built up) • rural, country feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect trees • keep larger blocks, setbacks and lower heights • development to integrate with rural/ rustic character • improve roads/ paths
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North Warrandyte	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, natural bushland, the views (trees/ bush) • topography (hills/ waterway) • low density • low height • minimal development • larger setbacks and natural bushy blocks • open space • rural, country, village feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect trees, bush and vegetation • new developments to be small scale • low rise • set back and use natural materials
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Panton Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, trees, green wedge • topography • larger blocks • historical character (gold rush/ fires) • views • mix of land uses – grazing, equine, rural • rural, country feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain hobby farms and grazing land • allow some mix of housing types • improve paths/ trails
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Table 5 – Locality consultation summaries

Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trees, large trees, bush setting, large gardens with wildlife • topography (hills/mountains) • larger setbacks and natural bushy blocks • variety of areas like farmland, rural, grazing, wineries • use of natural building materials • no formal/ unsealed roads • rural, country feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain and increase trees, bush, vegetation, gardens • retain current setbacks, form and development to respect current building height/ size • prevent on-street parking
Plenty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, the Gorge • natural areas • open spaces • large blocks • views • topography (hills) • setbacks • rural, township, country feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain trees, native vegetation • increase vegetation cover • retain rural character • limit subdivision/ heights, retain setbacks and open spaces • improve walkways and paths
St Andrews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural bushland • large bush blocks • mix of uses – paddocks, working farms, residences • views • topography • informal unsealed roads • rural, country feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect green wedge • protect wildlife • no subdivisions • small scale only • use natural materials • improve roads
Yarrambat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trees, hobby farms, bush • native front gardens • views, topography • large blocks and setback • low density • rural, country feel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain gum trees, tree canopy • diversity of housing • large block sizes
Greensborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetation, trees, gardens • open spaces • the views and street layout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit new development and heights

Table 5 – Locality consultation summaries

4.0 Key Issues and Threats

4.1 Overview

In order to inform appropriate future planning provisions for this Neighbourhood Character Strategy (as part of future strategic work), the key character issues applicable to the study area need to be considered.

These threats are summarised below based on the survey findings of the project team, initial consultation with the community and working groups with Council's planning officers.

The following themes have been identified as the key issues and threats:

- Poor Quality Contemporary Infill
- Removal of Vegetation & Landscaping
- Subdivision of Larger Lots
- Retirement Villages, Aged Care, Medical & Other Services
- Dominant Fencing Styles
- Siting & Scale
- Car Access & Storage
- Colours & Materials
- Viewlines
- Bushfire Management

The following section provides an overview of each of these issues and threats and identifies areas and locations which are affected by these themes.



Key Issues and Threats

4.2 Contemporary Infill

Contemporary infill buildings are prominent across much of Nillumbik Shire. These new developments, which feature architectural styles and material palettes that can contrast with existing housing stock, have contributed to a change in character across the study area. In Nillumbik Shire, this type of development has typically occurred in the form of:

- replacement houses
- additional dwellings or extensions located at the rear of existing lots
- redevelopment of sites to accommodate larger residential developments
- duplex or side-by-side housing typologies

The quality of design of infill buildings is varied. Some are respectful of the existing and valued character of a precinct, while others fail to reflect their location and comprise features that disregard the character of existing areas. Issues associated with contemporary infill include:

- Reduced setbacks
- Reduced building separation
- Vegetation clearing to enable larger scale development
- Loss of remnant native vegetation/canopy trees
- Lowered instances of tree retention
- Minimal provision of space for deep soil planting and canopy trees
- Demolition of existing low density, detached dwellings for larger-scale development
- Change in materiality - use of more contemporary materials (concrete, render, etc)

Given the existing planning context, there are examples of newer developments in Greensborough, Eltham and Diamond Creek that are visually bulky, have high site coverage, provide small front and side setbacks, have minimal canopy tree retention (especially native vegetation) and provide limited space for deep soil planting. The introduction of a prominent architectural element, building form or material not commonly found in the area can incrementally diminish the valued character of the neighbourhood.

The concept of character does not seek to prevent infill development from occurring; rather it aims to ensure that new buildings reflect their location and respect the surrounding built form in a contemporary way. A contemporary development could successfully respond to its location by reflecting the form and siting of surrounding dwellings.

Analysis Overview

Locations affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As Nillumbik Shire is characterised by undulating topography and steep slopes, all localities (particularly in some areas in the south) are seeing new volume builds which reflect a 'cut' and 'fill' approach, rather than responding to the slope of the land.• In locations such as Eltham and Diamond Creek, there has been an increase in larger residential development and in Greensborough an increased prevalence of two-three storey housing typologies.• Hurstbridge is seeing higher density, mixed use development of existing allotments.
	Other considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of existing dwellings.• Future population projections.• Subdivision of larger lots.

Implications for Guidelines

Examine the extent to which design objectives can increase setbacks and reduce the bulk and scale of built form, by:

- Reflect minimum side boundary setbacks and minimum landscaping requirements in design guidelines.
- Restricting the percentage of the site covered by impermeable surfaces (where relevant).
- Strengthen guidelines in regards to deep soil areas and canopy tree/significant vegetation retention in front and rear yards, especially native vegetation.
- Reflect typical siting in design guidelines.

Key Issues and Threats

4.3 Loss of Vegetation and Landscaping

Vegetation and landscaping are central elements when determining an area's neighbourhood character. This relates specifically to existing vegetation, including:

- The public and private realm
- The landscaping of individual gardens
- The cumulative effect of landscaping across an entire area
- The prevalence of canopy coverage

Across Nillumbik Shire, vegetation is extensive and is predominately informally planted with canopy trees, native trees and low lying bush/understorey. There also remains remnant native Ecological Vegetation Classes such as remnant Grassy Dry Forest, Valley Grassy Forest, Gully Woodland and other native species.

There is however also a mix of:

- Formal gardens with non-native vegetation
- Informally planted gardens and heavily vegetated lots with a mix of native and non-native species
- Wide grassy lawns or low-level gardens with limited vegetation

A key threat to Nillumbik Shire's neighbourhood character is the loss of vegetation in private gardens, and its replacement with larger developments or non-permeable hard-scaping, such as paving. Additionally, existing landscape character is undermined by contemporary infill builds which do not provide adequate garden space for planting of new vegetation, replanting of native species or canopy trees, which require deep soil and space for roots to grow.

The threat of significant vegetation clearing is particularly relevant in Nillumbik Shire due to State-sanctioned permit exemptions within planning controls applying to a large portion of the Shire, which allow as-of-right removal of vegetation for bushfire management and maintenance. As most of Nillumbik Shire is within a designated Bushfire Prone Area (BPA), with a portion of the study area covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), both the planning and building systems in Nillumbik Shire comprise of State-sanctioned exemptions which override all other planning triggers for the purposes of bushfire protection including vegetation and landscape protection controls. Details of these exemptions and their impact on neighbourhood character are further discussed Section 5.2 of this Strategy.

Analysis Overview	
Locations affected	<div>Localities under pressure for redevelopment:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diamond Creek• Eltham• Eltham North• Hurtsbridge• North Warrandyte• Panton Hill• Research• St Andrews• Wattle Glen
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of statutory protection for vegetation.• Bushfire planning considerations.• Boundary-to-boundary development limiting the scope for adequate deep soil areas.• Moonscaping of lots.• Excessive site coverage.• Mandatory garden area requirements increase areas for planting on lots greater than 400m2, although this does not consider the loss of garden spaces due to paving, swimming pools and tennis courts.

Implications for Guidelines
<div>Investigate opportunities to strengthen policy relating to the retention of existing vegetation, by including guidelines which:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen vegetation retention and deep soil areas (where possible).• Require more generous side setbacks in heavily vegetated areas to allow for planting of vegetation and canopy trees.• Apply site coverage maximums to retain sufficient site area for vegetation, where relevant.

Key Issues and Threats

4.4 Subdivision

Subdivision of lots within Nillumbik Shire is particularly prevalent in localities that are not within an LDRZ or covered by DDO2 and DDO3 which specify a minimum lot size. Subdivision is often associated with mass vegetation removal in order to maximise the development yield.

The subdivision of lots throughout Nillumbik Shire has a direct impact on neighbourhood character due to:

- Reduced setbacks
- Reduced building separation
- Vegetation clearing to enable larger scale development
- Loss of remnant native vegetation/canopy trees
- Lowered instances of tree retention
- Minimal provision of space for deep soil planting and canopy trees
- Demolition of existing low density, detached dwellings for larger-scale development
- Change in materiality - use of more contemporary materials (concrete, render, etc)

A key threat to neighbourhood character in many localities is the subdivision of lots and the resulting incremental change in the type of housing stock as well as ineffective integration of the natural and urban environments.

Subdivision must be done in a manner that is contextually sensitive to the distinct neighbourhood character of each locality in Nillumbik Shire.

Analysis Overview

Locations affected

- Areas not covered by a DDO or LDRZ.
- Yarrambat is covered by DDO2, which is constrained to controlling subdivision size with limited density and setback provisions.

Other considerations

- Lack of statutory protection for vegetation.
- Future demographic considerations.
- Choice of housing typologies.

Considerations

- Consider minimum subdivision sizes in areas that are heavily vegetated and where necessary - to be considered in conjunction with recommendations of a future Housing Strategy and Residential Development Framework.



23 Subdivision with duplex housing development - Diamond Creek

Key Issues and Threats

4.5 Larger Scale Development - Retirement Villages, Aged Care, Medical & other Services

There is potential for an increased pressure for mixed-use development in residential areas throughout Nillumbik Shire. This type of development includes:

- Retirement villages
- Aged care facilities
- Medical centres
- Childcare centres

Clause 53.17 Residential Aged Care facility allows for an aged care facility to have a maximum building height of 16 metres on land located within the General Residential Zone (GRZ), Mixed Use Zone (MUZ), Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ), Residential Growth Zone (RGZ) or Township Zone (TZ).

The increasing pressure for these services to be developed in residential areas covered by the following zones, may impact upon existing character in Nillumbik Shire.

For example, increased pressure to develop Aged Care facilities that are of a greater scale and form than surrounding residential dwellings, will impact the rhythm of existing streets and the ability to provide planting of canopy trees or the retention of significant vegetation, directly impacting upon neighbourhood character.

Implications for Guidelines & Considerations

- Consider guidelines which prioritise the retention of significant vegetation and the provision of ample space for canopy trees.
- Consider impact of upper level setbacks to existing residential uses.

Analysis Overview

Locations affected

- Localities covered by GRZ (Diamond Creek, Eltham, Research and Greensborough).
- Areas under pressure for redevelopment (e.g. areas with lower quality housing stock, in close proximity to activity centres).

Other considerations

- Whilst the increased emergence of medical and childcare centres in residential areas is a present issue within the Shire, the development of retirement villages and aged care facilities is a potential future threat.
- Future demographic considerations, including an ageing population, may require aged care or retirement facilities in the future.
- Choice of housing typologies.



24 VMCH St Thomas' Retirement Village - Greensborough

Key Issues and Threats

4.6 Dominant Fencing Styles

The treatment of front boundaries varies throughout Nillumbik Shire, with many residential areas characterised by no front fencing or low fences that allow views to the front garden or dwelling, use vegetation as a border treatment or have open frontages. The combined effect of these boundary characteristics is open streetscapes and a vegetated dominated atmosphere where fences are a less prominent feature.

As the majority of areas within Nillumbik Shire are characterised by no or low front fencing, the introduction of more dominant fencing styles that block views to gardens and dwellings would directly impact existing character. High, solid fences would undermine the blending of vegetation in the public and private realm, which is a key characteristic of Nillumbik Shire's residential areas. High, solid front fences are starting to emerge in areas under pressure for redevelopment, as well as areas with frontages to major roads or smaller roads of high usage.

Implications for Guidelines

- Strengthening zone and overlay schedules that relate to front fence design ensuring they are appropriate to local neighbourhood character, including objectives that:
 - encourage fencing that reflects the typical styles in the area.
 - encourage a lack of front fencing in areas where this is common.
 - discourage the development of high, solid fences that limit visual permeability.
 - consider only allowing higher front fences on main roads where there is particular need to provide privacy and mitigate against noise in the front setback.
 - consider guidelines that locate front fencing within a site boundary to allow space for plantings in front of the fence.
- Resist pressure from applications to incorporate high front fences in order to utilise the area as secluded private open space.

Analysis Overview

Locations affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas under pressure for redevelopment.• Areas with frontages to main roads.• However it is noted that tall or solid fencing may impact the character in all localities.
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A front fence includes any fence within 3 metres of the street and should not exceed the maximum fence height.• Noise impacts and privacy concerns from the public realm.• Security considerations.



25 Streetscape with low and transparent timber fencing - Plenty



26 Residential streetscape with solid fencing - Diamond Creek

Key Issues and Threats

4.7 Inconsistent Siting & Scale

Siting and scale are central elements of determining an area's neighbourhood character. Topography is a distinguishing characteristic of Nillumbik Shire, ranging from gentle undulating slopes to very steep areas along waterways and ridgelines. Subsequently, dwellings are often built to take advantage of the landscape and to enable views of ranges, valleys and Metropolitan Melbourne (e.g. split level designs). Notably, dwellings in the northern residential areas are typically sited on steep hills or below street level.

In terms of character, it is important that new developments differ in detailed design elements, whilst simultaneously respecting the form, siting, scale and vegetation coverage of existing dwellings in a streetscape or character area. In Nillumbik Shire, it is critical that new development respects the varying topographic conditions, limiting development located on ridgelines and the penetration of built form above tree canopy coverage.

The scale and siting of dwellings on their residential lot has a significant influence on the character of a streetscape. In areas with a consistent neighbourhood character, dwellings will generally follow a typical pattern with the rest of the streetscape and will conform to similar building envelopes.

New developments with substantially reduced setbacks interrupt the established pattern of streets and increases the built form enclosure of the street. As Nillumbik Shire is predominately characterised by large allotments that follow a curvilinear subdivision layout, the siting of new buildings on irregular-shaped lots may also disrupt existing streetscape rhythm.



27 Dwellings sited on steep hill - Diamond Creek

Analysis Overview

Locations affected

- Majority of the residential areas within Nillumbik Shire are characterised by undulating slopes, and some localities feature steep areas along waterways and ridgelines.
- Areas under pressure for redevelopment, subdivision and contemporary infill development (e.g. areas in close proximity to activity centres).

Other considerations

- Redevelopment/extensions of single dwellings into larger scale and medium density housing.
- Development of aged care, retirement, medical centres and child care facilities within residential areas.
- Within the BMO, replacement or extended dwellings require a Bushfire Management Plan and the creation of a defensible space. As a result, developments characterised by a large building footprint will see high levels of vegetation removal.

Implications for Guidelines

- Examine best-practice examples of maintaining views between dwellings, planting in rear gardens, creating a sense of spaciousness and streetscape rhythm, by including guidelines that:
 - encourage upper level setbacks and front and side setbacks at ground level to facilitate the provision of landscaping and significant vegetation.
 - maintain key siting considerations such as dwelling orientation and side setbacks.
 - specify preferred roof forms where this is consistent.

Key Issues and Threats

4.8 Dominant Car Access & Storage

The siting and design of car access and storage has a direct impact on the character of streetscapes. Additional or widened crossovers result in increased hard paving and loss of nature strip planting. Reduced garden space and permeable ground for sustaining vegetation also occurs due to hard paving areas within front setbacks for car parking or other purposes. Landscaping along driveways to soften this impact is often non-existent or too narrow.

Car parking structures vary greatly across the Nillumbik Shire. Car parking structures can dominate the frontage of a property in two ways. Firstly, by being located in line with or forward of the dwelling. Secondly, by occupying a large proportion of the frontage, for example by the use of a triple or double garage. Both of these car parking structure types are present in Nillumbik Shire. As a result, streets are less attractive for pedestrians, passive surveillance is reduced, and the positive aspects of neighbourhood character in the streetscape are undermined.

In order to address this, dominant car parking structures should be discouraged. Guidelines should also seek to minimise the hard surfaces in front setbacks and reduce the crossovers to one per property.

Landscaped strips should be encouraged along driveways located along property boundaries. Landscaping works to break up expanses of hard, impervious surfaces, particularly where driveways abut across property boundaries.



28 Dwellings with large car storage areas and expanses of hard surfaces

Analysis Overview

Locations affected

- Areas under pressure for redevelopment, subdivision and contemporary infill development (e.g. areas in close proximity to activity centres).

Other considerations

- Infill of additional dwellings at the rear of the lot.

Implications for Guidelines

- Where applicable, guidelines should be incorporated in provisions in the Nillumbik Shire Planning Scheme that:
 - Limit the proportion of the site covered by impermeable surfaces, particularly in front setbacks.
 - Locate garages and carports behind the front facade of the dwelling.
 - Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage.

Key Issues and Threats

4.9 Inconsistent Colours & Materials

In Nillumbik Shire, the consistency of colours and materials is a defining aspect of the character of some localities. However, the colour palettes and materiality of contemporary design schemes of new builds in some localities has caused built form to stand out from their surroundings, rather than blending in within them. Some areas of Nillumbik Shire have an identified and recognisable character due to the consistency of a muted and earthy toned colour palette and natural building materials. For example, Eltham and North Warrandyte feature notable concentrations of mud brick dwellings characterised by muted tones and natural material finishes which complements Nillumbik Shire's 'leafy' character feel and landscaped setting.

The majority of dwellings in Nillumbik Shire are constructed of varied materials, ranging from brick and concrete render combinations, timber weatherboard and other contemporary materials. However, many areas are often characterised by muted and earthy hues on both façades and roofs. However, much of the contemporary development makes use of a grey-based palette, this exaggerates the contrast in building style and form between new and old. Sometimes, adopting the same (or similar) materials and finishes can be a decisive factor in allowing a contemporary design to complement, rather than compete, with its surroundings.

This Strategy seeks to clearly identify the areas where maintaining similar or complementary surface finishes is fundamental to the preferred neighbourhood character.

Analysis Overview

Locations affected

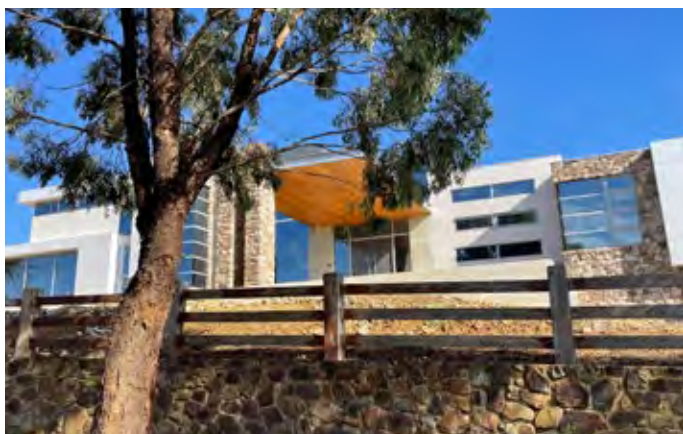
- Diamond Creek and Plenty- built form outcomes emerging as a result of DPO objectives.
- Areas under pressure for redevelopment (e.g. areas with lower quality housing stock, in close proximity to activity centres).
- Diamond Creek and part of Eltham North - areas that have no SLO coverage; no permit triggers for single dwellings.
- However it is noted that contemporary development may disrupt the consistency of earthy colours and materials in all localities.

Other considerations

- Redevelopment/extensions of single detached dwellings into medium density housing.
- Development of aged care, retirement, medical centres and child care facilities within residential areas.
- Sustainability factors.

Implications for Guidelines

- Identify areas in which a specific range of material finishes and colour palette should remain a key part of the preferred future character.



29 Contemporary dwelling featuring varied material finishes - Yarrambat



30 Mud brick residential dwelling - Eltham

Key Issues and Threats

4.10 Interrupted Viewlines

In Nillumbik Shire, maintaining the views from the public realm between dwellings and vistas across the landscape is a critical component of neighbourhood character.

A significant element of character across multiple localities within Nillumbik Shire is the undulating topography, which affords picturesque views of vegetated areas and elevated ridge lines.

Viewlines to the tops of tree canopies and ridgelines is also a key feature of neighbourhood character within many of the bushy and 'leafy' vegetated areas. An important consideration for new development is to ensure it does not visually penetrate these viewlines.

However, as mentioned previously, contemporary infill development typically utilises a 'cut' and 'fill' method to accommodate volume builds which do not effectively respond to the slope of the land. Although this allows for the continuation of shared views, it disrupts the street rhythm and reduces vegetation retention.

Analysis Overview

Locations affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas located on steep slopes or within close proximity to waterways.• Areas with long ranging views to Diamond Creek, Plenty River, Yarra River, vegetated areas, tree-canopy elevated ridge lines, rolling hills, Metropolitan Melbourne etc.• However it is noted that new development may disrupt viewlines in all localities characterised by undulating topography.
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of aged care, retirement, medical centres and child care facilities within residential areas.• Choice of housing typologies.

Implications for Guidelines

- Consider guidelines for the identification of and reasonable protection of shared viewlines, including:
 - Upper level setbacks
 - Front and side setbacks at ground level
 - Siting
 - Building bulk
- Consider objectives and guidelines to ensure new development does not visually penetrate tree canopies and/or ridgelines, where this is a key feature of an areas character.



31 Residential area with rural views - Yarrambat

5.0 Performance of Existing Settings

5.1 VCAT Cases Summary

The following is a summary of a selection of VCAT cases relating to neighbourhood character in Nillumbik Shire.

The key implications for this Strategy are outlined below.

Effectiveness of Existing Controls

Of the VCAT cases reviewed, the majority indicate that the existing planning controls that are used to implement neighbourhood character objectives are performing relatively well.

The Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO3) was cited in six cases as having provided an effective decision making framework for VCAT members, resulting in either an affirmation of Council's prior permit refusal, or, approval of an amended permit. In the case of an amended permit, VCAT required additional design changes including increased setbacks and space for landscaping to achieve the objectives of SLO3.

Where a case involved an existing DDO (DDO2), Council's concerns relating to building height and form were not upheld, with VCAT ruling that proposed multi level dwellings were in accordance with the objectives of DDO2, which is limited to controlling subdivision size. The design response to the character area was deemed to be appropriate as sufficient setbacks and space for landscaping were provided to maintain the bush setting. This suggests that there may be scope to revise existing DDOs, or implement new controls with guidelines targeted at generating built form outcomes that respond to identified character attributes.

Gaps in Controls

Two VCAT cases reviewed, concerned proposed development in residential locations that were not subject to either an SLO or a DDO; Council's main tools for implementing its Neighbourhood Character Guidelines.

In these instances Council raised concerns with built form elements including inadequate setbacks, excessive visual bulk and limited opportunity for retention of vegetation or replacement landscaping.

However, VCAT were satisfied that the developments met the neighbourhood character objectives of Clause 55 (Rescode) and were therefore deemed appropriate for approval.

While the relevant neighbourhood character objectives were outlined within local policy at Clause 22.12 (now 15.01-5L), greater weight was placed on the objectives of Clause 55. This highlights that in the case of achieving neighbourhood character objectives, it is important that they are implemented by utilising Clause 55 variations within the zone schedule, or through overlays such as an SLO to ensure that they are given appropriate statutory weighting.

Case
Calzone v Nillumbik SC
Hopping v Nillumbik SC
Merrigan v Nillumbik SC
Bible Street Project Pty Ltd v Nillumbik SC & Ors
Sam Battiato for Creative Design Studio v Nillumbik SC & Or
Architectural Home Design v Nillumbik SC
Sarantis v Nillumbik SC
Thomson v Nillumbik SC

Table 3 – Reviewed cases that identify effectiveness of existing controls

Case
Glenrich Investments Pty Ltd v Nillumbik CC
Scheiber & Co Pty Ltd v Nillumbik SC

Table 4 – Reviewed cases that identify gaps in existing controls

5.2 Bushfire Management

The majority of Nillumbik Shire is a Designated Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) under section 192A of the Building Act 1993. Also, a large proportion of land within the Shire is subject to Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). While allowing residents to mitigate bushfire risk on their properties is integral to the protection of human life, anecdotal evidence suggests that an unfortunate consequence is the impact on neighbourhood character. The cumulative impact of vegetation removal from individual properties poses a threat to the highly valued 'leafy green' character of the Nillumbik Shire.

The importance of vegetation to Nillumbik Shire's character and biodiversity is recognised through various parts of the Nillumbik Shire Planning Scheme, as noted in previous sections. The neighbourhood character analysis has also identified vegetation as a critical component of the character of majority of localities, and contributes overall to Nillumbik Shire's character.

Exemptions apply to buildings built or approved prior to 10 September 2009 and are set out in Clause 52.12 (Bushfire Protection: Exemptions). The exemptions apply regardless of whether a permit is required to remove vegetation under any other provision of the planning scheme (e.g. Clause 52.17: Native Vegetation Protection Overlay, Environmental Significance Overlay or the like). Specifically, the exemptions override all other planning permit triggers, meaning that Council does not have the power to prevent the removal of vegetation covered by the exemptions.

This Neighbourhood Character Strategy does not have the capacity to influence, alter or change the exemptions that are specified under Clause 52.12.

Analysis undertaken as apart of this Strategy has highlighted the community's concern about mass vegetation removal and the associated impact on the valued bushy character of localities. Part of this concern may arise from a question of whether any property owners are taking advantage of bushfire exemptions to maximise development yield, rather than simply to mitigate a genuine bushfire risk.



33 Densely vegetated rural road - Yarrambat

Bushfire Management

Legend

- Nillumbik municipal boundary
- Road network
- Study Area
- Bushfire Prone Area (BPA)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

MURRINDINDI
SHIRE COUNCIL

CITY OF
WHITTLESEA

St Andrews

Yarrambat

Hurstbridge

Panton Hill

Plenty

Wattle Glen

Diamond Creek

Greensborough

Eltham North

Research

Eltham

North Warrandyte

YARRA RANGES
SHIRE

CITY OF
BANYULE

CITY OF
MANNINGHAM

0 2.5 5km



6.0 Draft Neighbourhood Character Areas

This section outlines the draft neighbourhood character areas identified within Nillumbik Shire as part of the desktop analysis and site surveys undertaken for this Strategy.






These draft neighbourhood character areas also reflect the key values identified through initial community consultation undertaken in April and May 2022.

The draft character areas will replace the character areas identified as part of Nillumbik Shire's previous Neighbourhood Character Study and Design Guidelines (amended in 2003).




The table below provides an overview of the draft character areas identified by this Strategy and also demonstrates the key differences between each character type/area.

Map 35 depicts the draft character areas based on the criteria outlined in the table.

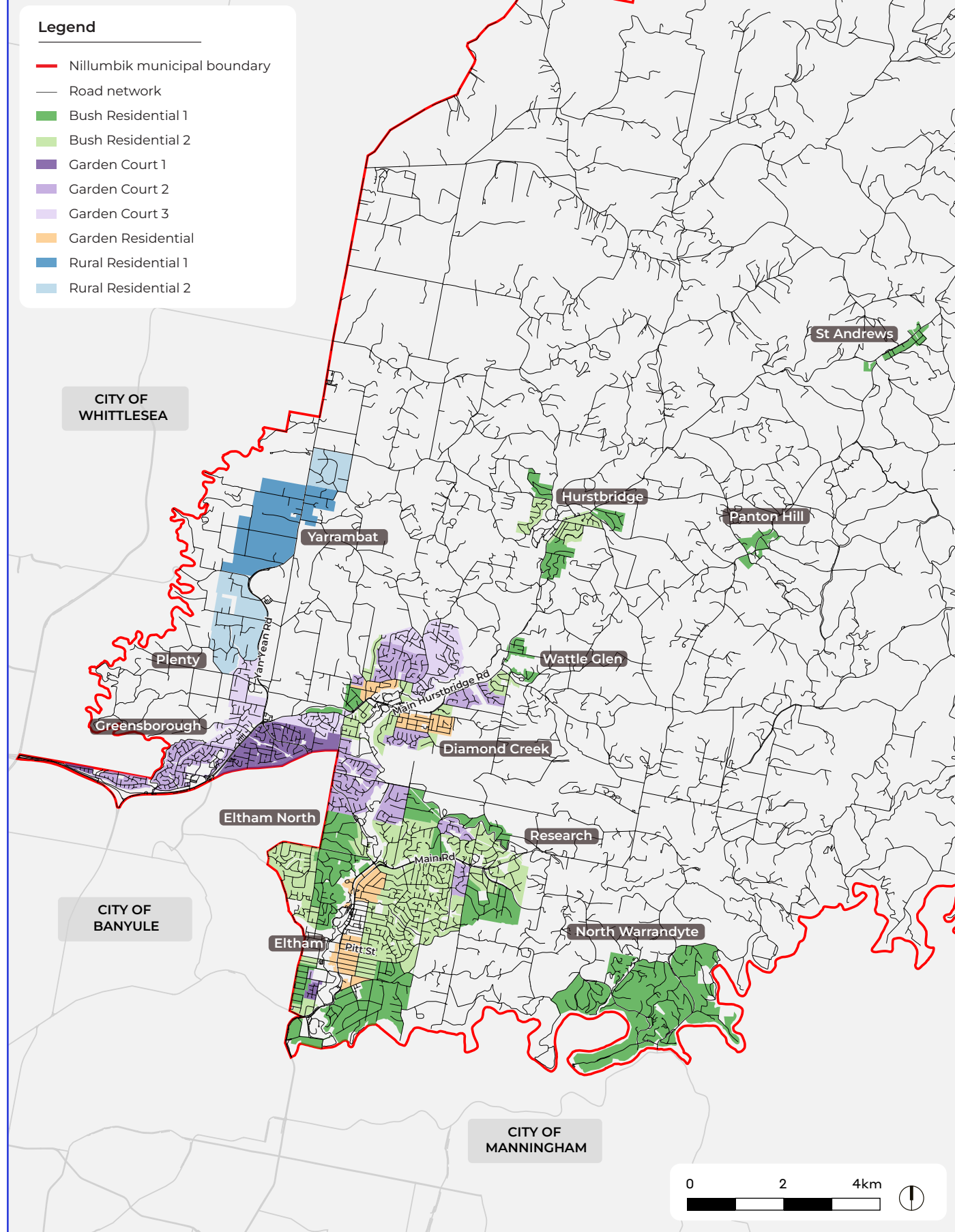
Summary of Draft Neighbourhood Character Areas

Bush Residential		
Defined by heavily vegetated residential areas generally consistently sited dwellings in a bush setting and sometimes informal street pattern; generally modified grid and curvilinear style streets.		
Bush Residential 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mix of post-war, modern and contemporary dwellings - Predominantly gable roof forms - High levels of native vegetation, screening dwellings from view - Presence of unsealed, dirt or gravel roads - Often no footpaths on either side of road 	Bush Residential 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predominantly post-war and modern dwellings - Mix of gable, hipped and flat roof forms - Formally landscaped gardens - Predominantly sealed, asphalt streets - Typically footpaths on at least one side of road 	
		
Garden Court		
Features spacious residential areas with sometimes informally sited dwellings in a garden setting and curvilinear street layout (courts / cul-de-sac), with a mix of flat and undulating topography.		
Garden Court 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern and contemporary dwellings - Low to medium levels of vegetation - Predominantly flat topography 	Garden Court 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predominantly modern dwellings - Medium to high levels of vegetation - Sloping to steep topography 	Garden Court 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contemporary dwellings - Low levels of vegetation - Sloping to steep topography
		

Summary of Draft Neighbourhood Character Areas

Garden Residential	
<p>Characterised by spacious residential areas with consistently sited dwellings in a garden setting and gridded street layout. Dwellings have typically been developed in the post-war era, interspersed by modern dwelling types and an increasing prevalence of contemporary infill development.</p>	
	
Rural Residential	
<p>Typically consists of contemporary and modern dwellings on large residential lots, set within semi-rural areas of the Shire. Dwellings feature large footprints and are often inconsistently sited on curvilinear street patterns.</p>	
<p>Rural Residential 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal streetscapes - Densely vegetated public realm - Significant front setbacks 	<p>Rural Residential 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sealed, asphalt streets - Low levels of vegetation - Formal gardens, expansive lawns
	

Draft Neighbourhood Character Areas



Note: A series of zoomed in locality maps are provided in the Appendix.

35 Identified Draft Neighbourhood Character Areas

7.0 Neighbourhood Character Precinct Profiles

7.1 What is preferred neighbourhood character?

As outlined in Planning Practice Note 90, under clause 54 and clause 55, *new development should respect the existing neighbourhood character or contribute to a preferred neighbourhood character.*

Preferred neighbourhood character is either:

- *the existing character of an area; or*
- *an identified future neighbourhood character different from the existing character of an area.*

Where the existing neighbourhood character is the preferred neighbourhood character, it is important to identify the existing features and characteristics of the area to be respected.

A preferred neighbourhood character statement can articulate the valued features and characteristics of an area to be respected by new development. There is no prescribed format for a preferred neighbourhood character statement. Its form will depend on several factors including the features and characteristics of an area or municipality, the housing outcomes sought, and the views of the local community.

It is important that preferred neighbourhood character statements are 'forward-looking' so that if an area is identified for increased housing growth, the growth is not undermined by neighbourhood character policies that seek to maintain the existing neighbourhood character.



36 Dwelling with densely vegetated garden areas - Diamond Creek

7.2 How to read the Character Precinct Profiles

Neighbourhood character precinct profiles have been prepared for each neighbourhood character area identified within Nillumbik Shire. Each profile provides a summary of character area with associated character objectives and design guidelines to provide guidance to future development, ensuring that it reflects the preferred character as best as possible.

The profiles are intended to replace the character areas identified as part of Nillumbik Shire's previous Neighbourhood Character Study and Design Guidelines (amended in 2003).

The precinct profiles include:










- Character Description;
- A Character Area map;
- A summary of key character attributes
- Preferred Character Statement;
- Preferred Character Objectives;
- Design Guidelines; and
- Photos

Neighbourhood Character Objectives and Design Guidelines

The purpose of the character objectives and design guidelines is to provide clear direction and guidance on built form outcomes based on preferred neighbourhood character outcomes.

In alignment with Planning Practice Note 91, the Preferred Character Statement directly informs the five design objectives per character area, which can be specified in a schedule to a residential zone to implement the preferred neighbourhood character.

Effective design guidelines should be used as a basis for Council planners when assessing planning applications. Design guidelines that are to be translated into a zone schedule, to vary ResCode standards, should be enhanced by including specific details of the schedule changes (i.e. permeability, site coverage, front and side setbacks).

Character Attributes	
	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Era of buildings • Existing building quality • Scale of existing development • Dominant residential form • Dominant residential typology
	Building Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary materials
	Building Heights
	Roof Styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roof form • Roof material
	Garages and Carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominance of parking structures
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front setback • Side setback • Consistency of setbacks
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front fence height • Front fence type
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private landscaping • Private garden type
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public landscaping • Street tree types • Footpath presence • Road layout • Road surface • Views • Topography

7.3 Bush Residential 1

Character Description

The Bush Residential 1 precinct is characterised by informal streetscapes and dense vegetation in both the public and private realms. Dwellings are predominantly Modern and Contemporary in their design, with occasional examples of Post-war architecture. Material finishes consist of muted tones and colours that fit within the landscape setting and dwellings are constructed in varied materials, including mudbrick.

Significant setbacks from the street level contribute to the heavily vegetated character of the area, affording ample space for the retention and planting of indigenous, native and some non-native vegetation. Dwellings are sited within lots that are also heavily vegetated with native, established gardens that appear visually unified with significant indigenous tree canopy and Australian native vegetation in the public realm. Dwellings are often obscured from view at street level due to the density of the planting. Low, transparent front fences often constructed of post and wire materials delineate the boundary between the private and public realms.

Road and vehicle crossovers are generally unsealed, with swale drains and often no footpaths. Typically roads are narrower than standard roads.



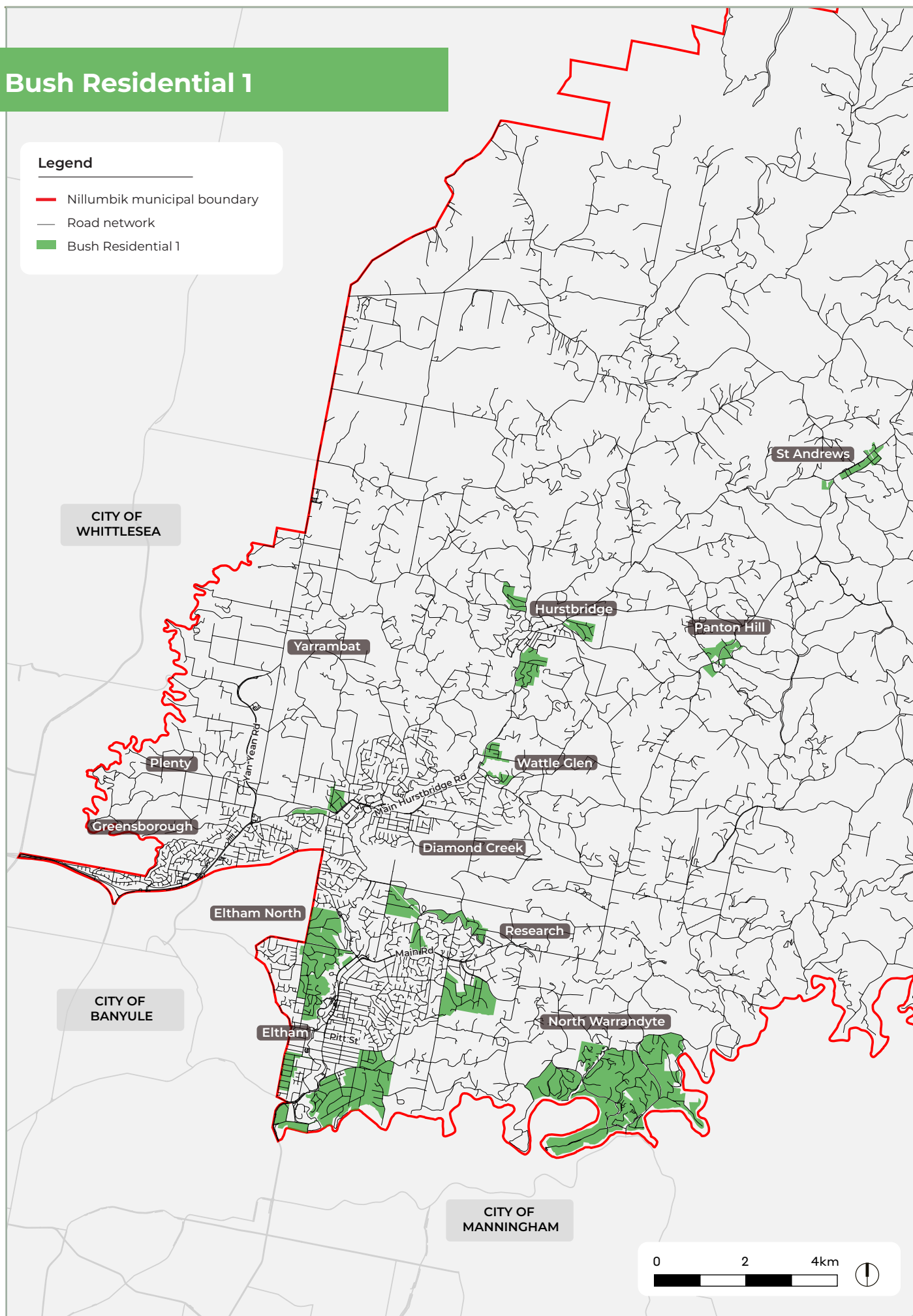
Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of Post-war, Modern and Contemporary era styles, reflective of varying building styles and material finishes. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of balconies, porch entrances, windows and doorways.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick or render, and other contemporary materials.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 storey dwellings.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly gable fronted roof styles, constructed of metal.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is often located behind the facade of the dwelling or constructed on the side boundary. Long, steep driveways that are typically unsealed.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent siting and orientation of dwellings. Front setbacks are generous, in excess of 9m. Dwellings are separated by spacious side setbacks, in excess of 4m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of no or low and transparent front fencing up to 1m and often constructed of post and wire.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of vegetation, specifically indigenous, native and some non-native species, including remnant trees that visually unite the public and private realms and often screen dwellings from view.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets have a modified grid layout, with curved roadways with cul-de-sacs. Informal street planting characterised by high levels of native remnant trees. Informal streetscapes typically with no footpaths and narrow unsealed roads and vehicle crossovers, with the surface consisting of gravel or dirt. Drainage usually consist of trenches or swales, with individual water pipes located under driveways. Undulating to sloping topography.

Bush Residential 1

Legend

- Nillumbik municipal boundary
- Road network
- Bush Residential 1



Preferred Character Statement

Streetscapes are dominated by large indigenous and native canopy trees with supporting undergrowth. Dwellings are sited to sit within the undulating landscape and to integrate with the informal style of the indigenous and native vegetation which flourishes in a spacious bushy setting.

View corridors to the Yarra River, the Diamond Creek, the Watsons Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and significant canopy trees are retained. Often formalised footpaths are not present. Mostly roads are unsealed and wind informally through the trees with minimal delineation between public and private realms.

New development positively responds to the predominantly low scale, one to two storey dwellings, using consistent natural, earthy 'coloured' materials and simple building forms to fit within the heavily vegetated setting.

Generous front and side setbacks provide for generous indigenous and native vegetation which embrace remnant trees, and screen dwellings from view.

Garages and carports are hidden from view, often located behind the line of the front dwelling façade and are integrated with the design of the dwelling.

Absent, low or transparent, front fencing contributes to the bushy and informal transition between public and private realms.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development reflects the preferred built form, characterised by predominantly 1-2 storey dwellings with varied architectural style that utilises natural materials with muted tones and 'earth' colours to fit within the heavily vegetated landscape.
2. To maintain and enhance views corridors to the Yarra River, the Diamond Creek, the Watsons Creek, elevated ridgelines, and the vistas, streetscapes, and backdrops of the precinct, characterised by large native canopy trees and lush understoreys of shrubs and grasses.
3. To ensure new development sits within the existing indigenous and native tree canopy, minimising the dominance of car parking access and structures.
4. To maintain and strengthen the spaciousness and bush setting surrounding dwellings, minimising disruption to existing indigenous and native tree and plant species.
5. To retain the bushy informal transition of public and private realms, characterised by absent or permeable low front fences.



North Warrandyte



Eltham



Panton Hill



St Andrews

Design Guidelines - Bush Residential 1

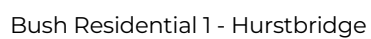
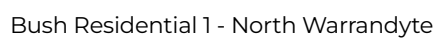
Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should complement the 1-2 storey building height and simple building forms of existing dwellings. • Buildings should not penetrate the indigenous tree canopy, where a canopy is present. • Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site. • New buildings at or near ridgelines should be designed and sited below the height of trees along the ridgeline. • Complement the building forms, natural materials such as mudbrick, earthy colour palette and siting of existing dwellings and articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of setbacks, recesses and windows. • Buildings should provide a pitched roof with prominent eaves.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings should be set back a minimum of 4m from one side boundary to enable the planting of indigenous trees and understorey planting. • If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of indigenous/native trees and understorey vegetation. • Buildings should be sited to take into account the sharing of views corridors to the Diamond Creek, the Watsons Creek, the Yarra River, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and canopy trees.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain existing indigenous and native canopy trees and understorey vegetation and replant wherever possible. If this cannot be achieved, or a tree is considered appropriate for removal, the site should provide adequate space for offset planting of native trees that will grow to a mature height similar to the mature height of the tree to be removed. • Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that utilise appropriate native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>. • Provide significant indigenous and native canopy trees occurring at a density of one to every 50-100m² across the site. • The site area covered by buildings should not exceed 40 per cent. • Provide at least 40% of the site as permeable surface.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling. • Minimise paving in front yards, including the driveway. • Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage. • Limit the width of vehicle accessways and minimise hard paving within the front setback. • Provide landscaping and plantings to soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence. • A front fence within 3 metres of a street should provide no or a low, open style up to 1.2m in height.

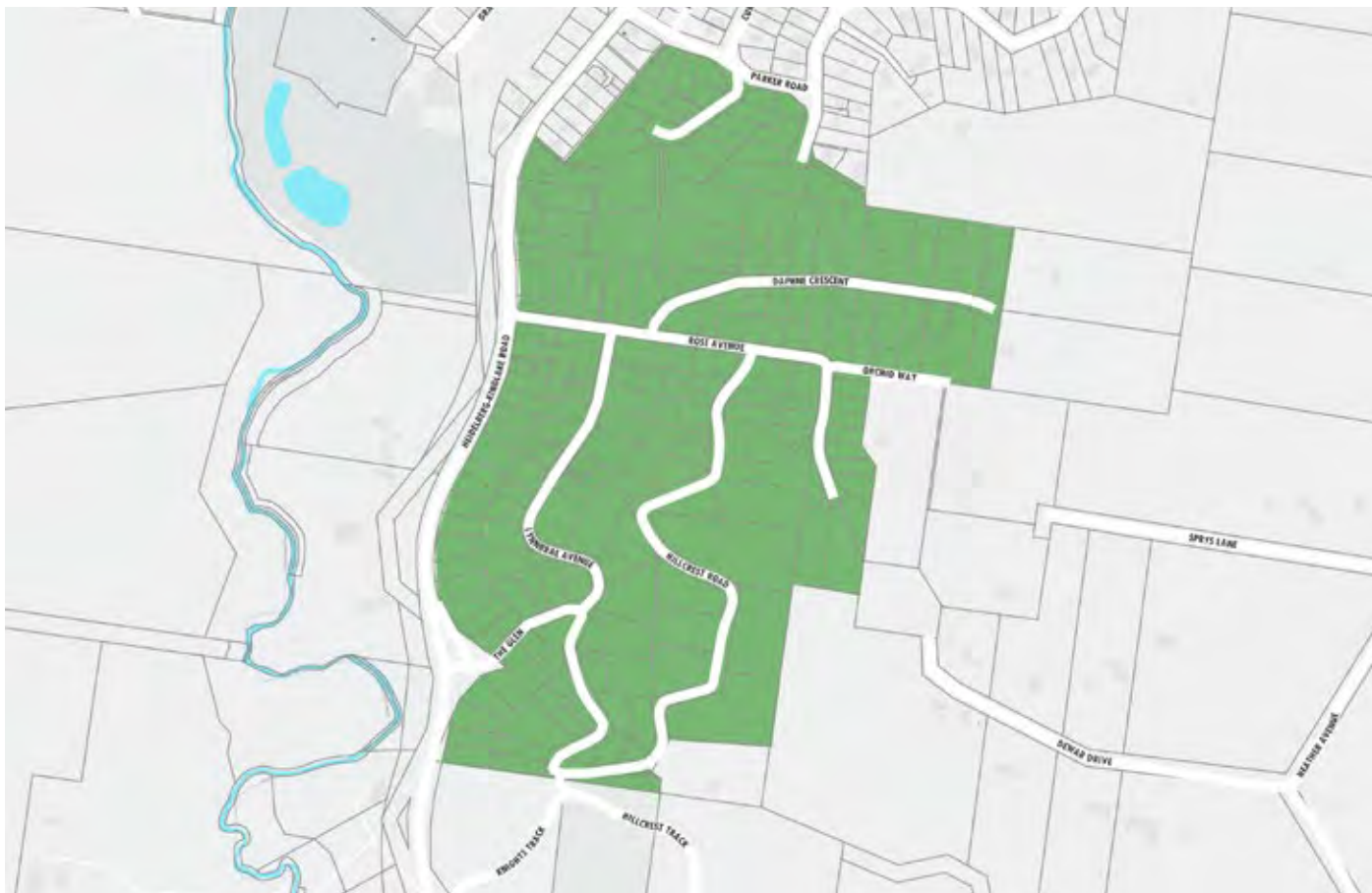


Bush Residential 1 - Diamond Creek



Bush Residential 1 - Wattle Glen

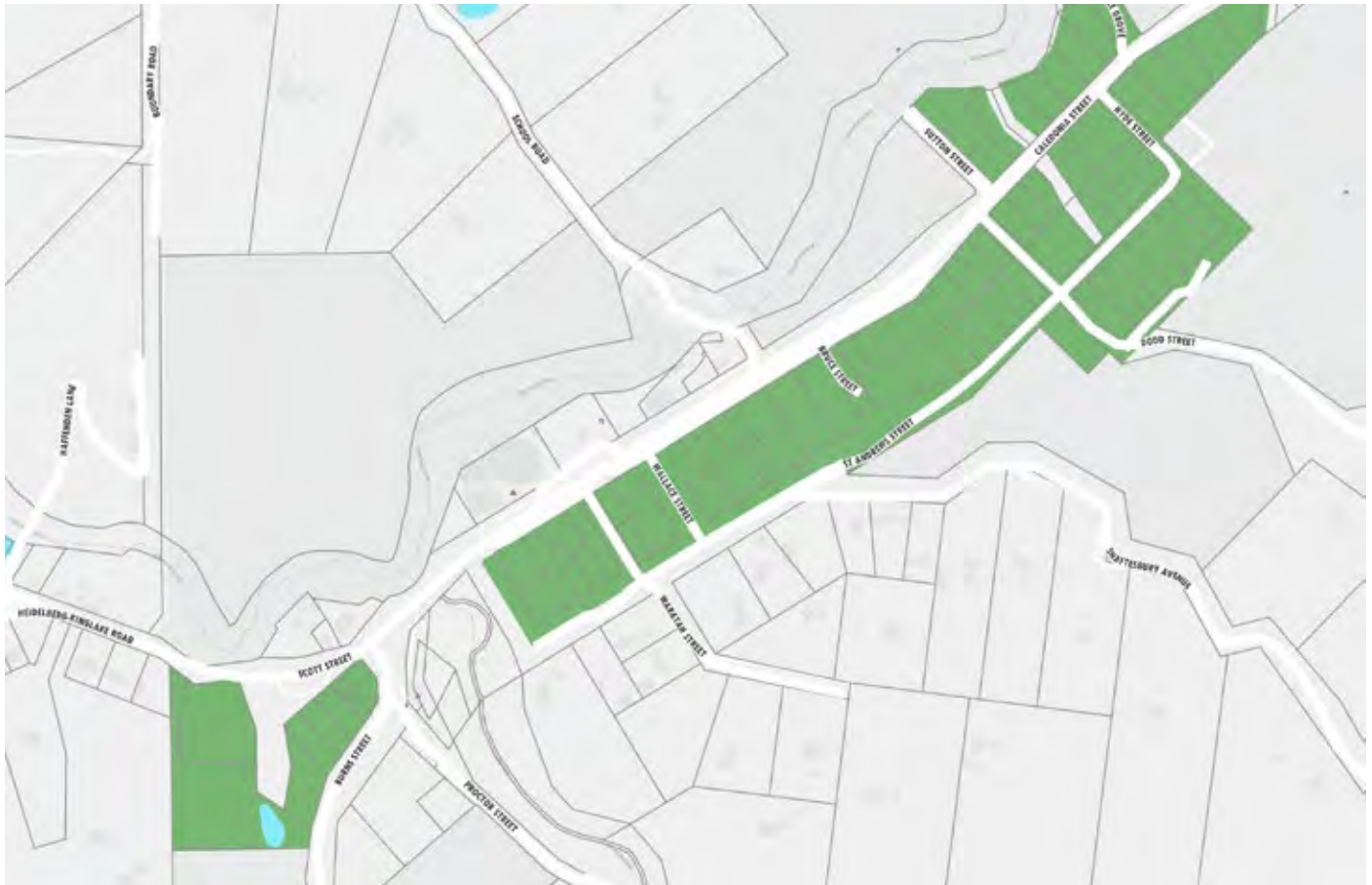




Bush Residential 1 - Hurstbridge



Bush Residential 1 - Hurstbridge



Bush Residential 1 - St Andrews



Bush Residential 1 - Panton Hill



Bush Residential 1 - Research



Bush Residential 1 - Eltham





Bush Residential 1 - Eltham/Research

7.4 Bush Residential 2

Character Description

The Bush Residential 2 precinct is characterised by formal streetscapes and densely vegetated, landscaped dwellings. The architectural style of dwellings in this precinct includes a mix of Post-war and Modern styles predominantly constructed of brick with gabled roof forms. Dwellings are detached and feature generous front and side setbacks. Dwellings are often obscured from view at street level due to the density of native and indigenous tree canopy and planting.

Dwellings are set within heavily vegetated lots, featuring a mix of native and non-native vegetation that often responds to the slope of the land. Private gardens feature mulched areas retained by timber walls, natural stone walls or boulders. A lack of front fencing is notable and creates an openness to the streetscape.

Another distinguishing characteristic of this precinct is the formal road network, consisting of sealed roads and vehicle crossovers, drainage infrastructure and a single-sided footpath in some areas. The road layout follows a curving street pattern through the undulating landscape. Road cross-sections vary between narrow and standard.












Eltham North

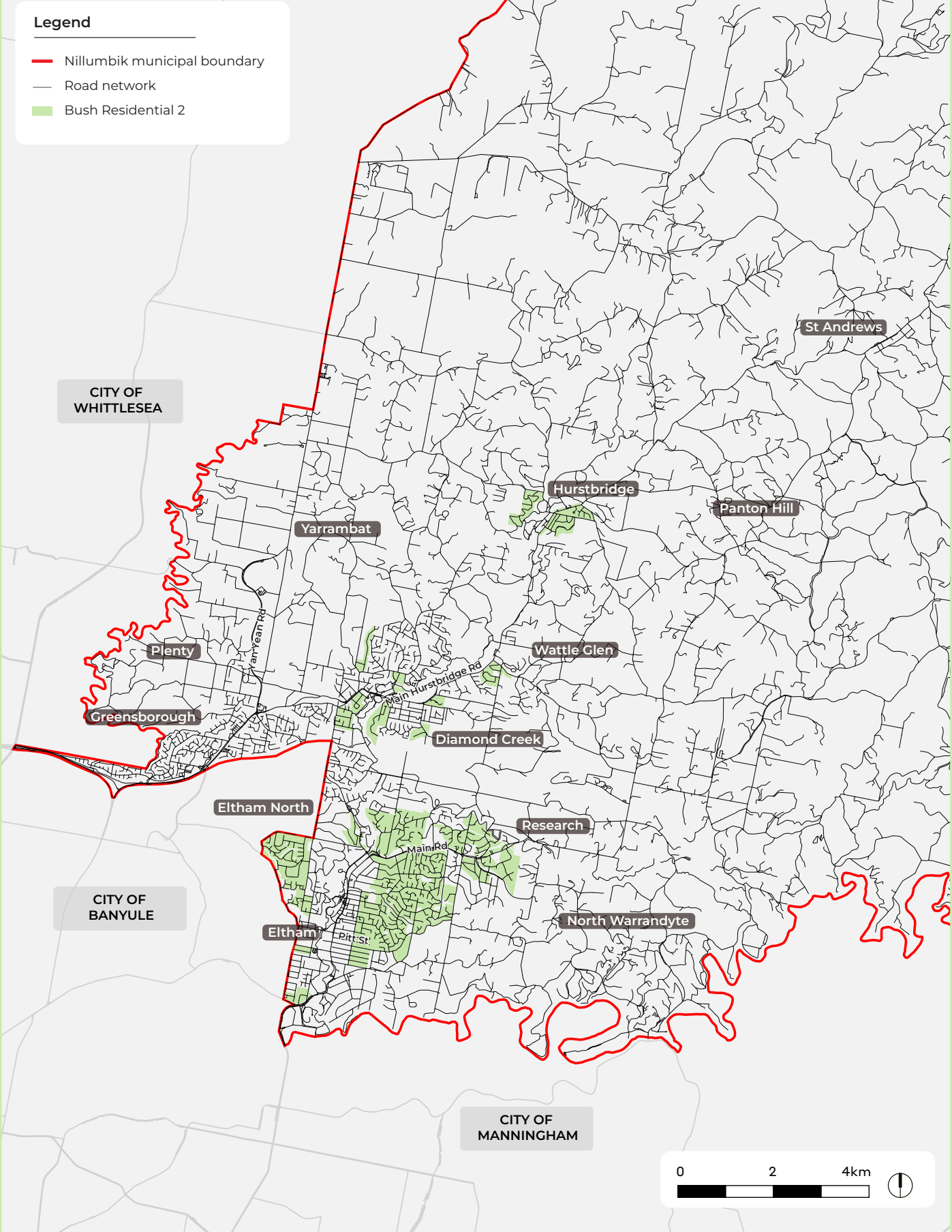


Hurstbridge

Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of Post-war and Modern era styles with an occasional Contemporary development. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of balconies, porch entrances, windows and doorways. Roof forms are generally gabled and flat in contemporary developments.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick or render, and other contemporary materials.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 storey dwellings.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of low and high pitched (gable or hip) or flat roofs constructed of metal or tile.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is often located behind the facade of the dwelling or constructed on the side boundary.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent siting and orientation of dwellings. Front setbacks are generous ranging between 7m to 9m and occasionally in excess of 9m. Dwellings are separated by spacious side setbacks, in excess of 4m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low, transparent front fencing up to 1m.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally landscaped gardens, comprising a mix of native and non-native plants, and remnant indigenous trees.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets have a modified grid layout, with curved roadways with cul-de-sacs. Formal streets comprising sealed asphalt and a single concrete footpaths in some areas. Drainage usually consists of concrete rollover kerbs. Undulating to sloping topography.

Bush Residential 2



Preferred Character Statement

Large indigenous and native canopy trees and understorey planting in the public and private realm, combined with the undulating topography, ensures that dwellings do not visually dominate the streetscape, enhancing the bushy vistas, streetscapes and backdrops of the precinct.

View corridors through to the Diamond Creek, the Watsons Creek, the Yarra River, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and canopy trees are retained.

Dwellings sit within bushy garden settings featuring timber walls, natural stone walls or boulders.

New development positively responds to the predominantly low scale, one to two storey dwellings, using consistent materials and simple building forms.

Garages and carports are often located behind the line of the front dwelling façade and are unobtrusive and integrated with the design of the dwelling.

Absent, low or transparent, front fencing contributes to the bushy and informal transition between public and private realms.

Mostly sealed roads wind through the undulating landscape and are dominated by substantial indigenous and native trees, with a presence of footpaths on one side the street.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development reflects the preferred built form, characterised by predominantly 1-2 storey dwellings with varied architectural style including simple building forms and low-pitched roofs with prominent eaves.
2. To ensure new development reflects the existing neutral colour palette of natural materials.
3. To ensure new development sits within the existing indigenous and native tree canopy and enhances the bushy vistas, streetscapes and backdrops of the precinct.
4. To maintain and reinforce the predominant rhythm of dwelling spacing within the streetscape, characterised by intermittent views of the Diamond Creek, the Watsons Creek, the Yarra River, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and canopy trees afforded by undulating topography and spacious setbacks that enable substantial planting between each dwelling and the street.
5. To retain and reinforce the spaciousness and bushy setting of the streetscape, characterised by no or low, permeable front fences with views to front garden areas.



Wattle Glen



Eltham North



Hurstbridge



Diamond Creek

Design Guidelines - Bush Residential 2

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development should complement the 1-2 storey building height and simple building forms of existing dwellings. Buildings should not penetrate the native and/or indigenous tree canopy, where a canopy is present. Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site. New buildings at or near ridgelines should be designed and sited below the height of trees along the ridgeline. Complement the building forms, natural materials, muted colour palette and siting of existing dwellings and articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of setbacks, recesses and windows. Buildings should provide a pitched roof with prominent eaves.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings should be set back a minimum of 4m from one side boundary to enable the planting of indigenous and native trees and understorey planting. If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of medium indigenous/native trees and understorey vegetation. Buildings should be sited to take into account the sharing of views corridors to the Diamond Creek, the Watsons Creek, the Yarra River, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and canopy trees.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing indigenous and native canopy trees and understorey vegetation and replant wherever possible. If this cannot be achieved, or a tree is considered appropriate for removal, the site should provide adequate space for offset planting of native trees that will grow to a mature height similar to the mature height of the tree to be removed. Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that utilise appropriate native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>. Provide large indigenous and native canopy trees occurring at a density of one to every 100m² across the site. The site area covered by buildings should not exceed 40 per cent. Provide at least 40% of the site as permeable surface.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling. Minimise paving in front yards, including the driveway. Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage. Where a side by side development occurs, space the vehicle crossovers to retain the existing rhythm of the street. Provide landscaping and plantings to the soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence. A front fence within 3 metres of a street should provide no or a low, open style up to 1.2m in height.

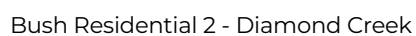
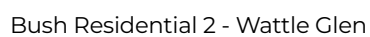
Zoom in Maps

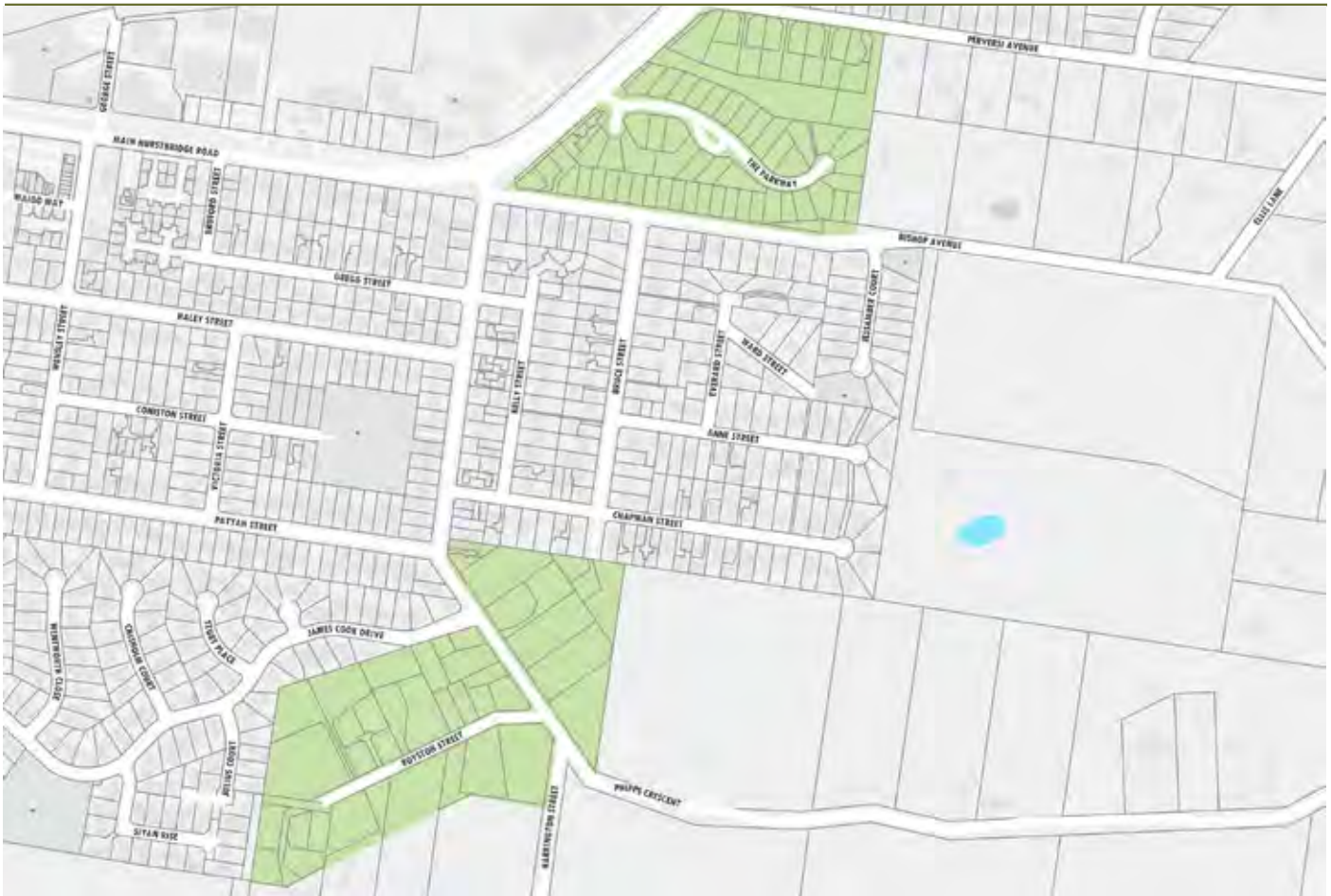


Bush Residential 2 - Hurstbridge



Bush Residential 2 - Diamond Creek





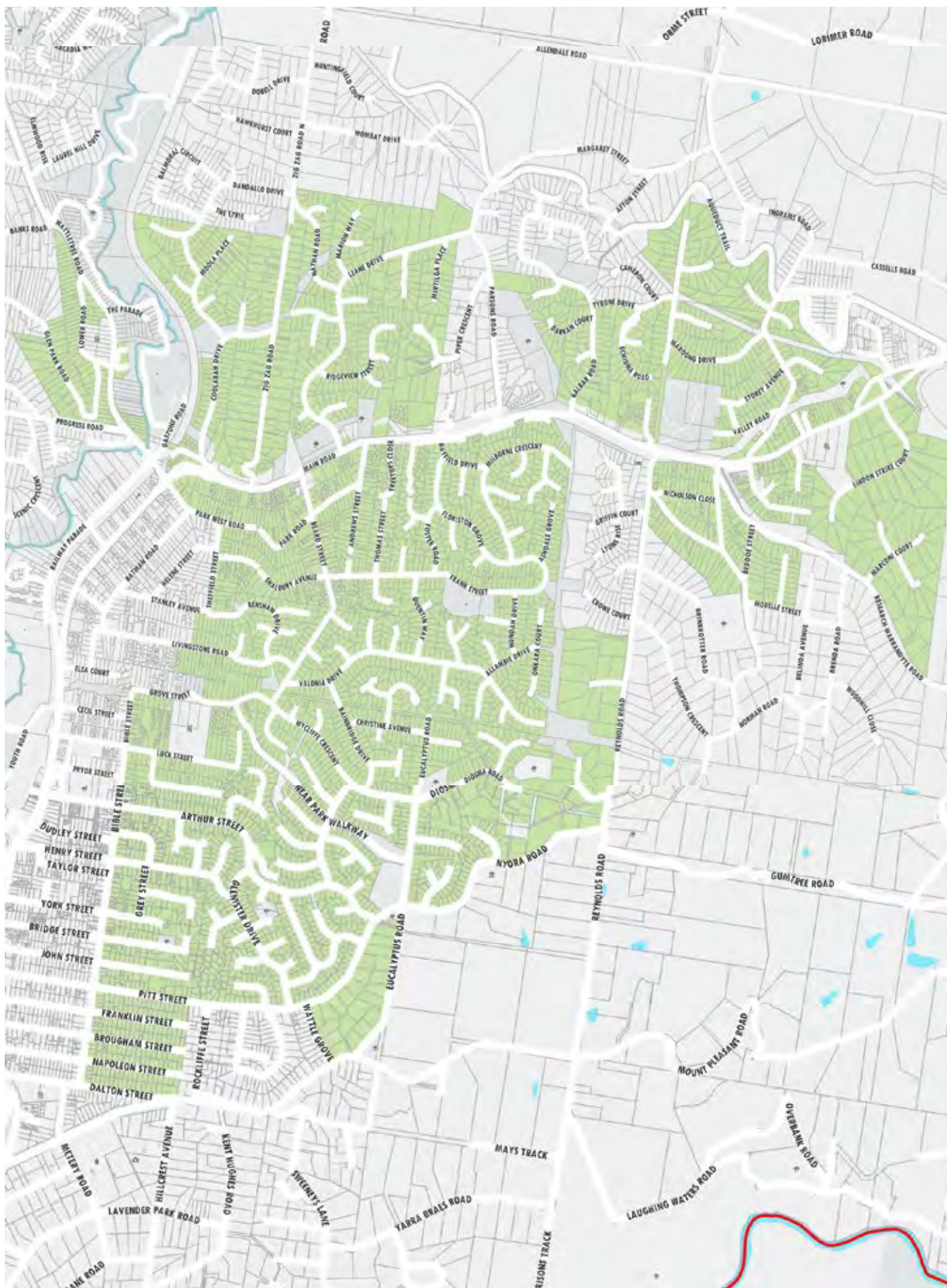
Bush Residential 2 - Diamond Creek



Bush Residential 2 - Eltham



Bush Residential 2 - Eltham / Eltham North



7.5 Garden Court 1

Character Description

The Garden Court 1 precinct comprises a mix of Modern and Contemporary era building styles. Buildings are generally constructed from brick and have predominantly pitched, tiled roofs. Dwellings are detached, and range between single double storey developments.

Regular and spacious front and side setbacks create a sense of openness in the streetscape. Low or no front fencing allow views to the buildings and front garden spaces. A key characteristic of this precinct is the low-level and formal front gardens, comprising native and non-native species and lawns.

The public realm is characterised by low to medium levels of vegetation, consisting often of grassed nature strips and low level indigenous trees. The lack of front fencing is notable and allows for the blending of vegetation between the public and private realm.

The streetscape is attributed to a curvilinear subdivision pattern comprising winding streets and court bowls. Roads typically have a wider cross section. Footpaths are generally located on one side of the street and rollover kerbs are common throughout.



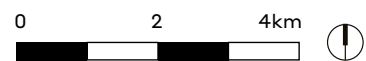
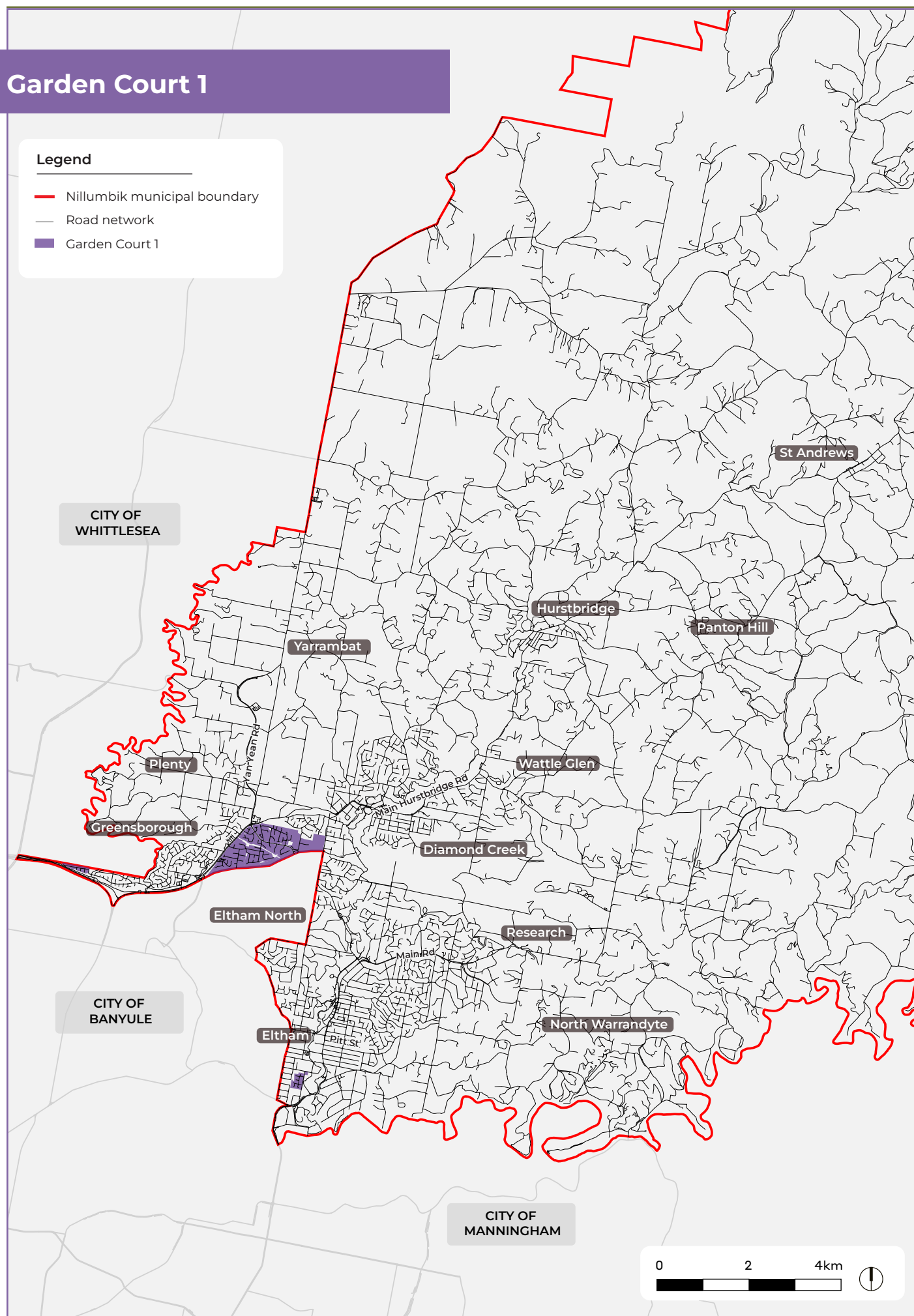
Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly Modern and Contemporary era styles constructed in the 1980s and early 2000s. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of porches, recesses, windows and doorways. Building and roof forms are consistent.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick and occasional rendered finish.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 storey single dwellings.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly hipped, tiled roofs.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is frequently constructed on the side boundary or in line with the front facade.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are oriented parallel to address the street. Consistent setbacks across old and new developments between 3m to 6m. Side setbacks range from 1 to 3m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A predominant absence of front fences. Where a fence is provided it is typically low and solid front fencing, up to 1m in height and constructed of brick.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low to medium level vegetation, formal front gardens with non-native species.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets are wide and follow a curvilinear, court-based, street pattern with nature strips and rollover kerbs. Footpaths are not always present on both sides of the street. Lower levels of vegetation with young trees planted on nature strips. Grassy nature strips is a common sight.

Garden Court 1

Legend

- Nillumbik municipal boundary
- Road network
- Garden Court 1



Preferred Character Statement

New development sits within a formal landscape setting and responds to the predominantly low scale, one to two storey dwellings, using consistent materials and simple building forms with low pitched roofs and eaves.

Regular and spacious front setbacks provide space for native plants and canopy trees and understorey vegetation, to mature and reinforce the landscaped setting. Low level and formal front gardens, comprising native plantings, flow uninterrupted into the public realm.

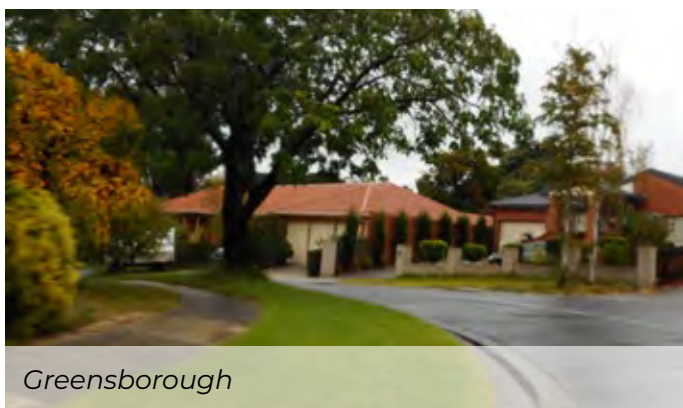
Garages and carports are often located to the side of the dwellings and are visually unobtrusive and compatible with the development.

Absent or low front fences facilitates the blending of vegetation between the public and private realm, and enable views through to dwellings and front garden areas.

Vistas around street bends and courts are characterised by public spaces featuring native plantings, with a presence of footpaths on either side of the street.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development positively responds to the preferred building materials and styles of the precinct, characterised by predominantly low-scale 1-2 storey dwellings with simple building forms and low-pitched roofs with prominent eaves.
2. To ensure new development follows the topography of the land and does not dominate the streetscape but minimises the dominance of car parking access and structures instead.
3. To provide spacious front setbacks, that retain the existing rhythm of spacing and allow for established front garden settings.
4. To maintain and strengthen the presence of established native vegetation, including canopy trees in the front and rear setbacks.
5. To retain the spaciousness of the streetscape, characterised by absent, or low, front fences with views to front garden areas.



Design Guidelines - Garden Court 1

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New development should complement the 1-2 storey building height, building forms and siting of existing dwellings.• Complement the building forms, materials, colour palette and siting of existing dwellings and articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of setbacks, recesses and windows.• Roofs should provide prominent eaves.• Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buildings should be set back a minimum of 1m from one side boundary and 2m from the other side boundary.• Storeys above ground level should be recessed to minimise impact on the streetscape.• Orient dwellings parallel to the street.• In the case of multi-dwellings on a lot, design the front dwelling to present as one dwelling to the street through the use of roof forms, materials and design detail.• If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of canopy trees and other native vegetation.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retain established canopy trees and other native vegetation and replant where possible.• Provide large canopy native trees occurring at a density of one to every 200-300m² across the site.• Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that utilise appropriate native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling.• Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage.• Limit the width of vehicle accessways and minimise hard paving within the front setback.• Where a side by side development occurs, space the vehicle crossovers to retain the existing rhythm of the street.• Provide landscaping and plantings to soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence.• A front fence within 3 metres of a street:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- should provide no or a low, open style of up to 0.8m in height or 0.5m in height if constructed in brick.- may be constructed up to 1.8m when located on a main road where they provide at least 25% permeability.





Garden Court 1 - Eltham

7.6 Garden Court 2

Character Description

The Garden Court 2 precinct comprises predominantly Modern era building styles, with an increasing prevalence of Contemporary infill development. Buildings are generally constructed from brick with pitched, tiled roofs. Dwellings are typically detached, single storey and double storey, with occasional three storey dwellings generally sited on steep hills.

Dwellings and front gardens are clearly visible from the street due to the lack of front fences. Private gardens feature medium to high levels of established native and non-native vegetation, which is generally formally planted and located within generous front setbacks. Landscaping and planting often responds to the slope of the land, with the presence of timber walls, natural stone walls or boulders in the private realm.

The public realm is characterised by a curvilinear street layout, sloping topography, and views to the Plenty River, the Diamond Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas, tree canopy and Metropolitan Melbourne. Roads typically have a wider cross section that contain nature strips with medium levels of vegetation, consisting often of grassed nature strips with substantial native and non-native canopy trees in some areas. Footpaths are generally located on one side of the street and drainage consists of both rollover kerbs and traditional kerb and channel layouts.












Greensborough



Eltham

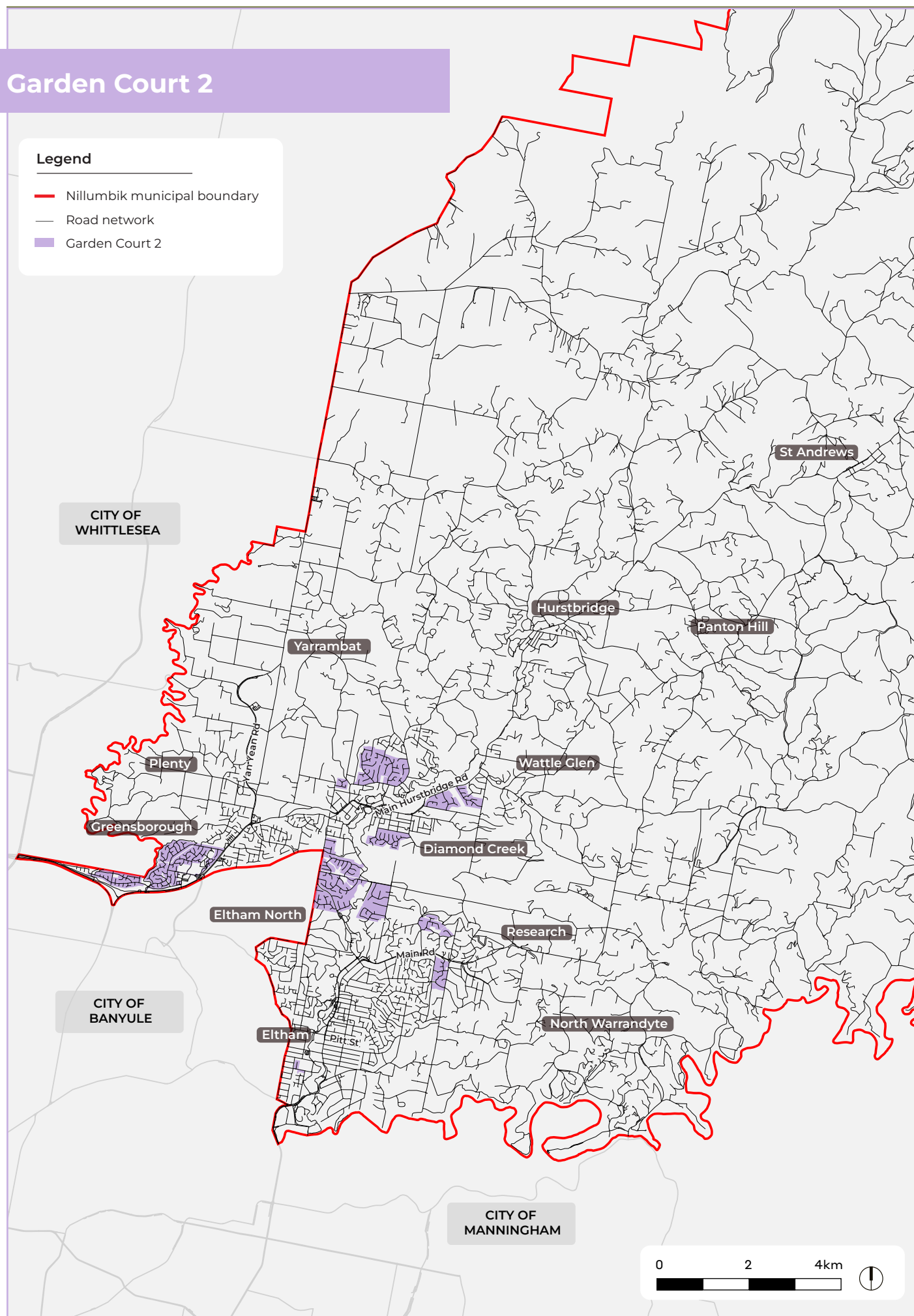
Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly Modern era styles constructed in the 1980s and early 2000s. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of porches, recesses, windows and doorways. Building and roof forms are consistent.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick and occasional rendered finish across Contemporary development.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly 1 to 2 storey dwellings and occasional 3 storey dwellings sited on steep topography.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly hipped, tiled roofs.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is frequently constructed on the side boundary or in line with the front facade. Parking structures and crossovers in the form of double car garages and large, steep driveways.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are oriented parallel to address the street. Varied setbacks ranging between 3m and 9m. Side setbacks range from 2m to 4m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A predominant absence of front fences. Where a fence is provided it is typically low and solid front fencing, up to 1m in height and constructed of brick.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium to high levels of vegetation, mix of formal and informal gardens with native and non-native species.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets are wide and follow a curvilinear, court-based, street pattern with wide nature strips and rollover kerbs. Footpaths not always present on both sides of the street. Some areas have substantial native and non-native canopy trees on nature strips. Sloping topography.

Garden Court 2

Legend

- Nillumbik municipal boundary
- Road network
- Garden Court 2



Preferred Character Statement

Streetscapes are dominated by a mix of indigenous and native canopy trees and vegetation. New development is nestled within sloping landforms and remnant vegetation and is consistent with the predominately low to medium scale built form, using consistent materials and simple building forms with low-pitched roofs and eaves.

Dwellings are visually obstructed and set behind indigenous tree canopy coverage and dense native vegetation. Spacious front and side setbacks provide for the continuation of established vegetation and understorey which responds to the slope of the land.

Garages and carports are often located to the side of the dwellings and are visually unobtrusive and compatible with the development.

Absent or low front fences enable views through to dwellings and lushly vegetated front garden areas which flow uninterrupted into the public realm.

Views to the Plenty River, the Diamond Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas, tree-canopy and Metropolitan Melbourne are retained.

Vistas around street bends and courts are characterised by nature strips featuring native vegetation and footpaths are on one side the street, enhancing the bushy garden character of the precinct.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development reflects the preferred built form and materials of the precinct, characterised by predominately low to medium scale dwellings with simple building forms and low-pitched roofs.
2. To maintain and strengthen the bushy garden setting of the precinct by providing spacious front and side setbacks to allow for private landscaping and mix of indigenous and native canopy trees.
3. To ensure new development does not dominate the streetscape but minimises the dominance of car parking access and structures instead.
4. To ensure new development provides reasonable sharing of public views to the Plenty River, the Diamond Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas, tree-canopy and Metropolitan Melbourne.
5. To retain the spaciousness of the streetscape, characterised by absent, or low, front fences with views to front garden areas which flow into the public realm.



Greensborough



Eltham



Diamond Creek



Diamond Creek

Design Guidelines - Garden Court 2

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should complement the low to medium scale building height, simple forms and siting of existing dwellings. • Complement the building forms, materials, colour palette and siting of existing dwellings and articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of setbacks, recesses and windows. • Roofs should provide prominent eaves. • Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set back dwellings at least 3m from one side boundary. • Storeys above ground level should be recessed to minimise impact on the streetscape. • Orient dwellings parallel to the street. • Provide at least 30% of the site as permeable surface. • In the case of multi-dwellings on a lot, design the front dwelling to present as one dwelling to the street through the use of roof forms, materials and design detail. • Buildings should be sited to take into account the sharing of views of vegetated areas, tree-canopy coverage, elevated ridgelines and Metropolitan Melbourne. • If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of native vegetation and understorey vegetation.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain remnant indigenous understorey vegetation and existing native vegetation and trees, where possible and replant where appropriate. • Provide high canopy indigenous and native trees occurring at a density of one to every 200m² across the site. • Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that utilise appropriate native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>. • The site area covered by buildings should not exceed 50 per cent.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling. • Where a side by side development occurs, space the vehicle crossovers to retain the existing rhythm of the street. • Minimise hard paving within the front setback. • Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage. • Provide landscaping and plantings to soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence. • A front fence within 3 metres of a street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – should provide no or a low, open style of up to 0.8m in height or 0.5m in height if constructed in brick. – may be constructed up to 1.8m when located on a main road where they provide at least 25% permeability.

The map displays the proposed boundaries for the new City of Waverley, which is highlighted in purple. The map includes numerous street names and geographical features. Key streets shown include the M1, M2, and M3 highways, as well as local roads like the M1, M2, and M3 highways. The map also shows the proposed boundaries for the new Council area, which is highlighted in purple. The map is titled 'City of Waverley' and 'City of Sydney'.

84 Draft Nillumbik Shire Neighbourhood Character Strategy





Garden Court 2 - Eltham

7.7 Garden Court 3

Character Description

The Garden Court 3 precinct comprises Contemporary building styles set within modern subdivisions layouts. Buildings are a mix of detached, single and double storey dwellings and are constructed from brick, render and other contemporary materials. Material finishes consist of muted tones and colours that fit within the landscape setting and roof forms vary. Dwellings are consistently setback from the front and side boundaries and a lack of front fencing creates an open streetscape. Formal garden settings are enhanced by a mix of native and non-native canopy trees, bushes, shrubs and garden beds.

A key characteristic is the intermittent views of surrounding landscapes and vegetation, afforded by curvilinear streets that respond to the undulating topography. Dwellings are often built to take advantage of the landscape, sited on steep hills or sinking below street level, with roof lines at eye level.

Planting in the public realm is generally low-level, with grassed nature strips being a common. Occasional remnant native canopy trees are planted on some streets. Footpaths are generally present and rollover kerbs are common throughout.



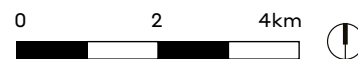
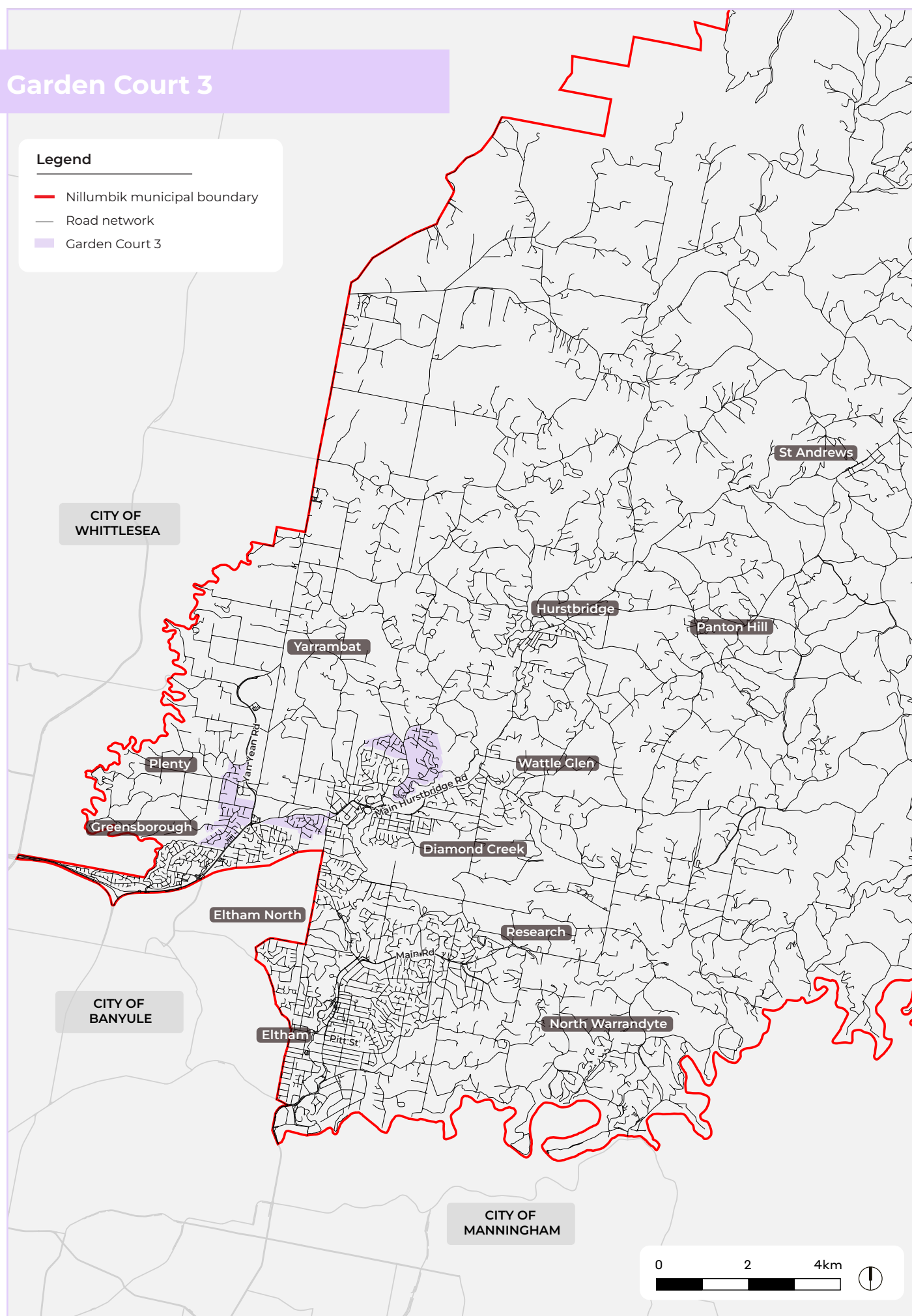
Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of Contemporary architectural styles developed from the 1990s to 2010s. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of recesses, balconies, porch entrances, windows and doorways.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick or render, and other contemporary materials that are muted in tone.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 storey dwellings.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of pitched (gable or hip) or flat roofs, constructed of steel or tile.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is frequently constructed in line with the dwelling facade.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are oriented parallel to address the street. Front setbacks are spacious, ranging from 4m to 9m. Side setbacks range from 2m to 4m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A predominant absence of front fences. Where fencing is present it is low and incorporates permeable elements or vegetation to soften the appearance.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low to medium levels of native and non-native vegetation.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets have a modified grid layout, with wide curved roadways with cul-de-sacs. Drainage consists of rollover kerbs. Footpaths not always present on both sides of the street. Street trees feature many native species, are large in scale and irregularly planted. Undulating to sloping topography.

Garden Court 3

Legend

- Nillumbik municipal boundary
- Road network
- Garden Court 3



Preferred Character Statement

New development is sited to take advantage of the views afforded by the undulating landscape and positively responds to the predominantly low scale, one to two storey dwellings, using consistent materials and simple building forms.

New development allows space for increased vegetation and planting of native canopy trees within the front and side setbacks, enhancing the garden setting.

Garages and carports are typically aligned with dwelling façades and are visually unobtrusive and compatible with the openness of streetscapes.

Absent or low front fences enable views through to dwellings and front garden areas, while intermittent views to the Plenty River, the Diamond Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and canopy trees are retained.

Vistas around street bends and courts are commonly characterised by grassed nature strips and intermittent remnant native canopy trees, with a presence of footpaths on either side of the street.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development positively responds to the preferred building materials and styles of the precinct, characterised by predominantly low-scale 1-2 storey dwellings with a Contemporary architectural style that utilises natural materials with muted tones and colours.
2. To encourage space for increased vegetation planting and native canopy trees within the private realm to enhance the garden setting of dwellings.
3. To provide for car parking which is in alignment with the dwelling façade and ensure parking does not dominate the streetscape.
4. To ensure new development provides reasonable sharing of views to the Plenty River, the Diamond Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and native canopy trees.
5. To retain the spaciousness of the streetscape, characterised by absent, low, permeable fences located within dwelling front setbacks.



Design Guidelines - Garden Court 3

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should complement the 1-2 storey building height, simple forms and siting of existing dwellings. • Complement the building forms, natural materials, muted colour palette and siting of existing dwellings and articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of setbacks, recesses and windows. • Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site. • Buildings should be designed to follow the contours of the site or step down the site.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set back dwellings at least 3m from one side boundary. • Storeys above ground level should be recessed to maintain the appearance of low scale street frontages when viewed from the street • Orient dwellings parallel to the street. • In the case of multi-dwellings on a lot, design the front dwelling to present as one dwelling to the street through the use of roof forms, materials and design detail. • Buildings should be sited to take into account the sharing of views corridors to the Plenty River, the Diamond Creek, elevated ridgelines, vegetated areas and canopy trees. • If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of canopy trees and other native vegetation.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain established or large canopy trees and other native vegetation where possible. • Provide high canopy native trees occurring at a density of one to every 200-300m² across the site. • Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that utilise appropriate native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling. • Where a side by side development occurs, space the vehicle crossovers to retain the existing rhythm of the street. • Limit the width of vehicle accessways and minimise hard paving within the front setback. • Paths in the front setback should be integrated with the driveway to maximise space for landscaping and planting. • Provide landscaping and plantings to the soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence. • A front fence within 3 metres of a street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - should provide no or a low, open style up to 0.8m in height. - may be constructed up to 1.8m when located on a main road where they provide at least 25% permeability.

Zoom in Maps



Garden Court 3 - Greensborough / Plenty / Diamond Creek



Garden Court 3 - Diamond Creek

7.8 Garden Residential

Character Description

The Garden Residential Precinct is characterised by spacious residential areas with consistently sited dwellings in a garden setting. Dwellings have typically been developed in the Post-war era, interspersed by Modern and an increasing prevalence of Contemporary infill development. Buildings are generally constructed of weatherboard and brick and have pitched roofs.

Regular front and side setbacks create a sense of openness in the streetscape. Dwellings and front gardens, comprising of native and non-native vegetation, are clearly visible from the street due to low level gardens and front fences.

Streets have a formal subdivision pattern with modified grid layouts, have a wide cross section which are complemented with paved footpaths on both sides of the street and kerb and channel throughout. Nature strips within this precinct generally contain low to medium levels of vegetation, consisting of grassed nature strips and intermittent indigenous and native canopy tree coverage.












Diamond Creek

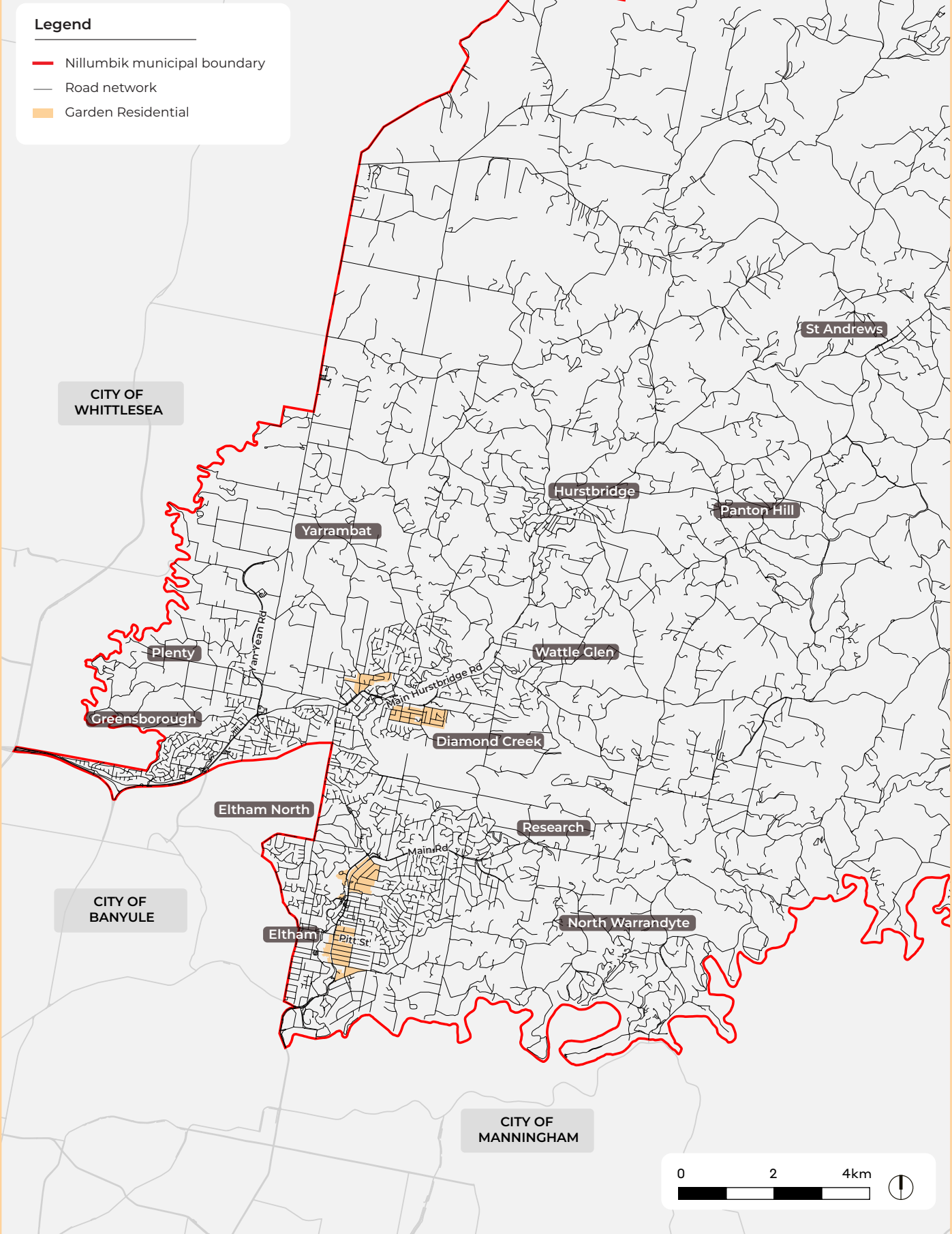


Eltham

Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of Postwar, Modern and Contemporary architectural styles constructed of brick or weatherboard. Buildings are generally detached with occasional semi-detached styles. Front façades are articulated with the use of recesses, balconies, porch entrances, windows and doorways.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly timber weatherboard or brick.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 storey dwellings.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of low and high pitched (gable or hip) constructed of metal or tile.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is mixed, located behind the facade of the dwelling or constructed on the side boundary.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings are oriented parallel to address the street. Front setbacks are spacious, ranging from 3m to 9m. Side setbacks range from 1m to 3m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low or transparent front fencing, up to 1m in height and constructed of materials suited to the building.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-maintained and low-level established planting, often featuring lawns and a mix of native and non-native planting.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets are wide and follow a formal grid layout with footpaths, nature strips and concrete kerbs and channels. Lower levels of vegetation with indigenous and native canopy trees planted on some nature strips. Grassy nature strips is a common sight. Flat to sloping topography.

Garden Residential



Preferred Character Statement

New development is sited within the landscape to allow for increased vegetation and native canopy coverage. Built form reflects the low scale dwellings, using simple building forms with neutral building materials sympathetic to the existing weatherboard and brick dwellings. Buildings are articulated with recesses, porch areas and large windows, to complement the architectural detailing of the older style dwellings.

Consistent front and site setbacks create a sense of openness in the streetscape. New development allows for space for increased vegetation planting and indigenous and native canopy trees, contributing to the garden character.

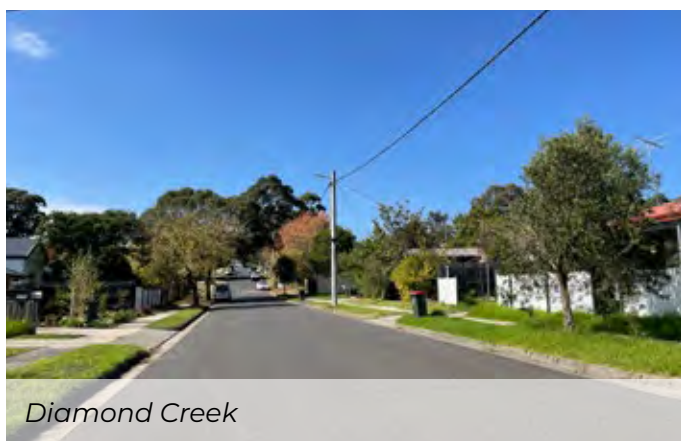
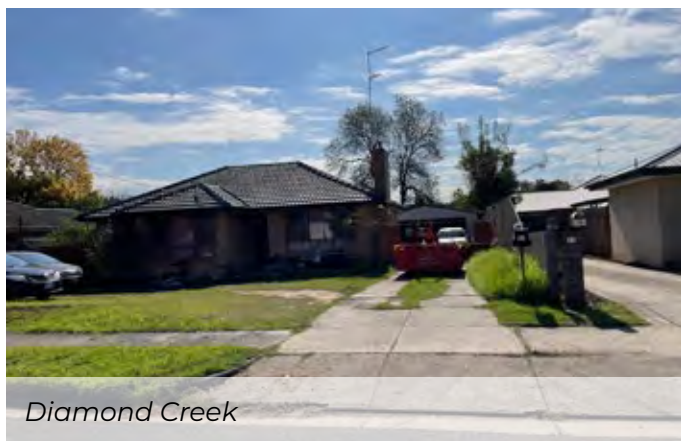
Garages and carports are often located to the side of the dwellings and are visually unobtrusive and compatible with the development.

A mix of low scale and permeable front fencing allows for views to dwellings and front garden areas.

Streetscapes are often characterised by public spaces featuring a mix of native and non-native plantings, with a presence of paved footpaths on either side of the street.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development reflects the preferred built form, characterised by predominately 1-2 storey dwellings with a mixture of architectural styles that utilise natural materials and simple building forms.
2. To maintain and reinforce the predominant building alignment along the street, characterised by setbacks that contribute to the sense of openness.
3. To encourage space for increased indigenous and native vegetation planting and canopy trees within the private realm, to strengthen the garden setting of dwellings and contribute to the enhancement of the public realm.
4. To ensure new development does not dominate the streetscape but minimises the dominance of car parking access and structures instead.
5. To maintain the openness of the streetscape, characterised by absent front fences.

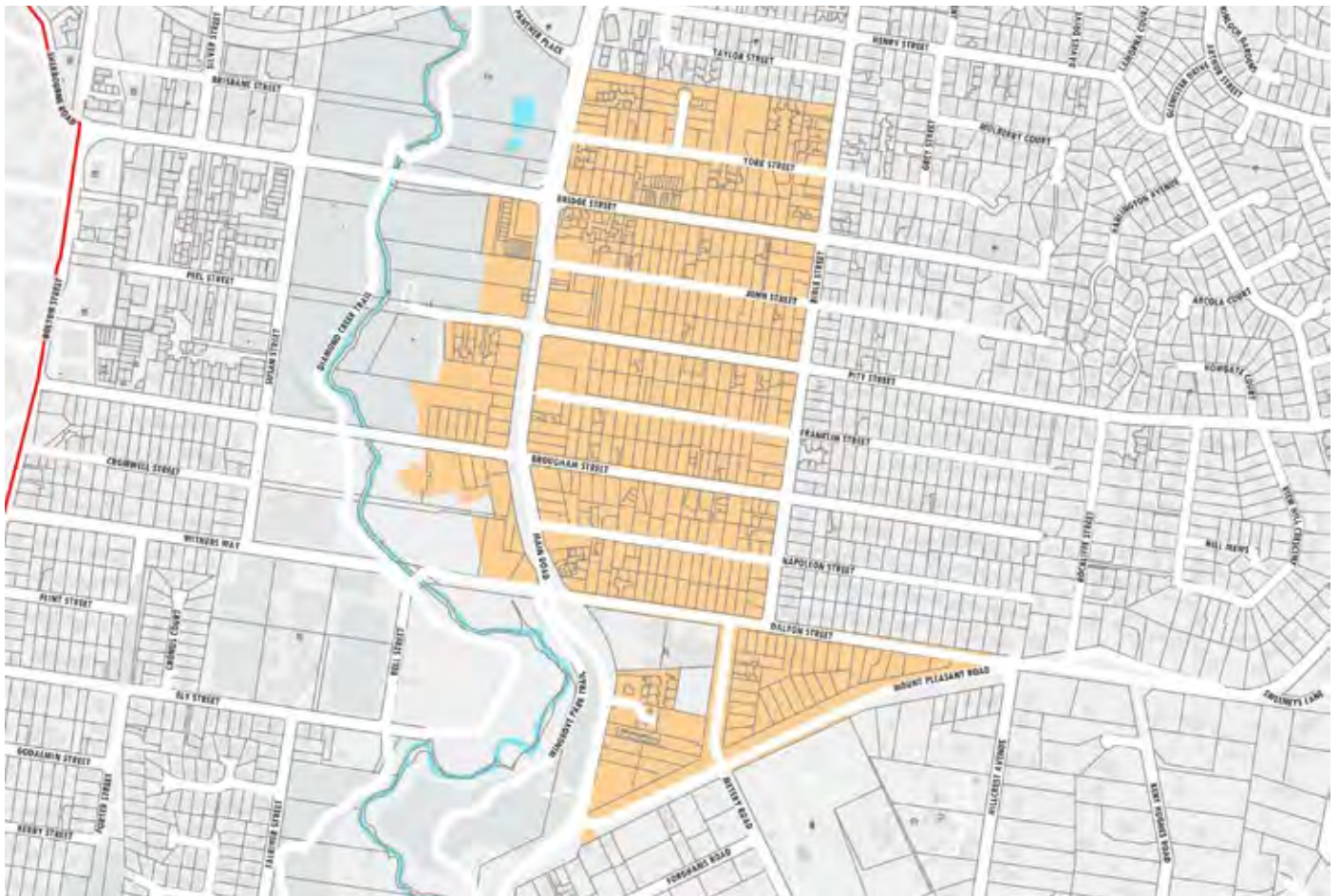


Design Guidelines - Garden Residential

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should complement the 1-2 storey building height of existing dwellings. • Complement the simple building forms, neutral materials such as brick and weatherboard, and the siting of older, original dwellings. • Articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of recesses, balconies, porch entrances, windows and doorways. • Use contemporary design details that do not mimic older architectural styles. • Buildings should provide a pitched roof with prominent eaves. • In cases where eaves are not provided, alternative techniques to articulate the dwelling should be introduced, which may include window shading, window shrouds, and other architectural features. • Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings should be set back a minimum of 1m from one side boundary and 2m from the other side boundary. • Incorporate upper level setbacks to maintain the appearance of low scale street frontages when viewed from the street. • Orient dwellings parallel to the street. • In the case of multi-dwellings on a lot, design the front dwelling to present as one dwelling to the street through the use of roof forms, materials and design detail. • If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of canopy trees and other vegetation.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that utilise appropriate native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>. • Retain indigenous and native canopy trees and other vegetation where possible. • Provide large canopy indigenous and/or native trees occurring at a density of one to every 200-300m² across the site.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling. • Where a side by side development occurs, space the vehicle crossovers to retain the existing rhythm of the street. • Limit the width of vehicle accessways and minimise hard paving within the front setback. • Paths in the front setback should be integrated with the driveway to maximise space for landscaping and planting. • Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage. • Provide landscaping and plantings to the soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence. • A front fence within 3 metres of a street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - should provide no or a low, visually permeable style up to 1m in height, in an appropriate style for the dwelling. - may be constructed up to 1.8m when located on a main road where they provide at least 25% permeability.

[illegible][illegible]

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Garden Residential - Eltham



Garden Residential - Diamond Creek

7.9 Rural Residential 1

Character Description

The Rural Residential 1 precinct is characterised by informal streetscapes and modern residential dwellings. Vegetation cover varies across the precinct, with dwellings set within either low or densely vegetated lots, comprising a mix of native and non-native species. Dwellings are generally single storey with large floor plates, and are constructed of brick and have hipped or pitched roofs.

The public realm is densely vegetated with native remnant trees. Significant front and side setbacks allow for the retention of remnant trees, as well as continued planting with native and non-native species and open lawns. Buildings are often obscured from view at street level due to density of the private and public realm vegetation.

The streets of this precinct have a largely informal character due to the high levels of roadside vegetation and general lack of public realm infrastructure; often without footpaths and unsealed roads and driveways. Low, post and wire fences delineate the boundary between the private and public realms.



Yarrambat

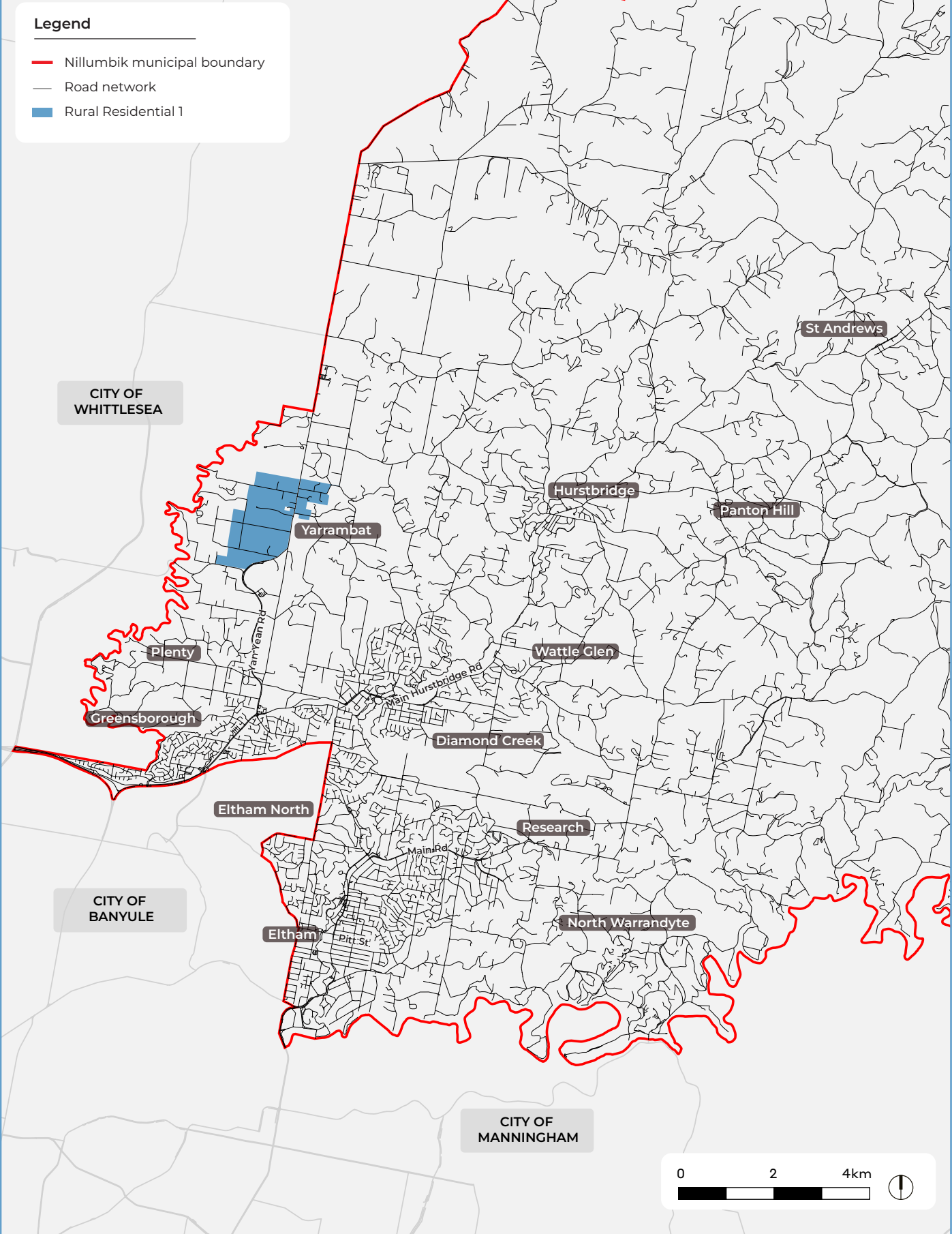


Yarrambat

Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly Modern dwellings interspersed by Contemporary infill development, typically constructed of brick. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of verandahs, windows, doorways and porch entries.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick or rendered finish.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single storey dwellings with large floor plates.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly hipped roof styles, constructed of metal or tile.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is often located behind or in line with the facade of the dwelling. Mix of sealed and unsealed, long driveways.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent siting and orientation of dwellings. Front setbacks are generous, in excess of 9m. Dwellings are separated by spacious side setbacks, in excess of 4m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low, transparent front fencing up to 1m and often constructed of post and wire.
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting in front gardens is often a mix of densely vegetated native and non-native species. High levels of native vegetation, including remnant trees.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal street planting characterised by high levels of native remnant trees. Streets are typically straight and narrow. Informal streetscapes typically with no footpaths and no formal drainage infrastructure, usually in the form of trenches or swales. Road surfaces vary between sealed and unsealed surfaces. Undulating to sloping topography.

Rural Residential 1



Preferred Character Statement

Streetscapes are dominated by large indigenous and native canopy trees with supporting undergrowth. New development is sited to strengthen the vegetation-dominated landscape. Informal bush gardens surround low scale dwellings on spacious lots. New development provides generous front and side setbacks to allow for the retention and continued planting of indigenous and native vegetation and open lawns.

New development reflects the low scale of dwellings, using simple building forms and low pitched roofs. Dwellings do not penetrate the existing remnant native tree canopy and are often obscured by dense roadside vegetation.

Dwellings utilise natural materials with muted tones and colours to fit within the vegetated landscape setting.

The streetscapes feature an informal character which embraces roadside vegetation and a mixture of sealed and unsealed roads.

Garages and carports are hidden from view, often located behind the line of the front dwelling façade and are integrated with the design of the dwelling.

Front fencing is low and permeable, blending with gardens and the unsealed roads.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development reflects the preferred built form, characterised by low scale dwellings with a contemporary architectural style that utilises natural materials with muted tones and colours.
2. To ensure new development does not dominate the wider landscape setting nor penetrates the existing native tree canopy but instead sits behind trees and bushes, often obscured by the vegetation, and minimises site disturbance and the impact of buildings on the landscape.
3. To strengthen the vegetation-dominated landscape, characterised by large rural lots with generous setbacks that allow retention of native remnant vegetation and continued planting of native trees and gardens.
4. To ensure new development does not dominate the streetscape but minimises the dominance of car parking access and structures instead.
5. To retain low, permeable front fences that blend with gardens and existing vegetation that lines the street.



Design Guidelines - Rural Residential 1

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should complement the single storey building height, building forms and large floor plates of existing dwellings. • Articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of verandahs, windows, doorways and porch entries. • Complement the contemporary building forms, natural materials, muted colour palette and siting of existing dwellings. • Buildings should not penetrate the tree canopy, where a canopy is present. • Buildings should be designed to follow the contours of the site or step down the site. • Buildings should provide a pitched roof with prominent eaves.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings should be set back a minimum of 4m from both side boundaries to enable the planting of indigenous and native trees and understorey planting. • The site area covered by buildings should not exceed 30 per cent. • Provide at least 50% of the site as permeable surface. • If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of indigenous and native canopy trees and other vegetation.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that include substantial native trees and species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>. • Retain large, established indigenous and native canopy trees and understorey and provide for the planting of new native trees where possible. • Provide large native canopy trees occurring at a density of one to every 200m² across the site. • Buildings should be sited and designed to incorporate space for planting of native vegetation.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling. • Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage. • Minimise paving in front garden areas including driveways and cross overs. • Use permeable driveway materials. • Provide landscaping and plantings to the soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence. • A front fence within 3 metres of a street should provide low, open rural style or wire up to 1.2m in height.

7.10 Rural Residential 2

Character Description

The Rural Residential 2 precinct is characterised by formal streetscapes and a mix of Modern and Contemporary architectural styles. Dwellings have large floor plates and are generally built from brick, or concrete with a rendered finish. Dwellings feature generous front and side setbacks, allowing for landscaping and planting in private gardens.

Dwellings contain varying levels of planting and often feature a mix of native and non-native, strongly textured planting. Open lawns stretching from the dwelling to the street verge are also prominent throughout the precinct. Treatment of batters and slopes is often with walls or similar materials to the dwelling to create flat spaces that relate strongly to the dwelling. Absent, or low and permeable front fences constructed from timber allow for views through to dwellings and front garden areas.

The streets of this precinct are of a more formal setting in their character; sealed and have a wider cross section featuring rollover curbs. Footpaths are generally present on one side of the street.



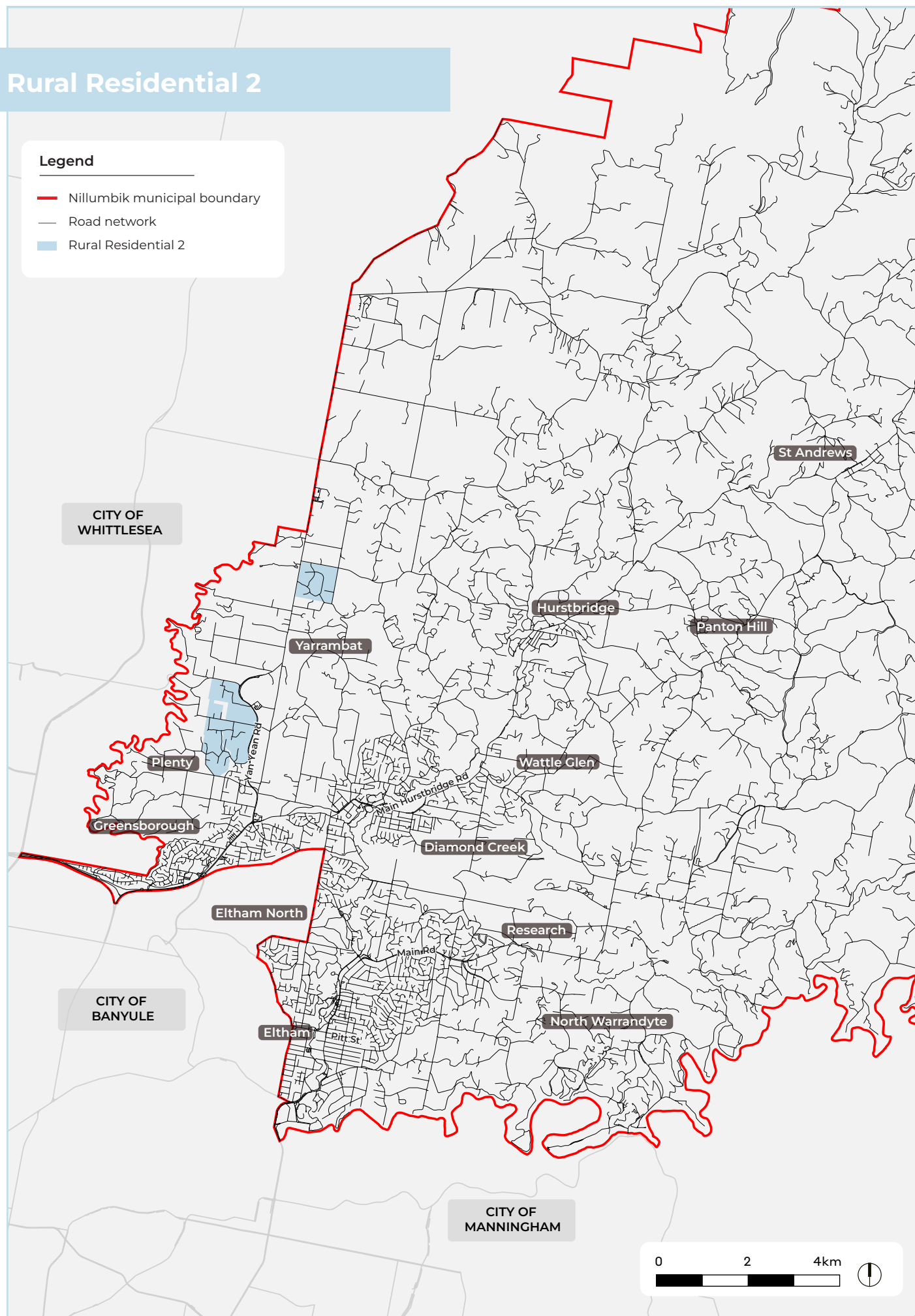
Character Attributes

	Architectural Style, form and layout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly Modern and Contemporary dwellings developed from the 1990s onwards. Buildings are detached. Front façades are articulated with the use of verandahs, balconies, windows, doorways and porch entries.
	Building materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly brick or rendered finish.
	Building heights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large, detached 1 to 2 storey dwellings.
	Roof styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of pitched (gable or hip) or flat roofs constructed of metal or tile.
	Garages and carports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking is often located behind or in line with the facade of the dwelling. Driveways are sealed, long and occasionally steep.
	Orientation and Siting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent siting and orientation of dwellings. Front setbacks are generous, in excess of 9m. Dwellings are separated by spacious side setbacks, in excess of 4m.
	Front Fencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of no or low, transparent front fencing up to 1m and often constructed of timber
	Gardens and Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting in front gardens is often low level and formally planted, with a vast expanses of open lawns.
	Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets have a modified grid layout, with curved roadways with cul-de-sacs. Formal streetscapes typically with footpaths and formal drainage infrastructure. Low to medium levels of native vegetation, including remnant trees. Road surfaces vary between sealed and unsealed surfaces. Undulating to sloping topography.

Rural Residential 2

Legend

- Nillumbik municipal boundary
- Road network
- Rural Residential 2



Preferred Character Statement

New development is set within the sloping landscape and reflects the semi-rural character of low scale, 1-2 storey dwellings with a contemporary architectural style that utilises natural materials with muted tones and colours.

New development provides significant front and side setbacks to allow for the retention and continued planting of indigenous and native vegetation and canopy trees.

Dwellings are sited on large lots that accommodate a mixture of indigenous and native species, strongly textured planting and vast open lawns.

The streetscapes feature a formal character, with a presence of sealed roads and paved footpaths on either side of the street.

Garages and carports are often located behind the line of the front dwelling façade and are unobtrusive and integrated with the design of the dwelling.

Front fencing is absent or of a low rural style and permeable, allowing for views through to landscaping located in the front setbacks of dwellings.

Neighbourhood Character Objectives

1. To ensure new development reflects the preferred built form, characterised by low scale dwellings with a contemporary architectural style that utilises natural materials with muted tones and colours and contributes to a semi-rural character.
2. To ensure new development does not dominate the wider landscape setting but minimises site disturbance and the impact of buildings on the landscape instead.
3. To strengthen the vegetation-dominated landscape, characterised by large rural lots with significant setbacks that allow continued planting of indigenous and native vegetation and canopy trees.
4. To ensure new development does not dominate the streetscape but minimises the dominance of car parking access and structures instead.
5. To retain the spaciousness of the streetscape, characterised by no or low rural style, permeable front fences with views through to landscaping located in the front setbacks of dwellings.



Design Guidelines - Rural Residential 2

Character Elements	Design Responses
Building height and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New development should complement the 1-2 storey building height and larger building forms of existing dwellings.• Articulate the front façades of buildings through the use of verandahs, balconies, windows, doorways and porch entries.• Complement the contemporary building forms, natural materials, muted colour palette and siting of existing dwellings.• Buildings should be designed to follow the topography of the land, and minimise the need for cut and fill throughout the site.• Buildings should be designed to follow the contours of the site or step down the site.• Buildings should provide a pitched roof with prominent eaves.
Siting and setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buildings should be set back a minimum of 4m from both side boundaries to enable the planting of native trees and understorey planting.• The site area covered by buildings should not exceed 30 per cent.• Provide at least 50% of the site as permeable surface.• If more than one dwelling is proposed, provide sufficient separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting of native canopy trees and other native vegetation.
Gardens and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings that include substantial native canopy trees and other native species as identified in the <i>Nillumbik Live Local Plant Local Guide</i>.• Provide large native canopy trees occurring at a density of one to every 300m² across the site.
Garage storage and vehicle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate garages and carports behind the line of the front dwelling façade, ensuring that they are integrated with the design of the dwelling.• Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage.• Minimise paving in front garden areas including driveways and cross overs.• Use permeable driveway materials.• Provide landscaping and plantings to soften the appearance of driveways.
Front Fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fencing should be set back from the front site boundary to allow for landscaping in front of the fence.• A front fence within 3 metres of a street should provide low, open rural style or wire up to 1.2m in height.

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8.0 Next Steps

8.1 Implementation

This Strategy recognises that Nillumbik Shire has seen change within its residential areas. Accordingly, the current 2001 Neighbourhood Character Strategy is dated and a new Strategy is required particularly to recognise developments in the overarching policy framework.

Implementing the recommendations of this updated Strategy can include a range of statutory and non-statutory mechanisms.

'Statutory' implementation, refers to the introduction of planning controls to the Nillumbik Shire Planning Scheme, that can be utilised to protect the character of the residential areas across the Shire, in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the identified Character Areas. This is in the form of Residential Zone and Overlay Schedules.

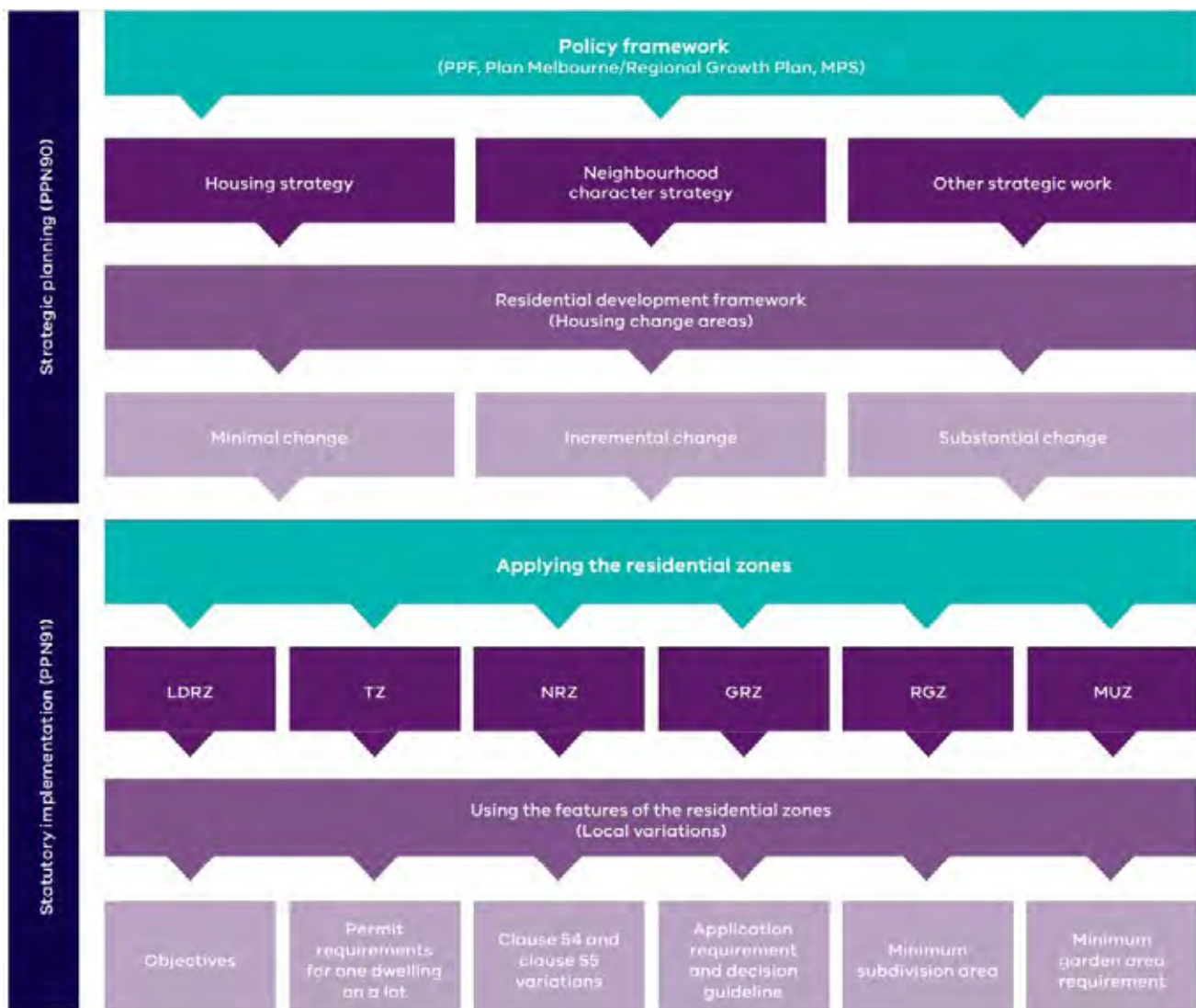
The implementation process also requires a 'non-statutory' yet equally important step of updating the Nillumbik Shire Planning Policy Framework (PPF) with the non measurable elements of the Character Areas Profiles including, Character Area Maps and character elements which cannot sit within a Zone or Overlay Schedule, which also assist in protecting and enhancing the character of these residential areas.

However, it should be noted that In accordance with Planning Practice Note 91: Using the Residential Zones, the application of zones should not be informed by Character alone, but derived from a municipal-wide strategic framework plan or residential development framework - Neighbourhood Character is one input into a larger strategic framework. The process for strategic planning and statutory implementation is shown in the figure overleaf.

The Neighbourhood Character areas identified in this Strategy will inform the preparation of a Housing Strategy and Residential Development Framework (to be undertaken as separate pieces of work), that will be implemented for residential areas in the Shire. The Housing Strategy will provide an opportunity to consider the extent of housing growth in residential areas.

While preferred neighbourhood character will continue to be an important consideration in these areas, there is also a need to respond to State Government requirements for growth in residential supply and diversity. The Neighbourhood Character Strategy, Housing Strategy and Residential Development Framework will enable the Shire to meet future housing growth and demographic trends, while still ensuring new development reflects preferred character across the municipality.

Continued consultation with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is also critical in the later stages of the project, given the complexity and evolving nature of this space.



40 Balancing housing growth and protection of neighbourhood character, *Planning Practice Note 91: Using the residential zones*, 2019

8.2 Consultation

Consultation is playing a crucial role in informing the draft Strategy. Input from the community regarding what they value most about their neighbourhoods and how they would like to see new development managed has directly informed the preparation of this draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy.

The purpose of the second stage of consultation is to seek feedback on the Draft Strategy and test findings with the community on aspects including:

- Identified Character Areas
- Character Area boundaries
- Preferred Character Statements
- Preferred Character Objectives
- Design Guidelines

This feedback will inform any updates to the final Strategy, which will be further tested with the community in a third round of 'Closing the Loop' engagement, which will seek to further confirm the updates to the Final Draft Strategy and confirm recommendations on implementation options and next steps.

8.3 Further Work

In this process of preparing this Strategy, the following additional further work has been identified to be undertaken:

- Dwelling materiality and colour palette: further work to be undertaken to identify materials that are appropriate within the identified neighbourhood character settings while also responding to relevant ESD principles. Sustainability objectives are often at odds with the application of earthy and muted colours and materials.
- Specific guidelines for fencing: further work to be undertaken regarding which fencing materials best respond to neighbourhood character.
- Specific guidelines for vegetation: further work to be undertaken to identify the minimum deep soil areas required for the range of preferred tree species for the Shire.

Appendix

Locality Maps

This appendix provides a snapshot of all character areas within the boundary of each locality in Nillumbik Shire.

