



Nagambie Growth Management Strategy

Neighbourhood Character Assessment

FINAL

FOR THE STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL
December 2008



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1 Introduction

Nagambie's population is growing dramatically, albeit from a relatively small base. In recent times, the Strathbogie Shire has experienced increasing interest from the Melbourne and Shepparton property markets, particularly in the Strathbogie Ranges, Avenel and Nagambie. Building approvals leapt from \$2.25M to \$7.25M in value in the year to 2006. The permanent population is expected to grow to around 4,000 people, and there will be a need to service some 7,000 altogether, including visitors and tourists. Proposed / approved developments include:

- Hotel resort accommodation including 13 units and conference facility
- Retirement village/caravan park, 208 units, 323 cabins and 72 van sites
- Proposed commercial and residential development
- New medical centre and 90 place child care facility
- The completed redevelopment of the Chinaman's Bridge caravan park, renamed the Nagambie Lakes Leisure Park, into a 5-star leisure resort, including licensed restaurant incorporating numerous annual cabin sites, powered caravan sites, camping sites and bunk houses. It has the ability to accommodate 2,000-2,500 people when full.

It is within this context that the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy will be developed. In order to deliver this comprehensive Strategy, it will consist of five separate projects that all look at individual aspects of the town, but which will be interconnected and operate as one final Strategy. They six components of the Strategy are:

- Nagambie Growth Management Strategy
- Main Street Plan
- Lakeside Connectivity and Recreation Plan
- Lake Activities and Access Framework
- Nagambie Style Guidelines
- Background Report & Appendices



1.1

Vision

This Plan forms part of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy and its aim is to provide guidance and direction for the future of the residential areas of Nagambie

Vision for Nagambie

Nagambie will grow as both an agricultural service centre, and as a visitor / lifestyle / retirement centre. This is to be done in a way that:

- Maximises the economic benefits of a lakeside location to the town and the Shire.
- Strengthens character of the town in its lakeside and rural setting.
- Protects and enhances the environmental values of the lake and other natural features.
- Improves the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the town.



1.2 Structure of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy

As part of the development of the Strategy, a number of different pieces of work were commissioned by Shire. The Nagambie Growth Management Strategy is the major document, with other studies informing a number of the individual components.

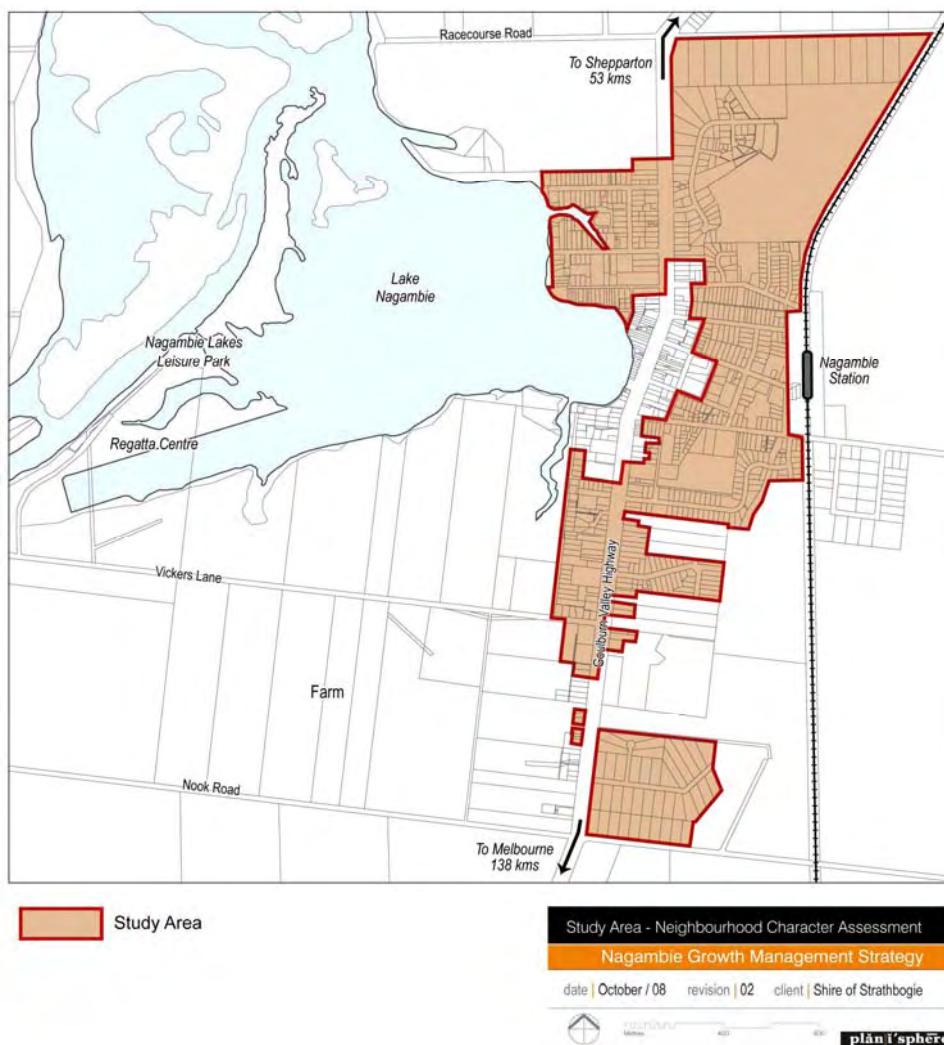
The structure of the Nagambie Growth Management Strategy is detailed below.

<p>THE STRATEGY</p>	<p>Nagambie Growth Management Strategy</p>	<p>Directs the growth and development of Nagambie over coming decades</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Background 3. Residential areas 4. Commercial areas 5. The Industrial area 6. Rural Areas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Access & Transport 8. The Lake & Recreation 9. Service Provision 10. Infrastructure 11. Built Form 12. Implementation Plan
<p>THE PROJECT DOCUMENTS</p>	<p>Main Street Plan</p> <p>Provides direction for the future of High Street as the town grows and in light of the proposed highway bypass</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. A Sound Future for High Street 3. Streetscape Concept 4. Public Space Design 5. Building Design 	<p>Lakeside Connectivity & Recreation Plan</p> <p>Improves connectivity between the township and developments on the south side of the Lake</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Ownership & Management 3. Lakeside Development 4. Lakeside Access 5. Existing Recreation Areas 	<p>Lake Activities & Access Framework</p> <p>Improves recreational and tourist access to the Lake</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Key Background Documents 3. Boating 4. Swimming & Fishing 5. Associated On-Land Facilities 6. The Regatta Centre Peninsula 7. Commercial Operations 	<p>'Nagambie Style' Guidelines</p> <p>Planning guidelines for the future development of Nagambie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Developing a 'Nagambie Style' 3. High Street Built Form Guidelines 4. Existing Residential Area Guidelines 5. New Residential Area Principles 6. ESD Guidelines 7. Additional Guidelines
<p>THE BACKGROUND</p>	<p>Background Report & Appendices</p>	<p>Describes the study's brief, process & method. Details results from Community Engagement exercises</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project Brief & Process 2. Policy Context 3. Background Documents 4. Demographics & Scenarios Development 5. Community Engagement 6. Appendices (inc. Neighbourhood Character Assessment) 	



1.3 The Neighbourhood Character Assessment Study Area

The Brief stipulated that the Study should cover the entire urban area of the township, excluding the commercial and industrial precincts. The Study Area is shown in the map below. It excludes some residentially zoned areas which are classified as 'greenfield' areas to be developed in the future. These areas will be addressed in principles for new residential area development across the township.



2 Policy Context

2.1 State Planning Policy Framework

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) comprises a statement of general principles for land use and development planning, and specific policies dealing with sectoral issues. Planning and responsible authorities must take into account and give effect to both the general principles and the specific policies applicable to issues before them to ensure integrated decision-making.

Specifically, the SPPF seeks to:

- Encourage higher density housing development on sites that are well located in relation to activity centres and public transport.
- Ensure housing stock matches changing demand by widening housing choice.
- Ensure planning for growth areas provides for a mix of housing types and higher housing densities around activity centres.
- Ensure an adequate supply of redevelopment opportunities within the established urban area to reduce the pressure for fringe development.
- Ensure all new development appropriately responds to its landscape, valued built form and cultural context.

In Clause 13 *Settlement*, the SPPF states the following issue as being of relevance to neighbourhood character:

Planning is to anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing, employment, recreation and open space, commercial and community facilities and infrastructure. Planning is to recognise the need for, and as far as practicable contribute towards:

- *Health and safety.*
- *Diversity of choice.*
- *Adaptation in response to changing technology.*
- *Economic viability.*
- *A high standard of urban design and amenity.*
- *Energy efficiency.*
- *Prevention of pollution to land, water and air.*
- *Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources.*
- *Accessibility.*
- *Land use and transport integration.*

Under the Settlement section, Clause 14.01 Planning for Urban Settlement, one of the objectives is: *To facilitate the orderly development of urban areas.*

At Clause 14.01-2 General Implementation the SPPF states that:

In planning for urban growth, planning authorities should encourage consolidation of existing urban areas while respecting neighbourhood character.



Under the Housing section, the objectives in relation to medium density housing as outlined in Clause 16.02-1 are:

To encourage the development of well-designed medium-density housing which:

- *Respects the neighbourhood character.*
- *Improves housing choice.*
- *Makes better use of existing infrastructure.*
- *Improves energy efficiency of housing.*

Clause 19.03 of the SPPF includes the following objectives in relation to Design and Built Form:

To achieve high quality urban design and architecture that:

- *Reflects the particular characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community.*
- *Enhances liveability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm.*
- *Promotes attractiveness of towns and cities within the broader strategic contexts.*

Clause 19.03-2 General Implementation states that:

Development should achieve architectural and urban design outcomes that contribute positively to local urban character and enhance the public realm while minimising detrimental impact on neighbouring properties.

2.2 Local Planning Policy Framework

There are parts of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme that have relevance for the Neighbourhood Character Study. A description of each policy and its implications are as follows:

Municipal Strategic Statement

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) sets the local policy context of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme. It is a concise statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and the strategies and actions for achieving the objectives.

Clause 21.03 Objectives – Strategies – Implementation

Clause 21.03 provides direction under the three different themes of Settlement, Environment and Economic Development. Under Settlement, the MSS states Council's aims to 'ensure that future residential growth and development is accommodated for in a planned manner'. Neighbourhood character and acknowledgement of built and cultural heritage are identified as common issues that need to be addressed within the four major townships of the Shire (Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel and Violet Town).

The MSS encourages consolidation of residential development in existing urban centres, new development that provides for a high quality lot layout and diversity of sizes and housing options to maintain a diverse population mix within the Shire. One of the key Settlement Strategies and implementation measures is the identification of neighbourhood character of the four main townships.

Structure Plans for the four major townships within the Shire are also included under Clause 21.03 of the MSS. The Nagambie Structure Plan provides direction for some of the key land uses, transportation routes and town entrances. It identifies areas that could be investigated in the future for residential growth when required. Most of these areas are included within the Neighbourhood Character Study boundary.

Local Planning Policies - Clause 22.03 Natural Landscape Protection

The Natural Landscape Protection Policy applies to all applications for new buildings and extensions to existing buildings within the Shire. The policy seeks to protect the natural landscape, and in particular areas of environmental and visual significance, from inappropriate development



and also provides a basis and guideline for the sympathetic external treatment of buildings in their context. Clause 22.03 provides policy statements for the siting and design of buildings and the use of building materials and finishes. It also states that mature vegetation which provides a backdrop for any development must not be removed or lopped.

2.3 Zones and Overlays

Residential 1 Zone

The Residential 1 Zone (R1Z) applies to the majority of the Study Area. The purposes of the R1Z are to:

- *provide for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households.*
- *encourage residential development that respects the neighbourhood character.*
- *In appropriate locations, allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs.*

The R1Z requires that new developments meet the requirements of either Clause 54 (one dwelling on a lot) or Clause 55 (two or more dwellings on a lot).

2.4 Other Relevant Council Policies

Strathbogie Urban Design Framework, 2003

The Strathbogie Urban Design Framework provides an Urban Design Framework (UDF) for each of the major towns within the Shire: Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel, and Violet Town. The purposes of the UDF for each township are to:

- Assist with the long-term sustainability of the township;
- Identify areas of significance;
- Provide and clarify urban design visions and strategic directions;
- Identify preferred land use and development options;
- Identify existing building or features in strategically important locations;
- Identify improvements to the visual quality of town entrances and thoroughfares;
- Identify improvements to vehicular and pedestrian routes and linkages; and
- Identify improvements to the town's functions and to strengthen the role of the township within the regional context.

Nagambie

The UDF provides a detailed analysis of the existing physical and statistical context and a framework for the town centre based on a vision to be viewed as a guide for further investigation. At the time of the Study, the town presented opportunity for substantial residential development. The Framework does not focus on the design or development of future residential development.



3 What is Neighbourhood Character

3.1 Neighbourhood Character Defined

The concept of Neighbourhood Character, its components and its value has been widely discussed and debated over the last ten years in the planning of Melbourne's suburbs. It has been demonstrated well that neighbourhood character is something that can have a range of meanings for different people or situations and is difficult to define. In the neighbourhood character studies that Planisphere has undertaken, we have attempted to arrive at a definition of neighbourhood character to form the basis of our study methodology. This understanding of what constitutes neighbourhood character has been developed over the course of many studies and collaboration with local communities, Councils and DSE.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with a clear understanding of Neighbourhood Character: what does it mean; how it is practically administered within the statutory framework; what are the principles of Neighbourhood Character; and what are Neighbourhood Character typologies?

What is Neighbourhood Character?

In December 2001 the former Department of Infrastructure published a General Practice Note titled 'Understanding Neighbourhood Character'. The Note contains useful information, however it fails to provide a single, all-encompassing and concise definition of neighbourhood character. Perhaps the most succinct definition is 'neighbourhood character is essentially the combination of the public and private realms'. The document suggests a number of factors as relevant, which to the reader may appear to obscure, rather than illuminate, the essence of neighbourhood character. Yet there have been useful previous statements on this subject, either auspiced by the former Department of Infrastructure, or produced by independent panels.

A more succinct and encompassing definition was included in the Draft Practice Note on Neighbourhood Character published in June 2000 as part of the first draft of ResCode:

Neighbourhood character is the interplay of natural, built social, cultural and economic conditions that make one place different from another.

This definition is helpful, but it has a number of weaknesses:

- The focus does not remain on the meaning of neighbourhood character that is reflected in tools provided in the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs).
- The adjective 'qualitative' is excluded when using the term 'interplay'.
- The reference to 'combination of the public and private realms', which is in the current Practice Note, is not included.

It is true that people attribute widely differing meanings to the term 'neighbourhood character'. For many, character is about the people who live in the area; for others it is broad attributes of the area, such as closeness to shops or transport, how much open space or traffic there is. Because this character study has been commissioned to provide planning scheme policies and controls, it needs to be focussed on the physical planning outcomes that are capable of being influenced by planning scheme tools. Fundamentally we are aiming to answer the question: how do buildings and landscape interact? Built form, vegetation and topographical characteristics are the physical



manifestation of neighbourhood character addressed in the VPPs. The former Good Design Guide used these terms in defining neighbourhood character.

The term 'interplay' in the former Practice Note comes from the 1998 Advisory Committee report on the City of Monash neighbourhood character 'local variations' amendment. Monash have Amended their Scheme to include the Monash Neighbourhood Character study, and have also made changes to the Schedule of the Residential 1 Zone.

The Monash report coined the phrase 'qualitative interplay'. Qualitative interplay refers to the way that the main distinctive components of an area's character combine to produce a particular sense of place. This concept carries important implications:

- Neighbourhood character needs to be described in a written character statement; it is insufficient to simply produce a catalogue or list of characteristics.
- Character statements must be skilfully written to describe the synthesis of qualities that make one area distinct from another.
- Character statements should make clear which characteristics are most important, and the manner in which they relate to each other.

The term 'qualitative interplay' transcends 'private and public domains', as the Monash report emphasises. The character of buildings and their grounds cannot be divorced from the character of the street scene in which they sit. For example, in the inner suburbs of Melbourne buildings often present as solid 'walls' to the street, producing a hard, urban character. In some landscape-dominated areas on the urban fringe, natural bush vegetation flows across private property and public domain alike, only stopping at the edge of the roadway. Clearing all the trees on a private allotment would completely change the character of this type of area. So would the construction of kerb, channel and footpath, or planting of street trees of an incompatible species or in a formal pattern.

Therefore, in summary, neighbourhood character is a synthesis of public and private domain characteristics, as listed in the provisions of ResCode. It is the qualitative interplay between those characteristics that make a place, town or neighbourhood distinctive. Some of these characteristics are more important than others in creating a distinctive character.

Surveying all characteristics, then listing the 'key' characteristics, is a useful analytical tool. However a written statement that explains the interplay of the character components is necessary to properly describe, assess and evaluate the character of a particular area. This is the theoretical and statutory basis for the Preferred Character Statements that have been drafted for each precinct within the study area (as detailed in section 5).

The following definition of neighbourhood character, used by a former Department of Infrastructure working party into neighbourhood character that met in late 1999, seems to us to accommodate all of these requirements. It forms the basis of the work undertaken in this Neighbourhood Character Study :

Neighbourhood character is the qualitative interplay of built form, vegetation and topographic characteristics, in both the private and public domains, that make one place different from another.

Neighbourhood Character Elements

In many areas, building type, era and spacing, the proportions and combined appearance of the 'walls' and 'floor' of the street space, and the amount and type of vegetation, are the key determinants of the area's character. How the buildings 'sit' in their landscape is critical. Vegetation includes street trees, front garden vegetation, and canopy trees in rear yards and public reserves forming a backdrop. Critical elements of the 'walls' and 'floor' of the street space are the height, permeability and profile of the 'walls': the depth of front setbacks; type of garden (eg lawn and roses, shrubs and trees, or an apparent continuation of the street space planting); presence and permeability of a front fence; and the formality (or otherwise) of the street space.



Other character components can include traffic, noise, type of activity, and demographic characteristics. Members of the public often cite these as important characteristics of their neighbourhood. People often raise amenity issues such as access to open space in character consultation sessions. All of these can be argued to be an essential part of an area's character.

Focussing on planning scheme implementation options

The important question in each case is: *how relevant is this to the task in hand?* In preparing policy and controls for implementation through the planning scheme, then the focus of the study needs to be on elements that are mentioned in either ResCode provisions or overlay controls and can therefore be addressed and influenced by the appropriate statutory tools. Many neighbourhood character elements can be addressed through other mechanisms such as social development strategies or public awareness campaigns that are outside the scope of planning schemes.

Neighbourhood Character is Not

The differentiation between different types of character area is not simply a question of architectural style or era of development. Neighbourhood character is founded on the layout and form of the areas, and the way that the built form interacts with and relates to the landscape. These factors should be the basis for the application of neighbourhood character policies. Neighbourhood character is not about the imposition of design styles. Rather it should be about recognising the distinctive characteristics of different urban forms, and their relationship to topography and vegetation. Getting this right is the best way of maintaining and enhancing the sense of place of the municipality's residential areas.

Nor is neighbourhood character about the amenity of adjoining properties or dwelling densities as such, although it has implications for both of these issues. In practical terms it does not dictate planning controls for either. For example, the recommended guidelines contained in the area papers with regard to spaciousness between dwellings may require that new buildings should be setback from both side boundaries. This may reduce the amount or number of buildings that can be accommodated on a site, and may also reduce potential amenity impacts from overlooking and overshadowing of adjoining properties. Front setback controls may also have a similar effect in some instances. These are secondary outcomes of the neighbourhood character guidelines, and while not the primary intent, may reduce community concerns about other aspects of new development.

Nor is character about density controls. ResCode makes no provision for density controls, and it is not considered that a policy which proposed density maximums or medium density housing saturation levels, would be supported by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. ResCode has more extensive provisions relating to amenity issues and it is likely that once these provisions become more widely implemented many amenity concerns will be reduced.

3.2 Neighbourhood Character Principles

The following principles of neighbourhood character were prepared by a former Department of Infrastructure working party into neighbourhood character that met in late 1999. They were included in the Draft Practice Note on Neighbourhood Character published in June 2000 as part of the first draft of ResCode. These form the basis of the process and content of the work undertaken by Planisphere for Neighbourhood Character Studies. The principles are:

Community Values

The values of the local community are part of determining the appropriate response to neighbourhood character. Planning controls that aim to protect, change or improve character must draw on professional and community views.



The community should be involved in identifying the neighbourhood character measures appropriate to their area. Professionals assist in developing and translating these ideas into techniques to manage design.

Physical Focus

Character, in its broadest sense, can include environmental, social and economic factors, but the planning system is concerned with managing the physical evidence of character and related social impacts.

The planning system is primarily focussed on achieving a wide range of objectives through the physical environment. Character is not concerned only with the private domain, as much of neighbourhood character is manifested in the public street space. However, some character issues are related to social outcomes or impacts. For example, the height of front fences is a town planning issue with character implications that may be physical (does a high fence contribute positively to the 'look' of the area?) and social (how do high fences affect social interaction?).

Special Qualities of an Area

All areas have a character that can be described, evaluated and, in many cases, improved. In some areas protection of particular qualities may be warranted; but there is no distinction between areas of special character and 'the rest'.

The aim in placing greater priority on character is to improve the quality of the environment throughout Victoria's residential areas, not just in retaining or improving a few select 'special' areas that already have high amenity values. For this reason, a neighbourhood character is equally relevant everywhere. Planning controls should aim to protect identified distinctive and valued elements.

Interaction between Elements of Character

Character is about the interrelationships between various elements of an area, and so cannot be described or evaluated by considering individual elements in isolation.

Design responses need to consider the whole picture of a neighbourhood, rather than focussing upon one or two elements of the building form or siting.

Neighbourhood Character and Other Planning Policies

State and Council policies provide the rationale for decisions about whether to protect, change or improve the neighbourhood character of an area. Area-specific controls should be developed in the light of these strategic directions.

A Council's Municipal Strategic Statement will provide guidance about priorities in any particular area. Local housing issues and other Melbourne 2030 directions such as focusing higher density development around activity centres will be important considerations.

Preferred Character

Neighbourhood character descriptions and evaluations should focus on the preferred character of an area.

Descriptions of existing characteristics are an important part of the process of identifying the 'starting point', but the desired character needs to be evaluated and considered in the context of other policy priorities. It may be that some areas should be encouraged to develop a new character, just as there may be some areas where critical elements need to be protected or reflected in all new development. The concept of preferred character is discussed in detail in section 5.1.



Neighbourhood Character Typologies

There are a limited number of consistent precinct types that can be defined, and frequently appropriate policy responses can be formulated without the need for expensive studies.

The 'Responding to Neighbourhood Character' ResCode Practice Note has adopted this approach in presenting possible policy responses to three typical residential character types. This is not to say that detailed analysis can be completely avoided, but much can be gained from shared understandings. Many councils have undertaken very detailed character studies and this information may supplement the examples provided.

Site Analysis

A site analysis, specifically from the neighbourhood character perspective, is necessary whether or not a detailed character study has been undertaken.

A site analysis is a mandatory requirement of ResCode.

Character and Heritage

Character and heritage share many attributes, but there are important differences between the two concepts. Community values are a key justification for the protection of neighbourhood character. Policies to transform character may be appropriate in some areas.

Character studies evaluate the interplay of built form, vegetation and topographical qualities, with reference to styles and ages where relevant, whereas heritage studies evaluate cultural heritage significance, with some reference to built form, vegetation and topographical qualities. Heritage studies designate levels of significance for sites or precincts by assessment against established criteria and by way of comparison with other heritage places. The basis of neighbourhood character is that every place has character regardless of its age or appearance and community feedback is an important means by which the value of this character can be understood. (See below for further discussion.)

Character and Amenity

The difference between neighbourhood character and amenity must be recognised.

Character and amenity are terms often used interchangeably, but in ResCode factors like visual and acoustic privacy and overshadowing should continue to be treated as issues separate to neighbourhood character.

3.3 Neighbourhood Character Types

Four Neighbourhood Character Types of Victoria

Neighbourhood character is a fundamental of sense of place in residential communities. While many councils have undertaken neighbourhood character studies, little or no attempt has been made to generalise the findings of these studies into a typology of neighbourhood character types. Broadly speaking, the following neighbourhood character types have been identified across Victoria:

Built Form / Landscape Relationship	Character Type
Built form dominated residential areas	'Inner Urban'
Spacious residential areas in a garden setting (formal street pattern, generally modified grid)	'Garden Suburban'
Spacious residential areas in a garden setting (informal, generally curving street pattern with courts/cul-de-sacs)	'Garden Court'
Landscape dominated residential areas	'Bush Suburban'

Table 3: Victorian Neighbourhood Types



These four broad categories illustrate the four main types of residential areas that exist in Victoria, from an urban design perspective. The differentiation between these types is NOT based on architectural style or era of development. It is founded on the layout and form of the areas, and the way that the built form interacts with and relates to the landscape. These factors should be the basis for the application of neighbourhood character policies. Neighbourhood character is NOT about the imposition of design styles. Rather it should be about recognising the distinctive characteristics of different urban forms, and their relationship to topography and vegetation. Getting this right is the best way of maintaining and enhancing the sense of place of the state's residential areas.

An initial version of these character types, prepared by Planisphere, was included in the Draft Practice Note on Neighbourhood Character published in June 2000 as part of the first draft of ResCode. Although this Practice Note has since been superseded, it provided some useful principles about the nature of neighbourhood character. The upgraded version of the character types shown here is included in *Sense of Place: urban design principles for the Metropolitan Strategy*, a technical report on urban design prepared by Planisphere and published in October 2002 as part of the Metropolitan Strategy.

Local Neighbourhood Character Types

In establishing a system of neighbourhood character description for a particular place, these broad level definitions are a useful starting point, from which further detailed classification can follow. They form the basis for definition of local character types. In undertaking neighbourhood character studies, Planisphere first establish a municipal-wide framework of broad character types. Within these broad areas further, finer-grained definition of character follows with the identification of precincts.

Often neighbourhood character studies identify wide variations within these broad character types, and these are important in differentiating the character of one neighbourhood from another, and in creating or strengthening sense of place



4 Neighbourhood Character In Nagambie

4.1 Survey

During the initial stage of the project, a survey was undertaken to firstly determine what character types were evident throughout residential areas of the township, secondly to determine where precinct boundaries may be drawn, and finally to take note of the different character elements on a street-by-street basis.

The following character elements were noted throughout the survey:

- Landscape Setting
- Vegetation
- Building Form (including Roof form)
- Siting including Building Spacing and Setbacks
- Design Detail and Finishes
- Building materials and colours
- Frontage and Façade Treatment
- Car Parking and Vehicular Access

4.2 Community Values

In order to gain an understanding of what the community values in Nagambie, a public workshop was undertaken and a disposable cameras exercise was carried out. The workshop and the Disposable Cameras Exercise proved to be very useful in identifying what it is that the community values about different aspects of neighbourhood character in the township. Below the outcomes of these exercises are summarised.

Community Workshop

At the Community Workshop, useful information was gathered about local community values. This information is summarised in the table below.

Summary of Nagambie Community Workshop Comments

Likes	Dislikes	Where change could occur
Variety of houses.	Damaged trees.	Additional housing could take place on larger allotments at a lower density.
Dwellings that are set back from boundaries.	Small urban-suburban blocks.	New development should maintain and respect the native landscape.
Wide property frontages.		Infrastructure including footpaths and streetscape design could be improved.
Wide streets.		
Low scale housing.		
The large gum trees at the entrance to the town.		

Disposable Cameras Exercise

The purpose of the Disposable Cameras Exercise was to provide an insight into the local community's values in relation to neighbourhood character. Six disposable cameras were distributed to residents and stakeholders, and a total of four were returned.

A photographic survey form accompanied the disposable cameras so that participants could write explanatory notes to accompany the photos. As part of the exercise, participants were asked to take photographs of places or things in their neighbourhood that they either liked or disliked and to explain why. They were also asked to include three photographs that demonstrated each of the following:

- A feature, place or view that depicts the special character of their neighbourhood (A).
- A photo of an aspect of their neighbourhood that they think needs improving.
- A photo of a building or place in their neighbourhood that is a good example of new development.

Following is a summary of the findings from the Disposable Cameras Exercise.

Photos of places or things that participants like

Participants submitted photos of various streetscapes, landscapes and individual houses under this category. In particular, views over the lakes from both residential areas and from Jacobson's Lookout were frequently cited. Although viewpoints from Jacobson's Outlook are not strictly within the Neighbourhood Character Assessment Study Area, residents obviously feel it has a substantial impact on the overall character of the township.

There were also numerous photos of natural landscapes, particularly within proximity of Blayney Lane. Views to the creek and trees in this area were cited as important to the character of the neighbourhood.

Photos of individual developments that participants liked were generally chosen for reasons such as integration with the overall streetscape character, new houses that look like original ones, permeable fencing that fits in with the landscape/streetscape, and use of natural materials such as timber and stone.

A number of historical buildings were depicted for providing relics of past eras and adding to the overall character of the township.

Many photos also depicted facilities close-by to residential areas such as walking paths, the swimming area at Buckley Park, and the football oval.

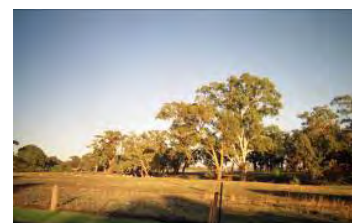
Sample Photos and Comments



The iconic Nagambie view over the lake.



Park Street House: New house set back from road with wide frontage. Looks like original homestead.



View from number 32 Blayney Lane: Like the tree canopy and tranquility.



Photos of places or things that participants dislike

There were only a few minor issues raised under this category. Many things mentioned and depicted under this category occurred outside the Neighbourhood Character Assessment Study Area, with comments related to the condition of public facilities and derelict buildings in the town centre.

In terms of residential development, participants expressed a dislike of the design of some streetscapes which included narrow roadways and a lack of footpaths and street lighting.

Some individual developments were also depicted for either the use of solid metal fencing that stands out in the landscape and poor visibility of access to buildings. Another was mentioned for its lack of character.

Sample Photos and Comments



Curramar Street: Street could be wider.



Barwon Street: Needs a footpath.



House facing Blayney Reserve: Poorly placed facing public park – creates problems for public usage. No clear access-way – driveway through other property?.

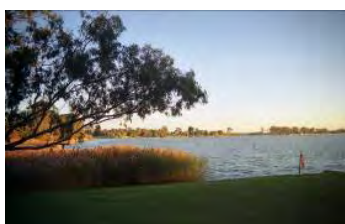
Photos depicting the special character of Nagambie’s neighbourhoods (A)

Most of the photos taken under this category correlated with landscapes and streetscapes of places and things that participants like about the character of their neighbourhoods. Views over the lake, views to tree canopies and other natural features were all frequently cited as things that participants think make Nagambie’s neighbourhoods special.

The design of streetscapes and the size and dimension of allotments were also mentioned as things that make Nagambie’s neighbourhoods special. Wide, curved streets combined with large lot sizes and big front yards were just some of the elements that were depicted as giving residential areas a sense of uniqueness.

The character of established parts of Nagambie was also depicted, with older houses and ‘good-sized’ frontages contributing to the ‘neighbourhood feel’.

Sample Photos and Comments



River Street Reserve – Lake View: This view typifies Nagambie’s greatest feature – the water. It is a serene view.



House at Curramar Street: Heritage house – big front yard and block.



Walkway view south to Tahbik Creek wetlands: Platypus habitat, native birds, fish and turtles.

Photos of aspects of Nagambie’s neighbourhoods that need improvement (B)

Again, many of the photos taken under this category related to public facilities and buildings and the need for upgrades and improved maintenance. Most of the comments received about things that need improvement related to what participants disliked about their neighbourhood.

Sample Photos and Comments



High metal fence in solid colour is a stark contrast to the environment. Looks wrong.



Playground, Blayney Reserve: badly designed, no cover, needs landscaping.



Units, Blayney Lane: No character, done for expediency and profit.

Photos of buildings or places that are good examples of new development in Nagambie (C)

New development in Blayney Lane was depicted as a good example of recent development because it fits in with the character of the street and town. New development in McGregor Avenue was also noted as a good example.

Several other photos were taken of buildings outside the Study Area however comments related to these new developments can provide an idea of what residents would like to see in future development. Photos were taken of the new buildings at Chinaman’s Bridge Caravan Park because it fits in with the natural environment, the Jetty development for its use of natural building materials and roofline, and St Joseph’s for the building additions that have been seamlessly designed to fit in with the original buildings.

Sample Photos and Comments



View south from number 16 Blayney Lane: Houses on average 2 years old, fits the character of the street and town.



View south-east, McGregor Avenue: New development, stylish.



Chinaman’s Bridge Caravan Park Café: A new development that fits in with the natural environment. It allows people to still enjoy the nature around it.

4.3 The Character of Nagambie

Distinctive Qualities of Nagambie

Nagambie has many unique and distinctive qualities that contribute to its neighbourhood character. Through field surveys and information gathered during consultation, the Study Team was able to gain an understanding of the distinctive neighbourhood character qualities that separate Nagambie apart from other places in Victoria. Some of these character elements exist in the private realm while others are visible only in the public domain.



Lake Nagambie is undoubtedly the most distinctive feature of the township. Its unique landscape quality adds an important and highly valued element to the township which could be further appreciated through development which addresses the landscape.

Aside from the lake, the landscapes surrounding Nagambie place it in a rural / farming context. At the edge of the township this is particularly relevant, where residential development is generally of a lower density and takes on rural features such as large lot sizes, post and wire fencing and vegetation wind breaks.

The town centre, although not a part of the Study Area for the Neighbourhood Character Assessment, contains several historic buildings and spaces that also distinguish Nagambie and give it a sense of place. The water tower, the former Post Office, the old Colonial Bank and the former Mechanics Institute are all notable features that, among many others, contribute to the overall character of the township. In addition to commercial buildings there are also a number of residential buildings that date back to the earlier settlement of the township, giving it a sense of history and enriching its neighbourhood character. These dwellings are generally located closer to the town centre, but a number of older Victorian buildings can also be found in former rural or farming areas, for example along Racecourse Road.

The residential areas of the township contains a mix of dwellings with some clearly segmented areas that show the evolution of the township, from its earlier days of settlement, to the pre- and post-war era eras, and to 1990s and current day development. Throughout these segmented areas, infill has occurred across all precincts, resulting in a variety of housing styles across the whole township. In addition to housing styles, different areas display an array of characteristics in the public domain which can assist in the delineation of character precincts. These include the appearance of streetscapes through the presence of footpaths, street trees, fences and vegetation in the private domain, among other things.

Character Precincts

Following the field surveys, individual precincts were identified. It is important to note that *preferred* character is the main criterion for precinct delineation. Character studies that attempt to delineate every variation in *current* characteristics often produce very large numbers of areas. While this approach might have some benefits in achieving a finer grain of information, it also may result in an overload of information that relates to segmented areas and this often tends to not be responsive to the community's aspirations for their area as whole.

Precincts and Preferred Character

Furthermore, preferred character should be a concept that provides a broad direction rather than prescriptive detail. Achieving an uninterrupted flow of landscape and vegetation across private and public domain might be the main aim of a preferred character statement. From this aim, numbers of policies and guidelines are derived. These are cognisant of the existing situation with boundary treatments, site coverage etc, but fine grain local variations in these characteristics today should not preclude the setting of an aim to create, in the future, a consistent character across a broader area. Town planning is, after all, about creating desired futures. Town planning policy should be arrived at after considering existing conditions. It should not necessarily be determined by them.

Precincts and Neighbourhood and Site Description

ResCode provides for a process of neighbourhood and site description that encompasses an assessment of neighbourhood character. The preparation of a character study does not remove the need for a site assessment. Local conditions and the specific circumstances need to be assessed and considered alongside the preferred character for the area. They may also change over time. It is not necessary for a character study to provide a detailed brief for every site. The character study should provide the broad future direction, complemented by the neighbourhood and site description, which assesses detailed local conditions.

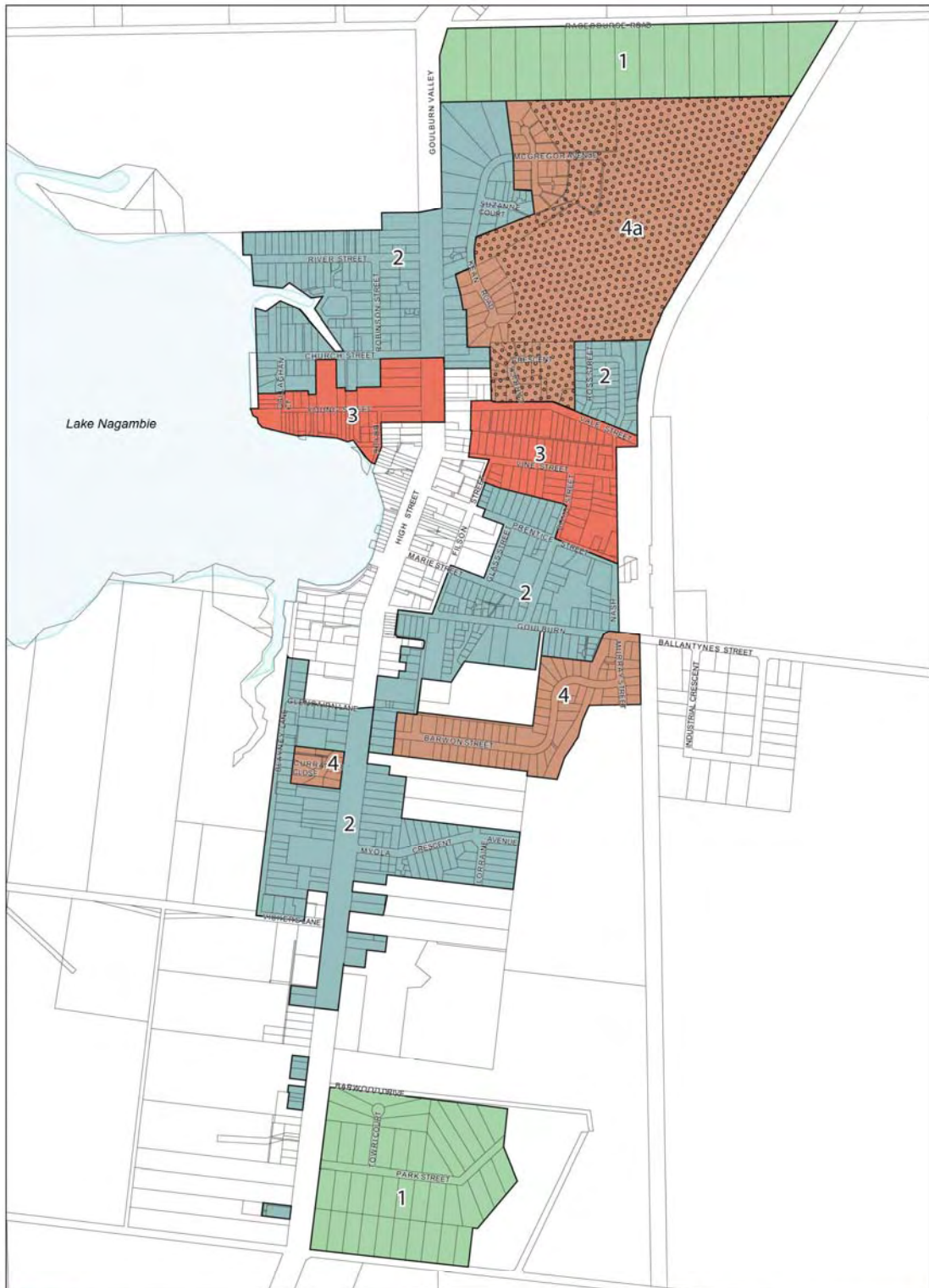


Precinct Delineation

Character area delineation is arrived at by considering a number of important factors: preferred character, similarity of characteristics and threats, and useability of the precinct definition. Some emphasis is placed on the detailed survey findings, but because the basis of delineation is preferred character, all the other factors may also be relevant. The actual boundaries between precincts are often well defined by the characteristics, and thus preferred character of an area. When this clear delineation occurs, there is always a physical separator such as a road or railway between areas. Where the characteristics change more gradually across an area, for example due to sporadic development or a gradual thinning of the tree canopy, a boundary must nevertheless be determined for reasons of useability. In these instances a road or other obvious physical element is used to provide an easily identifiable boundary between precincts.

Interface Issues

There are three situations where interface issues are of importance. The first relates to the immediate interface between two adjoining precincts. Precincts are usually delineated using identifiable physical elements such as roads. In many cases, however, the actual boundary may be slightly blurred such that the characteristics of the adjoining precinct may also apply to the land in question. Where this occurs, the adjoining precinct guidelines should be taken into account in the assessment of proposals on land adjoining another precinct. The second occasion where interface issues are of importance is in specific situations where a residential area adjoins an area outside the study boundaries. This includes public reserves, rural areas, natural landscape area, institutions and commercial or industrial areas.



- 1 Rural Interface
- 2 Garden Suburban Post-war Mix
- 3 Garden Suburban Mix
- 4 Garden Court
- 4a Future Garden Court
It is understood that this area will be subdivided and developed in the Garden Court style

Neighbourhood Character Precincts
Nagambie Neighbourhood Character Study

date | August / 08 revision | 01 client | Shire of Strathbogie





5 Character Directions for Nagambie

5.1 Preferred Character

With the increasing emphasis of neighbourhood character theory on preferred character, it is necessary to develop a logical way to arrive at a preferred character statement. Without an explicit emphasis on preferred character, character studies tend to dwell on existing characteristics. Most of the survey work of a character study, and most of the discussions in the initial stages of the project, focus exclusively on present characteristics. Also, community members tend to be sceptical and guarded when the issue of a preferred future character is placed on the agenda. Many respond that they want 'no change', or that they have no desire to impose their view of a preferred character on others. A sound, simple process is needed to 'unlock' this subject, one that enables the participants to see the sense and logic of it. It is also important for a future Planning Panel to be able to examine an explicit process by which preferred character statements have been crafted.

The following section describes the process for arriving at preferred future character for the precincts. Draft Precinct Issues Papers were produced for each precinct to describe the existing characteristics, planning controls and strategic directions, summarise the community's values and identify issues or threats. A Draft Preferred Character Statement was included in the Issues Papers. Draft statements were based on existing characteristics, community values discussed at the workshops and the study team's view of the potential or need for change in each area was produced. The Precinct Issues Papers were then reviewed by Council planning officers and interested people on the mailing list. Comments were incorporated and the Papers revised as the Precinct Brochures, which include character descriptions and Design Guidelines for each precinct.

5.2 Precinct Issues Papers

Precinct Description

The Precinct Description encapsulates all of the existing neighbourhood character features of the precinct. The interplay between existing characteristics and any unique aspects of the precinct's neighbourhood character are described. The precinct description is important because it paves the way for identifying elements that may need to be either maintained or changed within the precinct.

Key Existing Characteristics

Key Existing Characteristics that were recorded throughout the field survey are summarised in this section. The dot points provide a catalogue of information related to elements such as architectural style, building materials and garden types.

Community Values

The various methods of community consultation, including the Community Workshops and the Photographic Exercise gave the Study Team an understanding of what it is that the community values about specific precincts as well as the township as a whole. A summary of these values are included in this section

Policy Context

The Policy Context identifies other relevant sections of the Planning Scheme that apply to the local area. This ensures that the Study builds on and is consistent with Council's existing directions where applicable.



Issues / Threats

Issues and threats applying to each precinct are identified within this section. These were identified through community consultation and by the Study Team. The issues may be current (i.e. examples may already exist in the precinct) or there may be potential for them to threaten the preferred neighbourhood character of the precinct in the future.

Draft Preferred Character Statement

The Draft Preferred Character Statement outlines the desirable character features for that precinct, and how they should be achieved. The Preferred Character Statement is a lead-in to the Character Guidelines, illustrating key elements for which guidelines need to be prepared.

5.3 Character Guidelines

Based on the Precinct Issues Papers and the feedback received on these, guidelines were prepared for each precinct. Together with the Precinct Issues Papers, the guidelines form a brochure for each precinct.

The Design Guidelines address the following character elements where relevant to the precinct:

- Existing Buildings
- Vegetation
- Siting
- Height and Building Form
- Front Boundary Treatment
- Materials and Design Detailing
- Specific interfaces, including Lake Nagambie

Each character element is accompanied by a Design Objective, Design Response and Avoid statement. The Design Objective states the desired action relating to each character element, the Design Response outlines specific ways in which the objective can be achieved and the Avoid statement summarises design treatments to avoid when trying to achieve the objective.

5.4 Key Character Issues

Lake Nagambie Interface

Nagambie is an attractive country town with a strong individual identity because of its location on the banks of a lake – in fact from some viewpoints the lake dominates the town. Topographically, the town is relatively flat, but stands of indigenous vegetation (eg River Red Gums) and the distant backdrop of the Strathbogie Ranges link the town strongly to its landscape context.

In terms of built form, there are interesting historic buildings on High Street, and some fine houses – but take away the lake, and the town might be hard to distinguish from other similar settlements across country Victoria.

As the town is expected to grow very substantially in coming decades, a significant opportunity arises. The sheer quantity of new development anticipated is likely to change the town's character, for better or for worse. The opportunity is to use the new development to help create a new and stronger urban character for the town – one that is founded in the sense of place that the town already has. The obvious starting point for this is the lake.

There is a tradition of waterside design in the western world based on use of weatherboard and other 'lighter' materials. Simple, lightly constructed boat sheds, fisherman's sheds, bathing boxes and pleasure structures such as pier pavilions exemplify this style.



In seaside environments this approach has often been overlaid with nautical detailing and sun-sea-and-sand colours. This would seem alien for an inland town like Nagambie.

In Nagambie's case, the 'palette' of colours and textures might more appropriately be taken from the town's landscape setting. The key colours that can be found in the local landscape are associated with native trees and grasses, and include olive green and varying shades of beige and brown. Locally appropriate 'natural' materials might include timber and sheeting products, perhaps with metal or stone details. Corrugated metal roofs, perhaps in the same colour palette, would complement the lightness of design. Shiny or reflective materials, other than glazing, would be avoided.

Building forms would be simple in basic plan but with strong articulation, particularly of elevations. Plans of larger buildings would fit more easily into the finer grain of a country town by being divided into distinguishable component parts and avoiding strong symmetry. Verandahs, balconies, roofs, balustrades and other devices can be used to articulate elevations and add to the feeling of lightness. Balconies, verandahs and similar features would use light timber or metal supports, rather than heavy masonry.

This approach to building 'style' is deliberately different to the heavier, urban style found in many resort developments and former docklands.

Older Dwellings

While there is a larger concentration of older buildings in the Garden Suburban Mix precinct, there are several older buildings dotted across other residential parts of the township. These older dwellings are an important feature of Nagambie, although there is a very limited use of the Heritage Overlay within the township. The Neighbourhood Character Assessment cannot recommend the application of the Heritage Overlay, although it is understood that Council has commissioned RBA Architects to undertake a Heritage Study for the Shire. As of August 2008 they have undertaken a preliminary analysis and have identified several key buildings in Nagambie with potential heritage values. In the case of the Garden Suburban Mix Precinct, through the design guidelines the Neighbourhood Character Assessment encourages, but cannot enforce, planning permit applicants to retain all or part of those older buildings which contribute to the valued character of the precinct.

Period Reproduction Styles

Period reproduction styles are often thought of as the best design response in a street of period homes, with the intent of 'blending in' new development. Many would argue that in fact period reproduction style homes detract from the integrity of older authentic homes. In areas where period homes exist, contemporary architecture that is distinguishable from existing buildings should be encouraged, in order to add another layer to the architectural history of the town.

Lot Size

Lot size is an issue that arose during consultation. Many residents value larger lot sizes however this is often attributed more to the size of the dwelling on a lot rather than the lot size itself. Newer subdivisions are often identified as areas with smaller lot sizes but in reality it is the size of dwellings that make lots appear smaller. Measures such as increased front setbacks and gaps between buildings can help to alleviate this issue, particularly in newer subdivisions. Infill buildings should respect the existing pattern of front and side setbacks in the street.

Higher Scale Buildings

It is understood that there is a low level of pressure in residentially zoned areas for higher scale buildings. The height of buildings is largely controlled through ResCode, and it would be considered excessive in Nagambie's case to restrict building heights in residential areas. If buildings are in excess of the existing predominant building height, it is more imperative that their design adheres to the Height and Built Form and Materials and Design Detail guidelines within the Neighbourhood Character Brochures.



New Subdivisions

Residentially zoned areas that are yet to be subdivided and developed have been deliberately excluded from the Study Area. The Nagambie Growth Management Strategy labels these areas as urban growth or future residential areas, requiring additional guidance. These areas are not addressed in the Neighbourhood Character Assessment because they lack an existing residential character to analyse and build on through the concept of preferred future character.

There are, however, some parts of the township that are zoned Residential 1 which appear to present opportunities for infill and higher densities than that which currently exists. This specifically includes the Rural Interface Precinct. The Neighbourhood Character Brochure for this area uses a combination of the existing character and community values as a base for the preferred future character and guidelines and supports the retention of the 'semi-rural' character of the precinct insofar as providing generous setbacks or vegetation or post and wire fencing as a front boundary treatment. The Neighbourhood Character Assessment does not, however, seek to restrict lot sizes or densities to an extent which would contradict the location of the precinct in the Residential 1 Zone.



6 Neighbourhood Character Guidelines

6.1 Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines for each precinct are one of the key outputs of the Neighbourhood Character Assessment. They form the second page of the Neighbourhood Character Brochures which are included at the end of this chapter. The purpose of the Design Guidelines is to provide a basis from which to assess planning permit applications, but also to inform permit applicants early on in the process of the objectives, possible design responses and things to avoid in each precinct.

6.2 Key Objective, Strategies and Actions

Key Objective

- Determine a preferred future character for development in Nagambie, existing and proposed.

Strategies

- Strengthen the existing valued neighbourhood character elements and the overall sense of place throughout the residential areas of Nagambie.

Actions

- Prepare a planning scheme amendment that:
 - Reflects the broad findings of the Neighbourhood Character Assessment in the MSS, including summary points of the findings in Chapter 3, 'Neighbourhood Character in Nagambie' and Chapter 4, 'Character Directions for Nagambie'.
 - Inserts the Preferred Character Statements for each precinct into the MSS;
 - Includes the Neighbourhood Character Assessment report as an Incorporated Document in the planning scheme.
- Retain and enhance the character of the public domain through the provision of street trees and landscaping and the maintenance of roadways, kerbs and footpaths.
- Consider an educational program to implement the Neighbourhood Character Assessment through the education of stakeholders including real estate agents, developers, land owners, design and building professionals, etc. This may take the form of information leaflets, workshops, award schemes for 'good' character developments, displays or media releases.
- Develop and support a staff skilling program to make the best use of the Neighbourhood Character Assessment's content which may include:
 - Correct approaches to site analyses;
 - Knowledge about acceptable design solutions;
 - Familiarity with architectural styles;
 - Consistency of decisions.

A staff skilling program may include training sessions, workshops or a review of current applications by urban design consultants. In addition, training may be required for other parts of the Council organisation where recommendations impact upon public domain works.



- Promote consistent decision making and communication techniques involving expectations around good design, and delays or refusal if permit applicants fail to meet these expectations.

Precinct Description: Rural Interface



Precinct Description

The character of the streets in this precinct is largely influenced by their location at the edge of the township and by the rural landscapes that surround them. Streetscapes have an open, informal and semi-rural atmosphere, due in part to unsealed shoulders, wide grassy verges and the use of post-and-wire fencing. There are several vacant lots throughout the precinct, but where buildings exist, they are predominantly low-scale brick dwellings from the 1970s-1990s. Buildings have generous setbacks with large grassed areas and sparsely scattered vegetation which enhances the openness of streetscapes. The general lack of solid fencing allows views across streetscapes and into the rural and farming land that surrounds the precinct.

Key Existing Characteristics

- Where buildings exist, they predominantly include low-slung brick style dwellings from the 1970s-1990s.
- Materials include a mix of timber and brick, with predominantly tin roofs.
- Building height is single storey.
- Gardens are large and open, with low-scale vegetation and scattered canopy trees and grassed areas that allow views to the landscapes that surround properties.
- Front boundaries are either open or lined with rural-style post and wire fencing. There is occasional use of steel fencing for side and rear boundaries.
- Front and side setbacks are large, with dwellings set in-ground.
- Streetscapes are informal, with generally unsealed shoulders, wide grassy verges and a lack of formal footpath. Street trees occasionally include scattered native vegetation.
- These residential areas have a unique 'rural' atmosphere owing to the farming land that surrounds them.

Community Values

- Large lot sizes.
- Lower density buildings.
- Low scale, single storey dwellings.
- Off-street parking.
- The rural aspect of the township.

Policy Context

- The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) contains strategies that:
 - 'ensure that future residential growth and development is accommodated for in a planned manner'.

- encourage consolidation of residential development in existing urban centres, new development that provides for a high quality lot layout and diversity of sizes and housing options to maintain a diverse population mix within the Shire.
- identify areas that could be investigated in the future for residential growth when required.
- The Residential 1 Zone provides for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households. It also encourages residential development that respects neighbourhood character.

Issues / Threats

- Large-scale subdivision that results in cul-de-sacs and narrow roadways and overdevelopment of sites.
- Loss of informal roadways.
- Large areas of impervious surfaces on private property.
- Housing development that exceeds the existing low scale of streetscapes.
- New development lacking on-site landscaping or tree planting.
- Use of brightly coloured or highly reflective materials or finishes.

Draft Preferred Character Statement

The open, semi-rural character of this precinct will be retained through the maintenance of views beyond the precinct to rural landscapes. Large lot sizes and low site coverage will continue to enhance this characteristic. Varying building styles will add to the appeal of the precinct however the built form will avoid dominating streets and the landscape. Front boundaries will be lined with either rural post and wire style fences or vegetation, in order to maintain the informal character of the precinct. Streetscapes will remain open, with native vegetation informally planted on roadside verges, unsealed shoulders and a lack of footpaths.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring large front, side and rear setbacks.
- Encouraging no front fencing or fencing appropriate to a rural setting.
- Encouraging the retention and planting of indigenous and native trees.
- Retaining and enhancing informal streetscape treatments.



Design Guidelines: Rural Interface

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
Vegetation	To maintain and strengthen the landscape character of streets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees and substantial vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible. > Provide indigenous and native vegetation as a preference over exotic vegetation wherever possible. 	<p><i>Removal of large, established trees.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i></p>
Siting	To provide space for front gardens.	> Set buildings back a sufficient distance from the front boundary to accommodate a front garden including trees and shrubs.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain the rhythm of spacing between buildings and allow for planting.	> Buildings should be set back from boundaries to create the appearance of space between buildings and to accommodate substantial vegetation.	<p><i>Boundary to boundary development.</i></p> <p><i>New development that interrupts the rhythm of side boundary setbacks.</i></p>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space, the dominance of car parking structures and the number of vehicular crossovers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling. > Minimise the use of hard paving in the space surrounding the dwelling. > Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage. 	<p><i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i></p>
Height and building form	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the dominant building scale and forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Respect the predominant building height and pitched roof forms in the street and nearby properties. > Articulate the form of buildings and facades through the composition of openings and setbacks and through the use of balconies, roofs and ballustrades.. 	<p><i>Buildings that appear to exceed by more than one storey the predominant number of storeys in buildings in the street and nearby properties.</i></p> <p><i>Large, bulky buildings with flat, poorly articulated wall surfaces.</i></p>
Materials and design detail	To use building materials, features and finishes that complement surrounding landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consider the use of materials such as timber and sheeting products in colours that can be found in the local landscape including olive green and varying shades of beige and brown. > Consider the use of metal or stone details. > Consider the use of corrugated metal roofs in colours that complement wall materials and finishes. 	<p><i>Large, unarticulated wall surfaces that use one material only.</i></p> <p><i>Shiny or reflective materials, other than glazing.</i></p> <p><i>Dominant building features such as wide columns or balustrades constructed of masonry or other materials that are heavy in appearance.</i></p>
Boundary treatment	To maintain the open, semi-rural character of existing residential areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provide an open frontage. > Provide vegetation as a frontage or use a rural post and wire style fence. 	<i>High, solid front fencing.</i>

Precinct Description: Garden Suburban Post-war Mix



Precinct Description

This precinct is dominated by post-war era dwellings set within front gardens, lined with low front fences. The gaps between buildings and generous front setbacks contribute to an openness within streetscapes that is further enhanced by wide verges. Dwelling styles are modest, and constructed of timber or brick, with simple detailing typical of the post-war era. Newer buildings respond to this character, with a general respect for the low scale of built form, generous front setbacks and simple design detailing. Streetscape vegetation is informal, and includes mostly native vegetation.

Key Existing Characteristics

- These areas predominantly contain housing from the post-war eras, including 1950s weatherboard dwellings and 1960s-70s brick dwellings. There has also been some more recent contemporary development.
- Dwellings are constructed of timber or brick and roofs are a mix of tile and tin.
- Building height is single storey.
- Gardens are generally low-level and medium in size, containing a mix of native and exotic vegetation and lawn areas.
- Front boundary treatment is mixed, although where fences are present, they generally allow views to gardens and dwellings.
- Front setbacks vary in length up to 12m.
- Side setbacks are generally 1-2m on one side and 3m on the other.
- Some more recent dwellings have garages or car ports built to the side of the dwelling, and often these abut the side boundary.
- Streets are lined with rollover or upstanding concrete kerbs and grassed verges. Concrete footpaths are generally provided on one side of the street.
- Streetscape vegetation predominantly comprises irregularly spaced native vegetation.
- Properties in the north-eastern section of the precinct have views to both the lake and small inlet which is surrounded by native vegetation. Dwellings along Blayne Lane also have scenic views to another inlet and across rural/bush land.

Community Values

- Large lot sizes.
- Lower density buildings.
- Low scale, single storey dwellings.
- Off-street parking.
- The rural aspect of the township.

Policy Context

- The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) contains strategies that:
 - 'ensure that future residential growth and development is accommodated for in a planned manner'.
 - encourage consolidation of residential development in existing urban centres, new development that provides for a high quality lot layout and diversity of sizes and housing options to maintain a diverse population mix within the Shire.
 - identify areas that could be investigated in the future for residential growth when required.
- The Residential 1 Zone provides for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households. It also encourages residential development that respects neighbourhood character.

Issues / Threats

- Buildings with a high proportion of site coverage that reduce the feeling of spaciousness in streets.
- Large unarticulated facades.
- Boundary to boundary development.
- Excessive hard surfaces surrounding dwellings.
- High front fences that block views to dwellings.
- Car parking structures that dominate the streetscape.

Preferred Character Statement

Older buildings will continue to dominate the character of this precinct, and new development will to reflect the pattern of low scale housing surrounded by garden spaces and lined with low or no front fences. Additional vegetation in both the public and private domain will enhance the landscape character of the precinct and improve streetscapes. New housing will be of a high quality and will avoid dominance of older houses through the use of materials, scale and setbacks.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the retention of older buildings that contribute to the valued character of the area.
- Encouraging low or no front fencing.
- Encouraging high quality housing that uses materials that complement the existing use of materials in the precinct.
- Encouraging low scale housing that avoids dominance of original housing stock.
- Ensuring that houses are set back from front boundaries and at least one side boundary in order to accommodate substantial vegetation.
- Ensuring development proposals include the use of substantial vegetation.



Design Guidelines: Garden Suburban Post-war Mix

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
Vegetation	To maintain and strengthen the landscape character of streets.	> Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees and substantial vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible.	<i>Removal of large, established trees.</i>
		> In the vicinity of Lake Nagambie planting in private gardens should contribute to the unique landscape quality of the lake and its surrounds through the use of native vegetation.	<i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i>
Siting	To provide space for front gardens.	> Set buildings back a sufficient distance from the front boundary to accommodate a front garden including trees and shrubs.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain the rhythm of spacing between buildings and allow for planting.	> Buildings should be set back from boundaries to create the appearance of space between buildings and to accommodate substantial vegetation.	<i>Boundary to boundary development.</i> <i>New development that interrupts the rhythm of side boundary setbacks.</i>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space, the dominance of car parking structures and the number of vehicular crossovers.	> Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling. > Minimise hard paving in front yards. > Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage.	<i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i> <i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i>
Height and building form	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the dominant building scale and forms.	> Respect the predominant building height and pitched roof forms in the street and nearby properties.	<i>Buildings that appear to exceed by more than one storey the predominant number of storeys in buildings in the street and nearby properties.</i> <i>Large, bulky buildings with flat, poorly articulated wall surfaces.</i>
		> Articulate the form of buildings and facades through the composition of openings and setbacks, and through the use of balconies, roofs and ballustrades.	
Materials and design detail	To use building materials, features and finishes that provide an interesting façade and complement the predominant building style in the street.	> Use building materials that are commonly found in the precinct, including a mix of masonry and timber. > Articulate the walls of buildings through the use of more than one material in building facades.	<i>Large, unarticulated wall surfaces that use one material only.</i> <i>Dominant building features such as wide columns or balustrades constructed of masonry or other materials that are heavy in appearance.</i>
Front boundary treatment	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views into front gardens.	> Front fences should be appropriate to the building era or reflect the typical fencing height and style of the street. > Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the dwelling. > In streets where front fencing is predominantly absent, provide an open frontage.	<i>High, solid front fencing that blocks views to gardens.</i>
Lake Nagambie Interface	To ensure that built form adjoining Lake Nagambie complements the landscape in views from across the Lake.	> Set back upper levels from facades fronting the Lake. > Respect the existing overall height of the built form abutting the Lake.	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape when viewed from across Lake Nagambie.</i>
	To use materials and finishes that complement the landscape features of Lake Nagambie.	> Consider the use of materials such as timber and sheeting products in colours that can be found in the local landscape including olive green and varying shades of beige and brown. > Consider the use of metal or stone details. > Consider the use of corrugated metal roofs in colours that complement wall materials and finishes.	<i>Shiny or reflective materials, other than glazing.</i>
	To create a sense of openness and retain views to buildings abutting the Lake.	> Provide an open frontage or a low or permeable fence alongside the Lake frontage.	<i>High, solid fencing abutting the Lake.</i>

Precinct Description: Garden Suburban Mix



Precinct Description

The variety of dwelling styles within this precinct creates a diverse character with varied building forms and a range of different materials within streetscapes. This precinct contains some of the oldest residential buildings in the township, with dwellings from the Victorian, Interwar, post-war and more recent eras. Streets have a low and open feel that is enhanced by low scale buildings and low or open front fences. The western portion of the precinct adjoins Lake Nagambie and some properties have access to spectacular views across this landscape.

Key Existing Characteristics

- These areas contain a variety of dwelling styles from all eras dating back to the Victorian.
- Dwellings are constructed of timber or brick and roofs are a mix of tile and tin.
- Building height is predominantly single storey.
- Gardens are medium in size and contain a range of exotic and native species. Some older dwellings have cottage gardens, while more recent dwellings tend to have low-scale gardens with areas of lawn.
- Front boundaries are generally lined with low to medium height front fences which include wire, brick and picket styles. Some front boundaries are also open.
- Buildings are set back at varying distances from the front boundary. Generally older dwellings tend to be positioned closer to the front boundary, while newer dwellings are set further back from the front boundary.
- Side setbacks are generally 1-2m on one side and 3-4m on the other.
- Some more recent dwellings have garages or car ports built to the side of the dwelling, and often these abut the side boundary.
- Streets are lined with rollover or upstanding concrete kerbs and grassed verges. Footpaths are generally absent, except along Vale Street.
- Streetscape vegetation is generally informal, with native and exotic vegetation throughout.
- Many properties located in the western portion of the precinct have impressive views across the Nagambie Lakes.
- This precinct also contains the Nagambie Catholic Church and School.

Community Values

- Large lot sizes.
- Lower density buildings.
- Low scale, single storey dwellings.
- Off-street parking.

Policy Context

- The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) contains strategies that:
- 'ensure that future residential growth and development is accommodated for in a planned manner'.
- encourage consolidation of residential development in existing urban centres, new development that provides for a high quality lot layout and diversity of sizes and housing options to maintain a diverse population mix within the Shire.
- identify areas that could be investigated in the future for residential growth when required.
- The Residential 1 Zone provides for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households. It also encourages residential development that respects neighbourhood character.

Issues / Threats

- Loss of older residential buildings that contribute to the valued character of the precinct.
- Buildings with a high proportion of site coverage that reduce the feeling of spaciousness in streets.
- Large unarticulated facades.
- Boundary to boundary development.
- Excessive hard surfaces surrounding dwellings.
- High front fences that block views to dwellings.
- Car parking structures that dominate the streetscape.

Preferred Character Statement

The established nature of this precinct as one of the oldest parts of the township will continue to be its dominating characteristic. Where possible, older buildings will be maintained and enhanced through renovation and restoration. New buildings will respect the existing character through the use of materials found in the precinct and through maintenance of space around buildings for gardens. Front fences will remain low and open to retain views to gardens and dwellings. Garden spaces will be planted with additional vegetation to soften the streetscape. Around Lake Nagambie, views across this landscape will be enhanced by maintaining a low scale building form and reducing visual clutter.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the retention of older housing stock that contributes to the valued character of the area.
- Encouraging low or no front fencing.
- Encouraging street planting in new developments.
- Ensuring development is sited to reduce the loss of vegetation and to provide for new vegetation.



Design Guidelines: Garden Suburban Mix

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
Existing Buildings	To encourage the retention of older dwellings that contribute to the character of the area.	> Consider retaining and/or adapting older Victorian, Edwardian or Interwar dwellings that are in good condition, particularly the front section, wherever possible in new development.	<i>Loss of older dwellings that contribute to the character of the area.</i> <i>New development that is out of scale and character with existing dwellings.</i>
Vegetation	To maintain and strengthen the landscape character of streets.	> Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees and substantial vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible.	<i>Removal of large, established trees.</i> <i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i>
Siting	To provide space for front gardens.	> Set buildings back a sufficient distance from the front boundary to accommodate a front garden including trees and shrubs.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain the rhythm of spacing between buildings and allow for planting.	> Set buildings back from boundaries to create the appearance of space between buildings and to accommodate substantial vegetation.	<i>Boundary to boundary development.</i> <i>New development that interrupts the rhythm of side boundary setbacks.</i>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space, the dominance of car parking structures and the number of vehicular crossovers.	> Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling. > Minimise hard paving in front yards. > Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage.	<i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i> <i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i>
Height and building form	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the dominant building scale and forms.	> Respect the predominant building height and pitched roof forms in the street and nearby properties. > Articulate the form of buildings and facades through the composition of openings and setbacks.	<i>Buildings that appear to exceed by more than one storey the predominant number of storeys in buildings in the street and nearby properties.</i> <i>Large, bulky buildings with flat, poorly articulated wall surfaces.</i>
Materials and design detail	To use building materials, features and finishes that provide an interesting façade and complement the predominant building style in the street.	> Use building materials that are commonly found in the precinct, including a mix of timber and masonry. > Articulate the walls of buildings through the use of more than one material in building facades.	<i>Large, unarticulated wall surfaces that use one material only.</i> <i>Dominant building features such as wide columns or balustrades constructed of masonry or other materials that are heavy in appearance.</i>
Front boundary treatment	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views into front gardens.	> Front fences should be appropriate to the building era or reflect the typical fencing height and style of the street. > Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the dwelling. > In streets where front fencing is predominantly absent, provide an open frontage.	<i>High, solid front fencing that blocks views to gardens.</i>
Lake Nagambie Interface	To ensure that built form adjoining Lake Nagambie complements the landscape in views from across the Lake.	> Set back upper levels from facades fronting the Lake. > Respect the existing overall height of the built form abutting the Lake.	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape when viewed from across Lake Nagambie.</i>
	To use materials and finishes that complement the landscape features of Lake Nagambie.	> Consider the use of materials such as timber and sheeting products in colours that can be found in the local landscape including olive green and varying shades of beige and brown. > Consider the use of metal or stone details. > Consider the use of corrugated metal roofs in colours that complement wall materials and finishes.	<i>Shiny or reflective materials, other than glazing.</i>
	To create a sense of openness and retain views to buildings abutting the Lake.	> Provide an open frontage or a low or permeable fence alongside the Lake frontage.	<i>High, solid fencing abutting the Lake.</i>

Precinct Description: Garden Court



Precinct Description

The character of this precinct is defined by more recent development set within cul-de-sacs or curvilinear subdivisions. Dwellings are constructed of brick, with low-pitched tile or tin roofs. Large areas of lawn, sparsely scattered shrubs and occasional canopy trees surround buildings. Streetscapes have an open appearance due to the general absence of front fences, wide verges and generous front setbacks. The lack of footpaths in some parts further enhances the openness of the streetscape and makes front gardens appear larger than they are. Curramar Close is a unique, enclosed subdivision with dwellings surrounding a common landscaped area.

Key Existing Characteristics

- Buildings are predominantly from the 1980s-1990s, although there are some examples from the 1970s and several recent contemporary and reproduction style dwellings.
- Dwellings are constructed of brick in varying colours and roofs are either tin or tile.
- Building height is single storey.
- Gardens vary in size and are generally formally landscaped with lawn areas, garden beds, shrubs and occasional canopy trees.
- Front boundaries are either open or lined with low front fencing that allows views to dwellings and gardens.
- Buildings are generally set back around 5m-7m from the front boundary and varying distances from the side boundary. In areas lacking front fences and footpaths, front setbacks appear larger than what they are. In some cases garages are built to the side boundary.
- Streets are lined with rollover or upstanding concrete kerbs and wide grassy verges. In some parts, there are concrete footpaths on one side of the road.
- Streetscape vegetation is generally informal, with sparsely scattered native vegetation throughout.

Community Values

- Large lot sizes.
- Lower density buildings.
- Low scale, single storey dwellings.
- Off-street parking.
- The rural aspect of the township.

Policy Context

- The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) contains strategies that:
 - 'ensure that future residential growth and development is accommodated for in a planned manner'.
 - encourage consolidation of residential development in existing urban centres, new development that provides for a high quality lot layout and diversity of sizes and housing options to maintain a diverse population mix within the Shire.
 - identify areas that could be investigated in the future for residential growth when required.
- The Residential 1 Zone provides for residential development at a range of densities with a variety of dwellings to meet the housing needs of all households. It also encourages residential development that respects neighbourhood character.

Issues / Threats

- Buildings that exceed the predominant building height in the streetscape.
- Large areas of impervious surfaces.
- Large wall surfaces of one material or colour.
- A reduction in front and side setbacks.

Preferred Character Statement

Dwellings in this precinct will continue to be surrounded by garden settings. These will be enhanced through planting of additional trees that will contribute to an evolving canopy of predominantly native trees. Open front setbacks will allow the spaciousness of the precinct to be retained and the lack of delineation between the public and private domain will continue to be a defining characteristic of the precinct. The low scale of buildings and low pitched roofs will emphasise the dominance of the landscape character. In the public realm additional informal street planting will enhance the character of streetscapes.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging low or no front fencing.
- Ensuring that substantial vegetation is included in all development proposals.



Design Guidelines: Garden Court

CHARACTER ELEMENT	OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
Vegetation	To maintain and strengthen the landscape character of streets.	> Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees and substantial vegetation, including canopy trees.	<i>Removal of large, established trees.</i>
		> Use native or indigenous vegetation as a preference over exotic vegetation where possible.	<i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i>
Siting	To provide space for front gardens.	> Set buildings back a sufficient distance from the front boundary to accommodate a front garden including trees and shrubs.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain the rhythm of spacing between buildings and allow for planting.	> Set buildings back from boundaries to create the appearance of space between buildings and to accommodate substantial vegetation.	<i>Boundary to boundary development.</i> <i>New development that interrupts the rhythm of side boundary setbacks.</i>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space, the dominance of car parking structures and the number of vehicular crossovers.	> Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling. > Minimise hard paving in front yards. > Provide only one vehicular crossover per typical site frontage.	<i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i> <i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i>
Height and building form	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the dominant building scale and forms.	> Respect the predominant building height and pitched roof forms in the street and nearby properties.	<i>Buildings that appear to exceed by more than one storey the predominant number of storeys in buildings in the street and nearby properties.</i>
		> Articulate the form of buildings and facades through the composition of openings and setbacks, and through the use of balconies, roofs and ballustrades.	<i>Large, bulky buildings with flat, poorly articulated wall surfaces.</i>
Materials and design detail	To use building materials, features and finishes that provide an interesting façade and complement the predominant building style in the street.	> Use building materials that are commonly found in the precinct, including a mix of masonry, timber and corrugated iron.	<i>Large, unarticulated wall surfaces that use one material only.</i>
		> Articulate the walls of buildings through the use of more than one material in building facades.	<i>Dominant building features such as wide columns or balustrades constructed of masonry or other materials that are heavy in appearance.</i>
Front boundary treatment	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views into front gardens.	> Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the dwelling.	<i>High, solid front fencing that blocks views to gardens.</i>
		> Provide an open frontage.	