

21.0613/08/2020
C119latr**BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE**

This clause provides local content to support Clause 15 (Built Environment and Heritage).

Specific reference to individual towns is included in Clause 21.09 (Local Area Growth Plans).

21.06-1**Urban Design and Neighbourhood Character**

Good quality private and public development and landscaping contribute to the function, safety and liveability of urban environments and improved health outcomes for the community. Consideration of good urban design outcomes is particularly important for main road approaches to urban centres.

The *Latrobe City Healthy Urban Design Good Practice Guideline – Meeting Healthy by Design Objectives* (the Guideline) provides guidance in designing and developing healthy and safe communities.

The *Latrobe City Urban Design Guidelines* (as amended) are relevant in considering development applications and their impact on the appearance of industrial, commercial and residential areas.

The *Latrobe City Council Housing Strategy* (2019) describes neighbourhood character as the interplay of the public and private realms within a streetscape, neighbourhood or township that make a place distinctive from another.

Neighbourhood character is however valued differently across local communities and for many, character is not always about the built or natural environment, it is about other attributes such as the people who live in the area, proximity to shops, transport options or availability of parks.

Regional centres have a number of unique characteristics when compared with typical suburban or metropolitan development. These differences are often interwoven with economic, social and geographical influences that shape the form of housing development. Several key distinctions between regional development and metropolitan development include:

- Layout and spaciousness
- Sporadic and irregular development patterns
- The size and spacing of dwellings
- Landscape and geographic context
- Community values, perceptions and expectations

Housing in Latrobe City has many of these elements and although there are some areas which have a more defined character than others, each of the four main townships shares many similarities. Common character elements include simple building forms comprising dwellings usually constructed with brick or weatherboard, incorporating aluminium frame windows and shallow pitched roofs in a garden setting.

It is acknowledged that there is a recognisable difference between the character of older established areas and the newer suburbs in the main towns.

Special character areas have been identified as follows:

- Garden Suburban, being spacious residential areas in a garden setting with a mixture of older buildings located along linear street patterns, with pockets of established vegetation.
- Lifestyle Suburban, being dwellings on large lots in spacious landscaped settings, located on curvilinear and court street patterns with a strong rural character.
- Bush Suburban, being residential areas of large, informal lots visually dominated by landscaping. Built form is often hidden behind canopy trees and a well-established garden setting.

Other urban character types can be defined and would be the subject of further research.

21.06-2 Objective 1

Support development in a form which strengthens civic pride and presentation as Gippsland's major regional city.

Strategies

- 1.1 Support high standard urban design outcomes.
 - 1.2 Improve the visual appearance of key transport routes and town entrances.
 - 1.3 Support the upgrade of degraded areas (including commercial and industrial land); in particular at town entrances and primary transport routes.
 - 1.4 Facilitate new development of varying scales, density and activity in accordance with the Housing Framework Plans whilst preserving and the amenity of existing neighbourhoods and locations with specific character or heritage value.
 - 1.5 Ensure applications for residential, commercial and industrial land use and development appropriately consider and respond to the Latrobe City Urban Design Guidelines.
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21.06-3 Objective 2

Reinforce the regional suburban character of Latrobe City's established and new neighbourhoods whilst responding to changing housing needs.

Strategies

- 2.1 Facilitate and support the development of diverse and smaller housing types in preferred locations in accordance with the Housing Framework Plans, while retaining streetscape character and recognised heritage values.
 - 2.2 Facilitate the development of streetscapes of regional suburban character in Latrobe City, comprising built form that addresses public areas, wide streets, provision of generous front setbacks and space between dwellings.
 - 2.3 Support development that is practical, flexible and which meets the needs of people of different ages and abilities without the need for major adaptation post construction.
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21.06-4 Objective 3

To provide for walkable neighbourhoods, ensuring public transport, shops, public open space and mixed-use activity and neighbourhood centres are close to all dwellings.

Strategies

- 3.1 Consider the *Healthy Urban Design Good Practice Guideline* when assessing new subdivision and development.
 - 3.2 Ensure new dwellings have good access to pedestrian and cycle paths.
 - 3.3 Ensure open space areas, pedestrian and cycle paths incorporate shade, toilet facilities, drinking taps, cycle racks, seating, lighting and directional signage where possible.
 - 3.4 Encourage community centres to be located within a 400-800 metre walk from all dwellings.
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- 3.5 Encourage built form that supports and enhances passive surveillance.
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21.06-5 Objective 4

To improve the visual quality of development through improved design, siting and landscaping.

Strategies

- 4.1 Ensure that urban design and landscaping improves the visual amenity of gateways, transport routes, streets and places.
 - 4.2 Ensure that multi-unit housing is well landscaped, with tree and shrub selection creating a positive visual image.
 - 4.3 In residential areas, ensure there is adequate scope for canopy tree planting in private properties and within street reservations.
 - 4.4 Provide adequate reserve widths or tree reserves in new subdivisions and established areas to enhance road safety, protect power lines and contribute to neighbourhood character
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21.06-6 Heritage

Latrobe City has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that is evidence of how the landscape has been changed by indigenous and non-indigenous people. Gippsland was occupied by the Gunaikurnai people for many thousands of years prior to European settlement. The first non-indigenous people to visit Gippsland were explorers, and pastoralists followed, which led to the development of agricultural industries such as grazing and dairying and the loss of native forest cover over much of the land.

The greatest change to the cultural landscape came in the twentieth century with the exploitation of the vast brown coal reserves.

The diverse history of the area is reflected in the heritage places that have been identified by the *Latrobe City Heritage Study 2010*, which incorporates the findings of two previous studies; *Traralgon Heritage Study 1992* and the *Latrobe Heritage Study 1991*. The heritage places include archaeological sites, township precincts, buildings, memorials, gardens, factories and trees.

21.06-7 Objective 1

To ensure that the heritage of Latrobe City is identified, protected and conserved.

Strategies

- 1.1 Ensure that all heritage places and precincts of local or state significance receive appropriate statutory protection.
 - 1.2 Nominate heritage places, precincts and archaeological sites of potential state significance for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register.
 - 1.3 Provide assistance and support to owners and custodians of heritage places in the conservation and management of these places.
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21.06-8 Objective 2

To identify, recognise and protect places of heritage, cultural and social significance.

Strategies

- 2.1 Discourage demolition of heritage assets, unless net community benefit can be demonstrated.
 - 2.2 Ensure that additions, alterations and replacement buildings are sympathetic to the heritage area and surrounds.
 - 2.3 Ensure that the management of heritage places will reveal rather than diminish the significance of the place.
 - 2.4 Ensure that the use and development of heritage places and adjoining land is compatible with and does not adversely affect the significance of the place.
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21.06-9 Township Identity

Each town has its own unique character and enhancing these characteristics is key to further defining township. A design response assessment is an important consideration for to assist Council and the community with making decisions on the basis of ‘character and identity’ to address issues including:

- Identifying and protecting areas within the municipality with significant neighbourhood character values.
- Considering neighbourhood character issues in the assessment of infill housing development proposals within existing residential areas.
- Balancing the tension in policy between promoting growth and consolidation with the desire to respect residential amenity and neighbourhood character.
- Ensuring that the scale and design of development and its impacts on existing amenity are addressed.
- Minimising the loss of backyard areas and established vegetation through subdivision and development.

21.06-10 Objective 1

To protect and enhance the unique landscape qualities and features that contribute to places in the urban and rural character of the municipality, and which give the different localities in the City their own identity.

Strategies

- 1.1 Ensure that new development maintains and enhances the character of the surrounding area.
 - 1.2 Improve the amenity of neighbouring areas and seek to enhance the built form design.
 - 1.3 Encourage the retention of intact, older buildings and features that contribute to the character of the area.
 - 1.4 Integrate buildings and landscape settings with open space and the environs.
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21.06-11 Implementation

The objectives, strategies and policy guidelines arising from this clause are implemented through the application of appropriate zones and overlays in Clause 21.10.