

donnybrook /
woodstock



visual character assessment

DRAFT REPORT: DONNYBROOK PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN (1067) / WOODSTOCK PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN (1096)

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Disclaimer

Information presented in the Donnybrook / Woodstock Visual Character assessment is based on site analysis and visits undertaken between 2012 - 2014 and background reports prepared to inform the Donnybrook / Woodstock Precinct Structure Plans.

This analysis is provided as a broad resource only and while care has been taken to ensure the content in this report is accurate, we cannot guarantee that the report is without flaw of any kind. There may be errors and omissions or it may not be wholly appropriate for your particular purposes.

The City of Whittlesea accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from reliance on any information contained in this report.

City of Whittlesea
July 2014

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Executive Summary





Retaining and integrating visual character features into urban development establishes a strong sense of place and local identity.

This report has been prepared for the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) and the City of Whittlesea to identify existing visual features of the Donnybrook and Woodstock Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) areas and provide recommendations as to how to sensitively integrate these features into future urban development.

The City of Whittlesea's growth corridors are highly valued for their existing visual character features. Both Donnybrook and Woodstock PSP areas boast many natural and heritage visual character features providing a solid foundation for an urban development with strong local identity.

Defining landscape features of the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP areas include presence and clustering of the River Red Gums, windrow planting and waterways. Topography of the area is defined by past volcanic eruptions creating a number of high points including Hayes Hill which facilitates 360 degree views. Views to Bald Hill, Mt Frazer, Kinglake National Park and the city are also available from different vantage points on site. Past geological activity has left a number of stony rises scattered throughout the site. The dry stone walls and heritage structures on the other hand provide a direct link to historical rural use and add to the visual interest and cultural identity of the area.

KEY PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The key project objectives of this report were to:

1. Identify the existing key visual character elements of the site and evaluate their visual character and retention value.
2. Provide a site analysis identifying site specific opportunities and constraints.
3. Provide an analysis of local case studies that have successfully incorporated visual character elements in to an urban context.
4. Recommend design responses for incorporating identified visual character elements in an urban context.
5. Identify existing strategies and policies that influence the retention of visual character elements.

Executive Summary

-  Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Area
-  E6 Reservation
-  Sydney/Melbourne Freight Line
-  Priority dry stone wall retention
-  Conservation / Open Space areas
-  Strategic Links
-  Heritage places
-  Visually exposed areas
-  Sensitive design area (scattered trees & windrows)
-  Key placemaking opportunity

LIST OF KEY PLACE MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

- A. Hayes Hill
- B. Grassy Eucalypt Woodland
- C. Farmstead at 975 Donnybrook Rd
- D. Stockyard remnants
- E. 915 Donnybrook Rd (Donnybrook Farmhouse Cheese Factory)
- F. Stone house remains



Figure 1: Donnybrook / Woodstock Summary Opportunities / Constraints



SITE ANALYSIS - OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

A site analysis and opportunity and constraints mapping has been undertaken in order to assess the value of retaining visual features in the Donnybrook and Woodstock PSP areas. The following opportunities were identified:

Conservation or Open Space Areas

Large woodland areas or areas with significant existing trees and multiple co-located visual character elements that should be prioritised for retention.

Strategic Links

Physical and visual linking opportunities between visual character elements (ie. via roads and/or linear open space reserves).

Priority Dry Stone Wall Retention

Dry stone walls prioritised for retention based on co-location with other visual character elements, heritage values and potential for links between visual character features

Heritage Places

Approximate site boundaries around heritage places have been shown and will be refined upon further detailed investigation.

Visually Exposed Areas

Areas where development will be visually exposed such as treeless plains where few visual character elements exist.

Sensitive Design Areas

Areas of loosely scattered trees and windrows where development will need to be carefully designed to ensure positive interface to trees.

Key Place Making Opportunities

Six sites were identified for local place making as part of the assessment. The sites were selected based on a variety of criteria including their standout visual appeal, contribution to local identity and location. Each site requires further investigation and site analysis as part of the subdivision process. These sites include:

A. Hayes Hill

B. Grassy Eucalypt Woodland

C. Farmstead at 975 Donnybrook Rd

D. Stockyard remnants

E. 915 Donnybrook Rd (Donnybrook Farmhouse Cheese Factory)

F. Stone house remains

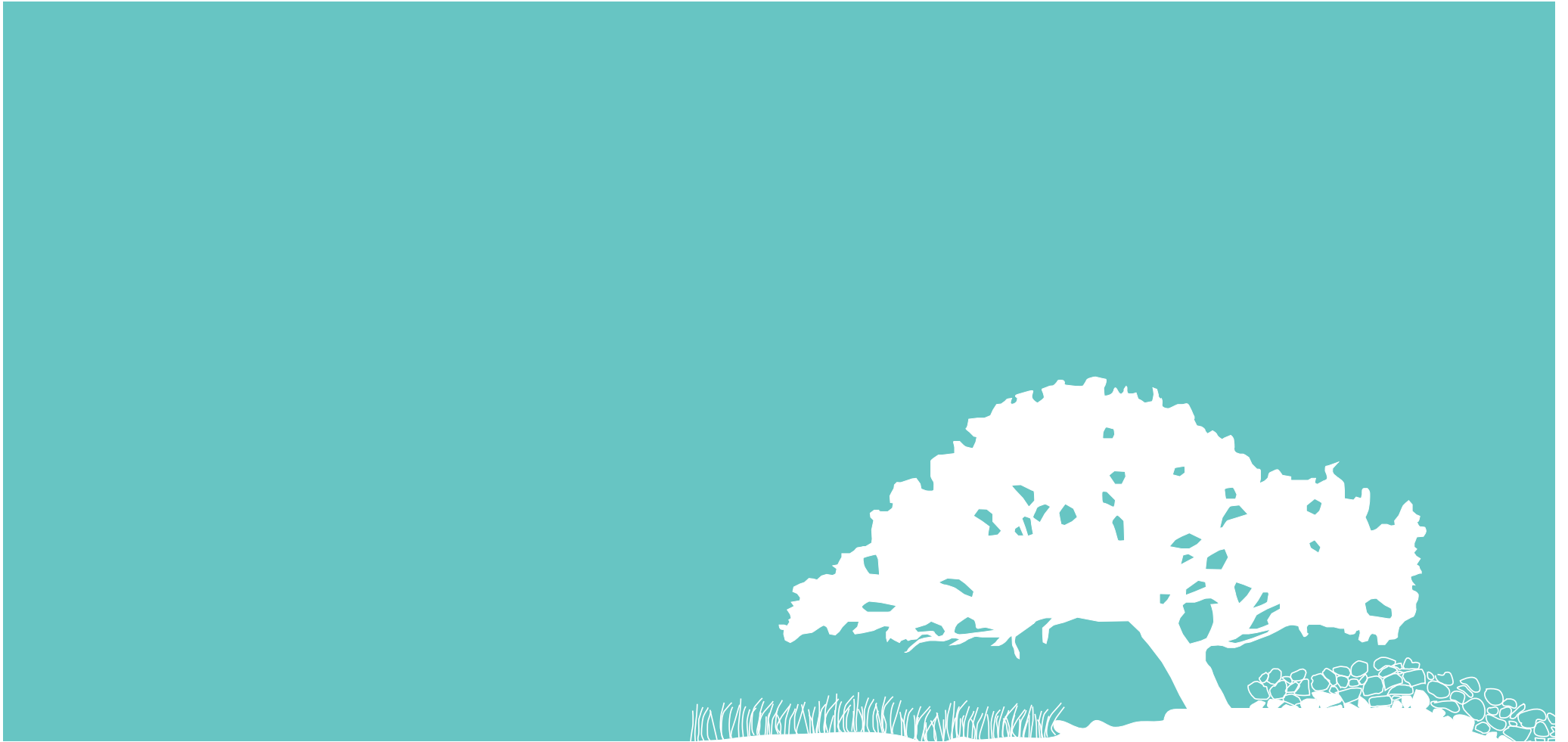
Executive Summary

A number of recommendations have been made in this report in the form of a series of objectives, requirements and guidelines.

The recommendations are to be read in conjunction with the Opportunities and Constraints plans in this report to ensure that the outcomes remain specific to place making and the creation of local identity in Donnybrook and Woodstock.

The nine key recommendations of this report are:

1. Establish a strong sense of place by responding to and enhancing the visual character of the precinct.
2. Retain, protect and integrate visual character elements where possible.
3. Investigate the opportunity to retain, enhance or reinterpret key place making elements.
4. Physically and visually link features where possible to retain a sense of the broader landscape character.
5. Retain an appropriate setting and context for heritage places.
6. Encourage the creation of distinct neighbourhood identity by integrating existing visual character features within local centres.
7. Retain long range and key local views where possible.
8. Protect and enhance waterways and associated open space opportunities.
9. Locate the open space network to preserve visual character features.



visual character assessment

Introduction

Background

The North Growth Corridor Plan designates parts of the Donnybrook and Woodstock for future urban development. The Donnybrook and Woodstock Precinct Structure Plans (PSP) are instruments to inform this future development.

The area will be developed to provide a new residential community of approximately 44,000 people (17,500 lots). The two precincts will be serviced by the Donnybrook Principal Town Centre (in the Lockerbie PSP, immediately abutting the west of the Donnybrook precinct), and are expected to accommodate local town centres, community facility hubs, local active recreation and passive reserves and conservation areas.

This report has been prepared for the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) and the City of Whittlesea to help guide the development of Donnybrook and Woodstock PSP's.

Its key objective is to identify key visual features of the Donnybrook and Woodstock PSP areas and provide recommendations as to how these features may be sensitively integrated into future urban development.

This report is limited to assessing existing conditions that have a visual impact.

Key Project Objectives

The objectives of this report are to:

1. Identify the existing key visual character elements of the site and evaluate their visual character and retention value.
2. Provide a site analysis identifying site specific opportunities and constraints.
3. Provide an analysis of local case studies that have successfully incorporated visual character elements in to an urban context.
4. Recommend design responses for incorporating identified visual character elements in an urban context.
5. Identify existing strategies and policies that influence the retention of visual character elements.

Methodology

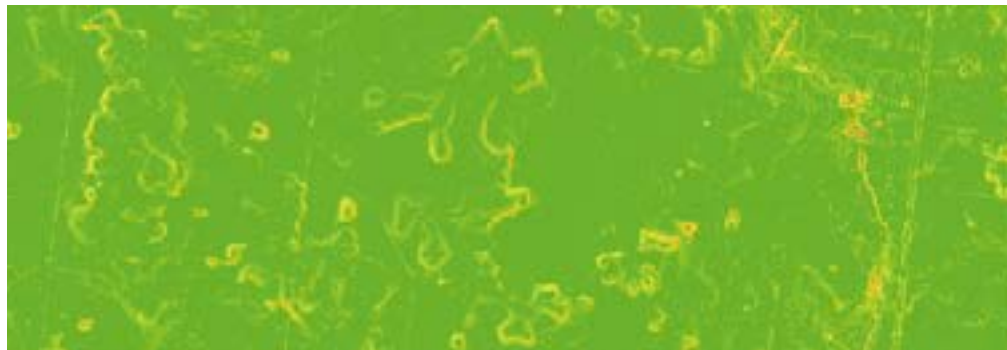


The Visual Character Assessment was prepared using a combination of desktop analysis and field work.

Desktop Analysis

Desktop analysis comprised a review of the following:

- Relevant planning policies and strategies.
- Relevant PSP background documents including:
 - Biodiversity Assessment (Biosis, 2013)
 - Arboricultural Assessment (Treetec, 2013)
 - Environmental, Hydrological and Geotechnical Assessment (Meinhardt, 2013)
 - Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (TerraCulture, 2013)
 - Post-Contact Heritage Assessment (Context, 2013)
- Available GIS information for the site including surface analysis and aerial photography.

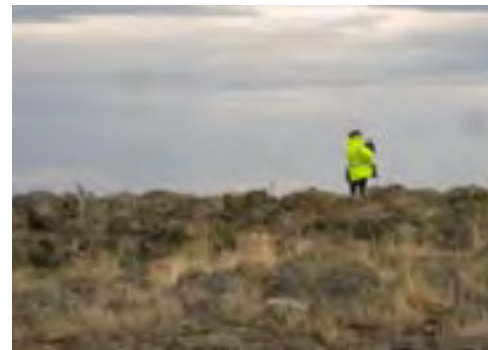


Field Work

The study area was observed through a series of site visits, including:

- Properties made accessible by owners and developers.
- Vantage points to provide an overview of the study area.
- Proximate local areas to assess where similar visual features have been successfully retained in an urban setting.

Note: The Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP areas are broad and some parts of the study area were unable to be directly accessed. Analysis of these areas is reliant on the desktop analysis. Further detailed site analysis is recommended upon site subdivision to confirm the findings of this report.



Strategic and Site Context

Strategic Context

The Donnybrook and Wollert PSP's sit in the context of a number of overarching strategies and detailed policies. Policies, strategies and reports reviewed for this report include:

State Government Strategies

- Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (2012)
- Sub Regional Species Strategies (2012)
- North Growth Corridor Plan (GAA, 2012))
- Metropolitan Planning Strategy: Discussion Paper (2012)
- Urban Design Charter for Victoria (2010)

Whittlesea Planning Scheme

- State Planning Policy Framework
- Local Planning Policy Framework
- Particular Provisions

City of Whittlesea Strategies

- Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2013)
- Shaping Our Future: Whittlesea 2025 (2009)

Refer to the Appendix for detailed discussion of the key relevant principles of each document.

Location

The **Donnybrook PSP** is located in Donnybrook in the City of Whittlesea and Mitchell Shire Council, to the east of the recently approved Lockerbie PSP. The precinct is bounded by the OMR/E6 reservation to the north, the Sydney-Melbourne train line to the west, Donnybrook Road to the south, and the Woodstock PSP to the east. It comprises 15 properties, with a total area of 1,067 hectares (gross) and a proposed primary land use of residential. The PSP is expected to accommodate over 10,000 residential lots.

The **Woodstock PSP** is bounded by the OMR/E6 reservation to the north-east, Merriang Road in the east, Donnybrook Road to the south, with the boundary of the Donnybrook PSP defining the western boundary of the PSP. The Woodstock PSP comprises 30 properties, with a total area of 759 hectares (gross) and a proposed primary land use of residential and is expected to accommodate over 7,500 residential lots.

These precincts form part of larger-scale development in the North Growth Corridor and will contribute to a projected population increase in the North to between 260,000 to 330,000 residents by 2031.

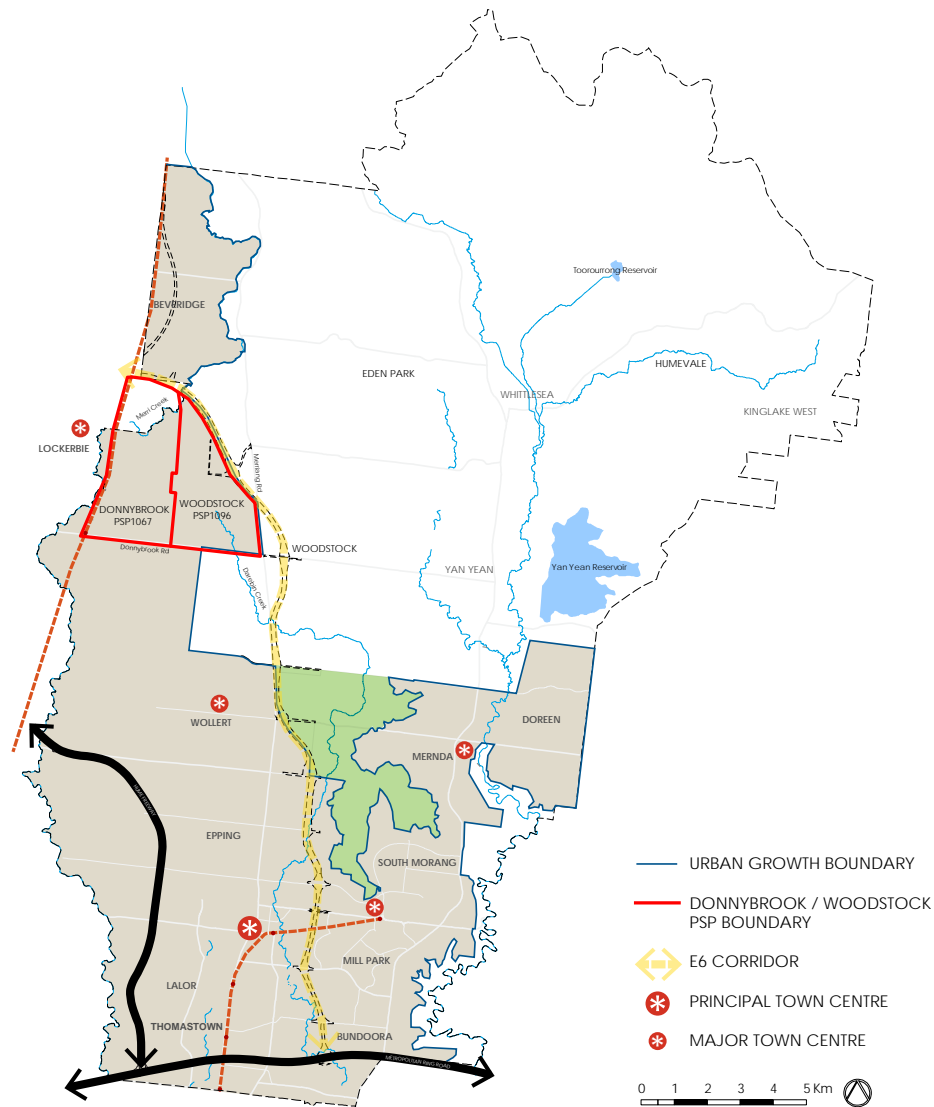


Figure 2: Location Plan

Strategic and Site Context

Existing Land Use

The **Donnybrook PSP 1067** area is used primarily for non-intensive agricultural purposes such as horse breeding and training, livestock grazing and livestock feed production. A number of current and historic farmsteads are located through the PSP area. Adjacent land uses directly include:

North – agricultural land with farm residences and other structures associated with agriculture. Merri Creek is located to the north and east, and transects the northern section of PSP 1067. The Township of Beveridge is located to the north-west of the site.

West – the western boundary of the study area is bounded by the Melbourne to Sydney railway line which runs from north to south. Beyond the railway is a Macedonian Orthodox Church, Donnybrook Mineral Springs, agricultural land and the township of Kalkallo. Merri Creek flows predominately along the western boundary of PSP 1067.

East – the eastern boundary is bounded by PSP 1067, which consists of agricultural land with farm residences, and other structures associated with agriculture.

South – the southern boundary is bounded by Donnybrook Road. Beyond Donnybrook Road is Mountain View Quarry and agricultural land with farm residences and other structures associated with agriculture. Further south is Summerhill Plant a clay brick manufacturing plant, located in Craigieburn.

The **Woodstock PSP 1096** is used primarily for non-intensive agricultural purposes such as livestock grazing and livestock feed production. A number of rural residential properties are located in the south-eastern corner of PSP 1096, along Merriang Road. Adjacent land uses include:

North – Agricultural land with farm residences and other structures associated with agriculture. The Township of Beveridge is located to the north-east of the site. Merri Creek is located to the north and slightly transects the northern perimeter of PSP 1096.

West – The western boundary is bounded by PSP 1096, which consists of agricultural land with farm residences, and other structures associated with agriculture.

East – Eastern boundary is bounded by Merriang Road. Beyond Merriang Road is agricultural land with farm residences and other structures associated with agriculture. Further east is the Yan Yean Reservoir.

South – The southern boundary is bounded by Donnybrook Road. Beyond Donnybrook Road is agricultural land with farm residences and other structures associated with agriculture. Further south-west is Summerhill Plant a clay brick manufacturing plant, located in Craigieburn.



Broad Character Areas

Donnybrook / Woodstock Character

Donnybrook / Woodstock's character is distinct, yet varied.

- Existing agricultural uses are evident by the open paddocks, grazing activities and livestock feed production.
- Flat landform is disrupted by stony rises, changing the landscape by creating elevation.
- River Red Gums dominate parts the landscape due to their scale and number.
- Exposed treeless plains feature tributaries that appear to be little more than depressions in the ground.
- Historic buildings, sheds and farmsteads along with dry stone walls, articulate historic settlement patterns.

Three distinct visual landscape character areas have been identified to provide a broad visual character assessment of the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP's. For the purpose of the study these have been generically named:

- Woodlands
- Plains
- Basalt Flows

Woodlands

The Woodlands consist of predominantly dense groupings of River Red Gums separated by open areas of land. Tree groupings generally feature high biodiversity values.

Plains

Flat and rolling plains of Donnybrook / Woodstock are visually exposed. Some ephemeral water features are also evident although not visually prominent and at many points little more than depressions in the ground. Tree cover throughout this area is widely dispersed.

Basalt Flows

This broad character area contains many stony rises formed by basalt flows. Some stony rises have biodiversity value and can coincide with the location of findings of aboriginal artefacts.

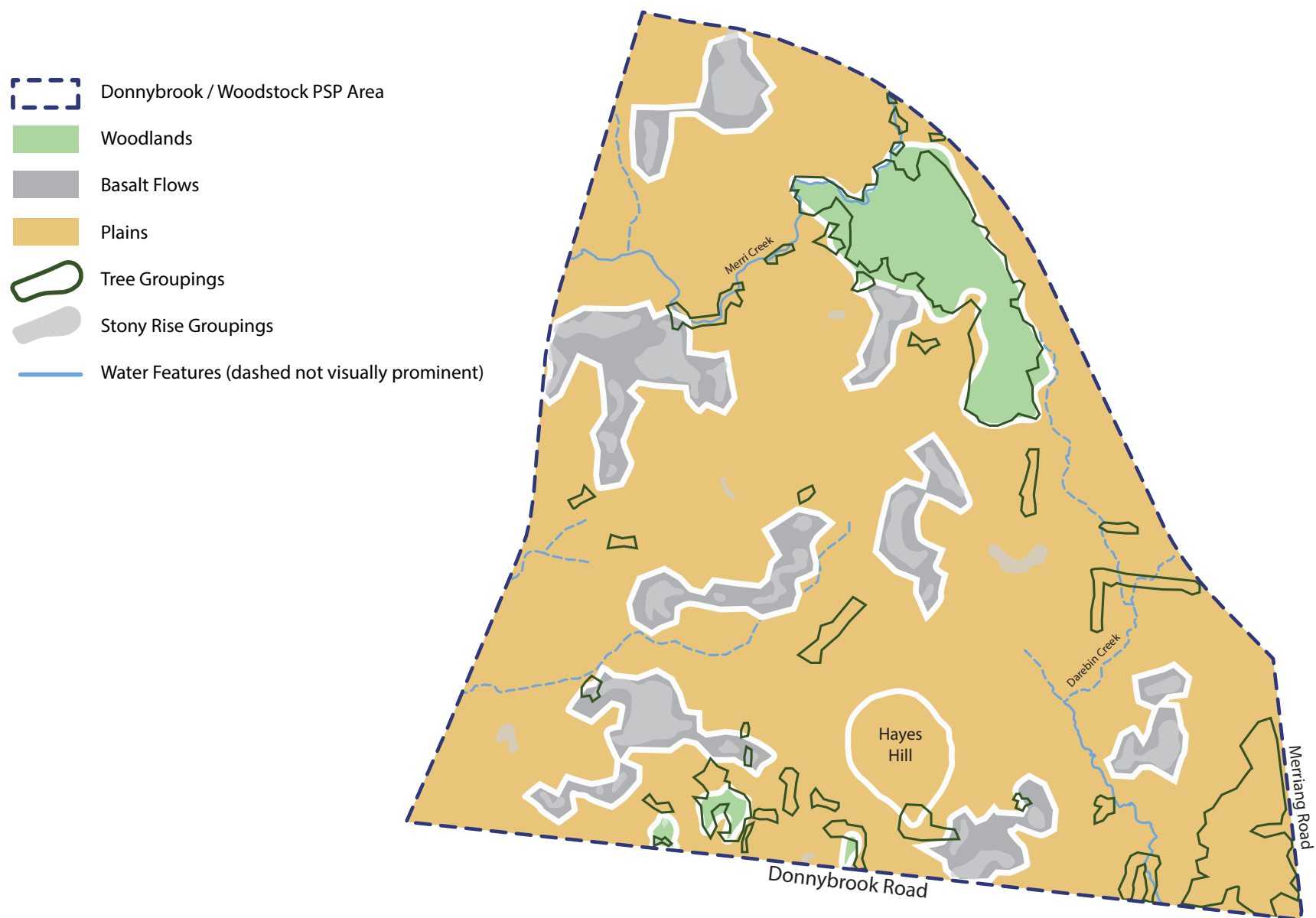


Figure 3: Broad Character Areas





key visual character elements

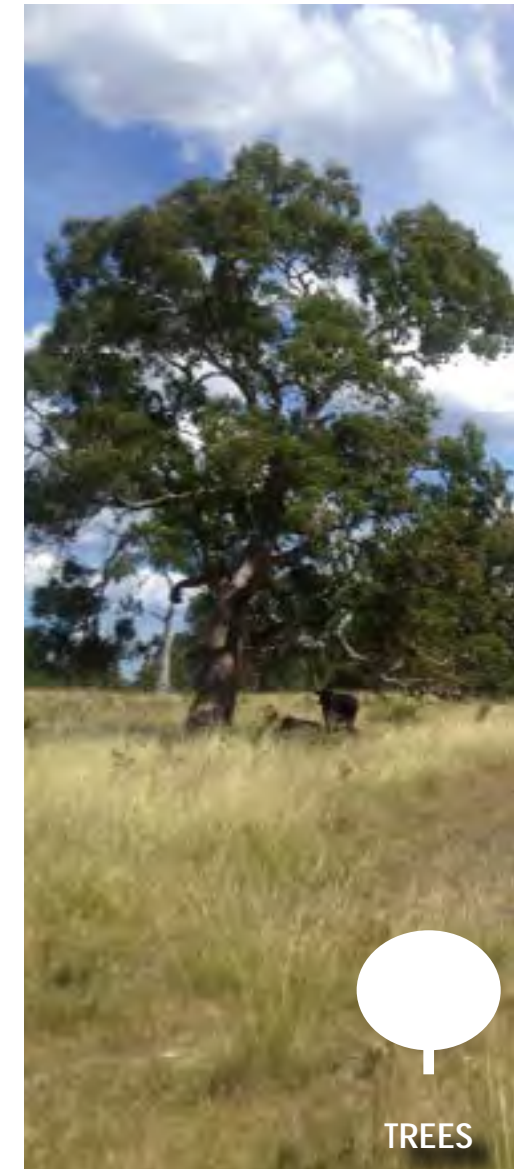
Visual Character Elements

The defining visual character elements of the study area can be categorised into 6 key elements. These elements present differently throughout the site and the combination of elements subtly changes giving local pockets of landscape identity.

Visual character elements were defined using three criteria:

1. Scale and visual prominence in the landscape.
2. The ability of the elements to define the landscape character.
3. Aboriginal and post contact cultural value.

The following pages examine the visual character of each element including their physical and cultural values.





STONY
RISES



DRY STONE
WALLS



HERITAGE
PLACES



WATER-
WAYS

Hills

Visual Character

Hayes Hill (5) is a very prominent feature. It is visible from most vantage points and is a reminder of the past geological activity of the area.

The Melbourne sheet (SJ 55-5) in the 1:250,000 Geological Map Series 1997 (Vandenberg, 1997) indicates that the geology is predominantly 'Qvn' –Pliocene olivine basalts of the Newer Volcanic Group (with extrusive tholeiitic to alkaline Basalts: containing minor scoria and ash).

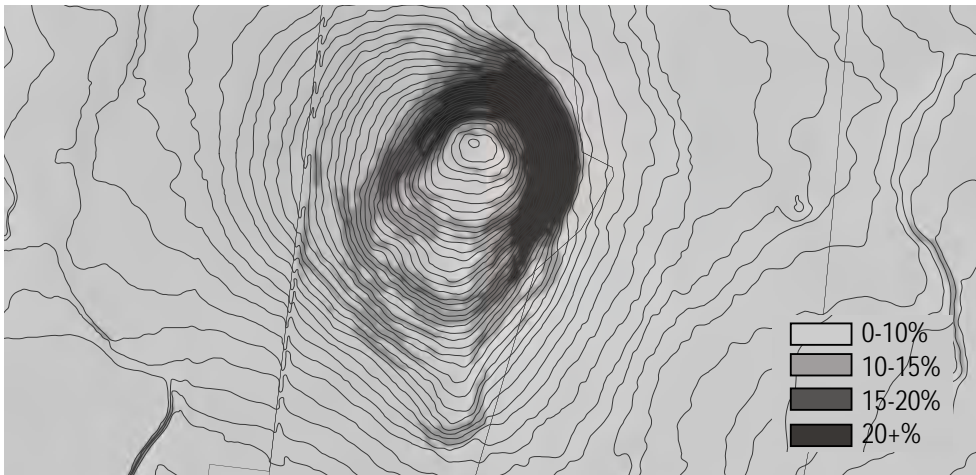


Figure 4: Hayes Hill Slope Analysis

Retention Values

Hayes Hill has value due to its natural occurrence. It provides an elevated element in the landscape breaking up the generally flat landform.

Its height is approximately 40 metres and there is limited vegetation up on its slopes. The slope on the southern half is approximately between 10-15%. In contrast, the slope on the northern half is in excess of 20% as can be evidenced in Figure 4.

In an urban setting Hayes Hill can assist in creating a unique sense of place and improve legibility. Its height on the other hand provides views of the surrounding landscape and further afield creating an excellent open space opportunity.

Development of the surrounding areas should appropriately respond to this valued natural element and minimise the extent of encroachment.





Visual Character

Trees are a key visual character element of the study area due to their scale, quantity, character, ecological and cultural values.

Donnybrook Arboricultural Assessment (Treetec, 2013) found 33 individual trees and seven groups of two or more trees that justified inclusion as being of higher Arboricultural Retention Value (ARV). These trees are indigenous Eucalypts, and are limited to two species - River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and Manna Gum *Eucalyptus viminalis*.

Woodstock Arboricultural Assessment (Treetec, 2013) found 75 listed trees (including 5 pairs), and 11 groups of trees (3 or more) that justified inclusion as being of higher Arboricultural Retention Value (ARV). All but one of these trees was a River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*. A single Hybrid (*E. ovata/camaldulensis*) was assessed as being of higher value.

River Red Gums are the signature trees of the local area and the key defining feature of the City of Whittlesea. They differentiate this area from other parts of Melbourne and form landmarks within the landscape. As a result, they offer a key opportunity for creating a sense of place in Donnybrook / Woodstock.

River Red Gums appear in the landscape as individual trees (1), scattered groupings (2) and woodlands (3). Despite their apparent separation in groupings their large scale effectively combines to create visual enclosure in the landscape.

Throughout the study area exotic plantings are often associated with heritage places and are often part of planted shelterbelts (4).

Retention Values

Trees provide links to the natural environment and add variety to urban structure. Trees engage our senses, providing shade, shelter, outlook, enclosure and visual relief.

The age of the trees provides links to pre and post European settlement landscape settings and use, helping to define our cultural identity.

River Red Gums and other indigenous trees have the highest retention value of trees found in the study area due to their links to the natural landscape of Donnybrook / Woodstock and aboriginal cultural identity. Groupings of trees should be prioritised for retention to reflect their natural landscape pattern and provide visual links to the past rural landscape. Some individual trees have high visual interest and therefore a high retention value.

Exotic trees associated with heritage buildings act as contributory elements to the heritage place and therefore have high retention value.

Replacement of River Red Gums is improbable in a future urban context considering their age and slow growth habit. It would take many years to regain their height alone.



NOTE

The landscape, ecological and cultural values of trees are often greater than arboricultural retention values indicate.



Stony Rises

Visual Character

Stony rises are a distinctive feature of the Western Plains landform. These features were formed by basalt lava flows and are visually expressed by irregular shaped areas of exposed basalt. Each stony rise may visually present separately but close inspection reveals that they form part of a linked larger flow.

A large number of stony rises has been identified in the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area using a combination of aerial photography, site contours and site inspections. The size, height and slope of stony rises also varies. Some stony rises appear as shallow surface rock (5), while others rise above natural ground level (6). Stony rises are often difficult to identify and many more may exist within the site than are identified in this assessment. This assessment has focused on rises of visual significance.

Retention Values

The stony rises have value due to their natural occurrence and uniqueness to this area. They provide a natural structural element in the landscape breaking up the generally flat landform.

Their retention in an urban setting can assist in defining spaces, adding variety and providing development breaks, particularly when incorporated into open space areas.

Their height provides views of the surrounding landscape and further afield (10).

Historically, loose rock sourced from stony rises was used to build the nearby dry stone walls. This directly links stony rises as natural elements to the cultural heritage of the study area.

Stony rises often have high archaeological significance and provide cultural identity. Ridgelines and stony rises were often travelling routes, vantage points and transient occupation sites for Aboriginal groups travelling through the area. Some artefacts recorded in the Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (TerraCulture, 2013) were located on stony rises (8, 9 & 10).

Stony rises often support remnant vegetation (7) and have retained high environmental values due to difficulty utilising their area for farming. River Red Gums are often co-located with stony rises which also provide habitat and shelter for small animals.



Dry Stone Walls

Visual Character

Dry Stone Walls were used extensively in the late 1800's to delineate property and paddock boundaries. They were constructed using carefully placed local basalt stones without mortar. The stones were locally sourced from loose rock on stony rises and basalt stone floaters found in paddocks. Dry stone walls in Donnybrook / Woodstock are typically wide at the base and taper to their top and vary in structure and condition (11, 12).

An extensive network of dry stone walls exists within the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area and are often located as boundaries of heritage places (14, 15).

Wherever possible, the dry stone walls in the Study Area should be retained, in line with Council policy. But, where this is not possible, priority should be given to higher significance walls and to the highly visible examples on stony rises which lend character to the landscape.

Retention Values

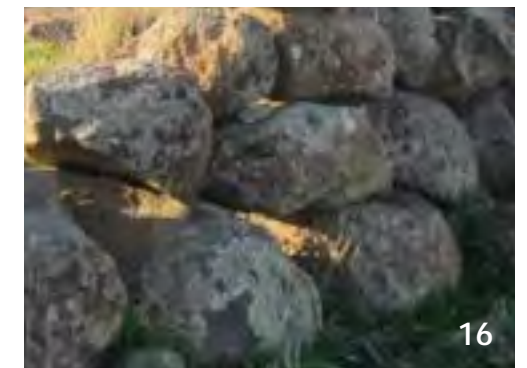
Dry stone walls provide a direct link to the previous rural use and ownership patterns of the area assisting to retain cultural identity.

Their construction of freely available local materials provides a visual reference to the natural materials found within the area.

Retaining the walls as contributory elements within local heritage places adds to their character and heritage value.

The walls lay out a pre-defined structure in the landscape that may assist with future legibility and wayfinding through the site (13).

They also provide visual interest and variety in the landscape (16).



Heritage Places

Visual Character

The Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area contains a number of built elements that have value as places of heritage visual interest. Heritage elements identified include:

- A series of dry stone walls
- Stone house remains (18)
- Stockyard remnants (17)
- Farmstead at 975 Donnybrook Road (19-23)



Retention Values

The character of heritage places contribute to local identity. Their varied age, construction methods and uses provide visual interest to the area. They help to define Donnybrook / Woodstock's settlement pattern and previous uses.

If retained they will provide a point of difference within the future urban landscape and help to retain the cultural identity of Donnybrook / Woodstock.

Their continued presence in the area will help provide direct visual links to the past. Where heritage places have visual prominence they can act as local landmarks and assist legibility.

These buildings also provide opportunities for adaptive reuse as cafes, community buildings or commercial uses.

NOTE:

Aspects of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage have generally been excluded from this report as artefact scatters and scar trees are difficult to identify with an untrained eye and have a limited direct visual presence within the site. Cultural values linked to visual character elements are acknowledged and discussed where relevant. Refer to the background report by TerraCulture for further details.



The most cohesive heritage element in the Study Area is the farmstead at **975 Donnybrook Road** which comprises a small house, setback approximately 25m from the road, with a small complex of domestic and agricultural buildings to its rear (19, 21, 22).

The house is a simple weatherboard structure with a gable roof around a central brick chimney and cement sheeting in its gable ends. The façade has a central door flanked by tripartite windows, each containing double hung sashes to either side of a fixed pane. A central porch structure extends over the door, and this is flanked by verandah sections over each window. A corrugated iron external toilet shed and a peppercorn tree lie to the north west of the house.

A series of dry stone walls surround the property (20, 23). These include a fine example to the north of the house (23). The wall is approximately 35m in length and 1.4m in height and exhibits a high level of technical competence.





Visual Character

Merri Creek runs along the northern tip of the site and is the most visually prominent water element in the landscape (24). Merri Creek flows in a southerly direction, where it eventually discharges into the Yarra River. A number of ephemeral water courses also flow across the site and discharge into Merri Creek at the western boundary of the site. The water courses are most likely to flow during significant rainfall events.

Freshwater wetland is located along the southern boundary of the site and covers an area of 5.63 Ha (26).

The wetland is not listed as a Ramsar Wetland or in the directory of nationally important wetlands in Australia. Further consultation with the Department of Sustainability and Environment will need to be undertaken to ascertain the environmental significance of the wetland and potential development constraints (Meinhardt, 2013).

Darebin creek runs along south east part of the site flowing in a southerly direction and eventually discharging into Yarra River. Darebin Creek was observed to be dry during the visual inspection and appears to be an ephemeral feature. As such, it visually less prominent than Merri Creek.

A number of dams are scattered throughout the site, with some having visual appeal and attracting wildlife (25, 27).

Retention Values

Waterways are important ecological, cultural, aesthetic and recreational components of the landscape.

These natural drainage features present the opportunity to be enhanced to provide outlook and linear open space links across the site.

They provide habitat for animals including the endangered Growling Grass Frog.







site analysis

Visual Character Elements Plan

Many subtle changes in character occur across the study area beyond the previously identified broad character areas (see Figure 2). The different combinations and clusterings of individual visual character elements creates a distinct character for each localised area.

In order to assess the value of retaining visual features in the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area, a site analysis and opportunity and constraints mapping has been undertaken.

The visual character elements plan (Figure 5) maps the location of the visual character elements in the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area including:

- River Red Gums and other trees. Where River Red Gums are clustered together in groups these have been highlighted, as tree groupings provide a different visual character to individual scattered trees.
- Individual stony rises, including groupings to show where they form part of a larger basalt lava flow.
- High points in the landscape and opportunities for panoramic views.
- Heritage buildings and the network of dry stone walls found throughout the precinct.
- Natural drainage features present the opportunity to be enhanced to provide outlook and linear links across the site.
- The gas easement is not currently visible however will be exposed in the future due to lack of development within associated boundary.
- The reserve for the E6 potential future freeway. This has been indicated on the plan although at the time of this report the road remains unfunded and the design details unconfirmed.
- Railway embankment is relatively low and has limited landscape along its eastern boundary. There are sections of tree rows on the other hand along its western boundary. Whilst views over the railway line are possible, it does nonetheless restrict physical connectivity.















-  Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Area
-  Stony Rise Groupings
-  Stony Rise
-  Conservation Areas and Tree Groupings
-  Water Features / Dams (dashed not visually prominent)
-  E6 Reservation
-  Sydney/Melbourne Freight Line
-  Dry stone walls
-  Heritage places
-  Trees
-  Woodland Patches
-  Elevation



Figure 5: Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Visual Character Elements Plan

Visual Character Sectors Analysis

The Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area has been divided into 4 visual character sectors to allow closer analysis of site specific opportunities and constraints (Figure 6).

The sectors are selected based on natural features of the site rather than following property boundaries.

The site analysis for each of the 4 sectors identifies opportunities and constraints presented by the visual character elements across the site.

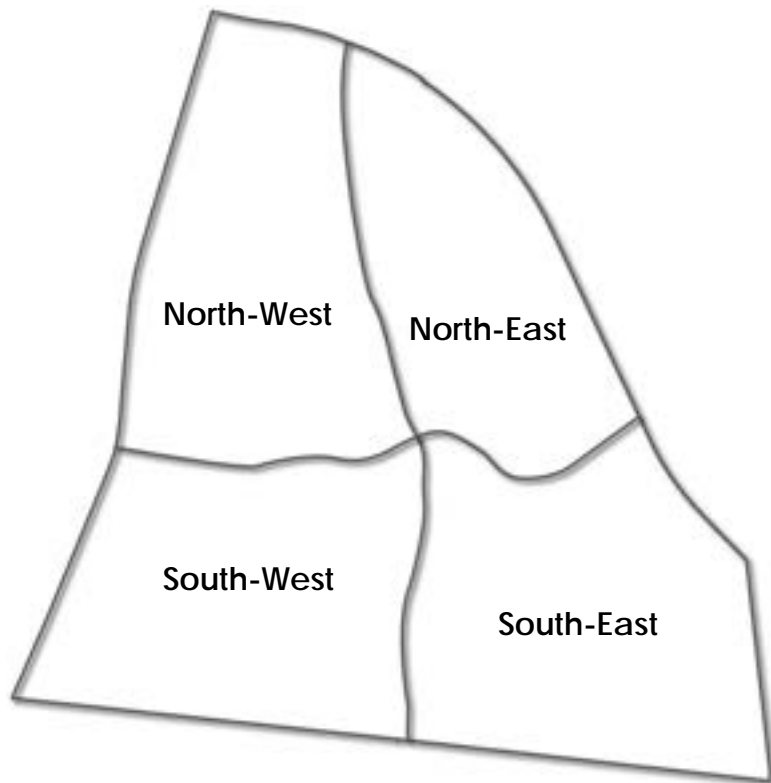


Figure 6: Visual Character Sectors

In general the analysis rated visual character elements as possessing higher retention value when co-located or somehow linked with one or more other types of elements or when large groupings of the same elements co-exist. In some cases an individual visual character element was deemed to have high retention value based on its strong visual character or heritage value.

Based on this rating system the sector maps identified the following opportunities:

Conservation or Open Space Areas

Large woodland areas or areas with significant existing trees and multiple co-located visual character elements that should be prioritised for retention.

Strategic Links

Physical and visual linking opportunities between visual character elements (ie. via roads and/or linear open space reserves).

Priority Dry Stone Wall Retention

Dry stone walls prioritised for retention based on co-location of other visual character elements, heritage values and potential for links between visual character features

Heritage Places

Approximate site boundaries around heritage places have been shown. Boundaries will need to be refined upon further detailed investigation.

Visually Exposed Areas

Areas where development will be visually exposed such as



treeless plains where few visual character elements exist.

Sensitive Design Areas

Areas of scattered trees and windrows where development will need to be carefully designed to ensure positive interfaces to retained trees.

Key Place Making Opportunities

Locations within the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area that present a high level of existing visual character and if retained will contribute strongly to creating a sense of place and local identity in the new urban context.

The Visual Character Element Values diagram (Figure 7) demonstrates the elements' overlapping individual values and links that increase their overall visual character value.

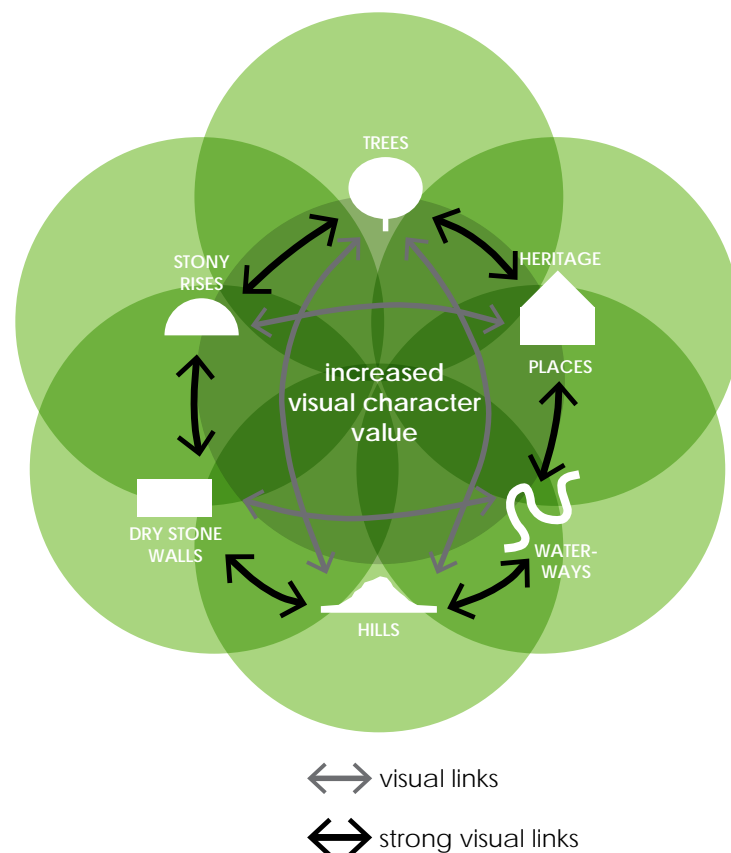


Figure 7: Visual Character Element Values

Opportunities / Constraints: North-West Sector





1. Opportunity to provide regional strategic link along Merri Creek (photo 28).

2. Retain dry stone walls in open space and along stony rises.

3. Elevated parts of the site with views could be explored as local open space opportunities (photo 30).

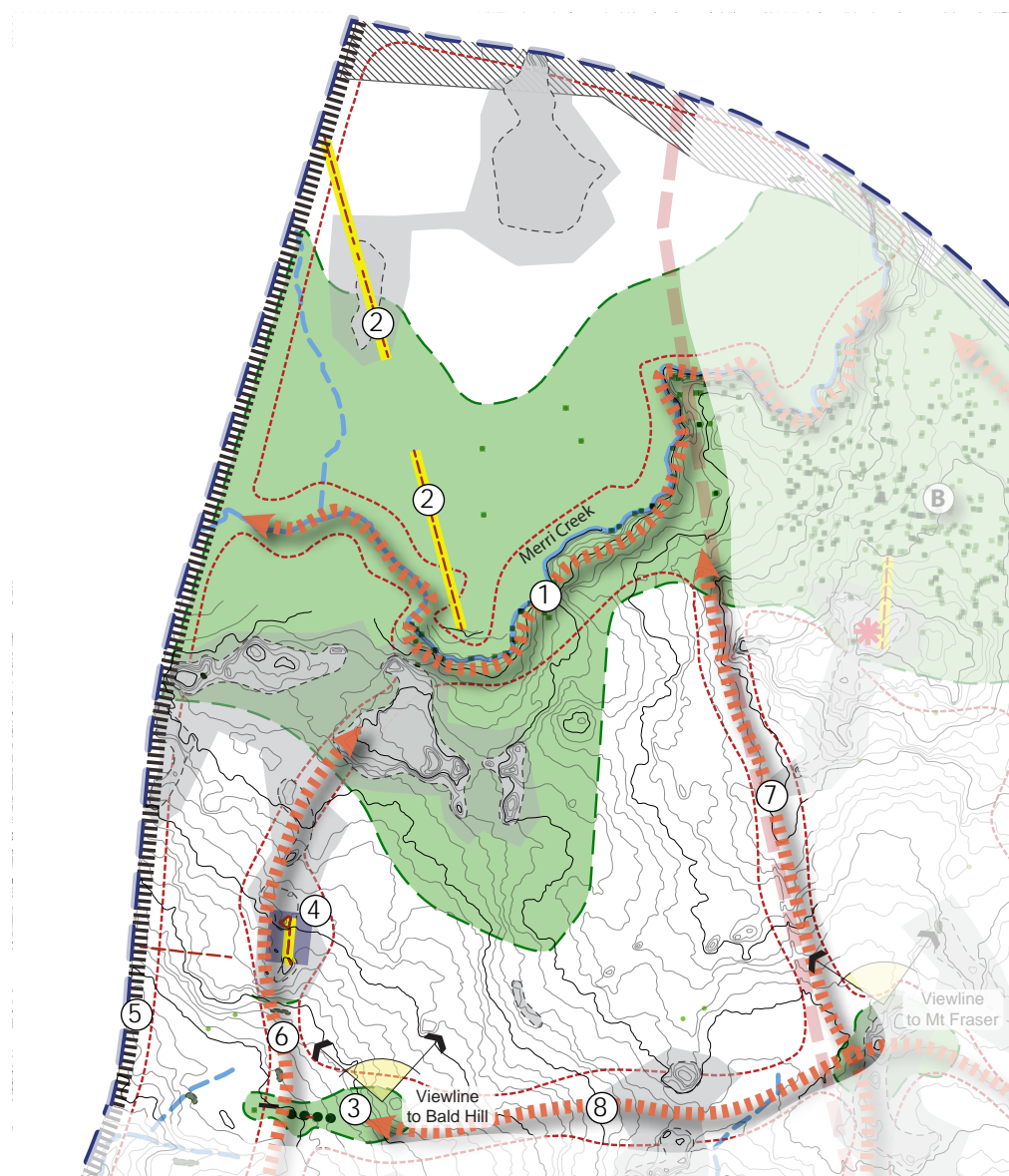
4. Convergence of multiple character elements in one area such as stony rises and dry stone walls presents as an open space opportunity (photo 29+30).

5. Subdivision layout will need to appropriately respond to railway interface.

6. North/south link to connect various visual character elements.

7. North/south link along gas easement will need to be carefully designed.

8. East/west link connecting multiple elevated parts of the site with views.



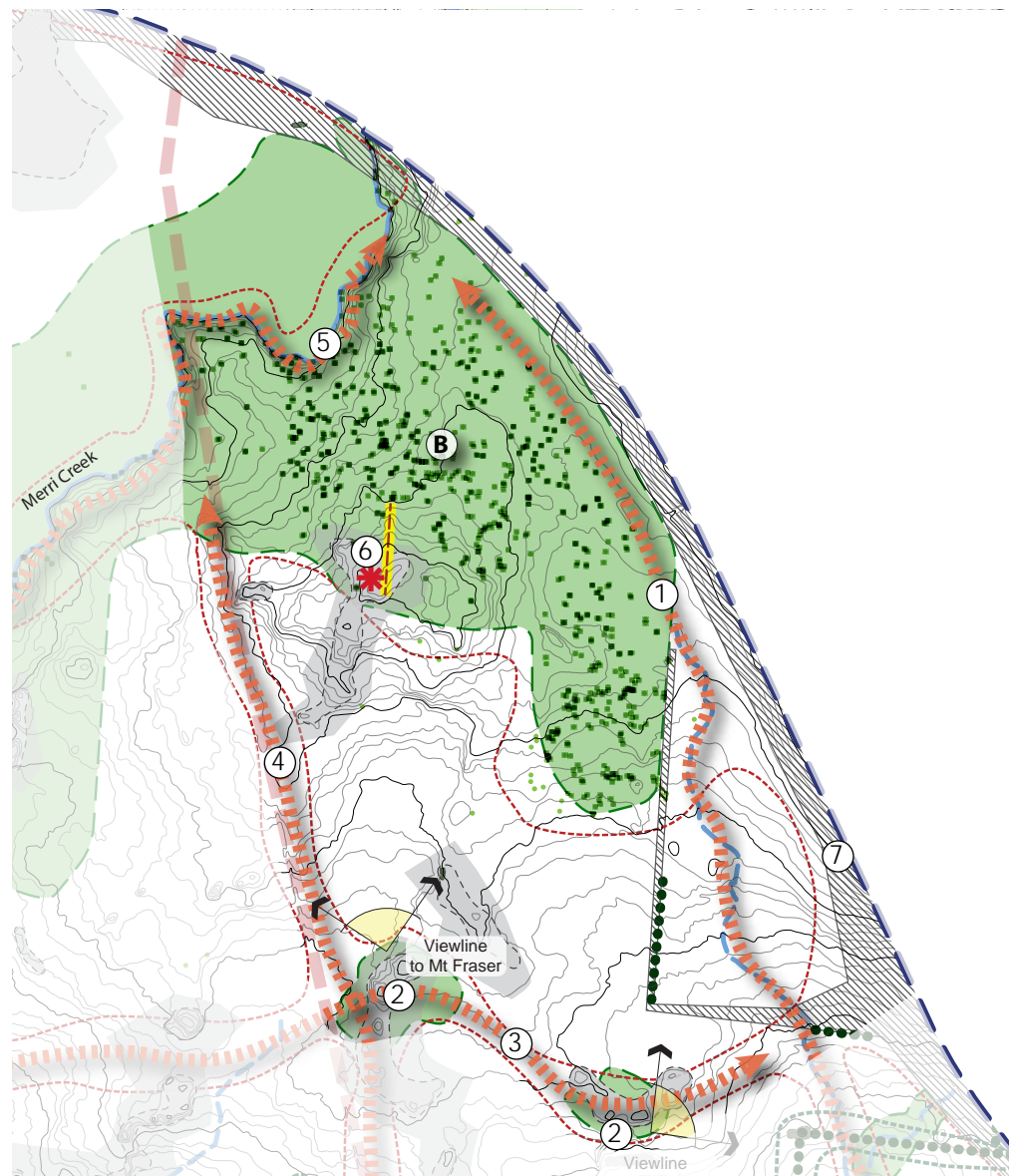
- Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Area
- Conservation / Open Space Areas
- Stony Rise Groupings
- Stony Rise
- Sensitive design area (scattered trees & windrows)
- Water Features / Dams (dashed not visually prominent)
- E6 Reservation
- Sydney/Melbourne Freight Line
- Dry stone walls (highlighted priority retention)
- Heritage places and buildings
- Trees
- Woodland Patches
- ✱ Elevation
- 0.5m contours (5m highlighted)
- Gas Easement
- Strategic Links
- Visually exposed areas
- Windrows
- A Key placemaking opportunity

Opportunities / Constraints: North-East Sector





1. Opportunity to provide strategic link along Darebin Creek.
2. Elevated parts of the site with views could be explored as local open space opportunities (photo 33).
3. East/west link connecting multiple elevated parts of the site with views
4. North/south link along gas easement.
5. Continuation of the regional strategic link opportunity along Merri Creek
6. Convergence of multiple character elements including stony rise, dry stone wall and topography elevation presents an opportunity to emphasise and celebrate it spatially (photo 32).
7. Subdivision layout will need to appropriately respond to future freeway interface.



B. KEY PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY GRASSY EUCALYPT WOODLAND
This is a large conservation area of open eucalypt woodland with a predominantly grassy understorey supporting diverse ecological community. The abutting development will need to provide an appropriate interface to this highly valued natural element (photo 31).

- Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Area
- Conservation / Open Space Areas
- Stony Rise Groupings
- Stony Rise
- Sensitive design area (scattered trees & windrows)
- Water Features / Dams (dashed not visually prominent)
- E6 Reservation
- Sydney/Melbourne Freight Line
- Dry stone walls (highlighted priority retention)
- Heritage places and buildings
- Trees
- Woodland Patches
- Elevation
- 0.5m contours (5m highlighted)
- Gas Easement
- Strategic Links
- Visually exposed areas
- Windrows
- Key placemaking opportunity

Opportunities / Constraints: South-West Sector



C. KEY PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY - FARMSTEAD AT 975 DONNYBROOK ROAD

Existing weatherboard house provides opportunities for adaptive reuse as cafe, community building or commercial use. Associated outbuildings, dry stone walls and trees help to further reinforce the significance of this heritage place (photo 34).



1. Existing windrows should be incorporated in the subdivision layout (photo 37).
2. Investigate ways to retain large open water bodies (photo 36).
3. Retain long sections of dry stone walls in open space and along road reserves.
4. Elevated parts of the site with views could be explored as local open space opportunities.
5. North/south link connecting various visual character elements.
6. Subdivision layout will need to appropriately respond to railway interface.
7. North/south link along gas easement will need to be carefully designed.
8. East/west links connecting multiple visual character elements.

E. KEY PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY - DONNYBROOK FARMHOUSE CHEESE FACTORY AT 915 DONNYBROOK ROAD

Donnybrook farmhouse cheese factory is a producer of hand-made cheeses. The milk for cheese production comes from cows on site. The premises also feature a restaurant. It is important to investigate ways to sustain this business on site which brings many visitors to the area.

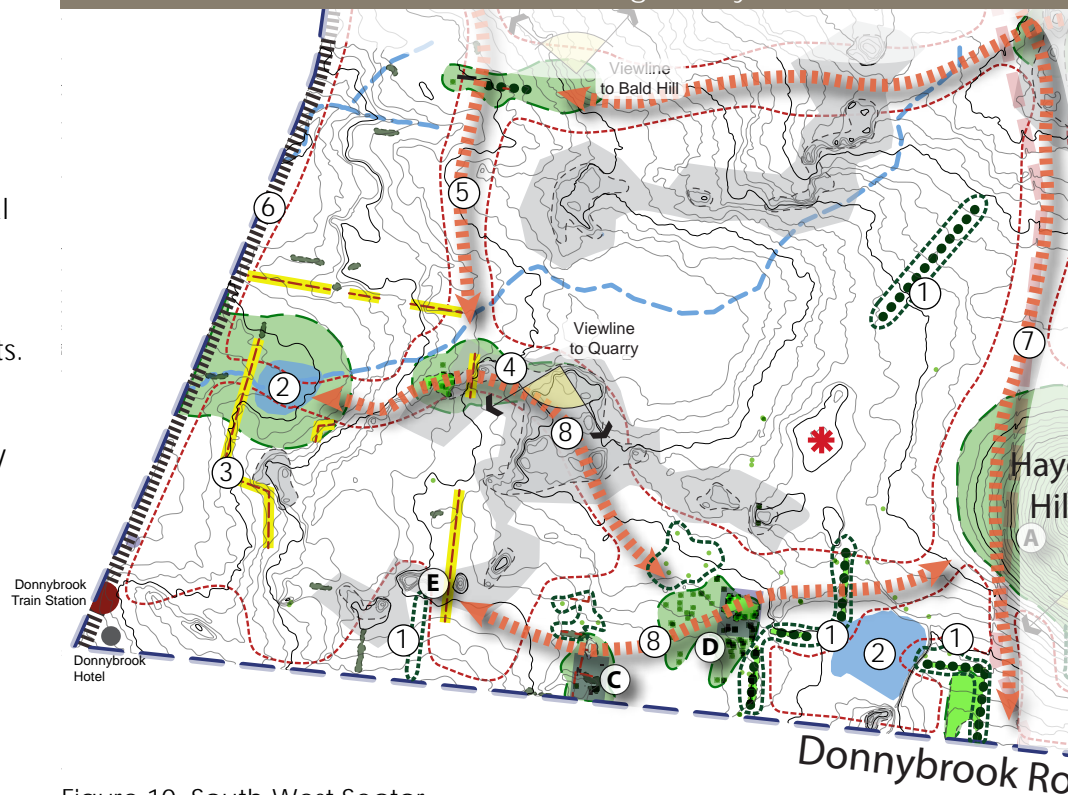


Figure 10: South-West Sector

D. KEY PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY STOCKYARD REMNANTS

Various stockyard remnants could be retained and incorporated in open space (photo 35).



Opportunities / Constraints: South-East Sector





1. Existing windrows should be incorporated in the subdivision layout.
2. Retain long sections of dry stone walls in open space and along road reserves.
3. Elevated parts of the site with views could be explored as local open space opportunities.
4. North/south link along Darebin Creek.
5. Subdivision layout will need to appropriately respond to future freeway interface.
6. North/south link along gas easement will need to be carefully designed.
7. East/west links connecting multiple visual character elements.

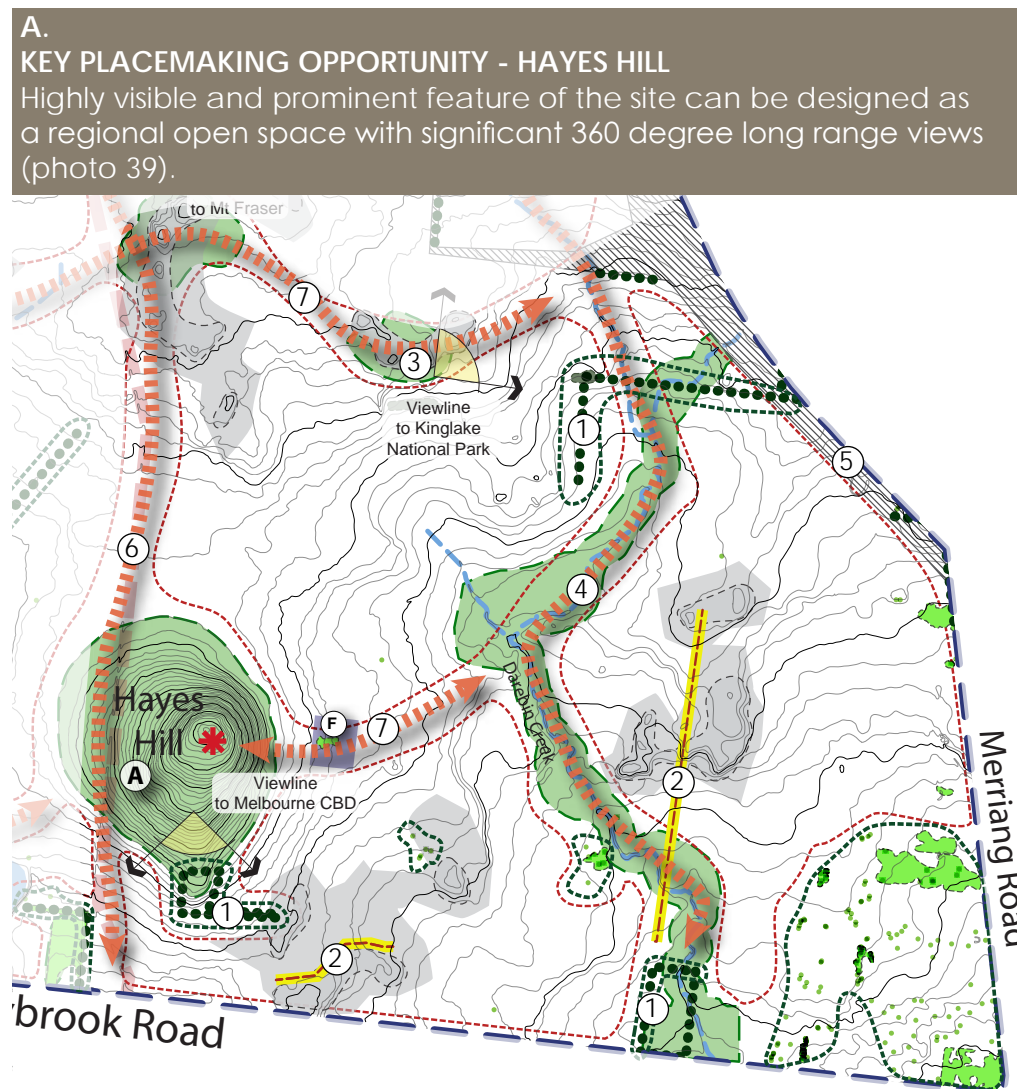


Figure 11: South-East Sector

**F. KEY PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY
STONE HOUSE REMAINS**
Existing stone house could be rebuilt and provide opportunities for adaptive reuse as cafe, community building or commercial use (photo 38).

- Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Area
- Conservation / Open Space Areas
- Stony Rise Groupings
- Stony Rise
- Sensitive design area (scattered trees & windrows)
- Water Features / Dams (dashed not visually prominent)
- E6 Reservation
- Sydney/Melbourne Freight Line
- Dry stone walls (highlighted priority retention)
- Heritage places and buildings
- Trees
- Woodland Patches
- Elevation
- 0.5m contours (5m highlighted)
- Gas Easement
- Strategic Links
- Visually exposed areas
- Windrows
- Key placemaking opportunity

Summary - Opportunities / Constraints



Figure 12: Donnybrook / Woodstock Summary Opportunities / Constraints

Summary - Key Place Making Opportunities



Six sites were identified for local place making as part of the assessment. The sites were selected based on a variety of criteria including their standout visual appeal, contribution to local identity and location. Each site requires further investigation and site analysis as part of the subdivision process. These sites include:

- A. Hayes Hill
- B. Grassy Eucalypt Woodland
- C. Farmstead at 975 Donnybrook Rd
- D. Stockyard remnants
- E. 915 Donnybrook Rd (Donnybrook Farmhouse Cheese Factory)
- F. Stone house remains



Strategic Links

A number of strategic links have been identified to connect various visual character elements.

Roads and/or linear open space reserves could be investigated as a way of linking visual character elements.

Visual character elements along these links should be prioritised for retention.

- Heritage Walk
- Hilltop Trail
- Merri Creek Trail
- Darebin Creek Trail

STRATEGIC LINKS



local case studies

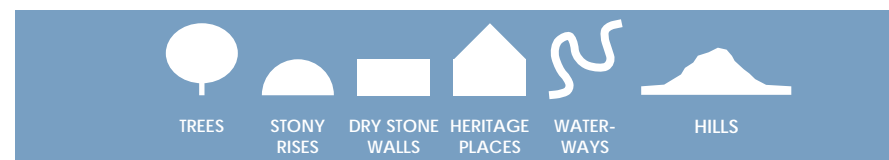


The City of Whittlesea has a distinctive landscape character featuring many strong visual character elements. These elements help to shape the authentic local identity of places and also provide amenity to communities.

Visual character elements were often removed by residential development in the past. This stripped the landscape of its existing character and residents waited years for new parks and trees to establish.

These sites provide relevant case studies particularly given their close proximity to the Donnybrook/Woodstock PSP area and their recent development.

For each case study, the visual character elements retained within the site are highlighted using the symbols below.



1. Epping North Conservation Reserve (Lyndarum Drive, Epping North)



TREES



STONY
RISES



DRY STONE
WALLS

This case study comprises a large (14ha) conservation reserve set aside to protect a large stand of remnant River Red Gums. It also features several stony rises and dry stone walls.

A balance between conservation and development has been achieved by allowing an irregular development edge including a residential pocket essentially surrounded by the reserve.

Pedestrian paths, both formally paved and informal dirt tracks have been provided to maintain pedestrian connectivity (Images 3 & 5).

The reserve provides a pleasant outlook to the neighbouring dwellings. Two medium density housing sites have been created where development for standard lots was limited (Image 2).





1. The long dry stone wall has been retained largely in its original state with the only modifications occurring where it meets the shared path. (Image 7)

2. Houses are separated from the conservation reserve with a local road. Open fencing with limited openings encourages use of the shared paths while protecting conservation areas. (Image 6)

3. A single River Red Gum has been retained within the nature strip resulting in a diversion of the road. This diversion provides a direct line of sight to the conservation reserve and the tree acts as a focal point along the road.

4. A shared path network runs through the site allowing resident interaction with the reserve whilst minimising pedestrian impact. Dry stone walls have been more formally rebuilt at the intersection of these paths. (Image 3)



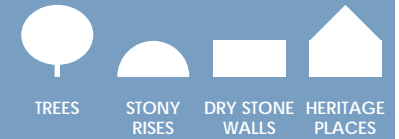
5. An integrated housing site at the edge of the reserve has frontage to the street. Frontage to the park to provide passive surveillance of the area would be a better outcome.

6. This medium density housing site has been sited to fit between a number of scattered trees. The dwellings face the smaller park which has unfortunately resulted in a row of garages fronting the main conservation reserve. Balconies at first floor overlook the main conservation reserve providing some activation/surveillance. (Image 2)

7. This smaller pocket park retains more River Red Gums providing a positive outlook for surrounding dwellings. It is visually linked to the larger conservation reserve and also physically with shared paths.

8. Housing lots yet to be built will provide direct frontage to the smaller park.

2. Creeds Farm (Redding Rise, Epping North)



Creeds Farm was a 19th century farm complex consisting of a bluestone house and barn, timber dairy with surrounding drystone walls, Cypress, Pine and Peppercorn trees.

These visual character elements are now incorporated into a neighbourhood centre consisting of a corner store/cafe, community centre, childcare centre and catholic primary school.

Mature Peppercorn trees and rebuilt dry stone walls create a key entry feature to the community centre. Subtle variations in the concrete footpath treatment delineate the location of old dry stone wall foundations. The catholic school has integrated and restored a heritage homestead and shed for use on its site.





1. The existing Creeds Farm heritage complex consisting of a bluestone dwelling and outbuildings has been retained and restored for use within the school grounds. (Images 11, 12)

2. A community centre and corner store have been located adjacent to mature peppercorn trees and rebuilt dry stone walls which act as a small avenue in to the public square. The contemporary design of new buildings provides a pleasant visual interplay with the historic trees and walls. (Images 8, 9)



3. A stony rise surrounded by dry stone walls and peppercorn trees has been retained by diverting the road around a widened nature strip. The alignment of the road provides a direct view to this feature. The widened nature strip acts to protect the feature from encroaching development and retains the feeling of openness that its previous rural context would have provided. (Images 10, 13, 14)

4. A stony rise on the south-west edge of the area has been embellished to provide a local park and playground. The open space acts to extend the open feeling of the centre and references the previous rural setting.

3. Findon Creek (Hayston Bvd, Epping North)



Findon Creek has been embellished at this point by the creation of wetlands and the addition of a BBQ shelter and bridge. River Red Gums have been retained and an add to the amenity created around the creek.

Several curved stone walls are featured in the site referencing local heritage and using local materials. Their form clearly indicates they are not heritage dry stone walls that have been reconstructed from original positions. It is unclear whether the rocks have been relocated from old dry stone walls.





1. The undeveloped portion of land to the north of the site indicates how the creek may have appeared before subdivision. (Image 16)

2. Findon Creek has been embellished in this location, forming wetlands and a technical drainage function. (Images 16, 17)

3. Houses front the creek separated by local roads. (Image 15)

4. A network of shared paths is located along both sides of the creek maximising connectivity.



5. A pedestrian bridge has been provided across the creek in this location. (Image 15)

6. It is unclear whether any dry stone walls existed in this location before it was developed. The stone walls utilised as landscape features can be seen as a positive feature as they use local materials. (Images 17, 18)

4. The Farm Vigano (10 Bushmans Way, South Morang)



The Farm Vigano at South Morang, was purchased by Mario and Maria Teresa Viganò in 1934-35. The property provides the last tangible physical association with Mario and Maria Teresa Viganò, and is able to demonstrate their remarkable contribution to cuisine, hospitality, culture and the arts.

Mario Viganò (1888-1966) was among a small number of Italian emigrants who pioneered the introduction of Italian and other cultures to the mono-culture of Anglo Celtic Australian society.

The Farm Vigano was recently restored and is currently used as an Italian restaurant continuing this tradition.





1. The Farm Vigano sits on a bend in the river within the Plenty Gorge Park in South Morang.

2. It is located behind an established residential area. Its entry is at the end of a steep driveway lined with cypress trees and interpretive signage. (Images 19, 20, 21 and 23)

3. Plenty Valley Community Health is co-located with The farm Vigano. It provides services to people with an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI).

4. Car parking is provided on site.



5. Main access to The Farm Vigano is via a local street through an established residential estate. Discreet signage has also been incorporated to assist way finding. (Image 22)

6. Residential estate and a local road provide an edge to the Plenty Gorge Park. (Image 24)

5. Carome Homestead / Two Beans and a Farm Cafe (10 Hathfelde Boulevard, Mernda)



Carome has had a long and varied history. It was once the site of one of Melbourne's early flour mills until the Yan Yean Reservoir, built to provide clean drinking water for the growing township of Melbourne, cut the flow of water to the Plenty River. The region then moved to mixed farming. Later the site was a flourishing dairy and more recently it was used for training trotting horses and as a horse stud.

The current bluestone house built in 1864 has been renovated and now incorporates Two Beans and a Farm Café. The gardens have been re-instated, fencing repaired and interpretive signage added. A new access road has replaced the old farm track and provides access to the homestead.





1. Carome Homestead location behind new residential estate and access via a local street (Image 25, 26, 29).

2. Carome Homestead abuts Plenty Gorge Park.

3. A number of outbuildings have been retained which house farm equipment. This helps to reinforce the history of the site. (Image 27, 28)

4. New gravel access way to the site.

5. Car parking is provided on site.

6. Residential interface to Carome Homestead and Plenty Gorge Park.



6. Laurimar Hilltop Parks (Chadwick Park and Eagle Boulevard, Laurimar)



These local park examples demonstrate a way to incorporate public open space on hilltops.

Parks are different in size and shape. Chadwick park is 1.1Ha in size and more regular in shape. Park along Eagle Boulevard is just over 1Ha in size and is more linear in shape.

Both parks incorporate a various level of program for passive and active recreation, playgrounds, shelters and BBQ facilities.





1. Hilltop Park along Eagle Boulevard incorporates bold architectural structure designed to be visible. This structure not only serves as a place marker but is also functional in providing shelter. BBQ facilities, half basketball court and a soccer pitch have also been incorporated in this open space. (Images 30, 34)

2. Chadwick Park features a simple structure which also provides weather protection. BBQ, seating facilities and a playground are also incorporated in this open space. (Images 31, 33)

3. Network of DDA compliant paths provide easy access.

4. Parks are highly visible and located at termination of streets.

5. There is a visual connection between Hilltop Parks. (Image 32)



7. Hilltop Park (Woodland Waters) (Leonardo Drive, Mernda)



An elevated area with significant trees has been turned into informal public open space.

A network of paths provide access to the top where simple shelter offers an opportunity to rest. 360 degree panoramic views are available from the hill top.

Existing dwellings around the perimeter of the space provide surveillance and frontage.

This open space is a great example which retains the natural landscape character of the site.





1. Abutting dwellings provide frontage and surveillance to the park (Image 38).

2. The park has three road frontages.

3. A network of DDA compliant paths provide convenient access. (Images 37, 39). Curving nature of paths provides a meandering approach to hill that follows the natural contours.

4. Existing trees have been retained (Images 35).

5. Simple shelter structure incorporates resting / seating opportunities (Image 36).



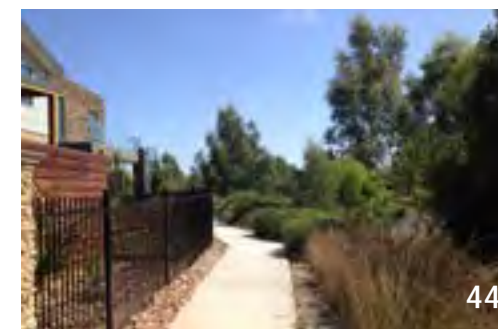
6. Pedestrian passageway along eastern boundary provides another point of entry. (Image 15) It is an alternative and more direct route to the hill top.

8. Wetland (Woodland Waters) (Waterview Drive, Mernda)



Wetland reserve is over four hectares in size. It is located at the entry to Woodland Waters on Plenty Road providing an attractive environment for local residents and a home to local flora and bird life. Wetland reserve is optimised to purify local rain water run off before joining the Plenty River.

The entry walls and fencing incorporate a wetland motif of reeds and water symbolising the site's rich natural characteristics and land form. Emphasis is placed on Australian and indigenous plant material, a theme that continues throughout the Estate, enhancing existing landscape character and providing a low maintenance approach.





1. Pedestrian/vehicle bridge provides access to lots with direct wetland frontage. (Image 40)
2. Pedestrian path facilitates access to wetland. (Images 43, 44)
3. Houses front the wetland and feature transparent fencing. This helps with surveillance of the wetland environment. (Image 41)
4. Pedestrian boardwalk across the wetland provides an opportunity for further engagement. It also completes a continuous loop around the wetland. (Image 42)



5. Formal break out space provides an opportunity for small events. It is also a gathering place with informal seating opportunities.
6. Road interface provides visibility and helps with surveillance of the wetland.

9. Mernda Villages Wetland Playground (Mernda Villages Drive, Mernda)



Mernda Villages Wetland Playground is co-located with a wetland and a conservation reserve. Wetland contains an innovative Aquifer Storage and Recovery System (ASR), which will store excess water in the wet months that can then be used in summer to water parks and gardens. Conservation reserve abuts the playground and has a path that runs through it. Road reserve along the western boundary provides a buffer from the residential area.

The playground has a range of program including: a metal slide, caves, fireman's pole, flying fox, ramp, walkways, steps and ladders. A ramp leads to an area of wooden platforms with a short tunnel slide, fireman's pole, ladder and scrambling wall. Further along is a large sculptured sandpit with a roof, tractor embedded into the path, see-saw and four swings.





1. Wetland at the entry to Mernda Villages. (Images 45, 46)

2. Continuous path network provides convenient access.

3. Conservation reserve abuts the playground with a very discreet boundary. (Image 47)

4. Path has been incorporated through conservation reserve with minimal impact.

5. Car park

6. Playground

7. Road interface helps with informal surveillance.

8. Road interface has been incorporated as a buffer between residential and conservation areas.

9. Boardwalk



10. Simon Creek Linear Park (The Parkway, Mernda)



Simon Creek has been embellished by substantial planting of native and indigenous landscape. This adds to the amenity of the creek.

This open space has limited program incorporating walking paths on both sides for pedestrian movement. No other program is incorporated and the space serves largely a drainage function.

The presence of the creek is further reinforced by pedestrian and vehicle bridge.

It is a good example which demonstrates creek environs in their natural state.





1. Simon Creek.
2. Road acts as a buffer between the creek and residential area. (Image 49)
3. Houses directly abut the creek interface. This helps to prioritise pedestrian movement.
4. A network of shared paths is located along both sides of the creek maximising connectivity.
5. Bridge provides a connection over the creek and different experience of it. (Image 48)



11. Hehr's Pine Park Farm / 3rd Place (Pine Park Drive, Wollert)



TREES



STONY
RISES



DRY STONE
WALLS



HERITAGE
PLACES

Hehr's Pine Park Farm is an A graded heritage place of regional and state significance. It is one of the most complete farms to survive from the 19th century in the City of Whittlesea. It comprises a bluestone house, milking shed, dairy machinery shed, loose box, stables, stones, extensive magnificent dry stone walls, mature Pinus species, Peppercorn trees and bluestone paving between buildings.

This heritage place has been retained and adapted to become a local cafe called '3rd Place'. It is of particular interest because similar local examples of adaptive reuse have occurred on the outskirts of residential developments whereas this example is near the main entry to the estate and central to the subdivision.



51



52



53



54



55



56



57



1. The rural setting of the bluestone dwelling has been respected by retaining a large open space area directly adjacent to the site. Despite the nearby residential subdivision, the sense of openness, the heritage integrity and rural character is retained. (Images 52, 55, 56)

2. A series of dry stone walls have been retained and incorporated in to the embellishment of the open space. Where paths cross the wall mortar has been used to protect the wall ends. (Image 52)

3. The site is visually prominent from Epping Road to the west and local streets.

4. The architecture of the addition is a simple form clad with dark earthy colours that recede into the background allowing the heritage building to retain its prominence. (Image 54)



5. A small stand of Peppercorn trees has been retained in an informal passive open space. This allows for the heritage place to be viewed through this contributing element from Epping Road.

6. The stony rise adjacent to the buildings has been revegetated and a small timber viewing platform has been installed providing panoramic views to the north and east. (Images 55, 56)

7. Rural post and rail fencing has been utilised to define the edges of the site.

12. Lehmann's Farm Playground (Broadleaf Drive, Epping North)



Lehmann's Farm Playground is particularly interesting because much of the site has been recreated through replacement, reconstruction or reinterpretation of the heritage elements of the farm. The farm was in ruin before being redeveloped as a playground to cater to the residents of the surrounding residential development.

This case study demonstrates that a heritage place does not need to be in excellent condition to warrant retention or references as the cultural values of the place can be highlighted in a many different ways. This heritage place is listed only on the Heritage Inventory and has not had any planning scheme protection and yet the history has been preserved, adding to local cultural identity.





1. This site has utilised the ruins of a farm building and outbuildings to create an interactive playground with bespoke play equipment referencing the previous use of the site as a dairy.

2. Interpretive signage conveys the site's history including the previous use and owners and clearly identifies what structures have been rebuilt or replaced. The signage also explains interpretive linkages to the play equipment provided on the site. (Images 60, 61)

3. A number of mature trees are retained on the site.

4. The recreated house foundation and reconstructed brick garage wall. (Image 58)

5. A new windmill replaces the original structure. (Image 59)

6. Circular planters mark the location of old wells. (Image 59)



Example interpretive signage found at the site (Image 61):

'Lehmann's Farm – Preserving the memory

The house foundation has been recreated and recycled brick paving has been used to mark the original location of the farm sheds.

Can you find the outlines?

A portion of the 1940's garage wall has been reconstructed and made in to a downhill wall and circular planters mark the location of the wells the Lehmann family used for drinking water.

A new windmill has replaced the original structure and an image of the original windmill can be seen in the ceiling of this shelter.

Can you see it?

A playground has been created and themed on the activities of the original dairy farm.

Lost and Found: The following artefacts were found on site.

Can you find some of these in the digging pits? Slate pencils, broken plate fragments, buttons, marbles, glass bottles.'





recommendations



Recommendations



Retaining key visual character elements and preserving their physical and visual linkages greatly enhances local identity.

The following recommendations are based on:

- the site analysis undertaken as part of this report.
- the identified opportunities and constraints and Key Place Making Opportunities.
- the review of case studies including identified opportunities and issues that can be either captured or avoided in Donnybrook / Woodstock.
- the review of policies and strategies guiding development within the City of Whittlesea

The recommendations have been structured as a series of objectives, requirements and guidelines for use in subdivision design throughout Donnybrook / Woodstock area.

Objectives describe the desired outcome to be achieved in the completed development, which must be met. Requirements must be adhered to in the development of the land. Guidelines are discretionary and alternatives may be considered by the responsible authority.

The Summary Opportunities / Constraints (Figure 12) plan and also each of the Opportunity and Constraint Sector Plans (pages 40-47) should be used in conjunction with these recommendations to ensure that the outcomes remain specific to place making and the creation of local identity in Donnybrook / Woodstock.



Recommendations

Objectives

1. Establish a strong sense of place by responding to and enhancing the visual character of the precinct.
2. Retain, protect and integrate visual character elements where possible.
3. **Conserve and enhance identified key placemaking opportunities.**
4. Physically and visually link features where possible to retain a sense of the broader landscape character (ie. via roads and/or linear open space reserves).
5. Retain an appropriate setting and context for heritage places.
6. Encourage the creation of distinct neighbourhood identity by integrating existing visual character features within local centres.
7. Retain views where possible.
8. Protect and enhance waterways and associated open space opportunities.
9. Locate the open space network to preserve visual character features.

Requirements

R1	Detailed analysis of visual character elements must be undertaken to determine appropriate boundaries or buffers from development.
R2	Subdivision design must respond to the landscape character by actively aligning roads, lots and open space to retain visual character elements (reference Epping North Conservation Reserve case studies).
R3	Cultural Heritage Management Plans must be undertaken for heritage places to ascertain cultural value, significance and appropriate site boundaries.
R4	Location, quality and retention value of existing Dry Stone Walls must be identified in subdivision plans.
R5	A planning permit must be gained for any alterations to or removal of Dry Stone Walls as per Council Policy within the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.
R6	Built form must respond to the scale, proportion and materials of adjacent or nearby heritage places and open space in a contemporary manner.
R7	Dwellings must not back onto the railway line and the existing gas easement (ie. back fences along these edges).



Guidelines	
G1	Visual character elements should be incorporated into the design of streets, conservation areas, public open space and local town centres to enhance local identity, where appropriate.
G2	River Red Gums should be retained within the public realm. Retention within private ownership will be considered on merit (ie. within town centres, car parks and schools).
G3	Identified placemaking opportunity sites should be retained to create focal points and add variety and interest to subdivision plans, where possible.
G4	Trees should be visually linked throughout the site by passive and active open space, boulevard treatments and viewlines created by roads and shared paths.
G5	Legibility and wayfinding should be promoted through visual access to distant views and identified placemaking opportunities, heritage places and significant trees.
G6	Subdivisions should protect and enhance creek corridors to facilitate linear trails and open space opportunities.
G7	Hard landscape within open space should incorporate local materials, natural colours and finishes to complement the landscape.
G8	Dry Stone Walls should be integrated as a design feature of open space areas, in accordance with Council Policy. Of particular importance are walls that define the edges of conservation or open space areas.

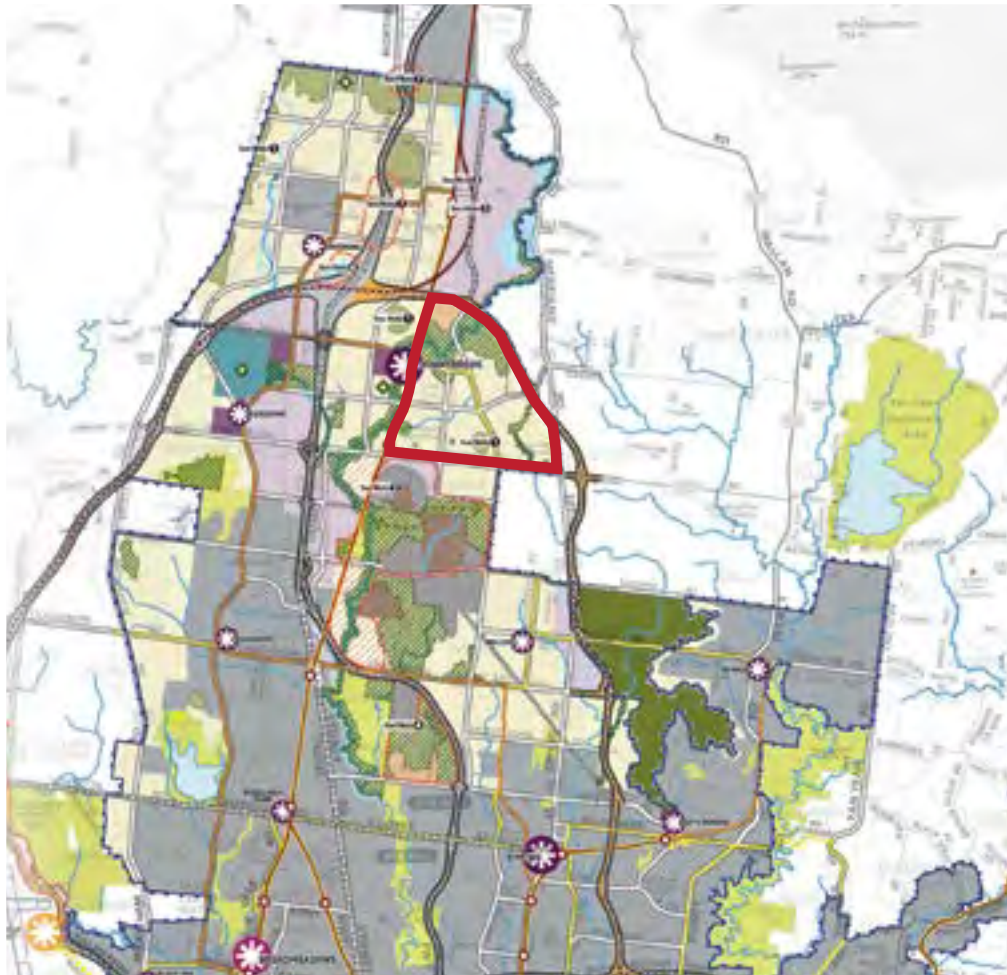
G9	Open space should be located adjacent to heritage places to provide a visual 'rural' context, where possible.
G10	Heritage places and their contributory elements should be conserved, restored or adaptively reused to add to the creation of local identity (reference 3rd Place, Carome Homestead and Creeds Farm case studies).
G11	Heritage places that are degraded and cannot be reused should be retained for its historic and interpretive value where possible. Ruins should be retained within open space or adapted for use as a playground (reference Lehmann's Farm Playground case study).
G12	Heritage places should be prominent in the subdivision design (reference Hehr's Pine Park Farm case study) to ensure that their importance is acknowledged.
G13	All open space areas and conservation reserves should be bounded by roads unless an improved outcome can be demonstrated.
G14	Where fencing is unavoidable adjoining open space areas, it should be a maximum 1.5m in height and at least 50% visually permeable.
G15	Development adjacent to conservation and open space areas should overlook and activate the area by using large windows, decks and balconies.
G16	Subdivision pattern abutting railway line and the existing gas easement should align road geometry to offer a mixture of lot frontages and sideages. Additional landscape buffer could be utilised along both of these interface conditions.





appendix

State Planning Strategies



North Growth Corridor Plan (GAA, 2012)

The North Growth Corridor Plan sets the strategic direction for the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP's. Preserving and enhancing the natural features of the site is one of the Corridor Plan's aims.

It highlights the need to undertake work such as the Donnybrook / Woodstock Visual Character Assessment to determine the most appropriate mechanism for recognising and protecting the valued natural features.

North Growth Corridor Plan Vision

'Each community will have a distinctive character, defined by its natural setting – the foothills, grasslands, woodlands, creeks and waterways – and well designed, accessible town centres.'

Key principles relevant to this assessment:

- Protect and reinforce landscape and cultural features that distinguish each Growth Corridor to create new suburbs with high amenity, character and strong local identity.
- Utilise the open space network to preserve natural features, character and heritage and also to provide important connections throughout the corridor.
- Design built form to enhance the local character
- Retain key local and distant views .

Figure 25: North Growth Corridor Plan



Metropolitan Planning Strategy Discussion Paper (2012)

The Metropolitan Planning Strategy (MPS) is currently being developed. It is intended that this document will set a vision for Melbourne to the year 2050.



The MPS Discussion paper proposes a number of principles to guide the strategy. Most relevant to this assessment is Principle One: A distinctive Melbourne. While this principle focuses more on the built form rather than the natural values of the landscape, we would expect this to be covered in the future draft and final strategy.

Urban Design Charter for Victoria (2010)

Key principles relevant to this assessment:

Legibility

Help people understand how places work and to find their way around.

Sense of Place

Places are valued because of their character - the individual qualities that make them distinctive from other places. Urban design should understand, protect, develop and celebrate local character.



Consistency and Variety

Natural patterns of the landscape provide a unifying structure and introduce variety at a smaller scale into the repetitive patterns of roads and railways.

Continuity and Change

Some constants in the public environment such as cultural heritage should remain from generation to generation. This public inheritance reminds us of our origins, helping to define our cultural identity, and locating us in a continuum of time as well as in space. A rich cultural heritage can be seen in the layering of elements from different periods.

Sensory Pleasure

Create spaces that engage the senses and delight the mind.

State Planning Policy Framework

Clause 12: Environmental and Landscape Values

Planning should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.

12.04 Significant environments and landscapes

12.04-2 Landscapes

Protect landscapes and significant open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.

Ensure natural key features are protected and enhanced.

Clause 15: Built Environment and Heritage

Ensure all new land use and development appropriately responds to its landscape, valued built form and cultural context, and protect places and sites with significant heritage, architectural, aesthetic, scientific and cultural value.

15.01 Urban environment

15.01-1 Urban Design

Require development to respond to its context in terms of urban character, cultural heritage, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.

15.01-3 Neighbourhood and subdivision design

Create a strong sense of place by emphasising existing cultural heritage values, well designed and attractive built form, and landscape character.

15.03 Heritage

15.03-1 Heritage Conservation

Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural significance as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.

Provide for the conservation and enhancement of those places which are of aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific, or social significance, or otherwise of special cultural value.

Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values and creates a worthy legacy for future generations.

Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.

Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.

Support adaptive reuse of heritage buildings where the original use has become redundant.

Local Planning Policy Framework



Clause 21.07 Built Environment and Heritage

21.07-1 Urban Design

The City of Whittlesea contains many diverse and rich urban and environmental features, which must continue to be identified, preserved and enhanced in order to retain the character of the municipality in the face of rapid urban development.

21.07-3 Heritage Conservation

The cultural heritage of existing and past residents contributes greatly to the identity of the City of Whittlesea. It is essential that the significance of heritage buildings, places and artefacts continue to be documented and measures continue to be put in place to ensure they are retained and incorporated within the development process. In a similar fashion to local environmental features, culture heritage offers the opportunity to add identity, interest and diversity to the City of Whittlesea.

Clause 21.08 Housing

21.08-1 Residential Capacity and Location

Create 'unique' local identity through the linking of new communities to local features or focal points including River Red Gums.

Clause 22.04 – Subdivision Design Policy

Create a sense of place and community focus through subdivision design. Features of cultural, heritage and natural significance are to be incorporated into subdivisions to create character, diversity and interest.

Clause 22.10 - River Red Gum Protection Policy

This policy applies to the protection of River Red Gums located in urban and rural areas.

Mature River Red Gums in an open plains grassland environment are generally recognised as the most important visual and environmental feature of this municipality. Many of the River Red Gums within the urban areas have been estimated to be between 200 and 800 years of age.

Council's experience has been that very few of the original River Red Gums survive the surrounding encroachment of urban development, unless careful site assessment and planning occurs. It is therefore essential that existing River Red Gums are properly assessed and treated as an integral part of development design.

It is policy that:

- The intrinsic value of River Red Gums be recognised in establishing character and identity in urban and rural areas.
- The majority of River Red Gums proposed for retention should be sited in public open space reserves and/or road reserves.

Particular Provisions

Clause 52.37 - Post Box and Dry Stone Walls

A permit is required to demolish, remove or alter a dry stone wall constructed before 1940 on land specified in the schedule to this provision.

Clause 56.05 - Urban Landscape

Incorporate natural and cultural features in to the design of streets and public open space where appropriate.

Standard C12

An application for subdivision that creates streets or public open space should be accompanied by a landscape design that:

- Responds to the site and context description for the site and surrounding area.
- Maintains significant vegetation where possible within an urban context.
- Takes account of the physical features of the land including landform, soil and climate.
- Protects and enhance any significant natural and cultural features.
- Protects and link areas of significant local habitat where appropriate.
- Incorporates natural and cultural features where appropriate.

Relevant Council Strategies and Reports



Whittlesea 2030 Strategic Community Plan

(City of Whittlesea: 2013)



This document is Council's community plan for connecting people, environment and economy

Key relevant statements:

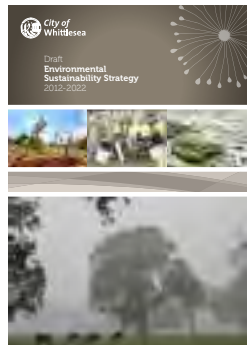
We share an open expression of cultural heritage.

Our urban design helps build connection to place and the community.

Our natural environment is a resource for all to enjoy and we need to protect it for future generations.

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

(City of Whittlesea, 2013)



This strategy provides direction for Council and the community for living and working in a more sustainable way.

Relevant objective:

Use landscape scale planning to protect significant environmental areas from urban growth.

Relevant Council Strategies and Reports

Rural Landscape Character Assessment

(Contour Consultants, 1999)

This report was a component of the Rural Review Strategy (City of Whittlesea, 1999). This assessment identifies areas of significant visual quality within the rural areas of the municipality and details the specific characteristics that contribute to the unique visual qualities of each of these areas. Policy guidelines were developed to provide an assessment framework for development applications to protect the visual qualities of the identified areas.

Visual Character Areas

The Rural Landscape Character Assessment identified four Visual Character Areas (VCA) in the City of Whittlesea. The Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP area is largely within Northern Plains sub area with only small section falling into Red Gum sub-area of the Western Plains VCA.

Western Plains Visual Character Area

'The Western Plains VCA, characterised by generally flat to undulating open plains with significant areas of River Red Gum Woodlands is significant in that with its open pastures and paddocks and farming buildings it is evocative of the more distant plains regions of the state but in close proximity to the urban areas and the other VCAs. The presence or lack of River Red Gums is a significant factor in the overall character of the various sub units. Other features which help to give this VCA a special character are the dry stone walls and older buildings and structures found throughout which provide visual reminders of the rural past, which given their proximity to the urban area, deserve special attention.' (Countour Consultants, 1999)

Red Gum Sub-area

This sub-area is defined by the presence of the signature River Red Gums.

Northern Plains Sub-area

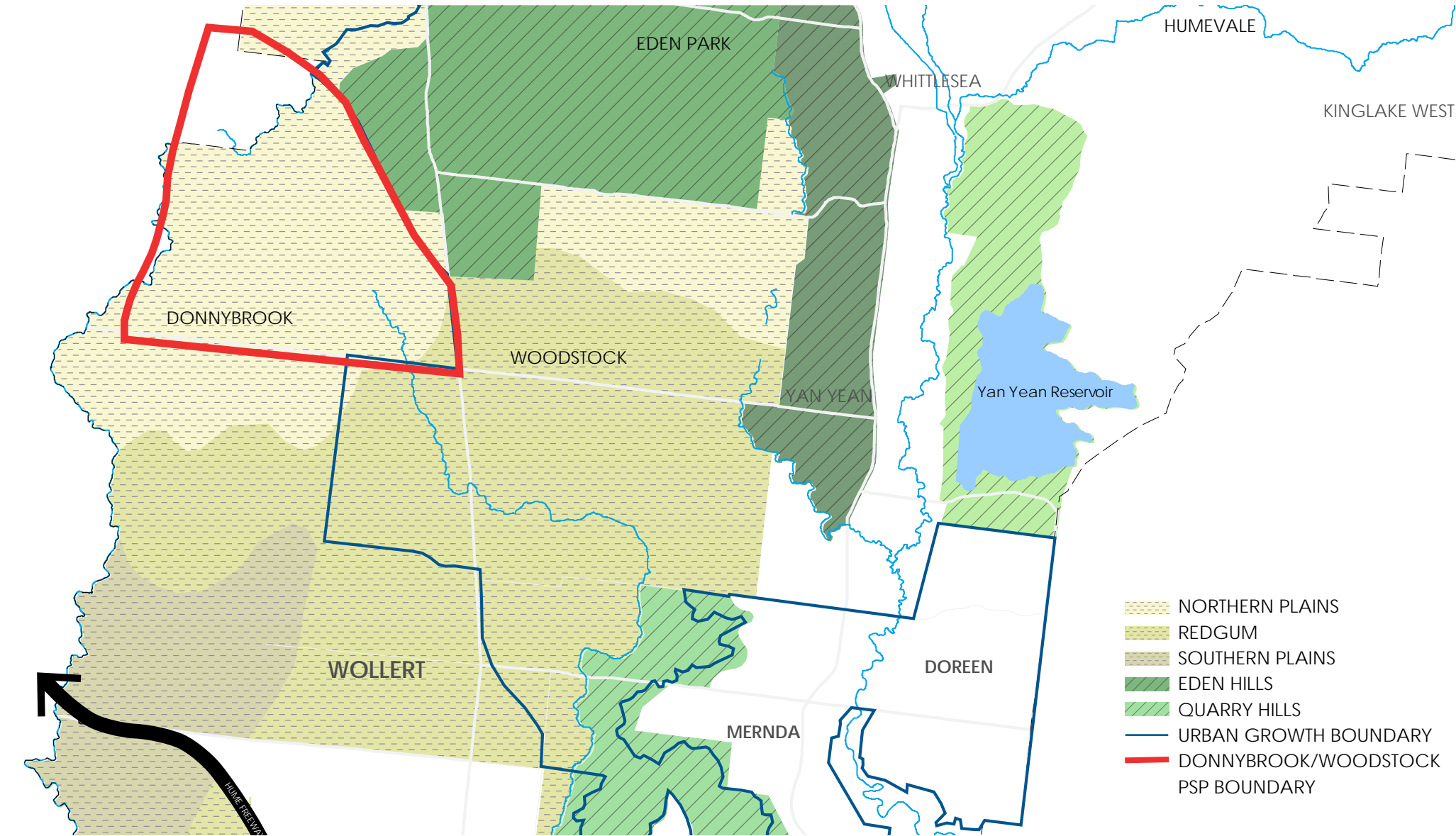
This sub-area is defined by generally flat to gently undulating basalt volcanic plains with stony rises. The stony rises found through these areas are unique to this land system, as they do not appear within other land systems on the volcanic (basaltic) plains. River Red Gums, stony knolls and grassland areas are dominant natural landscape features.

NOTE

The Rural Landscape Character Assessment was carried out before the study area was nominated for residential development. As such the areas were assessed based on a continuing rural use. The definitions of landscape character apply as a good description of 'existing character' but the design response recommendations contained within the report are not relevant to the Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP areas.



Figure 26: Rural Landscape Character Assessment



References

The key existing background studies and policy documents informing the urban design future for the Precinct Structure Plans areas of the City of Whittlesea include:

The City of Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan, 2011

City of Whittlesea Heritage Study, Context (2011)

The City of Whittlesea Rural Landscape Character Assessment, Contour Consultants (1999)

The City of Whittlesea Rural Review, City of Whittlesea (1999)

Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable Communities (July 2009)

Environmental Sustainability Strategy, City of Whittlesea (2013)

A Guide to Growth Area Street Tree Planting, City of Whittlesea (June 2007)

Landscape Assessment for Aurora, VicUrban (December 2004)

North Growth Corridor Plan, Growth Areas Authority (June 2012)

Whittlesea 2030 Strategic Community Plan, City of Whittlesea (2013)

Urban Design Charter for Victoria, Department of Community Planning and Development (2010)

Urban Design and Landscape Approach for Aurora, MDG Landscape Architects (January 2007)

Whittlesea Heritage Study, Meridith Gould Architects (1991)

Whittlesea Planning Scheme

Donnybrook / Woodstock PSP Background Reports:

- Biodiversity Assessment (Biosis, 2013)

- Arboricultural Assessment (Treetec, 2013)

- Environmental, Hydrological and Geotechnical Assessment (Meinhardt, 2013)

- Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (TerraCulture, 2013)

- Post-Contact Heritage Assessment (Context, 2013)

