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C212**WHITE HILLS RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER POLICY**

This policy applies to development, (including subdivision) and works in the General Residential Zone and Low Density Residential Zone in White Hills, as shown on Map 1 forming part of this clause.

Policy basis

White Hills is an area towards the north eastern outskirts of the Bendigo urban area. An area along the highway retains some buildings that recall the early settlement of the area, however most areas are more recently developed. Some areas have a strong post-war character with low scale, consistent building forms and siting. Newer areas retain a spaciousness due to a lack of front fencing and regular spacing.

This policy assists in achieving the objectives of the State Planning Policy Framework, particularly in relation to responding to neighbourhood character and urban design principles. The policy implements the objectives and strategies contained in Clause 21.05 by ensuring that development enhances the character of urban areas, and achieve high standards of urban design and amenity.

The policy implements the findings of the *City of Greater Bendigo Residential Character Study 2001* that identifies the key existing characteristics and desired future character of the residential areas of White Hills. Development in residential areas needs to respond to the particular built form and natural environment elements that achieve the desired future neighbourhood character of the area in which it is located. These elements include building form, scale, siting, materials, front fencing and vegetation density. The *Residential Character Study* defines character precincts based on the delineation of areas of similar character elements (as shown on Map 1 forming part of this clause).

Objectives

To ensure that development is responsive to the desired future character of the area in which it is located.

To retain and enhance the identified elements that contribute to the character of the area.

To implement the recommendations of the *City of Greater Bendigo Residential Character Study 2001*.

White Hills Policy

In the White Hills Character Precincts it is policy that the following character descriptions, statement of desired future character, objectives and design responses are taken into account when considering any application to develop or subdivide land. Proposals that meet the design responses are also considered to meet the related objectives.

White Hills Precinct 1 (WH1)*Character description*

Although the area has a mix of building styles and materials, there is consistency in the way buildings are sited. Most share the same standard front set back, and most also have spacious side setbacks. This sense of spaciousness is emphasised by low or transparent front fences.

Statement of desired future character

The consistency of siting of the dwellings and the openness of the streetscape will be maintained.

Objectives and design responses

The desired future character is to be achieved by the following objectives and design responses:

Objectives	Design responses
To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings.	Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings.
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
To maintain the rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be off-set from one side boundary, and preferably both.
To ensure that buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape.	Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties. Where there is a predominance of single storey, the height of the dwelling at the front of the dwelling should match the typical single storey wall height.
To use building materials and finishes that complement the dominant pattern within the streetscape.	In streetscapes where weatherboard predominates, use timber or other non-masonry cladding materials where possible, and render, bag or paint brick surfaces.
To maintain the openness of the streetscape.	Provide open style front fencing. Front fences should not exceed 1.2 metres other than in exceptional cases.

White Hills Precinct 2 (WH2)

Character description

Among the mix of building styles and materials there is a strong 1950s character, which, coupled with the symmetrical street pattern (with crescents) that is so evident on a map, make this a distinctive area and an attractive garden suburb. Front gardens often form part of the street scene because of the low or transparent front fences, and large trees are an important feature of the street scene.

Statement of desired future character

The spacious, garden suburb qualities of the streetscapes will be maintained.

Objectives and design responses

The desired future character is to be achieved by the following objectives and design responses:

Objectives	Design responses
To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings.	Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings. Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees wherever possible.
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
To reflect the existing rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be setback from at least one side boundary.

Objectives	Design responses
To ensure that buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape.	Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties. The height of the dwelling at the front of the dwelling should match the typical single storey wall height. Use low pitched roof forms.
To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the garden settings and the openness of the streetscape.	Provide open-style or low front fencing to a maximum of 1.2 metres.

White Hills Precinct 3 (WH3)

Character description

There is a mix of building styles and materials, and variations in the siting and front boundary treatment of houses, all of which lessen the impact of the symmetrical street pattern (with crescents) that is so evident on a map. Nevertheless this is an attractive garden suburb. Mature trees in reserves or private gardens often dominate the skyline, and spaces between the houses allow glimpses of back yard vegetation. Front gardens often form part of the street scene because of the low or transparent front fences. Some streets have avenues of large exotics, which add to the character of the area.

Statement of desired future character

The spacious, garden suburb qualities of the streetscapes will be maintained.

Objectives and design responses

The desired future character is to be achieved by the following objectives and design responses:

Objectives	Design responses
To strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings.	Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings. Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new indigenous and native trees whenever possible.
To reflect the existing rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be set back 1 to 3 metres from both side boundaries, based on the predominant pattern in the streetscape.
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
To ensure that buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape.	Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties. Use low pitched roof forms.
To use building materials and finishes which complement the dominant pattern within the streetscape.	Use timber or other non-masonry cladding materials where possible. In streetscapes where weatherboard predominates, render, bag or paint brick surfaces.
To maintain the openness of the streetscape.	Provide low or open style front fences.

White Hills Precinct 4 (WH4)

Character description

This area of Bendigo is distinctive for its consistent rows of modest, early post war housing. There is a high degree of uniformity of style, building materials form and siting, and in future the area may be of heritage interest. Roof shapes are also important, as they too are consistent, and dominate the streetscapes. Front fences are mainly original and therefore low in height, creating an open feel to the streetscape.

Statement of desired future character

The intact post-war streetscapes, including consistency of siting, form of buildings and front fencing, will be maintained.

Objectives and design responses

The desired future character is to be achieved by the following objectives and design responses:

Objectives	Design responses
To retain buildings that contribute to the valued character of the area.	Retain and restore wherever possible, intact post-war era dwellings. Alterations and extensions should be appropriate to the dwelling era.
To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings.	Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings. Retain large, established trees and provide for the planting of new trees wherever possible.
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
To reflect the rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be setback from at least one side boundary, and preferably both.
To ensure that new buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape.	The height at the front of the dwelling should match the typical single storey wall height. Use low pitched roof forms.
To use building materials and finishes that complement the dominant pattern within the streetscape.	Incorporate timber or other non-masonry cladding materials where possible. In streetscapes where weatherboard predominates, render, bag or paint brick surfaces,
To maintain and enhance the openness of the streetscape.	Provide low front fencing.

White Hills Precinct 5 (WH5)

Character description

This precinct, developed mostly since the 1980s, is one in which the horizontal emphasis of dwelling form is important, resulting from the long, low elevations of the buildings in relation to their height. Brick and tile is the predominant building material. Many are sited at an angle to the street, with generous setbacks on front and sides, combined with an absence of front fencing in most instances.

Statement of desired future character

The horizontality of the dwellings, the informality of their siting, and the openness of the streetscape, will be maintained.

Objectives and design responses

The desired future character is to be achieved by the following objectives and design responses:

Objectives	Design responses
To strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings.	Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all applications for new dwellings.
To minimise site disturbance and impact of the building on the landscape.	Buildings should be designed to follow the contours of the site or step down the site.
To maintain the consistency, where present, of building front setbacks.	The front setback should be not less than the average setback of the adjoining two dwellings.
To reflect the existing rhythm of dwelling spacing.	Buildings should be setback between 1 and 3 metres from both side boundaries, based on the predominant pattern in the streetscape.
To ensure that buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape.	Respect the predominant building height in the street and nearby properties. Use low pitched roof forms.
To maintain the openness of the streetscape.	Provide no fencing or post and wire style fencing.

White Hills Precinct 6 (WH6)

Character description

An area of Bendigo distinctive for its semi-rural and bushland residential character, with large lots, farm or ranch style fencing (or no fencing), and sealed roads but no kerbs or footpaths. Setbacks are substantial, and some dwellings stand in large grounds. In the bushier parts, native vegetation flows from block to block and onto the edges of the road reserve.

Statement of desired future character

The semi-rural and bushland qualities of the area will be maintained and strengthened.

Objectives and design responses

The desired future character is to be achieved by the following objectives and design responses:

Objectives	Design responses
To maintain and strengthen the native and indigenous vegetation dominated streetscapes.	Retain established, indigenous tree and understorey species. Replace any indigenous trees lost due to the development with similar species and size trees. Buildings should be sited and designed to incorporate space for the planting of substantial vegetation (locate footings outside root zone). Prepare a landscape plan to accompany all development proposals.

Objectives	Design responses
To maintain the bush setting of the dwellings.	Buildings should be set back substantial distances from front and side boundaries.
To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of vegetation.	<p>The total hard surface site coverage (including outbuildings, swimming pools, tennis courts, driveways and all non-permeable surfaces), should not exceed 40%.</p> <p>Proposals that exceed the specified site coverage maximums must demonstrate that the Site Coverage objective and all remaining Objectives and Design responses have been met.</p>
To ensure that buildings and extensions do not dominate the streetscape and wider landscape setting.	Buildings should not protrude above the predominant tree canopy height.
To use materials and finishes that harmonise with the surrounding vegetation.	Use earthy toned building materials, finishes or colours.
To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of vegetation across the landscape.	Provide no fencing or post and wire style to the front, sides and rear.

Reference document

Planisphere, John Curtis Pty Ltd and City of Greater Bendigo, *City of Greater Bendigo Residential Character Study*, 2001.

Map 1. - The White Hills Residential Character Precincts

