

22.11 FERNTREE GULLY VILLAGE LOCAL POLICY

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This policy applies to all planning applications within the Ferntree Gully Village Activity Centre, defined by Schedule 8 of the Design and Development Overlay.

22.11.1 Policy basis

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The purpose of this policy is to give effect to the *Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan* (June 2014).

Ferntree Gully Village is designated as a Neighbourhood Activity Centre within Council's activity centre hierarchy. It is one of four activity centres servicing local catchments in the Dandenong Foothills.

The *Knox Urban Design Framework 2020* identified the Dandenong Ranges and its foothills as forming a backdrop to views across the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, including long range views from central city office buildings and other high points throughout the metropolitan area such as Northcote Hill and the Calder Highway. Ferntree Gully Village has a distinct character formed by its landscape setting in the Dandenong Foothills. Views to the Dandenongs frame Ferntree Gully Village to the east and significant native and exotic trees form an essential part of its identity and amenity. Low rise buildings sit comfortably within the undulating foothills topography. It is important that future development within the Village complement this important landscape setting.

The Village is based around the Ferntree Gully train station and provides a limited mix of retail, commercial and community uses to meet local convenience needs. Its local role is distinct from other larger centres nearby which serve a broader catchment.

Ferntree Gully Village is expected to experience low population growth over the next 20 years, and will retain its role as a Neighbourhood Activity Centre. Expected growth can be accommodated through redevelopment of underused sites that could provide small scale commercial, community or residential development to meet the needs of the local community.

Access around the Ferntree Gully Village is currently difficult due to the railway line segregating the east and west of the Village, poor pedestrian crossings and connectivity to and from the rail station and a lack of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure within the area. Existing commuter car parking at the train station is at capacity, leading to some illegally parked vehicles.

This policy seeks to manage future development within the context of the foothills landscape setting. It provides direction for preferred land uses and seeks improved access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with limited mobility.

This policy:

- Applies the following SPPF objectives to local circumstances - Clause 11 (Settlement), Clause 11.01 (Activity centres), Clause 11.04 (Metropolitan Melbourne), Clause 19 (Infrastructure) and Clause 15 (Built Environment and Heritage).
- Builds on the MSS objectives in Clause 21.05 (Housing) and Clause 21.07 (Economic Development).

22.11.2 Objectives

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- To provide a mix of retail, commercial and community uses to meet the needs of the local community.
- To facilitate more opportunities for people to live in Ferntree Gully Village.
- To support and facilitate health, aged care and allied community services.

- To protect and enhance the landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills.
- To protect and enhance the village character and landscape dominated settings of Ferntree Gully Village.
- To create attractive and vibrant streetscapes that are defined by innovative, sustainable and well-designed buildings of an appropriate scale and setback to their location.
- To protect the amenity of sensitive land uses such as residential areas and open spaces.
- To provide safe and direct connections within the centre for pedestrians, cyclists and people with limited mobility.

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Policies

Land Uses

It is policy to:

- Create a vibrant and compact retail core within the Commercial 1 Zone.
- Encourage development of underutilised sites to create an improved urban environment.
- Encourage the provision of well-designed residential uses above ground floor throughout the Village.

Buildings

It is policy to:

- Ensure buildings are sited and designed to complement the landscape setting and topography of the Ferntree Gully Village and the Dandenong Foothills.
- Ensure rooflines are varied to reflect the landform of the Dandenong Ranges
- Avoid flat roofs.
- Maintain a low built form that retains the dominance of tree canopies as a backdrop to views across the Ferntree Gully Village.
- Create attractive and vibrant streetscapes defined by well-designed buildings of an appropriate scale and form.
- Ensure buildings have active street frontage and upper level setbacks.
- Maintain the amenity of adjoining low-scale residential areas.

Access

It is policy to:

- Improve access to the railway station.
- Improve key pedestrian and cyclist connections within the Village. This includes: the cycle path 'missing link' through the eastern side of the railway car park; and pedestrian links over the railway line and through railway car parking areas.
- Improve linkages to existing green spaces at the periphery of the Village such as the open space area on Wyuna Street.
- Improve the appearance and utilisation of car parks.
- Restrict public access to the railway line to the south of The Avenue with boundary treatments such as fencing.

- Discourage additional vehicle crossovers in the Commercial 1 Zone and the Mixed Use Zone to maintain the continuity of footpaths.
- Balance the provision of sufficient on-site car parking with the need to promote walking and other alternative transport methods. A reduction in car parking may be considered appropriate where:
 - There is adequate off-site parking available in the surrounding area,
 - There is a reduced demand for car parking due to available alternative travel methods to access the premises, such as public transport, walking or cycling, and
 - The character and amenity of the site will be negatively affected by the provision of additional car parks (eg. loss of open space, increased noise, disturbance to nearby residential dwellings, loss of pedestrian amenity).

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Reference documents

Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan (June 2014)

Knox Urban Design Framework 2020, Knox City Council (2003)