

22.12 NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER POLICY

24/07/2014
C87

This policy applies to development (including subdivision) and works in the General Residential, Residential Growth, Neighbourhood Residential, Low Density Residential and Township zones within the Shire of Nillumbik as shown on Maps 1, 2 and 3 forming part of this Clause except where Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 applies.

22.12-1 Policy basis

06/06/2013
C77

This policy assists in achieving the objectives of Clause 16 Housing and in applying the objectives of Clause 19 Built Environment and Heritage of the State Planning Policy Framework to local circumstances.

The policy responds to the vision contained in the Nillumbik Municipal Strategic Statement and implements the objectives and strategies contained in Clause 21.05 by ensuring that development respects local community and environmental values, and maintains and enhances the character of urban and township areas. The policy implements the findings of the Shire of Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Study 2000, that identifies the key existing characteristics and preferred future character of the Shire’s residential areas. It provides design guidance to ensure that development and, where relevant, works respond to the preferred neighbourhood character of residential areas.

Development in residential areas needs to respond to the particular built form and natural environment elements that make up the neighbourhood character of Nillumbik. The extent of the predominately native and indigenous vegetation cover is a particular characteristic of Nillumbik that makes it distinctive from other areas of Melbourne. However, many other elements contribute to the individual character of different parts of the municipality. These elements include topography, vegetation density, building form, scale, siting, materials and front fencing. The Shire of Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Study defines residential precincts based on the delineation of areas of similar character elements (as shown on Maps 1,2 and 3 forming part of this Clause). The Nillumbik Residential Guidelines 2000 provide additional design advice.

The Key Characteristics, Statement of Preferred Future Character, Design Objectives and Design Responses for the precincts in this policy are to taken into account when considering any application to develop or subdivide land.

22.12-2 Objectives

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- To ensure that development is responsive to the preferred future character of the area.
- To retain and enhance the identified elements that contribute to the character of the area.
- To implement the recommendations of the Shire of Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Study 2000 and the Nillumbik Residential Design Guidelines 2000.
- To recognize the potential for change as a result of new social and economic conditions, changing housing preferences and State and local housing policies.

22.12-3 Design Objectives and Design Responses - All Precincts

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The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by these additional Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain the existing vegetation including canopy trees.</i>	▪ Retain existing high canopy trees wherever possible and as appropriate.

Design Objectives	Design Responses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Removal of existing trees or development adjacent to existing indigenous canopy trees may require an arboricultural report on the effects on existing vegetation.
<p><i>To minimise site erosion, the detrimental effects of excavation and the landscape impact of development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buildings and other development should minimise the impact on the natural slope of the site by following the topography of the site.
<p><i>To ensure buildings do not dominate the streetscape.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain plant ground covers and plants with substantial root systems on sloping sites. ▪ Buildings should be designed so as not to protrude above the ridgeline, when viewed from lower areas. ▪ Use elevational treatments, such as stepping, which complement the landscape setting. ▪ Use earthy toned finishes and paint colours.
<p><i>To ensure that car parking areas, garages and carports do not dominate sites when viewed from the street.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimise excavation for car access, loss of front garden space and dominance of access driveway and car storage facilities.
<p><i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the garden settings and the openness of the front boundary treatment.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide sufficient space in front of dwellings for the retention and/or planting of canopy trees.

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Garden Court Precincts

Key Characteristics

- Occasional high canopy native trees combine with substantial exotic trees occurring at a density of one to every 200m².
- Front fences are generally not present and, although becoming more frequent in some areas, do not predominate. Side fences forward of the dwelling are either not present or are low.
- Front gardens are generally low level, often with planted lawns and many also have substantial shrubs.
- Front setbacks are generally 7 - 8 metres. Orientation of dwellings to the street is often not parallel and varies. Side setbacks are generally 1 - 3 metres.
- Dwellings are usually single storey.
- Low-pitched tile roofs, with wide eaves, are dominant. Dwellings often incorporate a projecting front room or 'triple fronted' articulation.
- Driveways are usually provided to the side of the dwelling. Car parking is provided in garages adjacent to or behind the dwelling.

Statement of Desired Future Character of Garden Court Precincts

Development is sited so that it nestles into the landform and surrounding vegetation. Buildings maintain the pattern of orientations and setbacks of adjoining properties and the streetscape. Some variation occurs in the Diamond Creek Garden Court 3 and 4 Precincts where innovative higher density housing has and will develop. Driveways and car storage areas should occupy the minimum functional area.

Residential development is generally set among indigenous trees, although there are some locations where native dominates and exotic trees are present. Hillsides of residential development viewed from a distance appear to be lushly vegetated. Garden planting flows uninterrupted to the edge of the roadway

There is little physical evidence of the boundary between private and public property at the front of the house, and no solid front fence. Solid side fences may reach the front property boundary.

The 'public' space between the garden and the roadway is not delineated as a separate space, and includes informal native plantings with some substantial native trees. Many footpaths and verges are informally aligned, but formal footpath-plus-standard-suburban nature strip layouts are common. Roadways are sealed, some with roll over kerbs, some with upstand kerbs.

Design objectives and design responses

The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by these additional Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain the existing mix of native and exotic vegetation including canopy trees and understorey.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain remnant indigenous understorey vegetation where possible and replant where appropriate. ▪ Substantial native and exotic trees should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues.
<i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the garden settings and the openness of the front boundary treatment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid front fencing or solid side fencing visible from the street where this is a feature of the streetscape.

22.12-5

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Bush Garden Precincts

Key Characteristics

- Frequently rolling to hilly topography
- Average sized dwellings in earth tones, not always visible from the street.
- Dwellings usually constructed 1960s-1980s
- Native gardens
- Significant native and indigenous tree canopy occurring at a density of one to every 150m².
- Gardens extend into the street space, with little or no delineation between public and private land.

- Predominantly low hipped or split gabled roof forms.
- In some areas two storey buildings are frequent.
- Few front or side fences visible from the street.

Statement of Preferred Future Character for Bush Garden Precincts

Development is sited to minimise disruption to landform and vegetation. Buildings maintain the pattern of orientations and setbacks of adjoining properties and the streetscape. Some variation occurs where innovative higher density housing has and will develop in areas close to activity centres and transport routes. Driveways and car storage areas should occupy the minimum functional area.

Residential development is set among predominantly indigenous trees, although there are some locations where native or exotic trees are present. Hillsides of residential development viewed from a distance appear to be lushly vegetated. There is little or no physical evidence of the boundary between private and public property at the front of the house, and no solid front fence. Solid side fences stop level with the front of the building.

The public domain includes footpaths and verges that are generally informally aligned. Some exceptions occur where formal standard suburban footpath and nature strip layouts are appropriate. Roadways are mostly sealed with roll over kerb and sometimes no kerb. In some areas, roll over kerb and channels have been constructed to prevent erosion and to protect properties from storm water runoff.

Design Objectives and Design Responses

The preferred future character is to be achieved by the following Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To retain remnant indigenous trees and continue enhancing the landscape setting with indigenous and Australian natives and understorey (where appropriate with other planning requirements including bushfire safety)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain remnant indigenous understorey vegetation where possible and replant where appropriate ▪ Substantial indigenous and native trees should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues.
<i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the vegetation of the bush garden landscape.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid front fencing or side fencing visible from the street where this is a feature of the streetscape.
<i>To design and site buildings which minimize the risk of loss in a bushfire and landscaping which minimizes the spread and intensity of bushfires.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscaping and bush retention should maintain an area of defensible space around the dwelling. ▪ New properties should have a permanent built-in and easily maintained fire protection system, linked to an independent water and power supply. ▪ Note: Further regulations for wildfire management and safety may apply elsewhere in the planning scheme.

22.12-6

19/01/2006
VC37

Semi Bush Precincts

Key Characteristics

- Rolling to hilly topography.
- Modified grid street layout or connective bush tracks, some unsealed.
- Predominantly 1950s - 1980s dwellings; with some pockets of inter-war and recent development
- Generally earth toned materials
- Bushy vegetation with significant indigenous or native canopy trees occurring at a density of one to every 50-100m².
- Native gardens continuous with road vegetation, some terraced gardens.
- Few front fences, few side fences visible from the street.

Statement of Desired Future Character of Semi Bush Precincts

Development is sited so that buildings nestle into the landform and are partly obscured from view by the topography or tree canopy. Development responds to sloping landforms and creates minimal disturbance.

Hillsides of residential development when viewed from a distance appear to be tree covered. In typical streetscapes, substantial indigenous or native trees dominate the skyline and are common in gardens. Garden planting is mostly indigenous or native, and flows uninterrupted to the edge of the roadway. There is little or no physical evidence of the boundary between private and public property at the front of the house, and no solid front fences. The only fencing is around rear gardens, and this is often open (eg. post and wire).

Driveways and car storage areas are confined to a small portion of the land area. Garages and carports are hidden from view.

The public domain includes a dominance of indigenous or native vegetation, although there are some locations where exotics occur. Roadways minimise impacts on the landscape by retaining unsealed surfaces or on sealed roads using roll over kerbs and channels to prevent erosion and protect properties from storm water

Design objectives and design responses

The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by the following Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain the indigenous vegetation including canopy trees and understorey planting and encourage the replanting of indigenous plants.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace any mature trees lost to development with advanced indigenous species. Replace any other trees or understorey vegetation lost to development with similar size indigenous species where appropriate. ▪ Substantial indigenous species trees should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues
<i>To minimise site disturbance and</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buildings should be designed to sit above the ground amongst the tree canopy or to

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>impact on the landform and vegetation.</i>	sit within the topography and understorey vegetation.
<i>To minimise excavation for car access, impact on bush setting and visibility of access driveway and car storage facilities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate the design of carports and garages with the main dwelling unless this would require significant excavation. ▪ Use non impervious surfaces for driveways and only seal driveways in locations where erosion may occur. ▪ Design driveways and access tracks to follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls and minimize the impact on existing vegetation.
<i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the landscape and vegetation and the bush character of the front garden vegetation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid fencing unless of post and wire construction. ▪ Use timber and rock for retaining walls.
<i>To design and site buildings which minimise the risk of loss in a bushfire and landscaping which minimises the spread and intensity of bushfires.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscaping and bush retention should maintain an area of defensible space around the dwelling. ▪ New properties should have a permanent built-in and easily maintained fire protection system, linked to an independent water and power supply. ▪ Note: Further regulations for wildfire management and safety may apply elsewhere in the planning scheme.

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Bush Precinct

Key Characteristics

- Rolling topography sloping down to the Yarra River.
- Connective bush tracks and long cul de sacs follow topography.
- Many unsealed roads, no footpath or kerb treatments, driveways generally unsealed.
- Predominantly 1970s - 1980s dwellings;
- most dwellings not visible from the road
- visible dwellings are earth tones, mixed materials
- Landscape appears as a natural bush setting.
- Significant indigenous vegetation with substantial trees occurring at a density of 50m²-100m²
- Some pockets of cleared land with rural feel.
- Very few front and side fences, no solid fences.
- High bushfire risk.

Statement of Desired Future Character of the Bush Precinct

Development nestles into the landform and vegetation with minimal disturbance and no erosion. The landscape appears as a natural bush setting, including a dense understorey merging into open bush gardens around the houses. The grounds of properties are indistinguishable from the continuous bushland that characterises the area, whilst landscaping and planting close to the house considers bushfire safety. Buildings are obscured from view from the street by topography or indigenous vegetation. Buildings are not visible above the tree canopy, and are articulated to respond to sloping landforms.

Driveways are discreet and car storage areas are hidden from view and confined to a small portion of the land.

The ‘public’ domain between the garden and the roadway is not delineated as a separate space, and is dominated by indigenous vegetation. There are no footpaths (other than bush tracks) and no recognisably separate verges. Roadways are unsealed bush tracks and where sealed are of minimum width and without kerbing. In some areas, roll over kerbs and channels have been used to protect properties from storm water runoff.

Design objectives and design responses

The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by the following Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain the indigenous vegetation including canopy trees and understorey planting and encourage the replanting of indigenous plants (where compatible with other planning requirements including bush fire safety).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace any mature trees lost to development with advanced indigenous species. Replace any other trees or understorey vegetation lost to development with similar size indigenous species where appropriate. ▪ Substantial indigenous species trees should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues
<i>To minimise site disturbance and impact on the landform and vegetation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buildings should be designed to sit above the ground amongst the tree canopy or to sit within the topography and understorey vegetation.
<i>To minimise the visibility of buildings from the road.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate buildings within the landform and vegetation so as to be wholly or partly obscured, wherever possible.
<i>To minimise excavation for car access, impact on the bush setting and on the visibility of access driveway and car storage facilities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate the design of carports and garages with the main dwelling unless this would require significant excavation. ▪ Use non impervious surfaces for driveways and only seal the driveways in locations where erosion may occur. ▪ Design driveways and access tracks to follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls. ▪ Design driveways to minimise the impact on existing vegetation.

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the vegetation and existing landscape.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid fencing unless of post and wire construction to the frontage and rear and side boundaries.
<i>To design buildings which minimise the risk of loss in a bushfire and landscaping which minimises the spread and intensity of bushfires.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscaping and bush retention should maintain an area of defensible space around the dwelling. ▪ New properties should have a permanent built-in and easily maintained fire protection system, linked to an independent water and power supply. ▪ Note: Further regulations for wildfire management and safety may apply elsewhere in the planning scheme.

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Eltham Central Precinct

Key Characteristics

- Reasonably flat topography.
- Grid street layout.
- Sealed roads, generally upstand kerbs and footpaths either one or both sides.
- 1950s - 1990s dwellings; mixed styles and materials
- Residential development is set amongst predominantly indigenous/native trees
- Concentration of recent medium density development
- Fairly open, intermittent street trees.
- Gardens are a mix of native and exotic vegetation with substantial trees occurring at a density of one to every 200m².
- Front fences often present - side fences always present.

Statement of Desired Future Character of the Eltham Central Precinct

Development responds to topographic and vegetation contexts. Buildings maintain the pattern of orientations and setbacks of adjoining properties and the streetscape. Some variation occurs in areas where innovative higher density housing has and will develop. Driveways and car storage areas should occupy the minimum functional area, and excavation and other earthworks are minimal.

In typical streetscapes, substantial indigenous/native trees dominate the skyline and are common in gardens. Hillsides of residential development viewed from a distance appear to be lushly vegetated.

The ‘public’ space between the garden and the roadway is not delineated as a separate space, and includes informal native plantings with some substantial native trees. Many footpaths and verges are informally aligned, but formal footpath plus standard suburban nature strip layouts are common. Sealed roadways occur some with roll over kerbs and some with upstand kerbs.

Design objectives and design responses

The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by the following Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain the existing mix of native and exotic vegetation including canopy trees and understorey.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees and understorey vegetation should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues.

22.12-9

19/01/2006
VC37

Rural Precinct

Key Characteristics

- Flat to rolling topography.
- Long bush roads.
- Generally unsealed roads, no footpath or kerb treatments.
- All eras of architecture, dwellings on large lots.
- Open, rural feel in parts.
- Strong canopy trees along roadside, natives and some exotics (eg. pines).
- Generally post and wire fencing.
- Significant native and indigenous vegetation, with some exotics, and substantial trees occurring at a density of for every 50m²-100m².

Statement of Desired Future Character of the Rural Precinct

Development is sited so that it nestles into the landform and vegetation. There is minimal disturbance to the landform and no erosion. Buildings are sited well back from the road and away from natural features such as hilltops or gullies and where possible are wholly or partly obscured from view. Buildings are generally low in form with strongly emphasised horizontals.

Driveways and car storage areas are confined to a small proportion of the land area, and are usually unsealed. Garages and carports are hidden from view, and the driveway entrance is discreet.

The grounds of properties merge into, and are subsidiary to, the rural landscape. Front boundaries are often heavily planted and the only physical evidence of any property boundary is a post and wire fence. The 'public' space between the garden and the roadway is not delineated as a separate space, and is dominated by native vegetation with some substantial indigenous and native trees. There are no footpaths (other than bush tracks) and no recognisably separate verges. Roadways are unsealed bush tracks or, where sealed, of minimum width and without kerbing. Roll over kerbs and channels have been used in some areas to prevent erosion and protect properties from storm water runoff.

Design objectives and design responses

The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by the following Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<i>To maintain the indigenous vegetation including canopy trees and understorey planting and encourage the replanting of indigenous plants (where compatible with other planning requirements including bushfire safety).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace any mature trees lost to development with advanced indigenous species and replace any other trees or understorey vegetation lost to development with similar size indigenous species where appropriate. ▪ Substantial indigenous species trees should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues.
<i>To minimise site disturbance and impact on the landform and vegetation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buildings should be designed to sit above the ground amongst the tree canopy or to sit within the topography and understorey vegetation.
<i>To minimise the visibility of buildings from the road.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate buildings within the landform and vegetation so as to be wholly or partly obscured, wherever possible.
<i>To minimise excavation for car access, impact on bush setting and visibility of access driveway and car storage facilities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate the design of carports and garages with the main dwelling unless this would require significant excavation. ▪ Use non impervious surfaces for driveways and only seal the driveways in locations where erosion may occur. ▪ Design driveways and access tracks to follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls. ▪ Design driveways to minimise the impact on existing vegetation.
<i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the vegetation and existing landscape.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid fencing unless of post and wire construction to the frontage and rear and side boundaries.

22.12-10

19/01/2006
VC37

Settlement Precinct

Key Characteristics

- Flat to hilly topography.
- Modified grid street layout (St Andrews), connective bush tracks (Panton Hill).
- Sealed and unsealed roads, no footpath or kerb treatments.
- Mixed eras and styles of housing;
 - earth tones, some mud-brick
- Main road township commercial and facility buildings dominant with residential buildings recessed in bush.
- Bushy, rural feel, with significant indigenous canopy, almost closed in parts with trees at a density of one to every 50m²-100m².
- Native vegetation consistent but less dense than bush areas, houses visible.
- Site landscaping continuous with road vegetation.

- Some post and wire fencing.
- High bushfire risk.

Statement of Desired Future Character of the Settlement Precinct

Development is sited so that it nestles into the landform and vegetation, with minimal disturbance and no erosion. Buildings are partly obscured from view from the street by topography or native vegetation. They are often low in form. Most building materials are ‘earth’ coloured and textured.

Driveways are often unsurfaced and car storage areas are confined to a small portion of the land area. Garages and carports are hidden from view, and driveway entrances are discreet.

Hillsides of residential development viewed from a distance appear to be tree covered. In typical streetscapes, substantial native trees dominate the skyline and are common in gardens. Garden planting is mostly native, and flows uninterrupted to the edge of the roadway, whilst landscaping and planting close to the house considers bushfire safety. There is little or no physical evidence of the boundary between private and public property at the front of the house, and no solid front fence. The only fencing is around rear gardens, and this is often open (eg. post and wire).

The ‘public’ space between the garden and the roadway is dominated by native vegetation with some substantial native trees. Footpaths are generally unsurfaced and wind informally through the trees. Verges form part of the uninterrupted flow of vegetation across the public and private domains. The impact of the roadway on the flow of the landscape is minimised by retaining unsealed surfaces or on sealed roads, using roll over kerbs or omitting kerbs altogether. In some areas kerbs and channels have been used to prevent erosion and protect properties from storm water runoff.

Design objectives and design responses

The Desired Future Character is to be achieved by the following Design Objectives and Design Responses:

Design Objectives	Design Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>To maintain the indigenous vegetation including canopy trees and understorey planting and encourage the replanting of indigenous plants.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace any mature trees lost to development with advanced indigenous species and replace any other trees or understorey vegetation lost to development with similar size indigenous species where appropriate. ▪ Substantial indigenous species trees should be retained or planted as necessary to contribute to the desired future character having regard to solar access, residential amenity and bushfire safety issues
<p><i>To minimise site disturbance and impact on the landform and vegetation.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buildings should be designed to sit above the ground amongst the tree canopy or to sit within the topography and understorey vegetation.
<p><i>To minimise excavation for car access, impact on bush setting and visibility of access driveway and car storage facilities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate the design of carports and garages with the main dwelling unless this would require significant excavation. ▪ Use non impervious surfaces for driveways and only seal the driveways in locations where erosion may occur. ▪ Design driveways and access tracks to

Design Objectives	Design Responses
	<p>follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design driveways to minimise the impact on existing vegetation.
<p><i>To maintain and enhance the continuous flow of the landscape and vegetation and the bush character of the front garden vegetation.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid fencing unless of post and wire construction to the frontage and rear and side boundaries.
<p><i>To design and site buildings which minimise the risk of loss in a bushfire and landscaping which minimises the spread and intensity of bushfires.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landscaping and bush retention should maintain an area of defensible space around the dwelling. ▪ New properties should have a permanent built-in and easily maintained fire protection system, linked to an independent water and power supply. ▪ Note: Further regulations for wildfire management and safety may apply elsewhere in the planning scheme.

Reference

Shire of Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Study and Residential Design Guidelines, Planisphere and John Curtis Pty Ltd, 2000.

