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C97**SCHEDULE 22 TO THE SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE OVERLAY**

Shown on the planning scheme map as **SLO22**.

**Foothills and Rural Townships**

Yarra Ranges is committed to preserving the unique areas of the municipality identified in Clause 14.01-2 including the Dandenong Ranges and Upper Yarra Valley.

The Upper Yarra and Dandenong Ranges Authority established under the *Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority Act 1976* prepared the Regional Strategy Plan, enabling increased protection for the special features and character of the region. The Regional Strategy Plan historically provided the basis for protection of the unique character of much of the residential area in the Shire. This Schedule has been further informed by work completed in 2002 in the *Shire of Yarra Ranges Neighbourhood Character Study*. The purpose of the control is to preserve and enhance these special residential areas.

**1.0****Statement of nature and key elements of landscape**16/05/2013  
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The landscape significance of residential areas in the Shire is attributed to the quality of the environment which includes the vegetation and its relationship to the broader landscapes which contribute to a 'sense of place'. Many of these landscapes have National Trust classification including: the Western Face of the Dandenong Ranges, Sherbrooke Forest, Upper Yarra River and Environs, Silvan Agricultural Area and the Puffing Billy Railway Scenic Corridor.

Vegetation and buildings occurring in streamside areas are of particular significance as they play a role in the broader catchment.

*Dandenong Ranges Foothills*

**Belgrave, Upwey and Tecoma** - the treed slopes of the Dandenong Ranges have iconic significance for Melbourne, and the relationship between buildings and the surrounding landscape contributes significantly to the character of the area. Extensive vegetation in this area complements the conservation and habitat values of nearby bushland areas, many of which are included within the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

In the hillside areas of Belgrave, Upwey and Tecoma, houses and their grounds stand in a forested hills landscape. Dwellings are dominated by mostly native forest vegetation, which includes tall canopy trees and some understorey.

Buildings maintain similar orientation and setbacks to adjoining properties and integrate well with the topography and the streetscape. There is usually little or no formal delineation of front property boundaries.

Planting of native vegetation and where possible vegetation indigenous to the environs is encouraged in order to complement and enhance the visual and environmental qualities of the area.

**Coldstream**

A small settlement, Coldstream is a pocket of suburban style dwellings surrounded by a broad rural agricultural area. Developed over a 40 year period, scattered large exotic and native trees provide canopy, and a sense of connection to the landscape of the surrounding Yarra Valley.

**Healesville** is characterised by a strong 'country town' atmosphere, arising from varying block sizes, winding roads and well treed private gardens and public areas. These landscapes integrate well with the surrounding backdrop of mountains, wooded hills and farmland giving a sense of spaciousness and rural ambience.

Site coverage and hard surfaces are minimised providing room for vegetation and a sense of openness to be retained. There is often an informal rural character with either open style fencing or an absence of front fencing.

**Montrose and Mt Evelyn** – these foothill areas at the base of the Dandenong Ranges contain houses which although occurring at more suburban densities are well integrated into an environmental setting. Some strong remnants of dry forest remain in the landscape and private gardens are spacious with a mix of native and exotic vegetation.

**Lilydale** – is a mix of established and newer residential areas with both native and exotic plants and a sense of openness. Many areas are steep and the vegetation in these areas creates a prominent landscape feature in its own right as it can be viewed from much of the surrounding areas. The well treed areas provide the foreground to the broader surrounding landscape of low hills and undulating pastoral landscapes to the south and north and the heavily wooded Dandenong Ranges in the east.

The lower density areas contain blocks of irregular shape and size; gardens are extensively treed and have farm style fencing. Many houses are low, sprawling ranch or homestead style. A small area in the southern part of Lilydale is developed on the hillside among mature mostly native trees. This area has a semi-forested quality unique in Lilydale.

**Monbulk** sits below forested hills, with generous blocks and low level gardens. Remnant dry forest and other large canopy trees along with bush gardens, strengthen its landscape character. Monbulk straddles the ridge between two creeks and provides views to the Silvan Agricultural Area and The Patch classified landscapes.

**Mooroolbark** – this area includes the Bickleigh Vale Village subdivision and gardens designed by Edna Walling which are classified by the National Trust. Bickleigh Vale is recognised as one of the finest examples of a major landscape created by Walling. The prominent landscape feature is the way in which the houses have been integrated into the heavily vegetated environment. The subsequent development of the neighbouring areas adopted a similar informal garden character. The neighbourhood has strong garden landscapes sustained by profuse informal plantings, open frontages, semi native gardens and wide nature strips.

### **Silvan**

Silvan is located on the eastern side of the Dandenong Ranges overlooking the Silvan Agricultural Area (famous for its horticultural industry). The handful of dwellings in Silvan is complemented by mature trees and bush gardens which blend in and strengthen the connection with surrounding the rural landscape.

**Seville, Seville East and Woori Yallock** – are characterised by a strong ‘country town’ atmosphere, arising from varying block sizes, winding roads, absence of footpaths and some well treed areas. These towns integrate well in the surrounding pastoral landscapes including the Warramate Hills and Upper Yarra River and Environs which include belts of trees and the wooded slopes of neighbouring hills.

### **Yarra Glen**

Residential development in Yarra Glen spans from the 1880’s to recent development. Residential areas contain a mix of mature trees both exotic and native which occur throughout the residential areas. These trees and the town’s location in the Yarra Valley with a backdrop of the Christmas Hills contribute to the country town atmosphere.

**Wandin North** is located in an undulating rural landscape with a village like character attributed to a mixture of houses and block sizes, low level gardens which provide views to its well treed setting in the Yarra Valley.

**Warburton** is located in the cleft between steep hillsides. The town’s residential areas spread up the hillsides (Donna Buang Range) and along river flats, sometimes in open pastoral settings, sometimes in forested gullies and sometimes in conventional residential settings with varied lot sizes. The dominance of landscape over the buildings and the

association of the area with a cottage or chalet style of design are valued characteristics of this unique place.

**Yarra Junction** enjoys a spacious country town feel of buildings set into a wider landscape context of the Upper Yarra River and Environs. Large blocks and low level often exotic gardens sit in a landscape that includes rolling paddocks and treed hillsides rising up from the Yarra Valley.

**Streamside areas** - Vegetation and buildings in streamside areas play a significant role in the broader catchment and should address the principles of ecologically sustainable development for the Upper Yarra River Catchment.

**The key elements of these landscapes are:**

- A visual dominance of vegetation including large mature native and indigenous trees and garden planting of both native and exotic plants
- The majority of development sits within the landscape with minimal excavation and dwellings are partly obscured from view
- Hillsides appear to be covered with trees, even when developed with houses
- Vistas through development to hills, canopy trees and the surrounding landscape
- A general lack of front fencing.

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**Landscape character objective to be achieved**

- To recognise and conserve the environmental and visual sensitivity of residential areas
- To maintain vegetation as a dominant element of the landscape and encourage retention and regeneration of native vegetation
- To ensure development is sensitive to the natural characteristics of the land including slope, terrain and any existing vegetation
- To ensure setbacks are generous, consistent with nearby dwellings and allow sufficient space for mature plantings
- To ensure site cover maintains the ambience and sense of spaciousness
- To ensure that buildings and works retain an inconspicuous profile and do not dominate the landscape
- To ensure that the health of existing trees is not jeopardised by new development
- To maintain an absence of front fences and informal rural character with either open style front fencing or an absence of front fencing
- To protect and preserve the riparian areas along waterways.

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**Permit requirement**

***Fences***

A permit is required to construct a front fence.

This does not apply:

- if the fence is less than 1.2 metres in height or
- if the fence is more than 75% transparent.

***Vegetation***

A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop any indigenous vegetation or substantial tree. A substantial tree is defined as having a diameter at breast height (DBH) greater than 0.16 metres 1.3 m above the ground. (Equivalent to a circumference of 0.5 metres at breast height).

This does not apply:

- If the lopping of vegetation is undertaken to assist its regeneration or
- If the vegetation is dead or
- To the partial removal of branches directly overhanging dwellings, garages or outbuildings so that they are not overhanging or within 2 metres of the building or
- If the vegetation to be removed is within 2 metres of a building
- If the species appears in the *Shire of Yarra Ranges Environmental Weed List - Clause 22.05*.

#### ***Buildings and Works***

A permit is not required to construct a building or carry out works provided all the following requirements are met:

- The height of any part of a building is no more than 7.5 metres above the natural surface of the ground directly below it
- The total building footprint does not occupy more than 30% of the site and the total hard surface area (impervious surfaces) does not exceed 50% of the site
- The buildings and works are at least 4 metres from the base of any substantial tree. Works may occur closer than 4 metres provided they do not alter the existing ground level or topography of the land
- The buildings and works are at least 10 metres from a designated stream
- The buildings and works are at least 10 metres from a designated open Melbourne Water drain.

## **4.0**

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### **Decision guidelines**

Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority must consider as appropriate:

- Whether the development satisfies the statement of key elements of the landscape and character objectives of this schedule
- The role of vegetation in contributing to the character and environmental significance of the area
- The impact of the proposal on views within the foothills areas and on more distant views across the city and suburbs to the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges
- The impact of the proposal on the rural character of the townships where development is more spacious and allows views through to the Yarra Valley and/ or the foothills
- If the buildings are of a height that is below the tree canopy level and are inconspicuous in the landscape. Aspects such as the height of surrounding development, the slope of the land and the impacts on views to and from adjacent viewpoints should be carefully considered
- The site coverage allows for the planting of canopy trees and other vegetation
- The buildings are dispersed to allow trees to be planted among them and any works will not impact on the health of any substantial tree
- The habitats for native fauna, including wildlife corridors will be protected, strengthened or created

- If the buildings or works will adversely impact on the natural environment of the adjacent watercourse
- If front fences are commonly provided in the street and the style of fence, including degree of transparency, height, materials and finishes.

## **5.0**

### **Reference Documents**

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Shire of Yarra Ranges Environmental Weed List 2009 (Clause 22.05)