Overview of Key Issues - Built Environment

The Key Built Environment Issues for Moonee Valley are:

**Character**

Council wishes to continue to be the leading residential location in Melbourne’s northwest and aims to provide high quality residential neighbourhoods for future generations. While Council supports the broad strategy of urban consolidation, it recognises there is substantial community concern over the scale and character of new infill development that in instances bears no relation to the established streetscape.

Council acknowledges that all streetscapes within the city possess unique qualities that deserve recognition and careful design responses such as architectural styles, dwelling setbacks, pattern of built form, building materials and landscaping. Council has prepared ‘preferred character statements’ for each of its suburbs which will be used in the assessment of all applications.

**Urban Design**

The community is increasingly demanding high quality architectural and urban design outcomes for built form and open spaces. The appearance of residential, industrial and retail areas is considered important in maintaining a strong level of civic pride. The siting and design of buildings can have a critical impact on visual appearance within urban streetscapes. Council is keen to ensure that sustainability principles strongly influence the design, siting and servicing of all buildings.

**Heritage**

The importance of heritage places to the built and natural environment of the municipality is acknowledged. Moonee Valley has extensive areas of heritage importance and the protection and conservation of these heritage assets is required. New development must respect the integrity of places of cultural heritage significance. Guidance is required for additions and works to existing buildings, for the removal of a heritage place and for new infill development.

**Signage**

Within Moonee Valley, there is a variety of commercial and industrial areas. The expectation for neighbouring residential areas is for a high level of amenity and privacy, with minimal intrusion from business use and signage which is not part of the character of these areas. Effective management of sign design and location can substantially improve the visual quality of these areas.

Some industrial areas and open spaces along freeways and declared main roads offer some limited opportunities for promotional high wall and sky signs in locations with long distance visibility. Generally, these signs are illuminated to maximise their visibility subject to consideration of the impact of such signage on the amenity of the surrounding area.

There is also a wide variety of shopping centres that vary in size, character and the role in which they serve the local community. Council promotes a co-ordinated approach to advertising in terms of common themes, colours and building identification. The Moonee Ponds Activity centre, the Racecourse Road shopping centre and part of the Union Road...
shopping centre are all within heritage areas and the controls for these centres are designed to protect the Victorian and Edwardian character of the commercial buildings.

### 21.05-2 Objectives & Strategies - Character

#### Objectives

- To ensure that each suburb within the City retains its own distinctive urban character identity.
- To ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to the appearance and amenity of the streetscape.
- To ensure that the siting of new development does not adversely affect the existing or the preferred character of the neighbourhood.

#### Strategies

- Maintain and enhance residential streetscape quality and character.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Aberfeldie is of a suburb characterised by residential development that demonstrates consistent front setbacks with established front gardens and canopy trees, low fences and off street parking or garages that are located behind the building line.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Airport West is of a suburban landscape characterised by consistent front setbacks with front gardens, low fences and off street parking or garages that are located behind the building line.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Ascot Vale is of a suburb which is predominantly a residential area characterised by a mix of housing stock and styles, that all contribute to and maintain streetscape character and heritage values.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Avondale Heights is of a suburb characterised by residential development that demonstrates consistent front setbacks with front gardens, low fences and off street parking or garages that are located behind the building line. New dwellings should recognise the differing streetscape qualities and layouts between the east and west of the suburb.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Essendon is of a suburb which is predominantly a residential area characterised by a mix of housing stock and styles, that all contribute to and maintain streetscape character and heritage values.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Essendon North is of a suburb characterised by residential development that demonstrates consistent front setbacks with established front gardens providing canopy trees, low fences and off street parking or garages that are located behind the building line.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Essendon West is of a suburb characterised by residential development that demonstrates consistent front setbacks with front gardens with canopy trees, low fences and off street parking/garages that are located behind the building line.
- Ensure that the preferred future character for Flemington is of a suburb which is predominantly a medium density residential area characterised by low transparent fences, consistent front setbacks and building bulk, off street parking, street trees and mix of building material. All buildings will contribute to and maintain streetscape character and heritage values. Higher density mixed use development will be accommodated within the Racecourse Road Major Activities Area.
Ensure that the preferred future character for Keilor East is of a suburb characterised by residential development that demonstrates consistent front setbacks with front gardens, low fences and off street parking or garages that are located behind the building line.

Ensure that the preferred future character for Moonee Ponds is of a suburb which is predominantly a residential area characterised by a mix of housing stock and styles, that all contribute to and maintain streetscape character and heritage values.

Ensure that the preferred future character for Niddrie is of a suburb characterised by residential development that demonstrates consistent front setbacks with established front gardens providing canopy trees, low fences and off street parking or garages that are located behind the building line.

Ensure that the preferred future character for Strathmore is of a largely low density suburb characterised by the presence of consistent front setbacks with private front gardens that provide for canopy trees and low front fences. Off street parking or garages are located behind the building line and street trees are protected.

Ensure that the preferred future character of Strathmore Heights is retained as a suburb characterised by predominantly detached dwellings on modest lots with established gardens. The suburb is characterised by generous front set backs, low front fences and off street parking/garages are set back behind the building line.

Ensure that the preferred future character for Travancore is of a largely low density coherent suburb characterised by the presence of consistent front setbacks with private front gardens providing for canopy trees, avenues of deciduous street trees and low front fences. Any off street parking or garages are located behind the building line.

21.05-3 Objectives & Strategies - Urban Design

Objective

To achieve contemporary development that is innovative, legible and designed in a manner that responds to its location and context.

Strategies

Encourage development that provides an appropriate degree of visual interest and design articulation.

Enhance and create visual and physical links to adjoining streets, public transport and/or key community facilities when developing large or consolidated sites.

Ensure that the siting (including setbacks and site coverage) of new development responds to the opportunities, constraints and features of the site.

Ensure that development minimises off-site amenity impacts.

Encourage the highest standards of urban design on ‘key redevelopment sites’ as identified on the Strategic Framework Plan.

Consider the impact of additional residential development, particularly in areas where the streetscape value has already been affected by infill development.

Ensure new development presents integrated building forms that have a sense of address and clearly articulated facades.

Encourage new development to apply design techniques (including façade variation, contrast/repetition, colour, texture and detail) that will integrate a building with its surroundings and create attractive and interesting forms.
 Ensure that new development highlights key corners or intersections through the use of design projections, detailing and massing that presents to its surroundings and street frontages.

### 21.05-4 Objectives & Strategies - Heritage

#### Objective

- To conserve the historic fabric of places of cultural heritage significance including buildings, streetscapes, gardens and archaeological sites.

#### Strategies

- Protect all designated heritage areas and objects of natural, aboriginal and cultural significance.
- Encourage the restoration and renovation of existing dwelling stock.
- Discourage the development of replica housing styles.

#### Objective

- To conserve the historic quality of heritage places through careful consideration of proposed buildings and works.

#### Strategies

- Ensure that heritage applications are considered in accordance with the “Policy Guidelines” at Clause 21.05-5.

#### Objective

- To ensure that new development is sympathetic and integrates with the surrounding buildings.

#### Strategies

- Encourage setbacks that result in new additions and works that are not visible when viewed from the street frontage.
- Encourage a façade height that conforms to the same height as the adjacent building frontages in the street.
- Encourage roof forms to be sympathetic to the predominant roof form of the streetscape.
- Encourage ancillary site services that support sustainability of heritage fabric and reduce the operational environmental impact of the existing building (such as solar panels, water tanks, solar hot water systems etc.) to be sensitively integrated into the design of the heritage place. These services may be visible if there is no reasonable alternative location.

### 21.05-5 Policy Guidelines - Heritage

The demolition of a heritage place is discouraged unless:

- The heritage place has no heritage value.
The heritage place has been changed beyond recognition of its original or subsequent contributory architectural character and;

- It does not contribute to the heritage character of the streetscape.
- It does not form part of a group of similar buildings, historic streetscape or collection of historic buildings.
- The proposed replacement building generally meets the provisions of this policy.

The derelict state of a heritage place will not be a reason for permitting demolition.

Additions and new works to heritage places are encouraged that:

- Do not obscure principal viewlines to heritage buildings or their features, such as verandahs, towers and porticos.
- Do not obscure principal viewlines to existing significant signage.
- Respect the context of an adjacent contributory heritage building.

New upper storey additions are encouraged where:

- The higher section is hidden from the street, such as behind an existing parapet wall or where impractical located to minimise the impact on the streetscape.
- The higher section is setback at least the depth of two rooms from the front wall of the dwelling to ensure the preservation of the existing historic ridge line and chimney, if the existing building is a terrace style or attached house.

Buildings and works are encouraged to respect historic trees and historic garden layouts by locating proposed new development at a distance that ensures the ongoing health of the tree and that does not negatively impact upon an historic garden layout or context.

**21.05-6 Objectives & Strategies - Signage**

**Objective**

- To ensure that signage is compatible with the character of the area and its local streetscapes.

**Strategies**

- Ensure that signs do not cause loss of amenity or adversely affect the natural or built environment, or the safety, appearance or efficiency of a road.
- Ensure that advertising signage is considered in accordance with the “Policy Guidelines” at Clause 21.05-7.

**21.05-7 Policy Guidelines - Signage**

In residential areas, Council will consider the use of:

- Small business identification signs for home occupation uses.
- Landscaping around signs to soften the appearance of signs.
- Illumination of signs by spotlight only with minimal light spillage to adjoining residential land.

For non-residential uses in residential areas, Council will consider the use of:

- Business identification signage having regard to the need to avoid visual clutter.
Illumination of these signs only where it can be shown that the impact from light spillage on adjoining residential areas is minimal.

In industrial areas, Council will consider the use of:

- Business and identification signs which are necessary to identify the location of the premises and the use of the building.
- Business directory signs for buildings with multiple occupants/uses.
- Internally illuminated pole signs where the building is set back from the street frontage and for uses such as petrol filling stations and car sales.
- Architecturally innovative sign structures that demonstrate a regard to the building design, scale and presentation and to the surrounding area.
- Promotional signage but only where it can be demonstrated that the amenity of the area will not be detrimentally affected and the sign will not obscure existing signage.

On or near main roads, Council will consider the use of:

- Architecturally designed and innovative supporting structures.
- Large promotional panel or sky signs but only where they are located in industrial zones and where it can be demonstrated that the signs have been designed to minimise intrusion on the skyline, not dominate the area of building walls and parapets and not have a negative impact on traffic safety.
- Signs that contain no flashing or intermittent lighting.
- Signs that are designed to become an architectural feature.
- The illumination of promotional signs which have appropriate baffling to minimise light spillage onto adjoining land.

In commercial areas, Council will consider the use of:

- Suspended under-verandah signs, including internally illuminated signage.
- Ground and first floor window signs.
- Awning fascia and parapet signs and first floor wall face signs.
- A-frame signs.
- Above verandah signage at 90 degrees angle to the building, if it is appropriate to the scale of the building.
- Projecting above-awning parapet level signs.
- Free-standing pole signs of appropriate scale to the buildings with a front setback.
- Side wall, upper storey panel signs which are of appropriate scale to the building.

21.05-8 Implementation – Built Environment

- Apply the Heritage Overlay to identified heritage places.
- Apply Design and Development Overlay No. 3 on Mount Alexander Road North Essendon to ensure future development is in accordance with the design objectives.
- Apply Design and Development Overlay No. 4 on Mount Alexander Road South to ensure future development is in accordance with the design objectives.

21.05-9 Further Strategic Work

- Review existing Heritage Overlays
- Develop Heritage Design Guidelines
- Identify exemptions for minor matters in Heritage Overlay.
- Prepare Outdoor Advertising Guidelines
- Develop Keilor Road Signage Policy
- Prepare Airport West Design and Development Guidelines
- Prepare Keilor Road Design and Development Guidelines
- Prepare North Essendon Design and Development Guidelines
- Review Mount Alexander Road (South) Guidelines

21.05-10 Reference Documents

- Mount Alexander Road South Urban Design Guidelines 2004
- Local Character Study
- Essendon Conservation Study
- Individual data-sheets, City of Moonee Valley
- Moonee Valley Historic and Significant Tree Study
- Moonee Valley Heritage Gap Study 2005
- Urban Design and Development Guidelines for Heritage Areas, Moonee Valley City Council
- Flemington and Kensington Conservation Study, Moonee Valley City Council
- Statement on Housing, Development and Neighbourhood Character 1999
- Residential Style Notes. City of Moonee Valley 1999