



The future of our Village
FERNTREE GULLY
Village

STRUCTURE PLAN

JUNE 2014



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Introduction

Project brief

Planisphere was appointed by Knox City Council to prepare a Structure Plan and Planning Scheme Amendment for Ferntree Gully Village.

The Structure Plan provides clear direction about future redevelopment opportunities, land use changes, economic development opportunities, urban and built form, public spaces, connectivity and access (including cycling and pedestrian routes), integrated transport and parking, and community infrastructure. The Plan also addresses non-planning issues including community driven activities and initiatives.

Structure plan area

Set among the forested slopes and rises of the Dandenong Ranges Foothills, Ferntree Gully Village is a centre experiencing change. It is a site of both challenge and opportunity as the Foothills not only provide a backdrop of visual and environmental significance for the local area, but as identified in the Knox Urban Design Framework 2020, across much of metropolitan Melbourne.

The Structure Plan area comprises existing commercial and public use areas. It is surrounded by predominantly residential zones that include provisions that aim to protect the foothills character and vegetation cover. These controls are intended to place limitations on the scale and intensity of development and reinforce a relatively low density of residential housing. As a result, the structure plan area is confined to the commercial and public use zone areas of Ferntree Gully which provide opportunities for change and an increased housing diversity.

Development of the Structure Plan

The process for preparing the Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan included the following key stages:

Stage 1: Background analysis

Stage 2: Community survey & workshops

Stage 3: Options development & community workshops

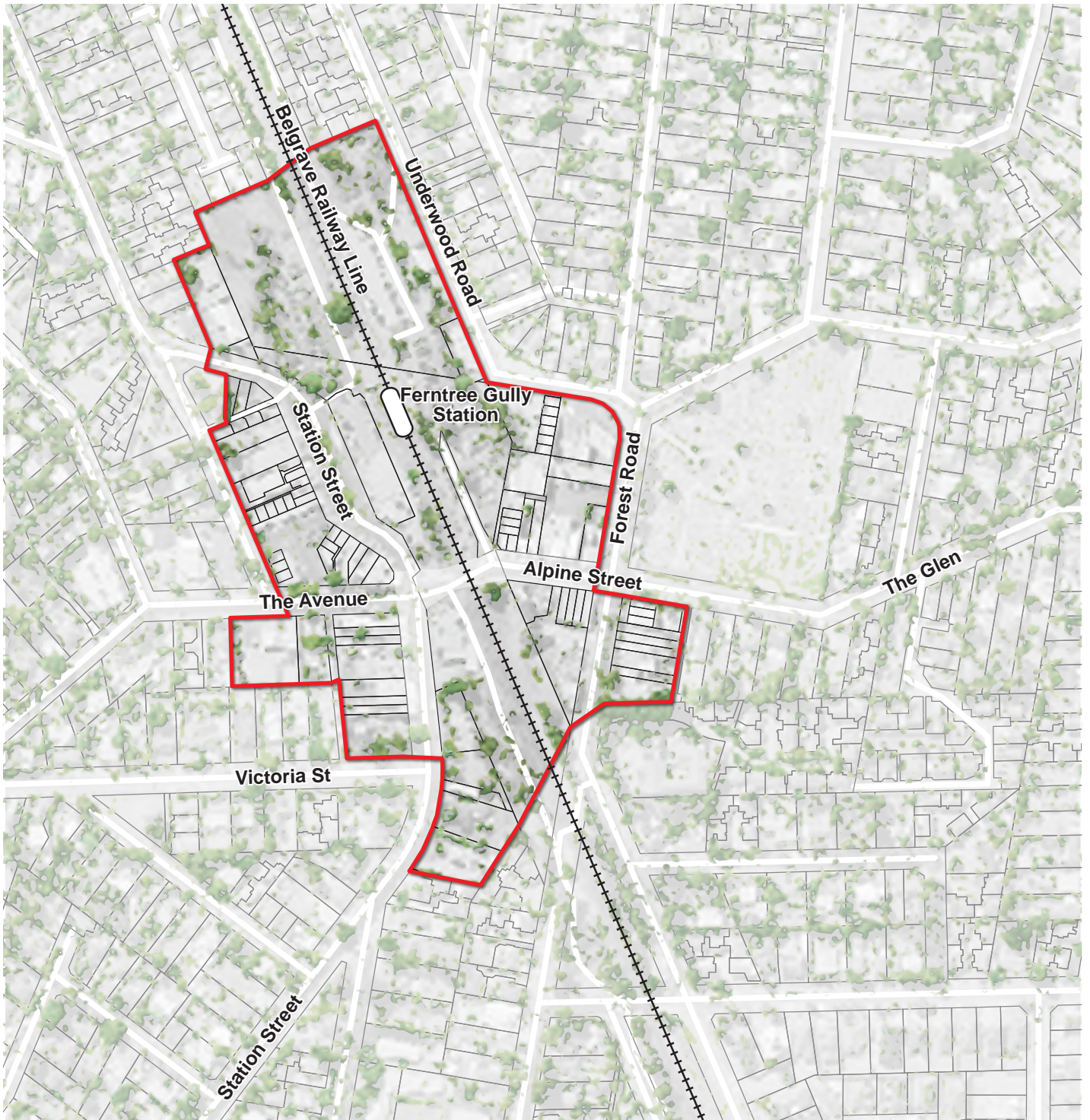
Stage 4: Development and exhibition of Draft Structure Plan

Stage 5: Changes in response to exhibition and finalisation of the Structure Plan

Research

This Structure Plan is informed by a comprehensive background report drawn from the following documents:

- State Government Zone reforms
- Vision for Knox
- City Plan for Knox
- Knox@50 Final Report, March 2013
- Knox@50 Discussion papers (Identity, Population, Resources, Technology, Governance)
- Amendments C40 and C49 to Knox Planning Scheme
- Ferntree Gully Village Traffic Study, Traffix Group PTY LTD 2009
- Local Planning Activity since 1997, Knox City Council March 2013
- Ferntree Gully Village Investment and Development Statement, Econ-KM PTY LTD September 2011
- The Not for Profit Sector & Ferntree Gully Village, Geografia August 2012
- Height Controls in Foothills Council Report, September 2012
- Ferntree Gully Village Streetscape Masterplan Council Report, October 2011
- Ferntree Gully Village Place Program Update Council Report, 29 May 2012

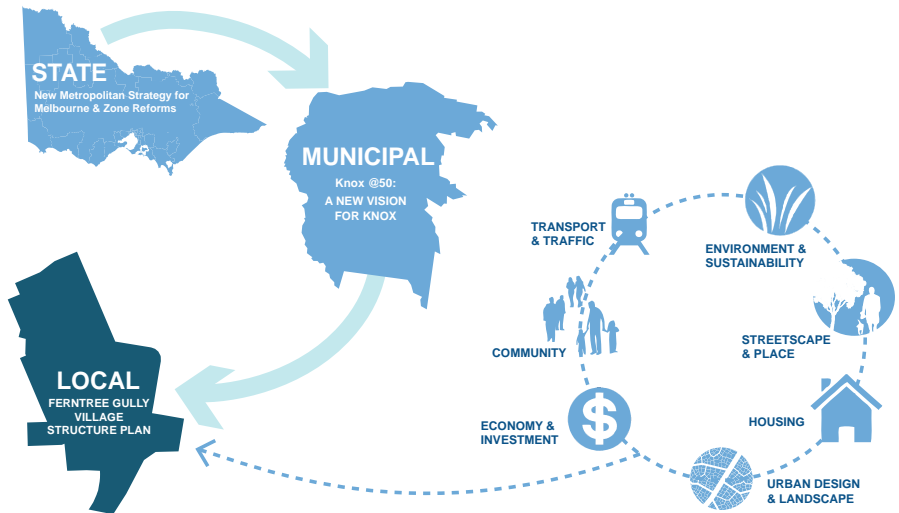


STRUCTURE PLAN AREA

 Structure Plan area

Context

This Structure Plan sits within a changing policy and urban landscape, which includes an emerging Metropolitan Planning Strategy for Melbourne, a new Vision and City Plan for Knox, and the significant work already undertaken to shape the municipality including the Ferntree Gully Village Place Program.



Knox Vision

Knox’s Vision is structured around five aspirations which are intended to provide a picture of the future City that will deliver the lifestyle, jobs and industry, health and wellbeing desired by members of the Knox community.

Knox City Plan

The Knox City Plan outlines the key objectives and strategies to achieve the aspirations outlined in the Vision. The Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan will aim to deliver on these objectives and strategies at the local level.

State and Local Policy

The requirements of State Planning Policy are a key consideration in the preparation of the Structure Plan. The Plan needs to demonstrate compliance with State Planning Policy to be approved.

Clause 11.02-1 of the State Planning Policy relates to the supply of urban land. The need for Councils to “plan to accommodate projected population growth over at least a 15 year period and provide clear direction on locations where growth should occur” is the key requirement for the Structure Planning in terms of future urban land requirements.

Clause 11.01-2 relates to Activity Centre Planning, with the objective of this clause to “encourage

the concentration of major retail, residential, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural developments into activity centres which provide a variety of land uses and are highly accessible to the community.”

Local Policy of the Knox Planning Scheme at Clause 22.10 - Housing, encourages medium density housing in the business zones of the Neighbourhood Activity Centres to “recognise and respond to the landscape and environmental sensitivities and existing character of the Foothills by:

- Minimising the site coverage of buildings;
- Allowing sufficient space to retain plant canopy vegetation;
- Ensuring that buildings are sited to minimise bulk and vegetation loss;
- Ensuring the height of buildings sit below or within the existing tree canopy”.

Current zoning and overlays protect the Dandenong foothills area and the commercial centre and in the residential zone surrounding the Village.

A tension exists between State policy, the aspiration of some owners of land in the Village and community concerns regarding built form and landscape character. Ferntree Gully Village is within a unique landscape

setting which is controlled through the Dandenong Foothills Policy and any future development must respect the Foothills

Existing Zones

Ferntree Gully Village is defined by a mix of Commercial Zones covering the majority of the centre, Public Use Zone covering the Rail Station and associated infrastructure, and Road Zone covering Station Street to the west and Alpine Street to the east.

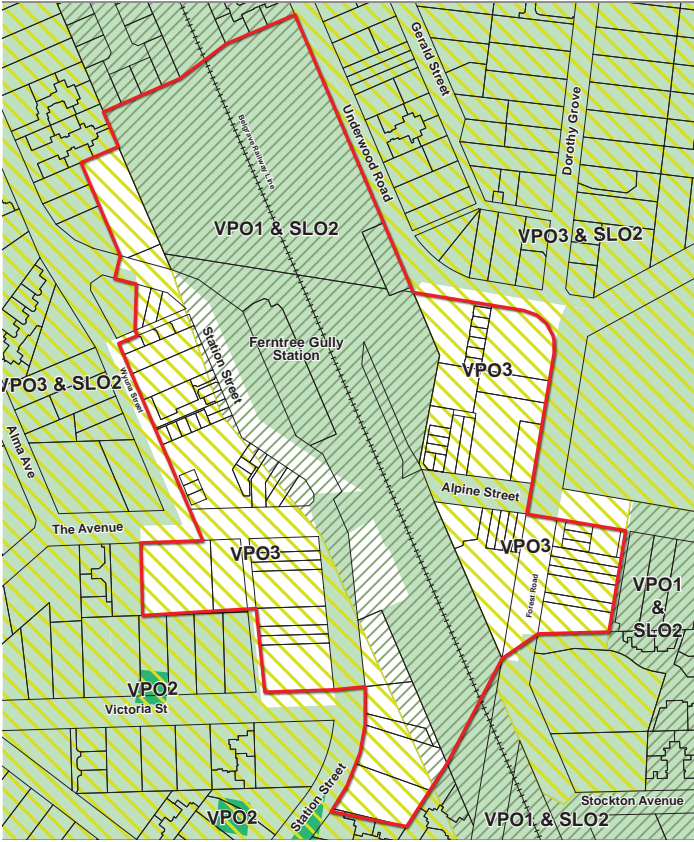
Surrounding residential development is Residential Zone 3.

Existing Overlays

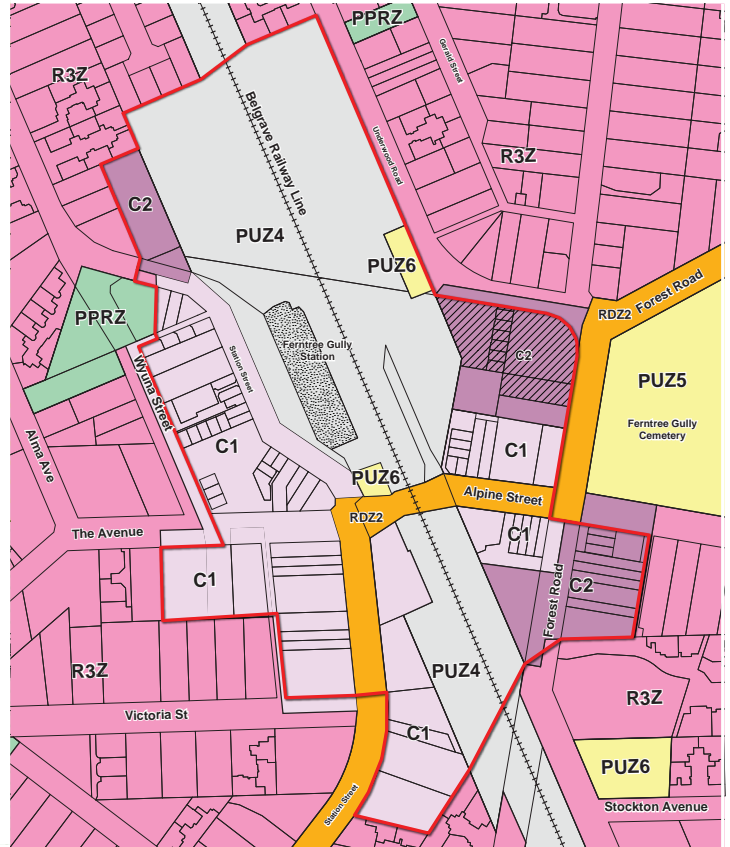
The structure plan area is subject to a number of overlays which aim to protect the foothills character.

VPOs 1&3 protect existing vegetation throughout Ferntree Gully. SLO2 seeks to protect and enhance the visual, natural and cultural values of the foothills landscape

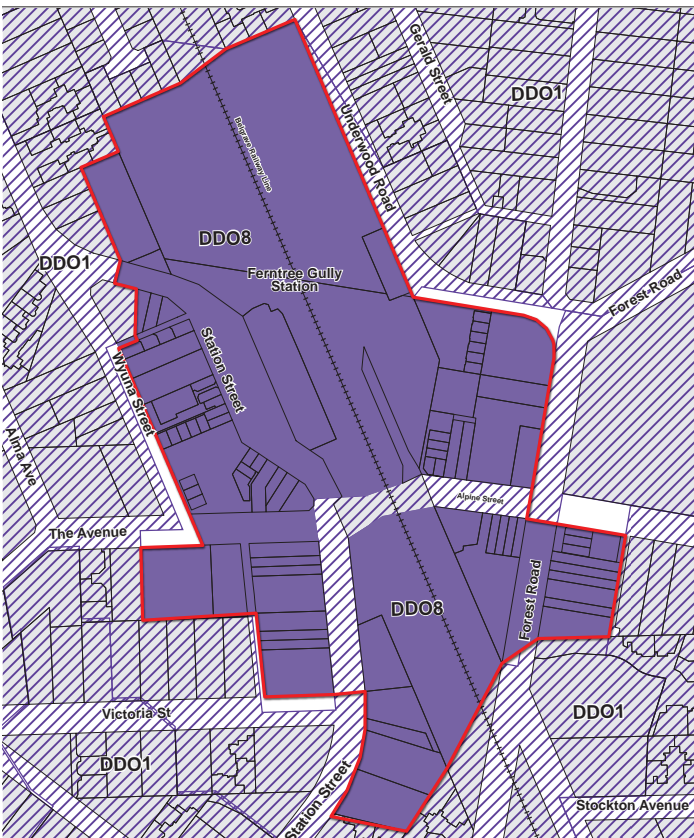
DDO8 enforces a mandatory 7.5 metre interim height limit to protect views of the foothills and ensure new buildings are compatible with the scale and character of the Village. The requirements of this overlay cease to have effect after 31 December 2014.



Existing Overlays: Environmental



Existing Zones



Existing Overlays: Built form

Structure Plan area

ZONES

- R1Z Residential 1 Zone
- C1Z Commercial 1 Zone
- C2Z Commercial 2 Zone
- PPRZ Public Park & Recreation Zone
- PUZ5 Public Use Zone 5: Cemetery
- PUZ6 Public Use Zone 6: Local Government
- PUZ4 Public Use Zone 4: Transport
- RDZ2 Road Zone 2

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERLAYS

- VPO1 Vegetation Protection Overlay 1
- VPO2 Vegetation Protection Overlay 2
- VPO3 Vegetation Protection Overlay 3
- SLO2 Significant Landscape Overlay 2

BUILT FORM OVERLAYS

- DDO1 Design & Development Overlay 1
- DDO8 Design & Development Overlay 8

Live rezoning request to:

- Rezone from C2 to C1
- Include in the DDO with a new schedule 8
- Include in the EAO

Rezoning required
Currently in business use

Overview

Ferntree Gully Village is one of four activity centres servicing local catchments in the Dandenong Foothills. Neighbourhood/local centres provide a limited mix of uses for local convenience to service the basic needs of the immediate residents, important focal points for the surrounding neighbourhood, ideally located close to community services, as well as being accessible by public transport.

Ferntree Gully Village is well located for public transport, being centred around the train station and serviced by three bus lines. The Village also includes a local Country Fire Authority (CFA) branch.

The Village is close to three higher-order activity centres. Knox Central Shopping Centre is the Principal Activity Centre for the region and serves as a major shopping and employment centre. Mountain Gate and Boronia are both Major Activity Centres which provide for diverse functions and services as well as containing full-line supermarkets.

The size and diversity of the larger activity centres nearby limit the retail and commercial catchment of Ferntree Gully Village. In addition, the structure plan area is located approximately 1km north of the Burwood Highway and not located on the arterial road network. As such, the Village has minimal levels of passing traffic, limiting the current and future role of the activity centre to one of local and neighbourhood significance.

The Village

Ferntree Gully Village has an established and compact urban structure of local retail, commercial and community activities based around the Ferntree Gully Railway Station and surrounded by low density residential neighbourhoods.

The Village is compact yet fragmented by the railway line which creates a physical barrier between the east and west sides of the Village centre.

The Village is anchored by the Ferntree Gully Train Station and the Foodworks and IGA supermarkets. The train station positions the Village as a strategic location for a diversity of housing and mixed use development under current policy settings, which encourage greater development density within walking distance to public transport nodes. However, any development must be considered within the context of the Dandenong Foothills Policy which aims to maintain uninterrupted view lines from vantage points and ensuring the sensitive design of buildings.

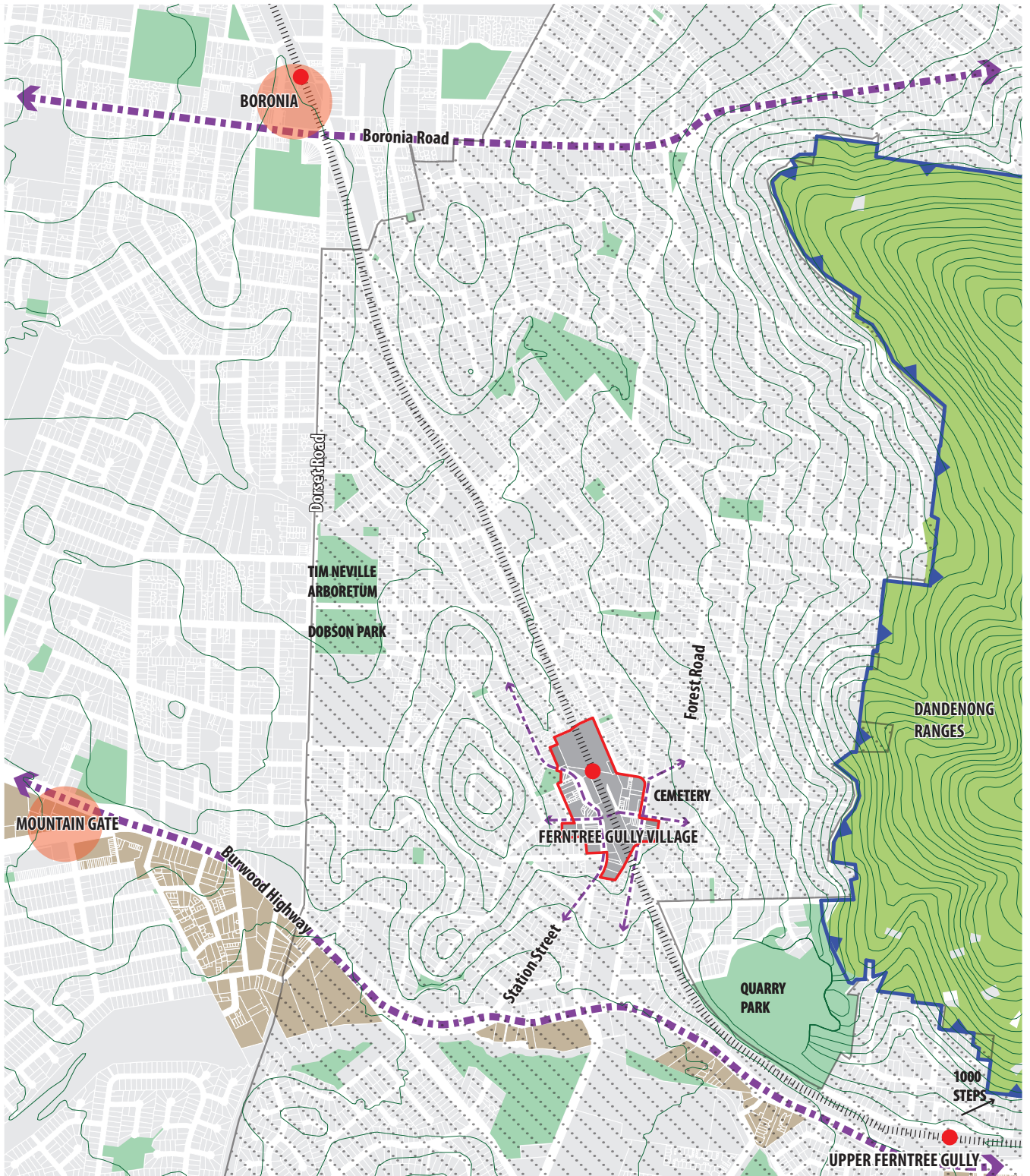
The existing policy setting of the residential areas surrounding Ferntree Gully Village create limited opportunity for subdivision. Ferntree Gully Village provides the only opportunity for the provision of housing diversity within the local context.

Views to the Dandenong Ranges frame the Village to the east and significant native and exotic trees form an essential part of the Village













character, identity and amenity. Its bushy, forested setting, slow traffic speed environment and low rise buildings that sit comfortably within the undulating topography, create a distinctive character for the centre. In many ways, the Village still retains elements of its former 'small country town' character.

The established tree canopy is of great significance for the Village. Trees are located on private land, along nature strips and within the station carparks and railway reserve. The trees provide a strong sense of place for the centre, and connection to the surrounding landscape of the Foothills environment. They offer shade and shelter for pedestrians and the opportunity for bird life within this urban environment.

The Ferntree Gully community is active and has strong and diverse opinions over the future of their Village. The Mountain District Learning Centre and Lower Gully Traders Association are established community groups within the Village.



CONTEXT PLAN

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Structure Plan area |  | Major Activity Centres |
|  | Urban Growth Boundary |  | Highway Retail |
|  | Major Roads |  | PPRZ |
|  | Minor Roads |  | National Park |
|  | Railway Line |  | 10m Contours |
|  | Railway Stations |  | Foothills Policy (DDO1) |



Community Input

Input from the community has been a key input to the development of the Ferntree Structure Plan. Community engagement commenced in mid 2013 - with the first in a series of information bulletins sent to over 3,000 member of the local community.

The issues, opportunities, ideas and aspirations for Ferntree Gully Village that informed the development of the Ferntree Gully Structure Plan were shaped through:

Community workshops to help scope the Structure Plan (15 May and 18 May 2013)

A paper based and online survey (184 responses received)

Community design workshops (22nd and 26th June)

The questions posed to the community during the scoping workshops included:

- + What are the changes we like? What might be causing these changes?
- + What are the changes we don't like? What might be causing these changes?
- + What are things we need to improve?
- + What are thing things we value?

The topics discussed during the design workshops included:

- + Where are the key views?
- + New buildings - where and how high?
- + Building design – what materials/features/shape/landscape?
- + What type of development - residential/commercial
- + Access - parking/bus/train/cycle
- + Spaces - what type and where?
- + Activities - what type and where?

What the community said:

The Village is lacking an 'identity'.

Want more of a buzz within the Village.

The Station Street apartments are 'not in keeping with the rest of the Village'.

Desire for more 'grass roots' community lead action

Residential development needs to respect significant views to the surrounding area and contribute to the 'Village feel' of the area.

Use of natural materials and muted colours were favoured

Some shopfronts in the Village are 'tired'; empty shops are considered 'eye sores'.

Residents like the new crossing on Station Street; however, the area is still considered dangerous by some, suggestions for traffic-slowing mechanisms such as speed humps and a reduced speed limit were suggested.

There is a need for more lighting particularly near the train station

There a number of parking issues, with concern about the effects of train commuters on the availability of car parking.

A desire for a better range of shops is important, including fresh food grocers and arts and craft markets (possible sites for parks and markets were identified – including existing car yards, surface car park areas, and disused buildings in the Village).

There is concern about the future pattern of development in the Village.



ACTIVITIES

Close To Activities. (11)



SPACES

Encourage commercial properties to open up frontages.



FERNTREE GULLY VILLAGE

Tom: Jini. What we have got, worth protecting. A.

Encourage Street Markets on weekends. + limited/organised performs

BUZZ



ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITIES

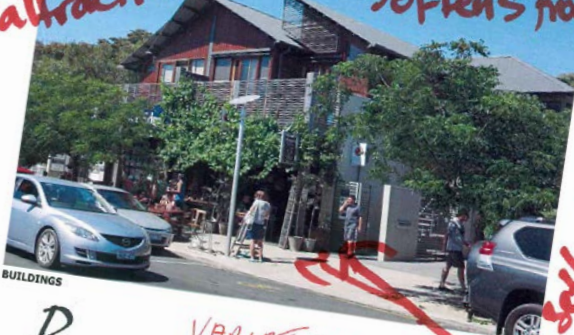
Love the horizontal garden something like this here. We could do A.



Even: like Modern features but old fashion feel

Variable height attractive

Added green Softens frontage



BUILDINGS

D

VARIATIONS OF TEXTURES

More setback



SMOOTH

Tom: Interface with greenery A.

Too Monolithic!



BUILDINGS

Public exhibition

Public Exhibition of the Draft Structure Plan

The Draft Structure Plan (December 2013) and Planning Scheme Amendment documentation (Amendment C129) were on public exhibition from 28 October 2013 until the 9 December 2013. Approximately 3,000 letters were sent to owners and occupiers of land in and around Ferntree Gully Village.

Forty submissions were received, comprising four supporting, thirty four objecting and two stating a non-objection to elements of the Draft Structure Plan and/or the Amendment Documentation. The submissions revealed broad support for the Draft Structure Plan (December 2013), with the key exception being the objection to the proposed 11m (3 storeys) building heights in some parts of the Village. Twenty nine submitters opposed the proposed 11m (3 storey) height limit in some parts of the Village. There were concerns that it would result in changes to the existing character and amenity of the Village by obstructing some views to the Dandenongs.

Council Decision

Following a council meeting on the 28th January 2014, and in response to submissions received Council resolved to reduce all proposed 11m (3 storey) maximum height limit areas to an 8m (2 storey) height limit.

Planning Panel (19th - 20th March 2014)

The Draft Ferntree Gully Structure Plan and the associated Planning Scheme Amendment Documentation (updated to reflect Council's decision to lower height limits) was presented to the planning panel for consideration, along with all submission received. Six submitters made presentations to the planning panel. In addition to supporting the reduced height limit (8m across The Village) a number of changes were made to the Structure Plan and amendment documentation (as exhibited) prior to adoption of the Final Structure Plan these changes include:

- + An 8m height limit across the Village
- + Removal of references to clustering community services on the east side of the railway line from the Structure Plan and proposed changes to the Planning Scheme
- + Removal of references to developing the Mixed Use Zone on the east side of Forest Road as a location for dining and evening entertainment from the Structure Plan and proposed changes to the Planning Scheme
- + Deletion of the section on 'Attracting investment' from the Structure Plan
- + Changes to the section on Statutory Recommendations in the Structure Plan - strengthening references to heights and justification for the application of the proposed changes to local policy, zones and overlays.

Key considerations

Land use

- Ferntree Gully Village performs an important role as a local centre, providing shops, services and transport for the immediately surrounding area.
- The Village is well supplied with retail and commercial floorspace and there is limited need to expand business areas in the future, any retail floorspace expansion could mean that existing businesses close due to lack of demand.
- There are many sites within the Village that are underused, have run-down buildings or are vacant and could support redevelopment.
- These sites present opportunities to introduce different types of more compact housing in the centre, close to shops, services and transport, as well as new businesses or community services.
- Redevelopment opportunities can also greatly enhance the appearance of the centre's buildings and streetscapes.
- A balance needs to be met in encouraging investment in the centre through redevelopment of opportunity sites, while protecting and enhancing its character.
- Ferntree Gully Village provides opportunity for creating housing diversity

Demographics and community

- Over the next 20 years, it is anticipated Ferntree Gully Village will experience low population growth and will retain its role as a local Neighbourhood Centre.
- Trends show that while the population is ageing, there are also younger professionals and families that are moving into the area.
- Different people in the community will have different needs for places to live, shop or recreate.
- Currently there is a lack of housing choice in the area, with most houses being detached family homes.
- There is a desire from the community to see grass roots community activity on existing underutilised spaces within the Village.
- There is a diversity of opinion within the community:

'Any new structures MUST be no higher than 7.5m and be of very significant design...not concrete boxes made from concrete slabs.'

'Keep our historic nature of Village, low-rise and existing small shops retained.'

'We welcome new shops and apartments, new development. Bringing life into what could be the best commuter Village.'

'MORE development is desperately required in order to bring more people to the Village and make local businesses more viable and attract new ones.'

Landscape setting

- The landscape setting of the Ferntree Gully Village in the Dandenong Foothills and its neighbourhood character are highly valued by the community and must be protected.

The vision for Ferntree Gully

The role of Ferntree Gully is explained further on the following pages within the context of Knox's aspirations.

Overarching vision

Ferntree Gully Village will become a flourishing centre with a heart, a Village that services the needs of the local community, with a variety of independent quality retail, services and dining options. It will become a place with a strong identity shaped by its landscape setting, niche commercial offer, public art and community spirit. Local employment, innovation and individual wellbeing will be highly valued and the community services sector will be well placed to service the wider area.

Through clear height controls and design guidelines the built environment will sensitively reflect the character of the surrounding landscape. The Village will contribute to providing housing and lifestyle choice in a way that is responsive and complements the desired character of the Village.

The 'green' will be put back onto the Gully as the landscape character of the foothills by extending this character into the streets of the Village.

Ferntree Gully Village will be a place that celebrates its unique qualities while embracing diversity and creativity. Diverse leisure and recreational activities which cater to all ages will be available and accessible. Public open space will be well designed and well used for events and gatherings throughout the year. Public art will be valued and maintained.

The train station will become a thriving transport hub, accessible to all users with great walking, cycling connections and carparking to the surrounding residential area and beyond. Commuters will choose to stop and spend in Ferntree Gully Village.

Healthy and active lifestyles will be the easy choice, with convenient access to goods and services, connection to nature and the enjoyment of views towards the Dandenong Ranges an integral part of Village life.

Ferntree Gully residents will be actively and willingly involved in positive engagement over the future of their Village. All residents have an equal voice and are confident about expressing their own views which have a genuine impact upon the future direction of the Village

Knox's Aspirations & Ferntree Gully

Knox's Vision is structured around five aspirations which are intended to provide a picture of the future City that will deliver the lifestyle, jobs and industry, health and wellbeing desired by members of the Knox community. The Knox City Plan outlines key objectives and strategies to achieve these aspirations.

The Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan will aim to deliver on these objectives and strategies at the local level, as outlined.

HEALTHY, CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Ferntree Gully will become a flourishing Village with a heart, a Village that services the needs of the local community, embraces diversity and has the support it needs to shape its own future.

The train station will become a thriving transport hub, accessible to all users with great walking, cycling connections and car parking to the surrounding residential area and beyond.

Healthy and active lifestyles will be the easy choice, with convenient access to goods and services, connection to nature and the enjoyment of views towards the Dandenong Ranges an integral part of Village life.

PROSPEROUS, ADVANCING ECONOMY

Ferntree Gully Village will become a walkable centre which serves the local community with daily shopping needs and a variety of quality retail, services and dining options.

Ferntree Gully Village will have an embracing, positive internet presence.

VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Ferntree Gully Village will be a place with a strong identity shaped by its landscape setting, commercial offer, public art and community spirit. Local employment, innovation and individual wellbeing will be highly valued.

Through clear height controls and design guidelines the built environment will sensitively reflect the character of the surrounding landscape while allowing the creation of a vibrant centre. The Village will contribute to providing housing and lifestyle choice in a way that is responsive and complements the desired character of the Village.

The 'green' will be put back onto the Gully as the landscape character of the foothills rolls down through the streets of the Village.

CULTURALLY RICH AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

Ferntree Gully Village will be a place that celebrates its unique qualities while embracing diversity and creativity.

Diverse leisure and recreational activities which cater to all ages will be abundant and accessible. Public open space will be well designed and well used for events and gatherings throughout the year. Public art will be valued and maintained.

DEMOCRATIC AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Ferntree Gully residents are actively and willingly involved in positive engagement over the future of their Village. All residents have an equal voice and are confident about expressing their own views which have a genuine impact upon the future direction of the Village.

From aspiration to action

Knox's aspirations

**HEALTHY, CONNECTED
COMMUNITIES**

**PROSPEROUS, ADVANCING
ECONOMY**

**VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE BUILT
AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

**CULTURALLY RICH AND
ACTIVE COMMUNITIES**

**DEMOCRATIC AND
ENGAGED COMMUNITIES**

Delivered through the following themes

ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS

SPACES

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS

BUILDINGS

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS

ACCESS

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS

Key Directions

Consolidate retail and other commercial activities

During consultation the community were concerned over the fragmentation of the Village. Demographic analysis has revealed a minimal need for additional retail floorspace. The strategy is therefore to reduce the extent of land zoned for business and commercial uses by rezoning to residential or mixed use a number of locations peripheral to the centre.

This will have the effect of consolidating business and commercial activity within a more compact commercial core. The advantages of a more compact retail core are:

- improved legibility
- pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- concentration of pedestrian activity to enliven streets

Encourage a variety of retail offer to meet the local needs of the community (local convenience shopping, niche shops, etc).

The structure plan provides opportunity for uses focussed around local food and groceries to support population growth and to strengthen the convenience role of the centre, as well as strengthening the role of the Ferntree Gully as a location for specialised or 'niche' retailers.

Provide more opportunities for housing in the Village.

Rezoning peripheral uses to residential supports the need for housing choice and allows Ferntree Gully Village to absorb demand for residential development based on the limited supply of vacant land in the surrounding catchment, the inability to further subdivide, and the policy support for mixed used development close to public transport nodes.

Provide opportunities for a diversity of housing types (ageing population, changing household structures, affordability, choice, etc).

The structure plan introduces new zones which aim to encourage housing choice and diversity. The General Residential zone and the Mixed Use Zone offer opportunities for housing diversity within the structure plan area. Commercial Zone 1 allows for shop top dwellings as of right which will create opportunities for smaller dwellings in close proximity to public transport.

Implement building heights (8m) and setbacks to protect views to the Dandenong foothills and retain a low-scale and open feel.

Following consultation on the Draft Plan (which included a mix of 8m and 11m height limits) Council resolved to introduce an 8m maximum height across all areas of the Village.

A mandatory 8m maximum building height is recommended to ensure that views are retained and that the overall sense of openness and Village character is maintained. The 8m height limit will allow for some variation in roof form.

Capitalise on the existing community services to support the local community.

The structure plan recognises the contribution of existing service providers and aims to provide support to community enterprises.

The community services sector is strongly represented in Ferntree Gully Village and the structure plan seeks to support these services and advocate for a purpose built community hub in the longer term.

Better utilise spaces for community uses (town square, markets, events, etc).

Community consultation revealed a perceived lack of open space within the Village. The structure plan recommends that existing areas of open space are redesigned to offer more flexibility and linkages to these spaces are upgraded.

The community also revealed a strong desire for local markets and temporary use of public land and private car parks for markets and other community activities. The structure plan advocates for the temporary uses of public land, such as VicTrack owned car parks for temporary community use.

Promote better integration of existing bus and train services.

The structure plan proposes measures to improve physical linkages to the railway station. A longer term aspiration is for a new transport interchange which would improve connections between bus and train travel and the sense of arrival into Ferntree Gully Village.

Activities

The activities theme relates to the location and intensity of land use activities including retail, commercial, residential and community activities. Ferntree Gully Village, having grown around the station, is effectively divided into the areas east and west of the railway line. Community members have commented on the fragmented nature of the commercial centre and this plan seeks to consolidate the retail core by rezoning peripheral uses.

Existing land use

The predominant land uses include retail services, discount retail stores, takeaway food, and not for profit care providers. There are small clusters of residential dwellings to the south and north-east.

There is significant provision of at grade car parking at the rear of retail businesses and surrounding the Ferntree Gully train station to service commuters.

Residential

Future population growth was projected using Victoria in Future (VIF) growth rates for the Knox North-East Statistical Local Area (SLA). The total population for the catchment in 2011 was 4,892 and is expected to grow at a rate of between 0.47% and 0.52% p.a. to 5,385 in 2031, a net increase of 493 persons by 2031. (It is noted that Forecast ID projects a higher growth of 0.73%, however this is based on the availability of a number of large development sites which are located outside the neighbourhood catchment area)

At an average household size of 2.5 persons, an increase of 493 persons equates to at least an additional 197 households which will be required within the neighbourhood catchment area (refer to background report for further detail of the neighbourhood catchment area).

Currently there is a lack of housing choice both within the Village and the wider suburb, with 89% of homes

in Ferntree Gully suburb being larger and detached. Background research has shown that the population in Knox is ageing and that household structure is changing. This will drive the need for different type of housing with a variety of tenure options.

Opportunities for development at higher density and scale within residential neighbourhoods are limited due to the Dandenong Foothills Policy implemented through the Knox Planning Scheme and the desire to protect neighbourhood character.

It is this need for housing choice and the limited potential to further subdivide in the surrounding residential areas that is creating a requirement for residential development within the Village to enable housing choice into the future.

Given the compact nature of the centre and its location near public transport and services, Ferntree Gully Village provides an opportunity for medium density residential development with walkable and attractive streetscapes.

Retail & commercial

There are two small line supermarkets (Foodworks and IGA) each with approximately 600m² of floorspace, both east and west of the railway line, and a number of fast food/takeaway outlets. National brands are uncommon in the centre – most retailers are independent.

The existing retail core of the Village

is located around the central spine of Station Street, adjacent to the train station. This part of the centre has benefited from recent streetscape upgrades. It is the natural heart to the Village with a well defined shopping strip.

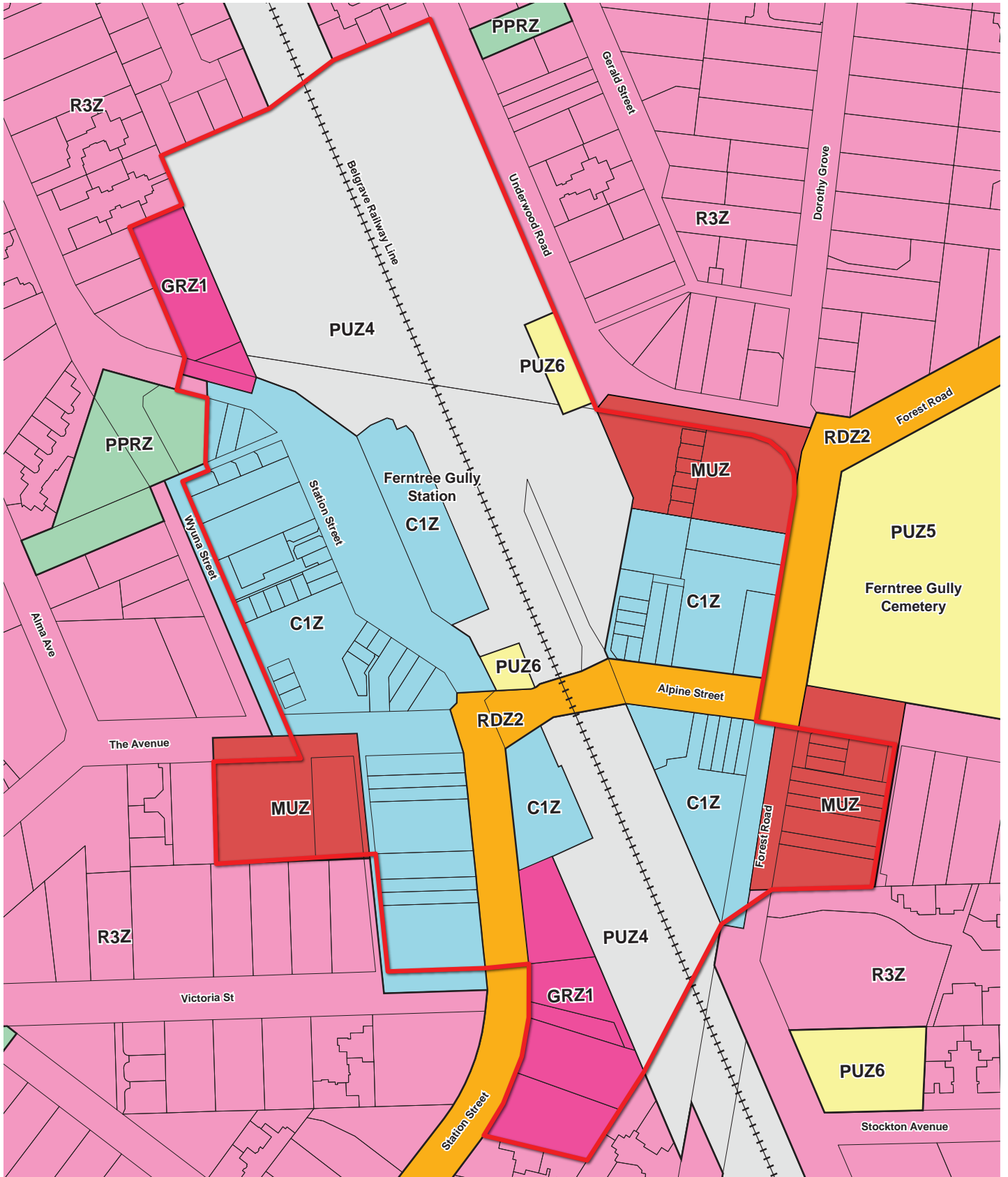
The majority of the commercial offer is service businesses such as hairdressers, accountants and health care, located throughout the centre. Three car saleyards are located in the southern part of the Village. These types of land uses do not promote an active and vibrant centre but are permitted in a commercial zone.

Community members have shown a strong desire to see more diversity of retail and improvement to shop frontages within Ferntree Gully Village. It is important that the role of the centre is supported and enhanced to ensure that local needs are met.

The challenge for the Village is to create an attractive retail niche that encourages residents to shop within the centre rather than making car journeys to local major activity centres such as Mountain Gate or Boronia. This offer could include more fresh produce and delicatessens, antiques or arts and crafts stores.







Potential for growth

It is anticipated that the estimated increase in population will create a demand for additional retail and commercial floorspace of 780m² (or at least 2000m² of land taking into account parking and access). Given the number of underused sites in



PROPOSED ZONE MAP



- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|  | Structure Plan area |  | Public Park & Recreation Zone |
|  | Residential 3 Zone |  | Public Use Zone 5: Cemetery |
|  | General Residential Zone |  | Public Use Zone 6: Local Government |
|  | Mixed Use Zone |  | Public Use Zone 4: Transport |
|  | Commercial 1 Zone |  | Road Zone 2 |

the centre, existing vacant premises and small scale redevelopment opportunities could support the majority of this demand.

The floorspace requirements identified to support organic growth (780m²) are low in the context of the existing size of the centre (approximately 9,000m²). However, based on the outward growth of Metropolitan Melbourne, the existence of Ferntree Gully Railway Station, and the attractive environmental setting of the Village, it is considered that the centre is well placed to attract growth in non-retail floorspace (e.g. small business and home office) and could potentially experience demand for retail floorspace and services above and beyond organic growth. If such a transition were to occur concurrent to the trend towards apartment living and the attraction of younger residents and those in professional occupations (as indicated by recent census shifts), supportable commercial floorspace could increase from 780m² to a higher level such as 1,000 – 1,200m² (not including parking and access). However, it is considered likely that the role of the centre will remain as a local and neighbourhood service centre over the forecast period.

Consolidation

Within the context of low demand for additional retail and commercial floor space and an existed fragmented Village the strategy is to consolidate by reducing the extent of land zoned for business and commercial uses. This will be done by rezoning, to residential or mixed use, a number of locations peripheral to the centre. This will have the effect of consolidating business and commercial activity within a more

compact commercial core. The advantages of a more compact retail core are:

- + improved legibility
- + pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- + concentration of pedestrian activity to enliven streets

At present, the natural heart of the Village is to the west of the railway line, and the Council has recently invested in upgrading the public realm in this area. Given the minimal need for additional retail floorspace anticipated in this study's economic analysis, early versions of the emerging structure plan demarcated this area as 'retail core', and envisaged the Commercial 1 Zone being reduced in extent to this area only.

In subsequent discussion with Council officers, it was decided to maintain, in addition, the current Commercial 1 Zone on close-in sites to the east of the rail line. While this provides more than the required space needed to accommodate the anticipated requirement for retail-based development, it does allow for greater flexibility to accommodate new retail and mixed use developments, and to allow for unforeseen retailing potential, such as speciality shops with a regional catchment.

There are more developable sites east of the railway, and the revitalization of the centre may be boosted by extending the opportunity for redevelopment to this area.

The Purposes of the Commercial 1 Zone and the Mixed Use Zone (the MUZ was at one time under consideration for this land) are quite distinct - the former quite clearly intended to create vibrant mixed use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses, while the latter has a residential and mixed use purpose.

However both zones allow Shop and Accommodation 'as-of-right', and even the Commercial 1 Zone can allow unlimited Residential use at ground floor with a permit.

Other service business & healthcare

Ferntree Gully Village attracts numerous service business and healthcare providers, a number of which have opened recently in shop fronts. This may be attributed to low rent, but also highlights the lack of appropriate office space for this sector in the Village.

These activities provide a valuable service for residents and local employment opportunities.

The Commercial 1 Zone and Mixed Use Zone provide are appropriate zones for the continuation of these services.

Community/civic

There is a passionate and active community in Ferntree Gully Village with strong and diverse opinions. Through consultation it became clear that there are sections of the community with the vision and energy to initiate grass roots community projects, leading a 'slow burn' regeneration.

This could include community events and gatherings on areas of VicTrack land, vacant shops being used as a community hub and community led markets.

The community services sector has been identified as playing an important role within the Village both economically and socially. Previous studies have shown that these enterprises generate at least \$7.7 million in income through employment alone. Consideration

should be given to the creation of a 'fit for purpose' community hub to alleviate fear of closure of existing facilities such as the guide hall and Wattle elderly centre.

Community arts have previously been supported within Ferntree Gully and further investment into public art is supported by the community.

Tourism / visitation

The centre currently attracts day visitation through its connection to cycling and walking trails.

A key opportunity for Ferntree Gully Village is to leverage off touring throughout the Dandenong Ranges by improving direct linkages to cycling and walking trails, providing a unique retail and leisure offer and improving the Village's online presence. In the longer term visitor accommodation should also be considered.

Entertainment

There are few entertainment options in Ferntree Gully Village for all ages. Suggestions made for a more diverse range of activities include WIFI hotspots, weekend markets, activities for young people and creating a central community hub.

Opportunities

There are numerous opportunities for future development within the Village, to support the existing and future population of the area and to provide a greater variety of shops and services. Providing opportunity for new activity in the centre also has the potential to increase its sense of vibrancy and 'buzz', which is something that community members would like to see evolve in the future.

Run down and poorly presented buildings and underused sites are

notable across Ferntree Gully Village. There is strong agreement from the community that redevelopment of these sites could help strengthen the 'Village' character, through improved design treatment of new development or the improvement of existing shop fronts.

Development opportunities exist for the centre's vacant sites, or underused sites such as the former garage and car yards. There are also many sites that support a small building footprint over a large area, and have an oversupply of surface car parking or external storage.

There are a small number of developers who own large areas of land within Ferntree Gully Village. Encouraging investment in these sites could see improvements in the building stock and streetscape quality.

VicTrack land around the station and railway line is also a considerable opportunity for future re-use.

Development viability

In order to attract future investment in new development and revitalising the Village, a reasonable level of development potential must be allowed for. Reinvestment will be more commercially viable if there is some degree of flexibility for development heights and density.

However, this needs to be balanced with community values and aspirations of protecting the centre's character and, importantly, retaining its views to the significant landscape setting.

The fact that the need for additional growth in the centre for residential, retail or commercial land uses has been shown to be relatively low means that modest building envelopes are an appropriate

response on both counts.

Development parameters are recommended in the Buildings section of this report that seek to allow opportunities for investment, housing diversity and new activity, while at the same time maintaining and enhancing the centre's valued character.

Activities: Objectives & strategies

1. Create a compact, vibrant retail core

- 1.1 Develop the retail heart of Ferntree Gully Village to the west of the railway line around the supermarket.
- 1.2 Rezone peripheral sites within the Structure Plan area to a zone that provides for residential use.
- 1.3 Encourage car yard uses to relocate to more appropriate locations outside the Village centre.
- 1.4 Support the existing activities of the Lower Gully Traders association.

2. Facilitate more opportunities for people to live in Ferntree Gully Village centre

- 2.1 Encourage a diversity of housing in the centre to provide a greater range of housing choice.
- 2.2 Encourage housing/accommodation above shops and ground floor commercial spaces throughout the centre.
- 2.3 Improve the amenity of Ferntree Gully Village to be more responsive for residential lifestyle, including streetscape upgrades to the east of the railway line, improved lighting, pedestrian linkages and safety initiatives.

3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.

- 3.1 Investigate the potential to establish a purpose built community hub.
- 3.2 Advocate for improved health, aged care and allied services and facilities within Ferntree Gully, including the provision of a medical service within the Village.
- 3.3 Support the existing activities of the Mountain District Learning Centre and other community groups.

4. Promote the attributes of Ferntree Gully that attract people to the area.

- 4.1 Create an integrated transport hub including an improved station forecourt to build upon the public transport offer.
- 4.2 Celebrate the unique history of Ferntree Gully (Arthur Streeton, watchmaker, Hut Gallery etc) through online promotion and public art,

ensure that any public art is supported by a maintenance program.

- 4.3 Protect, utilise and showcase Ferntree Gully's unique history.
- 4.4 Promote Ferntree Gully as a tourism destination.
- 4.5 Support community events that increase visitation to Ferntree Gully.
- 4.6 Support visitor accommodation in the Village centre.
- 4.7 Improve physical linkages to walking and cycling trails in the Dandenong Ranges.

5. Facilitate the short term use of public and private land for the benefit of the community

- 5.1 Negotiate with VicTrack to support weekend community uses on publicly owned VicTrack car parking land [such as weekend markets].
- 5.2 Discuss with landowners the opportunity of using private land for short term community use as above.
- 5.3 Support community uses on VicTrack owned green spaces [such as community gardens].
- 5.4 Re configure and formalise commuter parking to increase capacity and reduce overflow.

6. Support community events and activities in Ferntree Gully

- 6.1 Develop a program of local events and activities for all ages.
- 6.2 Investigate opportunities for initiatives such as Village wide WIFI access and walking and cycling trails.
- 6.3 Identify specific locations that could be redesigned to allow for a more flexible use that could host community activities.
- 6.4 Support the establishment of a regular arts and crafts market to showcase local talent.
- 6.5 Continue to facilitate formation of partnerships and information sharing for community groups and initiatives.
- 6.6 Use Council procedures and processes to foster longer term community engagement

Spaces

The spaces theme considers the public spaces and green spaces of Ferntree Gully Village. This includes the design and landscaping of the Village's streets and open spaces.

Existing streets and open spaces

Ferntree Gully Village has a number of small seating areas with larger areas of open space not centrally located.

There are a few scattered pause places including at the corner of Alpine Street and Station Street and The Avenue and Station Street. There is opportunity for the corner of Alpine and Station Street to be redesigned into a more flexible, multipurpose space. There is a grassy triangle of open space on Wyuna Street to the west of the structure plan area, while this is within close proximity of the Village centre it is not currently perceived as a meeting spot.

The streetscape Improvements have been well received by the community and enhance the overall attractiveness of the Village. These improvements are contained to the west of the railway line and to the north of The Avenue. The streetscape palette of the Village centre is varied, with different types of paving, seating, lighting and signage applied. Within the recently improved areas a palette of colour tones and textures has been established and

works well. As resources permit, this should be extended to Alpine Street, Forest Road, the Avenue and the station forecourt. Paving needs to be upgraded in some places as it has deteriorated and is unsafe, particularly on paths leading towards the station.

The Ferntree Gully train station is a significant asset for the Village and priority should be given to improving public space around the station and connections towards the station. A redesigned station forecourt could enhance interchange between bus and train travel and offer an improved gateway in the Village for train users.

There is very little remnant vegetation left in the Village, however a number of substantial trees within undeveloped spaces continue to provide a strong link between the urban areas and the densely forested Dandenong Ranges beyond. These form a strong canopy cover, which complements the mix of exotic and native tree species within the Village.

Recent streetscape works within the Village introduced Ornamental Pears and retained existing Plane trees along Station Street. These have been set into planters that employ

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) techniques.

Ferntree Gully cemetery creates a large area of open space to the east of the centre. In the longer term the interface between this and the Village should be opened up with improved linkages through the cemetery and towards walking tracks to the east.

The overall strategy for Ferntree Gully Village's streets and spaces is to raise the quality of the landscaping, spaces and materials throughout the Village.

Improvements to gateway landscaping in key locations as shown on the spaces map, and a consistent approach to surface materials and street furniture along with a reduction of clutter across the Village will assist in creating a more attractive Village.

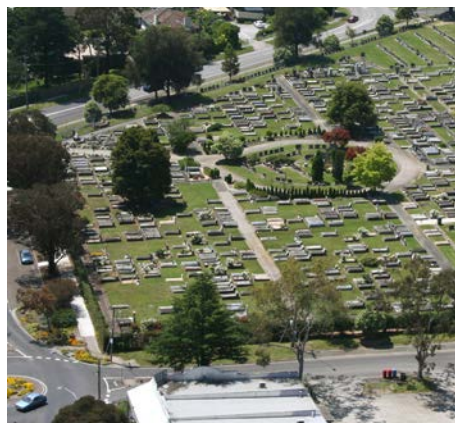
Public land

There are some large areas of informal open space contained within the VicTrack owned land in the centre of the Village. These areas contain some large remnant trees which help to create a green canopy. Some of these areas to the north are used as ad hoc commuter car parking which is at capacity during the week. These areas should be formalised to create more car parking within the constraints of existing vegetation. There is opportunity to utilise these areas during the weekend as temporary markets when they are not required for commuter parking.

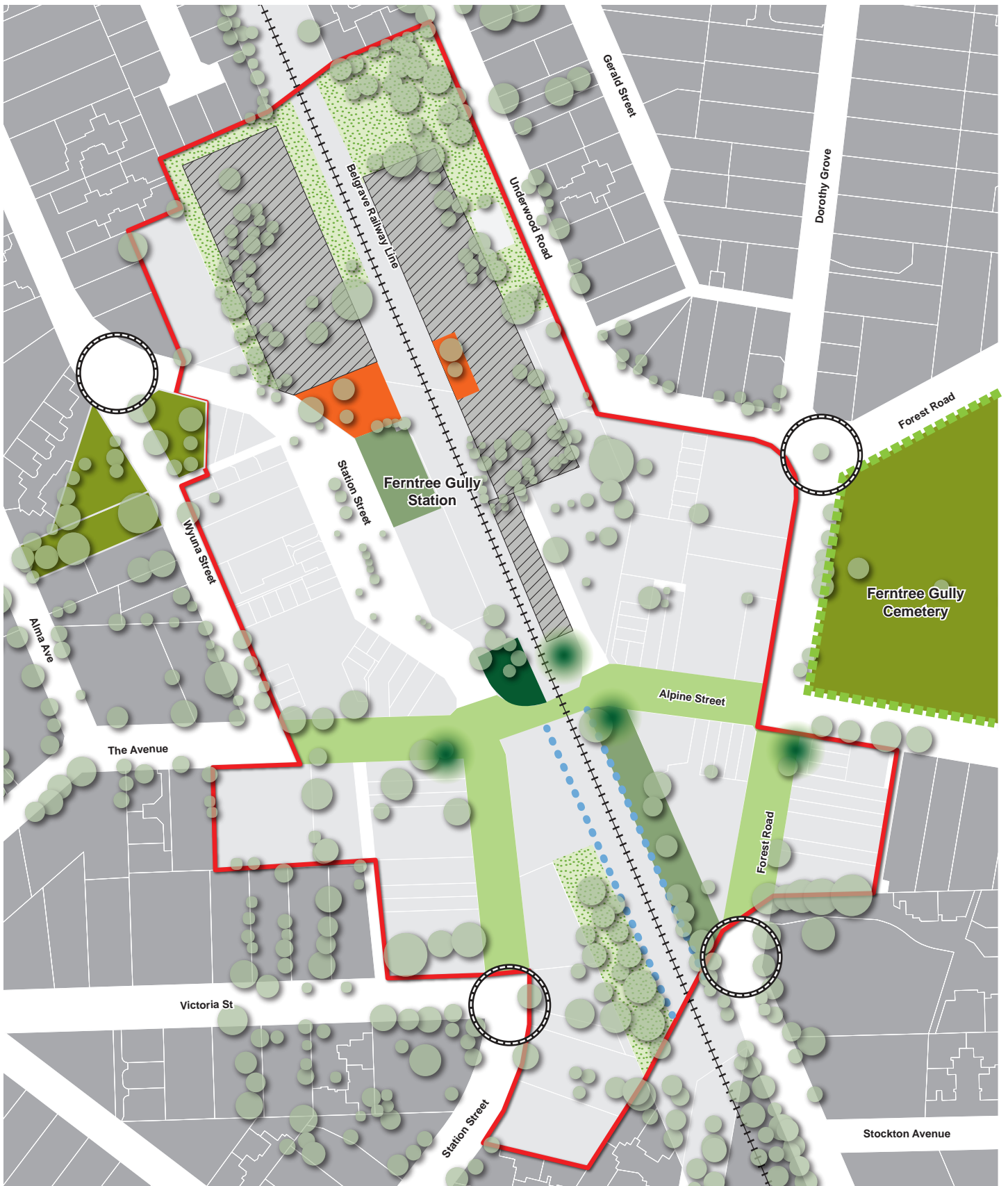
The strip of land to the south of Alpine Street to the east of the railway line is currently underutilised and could be established for short term community uses such as a community garden.
















Streetscape improvements on Station Street



Ferntree Gully cemetery looking east



PROPOSED SPACES

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------|
|  | Structure Plan area |  | Improved open space |
|  | Existing informal open space |  | Upgrade streetscape |
|  | Existing open space |  | Improve station forecourt |
|  | Existing trees |  | Strengthen gateway landscaping |
|  | Formalised car parking |  | Opportunity for temporary uses |
|  | Improved pause places (benches/landscaping) |  | Upgraded interface |
| | |  | Improved boundary treatment |



0 100m

Spaces: Objectives & strategies

7. Strengthen Ferntree Gully's identity and 'Village' character

- 7.1 Extend the streetscape upgrades to Alpine street, The Avenue and Forest Road.
- 7.2 Identify opportunities to provide spaces for outdoor dining throughout the town centre.
- 7.3 Require high quality furniture for outdoor dining.

8. Develop a landscape plan to 'green the gully'

- 8.1 Investigate opportunities to provide additional street tree planting where possible. Encourage the use of indigenous trees or drought tolerant exotic large canopy shade trees.
- 8.2 Bring the landscape setting of the Dandenong Ranges into the Village through the planting of street trees and enhancement of 'pause places'.

9. Improve the amenity and image of the Village through the quality and consistency of its streetscape design.

- 9.1 Develop a streetscape palette to create a consistent approach to paving materials and street furniture
- 9.2 Apply CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles to all open space, streetscape and building design.
- 9.3 Ensure public spaces are well-maintained.
- 9.4 Provide adequate amenities within the centre

10. Enhance the active and passive role of recreational spaces

- 10.1 Prioritise improvements to the open space area at the corner of Alpine Street and Station Street to create a more flexible and inviting space.
- 10.2 Encourage street trading to facilitate a more lively and active Village.
- 10.3 Complete the missing cycle link through the railway car park
- 10.4 Improve the open space area on Wyuna Street as a place for community gathering and events
- 10.5 Improve the Ferntree Gully Cemetery boundary treatment

11. Improve the appearance and function of the railway station

- 11.1 Redesign the area surrounding Ferntree Gully Station to create a public transport interchange focussed around a station plaza with clear and safe walking and cycling connection
- 11.2 Upgrade the streets that form pedestrian links between key areas of activity and the railway station to improve accessibility and safety.

12. Improve the image of the Village through the quality and consistency of its Public Art

- 12.1 Include reference to the importance of public art and art maintenance strategy in Ferntree Gully Village within the municipal public arts strategy to celebrate the unique sense of place of Ferntree Gully Village
- 12.2 Ensure that any strategy considers the long term maintenance of artwork

13. Adopt sustainable design techniques in the public realm.

- 13.1 Continue to use water sensitive urban design techniques.
- 13.2 Use energy efficient street lighting throughout the town centre (e.g. LEDs, solar lighting).
- 13.3 Investigate the use of edible plant species such as fruit and nut trees, keeping in mind the water and maintenance needs of these plants.

Buildings

The buildings theme looks at the 'three dimensional' form of the town centre. It addresses the scale and form of new buildings, ways in which better design quality can be achieved and how new and innovative ways in building design can decrease the environmental footprint of buildings.

Design and Development Overlay 8 in the Knox Planning Scheme enforces a 7.5 metre interim height limit which seeks to protect views to the foothills and ensure new buildings are compatible with the scale and character of the Village. The requirements of this overlay cease to have effect after 31 December 2014. The provisions in the Structure Plan and associated planning scheme amendment will replace this interim height limit and set the future height limits for the Village.

Character of Ferntree Gully

The character Ferntree Gully Village is centred around its landscape setting within the Dandenong Foothills, with open views east towards the ranges and numerous mature trees throughout the centre. Views of the landscape surrounds are obtainable from most vantage points in the centre.

Much of the existing built form in the Village is run down and poorly presented buildings are notable. Some shopfronts require upgrading and approach to signage is inconsistent, with varying colours, sizes and placement creating a cluttered streetscape.

Well designed buildings can provide opportunities for different activities within the Village and create attractive and liveable streetscapes. Throughout the centre there are opportunities to redevelop under used sites, including large areas of public (VicTrack) and private land, to reach their full potential in terms

of presenting an improved quality of architectural design to the street and providing space for additional activity. New development will need to be balanced against the protection the character of Ferntree Gully as a Village that sits in a landscape dominated setting. Building design guidelines are presented within this document.

Several factors work together to give Ferntree Gully its distinctive character:

- 1 Building grain and scale
- 2 Key views and dynamic views
- 3 The dominance of the landscape setting including tree canopy
- 4 Street-wall to road-width proportions

The characteristics listed above each have an implication for building height.

Building grain and scale

Currently, the predominant building height in the town centre is one storey. There are scattered 2 storey buildings in a small number of locations, particularly to the south of Station Street. One 3 storey residential block is located at 36 Station Street.

The majority of buildings in the Village have no front setback; notable exceptions to this include the CFA building, 3 The Avenue and structures within car yards.

The existing building grain is small scale, with narrow frontages and only a small number of larger frontages along the south end of Station Street.

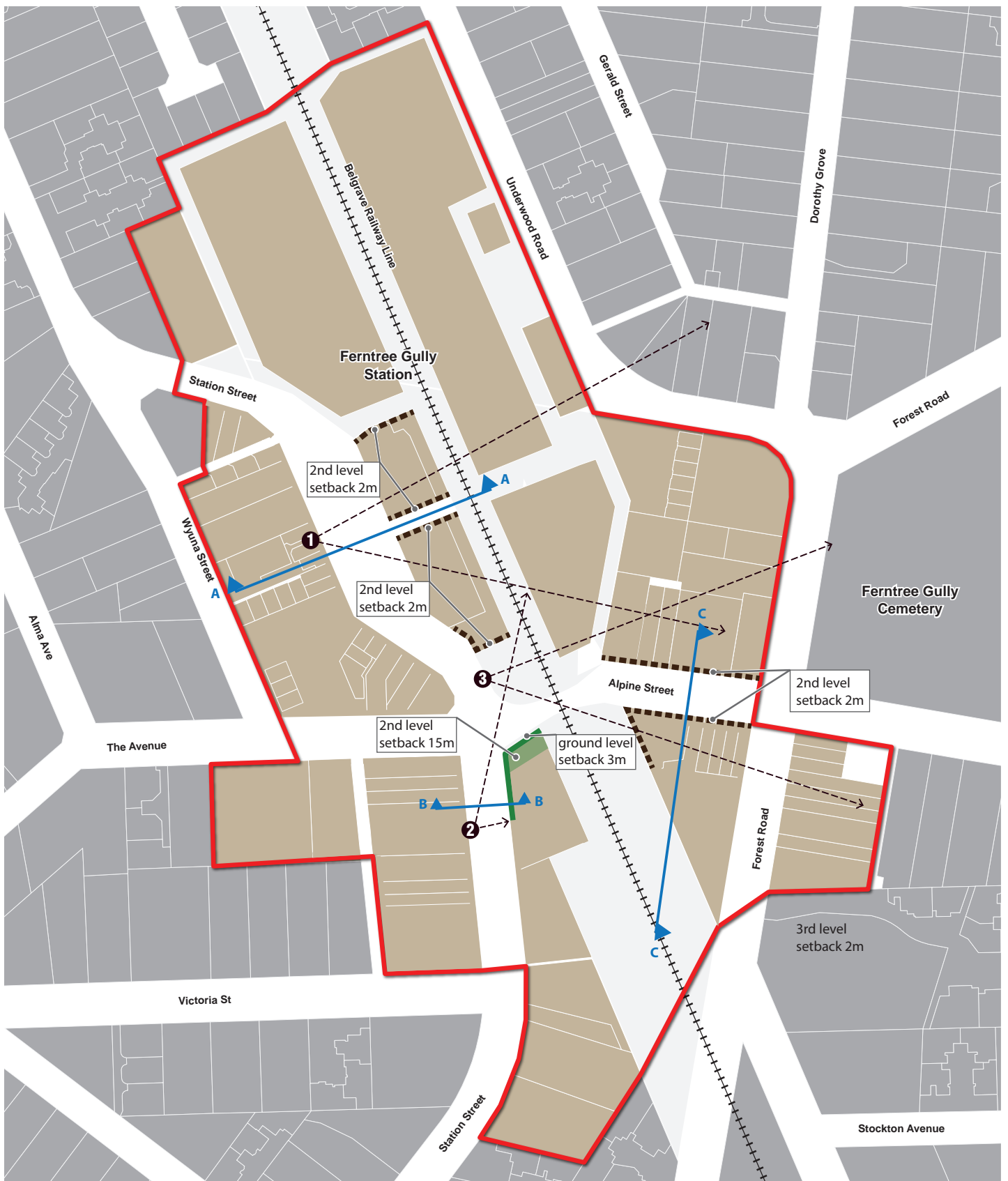
Building scale, including height, plays a vital role in maintaining the characteristic of the sense of a Village that sits in a landscape-dominated setting. Building heights need to be kept generally low to maintain this sense of visual connection with the surrounding landscape.

Gaps between buildings can be used to frame views, and this is a technique that is being suggested for new development on the block adjacent to the train station to the east of Station Street. The important point here is the balance between landscape and urban environments – this is the vital character ingredient. If too much urban development intrudes into or obscures the visual connection with the surrounding landscape, the balance of the centre's visual character will tip increasingly towards the urban or suburban. From the point of view of community values and good urban design, this is a prospect that sound planning policy should mitigate against.

Views and landscape setting

As you move around the centre views of the surrounding hills and/or vegetation are apparent most of the time. The aim is not to protect a finite number of static viewpoints, although in some locations key views would be framed. Nor is it a situation in which the aim is to protect 'glimpses' of the surrounding landscape.

- 1 Building heights are kept low to maintain the sense of a Village that sits in a landscape-dominated setting.



PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS

- Structure Plan area
- 4.5m (1 storey) maximum
- 8m (2 storey) maximum
- ▲ Location of section diagrams
- Provide ground level setbacks
- Provide second level setbacks

- Views identified by the community as important
- 1. From the pedestrian crossing, Station Street
- 2. From the Station Street gateway
- 3. From the open space corner Station Street & Alpine Street



Buildings

- 2 Setbacks are used to frame certain views eg. along Alpine Street

For the purpose of testing the impact of built form on key views, 3 key views have been modelled. These viewpoints were arrived at in consultation with the community.

Street proportions

The low ratio of building height to road reservation width apparent in Ferntree Gully Village is a familiar characteristic of settlement centres in rural settings.

In Ferntree Gully Village the proportion of street wall to road widths are generally 1:3/3.5. Station Street to the north of The Avenue has an even less 'urban' proportion of 1:7 with centrally planted street trees.

This sense of openness, an urban form with single storey and the occasional double storey building, is what we expect to find in a small country town or Village. Allowing this to change to four storeys or more would change the character, imparting an urban scale at odds with the stated aim of strengthening the Village character.

Built form recommendations

To retain the character of Ferntree Gully, a maximum height limit of 8m (2 storeys) is proposed. The maximum building height does not apply to architectural features and detailing. These height controls are shown on the Proposed Buildings Heights Map.

Assuming a standard ground level commercial floor-floor height of 4m-4.5m and upper level floor-

floor height of 3m-3.5m, the 8m height limit will support two storey developments, including the opportunity for some architectural expression and variation in the building and roof form.

Analysis of proposed building scale and form in relation to key view lines has been undertaken, as shown on the following pages.

VicTrack land

VicTrack is a major landowner in Ferntree Gully Village. Much of the land is currently leased to Metro which requires it for public transport purposes (car parking, rail facilities etc.).

Although the land represents a strategic development opportunity, initial consultation with VicTrack indicates that there is no surplus land and therefore no immediate development opportunities in Ferntree Gully Village. The key opportunities will be limited to improving/amending the bike path and temporary uses (during weekends on car parking areas).

Although future height limits are shown for the VicTrack land there are no proposals for this land to be developed for anything other than its current use (railway reservation and commuter parking). However station sites are gradually being redeveloped with housing and other uses, sometimes in association with grade separation.

It is recommended that if any development were to occur it should be restricted to a maximum of 8m in order to retain the character of Ferntree Gully as a Village set within a landscape dominated setting.

Ecologically sustainable development

Ecological Sustainable Design (ESD) is a key step in the direction of establishing a sustainable future for a town or city. The benefits of 'green buildings' in terms of their amenity and property value will become increasingly recognised. Councils and major developers can play a leadership role in facilitating ESD measures in new development.

Buildings: Sections & views

A Section A: Station Street



8m commercial development along the west of Station Street	Existing streetscape upgrades	Station Street	Existing streetscape upgrades - opportunity for cafe seating	New commercial development at a maximum of 8m with upper level setbacks to frame views and reduce bulk. Opportunity for first level activity to make the most of views east.	Improved footpath connection to the station	Improved east west linkages across the railway line
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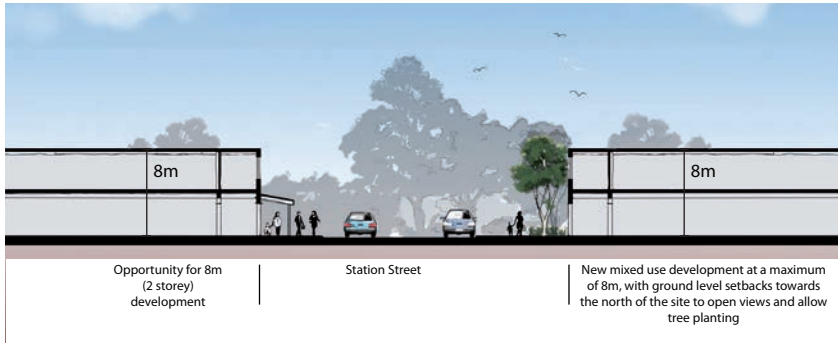
1 View 1: Looking east from Station Street pedestrian crossing



View 1 looks directly east over the existing one storey shops and car park. It is proposed that the buildings in this location have a maximum height of 8m which would still allow the profile of the Dandenong Ranges to dominate the horizon.

A break between buildings frames views east and provides further visual reference to the landscape setting. Upper level setbacks of 2m along the side edges of new development enhances the openness of this view.

B Section B: Station Street south of The Avenue



2 View 2: Looking north from Station Street, south of The Avenue



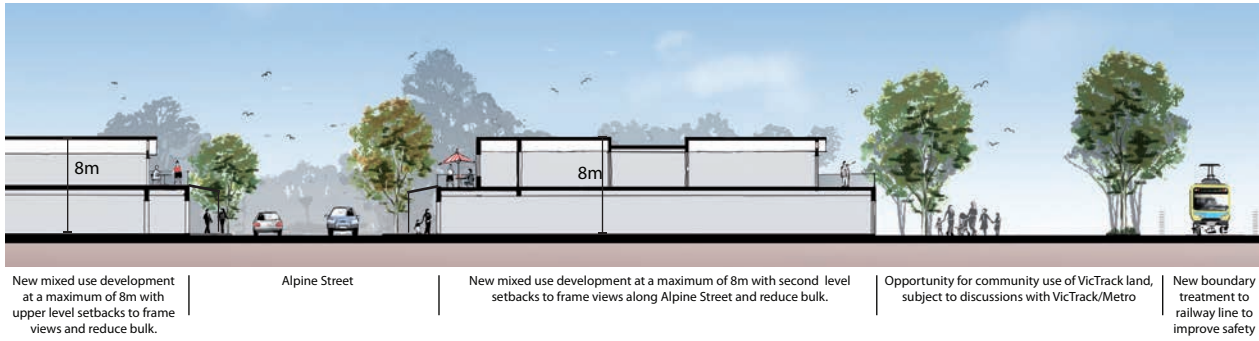
At present the open forecourt areas of the service station permit open views of the hills to the east. Any redevelopment of this land is likely to close off the majority of this outlook, so the strategy is to reveal the view as you arrive at the Alpine Street intersection.

View 2 allows gateway views of the Village and ranges beyond to open up as you move north along Station

Street towards The Avenue. Ground level setbacks of 3m along a portion of the street frontage open views towards the hills, allow tree planting to soften the building edge and provide space for cafe spill out.

A substantial 15m second level setback retains some views over new development from the viewing location and creates opportunity for upper level activity.

C Section C: Alpine Street



3 View 3: Looking east along Alpine Street from the open space



View 3 is framed through the alignment of Alpine Street. It is proposed that the buildings in this location have a maximum height of 8m. These building heights allow the profile of the Dandenong foothills to dominate the horizon.

Upper level setbacks of 2m on the second storey help to open and frame this view. The foreground of this view is currently cluttered with railway signage and overhead wires. Excessive signage should be rationalised.

Buildings: Objectives & strategies

14. Strengthen the landscape setting of Ferntree Gully

- 14.1 Limit the height of buildings to maintain the sense of a Village that sits in a landscape-dominated setting (refer to Proposed Building Heights map).
- 14.2 Use upper level setbacks to frame certain views eg. along Alpine Street (refer to Proposed Building Heights map).
- 14.3 Ensure that any future development on VicTrack land has a preferred height of 8m to retain the visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges from key viewing locations (see Buildings Map)

15. Create attractive and vibrant streetscapes that are defined by high-quality and well-designed buildings of an appropriate scale and setback to their location.

- 15.1 Ensure a co-ordinated approach to the use of signage in the Village to avoid clutter and confusion and ensure the amenity of streetscapes.
- 15.2 Ensure that street facades in the core retail area are active, meaning that they are designed to include clear glazing at street level to allow a visual connection between the building occupants and people on the street, decorations or window displays are included to add interest at the street level, without blocking views into or out of the building.
- 15.3 Ensure that public spaces are overlooked and have active uses anchoring the space.
- 15.4 Redesign the rear elevation of buildings to present an attractive façade in highly visible locations.

16. Develop the image of Ferntree Gully as a Village that fosters innovative, sustainable and contemporary design through the quality of its buildings.

- 16.1 Encourage new developments which employ Environmentally Sustainable Design techniques

17. Encourage redevelopment of underutilised sites to more efficiently use space within the centre and to create an improved urban environment.

- 17.1 Continue dialogue with the owners of any underutilised sites to discuss the redevelopment potential of their land.
- 17.2 Work with these landowners to create site specific design guidelines which build upon the design guidelines contained within this Plan
- 17.3 Encourage rooftop activity such as roof gardens and seating areas to make the most of views and landscape setting

Buildings: Design guidelines

Element	Design Objective	Design response	Avoid
Materials and design detail	To encourage buildings that contribute positively to the streetscape through the use of innovative architectural responses and by presenting visually interesting facades to the street.	Articulate the form and façades of buildings through the use of different colours and materials, through the composition of openings and setbacks and through variations in wall surfaces.	Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.
	To encourage buildings which visually complement the features of the surrounding environment.	Buildings roof lines should vary in form and reflect the landform of the Dandenong Ranges. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional natural materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, glazing, stone, brick, and iron roofing. Materials that weather over time with the landscape should also be considered. Maintain the existing 'fine grain' appearance of buildings which is created by the width of the individual shopfronts. Provide vertical articulation to visually break up the appearance of building frontages on wider allotments. This vertical articulation should reference the standard width of shopfronts. Utilise colours and finishes that complement the native vegetation of the local area, including earthy, natural colours and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity	Sheer, visually dominant elevations. Large building masses that dominate the streetscape. Excessive use of flat and unarticulated roof forms. Unarticulated or non-textured, sheer facades and building forms. Excessive use of colours that contrast strongly with the vegetation. Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials. Overuse of heavy looking materials such as brick. The visibility of air-conditioning units and other equipment. Wherever possible, incorporate these elements within the building envelope.
Views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the Dandenong Ranges To ensure buildings are sited and designed to take into account existing views to the Ranges from nearby properties. To encourage views between buildings to the surrounding landscape	Buildings should be sited and designed so as not to intrude into view lines from public viewing locations. The upper level(s) of development should be stepped in from the ground floor in order to maintain viewing corridors between buildings. Where mountain views are available along a road corridor, have regard for adjoining front setbacks so that new development does not intrude significantly into existing view lines. Vegetation should be sited and appropriate species selected in order to maintain mountain viewing corridors from adjoining properties.	Buildings and structures that obscure views to the mountains Bulky upper levels that block views to the mountains from adjoining properties. Large trees sited within existing view lines to the mountains

Element	Objective	Design response	Avoid
Weather protection	To provide continuous weather protection along key pedestrian routes of the core retail areas	Incorporating verandahs or awnings into the facade design.	
Signage	To ensure a cohesive approach to signage across the Village	<p>Develop a signage strategy that establishes a co-ordinated approach to the scale, placement and design of all signage.</p> <p>Adopt a co-ordinated approach to the use of signage in the town centre to ensure the clarity of messages being conveyed and to avoid visual clutter in streetscapes.</p> <p>Liaise with VicRoads to reduce any unnecessary road signage and ensure that road signage is coordinated with other forms of signage. Directional signage should comply with VicRoads standards.</p> <p>Rationalise above verandah signage to reduce repetition and clutter.</p>	The use of multiple inconsistent and ad hoc signs on buildings and along street frontages.
Landscaping	To ensure landscaping is integrated with the design of the development and complements the landscaping of the adjoining public realm.	<p>Landscaping should provide visual links with the Dandenong Ranges.</p> <p>Retain existing trees and provide for the planting of new vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible.</p>	Landscaping that provides little connection to the surrounding context.
DDA compliance	To create a place which is accessible to all users	Ensure all new development complies with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia: Access for People with a Disability and DDA standards.	

Access

The Access theme explores the various modes of transport used to travel to and through the Ferntree Gully Village, with a particular focus on pedestrian, cyclist and public transport accessibility to increase the sustainability of travel choices and reduce car dependence. Vehicular traffic, roads and parking are also addressed in this section.

Walking and cycling

The railway line creates a physical and psychological separation between the east and west of the Village. There is a pedestrian crossing at the railway station, and another at Alpine Street.

Pedestrian connection towards the railway station from all directions is currently poor, particularly from the east, with steep ramps and a lack of footpath connections. It is difficult for pedestrians to cross Alpine Street between the railway level crossing and the roundabout at Forest Road.

Lighting throughout the centre requires improvement and does not encourage walking and cycling due to perceived safety issues.

An off-road bicycle path exists along the east side of the railway line to the north of the Railway Station, and on the west side of the railway line to the south of Alpine Street. There is a missing section where no bicycle path exists through the carpark area on the east side of the railway line. There are no on-road bicycle lanes within the centre, although bicycle lanes exist in Station Street to the south.

Public Transport

Ferntree Gully Village is well served by Public transport, with train services and a number bus routes, including two TeleBus services which terminate at the railway station. However, connections between the surrounding suburbs and the railway stations should be improved to encourage commuters to leave their cars at home and travel to the station by public transport. The interface between bus and train should be improved through the creation of a well designed station forecourt to allow safe and easy transport interchange.

Traffic management

The high traffic volume on Forest Road suggests that it is currently operating as a through traffic route rather than providing solely for local access to the area. Typically roads which carry 12,000 to 40,000 vehicles per day (such as Forest Road) are managed as Secondary Arterial Roads under the responsibility of Council. This requires a higher emphasis to be placed on the through traffic function to avoid the road becoming congested. Arterial Roads also

typically require dedicated facilities to be provided for cyclists and are more difficult for pedestrians to cross without the provision of specific crossing points. Arterial roads are generally the responsibility of VicRoads, Forest Road between Boronia Road and Burwood Highway is a Council link road.

Currently there is only a single access to the railway station carpark to the east. This exit can become congested after a train has left as a large number of vehicles are wishing to exit the carpark at one time. The close proximity of the exit to the railway level crossing compounds this issue as it can reduce the amount of time for traffic to exit the carpark into Alpine Street. Therefore, a second exit onto Underwood Road is proposed.

Improved signage and lighting of off-street car parks is needed, along with better lighting of pedestrian links to the station.

Car parking

Background research has identified that commuter parking at the train station is currently at capacity, with illegally parked vehicles commonplace. This illegal and informal parking results in under-use of the available space. Long term commuter parking overflowing from railway station carparks into shopping centre areas is displacing parking required by traders and customers.

Short term on street parking is at around 50% capacity, with 4hr off street parking well used at around 80%. Consideration should be given to removing the parking restrictions in the evening hours to allow residents unrestricted parking when visiting restaurants.

Residential developments generally only provide parking for residents with some on street parking for visitors, there is a conflict between customer parking for businesses and visitor parking for residents.

Accessibility

As the population ages the issue of accessibility will become more important. In general the recent streetscape improvements to the west of the railway line have enhanced accessibility.

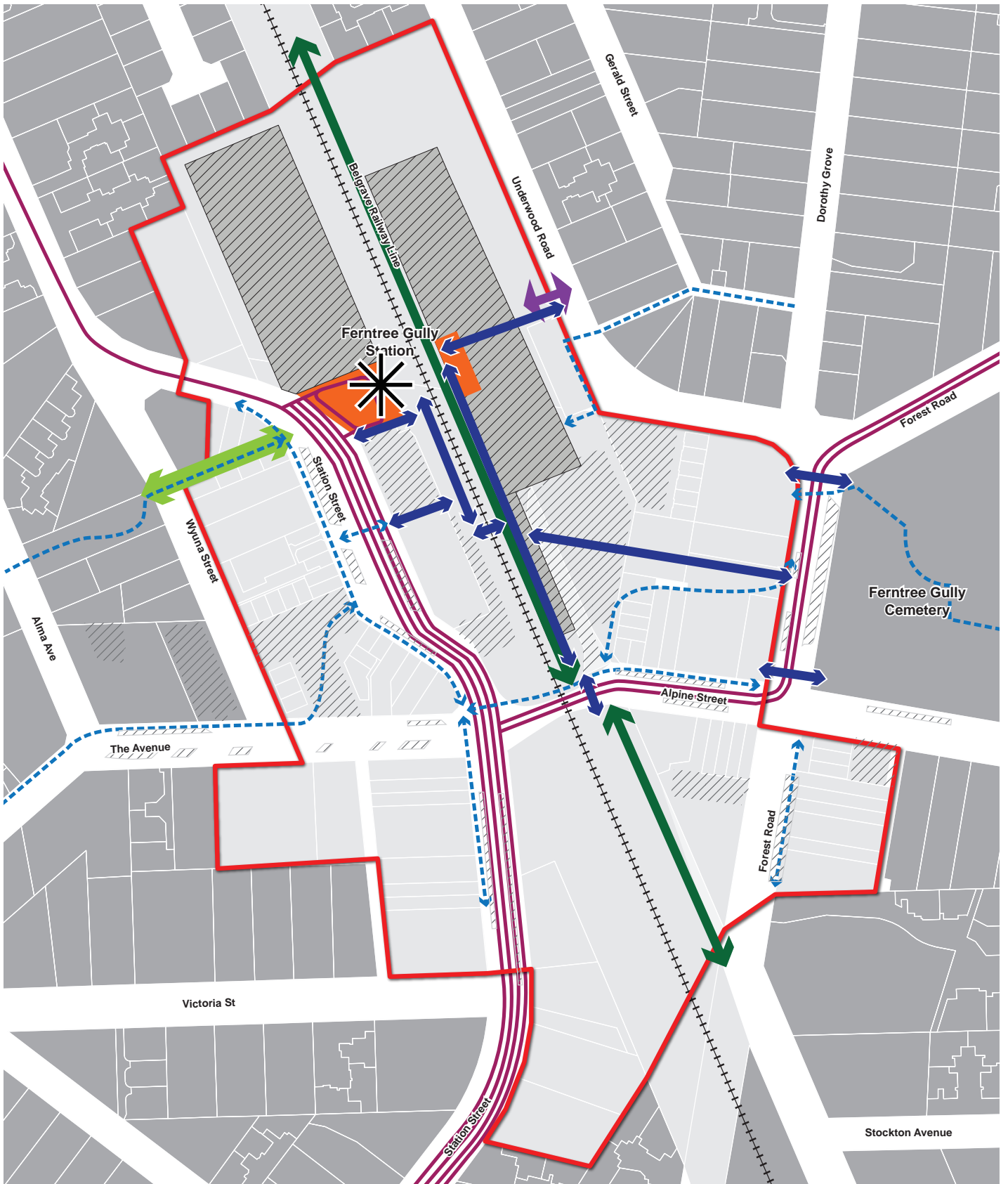
There are specific improvements which would improve overall accessibility, including upgrading the connections between the station and Station Street to ensure ramps are accessible and pathways are clearer. Tactile ground surface indicators (TGSi) need to be used consistently, and upgrading the car park areas for railway users.

Future use


The existing road network within the Ferntree Gully Activity Centre has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional development of the scale proposed within the structure plan.

To minimise traffic and parking impacts to existing uses within the centre the following items should be considered:

- Long-term residential parking associated with new residential developments should be provided in off-street locations.
- Parking associated with visitors can be accommodated within existing on-street and public off-street parking areas.
- New vehicle access points to key streets within the activity centre that carry high pedestrian traffic (eg Station Street, Alpine Street, and Forest Road) should be minimised and instead access provided via rear laneways or parking areas where possible.
- The recommended additional access to the railway station commuter carpark from Underwood Road will help to reduce congestion in the vicinity of the existing railway level crossing in Alpine Street which will offset traffic impacts associated with new development.
- New development on the west side of Forest Road between the existing roundabouts at Underwood Road and Alpine Street could be restricted to left in/left out movement to reduce congestion, as this section of the street carries the highest traffic volume in the area and alternative right turn access is available by undertaking U-turns at the nearby roundabouts.



SPACES

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Study area |  | Main pedestrian routes |
|  | Car parking |  | Improved pedestrian/cycle links |
|  | Formalised car parking |  | Improved linkages to green spaces |
|  | Public transport interchange |  | Re-routed rail trail |
|  | Improved station forecourt |  | New vehicular access |
|  | Bus routes | | |



Access: Objectives & strategies

18. Provide safer, more direct connections within the centre

- 18.1 Restrict general access to the railway line to the south of The Avenue with boundary treatments such as fencing
- 18.2 Improve access to the railway station/proposed station precinct from both the eastern and western approaches
- 18.3 Improve key pedestrian and cyclist connections to, from and within Ferntree Gully, including 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.
- 18.4 Upgrade pedestrian/cycle crossings in key locations (refer to Access map)
- 18.5 Enhance gateways and entrance points into Ferntree Gully Village, making them more obvious and welcoming
- 18.6 Improve linkages to existing green spaces at the periphery of the Village including the open space area on Wyuna Street and the Ferntree Gully Quarry.
- 18.7 Improve public transport connections from surrounding residential areas to the railway station

19. Improve the safety and convenience of transport inter-changes within the centre

- 19.1 Redesign the area surrounding Ferntree Gully Station to better facilitate bus and rail interchange
- 19.2 Allow bus users to benefit from the presence of the railway PSOs
- 19.3 Upgrade the streets that form pedestrian links between key areas of activity and the railway station as a priority.

20. Improve access to the centre

- 20.1 Provide safe and connected pathways between key destinations within Ferntree Gully Village, particularly for those people who are unable to drive, including young people, the elderly or people with disabilities.
- 20.2 Ensure that new uses and/or developments provide car parking to meet demand and do not rely on private car parks.
- 20.3 Continue discussions with VicTrack to formalise and monitor commuter car parking (see Access map)
- 20.4 Expand and formalise the existing railway station carparks to increase the amount of commuter parking provided.
- 20.5 Improve the appearance and utilisation of shopping centre carparks
- 20.6 Continue to enhance access for people with a disability, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act

21. Facilitate more recreational cycling and walking between the centre and the Dandenong Ranges

- 21.1 Provide clear signage, including maps, to the walking and cycling routes of the Dandenong Ranges, including off road routes to the 1000 steps.
- 21.2 Improve connectivity through Ferntree Gully Village and provide for amenable rest stops within the Village for walkers and cyclists

Implementation Plan

Implementation of the Strategy will require cooperative involvement from a number of government departments, agencies and organisations. The Knox Planning Scheme is the primary tool to implement the statutory recommendations of the Plan, however is not the only statutory mechanism that may be used by the Council.

While most of the actions require some input from the Council in its various roles, some require direct input and management by others who may own relevant sites or manage related infrastructure. Advancement of actions in the Implementation Plan will be subject to Council's business and resource planning processes.

The Implementation Plan identifies which of the Knox City Plan objectives are met through the implementation of each identified action and forms a separate working document.

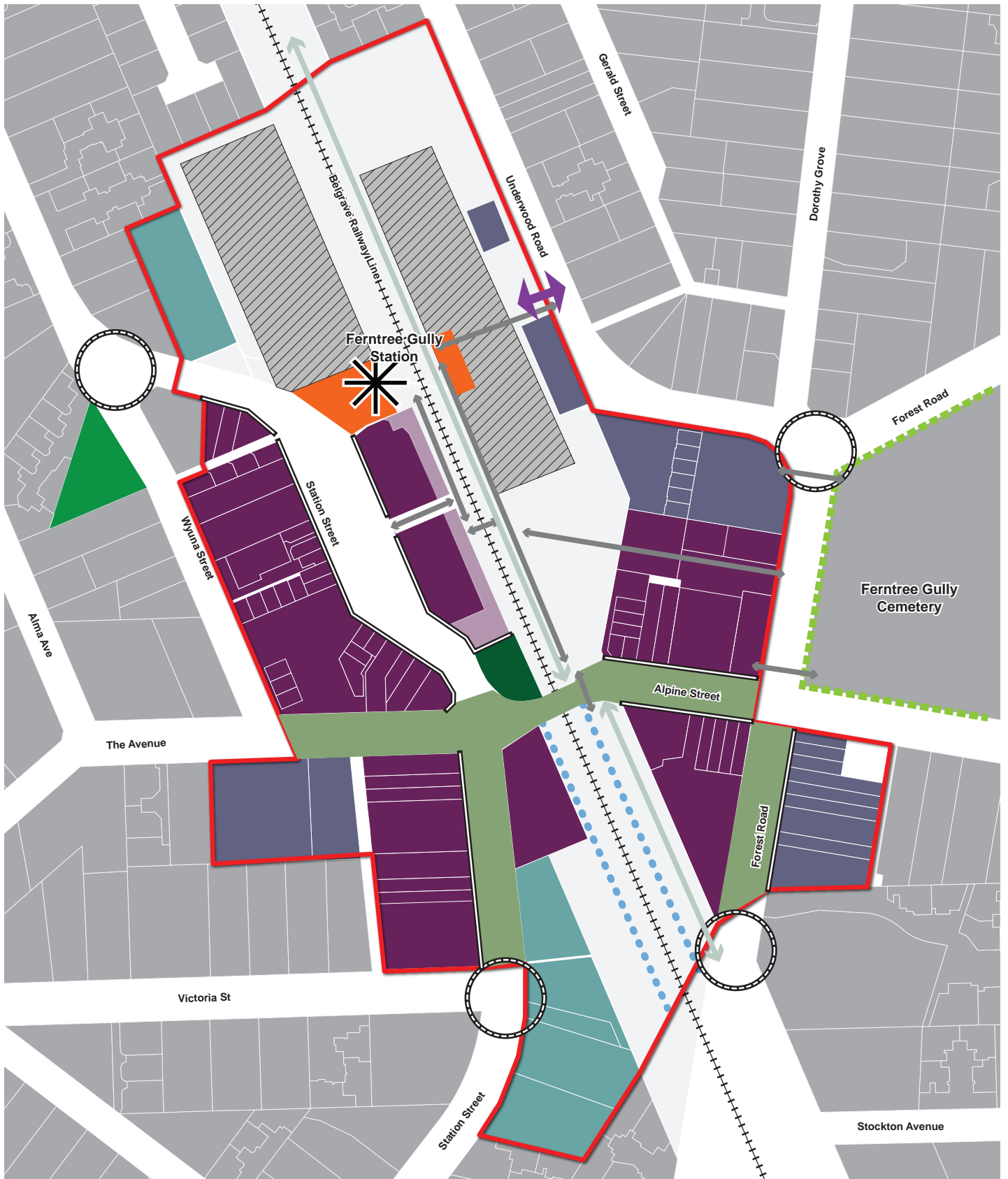
Summary strategy

The proposed strategy for Ferntree Gully Village is derived from the following:

















- Consolidation of the retail core as a reaction to low demand for retail and commercial floorspace over the projected period of 2013 – 2031
- Rezoning peripheral uses to residential to support the need for housing choice and to allow the Village to absorb demand for residential development based on the limited supply of vacant land in the catchment, the inability to further subdivide, and the policy support for mixed used development close to public transport nodes.
- Providing opportunity for uses focussed around local food and groceries to support population growth and to strengthen the convenience role of the centre, as well as strengthening the role of the Ferntree Gully as a location for specialised or 'niche' retailers.
- Protecting the unique landscape setting within the Dandenong foothills through mandatory 8m height controls.

The spatial manifestation of the key directions is shown in the Summary Strategy Map and are defined as follows:

- The strategy is to consolidate retail and community uses to the commercial precinct, which is located around the central spine of Station Street and Alpine Street, some of which benefits from recent streetscape upgrades. It is the natural heart to the Village with a well defined shopping strip.
- The residential precinct is focussed around peripheral areas which would assist in the overall objective to consolidate retail activity and provide opportunity for housing choice.
- The mixed use precinct covers peripheral areas to the east of the railway line and a small pocket of land on The Avenue. This precinct will allow for a majority residential use in line with the consolidation of retail uses to the commercial precincts. It is proposed that the mixed use would also cater for the well used restaurant cluster to the east of Forest Road.
- A maximum building height of 8m is proposed. This cap on height is to ensure that views are retained and that the overall sense of openness and Village character is maintained.



SUMMARY STRATEGY MAP

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  Structure Plan area |  Formalised car parking |  Re-routed rail trail |  Upgraded interface |
|  Commercial Precinct |  Public transport interchange |  New vehicular access |  Improved boundary treatment |
|  Possible commercial expansion |  Improved station forecourt |  Improved open space | |
|  Mixed Use Precinct |  Improved pedestrian/cycle links |  Upgrade streetscape | |
|  Residential Precinct |  Strengthen gateway landscaping | | |

City Plan & Structure Plan Objectives

The matrix below cross references the structure plan objectives against the Knox City Plan Objectives.

STRUCTURE PLAN OBJECTIVES

CITY PLAN OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	SPACES
Healthy, Connected Communities		
<i>1.1 The Knox community benefits from good health and wellbeing at all life stages</i>	3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.	
<i>1.2 A safe community with strong community connections and where learning and volunteering are valued and supported</i>		11. Improve the appearance and function of the railway station
Prosperous, Advancing Economy		
<i>2.1 Knox has a strong local economy that supports business growth, jobs and community wealth</i>	1. Create a compact, vibrant retail core	
<i>2.2 Improve local opportunities for people to live, work, learn and play in Knox</i>	2. Facilitate more opportunities for people to live in Ferntree Gully Village centre	
Vibrant & Sustainable Built & Natural Environments		
<i>3.1 The changing needs of a diverse community are supported through planned growth and change in housing and infrastructure that respects both built form and natural systems, and resource availability</i>	2. Facilitate more opportunities for people to live in Ferntree Gully Village centre	7. Strengthen Ferntree Gully's identity and 'Village' character 13. Adopt sustainable design techniques in the public realm. 9. Improve the amenity and image of the town centre through the quality and consistency of its streetscape design.

BUILDINGS	ACCESS
	<p>20. Improve the safety and convenience of transport inter-changes within the centre</p>
	<p>21. Improve access to the centre</p>
<p>15. Create attractive and vibrant streetscapes that are defined by high-quality and well-designed buildings of an appropriate scale and setback to their location.</p> <p>16. Develop the image of Ferntree Gully as a Village that fosters innovative, sustainable and contemporary design through the quality of its buildings.</p> <p>17. Encourage redevelopment of underutilised sites to foster a more efficient use of space within the town centre and an improved urban environment.</p>	

	ACTIVITIES	SPACES
3.2 Biodiversity and places of natural significance, including waterways and open space are highly valued, protected and enhanced	4. Promote the existing attributes of Ferntree Gully to attract people to the area.	7. Retain and improve Ferntree Gully's unique identity and 'Village' character 8. Enhance the leafy landscape setting of Ferntree Gully
3.3 Infrastructure networks provide transport choice, affordability and connectivity		11. Improve the appearance and function of the railway station
Culturally Rich & Active Communities		
4.1 Improve the acceptance and valuing of diversity and difference in the Knox community	3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.	
4.2 Increase use of public spaces and infrastructure for the purposes of cultural expression and physical activity	3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure. 5. Negotiate the short term use of public land for the benefit of the community 6. Support community events and activities in Ferntree Gully	10. Enhance the active and passive role of recreational spaces 11. Improve the image of the Village through the quality and consistency of its Public Art
Democratic & Engaged Communities		
5.1 Improve community leadership and participation in Knox	6. Support community events and activities in Ferntree Gully	
5.2 Increase opportunities for the Knox community to participate in public decision-making processes	3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.	
5.3 Ensure Council is well governed and demonstrates effective leadership		

BUILDINGS	ACCESS
14. Strengthen the landscape setting of Ferntree Gully	
	19. Provide safer, more direct connections within the centre 20. Improve the safety and convenience of transport interchanges within the centre 21. Improve access to the centre
18. Protect the amenity of sensitive land uses such as residential areas and open spaces.	22. Facilitate more recreational cycling and walking between the centre and the Dandenong Ranges

Statutory recommendations

Land Use

(Refer to summary strategy map p.45)

Commercial Precinct

The Commercial Precinct is located on the western side of the Ferntree Gully Railway Station, bordered by Wyuna and Victoria Streets; and east of the railway reserve on the west side of Forest Road.

The objective of this precinct is to consolidate shops and services into a more legible and accessible location (close to the station).

The primary land use will be shops and services, with complementary office and upper level residential uses.

Existing businesses include: shops, supermarket, milk bar, chemist, health care, hairdressers, cafe, florist, professional services, takeaway food outlets, cafes and laundromat.

ACTION

- Apply the Commercial 1 Zone to all land within the precinct.

A number of privately owned properties with shops and businesses adjoining the rail reserve (88, 90, 92, 98 and 100 Station Street) are currently zoned Public Use Zone 4 (Transport). VicTrack and Council have no foreseeable plans to acquire these sites for transport or community uses.

Therefore, it is recommended that they be rezoned to Commercial 1 to align with the preferred future uses land uses for this precinct.

Number 33 and 41 Forest Road are currently zoned Commercial 2. It is considered that the intent and as of right uses associated with the Commercial 2 Zone are not suitable for this precinct. Therefore, it is recommended that these properties be rezoned to Commercial 1 to align with the preferred future uses land uses for this precinct.

Mixed Use precinct

The Mixed Use Precinct is located in three areas, one west of the railway line and two to the east. The intent of this precinct is to provide for mixed residential, community service and office uses, with some complementary commercial uses.

The eastern section is located in two sections. The northern area is at 47 Forest Road and 170 Underwood Road. This area is located at the residential interface of the Village. Future development needs to be sensitive to the context of the area, and be well designed due to its gateway location. An unused petrol station currently exists on this site.

A number of cafes, takeaway shops, restaurants are located along the corner of Alpine Street and Forest Road. The eastern edge of this adjoins residential properties, with views of the Dandenong Ranges and canopy trees dominating the landscape settings. The objective for this area is to support the existing restaurant and food businesses, while allowing for peripheral retail, entertainment and complementary residential uses.

A smaller western pocket of this precinct is situated along The Avenue, comprising the Ferntree Gully Fire Brigade, a hairdresser and childcare centre. Here the objective of this precinct is to support the existing community uses, and allow for a transition to mixed uses, including residential recognising the adjoining residential zones.

ACTION

- Apply the Mixed Use Zone to this precinct.

This precinct is currently zoned Commercial 1 and 2. It is not the intent of this precinct to allow for predominantly commercial uses. Rather it is envisaged that there will

be a focus on providing for a mix of residential, office and community uses. The precinct will also allow for flexibility to adapt towards future commercial and residential requirements. Based on these uses, it is recommended that the Mixed Use Zone be applied to this precinct.

Residential precinct

The objective of this precinct is to provide for moderate housing growth, and to provide a transition from the Commercial Precinct to surrounding lower density residential areas.

The residential precinct is located on the peripheral edges of the activity centre, at Station, Alpine, and Victoria Streets. The existing uses on these sites include residential dwellings, light industrial, community services, and underused or vacant lots

ACTION

- Apply the General Residential Zone to this precinct.

This precinct is currently zoned a mixture of Commercial 1 and 2, which is considered to be inappropriate as the Plan seeks to encourage primarily residential uses in this precinct.

Therefore it is recommended that a General Residential Zone be applied to this precinct to encourage moderate housing growth

Potentially Contaminated Land

Ministerial Direction No. 1 (Potentially Contaminated Land) requires planning authorities to satisfy themselves that the environmental conditions of land proposed to be used for a 'sensitive use' – such as residential – are, or can be remediated to be, suitable for that use. It is recommended that the Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) be applied to some sites - based on their previous land use (such as a service station) and/or previous

zonings, which may have allowed industrial activity on the site. The EAO ensures the requirement for an environmental audit is met before the commencement of the sensitive use.

The application of the EAO while ensuring the requirement will be met in the future - does not prevent the assessment and approval of a planning scheme amendment.

ACTION

- Apply the Environmental Audit Overlay to potentially contaminated sites at 2 Francis Crescent, 33, 41, 47, Forest Road and 170 Underwood Road. These sites are proposed to be rezoned to combination of Mixed Use, General Residential and Commercial 1 – all of which allow residential development. All of these sites are current within the Commercial 2 Zone (and were previously zoned Business 3).

These sites have a high potential for contamination, based on previous land uses such as factory, service station and automotive repairs.

Local Planning Policy Framework

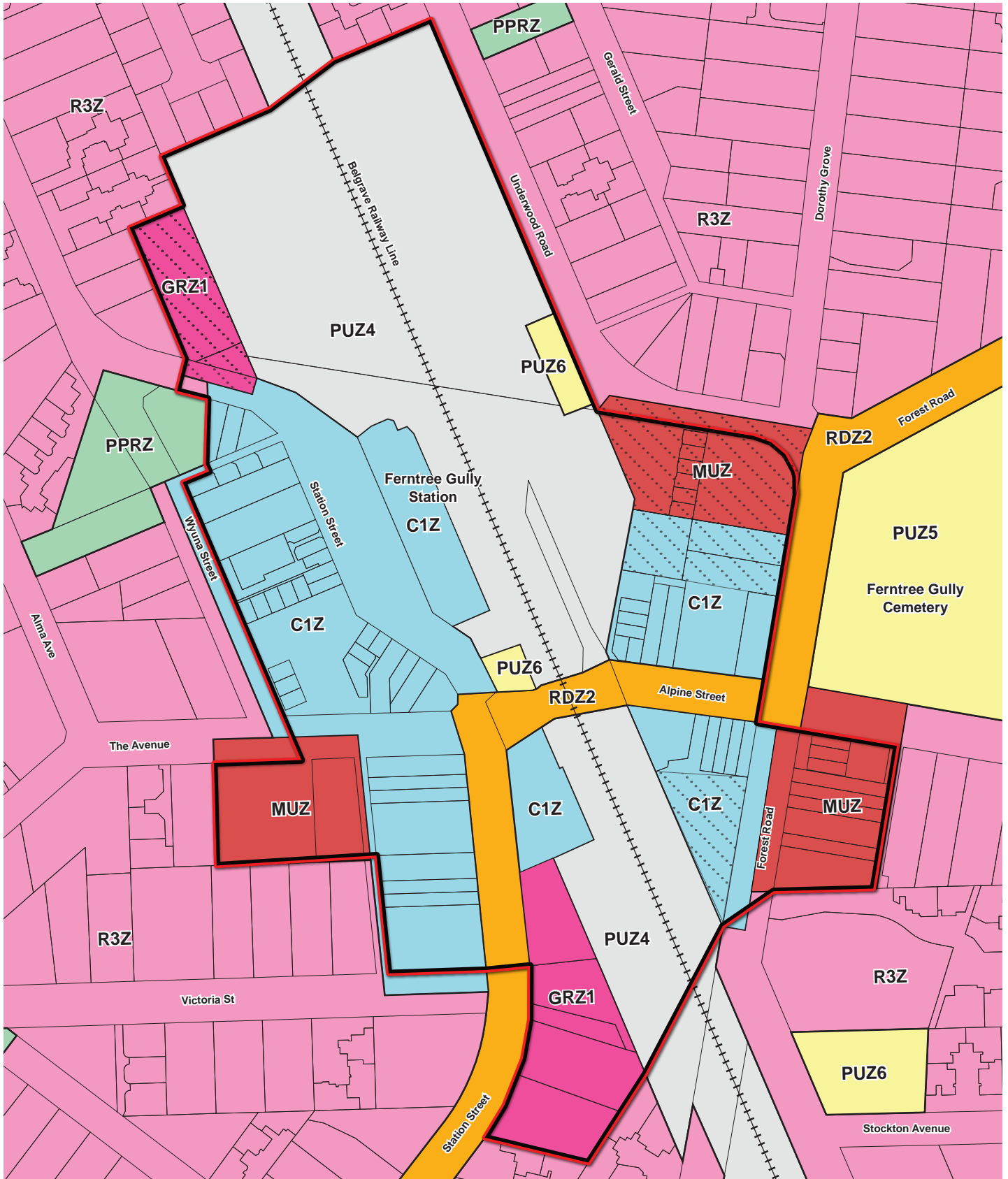
The Municipal Strategic Statement provides the necessary strategic context and justification to guide the application of zones, overlays and provisions in the planning scheme. The Knox Municipal Strategic Statement follows broad themes of urban design, housing, environment, economic development and infrastructure. Local Planning Policies consist of detailed or location specific policies such as the Neighbourhood Character and The Dandenong Foothills.

ACTIONS

- Include reference to the Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan in the following sections of the Municipal Strategic Statement: Clause 21.05 (Housing); Clause 21.07 (Economic Development).
- Amend Clause 21.09 to include the Ferntree Gully Structure Plan as a reference document.
- Include reference to the Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan in Clause 22.10 (Housing).
- Amend Clause 22.01 Dandenong Foothills Policy to exclude references to Ferntree Gully Structure Plan.
- Include a new Local Planning Policy for Ferntree Gully Village (which includes relevant references from the Dandenong Foothills Policy)













References to the Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan also need to be included in the Municipal Strategic Statement where it is relevant to the themes and issues. In particular, Clause 21.07 Economic Development which identifies the hierarchy and role of activity centres within Knox.

Practice Note 8 Writing a Local Planning Policy identifies the role of a local policy as a guide for decision making in relation to a specific discretion in a zone or overlay. Based on the format of the Knox Planning Scheme, it is recommended that a Local Policy for Ferntree Gully Village be included within the Planning Scheme to provide additional guidance for development considerations within the Activity Centre.



STATUTORY IMPLEMENTATION MAP



- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
|  | Structure Plan area |  | Public Park & Recreation Zone |  | Design and Development Overlay |
|  | Residential 3 Zone |  | Public Use Zone 5: Cemetery |  | Environmental Audit Overlay |
|  | General Residential Zone |  | Public Use Zone 6: Local Government | | |
|  | Mixed Use Zone |  | Public Use Zone 4: Transport | | |
|  | Commercial 1 Zone |  | Road Zone 2 | | |

Built form

Built Form Recommendations

The Dandenong Foothills and Ranges are prominent features that contribute to the character of Ferntree Gully Village, which is located within 500m west of the Ranges. Dynamic views are available throughout the Village which add to the sense of Ferntree Gully as a Village in a landscape setting. In addition to the dynamic views, three important views were identified in consultation with the community within the existing study area from the pedestrian crossing at Station Street, the Station Street gateway, and the open space corner of Station and Alpine Streets.

Clause 21.06 (Environment) identifies the Dandenong Foothills as an environmentally significant area, which its landscape and environment should be protected and development limited where it may compromise this significance.

Clause 21.05 (Housing) stipulates that the height materials and design of new housing development in the Dandenong Foothills should blend with and sit below the dominant tree canopy height, and that built form gradually steps up at the interface of low rise developments. This is further emphasised by Clause 22.01 (Dandenong Foothills) which seeks to protect and enhance the landscape significance, and maintain uninterrupted viewlines from the municipality by ensuring that all buildings and works are sensitively designed and sited to sit below the dominant tree canopy height.

The key objectives in recommending height limits within the Village are to:

- Ensure development does not compromise the landscape and

environmental significance of the Dandenong Foothills

- Ensure development positively contributes to the preferred character of the Village
- Protect views of the Foothills and Ranges from within the Village
- Maintain the dominance of tree canopies as a backdrop to views across the Village
- Step development down to adjoining residential areas

Recommended heights and setbacks

A mandatory 8 metre (2 storey) height limit is recommended to retain views to Dandenong Ranges, to respect the nearby low-scale residential buildings, and to enhance the overall sense of openness. The maximum building height does not apply to architectural features and detailing.

Ground floor and upper level setbacks are also recommended in certain areas to protect or frame important views along roads (such as Alpine Street).

ACTIONS

- Apply the Design and Development Overlay DDO (refer to the DDO schedules provisions table on page 61)

The DDO allows Council to specify design objectives and tailor detailed building controls to achieve specific outcomes relating to: building height and building setbacks. Therefore it is recommended that a DDO is used to guide the development for future buildings and works in accordance with the direction of the Structure Plan.

While acknowledging that the Victoria Planning Provisions prefers the use of discretionary height controls (to allow greater flexibility in achieving objectives and standards)

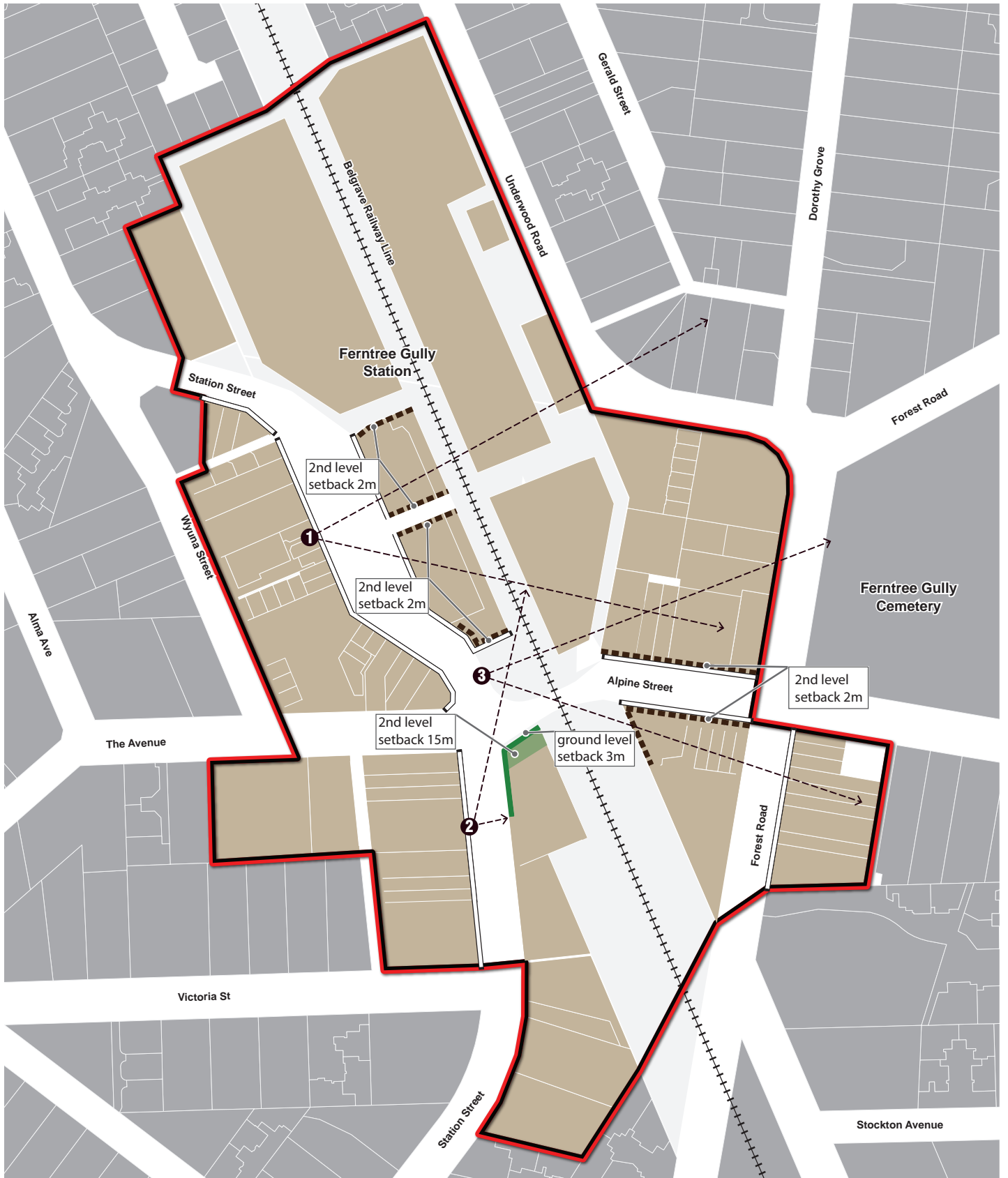
there are instances where mandatory provisions are appropriate. The use of mandatory controls is recommended to achieve the objectives of the Structure Plan.

Practice Note 60: Height & Setback Controls for Activity Centres recognises that mandatory heights may be appropriate in specific and confined precincts that might include significant landscape precincts such as natural waterways, regional parks and areas where dense tree canopies are the dominant feature, significant heritage places where other controls are demonstrated to be inadequate to protect unique heritage values, and sites of recognised State significance where building heights can be shown to add to the significance of the place, for example major waterways (emphasis added). The importance of the landscape and environmental value of the Dandenong Ranges are recognised in both the State and Local sections of the Knox Planning Scheme.

Specifically under Clause 12.04 (Significant environments and landscapes) the objective of Clause 12.04-1 (Environmentally sensitive areas) is "to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas." Strategies include: ...protect environmentally sensitive areas with significant recreational value such as the Dandenong Ranges... from development which would diminish their environmental conservation or recreation values.








The objectives of clause 22.01 (Dandenong Foothills) include:

Protect and enhance the metropolitan landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills and maintain uninterrupted view lines from within the municipality and vantage points in metropolitan Melbourne by ensuring that all buildings and works are sensitively designed and sited



MAP 1: PROPOSED BUILT FORM CONTROLS



- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
|  | Structure Plan area |  | Design and Development Overlay |
|  | 4.5m (1 storey) maximum |  | Provide weather protection |
|  | 8m (2 storey) maximum | | |
|  | Provide ground level setbacks | | |
|  | Provide second level setbacks | | |



Views identified by the community as important

1. From the pedestrian crossing, Station Street
2. From the Station Street gateway
3. From the open space corner Station Street & Alpine Street

to sit below the dominant tree canopy height.

Promote the maintenance and improvement of the continuous closed tree canopy by allowing enough open space within new development for the retention of existing canopy vegetation and growth of new canopy vegetation.

Furthermore Melbourne 2030 recognises the environmental and landscape qualities of land in the vicinity of the Dandenong Ranges as having high environmental and social values of metropolitan significance.

Practice Note 59: The Role of Mandatory Provisions in Planning Schemes states that:

“...mandatory provisions will only be considered in circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that discretionary provisions are insufficient to achieve desired outcomes.”

The issue of whether building height requirements should be expressed as mandatory or discretionary has been the subject

of consideration by a number of Planning Panels. Mandatory controls have been recommended by Panels in circumstances where unusual or particularly sensitive site conditions are considered to require a prescriptive approach to building form parameters. These are typically to be found in areas of high heritage value, strong and consistent character themes, or in sensitive environmental locations.

Practice Notes 59 and 60 provide a range of criteria to test whether the provisions may be acceptable. Based on these assessment criteria, it is considered that the use of mandatory controls in Ferntree Gully Village is appropriate for the following reasons:

- The recommended provisions are strategically supported through the built form analysis undertaken as part of the preparation of the Ferntree Gully Village Structure Plan.
- The proposed heights achieve clear objectives to retain views to Dandenong Ranges and to respect and provide transitional heights

to the nearby low-scale residential buildings.

- The mandatory provisions are appropriate to the majority of the planning proposals.
- The mandatory provisions provide for the preferred outcomes within the centre.
- Proposals not in accordance with the mandatory provisions are considered to be unacceptable in achieving the preferred outcomes.

Practice Note 59 notes that the DDO is the most appropriate tool for the expression of mandatory built form requirements.

DDO schedule provisions

MAXIMUM HEIGHT	FRONT SETBACK	UPPER LEVEL SETBACKS	OUTCOME
8 metres (2 storeys)*	Buildings should be built to the front property boundary (zero metre front setback), unless indicated in Map 1. 44 Station Street (see Map 1), set back buildings 3 metres from the front boundary.	Building levels more than 4.5 metres (1 storey) above the ground should be setback a minimum of 2 metres from the boundary where indicated in Map 1. 44 Station Street (see Map 1): building levels more than 4.5 metres (1 storey) above the ground should be setback a minimum of 15 metres from the boundary.	Development will not block or intrude into important views to the Dandenong Ranges (where indicated in Map 1) or detract from the overall landscape settings. Development will provide a consistent pattern of ground level setbacks.

* The maximum building height does not apply to architectural features and detailing.