



- **visual sensitivity**

Visual sensitivity within the study areas is determined by the aspect of key view lines along roads, open space spines and public vantage points, and proximate rising topography along such paths. Strong views east are available along each of the primary arterial roads serving the Ranges, with prominent panoramas also occurring along Scoresby and Dorset Roads. Sensitive exposed slopes views from these vantage points are the rising intermediate hills east of Dorset Road (between Mountain Hwy and Napoleon Road, lower reaches of the Lysterfield hills and the rising slopes to the east of Forest Road in Ferntree Gully). These represent exposed locations where residential development and growth has the capacity to erode the green sense of place of the City's edge.

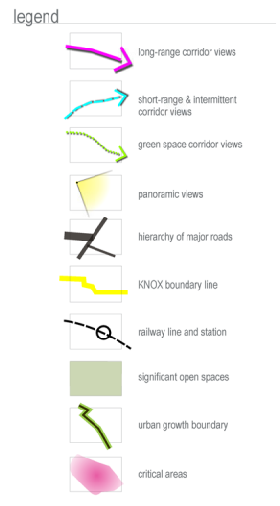
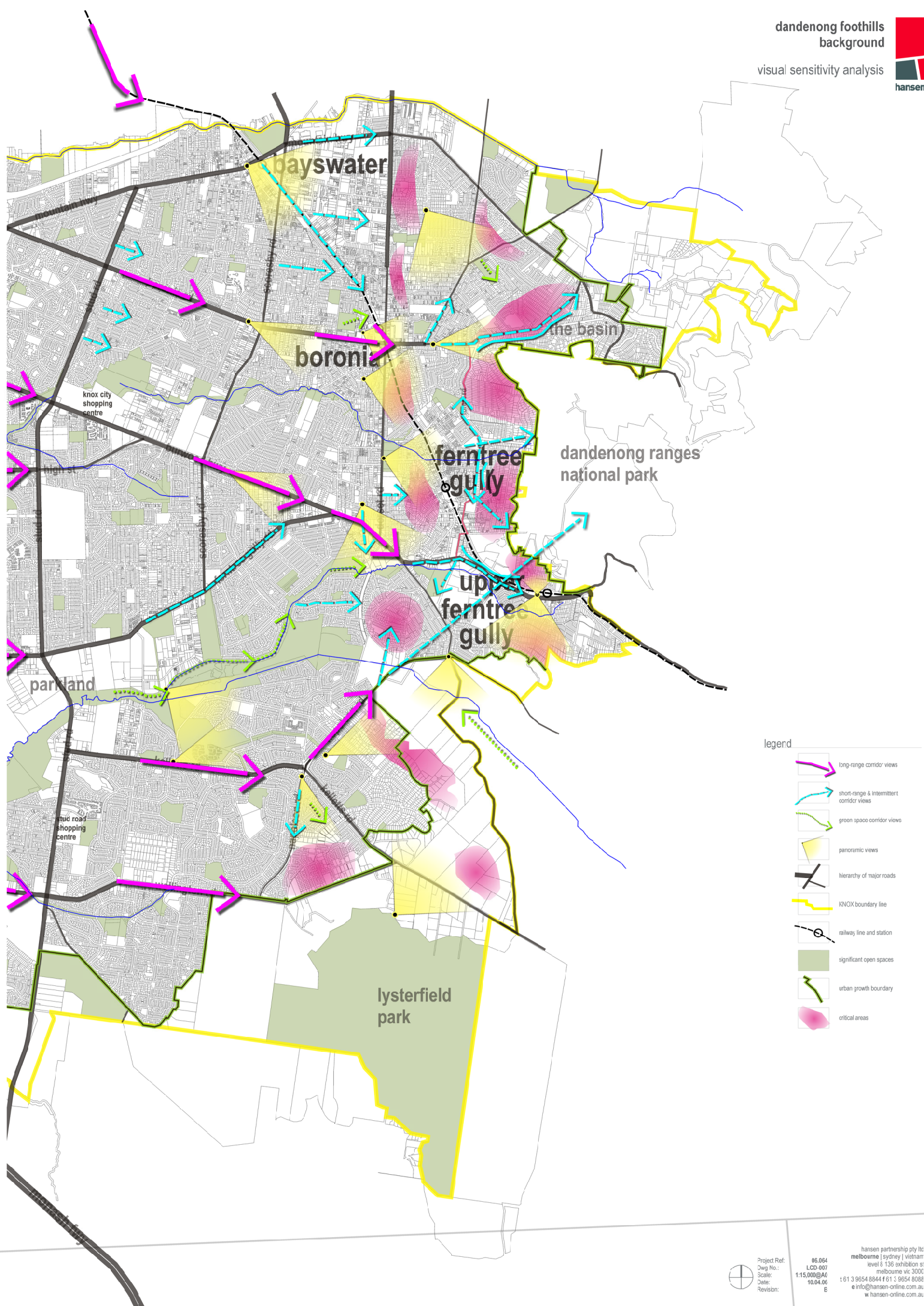
6 character precincts

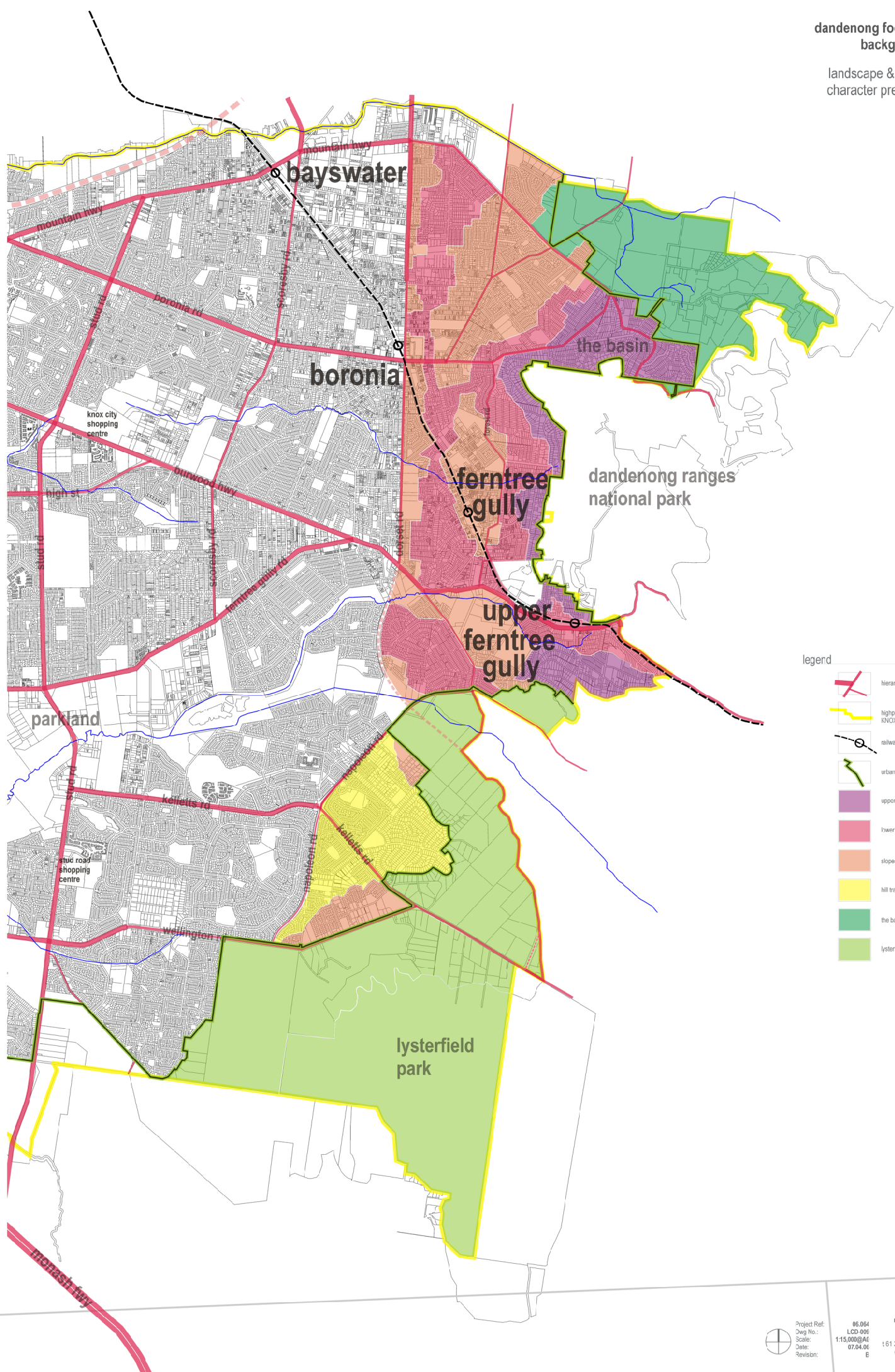
The thorough municipal analysis undertaken as part of this review has also assisted in the identification of a series of existing character traits that define and distinguish places within the Dandenong Foothills. A notion of the difference between places in the study area has been introduced in both the Knox Urban Design Framework 2020 and the City of Knox Neighbourhood Character Study. While each of these assessments provides a credible assessment of 'place', this review has considered these precincts in terms of their scenic contribution, topographical condition and urban development pattern. There are many consistencies with the previous studies, with a view establishing a clear set of boundaries and/or delineations to justify future development controls and guidelines (refer Figure 10).

While the notion of neighbourhood character and sense of place is relatively new in terms of planning scheme assessment, it is a factor that has been at the heart of urban development and placemaking for generations. It is defined as the 'collective experience of public and private elements within a setting', including a combination of private objects such as building forms, fencing, gardens and outdoor spaces, and public features including roads, footpaths, parklands and street trees. Another critical feature of the 'public' environment and an element which is invariably the most influential is the broader 'landscape'; in terms of the sensory experience (visual, acoustic or tactile) comprising topography, views, and the presence of bush, coast, plain or other setting.

In the context of the Dandenong Foothills, the prevailing feature of the place is unquestionably its topographical condition and the extent of vegetative cover (or lack of as the case may be). As such, the following character precincts are defined primarily in terms of their location within the broader topographical and/or bush or parkland setting.

It is also important to note that the following statements do not necessarily reflect the preferred or future quality of the place, as 'existing' character is not always highly valued. The following statements of existing character must be distinguishable from further statements of 'preferred character', which indicate what type of urban development form and finish can comfortably co-exist within a stated topographical or locations setting.





legend

- hierarchy of major roads
- highpoint KNOX boundary line
- railway line and station
- urban growth boundary
- upper hillside
- lower hillside
- slopes & valleys
- hill transition
- the basin
- lysterfield valley





6.1 existing qualities

The following statements of existing character relate to the six identified urban and landscape precincts emerging from the strategic analysis of the municipality. Each of the following descriptions provides a definition of the precinct's location, its key values and qualities, an outline of a sample site and a listing of pertinent issues as a guide for future management. There are six precincts, including

- Upper Hillside
- Lower Hillside
- Slopes and Valleys
- Hill Transition
- The Basin
- Lysterfield Valley

Sample sites, precinct photos and sections depicting slope condition of the foothills are provided at the conclusion to 6.1

6.1.1 upper hillside

The Upper Hillside area comprises the elevated belt of land skirting the eastern Knox Boundary, adjacent to Dandenong Ranges National Park. It includes higher west facing hillside south above Forest Road that form part of the suburb of Ferntree Gully and the elevated ridges to either side of the Ferntree Gully Creek and township. Urbanised parts of the Basin are also incorporated into this precinct, primarily due to its elevated position and well vegetated canopy cover.

key values

This area is recognised as one of the most important precincts in the City due to its elevated position and the steep gradient of land resulting in a high degree of exposure. Key features of this precinct include:

- steeply sloping land of between 10-15% and greater
- exposed elevated land allowing for view across Knox
- high visible from flat lands of Knox to the west
- variety of lot size given mixed zoning resulting in a diversity of lot configuration and dwelling form
- double storey form plus roof form projects out of tree canopy due to slope on occasion
- open and informal street network required due to extreme sloping land

A sample site (L02) has been identified surrounding Hilltop Road north-west of the Upper Ferntree Gully town centre. This site has a significant slope with established upper hillside development.

Issues

- protecting the appearance of this area as treed slopes rising above the suburbs
- avoiding intrusion from the inappropriate siting, design or materials of buildings and signs
- impact of development on distant views across the city and suburbs to foothills of the Dandenongs
- impact of development on local views within the foothills area
- protection and rejuvenation of indigenous planting (habitat and landscape value)



6.1.2 lower hillside

The lower hillside precinct consists of 2 elongated belts of elevated land separated by a series of north south aligned valleys. The area consists of the intermediate slopes abutting the 'upper hillside' to the east of Forest Road and either side of Ferntree Gully Road. It also comprises a series of peaks to a modest elevation located parallel to (and east of) Dorset Road., extending from Mountain Highway to the edge of Lysterfield Park, and the rise between Dorset Road and Glenfern Road. The areas are largely urbanised but consists of well vegetated highly visible rises. They are most proximate to the western flats of the City.

key values

This area is an important precinct due to its proximity to Dorset Road and the axes of Burwood Highway and Napoleon Road. Key sensitive slopes are located within this precinct. Key features include:

- a garden suburban setting defined by large dwellings on single lots,
- long linear street systems laid out according to slope and/or on grid,
- urbanised street formats with kerb and channel and formal front boundaries
- a moderately variable topography with local rises and troughs,
- mixed canopy cover consisting of native and exotic species,
- strong native canopy cover to southern Ferntree Gully and Glenfern Road areas,
- key views out to west, and prominence from most eastern parts of City.

A sample site (L03) has been identified surrounding The Avenue and Victoria St south-west of the Ferntree Gully. This established suburban site is positioned on an interim peak with a medium rising slope.

Issues

- protecting the appearance of this area as treed slopes rising above the suburbs
- avoiding visual intrusion from the inappropriate siting, design or materials of buildings and signs
- impact of development on distant views across the city and suburbs to the foothills
- impact of development on local views within the foothills area
- protection and rejuvenation of indigenous planting (habitat and landscape value)

6.1.3 slopes & valleys

Large parts of the study area are contained within the land defined by lower slopes and valleys running north south from Bayswater through to Lysterfield Park. These areas comprise typically standard subdivisional housing with established gardens. They are not particularly prominent in the municipal context, but are also under considerable pressure to change as a function of their recessive position within the Ranges. The precinct is largely disconnected, with the Ferntree Gully valley distinguishable from the Upper Ferntree Gully southern slopes, and the broad valley defined by Albert Avenue and Miller Road to Mountain Highway in the north. Some moderate rises to the south at Lysterfield north and south are also included in this precinct.

key values

This area is important because it represents a broad area of suburban development in recessive and less exposed locations. While this may deem the precinct less sensitive than other elevated positions, it has important values in terms of continuity of the well vegetated link to the east and west. Key features of this precinct include:



- ageing garden suburban residential development
- largely modified bushland landscape character with introduction of considerable exotic tree cover
- slight gradient leading down to well vegetated creek or gully settings
- local views to higher reaches of lower and upper hillside precincts
- lower order of dwelling stock, often low site coverage and single storey form
- limited opportunity for long range views out of the precinct

A sample site (L04) has been identified surrounding Gravenstein Crescent and Goodwin Street north-west of The Basin. This established suburban site is positioned within a sloping valley.

Issues

- compatibility of development with scale and character of existing development
- avoiding visual intrusion from the inappropriate siting, design or materials of buildings and signs
- impact of development on views within the foothills area
- protection and rejuvenation of indigenous planting (habitat and landscape value)
- increased development density given limited impact on broader landscape setting

6.1.4 hill transition

The hill transition precinct comprises the southern portion of the study area between Napoleon and Wellington Roads. It is an unusual area in that it incorporates recently developed suburban land which rises evenly up towards the edge of Lysterfield Park and the Monbulk Creek valley. It is unlike other sloping land with established canopy vegetation to the north and is somewhat abrupt in its interface with the Lysterfield Park and valley.

key values

This area is distinguishable for its relatively flat and rising suburban form and lightly vegetation cover. It is a formally constructed subdivision with established utilities and a relatively standard suburban image. Key features of this precinct include:

- contemporary subdivision and street layout with curvilinear streets and cul de sacs
- sense of estate suburban development on lower land
- recent or newly established single and double storey residential development
- defined front and side lot boundaries to streetscape
- limited vegetation cover and clear sense of disconnection from bushland fringe to south and east.

A sample site (L05) has been identified surrounding Hambleton Court and Grange Drive, east of Kelletts and Napoleon Road junction. This recently established suburban site is within an almost flat valley with hill transitions to southern foothills.

Issues

- impact of development on local views and views of the dandenong ranges, Lysterfield hills, Lysterfield valley and significant ridgelines
- ensuring development is sensitive to slope, terrain, remnant vegetation
- orienting development to bush and rural/pastoral spaces
- street layouts that follow contours, create an 'edge' to the urban area and provide access to reserves, parkland and views
- use of larger lots in subdivisions to create transition between urban areas and Lysterfield hills and valley



6.1.5 the basin

The Basin precinct consists of broad area of non-urban land beyond the Urban Growth Boundary utilised for industrial, rural residential and farming activities leading to the edge of the Dandenong Ranges National Park. It includes land to either side of the Basin- Olinda Road. The western portion of the land is relatively flat but rises evenly to the east and the Park edge.

key values

The precinct has a strong open character to its western edge and evolves towards a well established and vegetated rural belt with significant canopy cover and clear large lot boundary definition. Key features of this precinct include:

- large lot configuration and lack of built structures in the setting
- rising topography and merged effect with national park
- substantial canopy vegetation and formal boundary planting definition
- open informal roads reflecting image of part rural setting
- limited views out due to canopy cover, but notable views to edge of park from the west.

A sample site (L65) has been identified surrounding Doongalla Road and Milleara Street, north-east of The Basin. This area is outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) with a rural living aspect that is not expected to experience pressures from future development.

Issues

- conserve flora and fauna, and protect ecological processes
- protect scenic, visual, cultural and environmental values
- protect the pastoral landscape character
- appropriate land management

6.1.6 lysterfield valley

The Lysterfield Valley precinct encompasses a broad area of southern non-urban land located outside the Urban Growth Boundary and defined as park and rural land. It includes Lysterfield Park and the Monbulk valley leading up to the elevated alignment of Glenfern Road.

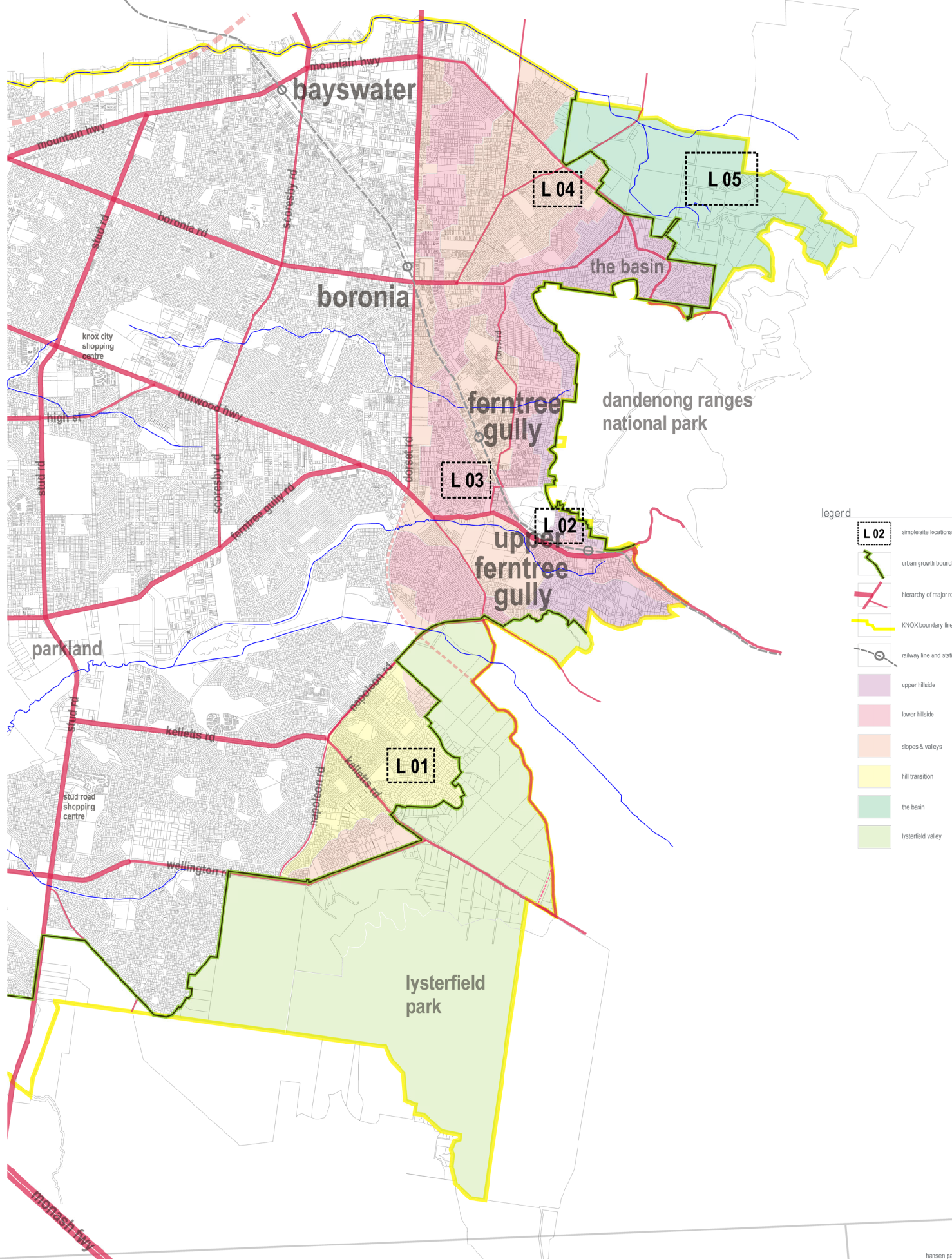
key values

The precinct has a strong open landscape character to the north where the bare hills of the Monbulk valley contrast with the vegetated rise of the Lysterfield Park. Key features of this precinct include:

- Intact rural setting with open bald hills in foreground behind well vegetated Ranges
- Rising slopes of Lysterfield Park and important native vegetation/ natural qualities

Issues

- maintaining the open rural/pastoral landscape and the open, bold hillsides
- maintaining rural land-uses that protect rural landscape qualities
- appropriate land management
- design of buildings and works to protect and enhance landscape qualities
- impact of development on views of the valley from significant ridges and the Dandenongs



legend

- L 02** (dashed box) simple site locations
- urban growth boundary (green line)
- hierarchy of major roads (red lines)
- KNOX boundary line (yellow line)
- railway line and station (black line with circle)
- upper hillside (light purple)
- lower hillside (pink)
- slopes & valleys (light orange)
- hill transition (yellow)
- the basin (light green)
- lysterfield valley (light green)



dandenong foothills visual assessment

sample site L02 upper hillside

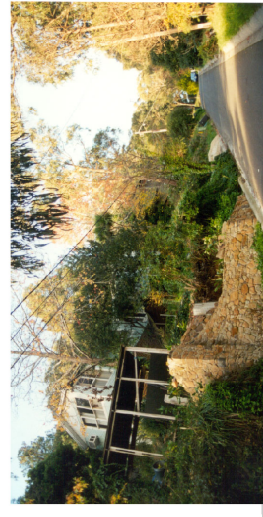
Legend



contours

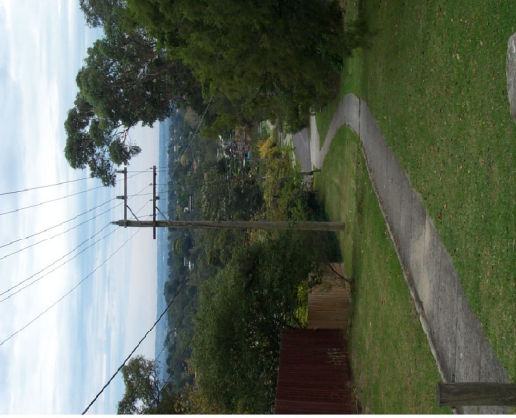


Project Ref: 06.064
Dwg No.: LCD-028
Scale: NTS
Date: 11.04.06
Revision: A



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Green Corridor



Map 74 D2

Clematis Avenue



Map 74 E2

Wynette Avenue



Map 74 H7

Ross Avenue



Map 65 H8



**dandenong foothills
visual assessment**
short range views
upper hillside

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dandenong foothills visual assessment

sample site L03 lower hillside

Legend



contours



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