# City Plan & Structure Plan Objectives

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

## CITY PLAN OBJECTIVES

### HEALTHY, CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

1. **The Knox community benefits from good health and wellbeing at all life stages**
   - 3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.

2. **A safe community with strong community connections and where learning and volunteering are valued and supported**

### PROSPEROUS, ADVANCING ECONOMY

2. **Knox has a strong local economy that supports business growth, jobs and community wealth**
   - 1. Create a compact, vibrant retail core

2. **Improve local opportunities for people to live, work, learn and play in Knox**
   - 2. Facilitate more opportunities for people to live in Ferntree Gully Village centre

### VIBRANT & SUSTAINABLE BUILT & NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

3. **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**
   - 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. Improve the safety and convenience of transport inter-changes within the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Improve access to the centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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

17. Encourage redevelopment of underutilised sites to foster a more efficient use of space within the town centre and an improved urban environment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>SPACES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2 Biodiversity and places of natural significance, including waterways and open space are highly valued, protected and enhanced</strong></td>
<td>4. Promote the existing attributes of Ferntree Gully to attract people to the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Retain and improve Ferntree Gully’s unique identity and ‘Village’ character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Enhance the leafy landscape setting of Ferntree Gully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.3 Infrastructure networks provide transport choice, affordability and connectivity</strong></td>
<td>11. Improve the appearance and function of the railway station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culturally Rich &amp; Active Communities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1 Improve the acceptance and valuing of diversity and difference in the Knox community</strong></td>
<td>3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2 Increase use of public spaces and infrastructure for the purposes of cultural expression and physical activity</strong></td>
<td>3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Negotiate the short term use of public land for the benefit of the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Support community events and activities in Ferntree Gully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Enhance the active and passive role of recreational spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Improve the image of the Village through the quality and consistency of its Public Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democratic &amp; Engaged Communities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.1 Improve community leadership and participation in Knox</strong></td>
<td>6. Support community events and activities in Ferntree Gully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.2 Increase opportunities for the Knox community to participate in public decision-making processes</strong></td>
<td>3. Continue to accommodate community services, activities and infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.3 Ensure Council is well governed and demonstrates effective leadership</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDINGS</td>
<td>ACCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Strengthen the landscape setting of Ferntree Gully</td>
<td>19. Provide safer, more direct connections within the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. Improve the safety and convenience of transport interchanges within the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. Improve access to the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Protect the amenity of sensitive land uses such as residential areas and open spaces.</td>
<td>22. Facilitate more recreational cycling and walking between the centre and the Dandenong Ranges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 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

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._
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 view lines 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
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.

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

### DDO schedule provisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAXIMUM HEIGHT</th>
<th>FRONT SETBACK</th>
<th>UPPER LEVEL SETBACKS</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 metres (2 storeys)*</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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