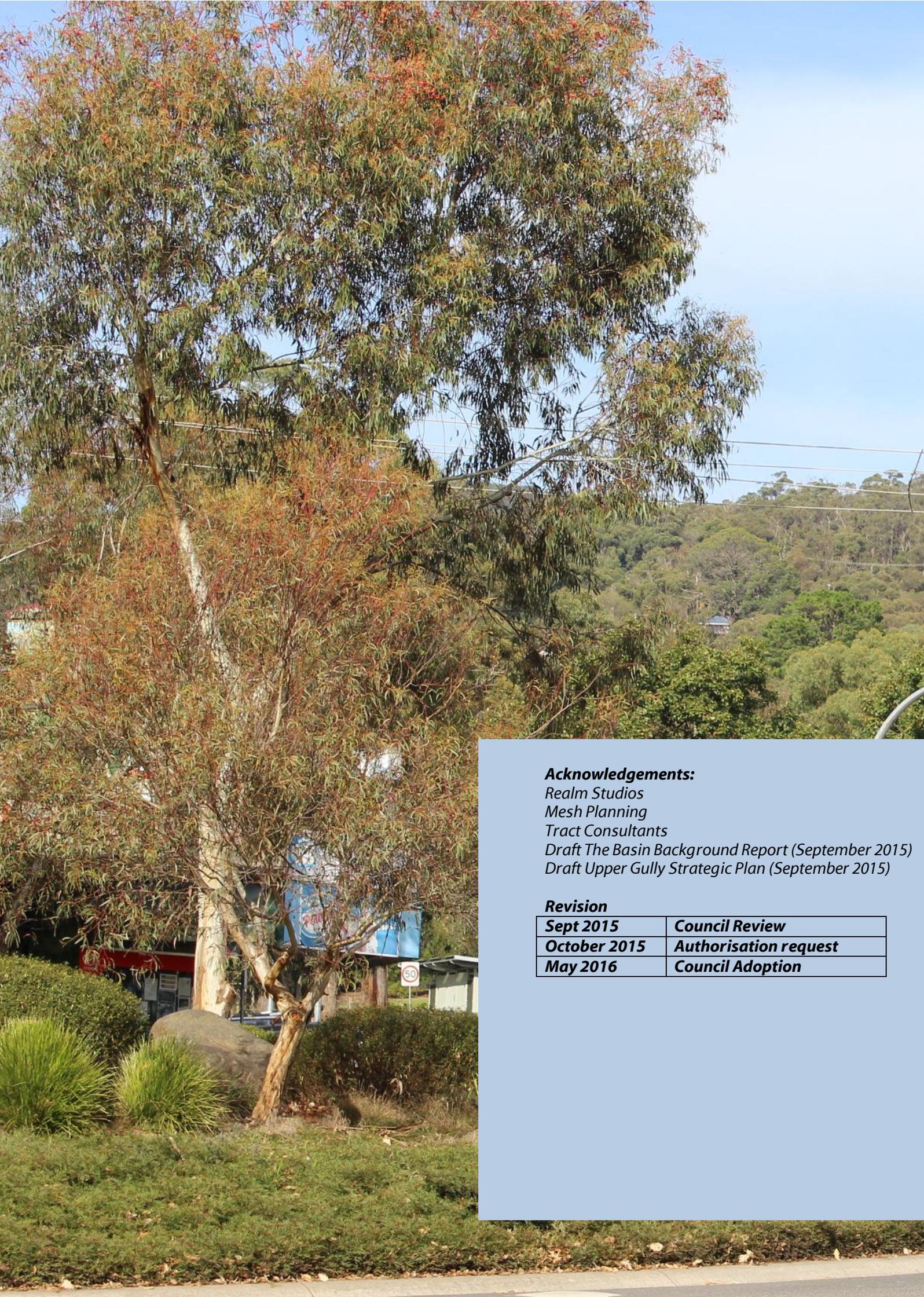


# Part 2

# The Basin Built Form Guidelines

MAY 2016





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**Revision**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Basin Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC) is nestled at the base of the Dandenong Ranges.

The study area comprises existing commercial and public use areas. It is surrounded by predominantly residential areas that include overlay provisions that aim to protect the foothills character and vegetation cover. These controls place limitations on the scale and intensity of development and reinforce a relatively low density of residential housing. In relation to the commercial and public zoned areas of The Basin, an absence of enough clarity regarding scale, led (in 2014) to a three year interim application of a 7.5 metre height limit to enable sufficient time to undertake the necessary strategic work to determine appropriate permanent built form controls.

In November 2014, the Minister for Planning approved an interim Design and Development Overlay (DDO10) through Amendment C130 to the Knox Planning Scheme with a mandatory height limit of 7.5 metres on the condition that further strategic work was undertaken and a full Planning Scheme Amendment

Strategic work has been undertaken for the centre. This included an analysis of the planning policy framework, demographics, existing land uses and a built form and view analysis including built form modelling. Community engagement to discuss built form outcomes in The Basin was also undertaken in April-June 2014. For further details on the strategic analysis and community engagement, refer to the *'The Basin Background Report, May 2016'* (the Background Report).

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of *Part 2 Built Form Guidelines* is to provide clear direction on built form outcomes for future development in The Basin. These *Built Form Guidelines* build on the strategic work undertaken in the Background Report and will result in Planning Scheme Amendment C137 being prepared for both The Basin and Alchester Village.

## 1.3 The study area

The study area is confined to the commercial and public use zone areas of The Basin which provide opportunities for limited change with a mixture of uses, including residential, office and retail.

The Basin is a local service and convenience centre located in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges in the north eastern corner of the Knox municipality in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The Basin is designated as a Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC) within Knox.

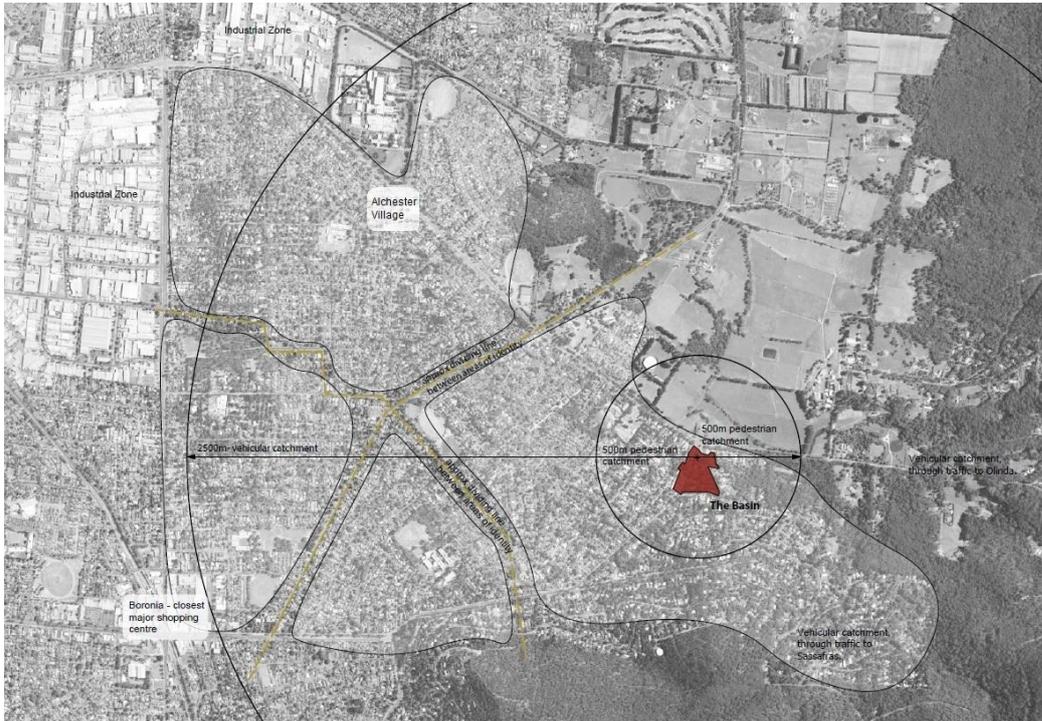
The Basin, along with the neighbourhood centres of Alchester Village, Ferntree Gully and Upper Ferntree Gully, represents one of Knox's gateway centres en route to the Dandenong Ranges, a State Significant landscape as identified in Plan Melbourne. As seen in Figure 1, the Boronia Activity Centre, located 2.5 km to the south west of The Basin, is the closest major centre and railway station. In the context of these major and neighbourhood centres, The Basin is positioned as a local shopping centre providing everyday necessities.

The study area covers an area of 3.7ha and comprises existing commercial areas to the west of Forest Road and to the east of Mountain Highway (see Figure 2). The 'Basin Triangle' is located at the heart of the study area, bound by Forest Road, Mountain Highway and Basin Olinda Road and comprises public uses.

The study area is predominantly surrounded by low density residential uses with extensive farmland to the north of the centre. The Basin study area is set within a treed environment with views of the Dandenongs and basin paddocks (Salvation Army land) contributing significantly to a unique village atmosphere.

Built form within The Basin is low scale, allowing the hills and vegetated backdrop to dominate the built form. There are a small number of shops and restaurants set amidst a village atmosphere.

The Basin is a gateway centre en route to the Dandenong Ranges. It has a number of roles, including providing everyday necessities and specialties to locals, as well as a tourism role. Mountain Highway between The Basin and Olinda is a popular and challenging route for cyclists and groups of cyclists frequently stop at The Basin for refreshments at one of the cafes or the park, particularly on weekends. The Basin is a lively village, playing host to a number of community groups including The Basin Theatre Group, Senior Citizens and The Basin Scout Group. The Basin Music Festival is held annually each March.



**Figure 01- The Basin catchment area**



**Figure 02 - The Basin study area**

## 1.4 Planning policies and controls

The Basin is identified as a Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC) within the Knox Planning Scheme. Strategically, The Basin is not anticipated to accommodate much of the demand for alternative forms of housing, as this is expected to occur within larger local centres, such as Boronia located outside of the Dandenong Foothills policy area. Additionally, population and household forecasts for The Basin indicate that there are limited opportunities and demand for alternative forms of housing in the centre. The Knox Planning Scheme Municipal Strategic Statement – Clause 21.01 Settlement specifies that *“Urban consolidation objectives must not outweigh the environmental and landscape objectives for the foothills”*. Despite this, some opportunities do still exist for some shop top housing within the centre, but is not the purpose of the centre.

The following statutory planning controls apply to The Basin:

### **Zoning**

- Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)
- Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 1 (NRZ1) – 1325 Mountain Highway
- Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) (within The Triangle)
- Public Use Zone 6 (PUZ6) *The Basin* Kindergarten and Maternal Child Health Centre
- Public Use Zone 7 (PUZ7) The Basin Country Fire Authority

### **Overlays**

- Design and Development Overlay Schedule 10 (DDO11) – interim 7.5 metre height control
- Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 (DDO1)
- Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedules 2 and 3 (VPO2, VPO3)
- Environmental Significant Landscape Overlay Schedules 2 and 3 (ESO2, ESO3)
- Significant Landscape Overlay Schedules 2 and 3 (SLO2, SLO3) height limits of 7.5 metres
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
- Heritage Overlay Schedule 51 (HO51) (The Triangle)

### **Local planning policies**

- Clause 21.04 Urban Design
- Clause 21.05 Housing
- Clause 21.07 Economic Development
- Clause 22.01 Dandenong Foothills Policy
- Clause 22.12 Residential Land and Development in the Commercial 1 Zone

## 1.5 Heritage

The automotive garage, The Basin Preschool and Maternal Child Health Centre and the post office were highlighted as significant to the community of The Basin during community consultation. As a result, heritage assessments have been undertaken for these sites, as well as the Progress Hall (see Figure 3). The assessment revealed that only the Progress Hall was significant enough to have the Heritage Overlay applied. While the HO51 applies to the whole of the Basin Triangle land, the schedule does not specifically identify the Progress Hall as a significant building. This will be addressed within Amendment C137 to the Knox Planning Scheme. The assessment also revealed that the shops on the eastern side of Mountain Highway (including the Post Office) should be retained, in particular the remaining metal framed windows and tiled shopfronts as these elements contribute to the character of The Basin.



**Figure 03 - The Basin Progress Hall**

## 1.6 Bushfire Risk

The CFA's Community Information Guide for The Basin identifies the township as having 'extreme' bushfire risk. This classification is based on high fuel loads in the bordering forest, the hilly terrain, a lack of accessibility with narrow dead-end roads and homes nestled into bushland. The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applies to the study area east of Forest Road and is located within a designated Bushfire Prone Area under the Building Act. Bushfire risk must be considered from a strategic perspective in the preparation of the built form design guidelines.

## 1.7 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, or a child care centre – are, or can be remediated to be, suitable for that use. It is recommended that the Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) be applied to 1300 Mountain Highway, The Basin (see Figure 4) based on its previous land use as a service station, which may have allowed industrial activity on the site. The EAO ensures the requirement for an environmental audit is met before the commencement of any sensitive uses.



Figure 04 - 1300 Mountain Highway

## 1.8 Built form analysis

This section represents a summary of a full built form analysis carried out in the Background Report, which provides the basis for these *Built Form Guidelines*.

Built form within The Basin is low scale, allowing the hills and vegetated backdrop to dominate the built form and create a village atmosphere (See Figure 7). Existing heights within the centre are generally single storey ranging between 3.5 and 5 metres.

Most buildings within the centre were constructed between the 1960s and late 1990s. Building stock is in good condition, with excellent occupancy rates across the centre and minimal permit activity and turnover of uses within the last ten years.

Setbacks within the centre vary. On the eastern side of Mountain Highway shops are constructed to the front boundary, with a continuous awning, creating a 'hard edge' and active frontages. Setbacks on the western side of Forest Road are more eclectic and varied as seen in Figure 5.



**Figure 05 - Western side of Forest Road**

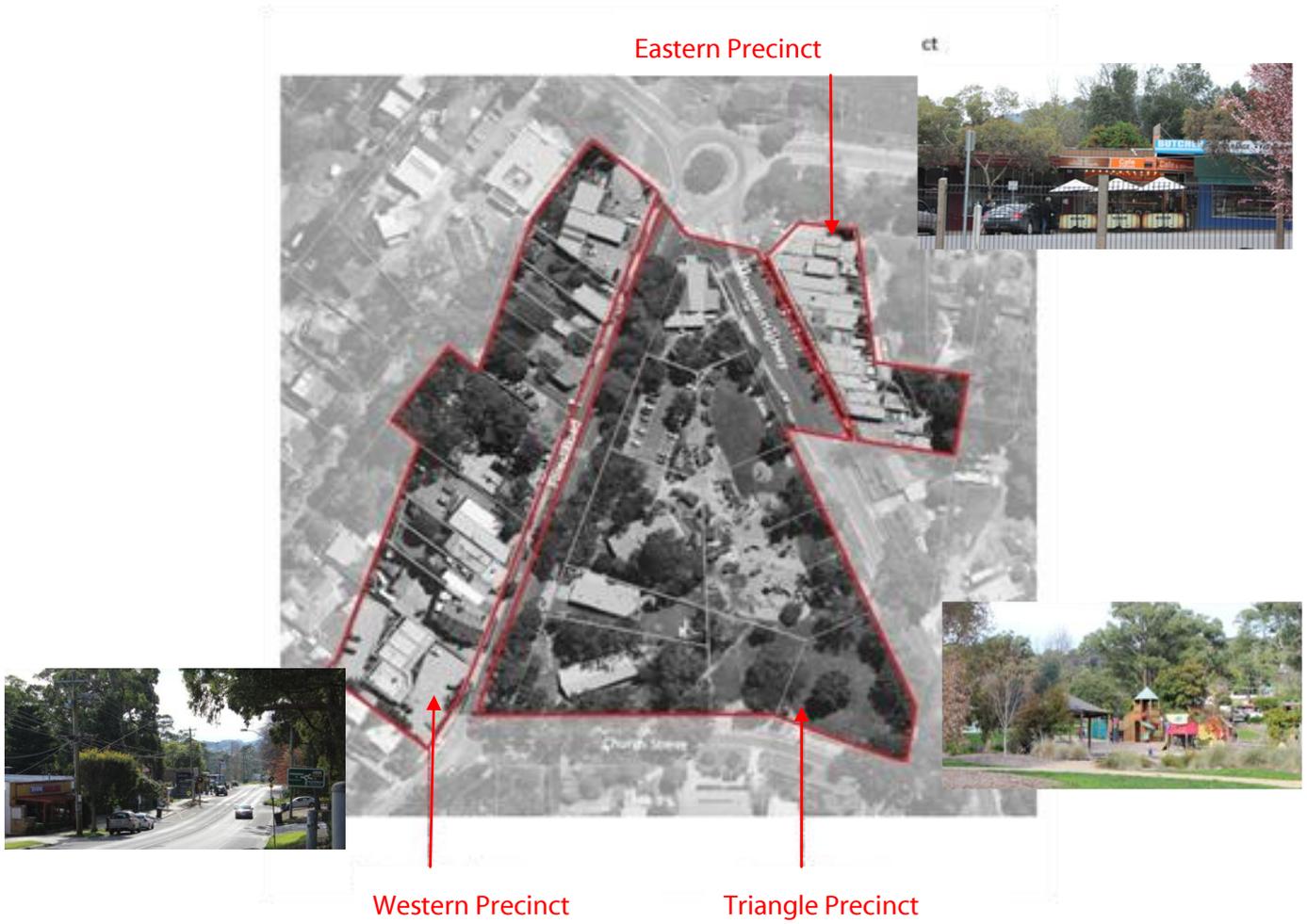
Building materials throughout the centre vary but are generally a mixture of brick, timber and colourbond in muted colours that reflect the centre's location within a treed environment. The Mountain Highway shops have narrow, tiled shopfronts with metal framed windows (see Figure 6). Many original shopfronts are still intact and these features, coupled with recent mural additions, contribute greatly to the character of The Basin.



**Figure 06 - Shops on the eastern side of Mountain Highway**

The centre is connected by pedestrian pathways along retail frontages and through the Basin Triangle. The centre is highly accessible by vehicle due to its location on the juncture of Mountain Highway, Forest Road and Basin-Olinda Road. The Mountain Highway shops can be accessed by a laneway to the rear. Public car parking exists in front of shops and within the Basin Triangle. There is opportunity to also provide rear loading for the retail properties on the western side of Forest Road to ensure a hard edge of built form along the street frontage.

Sensitive residential interfaces exist to the west of the shops along Forest Road. Buildings should be setback from the western boundary to ensure residential amenity is protected.



**Figure 07. Precinct definition**

# 2. Built Form Priorities

The *Part 1: The Basin Background Report* summarises the following as key built form priorities affecting The Basin. Please see the *Background Report* for a full discussion of these issues.

## 2.1 Maintain the connection to the highly vegetated Dandenong Foothills landscape

The Knox Planning Scheme provides clear emphasis on the aesthetic, environmental and landscape values and vistas of the Dandenong Foothills and seeks to ensure that development responds positively to this local context (Clause 21.04-2). Clause 22.01 '*Dandenong Foothills*' directs that development within the 'Dandenong Foothills, Foothills Backdrop and Ridgeline Area' should enhance the visual dominance of vegetation.

The study area is predominantly surrounded by low density residential uses within a heavily treed environment with extensive paddocks (Salvation Army land) to the north of the centre. The Basin NAC has a strong visual connection to the Dandenong Ranges and the basin paddocks. The basin paddocks are registered with the National Trust, a non-statutory body with an interest in preserving local and state cultural heritage. These views of the Dandenongs and basin paddocks (Salvation Army land) contribute significantly to a unique, semi rural village atmosphere as illustrated through Figure 8.

View analysis carried out in the *Background Report* shows that the visual connection to the continuous canopy tree cover which surrounds The Basin contributes to its character and identity as a centre located within the Dandenong Foothills, and to its role as a gateway centre to the Dandenong Ranges.

Accordingly, the *Built Form Guidelines* seek to encourage development which maintains the sense of visual dominance of the centre's canopy tree backdrop.



**Figure 08 - Views to the Eastern and Triangle precincts demonstrating visual dominance of canopy tree backdrop**

## 2.2 Protection of key views to the Dandenong Ranges and foothills landscape

The views analysis carried out in the *Background Report* investigated significant views from public spaces within the centre to the surrounding Dandenong Foothills and the basin paddocks as well as to the Dandenong Ranges ridgeline. The analysis ultimately selected two key views as significant views from the public realm which require protection, as shown in Figure 9.

Unlike the other view points within the centre, the two perspectives shown in the following diagram are able to capture visually dominating views of the Dandenong Ranges backdrop, and are the main viewpoints from which users of The Basin are able to form a sense of the Foothills identity of the centre.



**Figure 09 - Key views to be retained and entry perspectives to be enhanced**

The *Built Form Guidelines* seeks to maintain these two key view lines from public spaces. Built form modelling carried out in the *Background Report* demonstrates that allowing infill development at a two storey scale within the Western Precinct, while restricting built form in the Eastern precinct to a predominantly single storey height, will allow key views to the Dandenong Ranges ridgeline to be preserved.

Roof forms in new development should also be considered, as variation in the building skyline will be able to better respond to the undulating land form of the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills. Pitched roof forms, as opposed to flat roofs, will be able to draw sight lines upwards towards the Dandenong Ranges or canopy tree backdrop.

## 2.3 Retain the ‘village’ atmosphere

A recurring theme which emerged from the community engagement process was the value the community placed on the ‘village feel’ of the centre. This can be attributed to:

- The compact footprint of the centre which provides an intimate experience;
- The single storey, low scale built form;
- The concentration of community and public uses within the centre; and
- The treed backdrop and views to the Dandenong Ranges and the basin paddocks.

In order to preserve this ‘village’ atmosphere, the *Built Form Guidelines* seek to encourage future development within The Basin to incorporate:

- Providing visual consistency in facades;
- Providing active surveillance and orienting development towards Forest Road in order to encourage a vibrant public realm;
- Avoiding any loss of commercial shop fronts by prohibiting residential development at the ground levels along key shopping areas; and
- Avoiding any erosion of the commercial function of the centre by encouraging adaptable spaces which could be adapted from residential to commercial uses (discussed further at Section 2.4 below).

## 2.4 Retain and enhance the ‘every day’ service offering of the centre

The *Built Form Guidelines* seek to ensure and enhance the continuing commercial function of the centre and raise the overall design quality of built form. Analysis within the *Background Report* found that internal ceiling heights across the centre are higher than the average 2.4 metres height, the minimum allowed under current building regulations.

The ability of internal spaces, particularly those at ground floor fronting onto key pedestrian areas, to be flexible and change uses over time is important to ensure the continuing commercial role of the centre into the future.

Generous floor to ceiling heights can enable adaptability and flexibility of uses in buildings over time – providing the ability for buildings to change from residential to retail or commercial uses.

Figure 10 demonstrates the principle of adaptive re-use - an under-utilised level of car parking at the Queen Victoria Centre, Lonsdale Street Melbourne, was able to be converted to high quality apartments due to the existing building fabric having appropriate floor to ceiling dimensions.

‘Future proofing’ buildings by providing sufficient internal dimensions to allow adaptation of redundant spaces between commercial, retail or residential uses enables buildings to better respond to fluctuation in property markets.



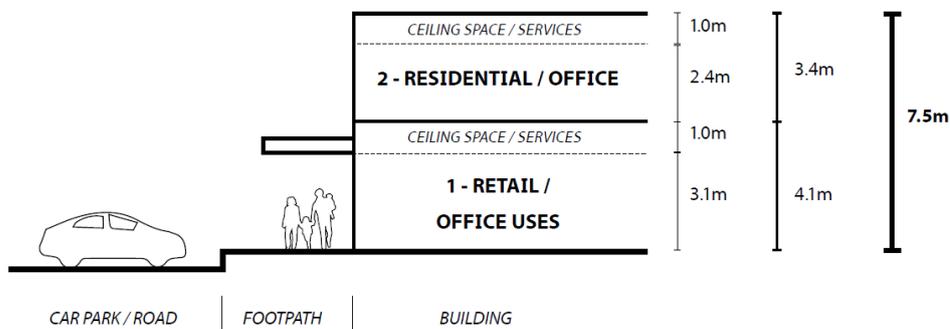
**Figure 10 - Car parking to residential conversion, Queen Victoria Centre, Melbourne**

It is important to ensure that future development within The Basin allows for the continuing commercial function of the centre, particularly given the community's value on the 'everyday' range of services and goods on offer and tourism functions. To allow for future scenarios where developments constructed for residential purposes are converted to or from commercial uses, the ground levels of development should be constructed with minimum 3.6 metres internal ceiling height to allow for adaptation between uses.

In order to maintain high levels of commercial and pedestrian activity, the *Built Form Guidelines* also seek to restrict residential uses at ground floor premises fronting onto key pedestrian and retail areas (in line with the provisions of the Commercial 1 Zone which limit as of right residential uses to 2 metres of frontage at ground floor).

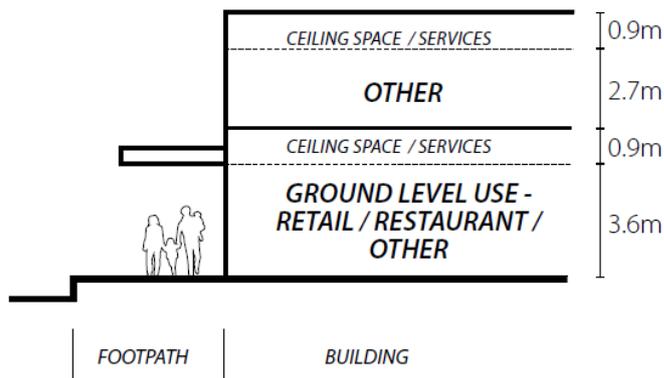
Residential uses at first floor level (i.e. shop top housing) can be supported in order to improve the vitality and surveillance of the centre outside of business hours. However, to allow for future scenarios where residential dwellings at first floor could be converted to commercial uses, such as offices, retail or hospitality, the upper levels of development should be constructed with minimum 2.7 metres internal ceiling height to allow for adaptation between uses.

Figure 11 illustrates an indicative building design that could be achieved under the interim building height controls of 7.5 metres. The diagram shows that floor to ceiling heights for at the ground and upper levels are restrictive and will not allow for generous spaces commonly associated with retail/commercial uses.



**Figure 11 - Existing 7.5 metre height limit**

In contrast, Figure 12 below shows that provision of generous 3.6 metre internal heights at ground level and above standard 2.7 metre height at upper levels could allow for adaptation between residential, retail and restaurant uses.



**Figure 12 - Increased ceiling heights**

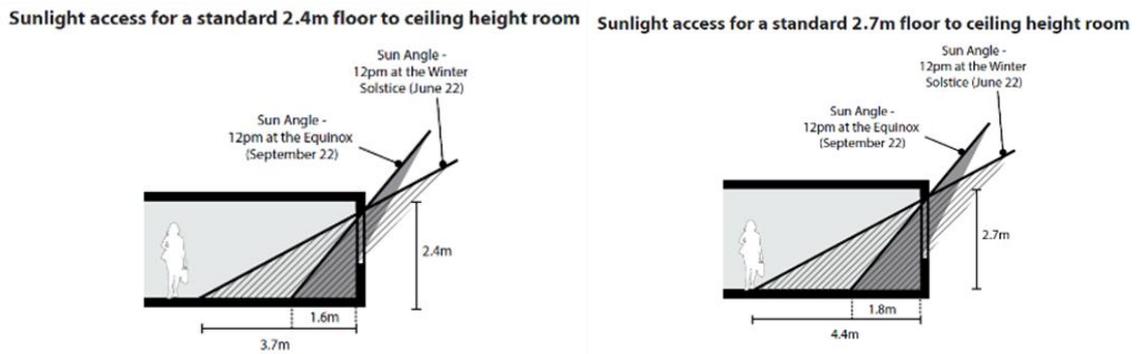
## 2.5 High amenity internal spaces

The *Built Form Guidelines* seek to enhance the overall design quality of development at The Basin. A key consideration in determining building heights is the level of amenity of internal spaces. Analysis within the *Background Report* found that internal ceiling heights across the centre are generally above the average 2.4 metres height, the minimum allowed under current building regulations.

Building heights at Section 4 of this report are based on internal ceiling heights of a minimum 3.6 metres finished floor level (FFL) to finished ceiling level (FCL) at ground floor and a minimum 2.7 metres at first floor. This dimension exceeds the 2.4 to 2.7 metre standard ceiling height permitted under Victorian building regulations for residential spaces.

Providing more generous ceiling heights allows for:

- Adaptability between uses (as discussed at Section 2.4 immediately above).
- Greater sunlight penetration and building ventilation within internal spaces, which contributes to improved internal amenity of developments and a lifting of overall design quality within The Basin. Built form analysis and community engagement for the centre at the Background Report both indicated that an upgrade of the appearance and design of the centre is important to maintain attractiveness of the centre to users.
- Figure 13 compares a standard floor to ceiling height (2.4 metres FFL to FCL) to a more generous floor to ceiling dimension (2.7 metres). The figure shows that additional sunlight will be provided to rooms if more generous floor to ceiling height is provided.



**Figure 13 - Sunlight access into internal spaces**

- At the ground level, generous floor to ceiling heights also allow for improved entrance design and a greater sense of openness for occupants, which is important for retail and restaurant uses.

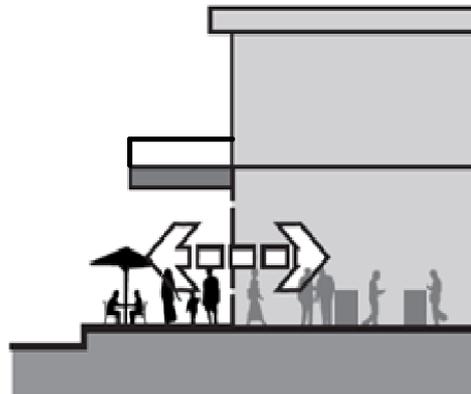
Accordingly, potential building heights discussed in Section 4 of this report are based on internal ceiling heights of a minimum 3.6 metres finished floor level (FFL) to finished ceiling level (FCL) at ground floor and a minimum 2.7 metres at first floor.

## 2.6 Enhance The Basin as a comfortable place to visit

The *Built Form Guidelines* seek to enhance the pedestrian experience across the centre through activation of building frontages and weather protection.

### Active Surveillance

Greater active surveillance should be promoted at key pedestrian circulation areas, which includes shopping areas, pedestrian pathways onto Forest Road and Mountain Highway, as well as throughout The Basin Triangle. Figure 14 below demonstrates the principle of active surveillance as applied to ground level pedestrian interfaces. Premises should be encouraged to provide clear glazing and customer service areas towards the street, in order to promote a sense of activity, surveillance and therefore safety within the public realm. At upper levels, balconies should be provided to provide surveillance of the street and the centre.



**Figure 14 - Ground level pedestrian interfaces**

## Weather protection

Comparison with other town centres provides valuable precedent learning, as shown in Figure 15 below. Variation in the height and form of verandahs can look disorganised (see Alchester Village example); however, the Kalamunda precedent shows that too much consistency can lead to a bland, unactivated streetscape. At Olinda, varied awnings at a consistent height frame the shopfronts and increase the character of the village. The precedent demonstrates that a variety of awning formats can be provided as long as a continuous height is maintained to provide visual consistency.

There is a lack of continuous weather protection along Forest Road in the Western Precinct to encourage pedestrian movement. Consistent provision of verandahs and awnings should be encouraged to provide valuable weather proofing and enhance the useability of a centre.



Figure 15 - Weather protection precedent

## 2.7 Respond to wider trends and strategies to increase housing diversity, particularly around existing activity centres

The *Knox Housing Strategy (2015)* reflects the significance of the Dandenong Ranges as a backdrop to the whole municipality, and identifies that the residential areas surrounding The Basin are preferred to remain low-scale neighbourhoods to best complement the significant biological and landscape values of the Dandenong Foothills.

Population forecasts for The Basin demographic area indicate that population increases over the next 10 years will be minimal. Additionally, the centre is identified as a township of 'extreme' bushfire risk by the CFA. As a result, the *Built Form Guidelines* seek to support limited provision of housing diversity within the commercial areas of The Basin, but also aims to encourage a scale and form of development which retains key views to the Dandenong Ranges and the Foothills context.

## 2.8 Heritage and built form character

The automotive garage, the kindergarten and maternal child health centre, the progress hall and the post office were buildings highlighted as significant to the community of The Basin during community engagement. Heritage assessments of these places revealed the following buildings are key contributors to the character of The Basin:

- The Progress Hall; and
- The intact shopfront facades of the existing Mountain Highway shops.

The *Built Form Guidelines* seek to protect these key characteristics by encouraging the retention of façade features such as metal framed windows and tiling in the Mountain Highway shops. The guidelines aim to ensure that alterations to The Basin Progress Hall building and development on adjoining sites is undertaken to respect the significance of the heritage building.

Additionally, Amendment C137 to the Knox Planning Scheme will include an amendment to Heritage Overlay Schedule 51 to include specific reference to The Basin Progress Hall.

# 3. Built form vision

## 3.1 Built Form Vision

The following key priorities are drawn from the community consultation process, the planning policy framework for The Basin, as well as built form analysis of the centre (see Part 1 Background Report for full details):

### *Community engagement*

- Preserve views to the Dandenong Ranges and basin paddocks
- Preserve the 'village' feel of the centre
- Provide for onsite car parking where possible
- Consistency of colours and materials
- Preserve and enhance the convenience of visiting the centre
- Preserve heritage spaces

### *Planning policy framework*

- Protect key views to the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills landscape
- Encourage adaptable internal spaces
- Encourage high amenity internal spaces
- Enhance users' comfort and enjoyment of the public realm
- Encourage development sympathetic to the centre's foothills location

### *Built form priorities*

- Protect key views to the Dandenong Ranges and foothills landscape
- Encourage adaptable internal spaces
- Encourage high amenity internal spaces
- Enhance users' comfort and enjoyment of the public realm
- Encourage development sympathetic to the centre's foothills location
- To encourage development to make provision for onsite car parking accessed from the rear.

The vision statement expresses the key elements of The Basin Neighbourhood Activity Centre that Council believes should guide future development.

### ***Vision***

*For The Basin to strengthen its unique local identity, enhance its role as a contained village at the base of the foothills and support development that reinforces the low scale, semi-rural village feeling with spectacular views to the Dandenong Ranges and basin paddocks.*

## 3.2 Built Form Objectives

To assist in achieving the vision for The Basin, the following built form objectives are to be achieved. They have been developed through community consultation and reflect the planning policy framework and built form analysis of The Basin detailed in *The Basin Background Report, May 2016*:

Priorities	Built Form Objectives
<p>Maintain the centre's location and setting within the Dandenong Foothills landscape, which is a highly valuable part of its appeal and character.</p> <p>Retain the centre's 'local,' 'village' atmosphere.</p> <p>Protect views to the Dandenong Foothills and basin paddocks.</p>	<p>To require that building heights and the scale of development is managed to respond to the low scale built form of the centre and adjoining residential and rural areas to maintain the centre's sense of containment within the Dandenong Foothills and to enhance the visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges.</p> <p>To retain and enhance key views to the Dandenong Ranges from within The Basin and surrounding areas.</p> <p>To support development that contributes positively to the streetscape through the use of innovative architectural responses and by presenting visually interesting and appealing façades and activates street frontages.</p> <p>To promote an intimate, engaging and personal scale in the built form and public realm.</p> <p>To support buildings that respect the valued foothills setting.</p> <p>To reinforce the existing pattern of fine-grain shopfronts across the Activity Centre.</p> <p>To support roof forms that contribute to creating an appealing and varied skyline within the centre.</p> <p>To provide continuous weather protection along key pedestrian routes of the Activity Centre.</p> <p>To require the adaptive re-use of buildings and provision of high internal amenity to support and enhance the retail and tourism roles of the centre.</p>
<p>Protect environmental sensitivities of the centre's setting.</p>	<p>To protect and maintain existing vegetation.</p> <p>To provide landscaping that is integrated with the design of the development and complements the landscaping of the adjoining public realm and its setting within the Dandenong Foothills.</p>
<p>The 'everyday' service offering of the centre is not compromised.</p>	<p>To facilitate the continuing commercial function of the centre.</p>

	<p>To support business including complementary entertainment and tourism functions within the Activity Centre.</p> <p>To require the adaptive re-use of buildings and provision of high internal amenity to support and enhance the retail and tourism roles of the centre.</p>
Protect existing heritage and locally significant buildings which contribute to the character of the centre.	<p>To require that new development complements existing heritage and locally significant buildings.</p> <p>To retain and protect buildings covered by a heritage overlay.</p>
Manage the location of the centre within a bushfire risk area.	To require that development in the Bushfire Management Overlay is sited and designed to ensure that the preservation of human life is prioritised.
Manage the location and extent of advertising signage.	To support signage that is designed and located to be compatible with the character of the centre and its location within the Dandenong Foothills.
Support Knox-wide demand for increased housing diversity.	<p>To support housing diversity within the commercial zones of the centre limited to second floor level to avoid loss of retail areas.</p> <p>To support housing that is designed to provide universal access at the ground floor and can be easily adapted for a range of users at its entrances and internally.</p>
Improve the centre's presence from road approaches.	To require development provides appropriate massing and design from centre arrival approaches.
Improve accessibility across the centre.	<p>Support universally accessible design within premises, at their entrances, and across the centre.</p> <p>To require pedestrian entry points, access, paths and walkways to be prioritised to improve walkability and the pedestrian experience.</p>
Manage car parking within the centre.	<p>To support development to make provision for onsite car parking accessed from the rear.</p> <p>To minimise the visual impact of car parking and access from the street so that it does not adversely affect streetscape character.</p>
Retain public uses within the Triangle.	

# 4. Built Form Guidelines

These *Part 2 - The Basin Built Form Guidelines (May 2016)* have been prepared to encourage future development to contribute to the character of the Activity Centre, to provide a high level of amenity for visitors, employees and neighbours, and to set benchmarks in design quality. The guidelines will be used to inform the development of a Design and Development Overlay Schedule 11 (DDO11) and local planning policy for The Basin Neighbourhood Activity Centre.

Any buildings and works in the centre should meet the following design guidelines:

## 4.1 Building Heights and Setbacks

This element provides guidance on building setbacks, the height of buildings and requirements for floor to ceiling heights.

### ***Design Objectives:***

- ***To retain and enhance key views to the Dandenong Ranges and connection with the Foothills landscape from within The Basin Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre.***
- ***To require development in The Basin Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre to be of a scale to maintain the centre's sense of containment within the Dandenong Foothills, and retain the visually dominant backdrop of the Dandenong Ranges and the basin paddocks.***
- ***To require development to contribute to a high quality public realm and pedestrian experience.***
- ***To support development that maximises opportunity for commercial activity.***
- ***To support the adaptive re-use of buildings and provision of high internal amenity within developments in order to maintain and enhance the commercial vitality of the Neighbourhood Activity Centre.***
- ***To avoid unreasonable detriment to the amenity of existing residential areas outside the Neighbourhood Activity Centre.***
- ***To support safe pedestrian movement within and to the Neighbourhood Activity Centre.***

The low scale of the centre allows for views to the Dandenongs from the park across Mountain Highway and views of the basin from Forest Road. The scale of the centre also contributes to the centre's 'village' atmosphere and intimate environment. In order to maintain and enhance the centre's containment and to protect views, heights should be limited to: 2 storeys (8.5 metres) along the western side of Forest Road; single storey (with the exception of the CFA site which may go to 2 storeys) (8 metres)

within the Triangle and single storey (5.4 metres) along Mountain Highway (with the exception of the northern most end of the shops which may go to two storey (8.5 metres)).

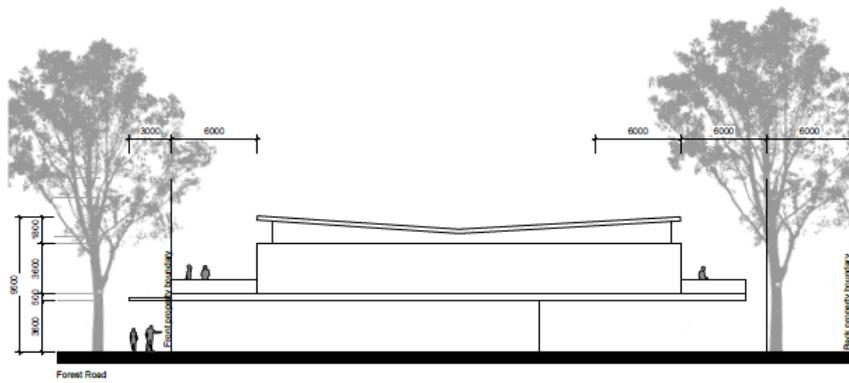
The proposed maximum building heights of 8.5 metres (two storeys), above natural ground level, is greater than the existing interim building height controls of 7.5 metres (two storeys). The proposed 8.5 metre height limit provides scope for increased floor to ceiling heights on both the ground floor level and upper level of buildings, which would enable retail or commercial uses on both levels and the flexibility to use the upper level for commercial or residential uses. Articulated roof forms and architectural features are not included in the 8.5 metres.

Generous floor to ceiling heights will allow for adaptable designs and enable buildings to accommodate commercial uses at ground level and a range of uses at first floor. They also allow a greater level of amenity for occupants by allowing more light to enter the building, improved natural ventilation and reduced heat gain. At the ground level, generous floor to ceiling heights allow for improved entrance design and a greater sense of openness for occupants, which is important for retail or restaurant uses.

The provision of roof forms has also been considered in determining the built form recommendations. Feedback during the consultation phases indicated that the community preferred variation in the building skyline. This is currently provided in the centre through a mix of flat, skillion and pitched roof forms across the single storey built form.

The recommended setbacks focus on reinforcing the street edge with built form to provide for a strong presence of activity along the retail street frontages of the centre. This is particularly necessary along Forest Road, where setbacks and built form are varied and eclectic (See Figure 16). This will be achieved through zero front and side setbacks across the majority of the centre, with the exception of public uses within The Basin Triangle where buildings are expected to be setback from the road frontage to ensure they are framed by vegetation (See Figure 17).

Rear setback along Forest Road will encourage rear loading and car parking to the rear of properties and also protect the amenity of residences to the west. Upper levels along Forest Road should be setback 6 metres to enable expansive views to the basin paddocks while travelling north along the road. The upper level setback also supports opportunities for useable balcony spaces.



**Section a-a**  
Built form dimensions to lots west of Forest Rd.

**Figure 16 - Built form dimensions on lots west of Forest Road**

Any redevelopment of the automotive garage site on the corner of Mountain Highway and Forest Road that does not reuse the existing built form should be stepped and setback at both the ground and upper level to retain the openness of the intersection and views to the basin paddocks.

#### Building Heights and Setbacks

- Building heights in the centre must be restricted to ensure view lines to the Dandenong Ranges are retained and the low rise character of the centre and its surrounds are protected by:
  - Applying a two storey height limit of 8.5 metres to properties on the western side of Forest Road;
  - Applying a single storey height limit of 8 metres to all Council land within The Basin Triangle;
  - Applying a double storey height limit of 8 metres to 362 Forest Road (CFA site);
  - Applying a single storey height limit of 5.4 metres to the properties on the eastern side of Mountain Highway;
  - Applying a two storey height limit of 8.5 metres to 1301 to 1305 Mountain Highway; and
  - Applying a minimum floor to ceiling height of 3.6 metres at ground and 2.7 metres at first floor levels (FFL to FCL).
- New development of commercial properties must be built to the street edge (zero setback) at ground level;
- New development of 1300 Mountain Highway should be stepped and setback at both the ground and upper level to retain the openness of the intersection and views to the basin paddocks;
- Second storey levels of new development to the west of Forest Road should be setback 6 metres behind the street boundary. Balconies are supported to protrude into this setback;

- Second storey level of new development at 1301 to 1305 Mountain Highway is not required to be setback from ground level. If a setback is provided, a balcony should occupy this setback;
- Second storey level of new development at 362 Forest Road (CFA site) must be setback 3 metres from the front facade of the building. Balconies may protrude into this setback; and
- New development on the western side of Forest Road must be setback a minimum of 6 metres from the rear boundary to enable shared vehicular access, rear loading and car parking. Vehicular crossovers to Forest Road which do not achieve this will be actively discouraged.

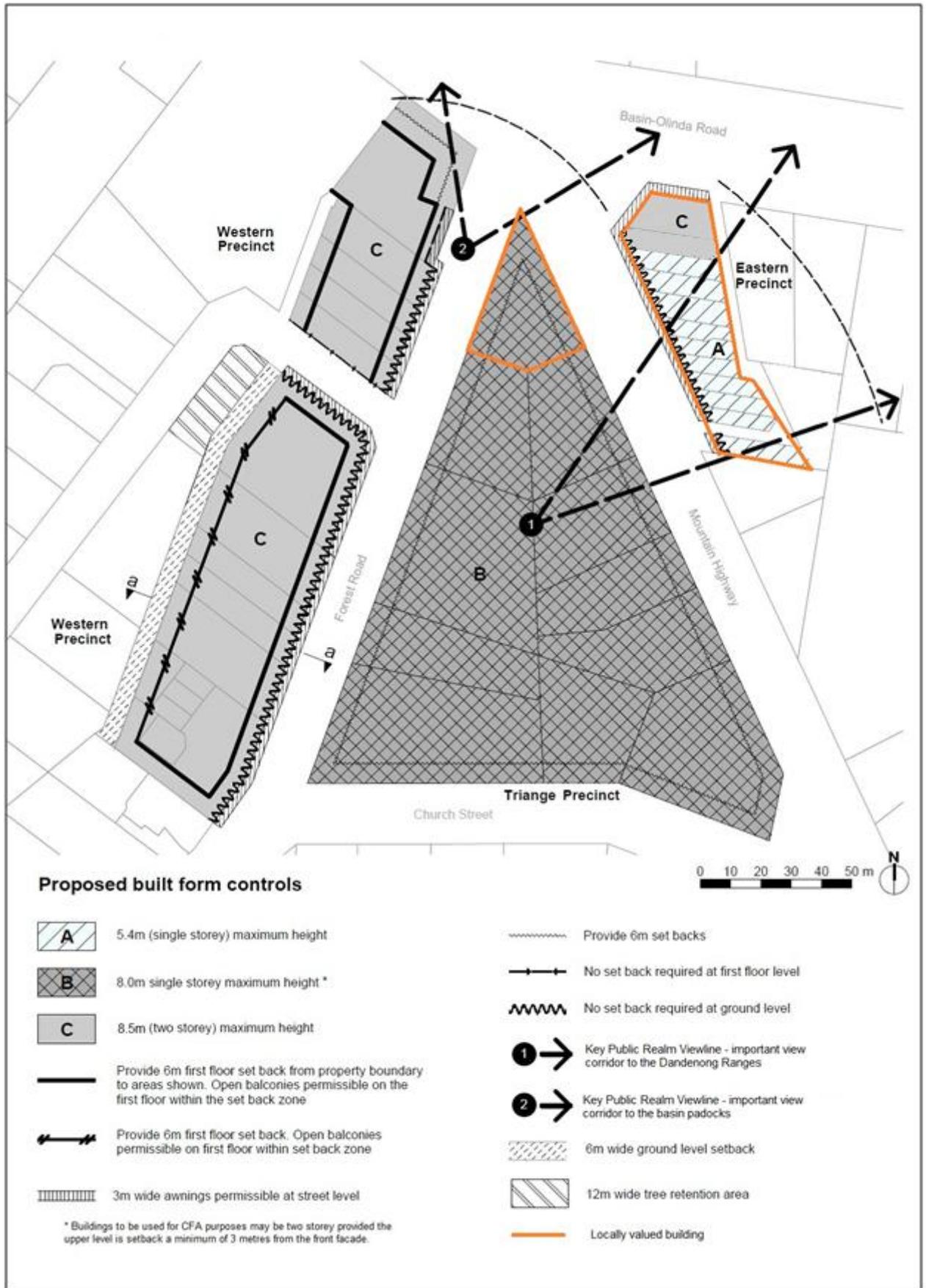


Figure 17 - Height and setbacks

## 4.2 Building Design

This element provides guidance on façade articulation, roof forms, the street level interface, materials and colours, and environmentally sustainable design.

### **Design Objectives:**

- ***To require development to contribute to a high quality public realm and pedestrian experience.***
- ***To require development to provide a high standard of universally accessible design to and within buildings in order to support people of all abilities.***
- ***To avoid unreasonable detriment to the amenity of existing residential areas outside the Neighbourhood Activity Centre.***

The key built form characteristics in The Basin that contribute to the streetscape are:

- The intact facades of shops on the eastern side of Mountain Highway which have experienced minimal changes. Of particular note are the metal framed windows, tiled facades, narrow fine grain shopfronts and continuous awnings; and
- The use of materials such as timber, colourbond, stone cladding and weatherboard in colours which complement the surrounding treed environment.

The guidelines in this section focus on ensuring built form is responsive to the existing streetscape and foothills character through reducing visual bulk, fine-grain façade articulation, varied roof forms and the use of materials and colours that integrate with the foothills landscape.

For larger sites, the guidelines recommend that fine grain articulation of façades is provided to ensure this valued characteristic of the existing shops is continued. Articulated roof forms are encouraged on larger sites to reduce the visual bulk of buildings.

New development is to adopt a palette of colours derived from the Dandenong Foothills indigenous plant materials palette. Grey greens, cool greys and warm greys are to be used for general areas of colour. Highlights such as doors, window frames and architectural features can include highlight colours selected from the colours of the foliage and flowers of the natural vegetation of the Foothills. Natural materials such as stone, timber and render are to feature in the new built form, demonstrating a solid permanent character.

The aim of these guidelines is to promote an enjoyable and comfortable pedestrian experience, and support the experience of The Basin as an engaging, local meeting place. These guidelines aim to support built form which is responsive to the existing streetscape and maintains the intimate scale of the Village. Larger sites should maintain the existing fine grain articulation of façades. Articulated roof forms are encouraged on larger sites to reduce the visual bulk of buildings.

The guidelines identify the primary retail areas (eastern side of Mountain Highway and western side of Forest Road) where verandahs are required to provide shade for pedestrians and protection from the rain. This will create a Neighbourhood Activity Centre that is a pleasant place to enjoy. Given the cool winters of the region and higher

levels of precipitation associated with the centre's proximity to the Dandenong Ranges, continuous weather protection is vital to ensure pedestrian comfort. Lack of visual uniformity in verandah heights and appearance has been identified as reducing the attractiveness of the centre. Verandahs and awnings should be encouraged to be consistent with adjoining properties.

This element also addresses opportunities for designing buildings for universal access and opportunities to incorporated best practice Environmentally Sustainable Development in buildings and landscaping.

#### Building Design

- Maintain a pattern of fine grain articulation on larger sites through the use of vertical architectural detailing and proportions of buildings and incorporation of windows;
- Support the provision of activated north facing facades and north facing pavement areas;
- Require second storeys to be recessive elements in the streetscape, yet incorporate balconies and habitable room windows within these upper setbacks to encourage passive surveillance of the public realm;
- Buildings should incorporate techniques to improve opportunities for views between public and private areas, such as utilising clear glazing and avoiding reflective, tinted or obscured window coverings;
- Ground levels of shop fronts should be provided as clear glazing with customer service areas facing the street. Upper levels should locate clear windows or balconies towards the street;
- Require the provision of continuous awnings for weather protection;
- Built form is to comply with the dimensions demonstrated to provide for quality light-filled internal volumes in the new spaces;
- Buildings should provide pitched roof forms to provide a visual connection to the undulating ridgelines of the Dandenong Ranges;
- Provide vertical articulation to visually break up the appearance of building frontages on wider allotments and reflect the existing pattern of fine-grain shopfronts. This vertical articulation should reflect the standard width of shopfronts (5-7 metre width). Roof forms should also be divided into distinct sections in order to minimise visual bulk and respond to the roof proportions of existing buildings;
- New buildings are to incorporate best practice Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles, such as designing for passive solar design, incorporation of green walls and roofs where possible and feasible, and the use of sustainable materials;
- External building walls should utilise muted tones, finishes and colours that contribute to the landscape setting of the Foothills, and should avoid excessive use of colours that contrast strongly with the dominant colours of the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills.
- Roofs should be coloured in dark, muted tones and be of low reflectivity;

- Screen waste, storage, loading or service areas within view of the street; and
- External walls which may be vulnerable to graffiti should incorporate vertical landscaping or other integrated deterrent measures.

## 4.3 Heritage and Built Form Character

This element provides guidance on development of heritage and contributory buildings.

### **Design Objectives:**

- **To require that new development complements existing heritage and locally significant buildings.**

Key buildings within the centre are:

- The Progress Hall is affected by the Heritage Overlay 51. The guidelines aim to ensure that alterations to this heritage building and development on adjoining sites is undertaken to respect the significance of the heritage building; and
- The intact shopfront facades of the existing Mountain Highway shops have been identified as contributing greatly to the character of The Basin. These elements should be retained and enhanced.

### Heritage and Built Form Character:

- Require the retention of the Progress Hall building. Any future development of this building and The Basin Triangle must be respectful and contribute positively to the historic characteristics of the building; and
- Support retention of metal window frames and tiled façades of shopfronts on the eastern side of Mountain Highway.

## 4.4 Landscaping

This element provides guidance on landscaping in new developments within the centre.

### **Design Objectives:**

- ***To retain and enhance key views to the Dandenong Ranges and connection with the Foothills landscape from within The Basin Village Neighbourhood Activity Centre; and***
- ***To require development to contribute to a high quality public realm and pedestrian experience.***

The key landscaping characteristics within the centre are:

- A mixture of native and exotic canopy vegetation within, predominantly located within public spaces; and
- Vegetation frames the centre, particularly road frontages and approaches.

The guidelines aim to ensure development is designed to retain existing trees where possible. This will strengthen the valued landscape setting of the centre.

### Landscaping

- Require landscaping to be well integrated with the design of the development;
- Facilitate landscaping which complements the vegetation of the adjoining public realm and Foothills landscape; and
- Require development to be designed to ensure retention of existing significant vegetation on or adjoining the property.

## 4.5 Signage

This element addresses the design and location of signage across the centre.

A key driver for the guidelines are to ensure signage is uncluttered, integrated with the design of the building and does not dominate the streetscape.

### ***Design Objectives:***

- ***To require advertising signs to complement views to and visual dominance of the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills, and to contribute to a high quality public realm.***

### Signage

- Require all signage is of a scale, design and location that complements the design and proportion of the building, the streetscape setting, and the Dandenong Ranges and Foothills landscape setting;
- Signage is kept to a minimum by consolidating information;
- Signage be designed to avoid visual clutter and not incorporate animation, flashing, bright or reflective surfaces;
- Signage be limited to one suspended sign per frontage, perpendicular to the façade, located below the verandah and one sign on the awning facing the road;
- Signage must not interrupt key views defined at Figure 17 in these guidelines; and
- Major Promotion signs and sky signs are actively discouraged within the centre.

# 5. Implementation

Statutory implementation of the *Built Form Guidelines* will be achieved by preparing Amendment C137 to the Knox Planning Scheme. Amendment C137 will make the following changes to the Knox Planning Scheme:

Change	Reason
Amend Clause 21.05 (Housing).	Amend to make references to the <i>Built Form Guidelines</i> for The Basin NAC.
Amend Clause 21.07 (Economic Development).	Amend to provide direction on economic development for The Basin NAC and reference the <i>Built Form Guidelines</i> for the centre.
Amend Clause 21.09 (Reference Documents)	Amend to include <i>The Basin Built Form Guidelines, Knox City Council, May 2016</i> as a reference document.
Amend Clause 22.01 (Dandenong Foothills Policy).	Amend to avoid conflicting height controls. The policy is to be amended so that the 7.5m height controls of the policy no longer apply to The Basin NAC. All other aspects of the policy will continue to apply.
Amend Clause 22.12 (Residential Land Use and Development in the Commercial 1 Zone).	Amend to include direction on housing for The Basin NAC and reference the <i>Built Form Guidelines</i> for the centre.
Apply the Design and Development Overlay Schedule 11 (DDO11) to the centre (excluding the rear of 1325 Mountain Highway).	The current interim 7.5 metre height controls in Design and Development Overlay Schedule 10 (DDO10) will be replaced with a new permanent control for The Basin (DDO11). This will support development consistent with the outcomes sought in the built form guidelines. Maximum (mandatory) height limit in the centre is proposed at 8.5 metres (2 storeys) above natural ground level. This maximum height does not apply to roof forms, architectural features and detailing. The DDO11 will also provide direction on built form outcomes for <a href="#">The Basin</a> relating to setbacks, materials and colours, weather protection and signage.
Delete Design and Development Overlay Schedule 10 (DDO10) (interim height controls).	The overlay can be deleted as it will be replaced by the new DDO11 (described above).
Apply the Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) to 1300 Mountain Highway, The Basin.	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. Based on its previous land use as a service station, it is recommended that the Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) be applied to 1300 Mountain Highway, The Basin. The EAO ensures the requirement for an environmental audit is met before the commencement of any sensitive uses.
Delete the Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 (DDO1) from where it	The overlay is unnecessary within the commercial and public land use areas of the centre.

<p>applies within the centre (with the exception of 1325 Mountain Highway, The Basin).</p>	<p>The overlay should continue to apply to the rear portion of 1325 Mountain Highway, as this land is used for residential purposes and should retain the same planning controls as adjoining residential land.</p>
<p>Delete the Design and Development Overlay Schedule 2 (DDO2) from 385-387 Forest Road, The Basin (The Basin Pre-School and Maternal Child Health Centre).</p>	<p>The overlay is unnecessary within the centre, as the new DDO11 will provide built form guidance for these sites.</p>
<p>Amend Schedule 51 to Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay (HO51) to specifically include The Basin Progress Hall.</p>	<p>A heritage assessment of the centre revealed that while the HO51 applies to the whole of the Basin Triangle land, the schedule does not specifically identify the Progress Hall as a significant building.</p>