

cranbourne east

precinct structure plan

Landscape Assessment

CEUGP/SR9B

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1 STUDY PHILOSOPHY

This analysis should be read in conjunction with figure 1. It identifies zones of broadly similar landscape character and areas within those zones that vary in character from their surroundings but complement the overall character of the zone, for example a cluster of trees around a house would create a localised area of distinctive character but from outside that area the overall character of the area might still be one of open paddocks, interspersed with house blocks and associated planting.

The analysis then identifies what make those zones and their component areas distinctive. It does this by describing the characteristics of the area in as value neutral way as possible. The dimensions by which the landscape character is defined are:

Visual catchment- the distance along the ground that the observer can see from a given point and the features that terminate the view (eg, wall, vegetation, ridgeline or views without termination ie infinity views). This is normally from the viewpoint of the observer in the adjoining public realm.

Dominant components – what is the most common element within that area that define its character (eg. Grazed paddocks, woodland, gardens or houses)

Secondary components – what are the other elements that contribute to that character (eg isolated or scattered trees, areas of defined edges, area of different colour or height grassland, changes in topography, drainage lines)

Topography – for example whether the site can be characterised as flat, gently undulating, undulating or consistently sloping in a particular direction)

Vegetation type and character – for example woodland, open grazed paddock, grassed area, garden.

The study then seeks to identify those aspects of the zone or area that represent potential assets that may contribute to the environmental welfare of the incoming community. This will then allow for due consideration of these assets in the design development process and facilitate their retention and enhancement where possible. The analysis also identifies site liabilities that might detract from the environmental welfare that the incoming community might otherwise enjoy from those landscape features. This will facilitate the design development process to focus on mitigating or otherwise addressing their negative impact.

2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site occupies an area that can generally be described as being;

Flatter in the north varying to gently undulating at the southern end of the site. The site is divided into x catchments(?) and drains to the north west towards Port Phillip Bay (?) along highly modified channels. At the time of assessment (August 07) most of the channels held some water. The site is generally very open in character, predominantly grassed and affording long views that are sometimes terminated by rows of trees planted for shelter and/or at paddock boundaries.

There are a few localised areas of more undulating land around the site, generally located in features that might more accurately be described as mounds rather than hills.

Edges within the site are generally straight lines and defined by roads or rows of trees which gives the area a very "constructed" feel, within which natural values have been subdued but may be re-emerging with an apparent decline in farming. In some areas these edges become wider and the boundary itself could be argued to create its own area of landscape character.

From the site there are a number of points or areas that allow views to the Dandenong Ranges.. These views are framed in many places under or between tree canopies.

Within this overall character there are a number of areas with distinctive character using the criteria described above, these are outlined below.

Table 1: Landscape Character

Zone (refer fig 1)	Visual Catchment from within area	Dominant components	Secondary components	Topography	Vegetation types	Landscape Assets	Landscape Liabilities
1	Open partially enclosed by vegetation	Grassed areas	Scrubby discontinuous vegetation, electricity pylons Nearby residential development	Flat, slight undulations, more undulating to south and east	Grassland, occasional trees, predominantly native	Views to Dandenongs	Intruded on by pylons Open character makes any development highly visible and therefore makes the character very sensitive
1a	Varied catchment, generally defined by garden planting around house. Trees provide partial definition of the visual catchment allowing longer views between and underneath trees.	Trees Shelter belt	Houses, outhouses, paved/hard standing areas	flat	mix of exotic and native trees, predominantly native lawns, paved/hardstanding areas	Significant canopy Green skyline, Environmental mitigation from shelter belts Trees create partial avenue effect Distant from intrusion from road	Isolated from existing public realm
1b	Varied visual catchment, generally defined by houses occasional glimpses between houses to surrounding paddocks and much more open visual catchment . Trees provide very limited definition of the visual catchment interspersed with	houses open paddocks, occasional trees Road	landscaping outhouses, paved/hard standing areas	Flat/undulating	mix of exotic and native trees, but predominantly native. lawns, paved/hardstanding areas	Variations in edge of catchment (sometimes near, sometimes far) adds visual interest Partial green skyline, Environmental mitigation from shelter belts	Dusty gravel/hard paved areas Intrusion of roads

	longer views, between and underneath trees.						
1c	Varied catchment, generally defined by houses, occasional trees planting around house. Trees provide partial definition of the visual catchment interspersed with longer views, between and underneath trees and between houses.	houses Shelter belt trees,	Houses, outhouses, paved/hard standing areas	flat	predominantly native trees on boundaries lawns, paved/hardstandin g areas	Variations in edge of catchment (sometimes near, sometimes far) adds visual interest Green skyline, Environmental mitigation from shelter belts Partial avenue effect	Dusty gravel/hard paved areas Intrusion of roads
2	Generally defined by rows of trees and vegetation on lot boundary	Trees, houses, outbuilding s, Grassed component of road corridors, Low vegetation on boundary	Grassed areas in lots, areas of gravel or hard paving fences	Flat and largely obscured by planting	Garden, mix of exotic and indigenous trees, understorey planting along property boundaries	Green skyline, wooded character, dappled shade on the ground, Variations in edge of catchment (sometimes near, sometimes far) adds visual interest Environmental mitigation from shelter belts	Dusty gravel/hard paved areas
3	Open, Partially enclosed by regular lines of trees and vegetation and partially defined by “escaping” views over a slight ridge	Grassed area	Trees Nearby residential development	Varying from slightly to significantly undulating from north east to south west.	Grassland, Trees on boundaries, predominantly native	Views to Dandenongs	Open character makes any development highly visible and therefore makes the character very sensitive

3a-c	<p>Varied catchment, generally defined by trees which provide strong definition of the visual catchment and creates avenue effect. Houses also provide an edge to the visual catchment in places.</p> <p>Visual catchment varies with the longer views between and underneath trees and between houses.</p>	<p>houses</p> <p>Roadside and garden trees,</p>	<p>Houses, outhouses, paved/hard standing areas</p>	<p>Slight slope</p>	<p>predominantly native trees on boundaries</p> <p>lawns, paved/hardstanding areas</p>	<p>Variations in edge of catchment (sometimes near, sometimes far) adds visual interest</p> <p>Green skyline,</p> <p>Environmental mitigation from shelter belts</p> <p>Strong avenue effect</p> <p>“dappled” effect of shade on the road</p>	<p>Dusty gravel/hard paved areas</p> <p>Intrusion of roads</p>
3d	<p>Open,</p> <p>Partially enclosed by regular lines of trees and vegetation and with intermittent views under canopy</p>	<p>Grassed area</p>	<p>Trees</p> <p>Nearby residential development</p>	<p>Sloping</p>	<p>Grassland,</p> <p>Trees on boundaries,</p>	<p>Views to Dandenongs</p> <p>Strong line of trees</p>	<p>Open character makes any development highly visible and therefore makes the character very sensitive</p> <p>Whole line of trees may lose integrity if trees from middle of group are felled</p>
4	<p>Intimate generally defined by woodland with occasional glimpses to more open surrounding countryside.</p>	<p>Trees and understorey planting</p>	<p>Open areas</p>	<p>undulating</p>	<p>Predominantly native</p>	<p>Woodland, “wilderness” effect</p> <p>Attractive views framed to hills</p> <p>Green skyline</p>	<p>Some impact from road</p>

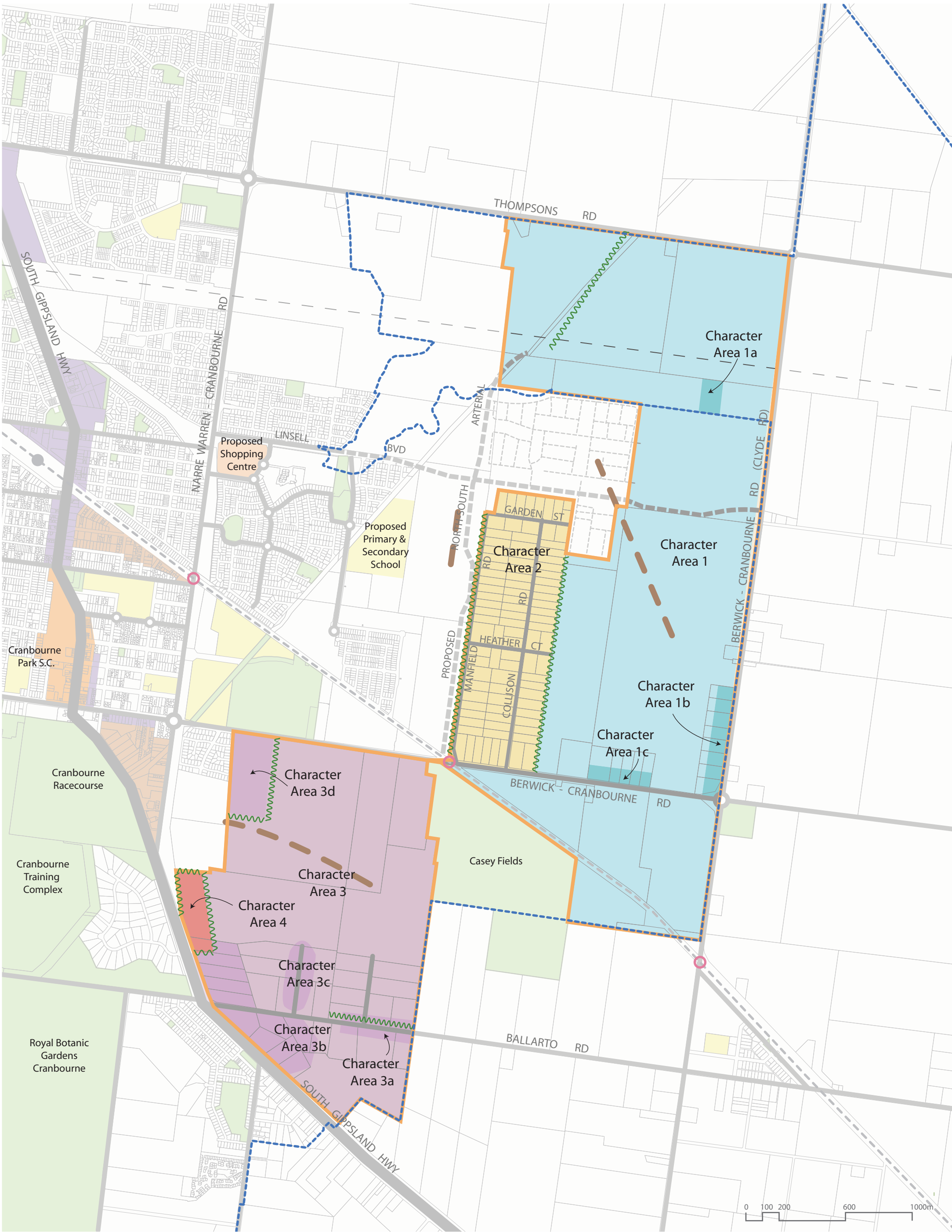
3 LANDSCAPE THEMES

An assessment of the area's landscape character suggests that if development is to capitalise on its assets and address its problems then the following themes should be considered. It is acknowledged these themes and their geographical extent only relate to existing conditions and cannot respond to any future plans and the attendant introduction of new edges and changes in character, composition of visual elements or visual catchment. These are likely to dominate the existing landscape character, change the zones and raise new opportunities and challenges. However, retaining a reflection of the previous character can give the development an established theme, contribute to a sense of distinctive neighbourhoods and help avoid homogeneity. Consequently the themes that may inform future landscape planning are shown in Figure 2.

Table 2: Landscape Themes

Landscape character zone	Suggested theme
1	The existing prairie feel is very sensitive to development by making it highly visible. The landscaping in this area might seek to introduce lines of planting of tall canopy trees to define the area, offer a green skyline over the roofscape, screen the pylons and provide visual relief from the flat openness.
2	The mixed/wooded character of the area and flat topography provides opportunities to reinforce the long, wooded avenue character along roads that frame views and offer a green skyline to the surrounding development
3	The existing prairie feel is very sensitive to development because of its visibility in such an open landscape. The proposed landscaping in this area might seek to introduce lines of planting of tall canopy trees to define the area, offer a green skyline over the roofscape and provide visual relief from the flat openness of the precinct.
4	<p>Retain and enhance</p> <p>The area offers an attractive and distinctive woodland/wilderness feel landscaping should seek to create an attractive edge between development and the road that emphasises a leafy character and offers the development a green skyline.</p>

Figure 3: Landscape Character Plan



0 100 200 600 1000m

figure 5
landscape
character
plan

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|--|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| | Site | | Existing / Proposed Retail |
| | Arterial Roads | | Existing Business |
| | Main Roads | | Existing Industrial |
| | Railway Line | | School |
| | Level Crossing | | Public Open Space |
| | Urban Growth Boundary | | Transmission Line |
| | Landscape Edge | | Ridge Line |

CEUGP/SR10A/003
AUGUST 2007

