



### Vermont Park, VIC

Vermont Park was the first cluster housing project built in Melbourne, offering a new model for housing in Australia.

Designed in 1977, the housing estate in eastern Melbourne was premised upon integrated design incorporating 43 contemporary, modest dwellings, designed by Merchant's Builders' architect Graeme Gun, within a sculptural 'Australian' landscape framework, designed by Tract's Steve Calhoun.

Tract was responsible for the site planning and landscape design of the 4 hectare site, including community facilities, including a swimming pool within garden setting. The intent of this project was to provide an alternative to typical subdivision development, at comparable densities, with detached houses.

The internal 'shared use' streets are named after the signature eucalyptus species with which they are planted – Maculata, Nicholli and Citriodora. Showcasing Australian native flora was a movement that asserted itself in the 1970s with the bush-landscapers of Eltham. Formalising the use of native plants as demonstrated in Vermont Park was a new application again.

Nearly 40 years after being built, Vermont Park remains a benchmark project. Native vegetation, multi-purpose shared-use streetscapes, integrated design, communal facilities, and housing affordability, while current themes that we are still striving to 'get right', are not new concerns.

The significance of Vermont Park and its need for conservation, has been recognised in its Heritage Overlay within the Whitehorse Planning Scheme (HO118).