



# STREETSCAPE DESIGN

The City of Holdfast Bay recognises that the enhancement of neighbourhood character is an important objective for new housing. Streetscape character and building appearance are important elements in achieving better housing outcomes. Council's aim is to provide attractive streetscapes that reinforce the functions of the street, enhance the amenity of buildings, and are sensitive to the built form, landscape and environmental conditions of the locality.

## What is the streetscape?

Streets have a number of roles in the urban context including providing access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists; providing corridors for physical infrastructure; defining territorial space and location; providing recreation space; encouraging social interaction; providing visual continuity and space; and contributing to the environmental system.

Streetscape encompasses both public and communal streetscapes (ie internal private streets that serve more than two dwellings), buildings, street and landscape design and includes all adjacent buildings, and landscaping and fencing, traffic treatments, paths, driveways, street surfaces and utility services. The spatial arrangement (including building setbacks) of these components and their visual appearance determine the streetscape character.

Streetscape priorities include the development of attractive streetscapes in new residential areas, the reinforcement of existing attractive streetscapes in established areas, and the improvement of streetscapes in areas undergoing a planned transition in urban character.

Streetscape quality takes on greater significance in areas with special environmental attributes, such as Historic Conservation Zones. Here, design of housing should strive to reinforce streetscape character and be sympathetic to the special qualities of the street and the locality.

## Public and communal streetscape criteria

When submitting an application for development the street, building and landscape design and fencing should achieve:

- The creation of attractive residential environments with clear character and identity;
- Respect for existing attractive streetscapes in established areas;
- Appropriate streetscapes in areas where desired future urban character has been defined;
- The infiltration of stormwater run-off wherever practicable (subject to climatic, soils and urban character criteria);
- Provision for appropriate street tree planting taking into account the image and role of the street, solar access requirements, soils, selection of appropriate species, and services;
- Use of such features of the site as views, vistas, existing vegetation and landmarks.

### The design of the landscape in public and communal streets should:

- Define a theme for new streets, or complement existing streetscapes and integrates with new development;
- Complement the functions of the street;
- Reinforce desired traffic speed and behaviour;
- Be of an appropriate scale relative to both the street reserve width and the building bulk;
- Promote safety and casual street surveillance;
- Improve privacy and minimise unwanted overlooking;
- Incorporate existing vegetation, where possible
- Appropriately account for streetscapes and landscapes of heritage significance;
- Assist in microclimate management (refer to Figure 1);
- Maximise absorptive landscaped areas for on-site infiltration of stormwater where appropriate;
- Integrate and form linkages with parks, reserves and transport corridors;
- Achieve lines of sight for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;
- Provide adequate lighting for pedestrian and vehicle safety;

- Provide attractive and coordinated street furniture and facilities to meet user needs;
- Satisfy maintenance and utility requirements and minimise their visual impact of above-ground utilities.

## The design of new streetscapes

When designing a new public or communal streetscape, it is important to consider the desired streetscape character. There are two distinct approaches to organising buildings and space that define streetscapes:

- Buildings containing space – this occurs where the street space is defined and enclosed by buildings, rather than by landscape.
- Landscape containing buildings – this occurs where open space and landscape dominate and provide a setting for the buildings.

## Appearance from streets

While design is a subjective matter (what is attractive to one person may be unattractive to another), there are some shared community expectations about acceptable housing appearance.

Generally, those parts of buildings that can be readily seen from public or from adjoining properties are subject to planning controls and codes, as their appearance impacts upon streetscapes and parks and possibly on the amenity of neighbouring rear gardens. There are special environments where greater design control over new buildings is justified, for example in areas of heritage significance.

## Context and identity

Where different dwelling types are introduced, the likelihood of residents and neighbours being mutually satisfied is increased if the external appearance is similar to existing built forms, at least overall if not in detail (eg apartment housing built in the same form as surrounding large houses).

The appearance of adjacent dwellings should not simply be replicated. However, it is desirable to continue the use of certain details, patterns or forms which help to establish an attractive theme or character for a locality.

## Emphasis

The emphasis in building design should be on the components that affect streetscape: how a dwelling is sited and designed to face or address a street, building height, roof pitch, articulation, detailing, form, materials, colours, textures, and identity.

The front of a building usually forms the dominant element abutting the street. It is considered to be good design practice for the front entrance of the dwelling to be prominently sited, with the building facing the street rather than away from it. It is also desirable for the building to be an integral part of the streetscape rather than concealed behind walls, garages or other such structures.

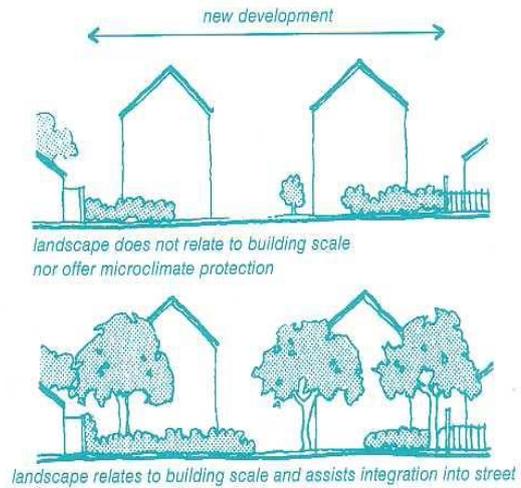
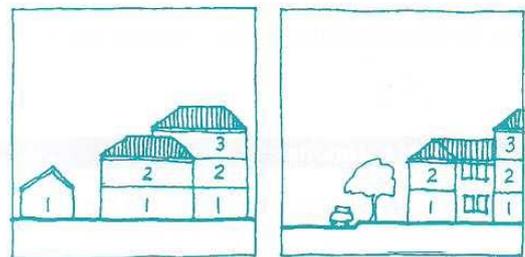


FIGURE 1

### Silhouette

The silhouette formed by the roofs of buildings contributes to streetscape appearance. A roof silhouette can have both visual harmony and rhythm. Where housing abuts a public street, dwellings should generally not be dramatically different in shape or height from their immediate neighbours (refer to Figure 2).

FIGURE 2



Building height related to neighbouring development at the public street frontage.

## Want to know more?

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