

Landscape Guidelines for Residential Developments

The City of Whittlesea is a large and diverse municipality containing new urban areas of metropolitan significance, established residential suburbs, township areas and low density/rural living areas. These areas have existing environmental and cultural heritage values, diverse open spaces and Established streetscapes.

The vision for the city is to encourage future growth, which will promote sustainability and quality development and protect and enhance the municipality's amenity and assets.

Given the municipality's location on the fringe of Melbourne, the challenge for future planning in the City of Whittlesea is to achieve a unique *sense of place* that carefully integrates development and environment.

These Landscape Guidelines have been prepared to assist applicants in the preparation of the Site Analysis and Landscape Plan that are required as part of the planning application process for Medium Density Housing Developments.

By preparing and implementing a quality Site Analysis and responsive Landscape Plan, applicants will enhance the amenity value of the property development and enrich the environmental and cultural character of the municipality.

Step 1: Planning Application and Site Analysis

Planning a development should take account of site location, existing physical conditions, landscape character and the planning and regulatory requirements that affect the site.

Medium density housing developments require the mandatory preparation of a Site Analysis which should be submitted for endorsement by Council as part of the planning application.

The Site Analysis must be prepared in advance of the design. The purpose is to identify and assess information regarding the site and its surroundings, and then to utilise this information in the Design Response.

The requirements for the Site Analysis are contained in Clause 55 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. This document may be obtained from planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/schemes/whittlesea. Council may, however, determine what Site Analysis details are required on an individual merit basis.

As a guide, the Site Analysis provides the necessary information for initial planning approval. Information on existing features should be submitted as a Site Context Plan at the time of your initial application.

Checklist – Site Analysis

Clause 55 specifies a list of features that must be shown on the site context plan. In addition, the City of Whittlesea requires the following information for the purposes of the preparation of an adequate Landscape Plan:

In relation to the site:

- Details of existing trees and other significant vegetation, including the accurate location, height, species, tree protection zone and a condition report for all canopy trees including the canopies of trees that overhang the land. The provision of this information is important as the removal of any trees may require a planning permit
- Existing boundary fencing, including height and style
- Location of any overhead or underground services
- Soil type
- Site microclimate including aspect (sunny and shady areas) or areas overshadowed by large trees or neighbouring buildings, any damp areas, direction of prevailing winds and breezes
- Desirable views to and from the site that should be retained and undesirable views that should be screened

In relation to the surrounding area:

- All streetscape features such as street trees, nature strip, power poles, bus shelters, or service pits
- Details of existing trees on adjoining sites including location, height and species

Submit: 3 copies of the Site Context Plan drawn at a legible scale.

Step 2: Planning Application and Landscape Plan

Council may require that a Landscape Plan accompany the planning application or request the preparation on of a detailed Landscape Plan as a condition of permit.

The aim of the Landscape Plan is to integrate the development with the surrounding environment or neighbourhood, and to provide attractive and liveable open spaces for residents. It is well known that a quality landscape will improve site amenity and enhance property values.

Checklist – Landscape Plan

The following checklist will help ensure that the submitted Landscape Plan provides all the information required to assess the landscape treatment aspects of the planning application. The Landscape Plan should address each of the Landscape Design Principles contained in this brochure.

In relation to this site:

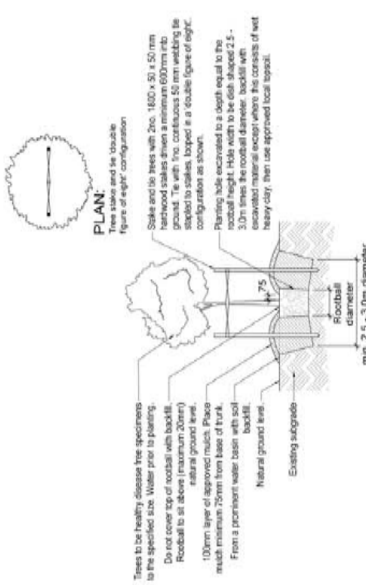
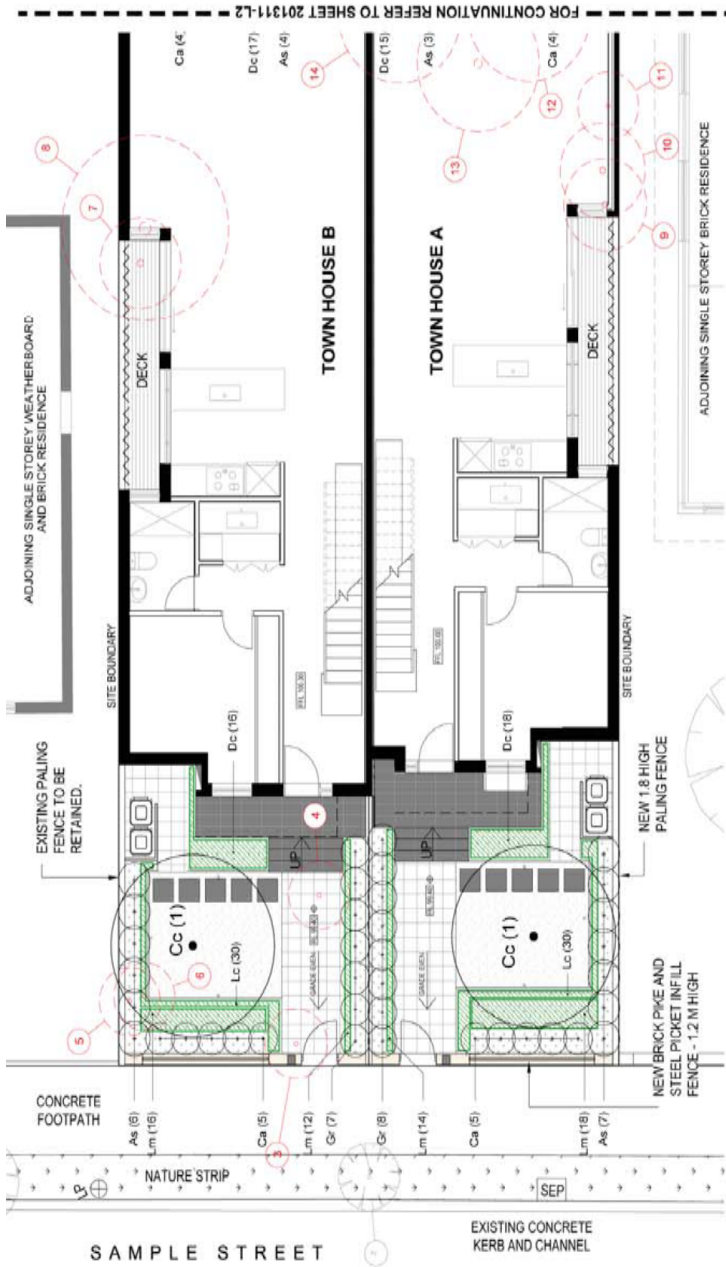
- Street name and title boundaries
- North point, scale and scale bar
- Legend
- Car spaces and vehicular access points clearly marked
- Location of rubbish bins enclosures
- Proposed buildings/garages, roof and verandah overhang
- Fencing layout, height and style and the location of all gates and letter boxes
- Services-underground and overhead
- Proposed watering system (taps/sprinkler/automated drip irrigation)
- Extent of any cut/fill, embankments and retaining walls
- Direction of flood flow and site levels. Site levels to include finished floor levels, top and bottom of embankments, retaining walls and outdoor structures
- Pedestrian access points and pedestrian pathways within the site
- Existing vegetation to be removed and retained
- Garden edges and lawn areas
- Clear graphics and call outs indicating locations of proposed plants that relates to the Plant Schedule. Identify plants with call outs comprising the initials of their botanical name and quantity (i.e. *x4 Acacia implexa* = Ai [4])
- Plant Schedule listing proposed plants by their botanical names and common names. Also include: plant quantities, pot sizes, and size of plants at maturity (height x width)
- Paved areas and paving material proposed. (These will include driveways, parking bays, paths, and courtyards)
- Proposed shade provision (by appropriate selection and siting of broad canopy trees)
- Landscape construction details for tree and shrubs planting, paving, edging treatments, lawns etc.
- Site preparation specifications (i.e. weed control, soil amelioration etc.)
- Maintenance schedule for 24 months establishment maintenance

In relation to the surrounding area:

- Treatment of nature strip

- Planting for visual privacy to and from the development

Submit: 3 copies of the Landscape Plan drawn at a scale of 1:100.



1 SECTION - TYPICAL TREE PLANTING DETAIL
NOT TO SCALE

SPECIFICATION NOTES

REMOVE ALL EXISTING MULCH AND WEED MATS FROM PROPOSED LANDSCAPE AREAS.

SPRINKLE WEED MAT WITH APPROVED MULCH TO PREVENT WEEDS FROM ESTABLISHING.

ALL VEGETATION WEED MATS TO BE STRAWED AND DET AILED.

INDICATE THESE IN TIMES THE BIRTH OF THE PLANTING MATERIAL TO BE USED.

APPLY AND SPREAD THIS DEFINITION TO ALL VEGETATION WEED MATS TO BE STRAWED AND DET AILED.

CULTIVATE ALL GARDEN BED AREAS TO 100MM DEPTH TO PREPARE FOR PLANTING.

PROTECT AUTOMATIC IRRIGATION SYSTEMS FROM DAMAGE TO THE PLANTING MATERIAL.

PROPOSED GARDEN BED AREAS SUPPORTED BY CONCRETE SLABS TO PREVENT SOIL COMPACTED BY FOOT TRAFFIC.

LOADS TO BE APPLIED TO ALL GARDEN BED AREAS TO BE SUPPORTED BY CONCRETE SLABS TO PREVENT SOIL COMPACTED BY FOOT TRAFFIC.

MAINTAIN THE HORIZONTAL WORKFACE FOR A PERIOD OF 24 MONTHS FROM PRACTICE.

REPAIRING TREES REQUIRE THE SELECTION OF TREE PROTECTION FENCING PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS.

TEMPORARY PROTECTION FENCING SHALL BE INSTALLED AT A MINIMUM DISTANCE AS SPECIFIED IN THE DRAWINGS TO PROTECT THE PLANTING MATERIAL FROM DAMAGE TO THE PLANTING MATERIAL.

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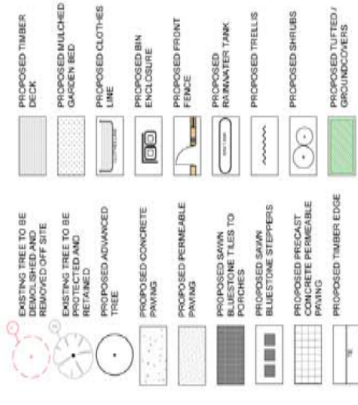
PROPOSED PLANT SCHEDULE

KEY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	MATURE SIZE (HxW)	INSTALL SIZE	DENSITY (Plants per Sq.m)	QUANTITY
TREES						
Cc	Cercis canadensis Forest Pansy	Eastern Redbud	5-10m x 5-10m	45L Cont. / 1.8m high	-	2
SHRUBS						
As	Acmena smithii Minor	Dwarf Lilly Pilly	2.3 x 1.2m	14cm Pots	-	20
Ca	Correa alba 'Saint Andrews'	Saint Andrews Correa	0.5m x 0.6m	14cm Pots	-	18
Gr	Grevillea rosmarinifolia 'Rosie Dwarf'	Rosie Dwarf	0.6m x 1.0m	14cm Pots	-	25
GRASSES AND TUFTED						
Ca	Chloris trichoides	Kaffir Lily	0.5m x 0.6m	14cm Pots	6	31
Dc	Dianella caerulea 'Lucifer'	Dwarf Parrot Lily	0.3m x 0.4m	14cm Pots	9	78
Lc	Lonicera caerulea	Little Cora	0.3m x 0.3m	14cm Pots	9	97
Lm	Liriodendron 'Samantha'	Spreading Turf Lily	0.4m x 0.4m	14cm Pots	9	60
CLIMBERS						
Lj	Fraxiliospermium jasminoides	Chinese Star Jasmine	climber	14cm Pots	2	11
						342

SCHEDULE OF EXISTING TREES

No.	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMENT
1	Pyrus spp.	Existing street tree. Retain
2	Pyrus spp.	Existing street tree. Retain
4	Fuchsia spp.	Remove
5	Neelum greener	Remove
6	Fuchsia spp.	Remove
7	Fuchsia spp.	Remove
9	Dracena spp.	Remove
11	Carmelia spp.	Remove
12	Citrus limon	Remove
13	Ficus spp.	Remove
13	Ficus spp.	Remove
16	Malus spp.	Remove
16	Malus spp.	Remove
17	Malus spp.	Remove
18	Olea spp.	Remove
20	Ficus spp.	Tree in neighbouring property. Retain
21	Corymbia citrifolia	Tree in neighbouring property. Retain
22	Pyrus spp.	Tree in neighbouring property. Retain

LEGEND



Landscaping/Designer
XYZ PTY LTD

CLIENT
ABC Pty Ltd

PROJECT
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

DRAWING TITLE
LANDSCAPE PLAN

STATUS:
FOR PLANNING APPROVAL

DATE
06.11.2013

JOB NUMBER
201311

SCALE
1:100 @ A1

DRAWING NUMBER
201311-L1

Landscape Design Principles

These design principles will guide you towards developing a landscape for the residential development that is:

- Visually appealing and comfortable to prospective buyers/renters
- In keeping with the design of the proposed buildings
- Complementary to the streetscape and neighbourhood character
- Respectful of environmental values. This includes conservation of indigenous landscape character and retention of trees as habitat for wildlife
- Self-sustaining and low maintenance

Retain Existing Trees

Retention of existing trees is one of the most significant landscape issues facing the planning of a development. Existing trees will contribute instant visual impact to a new development.

Existing trees nominated for retention should be incorporated into the design of the development at the early planning stages, including trees on neighbouring land and within nature strips. This requires siting the buildings and other built components such as car parks and fences around existing trees to minimise disturbance to tree roots.

Council has a River Red Gum Protection Policy to protect and integrate existing River Red Gums into proposed developments. This policy must be consulted if River Red Gums are present either on or in close vicinity to the property. For trees not covered by Council's River Red Gum Policy, AS 4970-2009 *Protection of Trees on Development Sites* should be referenced and used.

Techniques

- Mature River Red Gums require retention in public open space or extended road reserves. In exceptional circumstances Council may permit their retention in a private/ body corporate context where Council can be satisfied of its security over the longer term and exclusion of activity within the tree protection zone
- During construction, protect trunk, branches, and tree protection zone by erecting temporary fencing around the edge of the tree protection zone, and avoid storing materials and equipment over the tree protection zone. Street trees affected by the design should be similarly protected
- Incorporate existing trees in lawn or garden beds. Retain existing soil level within the tree protection zone and avoid filling or excavating the soil levels. Also avoid trenching in the vicinity of tree roots
- Where paving is placed within a tree protection zone, place paving above natural surface level (i.e. not dig construction) so as not to disturb roots. Use a free draining porous paving material to allow oxygen and water to permeate through to tree roots
- Consider canopy growth and spread requirements for younger trees to be retained

Select Plant Species and Garden Styles appropriate to both the Building Design and Landscape Character of the Area

Good development proposals incorporate landscape design as an integral component of the overall development and at the early planning stage particularly where existing trees are to be integrated into the design. The result will be a visual cohesion between the building and landscape that makes the development attractive and functional.

Plants that are appropriately selected for the site should also help integrate the development with the surrounding area. Building setbacks should complement either the existing or Council's proposed landscape character for the area. In the established areas, this is guided by the relevant Housing Change Area in Council's Housing Diversity Strategy.

Techniques

- Accommodate canopy trees with spreading crowns that contribute to the streetscape and soften the appearance of the development. Consideration should be given to locating trees such that their potential to damage nearby buildings and other structures is minimised
- Space should be made for trees in both the front and rear garden areas
- Select semi-advanced canopy trees with a minimum 300mm pot diameter. The selection of quality tree stock may be guided by Australian Standard AS 2303:2015 *Tree stock for landscape use*
- Select plant species suited to the soil conditions and microclimate of the site
- Use plants that typify and perform well in the area to reinforce local landscape character
- In areas of environmental significance, the planting scheme should include species indigenous to the area (refer to the back page 'Information and Contacts' for assistance)

Use sympathetic Front Boundary Treatment

The appearance of front boundaries contributes significantly to the streetscape character of an area.

A landscape that meets all the stated design principles may still detract from neighbourhood character if its front boundary treatment is not in keeping with the surrounding area. The following techniques are a guide and Council will ultimately advise on suitability of fence types in relation to individual sites.

Techniques

- Developments on corner sites should address both street frontages with a landscape treatment to integrate the site within the neighbourhood
- Use transparent fence types or low solid fence types to provide opportunity for casual surveillance from the street. Use fences of a construction type such as steel/timber pickets or brick piers with steel/timber picket infills, to a maximum height of 1.5 m. Use solid fences such as dry stone walls, brick or timber fences, to a maximum height of 1.2m
- Utilise 'green' alternatives to fences such as clipped hedges or climber covered fences

Create Private Open Spaces as Liveable Outdoor Rooms

Private open space should be designed to service a range of resident needs. If suitably designed, these outdoor living areas will provide value-added benefits to the development.

Techniques

- Provide each dwelling with sufficient space for residents' utility storage and screen lawn areas and paving for outdoor living
- Select and locate plant species to provide comfortable micro environments for each private courtyard. For example:
 - Provide shade in summer and allow light in winter by locating deciduous trees and shrubs on the north side of the courtyard
 - Buffer the effects of prevailing winds by locating trees and shrubs on the north and west sides of the courtyard
 - Provide seasonal variety and colour
- Provide sufficient building setbacks on all boundaries to allow planning for visual privacy to and from the development
- For privacy and security reasons avoid designing private open space in the front setback of the development
- Allow for outdoor clothes drying where practical
- Select colours for hard landscape elements such as paving and fencing that complement the building

Minimise External Paved Area

Minimising paved areas will visually soften the appearance of the site and increase on-site infiltration of stormwater.

Techniques

- Maximise garden beds and lawn surfaces. For low access areas use stepping stones through garden beds or grass as an alternative to a path
- Use porous materials for paving pedestrian areas. For example:
 - Gravel or granite c sand on crushed rock base
 - Unit pavers laid on a sand and crushed rock base
- Use impervious paving such as *in situ* concrete only for vehicular access areas

Achieve Dense Plant Coverage that is Low Maintenance

Techniques

- Control weeds in proposed garden beds and lawn areas before planning
- Deep ripping and treating clay soils with gypsum to enhance drainage and root penetration. Deep ripping should be undertaken with caution in proximity to underground services
- Place all shrub and groundcover plants in garden beds with a containing edge treatment such as a timber, brick or concrete edge
- Trees can be placed in garden or lawn areas. Apply mulch to all garden beds to reduce weed growth and conserve soil moisture. *Examples of mulch include*
 - *wood chips, pine bark and jute mat. To effectively control weed growth, a loose mulch such as wood chips should be spread to 75mm depth*
- Install an automated drip irrigation system
- Control weeds during the plant establishment period

- Plant shrubs and groundcover at the appropriate density to ensure complete coverage of the area when planting is mature. Use the guide below

Spacing Guide for Shrubs and Groundcovers

- **Tall shrubs** - 2-5m height, space 1 plant every 2 metres
- **Medium Shrubs**, 1-2m height, Space 1 plant every 1 metre
- **Small Shrubs and Groundcover** Under 1 m height Space 1 plant every ½ metres

Create Communal Open Spaces as Attractive, Functional and Safe Environments

Communal open space areas such as driveways are the first point of user contact with the site, therefore providing the ‘first impression’. Communal open spaces should be designed for function, visual amenity, efficient management, and, where possible, social interaction.

Techniques

- Provide sufficient open space for the planting of semi advanced canopy trees. In the established areas, this is guided by the relevant Housing Change Area in Council’s Housing Diversity Strategy
- Select tree species that integrate the development with the surrounding neighbourhood
- Locate plants to soften the visual impact of hard surfaces such as paved car parking spaces
- Maintain sight lines in access areas by using canopy trees that will grow to have with 2.5m minimum clearance from ground to canopy, and low groundcover plants species under 1m
- Encourage social interaction by providing shaded outdoor seats in communal areas within landscape surrounds
- Ensure large outbuildings are screened (this is a problem in low density residential areas)

Landscape Bond, Inspection and Approval

Council will levy a bond, as a condition of the planning permit, prior to works commencing to ensure that the landscape works are undertaken and maintained as per the approved Landscape Plan.

The developer should book a final inspection by arranging a time with a council officer from the Planning Department. The final landscape shall be assessed for its conformity to the Landscape Plan.

Any areas or items found to be unsatisfactory or inconsistent with the Landscape Plan must be rectified. Where work is not satisfactorily completed, a notice will be issued to the permit holder.

On completion of the landscaping works to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, a refund of 50% of the security deposit will be made to the payee. Upon the maintenance of the landscaping works for a period of two years after completion of such works to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, the balance of the security deposit will be refunded to the payee.

Compliance with Approved Landscape Plans

Landscape Plans endorsed under a planning permit must continue to be maintained in accordance with the plan and dead and diseased plants are to be replaced and weeds controlled. Council officers may undertake inspections to ensure that landscaping is maintained.

Amendments to Landscape Plans require the approval of Council if proposed or if there are future changes to the land or permitted uses/development.

Information and Contacts

Design Assistance

Where the scale and complexity of a project requires professional design assistance, it is suggested that a suitably qualified landscape design professional be employed. Their involvement should start at the early stages of site analysis and development planning.

A list of landscape design professionals is available from the following organisations:

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

(Victorian Chapter)

PO BOX 110

Montmorency Vic 3094

Phone: 03 9016 0111

Email: vic@aila.org.au

www.aila.org.au

Landscape Industries Association of Victoria

Suite 12, 497 Burke Road, Hawthorn East VIC 3123

Phone: 1300 365 428

www.landscapingvictoria.com.au

Useful References

The following publications will provide assistance in the areas of planning requirements for medium density housing, landscape design and plant selection.

- Plants of the Merri Merri: A guide to the indigenous vegetation at the Merri Creek Valley and Melbourne's Northern Suburbs (Merri Creek Coordinating Committee)
- Flora of Melbourne, A Guide to the Indigenous Plants of the Greater Melbourne Area (Marilyn Bull)
- Botanica: The illustrated A-Z of over 10,000 Garden Plants and how to cultivate them (Random House)
- Developing Shade in Public Places, An -Cancer Council of Victoria
- Urban Nature Strip Guidelines, City of Whittlesea

Contacts

- **Council's Planning Department**
- Phone: 9217 2236