

THE GOOD DESIGN ADVICE SHEETS

AUGUST 2019



DESIGNING BETTER MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING IN MORELAND



GOOD DESIGN ADVICE SHEETS AUGUST 2019

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1. SITE LAYOUT

PLANNING SCHEME REFERENCES:

55.02 Neighbourhood Character & Infrastructure

55.02-1 – Neighbourhood character objective
55.02-5 – Integration with the street objective

55.03 Site Layout & Building Massing

55.03-1 – Street setback objective
55.03-2 – Building height objective
55.03-3 – Site coverage objective
55.03-6 – Open space objective
55.03-8 – Landscaping objective

SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCES:

[Moreland Tree Finder Tool](#)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

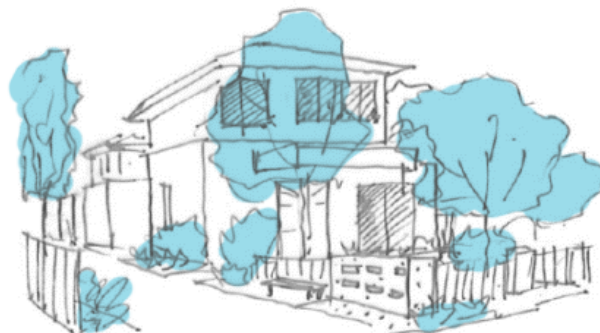
Site Layout should:

- ☒ Respond to the neighbourhood context
- ☒ Provide usable open space
- ☒ Provide opportunities for social interaction
- ☒ Consider the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties
- ☒ Provide meaningful landscaping including canopy trees
- ☒ Provide opportunities for activation of the street and any adjoining open space

1.1 STREETSCAPE CHARACTER

Design Response Considerations

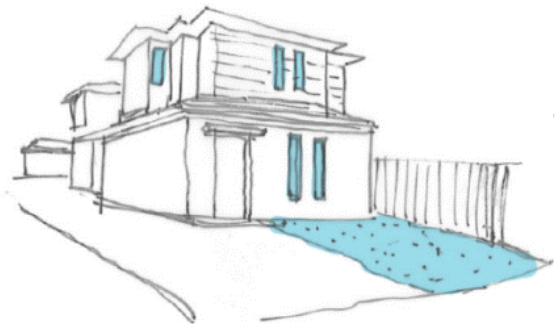
- Facades that are visible from the street should be articulated.
- Ensure the number of windows and habitable rooms fronting the street are maximised to achieve street activation.
- If garage doors are visually dominant, use doors with visual interest and functionality such as windows.
- Maximise the size of canopy trees in the front setback.
- Ensure landscaping of the front setback softens the building's presentation to the street.
- Pedestrian paths should be integrated with landscaping where there is sufficient space.
- Ensure fences are used to clearly delineate between public and private areas and to conceal utility metres.



1.1 STREETSCAPE CHARACTER (CONTINUED)

Things to Avoid

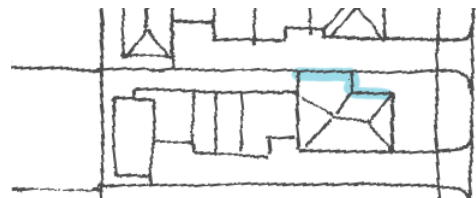
- Narrow/opaque windows facing the street
- Large expanses of blank facade facing the street
- Orientating the 'side' of the building towards the street, as it creates a horizontal expression which increases visual bulk
- Insufficient or sparse landscaping within the front setback area
- Front setbacks that are more than 50% hard-paved



1.2 GAPS BETWEEN BUILDINGS

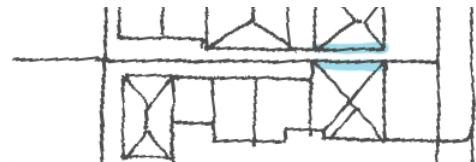
Design Response Considerations

- Ensure buildings are set back from one or both side boundaries according to the streetscape character and neighbouring buildings.
- Provide setbacks to areas closest to the street on constrained sites that do not allow side setbacks.



Things to Avoid

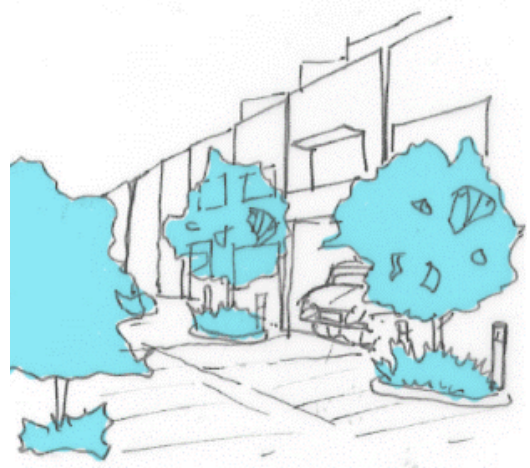
- Not providing gaps between buildings, unless appropriate to the existing character



1.3 SOFT LANDSCAPING AND TREES

Design Response Considerations

- Ensure that the site layout maximises opportunities for tree planting. Trees in medium density dwellings should be located within the front setback, along vehicle accessways, and within private open spaces (side and rear) to soften the built form, increase canopy coverage and provide screening.
- Ensure front setbacks can accommodate canopy trees. These areas contribute to the streetscape and neighbourhood character.
- Position canopy trees to provide shade to hard surfaces such as driveways and buildings.
- Prioritise the use of deciduous trees to maximise solar access in winter months and provide shade in summer. This is especially important in small areas such as courtyards.



1.3 SOFT LANDSCAPING AND TREES

Design Response Considerations

- Ensure front gardens contain layered landscaping.
- Provide understorey planting below trees to provide layered greenery and greater visual interest.
- Encourage in-ground landscaping and provide a maintenance plan to ensure the landscaping can be sustained.
- Low-maintenance, planting is encouraged. As plants will require time to grow, the materials behind them should look good by themselves.
- Provide planter beds on the building's upper-levels for cascading plants which drop down to the lower levels and contribute to a greener streetscape in restricted space. Ensure planters an access rainfall, are open to sky and can be irrigated and maintained.
- Improve privacy to neighbouring dwellings through landscaping.



Things to Avoid

- A site layout that doesn't allow space for canopy trees to be planted
- Using trees species unsuitable (size/shape/species) to the location
- Installation of synthetic turf
- Excessive use of gravel
- Excessive paved areas



2. EXTERIOR APPEARANCE

PLANNING SCHEME REFERENCES:

55.02 Neighbourhood Character & Infrastructure

- 55.02-1 – Neighbourhood character objective
- 55.02-3 – Dwelling diversity objective
- 55.02-5 – Integration with the street objective

55.03 Site Layout & Building Massing

- 55.03-1 – Street setback objective
- 55.03-2 – Building height objective

55.06 Detailed Design

- 55.06-1 – Design detail objective
- 55.06-2 – Front fences objective
- 55.06-3 – Common property objective

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

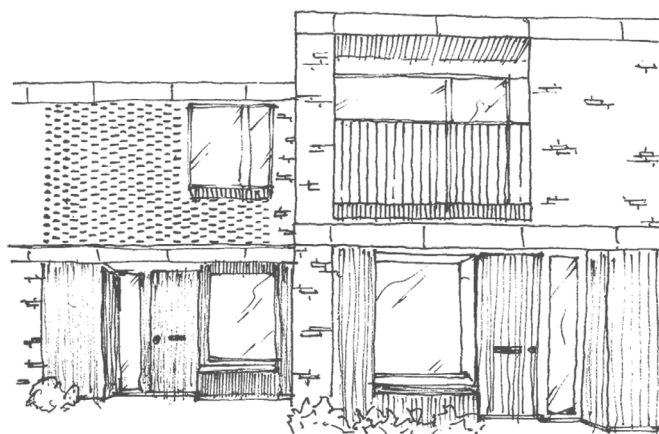
Exterior Appearance should:

- ☒ Be derived from and respond to the features described in the neighbourhood and site descriptions
- ☒ Respect the scale, form and architectural style of surrounding development
- ☒ Reflect a consideration of the architectural form and facade articulation*

***Architectural form** describes a building's three-dimensional form when viewed along the street.

It includes the building's external shapes (roofs, walls recesses etc.), the proportions and configurations of these shapes, the voids between them and their combined relationship to other buildings in the streetscape.

***'Facade articulation'** describes the finer details which provide additional visual interest and reinforce the intentions of the 'Architectural form'. It provides articulation of building elements and materials.



2.1 EXISTING AND PREFERRED CHARACTER

Design Response Considerations

- Ensure that architectural forms and the collective rhythm of surrounding developments are acknowledged.
- Appropriate development can either reflect the existing streetscape character or provide a design response that differs from the surrounding built form but remains respectful of the appearance of adjoining properties.



Things to Avoid

- Unsuitable/distracting architectural forms and material palettes

2.2 OVERALL PROPORTIONS

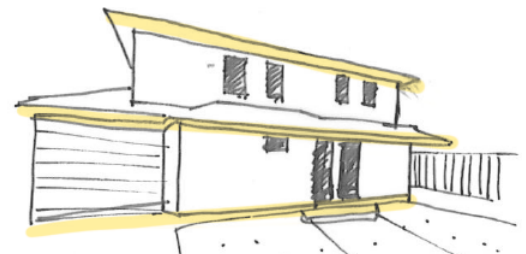
Design Response Considerations

- Ensure that the separate elements of the built form are defined to reduce the visual bulk.
- Suitably sized windows in proportion to the surrounding facades result in a more balanced, residential street appearance.



Things to Avoid

- Long horizontal proportions which create larger visual bulk
- The use of too many materials, which becomes visually distracting
- Large expanses of blank wall or homogeneous material
- Over scaled porches which are not proportional to the overall design



2.3 FACADE ARTICULATION

Design Response Considerations

- Provide recesses or extruded frames to windows to produce three-dimensional facades.
- Propose purposeful articulation e.g. Shading as an expressed element
- Intermediary structures such as front verandas encourage social interaction with neighbours and permit passive surveillance.



Things to Avoid

- Flat facades where windows and different materials are on the same flush plane



2.4 ROOF DESIGN

Design Response Considerations

- The design of new buildings should have good overall proportions, and provide each dwelling with a sense of address and individuality.
- Roof forms should be considerate of the architectural rhythm of the street so that they can be simultaneously unique and not too disruptive or distracting.



Things to Avoid

- Roof forms which result in lots of visible downpipes
- Roof forms that unnecessarily increase visual bulk
- Roof forms that cause two dwellings to resemble a single large dwelling.



2.5 MATERIALS

Design Response Considerations

- Priorities materials that require less maintenance to remain presentable and functional.
- Provide a vertical connection between upper and low level materials.



Things to Avoid

- Cladding upper-level structures in thin finishes, which typically age quickly and poorly such as thinly rendered polystyrene
- Large expanses of blank wall or homogeneous material
- Large scale materials and forms that would typically be found in retail and commercial developments or higher density residential developments, including large laminated sheet materials and thinly rendered lightweight structures as these materials often create bland, homogeneous forms



2.7 REDUCING THE IMPACT OF LONG BUILDINGS (FRONT SETBACK)

Design Response Considerations

- Minimise the impact of longer building facades by using a variety of 'architectural forms'.
- Use a variety of complementary materials rather than varying the colour of one material, to break monotonous facades.



Things to Avoid

- Monotonous, long facades without any variety, visual interest or physical breaks



2.8 REDUCING THE IMPACT OF LONG BUILDINGS (SIDE SETBACK)

Design Response Considerations

- Provide breaks along long, upper-level built forms to reduce their dominance over adjacent properties.
- While side and rear facades are not generally visible from the street's public realm, the continuous length of the building may need to be broken up to allow for planting, provide solar access and to respond to surrounding building patterns.



Things to Avoid

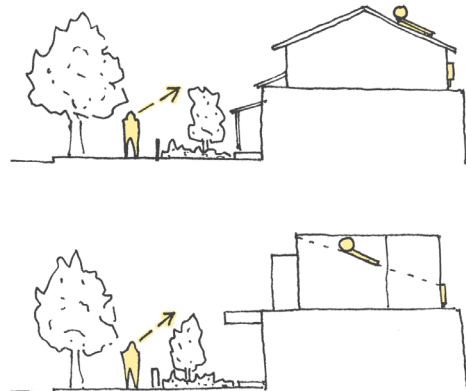
- Extensively long buildings without any upper-level gaps



2.9 UPPER LEVEL UTILITY INTEGRATION / CONCEALMENT

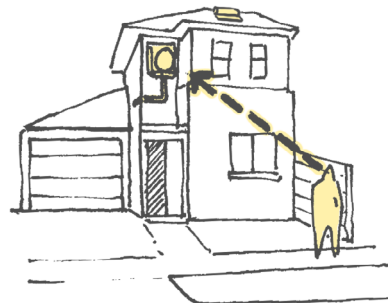
Design Response Considerations

- While solar panels and solar water heaters are encouraged, they should not be visually dominant from the street or nearby public spaces and should utilise the design of the roof. On a highly constrained site, solar panels can still be visible from the public realm.
- Air conditioning units should be hidden from streets and/or nearby public spaces.
- If downpipes have to be visible from the street, their appearance should be well-considered as part of the overall facade.



Things to Avoid

- Locating air-conditioning units in places that make them visually dominant from streets and/or nearby public spaces



2.10 STREET FENCE DESIGN

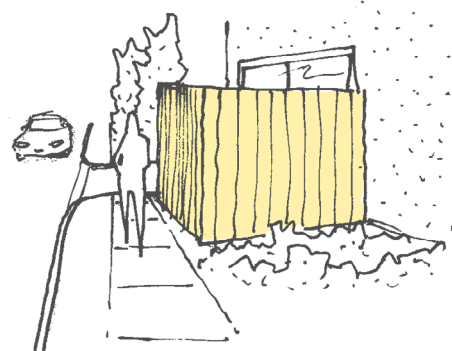
Design Response Considerations

- Front fences should relate to the overall building design and connect upper level design elements to the street.
- Lower fences are generally preferred, as they are perceived to be more welcoming, attractive and provide passive surveillance, while still being able to achieve privacy.
- Provide some sections which are transparent by using semi-transparent materials (such as timber slats/perforated metal/'hit and miss' brickwork etc.) or gaps in-between solid walls.
- Variations of height and materials of the fence provide visual interest to the street and reduce horizontal effects.
- If no fencing is desired, landscaping should be provided to distinguish between the public and private realm.



Things to Avoid

- High boundary fences within the front setback
- Solid fences without any transparent elements or detailed treatment. These types of fences can present unwelcoming, standoffish appearances to the street.
- Providing no fence unless a suitable landscaped alternative has been proposed or the existing/preferred character suggests otherwise



3. COMMUNAL AREAS

PLANNING SCHEME REFERENCES:

55.02 Neighbourhood Character & Infrastructure

55.02-1 – Neighbourhood character objective
55.02-5 – Integration with the street objective

55.03 Site Layout & Building Massing

55.03-1 – Street setback objective
55.03-6 – Open space objective
55.03-8 – Landscaping objective

55.06 Detailed Design

55.06-1 – Design detail objective
55.06-2 – Front fences objective
55.06-3 – Common property objective

SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCES:

From Melbourne Water:

[Raingarden instruction sheets](#)
[Porous paving instruction sheet](#)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

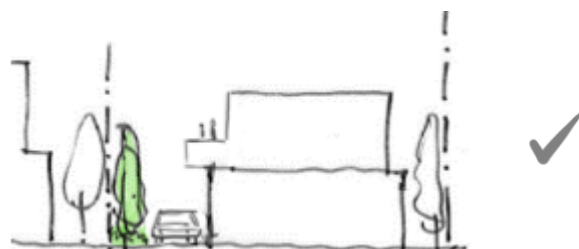
Communal Areas should:

- ☒ Prioritise people over vehicles
- ☒ Integrate vehicle accessways and pedestrian paths
- ☒ Be well landscaped
- ☒ Contribute positively to the streetscape

3.1 DRIVEWAY / BUILDING INTERACTION

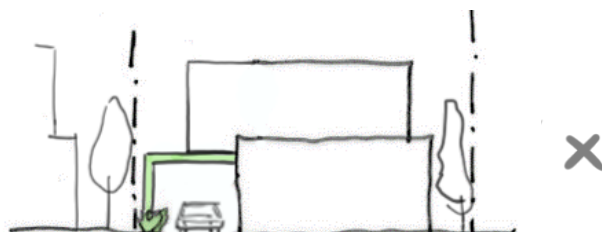
Design Response Considerations

- For single row townhouse typologies, driveways should allow room for landscaping opportunities, welcoming dwelling entrances, surveillance from the dwellings and a good presentation to the street.



Things to Avoid

- Driveway areas that do not provide significant landscaping opportunities and create dark, closed off areas with no passive surveillance.



3.2 SHARED PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICLE ACCESS

Design Response Considerations

- Co-locate vehicle and pedestrian access areas.
- Provide high-quality finishes to pedestrian paths along driveway areas to enhance the sense of pedestrian priority.
- Provide ground-level lighting and outdoor furniture where appropriate.
- Sites located adjacent to public open space should provide a separated walkway entry along the edge to the public open space.



Things to Avoid

- Separate walkways which could otherwise be utilised as private open space
- Poor quality, harsh or ineffective lighting

3.3 PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE

Design Response Considerations

- Upper levels should provide surveillance to the lower levels using balconies or windows.
- Well considered external lighting can greatly improve not only the safety of a space, but also the general presentation and arrival experience.



Things to Avoid

- Continuous row of garages
- Narrow pedestrian entries
- The use of harsh or poor-quality spot lighting



3.4 VISUAL VEHICLE AREAS

Design Response Considerations

- For side-by-side developments driveways should be located on either side of the development.
- Vehicle parking should be setback further than the front wall of the dwellings.
- Vehicle parking facilities should not occupy more than 50% of the building frontage to the street.
- Provide vehicle access from laneways where possible.
- Garage doors should be integrated into the building design.
- Consolidate vehicle crossovers with neighbouring properties where appropriate and possible.
- Communal car parking should be considered for larger developments.



Things to Avoid

- Centrally locating the driveway in relation to the building facade



3.5 GROUND LEVEL UTILITY INTEGRATION / CONCEALMENT

Design Response Considerations

- A dedicated area should be provided for communal mailboxes. The mail box area should be low-height to integrate with the landscaping while remaining visible from the street.
- Mailboxes could be co-located with service utilities and amenities such as lighting, benches and landscaping.
- Integrate services into the fence design or locate behind the front line of the building.
- Dwellings with direct street entry should have individual mailboxes and services.



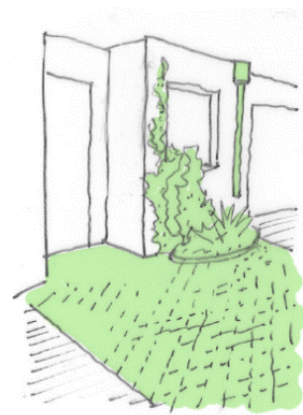
Things to Avoid

- Locating mailboxes in areas at risk from moving cars

3.6 STORM WATER AND PASSIVE IRRIGATION

Design Response Considerations

- Utilise storm water run-off from the driveway and roofs for passive irrigation. Irrigation details should be shown on the landscape plan.
- Incorporate porous paving to break up hard surfaces such as driveways. Provide construction details to demonstrate the permeability of porous paving.



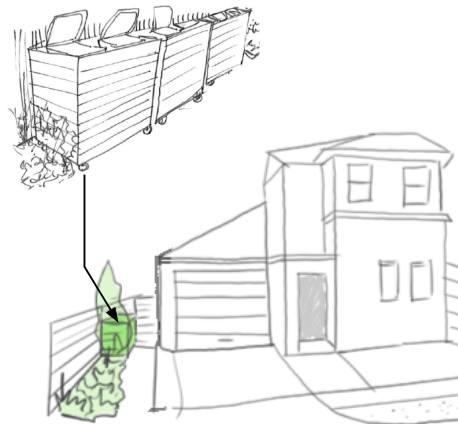
Things to Avoid

- Large, non-porous hard paved areas without landscaping
- Diverting storm water that could be used for passive irrigation
- Poorly constructed paving which is impermeable

3.7 WASTE AREAS

Design Response Considerations

- Locate bin storage behind the building line integrated with the building's wall or with the side fence. Use Landscaping to enhance the appearance of these areas.
- Provide bin enclosures to conceal bins with the size fitting Moreland City Council's bin sizes.
- Provide additional space for a green waste bin and communal compost/ worm farm facilities.
- Larger developments should incorporate shared communal areas for BBQs, washing lines, laundries and bins.



Things to Avoid

- Designating no space for communal bin areas
- Poor appearance of bins, visible from the street



4. AMENITY

PLANNING SCHEME REFERENCES:

55.03 Site Layout & Building Massing

55.03-7 – Safety objective
55.03-9 – Access objective
55.03-10 – Parking location objective

55.04 Amenity Impacts

55.04-5 – Overshadowing open space objective
55.04-6 – Overlooking objective
55.04-7 – Internal views objective

55.05 On-site Amenity and Facilities

55.05-4 – Private open space objective
55.05-5 – Solar access to open space objective

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The design of new dwellings should:

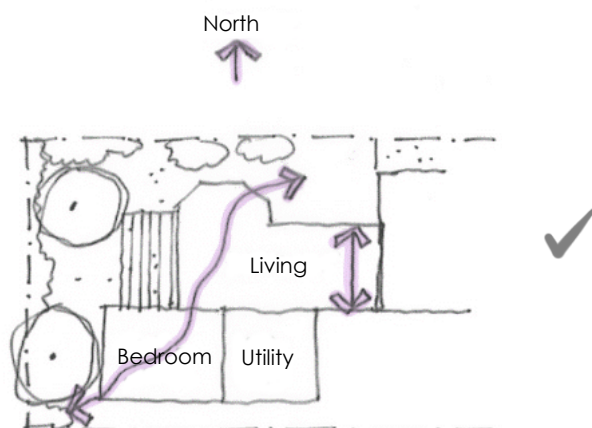
- ☒ Provide good levels of amenity for their own residents
- ☒ Protect the amenity of existing neighbouring residents
- ☒ Consider amenity as central to creating livable homes and being key to people's health and wellbeing

4.1 PASSIVE DESIGN

Design Response Considerations

Provide passive design principles which reduce the need for mechanical equipment for heating and cooling. This can be done with:

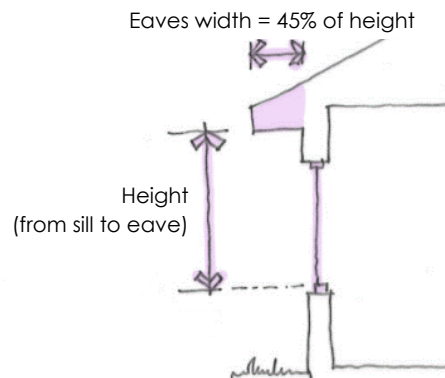
- North facing living areas.
- Shading devices on north and west facing windows
- Providing natural ventilation of dwellings and allow occupants to effectively manage natural ventilation (Refer to Clause 58.07-4 Standard D27 for guidance)
- Suitably located deciduous trees.
- Appropriately sized windows



4.1 PASSIVE DESIGN (CONTINUED)

Design Response Considerations

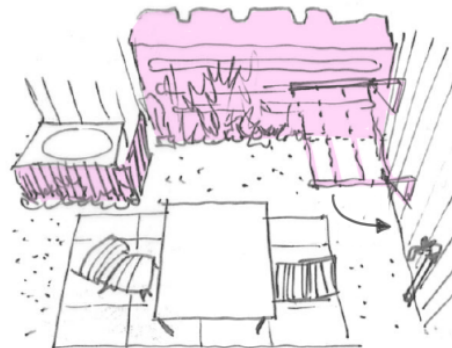
- Lower overhangs and eaves provide more effective shading to windows.
- Specify appropriate windows and skylights (to minimise artificial lighting and optimise natural ventilation).
- Specify deciduous trees and supplementary vegetation in courtyards that provide seasonal shading/cooling and solar access to buildings and hard paved surfaces.



4.2 COURTYARDS

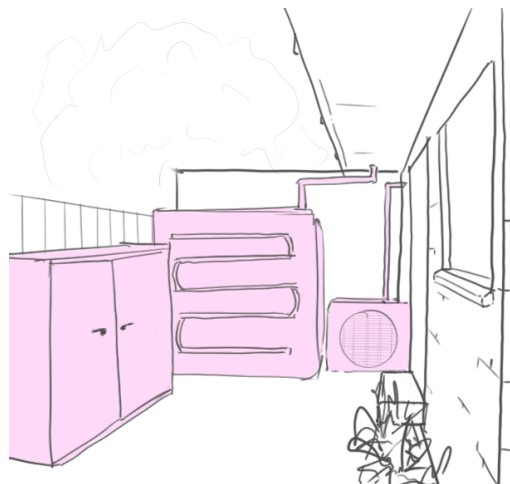
Design Response Considerations

- Tree planting is required in courtyards. Decking can maximise usable space underneath trees. In courtyards, a deciduous tree provides summer shade and solar access in winter.
- Utilities should be consolidated in one area and screened. The design of the space should optimise usable area of the courtyard.
- Rainwater tanks can be placed underneath the decking. Alternatively, vertical slimline water tanks can be placed in side setbacks under eaves.
- Storage should be located below eaves (or internally to a garage) to maximise landscaping areas which are open to sky.
- Specify washing lines that can be folded or retracted when not in use.



Things to Avoid

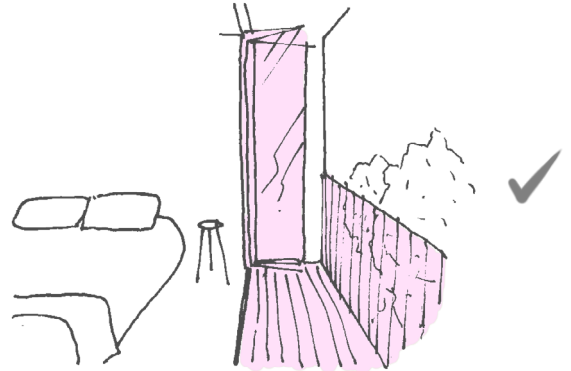
- Placing storage sheds in locations which compromise the effective size of private open spaces
- Placing utilities (water tanks, washing lines, hot water services, air conditioning, etc.) within usable private open spaces in ways that would compromise their usability and visual appearance
- Narrow spaces which are unusable
- Inflexible utilities (rigid clothes lines, bulky water tanks etc.) that reduce the usability of private open space



4.3 BALCONY SIZE

Design Response Considerations

- Even marginal increases in balcony dimensions improves the functionality and usability for building occupants. (Refer to Clause 58.05-3 Standard D19 for guidance)
- Provide a usable space on a balcony that allows the convenient arrangement of table and chairs.
- Mechanical equipment should be concealed to reduce visual and noise impacts.
- Allow extra space on balconies when external A/C units are located there.



Things to Avoid

- Narrow balconies with high screening
- Locating air-conditioner fan units and other equipment within usable balcony space

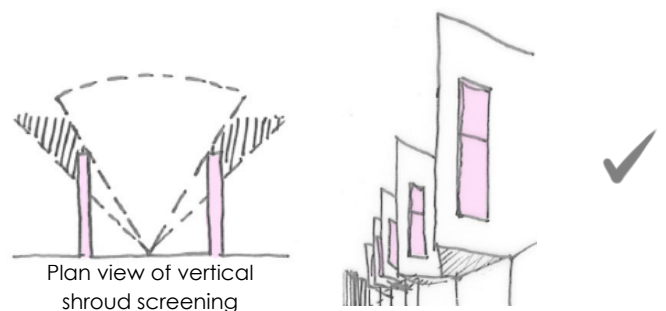
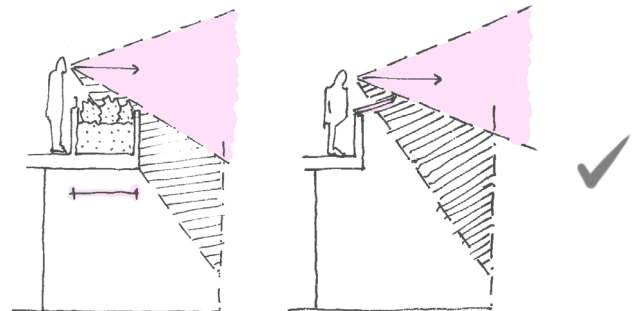


4.4 PRIVACY

Design Response Considerations

Limit overlooking whilst at the same time providing reasonable outlook from new dwellings and a visual connection to the external environment from upper levels of new dwellings by:

- Orientating windows away from sensitive areas.
- Provided they still comply with overlooking standards, using adjustable screens allow flexible use by the occupant.
- Angling screens to divert the view away from next door neighbours, while ensuring there is good solar access to the room.
- Using vegetation to screen by selecting narrow form or screening specific shrubs and trees. (Should not be solely relied upon.)



Things to Avoid

- Excessive use of fixed screenings and obscured glazing
- Fixed screens on windows that create poor internal amenity and do not allow flexibility by the user
- Fixed high screening on balustrades, particularly on small, narrow balconies





5. INTERNAL LAYOUT

PLANNING SCHEME REFERENCES:

55.04 Amenity Impacts

- 55.04-4 – North-facing windows objective
- 55.04-6 – Overlooking objective
- 55.04-7 – Internal views objective

55.05 On-site Amenity and Facilities

- 55.05-1 – Accessibility objective
- 55.05-2 – Dwelling entry objective
- 55.05-3 – Daylight to new windows objective
- 55.05-4 – Storage objective

SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCES

From Livable Housing Australia:

[Livable Housing Design Guidelines](#)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

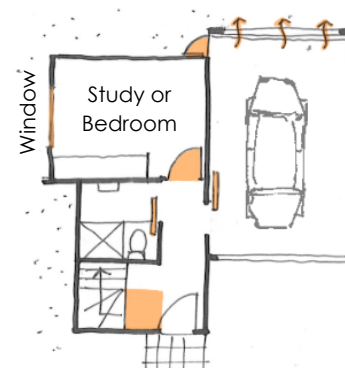
Internal Layout should:

- ✓ Provide sufficient space within rooms and provide sufficient circulation spaces between rooms
- ✓ Provide flexibility to change the use of a room in the future
- ✓ Incorporate Livable housing design features
- ✓ Provide sufficient internal storage space to meet the needs of future occupants

5.1 CIRCULATION SPACES

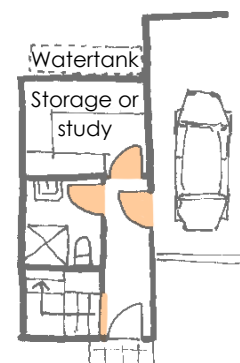
Design Response Considerations

- Consider using sliding door for restricted spaces.
- Create multi-functional rooms instead of small, separated rooms, such as laundries combined with linen storage.



Things to Avoid

- Locating hinged doors too close together
- Insufficient circulation space at the entry and staircase area



5.2 DESIGNING FOR LIVABILITY

Design Response Considerations

New dwellings are encouraged to achieve Silver Level of performance under the Livable Housing Australia, Livable Housing Design Guidelines, including:

- Providing an accessible path from the street and car park areas to a level entry.
- Providing minimum clear opening width of 850mm for doors and 1000mm for hallways at ground (or entry) level.
- Whenever practical and reasonable, providing a living area, kitchen and bedroom at entry level.
- Hobless shower recesses designed to enable later removal of shower screens and installation of grab rails.





Moreland Language Link

廣東話	9280 1910	हिंदी	9280 1918
Italiano	9280 1911	普通话	9280 0750
Ελληνικά	9280 1912	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	9280 0751
عربي	9280 1913		
Türkçe	9280 1914	All other languages	
Tiếng Việt	9280 1915	9280 1919	