



GOOD DESIGN STANDARD

●●● *Better neighbourhoods,
streetscapes & homes*

THE TEN QUESTIONS



Contributing to context



1

Can the site comfortably accommodate the proposed development?



2

Is there an understanding and response to context and character?



Creating a place



3

Is vehicular dominance reduced and priority given to pedestrian and residential amenity?



4

Does the design make a positive transition to its neighbours and the street?



5

Is landscape design recognised as an important and integral part of the project?



6

Are building services integrated into the design without being visually or physically obtrusive?



7

Are the finishes of good quality, attractive and contributory to the surrounding context?



Creating a home



8

Has the overall layout of your proposed development been designed to maximise access to space and light for all dwellings?



9

Has the design of each dwelling been carefully composed to maximise its amenity and ensure all spaces are fit for purpose?



10

Do the common areas of the building provide for enjoyment, ease of movement, connectivity and accessibility?



INTRODUCTION

The Good Design Standard seeks to improve the quality of housing in the City of Maribyrnong by asking Ten Questions that all new residential development must address to demonstrate how the proposal:

- Contributes to context,
- Creates a place, and,
- Creates a home.

The Good Design Standard enables a dialogue between applicants and Council and is used to review the quality of a proposal using a simple traffic light system, where applicants are encouraged to:

- Achieve as many Greens as possible,
- Minimise the number of Ambers, and,
- Design out any Reds.

A successful proposal is one that contributes positively to the City of Maribyrnong and supports a good quality of life for existing and future residents.

Why it matters

Nowhere do we feel the benefits of good design more than in our homes and the spaces around them. Proposed developments may be sold as real estate, but they quickly become homes for their occupants. We eat, sleep, work, rest and play in our homes, and we raise our families and grow old in our homes. They represent stability and security, and should provide flexibility, functionality, comfort, privacy and freedom. A home should be designed to stand the test of time and be robust in the face of change.

The benefits of getting this right for new residents are self-evident, but all residents of Maribyrnong and visitors to its many neighbourhoods have something to gain from better buildings, better streetscapes and better landscapes.

Who is the Standard for

If you are looking to develop one or more dwellings on a lot, the Good Design Standard applies to you. It has been designed to be as simple and easy to use as possible, with the aims and objectives of each question clearly laid out to guide your planning application. The Ten Questions should be addressed at the start of a new project to inform your design, encouraging a dialogue between:

- Client and architect, or building designer;
- The design team and the client's planning consultant; and with
- The planning department at Council.

How to use the Standard

First, read this introduction and the Glossary, which provides you with plain English explanations of planning terms to make the document easier to understand.

The Good Design Standard is organised around Ten Questions. Each question is presented in the document along with prompts, supporting questions and explanatory text.

The drawings that accompany your application should clearly demonstrate how the design positively addresses each of the Ten Questions and should contain sufficient information to allow Council to make a judgement on whether the proposal:

- Meets the desired objective, Green light;
- Has room for improvement, Amber light; or,
- Fails to address the objectives, or, there is insufficient information provided, Red light.

Upon lodgment of your application, you will need to provide a summary response to each of the Ten Questions, explaining how your design addresses the criteria for each. Use the attached Good Design Standard: Self-Assessment form and rate your response using the traffic light system.

By answering the Ten Questions and rating your own application against each Question, you can begin to build up the case to support your application. The case for support will be strong if you can show green lights across all of the questions.

How your scheme is assessed

The Good Design Standard may be used throughout the design process to assess the quality of your proposal and identify room for improvement. Your architect or building designer should consider the criteria of each question throughout the design process.

Once concepts have been prepared, you are encouraged to have a pre-application meeting with a Council officer, who will make a preliminary assessment of your proposal against the Ten Questions and provide you with an initial assessment and traffic light rating. The intent of this feedback is to allow you to address any concerns prior to lodgment.

Upon lodgment of your planning permit application, which will include your own response to the Ten Questions and your traffic light rating, Council will review your application against the criteria of the Good Design Standard and in accordance with their responsibilities under the Planning Scheme.

On receiving any preliminary feedback, you will have the opportunity to improve your proposal, submitting amended plans and further information detailing the changes you have made. The aim is to get your application to green lights across most, if not all, of the Ten Questions, and red lights for none.

Contributing to context

QUESTION 1

Can the site comfortably accommodate the proposed development?

PROMPTS:

Are the aspirations of the project suitable for the site?

Is the site suitable for the size and intensity of the development?

Does the project propose more development than the site can reasonably take?

Is the residential typology you are proposing appropriate for the site and context?

Is the design more than an organisation of the parts within the Res-Code envelope or planning framework?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- In the interests of improving our neighbourhoods through better quality buildings and landscapes, it is important that new developments are appropriate to the setting, in terms of their size, their impacts on the existing or preferred situation and their particular qualities.
- The quantity or amount of new development is an important part of this. Over development – or building proposals that are simply too big or too dense for their sites – is a key cause of poor development.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Can the amount and type of dwellings be accommodated comfortably, and to a good standard of public and private amenity (benefit) by being located on this site?
- Is the site big enough and the right shape to achieve everything that you want to achieve?
- Does the proposed development allow areas of undeveloped, landscaped space to soften areas of the building and provide amenity for future residents?

WHAT TO DO

- Explain the aspirations and objectives behind your design, and why and how it is appropriate for the site and the setting.
- Show in your drawings how you have balanced built-out areas with areas of meaningful landscape, space between buildings, and how you have avoided an over development of your site.
- Demonstrate how the proposed residential typology is suitable for the site.

1. YOUR ANSWER:

Contributing to context

QUESTION 2

Is there an understanding and response to context and character?

PROMPTS:

Is there an analysis of the existing context and character? Has the analysis helped shape the design?

Does the design contribute positively to the local and wider context?

Does the proposal reinforce existing connections or create new opportunities for pedestrian permeability and connectivity?

Is there reasoning behind the architectural expression of the building?

What are the key ideas informing your design proposal? Are they of benefit to the streetscape and local community?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- All developments introduce change. This change will impact on the actual site, but also on the feel and character of the surrounding setting, which we call the context.
- By analysing the context, we are able to change our design ideas to respond to what we observe, and the result is development proposals that are better suited to their setting.
- If we get it right, our proposals will in fact provide benefits to the setting.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Have you provided evidence that demonstrates how your analysis of site, context and character has informed your design?
- Your proposed development will have an impact on the existing conditions, inevitably changing some parts of the appearance of the place. Your development should offer both public and private amenity benefits.
- Will the proposed development contribute to the visual attractiveness of the place, and/or is offer practical benefits such as new public open spaces, new shade trees, visually attractive gardens or green spaces to look at or occupy, or other forms of public benefit?
- On larger developments, does your proposal maintain and enhance existing connections, or create new connections that will be of benefit to both new and existing residents in the neighbourhood.
- Is your proposed development well proportioned and of an appropriate scale for the site? Answering this question means understanding the context and setting, and paying attention to the impression made by the existing situation.

WHAT TO DO

- Undertake a meaningful site and context analysis that can help inform your design. Review your findings and draw conclusions to demonstrate how your proposal will contribute positively to the local context and character.
- Explain in both your design statement and through your drawings how the proposal is of an appropriate scale and will contribute to and improve the environment of which it is a part.

2. YOUR ANSWER:



Creating a place

QUESTION 3

Is vehicular dominance reduced and priority given to pedestrian and residential amenity?



PROMPTS:

Have people been considered before cars?

Have garages, driveways, crossovers, streets and carports been designed to reduce their negative impact?

Where areas of vehicle parking can serve a dual function as landscaped spaces, have they been designed to provide additional amenity benefits.

Are any necessary hard surfaces, including driveways, of an attractive finish, or does bitumen or bare concrete dominate?

Does your site have a clear and inviting pedestrian path to the front door, unencumbered by vehicles?

YOUR APPLICATION

- Does your development put people before cars?
- If your proposed development puts people before cars, the development will have improved amenity and security than if dominated by garage doors, driveways and vehicle access.
- Garage doors can create 'blank' (undesirable, un-activated) frontages, which reduce public safety and create an unattractive appearance.
- Have you carefully designed garage doors as an integral part of your design? Do garage doors present themselves as visually recessive (not dominant) and attractive by using high quality finishes?
- Have driveways and carport surfaces been designed carefully to allow them to serve different functions when not being used by vehicles?
- Have you considered the use of alternative surface materials such as permeable pavements or attractive hard landscapes?
- It is also important to consider your building entry, and how pedestrians move from the public realm into the building. Do pedestrians and vehicles clash? Who has priority?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Places that are dominated by cars, and the infrastructure needed for them, are often poor environments for people and can be unattractive and unappealing for new and existing residents.
- Overly dominant parking infrastructure can have an equally negative impact on the streetscape and existing character of an area.
- By putting people first, the areas used by vehicles can be addressed through good design to reduce vehicular dominance and provide amenity benefits.
- When the open areas of a development are dominated by driveways or parking areas, with little or no green space or other permeable surfaces, the appearance can be unattractive and undesirable.

WHAT TO DO

- Explain how your proposed development practically reduces the dominance of vehicles and their impact on your design, and prioritises people travelling on foot, wheelchair or bicycle.
- Explain how your proposed development minimises areas of hard paving and dominant driveways and/or garage doors, and balances them with permeable paving and areas of green landscaping. List the finishes and materials used for any hard surfaces.

3. YOUR ANSWER:



Creating a place

QUESTION 4

Does the design make a positive transition to its neighbours and the street?

PROMPTS:

Has the design shown sympathy and respect to neighbouring buildings and spaces?

Does your proposal protect the sense of space and light enjoyed by neighbouring residences?

Does your proposal present a visually attractive form when viewed from neighbouring properties to the side and rear?

Has the layout carefully considered the transition from the public realm to private realm?

Does the building frontage and façade make a positive contribution to the streetscape, with articulation, breaks in the form and good proportions?

YOUR APPLICATION

- How has your design been shaped and formed to make a positive transition from your proposed building (height, shape, massing and profile) to neighbouring buildings and spaces?
- Do doors, windows and balconies to habitable rooms allow passive surveillance of the street, or open spaces nearby, to activate the frontages?
- The sides and rear of your proposal should be addressed with the same care as the frontage. Consider how your building will appear from all sides and how the form, massing and activation can be improved to all sides.
- The façade of your building on visible frontages is the point where the private realm and public realm intersect. Does the front façade of your proposed development contribute something of interest to the streetscape, complementing and improving on the existing conditions?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- New developments introduce change, but that change should be complementary to and respectful of existing neighbours or the desired future character of the neighbourhood.
- This is important in relation to physical characteristics such as scale, height and size, but also to equitable amenity.
- Contrast can be good when it introduces variety and interest; however, sudden or large changes in height, bulk or massing, blank façades, poor materials or inappropriate uses are not desirable and must be avoided.
- Excessive height, blank walls and the dominance of built form to neighbouring properties can have a negative impact on existing residents sense of space and private amenity.

WHAT TO DO

- Explain how your development is designed to make the transition between new buildings and existing ones pleasing and not visually intrusive or unattractive.
- Explain how your proposed design manages the transition from public to private areas on and around the site.

4. YOUR ANSWER:

Creating a place

QUESTION 5

Is landscape design recognised as an important and integral part of the project?

PROMPTS:

Does the landscape, hard and soft, provide functional and visual amenity?

Will families be living in the proposed development? What play and recreation space is provided for them?

For sites where green open space is desirable, is there provision for broad canopy trees?

Can the landscape be easily maintained?

Has the species selection been considered for its appropriateness to the setting?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- The design of soft (planted) and hard (paved) areas of landscape has a direct impact on the quality of a place. Proposed developments that have no areas of soft landscaping can create harsh environments with little or no visual 'relief'.
- The creation of outdoor spaces for both public and private use significantly contributes to the quality of each dwelling and helps new developments blend into the existing neighbourhood.
- Providing green spaces reduces heat accumulation in summer, and provides a visually attractive appearance to a place.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Landscaping should be considered at an early stage in your design process to ensure it becomes an integral part of your development.
- Consider carefully the design of private open space to maximise solar access to sustain areas of soft landscape.
- Identify where landscape design can transform areas of hard paving for vehicles into areas of hard landscape that can provide additional amenity benefits and improved visual attractiveness.
- The design of any required hard surfaces should use materials other than bitumen or bare concrete. The use of permeable pavement materials (where possible) is also important.
- Applicants are encouraged to engage the services of a suitably qualified landscape architect or design professional to provide considered and clearly specified soft and hard landscaping.

WHAT TO DO

- Demonstrate that landscape design is an integral part of your proposal.
- Explain how the landscape design works collectively with the building design to improve amenity and enhance the setting of the proposal.
- Explain how the planting design supports the existing context.

5. YOUR ANSWER:



Creating a place

QUESTION 6

Are the buildings services integrated into the design without being visually or physically obtrusive?

PROMPTS:

Are rooftop services suitably screened from both local views and more distant views – down the street, from open spaces and from neighbouring properties?

Are ground level services (such as meters, regulators) and balcony services (such as air conditioner condensers) integrated thoughtfully into the design?

Have downpipes, drainage details, ventilation grilles and façade penetrations been considered in the design?

Are supporting waste management services considered and bin stores sensitively integrated into the design?

- Have you planned these services as an integrated part of the façade and frontage design, ensuring that the appearance of the services is attractive and wherever possible hidden?
- Have you provided a dedicated space for the storage of bins that is easily accessible but screened from the public realm and private living areas?
- Have you incorporated space in your plans for service risers, small areas of walled space set aside for services to move up through the building to avoid penetrations in the façade?
- Have you integrated any required surface-mounted vent hoods or grilles into your façade design?
- Downpipes also need to be considered as an integral part of your proposed design, and they should be integrated into façades rather than just applied to the surface. Has this been achieved?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Few things make a building more unappealing than obtrusive services sticking out on balconies, roofs, façades or frontages, not integrated into alcoves, or without covers or screening.
- By thinking about services up-front, and incorporating room for them into your design, you are able to reduce their visual impact, in some cases making them disappear from view altogether.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Building services must be integrated into the design and clearly annotated on the drawings.
- Services to consider include air conditioning units, meters and meter boxes, gas regulators, substations, fire hose reels and hydrants.

WHAT TO DO

- Demonstrate how you have accommodated the required services and downpipes into the proposed design in an integrated way, leaving enough room and practical access and maintenance space for the required infrastructure.
- Building services must be indicated on floor plans and elevations submitted as part of the planning permit application. Detail should be provided identifying materials, finishes and colours.
- Ensure enclosures for bins do not dominate the frontage or conflict with private entries. Demonstrate how you have considered waste management in your design.



Creating a place

QUESTION 7

Are the finishes of good quality, attractive and contributory to the surrounding context?

PROMPTS:

Will the building look good throughout the seasons and with the passing of time?

Can the finishes and surfaces of the building be easily maintained and cleaned?

Are building finishes and materials appropriate to the setting?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Buildings that age poorly, due to badly specified materials and finishes and poor construction detailing, look bad and worn sooner rather than later. This reduces the overall quality of our neighbourhoods, making for an unattractive appearance. This is also true for buildings that have materials and finishes that look out of place in their setting.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Your site analysis should guide your selection of appropriate finishes to contribute to the locality and provide for an attractive appearance. Have you studied the existing context and chosen finishes to enhance or sustain existing positive features?
- Are all finishes clearly annotated on the drawings with a summary specification including: the material choice, finish, colour, and if known, manufacturer's detail? You should provide as much information as possible – unspecified, or finishes labeled as 'select' will attract a red light.
- High quality materials that are durable and weather well are important, along with building construction details that are robust and require little maintenance to keep them looking good and functioning well. Demonstrate you have considered the appearance of the building over time.

- The choice of materials with integrated finishes is good, as they will almost always weather better and require less maintenance than site applied finishes. If integrated finishes are specified, are they used in a way that will be durable and easy to clean?
- Site-applied finishes are also acceptable if used the right way. If site-applied finishes are specified, are they used in a way that will be durable and allow for easy maintenance or refinishing?
- Are areas of feature finishes, or blocks of highlight colour, designed as integral elements of the overall building, not used simply to disguise, or 'break-up', a poorly resolved façade?
- Is your design detailed in such a way that it will manage rainwater runoff on roofs, balconies and façades, without staining or water damage?

WHAT TO DO

- Provide an illustrated materials schedule of all the finishes proposed in your development, clearly specifying the material type, finish, colour, and where applicable, profile or pattern. Material samples should be provided upon request.
- Demonstrate that your proposed development will be finished in robust, high quality materials.
- Explain how your proposed development is designed for ease of maintenance and durability, particularly with regards to cleaning surfaces and water runoff management for roofs and balconies.
- Explain how your choice of materials and finishes will create an attractive and complementary appearance for your proposed development in its setting. Do this by clearly communicating that all the buildings finishes that will be viewed from the street or neighbouring properties, including the undersides of building elements and other surfaces that don't show on the elevations. Ensure these are annotated, and where appropriate, illustrated in a 3D view.



Creating a home

QUESTION 8

Has the overall layout of your proposed development been designed to maximise access to space and light for all dwellings?

PROMPTS:

Has the layout of the site actively minimised the number of south-facing dwellings?

Does the layout of the building maximise the site's potential for solar orientation?

Does the layout allow for the majority of apartments or homes to be dual aspect and incorporate cross-flow ventilation (ventilation through a building from one side to another)?

Has the overall layout been designed to avoid borrowed light to habitable rooms?

In apartment buildings, does the overall layout minimise long corridors?

Does the overall layout share amenity fairly among the proposed dwellings?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- The way a site is designed, the way a building is organised and the way individual dwellings are positioned has a direct impact on the quality of life for new and existing residents.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Your proposed development should have a site layout that provides good access to outdoor space and natural light for new residents.
- Northern sunlight should be favoured and the layout should also minimise the number of dwellings that are south-facing only. This will allow sunlight to enter dwellings in winter.
- Do all dwellings benefit from good access to natural light and an outlook from habitable rooms?
- Are internal living spaces well positioned on the site for natural light, and access to secluded private outdoor living space?

- Do individual dwellings have windows that face in more than one direction to allow for cross-flow ventilation and natural air flow through the dwelling?
- Has the layout been designed to avoid bedrooms with borrowed light, light admitted via light courts, screening to windows or high screening to balconies?
- Is the site organised and planned in such a way to promote privacy and safety for new residents and maintain privacy and safety for existing residents?
- Has the site been organised to promote passive surveillance of common and public areas, promoting safety through creating situations of overlooking?
- Have you considered the accessibility of your development for a range of users from those with mobility impairments to residents in wheelchairs and with prams and bicycles?
- Has an appropriate development yield been achieved without compromising the overall design quality and amenity of residents? Does the layout of your building ensure that all good design standards are met without compromise?

WHAT TO DO

- Explain how your proposed development organises dwellings on the site to maximise the overall amenity benefits and quality of life for all residents.
- Explain how sunlight access, privacy, safety and accessibility are supported by the layout of your proposed development.
- Demonstrate that all dwellings avoid borrowed light or reliance on light courts?
- Illustrate how you have planned all the dwellings to minimise the need for high-level screening to windows and balconies, ensuring all key habitable rooms have an outlook.

8. YOUR ANSWER:



Creating a home

QUESTION 9

Has the design of each dwelling been carefully composed to maximise its amenity and ensure all spaces are fit for purpose?

PROMPTS:

Does every space work in practical terms, with furniture layouts that are livable? Does the furniture required for a given room actually fit?

Can each room provide the qualities of 'home' appropriate to the dwelling?

Are bedrooms given privacy, comfort and quiet?

Are living spaces given views, space and flexibility?

Are utility and service areas like laundries and kitchens designed for adequate storage, good access and practicality?

Does the dwelling generally provide appropriate levels of space, amenity and storage suitable for the number of proposed residents?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Proposed developments may be sold as real estate, but they quickly become homes for their occupants. The fundamental principles of what makes a home work are well understood, as is the understanding that good design can improve quality of life.

YOUR APPLICATION

- All dwellings in your proposed development should have a practical and appealing layout, with thorough consideration of usability. Have you included furniture layouts in your application that demonstrate the usability of each dwelling?
- Do your dwellings have good access to natural light and ventilation with windows to all habitable rooms?
- Have you reduced areas of circulation, or where they are required, designed them to serve more than one function?
- Are your dwellings suitably private, particularly with regards to bedrooms and living spaces, and the relationship to common areas or shared access ways?
- Have you provided a broom cupboard, a linen cupboard, and additional storage in every dwelling?
- Is there adequate storage in your kitchen, and does it include a pantry?
- Is external storage provided adjacent to outdoor living space?

WHAT TO DO

- Demonstrate how your proposed development allows for practical furniture layouts, functional spaces, privacy, storage, good connectivity between living spaces indoor and outdoor, and good amenity in bedrooms and all habitable rooms.
- Show furniture layouts on your plans to illustrate how every room works, is fit for its intended purpose, and provide for the positive amenity aspects of a home to the dwelling.
- Explain how you have provided privacy, access to natural light and ventilation in each dwelling.

Creating a home

QUESTION 10

Do the common areas of the building provide for enjoyment, ease of movement, connectivity and accessibility?

PROMPTS:

Is it easy to get to each dwelling? Are corridors short, ventilated and naturally lit with open stairs on shorter buildings?

Does the passage of residents through the building still allow for the privacy of others?

Is the 'front door' impression a positive one for daily use and welcoming guests?

Have the needs of bicycle and pram users been considered?

Are everyday activities considered and supported by good design: taking out rubbish, waiting for a taxi in wet weather, climbing the stairs, bringing in the groceries, checking the mail?

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

- Secondary, access and 'connection' spaces we use every day contribute to our ability to enjoy the buildings and places we live in.
- In these spaces we make the transition from the public to the private realm, and we welcome guests and escort them to our homes.
- These are the spaces where residents are given the opportunity to meet each other or make their way to their dwelling in privacy.
- Stairs that are easily accessible and enjoyable promote greater use, with increased incidental physical activity of residents leading to improved health.
- The quality of such spaces has a large impact on our sense of a place and should always be considered as an extension of the home, providing stability and security and being attractive and desirable.

YOUR APPLICATION

- Are such areas carefully designed as an integral and considered part of the design?

- New buildings may contain foyers, stairs, circulation corridors, mail areas, refuse areas, bicycle storage areas, storage access spaces, carparks and other common spaces.
- Are refuse areas, the routes to them and their ventilation outlets, carefully located away from residential entries, outdoor living spaces and communal spaces to avoid any sensitive interfaces?
- Are circulation and common areas attractive, with good light, ventilation, universal accessibility for people of all abilities and well designed for passive safety (no blind or dark corners, good overlooking where possible)?
- Are the common areas planned carefully to avoid an intrusion of privacy or disruption to adjacent residencies? Are entries to dwellings clearly separated and/or indented to avoid a loss of privacy and conflict between neighbours?
- In multi-unit developments, have the communal stairs been designed as a principle means of vertical circulation favoured over lifts, and where possible, open to an atrium or the common corridors?
- Can large items of furniture be moved with ease to all rooms of each dwelling?
- In developments with more compact dwellings, is there a secure communal space for prams and bicycles on the ground floor?

WHAT TO DO

- Provide the explanatory material that demonstrates the design of front doors, entries and common areas meets a good standard and will contribute to the quality of the proposed development.
- Demonstrate how your design creates a good 'front door impression' and provides a strong sense of place for residents.
- Explain how you have considered the privacy and access issues of residents with careful planning and a layout of supporting storage or service spaces.
- Demonstrate how shared circulation spaces are enjoyable spaces that are naturally lit, accessible, inviting and safe.

10. YOUR ANSWER:



GLOSSARY

The following glossary of terms explains some key concepts used in the Ten Questions document of the Good Design Standard.

Planners, architects and urban designers sometimes seem to be using a different language when they talk about our buildings and landscapes. This language has evolved over time to make the complex ideas and issues relating to the built environment understandable by professionals. Here we attempt to explain in plain English the meaning and definition of some of these words.

The terms are presented in alphabetical order.

- **Accessibility:** a concept relating to the ease of people of differing abilities to gain access to and from a place. Closely related to connectivity.
- **Activation:** defined as the positioning of uses and rooms behind façades that suggest/encourage surveillance and activity through windows and doors. Of particular importance at ground level adjacent to streets.
- **Amenity:** defined as the benefits that a place provides in supporting a good quality of life to residents, the public or a neighbour. A desirable development is one that provides good amenity to residents, the public and its neighbours.
- **Appropriate:** defined as a quality of one thing being suitable or suited to something else (for example context, adjoining buildings, streetscape).
- **Articulation:** defined as the particular way built form is shaped and detailed to create visual interest and building definition. Example form: "The articulation of the parapet creates a distinctive building profile".
- **Borrowed light:** light admitted to an internalised room through a secondary space. Borrowed light should be avoided, but may be considered for studio apartments only.
- **Boundaries:** the edges of a lot / property (side, front and rear).
- **Building quality:** defined as the use of materials, finishes and details that are durable and robust, and that will age well.
- **Built form:** defined as the physical shape of buildings and building elements, example question, "Is the built form out of scale with the streetscape?"
- **Character:** the features, details and qualities of a place or building that form an overall impression or individual expression.
- **Connectivity:** the quality of connection, which may be visual or physical, and relate to views, pedestrian movement, bicycle or vehicle movement; in general, the ability to get from one point in a place or building to another. Good or easy connectivity is desirable, and having connectivity options makes a place feel and become safer.
- **Context:** the physical, social and economic characteristics of the site and its surroundings.
- **Context, Physical:** the setting of a building or place, and its qualities. Including, built form, development and subdivision pattern, landscape, heritage, urban structure and environmental conditions.
- **Context, Social:** means how people in the locality will be affected by the development.
- **Context, Economic:** the contribution the development will have on the local economy, to support and encourage positive investment and growth, for example, the creation or loss of jobs.
- **Context, Planning:** the policies and strategic guidance applicable to the site as outlined by the Planning Scheme that affect the development outcome.
- **Contrast:** the positive element of surprise as a result of a deviation from surrounding norms. Example form: "The built form is articulated in a way that creates a pleasing contrast to the context and is not at odds with it."
- **Development:** a proposed construction project that will make changes to the physical environment, thus altering site and some aspects of the context. As defined in the Planning Scheme, development may include the construction and exterior alteration or exterior decoration of a building; the demolition or removal of a building or works; the construction or carrying out of works; the subdivision or consolidation land, including buildings or airspace; the placing or relocation of a building or works on land; or the construction or putting up for display of signs and hoardings.
- **Form:** defined as shape or appearance. Example question, "How is the form articulated on the boundary?" "How does the proposed development reflect the form of the streetscape?"
- **Frontage:** defined as the part of the building facing and/or connected to a street, laneway or open space at the front of a lot. The frontage needs to be considered 'in the round', and not just as a 2-dimensional façade treatment. Note that a site may have more than one frontage.
- **Good design:** design that creates new buildings and places that are well suited to their site and setting, and well suited to their intended purpose. Good design is well proportioned, attractively finished and durable. Good design is the objective of this document.
- **Home:** the place where someone lives, the fixed residence of a family or household; the physical infrastructure that supports a good quality of life and positive mental well-being for residents.
- **Intensity:** the density or concentration of uses and built form in a given location.

- **Legibility:** a legible design is one that is easy to understand and find your way around without the need for signage. A legible design is one where different uses are clearly understood and the division between public and private is clear.
- **Light:** sunlight or artificial light are both important. Light is an important aspect of amenity (good natural light equals positive amenity) and it is desirable in all habitable rooms and outdoor spaces. Artificial light can improve safety, identify entrances and improve legibility after dark.
- **Light courts:** a space formed by the outer walls of the building that admits light and air to adjacent habitable rooms. Light courts should be avoided to serve multiple dwellings, or as the primary means to light and air for key habitable rooms.
- **Lightness and heaviness:** a quality of built form. Example question, “Does the building form appear light or heavy?”
- **Massing:** also referred to as bulk and massing, it is defined as the way built form is brought together to create an impression and three-dimensional shape, example question, “Does the building massing along the boundary impact visually on the neighbours?”, “How are buildings massed in the streetscape?”
- **Overlooking:** the act of being able to see from one part of a place into another. Can be positive (see surveillance below) or negative (when new development threatens to overlook existing secluded private open space or into habitable room windows).
- **Physical environment or built environment:** defined in this document as the physical place, including landscape and buildings.
- **Place:** related to context and character, the collective atmosphere of the local context, which should be built upon or strengthened. Example question: “How does the development create a sense of place for future residents?”
- **Proportions:** the relative sizes of doors, windows, and overall buildings and building elements in relation to each other. A well proportioned façade will be visually pleasing and attractive.
- **Quality:** a relative characteristic of a development or design in relation to agreed principles of good design. Ranges from poor or low to good or high, where a high quality design will address good design principles when considered overall.
- **Rhythm:** a quality of building form or elements of a building, example question, “Are the columns in a uniform rhythm or are they spaced at varying intervals?”, or, “Does the built form complement the rhythm of the streetscape”, or, “Is the rhythm of buildings along the streetscape interrupted or reflected in the proposed development?”
- **Scale:** defined as the relative size and relative appearance of the building form in relation to other elements or aspects of the place; example question: “Is the building form of an appropriate scale to the streetscape? Is the building height graduated between surrounding built form?”
- **Secluded private open space:** defined as outdoor areas that are used by residents for leisure or relaxing. Should have a connection to indoor living space, have good solar access, and not be overlooked unduly by new development.
- **Security:** the perception and reality of making a place safe through the design of the physical environment. Surveillance (and creating a sense of surveillance) is a major aspect of this, as is the creation of good connectivity. Example question, “Does the design or height of front fencing or landscaping allow for surveillance of the property?”
- **Setbacks:** the distance between a building or building element and a front, side or rear boundary or other reference points (for example, podium edges). The Planning Scheme defines the setback as the minimum distance from any allotment boundary to a building. Example form: “The building setback is 3 metres at the first floor level”.
- **Site:** the specific location or property where the development or building is proposed.
- **Streetscape:** the overall impression, appearance and form of the street, as composed of elements of building frontages, architectural styles, building scale, setbacks, rhythm and trees and other features of the landscape.
- **Surveillance (passive) and outlook:** defined as the ability of people to view or overlook a space or place when going about their normal business, achieved through the building design, layout and use of rooms. Can also relate to ‘overlooking’ in the positive sense.
- **Typology:** categorisation of different types of residential dwellings and their layout, for instance: broad fronted apartment, ‘saddle-back’ apartment, townhouse, side-by-side, duplex, detached house, etc. Example form: “The proposed typology is not considered suitable for the site”.
- **Visual impact:** defined as the resulting impression, visually, of a building, building element or other aspects of the development. For example, how does the building appear when viewed from the streetscape or a neighbour’s back yard.
- **Yield:** The gross area or quantity of dwellings, or the number of commercial and/or retail tenancies proposed on a site.



GOOD DESIGN STANDARD

●●● *Better neighbourhoods,
streetscapes & homes*

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