

Description of Existing Character

The character of this precinct is predominantly attributed to the strong presence of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings. Several streets have intact rows of dwellings from these eras, many of which have been extended or restored. There have also been a number of infill developments in this precinct, ranging from the 1960s to the present era. Infill development tends to be in the form of blocks of flats, units and dual occupancies.

Community Values

- Quiet residential area with family homes.
- Trees in the streets and private gardens.
- Nearby parklands and waterways with abundant birdlife.
- Bike paths and good access to transport.
- Victorian and Edwardian era dwellings, particularly those that have been renovated.
- Local facilities such as vibrant shopping centres, schools and entertainment.
- Single storey, detached homes.
- Views from Rucker’s Hill.
- Mixed housing styles in appropriate locations.

Key Characteristics

Era/style of development	Victorian and Edwardian style dwellings are predominant. There are many streets with intact streetscapes from these eras. Exceptions to this include a pocket of 1960s orange brick development located on the northern side of Westbourne Grove west of the railway line, and a housing estate in Walker Street comprising 3-4 storey 1960s-70s flats.
Materials	Victorian dwellings are either timber or brick construction, while Edwardian buildings are timber.
Position on site	Front setbacks are typically small, ranging between 1 m. and 6 m., with several rows of terraces with consistent setbacks. Side setbacks are frequently not present, and otherwise are 0.8 – 2 m.
Height	Dwellings are usually single storey, however more recently developed dwellings are often two storeys in height.
Building shape	There are many rows of single fronted terrace houses, and simple Edwardian villas with a projecting room and return verandah.
Roof Form	Victorian terraces generally have hipped or parapet roofs, while Edwardian styles mostly have gable roofs. Roofs are a mix of corrugated iron, slate and tile.
Vehicle access/storage	Crossings are rare, with few properties having on-site parking. Rear laneways are common.
Garden Style	Gardens mostly comprise exotic species, with occasional canopy trees. There are also a number of cottage gardens and some examples of Mediterranean style gardens.
Front boundary	Front fences are generally 1 - 1.2 m and permeable. Front gardens are usually low level.

Other Characteristics

Topography	Land west of the railway line is relatively flat, rising sharply to the north - east of the railway line.
Subdivision pattern	Site sizes are small and range from 175 sq.m. to 350 sq.m., and the subdivision pattern is east-west grid.
Landmarks	The former convent buildings fronting St Georges Road are a highly recognisable feature of the area. Merri Station is also a local landmark. This precinct is adjacent to the Northcote Activity Centre, focussed around High Street.
Street trees	Mixture of medium sized street trees, predominantly exotic deciduous species including robinia, plane as well as some avenue plating and street landscaping with native species.
Kerbs and channel	Kerbs and channels are predominantly concrete, with occasional concrete kerb with bluestone channel. New concrete rollover kerbs have been installed in some streets.
Footpaths/nature strips	Footpaths are usually asphalt in the north-eastern part of the precinct, and concrete in the south-western part. Nature strips are not provided in the south-western area, while they 1 - 2 metres wide in the north-eastern part.

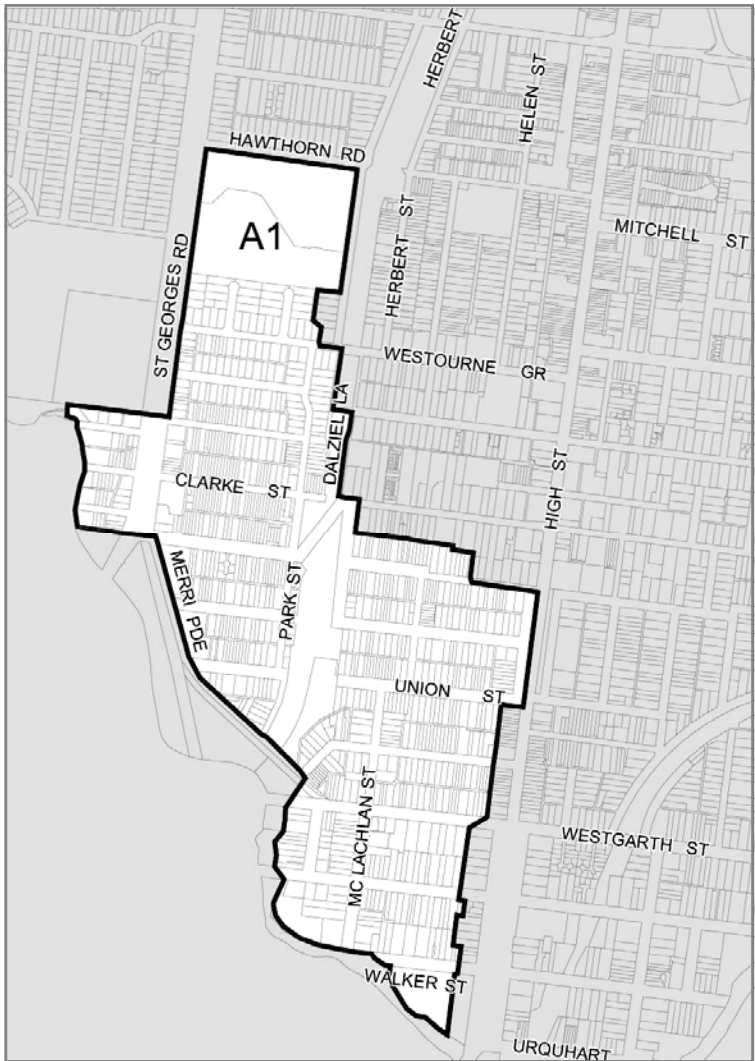
Preferred Character Statement

Victorian and Edwardian dwellings will continue to be set behind established gardens that match the era of development and make the most of limited front setbacks. These two architectural styles will dominate the housing type in the Precinct. Infill buildings will acknowledge the form, scale, siting and materials of surrounding Victorian or Edwardian era buildings. Low or transparent front fences will contribute to the openness of streetscapes and allow views to front gardens and dwellings.

This will be achieved by:

- Encouraging retention of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, where located within the Heritage Overlay or where these dwellings contribute to the valued character of the area.
- Designing new dwellings that interpret the defining elements of Victorian or Edwardian eras in a contemporary manner, while respecting existing period architecture.
- Maintaining the predominant single storey scale of building frontages.
- Keeping front fences low and preferably transparent.
- Ensuring that front gardens are not dominated by car parking spaces or structures.
- Encouraging additional planting in all gardens across the precinct. In smaller gardens, selecting species that are appropriate to small planting areas.

Precinct Map



Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study



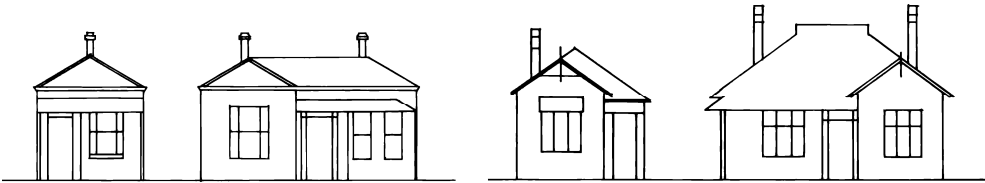
Precinct A1



Design Guidelines

CHARACTER ELEMENT	DESIGN OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
EXISTING BUILDINGS	To encourage the retention of older dwellings that contribute to the valued character of the area in the design of development proposals.	In streets that contain intact groups of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, consider retaining and/or adapting those buildings that are in good condition, particularly the front section, wherever possible in new development. ILLUSTRATION 1	<i>Loss of intact streetscapes and new development that is out of scale and character with the existing Victorian/Edwardian dwellings.</i>
VEGETATION	To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings and the presence of trees in the streetscape.	Applications for new development should be accompanied by a landscape concept plan that includes retention of trees and shrubs wherever possible, and provides for the planting of new vegetation. ILLUSTRATION 2 Buildings should be sited and designed to retain large, established trees where present and to incorporate space for the planting of substantial vegetation, such as canopy trees, on larger sites. ILLUSTRATION 3 For smaller sites with limited garden space, allow for the planting of species that are particularly suitable for small garden areas.	<i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of impervious surfaces.</i> <i>Removal of large, established, healthy trees, and the location of buildings on top of the root zone of trees.</i> <i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient setbacks to accommodate trees.</i>
	To integrate garden settings with creek-side environs.	Select native species for private gardens and street planting in areas close to the Merri Creek.	<i>Weed species or exotic vegetation in private gardens located near creek-side environs.</i>
SITING	To provide space for front gardens.	Buildings should be set back from the front boundary a sufficient distance to accommodate a front garden.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain and reinforce the existing rhythm of spacing between dwellings.	In streets with predominantly attached terrace style housing, new dwellings should reflect the lack of side setbacks. ILLUSTRATION 4 In streets with predominantly detached style housing, new dwellings should be set back from at least one side boundary for a distance in accordance with the predominant setback pattern in the street. Where a new development is proposed to be sited on one side boundary in streetscapes with detached buildings, the section of the dwelling on the boundary should be recessed from the facade of the dwelling to create the appearance of space between buildings. ILLUSTRATION 5	<i>Boundary to boundary development in streetscapes where a detached style predominates.</i>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space and the dominance of car parking structures.	Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling. Minimise paving in front garden areas including driveways and crossovers. Use permeable driveway materials. Provide vehicular access from a rear laneway if available. Where rear access is not available and crossovers are common, one crossover per site may be provided. ILLUSTRATION 6	<i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i> <i>Creation of new crossovers in streets that do not have crossovers.</i> <i>Creation of wide driveways or crossovers.</i> <i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i>
HEIGHT AND BUILDING FORM	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the predominant height and form of buildings in the streetscape.	In streets with mostly single storey buildings, upper levels should be set back a substantial distance from the front façade (e.g. the distance of one room) or accommodated within roof spaces. In streets where pitched roofs dominate, provide a pitched roof form for the part of the building visible from the street. ILLUSTRATION 7	<i>Buildings that are out of scale with adjoining buildings or that appear to dominate the streetscape.</i> <i>Buildings that do not incorporate pitched roof forms where dominant in the street.</i>
MATERIALS AND DESIGN DETAIL	To ensure that the use of materials and design detail in new development complements that of the predominant building styles in the street.	In streets with many Victorian or Edwardian dwellings, new development should interpret the defining elements of these styles in a contemporary way. ILLUSTRATION 8 In predominantly timber or weatherboard streetscapes, new dwellings should incorporate timber or other non-masonry materials.	<i>Large expanses of poorly articulated wall surfaces of one material only.</i> <i>Reproduction styles and detailing in Heritage Overlay areas.</i>
	To encourage buildings that contribute positively to the streetscape through the use of innovative architectural responses and by presenting visually interesting facades to the street.	Articulate the form and façades of buildings through the use of different colours and materials, through the composition of openings and setbacks and through variations in wall surfaces. Outside Heritage Overlay areas, cultural expression through colour, building details and architectural reinterpretation could be included in a design.	<i>Large, bulky buildings with unarticulated wall surfaces.</i>
	To use materials and finishes that harmonise with the Merri Creek setting for dwellings within close proximity of the creek.	Use materials such as natural timber, stone, or brick in subdued tones and finishes that complement the creek environment and its bushland qualities. Consideration should also be given to how the materials will weather over time.	<i>Brightly coloured or highly reflective materials or finishes.</i>
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views to established gardens and dwellings.	Front fences should be appropriate to the building era (e.g. picket, low brick or wire), or reflect the typical fencing height and style of the street. Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the building. ILLUSTRATION 9	<i>High, solid front fencing.</i>

ILLUSTRATION 1



Victorian
Hipped roof to the street with minimal eaves, verandah front with separate roof structure from the main structure.

Edwardian
Steeply pitched, hipped main roof with smaller gable end to the street. Verandahs generally integrated with the main roof.

ILLUSTRATION 2

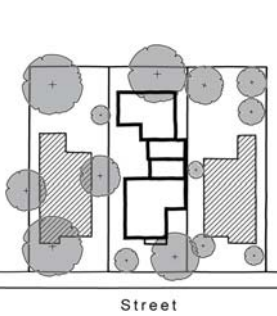


ILLUSTRATION 3

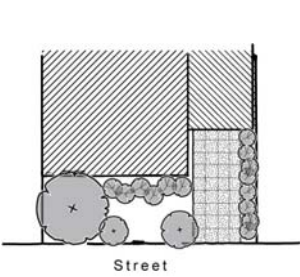


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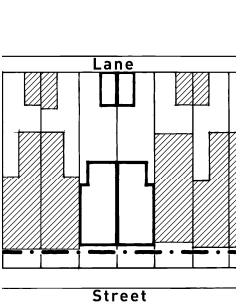


ILLUSTRATION 5

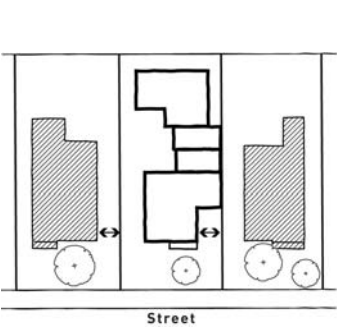


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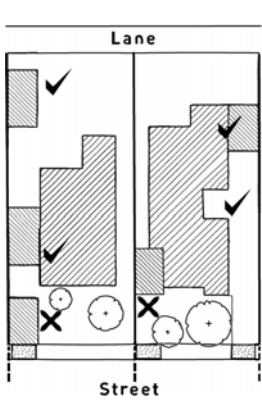


ILLUSTRATION 7



ILLUSTRATION 8

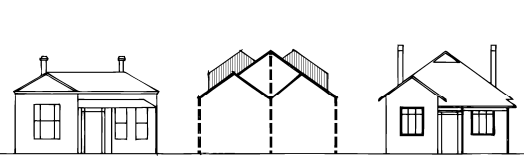
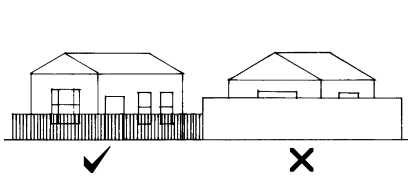


ILLUSTRATION 9



Description of Existing Character

The character of this area is typified by dwellings from the Victorian and Edwardian eras with overbuilding from the 1960s onwards. Many original dwellings have been restored or extended, resulting in a high quality of housing stock in many streets. Medium density dwellings constructed on an unused strip of railway land in Ethel Street form a significant brownfield development in the precinct. While gardens are generally limited by small front setbacks, many original dwellings capitalise on these spaces with cottage gardens consisting of shrubs, flower beds and occasional trees. When combined with street trees, this creates a leafy character in many streets.

Community Values

- Quiet residential area.
 - Trees and parklands which attract birdlife.
 - Wide roads and street planting.
 - Bike paths and rear laneways.
 - Victorian and Edwardian era buildings.
 - Freestanding homes.
 - Local facilities such as shops and schools.
- Proximity to transport.
 - Well landscaped streets with nature strips and trees.
 - Homes with gardens that have space for families.
 - Parklands and open spaces.
 - Low scale of development that creates a sense of openness in the street.

Key Characteristics

Era/style of development	The precinct is predominantly a mixture of Victorian and Edwardian style dwellings. There are pockets where one of these eras predominate. Occasional infill development occurs in the form of 1960s single dwellings and blocks of flats as well as more recent contemporary and reproduction style dwellings.
Materials	The Victorian dwellings are predominantly of brick construction, with the Edwardian buildings being timber.
Position on site	Front setbacks are typically small, ranging between 3 m. and 6 m., with several rows of terraces with consistent setbacks. Side setbacks are frequently not present and otherwise are 0.8 – 2 m.
Height	Dwellings are usually single storey, with occasional two storey terraces and additions. Blocks of flats are generally two storeys in height.
Building shape	There are many rows of single fronted terrace houses, and simple Edwardian villas with a projecting room and return verandah.
Roof	Roofs are both hipped and gable and are predominantly corrugated iron, however, some dwellings have tiled roofs. Flat roofs are evident in more recently developed dwellings.
Vehicle access/storage	Crossings are infrequent, with wider properties having on-site parking.
Garden Style	Gardens are established with shrubs, garden beds and lawn but are often low-level.
Front boundary	Front fences are usually 1 – 1.2 m high.

Other Characteristics

Topography	The land west of High Street is relatively flat, rising slightly to the north and south, and east of High Street the land is undulating, gradually sloping down to the east.
Subdivision pattern	Site sizes are small and range from 175 sq.m. to 350 sq.m., and the subdivision pattern is predominantly east-west grid. Rear laneways are common.
Street trees	Mixture of medium sized street trees, including callistemon, eucalyptus, brush box and paper bark.
Kerbs and channel	Kerbs and channels are predominantly concrete, with occasional concrete kerb with bluestone channel. A limited number of streets have both bluestone kerb and channel.
Footpaths/nature strips	Footpaths are usually concrete, with some pockets of asphalt footpaths. Nature strips are generally 1 - 2 metres wide.
Views	Limited views are available to the west and south to the city.

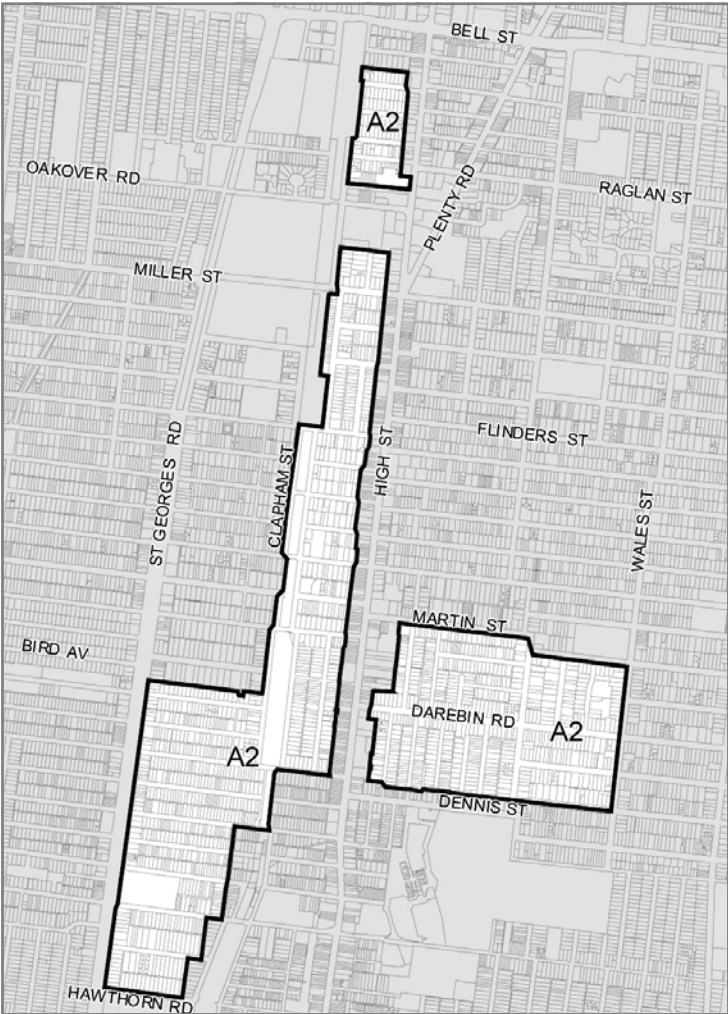
Preferred Character Statement

Victorian and Edwardian dwellings will be retained and enhanced through thoughtful restoration and maintenance. Infill buildings will acknowledge the form, scale, siting and materials of surrounding Victorian or Edwardian era buildings. Second storey extensions and new developments will be respectful of generally low-scale streetscapes. Established gardens with landscaping suited to smaller spaces will create a pleasant leafy character, and views to front gardens and dwellings will be maintained through the use of low to medium height front fences.

This will be achieved by:

- Retaining the existing Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, where located within the Heritage Overlay or where these dwellings contribute to the valued character of the area.
- Designing new dwellings that interpret elements of Victorian or Edwardian eras in a contemporary manner, while respecting existing period architecture.
- Maintaining the predominant single storey scale of the area.
- Ensuring new dwellings accord with the predominant front and side setbacks of nearby buildings.
- Keeping front fences low and preferably transparent.
- Encouraging additional planting in all gardens across the precinct. In smaller gardens, selecting species that are appropriate to small planting areas.
- Ensuring that front gardens are not dominated by car parking spaces or structures.

Precinct Map



Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study



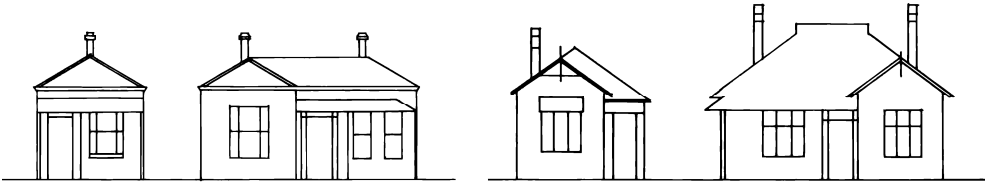
Precinct A2



Design Guidelines

CHARACTER ELEMENT	DESIGN OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
EXISTING BUILDINGS	To encourage the retention of older dwellings that contribute to the valued character of the area in the design of development proposals.	In streets that contain intact groups of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, consider retaining and/or adapting those buildings that are in good condition, particularly the front section, wherever possible in new development. ILLUSTRATION 1	<i>Loss of intact streetscapes and new development that is out of scale and character with the existing Victorian/Edwardian dwellings.</i>
VEGETATION	To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings and the presence of trees in the streetscape.	<p>Applications for new development should be accompanied by a landscape concept plan that includes retention of trees and shrubs wherever possible, and provides for the planting of new vegetation. ILLUSTRATION 2</p> <p>Buildings should be sited and designed to retain large, established trees where present and to incorporate space for the planting of substantial vegetation, such as canopy trees, on larger sites. ILLUSTRATION 3</p> <p>For smaller sites with limited garden space, allow for the planting of species that are particularly suitable for small garden areas.</p>	<p><i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i></p> <p><i>Large areas of impervious surfaces.</i></p> <p><i>Removal of large, established, healthy trees, and the location of buildings on top of the root zone of trees.</i></p> <p><i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient setbacks to accommodate trees.</i></p>
SITING	To provide space for front gardens.	Buildings should be set back from the front boundary a sufficient distance to accommodate a front garden.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain and reinforce the existing rhythm of spacing between dwellings.	<p>In streets with predominantly attached terrace style housing, new dwellings should reflect the lack of side setbacks. ILLUSTRATION 4</p> <p>In streets with predominantly detached style housing, new dwellings should be set back from at least one side boundary for a distance in accordance with the predominant setback pattern in the street.</p> <p>Where a new development is proposed to be sited on one side boundary in streetscapes with detached buildings, the section of the dwelling on the boundary should be recessed from the facade of the dwelling to create the appearance of space between buildings.</p> <p>ILLUSTRATION 5</p>	<p><i>Boundary to boundary development in streetscapes where a detached style predominates.</i></p>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space and the dominance of car parking structures.	<p>Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling.</p> <p>Minimise paving in front garden areas including driveways and crossovers.</p> <p>Use permeable driveway materials.</p> <p>Provide vehicular access from a rear laneway if available.</p> <p>Where rear access is not available and crossovers are common, one crossover per site may be provided.</p> <p>ILLUSTRATION 6</p>	<p><i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of new crossovers in streets that do not have crossovers.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of wide crossovers.</i></p> <p><i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i></p>
HEIGHT AND BUILDING FORM	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the predominant height and form of buildings in the streetscape.	<p>In streets with mostly single storey buildings, upper levels should be set back a substantial distance from the front façade (e.g. the distance of one room) or accommodated within roof spaces.</p> <p>In streets where pitched roofs dominate, provide a pitched roof form for the part of the building visible from the street.</p> <p>ILLUSTRATION 7</p>	<p><i>Buildings that are out of scale with adjoining buildings or that appear to dominate the streetscape.</i></p> <p><i>Buildings that do not incorporate pitched roof forms where dominant in the street.</i></p>
MATERIALS AND DESIGN DETAIL	To ensure that the use of materials and design detail in new development complements that of the predominant building styles in the street.	<p>In streets with many Victorian or Edwardian dwellings, new development should interpret the defining elements of these styles in a contemporary way. ILLUSTRATION 8</p> <p>In predominantly timber or weatherboard streetscapes, new dwellings should incorporate timber or other non-masonry materials.</p>	<p><i>Large expanses of poorly articulated wall surfaces of one material only.</i></p> <p><i>Reproduction styles and detailing in Heritage Overlay areas.</i></p>
	To encourage buildings that contribute positively to the streetscape through the use of innovative architectural responses and by presenting visually interesting facades to the street.	<p>Articulate the form and façades of buildings through the use of different colours and materials, through the composition of openings and setbacks and through variations in wall surfaces.</p> <p>Outside Heritage Overlay areas, cultural expression through colour, building details and architectural reinterpretation could be included in a design.</p>	<i>Large, bulky buildings with unarticulated wall surfaces.</i>
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views to established gardens and dwellings.	<p>Front fences should be appropriate to the building era (e.g. picket, low brick or wire), or reflect the typical fencing height and style of the street.</p> <p>Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the dwelling. ILLUSTRATION 9</p>	<i>High, solid front fencing.</i>

ILLUSTRATION 1



Victorian
Hipped roof to the street with minimal eaves, verandah front with separate roof structure from the main structure.

Edwardian
Steeply pitched, hipped main roof with smaller gable end to the street. Verandahs generally integrated with the main roof.

ILLUSTRATION 2

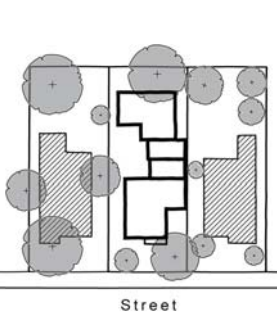


ILLUSTRATION 3

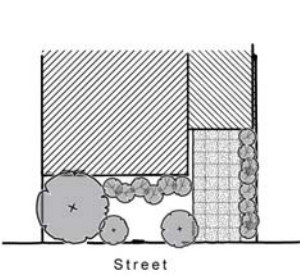


ILLUSTRATION 4

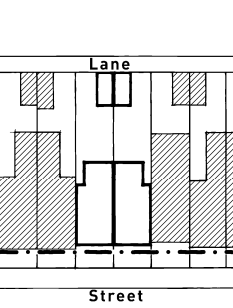


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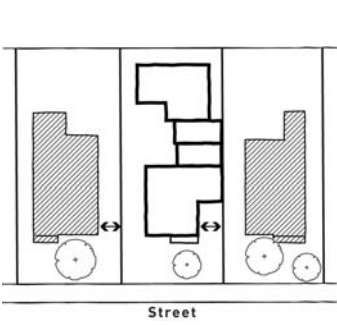


ILLUSTRATION 6

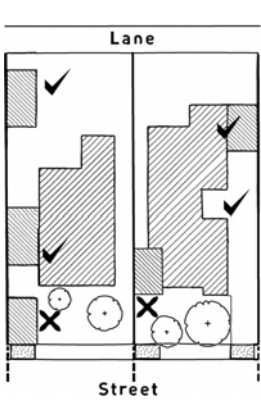


ILLUSTRATION 7

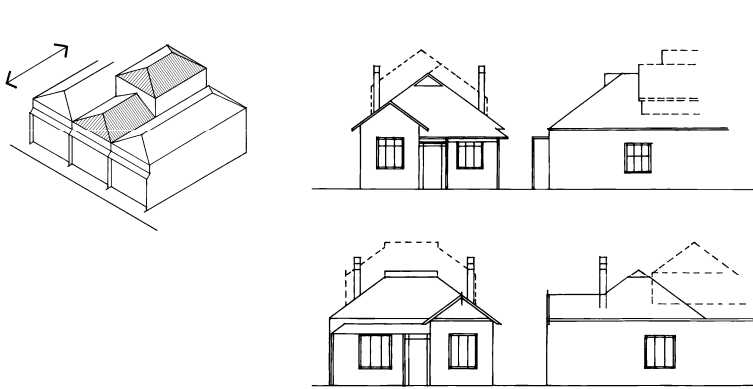


ILLUSTRATION 8

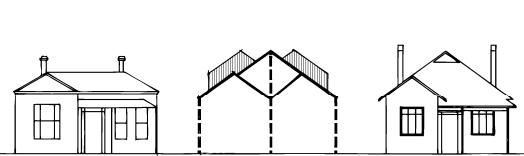
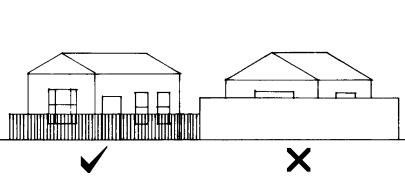


ILLUSTRATION 9



Description of Existing Character

Although lot sizes are not particularly small in this precinct, the area has a distinct inner-city feel due to smaller setbacks, terrace houses and medium density dwellings. Housing styles are a mix of Victorian and Edwardian homes with occasional Californian bungalows and more recent infill. A number of older homes have also been restored or extended, adding to the quality of housing stock in the area. Newer dwellings are generally respectful of period homes, however some tend to overdevelop sites through bulky, unarticulated designs with small or no front setbacks.

Community Values

- Quiet residential area with family homes.
 - Trees in the streets and private gardens.
 - Nearby parklands and waterways with abundant birdlife.
 - Bike paths and good access to transport.
 - Heritage buildings, particularly those that have been renovated.
- Local facilities such as vibrant shopping centres, schools and entertainment.
 - Single storey, detached homes.
 - Views from Rucker’s Hill.
 - Mixed housing styles in appropriate locations.

Key Characteristics

Era/style of development	Predominantly a mixture of Victorian and Edwardian style dwellings with some Californian bungalows and some recent infill dwellings. Occasional infill 1960s development is evident, particularly around High Street. Buildings range from single fronted terraces to large two storey homes commanding expansive views.
Materials	Brick and timber dwellings are found throughout the area. Brick is usually pressed red. Roofs are a mixture of corrugated iron and terracotta tiles.
Position on site	Front setbacks vary within the area, but are relatively consistent within streets, with occasional rows of terraces with consistent setbacks. Side setbacks are frequently not present and otherwise are 0.8 – 2 metres.
Height	Dwellings are usually single storey.
Building shape	Dwellings are frequently individual designs and form varies with the era.
Vehicle access/storage	Crossings are infrequent, however wider properties usually have on-site parking.
Garden Style	Front gardens are established with mixed species and occasional medium sized trees. There are a number of cottage gardens throughout the precinct.
Front boundary	Front fences are usually 1 - 1.2 metres high and permeable, however there are some high, solid front fences throughout the precinct.

Other Characteristics

Topography	The precinct is located on the Northcote hilltop, known as ‘Rucker’s Hill’, the highest point in the metropolitan area.
Subdivision pattern	The subdivision pattern is predominantly grid. Rear laneways are frequent.
Landmarks	Northcote Hill itself is a regional landmark. Former Northcote Town Hall and High Street Activity Centre.
Street trees	Mixture of medium sized street trees, although occasionally streets have none.
Kerbs and channel	Approximately half the streets have bluestone kerbs and channels or bluestone channel only, while the other half have concrete
Footpaths/nature strips	Footpaths are usually concrete, with some pockets of asphalt footpaths. Nature strips are generally 1 - 2 metres wide, however some streets have no nature strips.
Views	Views from this precinct are extensive, to the south, east and west.

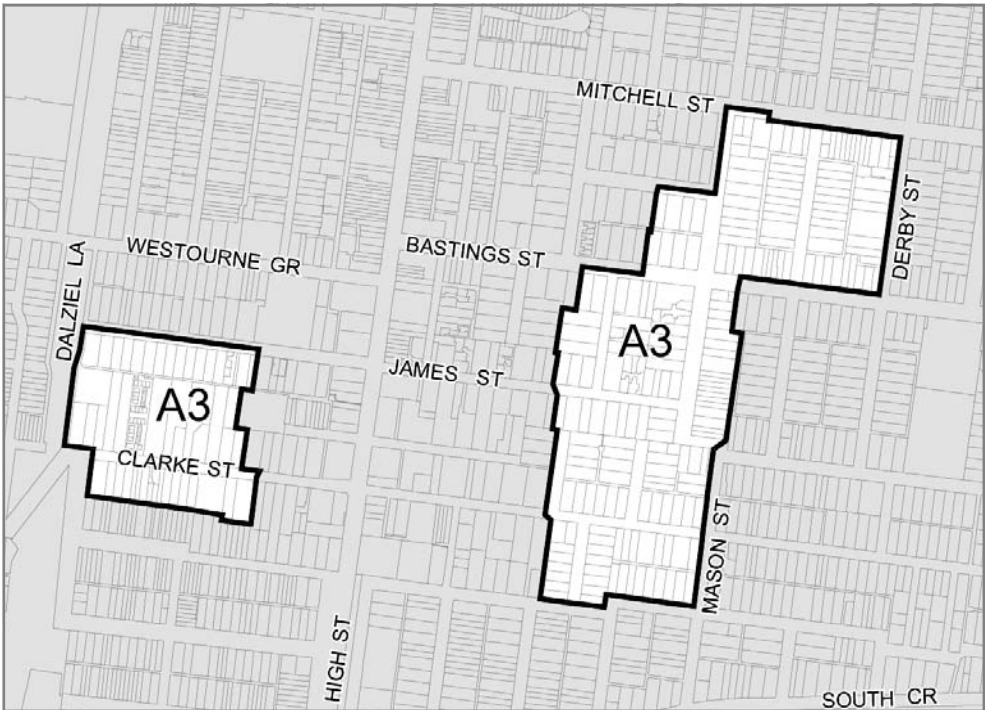
Preferred Character Statement

The inner-city feel of this precinct will be maintained throughout. Victorian and Edwardian dwellings will be retained and enhanced through maintenance and thoughtful restoration. Extensions to these buildings and new dwellings will acknowledge the form, scale, siting and materials of surrounding Victorian or Edwardian era buildings. Dwellings will capitalise on small setbacks through landscaping and sufficient planting that will and add to the landscape quality of the area. Gardens will be bounded by low to medium height or transparent front fences to maintain views to gardens and dwellings.

This will be achieved by:

- Retaining Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, where located within the Heritage Overlay or where these dwellings contribute to the valued character of the area.
- Designing new dwellings that interpret elements of Victorian or Edwardian eras in a contemporary manner, while respecting existing period architecture.
- Maintaining the low scale of the area.
- Ensuring that front gardens are not dominated by car parking spaces or structures.
- Respecting the predominant front and side setbacks of nearby buildings.
- Keeping front fences low and preferably permeable.
- Encouraging additional planting in all gardens across the precinct. In smaller gardens, selecting species that are appropriate to small planting areas.

Precinct Map



Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study



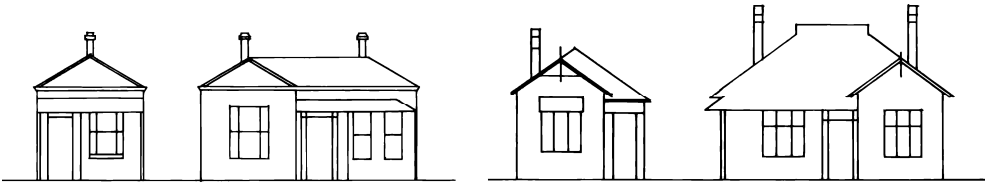
Precinct A3



Design Guidelines

CHARACTER ELEMENT	DESIGN OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
EXISTING BUILDINGS	To encourage the retention of older dwellings that contribute to the valued character of the area in the design of development proposals.	In streets that contain intact groups of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, consider retaining and/or adapting those buildings that are in good condition, particularly the front section, wherever possible in new development. ILLUSTRATION 1	<i>Loss of intact streetscapes and new development that is out of scale and character with the existing Victorian/Edwardian dwellings.</i>
VEGETATION	To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings and the presence of trees in the streetscape.	<p>Applications for new development should be accompanied by a landscape concept plan that includes retention of trees and shrubs wherever possible, and provides for the planting of new vegetation. ILLUSTRATION 2</p> <p>Buildings should be sited and designed to retain large, established trees where present and to incorporate space for the planting of substantial vegetation, such as canopy trees, on larger sites. ILLUSTRATION 3</p> <p>For smaller sites with limited garden space, allow for the planting of species that are particularly suitable for small garden areas.</p>	<p><i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of impervious surfaces.</i></p> <p><i>Removal of large, established, healthy trees, and the location of buildings on top of the root zone of trees.</i></p> <p><i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient setbacks to accommodate trees.</i></p>
SITING	To provide space for front gardens.	Buildings should be set back from the front boundary a sufficient distance to accommodate a front garden.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain and reinforce the existing rhythm of spacing between dwellings.	<p>In streets with predominantly attached terrace style housing, new dwellings should reflect the lack of side setbacks. ILLUSTRATION 4</p> <p>In streets with predominantly detached style housing, new dwellings should be set back from at least one side boundary for a distance in accordance with the predominant setback pattern in the street.</p> <p>Where a new development is proposed to be sited on one side boundary in streetscapes with detached buildings, the section of the dwelling on the boundary should be recessed from the facade of the dwelling to create the appearance of space between buildings.</p> <p>ILLUSTRATION 5</p>	<p><i>Boundary to boundary development in streetscapes where a detached style predominates.</i></p> <p><i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of new crossovers in streets that do not have crossovers.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of wide crossovers.</i></p> <p><i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i></p>
HEIGHT AND BUILDING FORM	To ensure that buildings and extensions respect the predominant height and form of buildings in the streetscape.	<p>In streets with mostly single storey buildings, upper levels should be set back a substantial distance from the front façade (e.g. the distance of one room) or accommodated within roof spaces.</p> <p>In streets where pitched roofs dominate, provide a pitched roof form for the part of the building visible from the street.</p> <p>ILLUSTRATION 6</p>	<p><i>Buildings that are out of scale with adjoining buildings or that appear to dominate the streetscape.</i></p> <p><i>Buildings that do not incorporate pitched roof forms where dominant in the street.</i></p>
MATERIALS AND DESIGN DETAIL	To ensure that the use of materials and design detail in new development complements that of the predominant building styles in the street.	<p>In streets with many Victorian or Edwardian dwellings, new development should interpret the defining elements of these styles in a contemporary way. ILLUSTRATION 8</p> <p>In predominantly timber or weatherboard streetscapes, new dwellings should incorporate timber or other non-masonry materials.</p>	<p><i>Large expanses of poorly articulated wall surfaces of one material only.</i></p> <p><i>Reproduction styles and detailing in Heritage Overlay areas.</i></p>
	To encourage buildings that contribute positively to the streetscape through the use of innovative architectural responses and by presenting visually interesting facades to the street.	<p>Articulate the form and façades of buildings through the use of different colours and materials, through the composition of openings and setbacks and through variations in wall surfaces.</p> <p>Outside Heritage Overlay areas, cultural expression through colour, building details and architectural reinterpretation could be included in a design.</p>	<i>Large, bulky buildings with unarticulated wall surfaces.</i>
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views to established gardens and dwellings.	<p>Front fences should be appropriate to the building era (e.g. picket, low brick or wire), or reflect the typical fencing height and style of the street.</p> <p>Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the dwelling. ILLUSTRATION 9</p>	<i>High, solid front fencing.</i>

ILLUSTRATION 1



Victorian
Hipped roof to the street with minimal eaves, verandah front with separate roof structure from the main structure.

Edwardian
Steeply pitched, hipped main roof with smaller gable end to the street. Verandahs generally integrated with the main roof.

ILLUSTRATION 2

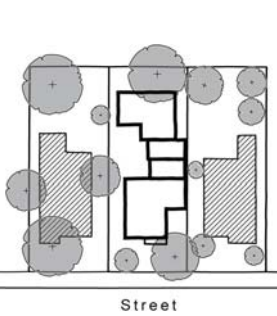


ILLUSTRATION 3

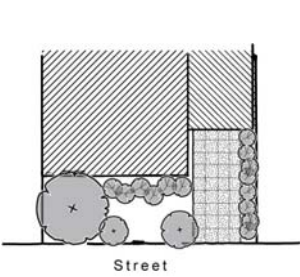


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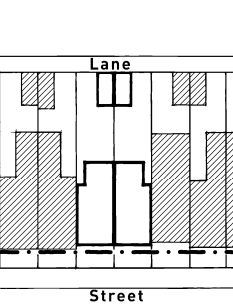


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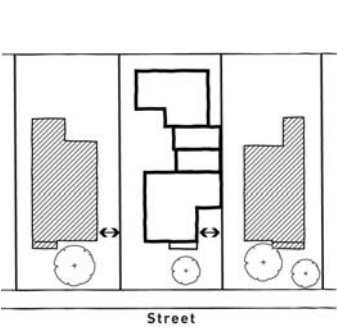


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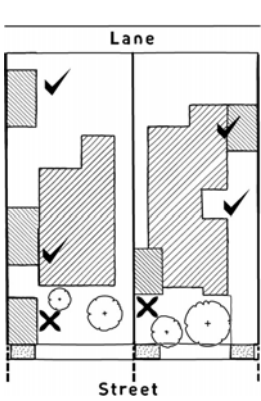


ILLUSTRATION 7



ILLUSTRATION 8

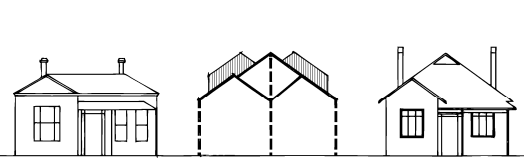
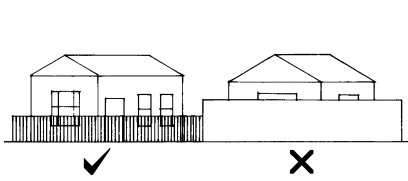


ILLUSTRATION 9



Description of Existing Character

Victorian and Edwardian style dwellings form the character base for this precinct, however overbuilding has occurred since the 1950s in the form of single dwellings, units and blocks of flats. Many streets have intact rows of Victorian or Edwardian dwellings that have been restored or extended. While front garden space is generally limited, many original dwellings are matched with attractive cottage style gardens that, when combined with street trees, tend to soften the built form. The Merri Creek runs along the southern border in the west of the precinct and contributes to the character of the streets in this area through the continuation of bushy vegetation and through the topography that gradually slopes down towards the creek.

Community Values

- Quiet residential area with family homes.
- Trees in the streets and private gardens.
- Nearby parklands and waterways with abundant birdlife.
- Bike paths and good access to transport.
- Heritage buildings, particularly those that have been renovated.
- Local facilities such as vibrant shopping centres, schools and entertainment.
- Single storey, detached homes.
- Mixed housing styles in appropriate locations.
- Consistency of building scale and setback.

Key Characteristics

Era/style of development	Victorian and Edwardian style dwellings are predominant. Exceptions occur along Heidelberg Road where more recent development also occurs, and 1960s public housing areas in Farnan St and at the southern ends of Knowles and Edwards Streets. Contemporary and reproduction infill development also occurs throughout the precinct.
Materials	Victorian dwellings are brick or timber, and Edwardian dwellings are usually timber. Later buildings are of brick or render. Roof materials are usually mixed, but some streets are predominantly corrugated iron.
Position on site	Buildings are generally setback 4 – 6 metres from the front, however several streets have consistent setbacks. Side setbacks are generally either not provided or are minimal (0.8m – 2m).
Height	Dwellings are generally single storey at the front. Rows of terraces are present in many streets. Other building forms are usually typical of the era.
Vehicle access/storage	Side driveways are not common.
Garden Style	Gardens are generally low-level but bushy and consist of exotic species, except near the creek where gardens tend to consist of native species.
Front boundary	Front fences are usually 1 metre high and permeable, and low level gardens are typical.

Other Characteristics

Topography	The land is generally flat north of Westgarth Street, and slopes down towards the Merri Creek south of Westgarth Street. The pocket west of Oldis Gardens is particularly hilly.
Subdivision pattern	Site sizes are small (200 sq.m. to 500sq.m.) and the subdivision pattern is north south grid. Properties along Heidelberg Road are usually much larger.
Landmarks	Oldis Gardens and Northcote Park Football Ground, Church of Latter Day Saints in Westgarth St and Westgarth Railway Station This area adjoins the Northcote Activity Centre along High Street.
Street trees	Mixture of medium sized street trees including callistemon, brush box and paperbark.
Kerbs and channel	Kerbs are predominantly older concrete or concrete kerb with bluestone channelling in some streets. Notable exceptions are in Thompson Street where indented layback parking areas with rollover kerbing has recently been installed, and other streets with new concrete kerbing.
Footpaths/nature strips	Footpaths are generally 1 metre wide and concrete. Average width nature strips are present throughout the area, however there are some examples where nature strips are either not present or are 2-3 metres wide.

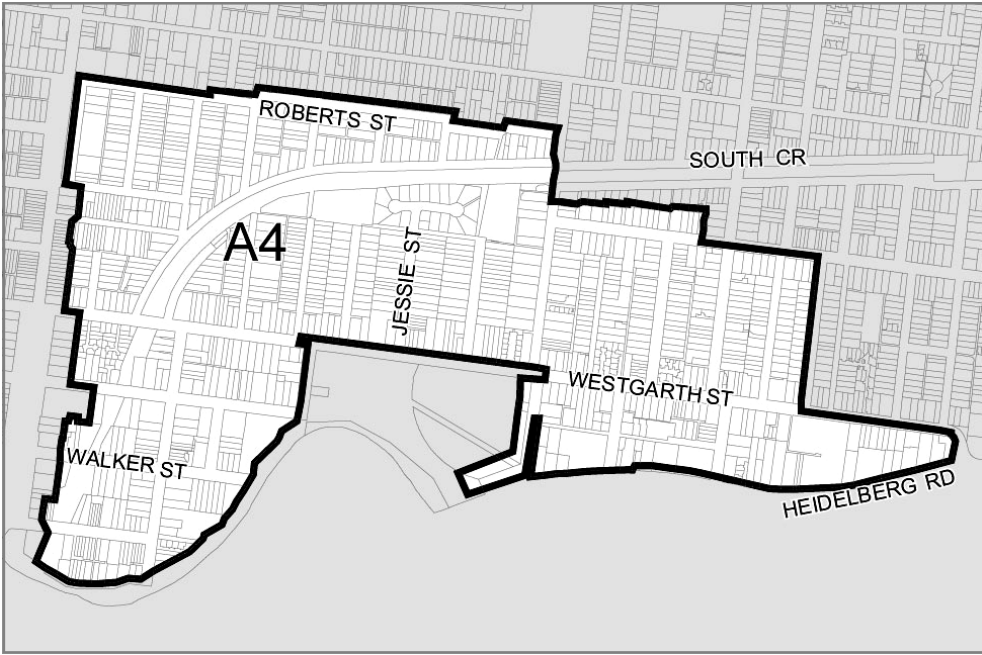
Preferred Character Statement

Victorian and Edwardian dwellings will continue to form the character base of the precinct. In streets where original dwellings are predominant, new development will acknowledge the form, scale, siting and materials of the original dwellings. In streets where Victorian or Edwardian dwellings are not predominant, new development will adopt more contemporary architectural styles. Streetscapes will remain generally low-scale and open, with established gardens and street trees that will add to the landscape quality of the area. Low or permeable front fences will be retained, allowing views to front gardens and dwellings.

This will be achieved by:

- Retaining Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, where located within the Heritage Overlay, or where these dwellings contribute to the valued character of the area.
- Maintaining the low scale of the area.
- Designing new dwellings that interpret elements of Victorian or Edwardian eras in a contemporary manner, while respecting existing period architecture.
- Encouraging more contemporary architectural styles in streets that have few period dwellings. These buildings must adopt the predominant scale, form and setbacks of their streetscape context, while showing design Innovation.
- Ensuring new dwellings accord with the predominant front and side setbacks of nearby buildings.
- Keeping front fences low and preferably transparent.
- Ensuring that front gardens are not dominated by car parking spaces or structures.
- Encouraging additional planting in all gardens across the precinct. In smaller gardens, selecting species that are appropriate to small planting areas.

Precinct Map



Darebin Neighbourhood Character Study



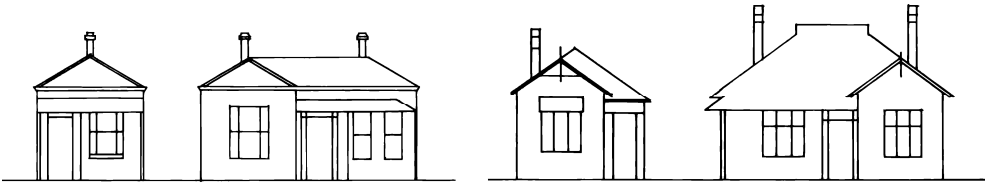
Precinct A4



Design Guidelines

CHARACTER ELEMENT	DESIGN OBJECTIVE	DESIGN RESPONSE	AVOID
EXISTING BUILDINGS	To encourage the retention of older dwellings that contribute to the valued character of the area in the design of development proposals.	In streets that contain intact groups of Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, consider retaining and/or adapting those buildings that are in good condition, particularly the front section, wherever possible in new development. ILLUSTRATION 1	<i>Loss of intact streetscapes and new development that is out of scale and character with the existing Victorian/Edwardian dwellings.</i>
VEGETATION	To maintain and strengthen the garden settings of the dwellings and the presence of trees in the streetscape.	<p>Applications for new development should be accompanied by a landscape concept plan that includes retention of trees and shrubs wherever possible, and provides for the planting of new vegetation. ILLUSTRATION 2</p> <p>Buildings should be sited and designed to retain large, established trees where present and to incorporate space for the planting of substantial vegetation, such as canopy trees, on larger sites. ILLUSTRATION 3</p> <p>For smaller sites with limited garden space, allow for the planting of species that are particularly suitable for small garden areas.</p>	<p><i>Lack of landscaping and substantial vegetation.</i></p> <p><i>Large areas of impervious surfaces.</i></p> <p><i>Removal of large, established, healthy trees, and the location of buildings on top of the root zone of trees.</i></p> <p><i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient setbacks to accommodate trees.</i></p>
	To integrate garden settings with creek-side environs.	Select native species for private gardens and street planting in areas close to the Merri Creek.	<i>Weed species or exotic vegetation in private gardens located near creek-side environs.</i>
SITING	To provide space for front gardens.	Buildings should be set back from the front boundary a sufficient distance to accommodate a front garden.	<i>Loss of front garden space.</i>
	To maintain and reinforce the existing rhythm of spacing between dwellings.	<p>In streets with predominantly attached terrace style housing, new dwellings should reflect the lack of side setbacks. ILLUSTRATION 4</p> <p>In streets with predominantly detached style housing, new dwellings should be set back from at least one side boundary for a distance in accordance with the predominant setback pattern in the street.</p> <p>Where a new development is proposed to be sited on one side boundary in streetscapes with detached buildings, the section of the dwelling on the boundary should be recessed from the facade of the dwelling to create the appearance of space between buildings. ILLUSTRATION 5</p>	<i>Boundary to boundary development in streetscapes where a detached style predominates.</i>
	To minimise the loss of front garden space and the dominance of car parking structures.	<p>Locate garages and carports behind the line of the dwelling.</p> <p>Minimise paving in front garden areas including driveways and crossovers.</p> <p>Use permeable driveway materials.</p> <p>Provide vehicular access from a rear laneway if available.</p> <p>Where rear access is not available and crossovers are common, one crossover per site may be provided.</p> <p>ILLUSTRATION 6</p>	<p><i>Car parking structures that dominate the façade or view of the dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of new crossovers in streets that do not have crossovers.</i></p> <p><i>Creation of wide crossovers.</i></p> <p><i>Front setbacks dominated by impervious surfaces.</i></p>
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	To use materials and finishes that harmonise with the Merri Creek setting for dwellings within close proximity of the creek.	Use materials such as natural timber, stone, or brick in subdued tones and finishes that complement the creek environment and its bushland qualities. Consideration should also be given to how the materials will weather over time.	<i>Brightly coloured or highly reflective materials or finishes.</i>
FRONT BOUNDARY TREATMENT	To maintain the openness of the streetscape and views to established gardens and dwellings.	<p>Front fences should be appropriate to the building era (e.g. picket, low brick or wire), or reflect the typical fencing height and style of the street.</p> <p>Provide a front fence that allows views through or over the fence into the front garden and to the dwelling. ILLUSTRATION 9</p>	<i>High, solid front fencing.</i>

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Hipped roof to the street with minimal eaves, verandah front with separate roof structure from the main structure.

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Steeply pitched, hipped main roof with smaller gable end to the street. Verandahs generally integrated with the main roof.

ILLUSTRATION 2

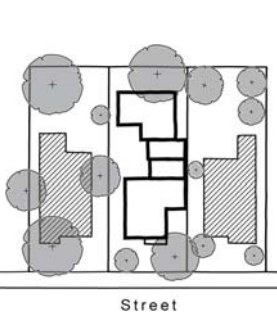


ILLUSTRATION 3

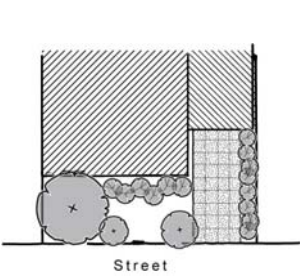


ILLUSTRATION 4

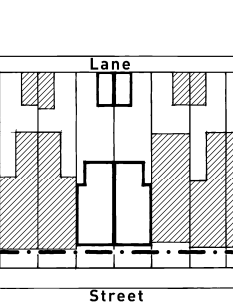


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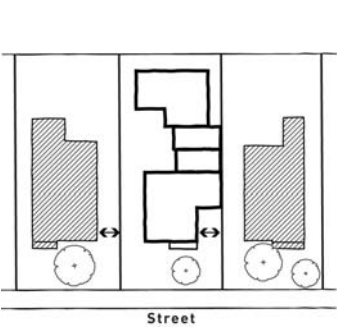


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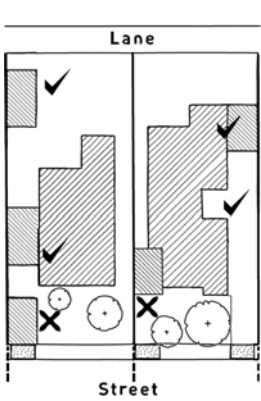


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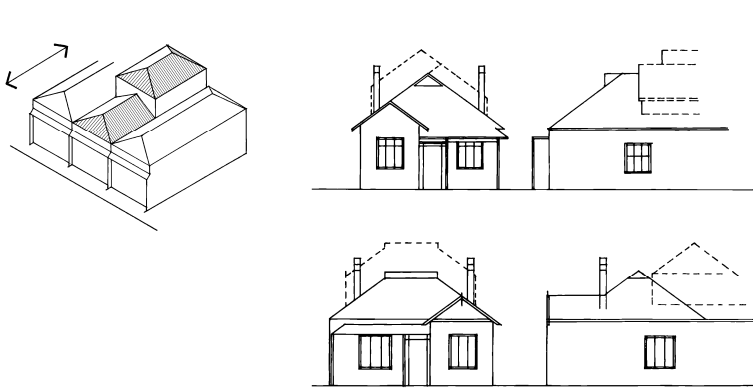


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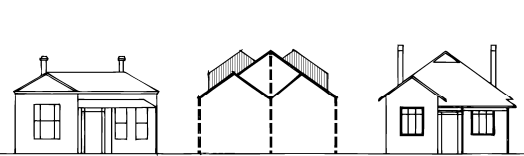


ILLUSTRATION 9

