7.12. Garden Suburban 6

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

The Garden Suburban 6 (GS6) precinct aligns with the Postcode 3081 Urban Design Framework (UDF) area in Heidelberg West, Heidelberg Heights and Bellfield. As neighbourhood character does not apply to substantial change areas it is only the Hinterland area of the UDF included in GS6. The topography of the area slopes towards Darebin Creek and the subdivision pattern is modified grid with some cul-de-sacs and some rear laneways. Site sizes are generally 500 – 800 sqm.

Older dwellings are predominantly 1950s and 1960s housing, occasional interwar and post war styles. There has been significant redevelopment throughout the precinct, particularly along main roads and thoroughfares. Dwellings range from single dwellings new build, through to multi-unit development in both separate, townhouse and apartment forms. Materials comprise predominantly brick and a mix of brick and weatherboard and concrete roof tiles of red, black and grey colours. Newer dwellings incorporate a mix of render and other materials. Front setbacks vary depending upon the depth of the block and with more recent development. Dwellings are generally single storey, however newer dwellings are more often double storey.

Gardens usually contain shrubs and sometimes substantial trees, exotic and native mix. Front gardens are generally low level with lawn and shrubs. Occasional small pockets of remnant indigenous vegetation remain in the precinct. Intermittent street trees add to the vegetation cover of private gardens. Front fences are generally either not present, 1 metre permeable or low brick matching the dwelling. Driveways are usually to the side with garages sometimes located to the rear of the dwelling.









GS6 EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

Architectural style	• Older dwellings predominantly 1950s and 1960s, occasionally Inter-War and Post-War styles. • Significant redevelopment occurring in more contemporary styles.
Subdivision pattern	• Generally, 500-800 sqm. • Modified grid with some cul-de-sacs and some rear laneways.
Topography and ridgelines	• Slopes down to the Darebin Creek
Dwelling type	• Ranges from single dwellings through to multi-unit developments in separate, townhouse and apartment forms.
Materials and form	• Brick, and a mix of brick and weatherboard. • New dwellings incorporate a mix of render and other materials. • Roofs predominantly concrete tiles of red, black and grey colours.
Setbacks	• Front setbacks vary from 6-10 metres depending on the depth of the block but are often consistent within a street. • Side setbacks generally 1-3 metres.
Height	• Mostly a mix of 1-2 storeys • Some newer 3 storey apartments
Vehicle storage and access	• Side driveways provided; carports generally not present, garages are sometimes located to the rear of the dwelling.
Garden styles	• Front gardens are generally low shrubs and lawn, and sometimes substantial trees, in an exotic and native mix.
Vegetation Cover	• Occasional small pockets of remnant native vegetation. • Few tall trees in front and rear gardens.
Front fencing	• Front fences generally not present, are 1 metre permeable, or low brick matching the dwelling.
Public realm	• A mix of street trees, generally wide, open verges, concrete kerb and channels

KEY THREATS IN GS6

- Dwellings that are located forward of the predominant setback in the street.
- Lack of space for planting and growth of indigenous and native trees and understorey vegetation.
- Building materials and finishes that are uncharacteristic of the area.
- Poor quality design
- Carports or garages that are located forward of the dwelling.
- Construction of high or solid front fences.

GS6 PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

New development in Garden Suburban 6 will evolve up to 3 storeys and support a range of well-designed housing within a treed landscape.

Development reflects a contemporary style to revitalise the character and enhance the urban environment while responding to the grain and rhythm of existing dwellings. Building materials and colour palettes reflect the existing residential character through natural, non-reflective materials, such as brick and wood, as well as muted colours. Front fencing is low and permeable complimented by landscaped front gardens.

New dwellings and extensions are positioned in keeping with the front setbacks of dwellings along the street, and with sufficient space in front and the side or rear setbacks for landscaping, tree planting and growth. Landscaping comprises native or indigenous trees and understorey vegetation. There are views of trees along neighbouring rear boundaries, improved avenues of street trees and the views of trees on private property from the street.

Basement ramps, carports, garages and open car parking spaces do not dominate the streetscape. Developments have only one single width crossover and a driveway that is softened with curves and vegetation.

Garden Suburban 6 **minimal** change area is located along Liberty Parade adjacent to the Darebin Creek. This area has significant biodiversity values and development is anticipated to consist of single dwellings that reflect the existing neighbourhood character.

Garden Suburban 6 **increased** change areas are located in areas well served by public transport and close to the Bell Street Mall. These areas will evolve over time to support a range of well-designed housing of up to 3 storeys. Canopy trees will continue to contribute to the character of the area, particularly in front setbacks to reinforce the character of the street, and along rear boundaries to soften the interface between dwellings. Townhouses, multi-dwellings and low-rise apartments will be encouraged in the precinct.

GARDEN SUBURBAN 6 OBJECTIVES

Minimal & Increased

- To ensure a vegetated landscape through careful placement of vehicle access, storage facilities and built form as viewed from the street.

Minimal

- To ensure adequate separation of dwellings and views of the river corridor are maintained.
- To create a generous front setback enabling trees and vegetation to be planted in front gardens and at the side or rear of dwellings.
- To use natural materials and finishes in dwellings that reflect the landscape setting.
- To maintain the continuous flow of the garden settings around and between dwellings by providing no or low fencing and encouraging the use of natural landscaping and vegetation.

Increased

- To strengthen the garden and tree dominated streetscape character and landscaped setting of the precinct by maintaining the openness of front boundary treatments, the views of established front gardens and a tree lined street.
- To create a consistent front setback enabling trees and vegetation to be planted in front gardens and at the side or rear of dwellings.
- To ensure development is designed to respond to the grain, rhythm and materials of the existing dwellings.

City Wide

- To ensure that developments on or near ridgelines retain existing trees, sit below the tree canopies, minimise excavation, and enable further tree planting to form a continuous canopy, so that the scenic quality is maintained and enhanced.
- To ensure development adjacent to parks and open spaces provides an active façade to improve safety and engagement with the public realm.
- To ensure development adjoining or adjacent to a heritage place is respectful of the significance, character, scale, setbacks, and form of the heritage place

GARDEN SUBURBAN 6 DESIGN GUIDELINES

Change Area	Design Response
Building Form and Materials	
All areas	• Design development to complement the building form, height and scale of the existing precinct supporting a range of well-designed contemporary dwelling styles. • Provide variation between each dwelling of a development that faces the street through varied roof pitches, window and door placement, materials, façade articulation or other design detailing. • Provide well-articulated building forms to reduce building bulk and provide visual interest. • Use building materials and colour palettes that reflect the existing residential character including natural, non-reflective materials, such as brick and wood in muted colours. • Locate and screen household services, including air conditioning units, hot water systems, rainwater tanks, solar panels, storage sheds and bin storage areas to minimise their visual impact on the street and adjoining properties. • Locate and screen rooftop plant equipment to minimise its visual impact and integrate it with the roof form. • Design and site new buildings at or near ridgelines so that cut and fill is minimised and the building sits below the height of trees along the ridgeline. • Use muted colours and tones, and non-reflective materials in new buildings at or near ridgelines.
Minimal	• Design development to reflect the existing building height of up to two storeys. • Position upper levels so that they address the street frontage and are recessed where appropriate to enable screen vegetation to be planted and the retention of views to the river.
Increased	• Design development to reflect a preferred building height of up to three storeys. • Position upper levels so that they address the street frontage and are recessed where appropriate to enable screen vegetation to be planted.

Change Area	Design Response
Siting and Setbacks	
All areas	• For corner sites, the front setback of a dwelling facing the side street should be at a transition between the predominant setback along the side street, and the side setback of the dwelling facing the front street. • Design buildings at the rear of a site to follow the topography of the land and respond sensitively to each interface with generous side and rear setbacks that are screened with vegetation.
Minimal	• Locate dwellings in line with the predominant front setback of dwellings along the street with sufficient space for the planting and growth of canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Set buildings back a minimum of 3 metres from at least one side property boundary to enable the planting and mature growth of small to medium canopy trees and understorey vegetation. A carport or garage may be provided on the other side property boundary. • Set buildings back a minimum of 5 metres from the rear property boundary to enable the planting and growth of medium to large canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Provide a minimum of 4 metres separation between each dwelling to allow for the planting and growth of small to medium canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Locate secluded private open space behind the line of a dwelling that faces the street with a minimum area of 50 square metres and minimum dimension of 4.5 metres to enable the planting and growth of medium canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Ensure building site coverage does not exceed 35 per cent to enable the planting, growth and retention of vegetation. • Minimise hard surface areas where possible to achieve a minimum site permeability of 55 per cent.
Increased	• Locate dwellings in line with the predominant front setback of dwellings along the street or a minimum of 4 metres with sufficient space for the planting and growth of canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Set buildings back a minimum of 3 metres from the rear property boundary to enable the planting and growth of medium to large canopy trees and understorey vegetation.

Change Area	Design Response
Landscaping	
All areas	• Retain existing trees wherever possible. If this cannot be achieved, or a tree is considered appropriate for removal, the site should provide adequate space for offset planting that will grow to a mature height similar to the mature height of the tree to be removed. Replacement trees should be indigenous or native species, however exotic species may be considered where they would contribute to the character of the precinct. • Provide one (1) medium to large canopy tree for every 400sq.m. of site area including at least one large canopy tree in the front setback, until the tree planting ratios are reviewed as part of the RDF in which case the updated ratios will prevail. • Provide a 1 metre wide landscape strip along the length of any shared driveway adjacent to the fence line. • Use curved garden beds within front setbacks to enable better softening of hard surface areas and opportunities for tree planting. • Use appropriate tree species and carefully selected planting locations to avoid canopy or root conflicts with overhead wires, easements and existing trees. • Provide a street tree within the frontage of a dwelling if there is no street tree. • Retain trees and vegetation in new development at or near ridgelines that contributes to the landscape. New native or indigenous trees should otherwise be planted on or near the ridgeline to form a continuous canopy.
Vehicle Storage and Access	
All areas	• Locate carports and garages behind the line of the dwelling or integrate them into the dwelling design. • Provide landscaping such as large shrubs and trees in the front setback and garden beds along driveway edges should be provided to discourage car parking between the front wall of a dwelling that faces the street, and the front property boundary • Provide only one (1) new or existing single width vehicle crossover. • Locate and design new vehicle crossovers to not affect existing street trees or on street parking, and consider the rhythm and spacing of vehicle crossovers along the street. • If more than one (1) dwelling is proposed and the street frontage is more than 20 metres wide, a second crossover may be considered. This should only be supported where this results in an improved site layout and landscaping outcome, there is at least 8 metres between each crossover, street trees are protected, planting opportunities are maintained in the front setback, on street parking is not reduced, and pedestrian and traffic safety is maintained. • Double width vehicle crossovers should only be considered where the street frontage is more than 20 metres wide. This outcome is only appropriate where street trees are protected, planting opportunities are maintained in the front setback, and on street parking is not reduced. • Finish driveways in muted tones and include curves and bends that provide sufficient room for landscaping at varying heights.

Change Area	Design Response
Front Fencing	
All areas	• Provide open and low front fences to a maximum height of 1.2 metres. This may be varied on sites that are adjacent to a main road.
Public Open Space & Heritage	
All areas	• Provide an active façade, including doors, windows or balconies adjacent or adjoining public open space or shared use paths to encourage activation within the public realm. • Encourage the use of low or open style fencing adjoining public open space or shared use paths to allow for passive surveillance and engagement with the public realm.
	Buildings on lots adjoining or adjacent a heritage place should: • complement the height, scale and setbacks of the heritage building • not visually dominate the heritage place • not obscure vistas and view lines to significant buildings

