

7.4. Garden Court 1

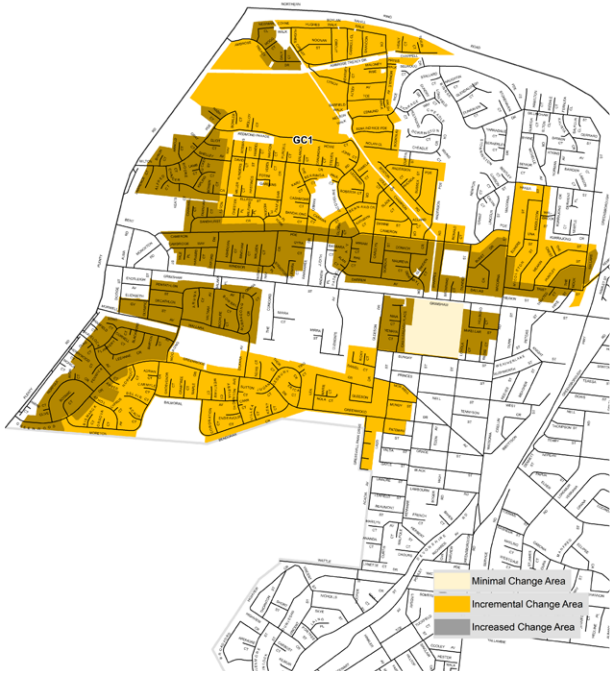
PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

Garden Court 1 (GC1) is located in the north west corner of the municipality in the suburbs of Bundoora and Watsonia. The area has a curvilinear and cul de sac street pattern established in the 1960s and 70s with later century and more recent development in the north of the precinct. The land is gently sloping or flat.

Featuring colours ranging from cream to brown, older housing styles in the precinct are largely single storey brick dwellings. More modern housing, post 1980s, is found in the north, reflecting the later expansion of the precinct, and are often two- storey,

Dwellings largely feature low hipped roof forms and horizontally proportioned windows with concrete tiled roofs and newer builds utilise cooler tones and pops of colour. Across the board, front setbacks are consistent with room for front gardens and side setbacks allow for a sense of space and openness. Houses tend not to have front fencing and planting is generally informal and low level, with lawns and grassed areas common.

The intermittent street trees and the low level gardens with minimal canopy trees result in this area having very low canopy cover and being more susceptible to the urban heat island effect.



EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

Architectural style	• Generally late 1960s to early 1970s. • Some 1980s-2000s era dwellings in north in the precinct. • Low hipped roof forms with horizontally proportioned windows.
Subdivision pattern	• Curvilinear and cul de sac street pattern.
Topography and ridgelines	• Includes parts of the Bundoora- Diamond Valley-Army Barracks Ridgeline. • Land is gently sloping.
Dwelling type	• Predominately detached dwellings, some multi-unit developments
Materials and form	• Mostly brown, orange or brick, with predominately concrete tiled roofs.
Setbacks	• Consistent front setbacks of 7-7.5 metres. • Side setbacks of 1-3 metres.
Height	• 1-2 storeys
Vehicle storage and access	• Car ports and garages located behind the dwelling accessed via side driveways • Newer dwellings tend to integrate the garage into the building form.
Garden styles	• Front gardens are generally low level, with grassed areas predominating.
Vegetation Cover	• Vegetation cover is poor with occasional large canopy trees located in the distance and street trees.
Front fencing	• Generally not present, with no delineation of front boundary. • Occasional low brick retaining walls
Public realm	• Footpaths provided on both sides of the street. • Intermittent street tree planting and narrow verges. • Kerbs and channels.

KEY THREATS IN GC1

- Dwellings, carports, or garages that are located forward of the dwelling.
- Removal of trees, particularly remnant indigenous trees.
- Construction of front fences.
- Loss of street trees and loss of opportunities for planting new street trees.
- Building materials and finishes that are uncharacteristic of the area.

GARDEN COURT 1 PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

New development in the Garden Court 1 area enhances the garden character of the precinct creating new opportunities for trees and vegetation cover. Dwelling design respects the architectural style, form and scale of existing development.

The precinct provides for a range of low to medium density development that respects the existing development in the precinct. Building materials and finishes that are complementary to existing dwellings are utilised, including exposed brick in neutral tones. Front setbacks are consistent with existing dwellings in the street with generous space provided around and between dwellings to create an attractive, treed landscape setting.

The retention and planting of canopy trees improves the landscape character of the area and enhances the scenic and environmental qualities of the precinct with space in the rear for planting. Carports, garages and open car parking spaces are positioned behind the front line of the development and are serviced with a single vehicle crossover and driveway that is softened with landscaping to either side. Absent or low and permeable front fencing allows for views into front gardens from streets retaining the open nature of the streetscape.

The streetscapes are characterised by avenues of street trees with views of canopy trees within private properties and adjacent reserves.

The **minimal** change area located in Garden Court 1 is a large individual heritage site. Future development of the site will be guided by the Heritage Overlay.

Garden Court 1 **incremental** change areas will experience modest infill opportunities including a mix of sensitively designed single dwellings and some dispersed medium density dwellings respecting the existing characteristics of the precinct.

Garden Court 1 **increased** change areas, located along streets adjacent to Grimshaw Street and Plenty Road will evolve over time to support a range of well-designed housing of up to 3 storeys enabling space for planting around more dense development, potentially greater site coverage, and smaller setbacks than incremental precincts.

GARDEN COURT 1 OBJECTIVES

Incremental

- To ensure new development complements the architectural style, form and scale of existing development in the surrounding precinct.
- To maintain consistency of current front setbacks with sufficient space to enable tree planting in front gardens.
- To minimise the dominance of vehicle access and storage facilities as viewed from the street.
- To maintain the openness of front boundary treatments with no front fencing and strengthen the garden and tree dominated streetscape character and the landscaped setting of the precinct, by providing space in the rear for the planting of canopy trees.

Increased

- To provide contemporary development that achieves a preferred form and scale and complements the architectural style of existing development in the surrounding precinct.
- To provide sufficient space to enable tree planting in front and rear gardens.
- To integrate car storage facilities into the design of development and placed at the side or rear of development.
- To maintain the openness of front boundary treatments and strengthen the garden and tree dominated streetscape character and the landscaped setting of the precinct.

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 COURT 1 DESIGN GUIDELINES

Change area	Design Response
Building Form and Materials	
All areas	• Design development to reflect a preferred building height of up to three storeys. • Provide well-articulated building forms to reduce building bulk and provide visual interest. • Recess second storey portions of buildings from ground level wall surfaces, incorporate within roof spaces where possible and minimise in height. Variations may be acceptable in increased change areas for developments that demonstrate exemplary design outcomes. • Provide variation between each dwelling in a development that faces the street through varied roof pitches, window and door placement, materials, façade articulation or other design detailing. • 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. • Integrate site services, including utility meters and mailboxes, within the design of the development and co-located where possible to minimise their visual impact on the street. • 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.
Incremental	• Design development to complement the building form and materials of surrounding dwellings, including exposed brick with low wall heights and low hipped roof forms with narrow, boxed eaves.
Increased	• Design development to complement the building form, height and scale of the existing precinct supporting a range of well-designed contemporary dwelling styles.

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 predominate setback along the side street, and the side setback of the dwelling facing the street. • 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.
Incremental	• Locate dwellings in line with the predominant front setback of dwellings along the street or a minimum of 7 metres with sufficient space for the planting and growth of canopy trees and understorey vegetation. • Set buildings back a minimum of 2 metres from 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. • Provide a minimum of 3 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 40 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 40 per cent to enable the planting, growth and retention of vegetation. • Minimise hard surface areas where possible to achieve a minimum site permeability of 50 per cent. • 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.
Increased	• Locate dwellings in line with the predominant front setback of dwellings along the street or a minimum of 5 metres with sufficient space for the planting and growth of canopy trees and understorey vegetation.
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 of indigenous or native trees that will grow to a mature height similar to the mature height of the tree to be removed. • Provide a 1 metre wide landscape strip along the length of any shared driveway adjacent to the fence line. • Provide one (1) medium to large tree for every 400 sqm 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. • Use curved garden beds within front setbacks to enable better softening of hard surface areas and opportunities for tree planting. • Provide a new street tree if there is no street tree within the frontage of a dwelling. • Use appropriate tree species and carefully selected planting locations to avoid canopy or root conflicts with overhead wires, easements and existing trees. • 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.

Change area	Design Response
Vehicle Storage and Access	
All areas	• Locate carports and garages behind the line of the dwelling or integrate them into the dwelling design. • Provide only one (1) new or existing 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 is only appropriate 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.
Front Fencing	
All areas	• Provide open and low front fences with a maximum height of 900 millimetres along the frontage and within 3 metres of the frontage.
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 with 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